



Cynocephali in casual setting.

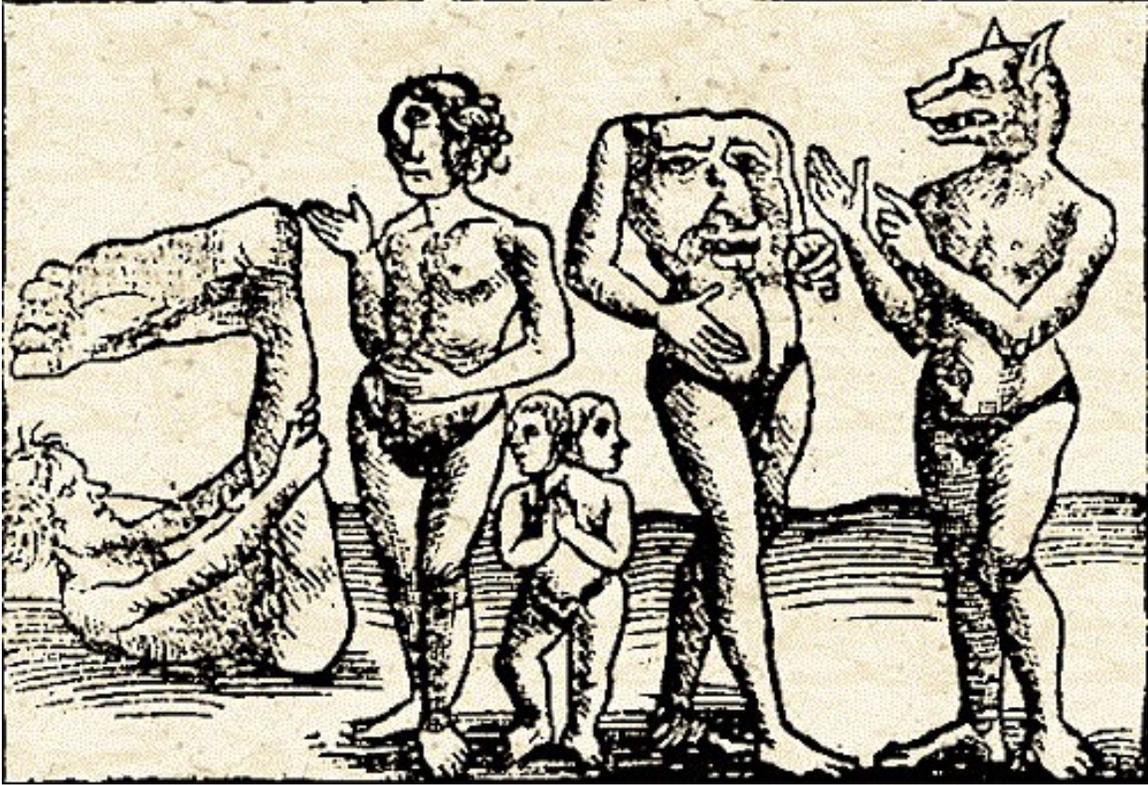
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5 Monstrous Half-Human Races From Zoroastrianism

This article briefly describes five strange, and in some cases, truly monstrous, humanoid races found in ancient Zoroastrianism literature, collected for the purposes of historical curiosity and fictional creativity. Additional information on these specific races, and others, is available from more recent historical sources, especially from medieval European and Moorish tomes. I may expand or rewrite this article in the future with additional detail, but for the moment here is a quick and easy overview for your consideration. The information for this article was condensed from Domenico Agostini's article *Half-Human And Monstrous Races In Zoroastrian Tradition*. A link to the source article will be found below. Agostini's research focused on the following, but also includes comparative references to many other sources.

'late Iranian and, especially, Zoroastrian sources, such as Draxt ī āsūrīg (The Assyrian tree), the Bundahišn (Primal Creation), the Ayādgār ī Jāmāspīg (The memorial of Jāmāsp), and the New Persian epic Šāhnāme.'

[https://www.academia.edu/41222931/
Half_human_and_Monstrous_Races_in_Zoroastrian_Tradition](https://www.academia.edu/41222931/Half_human_and_Monstrous_Races_in_Zoroastrian_Tradition)



Monstrous Tribes by Thomas Munster.

5 Monstrous Proto-Human Races From Zoroastrianism

Compiled by Raymond Towers

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The Five Races

[The Dog-Headed People](#) (Cynocephali)

[The Breast-Eyed People](#) (Acephali, Sternophthalmi)

[The Breast-Eared People](#)

[Leather-Strap-Legged People](#) (Hymantopodes)

[Dwarves](#)

[Other Half-Human Races Mentioned](#)

[About The Author](#)

The Dog-Headed People (Cynocephali)



Right: Saint Christopher of Lycea, died in Anatolia in 251 CE.

Persian name: sag-sarān

Location: across the Warkas sea on the continent of Xwanirah, beyond the borders of India, or beyond the Hun lands, or in Gog and Magog, or in Mazandaran, a land known for wickedness and violence

Description: heads like dogs with eyebrows of men, eat dried fruit (jujube or fig?), leaves, drink goat milk, prepare appetizers and beer, can be active, peaceful and sociable, Christian Saint Christopher of Lycea, mountain folk, can be uncivilized, wild appearance, possibly look like mandrills and baboons, tough, brutal, violent, dirty, stinking, ugly, hairy, have no leader, negatively aligned, eat their dead and righteous humans, or can be neutral to humans, can be dispersed by fire but it won't be easy

Gallery of cynocephali on Flickr:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/tomatotornado/galleries/72157631954401925/>



Knights versus cynocephali.

The Breast-Eyed People (Acephali, Sternophthalmi)

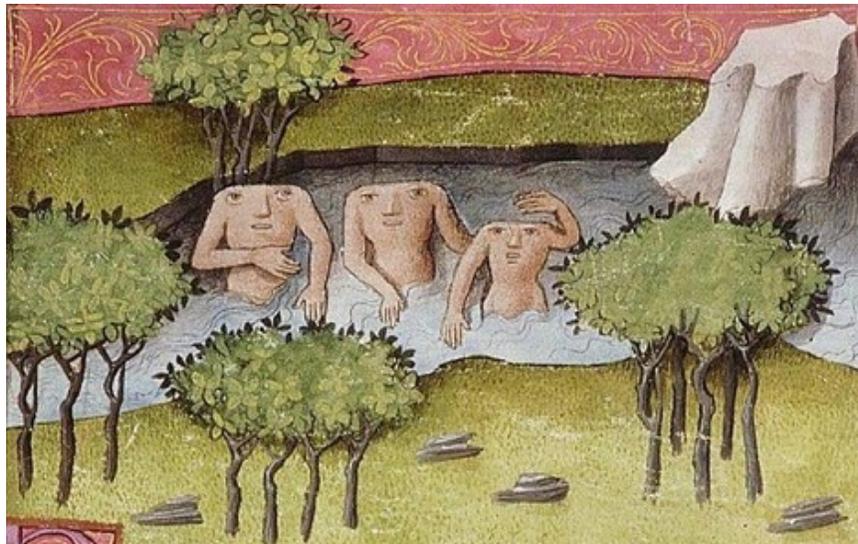


Acephali in village.

Persian name: war-čašmān

Location: across the Warkas sea on the continent of Xwanirah, beyond the borders of India, Acephali live in Libya, Blemmyes live in Ethiopia or Sudan, or they live in the Land of Witches, which has many forests, fruit trees and cows

Description: eyes and mouth on chest, no neck or head, prepare appetizers and beer, can be active, peaceful and sociable, they have no leaders, they are negatively aligned, eat their dead, when they are fully mature they are thrown into the fire, they eat every animal they catch, brutal, or can be childlike, simple, speaking like humans



The Breast-Eared People

Persian name: war-gōšān

Location: not sure of description, other than their ears are on their chests, live in the Land of Witches, which has many forests, fruit trees and cows, or Mazandaran, a land known for wickedness and violence

Description: eat leaves and grass, uncivilized, in constant conflict with dwarves

Leather-Strap-Legged People (Hymantopodes)

Persian name: dawāl-pāyān

Location: Mazandaran, a land known for wickedness and violence

Description: legs look like leather belts, tough, brutal, violent, bestial, dirty, stinking, have no leader, negatively aligned, eat their dead and righteous humans, stone and slay soldiers, before fleeing and hiding in rocks, or can be brave horsemen who protect their leader / king



Little people versus cranes.

Dwarves

Persian name: widestīgān, 'those who are a span long'

Location: across the Warkas sea on the continent of Xwanirah, beyond the borders of India

Description: Prepare appetizers and beer, can be active, peaceful and sociable, can be a fist long, can be 3 spans long, or 6 times shorter than humans, can be uncivilized, wild appearance, or wise and skillful servants, smart, clever, some are positively aligned but some are negative, organized society, enemies of the breast-eared people, parallel to pygmies fighting cranes myth

Other Half-Human Races Mentioned

Aquatic men, one-legged men, men with bat wings, forest-dwellers with tails and fur like bears and monkeys, people of Mazandaran who are 6 times taller than humans, 2 or 3-headed, many-handed, ass-headed, bull-headed, cow-headed, pig-headed



The Monopod and the Panotti.

There are other types not mentioned, such as wild men (Bigfoot?) and elephant-eared people, which you can find many medieval references to. I have reading material on some of these types, but Agostini's article had a lot of good info in it and I thought to jot that down for the story I'm currently writing... so I can exploit it!

One other interesting idea I came across is that in one story, the Turanians organized an army in China, and part of their troops included the giants of Mazandaran, the dog-headed men and the breast-eared men. Imagine seeing those guys standing across the battlefield from you!



Wild men and chimera beasts.



Knights negotiating or demanding from acephali?

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About The Author

Raymond Towers is an author of fantasy, horror and science fiction that strays away from the mainstream, plus a little in the way of true paranormal and other genres. He has written and independently published a good number of titles, most of them full-length novels and collections, with several more on the way. The author has been a lifelong resident of warm and sunny southern California, a location that pops up frequently in his writing. At the moment, the author is looking for ways to reach new readers all over the world, in addition to pursuing his great love of writing and taking it to the next level.

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