

The Witcher for Cogent RP

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Introduction

This document is meant to aid in organizing tabletop roleplaying sessions set in the world of The Witcher using the system Cogent Roleplay. It is by no means exhaustive, and does not attempt to be: Anyone seeking to narrate a campaign in so complex a world had best have some first-hand experience of it, and both the original books and the games will convey more details on any given topic than this plugin. It is concerned mostly with creating rules that (more or less) faithfully convey the experience of the original works in this roleplaying system, as well as keeping the spirit of simplicity and learnability of the underlying system. Yet it endeavours also to serve as a reference for players who have never heard of this setting before, not to give detailed descriptions of the world, but to provide names and points of reference that can be used to look up detailed information wherever desired.

Since my only direct exposure to The Witcher has hitherto been the series of games, these to a large degree shape the gameplay elements. For the same reason, the time all descriptions are appropriate to is roughly between the first two games, though of course, the same rules (and most of the descriptions) can be used to play during any time a couple decades sooner or later.

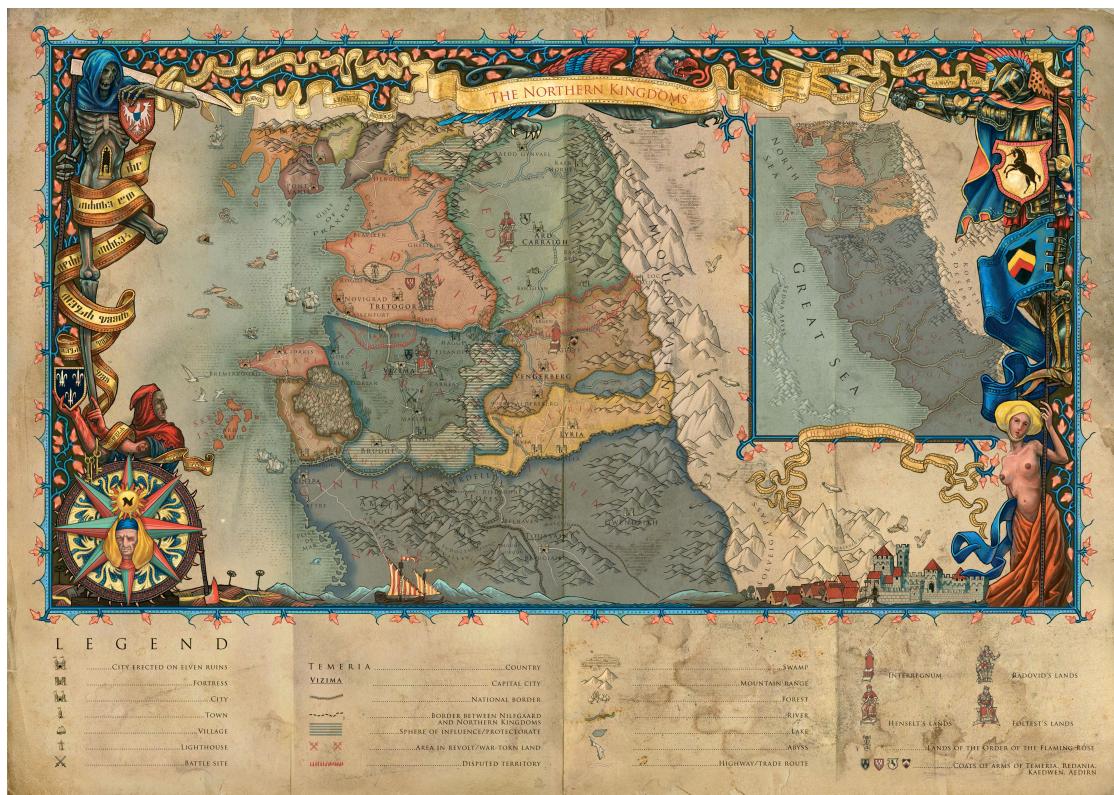
The document contains very few images, as I do not hold the right to any. I believe the Bestiary in particular would benefit greatly from depictions of the various creatures, but 1) It would be a lot of effort to find fitting portraits and 2) It would be even more effort to ensure I do not encroach on copyright of any sort. Happily, images can be easily found by looking up the creatures' names online.

This version of the plugin is by no means complete, more content is to be added (hopefully soon).

1 The world

1.1 Geography

1.1.1 A map of the North



https://vignette.wikia.nocookie.net/witcher/images/1/17/Northernkingdoms_full.jpg/revision/latest?cb=20110530105156

1.1.2 Important regions

This section ignores the political Situation of the Northern Realms, it is concerned exclusively with geographic features.

The Dragon Mountains

The northern border of civilization. They were never crossed, or at least not crossed twice, so no report of the lands the other side of the mountains has come into the south. This

is explained by their extreme remoteness and the considerable population of dragons the mountain range draws its name from.

The Blue Mountains

Home to the free elves and a natural border to Haakland and Zerrikania. Here is Dol Blathanna, the Valley of Flowers, a wonder of the northern world. Roughly halfway along the range lies the ancient city of Loc Muine that was built by the mysterious Vran.

The Pontar River and the Pontar Valley

The Pontar is one of the chief rivers of the north, separating the land in a nearly straight line from the The Blue Mountains to the sea. The valley, formed over millenia out of reckoning by the river, is the granary of the north: Nigh on all tradeable foods are grown here, including the northern wines.

The Mountains of Mahakam

These mountains form the border between Aedirn and Temeria and are known for the great wealth of ore found there. It is hardly surprising that the mountains, homeland of dwarves and gnomes, have produced some of the finest pieces of smithcraft to be found at this age in the world. The regions largest settlement is situated beneath Mount Carbon, where its inhabitants mine incessantly for the worlds best iron and gnomes in their smithies forge excellent weapons, such as the renowned Gwyhir.

The Skellige-Isles

A collection of six islands to the continent's west. Their rough cliffs and grey sea have an untamed, perilous beauty. No traveller in the north should forgo the sight of the sun sinking into the sea from a summit of a mountain in Skellige.

Brokilon

Called by men the "Forest of Death," the home of the Dryads stretches across the north's largest wood. It offers a refuge to all those pursued and discriminated against by men and stands as the last realm never conquered by the younger race.

1.1.3 Realms and peoples

This section is concerned with politics, as well as social structures and institutions.

Redania

Ruled at the moment by king Radovid the Stern, the kingdom profits greatly from trade with the other realms of the north. The chief source of Redania are her export of grain to less fertile regions, though recently cheaper imports from Nilfgaard have begun threatening this key factor of the Redanian economy. Redania stands in a long tradition of war with Temeria, however, the two kingdoms have grown closer during the reign of Radovid.

Key cities

The Free City of Novigrad Although geographically part of Redania, the city of Novigrad is not ruled by Radovid but rather self-governed. She has by trade become the richest city of the north, a success due largely to her haven - one of the greatest on the entire continent.

The Church of the Eternal Fire has an influence greater than anywhere else in the Free City, its greatest temple towers over the city atop a sheer cliff. Hence it is an unfortunate truth that nowhere else can such animosity towards non-humans be found, and witch-hunts are a gruesome factor of life in Novigrad.

Officially, the Free City is governed by a city council, but in fact all real power rests in the hands of four criminal organizations:

- Whoreson Junior's gang, involved in gambling and brothels and the like. They are, as a rule, despised even by their peers.
- Sigi Reuven's gang, lead by the former redanian agent Sigismund Dijkstra, mostly lurks in the shadows of the town. How exactly they make ends meet is unknown, however the assumption that it is connected to clandestine activities of some sort is quite obvious.
- The inhabitants of the secret street aptly named "the Putrid Grove" led by Francis Bedlam, the "King of Beggars". The group consists mostly of thieves and beggars who find refuge and pawn shops in their home street.
- Cleaver's gang mostly consists of dwarves, quite sensibly, as Cleaver himself is a dwarf. It specializes on thuggery of all kinds and practically amounts to a small army.

Oxenfurt A small town by comparison, with its centre situated on an island in the Pontar. It is well renowned for its academy which supports the natural sciences and almost entirely fills the city's centre, either directly with its large campus, or indirectly

with pubs and similar establishments frequented by students and teachers alike. The town was built upon the ruins of an elven settlement, however, the ancient brickwork can nowadays only be admired by anyone unfortunate enough to find their way into the sewers.

Tretogor The capital city of Redania, known mostly for the annual horse race, the "Grand Tretorian," held here.

Kaedwen

The largest of the Northern Realms, Kaedwen shares borders with both Redania and Aedirn. The kingdom's ruler is king Henselt, who has continued the petty wars and skirmishes with Aedirn that have been occurring for many decades over which realm gets to control the Pontar Valley. To date, the region is held by Aedirn.

Key cities

Ban Ard Likely the most important city in Kaedwen and home to the powerful sorcerers' academy.

Ard Carraigh The capital city of Kaedwen, though lesser in most ways than Ban Ard.

Aedirn

Situated between the mountains of Mahakam to the west, Kaedwen to the north and the Blue Mountains to the east, Aedirn is shielded from harsh weather by the surrounding mountain ranges. This kind and consistant climate, along with the Pontar Valley, have enabled a strong agricultural economy to flourish. Further, the proximity to Mount Carbon has lead to the development of considerable industry in the western parts of the kingdom. Aedirn is ruled by king Demavend the Third.

Key cities

Vengerberg The capital city of Aedirn and in days gone by one of the richest and most populous cities in the north. In the most recent war with Nilfgaard, however, it was sacked, and has since only slowly begun rebuilding.

Temeria

...

Nilgaard

...

2 Character creation

In this chapter, the impact of the characters race on stats and gameplay will be described. A short and intentionally vague paragraph on starting equipment is also included after each “class”. These are only suggestions and not meant to be exhaustive, anyone playing this plugin is likely to know the franchise well enough to figure out for themselves what is reasonable equipment.

2.1 Race

A character’s race has little influence over their stats, instead, the chief effect it has is a social one: Humans, particularly in the North, pursue and dislike any of the other races, though the extremity varies from area to area. An elf may be well-advised to cover his ears when taking a stroll around Novigrad, whereas a human will be in deep trouble when trespassing into Brokilon. Discrimination needn’t be limited to open hostility, however: A cunning narrator will perhaps charge a dwarf double when he tries to shop in human territory.

2.1.1 Elves

Elves appear somewhat feminine regardless of gender, their ears are pointed and they seldom wear beards. They have a knack for plants and animals, and are rarely seen in metal armor.

Elves gain one additional attribute point in REF, as well as a bonus success to perception.

2.1.2 Dopplers

Dopplers live a dangerous life: Should they be found out, most would burn them at the stake or try to exploit them in criminal endeavours. They can take the shape of any humanoid creature they have seen before, which not only makes them look practically identical but also allows the doppler to use some of their skills. Any permanent markings on the body, such as scars or tattoos, will be present in any form the doppler takes.

Dopplers don’t gain any points by default, but may *transform*. When transformed into another character, their effective skill points in any skill¹ are the average between their

¹Explicitly not in attributes

own and those of whoever they impersonate. They are, unless marked by some permanent feature, indistinguishable from the people they copy, but may still be found out if they behave strangely.

2.1.3 Dwarves

Dwarves are shorter than humans, but typically a bit taller than halflings. They make excellent heavy infantry, but can also be prolific craftsmen. It should also be mentioned that the world's largest bank is run by the Vivaldis, a family of dwarves.

Dwarves gain one additional attribute point in STR, one extra success in grappling and no penalty when unarmed in close combat.

2.1.4 Halflings

Halflings, as a rule, are on better terms with humans than most other races. One possible explanation for this is that they tend to live in secluded farmsteads and keep out of the way of humans while supplying them with honey, roots and other agricultural commodities.

Halflings may roll one extra die on *aim/throw*, *acrobatics* and *sleight of hand* checks, and they are immune to magic². They must not exceed one attribute point in STR.

Humans

Since Cogent Roleplay assumes humans as the standard, so shall this plugin. Humans' stats are simply the default, but they will not draw any special attention to themselves in most regions. If some advice may be given, it makes for a less interesting game to pick one's character by giving them the best stats possible than by coming up with a character concept and picking skills consistent with that concept.

2.2 Professions

Naturally, the typical professions found in most fantasy settings can be applied here, too; it is advised, however, to talk over specifics with the narrator, as social positions might be and organizations will be unique to this world. Since this document should allow even those with no prior experience of The Witcher at least to participate in a campaign, some of the less obvious professions are listed here.

²This includes hypnosis and the like. Magic can still harm them, as, for example, while they cannot be magically set ablaze, their surroundings can, and they are not immune to heat. Nor large rocks, for that matter.

2.2.1 Havekar

Smugglers who sell arms to the ??, some out of sympathy but most out of greed. They are scarcely less hated than the ones they supply, and slightly named Hawkers by their enemies.

2.2.2 Scoia'tael

Guerrilla fighters in league with Nilfgaard, they joined the second northern war to fight for a free country of non-humans. They are mostly elves and dwarves, but some halflings have also joined the ranks. Even now, in times of peace, they continue to harass the unwary, turning more and more into terrorists. Men call them Squirrels and pay good money for their heads.

2.3 Witchers

Since being a Witcher determines both one's profession and genetic makeup, they will be treated separately from all other types of character. Quite appropriately, when you think about it.

Witchers, similarly to non-humans, suffer distrust and harassment in most places, especially cities far removed from the monsters Witchers were made to combat. They are generally tolerated, however, much in the way that whalers are: They're nasty, unrefined, and they stink, but their jobs have to be done by someone. It is also commonly accepted that the mutations Witchers undergo rob them of any emotions. Their eyes are like those of a cat, and by this, they can be told from regular humans, if the two swords did not already give the game away.

Witchers gain one additional attribute point to be spent on either STR or REF. Their vocation is *Witcher*³, and they must put at least two skill points into this vocation, as well as one skill point each into proficiency with longsword and signs. Witchers needn't make any dice rolls to determine their compatibility with Witcher potions.

Starting wealth will typically range from 1 to 3. The Witcher will likely be equipped with light or medium armor, a steel and a silver longsword and perhaps one or two potions.

³This vocation can be used to assist in most perception checks, as it includes the Witchers' senses. It also includes herblore, knowledge about monsters and all things part of the profession

3 Magic system

3.1 Witcher signs

A Witcher may cast these signs as long as he has at least one free hand. If he casts one of these signs in combat, their base modifier is +0D6.

3.1.1 Aard

The character issues a shockwave from their hand. Can replace strength checks (use two thirds of successes).

In combat: Cannot damage opponents, but only *stagger*, *disarm* or *trip*. Add 2 successes.

3.1.2 Axii

Mild form of hypnosis. May be used to assist in persuasion, deception or any other skill attempting to influence someone's mind. Some monsters and most mages are immune to such manipulation.

In combat: Detract victory level over victim from victim's successes next turn. If the victim's successes thereby become negative, they are doubled to assault their partners (if any).

3.1.3 Igni

The character issues small amounts of flame from their hand. Can be used to light fires, candles etc.

In combat: +1D6 in close combat. The player may choose to blind the opponent if he achieves a victory level of 3 or higher.

3.1.4 Quen

The character draws up a shield around themselves. This protects them from fire as well as small objects, such threats as falling trees, for example, are not averted by Quen. The shield fits one character for every 2 successes rolled.

In combat: Purely defensive round, but the successes are doubled.

3.1.5 Yrden

The character sets up a magical trap in a circle 1 or 7 feet in diameter. They must be able to physically reach the perimeter to do this. Only one such trap may be active at any one time.

Small circle: The first opponent to step into the circle is immobilized for one turn of combat for every success above 3.

Large circle (CL4): Every opponent within the circle rolls one fewer die on every roll. Spectres may be harmed by any weapon while within a trap set by Yrden.

In combat: Setting up a small circle takes one turn of combat, the large circle takes three.

3.2 Witcher potions

The potions' effects typically last about 8 hours.

If any non-Witcher tries taking a Witcher potion, they must make a destiny roll. If this roll is an eight or worse, they are poisoned by the potion, the severity ranging from day-long nausea to incapacitation and serious risk of death, unless medical action is taken. If the result ranges from nine to twelve, the character drinking the potion throws it up but suffers no long-term damage from it. If the result is thirteen or higher, the potion develops its effect partially or fully.

A Witcher attempting to consume more than 3 potions in 36 hours is treated like any non-Witcher for every potion he drinks after his third.

Penalties for repeated incompatability may be issued as seems fit.

Rarity of ingredients: The rarity of ingredients determines the challenge level on a survival check on finding them in the wild¹. It should also inform the availability and cost when attempting to purchase them.

3.2.1 Black blood

Turns the consumers blood into a lethal poison. Any creature drinking it while the effect lasts immediately receives poisoning equivalent to a level 4 injury.

Rarity of ingredients: 3

¹Though, of course, depending on ones surroundings, penalties or boni may be issued

3.2.2 Cat

Negates all penalties to perception checks caused by darkness.

Rarity of ingredients: 2

3.2.3 Swallow

Immediately heals all level 1 injuries. Over time reduces the injury levels of all injuries by up to 2.

Rarity of ingredients: 4

3.2.4 Thunderbolt

Grants one extra die for each combat roll, but negates boni for defensive actions.

Rarity of ingredients: 4

3.2.5 White honey

Cancels the effects of all other potions and removes any poisoning caused by potions.

Rarity of ingredients: 3

4 Additional combat modifiers

Positive

Name	Effect

Negative

Name	Effect
Blindness	-4D6, Destiny roll to determine target of attack

5 Bestiary

In this chapter will be listed some of the typical monsters one might face in the world of The Witcher. Stats are, once again, only suggestions

5.1 Beasts

While not magical in the ordinary sense of the word, these wild animals pose a serious threat to any wanderer foolish enough to disturb them.

5.1.1 Bears

Large heaps of muscle and fur. Any wounds ordinary weapons can inflict are likely only to make them more irate still.

Stats: 4-6 STR, 0-1 REF, 0-1 Claw'n'Maw (proficiency)

5.1.2 Wargs

The larger, stronger, nastier cousins of wolves. It is said they delight in evil and cruelty, though scholars are dubious on this point. It is generally agreed, however, that wargs tend to lead packs of their lesser kin instead of banding together themselves.

Stats: 1-2 STR, 0-2 REF, 1-2 Claw'n'Maw (proficiency)

5.1.3 Wolves

Slender, but strong, and silent until they attack. A single wolf should not pose a great threat to a determined man¹ with a sword, but they tend to come in packs.

Stats: 0-1 STR, 0-2 REF, 0-1 Claw'n'Maw (proficiency)

¹Or a woman, for that matter

5.2 Necrophages

Here are listed the manifold corpse-eaters plaguing the war-torn areas of the North. Wherever there are corpses unburied, one can be sure to come across a handful of these truly unsanitary creatures.

5.2.1 Rotfiends

Of humanoid shape, but with pale, sickly yellow-ish skin and thick, protruding, deeply red veins. Like with most necrophages, their stench precedes them. When terminally wounded, they are prone to explode spectacularly. This is their true danger, since their blood is poisonous.

Injuries dealt by non-silver weapons are halved.

Stats: 0-1 STR, 0-1 REF, 0-1 Strangle (proficiency)

Abilities

Self-detonation (Rotfiends) The rotfiend begins to swell and wriggle. After one turn of combat, any combattant standing next to the creature without cover receives an injury (greater the closer) and is poisoned. If they are not treated within a day, grave illness and even death may ensue. This ability is always triggered once the injuries dealt to the Rotfiend reduce its combat roll to a third of its original or if it receives a level 4 injury.

5.3 Spectres

This section contains all those incorporeal beings whose origins can be found in the deceased. They cannot be harmed unless by silver weapons or specialized magic. The weaker ones can be dispelled by silver, but those with uncut ties to the world of the living may simply reappear the next day if defeated.

5.3.1 Noonwraiths

Usually the restless souls of those who came to a violent end in the fields by day. They scorch the earth around them and can become quite dazzlingly bright. Since they are scalding hot, every turn in close combat results in a minor injury.

Stats: 1-2 REF, 0-1 STR, 1-2 Wraith's wrath (proficiency, used in ability-rolls)

Abilities

Blinding All combattants (with vision) within sight must roll a REF-check, CL2. Every level they fail their check by results in one turn of blindness. If the CL is met exactly, the shielding of one's eyes results in a penalty of -1D6 for this turn. If the CL is exceeded, no adverse effects occur.

Restoration (Spectres) The spectre turns to fog or smoke and creates a number of copies in the near vicinity. These copies are harmless and can be immediately defeated by any victory level, but for any n copies alive at the end of one round of combat, the spectre may heal one even n injury. The copies roll half the original's dice, but penalties to the original do not apply. The original is forced to reappear once the last copy is taken out.

5.3.2 Nightwraiths

Usually the restless souls of those who came to a violent end in the fields by night. They freeze the grass around them and can emit fearsomely frosty fog. Since they are deadly cold, every turn in close combat results in a minor injury.

Stats: 1-2 REF, 0-1 STR, 1-2 Wraith's wrath (proficiency, used in ability-rolls)

Abilities

Freezing Fog The user throws a cloud of fog and tiny ice-shards in every direction. Every combattant with exposed skin takes level one injuries according to the amount of skin in contact with the attack. If players want to dive for cover, that counts as a defensive action and is pitted against the user's roll.

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