

Chelti General Information

The chelti are somewhat humanoid shaped space-capable species that originate from the planet *Seloca*, the fifth planet orbiting an unnamed (to outside species) star called *Kimoga* by the chelti themselves. Their biology resembles that of marsupials, and they seem to fill a similar role in their natural environment. Their short lifespans and rapid gestation cycle indicates their species evolved from a prey animal, however their large claws and often aggressive outlook indicate a predatory nature.



On the galactic scale chelti are relatively reckless expansionists, their wide reach belied by their largely

thin hold over it. With their home system desperate for resources, and being subtly encouraged behind the scenes, chelti factions have moved rapidly through systems exploiting as many resources as they can; often at the expense of any primitive native lifeforms on planets they control.

- Home world: [Seloca](#)
- Home system: [Uncharted](#)
- Total Population: No reliable census data

Prey Or Predator?

"The chelti physique is a product of their environment. Tough, Diverse, and more than occasionally Brutal"

In truth chelti fulfill both roles on their world, where high oxygen content and slightly shallower than standard gravity have allowed far larger creatures to grow than on most worlds. The chelti have to compete with a variety of creatures both great and small, and survival has not always been a battle they've had an upper-hand on. Many creatures on the planet are notably fierce, and much of the landscape is largely inhospitable. Even some of the plant-life is predatory!

Much of their physiology is dedicated to moving quickly and climbing trees while being quiet, as a mixture between prey and predator the ability to stay stealthy has been a strong survival trait. Their powerful legs give them a long leap, even in heavier gravity environments.

Divided We Stand

Naturally wary of outsiders, and a troubled history making them detest social stagnation. Despite this chelti have always possessed a pack-like nature with those they care about, a trait strengthened by their unusual form of psychic abilities. This has allowed them to form tight bonds with those around them. However it's also because of this that they are often wary of outsiders and especially any other species, as losing a bonded friend or family member can be a great psychological blow to their health.

The chelti have always resisted forming a monoculture as they believe it is the path to a slow death for their species. Instead three large factions have emerged on their home planet, with dozens of much smaller groups scattered on their planet and in space.

Aggressive Expansion

"They'll kill the men, women and children, and have their way with the livestock before they go about digging out whatever they find useful." - Unknown Frontiersman

After the great [space resource](#) rush and the series of brushfire wars it sparked, three powerful factions are leading the colonization of alien worlds. Military conflict on the home world is extremely limited by treaty, backed by nuclear fail-safes. But the colony worlds are rife with battles over resources, trade

routes, and even for prestige.

Paradise-class worlds are rare in their part of the sector, and life is cheap. Most common, less livable, planets are taken only to be strip mined or exploited for resources. Chelti colonization procedures often include dropping a device that most other species would consider a form of biological weapon on the surface to promote life on inhospitable worlds, or to help overcome native flora on others.

As child mortality rates drop and their life expectancy grows this trend is likely only to accelerate as they struggle to supply their resource starved homeworld and provide for their species.

Psychic-Abilities

"Possessing a strong form of empathy, each healthy member of the chelti race has a very vivid acuity in regards to reading fellow members emotive states. It allows chelti to detect distress, fear, anger, sadness, and a wide array of emotions without facially or vocally expressing themselves, even at a proximity of roughly ten to fifteen feet away." - Yamataian biological research journal

Unlike the traditional idea of psychic manifestation, chelti evolution has taken a different approach. Rather than simply read thoughts directly, chelti send out their feelings or emotions through an almost closed system designed to be nigh undetectable to anything else. Not even the chelti themselves know much about this phenomenon, as any attempt to technologically crack the mechanism of this system has been thwarted by millions of years of evolution

In conversation this primitive form of psychic medium is used in a similar capacity to tones of voice and seems to replace facial expression as a means of non-verbal communication. Chelti faces have a very limited number of muscles compared to a human.

The phenomenon occurs in other species of their native planet as well, some even using it as an instinctive weapon to hunt. It's for this reason that the chelti psychic presence is so stealthy and defensive, the ones that couldn't mask their emotions were detectable and consumed by the pace of evolution. It's also given them a resistance to psychic attack without using technology, although they are still affected somewhat by strong attacks.

New Additions

"Yeah, they're cute 'til they find out you're edible."

Chelti are born in litters between three and seven usually and are often community raised by their clan, all members of the family taking part. It should be noted that both females and males share a small abdominal pouch used to carry small young, although only the females can give milk.

Each chel takes about five standard years to mature, or roughly three and a half of theirs. Chelti remain in their prime throughout life, growing in height and size as they age, until reaching eighteen or twenty standard years when they suddenly begin to deteriorate and usually die within the year.

Children sometimes take on the traits of an older family member through a ritual known as *Inheritance*. This process most commonly happens early in life, although there are cases of older individual absorbing personalities, and produces very similar traits in the child they receive from their older relative. Often things such as passive habits, turns of phrase, and even decision processes are sometimes changed in the receiver. This is believed to be a by-product of their unusual psychic evolution.

Because of the dangerous nature that is life on their planet children are extremely vulnerable until they are able to keep up with the rest of the pack. This makes children extremely precious to the chelti as a whole. While technology has made life slightly easier, children are still taught early the dangers of the world around them.

In a blood duel where accidental death is not uncommon, the surviving victor is expected to provide for the now deceased chel's family as well as their own if the worst does happen.

Daily Life

The life expectancy of a chel is much shorter than that of other sentient species. While there are strong environmental and cultural factors for this, the chelti body is not designed to live past twenty standard years, or seventeen of theirs. The average life span of ethnic chelti is only roughly thirteen standard years, many of them killed by other creatures. Death by murder or warfare is only a tiny fraction of deaths, contrary to popular belief.

Chelti culture is often one of contradictions, although seems to universally be roughly the same. Despite the chelti having spread across the different regions of their planet and into space many cultures have remained largely similar in their core beliefs. If one needed to describe the complex state of chelti politics they could use the term "Egalitarian-anarchism" although that might be over-simplifying things a bit.

The great empathy that exists in their species means that the plebs hold more sway through unofficial channels than government process. Leaders that don't follow the will of their people often find themselves suffering subconscious repercussions whenever near other disaffected chelti.

Long Time Dead

"The great tapestry was beautiful indeed, however when I pointed out that it appeared to be patched together I was then told what it was actually stitched from..." - Traveler's journal

Chelti dead are treated with great reverence in spite of the brutality that other species may perceive of their rituals. The deceased are often ritually sun-dried or preserved by other means and pieces are taken and spread among parts of the family. Ears and some small bones are popular keepsakes. Each chel's life is described in their hide, their scars showing the glory in their lives as such their tanned skin is seen as the most important part of the body. Their treasured skins are often used to decorate spiritual shrines in clan estates.

Teeth are only to be carried when the relative feels his dead kin must be avenged, otherwise they are used to thread the former owners skin into their families great tapestry and then disposed of by various

means depending on region. Seeing a chel wearing a string of teeth in a crude mask over his mouth is a sure sign of vendetta about to occur.

Because of the phenomenon of *Inheritance* nothing is more comforting to a dying chel than seeing a child by their deathbed, this often means that at least part of them will last past their short lives.

It's believed these practices evolved from chelti unwilling to leave their dead buried or fed to animals as it would encourage them to actively hunt chelti. Many creatures still do regardless. It's also believed to be a contributor to their cultural scarification.

Clan? Pack? Mob?

"...and then the two of them pulled these long scrolls of parchment and appeared to be comparing notes! I've never seen such a thing in my life!"

Chelti clans are complicated affairs, branch families splitting and merging over generations. Clans are usually used to determine a chel's family loyalties, while not a strong factor in all clans the more ambitious and militaristic of clans will rigidly enforce loyalty of their clans. Clans are only the most basic family unit in chelti culture, and not all clans stand completely united.

Two chelti from the same clan can often spend hours tracing their heraldry back to the common link, while not a social imperative it's often done to help establish the relationship between the two. A chel completely unable to recognize any of a strangers family markings will usually immediately comment so. Chel unused to alien contact may sometimes do this with other species as well not realizing that not every species shares the same strict attention to bloodlines as they do.

In older times clans could declare almost a state of war within the country, although in more modern times the factional military usually steps in and drives a resolution to the problem by force. Usually with both sides of the deal regretting forcing the military to intervene in their little stoush. Repeat offenders are rare in chelti society, from petty thief to major clan.

Dividing these clans are Houses, a simple designation that plainly states where this member usually resides as most clans keep multiple estates in many regions. Houses are often, but not always, formed from a branch family that took to settling in the region. Houses derive from the chelti practice of living in large communal houses with enclosed courtyards. Members of rival houses have been known to tussle on occasion in in-clan rivalries.

Informally family members are also grouped by litter, chelti are often born in litters of three to five, although litter-mate relations vary as much as the individual. Not strictly genetic, the communal upbringing of chelti will usually group those of somewhat similar age together naturally.

Government

"I thought I was being taken to some sort of unusual sparing circuit, apparently their parliamentary system is like this all the time." - Travelers journal

As the chelti as a species have yet to form a mono-government each faction is largely independent with its actions and mode of operation. What most factions share in common is that they are largely autocratic with a ruling elite headed by powerful clan leaders. Most chelti are quite content with this as their pack-like social nature calls for one strong leader, while this leads to some corruption this is accepted as a trade-off by most factions, the plebs are usually able to sway affairs through a complex and intangible empathetic feeling. Leaders who expose themselves to the populace more are able to judge the mood of the masses and base their decisions accordingly. Leaders who make unpopular moves have been known to be dealt with quite violently.

Below the elites are the province houses, these houses are usually simply the most powerful clan in an area, or in some cases multiple equal clans, given administrative control of a small region. Allocated budgets allow them to maintain infrastructure and duty of care for the region. Naturally the controlling house sees that it receives the benefits from these renovations, however the tide of power can quickly change if a house neglects its neighbors.

Parliament is sometimes seen as a form of entertainment by the populace, as disputes are sometimes settled physically. Security is tasked with breaking up any fights, but chelti politicians are known for being some of the most dangerous martial artists in all chelti society. Politicians are required to wear plastic sheathes over their claws while in session or have them filed to nubs, while on diplomatic missions they may sometimes be physically restrained as a way to reassure the other ambassador that no harm will come to them. This form of violent political debate has spawned a whole martial art based around making decisive blows without detection and dominating opponents into submission both physically and verbally.

The Ruling Elite

Success in life is a measure of success in politics, and professional politicians are almost non-existent in chelti politics. Instead most clan leaders have large holdings through their clan resources and the ambition to lead a more direct role in decision-making. These elite are usually formed into a small council, either under a directive head or first among equals basis, the council meets at set times to discuss topics of interest. Alas, during quiet weeks these discussions have been known to be more concerned with local sports events than actual politics.

These meetings are largely autocratic, however many factions have a policy of open house, where anyone may watch the proceedings if not speak or vote. Confining Council meetings to the house is used to handle state secrets and other naughty affairs that need to be carried out without the watching eyes of the public. All participants are sworn to secrecy, and breaking such means summary execution.

Province House

These are usually responsible for towns and other areas of dwelling, larger cities tend to have multiple competing houses form council, they maintain public infrastructure and see that roads, water supply and security are up to par. Most towns have different ways of running their operations and so the welfare of different settlements can vary somewhat.

Pleb House

A term used to designate any house without administrative status, some of these houses can still be quite powerful in their region of influence. Many houses are strongly networked to their ruling clans, and a distinct power balance is maintained throughout regions. Clans only being allowed administrative privilege over so much territory.

Political Participation

As the chelti have a strong pack mentality, they generally use very little in the way of voting. However, with their unique form of empathetic psychic manifestation it's possible they have less need of individual votes to achieve group consensus. However even politically weak clans will usually have someone sitting in on elite Council meetings to keep an eye on national affairs. As individuals it is rare for chelti to have political inclinations.

Law Enforcement

"For a bunch of vigilantes, bounty hunters, and private investigators, the chelti justice system seems to work out most of the time."

The Chelti have always had a very chaotic nature, and official law and order don't sit well with them, instead they use a bizarre collection of beliefs which basically state that an individual should live the way they choose in a manner appropriate to their surroundings. This is also the reason why many chelti cities will display subtly different sub-cultures within themselves, some of these sub-cultures may be more stringent in their affairs while others will display a more liberal aspect.

The usual form of justice for a dispute is often a duel, the challenger chooses the place, the challenged selects the weapons, if any. While not always to the death these can become quite violent, especially in the more "lawless" cities. The second form of justice is community based, in which the community can force an individual to move to a place "more fitting" of their lifestyle until they change, usually this form of punishment is solutions such as sending a thief to live in the desert where the most precious possession is water, but can sometimes just be permanent exile. Other punishments include the cutting of hands, corporal punishment, stockades and other locally inventive means of deterring those that would make others lives difficult.

"According to the chelti, it's not even until the other guys head is resting on a pike."

Seriously crossing an individual or a house will often cause a manhunter team to be formed from the house members or hired professionals. Manhunters are serious affairs, and teams will usually stop at nothing to bring down their target and either commence some prescribed frontier justice, or bring the perpetrator back to the crossed party for other punishments. If it's serious enough to sick a manhunter team on then the punishment is usually public execution with the head put on display.

When houses come into conflict there can sometimes be minor feudal battles, these usually only lasts for

a few days up to maybe a week or more until one house decides it has had enough and calls a truce. If these feudal fights get out of hand the military will often step in and arrest the leading members of both houses, force them to talk to each other and only release them when they've promised to calm down. This is seen as highly embarrassing for all parties and usually the conflict never resurfaces within that generation. If this fails then the military has been known to use more extreme methods.

Martial Law

The military often holds a unique place in the justice system, as military officers are authorised to summarily execute criminals they find beyond reasonable doubt. While a report usually has to be filed of the incident and reviewed, this freehand approach is tempered by the punishments for meaningful wrongful shooting and the degree of indoctrination nearly all officers go through.

Civil Service

In place of a conventional police force, local organizations collectively known as Civil Service take the role of firefighters, pest control, and public security. They're also used to enforce tax law, a very physical affair in chelti society involving angry chelti in body armour breaking down offenders doors at unusual hours and coming out with significantly more material wealth than when they went in.

The civil service from an outsiders perspective would resemble almost a neighborhood militia of sorts promoting community welfare. Completely volunteer based, although sometimes a local house will sponsor these groups, they often receive surplus military equipment for pest control duties and transport.

Dueling

Also known as *Trial by Battle*, this ancient form of settlement dispute has fallen out of favour for most chelti, as military vets are now allowed to hide their brands. However, both parties must agree to it, the challenger chooses the place, the challenged the weapons. While not all of these are to the death, they are sometimes used simply as a means of legal murder.

As a side note, at one point it was illegal for chel who served in the military to hide their scars due to incidences of challengers not realising they'd just asked to meet a killing machine on the field of trial. If an opponent is killed then it is customary for the survivor to pay child support to any immediate relatives, further declining this form of justice.

Instead, most duels are actually declared bloodless, with either one party standing down or both agreeing to certain terms. Bloodless duels are seen as a sensible, yet rather dull and anti-climactic way to sort affairs. If the duel attracts a crowd this usually always prompts some complaint. Others may simply be to first blood, or other less-lethal rules and weapons.

Outcast

If an offence is judged not quite worthy of death (such as petty theft of property), but the culprit is a known recidivist the Province house may declare them banished from the territory. In olden times this would simply mean they were dragged across the ground past the provincial border, and then chased from mounts a good distance for extra sport before they were driven out forever. In modern times, some houses get a little more creative, occasionally a felon due for banishment will create the wrong victim and be shipped off-world to work in a hellish mining gulag under an oppressive contract for many years.

Eccentric Planetary Rotation

"I was presented with a charcoal drawn map on a piece of thick leather parchment as a parting gift, I was told drawn up by one of my gracious hosts senior members, the methods of navigation and time keeping depicted on it were unknown to me. It seemed that the Northern Pole was used as the center of the world, while various passings of the numerous moons were used as time indicators." - Traveler's Journal

Unlike most planets *Seloca* has abnormally low mass for its size, causing what would have been the North Pole to be locked inwards towards the local star, resulting in their unique ecological situation. As such there is very little in the way of a day/night cycle, and seasonal variations are extremely mild on most sections of the planet.

Due to the tidal lock of their planet the local star was near-useless as a method to track time, instead chelti time zones are based on the moon cycles around their planet. The Seven Daughters, as the chelti call their set of small moons, have been invaluable to early chelti astronomers for creating time measurements and building calendars.

The only regions where orbital wobble inducing seasons is really felt are the dusk plains on the equator. This mixed region of sparse vegetation and mosses is partially overtaken by ice and then freed again in a slow cycle of five years. Surprisingly most of the mosses and bushes survive their time under the few feet of ice, some even using the flow of water when the thaw happens to spread their spores and seeds.

Bill of Rites

Chelti have a diverse set of mythos and believes, this is a selection of the most prominent and widespread.

Astrology

Astrology has always held a great significance to the chelti, both spiritually and culturally, as the eternal night sky in the Southern hemisphere has shown them from their earliest times a window to new worlds. The *Thirteen Brothers*, as the chelti call the resident planets in their system, are a mixed bunch with the gas giants, nine terrestrials, and dozens of small moons, all of varying sizes.

The Great Father, their star, has been tied to much of chelti early religious belief, its unending glare on the Northern part of their planet a strong presence in their daily lives. Most of these cults died out when chelti discovered the scientific method, and things were explained. Now most chelti are atheist and practice a form of spiritual ancestor worship.

For a long time the chelti believed in the Silent Mother, a sort of mysterious opposite to their Father that inhabited the other side of the planet. Many cults preached that while life was born of the Father, it was to the quiet and soothing embrace of the Mother that they returned.

As early science began to emerge it was once taken as fact that the Mother was an actual celestial object that was affecting the planets gravity and could destroy their planet under the right conditions. The current space age has seen no evidence of such an object.

Scars

Scars are an important part of a chel throughout life, they indicate status, experience, and above all, individuality. Chelti themselves have very low genetic diversity between sub-species, a defence mechanism against some predators. The urge to distinguish ones self from the others causes what other civilised races to view as a masochistic practice.

Scars are often ritually awarded, and a chel with take great pride in their collection. Occasionally “refreshing” them as the skin slowly heals over the years. An individual carrying unwarranted ritual scars may find the offending pieces flayed off.

A Mixed Bunch

The chelti have a small variety of sub-species each with a collection of vastly different ethnicities. From shorter, darker-skinned jungle dwellers to the taller, hardy desert peoples, and even large and brutish Southlanders from the ice encrusted cold side.

While there are no major differences among chelti sub-species each of them has developed from the varying regions on their home planet. Many of these sub-species can, and do, interbreed freely and there is no real divide among the different species. It should be apparent that many individuals often prefer to live and work in the environment they’ve adapted to.

All breeds share similar tough skin, and practice ritualistic scarification. They have vertical slit-eyes and long, powerful limbs, their teeth and claws are one of their most impressive features, although claws are often skimmed down depending on the individuals profession.

Desert Dwellers

Pretty much what most foreigners would consider vanilla chelti and probably the closest living resemblance to their first ancestors. These chelti make up a slight majority of the species and are extremely varied. Sometimes known colloquially as Sand-Crawlers.

Their skin tones range from light colours, to dusty browns. Some minorities have even been noted with bright yellow areas in parts. They commonly stand at just over six foot at the beginning of adulthood, their claws and fangs are habitually left at manageable lengths depending on profession.

Jungle Dwellers

It's believed that early chelti originated in the rim of the polar jungle but were forced to migrate into the desert to escape competing creatures. The vast number of diseases and predators often made life short and brutal for those who stayed. Naturally they adapted, as chelti are prone to do, and eventually managed to settle into reasonably safe lifestyles at different strata's of the pole.

Chelti of this genus usually have very sensitive senses, even for other chelti, and even stronger immune systems. Their snouts are usually narrower than other chelti, with thinner more needle-like teeth. Their fingers are usually longer and more graceful than other chelti and their claws are also known for being more pronounced, a trait probably inherited from their need to climb large trees. However their stature is often much smaller than that of other species, and many live in financially disadvantaged conditions.

Southlanders

Sometimes known as Snow-Eaters or Brutes because of their excessive hair relative to the rest of the species, these relatively rare individuals inhabit regions deep over the equator where other chelti suffer heavily from the lack of warmth.

A minor genus within the chelti species, physical differences include a larger snout to help warm air coming through. A thin sheen of hair or fur to improve the effect of protective clothing against the cold, and thicker arms and legs to deal with the cold and to push through snow. Some smaller differences can be noted, including shorter fingers and larger hands as well as wider feet with thinner keratin plates. While great for snowy conditions, on fair ground they are often slower over long distance relative to other chelti.

Where You Belong

Over thousands of years clans have split, migrated or even dwelt in the confined corridors of space. The way a chel is brought up and their lifestyle are often extremely dependent on where they were born and raised.

Home World

Home world chelti live very close to their clans, and from a young age have had to avoid or defeat dangers. Homeworlders are often tradespeople, inheriting a family skill whether it be carpentry, plumbing, artisan or even soldiery. They tend to be very tough and hardy, constantly tuned in for possible dangers.

Voidborn

Chelti born in space have lived in very controlled environments and tend to be highly educated. These chelti are often born in mining crews, or trade or research research stations scattered throughout the chelti reaches. While evolution has not yet changed these chel drastically from their kin, some stations without artificial gravity require their members to undergo rigorous training before stepping foot on a body.

Colonial

Chelti born on the colonies tend to be more open to wandering, and sometimes more curious than their fellow chel. While the places where chelti tend to place colonies may not always be a slice of heaven, these chelti have adapted to their particular hostile environment. Children in these clans are often raised in mining or commodity based communities, occasionally having the tide of war pass over them as factions battle for control.

Would You Like To Know More?

Recommended Links:

- [Chelti](#)
- [Chelti Culture](#)
- [Chelti History](#)
- [Kimoga System](#)

From:

<https://wiki.stararmy.com/> - **STAR ARMY**

Permanent link:

https://wiki.stararmy.com/doku.php?id=faction:chelti:general_info

Last update: **2023/12/21 00:58**

