

Darwin's Catalogue: The Outsiders

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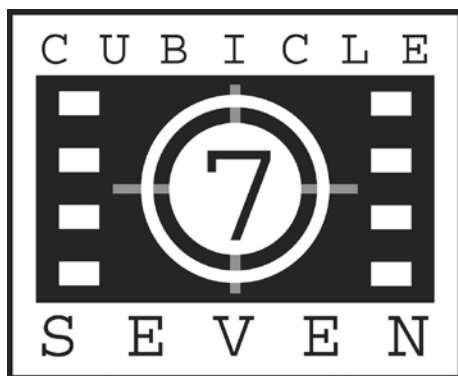
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DARWIN'S CATALOGUE: THE OUTSIDERS

From the first dawn of life, all organic beings are found to resemble each other in descending degrees, so that they can be classed in groups under groups...The varieties, or incipient species, thus produced ultimately become converted, as I believe, into new and distinct species; and these, on the principle of inheritance, tend to produce other new and dominant species.

- Charles Darwin, On the Origin of Species (1844)

While Beastmen, Dwarves, Eldren, Gnomes, Halflings, Humans, and Ogres are the most common races in Victoriana Europe, they are by no means the only ones. Other intelligent races do exist around the world. Some, like the Steppegoblins of North and East Asia, are simply more common elsewhere than in Western Europe, while others, like the Oni, are smaller in number compared to their brethren.

While on his voyage with the HMS Beagle, Dr. Charles Darwin, noting the similarity between Eldren and Steppegoblin as well as Ogre and Oni, attempted to trace a common ancestor amongst all of the races. In this quest he's collected information on every race he could in order to trace the commonalities back to the original race. The Aluminat has ridiculed his effort, as the First Book of the Aluminat Bible clearly states that the first couple of each race was fashioned by different angels according to a common design.

While his search continues on, Darwin's research is collected in his unfinished Catalogue of Intelligent Races.

This excerpt contains information on what noted Eldren French philosopher Ricard Dupree called les étrangers, or the Outsiders, in 1664. These are the races most commonly found in small numbers across Western Europe.

Five Outsider races are presented here. The Giant, the Orc, and the Steppegoblin were originally presented as monsters and creatures in the Core Rulebook, while the Oni received only a passing mention. The Karaka are an entirely new race that is most commonly found in the Mediterranean and Southeast Asia. All are presented here with full information on using them as player character races. A racial competencies chart for Outsiders is also included for ease of generating non-player characters.

Also included in this instalment are the rules for corporeal mediums, first introduced for the Second Edition in Jewel of the Empire, as they are frequently found amongst Outsider races. The rules presented here add clarifications to those presented in Jewel and apply to all corporeal mediums in Victoriana.

OUTSIDERS IN THE CORE RULEBOOK

Sharp-eyed readers may notice some discrepancies between the way the Giants, Oni, Orcs, and Steppegoblins are presented here and in the Core Rulebook. The witty reasoning would be that the information based on those races in the Core Rulebook are based on European observations and therefore inaccurate; the more truthful answer is that, as these races were adapted for use as player characters, considerations of game balance led to the changes. Thus, this supplement serves as errata.

We suggest that you use these rules for player characters, as their racial abilities are balanced with the attribute modifiers. While we also suggest that you use these rules for non-player characters (hence the Racial Competencies Table), you may certainly continue to use the Outsider races as presented in the Core Rulebook if you so desire. You can even mix-and-match (the Giant presented here is a younger specimen than the one in the Core Rulebook) as the differences, while significant, are hardly game-breaking.



GIANT



Some say that Giants were the first inhabitants of Eurasia, before the other races invaded from lands now lost beneath the waves. Others believe that Giants are magical experiments gone wrong, attempts to make a large servitor race that failed to give them the necessary intelligence to go with their size. Whatever the case, Giants have spent most of the dawn of recorded history fighting and losing wars against the civilised races. They were pushed back into the foothills and mountains as their clans dwindled away into smaller tribes and, eventually, small families.

By the Middle Ages Giants were no longer credible threats although professional Giant hunters still existed in Europe, especially amongst the Germanic states. Those few that remained learned to coexist with their neighbours, either by avoiding them or integrating themselves into society. While the smaller races balked at Giants lumbering through towns and eating mass quantities of food, they enjoyed fielding Giants on the battlefield or using them for civil projects, such as dragging ships through shallow water or constructing tall buildings.

Still, their slow-witted nature and large size makes it difficult for Giants to be fully accepted; most see them as Ogres that can't enter buildings or ride with their employers. Still in spite of the drawbacks, Giants can be very useful scouts or sentinels (due to their ability to see far distances and over some trees) as well as soldiers.

Clumsy: Your massive size makes it difficult to manoeuvre in places built for the civilised races. At the Gamemaster's discretion, your Difficulty Rating for Dexterity-based skills is increased by one or more due to the number of hindrances and obstacles placed in your way due to your massive form. You also may be barred from entering buildings, sewers, caves, or other passages that are simply too small or fragile to accommodate your massive form.

Huge: You are over 20 feet tall. You gain +9 dice to damage in all melee attacks and you gain +6 health dice. However, you have a -3 pool modifier to all Hide & Sneak attacks and anyone attacking you gains +3 dice to his roll to hit.

Iron Will: Your unwavering faith in the Aluminat grants you a +2 dice bonus on rolls to resist magic.

WE CAN REALLY PLAY GIANTS?

At first glance Giants seem rather unbalanced in relation to the other races. Their sheer size enables them to easily pummel opponents and they can take much more damage than other races before they fall. And while the Attribute adjustments are balanced, losing points in the other attributes in order to pump up Strength and Constitution seems a munchkin's dream. Why then, should Giant characters be allowed at all?

Giant characters can provide an interesting roleplaying challenge. While they certainly have many advantages, they also have numerous disadvantages, many of which far outweigh their combat effectiveness. A Giant can't stroll into most buildings which, coupled with his low Wits score, limits his usefulness in an investigative campaign. A Giant is most effective in war campaigns, although his large size makes him an easy target and other races have vehicles and battle harnesses that level the playing field.

In short, a player choosing to play a Giant has a very challenging role in his hands. He doesn't belong in civilised society, no matter how much he craves it, and his mere presence often causes more harm than good. While he may have a few moments of glee during the occasional skirmish, he'll spend most of the session feeling isolated and alone, only offering meagre assistance to his comrades.

KARAKON



Karaka are a regional race that, like the Stepegoblin, seem to hail from Central Asia. Karaka are similar in height to gnomes but have wrinkly, leathery skin and oversized ears. Karaka are completely hairless and spindly, with arms and legs that seem too long for their torsos. They also have comparatively large hands and feet.

Karaka were more numerous in Classical times and there were several Karakon magicians, philosophers, and priests in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Mesopotamia. Perhaps because of their prominence in elite circles, the Karaka were butchered by the Romans as their empire expanded in the east. Many believe this is why most Karaka don't accept the Aluminat faith. Instead, Karaka tend to choose more monotheistic (or dualistic) faiths like Avestism, Ismal, or Yehudism. Those few Karaka that settle in South or East Asia prefer Buddhism and Sikhism.

With their effective expulsion from the Eastern Mediterranean, many Karaka settled in Central Asia along the Silk Road. These Karaka have become adept traders, although they remain socially isolated from their neighbours as a means to ensure their survival. Karaka have a very arcane set of rituals that they follow, covering all aspects of their lives. Because of this, Karaka can send coded messages to each other, even within earshot of others, and be reasonably certain that no one would notice. While this makes Karaka very effective spies, a Karakon's first loyalty is to his extended family.

It is said that Karaka spies were responsible for King Geoffrey the Pale's seizure of the English crown in 1192. Fearing that their abilities may soon be used against him, Geoffrey had all Karaka banished from England and its territories in France with the Edict of 1193. The reputation of the Karaka continued to be weakened in Western Europe by their prominent depiction on the side of Nithami states during the Crusades. While the Edict was lifted in 1649, relatively few Karaka have settled in England in the 200 years since.

Fragile Physique: Due to their size, Karaka cannot ever enhance their Strength attribute in the same way some of the other races can. Regardless of their Rank and attribute cap, their Strength attribute can never be higher than 3.

Little Legs: Karaka are a short race and, as such, their legs are much shorter than those of the average Human (or Eldren or Beastman for that matter). When calculating movement speeds, your scores are halved (but rounded up).

Mana in the Veins: Karaka are better attuned to the flows of magic within themselves. All Karaka begin the game with the Talent Mana Manipulator at no cost, which doesn't count against their total number of talents.

Night Vision: The Karaka are night creatures and can see in all but absolute darkness. They gain the Talent Night Vision for free.

A black and white illustration of a fierce, bearded samurai warrior in a dynamic, crouching pose, holding a curved sword (katana) high above his head with both hands. He wears a dark, patterned kimono and a headband. The style is reminiscent of traditional Japanese woodblock prints.

Long Legs: In the same way that Dwarves, Gnomes and Halflings must reduce their movement rates, the Oni can increase his. Oni can multiply their movement rate scores by 1.5 due to their vast size.

The exact nature of the relationship between Ogre and Oni is unknown and often leads to “chicken or egg” arguments amongst anthropologists. There are three main schools of thought. The first is that the Oni is the result of sustained cross-breeding between Ogres and another race. The second is that the Ogres descended from the Oni and some natural or magical force blunted their wits. Finally, the third and by far the smallest school see Ogres and Oni as completely separate races, no more connected than a Dwarf and a Halfling.

Orc



No race is more feared and vilified than the Orc. Seen as little more than savages, the Orcs are forced to make their homes on the outskirts of civilisation and are expected to move whenever the wilderness they inhabit is tamed. Little effort is made to integrate Orcs into civilised society; even in the rookeries Orcs are set apart from other residents. Mothers whisper to their children to fear the Orc, as it is clearly a demon manifest on this world.

Orcs are found all over the world, albeit in the most remote locations. Their largest concentrations are in the southern hemisphere: Africa, Australia, and South America, although small tribes can be found on every continent. Part of this is due to their breeding; Orc women often give birth to four to six children at once, enabling even a small group of Orcs to grow into a thriving colony within a generation or two.

Due to their proliferation in the Southern Hemisphere scholars traditionally thought that Antarctica is the original Orc homeland (many maps refer to Antarctica as "Terra Orcus" and the waters around it as the "Oceanus Orcus"). Like the Giants, Orcs were spreading throughout the world until the Flood, after which the civilised races colonised the world and pushed the Orcs beyond the ever-expanding frontiers.

Recently, some natural philosophers have come to believe that there is a more insidious reason for prejudice against Orcs. While the research is sparse and primarily anecdotal, every case of an Orc and a member of another race mating have produced orc children exclusively, albeit only one or, in rare cases, two children. In the most recent edition of *The Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin has added a new final chapter in which he postulates that orcs may be the evolutionary end of all races and, if allowed to integrate into civilised society, would ultimately transform Earth into a world of Orcs.

Naturally, most of Darwin's colleagues and polite society in general find his conclusion quite shocking and repulsive. Darwin's Eldren critics are quick to point out that there has yet to be a documented case of a child born to an Eldren and an Orc. While Darwin's theory may be ridiculed, the fact remains that Orc enclaves are isolated within rookeries and there is little social contact with Orcs and other races.

While Darwin may be ridiculed in some circles, one need only examine an Orc to realise that his claim may have some merit. Like the Dwarf, the Orc is stocky and strong, although his build tends toward, but not quite reaching, Ogre size. He has the cat-like pupils of an Eldren, but his eyes are built for night vision like a Gnome's. He has the tawny skin and high birth rate of a Beastman, and the wanderlust of some Halflings. Finally, the Orc has a spiritual side and belief in the Divine that rivals that of Humans.

Of great concern to those that believe Orcs to be an evolutionary end is their affinity for machinery. While science and sorcery often work hand-in-hand, there was a time when sorcery was much greater and now, in the wake of the industrial revolution, science is quickly overtaking it. If the Eldren is a reminder of an age when sorcery was king, then the Orc is a symbol of a new technological age.

The polar opposite of Eldren, Orcs skin colour varies by region but is always darker-tinged and course to the touch. Orcs generally have dark hair; Orcs born with silver hair are believed to be Divinely-touched and are often





trained as shamans. Orc eyes have cat-like pupils and white or pale metallic irises; their lobe-less ears come to a delicate point at the tip. An Orc's lower incisors are pronounced and often protrude even when their mouths are closed.

While painted as filthy heathens by the Aluminat, Orcs have a strong sense of spirituality centred on nature worship. They honour their ancestors and call upon their spirits for aid. They also believe in greater spirits, the most potent of these being Orcus. Orcus is the Lord of Oaths and wreaks vengeance upon anyone that breaks an oath with an Orc (including other Orcs). Orcs that convert to the Aluminat, Ismal, Buddhism, or other faiths never fully abandon Orcus, fitting him into their new faith as an angel, a god amongst many, or wherever else he would fit in the cosmology of the new religion.

Constant conflict between Orcs and other races, largely over the latter trying to take territory, enslave, or convert the former, has given Orcs a reputation for brutality and ferocity. In truth, Orcs are no more or less aggressive than any of the "civilised" races. Famed Halfling Aluminat missionary Fr. Stanley Livingston claimed that he could think of no Aluminat priest that was more pious, reflective, and spiritual than an African Orc shaman.

Foreigner: Old habits die hard and it is difficult for members of the 'civilised' races to accept you as one of them, even if you were born in the 'civilised' world. You are automatically treated as having the Foreigner complication. This complication does not count against your total number of complications.

Greasy Thumbs: You have a natural aptitude for mechanics. Add 1 die when using Ad-Hoc Repair or a particular Engineering or Craft (involving mechanics) specialisation to build or repair a device. This ability is the same as the Greasy Thumbs talent, but does not count against the total number of times the character may take that talent.

Night Vision: You see perfectly well in the dark, not quite as well as if it were daylight, but well enough to see without any penalties.

STEPPEGOBLIN

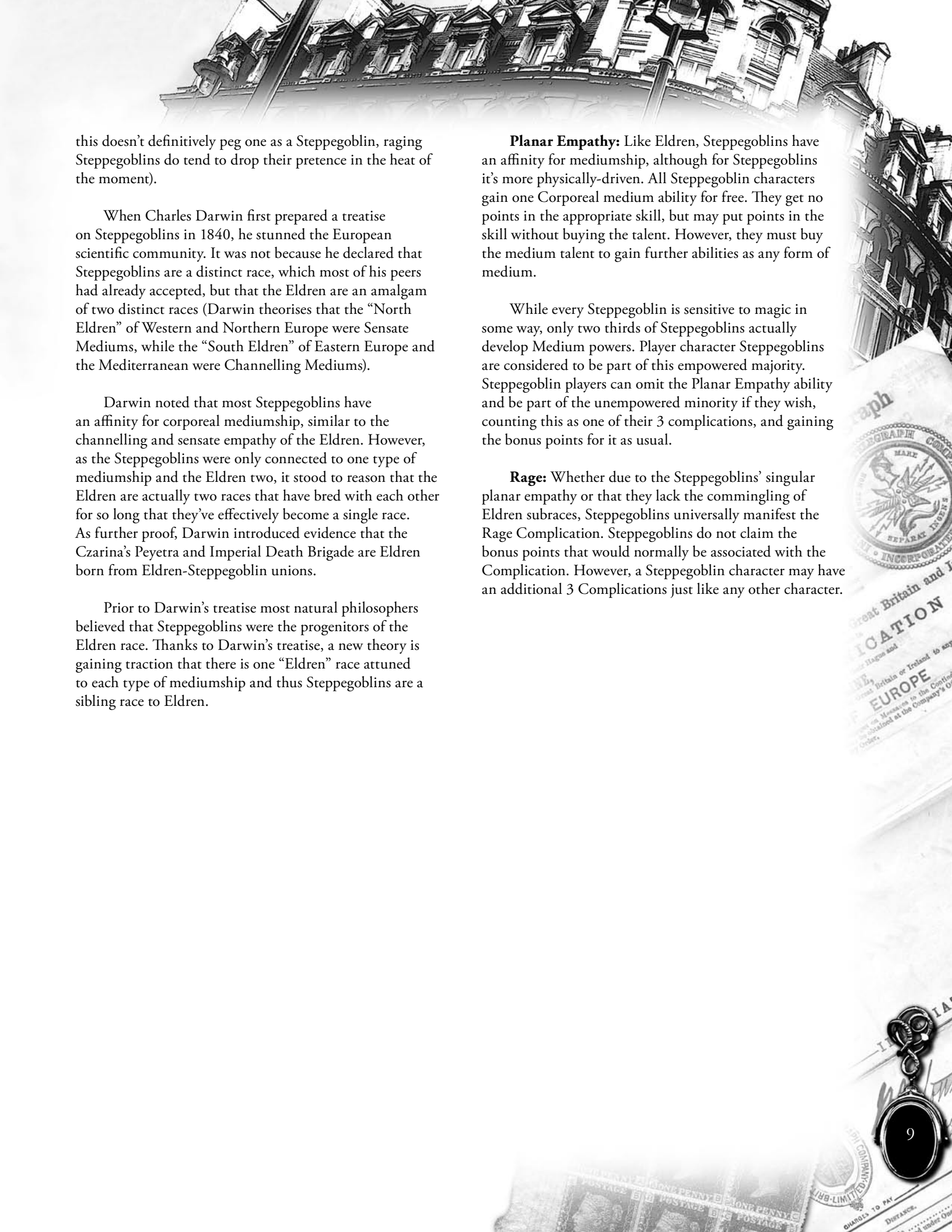


Steppegoblins are a small race that primarily lives in the steppes of Central Asia, although some can be found as far west as Eastern Europe and as far east as China. For centuries they have been noted sorcerers in ancient courts and some claim them to be the originators of not only the unarmed martial arts, but also the mysticism behind them. In Russia, the aristocratic Steppegoblins make up 20% of the ruling families.

For centuries, natural philosophers have tried to determine whether Steppegoblins are a distinct race or merely a variation of Eldren. With the exception of their silver hair, there is nothing that physically differentiates a Stepegoblin from an Eldren. Indeed, both Eldren and Steppegoblins often masquerade as each other when performing covert missions or merely trying to blend in with the local population. A common "Great Game" tactic is to incite a masquerading Stepegoblin to rage (while

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this doesn't definitively peg one as a Steppegoblin, raging Steppegoblins do tend to drop their pretence in the heat of the moment).

When Charles Darwin first prepared a treatise on Steppegoblins in 1840, he stunned the European scientific community. It was not because he declared that Steppegoblins are a distinct race, which most of his peers had already accepted, but that the Eldren are an amalgam of two distinct races (Darwin theorises that the "North Eldren" of Western and Northern Europe were Sensate Mediums, while the "South Eldren" of Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean were Channelling Mediums).

Darwin noted that most Steppegoblins have an affinity for corporeal mediumship, similar to the channelling and sensate empathy of the Eldren. However, as the Steppegoblins were only connected to one type of mediumship and the Eldren two, it stood to reason that the Eldren are actually two races that have bred with each other for so long that they've effectively become a single race. As further proof, Darwin introduced evidence that the Czarina's Peyetra and Imperial Death Brigade are Eldren born from Eldren-Steppegoblin unions.

Prior to Darwin's treatise most natural philosophers believed that Steppegoblins were the progenitors of the Eldren race. Thanks to Darwin's treatise, a new theory is gaining traction that there is one "Eldren" race attuned to each type of mediumship and thus Steppegoblins are a sibling race to Eldren.

Planar Empathy: Like Eldren, Steppegoblins have an affinity for mediumship, although for Steppegoblins it's more physically-driven. All Steppegoblin characters gain one Corporeal medium ability for free. They get no points in the appropriate skill, but may put points in the skill without buying the talent. However, they must buy the medium talent to gain further abilities as any form of medium.

While every Steppegoblin is sensitive to magic in some way, only two thirds of Steppegoblins actually develop Medium powers. Player character Steppegoblins are considered to be part of this empowered majority. Steppegoblin players can omit the Planar Empathy ability and be part of the unempowered minority if they wish, counting this as one of their 3 complications, and gaining the bonus points for it as usual.

Rage: Whether due to the Steppegoblins' singular planar empathy or that they lack the commingling of Eldren subraces, Steppegoblins universally manifest the Rage Complication. Steppegoblins do not claim the bonus points that would normally be associated with the Complication. However, a Steppegoblin character may have an additional 3 Complications just like any other character.

Racial Abilities Table

Race	Social Class			Lifespan	Special Abilities
	Upper	Middle	Lower		
Giant	No	No	Yes	50	Clumsy, Huge, Iron Will
Karakon	No	Yes	Yes	200	Fragile Physique, Little Legs, Mana in the Veins, Night Vision
Oni	No	No	Yes	50	Long Legs, Stout Constitution
Orc	No	No	Yes	50	Greasy Thumbs, Foreigner, Night Vision
Steppegoblin	Yes	Yes	No	200	Planar Empathy, Rage

Racial Attribute Modifiers Table

Race	Attribute adjustments					
	Strength	Dexterity	Fortitude	Presence	Wits	Resolve
Giant	+6	-2	+6	-4	-4	-2
Karakon	-3	none	none	+1	+1	+2
Oni	+3	-1	+2	-2	-1	none
Orc	+1	none	+1	-1	none	none
Steppegoblin	-1	none	+1	+2	none	none

Racial Attribute Scores Table

Race	Attribute adjustments					
	Strength	Dexterity	Fortitude	Presence	Wits	Resolve
Giant	7 (9)	-1 (1)	7 (9)	-3 (-1)	-3 (-1)	-1 (1)
Karakon	-2 (0)	1 (3)	1 (3)	2 (4)	2 (4)	3 (5)
Oni	4 (6)	0 (2)	3 (5)	-1 (1)	0 (2)	1 (3)
Orc	2 (4)	1 (3)	2 (4)	0 (2)	1 (3)	1 (3)
Steppegoblin	0 (2)	1 (3)	2 (4)	3 (5)	1 (3)	1 (3)

Racial Competencies Table

Race	Physical	Mental
Giant	+6	-4
Karakon	-2	+2
Oni	+2	-2
Orc	+2	-1
Steppegoblin	-1	+1

CORPOREAL MEDIUMS

Whereas the sensate and channelling mediums experience a widening of the senses from their gift, the corporeal mediums' gift is channelled through their bodies. With discipline and training the corporeal medium can perform incredible physical feats. In history and legend many mighty warriors have in fact been corporeal mediums, many of which were completely unaware of their own nature. Some corporeal mediums, especially amongst Buddhist monks in Asia, have combined their magic with the martial arts in order to become living weapons.

Corporeal mediums are quite rare in Western Europe and as such their abilities are not recognised or categorised by the Guild. This is not due to any prejudice; Guild mages simply lack the knowledge to categorise them. However, "home grown" corporeal mediums do exist in Western Europe and occasionally a soldier impervious to harm or a circus acrobat performing improbable feats pops up now and again. In the 1866 British Bare Knuckle Championship Gnome prize fighter Wee Neville beat his opponent, a 400 lb Ogre Vinegar Jim, so badly within a single round that the Ogre was hospitalised. This shocked the crowd, leading to a riot in which several bookkeepers were lynched for "fixing the fight."

While rare in Western Europe, corporeal mediums can be found in other places around the globe where they can access formal training, assuming they meet the requirements. Several Buddhist monasteries in South, Central, and East Asia offer training to any student that has the gift and promises to adhere to the tenets of Buddhism. Imperial Russia also offers training to corporeal mediums, providing that they are Eldren women born into Steppegoblin families and accept indoctrination into the Peyetra. The warrior elite of the Zulu tribe receive training as corporeal mediums, where the chosen Humans, Dwarves, Ogres, and Orcs live in hardship and isolation from their own tribe through youth in order to better hone their bodies and minds on battle and the hunt.

It's also believed that the "berserkers" of Scandinavia had corporeal mediums within their ranks, as well as the Aztec and Inca empires in the Americas. Such groups, if they existed at all, are now lost to history save for the occasional secret society.

Corporeal mediums are created in the same way as other mediums. The character must select the Talent Corporeal Medium as described below. Every time this talent is purchased, the character gains a corporeal medium ability. The character must also purchase the Skill Corporeal Medium to exercise control over these abilities.

The abilities of a corporeal medium are all free actions to activate (and do not incur multi-action penalties), and typically stay in effect until the end of the current round. Action rolls to activate the power are rolled at the start of a combat round, and then are in effect for that round.

A corporeal medium may activate multiple corporeal abilities in a single round. Each additional corporeal ability adds 2 to the Difficulty for every corporeal ability activated. For example, Natalya Androva wants to activate Compound Actions and Strength of the Bear in the same round. She now has Difficulty 7 for Compound Actions and Difficulty 3 for Strength of the Bear.

Compound Actions is a special case. Using Compound Actions to gain more than one action adds 1 to the Difficulty and 1 to the cost. This increased cost does not affect activating other corporeal abilities in the same round. Continuing with the above example, Natalya also wants to add an extra compound action. This increases her Difficulty for Compound Actions to 8 but Strength of the Bear remains Difficulty 3.

New Talent

Corporeal Medium* (6 points)

You have one ability from the Corporeal Abilities list, but you will need the Corporeal Medium skill to make use of it. You can purchase the skill as any other specialty in character creation. If you select this talent more than once, you gain a further ability from the Corporeal Abilities list.

New Skill

Corporeal Medium (Resolve)

This skill governs the amount of control a corporeal medium has over her powers. Unlike other mediums, the corporeal medium learns to channel the extra-dimensional energies through her body to accomplish incredible physical feats. As a true corporeal medium must undergo rigorous training, this skill also represents a character's knowledge of corporeal medium training techniques around the world.

CORPOREAL ABILITIES

Through meditation, a corporeal medium learns to link his mind with his body, channelling his inner energy to increase his physical prowess.

Cold Fury

Difficulty: 1

Cost: N

Use of this ability adds half your Corporeal Medium skill rating to all opposed Resolve rolls for the round.

Compound Actions

Difficulty: 5

Cost: 1+N

Use of this ability allows you to take an additional action this round with no multiple action penalties. This can be utilized several times within the same round by increasing both Difficulty and Cost by 1 for each additional action. The maximum amount of compound actions that can be taken in one round is equal to Dexterity/2.

Fortify

Difficulty: 1

Cost: N

Use of this ability adds half your Corporeal Medium skill rating to your Fortitude dice for the round.

Project Will

Difficulty: 2

Cost: 1+N

You can project your Will across great distances and make a single melee attack against any target within your line of sight.

Quicken

Difficulty: 1

Cost: N

Use of this ability adds half your Corporeal Medium skill rating to your Dexterity dice for the round.

Regenerate

Difficulty: 2

Cost: N

Use of this ability heals an amount of both bruising and lethal damage equal to half your Corporeal Medium skill rating at the end of the round that the power was activated on.

Strength of the Bear

Difficulty: 1

Cost: N

Use of this ability adds half your Corporeal Medium skill rating to your Strength dice for the round.

Warp

Difficulty: 2

Cost: 2+N

Use of this ability warps your physical body as magical energy courses through you. Add half your Corporeal Medium skill to all Strength and Dexterity dice rolls. As a downside, you temporarily lose your reason and will continue to fight and kill (even your allies) regardless of personal injury until someone succeeds in a Very Difficult (6 black dice) Wits + Charm roll (or other soothing effect) to calm you down.

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