

This article has been approved by Professor Barker as compatible with “Real Tekumel”.

Generating Pé Chói Characters in Gardásiyal

by Robert Dushay

Note: This material on the Pé Chói came from the Tékumel Sourcebook, and the article on the Pé Chói written by Professor Barker. I have simply chopped it up to fit into the Gardásiyal character generation system. --Robert Dushay.

Pé Chói are frequently found in human communities. Many communities of 5,000 people or more include at least a few Pé Chói, and they may even be found in less populated areas, as they sometimes work as foresters, hunters, or estate managers. They age at about the same rate as humans do, too. Therefore, Pé Chói characters who were raised in human lands generate characters exactly as humans do, except for the obvious physical and psychic differences. They belong to clans and determine skills just as humans do. Pé Chói worship all human deities, although they prefer Hnálla, Thúmis, Karakán, Hru#’u#, Ksárul, and Vimúhla the most.

Pé Chói who were raised in the forests of Dó Cháka use a modified skill generation system. They may choose at any time to switch to the human skill development system (by moving to a human community.)

Pé Chói names: The Pé Chói use poetic names, such as "Tk-étk-dsa`" (meaning "Green-Timber-Like-Warrior"), although their phonemes are often difficult for humans to pronounce. Other examples of Pé Chói names (no translation available) are "Chtk-ptk" and "Ttk-mtk-ntp". Humans often give them more pronounceable nicknames.

"Academic Skills" (Corresponds to 7.1 in Adventures on Tékumel, Vol. 1) Pé Chói education does not have a formal division between school and leisure time, therefore Pé Chói characters raised in the forests do not choose elementary and outdoor skills separately. Instead, they pool the skill points from table 7.1 and the 5 skill points for outdoor skills, and choose off the Elementary table below. The Pé Chói also get 6-10 (D5+5) skill units to invest in the Occupational Skills table. As for humans, no more than 2 levels of any skill may be bought at this time. Pé Chói raised in the forests do not learn religion as a skill, and they may learn sorcery without studying religion.

"Growing Pains" (Corresponds to 8. in Adventures on Tékumel, Vol. 1) The Pé Chói character returns to the table in 7.1, adds 5 points to the total, and obtains skills from the Elementary skills table below. They also get as many points to invest in Occupational skills as obtained before. As before, no more than 2 levels in any skill may be purchased. To maintain balance with human characters, warrior and archer may not be chosen at this time, although the Pé Chói of the forests would probably not be bothered by their children studying these skills at this time.

"Academic Skills" (Corresponds to 8.1 in Adventures on Tékumel, Vol. 1) The Pé Chói of the forests spend little time on advanced academic skills. Use the skill units obtained in table 8.1 on both the occupational skills table and the Advanced skills table given below. Most Pé Chói travel to Mu'ugalavyá or Tsolyánu to study advanced topics (meaning they often switch to the regular rules at this point, if they wish to learn advanced subjects).

"Hobby Skills" As for humans, but the following skills are not relevant to the Pé Chói in their own societies:

Arts and Crafts: Book illumination, Calligraphy, Clothing, Perfumes and Essences.

Collecting: Coins, Perfumes and Essences, Slaves, Wines and fine liqueurs. The Pé Chói of the forests do collect elegantly shaped pieces of wood, sometimes as "found objects", sometimes enhanced by cutting and polishing. The Pé Chói do not have one term for these objects, and their purpose--art? furniture? learning devices?--is incomprehensible to humans. Consider this hobby "Wood collecting".

Business and Professional: Few of these are relevant to Pé Chói society. In the forests, the Pé Chói do not use human economic systems or coins, preferring to barter and to use another, more complex system of traded influence that is virtually unknown to humans (and very difficult to understand.) These systems do not lend themselves to being "hobbies". Pé Chói may take Foreign Trade, and Timber and forest products.

Spectator Sports and Pastimes: Dueling, Falconry, Fishing, Gladiators, Puppetry, Sailing, Swimming, The Hirilákte Arenas, Unarmed martial arts.

Food and Drink: Drunkenness, Drugs and narcotics, Fine liqueurs, Teetotalling. Fine wines refers to the few mild fermented drinks of the Pé Chói.

Government and Politics: Only Foreign (meaning "human") is suitable. The Pé Chói sense of "appropriate action" makes politics irrelevant to them, and they have little interest in the subject.

Fighting and the Military: Artillery, Assassin's weapons, Dueling, Gladiatorial combat, Logistics and supply, Military history, Sieges and Fortifications, Strategy, Tactics, Unarmed martial arts. Replace Nonhuman weapons and tactics with Human weapons and tactics. Note: the Pé Chói sense of "appropriate action" makes the study of strategy and tactics unnecessary. A very rare Pé Chói may choose to study specialized human fighting techniques, but these unusual types require a referee's permission to learn these subjects (and will almost certainly need to find a human instructor).

Science and Knowledge: Navigation, Oceanography. Replace Tribal languages with Other Pé Chói languages. There are six Pé Chói languages, and three of them are extinct. The ones in use are spoken in 1. northern and eastern Do Cháka (called Ts-kt), 2. western Do Cháka and Mu'ugalavyáni Pé Chói villages, 3. the "wild" villages of the Sárku-worshipping Pé Chói in the Do Chakán interior.

Religion: This hobby is extraordinarily rare, as most Pé Chói have little concern for the religious issues that plague humans. The following hobbies are simply not possible to follow in Pé Chói territory: Factions and politics, Heresies, Temple administration. Human religions may be included under "Nonhuman religions".

Sex and Romance: The Pé Chói do not share the human obsession with sex. The only topics here of interest to them would be Love Poems and Romantic Love, and these would be rarely studied.

Elementary Skills

Archery (2)
Athletics (1)
Brawling (1)
Forest survival (2)
Hunting (1)
Interpreter (Mu'ugalavyáni or Tsolyáni only) (3)
Mathematics (2)
Medicine (2)
Music (1)
Read (Pé Chói stylus marks) (1)
Sorcery (See below) (2)
Warrior (2)

Occupational Skills

Architect (with the Pé Chói secretion used as a building material) (2)
Armourer (3)
Artist/Sculptor (3)
Basketry (1)
Beast-trainer (1)
Botanist (2)
Brewer (Pé Chói fruit drinks) (1)
Carpenter (1)
Cloth-maker (1)
Cook (1)
Engineer (3)
Farmer (1)
Fletcher (1)
Forester (1)
Glassblower (2)
Hunter, tracker (1)
Interpreter (3)
Jeweller-goldsmith (2)
Musician (2)
Physician (3)
Potter, crockery-maker (1)
Rope and net maker (1)
Smith (1)
Tanner (1)

Weaver (1)

Advanced Skills

Alchemist (2)

Astrology (3)

Geographer (3)

Geologist (3)

Historian (Pé Chói history) (2)

Languages (See Sec. 8.2) (3)

Logician (3)

Mathematician (3)

Musician (2)

Philosopher (3)

Sorcerer (See below and Sec. 8.5)

Warrior (See below and Sec. 8.6)

Zoologist (2)

Sorcery, Religion, and Priestly Skills:

When not in human society, the Pé Chói worship two deities: The Father of Nests (who is most closely related to Hnálla and Thúmis, and is considered an Aspect of each of these deities in human temples) and The Black Old One (most closely related to Hru#u# and Ksárul, and considered an Aspect of these deities). There are no temples in Pé Chói lands: they have little interest in theological speculation, although the skills of logician, philosopher, and sorcerer are admired. Characters may not become Pé Chói priests unless they journey to human lands.

A character who wishes to study sorcery in the Pé Chói villages does not learn from the priesthood. However, in order to preserve the magic system of the game, a Pé Chói sorcerer character should choose one human deity to determine which spells can be learned. Once this deity is chosen, the character may only change under the same circumstances as a human character: all knowledge reserved to the old deity is removed from the character's mind, including spells. No character may ever know spells from more than one temple's list! Spells, therefore, are chosen for Pé Chói just as for human characters, regardless of whether they are in Pé Chói or human territory.

If a Pé Chói wishes to learn spells in human lands, they must either find a Pé Chói tutor, or they must adhere to human customs (meaning an affiliation of some sort with the appropriate temple). Unless they wish to be a lay-priest, they must attain 4th circle scholar-priest before learning more spells. Pé Chói sorcerers of less than 4th level need only be a 2nd circle scholar-priest to learn more spells. Of course, Pé Chói just starting to learn sorcery in human lands follow the same rules humans do. Use the rules in *Adventures on Tékumel, Part 2, Vol 1* to obtain promotions to the appropriate priestly circle.

(NOTE: Although one might assume the sorcery of the forest-dwelling Pé Chói might more closely resemble shamanistic magic than urban temple magic, it is more likely that they originally learned magic in the human academies and brought it back into the forests. The Pé

Chóí certainly have specialty spells which are not taught to humans, but these magics are not known at this time.)

Warrior Skills:

The Pé Chóí can use any human weapon, but in their own lands, they use javelins, swords, and light crossbows almost exclusively. Therefore, in the forests, a character may only learn the following Warrior skills:

Hand Weapons: Shield (1), Fisticuffs and Brawling (1), Dagger/knife-fighting (1), Shortsword, mace, club (2), Long sword or scimitar (2), Wrestling (4)

Missile Weapons: Dagger-throwing (1), Javelins (1), Light crossbow (3).

Pé Chóí are not required to follow the human rules for learning weapons (that is, they do not need five skill levels in two weapons out of the first five before advancing to the second five). However, they must have at least five levels in shortsword before learning long sword.

Other notes:

1. Literacy and literature. The Pé Chóí writing system involves using a stylus to make indentations in soft wood. Pé Chóí writing is very rarely used outside of their own settlements in Do Cháka. Their "books" are almost always scientific in nature, such as astronomy or mathematics. Their literature is more usually oral, being sung or droned epics. These works are often performed in choruses, with a leader reciting over the drones or hums of the rest of the group. These performances are not done in human company, so little is known about it.

2. Pé Chóí are considered adults, both sexually and socially, at age 15 or so. From this age to about age 22, it is common for them to wish to leave their communities and wander. This is the most common time for Pé Chóí to enter human lands, join a mercantile clan, or enlist in a legion. By age 30, they are usually ready to settle down, often returning to their Dó Chákan villages.

3. No discussion of the Pé Chóí is complete without mention of two further topics. The rudimentary telepathy of the Pé Chóí gives them a permanent sense of restless melancholy beyond the understanding of other races. This feeling is called Ntk-dqekt, and it colors the sensibilities of every Pé Chóí, no matter where or how they are raised. It is impossible for humans to completely comprehend, including elements of oneness, along with solitude, pain, loneliness, endurance, and separation.

The Pé Chóí also have the concept of the Eternal Garden, called "the Forest of Hh-kk-ssa". The Eternal Garden inspires deep feelings, and is more important than religion to them. It may simply be a symbolic means of addressing Ntk-dqekt, giving every Pé Chóí a sense of a place that could be considered their true home, where all Pé Chóí are united and the sense of separation is relieved. It could also be an ancestral memory of their lost homeworld, and thus the true underlying cause of the Ntk-dqekt. In any event, the Eternal Garden is considered the Pé Chóí equivalent of The Isles of the Excellent Dead, save for the fact that the Pé Chóí insist it is a real place that can be visited by the living. (The Pé Chóí often refer to it as "the place that cannot be seen save through the Circlet of Iron". This may be a rock formation in Dó Cháka, or an ancient magical device, or it may be something else.)