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OSIRION, LEGACY OF PHARAONS

Authors • Alex Greenshields, Amanda Hamon,
Jonathan H. Keith, Ron Lundeen, and David N. Ross

Cover Artist • Michal Ivan

Interior Artists • Tim Kings-Lynne, Rob Lazzaretti,
Miroslav Petrov, Paolo Puggioni, and Bryan Sola

Cartographer • Rob Lazzaretti

Creative Director • James Jacobs

Editor-in-Chief • F. Wesley Schneider

Senior Editor • James L. Sutter

Development Lead • Mark Moreland

Development Team • Logan Bonner, John Compton,
Adam Daigle, Rob McCreary, Mark Moreland, and
Patrick Renie

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Sean K Reynolds

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Reference

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

<i>Advanced Player’s Guide</i>	APG	<i>Inner Sea Bestiary</i>	ISB
<i>Bestiary</i>	B1	<i>Mythic Adventures</i>	MA
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>NPC Codex</i>	NPC
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Bestiary 4</i>	B4	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM
<i>GameMastery Guide</i>	GMG		

On the Cover



Alahazra is not caught by surprise when the tomb’s decor suddenly leaps to its defense in this illustration by Michal Ivan.



Paizo Publishing, LLC
7120 185th Ave NE, Ste 120
Redmond, WA 98052-0577

paizo.com

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LAND OF THE PHARAOKS

What can one poor historian say about his homeland that hasn't already been said a hundred times better by historians five hundred lifetimes ago? It is a nation that was already old when Azlant's children founded Taldor. It was already ancient when Aroden raised the Starstone from the Inner Sea and became a god, and it was truly venerable when Qadira toppled the last, feeble remnant of a once-great line of pharaohs. Despite the vandalism and other atrocities the Keleshites committed during their rule, they did accomplish one thing: they cleared away the weeds that had grown up under millennia of pharaonic rule, so that a new growth, germinated from an ancient seed, was restored to its native earth when its people needed it the most.

—Introduction to *Osirion: A History in Four Ages* by the Sand Sage

One of the first civilizations to rise in the wake of Earthfall, Osirion is also one of the greatest human empires in the history of Golarion, a nation of great knowledge, wealth, and power. This ancient land harbors pyramids, mummies, terrible curses, and endless sand, as well as a culture steeped in proud traditions: devout respect for the gods, dedication to communal service, and unswerving devotion to its rulers. Osirion today is just emerging from millennia of Keleshite rule and regaining the legacy of the pharaohs supplanted by these foreign oppressors. Its people seek to reestablish their own identity in a modern world by reaching back thousands of years and proudly proclaiming—and often rediscovering—their forebears' accomplishments.

Pharaoh Khemet III, the Ruby Prince, is the third scion of the Garundi Forthbringer dynasty to reign in Osirion after 3,000 years of Keleshite rule. The Ruby Prince's authority is absolute, like that of his distant pharaonic ancestors, and he sets all matters of foreign and domestic policy. In concession to the political developments of modern times, however, members of the dynasty are advised by the Council of Sun and Sky, a 100-person legislature composed of wealthy merchants, important members of the clergy, minor nobles, and other individuals in the good graces of either the Ruby Prince or one of the governors who oversee the nation's many disparate regions. Each council member represents one of Osirion's major cities and is charged with handling the day-to-day affairs of the national government, such as forging trade agreements, setting financial policy, allocating funds for the armed forces, and maintaining the nation's ports, streets, and river locks. Regional matters are largely left to each region's governor. Established in 4610 AR, the council meets in chambers beneath Sothis's Black Dome, and initially ensured that the early supporters of Khemet I would have the Forthbringer's ear. Council members are expected to advocate for the needs of their constituents, but most spend their time pursuing their own agendas. The pharaoh can revoke their positions at any time, although he generally does this only if he discovers council members enriching themselves excessively at the nation's expense.

Five members of the Council of the Sun and Sky are elected to serve on the council from within the ranks of a second deliberative body—the Council of Liberated Slaves. This 63-person council, composed entirely of former slaves and the children of slaves, is charged with overseeing the well-being of Osirion's slave population, but tends to advocate for the nation's freeborn poor as well. Outsiders may find it strange to elevate former chattel to seats within the government, but it has proven a workable compromise for Osirion as the nation's ancient traditions confront the changing modern world.

Slavery is one of Osirion's most deeply embedded cultural cornerstones (after all, slaves built many of the monumental statues and buildings of Ancient Osirion), and even though slavery is not as common as it was a century ago, it is still a common practice in the Land of Pharaohs. Inspired by the founding of the state of Andoran in 4669 AR and its declaration in the Common Rule that slavery be abolished everywhere, the slaves of Osirion rose up and demanded similar reforms, no longer content to serve beneath their masters' lashes. Caught between the potential for permanent economic harm posed by prospect of abolition and the slave revolts that threatened to bring down his father's government, Khemet III instituted the Laws of Equitable Use in 4679 AR. These laws abolished hereditary slavery, established guidelines under which the government could place someone in slavery as punishment for criminal activity, prohibited harsh mistreatment of slaves and killing or marrying them against their wills, and chartered the Council of Liberated Slaves. This compromise ended the slave rebellions and restored order in Osirion. Osirian slaves today are considerably better off than their counterparts in other slaving nations such as Cheliox and Katapesh.

The nation's military forces are under the direct command of the Ruby Prince through a chain of high-ranking Risen Guards, from whose ranks the military's top officers are selected. Osirion's army is based in Ipeq along the Brazen Frontier, while its navy is headquartered in the port of Totra. The Ruby Prince has expanded the Osirian army and navy considerably in the last 10 years, but has yet to explain the reasoning behind this build-up of forces.

Osirion's steep economic growth in recent years has sparked interest from many nations in the region, and Absalom, Cheliox, Andoran, Qadira, and Taldor in particular are eager to increase their diplomatic and trade relations with the Land of Pharaohs. The Ruby Prince has treated most of these nations' inquiries with marked indifference, however, keeping his true geopolitical intentions very close to his chest.

Osirian humans are primarily of Garundi and Keleshite descent, with a smattering of Vudrani living in Sothis and the smaller settlements on the Scorpion Coast near their island homeland of Jalmeray. Despite ruling the country for over 3,000 years, Keleshites make up less than a fifth of its human population. Under the Keleshite caliphs, Garundi were denied the best positions and trade contracts, and even though this prejudice has not been embedded in national policy for over a century, the legacy of discrimination has left many of Osirion's Keleshite families quite wealthy, while Garundi still make up over 90% of the nation's poor.

Osirion contains a sizable population of native Phamet dwarves, who live in small communities outside of the major metropolitan centers and generally keep to themselves. The urban areas of Osirion are often home to halflings, who have lived in this nation since its founding 8,000 years ago. They were sought-after domestic servants and slaves of the ancient pharaohs and their nobility, and continue to serve in much the same capacity today, though in much smaller numbers. Halflings largely live integrated in the human cities, albeit in houses that better fit their small frames.

HISTORY

The Garundi people first settled along the southern shores of the Inner Sea in the now-forgotten years of the Age of Anguish. Nomads who traveled in clans of related families, they eventually put down permanent roots to become farmers and shepherds along the fertile banks of the Sphinx, but continued to war with one another until a man named Azghaad came to power. Azghaad had met a mysterious stranger named Nethys, a being not quite a god, but still possessing immense power, who imbued Azghaad with his magic and taught him how to unite the squabbling clans. Though the clans initially balked, when Azghaad, channeling the full might of Nethys, destroyed Ulunat, the Spawn of Rovagug that had terrorized Casmaron and northern Garund for hundreds of years, the clans proclaimed Azghaad their first god-king or pharaoh. Azghaad ordered the clans to work together to build a new city in the shadow of the shell of Ulunat, so that it would serve as a constant reminder of a true ruler's power. He named the city Sothis, after the Ancient Osiriani name for Cynosure, the north star.

During its First Age, Osirion's pharaohs marched into what is now Katapesh, Nex, and Geb with little opposition, intent on expanding their influence and power throughout the region. They met their first significant military challenge as they pushed westward and encountered the Tekritanin League, a loose collection of settlements and nomadic tribes who offered them an alliance against the older, more powerful Jistka Imperium farther west. The imperium successfully resisted the Osirian advance until the Pharaoh of Forgotten Plagues captured a powerful efreeti commander. The pharaoh's necromancers, known as the Usij, transformed the genie into an undead ghul and sent him home carrying a magically engineered disease called the Night Plague that only targeted Jistka's noble houses. With the nation's leadership in shambles, Jistkan power waned over the following centuries.

After defeating all its major rivals in the region, Osirion entered its first golden age, building immense statues and pyramids to celebrate its leaders, and expanding from Sothis to found the cities of Totra, Ipeq, Tephu, and Wati. This period lasted through the reign of An-Hepsu XI, who was violently deposed in -1768 AR. Osirion's power declined quickly thereafter, leaving its people to suffer through centuries of poor leadership, foreign invasions, and internal strife.

The nation's next great moment came in -1498 AR when the Four Pharaohs of Ascension, each of whom controlled a small part of the country, decided to pool their strength and rule as one, ushering in Osirion's Second Age. The four restored many of its former glories, moved the capital to the newly built city of Tumen, and finally defeated the Tekritanin League. After nearly 70 years of enlightened rule, they died together as they had sworn. Sadly, their successors were unable to build on their achievements and the nation once again slipped into stagnation.

Dynasties rose and fell in the many centuries that followed, but none were able to match the achievements of the First Age, or the power and good governance of the Pharaohs of Ascension. As the god Aroden ushered in the Age of Enthronement and founded the city of Absalom, the torch of innovation was passed to other countries, leaving the once-mighty Osirion a cultural and political backwater.

Sensing Osirion's weakness, the nation of Qadira, the westernmost satrapy of the mighty Empire of Kelesh, seized control of Osirion in a bloodless coup in 1532 AR and forced the last Garundi pharaoh of the Second Age, Menedes XVII, into hiding. For 700 years, Qadira's satraps ruled Osirion from their capital of Katheer, installing royal viziers in Sothis to handle local affairs. Thousands of Keleshites migrated across the Obari Ocean to seek their fortune in this ancient land, for the first time turning Osirion into a nation of two distinct traditions. These immigrants brought along their worship of the goddess Sarenrae, and it was ironically a member of this religion who finally brought about the fall of Osirion's foreign rulers.

A militant Sarenite sect called the Cult of the Dawnflower killed the ruling satrap in 2253 AR, replacing him with a local sultan and proclaiming Osirion to be an independent Keleshite kingdom. This new nation did less to suppress the ambitions of the native Garundi population, leading to a great flowering of traditional



AZGHAAD



Osirian culture toward the end of the twenty-third century AR. These political arrangements continued relatively unchanged for the next 2,300 years.

The death of the god Aroden in 4606 AR led to widespread natural disasters and panic throughout the Inner Sea region, and Osirion was not immune to these upheavals. Terrible storms lashed its coasts for weeks and the Sphinx, Asp, and Crook flooded disastrously, leading to severe food shortages. The caliph and his family were killed in a massive tornado that devastated Sothis.

With no clear leader in place, members of a nativist Garundi organization called the Children of Wadjet seized power on behalf of a Garundi cleric of Abadar from Absalom, known simply as Harun of Abadar. The Children claimed that Harun was a direct descendant of Azghaad, the first pharaoh of Osirion, whose family had been living in exile for generations. The Keleshite government and army, still in disarray from the disasters attending Aroden's death, could do little to oppose this chosen leader when he stepped off the ship in the port of Totra in 4608 AR and was greeted by a multitude of grateful Osirians eager for any kind of stability. Months of protests followed in every major Osirian city, demanding the Keleshite government's abdication and dissolution, but it was not until Harun sailed into Sothis, flanked by hundreds of obedient hetkoshu crocodiles and a large contingent of loyal Garundi soldiers, that the government relented. Harun took the name Khemet I at his coronation and quickly restored order throughout the land, becoming the first Osirian pharaoh to sit on the throne in over 3,000 years.

Khemet I, who became known as the Forthbringer, ruled wisely and restored many of the pharaonic monuments that had been defaced or destroyed under Keleshite rule, instilling in his subjects a pride in their country and culture. He decreed that there should be no retaliation against the thousands of Keleshite Osirians who still lived in his country, and allowed many of the bureaucrats and other officials from the former government to retain their positions. He also made secret pacts with the various elemental clans of the desert and formed bargains with other powerful beings from the Great Beyond to restore stability to his new nation.

When Khemet I died in 4649 AR, his rod and scepter passed to this son, Khemet II, who lacked his father's focus and talent for governance, preferring his many harems to his throne. Despite these shortcomings, Khemet II managed to rule the nation for nearly 30 years by leaving most serious decisions in the hands of competent advisors.

Khemet II's eldest son ascended to the throne in 4678 AR. Khemet III, who became known as the Ruby Prince, more closely resembled his grandfather in temperament, and

maintained many of the extra-dimensional pacts and agreements Khemet I had forged, in addition to crafting more of his own. His ambitions for Osirion's continued growth and expansion required a huge new influx of capital, and the Ruby Prince opened the borders and countless tombs of his nation to foreign explorers in 4707 AR. Osirion has since seen an influx of new visitors eager to plunder the ancient burial chambers of forgotten pharaohs.

OSIRION TIMELINE

The following timeline describes the major events in Osirion's 8,000-year history.

FIRST AGE OF OSIRION

Date	Event
-3470 AR	Founding of Ancient Osirion. Under the guidance of the god-king Nethys, Azghaad I unifies warring tribes along the River Sphinx. Azghaad defeats the Spawn of Rovagug, Ulunat, and founds the city of Sothis around the slain beetle's carapace, initiating Osirion's first pharaonic dynasty.
-3399 AR	Azghaad has a magnificent temple built to the All-Seeing Eye, and proclaims Nethys Osirion's patron god, ushering in the First Age of Osirion.
-3412 AR	Azghaad's successor, the Naga Pharaoh, begins her rule. She is haunted by violent visions and terrible nightmares sent by Nethys, who wishes to use her as an example of magic's destructive power. She obliges him later in her reign as, driven into a destructive rage by her ordeal, she tears down the great temple to the All-Seeing Eye and dies in the ensuing blaze.
-3250 AR	The Tekritanin League is founded by nomads in the deserts west of Osirion.
-3070 AR	The Pharaoh of Forgotten Plagues summons the daemonic harbinger Zelishkar, and binds him and his minions to serve in several military campaigns. Zelishkar is later imprisoned by the pharaoh in what later becomes known as the Labyrinth of Shiman-Sekh.
-3064 AR	The necromantic advisers of the Pharaoh of Forgotten Plagues—the Usij—capture an efreeti commander from Jistka and turn him into a ghul that carries the Night Plague into Jistka, leading to the imperium's ultimate downfall.
-3047 AR	The Song Pharaoh overthrows the Pharaoh of Forgotten Plagues and founds the city of Shiman-Sekh. Osirion reaches the height of its First Age.
-2999 AR	The Song Pharaoh is killed by Jetrieti I, who usurps the throne and ushers in a long line of cruel and decadent rulers whose gluttonous appetites lead to Osirion's decline. Osirion's rulers become increasingly obsessed with the afterlife.

-2957 AR	Jetrieti I dies and is buried in the Pyramid of Masks in the Tremor Valley. His tomb is the first in what later becomes known as the Gozarin Necropolis.
-2885 AR	Pharaoh Jetrieti V begins his rule. During his reign, he plunders the tombs of his predecessors to cover himself in precious jewels, burning their mummified corpses in Sothis. In response to these atrocities, the spirits of these kings animate their bodies as mummies.
-2764 AR	The Jistka Imperium collapses following a long series of succession wars, removing Osirion's main rival for control of northern Garund.
-2587 AR	The city of Totra is founded by the Conquering Pharaoh An-Hepsu II.
-2385 AR	An-Hepsu VII, the Pharaoh of Blades, completes construction of the city of Ipeq with the help of his genie servants.
-2370 AR	The bridge known as the Khopesh Span is constructed across the Crook River east of the Shallows of Ipeq.
-2359 AR	An-Hepsu VII is murdered under mysterious circumstances—possibly by his own son—and his corpse is laid to rest in the Tomb of the Pharaoh of Blades.
-2168 AR	An-Hepsu XI, known as the Pharaoh of No Rain or the Incorruptible Pharaoh, becomes pharaoh; he rules for nearly 400 years.
-2044 AR	In a deal brokered by the archdaemon Szuriel, An-Hepsu XI releases the daemonic harbinger Zelishkar from the Labyrinth of Shiman-Sekh. After the daemon lays waste to a number of Osirian settlements, he is reimprisoned in the Labyrinth.
-1768 AR	Pharaoh An-Hepsu XI imprisoned; Kemusar I serves as regent in his stead.
-1757 AR	Kemusar I is murdered in his sleep and his body is thrown to hungry crocodiles; 11 days later, his unfinished tomb disappears.
-1756 AR	Sekhemib I reaches adulthood and becomes the new pharaoh.
-1649 AR	Construction begins on the Slave Trenches of Hakotep in southern Osirion.
-1608 AR	Wati is founded by Djederet II.
-1605 AR	Tephu is founded by Djederet II.

SECOND AGE OF OSIRION

Date	Event
-1498 AR	The Four Pharaohs of Ascension become joint rulers of Osirion, ushering in Osirion's Second Age, also known as the Age of the Black Sphinx.
-1476 AR	The Four Pharaohs found Tumen in the desert east of Sothis as the new capital of Osirion.
-1452 AR	Armies of the Four Pharaohs defeat the Tekritanin League. Osirion absorbs some of the League's city-

-1431 AR	The rule of the Four Pharaohs comes to an end, and Osirion declines once again. The capital is moved back to Sothis soon thereafter.
-1334 AR	Tumen is abandoned.
-929 AR	The exiled necromancer Geb exerts his influence in Osirion's southernmost province. The empire eventually cedes it to Geb's control.
-841 AR	High Theurgist Fentet-Pesu, the Osirian governor of Thuvia, is assassinated by one of his favored consorts in the regional capital of El-Amara. Osirion effectively cedes control of all land west of the Junira River when Pharaoh Yafeha I fails to send a new governor. The fortress of Mekshir is swallowed by a sandstorm.
-644 AR	Pharaoh Osezis II negotiates a pact with the water elementals of the Hytae clan that regulates the sometimes destructive annual flooding of the Sphinx River. This agreement leads to longer planting seasons, ending a nationwide famine and ushering in a steady increase in Osirion's population over the following decades.
-447 AR	Pharaoh Ahabaris I, the Pharaoh of Long Shadows, is torn apart by a mob of her subjects after a short rule marked by inhuman decadence and cruelty.
-107 AR	An, the City of Triangles, is founded by Pharaoh Hirkoshek I to house the workers constructing his pyramid.
-21 AR	Kamaria the Brazen becomes the only pharaoh to openly worship Rovagug. She reigns for three human lifetimes.
159 AR	Kamaria is succeeded by her son Gebessek IX, known as the Healer.
1251 AR	Menedes XVII abolishes slavery in Osirion. His great-grandson, Menedes XX, later reinstates it.
1490 AR	The Monastery of Tar Kuata is founded by the Iroran priest Narmek Tar Kuata in the Footprints of Rovagug.

KELESHITE INTERREGNUM

Date	Event
1532 AR	Agents from the Padishah Empire of Kelesh create instability within Osirion, leading to a series of slave revolts that further destabilize the corrupt bureaucracy of Pharaoh Menedes XXVI, later dubbed the Fallen Pharaoh. Menedes is forced into hiding and is replaced by the Qadiran satrap, Xerbystes I. The Padishah Emperor assigns Xerbystes I a vizier named Guyun to advise him, but gives the satrap total control over both Qadira and Osirion. Keleshite immigrants pour into Osirion,

	destroying monuments that refer to pharaonic rule, including Azghaad's Spire in Sothis.	4698 AR	The long-lost Labyrinth of Shiman-Sekh is discovered beneath a black glass obelisk under the Golden Oasis on the outskirts of Shiman-Sekh.
1535 AR	Vizier Guyun lets the 2,000-year-old pact with the water elementals of the Hytae Clan lapse. The following flood season is the most destructive in centuries and leads to widespread famine.	4707 AR	Needing a new source of revenue, and wishing to reclaim Osirion's former glory by the uncovering of the secrets of its past, long hidden by the sands and the nation's Keleshite occupiers, Pharaoh Khemet III opens up Osirion's desert ruins to foreign explorers.
1537 AR	To the chagrin of the settlement's native Osirians, Keleshite immigrants swell the population of El-Shelad, turning it into a small city and kicking off political tensions that last to this day.	4712 AR	The Ruby Prince is struck by a terrible wasting curse while handling a Thassilonian artifact. He blames the Pathfinder Society, as it was one of their agents who brought the cursed item to his attention in the first place. Amenopheus, the Sapphire Sage, is stripped of all political influence and forced into exile.
1687 AR	After a series of violent earthquakes and at least one major tsunami, the port of Shotep-Kara on the Burning Coast falls into the Obari Ocean.	4714 AR	The current year.
2217 AR	The Cult of the Dawnflower's growing influence is viewed as a threat by the Qadiran satrap, who banishes the sect's followers to the western desert.		
2253 AR	Followers of Sarenrae assassinate the corrupt Qadiran satrap, replacing him with a Keleshite sultan independent of the Padishah Empire.		
2499 AR	The cult of Lamashtu unleashes the Plague of Madness in Wati; an estimated 60 percent of the city's population dies from the disease.		
2953 AR	Clerics of Pharasma found a major temple in Wati to honor those who died of the Plague of Madness and establish the city's necropolis.		
3250 AR	Katapesh breaks free from Osirian rule and becomes an independent nation.		
4212 AR	The desert druid Qali Manar undertakes a pilgrimage to the edge of the Scorpion Coast, where he begins the circle of druids that continues to cultivate the Gardens of Shepeska.		

THIRD AGE OF OSIRION

Date	Event
4609 AR	Osirians overthrow the Keleshite sultan in a near-bloodless coup, and establish Pharaoh Khemet I, a priest of Abadar, as the first Osirian ruler of the country in 3,000 years. Khemet I becomes known as the Forthbringer and establishes a new dynasty in his name.
4620 AR	The mighty obelisk known as Azghaad's Spire is rebuilt in Sothis.
4649 AR	Pharaoh Khemet II, the Crocodile King, succeeds his father as pharaoh.
4670 AR	News of abolitionist Andoran spreads to Osirion, where it leads to great unrest among the country's slave population.
4677 AR	Twins Jasilia and Ojan are born to one of Khemet II's many concubines, placing them next in line after their much older brother Khemet III.
4678 AR	Pharaoh Khemet II dies in a little-understood summoning accident and is succeeded by his son, Khemet III, the Ruby Prince.



THE BRAZEN FRONTIER

TREACHEROUS GNOLL-INFESTED BORDERLAND

Alignment: CE

Notable Settlements: Erekrus (3,177), Fort Fang (720), Ipeq (12,730), Oe-Tet (1,745), Safani (493)

Major Races: Dwarves, gnolls, humans

Languages: Dwarven, Gnoll, Osiriani

Resources: Bronze, cotton, mercenary soldiers, slaves

The Brazen Frontier takes its name from the Brazen Peaks, a rugged but pass-riven stretch of high mountains that creates a natural, if porous, border between Osirion and Katapesh to the south. The mountains stretch from the Kho-Rarne Pass in the west to the shores of the Obari Ocean in the east. Numerous passes wind through the mountains, but the savage gnolls and dangerous wildlife of the region make overland trade and travel across the mountains a treacherous proposition.

Runoff from the Brazen Peaks is the main source of both the Asp and Crook rivers, which form the eastern and northern borders of the region, respectively. The many rivers and streams that etch the lands between the mountains and the major rivers cause the soil to be more fertile than it is anywhere in Osirion save the Sphinx basin. The land remains largely untamed and unpeopled, however, because of the inimical local monsters and wildlife as well as the territorial or violent nature of its nonhuman inhabitants. Most of the region's civilized inhabitants live within a few miles of the Crook, including a large farming population surrounding the city of Ipeq, the only major settlement in the area.

Outside of Ipeq, the Brazen Frontier is primarily populated by a combination of humans and Pahmet dwarves, the former in small villages and settlements scattered across the uplands, the latter inhabiting a variety of harsh locales that they guard ferociously. Outside of these settled areas, gnolls reign supreme, and even claim a number of semipermanent settlements for themselves.

Until the middle of the First Age, the region now known as the Brazen Frontier stood as the southern border of Osirion, whose vast empire spread primarily west along the northern coast of Garund. It was An-Hepsu VII, the Pharaoh of Blades, who made the decisive push to incorporate the lands south of the Brazen Peaks into the growing empire, which he hoped to spread as far south as Axanir River. The barbaric inhabitants of what is now Katapesh resisted more than the pharaoh anticipated, disrupting Osirion's exposed supply lines and stalling the advance of the numerically and magically superior

Osirians. In response, An-Hepsu VII called upon legions of genies to erect a great fortress at the Shallows of Ipeq. The city, with its great white walls, still stands on the spot, a testament to the power of the ancient pharaohs and inevitable march of Osirion to dominate much of non-Mwangi northern Garund.

With Ipeq as a base of operations, An-Hepsu VII was able to subjugate Katapesh and continue expanding Osirion into what are now Nex and Geb. Later, when Katapesh broke away from Osirion and came into its own as a sovereign nation, Ipeq served a vital role in protecting Osirion from its southern neighbor. The current friendly relations with Katapesh make that mission less relevant, however, and the region has declined in prominence as a result.

Despite the vigilant watch of Ipeq, the Brazen Frontier remains a perilous place to travel. Roving tribes of gnoll raiders and slavers pose the most obvious threat, fighting running battles with the Pahmet dwarves and ransacking any caravans small or slow enough to overwhelm. Travelers who wish to pass unmolested either travel in large caravans (often waiting weeks in Ipeq for enough fellow travelers to accumulate) or hire small contingents of the soldiers garrisoned at Ipeq to escort them across the region.

While gnolls are the most dangerous of the Brazen Frontier's humanoids, they are not the only ones who present difficulties for humans in the region. The territorial Pahmet dwarves are isolationist to a fault, and view much of the region as their realm. Generally, the Pahmet can be dealt with peacefully by polite and prompt diplomacy and withdrawal, but more violent results have been reported, especially when the dwarves feel threatened.

The landscape of the Brazen Frontier is perilous in and of itself. The land is folded into mazes of canyons and ridges, especially near the Brazen Peaks. It's easy to become turned around in the foothills—many box canyons and ravines in this region host the remains of lost travelers.

While the Brazen Frontier is seen by Sothis almost exclusively in military terms, the agricultural land around the Crook and Asp, as well as along the countless tributaries flowing out of the mountains into these prominent waterways, is highly productive, and more food and cotton is shipped down the rivers than is consumed locally. If the region could attract or produce more population, it could expand into unworked lands and increase that flow of trade. Doing so would require taming the rebellious and rampaging wild peoples of the region, however, and to date the push of civilization has been thwarted in every such effort.

GAZETTEER

Despite being part of Osirion for thousands of years, the Brazen Frontier remains a largely lawless and uncivilized region. Below are details of some of the points of interest that define this tumultuous region.

Bone Garden: The gnolls of the Brazen Peaks aren't usually of a reverent mind-set, and left to their own devices they leave their dead to the jackals. The gnoll priestesses of the Bone Garden care very much for the dead, however. These clerics of Urgathoa make much of gnolls who bring their dead back for a proper resting place, whether the dead worshiped the Pallid Princess, Lamashtu, or another god in life. In fact, the dead who are brought here find little rest, as the priestesses animate their corpses into undead thralls. They have amassed a sizable army of gnoll zombies and skeletons, some of which they trade to the Pharaoh of Fangs to augment his raiding army.

The Crook: The Crook River is one of the two major tributaries of the Sphinx, the river system at the center of Osirian life. It drains the entire Brazen Frontier as well as the Barrier Wall Mountains to the west, flowing at a steady but sluggish pace 200 miles east to meet the Asp, after which it's known as the Sphinx. The lands on either side of the river are flat flood plains, and are heavily farmed near Ipeq. Elsewhere the verge is marshy, and is treacherous due to the crocodiles and hippopotamuses that call it home.

The only easy crossings are the Shallows at Ipeq and the Khopesh Span just to the east. Farther west, travelers can find fisher folk willing to ferry them across at some of the infrequent river settlements, and at Oxjaw Falls travelers on foot can make a perilous journey across the river. Between the Oxjaw and the Ipeq Shallows are numerous stretches of rapids that aren't shallow enough to ford but are too rocky and wild to allow easy navigation. Upriver traders generally travel in skiffs that they can portage around the rapids as needed, making the rapids attractive ambush points for gnolls and other raiders. The Big Eye rapids near Oxjaw Falls lie close to a Pahmet settlement, and those who portage along the more traversable south bank of the river have come under attack if they don't give the dwarves a wide berth or pay them proper respect.

Dead Villages: The Brazen Frontier was, for a time, home to a sect of death worshipers who believed the afterlife could be improved dramatically by entering it at a time of one's choosing, through suicide or death in ritual combat. The sect was successful in attracting adherents and for a time occupied a string of several villages along the route south from Katapesh. Those villages exist to this day, full of monuments to the elaborate ceremonial deaths instigated and suffered by their leading citizens. The villages now lie empty, for a cult that teaches its followers to kill themselves can have only a limited existence. Skeletons still litter the central

PAHMET DWARVES

The Pahmet, known colloquially as sand dwarves, are a dwarven subrace endemic to the deserts and mountains of northern Garund, with the greatest concentrations residing along the Brazen Frontier between Mount Osiki and the Kho-Rarne Pass. The Pahmet are best known for their role in Ancient Osirion, where they served as advisers to those benevolent pharaohs they deemed worthy of the honor. In modern times, their role in national affairs is much diminished, reduced to the guardians of the necropolis at Erekrus, which they open to only the most deserving dead of Osirion. The Pahmet are highly territorial, and while ostensibly loyal to the Ruby Prince, they are fiercely independent. To date, the dwarves have never offered their services as advisors to the pharaohs of the Forthbringer Dynasty, and each group rarely interacts with the other.

The Pahmet live in small settlements throughout the Brazen Peaks, mostly subterranean but often with windows and watchposts overlooking the surrounding terrain, which they guard fiercely. The Pahmet and the gnolls of the Brazen Peaks are ferocious enemies, and conventional wisdom among the region's humans is that this rivalry is all that keeps the Pahmet from pushing the human populace across the Crook. The Pahmet are, however, known to be merciful to those who meet with misfortune in their lands, provided such supplicants are humble and respectful in their requests for aid.

The Pahmet claim that all of their actions stem from an ancient code supposedly handed down from a "dwarven pharaoh," though Osirian scholars dismiss the idea since no records of a dwarven pharaoh have ever been found. The code appears to be quite complex, and its tenets are known to no one outside the Pahmet, leading many who interact with the prickly dwarves to believe that it is more a code of convenient rationalizing than anything else.

Holding aloof from the Pahmet of Erekrus and the desert settlements are the Ouat monks. This contemplative order of monks hails from the monastery city of Tar Kuata but keeps almost entirely to itself, eschewing racial pride and tradition in the hope of attaining the state of self-actualized enlightenment.

square of each village, and each night the villages come alive with a swarm of allips and other distressed undead. While the cultists believed they worshiped Pharamasma, in truth the sect of her faith that dominated the villages was led by a cabal of Sifkesh's clergy, who both conducted the ultimate heresy in leading Pharamasma's faithful to become undead, and also sent countless souls to their demonic mistress through ritual suicides.



Erekrus: Erekrus is the largest of several Pahmet dwarf settlements built into the side of the Brazen Peaks on the border with Katapesh. But it is much more than a mere settlement, and its fame across Osirion is well deserved. The cavern system houses perhaps the most exclusive necropolis in Osirion, where many of the most renowned and well-loved pharaohs of old lie buried. Here lie Osezis II, who ended a nation-wide famine, and Menedes XVII, who abolished slavery. The Pahmet choose only the true of heart to slumber under their mountain, and many pharaohs who tried to bribe their way in despite their failed deeds.

To this day many pharaohs and others who see themselves as leading lights in Osirion travel to the necropolis hoping to negotiate later interment. The priests who oversee Erekrus, the reputed siblings **Garzukk** (LG male dwarf cleric of Magrim 8) and **Trelka** (LN female dwarf cleric of Pharamasma 6), are usually happy to talk to visitors, be they prospective eternal guests or relatives come to pay their respects to the those interred within.

Journeying to Erekrus is among the few excuses for traveling through Pahmet lands, so there are tales of travelers attempting to persuade the dwarves that an unauthorized journey was actually a funerary expedition.

Eyes of the Bronze Man: The Brazen Peaks are named not only for the way they shine in the sun—the region at their base is also thought to be the birthplace of bronzeworking, though such claims are disputed by metallurgists throughout the Inner Sea region. The Eyes of the Bronze Man are twin mines, one of tin and one of copper, side by side halfway up the face of a mountain. It is said that the two mines, operating in such close proximity, contributed to the development of bronze. In later years the mountainside, already suggestive of a human face, was transformed by historically minded Djederet I, who had it faced with bronze and worked in his likeness. Bronze is not as valuable as it once was and the Face of the Bronze Man remains largely unmolested. Djederet I is reputed to have created an elaborate tomb for himself deep within one of the played-out mines but was ultimately buried elsewhere.

Fort Fang: The gnolls of the Brazen Frontier are largely nomadic raiders, but they do have one permanent redoubt. Fort Fang is part slave pits, part treasury, and part barracks. Ruled by the self-styled gnoll Pharaoh of Fangs, the augmented ruin is the likely destination for any human captives who aren't eaten during the journey. For more information on Fort Fang, see page 46.



Hostel Sepet: Journeying across the Brazen Peaks can be perilous on either side of the hump, with gnoll raiders and dangerous wildlife plaguing the journey the entire way. Fortunately caravans that make it to the top of Sepet Pass can spend a night in absolute safety. The Hostel Sepet is built on top of ancient Osirian fortifications on the eastern edge of the saddle, with thick stone walls that rise up several stories. The ruined keep has been sealed up tightly, with only one sturdy gate and the narrowest of windows to allow ingress. Inside is a comparative paradise of fountains and flowers, but the main draw is one night on the journey between Ipeq and El-Fatar when nobody has to take watch.

Ipeq: Ipeq is not a city built organically over the centuries by human hands. It is, rather, an organic human city laid over a militarily driven, genie-generated plan. Its location blocking the shallows, its artificial fortified hills, and its high and almost gateless walls all point to its genesis as a fortress. An-Hepsu VII, the Pharaoh of Blades, used all of his pull with his noble genie allies to construct the city and its walls and barracks. As a base of operations, Ipeq flourished along strictly military lines for centuries, but in recent millennia it has acted more as a hub for local commerce. Many of the barracks are now markets or apartments, the inner walls overrun by ivy and flowering vines.

IPEQ

LN small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +2; **Law** +2; **Lore** +2; **Society** +1

Qualities strategic location

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 12,730 (10,702 humans, 1,105 halflings, 546 dwarves, 377 others)

Notable NPCs

Commander Sefir Etis of the Risen Guard (N male human fighter 11)

Governor Hepater Rephitan (LN male human aristocrat 8)

High Priestess of Sarenrae Eferet Dar (NG female suli cleric of Sarenrae 12)

Speaker of the Council Sol Jetet (N male human bard 4/ aristocrat 2)

Thovet Fena of the Merchants' Council (LN female human expert 2/rogue 4)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 4,400 gp; **Purchase Limit** 25,000 gp;

Spellcasting 6th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

Ipeq stands on the southern bank of the Crook River, completely blocking the Shallows of Ipeq, one of only

three ways of crossing the Crook on foot. The shallows are a remarkable feature: a placid, slow-moving stretch of river with water no more than 5 feet deep. The city itself sports two square hills on either side of the main road through town, their regular angles and identical height a testament to their magical provenance.

Ipeq is divided into nine districts, though the districts are more practical than governmental, as the entire city is overseen by the Garundi governor, Hepater Rephitan, and his appointed council, most of them legacy appointments who were in power before he arrived. All citizens of Ipeq are trained for military service, even if they never serve in active duty. In times of war, command of the city immediately reverts to its current military commander, and the citizenry is conscripted to serve until released from duty. Such a situation has not come into effect since 4518 AR, when the city was besieged by gnolls for 17 months before the raiders were finally repulsed.

The highest-ranking member of Osirion's military currently living in Ipeq is Sefir Etis, a Garundi commander in the Risen Guard. Etis is occupied almost exclusively with military matters, especially those regarding the Risen Guard's operations in the region, and is rarely interested in the politics of Ipeq. That said, he has become increasingly dissatisfied with both the governor and the People's Council, who the commander feels have put the needs of the civilian populace above the needs of the military force stationed there, and to whom the city was once completely dedicated. Despite his concerns, however, soldiering is a highly respected occupation in Ipeq, and the Bladesworthy neighborhood that houses most of the active members of Osirion's army is among the finest in the city.

Though Ipeq is still primarily a military town, and most of the money that flows through its streets is a result, directly or indirectly, of the Ruby Prince's desire to see the southern border remain secure, the money does not flow as abundantly as it once did. Foreseeing the end of an era, Speaker of the Council Sol Jetet has been making plans to wean the city off of the military subsidies and toward trade with the rest of Osirion and beyond. The economic projects include converting more farmland to cotton production and building a series of outposts to protect the southern caravan route from marauding gnolls. If this route were safe, the thinking goes, Ipeq could steal much of the trade that currently rounds the Burning Cape by sea.

The city's internal economy centers around Sun Market, a giant open-air market where much of the city's produce and agricultural products are traded. Shade Market, built in and around the Pharaoh of Blades-era barracks, is a market for more durable goods as well as the sort of goods that people wish to buy and sell out of the public eye. Generally the upper story of the old barracks is the place to go for surreptitious goods, and the phrase "let's take



this upstairs” is used locally as an invitation to discuss something further in secret. Both markets are overseen by the Merchants’ Council, a 15-person committee led by a Keleshite woman named Thovet Fena that provides business permits and regulates the many laws regarding taxation and what can and cannot be sold in the city.

Ipeq’s elites make their homes on or around Temple Hill, which encompasses not just the titular hill but also the walled neighborhood surrounding the base of it. The hilltop is dominated by numerous temples and the Crook Lyceum, a prestigious college of natural philosophy. The Temple of the Twin Suns, dedicated to Sarenrae, is the most beautiful edifice in the city; its jeweled towers seem to shine with an inner light even after the sun sets.

Khopesh Span: The Khopesh Span is a massive stone bridge that crosses the Crook several leagues east of Ipeq—the only nearby alternative to fording the river at the Shallows at Ipeq. While the fortress of Ipeq speaks to the need to defend and consolidate the Brazen Frontier, the Khopesh Span expresses the desire to push Osirian power past the frontier into Katapesh and beyond, allowing as it does the rapid deployment of forces across the Crook. The bridge is tall and well fortified, with towers rising from the four pillars that support its great arch, high enough to allow the greatest river barges to sail underneath without taking down their masts. The bridge has never been taken by an opposing force but has also never been seriously tested.

Kho-Rarne Pass: The Kho-Rarne Pass is the only overland route between Osirion and the Mwangi Expanse, passing between the Brazen Peaks and the Barrier Wall Mountains. It is a broad, easy pass, and if it linked Osirion to anything other than trackless jungle, it would be a major trade route. As it is, the only thing the pass leads to is the ruins of Kho, a ruined Shory flying city that accounts for half of the pass’s name. The second half of its name comes from the ruins that mark its northeastern end, the now almost completely forgotten city of Rarne. Now all but subsumed by the sands of the encroaching desert, Rarne serves primarily as a stopping point and as meager protection from the elements for caravans traversing the pass.

Mount Osiki: Mount Osiki is the tallest mountain in the Brazen Peaks, its foothills and outlier peaks extending almost to the Crook River. An ancient stairway rises from a stone landing on the banks of the Crook, winding through those foothills and ultimately all the way to the top of the mountain. An ancient shrine to a forgotten god sits

at the very peak of the mountain. The handful of people who make the journey to the mountain’s apex every year are rumored to have committed to the pilgrimage after being saved from death or ruin by a dark-cloaked stranger. Whatever happens at the top of Mount Osiki, the returning pilgrims will not talk about it under any inducement, as though compelled to secrecy by a mysterious power.

Oe-Tet, the Open City: The Pahmet dwarves of the Brazen Frontier are a territorial lot, and trespassing upon one of their settlements is likely to earn an interloper much anguish. The Pahmet need to trade, however, so they have set up one settlement that Osirian traders can enter for mutual advantage. Traders who come for the first time are likely to be interrogated brusquely until the dwarves are convinced everything is as it seems.

The center of the otherwise traditional Pahmet settlement is a modest bazaar where human and Pahmet merchants lay out their wares on brightly colored rugs. Oe-Tet’s epithet of the “Open City” is an overstatement, as any who range beyond the bazaar and the few inns catering to non-dwarves are confronted and expelled from the settlement.

Oxjaw Falls: Near its headwaters east of the Slave Trenches, the Crook River drops suddenly from the highlands into the lower reaches of the Brazen Frontier. The 40-foot-tall cataract, known as Oxjaw Falls, creates a moist and verdant pocket nestled in a rocky grotto. The base of the falls is infested by lizardfolk who worship and guard an ancient altar set into the grotto’s mossy walls. The river at the top of the waterfall flows through deep channels between numerous flat rocks (the ox’s teeth, presumably) that allow a slippery crossing for travelers on foot or with extremely sure-footed horses. This is the only safe foot crossing west of the Shallows of Ipeq and is used primarily by explorers who don’t want their crossing noticed by gossipy fisher folk or suspicious Ipeq guards.

Pyramid of Doom: Many of the most important pyramids in Osirion are noted by their great size. Not so the Pyramid of Doom, a monument of modest proportions that looks from the outside like the tomb of some third-rate vizier. The only adventurers who enter the pyramid are those who know just enough to understand that the pyramid is more than it seems to be but not enough to cause them to run screaming in the other direction. The Pyramid of Doom is further detailed in page 50.

Ravenous Sphinx: Half-buried in the sands south of Wati is the Ravenous Sphinx, a jet-black crouching lion



SEFIR ETIS

topped by the snarling head of some fantastical beast. The trap-filled chambers within harbor the secret of the Mad God Nethys's Third Riddle. Learning the secret of the Third Riddle is supposed to unhinge the mind, just as learning all three is supposed to unhinge the cosmos. But the Third Riddle is also supposed to be an artifact of great power, power perhaps worth risking madness for. For more information on the Ravenous Sphinx, see *Pathfinder Society Scenario #11: The Third Riddle*.

Safari, the Hidden Village: Safari is located near the Crook about halfway between Ipeq and Oxjaw Falls. It's the largest upriver settlement and somewhat beyond the protection of regular Ipeq patrols. Safari has developed a unique defense against gnoll raiders: it hides from them. The village of nearly 500 people is made up of sod houses set into the sides of hills and ravines. Brush and vegetation are deliberately cultivated in such a way that they can be shifted over the doors and windows of the dwellings, leaving an eerily empty patch of farmland and vegetable gardens. Lookouts on a nearby tor alert the settlement to intruders, and the town militia harries gnolls on their way before they can study the landscape closely enough to wreak havoc. The settlement is led by **Efni Raan** (N female human ranger 3), a former member of an elite Osirian scout company. She manages the disappearing act, keeping the deception up to near-military standards.

Slave Trenches of Hakotep: The Slave Trenches of Hakotep are a sprawling collection of earthworks located well northeast of the Kho-Rarne Pass, near the headwaters of the Crook. The trenches are so named because between each set of mounds, ridges, and berms lie trenches full of tens of thousands of bones, presumably the remains of the slaves of Hakotep I, the otherwise obscure pharaoh who caused the trenches to be built. The works are also dotted with thousands of eroded obelisks, each containing a bound elemental; their only current known effect is to cause several minor earthquakes a year.

No one knows the purpose of the earthworks, but leading theories posit that they are some sort of magical or mundane defense against attacks from across the Kho-Rarne Pass, though what they could be defending against is unclear. Still more obscure rumors, unsubstantiated by any reputable scholarly work, speak of the trenches in relation to an artifact called the Amber Chronograph, said to count the hours until "the stars go out." Those rumors tie into an entire set of theories about "countdown clocks" that is generally seen as the province of lunatics and charlatans.

The restive dead of this site rise frequently—elemental spirits possess the bodies of the dead slaves and use these forms to continue their task of endlessly clearing the site of the relentlessly encroaching desert. The complex thus remains largely devoid of errant sand, as though it could

be turned toward its long-lost goal on a moment's notice were one to know how to use it properly.

Valley of Shards: Near the headwaters of the Asp River lies a long shallow valley whose floor is covered the shards of more than a thousand pots. Each shard is covered with Ancient Osiriani hieroglyphs, and the fragments large enough to read seem to deal exclusively with magic, both divine and arcane. Nothing in the valley gives any indication of the shards' source or why they were left there. The valley is inhabited by a small group of hermits who sift through the potsherds and attempt to piece them together into a coherent message. The hermits either have escaped the notice of the region's gnolls or have been left unmolested for reasons unknown.



FOOTPRINTS OF ROVAGUG

DESOLATE VOLCANIC BADLANDS OF MONSTERS AND ANCHORITES

Alignment: LN

Notable Settlements: Aphet East (350), Djeneq (187), Tar Kuata (78)

Major Races: Dwarves, humans, mephits

Languages: Abyssal, Draconic, Dwarven, Osiriani, Sphinx

Resources: Copper, igneous rock, medicinal spring water

The region known as the Footprints of Rovagug is the swath of rocky badlands in southwestern Osirion bordered by the Scarab River to the north and the Parched Dunes to the west. This stony, barren land extends up to the Barrier Wall Mountains and includes the northwestern peaks of that range. Although filled with arid dirt and dry clay rather than sand, this region is just as harsh as Osirion's dune-filled deserts and presents its own dangers.

Fierce monsters haunt the ruins of these forsaken lands. During the First Age of Osirion, several ambitious pharaohs constructed temples and tombs in the Barrier Wall, far from the teeming capital of Sothis. Some of the great projects from those halcyon days were destroyed in earthquakes or buried under volcanic ash, but many remain intact—though they no longer serve as homes for civilized races. With their previous humanoid residents displaced by disasters or cursed with undeath, these forgotten locations now crumble around their ancient treasures. Because greenery is so sparse in the Footprints of Rovagug, monstrous inhabitants must venture far to gather sustenance, and as a result, winged monsters such as manticores and wyverns are common. Treasure seekers frequently encounter sphinxes or their humanoid kin, the isolationist maftets. Unfortunately, intelligent or kind-hearted sphinxes such as gynosphinxes are rare in this region; much more common are bestial hieracosphinxes and criosphinxes, who eagerly defend their hunting grounds from trespassers.

Osirion's two active volcanos are both found near the center of this region, making this bleak area is rich in geothermal activity. Asuulek's Mouth is a fiery hell that rains ash and fire for miles in every direction on a regular basis. Sokar's Boil is a simmering menace, quiescent for the past 3 millennia but liable to erupt in a cataclysmic explosion at any time. Other features of the area, such as cinder cones and the numerous hot springs, likewise are of volcanic and geothermic origins. The most unique volcanic landmarks—and the features that give the region its name—are massive sheets of dried lava that sprawl across the badlands like three-toed footprints.

Hot springs are ubiquitous throughout the Footprints of Rovagug. Most of these hot springs are boiling pools of acidic water, tainted by poisonous gases leaking from beneath the earth, and home to foul monsters such as behirs and lamias. A few of the hot springs are suitable for bathing, and their high mineral content imparts therapeutic benefits. These so-called "healing springs" have long been a destination for Osirian nobility, and many have attracted small communities that cater to such wealthy visitors.

Mineral resources are scarce in the Footprints of Rovagug, but this does not prevent lone miners, or even small mining companies, from pulling what they can from the earth. While the region is best known for producing copper, silver, and iron, quarries of tuff and pumice also split the ground. Most of these mines and quarries date from before the Qadiran satrapy, and were long ago exhausted and abandoned, but a few stubborn miners still extract enough to make a meager living.

As in many isolated locations throughout Osirion, links to the elemental planes are surprisingly common and elementals and their kin—such as the diminutive mephits—abound. Perhaps reflecting the harsh nature of the land, many of these elemental creatures are savage and dangerous. Fortunately for travelers, large congregations of elementals are rare.

Aside from the occasional tourist, miner, or explorer, few have any reason to enter the Footprints of Rovagug. Nevertheless, some find its very isolation attractive. Lone anchorites and communities of ascetics dot the area. The most notable of these communities is Tar Kuata, the monastery of Irori, built high in the Barrier Wall Mountains. Tar Kuata would be ranked as a small village elsewhere in Golarion, and it's only a fraction of the size of the secular settlements of Aphet East and Djeneq. However, its isolated and unusual nature make it one of the most famous monastery in the region, and its fame extends even beyond Osirion's borders. Not all religious communities in the Footprints of Rovagug are so benign; several cults of Lamashtu, Urgathoa, and Rovagug flourish in the desolate landscape, far from the prying eyes of civilization. Weary traveler should accept shelter at a hermitage with caution, lest they end up on a blood-stained altar in the rocky wastes.

GAZETTEER

In part because this region is so distinct from other parts of Osirion, the Footprints of Rovagug present a number

of places of interest and unique challenges unlike any found elsewhere in the Ruby Prince's domain.

Aphet Mines: Deposits of copper and iron dot the northeastern face of the Barrier Wall Mountains. Throughout Osirion's long history, the larger deposits have been fully exhausted to fuel the pharaohs' endless demands for weapons and ornamentation. The most productive remaining mines, and the only ones operative by more than a handful of enterprising homesteaders, are three interconnected copper mines called the Aphet Mines. The Aphet Mines operate only quasi-legally, as the multinational Aspis Consortium recently secured the mineral rights in a series of questionable political maneuvers. The Aphet Mines were considered practically valueless, as the mines were believed to be played out for more than a century, but they've reopened under the ownership of the Aspis Consortium, and now display unprecedented productivity. The overseer, a Chelish silver agent named **Falsin Deek** (LE male human wizard [earth elementalist^{APG}] 8), uses his mastery of stone and minerals to locate untapped copper deposits and maintain the mines' high output. Deek keeps a contingent of mercenaries on hand to deter intruders and quell rebellion. The mines provide a front for consortium operations in Osirion and allow the organization to move contraband and personnel in and out of the nation under the auspices of managing the mines' functions.

A small community called Aphet East has sprung up near the mines to provide services and trade goods to the miners. Not everyone in Aphet East approves of the Aspis Consortium's practices. Deek's most outspoken critic is a popular priest named **Varphet** (N male human cleric of Pharasma 3), a Garundi man whose popularity among the miners and political connections in Sothis have thus far deterred Deek from ordering his assassination.

Asuulek's Mouth: The more active of Osirion's two volcanoes, Asuulek's Mouth towers over the surrounding hills. Crevices vent noxious gases from its slopes, and the caldera houses a bubbling lake of lava 100 feet across. Eruptions from Asuulek's Mouth are frequent, spewing volcanic bombs and clouds of hot ash for miles. However, the region's greatest danger is **Asuulek** (CE male ancient red dragon) himself, the creature that gives the volcano its name. Asuulek lairs in a superheated air pocket within the

mountain's slope, accessible only by swimming through the lava within the volcano's caldera. He's a clever and domineering creature who alternates decades of torpor with years of infamously rapacious activity. Although currently active, Asuulek has kept his depredations to a minimum while he investigates the elemental mysteries

of the other nearby active volcano, Sokar's Boil. As he is so focused on unlocking those mysteries, Asuulek often neglects his hoard for days at a time, leaving care of his wealth in the hands of a few slaves, many of whom are capable azer artisans and trapsmiths. Were his hoard plundered in his absence, the dragon's wrath would be terrifying to behold.

Thanks to the frequent rains of ash, the land around Asuulek's Mouth is surprisingly fertile. Crops grow at a prodigious rate in the enriched soil; if the area were to be tilled and seeded, it could be among the most fertile farmland in Osirion. Unfortunately, the occasional volcanic eruptions and Asuulek's sporadic wrath keep agriculture to a minimum. Even so, a small industry of "dirt thieves"

operates in the region. These grimy workers make daring expeditions from far valleys to the base of Asuulek's Mouth with camel- or oxen-drawn carts and flat digging spades. There, they quickly cut wide swaths of ash-enriched soil and cart it back to their valleys to fertilize crops in relative security.

Djeneg: A day's walk northwest of the head of the Crook River, a chain of mineral springs lies close together in a trio of shallow valleys. The largest of these springs, the Great Pool, is shielded from view by a low rise. These mineral springs—cooler than most springs in the area, free of poisonous gases, and relatively easy to reach—have been a favorite retreat of Osirian nobility for millennia. The nobles bathe, and engage in their intrigues privately, while their sycophantic courtiers occupy the lesser springs in descending order of station. The village of Djeneg grew up around the springs to cater to travelers and enforce the traditional class restrictions dictating who may bathe in which spring. High walls of stone top the rise in order to further shield the Great Pool from eavesdroppers, and the pool's attendants are selected from deaf commoners who are trained to look discreetly away from bathing dignitaries except as their functions require. Many Osirian nobles consider the



ASUULEK

Great Pool a safe place to relax and discuss sensitive state business, although Djeneg has its share of blackmailers, chiselers, and information brokers. The settlement's charismatic Keleshite mayor, **Pophata the Hostess** (CN female human rogue 4), knows of a few flaws in the privacy walls where a perceptive eavesdropper can catch snippets of conversations in the Great Pool. She runs a side business trading in the secrets that her "privacy assessors" uncover at these locations. Pophata's espionage business is lucrative but dangerous, as exposure risks the reputation—and thus the future—of her town.

Footprints of Rovagug: Giving the region its name, the Footprints of Rovagug are hardened lava flows hundreds of feet across and millennia old. Although the flows are scattered all across the region, each bears a substantially similar shape: the track of a colossal three-toed beast. These so-called "footprints" don't lead in a clear path, rarely point the same direction, and are sometimes dozens of miles apart. Most Osirians assume that these landmarks are simply ancient lava flows that oozed up from magma deposits beneath the earth. But some—particularly cultists of Rovagug—believe that some sacred monstrosity must have trod the earth hard enough to release the lava in the first place.

Unsurprisingly, the landmarks are sacred to worshipers of the Rough Beast. Although not all of the footprints are overseen by zealous lunatics—followers of Rovagug are too disorganized for such widespread coordination—many of them are. In most cases, a solitary, fractious hermit half-mad from the desert heat and prone to violent rages keeps vigil. In others, enough worshipers have come together to form a cult. For example, at the six adjacent footprints called the Worldbreaker's Stride, a cult of several humans and gnolls eagerly prey on travelers with their half-tame giant scorpions.

Gralgor-Ot: The ruined city of Ekbet is known by its sphinx residents as Gralgor-Ot, and is known throughout Osirion as the center of activity for the timeless guardians called living monoliths. Here the magically enhanced sentinels work in tandem with the sphinxes (from whom the sentinels' power flows) to protect the ancient ruins. This location is further detailed on page 46.

Kilik-Tura Oasis: Unlike most springs in this region, the water at the small Kilik-Tura Oasis is cool, wholesome, and plentiful. The oasis is a popular stop for caravans in the region, despite whispered rumors that large, wormlike creatures occasionally slither from the water's depths to snatch guards or mounts in the dark of night. Expeditions into the waters of the oasis have uncovered few clues. The oasis is perfectly circular and effectively bottomless, and the water-filled tunnels that lead out from the main depression branch out for miles under the surface. One brave diver returned with

a fantastical tale about the tunnels, insisting that they opened into dry caverns filled with crawling horrors and feral humanoids. Unfortunately, his experiences had fractured his mind and he soon took his own life. The fact that some evil lurks beneath the bountiful waters of the oasis is certain, though only those who serve this evil know its true nature—the monstrous **Crawlbrother** (CE male seugathi^{B2} sorcerer 7), a distinguished agent of the nearby Darklands ghoulish city of Nemret Noktoria.

Klarwa Fountain: This steep cinder cone from a long-extinct volcano rises hundreds of feet above the surrounding foothills. The top of the cone is a bowl-shaped depression filled with a pool of rainwater that never quite evaporates despite the region's heat. Gases occasionally vent from deep within the cone, fueling violent plumes of water visible from several miles away. One such column drew the attention of the anchorite Klarwa as he was dying of thirst in the badlands during the Second Age, thus revealing the fountain's life-saving water and earning the feature its name. Today, the hill is a landmark to the few travelers making their way through western Osirion, and its potable but bitter waters make the ascent up the steep hill well worth the trek. Some hermits, hoping to obtain the holiness that Klarwa ultimately attained, live within sight of the landmark, hiking up its sides only when driven by desperate thirst. These hermits are often gripped with sunstroke-induced madness and wild hallucinations by the time they approach Klarwa Fountain, making them an erratic danger to travelers.

Mephit Spring: The jagged mountains between the Kho-Rarne Pass and Tar Kuata hide several secret valleys. One of these valleys holds a rare confluence of elemental forces and a sizable population of mephits from varying planes. Mephit Spring was once a joyful place where mephits communed in peace, but it has recently lost the vibrant and energetic spirit it was once known for, as a domineering demon now controls the valley and oppresses the playful mephits. This location is further detailed on page 48.

Scarab River: The swift and narrow Scarab River flows westward to the large Junira River and marks the border between the Footprints of Rovagug and the Glazen Sheets. The source of the river is a series of springs in a chain of high hills abutting the Parched Dunes. Despite the easy access to clear water, few dare to settle along the river's hundred-mile length. Unlike the great Sphinx River, the Scarab doesn't have seasonal floods and flows along its rocky, soil-poor banks. Worse, several flocks of man-eating ibis-like creatures called stymphalidies hunt along the river. These birds, which have metallic, razor-sharp bills and feathers, generally subsist on the hardy beetles that give the river its name, but they eagerly attack

larger prey. As a result, caravans through the area camp at only a few established sites that the birds are rumored to avoid. The headwaters of the Scarab River are the domain of the misanthropic master of the vicious birds, an elderly Garundi witch known as **Haptaba the Ibis-Headed** (NE female human witch^{APG} 12).

Sokar's Boil: In many ways, Sokar's Boil is the opposite of Osirion's other active volcano, Asuulek's Mouth. Sokar's Boil has not erupted for thousands of years, and its caldera is sealed off with a solid plug of hardened lava. Its slopes are jagged stone, as barren as the rest of the region. Sokar's Boil is far from dormant, however; the volcano is slowly expanding as the magma chamber deep in the volcano's heart swells with each passing year. When Sokar's Boil erupts, it will not rain destruction for miles, as Asuulek's Mouth does—it will be an explosive catastrophe that will darken the skies with ash and alter northern Garund forever.

In 4655 AR, a shift in the rocky soil on the volcano's flanks revealed an entrance to chambers constructed within. Excavations uncovered temples and halls constructed early in Osirion's First Age that were carved throughout with hieroglyphics reminiscent of Ignan. Surveyors were stymied by a series of massive doors built of a strange golden-hued stone. Khemet III took a personal interest in the site during his father's reign, and during one visit, was reported missing for several hours. The Ruby Prince keeps his own counsel regarding what wonders he discovered on that day, but rumors say he bypassed the stone doors and accessed the inner chambers. Curiously, this visit corresponds with the arrival of his invisible fire elemental companion, Janhelia. When the Ruby Prince ascended to the throne and opened Osirion's borders to exploration from abroad, he proclaimed a cessation of sanctioned explorations of Sokar's Boil. He also directed loyal agents to quietly expand the survey of Sokar's Boil. (The Ruby Prince acknowledges the ongoing exploration only when Janhelia is absent; in her presence, his denials of any involvement ring remarkably true.) The Ruby Prince's surveyors have not yet breached the doors of golden stone, as the doors themselves seem to relocate around the mountain based on astrological phenomena, but they have learned that many of the outer chambers are designed to bind extraplanar creatures, and that the curious hieroglyphics reference an unknown elemental clan called the Illuminates of Sokar.

The Ruby Prince is not the only powerful figure to have reached the inner complex. Asuulek has been exploring the site with uncharacteristic discretion. The ancient red dragon has discovered his own entrance to the chambers within and has learned that the mountain is keyed to open gates to a unique demiplane situated between—metaphysically speaking—the Plane of

LIVING MONOLITHS

Early in Osirion's history, divinely appointed sphinxes granted life to the stone statues warding the tombs and cities of the pharaohs. By binding a sacred ka stone to the statues' foreheads, the sphinxes granted these sentinels life. These empowered guardians, called guardian monoliths, served as powerful wardens of their domains. Over time, violence and the elements weakened the guardian monoliths and thinned their numbers. Surviving guardian monoliths can be represented by graven guardians (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 140, typically advanced to 12 Hit Dice or possessing the giant creature simple template).

A new and unexpected source arose to replenish the ranks of the guardian monoliths: mortal warriors, seeking to emulate the constructs' vigilance and strength, petitioned descendants of the sphinx paragons for ka stones of their own. The sphinxes affixed ka stones to the brows of these worthy mortal supplicants and thus created the first living monoliths. Even today, in isolated ruins where sphinxes lair, a warrior with sufficient martial skill and knowledge may petition a sphinx to become an inheritor of this ancient tradition. If the sphinx deems her worthy, she will be permanently bound to a ka stone and become a living monolith. Refer to *Pathfinder Player Companion: People of the Sands* for more information on living monoliths, including the living monolith prestige class.

Fire and the First World. Asuulek seeks to access (and ultimately, to subjugate) this heretofore unknown realm of whimsical but fierce creatures from which Janhelia appears to originate. Asuulek and the Ruby Prince's surveyors have yet to come into contact, but a violent clash seems inevitable as both strive to uncover the volcano's otherworldly secrets.

Tar Kuata: The center of Irori's faith in Osirion is at one of the highest points in the nation, a tall peak in the Barrier Wall Mountains. Far removed from civilization, the monastery of Tar Kuata is difficult to reach, but is populated by many devoted mystics and a small communal village of laborers and pilgrims.

In 1490 AR, a Sothan priest of Irori named Narmek Tar Kuata ascended a remote mountain and founded a monastery on the peak's southern flank. He served as master of the monastery for 90 years, teaching generations of Irori's followers and communing with the spirits of the air around the windy peak. Legends hold that Tar Kuata once challenged these air spirits for mastery of the winds around the mountain. When the air spirits threatened to pull him from the peak, he struck

the stone with his fist, raising a pillar 200 feet high into the air—this act drove away the spirits and earned their respect and eternal service. This smooth spire still stands today, rising above the top of the mountain, its flattened top often hidden in clouds.

The mountain and the monastery now bear Tar Kuata's name, and the priest is widely regarded as a saint. Although most of Tar Kuata's mortal remains have been spread around the world as sacred relics, his skull and spine, now sheathed in gold, rest within a reliquary at the top of the high spire. The air spirits from Tar Kuata's day—in truth, a group of invisible stalkers—still defend the spire and its reliquary from thieves and intruders. Many of the subsequent masters of the Tar Kuata monastery have ascended the smooth stone spire and contacted these spirits; over time, they have learned the faith of Irori and are all skilled monks. These “Unseen Disciples” have become a local legend. Junior monks debate whether or not these mythical figures even exist, while the monastery's master merely smiles.

The monks occupy a sprawling series of halls carved into the mountain, where they pursue a strict regimen of meditation, devotion, and exercise, seeking perfection of body and soul. Approximately 15 monks are in residence at any time, although the exact number varies as monks make journeys in the outer world to test their skills and pilgrims or aspirants visit the monastery. The current head of the monastery is Itephta the Immaculate, a surprisingly young Garundi man possessed of insightful wisdom, a gentle demeanor, and a sly wit.

The mountain of Tar Kuata, in which the monastery is built, stands at the entrance to a high mountain valley. This fertile valley is sheltered from the harsh weather and protected by the ramparts of the monastery, and it boasts several springs. Over the millennia, supporters of the monastery have terraced the hills and sown the land, turning into a fruitful garden. The villagers tend to the few earthly needs of the monks in the monastery in exchange for the monks' services as magistrates and guardians. The valley's residents live in communal harmony, working together in the fields and relaxing around the small lake at the valley's heart; the ivy-draped stone pavilion, built

on a stone pier in the clear waters of the lake, is one of the most beautiful spots in all of Osirion.

Most of the residents of this high valley are descendants of pilgrims who arrived generations earlier. To this day, many adherents of Irori make the difficult trek to Tar Kuata and decide to live the rest of their days in the valley. A handful of villagers are former students who came to the monastery as aspirants but failed to uphold its demanding strictures. Rather than leave the mountain, these erstwhile monks have found a welcoming home in the village. One of these former disciples, a former scribe from Tephu named Hespeta Wondermaker, fancies herself a visionary who strives to bring technological advances of the modern world to the ancient valley. Although some of this Mwangi woman's clever devices (such as water pumps driven by windmills) have been embraced by the villagers, other devices (such as kites intended to pull farm implements) have been met with polite skepticism.

Although most of the valley's residents are humans of ancient Garundi ethnicity, a contemplative dwarven monastic order called the Ouat occupies a series of caves in the high northern portion of the valley.

The Ouat, who consist mainly of Pahmet dwarves, eschew traditional dwarven ways in favor of a path they believe can usher them toward perfection.

Following the examples of Irori and Nethys, who achieved godhood through their own actions rather than with the assistance of existing deities or by being born into such power, the adherents of the Ouat school of thought venerate the divine spark they believe every living being contains, rather than the dwarven racial pantheon, most of whom they see as showing no initiative to improve themselves or dwarvenkind on the cosmic scale. These dwarven monks are easily distinguished from others of their race by their shaven heads, which they use as a further means of distancing themselves from stereotypical dwarven culture. The leader of these dwarves, Menkha Helg, is a stern woman who sees isolationism as the only defense of her people's ancient ways.



MENKHA HELG

TAR KUATA

LG village

Corruption -3; **Crime** -2; **Economy** -1;
Law +1; **Lore** -1; **Society** +0

Qualities holy site (Irori), insular

Danger +0

**DEMOGRAPHICS****Government** autocracy**Population** 78 (61 humans, 14 dwarves, 3 other)**Notable NPCs****Hespeta Wondermaker, Relentless Innovator** (NG female human expert 4/fighter 1)**Itephta the Immaculate, Master of the Monastery** (LN male human cleric of Irori 7/monk 3)**Menkha Helg, Ouat Leader** (LN female dwarf monk 5)**MARKETPLACE****Base Value** 500 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 5th
Minor Items 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** —

Tomb of the Bound Sphinx: This pyramid-shaped tomb was constructed deep in the Barrier Wall Mountains in -1116 AR, during the reign of the pious Pharaoh Kenaton. Although constructed to be Pharaoh Kenaton's final resting place, the pyramid had another purpose: it serves as a magical prison for the mythic^{MA} hieracosphinx Hephthethnet the Reaver. As large as a house and more intelligent than his normally dimwitted kin, Hephthethnet was Osirion's greatest scourge in Pharaoh Kenaton's day, terrorizing southern Osirion and

claiming it as his territory. Pharaoh Kenaton's last great act was to magically bind Hephthethnet in the heart of the tomb, where the beast will remain until it collects a thousand unique riddles.

The tomb's placement proved to be ill-chosen, however; a few decades after its construction, the entire edifice dropped into a vast underground chamber over which it had been unknowingly built. The collapse shifted several of the passages within the tomb and smashed many of its treasures, but the arcane conditions binding Hephthethnet survived the disaster. Today, the only access into the pyramid is via a gap in a pit of rubble, which leads into what was once the tomb's top chamber. Several explorers have entered the misaligned halls and irregular chambers of the tomb in search of Pharaoh Kenaton's treasures, only to run afoul of ancient traps or to be stymied by dead-end corridors. Few have reached the vaulted room at the heart of the pyramid where Hephthethnet waits, longing to be free to ravage the countryside again. Unlike most hieracosphinxes, Hephthethnet is likely to converse with intruders, whom he ultimately depends on for his freedom, but he consumes them if they cannot add to his painstakingly collected store of 994 riddles.

OSIRIAN DESERT

SANDS ABOVE, SECRETS BELOW

Alignment: N

Notable Settlements: Eto (9,500), Shiman-Sekh (6,680)

Major Races: Desert giants, elementals, girtabililus, gnolls, humans, maftets

Languages: Auran, Giant, Gnoll, Ignan, Osiriani, Terran

Resources: Camels, feathers, glass, relics, slaves, water

The Osirian Desert comprises the bulk of Osirion's land area and is as forbidding a territory as any on Garund. The desert is largely trackless, as its shifting sands and scouring khamsin winds soon overwhelm roads and structures. Rocky outcroppings thrust into the sky throughout the desert, often providing the only landmarks by which to navigate, and those sites and settlements that survive the elements do so by huddling in their protection. Often, however, the great expanse shows nothing but sky and sand in any direction.

The region is bounded to the east by the fertile lands of the Sphinx Basin, to the north by the Inner Sea, to the south by the Crook River, and to the west by the Junira River and the border with Thuvia. While most of that territory is traditional sand desert, distinctive biomes dot the edges, from the glass flats of the Glazen Sheets to the Pillars of the Sun, an isolated and forbidding stretch of mountains.

The history of the Osirian Desert reflects the nation's history and culture in an eternal cycle. When Osirion is weak, the desert forms an insuperable barrier; when Osirion is strong, its rulers adorn the desert with new tombs, monuments, and places of power. In time, the sands reclaim these new ornaments, sending them to join those sleeping in their depths, and new rulers rise to power and attempt to make their mark on the desert, however temporarily.

The Osirian Desert is the most sparsely populated region of Osirion. Outside of the pleasure city of Shiman-Sekh and the trade hub of Eto, the desert is home only to nomadic Yerbira tribesfolk—roving clans of indigenous wanderers with ancient Garundi bloodlines. Hospitality is an art form to the Yerbira, and they are fast friends and useful guides to those who gain their trust. Yerbira law is entirely unwritten and never explained to outsiders, but those who break it often disappear into the deep desert, their fates unknown, or face certain death at the storied Desert's Mouth.

The environment is inimical to human life, and aside from hidden Yerbira springs and the few widely known oases, almost no water is to be found in the Osirian Desert. Anyone unprepared for the extreme climate won't last

long. The desert is also home to elementals, desert giants, girtabililus, and other dangers, and any place that offers respite from the harsh sun and wind probably already houses creatures willing to fight to defend it.

After being ignored for centuries, the Osirian Desert has become a major destination for adventurers because of the recent boom in artifact hunting and exploration. Since the Ruby Prince takes a cut of whatever is recovered (at least, of the finds that get reported), the desert is now a significant source of national revenue. Thus Eto and Shiman-Sekh harbor more than their fair share of government agents, watching closely to make sure that Osirion's cultural heritage goes through the proper channels.

GAZETTEER

Despite the vast and desolate expanses of its sands, the Osirian Desert nevertheless offers numerous sites of interest for adventuresome explorers or travelers merely passing through. With only a few exceptions, these locations remain at the mercy of the shifting dunes, and over the millennia some have come and gone, wiped from memory as generations passed, only to be rediscovered after a particularly ravenous khamsin storm. Below are details on a number of significant locations currently known to the people of the Osirian Desert.

Alamein Peninsula: The Alamein Peninsula is the northernmost point in Osirion. Here, where the Stepped Tower of Djedefar rises on the peninsula's tip, the shifting sands of the deep desert give way to rolling hills of sere brown grass. Isolated enough to deter ordinary herders, the pasturelands are home only to a few flocks of sheep kept by the monks of Djedefar. The peninsula is otherwise unoccupied, but atop each rolling hill lies evidence of prior occupation: ruined towers of much the same design as Djedefar. Some have been explored, and the extensive but empty underground chambers have caused a certain amount of speculation about what might be held in similar chambers under Djedefar.

Cliffs of Kusha-ta-Pahk: Ancient Osirion's great reach encompassed vast fleets of ships that plied the Inner Sea, traveling between its far holdings. The Cliffs of Kusha-ta-Pahk—named for their primary architect—are thought to have been carved to remind the sailors of those ships that they were part of something larger than themselves. The 250-foot-tall cliffs are covered with the rough-hewn visages of several of the God Kings of that elder time. The folds of their raiment form natural ledges and shelves and hide numerous caverns and niches, reachable only



by a perilous climb from the harsh coast below. Many of these cliffside chambers host monstrous inhabitants, including feuding bands of harpies and sirens who use those enraptured by their songs as pawns in their never-ending struggle for control of the cliffs and the potential treasures housed within.

Coast of Graves: The Coast of Graves provides favorable and fairly constant winds and is thus well traveled by ships sailing west from Totra. The shallow waters over which the wind blows, however, are home to jagged, barely submerged rocks and numerous difficult-to-spot shoals. The fastest routes are some of the most dangerous, and the coast is littered with the skeletons of ships whose captains didn't trust their navigators' instincts or who put too much faith in poorly written charts.

Desert's Mouth: Resembling the lair of a giant antlion, the Desert's Mouth is a black pit at the bottom of a conical hole in the shifting sand dunes near the Thuvian border. The hole is a perfect circle, a strangely regular entrance into a giant cavern some say is connected to the Darklands. Phosphorescent gases can be seen drifting out of the mouth at night, and those who stay too near the pit report hallucinations about dark caverns dripping with water. Descending the sandy slopes is difficult enough, but ascending again is nearly impossible. The risk of being trapped has kept the site from being explored in recent memory, but ancient accounts describe forests of glowing fungus and strange crustaceans skittering in the dark.

The Yerbira are said to use the Mouth to execute anyone who breaches their few taboos. They lower the condemned into the hole with a rope, which is thrown in after him. If the condemned can climb out of the pit on his own, the Yerbira believe that the gods are with him and all is forgiven. There are no known stories of anyone returning.

Eto: Just north of the Pillars of the Sun, Eto is the hub where most of the roads through the Osirian Desert converge. The caravan routes that cross the desert are at best marked by guideposts and at worst traversed only via celestial navigation and memory, but they all include Eto, the largest and most accessible city in the region. Shiman-Sekh is a wonderful place for those who can afford its luxuries, but Eto is the true heart of the region, and any adventurer who sifts the sands of the Osirian Desert is likely to visit Eto at some point.

ETO

N small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +3; **Law** +1; **Lore** +3;
Society +1

Qualities insular, notorious, prosperous, strategic location

Danger +15

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 9,500 (8,215 humans, 436 halflings, 255 dwarves, 187 elves, 96 half-elves, 311 others)

Notable NPCs

Caravan Captain Elitan Nophir (NG female human ranger 8)

Field Director Safira Neda, Ministry of Culture (LN female human alchemist 8)

Governor Asep Ma (N male human inquisitor of Abadar 10)

Rafa Dan, Black Market Antiquities Trader (CN male human rogue 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 7,436 gp; **Purchase Limit** 56,250 gp; **Spellcasting** 6th

Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

The city of Eto is protected from the desert sands and the vicious khamsin winds by a series of cliffs that ring the city, creating a strangely cylindrical crater roughly a mile wide and 60 feet deep. Hidden springs seep through cracks in the cliffs, and clean water flows down smoothly eroded stone troughs into the city's cisterns. Water is precious in Eto; the local supply is supplemented by several deep wells sunk into the crater's floor.

Eto has been settled since time immemorial, and its solid stone and clay buildings are built to last. During the nadirs of Osirian history, as much as nine-tenths of the city has lain vacant, waiting for better times. The great age of the settlement means many a humble laborer lives in a hut with ancient glyphs an Osirionologist would pay well to see, if only the laborer appreciated the nature of his wall decorations or the Osirionologist knew to look for them.

Eto is divided into several residential districts variously quiet or rowdy, all surrounding the Eto Bazaar at the center of town. The bazaar is a nonstop riot of activity save for a few hours around midday, when the shopkeepers close their stalls to the angry sun. The only permanent structure in the Eto Bazaar is Government House, a tall stone building that serves as accommodations for the governor—currently Asep Ma—and his staff. It also houses the heavily guarded central cistern into which the city dips in times of exceptional demand.

Since the Ruby Prince opened up the desert for exploration and capitalization, Eto has been the primary point of departure into the deep desert. Shiman-Sekh actively discourages treasure hunters from visiting its opulent avenues, but Eto welcomes them with open arms. Thus Eto is crowded with honest and dishonest merchants rubbing elbows with Osirionologists and glorified grave robbers. The city's population can fluctuate by as much as 20 percent during times of especially good weather, as caravans hundreds of members strong amass in the caravanserais that surround the city's crater and provide accommodations for travelers year round. These facilities are overseen by Caravan Captain Elitan Nophir, a Garundi

woman who ensures the safety of those passing through Eto and the efficiency of their preparations.

Eto has only the rudiments of a local economy, subsisting almost entirely on trade. The ring wall keeps all but the most acrobatic from entering and leaving the city by any way other than the two well-guarded entrances, and everyone who passes through those entrances is made to contribute to the local coffers. The tax is small (especially if the gratuity to the guards is ample), but with a thousand caravans entering Eto each year, the city draws ample funds.

As the major hub for Osirion's recovered relics, Eto is home to many agents of the Ruby Prince. The local office of the Ministry of Culture, headed by Field Director Safira Neda, does a brisk business inspecting the finds of the many explorers who would rather stay on the right side of the law. Most get their treasures back minus a moderate surcharge, but treasures that the ministry's experts deem to be of great cultural value are confiscated, sometimes without explanation. Those who would rather dispense with the surcharge or the threat of confiscation don't visit the ministry's office and spend their time in Eto trying to keep their treasures away from the watchful eyes of the ministry's clandestine agents. The desert around Eto is well patrolled, and any caravan that tries to avoid the city is searched closely to determine whether it skirted the town to avoid scrutiny or rather for some benign reason.

The social divide between the law-abiding and the tax-avoiding sometimes plays out in strange ways. Eto's two most celebrated taverns, the Bent Coin and the Night Oasis, sit directly across the bazaar from each other. At any given time, legitimate explorers prefer one of the taverns, while tomb raiders and smugglers patronize the other. But as soon as it becomes apparent which is which, the smugglers invariably switch taverns to avoid suspicion, eventually driving the law-abiding explorers to the other establishment in a never-ending cycle. Currently, the Bent Coin is home to the black market merchants, led by the influential and conniving Rafa Dan.

Glazen Sheets: The desert southwest of Shiman-Sekh is radically different from the rolling dunes that cover most of the area. The Glazen Sheets shine in the sun, a series of broken glass mesas and plains, some shattered into fine granules and others consisting of unending, mirror-sheened planes. The area is inimical to practically all life, but this was not always the case, as bones and

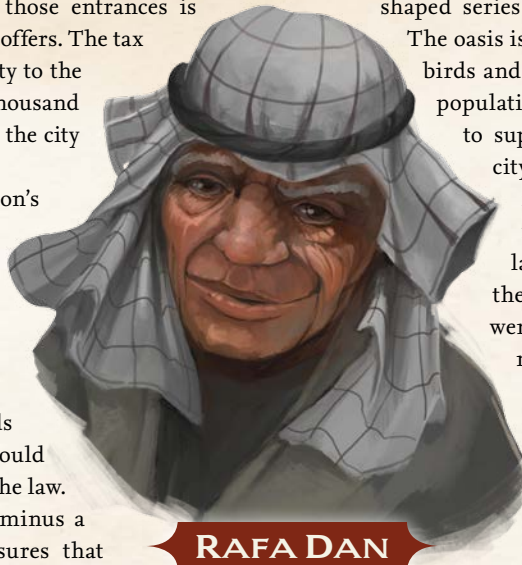
shells embedded in the thick sheets of glass suggest that something lived here before the region was transformed from sand into patches of shimmering glass. What could have caused such a transformation remains a mystery.

Golden Oasis: Situated in the middle of the northern Osirion Desert is the Golden Oasis, a lotus-blossom-shaped series of lakes fed by submerged springs. The oasis is a natural habitat for many migratory birds and provides fertile farmland for a small population of farmers, as well as enough water to supply drinking water for the adjacent city of Shiman-Sekh and even support its fountains and gardens. The strangely regular and beautiful shapes of the lakes cause many scholars to assume they have magical origins. If so, the lakes were created so far back in history that not even legends account for them.

Gozarin Necropolis: The sporadic attention that Osirion pays to its desert holdings is nowhere more obvious than in the Gozarin Necropolis. Based around the massive Pyramid of Masks, the various structures and excavations in the necropolis show widely disparate and unrelated architectural styles ranging from the ancient to the merely old. As adventurers pour into Osirion's tombs at the invitation of the Ruby Prince, the site's Jah-Ipo guardians have seen their authority wane and their jurisdiction diminish. Even so, they remain vigilant against intrusions to the few sites that are still inviolate, such as the Pyramid of Masks. For more information on the Gozarin Necropolis, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms*.

Hor-Aha: Far out in the Inner Sea, beyond the Coast of Graves, sits the great lighthouse of Hor-Aha. During the height of Ancient Osirion, the lighthouse was a key navigational aid; its magic light both marked its location and shone a many-colored code by which the resident wizards disseminated their divined knowledge of upcoming weather. Though the structure has remained dark for thousands of years, lurid red and purple light now strobes from its lantern room, the sign for violent gales. Efforts to visit the lighthouse isle and discern the source of the renewed light have been universally unsuccessful as wind, fog, and even ocean currents have forced nearly all ships to turn back. Those rare vessels that made landfall on the lighthouse's small isle were never heard from again.

Junira River: The Junira River forms much of the border between Osirion and Thuvia to the west. Unlike the Sphinx, the river has no flood cycle and the land surrounding it is mostly infertile desert. Aside from a few



RAFA DAN

stretches of canyon, the river flows between gentle, sandy banks. The occasional reedy stretch hides crocodiles, and some sheltered areas hold rotting, forested swamps that are home to nuckelavees—evil fey that attack anybody who despoils or alters the land’s natural state. The lack of arable or hospitable land along the Junira accounts for the absence of any sizable settlements along the river’s length, save for the Thuvian city-state of Lamasara.

Lair of the Crystal King: Deep in the center of the Glazen Sheets rises a startling edifice of blazing mirrored glass, a crystalline formation as large as a castle. This glass fortress is the lair of Susurex, an adult blue dragon who has made the unusual terrain of the Glazen Sheets his solitary domain. The self-styled Crystal King has dedicated his life to researching the mysterious origins of the region, and has enslaved hundreds of unfortunate Yerbira and unsuspecting caravaneers who now toil away within and beneath the crystalline tower, performing research and experiments at their master’s behest. Susurex knows much of what transpires in western Osirion and is generally happy to exchange information for treasure or slaves to help him uncover the nature of the Glazen Sheets—he’s certain that such knowledge would enable him to bring the whole of Osirion under his control with the threat of replicating the same effect throughout the land.

Lamashtu’s Flower: Located in a hidden oasis in the depths of the desert between Shiman-Sekh and Eto, Lamashtu’s Flower is a temple centered on a sacrificial altar and studded with the desecrated shrines of other gods and long-dead pharaohs. For more information on Lamashtu’s Flower, see page 47.

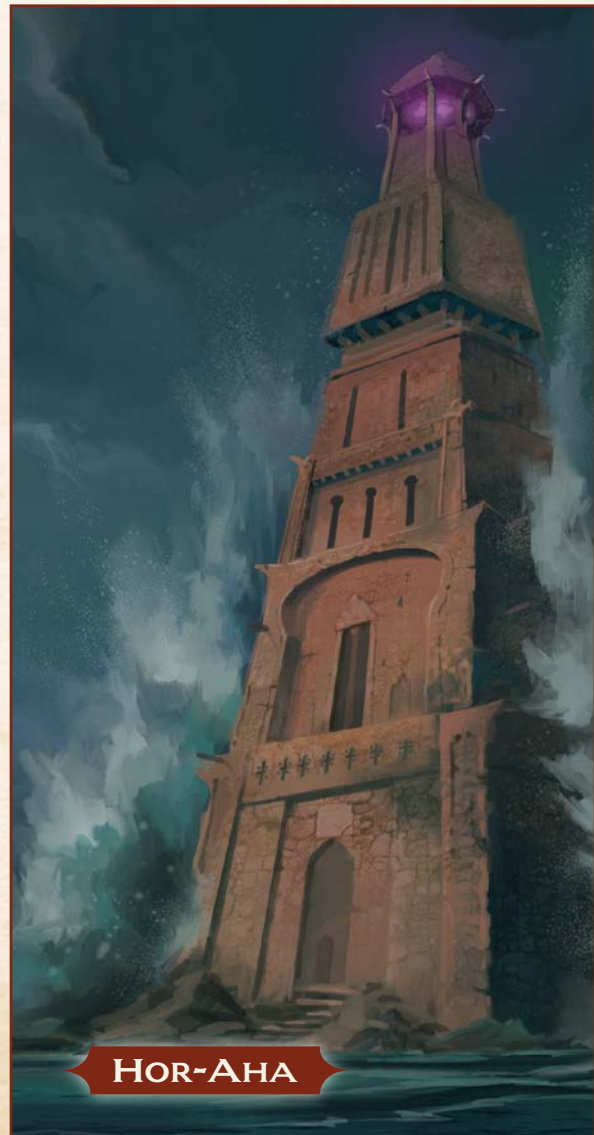
Lost Fortress of Mekshir: The fortress of Mekshir, which once guarded the trade routes between Osirion and its holdings in what is now Thuvia, was engulfed in the terrible khamsin storm that brought the short-lived and little-remembered Apsu Dynasty to a sudden end in –841 AR. According to legend, Mekshir remains intact, successively unearthed and reburied over the ages by the khamsin winds. Its treasures survive, but so do the soldiers who guarded the fortress in life, and who ward it still as undead creatures protecting the site’s riches and stores under the command of a mad skeletal champion.

Lost Mines of Siwat: In the forty-fourth century AR, a group of silver miners struck it big at a rocky outcropping near the eastern edge of the Osirian Desert. The outcropping included a hidden spring, and soon a town sprang up around it. Five years later, the town was found deserted and the mine entrance collapsed, with no explanation for either phenomenon. For more information on the mines, see page 48.

Parched Dunes: This vast expanse of uncharted desert is among the least hospitable regions of the Osirian Desert, and Osirion on the whole. Few caravans venture into the

dunes, for the girtabilus, maftets, and drakes that call the region home are vicious, and there is little on the other side worth flirting with their wrath. For more information on the Parched Dunes, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #81: Shifting Sands*.

Pillars of the Sun: The mountains known as the Pillars of the Sun are geographically isolated, surrounded by low-lying deserts and attended by only a few small rocky spires jutting from the desert. They are even more isolated from civilization, as they are populated only by monsters, dangerous beasts, and whatever undead creatures protect the various tombs and ruins built into their granite cliffs and valleys. The Pillars have not been mapped since ancient times, and even those maps seem strangely inaccurate. Legend holds that the lost pyramid of An-Hepsu XI is hidden within the Pillars, though few seek it out, for horrors are said to be sequestered within.



HOR-AHA

Ruins of el-Amara: Once the capital of the ancient Osirian province of Thuvia, el-Amara fell to ruin as the pharaohs turned their gaze away from the faltering western province. After its governor's assassination and abandonment by its citizens, el-Amara lay vacant for centuries. It is now inhabited by cultists of Ahriman, who hope to bring him back to lay waste to the Material Plane. Ruled by **Karesh-Ekhial** (NE female sepid barbarian 4), the self-styled Herald of Disdain, visiting the Ruins of el-Amara is fatal for uninvited guests or even invited guests who incur her fiendish wrath.

Sahure Wastes: By the standards of the Osirion Desert, the Sahure Wastes are positively lush. Centered on a grouping of strangely symmetrical hills, the wastes are carpeted with a variety of succulents, as well as various cacti unknown elsewhere in Osirion. No animals live in the wastes, and botanists note that every sampled plant in the area is poisonous. The hills in the middle of the waste are topped by the wildest profusion of the deadly plants, and researchers who have penetrated that far report a pervasive feeling of watchfulness. Aside from the occasional botanist, the only visitors to the wastes are assassins and apothecaries carefully harvesting some of the more sought-after toxins for sale or personal use.

Seven Stelae: The Seven Stelae are massive red granite pillars rising from the desert near the trade route from Shiman-Sekh to the port of Totra. Built by An-Hepsu I, the Pharaoh of Seven Faces, each pillar is topped with a relief of the pharaoh in a different pose. One stands shorter than the others; it ends in a shattered point, and its top is lost somewhere beneath the sands. The pillars are covered with stories of the pharaoh's deeds, but of more interest to adventurers are the hidden doorways recently uncovered in the stelae and the larger complex apparently buried under the sand. A second series of pillars has been discovered in the desert surrounding the stelae, along with what appears to be the roof of an even more deeply buried temple. All exploration into the depths of the Seven Stelae has been stymied by the spectral pharaonic guardians that attack any who attempt to penetrate the complex.

Shiman-Sekh: Shiman-Sekh is among the oldest extant cities in Osirion, constructed in -3407 AR by the Song Pharaoh as a pleasure retreat watered by the beautiful Golden Oasis. Pharaohs and dynasties rose and fell, sometimes violently, but whether Garundi or Keleshite, each new ruler has seen the benefit of having such a beautiful and isolated site available. Thus has Shiman-Sekh escaped ruin for thousands of years.

SHIMAN-SEKH

NG small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +4; **Law** +2; **Lore** +2; **Society** +1

Qualities prosperous, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 6,680 (5,180 humans, 498 halflings, 316 elves, 237 dwarves, 182 gnomes, 95 half-elves, 172 others)

Notable NPCs

Governor Jas Apep (LG male human aristocrat 4/bard 7)

High Priestess Morit Dejar (NG female human cleric of Sarenrae 11)

Slavemaster Lepata Senaa (LE female human expert 3/rogue 6)

Vizier Ghaf Moor (CG male human wizard 8)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 6,864 gp; **Purchase Limit** 37,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 6th

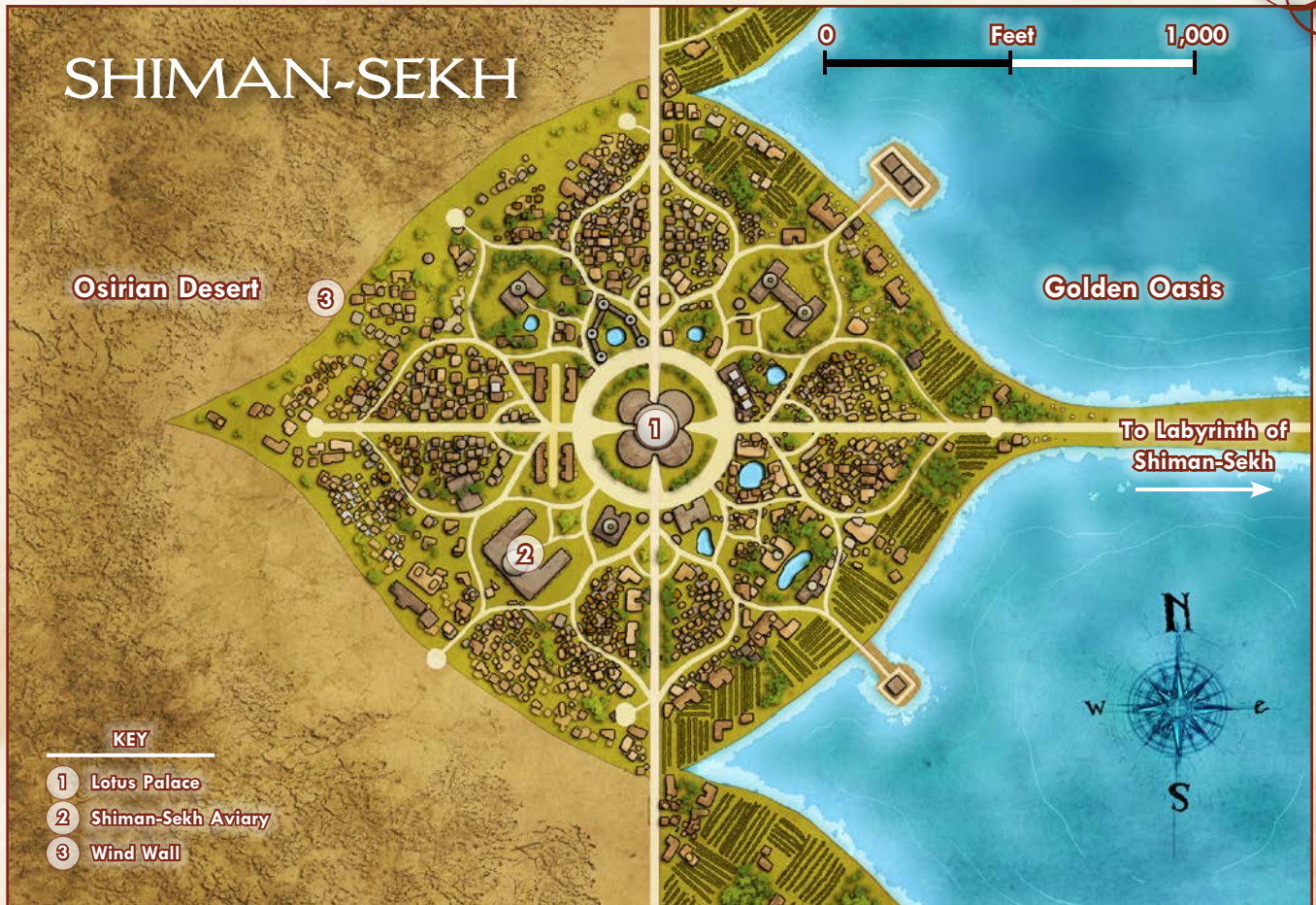
Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

An ancient earthen berm holds back the worst of the khamsin winds. It keeps the shifting dunes of the deep desert from burying this city, situated just west of the Golden Oasis, and marks its western edge. The ancient towers of the wind wall overlook a city shaped by the Song Pharaoh into the form of a lotus blossom, echoing the beautiful and eerily artificial shape of the Golden Oasis itself. Unlike other pharaonic retreats, the Lotus Palace at the city's center is never vacant. Ancient tradition dictates that the palace's charms never go to waste. The current inhabitants are the Garundi Governor Jas Apep and his Keleshite consort and arcane advisor, Ghaf Moor.

Beyond the Lotus Palace is a city only slightly less palatial. Beautiful architecture marks even the servant districts; the only clear difference between poor and rich neighborhoods is the density of construction; the crowded apartment buildings of the former contrast sharply with the spacious mansions and temples of the latter, which include the largest temple to Sarenrae outside Sothis: the Dawnblossom, headed by High Priestess Morit Dejar.

The economy of Shiman-Sekh is almost entirely based on the entertainment of the Osirian elite, but the city is agriculturally self-sufficient, as the neighboring Golden Oasis provides ample fish, fowl, and farmland to feed the small city. The water birds of the oasis sport an incredible variety of brightly colored feathers, which form the fletching in Osirian arrows and are exported throughout the Inner Sea. The slave market along the southern edge of the city provides slaves for both labor and pleasure, and has been in constant operation since it was established under Keleshite rule. The market is currently overseen by the harsh Mauxi slavemaster Lepata Senaa.

In 4688 AR, workers digging a well on the outskirts of the city uncovered a massive underground complex known as the Labyrinth of Shiman-Sekh. The labyrinth is associated with An-Hepsu XI, the Pharaoh of No Rain, and is believed to represent his greatest error—a failed attempt to harness the fiend Zelishkar of the Bitter Flame for his



own purposes. The labyrinth has since been resealed by order of the Ruby Prince and remains heavily guarded by a contingent of the Risen Guard.

Sphinx Head: The Black Sphinx is buried up to its chin in the sands of the desert, and its interior is accessible only by a recently discovered door on the top of its head. Inside are the burial chambers of Menedes I, the Sky Pharaoh, who protected his treasure and final resting place by removing the air from all but the entry chamber with powerful elemental magic. Anyone who explores beyond the sphinx's head risks suffocation in a matter of minutes.

Stepped Tower of Djedefar: Located at the tip of the Alamein Peninsula, the Stepped Tower of Djedefar is a secluded monastery of Irori. The tower sits at the peak of the northernmost headland, rising seven stories above its surroundings, each story a step in the narrow structure. On the open balcony that tops each step, Iroran monks practice their secret martial exercises or meditate in the sun. The seven steps represent the stages of enlightenment in Irori's ascent to perfection, and monks are allowed only as high as their training and experiences dictate.

Tomb of the Incorruptible Pharaoh: An-Hepsu XI, the Incorruptible Pharaoh, gained his epithet because of his

well-hidden lichdom, not his moral rectitude. When he was overthrown after ruling for 400 years, his phylactery and severed body parts were hidden in a tomb deep within the Pillars of the Sun. For more information on this location, see page 50.

Tremor Valley: Tremor Valley divides the Glazen Sheets from the deep desert and the Parched Dunes. Its walls are sheer, though chimneys and ravines allow dangerous travel from the desert above. The valley is named for the periodic earthquakes that rock it, though these seem to have no effect on the ruins of the Gozarin Necropolis covering much of the valley floor. The cliff walls of the valley include numerous ancient cliff dwellings whose architecture is clearly Osirian but with strange flourishes of an unknown foreign style.

Xefon-Ra: Located along the caravan route from the Sphinx Basin to Thuvia, Xefon-Ra has astonished and inspired the occasional artist who has traveled that way. The strangely shaped mountain rises steeply out of the desert, its brightly colored stone seeming to shift in the light. Those who camp near it say that the colors remain visible through the night, glowing gently, and rumors abound of those willing to linger near the rocky spire finding grievous wounds healed and sicknesses cured.

THE SCORPION COAST

ANCIENT RUINS AND MODERN INTRIGUE

Alignment: N

Notable Settlements: An-Alak (1,500), El-Shelad (25,000), Gardens of Shepeska (88), Mount Na-Ken (31)

Major Races: Androsphinxes, desert giants, elementals, girtablilus, humans

Languages: Aquan, Auran, Giant, Ignan, Kelish, Osiriani, Terran

Resources: Glass beads, salt, seafood, textiles

On the Scorpion Coast, located in eastern Osirion, wastelands obfuscate both ominous history and mysterious modernity. The region's shifting sands and barren dunes cunningly hide a slew of ancient wonders, which have drawn adventurers to this perilous area for thousands of years—and driven more than a few to their deaths. By comparison, the hardy souls who call the region home are resilient, and many are resolved to forge a new future for themselves independent of the coast's pharaonic past. Vast danger and untold opportunities for wealth, power, and adventure in the midst of a relentless desert—these are the offerings of the Scorpion Coast.

Perhaps the most noteworthy features of the Scorpion Coast are its natural ones. In the region's northern half, fierce desert winds—aided in no small part by the warring elemental clans that roam this expanse—sculpt enormous vistas of fine sand into mountains and valleys that form a treacherous topography for any traveler. Called the Underdunes, this vast expanse shifts frequently because of massive sand-slides that alternately bury and uncover Ancient Osirian ruins, some of which have remained undisturbed since the earliest days of the nation's founding. In the Scorpion Coast's center, rocky peaks rise as if from nowhere, providing a convenient and easily defensible lair for creatures that prefer to remain undiscovered. The coast's southern terrain, in contrast, is pocked with the remnants of a prehistoric seabed, which left deposits of life-extinguishing salt within the area's hills. These badlands have proven unwelcoming to all but the hardest explorers and adventurers—and more than a few god-kings, who believed it a perfect, isolated location for their burial pyramids. Some of these tombs still house their pharaohs' bodies today. Defining the region's western border are the Asp and Sphinx rivers, which have served as vital sources of life, travel, and trade from the rise of Ancient Osirion through the present day.

Scattered among the Scorpion Coast's varied natural features are ruined monuments from one of humanity's oldest existing civilizations. At the edge of the Underdunes

stand the ruins of Tumen, remains of a city built in testament to the power and hubris of the Four Pharaohs of Ascension. Rumors suggest that the quadrumvirate's burial pyramid is located to the southwest of their capital, within recently uncovered ruins that date back more than 6,000 years. And between these ruins and pyramids, the bizarre Androsphinx of Zukebri has stood since antiquity, although its origin is much murkier and its recent history is far more forbidding.

In addition to ancient ruins and monuments, the Scorpion Coast contains a few locales where modern politics and concerns outweigh the area's rich, inscrutable past. Just south of the ruins of Tumen, for example, is the coastal city of El-Shelad, where Keleshite aristocrats dream of returning their city to the Padishah Empire's control. In contrast, high in the Shining Mountains, Mount Na-Ken is home to an ascetic order of monks who believe that attaining absolute self-control and the pinnacle of martial prowess will lead to unfettered access to the Ethereal Plane. Similarly, the Temple of An-Alak in the center of the Scorpion Coast is the monastic home to certain faithful of Irori, although their devotion to the Master of Masters centers more on achieving a perfect society than on self-perfection.

In short, the Scorpion Coast is no place for the faint of heart. Its complicated, modern settlements and bizarre, ancient ruins—some of which thrum with arcane and divine power beyond most mortals' comprehension—are rife with pitfalls quick to swallow the ill-prepared. To be sure, the coast is a haven for undisturbed tombs, ancient magic waiting to be awakened, and entrenched monsters, but it's also a place where the native inhabitants' cunning and resolve should not be underestimated. Most residents view themselves as either descendants of one of the greatest ancient civilizations on Golarion or as vehicles for changes that must come to modern-day Osirion. No matter their purpose for venturing into the Scorpion Coast, wise adventurers heed one piece of advice: to never stop looking over their shoulders for angry elementals, crafty politicians, crusading monks, and malevolent mummies. In a region so rife with peril, safety is relative—and adventure is always around the corner.

GAZETTEER

The Scorpion Coast is home to some of Ancient Osirion's most powerful and mysterious ruins, many of which are periodically buried and unburied in the desert's treacherous khamsin storms. It's also home to



settlements and orders that blend the region's unique history with more modern concerns. Below are details of some of the region's points of interest.

Ahn'Selota: This mysterious pyramid, located near the ruins of Tumen, is linked to a magical pact that united—and eventually destroyed—the Four Pharaohs of Ascension more than 6,000 years ago. These four pharaohs, called the Cerulean Pharaoh, the Fiend Pharaoh, the Pharaoh of Numbers, and the Radiant Pharaoh, each vied for control of Ancient Osirion. In an effort to avoid civil war, the pharaohs struck a deal in which all four ruled together. But to prevent any one pharaoh from betraying the others, they forged a magical pact to seal their fates together. Together, the pharaohs ushered in a new age of Osirian prosperity, but when one fell ill, the other three were doomed to the same fate. It's said that Ahn'Selota houses the secret to the pharaohs' powerful pact.

Ahn'Selota is further detailed in *Pathfinder Module: The Pact Stone Pyramid*.

An-Alak: Relatively isolated from the rest of Osirion, this small community centers on the Temple of An-Alak, and nearly all inhabitants are devout worshipers of Irori. An-Alak began as a tiny trading outpost during the heyday of Ancient Osirion, but once Irori's faithful realized that its remote location and slow way of life lent itself to meditation, the settlement's numbers swelled. Nearly 1,500 souls, mostly Keleshites, now live in this regimented society, which in all aspects is focused on self-perfection.

The settlement includes its namesake temple, led by **Master Aneksi Nakhti** (LN female human cleric of Irori 7). Nakhti and her acolytes primarily focus on rigidly governing the town according to Irori's doctrine: citizens are encouraged to find their own personal paths to enlightenment, but they are not allowed to pollute their bodies with alcohol, indulgent food, or intoxicants that dull the senses. The temple is also known for its divinely inspired botanists, who cultivate a rare, hand-shaped desert fruit known as the saffron star. This curious fruit tastes bland but is remarkably nourishing. Some even say it can inspire visions of the eater's perfected self.

Androsphinx of Zukebri: Unlike most of the ruins in the Underdunes, this modest sphinx statue carries some protection against the threat of burial under the desert sands that creates a perfect circle of even ground around it. From a distance, observers can make out black fluid weeping from the sphinx's eyes. But when travelers draw near, most find themselves subject to a cacophony of piercing telepathic screams—which cease the moment they leave the area.

Several Osirionologists have recorded that about one in a thousand travelers to this site appear to be immune to the monument's mental attacks. Many such individuals have

ELEMENTAL CLANS OF THE SCORPION COAST

The wasteland of the Scorpion Coast, particularly the area between the ruins of Tumen and the River Sphinx known as the Underdunes, is one of the rare places on the Material Plane where elementals gather and thrive. The connection between the ancient desert and the elemental planes is simply stronger here, according to some, although others believe that a strange artifact or an inscrutable magical power source draws these temperamental beings to this particular area.

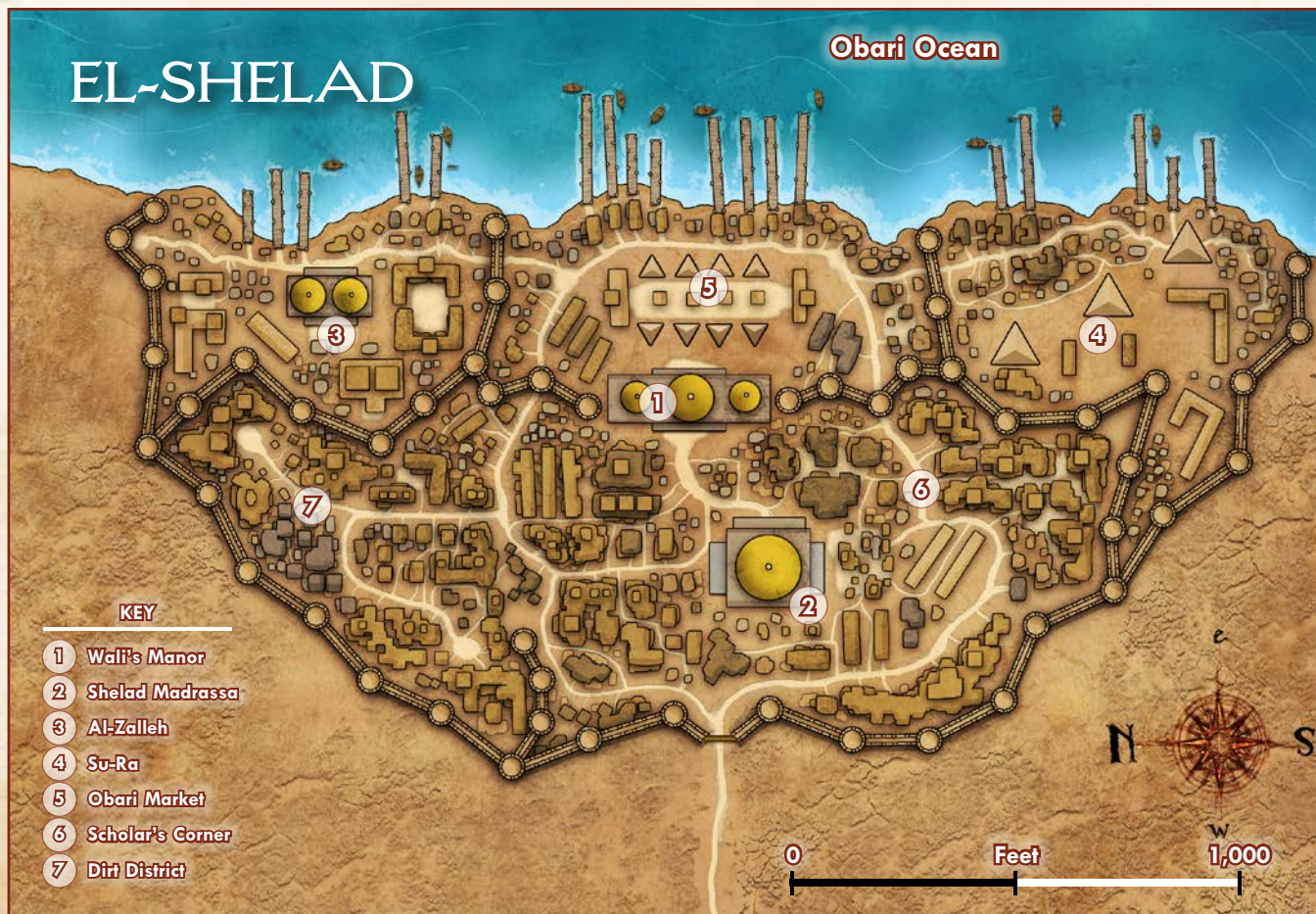
The elementals are split into several warring clans that wage long-running struggles to gain control of the region—or perhaps an even larger area. Given that the fire elemental Janhelia is Ruby Prince Khemet III's companion, these conflicts could potentially affect all of Osirion. For her part, Janhelia claims that her clan, the Illuminates of Sokar, has remained apart from the conflicts that afflict the other elementals.

The most prominent elemental clans include the Goanron Triumvirate, which consists of earth, fire, and air elementals that act as the self-appointed caretakers of the ruins of Tumen. The Ainsi clan of air elementals stands in direct opposition to the Goanron, and its members periodically expose the ruins to the harsh desert wind. The water elementals of the Hytae clan long ago took offense at the ancient magic that brought water to Tumen, and periodically launch attacks on the ruins out of spite—when not reveling in their beloved lairs within the sporadic oases that pepper the landscape.

Although the ruins of Tumen factor heavily into many clans' motivations, other clans seek only to live free among the sands. The Vosh Dune Prides are a loose federation of individual tribes that each mostly consist of a single elemental type, cooperating to protect their shared independence. The homogenous tribes of the Ken-Var Society, on the other hand, are united in the belief that elementals should build a collaborative society to protect themselves from the destructive nature of humankind.

banded together to worship the androsphinx as an idol to Lamashtu, making the site a dangerous destination for unwary travelers. More than a few innocents have been sacrificed to the monument as part of the cult's rituals.

The Asp: This rather slim, twisting waterway begins on the northern slopes of the Brazen Peaks. It flows north and connects with the Crook near the city of Wati to form the mighty River Sphinx. Its treacherous lengths are havens for river pirates—often residents of poor Garundi villages located in Osirion's interior—and dangerous fauna such as crocodiles, enormous



constrictors, and hippopotami. The Asp is also home to a group of particularly volatile water elementals, an offshoot of the more northern, oasis-based Hytae clan. These elementals are fiercely independent; they always resent and sometimes attack any creatures that disturb their peace.

Burning Cape: This rocky stretch of coast was so named because it appears to be aflame when the morning sun hits it from the east. The shoreline is littered with the skeletons of ancient seafaring vessels, hailing from distant ports in Avistan, Garund, and Casmaron, that tried and failed to locate the secret sea-lanes of Shotep-Kara. Instead of reaching the farthest corners of Ancient Osirion through hidden extradimensional portals, these trading and fishing ships ran aground of the cape's dangerous reefs and sandbars. Even worse, the area's haunted reputation prevented rescue vessels from coming to the aid of these stranded crews. Those who did not escape still haunt the shore as malevolent ghosts, wraiths, and other undead horrors. Despite the danger, the place often draws treasure hunters, as well as cultists who believe the might of Urgathoa herself sustains the undead sailors of these ruined ships.

El-Shelad: Once a sprawling slave encampment housing just a fraction of the hordes that built Tumen, El-Shelad has become a city defined by fierce political struggles and racial tension. The primary players are those loyal to Osirion and those who would rather see the city pay fealty to the Padishah Empire of Kelesh across the Obari Ocean. Indeed, although the city's roots are decidedly Osirian, it was not until Qadirans usurped leadership of the country—turning it into a Keleshite satrapy—that El-Shelad bloomed, largely because the resulting influx of Keleshites into the city strengthened its economy.

When Khemet I rose to power, he promptly installed a loyal governor in El-Shelad. As a sign of good faith to its Keleshite citizens, though, the Forthbringer allowed the city's ruler to retain the traditional Qadiran title of "wali." That gesture did not dissipate the political tension in the city, however, and the animosity between El-Shelad's Osirian loyalists and Keleshite sympathizers has never subsided. The city has since become known for its tumultuous elections, which until recently produced a string of Garundi governors loyal to Sothis—the latest victor, Sarita Senbi, is Keleshite and thus deeply distrusted by El-Shelad's Garundi residents. Needless to



say, rumors of voter fraud or election rigging persist each time a new wali takes office, with the loudest grumbles coming from the wealthiest residents.

The two groups have used the significant profits from the city's fishing industry to build two completely separate districts. These districts are separated from the rest of the city by a series of walls, thicker and stronger than those that protect El-Shelad from the wastelands inland. The city's wealthiest families spare no expense in hiring guards to ensure they never have to unexpectedly encounter members of the opposing group.

Both the Su-Ra District, where affluent Osirian loyalists live, and the Al-Zalleh District, home to prosperous Keleshite sympathizers, include private docks and easy access to the city's gates. Temples to Nethys and Sarenrae, respectively, dominate the centers of the Su-Ra and Al-Zalleh districts; however, neither faction is particularly religious, and many say the continued prominence of both sects is merely a way for the two sides to accentuate their differences.

Both districts enjoy proximity to the Obari Market, where all manner of fresh seafood, lush textiles, and magical trinkets are sold. Also near the city's wealthy districts is the Wali's Manor, a sprawling, governmental building and manse complete with several domed spires and towers. Its current occupant is Wali Sarita Senbi, eldest daughter of a prominent Keleshite family, and the first open opponent of the Osirian government to hold the office. Sarita's recent election sparked a week of rowdy, though nonviolent, protests. Stoking those protests, of course, were the city's prominent Osirian sympathizers, led by Asad Arani, who secretly hopes to one day become wali himself. A tall Garundi man with a powerful presence, Asad has been amassing political support by parlaying his prominent position at Shelad Madrassa, the city's small but prestigious spellcasting academy. The other instructors and students at the Madrassa, however, hold themselves aloof from politics, and study the magical practices of both Osirion and Qadira with equal fervor. The surrounding Scholars' Corner, where the Madrassa's instructors live, is also a haven from the city's politics.

Further complicating the city's social structure is its citizens' shared distaste for elves. The origins of this racial intolerance are murky, but most scholars attribute it to the tumultuous years directly following the usurpation of the throne by Khemet I in 4609 AR, when opportunistic elven thieves and mercenaries tried to seize control of the city's

lucrative fishing industry. The city's humans and its new Osirian governor quashed the elves' efforts in short order, but El-Shelad's citizens have a long memory.

This dislike is enhanced by the fact that a few half-elves have carved out homes in the city's worst hovels in the cramped Dirt District. Some of the city's unscrupulous half-elves, following their elven ancestors' examples, have partnered with humans to create small guilds dedicated to snatching rich families' valuables and ransoming noble children of either faction. The largest of these is called the Ruby Urchins, and is led by Kawit Haidar. Of elven and Keleshite descent, Kawit hates all members of the upper class with impunity and quietly works to subvert them in any way she can. In fact, some say only her trusted lieutenants keep Kawit from fomenting outright rebellion in the city—a task that, given her considerable talent for assassination, might be easier than the city's leaders would think.



SARITA SENBI

EL-SHELAD

N small city

Corruption +1; **Crime** +1; **Economy** +2;
Law +1; **Lore** +5; **Society** +0

Qualities academic, prosperous, racially intolerant (elves),
rumormongering citizens

Danger +5

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 9,500 (9,400 humans, 43 half-elves, 28 halflings,
22 geniekin, and 7 others)

Notable NPCs

Asad Arani (CN male human sorcerer 5)

Kawit Haidar (NE female half-elf rogue 6)

Wali Sarita Senbi (LN female human magus^{UM} 9)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 5,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 37,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 7th
Minor Items 4d4; **Medium Items** 3d4; **Major Items** 1d6

Gardens of Shepeska: At the bottom of the sheer, 200-foot Cliffs of Shepeska at the far northeastern point of Garund lives the Qali clan of desert druids. The order's founding dates back over 1,500 years, when an eccentric, outcast Garundi druid named Qali Manar experienced a series of bizarre visions. Hoping to find a place to cultivate desert gardens that would rival any jungle, he set off across the wastelands. Qali accumulated many followers during his dream-guided wanderings, which eventually led him to a massive cliff overlooking the Inner Sea. There, he and his

acolytes set to work weaving esoteric magic and cultivating the odd seeds that resulted from their prophetic rituals.

Generations later, the druids' work has resulted in lush, lichen-like foliage growing nearly to the cliff's top—a natural wonder that piques the curiosity of even Osirion's most powerful leaders. As a sign that they truly desire peace with all, the Qali druids funneled their magic into saplings, which they donated to the Shepeska Grove in Sothis. The grove remains a popular place within the city's Black Dome, and it is a reminder of the diverse and hardy folk that inhabit even Osirion's most remote locales. The druids' current leader, **Merlah Nahtia** (NG female human druid [desert druid^{APG}] 8), proudly continues the order's legacy of cultivating their hardy gardens while avoiding nearly all outside interests.

Mount Na-Ken: High in the Shining Mountains stands an isolated and sparse temple, little more than a few slabs of granite perched on a thin ledge. This is the home of the Na-Ken monks, a clan of ascetic worshipers of Irori. Unlike most Irorans, who hope to achieve perfection and thus a place in the Great Beyond, the Na-Ken monks believe the Ethereal Plane and its manifestations of dreams and nightmares offer the profound answers they seek. Furthermore, they assert that achieving the pinnacle of martial prowess will allow them unfettered access to the Ethereal Plane and provide a unique perspective of the Material Plane.

The Na-Ken monks' decision to locate their temple among the highest peaks in Osirion was motivated by their unconventional goal, as the Shining Mountains are known for having a thinner-than-normal barrier between the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane. The monks' leader, **Sethir Lannoth** (LN male human monk 12), has perfected a technique that allows a form of lucid dreaming in which hand-to-hand combat initiates brief entry to the Ethereal Plane. Thus, the Na-Ken monks obsessively train, deprive their bodies of all but the most basic necessities, and strive to merge their mountaintop temple with the Ethereal Plane.

Salt Hills: These barren badlands are geological evidence of an ancient seabed that once covered southeastern Osirion. Although the sea dried up during the Age of Creation, it left enormous salt deposits on the sandy, rolling hills that developed in its place. This hostile environment does not support any settlements—in fact, most of this region is shunned as a place of bad luck or, perhaps more rationally, as a hotbed of sinister magical influences. This wasn't always the case; several of Ancient Osirion's pharaohs thought the hills a perfect, isolated place to bury treasures and secrets.

One such example is the Oasis of Bones, located near the center of the Salt Hills. Here lie the remains of Nasamaria, doomed bride of Sethmose, the last bound male concubine of Pharaoh Kamaria the Brazen. When the evil pharaoh learned that her plaything had reunited briefly with his

beloved wife, she struck Nasamaria down and interred her remains in the remote hills. Nasamaria's corpse is guarded for all eternity by a vicious, deathless lamia, which is bound to prevent Sethmose (or those his mummy has influenced) from reuniting with his beloved.

Shining Mountains: These towering peaks, which rise unexpectedly from the Scorpion Coast's rolling sands, are home to a variety of mystical creatures. Perhaps the best-known inhabitant is Paishnia, a proud female griffon with feathers the color of tarnished gold. Far from antisocial, Paishnia is a kind and patient guardian of the mountains and her human neighbors, though they are few in number. However, Paishnia has been known to attack those who trespass too deeply into the mountains' passes, and many believe she protects a treasure of great value to her. Whether that treasure consists of gold and gems, powerful magic items, or merely a brood of young griffons is up for debate.

Although they've only been witnessed by a few adventurers' whose reports are questionable, a handful of androsphinxes—winged lions with male human heads, typically clad in a pharaoh's finery—are also said to inhabit the lower reaches of the Shining Mountains. These regal creatures are fairly solitary and barely abide each other's presence, much less that of opportunistic adventurers. It's said, though, that they have unparalleled knowledge of the ruins located in the Salt Hills and elsewhere along the Scorpion Coast, and that they might be willing to part with those details in exchange for a particular piece of information. What the androsphinxes desire to learn, however, is a mystery scholars have not yet been able to solve.

Shotep-Kara: Once a military and commercial hub connecting Tumen to the Obari Ocean, Shotep-Kara is now a watery grave for ancient monuments, crumbled temples, and docks. Activity in the port had virtually come to a halt with the passing of the Four Pharaohs of Ascension and the subsequent ruin of Tumen, and a series of earthquakes and tsunamis finally drew the city into the sea more than 3,000 years ago. Most in the Inner Sea region have forgotten that Shotep-Kara ever existed.

Although none but the most entrenched hermits still lived in Shotep-Kara when the ocean claimed it, the place remains imbued with powerful conjuration magic. At the height of the Four Pharaohs' power, this magic once contracted the distance required to travel to the far corners of Ancient Osirion and beyond. It's said that the conjuration magic persists to this day, though in a wildly unstable form. For those willing to brave the oceanic horrors and unquiet spirits that infest the waters, Shotep-Kara may offer magical passage to places that may include other planes of existence.

Temples of Pharaoh Ahn: Early in the first Age of Osirion, after the Naga Pharaoh's self-destructive reign, a short-lived ruler named Pharaoh Ahn dared to believe

himself as powerful as the god Nethys had been in life. Driven to the brink of insanity by his delusions of grandeur, Pharaoh Ahn gathered a huge contingent of slaves and sycophants and traveled south, past the Salt Hills to the feet of the Brazen Peaks. There, his wizard advisors told him, he might access the same mysterious power that they believed fueled Nethys's apotheosis.

While Pharaoh Ahn wandered the peaks looking for this nonexistent fount, his mad followers built a series of inverted pyramids made entirely of precious gems, magically impervious to mortal depredations. These structures were to serve as Pharaoh Ahn's first temples when the ruler claimed divinity. However, neither Pharaoh Ahn nor his acolytes ever returned from the peaks, and later expeditions to the temples found few traces of life there save for bloody trails leading into the pyramids. Today, only the Osirionologist **Ali Ahmendi** (N male human aristocrat 8/bard 3), a self-proclaimed descendant of Pharaoh Ahn's primary advisor, shows any significant interest in uncovering the truth about the site. Even so, Ahmendi conducts his research from the safety of Sothis, though he constantly seeks adventurers to tackle the harrowing task of exploring the temples.

Tumen: Sothis was Osirion's original capital and is its capital again today, but earlier pharaohs had different ideas. More than 6,000 years ago, at the height of their power, the Four Pharaohs of Ascension brazenly decided to construct a new capital closer to Ahn'Selota, the pyramid that housed their pact stone. The pharaohs enlisted an army of slaves to build Tumen, which they divided into four distinct sub-cities—one for each of the headstrong leaders to design as he or she saw fit.

To sustain the city, the pharaohs worked mysterious magic and accessed pure water for citizens' use. Shortly before the Four Pharaohs' fall, however, that supply began to ebb. Over the next century, Tumen's water disappeared and its people abandoned the city, leaving it to remain forever locked in a cycle of burial and excavation governed by the whim of the region's khamsin storms and the Underdunes' warring elemental clans.

Tumen is further detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Cities of Golarion*.

The Underdunes: Some of Osirion's most remarkable geographic features are these enormous trenches and mountains of sand, which the region's scalding khamsin storms and raging elementals sculpt and destroy on an ongoing basis. Travelers who wish to cross the area must balance the opportunity for faster travel against the threat of massive sand-slides that can easily wipe out entire caravans. The sheer size of this region and length of Osirion's history guarantees that monuments and ruins unknown even to the most learned Osirionologists are occasionally revealed—many for the first time in millennia.

The Underdunes play host to a variety of non-human cultures, perhaps more so than anywhere else along the Scorpion Coast. Tribes of nomadic desert giants and less transitory girtablilus can be found throughout the region, and if approached diplomatically, may even serve as allies for explorers or those who would help them quell the constant elemental warfare that plagues the region. (For more information on one such girtablilu tribe, see page 49.) The Underdunes are also home to an ancient phoenix named Firesong, who has somehow extended her life far beyond the 500 years normally allotted for such a creature's single lifetime. Some claim she has reached her great age by serving as Sarenrae's agent in the region.

Valley of the Pyramids: Recently uncovered following khamsin storms and elemental battles of particular intensity, this grouping of long-forgotten pyramids had not been fully seen since the reign of the Four Pharaohs of Ascension during Osirion's Second Age. Within this vast complex are four pyramids in a square formation. Their true purpose is not to serve as monuments but as anchors for the vast, extradimensional pyramid that houses the four pharaohs' tomb—the Veinstone Pyramid.

The Valley of the Pyramids is further detailed in *Pathfinder Module: Entombed with the Pharaohs*.



ALI AHMENDI

SOTHIS

STORMHAVEN OF OSIRION

Alignment: LN

Notable Settlement: Sothis (111,989)

Major Races: Dwarves, genie-kin, halflings, half-elves, humans

Languages: Common, Kelish, Osiriani

Resources: Antiquities, fine wares, knowledge, slaves, spellcasting services, travel

The seat of the pharaonic power and the nation's largest and most influential city, Sothis is the heart of Osirion's culture, politics, and economy. Its population sprawls to the edge of the River Sphinx's fertile flood plain, flourishing among the scattered springs and oases reputed to have sprung from the spattered blood of Ulunat, a spawn of Rovagug whose immense, scarablike shell now looms over the city's skyline. But it's the presence and influential patronage of the pharaoh that truly elevates Sothis to its status as first city of Osirion. From the Forthbringer flows all good things, and the bustling, thriving city in the desert is living proof.

The industrial and residential areas of Sothis are consigned to the area beyond the city proper by the ever-growing array of civic monuments, offices, and palaces springing up near the Black Dome and the Palace of the Forthbringer. Monuments line the major roads into the capital and dot the Old City, where visitors can spend days gazing at the impressive architecture as the work of the city buzzes on across the Crimson Canal. Many point to Sothis as the showcase for Osirion's rebirth, but for residents it's also a living, breathing city—one with civic leaders who are much more interested in their own advantage than in any lofty ideological or cultural concerns.

SOTHIS

LN metropolis

Corruption +2; **Crime** +4; **Economy** +7; **Law** +5; **Lore** +6; **Society** +4

Qualities academic, holy site (Nethys), pious (Nethys), prosperous, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 111,989 (87,453 humans, 6,055 dwarves, 4,918 halflings, 3,361 elves, 2,266 gnomes, 1,924 half-elves, 1,563 genie-kin, 1,109 half-orcs, 3,340 other)

Notable NPCs

First Speaker Dahnakrist Phi, (NG male human bard 3/ commoner 6)

High Priest of Pharamasma Inebni Andebar (NG male human cleric of Pharamasma 14)

High Priestess of Nethys Nefreti Clepati (N female human cleric of Nethys 7/wizard 3/mystic theurge 10)

Khopheshman of Sothis (LN male human aristocrat 3/fighter 12)

Ruby Prince Khemet III (LN male human cleric of Abadar 15)

"Sidewise" Kepi Tel (CG female human rogue 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 25,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 150,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 9th
Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

GEOGRAPHY

Sothis consists of 16 major districts, most of which encompass numerous smaller neighborhoods. Over the millennia, the various districts have grown ever more idiosyncratic and culturally distinct, and many residents spend their whole lives within just a mile of their birthplace.

The Old City lies east of the Crimson Canal, surrounding the Black Dome and encompassed by the old city wall, which is now pierced in numerous places by the streets that connect the Old City with the rest of Sothis. The district's proximity to the seat of pharaonic power has caused much of it to be converted from residential buildings into civic offices and ceremonial spaces. Plazas, fountains, and palaces now occupy most of the Old City, with narrow strips of apartments lining the side streets and alleys. The major exception to the scenic grandeur is the Malhitu Bazaar, a gargantuan public market of temporary stalls and tremendous racket.

Across the Crimson Canal from the Old City is the Canal District, where the supplemental canals provide transport through the city's industrial heart. Since the Canal District hasn't experienced the periodic building campaigns of the Old City, it still maintains the something of the look of ancient Sothis—crooked, narrow streets and ancient buildings piled atop one another.

At the upper edge of the city (Sothans think in terms of "lower and upper" instead of "northern and southern," respectively, because of the flow of the Crimson Canal and the Sphinx beyond), the Crimson Island is a seedy area separated from the rest of the city by particularly wide canals. The Crimson Island functions as a sort of free market, though it's heavily monitored by the Eyes of Sothis—the city's watch and primary law-enforcement—the Ministry of Culture, and other organizations who keep a close eye on what and who is bought and sold in the district. The Eyes of Sothis in particular have led a number of campaigns into the district in an attempt to clean up crime throughout the city, concentrating on shutting down unsavory businesses before they spread further corruption.

Northwest of the Canal District sits the Street of Artisans, a district of crafters who supply much of the fine goods for the rest of the city and beyond, from metalwork to furniture and sculpture. This is also home to many experts on the arts and architecture of Ancient Osirion, who use their expertise to create modern examples of the style, either to sell as homage or to pass as the real thing.

Sphinxside encompasses the northwest quarter of the city, a down-at-heels neighborhood slowly being digested by the Necropolis of the Faithful. Many less successful artisans and merchants make their homes here, moving “down canal” as their fortunes wane.

Surrounded by prosperous neighborhoods that have systematically pushed out urban squalor in favor of monuments and mansions, the Rose Quarter is one of the last the bastions of illicit commerce east of the Crimson Canal (along with the frenetic Malhitu Bazaar). Unlike in Malhitu, the atmosphere of the Rose Quarter is slow and leisurely, as if the district knew that time has passed it by and it were happier that way. The Rose Quarter is most famous among desert explorers as home to the Unwinking Eye, a curio shop that boasts the best collection of Ancient Osirian artifacts outside of the Sothis Exhibitory—and asks no questions.

The periphery of Sothis is home to several prosperous districts boasting large oasis circles with fountains, wide avenues and other amenities. These suburbs are home to civil servants, wealthy merchants and artisans, and the mansions of the noble families. Aru-Da, Grand Oasis, Marblecourt, the Palms, and Peacock Square all ring the northeastern edge of the city, with Oldstone, Newstone, Triangle Gate, and Baza’s Pool anchoring the southern edge.

GOVERNMENT

As both a national capital and a vast metropolis, Sothis must play host to two very large and complex intertwined bureaucracies. The Council of the Sun and Sky represents all of Osirion but meddles constantly in city politics, especially under the leadership of First Speaker Dahnakrist Phi, the outspoken and populist former slave.

The First Captain of the Risen Guard, sworn to protect the Ruby Prince, is also Commander of the Eyes of Sothis, whose duty it is to maintain the peace and sweep crime from the city streets. The holder of these titles sets aside his name and former identity and adopts the name of his favored weapon, for he is nothing but a weapon whose sole purpose is to protect the pharaoh and his capital. Currently, the Kopesman of Sothis fills this role, having taken up the mantle from the Spearwoman of Sothis in 4704 AR.

Each city district has its own council, most which have at least one member sitting on Sothis’s Council of the Sun and Sky, ostensibly looking after the interests of Sothis as a whole but also well placed to do favors for those who keep them in power in their home districts. Making contacts on these district councils can yield dividends when dealing with the Eyes of Sothis as well, since the precincts are often heavily influenced by their local councilors. Politicking come to a sudden stop, however, if the Risen Guard or other hard-line elements of the Forthbringer’s bureaucracy come into play, and wise political operatives know when to knuckle down and follow the rules.

Residents of Sothis generally regard the lands beyond the capital as backward hinterlands. This attitude rubs the leaders of Osirion’s other major cities the wrong way, and wise Sothans who visit these metropolises work hard to avoid offending the locals.

HISTORY

Sothis is the oldest permanent settlement in Osirion, founded by Azghaad I as a fitting monument to his victory over Ulunat, around whose shell the city was formed. The shelter of Ulunat’s carapace has lent Sothis its enduring sobriquet of “Stormhaven of Osirion.” The city is far enough away from the Sphinx to avoid seasonal flooding, but that same distance stunted trade until the Crimson Canal was built. History is unclear on whether Azghaad or his successor, the Naga Pharaoh, commissioned the canal, but its construction marked the beginning of a population explosion; 500 years later, the city’s inhabitants had spilled over the walls, requiring the excavation of the supplementary canals that connect sections of the capital.

The fortunes of Sothis have risen and fallen with Osirion’s fortunes as a whole, though dynasties that chose



KOPESHMAN
OF SOTHIS

THE RISEN GUARD

Not all who die in the service of the Ruby Prince are gone forever. The Risen Guard are the elite bodyguards of the Forthbringer dynasty, distinguished by meeting an early death defending their charges—or willingly sacrificing themselves to prove their loyalty—and being raised from the dead. Each newly resurrected Risen Guard is expected to forswear all outside connections and allegiances, often going so far as to take a new name. It's not uncommon for those among the Risen Guard to have died more than once fulfilling their duties, though a commission in the Guard does nothing to ensure immortality—members die of old age like anyone else. Rumors persist, however, that some of them are not immediately raised after their willing deaths and forswearing into the organization, but are instead stockpiled against some future calamity, and that the Forthbringers might thus have access to a significantly greater number of loyal fighters than anyone suspects.

Perhaps 500 agents of the Risen Guard are active at any given time. The bulk of these are stationed in Sothis at the Palace of the Forthbringer, though a large contingent travels with the Ruby Prince whenever he leaves the city. A dozen or more Risen Guards are always within sight of the Forthbringer and many more scout out a wider perimeter, vigilant against far-reaching assaults. Members of the Risen Guard serve as commanders and generals of Osirion's armies, ensuring not only that the Ruby Prince has a direct link to those in charge of his armies, but also that each commander has been tested for her loyalty and combat prowess before assuming command.

In overall command of the Risen Guard is the Khopeshman of Sothis, a personal confidante of the Ruby Prince and a man whose past before joining the Risen Guard is the subject of rumor rather than record. Unlike other members, he is a major political figure, serving as Commander of the Eyes of Sothis and dealing with situations that if left untended could result in him having to die for the Forthbringer a fourth time.

to locate their capitals elsewhere (such as the Four Pharaohs of Ascension, who built Tumen as their capital) temporarily diminished Sothis's influence. Now, with the rise of the Forthbringers, the city's power waxes again, seemingly with no end in sight.

GAZETTEER

As the sixth-largest settlement in the Inner Sea region, Sothis is host to literally hundreds of sites of interest, from places of power to holy sites to the very buildings in which the movers and shakers of the nation do their work. The following is just a sampling of the city's many offerings.

Azghaad's Spire: Rising from the sprawling Temple of the All-Seeing Eye, Azghaad's Spire is a monument to the first ruler of Ancient Osirion, who smote Ulunat and founded Sothis. The magic used in its construction kept it strong through the intervening millennia until it was ultimately demolished by the Qadirans, who feared it would become a symbol of Osirian pride. Rebuilt following the advent of the Forthbringers, the spire is now among the highest edifices in Sothis, as tall as the High Temple of Pharasma and second only to the Black Dome itself.

A single staircase winds up Azghaad's Spire to a lone chamber at the tower's peak. A translucent, amber-colored roof of desert glass, purportedly taken from the tomb of Azghaad himself, caps the chamber. The clerics of Nethys who guard the spire are close-mouthed about the capstone and whether they know the location of Azghaad's tomb.

Black Dome: The Black Dome towers above the skyline of Sothis, the first thing travelers see as they approach the city and the last they glimpse as they leave. The dome is not an architectural edifice in any conventional sense of the world, but rather the iridescent carapace of a truly titanic scarab beetle. By legend, that beetle was Ulunat, one of the Spawn of Rovagug, and tales claim Azghaad slew the titanic creature by channeling the power of then-*proto-god* Nethys. Other tales suggest the carapace lay at the site long before the time of Azghaad. All agree, however, that the shelter given by the carapace contributed to Sothis's geographical placement.

The Black Dome is the most exclusive part of the city, given over entirely to the palaces, monuments, and parks of the elite. Numerous gates pierce the carapace at ground level, but otherwise the coverage is complete. Magical lights illuminate the interior, arranged on the dome's interior in the pattern of the constellations, shining down upon the palaces below even during the daytime hours.

As the home of both the Ruby Prince the most influential citizens of Osirion, the Black Dome is heavily guarded. Entrance is granted by invitation only; a lottery of 100 invitations per day allows the public access to their government representatives within the dome, but many believe the selection of lottery winners is a corrupt process that rewards only those who bribe their way inside.

Council of the Sun and Sky: An innovation of Khemet I, the first native ruler of Osirion's new age, the Council of the Sun and Sky does the heavy lifting of government allowing the Ruby Prince to deal with loftier concerns. Because of the extreme discretion granted the council, those council members with high levels of influence are major power players in the city at large. The council can make or break nearly any commercial enterprise, and money flows through the hands of councilors as a regular part of doing business. Particularly greedy councilors are subject to removal from their posts, but the Ruby Prince seems to turn a blind eye to what he deems reasonable graft.



Some independent-minded and idiosyncratic councilors aren't afraid to wield their influence and resources to investigate reports of corruption among the aristocracy and nobility. Appointees from outlying cities are particularly likely to disregard the careful alliances built by the Sothan elite, and befriending one of these maverick councilors is a good way to circumvent the elaborate and intractable hierarchies of Sothan life.

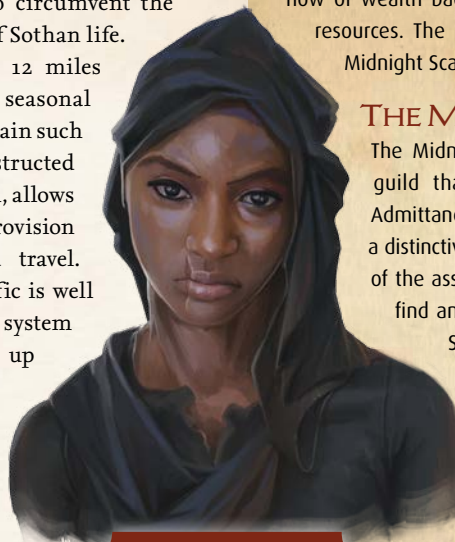
Crimson Canal: Sothis is situated 12 miles from the River Sphinx, far from the seasonal floods and necessary agriculture to sustain such a large city. The Crimson Canal, constructed during the early days of Ancient Osirion, allows maritime and river trade to feed and provision Sothis without relying on overland travel. The canal is quite wide, and river traffic is well organized as a result of a right of way system and a guild of pilots who direct ships up and down the waterway. Watchers on the Eye of Sothis, the canal's sole island, oversee the entire operation.

Many branches of the canal cut into the western portions of the city, providing easy transportation of goods and keeping the main branch of the canal free from congestion. Outside Sothis, the canal runs primarily east and west, and provides just enough current to keep the water moving while still allowing for easy counter-current travel.

The boat pilots who ply the canals are common brokers of information regarding the movements of prominent Sothans and the whereabouts of notable shipments. They can be powerful allies to smugglers and bounty hunters alike, but the head of the Boatman's Guild is the upstanding Bonuwat ex-slave "Sidewise" Kepi Tel, Lady of the Canals, who discourages illicit activity among her fellow pilots, even going so far as to sabotage the boats of those who defy her orders to obey the law.

Eye of Sothis: The Eye of Sothis is a large island in the middle of the Crimson Canal. On its lower end lies the First Fortress of the city watch, who themselves are known as the Eyes of Sothis, both because of the location of their headquarters and their role in overseeing the city. The city watch also includes a large commercial division that keeps order on the canal by means of signal flags and the ubiquitous pilots who ensure commercial transports remain on the straight and narrow. The upper end of the island is home to the city's busiest commercial docks, and to the many warehouses that collect and disperse the myriad goods ever moving up and down the Crimson Canal.

At the center of the Eye of Sothis is a large, low plaza, pierced by an ancient tower dedicated to Azghaad I, which has been updated with the images of subsequent



"SIDewise"
KEPI TEL

ASSASSINS AND THIEVES

No city the size of Sothis would be complete (or would even function, according to some) without the presence of powerful and influential thieves' and assassins' guilds to keep those in power fearful and maintain a constant flow of wealth back from the rich to those with fewer resources. The most notable of these guilds are the Midnight Scarabs and the Wind Serpents.

THE MIDNIGHT SCARABS

The Midnight Scarabs are a storied assassins' guild that operates in Sothis and beyond. Admittance to their ranks is gained by acquiring a distinctive onyx scarab and presenting it to one of the assassins. While it's almost impossible to find an onyx scarab by chance, the Midnight Scarabs sometimes place the tokens in the paths of especially promising potential members as tests to see whether they've heard of the guild and would like to join. Even more closely held rumors suggest the scarabs are actually *figurines of wondrous power* that allow the assassins to kill with a command word known only to the members of the elite guild. The

Midnight Scarabs like having a monopoly on the figurines, and anybody who finds one and hasn't the wherewithal to present it to the guild is walking with a target on her back.

WIND SERPENTS

The Wind Serpents are a well-known thieves' guild in Sothis, though locals don't usually discuss them with outsiders. The Wind Serpents are mostly accomplished tomb raiders and desert adventurers who have retired from the risky life of looting tombs in favor of stealing ancient treasures from collectors and dealers. The Wind Serpents have relationships with many of the major fences and smugglers in Sothis, as well as enough agents of the Ministry of Culture to get the government to turn a blind eye at appropriate moments. Their modus operandi puts them in frequent conflict with the Pathfinder Society, but they prefer to pick on smaller operators who can't retaliate as easily. Thus the Wind Serpents and the Pathfinder Society maintain an uneasy truce, both trying to stay out of each other's way and to keep their activities from coming under the glare of the Eyes of Sothis.

pharaohs in bas-relief, and recently has also been made taller to accommodate the latter-day rulers. Some of these visages have been defaced with chisels or magic, and the spire provides at best an incomplete record of Osirion's



pharaonic lineage. The plaza provides a broad avenue for goods and people moving over the Crimson Canal across the great bridges, as well as an open-air market replete with “plaza philosophers” hawking their views on everything from religion to governance.

High Temple of Pharama: Similar to how Pharama’s Spire rises above the Outer Planes, the High Temple of Pharama looms over the ever-expanding Necropolis of the Faithful. The temple is presided over by High Priest Inebni Andabar, whose priests spend much of their time tending to the resting places of those in the necropolis below as well as consoling or consulting with bereaved loved ones. The temple is an elaborate but somber affair, and rises taller than any other building west of the Crimson Canal.

Malhitu Bazaar: Malhitu Bazaar takes up much of the southeastern part of the Old City, and is located close enough to the Black Dome to be handy, but far enough for the cacophony not to intrude on the elite. The bazaar is a huge expanse of open-air markets, tents, and pavilions, many of which move from day to day and season to season. The only fixed points are the tents of the auction houses to the north and the slave stockades of the south, with the stockades’ attendant city guard outpost. In the auction

houses, a well-heeled buyer can come away with anything from commodities in bulk to precious Osirian artifacts, though only artifacts that have been approved for sale by the Ministry of Culture can legally be bought here. Black market goods, however, can be found in the bazaar’s dark corners, safely out of the public eye.

Menetnashte’s Orrery: Rising from a park near the center of the Black Dome, Menetnashte’s Orrery is a giant model of the solar system, depicting Golarion’s sun and all of its planets and their moons. The orrery can be controlled from a large room at its base, and can be set to depict the accurate positions of the planets and their satellites at any point in the past or future. While the orrery is itself mechanical, the stars that line the inside of the Black Dome are magically keyed to it, and shift into their past or future configurations along with the orrery. Thus the orrery is shifted only infrequently, briefly, and for specific purposes, as the wheeling stars can be disconcerting and the many astronomers who make regular use of the dome’s interior ceiling dislike having their observations interrupted.

Necropolis of the Faithful: Shepherded by the church of Pharama, the Necropolis of the Faithful is an ever-expanding presence in northwestern Sothis. The church



has enough money that it can buy buildings just to knock them down to add space to the necropolis. As comparatively wealthy parts of Sphinxside resist the encroachment of the hallowed grounds, the edges of the necropolis bulge out between them like a plant bursting from a pot.

On a daily basis, the necropolis bustles with mourners and loved ones, along with the scores of Pharasmin clerics who aid these visitors and maintain the funerary edifices and walkways. Every night, the public is ushered from the grounds and the Pharasmins retreat to the High Temple, leaving the necropolis to another, darker company—an occult order of exorcists whose main purpose is eradicating any uneasy dead who shuffle the necropolis's streets at night as well as keeping the populace unaware of these undead beings' existence.

Palace of the Forthbringer: The largest and most impressive structure under the Black Dome, and thus in all of Osirion, is the Palace of the Forthbringer, a huge complex of towers, domes, and gardens. Inside the palace is an earthly paradise of perfectly but mysteriously maintained grounds, and a constant, gentle breeze dispels the summer heat yet seems not to increase the nocturnal chill.

While the carnelian-domed towers of the main palace are well known to the Sothan elite, the private lives of the Ruby Prince and his family are completely protected in an adjoining, exclusive-access compound about which outsiders can only speculate. In truth, more elementals than Osirian nobles and servants populate the palace, and the most important building in the complex is the unadorned red sandstone edifice where the Ruby Prince summons and binds his elemental allies and workers.

Sandswept Hall: Sandswept Hall was once a high-security prison, but fell into disuse during the Keleshite occupation. It has recently seen a renaissance as Sothis's Pathfinder Society lodge. The Pathfinders are grateful for the unusually secure premises, and happy to supplement their lodge income by housing prisoners for private parties in cells that aren't employed for mundane storage or other purposes. The Pathfinders are famously indiscriminate about the prisoners they house, as long as the price is right, though they are careful not to take any "clients" who might get them in trouble with the Ruby Prince.

Pathfinders based in Sothis have become experts at identifying, researching, and safely handling ancient Osirian artifacts and have an extensive smuggling network for getting such artifacts out of the country without risking their confiscation by agents of the Ruby Prince. **Norden Balentiir** (N male human alchemist 12) oversees the lodge, though other venture-captains have been known to operate independently elsewhere in Sothis, always deferring to the official head of Pathfinder operations at Sandswept Hall.

Shepeskan Grove: The Shepeskan Grove is a garden of trees that were given to the Forthbringers as saplings by the

Qali druids of the Gardens of Shepeska along the Scorpion Coast. The slow-growing trees host several varieties of magical lichens that dampen the city noise within the grove, providing a contemplative atmosphere for philosophers and diviners of the court practicing their crafts.

Sothis Exhibitory: The finest museum in Osirion, the Sothis Exhibitory is the public annex of a much larger collection of artifacts and historical objects that have been assembled by the Ministry of Culture. The open vistas and sunny courtyards of the low, sprawling exhibitory belie the extremely high levels of magical security that protect the treasures on display. The museum caters to those rich enough to make large donations, but the museum is open to all Osirian citizens—as long as they win the daily lottery to gain entry into the Black Dome. The exhibitory includes an even more secure annex of powerful magical artifacts and weapons, from the *Helm of Tened-Hep* to the *Crook of Plagues*, but access to this portion of the museum is granted by pharaonic invitation only.

Temple of the All-Seeing Eye: The temple of Nethys is actually a sprawling compound of concentric temples, centered on the reconstructed Azghaad's Spire. The inner circles of the temple, and the spire itself, are restricted to clerics of Nethys, though it's said that the Ruby Prince walks those halls on occasion. As the largest temple to Nethys in a city reputedly founded in part by the god himself, the Temple of the All-Seeing Eye is regarded by its clergy as well as many of the faithful at large as the preeminent shrine to the god of magic. Chief among these priests is the venerable Garundi cleric and mage Nefreti Clepati, who's indisputably one of the most powerful spellcasters in the Inner Sea.

Among the historical treasures of the temple is a chunk of the original Azghaad's Spire, complete with the blacked outline of Jetrieti V, the Insatiable Pharaoh, indelibly marked on the stone. The stone's scars mark where he was affixed to the ancient spire as a warning to those pharaohs who would, through hubris, loot the tombs of their predecessors.

Temple of the Eternal Sun: Sothis's premier temple to Sarenrae is a striking combination of Qadiran and Osirian architecture, as the temple is built onto the former palace of the Qadiran satraps. The Cult of the Dawnflower cemented its relationship with the Forthbringers by handing over all of the last satrap's treasures (as well as by rendering other services, if the rumors are to be believed), so the temple has little material wealth, though the Osirian and Sarenite iconography in the white and gold palace is luxuriant.

The temple is meant to be a tangible example of the efforts of the Dawnflower's clerics to help Osirion get past the indignities of the former Qadiran occupation. Thus the clerics' public expressions of loyalty to the newly risen Osirion are at least somewhat believable, but perhaps only the Ruby Prince knows for sure how far the Cult of the Dawnflower can be trusted.

THE SPHINX BASIN

FERTILE HEARTLAND OF THE LAND OF PHAROHS

Alignment: N

Notable Settlements: An (38,200), Djefet (1,876) Kalit (169), Sothis (111,989), Tephu (19,480), Totra (52,360), Wati (7,300)

Major Races: Humans, lizardfolk, shaitans, water elementals

Languages: Aquan, Common, Draconic, Keleshite, Osiriani

Resources: Boats, grain, papyrus, quarried stone, seafood

The Sphinx Basin has been populated since before written history, its fertile land and mild climate providing shelter for isolated tribes after Earthfall turned northern Garund to desert. The area was home to feuding nomadic tribes until Azghaad founded Sothis in the shadow of his slain foe, Ulunat, but even then many small settlements dotted the basin. Since Osirion's rise, the long, narrow river valley has been the center of the civilization, the sturdy trunk from which all of its various branches depend. Yet the great cities of the Sphinx (with the exception of Sothis) are all recent by the standards of the ancient civilization. Of the three cities of the south, Tephu is the oldest, built near the end of the First Age of Osirion. An wasn't built for another 15 centuries after that, and Wati was built only a couple of hundred years before the Qadiran invasion. The growth of the sister cities eventually transformed the Sphinx Basin into a broader population center rather than leaving the region to remain merely the hinterlands of Sothis.

The heart of the Sphinx Basin is the River Sphinx, among the largest rivers on Garund. The river is wide and lazy all the way from its confluence at Wati to its marshy delta north of Sothis. The banks are naturally boggy and clotted with papyrus reeds, lotus flowers, and other swamp verdure, but this has been cleared away from most of its length in favor of easy navigation and maximized farmland. The Sphinx floods in a yearly cycle, rejuvenating the farmland and forcing villages to be evacuated and rebuilt. Consequently, the settlements along the Sphinx are portable; the buildings are constructed of wood and reeds and sit on permanent stone foundations much of the year, but can be carried inland when the river floods.

Beyond several miles of irrigated farmland, the desert holds sway. The ferocious khamsin winds fall short of the cultivated lands as if the desert feared to touch the river's edge. Monsters of the deep desert similarly avoid the farms and irrigation ditches of the Sphinx. The Sphinx Basin region encompasses the nearest stretches of desert, those within a day's walk from the banks. Its dunes, mountains, and pyramids are almost always in sight from any point on the Sphinx.

Many historians have described the Sphinx Basin as a pendulum, with Sothis as the anchor and all the rest of the weight down at the bottom. It's an apt metaphor, as the middle stretches of the basin have few major population centers and little industry. Rather, every village has a small wharf where finished goods are unloaded and agricultural produce is loaded onto the merchant barges that ply the river. The sister cities of An, Tephu, and Wati combined have only half the population of Sothis, but their close proximity and industry give them a certain cultural heft that the thousands of farmers spread along the length of the Sphinx can't match. One day, perhaps, the springs of Sothis will reach their limits, the sister cities will hit their stride, and the relationship will reverse. In the meantime, the cities take comfort in their relative position as sophisticated islands in a sea of rustic farmland and desert.

While the sister cities are in Sothis's shadow, Totra sits alone on the coast of the Inner Sea, controlling the lion's share of the trade through the Osirian Desert and points west. Better positioned on the sea-lanes than is riverine Sothis, Totra continues to make money hand over fist, even though the imperial bureaucracy skims off much of the excess.

GAZETTEER

The Sphinx Basin is easily the most densely populated region of Osirion, and thus offers numerous locations of interest along its roughly 200-mile length. These range from small fishing villages to some of the nation's largest and most influential cities—including its capital, Sothis, which is fully detailed on pages 32–37. Below are a number of unique sites of interest that may be found along the fertile artery that sustains the nation of Osirion.

An: An is known as the City of Triangles because of the aesthetically intriguing symmetry and prominence of the Shining Mountains to the northeast and the great pyramids to the south, the most prominent of which is the Pyramid of Kamaria the Brazen. Since its appellation stuck, the city has tried to live up to its name—much of its architecture and street layout is triangular. One of the city's most noteworthy features is the series of pyramids that serve as its civic buildings, housing living scribes and bureaucrats instead of dead pharaohs. Most of An is set back from the Sphinx River, and great stone levees protect it from the yearly floods. The wharf district, on the other hand, is entirely wooden, set on pilings that allow it to rise and fall during the flood season.

**AN**

LN metropolis

Corruption +4; **Crime** +4; **Economy** +7; **Law** +5; **Lore** +6;
Society +4**Qualities** academic, magically attuned, prosperous, strategic
location, tourist attraction**Danger** +10**DEMOGRAPHICS****Government** autocracy**Population** 38,200 (30,638 humans, 3,413 half-elves,
1,545 elves, 1,293 halflings, 769 dwarves, 542 other)**Notable NPCs****Governor Leksi Mebar** (LN female human aristocrat 8)**High Priest Rakon Shebes** (CN male human cleric of Nethys 17)**Major Calphi Hapsin of the Risen Guard** (LN female half-elf
rogue 8)**Raffa Admepi** (CE female half-orc inquisitor of Rovagug 7)**Sep Adit, Master of the Tripoint Arena** (CN male human
cavalier 5/commoner 2)**MARKETPLACE****Base Value** 28,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 170,000 gp;**Spellcasting** 9th**Minor Items** all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

An was founded almost by accident by Hirkoshek I, who was just trying to create an efficient base camp for all the slaves and materials needed to construct his grand pyramid to the city's south. The spot proved useful to the subsequent pharaohs, and it grew into a full-fledged city. The pharaohs began looking elsewhere for burial after Kamaria was interred in her pyramid, but An already had all of the infrastructure needed to be self-sustaining.

The most famous triangle in the city proper is the Tripoint Arena, a fighting pit that attracts some of the toughest gladiators of the Inner Sea region to try their mettle against each other and against Osirion's signature beasts, from giant scorpions to hetkoshu crocodiles. The arena's master of ceremonies is the Katapeshi ex-slave Sep Adit; he gained his freedom in the Grand Coliseum in Katapesh before moving north and winning an unprecedented 188 bouts in the arena, and eventually took over the arena's operations.

As with all of the Sphinx River cities, An is an agricultural center, but it also has many marble and sandstone quarries, which account for much of its major trade up and down the Sphinx. The rectilinear pits and ridges of the quarries are put to good use once the usable stone is gone, converted to underground warehouses, granaries, and even apartment blocks for the steadily growing population.

The recent antiquities rush, caused by the Ruby Prince opening the deserts to outside exploration, has boosted the local economy; even the well-picked pyramids in the vicinity have attracted adventurers eager to find

something the last thousand overlooked. The hope isn't entirely unreasonable, as adventurers fairly regularly discover minor tombs or side-chambers in even long-ransacked pyramids.

All of the usual dangers apply to the tomb hunting that goes on in the pyramids south of the City of Triangles, with one extra hazard unique to the area. The Pyramid of Kamaria the Brazen is an important site for the Cult of Rovagug, and is rumored to house secret links to the Darklands and even other planes. Led by the enigmatic Raffa Admepi, the cult is also active within the city, where the cultists mostly keep their heads down, but they have been known to befriend adventurers under false pretenses, then lure them into traps and murderous rites. The Ruby Prince's minions are well aware of the cult's activities, tacitly allowing them to continue as a way to keep an eye of the devotees of the Rough Beast.

The city's proximity to so many tombs and ancient pyramids has attracted another religion to establish itself in the city center: the faithful of Nethys. These seekers of knowledge support adventurers whom they trust to share their discoveries with them, and are often in direct conflict with Rovagug's faithful, who seek to destroy the relics of the past in honor of their god. The Pyramid of Lore, the primary Nethysian temple in An, is one of the largest outside of Sothis, and is headed by High Priest Rakon Shebes.

Djefet, Village of the Ashen Curse: Djefet looks just like any other small town in the Sphinx Basin—lightweight reed-and-wood buildings on stone foundations surrounding a stone wharf. The wharf is wide and long, however, and the barges that trade with the village undergo an elaborate procedure that conjures images of the riddle of the wheat, the goose, and the fox. No one from the outside world wants to set foot in the village or stand too near its residents, as Djefet labors under an ancient curse that causes those who live there to turn ash-colored as they enter adulthood, wrinkling and withering away prematurely. The village is still going strong, as the first few who tried to leave to escape the curse found themselves unable to do so through persistent happenstance and coincidences keeping them in the village. The lore of the village speaks of a lost artifact that, if recovered, would end the curse. The artifact is supposed to rest in the Pillars of the Sun, a location well out of reach of the withered villagers.

Hungry Sepulcher: Kemusar I ruled Osirion after the dismemberment and interment of An-Hepsu XI, the Incorruptible Pharaoh, and he may have had a hand in An-Hepsu's defeat and the occlusion of his tomb. In a horrible symmetry, his own premature death is rumored to have been at the hands of his ward, Pharaoh Sekhemib I. Kemusar was a powerful necromancer and his grizzly death ("K is for Kemusar, a crocodile's feast," as the line

of the children's rhyme goes) wasn't enough to keep him from his vengeance. His unfinished and untenanted tomb became unmoored from geography, disappearing from the royal necropolis and heralding a series of disappearances of 10 members of the court linked to Kemusar's death. Other members of the court were plagued by terrible nightmares of something terrible beneath the sands and the ghostly admonition: "Till my betrayers and their heirs are dead, sand and soul are one. An-Hepsu XI must never be freed."

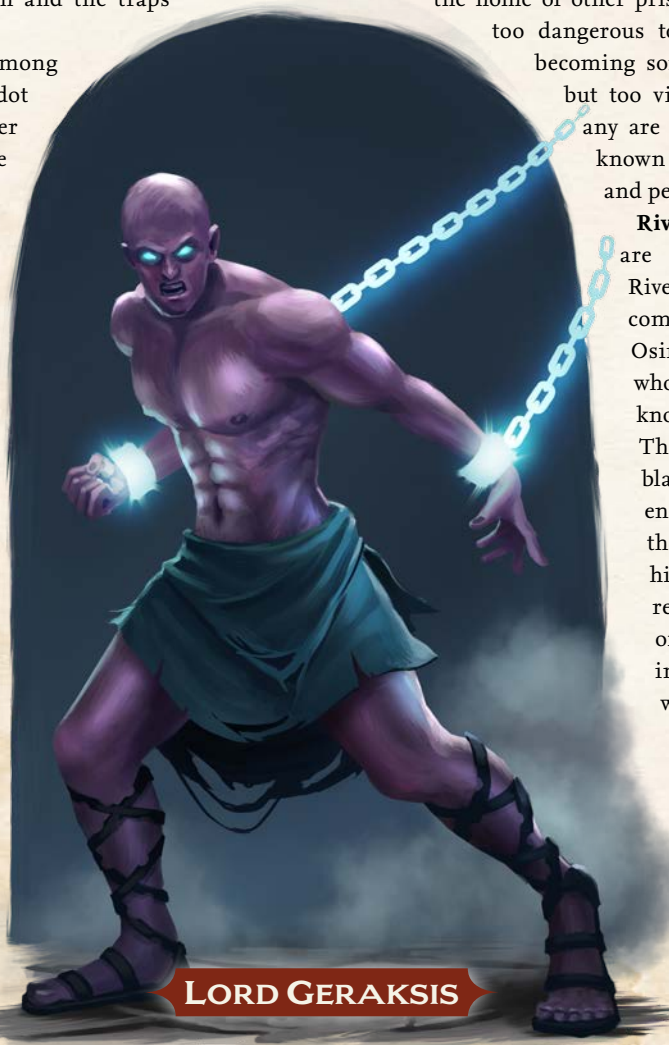
The Hungry Sepulcher (as it came to be known) appears from time to time, seemingly at random along the banks of the Sphinx. Every appearance coincides with a mysterious death, usually of a descendent of a courtiers from Kemusar's court. Some investigators believe there's a pattern to the location of the appearances and hope to learn enough to be present when it next appears, either to loot the well-stocked tomb or to search the sepulcher for a greater prize: information on the location of the Tomb of the Incorruptible Pharaoh and the traps and wards that guard it.

Kalit, Village of Stories: Among the farming villages that dot the middle stretch of the River Sphinx is Kalit. This otherwise unexceptional village has for thousands of years maintained an odd practice: Every time strangers come through the village, the village elders interview them about their lives. The elders are highly insistent, and it's a rare traveler who manages not to share her life story. The elders preserve the stories orally, and once every decade those stories deemed important or special are committed to papyrus. Kalit now holds an extensive but idiosyncratic history of Osirion and the other lands of the Inner Sea, told via countless life stories. Lately, more adventurers have come to Kalit, eager to share their stories in exchange for the opportunity to study

the archives' more ancient tales—many of which contain clues that could lead to new discoveries.

Prison Barge of Ap-Tula: The Prison Barge of Ap-Tula is a floating fortress, hundreds of feet long with thick cedar walls. The Prison was created to house the shaitan Lord Geraksis after he was captured by Menedes XX (who was also known for reinstating slavery in Osirion after his great-grandfather outlawed the practice). Lord Geraksis had boasted that no prison could hold him because of his friendship with the spirits of the earth, so Menedes imprisoned him in a gaol that was never to touch land. The prison ship has survived more than 3,000 years by avoiding conflict, hiding deep in the Sphinx Delta through periods of instability only to come back out into the open in times of peace. Lord Geraksis is still presumed to be onboard, though the secretive order that guards the prison allows no visitors, and nobody outside the order has gone inside and returned to tell about it. Over the millennia, the prison barge has been the home of other prisoners who were deemed too dangerous to kill (for fear of them becoming something more powerful) but too vile to let loose. Whether any are currently held within is known only to the barge's crew—and perhaps to the Ruby Prince.

River Sphinx: Those who are unaccustomed to the River Sphinx see it as placid compared to the rest of Osirion's waters, but those who travel it regularly know of its many dangers. The hetkoshus, terrible black-scaled crocodiles of enormous size, are only the most obvious hazard—hippopotamuses, venomous reed vipers, various species of carnivorous fish, giant insects, and predatory water fowl round out the river's dangerous fauna. Bandits plague the more desolate stretches of river, launching their skiffs from reed-obscured shores or camouflaging themselves under hollow shells made to look like crocodiles



LORD GERAKSIS



and hippopotamuses. These bandits are often in league with local villagers who hide the thieves and tip them off in exchange for a modest cut of the take, making the pirates difficult to root out. Capricious water elementals lord over some areas of the river, especially the widest or most isolated sections, though sometimes they can be appeased with unpredictable gifts when avoiding them isn't possible.

Sphinx Delta: From a few miles below Sothis all the way to the Inner Sea lies the Sphinx Delta. Here the Sphinx breaks up into scores of sluggish, shallow channels, most choked with weeds and surrounding marshy islands and sand bars that shift with the seasons. There is almost always one main channel that is used by deep draft ships, and when this is not the case, a channel is dredged by means magical and mundane. The main channels—which shift from year to year—are well patrolled and well charted, but monitoring the backwaters isn't worth the effort, and the swamps are home not only to ferocious beasts from hydras to basilisks but tribes of isolationist lizardfolk as well. The unmapped and rarely traveled waterways of the delta also provide a haven for fugitives, as well as cults of Erastil, Gogunta, and Hanspur.

Swells of Gozreh: A shallowly submerged shelf of land out to sea from the mouth of the River Sphinx, the Swells of Gozreh are marked by rolling waves seemingly impervious to changes in the weather. Ships that sail the crystal clear swells are treated to the remarkable sight of extensive coral reefs growing in profusion on the sandy bottom. The floor of this submarine plateau is home to a large colony of aquatic elves whose modest coral buildings are visible from the surface. The elves venerate Gozreh, and Osirian sailors believed they have incredible influence over the weather and sea conditions in the area. It's common practice for superstitious sailors traveling through the area to drop small treasures over the side in the hope such offerings will bring them good weather and favorable currents for the rest of their journey. The elves aren't typically seen wearing this wealth or using it to adorn their settlement—perhaps they either hoard it deeper beneath the waves or trade it away to nearby merfolk settlements.

Tephu: Known as the City of the Reed People, Tephu sits on a small rise in the marshy region where the Crook meets the Asp and the Sphinx begins. The reeds of the marshes are the material from which papyrus is

created, so Tephu has always been closely identified with scribes and learning. The Tephu Academy of Scribes trains the army of young scholars who ultimately fill the ranks of the temples, the universities, and the imperial bureaucracy. The city boasts one of the largest libraries in the Inner Sea region; its contents date back to the era of Ancient Osirion, and have been carefully guarded for millennia (which saved many key documents whose other, more accessible copies were destroyed during the Qadiran purge). Access to the archives is highly sought after by Osirionologists, explorers, and treasure hunters hoping to glean knowledge of sites missed by less careful eyes, a fact that the city's current governor, **Deka An-Keret** (LN female human cleric of Nethys 10), exploits economically and for political influence. For more information on Tephu, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #81: The Shifting Sands*.

Tomb of Statues: The Tomb of Statues contains the remains of An-Hepsu III's family and retainers, though that's not why it is renowned—many Osirian tombs boast similar contents. What makes this place remarkable is the method of preservation: rather than kill the late pharaoh's family and slaves or bury them alive, An-Hepsu's medusa consort turned them all to stone. For more information on the Tomb of Statues, see page 51.

Totra: The city of Totra is the second largest port in Osirion after Sothis, a spectacular natural harbor surrounded by headlands and ridges that protect it from storms of both sea and sand. The harbor of Totra is actually three separate harbors divided by dual peaks—the Outer Harbor and the Deep Harbor cater to open ocean merchant vessels and warships while the Shallow Harbor primarily houses the fishing fleet and some coastal craft.

TOTRA

NG metropolis

Corruption +4; **Crime** +4; **Economy** +7; **Law** +4; **Lore** +6;
Society +5

Qualities academic, prosperous, strategic location,
tourist attraction

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government autocracy

Population 52,360 (46,711 humans, 2,448 halflings,
1,569 dwarves, 598 gnomes, 1,034 other)

Notable NPCs

Archbanker Kalit Maron (N female human cleric of
Abadar 17)

Governor Hep Litas (NG male human aristocrat 6)

Harbormaster Jira Odan (LN female half-elf druid 11)

Rismaya Kalouf, Qadiran Trade Envoy (LN female human
diviner 5/rogue 3)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 25,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 150,000 gp; **Spellcasting** 9th
Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

The palaces of Totra's elite and the olive groves that provide one of Totra's economic staples are situated in the lowlands between the region's various ridges and peaks. Residential housing now completely crams the harbor's shorelines.

The original city of Totra, known as the Old City, is demarcated by a wall that encompasses about a quarter of the city at the landward side of The Brothers. The Brothers are a busy combination of docks, civic buildings, palaces, and monuments, and include a large pyramid complex on Little Brother and the Scorpion Palace along with a huge alabaster statue of Khemet I atop Big Brother. The city's current governor, Hep Litas, is rarely seen beyond these twinned hills. The Neck connects The Brothers with the mainland and serves as a commercial thoroughfare boasting large markets that specialize in luxuries and high-end merchandise. The Old Docks still account for around a third of the commerce in the city, despite being farther from the sea than the new docks. Proudstone and Swanmarket represent the residential heart of the Old City, while the groves and monuments of Mount Olive overlook the mansions belonging to the older families of the city's elite.

The city's three harbors are overseen by the Harbor Watch, whose ranks are such that even when the harbor is bustling with incoming and outgoing vessels, the flow of ships through the various checkpoints never causes backups or delays. This efficiency is largely due to the influence of Harbormaster Jira Odan, who possesses a preternatural connection to the harbors, the vessels within, and the flow of goods and people throughout the city.

The Deep Harbor has long been completely subsumed by city; even the islands in its center are covered with houses. Big Shell and Little Shell, named for their humped, turtle-like shapes, are mere residential islands, but Monument Island is topped by monolithic pyramids dedicated to Totra's many rulers over the ages. Hospital Island is a walled quarantine zone whose regular population of lepers is sometimes augmented by the passengers and crews of suspected plague ships. At the decree of Archbanker Kalit Maron's decree, the highest-ranking cleric of Totra's most influential church, those offering medical aid and healing to the citizens quarantined on the island are allowed to enter at any time, though they must undergo a period of sequestration upon returning to the rest of the city to ensure they don't carry disease with them. The Deep Harbor is also overlooked by the dense residential neighborhoods of Riverside, Dawnflower, and Nightside.

The Shallow Harbor is so named because its deepest points are around 10 feet deep, and shellfish



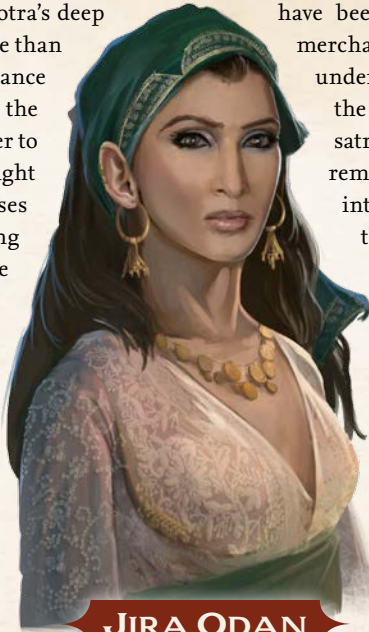
harvesting—largely of scallops and oysters—is a major industry. Totra's fishing fleet embarks from the shallow draft docks that ring the harbor. The Shallow Harbor is surrounded by sleepy residential districts such as Three Kings and Tefet Triangle, along with produce markets that feed the city from the surrounding countryside.

The Outer Harbor contains most of Totra's deep draft docks and is much easier to navigate than the Deep Harbor, with its narrow entrance and rocky islands. The Slave Docks to the west and the docks of the Qadiran Quarter to the east are the lifeblood of the city. Westlight and Eastlight house jetties and lighthouses that keep the docks operating even during storms. Further back from the harbor the Opal Court, an ancient fortification-turned-university teaches the children of the city's elite. Otherwise, the seaward ridges are given over to olive groves and high-class noble districts of mansions and country houses.

Totra is Osirion's second largest city, and its economy is fueled by its wonderful harbors and its convenient location. The city is more convenient to western Osirion than it is to Sothis, and it's a logical stopping place for ships that don't wish to thread through the Sphinx Delta to reach the capital. Totra has gotten an additional boost recently with the increase in the antiquities trade, and even the heavy taxes levied by the Ruby Prince haven't been able to keep up with the waxing profits of the city's merchant princes. That doesn't keep them from complaining, but as they say publicly at every opportunity, they are the most loyal of Osirians.

Totra was founded during the An Dynasty and was central to the Great Atoqua, the slavery-fueled push to annex Thuvia and Rahadoum. The city acquired many of those slaves and used them to bedeck itself with monuments and great architectural feats. Ultimately, Totra rivaled Sothis for its number of monuments, pyramids, sphinxes, obelisks, and palaces.

When Ancient Osirion fell, Totra's new Qadiran rulers destroyed and defaced much of the city's splendor, scarring Totra and littering it with their own monuments. The harbors of Totra were full of toppled statues and rubble that were once great works of art and beauty. Totra suffered more than most places during the time of the Qadiran satrapy, partially because it had more to lose. Because of its status as trade hub, it also attracted many Keleshites from Qadira and beyond—ruthless traders who used the patronage of their ruling compatriots to edge the locals out of the market.



JIRA ODAN

These days, the city is finally beginning to regain its former glory. The push to reclaim the past is best typified by the giant and defiant statue of An-Hepsu II that graces the center of the Outer Harbor, whose monstrous base was constructed largely from destroyed Qadiran monuments. And now that the shoe is on the other foot, the native elites have been merciless in driving out the Keleshite merchants. More than any other Osirians, Totrans understand that commerce is power. At one time, the city was almost a third Inner Sea Keleshite satrapy in and of itself. Now those Keleshites remaining have been driven almost entirely into the Qadiran Quarter, where they keep their holdings largely due to the favor shown them by the Qadirans who come to Totra to trade, and give their local relatives preferential treatment. Combined with the efforts of the powerful (and often corrupt) Keleshite merchant princes like Rismaya Kalouf who still reside in the city, this gives the Keleshites of Totra enough of an advantage that they gain back more of their political and economic influence with each successive year, unlike the Keleshites in other areas of Osirion.

Water Gardens of Xerbystes:

Xerbystes I, the first Qadiran Satrap, saw the Sphinx Delta as an underused resource. He built a vast complex of pools and gardens on a large island in the middle of the delta. The island was shored up to keep it stable and enjoyed the patronage of many of Osirion's new Keleshite ruling class. Native Osirians avoided the place, however, worried that by building up the land in what should be the domain of the river, Xerbystes I was risking the ire of guardians or spirits of the river. During the great flood of 1535 AR, the Water Gardens were unexpectedly submerged and all within them perished. To this day the shifting currents of the Sphinx occasionally leave parts of the Water Gardens high and dry, only to drag them back under at unpredictable intervals.

Wati: Wati is called the Half City, a legacy of the terrible Lamashtu-spawned plague that ravaged it hundreds of years ago, killing over half the population. The city was abandoned entirely, then reclaimed by the Church of Pharama, whose temple is still the most important civic building in town. Half of the original city was left to the dead, a sprawling ruinous zone inhabited only by desert creatures and those who would loot the dead and risk the wrath of the living. The living part of Wati is expanding and now eclipses the quarter of the dead in size, but the memory of those lost is still a palpable presence in what even today is a macabre city. For more information on Wati, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #79: The Half-Dead City*.



PLOTS AND PERILS

I was so certain that the vision we all saw on the horizon was a mirage, yet we risked dehydration anyway, trudging through the heat toward our last hope of salvation. After dragging our exhausted forms for half a day across the bone-dry trackless sands, we discovered it wasn't a mirage that awaited us after all, but rather the top of an ancient ruin jutting out of the dunes, the entrance to its inner chambers beckoning us like a siren's song. In retrospect, I wish it had just been a trick of light on the desert sands. What we found in that tomb—the horrific terror that killed my companions and left me afflicted with this wretched curse—is certainly worse than any thirsty death I can imagine.

—Scarab Seeker Ven Lorovox, from volume 38 of the *Pathfinder Chronicles*

HAZARDS

The scorching deserts of Osirion are inhospitable to most forms of life, so it's rarely monsters or wild beasts that the average traveler must fear. Instead, it is the desert itself that poses the greatest dangers. The environmental hazards of Osirion include searing heat, lack of water, wicked sandstorms known as "khamsin storms," and desperate inhabitants who would steal from travelers in order to survive. Rules for Osirion's deadly khamsin storms and for the desert phenomenon of mirages are presented below.

KHAMSIN STORMS

The iconic desert storms of Osirion are locally known as khamsin. These blasts of hot wind can last days, sweeping across the desert and carrying the dunes before them until the land is changed beyond recognition. Khamsin are capable of swallowing whole towns, uncovering ancient ruins, and scouring skin from the bones of anyone foolish enough to be trapped in one. Though they resemble the sandstorms encountered in other deserts on Golarion, the violent khamsin aren't simply mere meteorological phenomena—they're seasonal sandstorms made truly dangerous after being affected by spirited conflict between various elemental chieftains of wind and fire that dwell in Osirion's deserts. Once set in motion, a khamsin can be as unpredictable and as tempestuous as the warring elementals themselves.

Osirian desert dwellers believe that since khamsin aren't of natural origin, they can perhaps be assuaged by mortal action. Locals often wear charms to appease the spirits or to alert themselves to impending storms. Because of Osirian legends about armies able to march unscathed through khamsin winds, scholars are open to the idea that the spirits of the khamsin can be influenced by those who know the old elemental magic.

Most of the desert's denizens, however, lack the wherewithal or hubris to tempt the wrath of the storms; instead, they simply remain within easy reach of their homes or other forms of shelter during khamsin season. From the first warnings of coming storms to the last khamsin of the year, the Osirian desert empties of all but the most foolish or desperate.

A khamsin storm reduces visibility to $1d6 \times 5$ feet and imposes a -8 penalty on Perception checks. The storm's blasting sands deal $1d6$ points of nonlethal damage and $1d3$ points of fire damage per hour of exposure. A khamsin leaves behind $1d6$ inches of dust and sand per hour it rages over a specific location. A single khamsin can last anywhere from $1d4$ hours to $1d3$ days, and historians report a rare few lasting a week or even longer, generally resulting in a completely different landscape left in the wake of its shifting sands.

MIRAGES

Mirages are naturally occurring optical illusions that result from light refraction and produce the appearance of false images on the horizon. Though they are not magical, mirages function as illusion (glamer) spells, generally *blur* and *hallucinatory terrain*. Unlike magical illusions, mirages cannot be dispelled, though some of them can be disbelieved. Mirages take two primary forms: the traditional mirage and the phenomenon known as heat haze.

Traditional mirages are long-distance phenomena in which hazy images appear on the distant horizon, often in the shapes of rock formations, flat pools of reflective water, or oases and city walls. These mirages pose the greatest threat to travelers suffering from dehydration (whose desperation may persuade their minds to believe in an otherwise obvious mirage), or to those using the desert's few landmarks as navigation aids. When navigating in the desert, the existence of a mirage imposes a -2 penalty on Survival checks to keep from getting lost.

Because mirages are created by light refraction and not magical manipulation of the environment, they're very difficult to distinguish from true structures or terrain features without the aid of magical divination or trial and error. Spells such as *true seeing*, which reveal things as they truly are, indicate a mirage's true nature but can't reveal what the mirage is obscuring because of the distance (generally several miles) at which the phenomena are observed.

Outside of magical means of detecting a mirage, a character must interact with the illusion to disbelieve it. A character who makes a successful DC 15 Survival check while observing a mirage can estimate the perceived distance to the image. When the character has traveled the estimated distance toward the mirage, he may attempt a DC 10 Will save to disbelieve the illusion. Alternatively, a character casting *reveal mirage* (see page 46) may attempt to disbelieve a mirage or similar effect as though he had interacted with the illusion regardless of the distance.

Heat haze appears in areas where the air close to the surface of the desert is heated to a significantly higher temperature than the air above it. During the day's hottest points, when hot air rises and cooler air above it sinks, this causes the air to appear to shimmer. This type of mirage can be seen from as little as 30 feet away. In conditions of heat haze, creatures beyond 30 feet appear indistinct, as though affected by the *blur* spell, and gain concealment against ranged attacks. Effects and abilities that would allow a character to ignore this concealment, such as blindsight and *true seeing*, negate this effect. Heat haze has no effect on navigation and cannot be disbelieved.

REVEAL MIRAGE

School divination; **Level** cleric 3, druid 2, ranger 1, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, F (a small prism)

Range personal

Target you

Duration 1 round

You can focus upon a single point within line of sight and discern if the terrain or geographic features of that point are illusory. This ability allows you a Will save to disbelieve a terrain-affecting illusion (glamer) effect from range as though you had interacted with it. In addition to affecting such spells as *hallucinatory terrain* and *mirage arcana*, this spell also allows you to disbelieve naturally occurring mirages.

ADVENTURE SITES

Osirion has watched its shifting desert sands cover 8,000 years of history. Much of the magic, might, and mystery that propelled Ancient Osirion to become the greatest human civilization on Garund lies lost to time—purposefully obscured by jealous and paranoid pharaohs, by Keleshites suppressing the heritage of their Garundi subjects, and by the changeable desert and the whims of the elementals behind the region’s harsh khamsin storms.

The remainder of this chapter details several different sites where adventurers can uncover some of these lost secrets and sources of power and gain the wealth and notoriety that follow such discoveries. Each entry begins with a short summary of the site’s location, master (the creature or organization that rules the site), notable inhabitants (the most common creatures one might encounter there).

FORT FANG

Gnoll Slavers’ Haven

Location Near the foot of Mount Osiki

Master Hlasho, the Pharaoh of Fangs (NE male gnoll fighter 8)

Notable Inhabitants Gnoll slavers, human and Pahmet slaves

Built on a rocky foothill of Mount Osiki, Fort Fang overlooks the Crook River and the main route between Ipeq and Katapesh to the south. The fortress’s base is composed of an Ancient Osirian ruin rooted deep in the hillside, but most of what can be seen above ground was added later by the ruling gnolls’ slave labor. The upper levels of the tower are constructed mostly of wood, bone, and hide, and ramps spiral up the precarious structure to the throne room.

Fort Fang has been the headquarters of the region’s gnolls for decades, ever since a cunning slaver named Hlasho brought his rivals to heel and consolidated the

efforts of the gnolls of the Brazen Frontier. Impressed by the Osirians’ effectiveness in fighting the gnolls from permanent settlements (especially Ipeq), Hlasho’s first act as the self-styled “Pharaoh of Fangs” was the establishment of a permanent fortress of the gnolls’ own. This development has significantly bolstered the efforts of the gnoll slavers and marauders who occupy Fort Fang, and with each year the fortress threatens to become an even greater threat to the people of southern Osirion.

Hlasho maintains a force of around 500 slavers and soldiers at Fort Fang, along with some 1,300 slaves, mostly Garundi, Keleshite, and Mwangi humans as well as a few Pahmet dwarves captured from nearby mountain settlements. Few slaves remain at Fort Fang for more than a couple of months before being shipped to the slave markets of Okeno, Katapesh, or Sothis, where they’re auctioned off to domestic or foreign bidders, never to be seen again. The fort is targeted with increasing frequency by Andoran’s abolitionist Eagle Knights; as long as they don’t obstruct the slave trade elsewhere in the nation, the Ruby Prince happily turns a blind eye to the Eagle Knights’ attacks on one who claims the title of pharaoh and openly violates the Laws of Equitable Use.

Since most of the captives taken by gnolls in the region are eventually eaten or brought to Fort Fang, the ruin is a logical last-ditch target for regaining captured loved ones or allies. Any would-be rescuers must either sneak through the many ravines and gullies flanking the hill or brazen their way up by demanding an audience with the vain pharaoh. Hlasho is open to negotiation, though he’s almost guaranteed to double-cross anyone once he no longer has a need for them. Unless Hlasho can be persuaded to release the captives, rescuers must find a way into the haphazardly guarded dungeons at the base of the ruins—possibly by posing as newly captured slaves on one of the numerous caravans bound for the fortress, or by simply taking the fight to the gnoll raiders head-on.

GRALGOR-OT

Undead-Plagued Sphinx Ruins

Location Western Footprints of Rovagug

Master High Priest Hahtebket (LE male mummy cleric of Abadar 11)

Notable Inhabitants Constructs, maftets, mohrgs, mummies, shadows, sphinxes

Ekbet, a gleaming city of temples and rune-carved towers, was constructed in –3290 AR near the headwaters of the Junira River. Like many holy sites in Osirion’s First Age, Ekbet was nurtured by sphinxes divinely appointed to secure the city’s safety. The sphinxes animated temple statuary by affixing sacred ka stones to each statue’s

brow, and the resulting guardian monoliths defended the temple-city well for almost 2 centuries, until a pair of earthquakes devastated the region in -3115 AR, and Ekbet was abandoned and left to crumble for millennia. Only a handful of surviving guardian monoliths patrolled the forgotten ruin, still dedicated to keeping the city free of intruders even though the major temples had been swallowed up by the earth.

In recent centuries, the ruins have attracted sphinxes and a large pride of maftets—distant descendants of the sphinx paragons who empowered the guardian monoliths to protect Ekbetto lair within the city. The sphinxes will admit supplicants seeking wisdom or worthy warriors petitioning to inherit the powers of the guardian monoliths (see the Living Monoliths sidebar on page 17); otherwise, they aid the guardian monoliths in repelling opportunistic treasure-seekers and arrogant explorers. The city's name has not been used since it was abandoned; the current residents call it Gralgor-Ot or the Aerie of Runes.

Recently, waves of undead have issued from a temple buried beneath the city to relentlessly assault Gralgor-Ot's proud protectors. The shadows are but the first wave of a force painstakingly assembled over centuries by a mummified priest of Abadar named Hahtebket. Hahtebket's faith in Abadar is twisted: he seeks a perfect social order within a civilized metropolis, but a city of the dead, purged of all living things. In the careful, deliberate manner typical to priests of the Lawgiver, Hahtebket has revised his plans for conquering and rebuilding the city many times to account for multiple contingencies.

Hahtebket rules from the heart of a buried temple of Abadar, and he has riddled his subterranean complex with numerous lethal traps. He's further protected by several lesser mummies and mohrgs, all former priests and acolytes of Abadar risen to unlife through Hahtebket's unholy magic. Few of his minions share Hahtebket's vision, instead seeking only to drain the life of the living whenever possible.

The current guardians of Gralgor-Ot are desperate for assistance to stop the attacks. **Phatep the Sagacious** (N androsphinx oracle 4), the oldest androsphinx at Gralgor-Ot, provides prophetic advice to would-be heroes, including a suggestion to first plumb the depths of the buried temple of Nethys to recover long-lost treasures useful in confronting the undead. But even Phatep does not see that the defenders of Gralgor-Ot include a traitor. An unusually contemplative construct named **Blackrock** (LN awakened giant graven guardian of Abadar) has met with Hahtebket and discussed a role for the guardian

monoliths in Hahtebket's necropolis. Whether Blackrock will turn upon the sphinxes and forsake the descendants of his creators is yet to be seen.

LAMASHTU'S FLOWER

Secret Lamashtan Temple Oasis

Location Osirian Desert near Eto

Master Alashra (CE female human werehyena cleric of Lamashtu 16)

Notable Inhabitants Gnolls, Lamashtan cultists, yaenit demons (*Pathfinder Module: Broken Chains* 29)

Amid the vast desert expanse between Shiman-Sekh and Eto stands a lush oasis known as Lamashtu's Flower,



ALASHRA

one of the most active places of worship and sacrifice to the Mother of Monsters in Osirion. Caravans aware of its location and ominous reputation give the Flower a wide berth—sometimes going as much as an extra week without refilling their water barrels—but despite their best efforts to avoid the oasis, many travelers find themselves at the hands of its sinister inhabitants against their wills.

This is in no small part due to the efforts of the oasis's leader, the deceptive high priestess Alashra. Consort to the cult's ostensible leader—the albino gnoll warlord **Nathrek the Pale, Devourer of Virgins** (CE male gnoll fighter 9)—Alashra allows Nathrek to take the glory for the oasis's reputation because it allows her to maintain the intricate ruse that keeps the entire operation running. When not administering the cult's foul rites and ceremonies, Alashra moonlights as the Eto trader Shai-Nefer, using her influence in the city's markets and among its caravaners to lure victims to be slaughtered in the name of the Mother of Monsters. Thus the gnolls' attacks on the trade route between Shiman-Sekh and Eto serve a dual purpose, enabling Alashra to eat into any mercantile competition while simultaneously sating the ever-growing hunger of her demonic cult.

LOST MINE OF SIWAT

Underground Dystopian Village

Location Sahure Wastes

Master The Son of Zibeon (NE sandman^{B2} transmuter 12)

Notable Inhabitants Darkness-adapted humans, morlocks, oreads^{B2}, sandmen^{B2}

In 4349 AR, a small party of prospectors from Eto staked a claim to a massive silver vein deep in the Sahure Wastes of the eastern Osirian Desert. To their great delight, a natural spring flowed from high in the cliffs overlooking the assay site. Within a year, the camp had grown into a tiny hamlet named Siwat, nestled in the rocky outcropping's minute canyon and well-protected from the fierce khamsin storms that plagued the area.

Unbeknownst to the villagers of Siwat, a small community of sandmen had already settled this lonely desert stretch to escape the powerful elemental clans of the area. The sandmen resented the human encroachment into their territory, and swiftly devised a plan to bring about the intruders' demise. They crept into Siwat at night, induced magical sleep in the population (murdering those who resisted their magic), and carried off the sleeping citizens. The town empty, the sandmen collapsed the silver mine, hoping that the site would earn a haunted or cursed reputation and never be developed again.

The sleeping survivors were taken deep into a nearby cave complex and introduced to the sandmen's leader, a powerful transmuter who called himself the Son of Zibeon. He informed them that they had been brought to the cave to keep them safe from a terrible sandstorm and would be allowed to leave as soon as the weather cleared. Initially believing the sandman's lie, the people of Siwat eventually realized the truth when days became weeks and still they were barred from egress. The surviving humans tried to escape, but their efforts were thwarted when the sandmen collapsed the exit and put them all back to sleep.

Trapped in the cave, the prisoners did what they had to do to survive, learning how to live off the various molds and lichens that clung to the wet cavern walls. As the months turned into years and the years turned into decades, they formed a new social hierarchy with the sandmen at its peak and adapted to living in complete darkness. Eventually forgetting about how they had ended up there, the humans began to see the sandmen not as captors but as saviors.

Fourteen generations have passed since the mysterious disappearance of Siwat, and only a few scholars and miners remember the discovery of its massive silver lode. The descendants of the village's inhabitants scarcely resemble their ancestors, having mutated to see in the darkness and sometimes bearing monstrous or otherworldly progeny including morlocks and oreads. Under the guidance of their current leader, **Vorok the Pale Speaker** (NE male human oracle 8), the deranged citizens of Siwat have greatly expanded the original caves, and have established a complex new society amid the darkness, worshiping the sandmen as gods and seeing their half-elemental children as divine scions. Rumors of midnight raids on caravans by human-like creatures with eyes as big as saucers are now told around the campfires of Eto. It's likely only a matter of time before the Lost Mine of Siwat becomes a topic of conversation once more.

MEPHIT SPRING

Demon-Ruled Elemental Playground

Location Southern Footprints of Rovagug

Master Vabyxis (CE male advanced vroek)

Notable Inhabitants Demons, fiendish elementals, mephits

Located at a rare confluence of elemental energies, Mephit Spring is the playground of dozens of mephits of different types. The spring has recently turned dark and dangerous, however, and the few hardy communities within a day's ride have reported missing livestock and bizarre nighttime robberies of mundane items. Lone settlers in the area have vanished, and few recent

travelers to the spring have returned. Those who have made it back to civilization describe ranks of armored mephits in slapdash military formation being routinely drilled by winged demons.

The corruption of Mephit Spring began 4 years ago, when the Taldan explorer **Cuoro Baluinos** (NG male human bard 8) came to the area to study its unusual elemental properties. Cuoro carried with him a gem recovered from Shiman-Sekh, which until then he had considered a mere archaeological oddity. The gem would prove to be far more than that, however, when the relic's dormant energy met with the extraplanar energies surging from Mephit Spring. The demon Vabyxis, who had been previously trapped within the gem, awakened from his millennia-long slumber, and he quickly possessed Cuoro's body.

Where Cuoro only saw whimsical outsiders, Vabyxis saw a potential army. The extraplanar confluence granted his demonic abilities greater power than most possessing demons can muster, and Vabyxis used them to dominate the local mephits. With alternating bouts of violence and promises of wealth and dominion, Vabyxis forged the mephits into a somewhat disciplined military force. The process has been irritatingly slow for the carnage-minded demon, and Vabyxis has had his share of challenges: at one point he had to butcher an uprising of recalcitrant water mephits and during another occasion publicly execute a gang of lazy ooze mephits. Unwilling to rely on the flighty mephits alone, Vabyxis has summoned more reliable allies to bolster his extraplanar forces, including fiendish elementals, shadow demons, and babaus. The mephits kidnap nearby settlers and livestock to slake Vabyxis's cravings for flesh, and also steal esoteric items, such as salt and silver shavings, needed to summon other demons.

Cuoro's wealthy family has finally identified Mephit Spring as their scion's last known location, and they have sponsored numerous expeditions to determine Cuoro's fate. As each expedition runs headlong into failure—its members falling prey to Vabyxis's increasingly well-trained army of elemental and fiendish soldiers—the Baluinos family sends forces ever larger and better armed than the previous one. A clash of armies is soon destined to ring around this once-peaceful spring unless a strike team can infiltrate the demon's rocky redoubt at the head of the valley and slay Cuoro or exorcise the demon within.

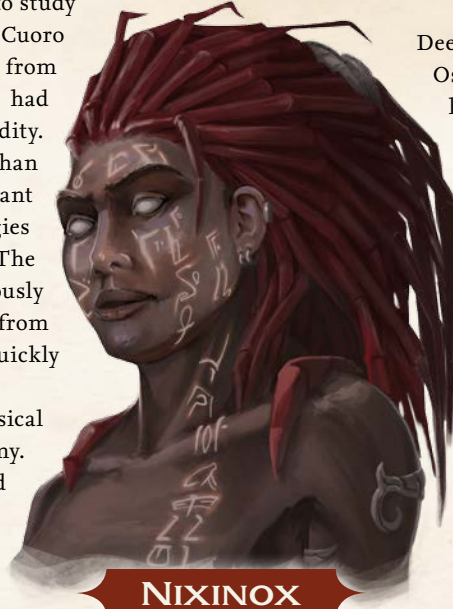
OSZOXON SPIRE

Abandoned Shrine of the Scorpionfolk

Location The Underdunes

Master Nixinox (N female girtablilu oracle 12)

Notable Inhabitants Death worms, fiendish air elementals, girtablilus, human cultists of Rovagug



NIXINOX

Deep in the Underdunes of eastern Osirion, a 60-foot-tall spire of hardened mud juts straight into the air, surrounded by a modest village of adobe huts. This spire is known as Oszoxon, sharing the name of the girtablilu tribe that lived at its base. The scorpionfolk of the Oszoxon tribe are missing, however, and have been for months, leaving behind only the tribe's spiritual leader, the shaman Nixinox.

Nixinox is a tall, middle-aged girtablilu with dark skin. Her eldritch white tattoos run down the length of her body, culminating in elaborate markings that cover almost the whole of her scorpion form. She's suspicious of strangers but welcomes assistance if convinced of their good intentions. Her oracle curse prevents her from traveling more than 100 feet from the spire at the center of town, and thus keeps her from searching for the rest of her tribe. What she knows and can impart to any allies is that Oszoxon Spire is but the top of a much larger structure that rises from an underground city beneath the sand. This city, she claims, is not dead like the other ruined cities buried in the Underdunes, but rather a living, thriving settlement inhabited by a sinister cult of Rovagug. Her people were increasingly drawn toward the Rough Beast's faith in the months before their disappearance, leaving behind the traditions Nixinox struggled to keep alive, and she fears they may have finally succumbed to Rovagug's bestial seduction.

The girtablilu shaman can direct anyone willing to aid her in finding her missing tribesfolk to a strange hemispherical depression in the desert a half-mile away, which she claims offers access to the subterranean city. A dome of violent winds covers the strange desert bowl, however, and only those who worship the fell god venerated by the cultists below may pass through without drawing the ire of the powerful, serpentine air elementals that reside in the dome. The lost city's secrets and the cult's plans can be discovered only by those brave enough to venture beneath the Underdunes and seek them out.

PYRAMID OF AN-HEPSU XI

Hidden Tomb of the Lich Pharaoh

Location Pillars of the Sun

Master Pharaoh An-Hepsu XI (NE human lich cleric of Nethys 18)

Notable Inhabitants Angels, archons, other good outsiders

Pharaoh An-Hepsu XI, the last of his dynasty, was also known as the Pharaoh of No Rain and the Incorruptible Pharaoh. He ruled over Osirion for 4 centuries, and was perhaps the most powerful pharaoh in Osirion's lengthy history. He was rumored to have traveled far into the continent's interior as a young man to study the Aeromantic Infadibulum, the now long-forgotten flight magic of the Shory, and it is said that the experience instilled within him a lust for life and knowledge few could fathom.

As he got older, An-Hepsu XI became increasingly obsessed with his own mortality and looked for new ways to prolong his lifespan via magic, but even his most successful applications of raw *wish* magic won him only a few decades of youth. Radically switching his field of study, An-Hepsu XI dove into the necromantic preservation of deceased flesh, theorizing that the mind could live forever if the body did not decay. He began to replace his internal organs with those of younger men and women—most of whom were still alive when the pharaoh's priests and advisors performed the ritual procedure. When these attempts reached their limit, An-Hepsu XI again changed tactics and sought to mummify his skin and remove his internal organs completely.

When even these extreme measures failed, he finally embraced undeath and became a full-fledged lich. His horrified subjects rose up against him, but by this time his magical powers were so great that they could do little to thwart him. Only when his closest advisors and pupils united against him was the so-called Incorruptible Pharaoh An-Hepsu XI finally defeated.

Unable to truly kill his spirit, his assailants hid each of An-Hepsu XI's body parts in a different part of his pyramid to prevent the lich from ever rising again. The entire pyramid, except for the entrance, was then placed in a demiplane strongly connected to the Positive Energy Plane to keep his undead powers in check. Finally, all but one of his captors took their own lives in such a way that they could never be resurrected and forced to reveal the location of the pharaoh's final resting place.

The crown regent Kemusar I, who succeeded An-Hepsu XI (but was never considered a true pharaoh because of his common birth), was the sole co-conspirator to remain alive, doing so in order to close the entrance to his former master's tomb and forever hide it from view. When he was murdered not many years thereafter, he had already arranged for his own tomb to disappear soon

after his death, so that any possible clues to his master's true resting place would never be found.

Only by delving into the Hungry Sepulcher (see page 39) can one possibly hope to learn the means of reaching the Tomb of the Incorruptible Pharaoh, the entrance to which lies deep in the Pillars of the Sun. Anyone who manages to reach his august pyramid finds it as much a prison as a mausoleum, its guardians and traps equally devoted to deterring potential tomb robbers and to ensuring the lich pharaoh remains imprisoned. A number of angels and archons, commanded by the great solar Mytreael, sealed themselves away in the prison demiplane to ensure An-Hepsu XI never returns; these defenders drive out even good interlopers lest they become corrupted by the lich pharaoh's influence and attempt to reunite his body with his evil soul.

PYRAMID OF DOOM

Eternal Lair of a Voluptuary Wizard-Pharaoh

Location Eastern Brazen Frontier

Master Pharaoh Heptar-Un (LE male human ghost wizard 16)

Notable Inhabitants Allips, Wisdom-draining shadows

The great Pharaoh Heptar-Un was, like many of his ilk, a skilled wizard. He placed his pyramid in the high desert of the Brazen Frontier, far enough away from the Sphinx to deter casual visitors but not so remote as to make the journey impossible. Rather than attempting to attain everlasting splendor in the afterlife or settling for the ultimately doomed immortality of lichdom, Heptar-Un sought to live forever through the minds of others—though not in a poetic or even historic sense. Heptar-Un's will to live kept his soul on Golarion as a ghost, and he hoped for occasional visitors who would be worthy vessels for his reemergence.

The Pyramid of Doom, as it's known, is a fairly small pyramid above the ground but is mirrored underground, forming a tetrahedron with the pharaoh's treasure chamber at its lowest point. The pyramid is guarded by traps laden with will-sapping poisons and magical effects, as well as the pharaoh's undead servants, including allips and madness-inducing shadows, also capable of draining the minds of intruders. With each will-attenuating strike, Heptar-Un's influence over his chosen vessel (usually a wizard and always someone of high intelligence) grows stronger. When he feels his potential vessel has been weakened sufficiently, he uses his ghostly powers to possess the living body. Heptar-Un then does whatever necessary to make his way out into world again, including killing his vessel's former comrades, so he can spend his vessel's life on an idiosyncratic mix of sensuous debauchery and arcane study. He also uses his periodic bouts of stolen life to plant more rumors and clues to

draw adventurers to his tomb. Eventually the vessel dies (of accident or, rarely, old age) and Heptar-Un's soul is sucked back into his eternal resting place to rejuvenate and await his next victim.

Heptar-Un's ghost can be destroyed if he receives a full, traditional pharaonic funeral in the style of Ancient Osirion and is buried on hallowed ground. Recreating an authentic pharaonic burial in 4714 AR would be no small task, and would likely involve the most powerful and influential people in Osirion. Additionally, since his own ego and desire for immortality prevent him from moving on to the Boneyard, Heptar-Un's name, reign, death, and burial must be so ingrained into the public consciousness that he no longer needs to live through others to be remembered—an extraordinary act that would no doubt take several months or even years to accomplish, as well as require the aid of those same influential people needed to perform the accursed pharaoh's funeral rites.

THE TOMB OF STATUES

Immortalized Pharaonic Household

Location West of the River Sphinx

Master Nafet-Ti (LE female mummified^{B4} medusa)

Notable Inhabitants Caryatid columns, sandstone gargoyles (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Classic Horrors Revisited* 20)

In Ancient Osirion, it was common practice for pharaohs to be buried with their material possessions as well as their slaves and sometimes even their family members. Pharaoh An-Hepsu III was highly influenced by his mistress, a medusa named Nafet-Ti, and on his deathbed he ordered his lover to petrify the other members of his household that they might attend him perfectly for eternity. Among those petrified were the pharaoh's wife, several siblings and other relatives, and most of his retainers and many of his slaves. Historians suggest that Nafet-Ti used her permitted petrifications as a way to settle scores and advance her station, since the high officials who joined An-Hepsu III in the tomb strangely included all of Nafet-Ti's court rivals and none of her allies.

The tomb itself is a sprawling and lavish affair with many underground levels and

dozens of wings. Fairly complete records exist of who was turned to stone, and several significant petrified individuals have yet to be found, suggesting that there is still more of the tomb to unearth. Further exploration has been halted, however, since explorers discovered statues in the tomb that looked less like Ancient Osirians and more like modern Osirionologists. Now, anyone wishing to study the tomb must personally risk becoming one of its ornaments, as no sane adventuring company or exploration committee will financially back delve into what is now ubiquitously referred to as the Tomb of Statues.

Unbeknownst to curious adventurers and even dedicated historians, Nafet-Ti was herself mummified to ensure she could watch eternally over the tomb of her lover. Since the Ruby Prince opened Osirion's ruins to foreign explorers, the medusa has been roused from her millennial slumber to keep interlopers out of the tomb, petrifying any who learn the secret of her lair to ensure their knowledge never leaves. Nafet-Ti further confuses anyone who may follow by moving the newly petrified explorers to other parts of the temple complex, creating dozens of trails of bread crumbs to carefully laid death traps, labyrinthine areas of the crypt, and puzzling dead ends—the latter of which are sometimes plagued by living walls (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 182) of Nafet-Ti's own design.

Nafet-Ti does not rely solely on her own abilities to guard the tomb: she has acquired the services of a group of sandstone gargoyles who act as lookouts and brutes. This terrifying flock of treasure-hungry monsters gladly works for Nafet-Ti in exchange for any of the valuables and treasure they might discover on their victims' bodies, and some of the creatures even lurk among the pillars and ornamentations outside the tomb to ward off intruders before they even ingress. Nafet-Ti has also scattered a few caryatid columns among the inert statues of the tomb, placing them at strategic locations to neutralize explorers while she or her gargoyle minions are preoccupied.



NAFET-TI



BESTIARY

It looked like nothing more than a muddy, rocky sandbar in the middle of the river. Our navigator, may Pharama judge her kindly, was confident she could steer around it. That is, until it moved. With the speed of an arrow loosed from a hunter's bow, the sandbar rose from the now-swirling waters, revealing its true nature—a massive crocodile the likes of which I've never seen. I fear the terrible sight will haunt my dreams to the end of my days. Before we could react, the monstrous reptile was upon the ship, which despite its exquisite craftsmanship offered little resistance to the beast's mighty jaws. That's to say nothing of its crew, of which I am the sole survivor.

—Journal of Khimshet Rukha, Tephu papyrus merchant

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLES

The encounter tables here cover many situations that could play out in Osirion, but aren't meant to be exhaustive—introduce other creatures as you see fit. Many adventures set in the Land of the Pharaohs take place within pyramids, tombs, and other ruins, and have their own themes and appropriate random encounter lists. The urban table below is suitable for use with most Osirian settlements.

Caravan (CR 8): Comprising anywhere from a dozen to several hundred heavily laden camels, a caravan can offer a variety of adventure hooks, NPC encounters, and trading opportunities in nearly any Osirian environment. The baseline caravan consists of eight merchants (N human expert 3) and four caravan guards (N human fighter 2), as well as their camels and other pack animals. This base unit can be doubled as needed to increase the size of a caravan; larger caravans typically include guards and merchants of higher level, as well as support staff and other NPCs. Many caravans have the population and economic statistics of a hamlet (and allow for encounters of higher CR), while a larger caravan can contain the resources of a small town.

Cultists (CR 6): This group of cultists typically consists of a priest (CE human cleric of Lamashtu 6), and six acolytes (CE human adept 2). Larger cults may have additional members with varying skill sets, as well as the occasional gnoll or lesser demon. While generally not welcome in the civilized portions of Osirion, cults are present in nearly every Osirian city, albeit hidden from public view. It is in the trackless desert that such cults truly thrive, however. This cult may alternatively worship Rovagug, as needed.

Tomb Raiders (CR 5): A typical band of tomb raiders consists of a dungeoneer (CN human rogue 2), an arcanist (N human wizard 2), a religious scholar (N human cleric of Nethys 2), and a thug (LN human fighter 2).

BRAZEN FRONTIER

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-11	1d3 hyenas	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 179
12-20	2d6 pugwampis	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 144
21-34	1 janni	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 141
35-49	Tomb raiders	5	See above
50-64	2d6 gnolls	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 155
65-74	Cultists	6	See above
75-89	1d4 manticores	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 199
90-100	1 behir	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 34

FOOTPRINTS OF ROVAGUG

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-10	1 aghas div	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 83
11-24	1d3 huecuvas	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 150
25-38	Tomb raiders	5	See above

39-52	1 large magma elemental	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 118
53-64	1 hieracosphinx	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 253
65-73	1 lamia	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 186
74-84	1d6 mephits	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 202
85-100	1 shaitan	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 143

OSIRION DESERT

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-08	1d3 scarab beetles	8	ISB 5
09-20	1d6 mummies	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 210
21-29	1 gynosphinx	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 257
30-37	1 living mirage	9	See page 58
38-48	1d3 desert drakes	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 105
49-60	1d6 maftets	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 188
61-75	1d3 greater elementals	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 120-127
76-90	1d4 girtablilus	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 130
91-100	1d3 desert giants	11	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 128

SCORPION COAST

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-12	Cultists	6	See above
13-22	1 dragonne	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 104
23-35	1d4 large elementals	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 120-127
36-45	1d3 wyverns	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 282
46-55	Caravan	8	See above
56-65	1 desert hermit	8	See page 57
66-78	1 androsphinx	9	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 251
79-91	1d3 girtablilus	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 130
92-100	1 pharaonic guardian	11	See page 60

SPHINX BASIN

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-15	1d6 bandits	2	GMG 258
16-30	1 crocodile	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 51
31-42	1 river cleric	3	See page 62
43-50	1d6 lizardfolk	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 195
51-58	1d6 lacedons	4	<i>Bestiary</i> 146
59-70	1 uraeus	5	See page 63
71-85	1 hippopotamus	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2157
86-95	Cultists	6	See above
96-100	1 ahuzotl	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 10

URBAN




d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
01-15	1 cutpurse	1/2	<i>NPC Codex</i> 144
16-21	1 vexgit	CR 1	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 145
22-37	1 rat swarm	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 232
38-50	1d4 guards	3	GMG 260
51-60	1d6 street thugs	4	GMG 265
61-81	1 Risen Guard	5	See page 61
82-87	1 mercane	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 188
88-95	Tomb raiders	5	See above
96-100	Cultists	6	See above

ANIMALS

The desolation of Osirion's vast deserts belie their variety of fauna, which may be found in proximity to the various rivers and oases that serve as a source of water for the animals' prey and plant-based sustenance.

CROCODILE, HETKOSHU

This enormous black crocodile gapes hungrily with a maw big enough to swallow two armored warriors whole.

HETKOSHU	CR 12	  
XP 19,200		
N Gargantuan animal		
Init +4; Senses low-light vision; Perception +15		
DEFENSE		
AC 25, touch 6, flat-footed 25 (+19 natural, -4 size)		
hp 172 (15d8+105)		
Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +11		
OFFENSE		
Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.		
Melee bite +23 (3d6+15/19-20 plus grab), tail slap +17 (4d8+7)		
Space 20 ft.; Reach 15 ft.		
Special Attacks death roll (3d6+15 plus trip), fast swallow, savage rush, swallow whole (3d6+15 bludgeoning damage, AC 19, 17 hp)		
STATISTICS		
Str 40, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 1, Wis 18, Cha 7		
Base Atk +11; CMB +30; CMD 40 (44 vs. trip)		
Feats Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Run, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite)		
Skills Perception +15, Stealth +11 (+19 in water), Swim +23;		
Racial Modifiers +4 Perception, +8 Stealth in water		
SQ hold breath		
ECOLOGY		
Environment warm marshes or rivers		
Organization solitary, pair, or colony (3-6)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Death Roll (Ex) Upon making a successful grapple check against a foe of its size or smaller, a hetkoshu deals bite damage to the target and knocks it prone. This does not break the hetkoshu's grapple.		
Hold Breath (Ex) A hetkoshu can hold its breath for 4 rounds per point of Constitution before having to make Constitution checks to continue holding its breath (<i>Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook</i> 445).		
Savage Rush (Ex) For 1 round per minute, a hetkoshu may sprint with devastating speed, increasing its land speed to 40 feet and allowing it to treat nonmagical difficult terrain as if it were normal terrain. If it charges during this round, it may attack twice with its bite as its attack action, using the same attack modifier for both attacks.		

Infamous along Osirion's major rivers as well as in the Golden Oasis near Shiman-Sekh, hetkoshus are among the most dangerous animals on Garund. They pose a constant threat to travelers and those who make their livelihoods along these waterways. Hetkoshus wait for prey to pass within 90 feet before rushing at them to gobble up one or two opponents in a single terrible motion, preferably before the prey even realizes any danger exists. They are known for their feared "death roll"—once one clings to its foe, it tucks in its legs and rolls rapidly, twisting and wrenching its victim.

Hetkoshus average 30 feet in length and weigh nearly 45,000 pounds.

JACKAL

This sandy-colored canine resembles a slender-bodied wolf with short, graceful legs. It watches with dark brown eyes.

JACKAL	CR 1/2	  
XP 200		
N Small animal		
Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +5		
DEFENSE		
AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)		
hp 9 (1d8+5)		
Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +1		
OFFENSE		
Speed 40 ft.		
Melee bite +2 (1d4+1 plus trip)		
Special Attacks opportunistic bite		
STATISTICS		
Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6		
Base Atk +0; CMB +0; CMD 12 (16 vs. trip)		
Feats Toughness		
Skills Bluff +2, Perception +5, Survival +0 (+4 when tracking by scent); Racial Modifiers +4 Bluff, +4 Survival when tracking by scent		
ECOLOGY		
Environment warm deserts or plains		
Organization solitary, pair, or pack (3-10)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Opportunistic Bite (Ex) On a successful bite attack against an opponent it's flanking or that is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC, a jackal deals 1 additional point of damage.		

Jackals are usually encountered alone or as a mated pair, but sometimes they associate for a time with a small pack composed of two parents and their adult offspring, with the offspring serving a deferential support role to their parents. Although considered craven and foul by humans, jackals are relatively friendly and gentle with members of their own small packs.

Attracted to the edges of human settlements in their territory, jackals often make opportunistic raids on fruit crops and vulnerable domesticated animals. They're also attracted to large deposits of garbage that they can sift through for leftover food. Jackals are remarkably adaptable, and readily forage for insects or fruit, feed on found carcasses, or hunt small or vulnerable game as the opportunity presents itself.

Jackals are notorious for their craftiness in evading pursuit, and they've been known to feign death when caught in order to lull opponents into complacency and gain another chance to escape. A jackal can attempt a Bluff check opposed by its opponent's Sense Motive check to play dead. If successful, after combat ends, the jackal can begin a new encounter with surprise. During the surprise round, only the jackal and any opponents who succeeded on their Sense Motive checks can act.

OSTRICH

This human-sized bird has a long neck and legs sprouting from a round body covered in fluffy gray feathers.

OSTRICH	CR 1	  
XP 400		
N Medium animal		
Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +8		
DEFENSE		
AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 natural)		
hp 13 (2d8+4)		
Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1		
OFFENSE		
Speed 60 ft.		
Melee claw +4 (1d6+4)		
STATISTICS		
Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 11		
Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 16		
Feats Endurance ^B , Run ^B , Skill Focus (Perception)		
Skills Acrobatics +6 (+18 when jumping), Perception +8		
SQ crouch		
ECOLOGY		
Environment warm deserts or plains		
Organization solitary, pair, pride (5–10), or flock (11–50)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Crouch (Ex) An ostrich can hide in plain sight as a bush or shrub by crouching down and concealing its head and legs. It makes a Stealth check as normal, but anyone who observes it from within 30 feet automatically sees through the ruse.		

Adult female ostriches average 6 feet tall and weigh about 220 pounds, with males averaging 7 to 9 feet and 250 pounds. Although they are likely to flee from predators when they can, ostriches are more than willing to stand

and fight when trapped or defending their chicks; they're known to kick even lions to death in defense of their young.

A trained ostrich has a market price of 80 gp, whereas an egg is worth 25 gp. Because it's bipedal, an ostrich requires an exotic saddle.

OSTRICH COMPANIONS

An ostrich can be taken as an animal companion by a druid. An ostrich companion possesses the following base statistics.

Starting Statistics: **Size** Small; **Speed** 40 ft.; **AC** +1 natural armor; **Attack** claw (1d4); **Ability Scores** Str 13, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 11; **Special Qualities** low-light vision.

4th-Level Advancement: **Size** Medium; **Speed** 60 ft.; **Attack** claw (1d6); **Ability Scores** Str +4, Dex –2, Con +2; **Special Qualities** crouch.

SNAKE, ASP

This long, muscular snake rears up and shows its hood and fangs when threatened.

ASP	CR 2	  
XP 600		
N Medium animal		
Init +6; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +10		
DEFENSE		
AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)		
hp 19 (3d8+6)		
Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +3		
OFFENSE		
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.		
Melee bite +4 (1d4 plus poison)		
Special Attacks poison		
STATISTICS		
Str 10, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 1, Wis 15, Cha 2		
Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 14 (can't be tripped)		
Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Finesse ^B		
Skills Acrobatics +10, Climb +10, Perception +10, Stealth +14, Swim +10; Racial Modifiers +8 Acrobatics, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth; modifies Climb and Swim with Dexterity		
ECOLOGY		
Environment warm deserts		
Organization solitary, pair, or nest (3–8)		
Treasure none		
SPECIAL ABILITIES		
Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; <i>save</i> Fort DC 15; <i>frequency</i> 1/round for 6 rounds; <i>effect</i> 1d2 Con; <i>cure</i> 2 consecutive saves. The save DC includes a +2 racial bonus.		

An asp is a type of cobra native to Osirion and northern Garund. It ranges from 4 to 6 feet in length and has brownish scales with dark mottling.

COLOSSUS, SPHINX

This towering stone edifice resembles a lion with a regal but blank human face.

SPHINX COLOSSUS

CR 14/MR 4



XP 38,400

N Gargantuan construct (colossus, mythic^{MA})

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 120 ft., x-ray vision; Perception +13

Aura frightful presence (150 ft., DC 20), selective antimagic (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 7, flat-footed 30 (+1 Dex, +24 natural, -4 size)

hp 199 (18d10+100)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities block attacks, fortification (50%); **DR** 10/epic;

Immune construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., sand glide

Melee 2 slams +29 (3d6+15) or stomp +29 (6d6+22 plus pinning stomp)

Ranged rock +15 (3d6+15)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

Special Attacks mythic power (4/day, surge +1d8), rock throwing (120 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th, concentration +13)

3/day—quicken *true strike*

1/day—*moment of prescience*

STATISTICS

Str 40, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +37; **CMD** 48

Feats Alertness^M, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack^M, Vital Strike

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Sphinx

SQ alternate form, create rocks

ECOLOGY

Environment warm deserts

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alternate Form (Ex) As a full-round action, a sphinx colossus can take the form of a sphinx statue. Its DR increases to 20/epic, and it gains fast healing 10. While in this form, the colossus cannot attack or move, but it can use its spell-like and supernatural abilities. It can resume its base form as a full-round action.

Create Rocks (Ex) As a move action,

a sphinx colossus can scoop up earth or rubble from an unoccupied square within its reach and compact it into a solid mass appropriate for use with its rock throwing ability.

Selective Antimagic Aura (Su) Spells and abilities of the divination school are unaffected by this aura.

Relics carved by mythic priests and god-kings of Ancient Osirion, sphinx colossi stand roughly 60 feet tall and weigh about 220,000 pounds.

CONSTRUCTION

The body of a sphinx colossus is first carved from sandstone of the highest quality costing 25,000 gp.

SPHINX COLOSSUS

CL 11th; Price 100,000 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, Mythic Crafter^{MA}, Quicken Spell, 4th mythic tier, *antimagic field*, *limited wish*, *moment of prescience*, *true strike*; **Skill** Craft (stonemasonry) DC 25; **Cost** 50,000 gp



DESERT HERMIT

This weathered-looking desert dweller is dressed from head to toe in tan, loose-fitting robes.

DESERT HERMIT

CR 8



XP 4,800

Human druid 9

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 80 (9d8+36)

Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +11; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects

Defensive Abilities heat shimmer (6 rounds, DC 17);

Immune poison

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk scimitar +9/+4 (1d6+2/18–20)

Ranged sling +9 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks wild shape 3/day

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th)

1/day—lesser planar ally (janni only)

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +12)

5th—control winds (DC 19), transmute rock to mud^D
(create loose sand instead of mud, DC 19)4th—giant vermin, hallucinatory terrain^D
(DC 17), vermin shape II^{APG}3rd—burrow^{UM}, cup of dust^{APG, D} (DC 17), greater
magic fang, neutralize poison, spit venom^{UM} (DC 17)2nd—barkskin, elemental speech^{APG}, pernicious poison^{UM},
resist energy, shifting sand^{APG, D} (DC 16), summon swarm1st—alter winds^{APG} (DC 15), cloak of shade^{APG, D}, faerie fire,
feather step^{APG}, longstrider, speak with animals

0 (at will)—create water, detect poison, light, virtue

D Domain spell; Domains Desert^{UM}

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 8

Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 23

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Iron Will, Natural Spell, Spell
Focus (transmutation), ToughnessSkills Fly +15, Knowledge (nature) +14, Perception +15, Stealth +12,
Survival +17

Languages Common, Druidic, Osiriani

SQ nature bond (Desert domain^{UM}), nature sense, trackless step,
wild empathy +8, woodland stride

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Osirion)

Organization solitary

Treasure NPC gear (+1 leather armor, mwk scimitar, sling with
10 bullets, belt of incredible dexterity +2, campfire bead,
ring of protection +1, wand of cure moderate wounds [16
charges], wand of endure elements [20 charges], 40 gp)

A desert hermit seeks the solitude in the windswept wastes for two chief reasons. First, the hermit finds that isolation allows him to more easily experience nature's harsh beauty and raw power, which he seeks to emulate. Second, the wide open spaces provide the hermit with the freedom to experience the world without interference from human society, which is trapped in meaningless competitions to get ahead in a race toward an unhappy death plagued by debt, troublesome relationships, and arbitrary expectations enforced by shame, discrimination, and even violence.

Desert hermits are often defensive and suspicious when interrupted by outsiders. They rarely form druid circles, preferring true isolation. Those who forgo their connection to the desert in favor of a bestial ally tend to select camels, cobras, jackals, and vultures.



LIVING MIRAGE

This glimmering vision shimmers on the horizon, the very air coalescing into an oasis that may or may not exist.

LIVING MIRAGE

CR 9



XP 6,400

N Gargantuan ooze

Init +0; Senses Perception -5

DEFENSE

AC 6, touch 6, flat-footed 6 (-4 size)

hp 114 (12d8+60)

Fort +9, Ref +4, Will -1

Immune sonic, ooze traits;

Resist cold 10, fire 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to wind

OFFENSE

Speed fly 20 ft. (perfect)

Melee touch +5 (3d6 plus desiccation)

Space 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.

Special Attacks

consuming mirage

(DC 21, 3d6 plus

desiccation), natural

invisibility, project

mirage (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 10, Con 20, Int —,

Wis 1, Cha 10

Base Atk +9; CMB +13; CMD 23

Skills Fly +2

SQ gaseous

ECOLOGY

Environment any deserts or oceans

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Consuming Mirage (Ex) A living mirage can engulf foes, as the universal monster ability. A creature engulfed by a living mirage doesn't gain the pinned condition and may move normally—such a creature is not in danger of suffocating—but as long as it begins its turn engulfed, the victim is subject to the living mirage's desiccation attack in addition to the damage this ability causes. The save DC to avoid a living mirage's consuming mirage ability is Constitution-based.

Desiccation (Ex) A living mirage siphons streamers of blood and other vital fluids away from living creatures it touches or engulfs. A living creature that takes damage from the living mirage must succeed at a Constitution check to avoid the effects of thirst (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 444), using the amount of damage dealt by the living mirage

as the check's DC. A creature that is already suffering the effects of thirst must attempt another Constitution check (DC equal to the damage dealt by the living mirage or the DC against thirst as if 1 hour had passed since the target creature's last check, whichever is higher) or take nonlethal damage from their thirst as described in the *Core Rulebook*. The target takes a cumulative -1 penalty on this check for each consecutive round beyond the first it takes damage from the living mirage. A creature that takes nonlethal damage from thirst as a result of this ability is fatigued.

Gaseous (Ex) A living mirage has a body composed of shimmering air. It can pass through small holes or narrow openings, even mere cracks, but cannot enter water or other liquid. It has no Strength score, and cannot manipulate objects as a result.

Natural Invisibility (Ex)

A living mirage remains invisible at all times, even when attacking.

This ability isn't subject to the *invisibility purge* spell. Against foes that cannot pinpoint it, a living mirage gains a +20 bonus on Stealth checks when moving or a +40 bonus when standing still. These bonuses are not included in the statistics above. Because of its size and pervasiveness within the area it occupies, a living mirage gains only a 20% miss chance due to its invisibility.

Project Mirage (Ex) As a standard action, a living mirage can create an illusory vision in areas of extreme heat or reflection—such as a desert, open ocean, or snow plain—to lure victims toward it. This is a nonmagical mind-affecting glamor effect identical to *hallucinatory terrain*. The living mirage can dismiss this effect as a swift action. The save DC to disbelieve the illusion is Charisma-based, and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Vulnerable to Wind (Ex) A living mirage is treated as a Small creature for the purposes of determining the effects high wind has upon it (*Core Rulebook* 439).

A living mirage is a cloud of shimmering air that dwells in warm and cold deserts and calm stretches of open ocean. Although reviled as cruel deceivers, living mirages are in fact mindless, without any motive beyond feeding on the water and minerals found in living bodies.



OSIRIONOLOGIST

This human adventurer wears a long, light-colored leather coat, a wide-brimmed hat, and a belt that keeps her tools, sheathed weapons, and vials within easy reach.

OSIRIONOLOGIST

CR 7



XP 3,200

Human bard (archaeologist) 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 32)
N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)
hp 71 (8d8+32)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9 (+11 vs. traps), **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 rapier +11/+6 (1d6+2/18–20) or
mwk whip +10/+5 (1d3+1 nonlethal)

Ranged mwk composite shortbow +10/+5 (1d6+1/×3)

Special Attacks archaeologist's luck 7 rounds/day (+2)

Bard Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +11)

3rd (3/day)—*dispel magic*, *good hope*, *haste*

2nd (5/day)—*cure moderate wounds*, *glitterdust* (DC 15),
locate object, *pilfering hand*^{UC}

1st (5/day)—*animate rope*, *charm person* (DC 14),
comprehend languages, *detect secret doors*, *grease* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *know direction*, *mending*,
open/close, *read magic*, *resistance*

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Toughness,
Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Appraise +5, Climb +12, Disable Device +15,
Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, history, religion) +11,
Linguistics +5, Perception +14, Spellcraft +7

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Common, Osiriani

SQ bardic knowledge +4, clever explorer +4, lore master 1/day,
rogue talents (trap spotter, weapon training)

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Osirion)

Organization solitary, pair, or expedition (3–6)

Treasure NPC gear (+1 mithral chain shirt, +1 rapier, mwk composite shortbow [+1 Str] with 20 arrows, mwk whip, *elixir of fire breath*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of endure elements*, *potion of invisibility*, antitoxin, climber's kit, grappling hook, magnifying glass, mwk thieves' tools, sunrods [5], 62 gp)

An Osirionologist is a scholar who specializes in the study of Ancient Osirion. Because this lost civilization accomplished wonders unmatched by current magical and

engineering knowledge and did so very suddenly after a starkly primitive beginning, many Osirionologists—including scholars, collectors, and power-hungry magical researchers from Andoran, Cheliax, Absalom, Osirion, Qadira, Katapesh, and beyond—obsess over discovering how these wonders came about.

Osirionologists are often amenable to working with Pathfinders exploring the ruins of Ancient Osirion as long as they feel their academic agendas are respected. They also work as hired experts for the Aspis Consortium so they can undertake otherwise unaffordable expeditions. Naturally, most Osirionologists place their own motivations above those of their allies, and can be trusted only so long as they are moving toward their goals.



PHARAONIC GUARDIAN

This towering humanoid figure has an animal's head and cold, brightly luminous eyes. Its radiant wings are beams of white light.

PHARAONIC GUARDIAN

CR 11



XP 12,800

LE Large undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 21, flat-footed 18 (+5 deflection, +7 Dex, +4 shield, -1 size)

hp 142 (15d8+75)

Fort +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal;

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee +3 *ghost touch* longsword +19/+14/+9 (2d6+3/17-20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks insightful strike, judging gaze, soul-rending wings

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th)

3/day—*suggestion* (DC 18)

1/day—*greater command* (DC 20)

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 25, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 34

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical

(longsword), Improved Vital Strike, Stand Still, Step Up, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Fly +13, Intimidate +23, Knowledge (history) +16, Knowledge (religion) +19, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21

Languages Aklo, Ancient Osiriani, Auran, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ guardian sword and shield

ECOLOGY

Environment warm ruins

Organization solitary, pair, or patrol (3–6)

Treasure standard (mwk longsword, mwk light steel shield, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Guardian Sword and Shield (Su) A pharaonic guardian can imbue any Large sword and shield with a +3 enhancement bonus and the *ghost touch* ability. This effect lasts as long as the guardian wields them and for 1 minute thereafter. The guardian uses these as if its Strength score equaled its Charisma score.

Insightful Strike (Ex) A pharaonic guardian gains a +4 insight bonus on attack rolls against foes whose thoughts it has read via its judging gaze ability.

Judging Gaze (Su) A pharaonic guardian's gaze attack reads the minds of those it sees, as the *detect thoughts* spell with 3 rounds of concentration. This gaze has a range of 30 feet, and can be negated with a successful DC 22 Will save. This is a mind-affecting divination effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Soul-Rending Wings (Su) As a standard action every 1d4 rounds, a pharaonic guardian can flare its wings to fire rays of soul-cutting light in two 30-foot lines extending away from it. Living creatures in the lines gain 1 negative level (Reflex DC 22 negates). A creature whose mind the pharaonic guardian has read from its judging gaze ability takes a -2 penalty on this save. Negative levels from this ability are made permanent at the next sunrise unless the creature succeeds at a DC 22 Fortitude save. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Pharaonic guardians were created when an egotistical Osirian pharaoh used now-lost techniques to ritually draw upon the fear of the countless slaves and servants who built her monuments. When enough of these minions were driven into self-destruction trying to provide for the pharaoh's decadent demands, she knitted their souls together to create the first pharaonic guardians. Such creatures now guard the entrances to tombs and other sites important to the pharaohs of the late First Age and the Second Age of Ancient Osirion.



RISEN GUARD

This warrior's armor resembles the carapace of a mighty beetle. She wields a *khopesh* in one hand and a large shield in the other.

RISEN GUARD

CR 5



XP 1,600

Human fighter 6

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)**hp** 49 (6d10+12)**Fort** +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5 (+2 vs. fear)**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.**Melee** +1 *khopesh* +11/+6 (1d8+5/19–20)**Ranged** heavy crossbow +8 (1d10/19–20)**Special Attacks** weapon training (heavy blades +1)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +9 (+13 trip); **CMD** 21 (23 vs. trip)**Feats** Bodyguard^{APG}, Combat Expertise, CombatReflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*khopesh*),Greater Trip, Improved Trip, In Harm's Way^{APG},

Iron Will

Skills Heal +6, Intimidate +8 (+10 vs. Osirians),

Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +6, Sense

Motive +6; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Intimidate

vs. Osirians

Languages Common, Dwarven, Osiriani**SQ** armor training 1, the Constant

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Osirion)**Organization** solitary, squad (3), team (6–12), escort (3–12 with government dignitary), or royal detail (24+ with pharaoh)**Treasure** NPC gear (half-plate, heavy wooden shield, +1 *khopesh*, heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 72 gp)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

The Constant (Ex) A Risen Guard has elevated influence in Osirion because of her privileged station as a guardian of the Ruby Prince and her title of "the Constant." She gains a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks against Osirians (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Faction Guide* 45).

The warriors of the Risen Guard are the elite bodyguards and champions of the pharaohs of Osirion. Each has been raised from the dead by order of the pharaoh, which they hold as a mark of high honor; the most honored are those revived by a pharaoh's own hand. In gratitude, Risen Guards swear to defend the monarch with their renewed lives. Distinguished in Osirian society, especially when

defending a popular ruler, Risen Guards can call upon assistance from many quarters.

Risen Guards usually patrol the pharaoh's palace in squads of three, guard his person in security details of 24 or more, or lead groups of other guards in maintaining pharaonic property that the pharaoh is not currently using. In addition to defending the pharaoh, Risen Guards also look after the throne's household and guests. Thus, an escort of three to 12 guards is likely to be found around any visiting dignitary or Ruby Prince Khemet III's twin younger siblings, Ojan and Jasilia. Both twins are fond of exploring the forgotten wonders of Osirion's desert, and up to six squads of Risen Guards are immediately dispatched to track them down when they slip off on their own to conduct field research. Some Risen Guards also collaborate with the city guard of Sothis or safeguard certain interests of national security.



RIVER CLERIC

This holy woman wears a large pendant of a winged, two-headed cobra around her neck and wields a mace of similar make.

RIVER CLERIC

CR 3



XP 800

Human cleric of Wadjet 4

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 25 (4d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk light mace +6 (1d6+2)

Ranged mwk javelin +6 (1d6+2)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 2/day (DC 11, 2d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +6)

5/day—icicle (1d6+2 cold damage), resistant touch

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +6)

2nd—*aid*, *calm emotions* (DC 14), *communal endure elements*^{UC}, *fog cloud*^D

1st—*bless*, *remove fear*, *sanctuary*^D (DC 13), *shield of faith*, *summon monster I*

0 (at will)—*guidance*, *know direction*, *purify food and drink*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Protection, Water

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Alertness, Skill Focus (Survival), Toughness

Skills Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (religion) +6,

Perception +6, Profession (sailor) +9, Sense Motive +9,

Survival +9, Swim +4

Languages Aquan, Common, Osiriani

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Osirion)

Organization solitary or with fellow travelers

Treasure NPC gear (+1 *leather armor*, mwk javelin, mwk light mace, *swan boat feather token*, antitoxin, backpack, bedroll, fishing net, flint and steel, healer's kit, holy water [2], silk rope [50 ft.], tent, torches [3], wooden holy symbol, 5 gp)

River clerics are dedicated to the pharaoh and the goddess Wadjet, the latter of whom they believe dwells within the papyrus marshes of the River Sphinx. These holy men and women consider it their sacred duty to offer services to river-goers in Osirion, whether by acting as guides for unexperienced travelers or by ferrying individuals across rivers. While accompanying travelers on their river journeys, river clerics make sure to educate the uninitiated on Wadjet and their ancient goddess's divine doctrine.

While attending to an Osirian river in accordance with Wadjet's tenets, river clerics expect to be paid for their services just as any other guide or ferryman. Unlike others who perform similar functions, however, clerics of Wadjet use nearly all of their income to fund their deity's church. A river cleric never turns down a job unless she feels it clearly violates her deity's code of conduct (such as obstructing or defiling the river or acting against the interests of the pharaoh and his loyal subjects). Even when not ferrying clients, a river cleric can be found traveling along the river, offering her goddess's insight and blessings to the loyal subjects of the reigning pharaoh.

For more information on Wadjet and the other gods of Ancient Osirion, see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #80: Empty Graves*.



URAEUS

This large two-headed cobra can fly thanks to a large pair of sleek, black-feathered wings that sprout from its serpentine body.

URAEUS

CR 5



XP 1,600

LG Medium magical beast

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 52 (7d10+14)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

Immune disease, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (average), swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 bites +10 (1d6+3 plus poison)

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. line, blinded for 1 round and must save against poison, Reflex DC 15 negates, usable every 1d4 rounds for each head)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 23

Feats Acrobatic, Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative

Skills Acrobatics +15, Climb +17, Fly +11, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +16, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +9, Swim +17; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics, +8 Perception

Languages Aquan, Common, Osiriani

ECOLOGY

Environment warm rivers

Organization solitary, pair, or nest (3–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite or breath weapon—contact or injury; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 2 rounds; *initial effect* blinded and paralyzed for 1 round; *secondary effect* blinded for 2d4 rounds; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Said to be children of the river goddess Wadjet, uraeuses are known throughout the Sphinx Basin as benevolent guardians of the River Sphinx and its confluences and tributaries. They are fierce opponents of any who would dare threaten the rivers' ability to serve as travel routes, and never hesitate to harry individuals whose efforts are opposed to the goals of Wadjet and her worshippers, as well as anyone whose influence risks leading the rulers of Osirion into folly. Uraeuses sometimes band together in large nests to

destroy the massive and terrible hetkoshus (see page 54) that occasionally threaten the Sphinx and its tributaries, though such attacks are met with mixed success. When a nest of uraeuses is too small to handle a hetkoshu or other waterway threat, they may seek aid from loyal river clerics of Wadjet (see page 62) or renowned Osirian adventurers who respect the pharaoh and the old ways. Uraeuses often hunt other dangerous prey such as asps, as well, and Osirians frequently tell stories of uraeuses saving children from venomous snakes, gars, and even hippopotamuses. In Ancient Osirion, some legends claim that during times of unusual danger, Wadjet sent throngs of uraeuses to warn the pharaoh of advisors or spies who would lead him to folly.

In addition to their duties as river protectors, uraeuses accept offerings to Wadjet from her faithful, including gifts of incense, spices, gold, and other tithings. In exchange, they teach Wadjet's flock the wisdom of the river and how to best serve Osirian society and its leaders. Patience, industry, and a willingness to listen to others are among the qualities they seek to instill in supplicants who seek them out. Uraeuses are always vigilant in their search for potential leaders for their goddess's church, and they keep a keen eye out for supplicants who may possess the gift of the river or who would otherwise serve as useful servants for their mother goddess.



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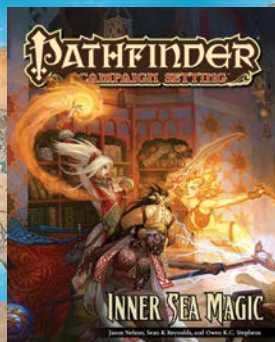
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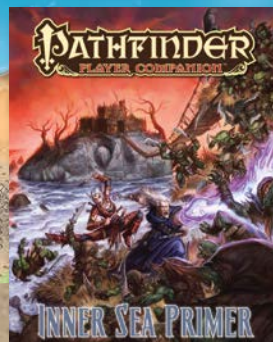
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SECRETS OF THE SANDS

In the heart of the Inner Sea region stretches one of the oldest human empires still standing today: the mighty and mysterious land of pharaohs and pyramids known as Osirion. Hosting as many accursed tombs and treasure-filled ruins beneath its shifting sands as above, Osirion offers no shortage of adventure for characters of all sorts. From the cosmopolitan capital city of Sothis, seat of the Ruby Prince, to the desolate wastelands of the Osirian Desert, discover the might and majesty that lifted humanity out of the Age of Darkness and could potentially usher in a new golden age if unearthed from the past.

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