

Empire of the Petal Throne

NONHUMAN SPECIES OF TÉKUMEL

Game characteristics for role-playing Nonhumans in the world of Tékumel of Pr. M.A.R. Barker.

- Erick-Noël Bouchard © January 2001 -

Although the original *Empire of the Petal Throne* rules for Tékumel mentioned the possibility of playing Nonhumans aside from mainstream Tsolyáni characters, game mechanisms were somewhat poor and sparse to provide players with this possibility. This article proposes simple guidelines for the creation of these unusual heroes in the spirit of the original *EPT* game and the *Swords & Glory* Sourcebook. Both are copyrighted by M.A.R. Barker: use of these trademarks and short excerpts from these books for illustration purpose only, as permitted by Canadian copyright law, should not be considered a challenge to the author's copyrights.

Though these game mechanisms might appear uncommon to the usual role-playing paradigm, game balance was kept in mind as a priority and, as such, no "bonuses" or "penalties" were applied to die rolls. We shall suppose player characters are a minority among their species and hence out of the ordinary. The orthodox should know that as the product of my own design, these rules have no official status whatsoever neither do they bear the "M.A.R. Barker seal of approval".

The Game Master should take into account the equivalence of Nonhuman social skills in a alien context, as well as the problem regarding clerical sorcery on the light of the Nonhumans' various cults. If no simple equivalence seems possible, then it might be best to chose another character type than an Cleric. Adjust relevant Skills to be relevant to the concerned species.

AHOGGYÁ

- **Alignment:** Neutral to mankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 3 HD (characters progress as if 2 levels higher)
- **Basic Armour Class:** 6
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as zero (0) regarding humankind. Reroll (once) Strength and Constitution if the result is under 50: keep the best of the two rolls, though neither can be under 50. Reroll (once) Dexterity and Psychic talent if the result is over 50: keep the worst of the two rolls.
- **Special abilities:** An Ahoggyá whose Psychic talent is under 20 has a 10% chance of being a magic damper). Ahoggyá usually make poor Sorcerers and cannot become Priests, being (seemingly at least) agnostics.
- Shén and Ahoggyá have no love for each other.

HLÁKA

- **Alignment:** Friendly to mankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 2 HD (characters progress as if 1 level higher)
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as ten (10) regarding humankind. Use the best roll for Dexterity and the worse for Strength.
- **Special abilities:** Hláka can fly. Their tails can sting as a second attack, causing 1D4 damage and poisoning (saving throw allowed). Prone to panic, player character Hláka must test morale (roll under Psychic Ability) every melee turn.

N'LÜSS (Humans)

- **Alignment:** Stability or Change
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as one level lower when dealing with "normal" humans. N'lüss can substitute their rolls for Intelligence or Dexterity in order to improve Strength. Any attribute can be substituted with Constitution to improve the latter.

PACHI LEI

- **Alignment:** Friendly to humankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as twenty (20) regarding humankind. Other attributes as humans.
- **Special abilities:** Pachi Lei can see in the dark as well as in daylight; they are capable of detecting visual abnormalities such as secret passages and ambushes 30% of the time, 50% as active sentinels. When revering human deities, Pachi Lei usually revere gods of Change.

PE CHOI

- **Alignment:** Friendly to humankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as sixty (60) regarding humankind. Reroll (once) Intelligence and Psychic Ability if the result is under 50: keep the best of the two rolls, though neither can be under 50. Reroll (once) Strength and Constitution if the result is over 50: keep the worst of the two rolls.
- **Special abilities:** Pe Choi can detect visual abnormalities such as secret passages and ambushes 80% of the time, 90% as active sentinels. Species-specific telepathy is common. They can feel the presence but not the thoughts of living creatures within 2 meters (1/6 success rate). All Pe Choi can feel the death of their kindred and identify the person responsible for this in a 5 kilometres radius. Pe Choi heal wounds only at 3/4 the speed for humans.

PYGMY FOLK

- **Alignment:** Friendly to humankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as ten (10) regarding humankind. Strength cannot be higher than 40. Pygmy Folk can switch their Constitution and Dexterity rolls in order to improve the latter.
- **Special abilities:** These creatures can see in darkness as in daylight and benefit from an exceptional sense of sight, smell and hearing. Pygmy Folk are exceptionally good traders. They have exceptional morale yet a reputation for callousness.

SHÉN

- **Alignment:** Neutral to mankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 3 HD (characters progress as if 2 levels higher)
- **Basic Armour Class:** 8
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as ten (10) regarding humankind. Reroll (once) Strength and Constitution if the result is under 50: keep the best of the two rolls, though neither can be under 50. Reroll (once) Psychic Ability and Dexterity if the result is over 50: keep the worst of the two rolls.
- **Special abilities:** Shé are especially robust and can endure temperatures well above human tolerance. If not using a weapon, Shén can use their tails to inflict 1D4 damage in melee.
- Shén and Ahoggyá have no love for each other.

SWAMP FOLK

- **Alignment:** Friendly to mankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as twenty (20) regarding humankind. Any attribute can be switched with Constitution in order to improve the latter.
- **Special abilities:** Swamp Folk dislike violence and do not master any form of magic; as such, finding an equivalent character class is problematic. For lack of any better alternative, consider them as Warriors while allowing them access to any non-magical skill. Swamp Folk can sense irregularities in their environment such as direction changes and dimensional nexus points (80%).

TINALIYA

- **Alignment:** Friendly to mankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as twenty (20) regarding humankind. Use the lowest roll for Strength, the best roll must be attributed to Intelligence or Dexterity.
- **Special abilities:** Tinaliya cannot become Priests.

URUNEN

- **Alignment:** Neutral to mankind
- **Basic Hit Dice:** 1 HD
- **Basic Armour Class:** 9
- **Attributes:** Consider appearance as twenty (20) regarding humankind. If desired, the rolls for Intelligence and Constitution can be substituted if the former is higher to the latter.
- **Special abilities:** Urunen are close enough to humans not to pose much a problem during character creation.