

PLANETARIUM KHETORASH

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PLANETARIUM

Khetorash

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GENERAL RESOURCES

Swords & Wizardry Complete^{S&W}
 The Tome of Horrors Complete^{PF, S&W}
 Tome of Horrors 4^{PF, S&W}
 Tome of Adventure Design
 Monstrosities^{S&W}
 Bill Webb’s Book of Dirty Tricks
 Razor Coast: Fire as She Bears^{PF}
 Book of Lost Spells^{5e, PF}
 Fifth Edition Foes^{5e}
 The Tome of Blighted Horrors^{5e, PF, S&W}
 Book of Alchemy*^{5e, PF, S&W}

THE LOST LANDS

Rappan Athuk^{PF, S&W}
 Rappan Athuk Expansions Vol. I^{PF, S&W}
 The Slumbering Tsar Saga^{PF, S&W}
 The Black Monastery^{PF, S&W}
 Cyclopean Deeps Vol. I^{PF, S&W}
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 Razor Coast^{PF, S&W}
 Razor Coast: Heart of the Razor^{PF, S&W}
 Razor Coast: Freebooter’s Guide to the Razor Coast^{PF, S&W}
 LL0: The Lost Lands Campaign Setting*^{5e, PF, S&W}
 LL1: Stoneheart Valley^{PF, S&W}

LL2: The Lost City of Barakus^{PF, S&W}
 LL3: Sword of Air^{PF, S&W}
 LL4: Cults of the Sundered Kingdoms^{PF, S&W}
 LL5: Borderland Provinces^{5e, PF, S&W}
 LL6: The Northlands Saga Complete^{PF, S&W}
 LL7: The Blight^{5e, PF, S&W}
 LL8: Bard’s Gate^{5e, PF, S&W}
 LL9: Adventures in the Borderland Provinces^{5e, PF, S&W}

QUESTS OF DOOM

Quests of Doom (Vol. 1)^{5e}
 Quests of Doom (Vol. 2)^{5e}
 Quests of Doom (includes the 5e Vol. 1 and 2, but for PF and S&W only)^{PF, S&W}
 Quests of Doom 2^{5e}
 Quests of Doom 3^{5e, S&W}
 Quests of Doom 4*^{5e, PF, S&W}

PERILOUS VISTAS

Dead Man’s Chest^{PF}
 Dunes of Desolation^{PF}
 Fields of Blood^{PF}
 Mountains of Madness^{PF}
 Marshes of Malice^{PF}

* (forthcoming from Frog God Games)

Khetorash

Galactic legend speaks of an ancient world, hidden from prying eyes, where a mysterious race of powerful space-faring dragons rules over a population of lesser races. It is said that the world contains fabulous riches, magical and technological wonders, and loot aplenty for the adventurer lucky enough to find it. Yet the tales all come with a stern warning — like all dragons, the world's masters guard their treasures jealously, delivering swift and merciless punishment to any and all unwanted visitors. Few are those who have even gazed upon the secret dragon world from space, and fewer still are those who have returned alive.

Most experienced spacefarers scoff at these stories, considering them to be nothing more than tall tales at best and delusional myths at worst. Yet many legends bear a grain of truth at their center, and the stories of **Khetorash the Dragon World** are actually nearer to the truth than anyone suspects.

Physical Description

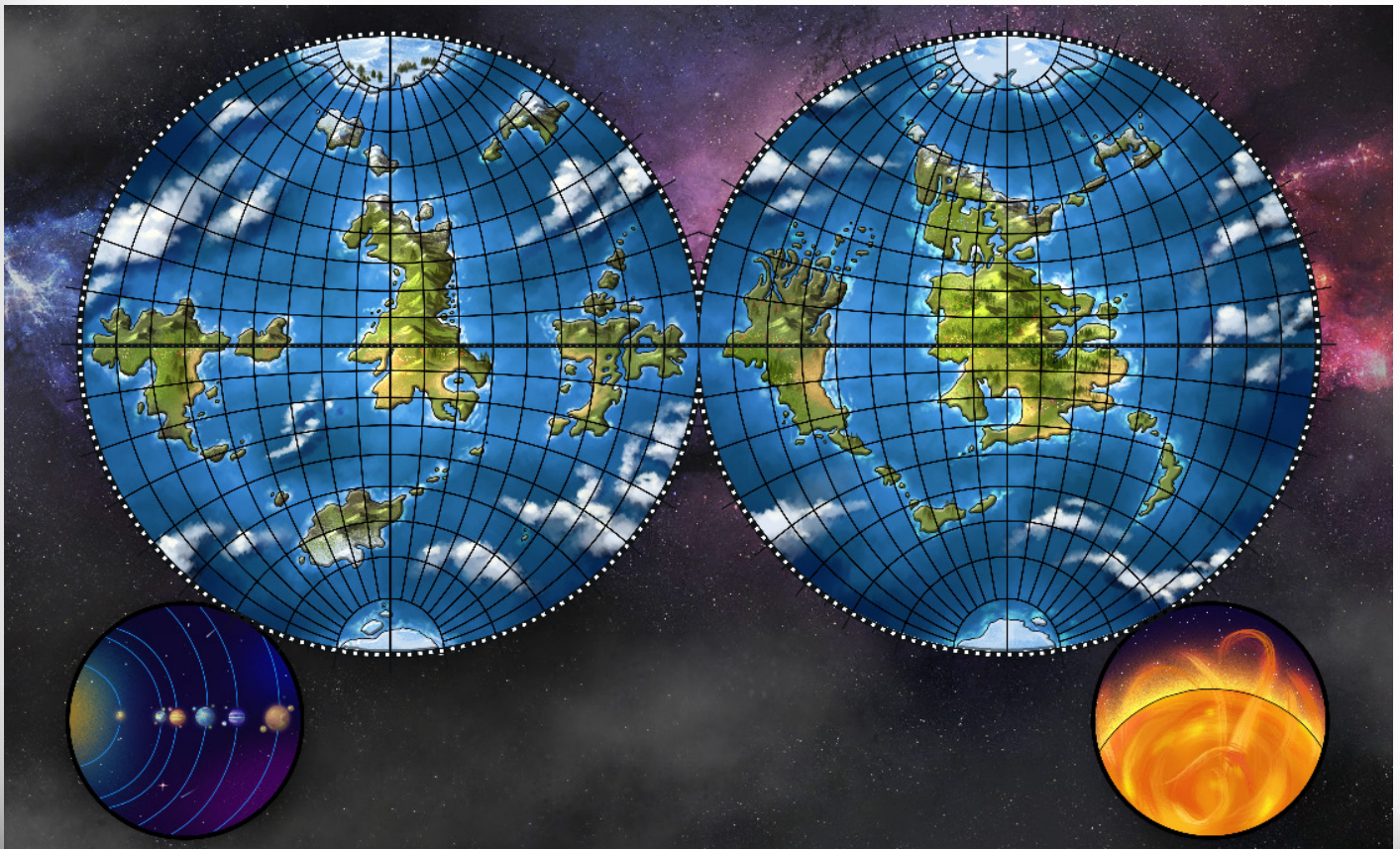
An almost aesthetically ideal planet, Khetorash's seas and continents are perfectly balanced, its colors and proportions all but flawless. Even the region of space it occupies is beautiful — surrounded by a delicate nebula and studded with stars. Its perfection is such that an observer might be tempted to think that the world was artificially designed by a higher intelligence, and there is evidence that this may well be the case.

Khetorash is the second of six planets orbiting a yellow sun called **Domá**, or “Mother” in the outer dragons' tongue. The four outer planets are gas giants, each with several moons, while the innermost world is a rocky world called **Maekevá**, a sun-blasted wasteland inhabited only by the solar dragons and their outerkin minions.

Khetorash is orbited by two moons, **Eá** and **Nyaé** (“Son” and “Daughter” respectively). These two bodies are all but identical in mass and diameter, moving in apparent absolute harmony with one another providing the world with regular and predictable tides as well as an elaborate lunar calendar system. The very perfection of the lunar system is yet another suggestion that Khetorash is not a natural world, but an artificial construct.

Just as its planetary aesthetics are all but perfect, Khetorash's climate and seasons are similarly flawless and predictable. Northern polar caps give way to tundra and picturesque mountains, then to vast coniferous forests, grasslands, and jungles. There are no deserts on Khetorash, and all regions are both fertile and full of living things.

The Khetorashi year is exactly 300 days long, divided into four 75-day seasons, each of which predictably represents its nature perfectly — bright spring follows cold winter and hot summer is followed by gloomy and increasingly cold autumn. While specifics of weather patterns vary from year to year, with storms and hot spells striking in different places depending upon conditions, their frequency and severity never vary.



Civilizations, History, and Current Status

The origins of Khetorash and its unique culture are shrouded in mystery and obfuscation, and the dragons protect their secrets with savage efficiency. Most evidence of the world's history must be derived from legend and myth, two highly suspect sources. For their part the dragons refuse to even discuss such matters with outsiders.

Some tall tales claim that Khetorash is an artificial world, created millions or billions of years ago by a long-vanished race of godlike beings, or by a race of primal dragons, of whom the outer dragons are but a mere shadow. Khetorash, it is said, was built as a haven for the dragon gods, where they could watch the mortal worlds while safely hidden behind a veil of nebular matter. As time passed the dragons grew bored with their world, and began to venture into the galaxy, seizing individuals from many races and bearing them back to Khetorash to found the great humanoid families dwelling there today. These houses served the dragons, did their bidding, and engaged in all the petty activities of mortals that so amused the dragon gods.

In addition to the abducted sentients, the dragon gods also experimented with creating life in their own image — races of draconic humanoids who served as their direct representatives. These races exist to this day, honored servants and anointed representatives of the outer dragons, given responsibility for the day to day rule of Khetorash's "lesser" humanoids.

While history is a fixed and unchanging thing, legend is not, and the tales of Khetorash and its rulers vary wildly, to the point that it is all but impossible to determine which is true and which is mere fancy. Certainly, the outer dragons who rule the world today are not the gods of old, but how they got that way is a matter of conjecture. Some tales claim they are merely the descendants of the old gods, who mated with lesser dragons to produce the outer dragons. Others claim they are another creation of the gods, a race of greater dragons granted rulership of Khetorash as the old dragon deities faded, or departed for other realms.

No one knows for certain what truly happened to the dragon gods (or, for that matter, whether they even existed in the first place), but those few who have encountered the outer dragons of Khetorash confirm they are every bit as arrogant and arbitrary as any god. Their powers may be less than they once were, but the outer dragons remain a potent force, easily able to both conceal their world from prying eyes and defend it against those who wish to plunder its riches or discover its many secrets.

Sentients

Outwardly Khetorash is a world where several different races live together in relative harmony under the benevolent rulership of the all-powerful outer dragons. Reality is somewhat less rosy, as the world is actually a tightly controlled society under the dragons' absolute rulership through both their own agency and that of their appointed surrogates, the outer-kin.

Outer Dragons

While the dragons of Khetorash are not the draconic gods of old, they are nevertheless worshipped as such by the world's teeming mortals. Outer dragons are among the rarest of their kind — ancient and mighty beasts who can soar through interstellar space, borne

OUTER DRAGONS

The outer dragons (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4* "Dragon, Outer") are actually native depths of space, but can be encountered on many different worlds. It is possible that these strange dragons originated on Khetorash, or in nearby interstellar space, and that their godlike forebears created the world as a place for their amusement and relaxation. Not much is truly known of these awesome creatures, and they themselves (at least those who dwell in the vicinity of Khetorash) are an arrogant species, unwilling to treat or discuss with those they consider inferior (which is to say any being that is not another outer dragon).

In addition to normal rules regarding dragons (age categories, natural armor, breath weapon, attacks, etc.) all outer dragons share the following:

Alien Presence (Ex): A juvenile or older outer dragon has an aura that functions as frightful presence with a range equal to 30 feet × the dragon's age category. The effect of each dragon's alien presence is noted in its description.

No Breath (Ex): Outer dragons don't need to breathe and are immune to inhaled poisons, suffocation, and drowning. See the universal monster rules for more information.

See in Darkness (Ex): Outer dragons can see perfectly in darkness, even that created by *deeper darkness*.

Starflight (Su): In outer space, an outer dragon can survive in the void and fly at incredible speed. Travel times vary, but a trip within a single solar system should take 3d20 hours, and a trip beyond should take 3d20 days or more if the dragon knows the way to its destination. An outer dragon can carry one rider of one size category smaller than itself, four passengers two sizes smaller, eight passengers three sizes smaller, or 16 passengers four or more sizes smaller. Passengers are protected from the void of outer space.

by their own innate arcane power and able to traverse vast distances in relatively short periods of time. How they got to Khetorash is not known, and it is entirely possible this is actually their homeworld, and the legends of old dragon gods are actually true. While knowledge of the very existence of this planet would cause a sensation throughout the galaxy, its true history and the secrets of the dragons' origins would be even greater discoveries.

Outerkin

Legend tells that while the humans, elves, dwarves, and goblins of Khetorash form the world's peasantry and laboring classes, the outer dragons did not trust their new subjects to govern themselves. Instead the dragon gods who created the world also made a new race of sentients to govern in their name. These so-called outerkin were smaller, humanoid versions of the five

KHE TORASH PLANETARY

Planetarium: Khetorash

outer dragon breeds, each with abilities similar to their masters, but lacking the ability to travel in space.

LUNAR-KIN

Tall, slender, and shimmering, with delicate wings touched by moonlight, the lunars are probably the most beautiful of the outerkin. Like their greater creators, lunar-kin retain their bewildering breath weapon, which can dazzle foes, and their natural melee attacks are treated as silver weapons.

SOLAR-KIN

Noble, statuesque beings of absolute graceful perfection, solar-kin fly about Khetorash, overseeing the dispensation of justice and the even-handed application of law. They possess a more limited version of the solar dragons' beam of light mode of travel and can also channel positive energy.

VOID-KIN

These green-speckled ebon creatures fly on star-studded wings, accompanying the void dragons on their raids and wanton destruction. They are seen only rarely — on Khetorash they serve as heralds of the void dragons, appearing when their arrival is imminent. Needless to say, this has made void-kin sightings into omens of fearsome disaster. The void-kin's gaze causes confusion, and their bite inflicts additional negative energy damage, like the void dragons themselves.

TIME-KIN

Observed so rarely that many Khetorashi consider them to be mythical, the time-kin do indeed exist, but usually appear only briefly, to deliver cryptic messages and decrees from their Master, the mighty **Taràhengá**. Physically they are steely blue with great sweeping wings that are difficult to focus on. Time-kin's breath weapon can displace targets in time, and once per day they can reroll any d20 or force another to do so.

VORTEX-KIN

Swift and often hard to see, vortex-kin are much like their masters in that they can travel at almost unbelievable speed to all corners of Khetorash. They function as messengers for the other outer dragons, and never appear to have permanent, fixed abodes. They are all considered to be permanently under the effect of a *blur* spell, imposing a 20% miss chance on attacks.

Other Sentients

While the outer dragons and their loyal outerkin are masters of Khetorash, they needed a pliant and cooperative population of subjects (or, in the opinion of some, slaves) to do the day-to-day tasks of the world — farming, fishing, mining, and other jobs. These subjects labor in eternal indentured servitude, toiling to provide food and luxuries to the outer dragons (or, as they are called on Khetorash, the *Imatál* or "Holy Ones"), while keeping the remainder for themselves. Over the ages, subject populations grew, cities sprang up and an entire culture developed devoted to serving the world's masters. Needless to say, all did not always go well, and the dragons used ruthless means to keep their subjects under control (see the **History** and **Culture** sections below).

HUMANS

Most of the subjects living on Khetorash are humans, favored for their high adaptability and fast reproductive rate. Humans are normally employed as manual laborers, farmers, and craftsmen, but some have risen higher than that, growing wealthy as merchants, artisans, or builders. True to their nature, humans always find the places they are most needed and rise above even the strict limitations placed on them by the outer dragons. Some humans have even superseded the elves that the dragons have placed in authority, rising to rule

kingdoms or even mighty empires. Such individuals are highly exceptional, and are still lauded in story and song among human communities.

The *Imatál* hold their wisdom and knowledge tightly in their clawed hands, sharing such things as spells and the creation of magic items only grudgingly. A handful of humans have learned a small amount of magic, becoming moderately powerful in the process, but never rivaling the mystics, technomancers, and archmages of other worlds. Magic items are also known, but these are usually of very low power and utility. Human mystics who grow too powerful and those who craft or discover potent magical artifacts are invariably brought down by the dragons and their minions.

ELVES

Khetorash also harbors large numbers of elves, whom the dragons placed in positions of authority, serving as a ruling noble class due to their longevity and reputed wisdom. As in other worlds, the elves of Khetorash are long-lived, haughty, and obsessed with beauty and aesthetics, but they also serve as artisans, entertainers, and spellcasters. Elves are allowed access to more powerful magic than humans, and their natural aptitude for it suggests some kind of innate ability, rather than a learned skill. This may be because the ancient dragon-gods were very selective in which humanoids they chose for resettlement on Khetorash, and chose those elves with some traces of draconic ancestry for their magical abilities.

For their part, the elves tend to be quite loyal to the dragons, whom they consider to be divine, or at least near-divine. Some elves still revere their old gods and practice clerical magic, but even these priests and priestesses place the dragons above all other "lesser" deities in their hearts and souls.

As the dragons' favored humanoids, elves rule most (but not all) cities and states throughout Khetorash. These elves form a cloistered ruling class, separate from the humans and dwarves, issuing decrees enforced by the outerkin or by their favored human representatives. Among humans and dwarves the elven noble class is treated with far less respect and fear than the all-powerful dragons and their kin, and elven rulers are often subject to disdain, contempt, scorn, and sometimes outright rebellion should they lay too heavy a hand on their subjects. The dragons' response to popular uprisings depends very much on how much damage they do and how well-liked the nobles are with the Masters — sometimes it is better to endure a revolution than continue to tolerate a poor ruler, and the outer dragons sometimes allow these insurrections to run their course, so long as the new leaders properly respect the "natural" order of things and continue to serve the Masters.

DWARVES

The dwarves of Khetorash also appear to be of highly selective ancestry — they practice no magic of any kind, and worship household gods that do not provide divine magic. In general, the dwarves are hard-nosed and pragmatic, acknowledging that the *Imatál* are not gods, but simply arrogant beings of great power, while at the same time realizing that there is little to be done about them. If the Masters demand they toil in mines or build castles and bridges, so be it, so long as the dwarves themselves are compensated and can live comfortably.

Dwarves live separately from humans and elves, dwelling in small hill or mountain communities, working as miners, engineers, and craftsmen to produce finished metals, precious gems, roads, bridges, castles, armor, and weapons. The austere dwarves do not produce art for art's sake, but the items they do produce are staggeringly beautiful in their functionality, with designs honed and perfected over generations.

The Khetorashi dwarves are also self-governing, for they harbor a great dislike of elves and a gruff disdain for humans. So long as they continue to toil and produce

DEVELOPMENTAL VIEW 77KDDON 0077B

the items the Masters need, the dwarves are left to their own devices, governed by elders and wise councils. Dwarven stoicism precludes rebellion or defiance, especially since such acts are doomed to failure and will invariably end in bloodshed and destruction. The average Khetorash dwarf sees life as a challenge to be overcome, or at worst, an irritation to be tolerated. They have no gods and no belief in an afterlife, preferring to simply live as best they can without complaint.

GOBLINS

Large numbers of goblins were brought to Khetorash by the old gods — fecund and easily trained, they now form the menial class of the world, bought and sold and employed in low-level, unskilled jobs by the elves, humans, and dwarves, for sometimes even slaves have slaves of their own.

Today, goblins are everywhere, serving in all but the smallest and most remote settlements or households. Generations of servitude has bred a culture of compliance, with older goblins teaching youngsters to obey their masters in all things and never even consider defiance. The goblins have developed an odd theology suggesting especially compliant slaves will be reborn as masters — humans, dwarves, elves, or if they are especially lucky, dragons. Few goblins truly believe in this cosmology, but they continue to serve, hoping against hope that it is true.

Some goblins retain memories of their old independence and quarrelsome culture however, and defiant youngsters sometimes run away to try to make a life on their own, living in the shadows of big cities, gathering into gangs and ruling small pieces of turf in the wilderness, or lurking in forests, robbing and killing to make their living. These outlaws are hunted down and ruthlessly exterminated when caught, but as their numbers grow they become more and more difficult to control, even for such powerful creatures as the dragons. If there is any true spirit of rebellion or a spark of independence among the humanoids of Khetorash, it resides in the hearts of these scrawny green creatures, whose violent and chaotic natures conceal fierce and untamed souls.

Culture

Khetorash is no more or less than a vast noble estate ruled by the various houses of dragonkind, with its humanoid population in the role of servitors and retainers. As long as they behave themselves, these subject races are treated relatively well, but should trouble arise the dragons have few qualms about setting things right by whatever means are necessary.

The dragons luxuriate at the top of Khetorash's social pyramid, and among them the Master Dragons — the five colossal great wyrms who are the oldest and most powerful of their kind — reign supreme. These dragons seem all but immortal and it is even possible they are directly related to the legendary dragon gods of old.

The eldest and most powerful of the masters is the time dragon Taràhengá. It is estimated that this awesome creature is millions of years old, but Taràhengá itself claims time itself has become irrelevant to its existence, allowing it to transcend mortality and even lesser concepts such as morality, consciousness, personal identity, and gender. Dwelling in the vast **Temporal Fortress** suspended high above Khetorash's north pole, Taràhengá rarely emerges, but prefers to remain at the center of a labyrinth that is said to exist in all places of both time and space, silently observing the flow of existence.

It is entirely possible Taràhengá has indeed moved beyond mere mortal existence and become a god in its own right, but if so it is a passive and unresponsive god,

unwilling to intervene in the various crises and dramas transpiring before its never tiring eyes. Getting to the Temporal Fortress and actually reaching Taràhengá is believed to be all but impossible however, and those foolish enough to attempt the task are never heard from again.

Though the mighty and mysterious Taràhengá rarely if ever directly intervenes in Khetorash's affairs, its will is nevertheless considered vital to Khetorash's survival and all beings, including the other Master Dragons honor it with prayer and tribute. There may be something to all of this, for no one knows for sure how much power the time dragon truly wields, and for as long as it is content to passively observe, the world will continue to exist and prosper.

On Khetorash itself the lawful solar dragon **Osomoé** rules, overseeing the day-to-day affairs of the world, addressing the grievances of lesser dragons, issuing decrees through his legion of outerkin, and dispatching communications with the aid of the vortex dragons. Osomoé is the living embodiment of his lawful neutral alignment, applying the law impartially and utterly without regard for such niceties as mercy and circumstance. His palace, the **Flawless Garden**, is located in orbit around Khetorash's equator and is a place of absolute mathematical and (at least in the eyes of the dragons) ethical perfection. Osomoé passes judgement on only the most momentous of legal matters while elsewhere in the world, his fellow solar dragons and outerkin act in his stead with absolute authority. Osomoé himself divides his time between the Flawless Garden, Khetorash itself and the sun Domá, where he and the other solar dragons go for solitude and private consultation.

Each of Khetorash's twin moons bears its own shimmering, silver palace, home to the twin sister lunar dragons **Lyssaena** and **Thelssae**. Their role in Khetorash's society is somewhat flexible, for they are chaotic and whimsical creatures, given to elaborate jokes and sometimes cruel pranks on each other, fellow outer dragons and on their planet-bound subjects. They frequently travel to Khetorash, along with other lunar dragons to interact with their subjects, visiting towns and cities to socialize or observe, traveling in humanoid disguise or offering great wealth to those who can solve their puzzles or otherwise amuse them. They also sponsor contests among humanoids — these can vary from simple mental or physical competitions to blood sport and fights to the death. The two lunar dragons take the role of tricksters in Khetorashi mythology, and chaotic individuals such as thieves and rogues pray for their blessing.

Selantus is master of the vortex dragons, who act as emissaries and messengers. These dragons always seem to be in motion, coming and going to places all across Khetorash and beyond. The appearance of a vortex dragon is considered a potent omen, for either good or ill, as they invariably bring news of momentous events, summons or judgement from other dragons, and other important items. Selantus does not have a permanent abode, but dwells in the fortresses of the various other Master Dragons.

Last among the Masters is the self-proclaimed Lord of Chaos, the void dragon **Natòmágis** and his spawn. The void dragons do not dwell permanently in physical space, but rather live in transdimensional pockets located in the space surrounding Khetorash, emerging seemingly at random to visit death and destruction upon the world's unfortunate mortals, and even preying upon the other outer dragons. Natòmágis and his kin are seen as pure forces of nature, carrying out the violence required for the cosmos to continue functioning.

There are no gods on Khetorash save the outer dragons, for it is from them that all good things flow. Yet these are not benevolent deities, rather they are arrogant and tyrannical, demanding worship and absolute obedience.

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THE LANGUAGE OF THE OUTER DRAGONS

While the common mortal folk speak familiar languages — Elven, Dwarven, Goblin, Common — the Imatál and their servants the outerkin communicate in a much older and elaborate tongue. A brief sampling of outer draconic is listed below, but this does not even scratch the surface of this ancient language.

All – Tempesakh	Bad – Nógol	Big – Akk	Call – Yeddáskk
Child – Immuz	Come – Tullá	Daughter – Nyaé	Day – Miakh
Dragon – Imatál	Dwarf – Shakh'oná	Elf – Numatál	Evil – Magís
Eye – Dokras	Father – Natòm	Find – Zek'ömos	Garden – Nöetàs
Get – Ukh	Give – Elha	Go – Rûma	Good – Akhtouí
Great – MúaaK	Hand – Beljoë	Holy – Imatá	Human – Shaëste
Important – Mastá	Judge – Osom	Large – Vokonë	Last – Fené
Law – Lédha	Life – Talkhestó	Little – Nûkk	Look – Pikkû
Lord – Henga	Moon – Et'ha	Mother – Domá	New – Faínkos
Old – Ankus	Other – Saahn	Palace – Rahàna	Path – Shakašil
Perfect – Décan	Place – Zhibéhl	See – Ohsoëh	Small – Tuukmá
Son – Eá	Take – Sh'elha	Tell – Poloëmha	Temple – Hakaná
There – Zuun	They – Behtal	Thing – Obbóss	Think – Umra
Time – Tara	Void – Natakhál	Want – Yíhoá	Way – Shav'siil
Year – Divaakús	You – Zö	Young – Saskhan	

Worship consists primarily of placating the world's masters with labor, tribute, and loyalty. Tarähengá is the passive, distant and all-powerful supreme god, Osomoë the stern judge, Lyssaena and Thelssae the mischievous tricksters, Selantus messenger and bearer of omens, and Natòmagís the bringer of darkness and chaos. As the great wyrms all actually fill these roles and their power on Khetorash is all but limitless, the real debate is whether they are truly "gods," or simply very powerful material creatures, and in the end what the true difference is, if any.

The mortals of Khetorash live in perfectly-managed and balanced societies, overseen by the benevolent outerkin, who care for their needs and act as intercessors for the all-powerful Masters and other outer dragons. The dragons themselves are the supreme authority, and their wishes are obeyed instantly by their loyal subjects, who thank them for their benevolence and generosity.

...Or so the outer dragons would have it. In reality Khetorash's non-draconic inhabitants are every bit as willful and fractious as their counterparts elsewhere in the galaxy. Content to serve and obey the dragons in times of plenty, and relatively calm if left in peace to go their own way, the humans, elves, dwarves, and goblins of Khetorash have also made trouble for their masters, rising up in anger if ill-treated and even — rarely — engaging in full-scale rebellion.

The various humanoid communities and kingdoms of Khetorash have their own needs and interests as well, engaging in trade and diplomacy, competing with one another for the Masters' favor, and sometimes going to war with one another. For their part the Masters allow such things to happen so long as they do not unduly disturb the world's harmony, or rob them of the tribute they feel is their due.

A rich and fertile world, Khetorash provides well for both its rulers and their subjects, and in good years humanoid populations soar, with towns, cities, and nations growing as their people grow prosperous. These periodic population booms have a variety of consequences, both good and bad. Should the bad consequences — war, famine, shortages, overpopulation, and deprivation — grow too pronounced, the ruthless outer dragons have been known to take steps to remedy the situation, culling humanoid populations with brutal efficiency. These purges are carried out by the outerkin, by loyal humanoid legions or, in especially dire circumstances, by the outer dragons themselves.

In reality, the humanoids of Khetorash are little more than serfs, toiling for their masters and surrendering the lion's share of what they produce. It is not surprising then, that there is invariably an undercurrent of resentment and anger toward the dragons and outerkin, as well as toward the nobles — usually elves — whom the dragons have appointed as rulers. This resentment is especially common among the young, and among more rugged individuals such as hunters and adventurers. While the outright overthrow of the Masters is all but impossible without outside help, these individuals usually confine their rebellion to quiet resentment and surly defiance of authority.

Technological Level

Khetorash is a world of magic, with arcane forces taking the place of science, providing the outer dragons with concealment, protection, and control. All-powerful and masters of significant magical forces, the outer dragons are quite capable of defending themselves, even

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against technologically-advanced foes. For the most part however the outer dragons prefer to simply avoid the rest of the galaxy, relying on the surrounding nebula and their powerful spells to keep Khetorash hidden.

Travel to and from Khetorash itself is limited to the outer dragons themselves, who are capable of interplanetary flight, and suffer no ill effects from the ravages of deep space. The palace of both the solar Master Dragon Osomoé is a wondrous, mathematically-perfect sphere that orbits Khetorash's equator, while the home of the time dragon Tarähengá is suspended motionless above the planet's north pole. The magical forces and arcane technology needed to construct and maintain these dwellings must be vast and impressive, but they remain a mystery since non-dragons are strictly forbidden entrance.

The palaces of the twin lunar dragons Lyssaena and Thelssae are similar wonders of arcane construction, but it is the extradimensional power of the Chaos Lord, void dragon Natômágis and his kin that is the most frightening and perplexing of Khetorashi magics. The ruthless and destructive void dragons appear to be masters of a technology that allows them to appear and disappear at will, across vast distances, arriving with terrible destruction, often heralded by powerful outerkin who bring word of their coming, then vanishing without a trace into interdimensional space. How (or, more importantly, why) the void dragons engage in such wanton, random acts of violence remains unknown to all but the dragons themselves, and they rarely deign to speak with lesser beings.

With vast arcane forces at their command, the dragons seem to want for very little and especially powerful individuals such as Tarähengá seem able to warp reality to suit themselves — fortunately this is a power the time dragon rarely if ever uses. Despite their nearly godlike status, the outer dragons are nevertheless heir to the same limitations as other creatures. They do need to eat, they need places of shelter, and like all dragons they are possessed of vast greed and desire for luxury and adoration. This is where their humanoid “subjects” come in, and despite their menial status, the lesser beings of Khetorash do have access to many arcano-technological wonders that are utterly unknown to the galaxy.

Khetorashi “technology” incorporates a variety of magical gems and crystals similar to the famous *ioun stones* — strange magically-active objects that elsewhere are considered to be among the rarest and most exotic arcane substances. It is the outer dragons themselves, with labor provided by their loyal outerkin, who “mine” the *ioun stones* in the depths of space and bring them to Khetorash to be crafted into the many wondrous devices used throughout the world.

Ioun crystals can be modified to contain magical energy, storing it like batteries, and that energy can in turn be used to power many different devices, including vehicles, communication devices, automata, weapons, and armor. Others can enhance mental and physical faculties, and are given to important servants while performing vital tasks. Ioun-powered devices can be found throughout Khetorash, in the hands of both the outer dragons and their minions, and the mortal humanoids who serve them. Ioun-powered carriages roll along Khetorash's roads beside horses and other riding animals. Ioun lights illuminate city streets and charged crystals allow messages to be transmitted instantly from town to town. Clockwork servants and guards aid nobles and wealthy individuals. Heavy machinery equipped with multiple powerful iouns assist dwarven miners and builders. Armies march to war equipped with ioun rifles and protected by ioun stones that often entirely take the place of heavier armor.

So potent is this ioun science that it easily rivals more conventional scientific and magical technology. The dragons know this, and protect their secrets jealously, keeping Khetorash hidden and ruthlessly destroying any

IOUN TECHNOLOGY

Ioun stones are found on many worlds, and are famous for their inherent magical abilities. Normally an *ioun stone* provides arcane protection or enhancement while literally orbiting its bearer's head like a tiny, glittering planet. As mysterious as they are valuable, these stones are sought after on worlds throughout the galaxy, and are found only in the possession of a lucky handful.

Not so on Khetorash, for among the many secrets known by the *Imatál* is that of the *ioun stones'* origin, and even more significantly the process by which they can be harvested and used. Only a few types of *ioun stones* are known on other worlds, but on Khetorash they form an important part of the planet's arcane science, powering everything from vehicles to weapons and armor, creating a uniquely-powerful and versatile technology.

Space doesn't permit a full list of all of the uses to which the dragons and their allies put *ioun stones*, nor does a list of all of the different colors and shapes that are found in and near Khetorash, or their many uses. Suffice to say that ioun-powered weapons can match the abilities of modern energy weapons, and ioun armor provides fixed bonuses up to +5. Other *ioun stones* equal or improve upon the powers listed in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*, while still others can, with the right modifications, provide power to technological devices and even, with especially large stones, starships.

Other iouns provide illumination, communication, and power all manner of arcane devices, including vehicles. Many of these devices duplicate the function of more advanced tech — GMs are encouraged to be creative.

Despite the vast powers of *ioun stones* and the sophisticated items they power, ioun technology is controlled by the dragons and their kin — what little is shared with the humanoids is limited to the rich and powerful, and even they can only access the most basic of powers. *Ioun stones* may light some cities, true, but for the most part the average mortal inhabitant of Khetorash rarely sees benefit, and the world remains at a medieval level of development, albeit with the occasional technological wonder.

who learn of the world's existence. Knowledge of the stones' source and uses could utterly shatter the balance of power in the galaxy, with every major power competing to control Khetorash and its priceless resources. Though they are arrogant beings, the dragons are not fools and know that despite their own vast powers they cannot stand against an entire galaxy — secrecy remains their best defense, though they will not hesitate to protect their world with savage efficiency if threatened.

KHE TORASH

Planetarium: Khetorash

Economy and Resources

The world's economic life is managed as tightly as its society. The rich Khetorashi climate, long growing season, and fertile lands mean that even after the master's take their portion there is always enough for the common folk and few if any ever suffer from the ravages of drought, famine, or deprivation.

The temperate regions are places of cities, surrounded by vast farmlands, tended by human peasants, served by legions of goblin slaves. The outer dragons are omnivorous, though their preference is for meat, and each year thousands of animals are slaughtered and butchered for the masters' benefit. Some animal products are held back for the humanoids, but meat is generally reserved for the noble and the wealthy. Woe unto the peasant who slaughters his cows for his own family's benefit — such a crime invariably merits a fine, imprisonment, or worse. The dragons are also fond of fish and crustaceans, so coastal settlements often support large fishing fleets. The masters have less interest in grains, fruits, and vegetables, and a larger percentage of these foods are left for the humanoids.

The dragons also enjoy luxuries and art. Although they themselves can create works of sublime beauty, they also patronize their subjects offering great wealth to talented painters, sculptors, and weavers. Song and poetry also pleases the dragons, especially the lunar and solar subspecies — an invitation to entertain a dragon in its palace can make an ordinary bard or skald wealthy for life.

In the absence of the ruling dragons, the humans, elves, and dwarves of Khetorash engage in familiar economic practices, and the idle visitor, unaware of the masters' existence, would find nothing out of the ordinary in the life of Khetorashi merchants, shopkeepers, tradesfolk, and artisans. All the same, the looming presence of the great outer dragons casts a long shadow over Khetorash and its people, even in their daily lives and economic pursuits.

Government

At the highest level, Khetorashi government is nothing more than an absolute monarchy, with the five Master Dragons at the pinnacle, with the younger dragons below them. Their word is absolute law — there is no appeal, argument, or question of a dragon's decrees. Even the youngest and weakest of the outer dragons bears godlike authority, able to come and go as it pleases and engage in any act striking its fancy.

Matters are a bit different when it comes to relations between the dragons themselves. Such disputes are settled by older dragons, and any party can appeal a decision all the way to the Master Dragons themselves, whose authority over their own subspecies is total. Appeals rarely go all the way to the Masters, for they have been known to deliver the ultimate penalty to those who disturb them by demanding judgement.

The humanoids of Khetorash live in cities and kingdoms much like those of other worlds, engaging in diplomacy, trade, and conflict under the watchful eyes of their masters. In most cases, elves form a noble ruling class, given authority by the dragons to rule over and judge the human commoners. Their offices are usually hereditary, but a troublesome family of nobles may find itself deposed and replaced by more reliable elves. A handful of humans have shown sufficient restraint and wisdom to rule their fellows, but such individuals are quite rare.

Dwarves generally live apart in communities dedicated to mining, building, and crafting. There is very little direct contact between dwarves and humans, and the two races treat each other as if they are entirely foreign

creatures with little in common. Unlike humans, the dwarves are usually self-governing, for they like elves even less and balk at being under elven authority. Dwarven settlements are independent mini-states, usually ruled by councils of elders, or by a single wise man or woman of great age and authority.

Goblins form the slave class for the other races and are generally treated as little more than chattel. A Khetorashi goblin's lot is a truly unhappy one, yet a few small communities exist, overseen by chiefs and shamans, clinging to some remnants of their old culture despite almost universal repression.

The varied kingdoms and city-states of Khetorash have their own intricate network of relationships, with diplomacy and trade tying them together. Like the kingdoms of other worlds, these states often compete with one another, sometimes for the favor of the dragons (when not engaged in wanton destruction, the capricious void dragons enjoy pitting humanoid kingdoms against one another). Diplomatic crises, skirmishes and even outright war between ioun-crystal armed militaries is not uncommon, and the dragons themselves usually allow such things to happen (often deriving enormous amusement from observing them), so long as they do not interfere with the general prosperity and tranquility of Khetorash. Militaristic states and empire-builders are considered far too ambitious and dangerous for the dragons, and invariably find themselves crushed by the Masters and their outerkin minions.

The outerkin are the Imatál's emissaries and favored servants on the surface of Khetorash, bred specifically to act as intermediaries, delivering decrees, overseeing conditions on the planet, and enforcing the Masters' laws with unquestioning loyalty and terrifying efficiency. The outerkin do not actively engage in governance or rule — this is left to the elves and other nobles — but they do not hesitate to remove any humanoid in authority who does not obey or sufficiently respect the outer dragons.

Ecology

A near-perfect world, Khetorash harbors species from dozens of worlds, and would be a quite familiar place to the average adventurer or spacefarer. Frozen mountains rise up and seemingly-endless tundra rolls along near the poles, serene temperate forests fill the middle latitudes and lush tropical jungle grows near the equator. Incongruously there are no deserts or wastelands on Khetorash, for all places are well-watered and fertile, supporting lush plant growth and agricultural activities.

General Flora and Fauna

Khetorash's plant and animal life are familiar and seemingly distributed to promote a harmonious and balanced environment. Grasses and flowering plants cover the tundra and plains, while deciduous and evergreen trees of many species fill the forests, and mighty tropical hardwoods rise from the equatorial jungles, rising above lush undergrowth. While naturally no outsider has ever seen, let alone studied, the varied and remarkable flora of Khetorash, a true scientific survey would find species drawn from dozens of worlds that are nevertheless entirely compatible with one another, and with Khetorash's mild climate.

The same may be said for Khetorash's animal species — while the ecosystem contains creatures from many different locations throughout the galaxy, their presence appears to be the result of careful study and planning. Rodents and small insectivores scuttle through the undergrowth, birds and flying mammals fill the skies. The rivers and oceans teem with fish, reptiles, and aquatic mammals, herd beasts thunder across the plains

and are fed upon by a wide range of predators. On the surface, Khetorash's ecosystems resemble those of many other worlds.

But there are some oddities as well. Most notably, the world lacks any truly dangerous larger creatures — undead, aberrations, outsiders, magical beasts, and dragons (especially dragons) are almost entirely absent, once more as if the world's wild places were artificially managed by some mysterious founders.

Large sections of Khetorash remain unsettled and largely unexplored, and that appears to be the way the dragons like it. Settled regions contain the humanoid kingdoms and cities, but expansion beyond proscribed borders is strictly forbidden. The ambitious monarch who expands too far or too quickly will invariably come to grief at the hands of the outerkin, so the limits of mortal kingdoms remain within currently-established borders.

Exploration, adventuring, and hunting in the wilderness is generally tolerated so long as the individuals doing so do not unduly disturb things. Those humanoids who balk at the excessively controlled and regimented nature of their lives under the dragons can sometimes escape, making a living in the wilderness far from the Masters' interference. All the same, these brave and independent men and women survive only due to the dragon's indulgence, and should too many try to escape, the Masters may take steps to curtail them. A few tiny communities of renegades, runaways, and outlaws survive in the wilderness as well, but they are careful to maintain low profiles and avoid attention from the Masters and their servants.

Apex Creatures

Khetorash's true apex creatures are of course the outer dragons who rule here. Exactly how many the world and its environs hold is not known — certainly a single world can't support more than a few hundred of these remarkable creatures. Outer dragons can be of any age category save one — though the exact mechanism is a mystery, only a single great wyrm of each subtype can exist at any time, and the current Master Dragons have been around for eons. It is entirely possible that the Masters are immortal, and there is no evidence that any have ever passed on or been replaced. In effect, the Masters are now and always have been, though naturally they refuse to share any information regarding their longevity and succession traditions.

Besides the *Imatál*, the most powerful creatures on Khetorash are the wild beasts of the wilderness, drawn from many worlds to create a varied and often dangerous environment. Tigers, lions, and other predatory cats rub shoulders with packs of wolves, hyenas, wargs, and various dire creatures. Many familiar monsters, aberrations, and magical beasts such as bulettes, chimera, hydra, displacer beasts, gibbering mouthers, sphinx, lemure and all non-outer dragons are, as noted above, entirely missing from the scene, but the wild is a challenging place nonetheless.

Population Centers, Landing Sites, and Points of Interest

Surprisingly this world's true rulers, the outer dragons, do not actually make their permanent home here, preferring instead to dwell in the depths of space. This is not to say they do not visit the world, often for long periods of time, but these are considered temporary stays intended to observe the teeming humanoids and wild creatures for amusement or insight, to collect tribute

that is then carried off to their interplanetary homes, to engage in governance, or deliver judgement. At any one time there are dozens of dragons on Khetorash, but hundreds more soar through the darkness between worlds, alighting on the sun, moons, asteroids, or in the case of the terrible void dragons, the depths of interdimensional space.

The Temporal Palace

Home to the mighty elder time dragon *Taràhengá*, the place known as the Temporal Palace (*Rahànantekhó* in the arcane language of the Masters) floats permanently 300 miles above Khetorash's north pole. At this distance, it is visible in the sky as a complex, roughly spherical structure surrounded by thousands of gleaming, flickering *ioun stones*. The palace is difficult to focus on, and its outline seems to shift and change, never taking the same form twice.

The unique aspects of the Temporal Fortress would be baffling to scholars and researchers should they ever be fortunate enough to gaze upon the place. The dragons — when they even deign to mention the place to mortals — imply that it exists simultaneously in all times, and can observe any place in the known universe. Whether this is true or not is unknown — it may simply be an exaggeration born of draconic arrogance, but there is no doubt that near the Temporal Palace strange things may happen. Those who approach it may find themselves suddenly younger or older, they may be instantly transported to another time or a random place on Khetorash, or (so it is rumored) they may cease to exist utterly, and events will instantly reshape themselves, adjusting to the fact that the visitor never came into being.

It is relatively certain that while the palace may exist throughout time, it remains in a fixed location, able to observe many places but unable to actually move there. Its relative stability in space (if not time) may be a function of its design, suggesting that if it can easily exist in one dimension, it must be required to remain utterly stationary in all others. No one knows for sure, and those Khetorashi humanoids who have speculated about the place generally keep their theorizing very, very quiet.

Taràhengá lives somewhere in the palace's labyrinthine interior. It is said that the great time dragon occupies a vast, dimensionally-transcendental chamber where it floats in absolute serenity, watching time unfold on a series of floating orbs that transmit images from across the cosmos. If indeed *Taràhengá* does exist in many times at once, it may have an infinite ability to observe and consider, but at no time in living memory has the mighty creature ever stirred from its vigil, nor does it communicate with anyone outside its fortress (even other outer dragons, much to their frustration) save through the agency of its most trusted time dragon advisors. Even then *Taràhengá*'s pronouncements are cryptic at best and utterly incomprehensible at worst.

Time dragons of all ages come and go from the palace at will, and some claim that a single dragon may enter at one age, then leave at another — older to younger, younger to older — as if it had spent hundreds of years inside, or had regressed for centuries. What these dragons do in the palace is as much a mystery as anything else, but speculation is rife — some say these dragons are dispatched throughout time to serve *Taràhengá*'s strange requirements, while others claim that their advancements and regenerations are the result of rewards or punishments, or even of training and practice in the magic of time and dimension.

There are clearly many secrets hidden in the palace, and if rumors are to be believed, vast treasures as well — if nothing else the time dragons' mysterious temporal powers might allow an enterprising rogue to travel through time, stealing the treasures of history (a

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Planetarium: Khetorash

popular tale tells of a band of enterprising dwarves who did just that, but came to grief when Taràhengá learned of their transgressions). Others might find great wisdom here, or possibly even powerful spells that might grant near-divine mastery over time and space. On the other hand, it's far more likely that any visitors will end up in a state of acute non-existence, and for all anyone knows, they already have, and all memories of them and their exploits have been erased.

The Flawless Garden

The magnificent and mathematically perfect demesne called the Flawless Garden (Décannoëtàs in the outer dragon language) is home to the creature generally acknowledged as Khetorash's ruler, the solar dragon Osomoé. Or rather, it is the great wyrm's semi-permanent residence, for both Osomoé and his fellows spend much of their time dwelling on Khetorash's sun, Domá, dividing the remainder of their time between Khetorash proper and the Flawless Garden.

The Garden takes the form of a great octahedron, orbiting precisely 300 miles above Khetorash's equator. "Flawless" is not merely a title — in keeping with the solar dragons' lawful nature, every line and curve is perfect, every angle exact. Within the great eight-sided structure lie great avenues, vast atria, wide picturesque galleries and soaring sculpted arches, each so utterly perfect as to defy mere mortal perception. Many of these spaces are both wide to accommodate dragons on foot, and high so they may fly. There are no stairs in the Flawless Garden.

The purpose of the Flawless Garden is to represent the perfection of Khetorashi society and the unyielding consistency of the solar dragons. At its center lies the high-vaulted hallway called the Shakasilédha or Path of the Law, which is lined with colossal stone tablets, each inscribed with the laws of Khetorash in tiny, intricately-carved runes. Legend holds that these laws were created the same day as Khetorash, and remained unchanged since, so perfect were they. The laws themselves are elaborate, detailed and for non-dragons, all but incomprehensible, but Osomoé and his fellow solar dragons — the Lédhaúlsk or "Lawgivers" — state with absolute certainty they address and govern every single possible situation that might arise on Khetorash.

Of course, no one can question the dragons, especially the Masters, so Osomoé's assertion cannot be tested. It is known, however, that the laws are enforced absolutely and consistently, even when they do not favor the dragons (which is rare, but not entirely unknown). There is certainly no question that Osomoé is an impartial judge, and that his dragons enforce the law without emotion or prejudice.

The Lunar Temples

On each of Khetorash's twin moons, Eá and Nyaé, stands a shining silver palace, home to the twin embodiments of chaos, the lunar dragons Lyssaena and Thelssae. As the two palaces have identical floorplans and design, it is highly likely that they were designed by lawful entities (such as the solar dragons or their rigidly lawful forebears), but the presence of the sisters has transformed both into random chaotic wonderlands filled with strange objects, devices, and magical phenomena.

Officially called Et'hakhaná — the Lunar Temples — and despite their name these dwellings are not actually places of worship, unless it is worship of disorder. The twins themselves are capricious, mischievous pranksters who enjoy spreading confusion on Khetorash and even teasing other outer dragons (though they rarely risk the wrath of the other Masters). As such they are worshipped as trickster gods by the humanoids of Khetorash, and those who feel the sting of their sometimes-cruel humor

are considered bizarrely "blessed" for the experience.

While the twin temples look identical from outside — graceful silver structures with tall thin towers and spidery bridges that would normally have been impossible to construct under normal gravity. Like the moon the temples are utterly airless and only the lunar dragons can live here — in addition to the twins, the temples serve as home to several other adult and ancient lunars, who sometimes accompany the Masters on their journeys to Khetorash and elsewhere.

Non-draconic visitors are rare, but the lunarkin sometimes come here, and the twins or their fellow lunars have been known to spirit away mortals to their realm, providing their "guests" with magical breathing aids, or temporarily altering their physiologies so that they do not need air — the alternatives are at the whim of the dragons themselves. Though they can be cruel and mean-spirited, the dragons are not sociopaths, and have never done anything that would result in death or permanent injury to those they abduct (unless of course their victims attempt to fight or retaliate, in which case all bets are off).

Those few mortals privileged enough to visit the temples report that they are places of wild, unrestrained beauty and, in some cases fear. Their interior chambers change size and shape, mad splashes of color decorate walls, ever-shifting and reforming. Paintings and tapestries appear and disappear, sometimes coming to life and transforming into full three-dimensional life. Statuary and sculptures likewise animate and move or speak.

Many legends surround the temples and what lies inside, many of which involve a supposedly-lucky individual who is carried off to one of the moons, only to meet with terrible misfortune or an ironic fate — riches that vanish upon return to Khetorash, a joyful return only to find that decades have passed, or a boon that proves to have the opposite effect of that desired (a man wishes for wealth only to find that it comes with vast and crushing responsibilities, a noble demands immortality only to be transformed into an unchanging statue, etc.). The moral of these tales is that "mere" humanoids should never meddle or even consider involvement in the affairs of the outer dragons, but instead be content with their lot in life.

The Void

While the Lunars are the mischievous tricksters of Khetorashi mythology, the role of the masters of evil and mayhem falls to the void dragons, led by the fearsome Natòmágis. Creatures of dread and fear, the void dragons dwell in the eternal darkness of interdimensional space, the place collectively called Natakhál, or "The Void."

The Void is a place separate from the other planes of existence, lying effectively in between dimensional spaces, where only the void dragons can survive. While the very concept of a place of absolute emptiness and non-existence is in itself terrifying, there is an even worse aspect to the Void — that it can be used to travel to virtually any location on or near Khetorash, and that the void dragons and voidkin might unexpectedly appear in even the safest and most seemingly-secure of places.

And this is just what they do — though rare, the void dragons' appearances are considered the direst of ill omens, for they invariably accompany death, destruction, and terror throughout humanoid lands. The void-folk's destruction alone is of course terrible, but their arrival also comes with terrible misfortune that persists for months or years after the dragons' departure.

When they vanish, the void dragons return to a place of utter darkness and immateriality — how they survive and what they do when they are there isn't certain. Some claim that Natòmágis and the other void-dwellers do not truly exist either — that they merge with the

Void's absolute nothingness, but are summoned up by the dark, incomprehensible forces of the cosmos, when wicked and untrammled chaos is required, or simply when formless evil must be appeased.

Lapangis

There is no doubt that Lapangis, capital of the great Lapangan Empire, is one of the most magnificent humanoid cities on Khetorash. Built like a vast circle around the centrally located Crown Bluff, the main settlement consists of long straight streets radiating out from the heights, connected by curved secondary streets and lined with cunningly crafted buildings made from marble and granite near the hub, and of wood and plaster near the outer perimeter. A graceful white wall surrounds the city, but it is not garrisoned for the great capital has not faced siege in over 150 years.

The Emperor's Palace stands atop Crown Bluff, built around a single domed structure where **Empress Tandyleah Thereogenes** holds court. Only the second ruler of the empire, Tandyleah took the throne 75 years ago when her father, the legendary **Marchosia Thereogenes**, voluntarily abdicated and vanished from the mortal realm — to where, no one can say, but some tales claim that he was reborn as a time dragon and dwells in the *Rahānantekhó* with the divine *Tarāhengá*.

Along the broad, tree-and-building lined streets near the bluff, Lapangis is a wonder, filled with ioun-powered vehicles, graceful statuary, breathtaking buildings, and generous public spaces. The noble human and elvish families fortunate enough to live in this district are old, powerful, and quite wealthy, but are always careful to remember the Masters, and attend worship services at five great temples, each dedicated to a different outer dragon.

Nobility is a privilege for the folk of the empire, and the presence of the Masters is never far from people's minds, especially since there are dozens of outerkin here as well, dwelling in their own places of splendor, flying overhead on important business, or simply observing goings-on in ominous silence. Four outerkin — **Graldis** for the solars, **Azivol** for the lunars, **Terengis** for the vortex and **Tyehuna** for the time-kin — live permanently at the palace, ostensibly as diplomats and advisors, but in truth as powers behind the throne whose approval (and that of their respective masters) is required for all important decisions. The void dragons are not represented, for their very presence presages loss and catastrophe.

Lapangis is home to over 200,000 humans. The elite elves at the top of the social and economic pyramid number perhaps 10,000 and a handful of dwarven craftsfolk and engineers also make their home here, though they generally do not like having to live near non-dwarves. No one really knows how many goblins live here, for there are many escapees, outlaws, and fugitives as well as a few free goblins who do not "belong" to anyone save themselves. It is estimated that there are 50,000–100,000 goblins in Lapangis, but that can only be a rough guess.

Farther from the center of the city conditions become more crowded and less luxurious, but Lapangis remains a teeming, vital place. Here, merchants command great trading empires, scholars pen books about the magnificence of their draconic rulers, poets craft epics and dragons artists pay tribute to the outer dragons in paintings and sculptures. Worship of the *Imatál* takes place here as well, with many smaller temples and shrines devoted to the Masters, or to other less powerful but nevertheless important individuals.

Beyond the wall sprawl vast neighborhoods that have organically grown over decades and centuries. Here is where the common folk of Lapangis live, going about the same sorts of business as common folk on a thousand different worlds. They too worship the Masters, but theirs is a somewhat more reserved and pragmatic adoration, tempered and made relatively mundane by

the daily struggles for survival and advancement.

Some of Lapangis' neighborhoods are labyrinthine slums, home to the poor, the criminal, the mad, or the antisocial. Life is cheap and difficult here, but the population is far more diverse, with humans and dwarves living side-by-side with goblins — runaway slaves, criminals, or rarely actual freefolk — and even outlawed, exiled, or disgraced elves. The hand of the Masters does not fall quite as heavily here; outsiders and those wishing not to be noticed might be able to survive, so long as the rough and ready humanoids of the slums don't take too much notice.

Law in Lapangis is enforced by the Custodians, a particularly efficient police force, granted the role of judge, jury and — if needed — executioners. Justice and trials by jury are unknown on Khetorash and in the Lapangan Empire, but punishments are strictly proscribed by the laws of the solar dragons, and each custodian is expected to enforce them in an efficient, but even-handed, manner. Justice is harsh and quick, but the lawful solars demand that it be fair.

Though it pales in comparison to the glories of the dragons' dwellings, Lapangis continues to be the leading humanoid city on Khetorash. Even as the empire itself begins to fray (see below), the greatest city of Khetorash continues to thrive and prosper, all under the watchful eye of the Masters and their loyal outerkin.

The Lapangan Empire

The dragons who rule Khetorash are of course its most prominent and notable inhabitants, but their carefully-managed empire would not exist without the teeming multitudes of humans, elves, dwarves, and goblins who share the planet with their masters. These humanoids live in towns, villages, great cities, and kingdoms and sometimes, so long as the Masters are not displeased, they even build mighty empires.

The Lapangan Empire is one such. Ruled by the ancient elven House *Thereogenes*, the empire stretches across most of a continent and has maintained its dominant position for nearly two centuries by cunningly playing its enemies off against each other while maintaining a respectful, almost obsequious relationship with the Masters.

Ruled from the mighty city of Lapangis, the Empire is divided into a dozen provinces, each ruled by a governor appointed by the Empress and approved by the outerkin (and ultimately by the Masters themselves). With few exceptions, these governors are drawn from the ranks of elven nobles, loyal to the Masters and pliable to the will of the Empress.

While the Masters do not forbid warfare or conquest, they are quite careful about when, how, and why it is allowed, and the empire has grown but slowly over the centuries. Its armies patrol the roads and garrison the frontier with neighboring kingdoms, but the last real war of conquest was over 50 years ago when the Lapangans marched into the rival state of *Idrallas*, overwhelming its defenders and adding its rich farmlands and mines to the empire. Since then, both through inertia and the unwillingness of the Masters, the empire has remained relatively static, guarding its borders and overseeing a population that is both declining in numbers and aging rapidly.

How much longer the empire will survive isn't certain, and its neighbors, especially the **Hysatian Federation** and the **Madine Republic** sense its growing weakness, and have been forming a strong trade alliance, bypassing the empire to do business with other kingdoms directly. The Empress has noticed the two states' activities and demanded they stop, but the Hysatians and Madines seem relatively confident that the Masters will not approve any further warfare by the empire. At worst, the alliance's rulers seem confident that their armies will be able to hold their own, making any conflict too costly for the Lapangans and too bloody for the Masters to allow to continue.

Planetarium: Khetorash

Hysatian Federation

A number of other smaller kingdoms and city-states compete with the great Lapangan Empire, and chief among them is the Hysatian Federation, a fractious but powerful alliance of about a dozen smaller states who banded together under a single electoral authority to protect themselves from the Empire's growing influence. Sharing a long border with the empire, the Federation has managed to maintain a regular and growing trade network, avoiding the Empire's ruinous tariffs and bureaucracy.

From the Federation's capital in the city of Hysatia, the Elector (officially "First Citizen") Artossa Morkhen manages a vast state with dozens of competing political and economic factions. So far his diplomatic and economic skill has kept the Hysatians a step or two ahead of the Lapangans, and even forged an alliance with the neighboring Madine Republic, but as always the Federation prospers at the pleasure of the dragons, who have noted the region's growing population, political and military power. Should the Masters allow the Lapangans to invade or, worse yet, decide that it's time for a cull, the fragile alliance that keeps the Federation together may collapse into chaos.

The Madine Republic

Unlike the Hysatians, the more cosmopolitan Madine Republic has a strong national identity, with several different human houses and cultures banded together for the greater good. Ruled by the elven **Lord Mhylos Brightwing**, the republic is comprised of 15 individual provinces, which select senators to attend a biannual congress, passing laws and managing the nation's society. Mhylos and his allies in the senate know the new alliance with the Hysatians is risky, for any change in the balance of power that threatens the dragons' prosperity could lead to open conflict, but the chance to create a new trade alliance independent of the Empire was too much of a temptation. Some of Mhylos' advisors think that he has become too "human" for his own good, ignoring his family's past obeisance to the dragons in favor of human-style greed, but he dismisses these criticisms contemptuously.

Adventure Hooks & Campaign Seed

Prior to its use as a place of adventure, the dragon world of Khetorash is nothing more than a legend — a tall tale told by ancient spacers in starport bars, fairy stories for children, or bardic stories of mythical lost lands. In reality, Khetorash is very real, but its masters have taken elaborate steps to keep its very existence secret. These hooks and seeds are intended for adventurers who discover the truth, and their exploits on this remote, secret, and very dangerous world.

The Lost World

The most obvious of campaign ideas is one centered around investigating, discovering, and exploring Khetorash, and learning more about the strange creatures who rule there. The GM can establish that legends of a "dragon planet" are common throughout the spaceways, even planting these rumors in the form of songs, stories, and books of mythology. A patient GM can even salt these clues throughout a normal campaign, piquing the players' interest but not revealing too much.

There are several different ways in which the adventurers can discover Khetorash is a real place. The wreckage of a crippled scoutship may contain a lone survivor, or logs of an accidental FTL mishap that landed the crew in the Khetorashi system, and include descriptions or images of mighty dragons attacking *in space!* A character may have had a relative or ancestry who had discovered the world and barely escaped, and left behind a journal or other evidence of the world's location. A government, corporation, or secret organization may have their own evidence and dispatch the adventurers to the coordinates of the mysterious "anomaly" to discover what is truly there. These, and many other options, are available to enterprising GMs.

Once evidence of Khetorash has been obtained the next step would naturally be to outfit an expedition to the place, either using the party's own resources — supplies, starships, weapons, etc. — hiring a starship for transportation or signing on with an existing expedition. Regardless, the characters will need to get to the strange part of space where a vast nebula and arcane spells of concealment keep Khetorash hidden from view. At this point, piercing the veil that hides the world is all-important, and naturally the dragons have created other barriers, including ioun-based explosive mines, hostile space creatures such as the whale-like oma, and spells of misdirection and confusion to keep intruders at bay.

Once past this line of defense, the party's challenges are only just beginning, for if they approach Khetorash proper they must decide whether to use stealth or move in openly. A stealthy approach is probably best, for it is best not to disturb or draw attention from the outer dragons who patrol Khetorashi space. An open battle with the dragons is likely to go badly for adventurers in a single starship, but any creative option should be allowed at this point. It is entirely possible the dragons will be aware something momentous is coming, from the cryptic prophecies of Tarähengá and the other dragons — fortunately their visions of the future when it comes to events outside Khetorash, and the actions of aliens like the characters are likely to be dim and indirect at best.

Reaching orbit undetected, players will have to locate a good place to land and fortunately, despite their near-godlike status, the dragons are not all-powerful, and are not well equipped to detect a small vessel or monitor all places on the world. Planetfall in one of the wilderness regions would allow the characters to set up a secure base, while coming in near settled areas would give them quick access to locals and more opportunities to learn about the new world. Once on the world, the characters must then determine their next course of action, and several of these are suggested here.

Rebellion

Khetorash has remained in a state of stagnancy for millennia, as the dragons and outerkin keep tight controls on the humanoids and their advances. Despite ioun technology, powered vehicles, advanced weaponry and many other innovations, for the most part, the world's level of development remains mired in the late middle ages. Innovators and inventors are suppressed, new devices are either banned or severely restricted, social and economic development is all but forbidden. Even in the field of conflict, wars only take place at the dragons' discretion, and even if peace and prosperity reign, a growing population is often ruthlessly culled to maintain the world's balance and its people's status as chattel.

Most adventurers would likely be horrified at this state of affairs, though some more lawful characters — especially those of a neutral or evil orientation — might find the dragon's efficiency and adherence to strict conduct quite admirable. A world that has existed as a virtual slave-state is unlikely to change easily, but there are always those who would rise up against the

status quo, and attempt to throw off the chains of the oppressors, for good or ill.

Characters must tread carefully on Khetorash, lest they be discovered as outsiders. Such a discovery will inevitably lead to a harsh response, for the dragons are not above destroying an entire community if it will stop “aliens” such as the characters from learning their secrets. On the other hand, some enlightened or well-educated Khetorashi may be aware of the world’s status, and of the fact that there is a greater galaxy beyond the nebula, where an individual is free to choose his or her own destiny, despite all risks and dangers. These free-thinkers may approach the characters, eager for change and enthusiastic about those who might bring it. Their views of the outside cosmos may be hopelessly naïve, and the freedom they crave may simply mean exchanging one set of masters for another, but even so these rebels may still crave liberation.

Another long campaign, the Rebellion storyline can contain almost any adventure, from exploration and dungeon delving, to espionage and outright hack and slash violence. The characters will be tasked with contacting and organizing those who would rise up and throw off the dragons’ tyranny while avoiding detection and frustrating the outerkins’ attempts to ferret out the rebels. Weapons, magical items, armor and supplies must be gathered, and would-be warriors must be trained. Once an army is ready, the rebellion can begin, but it is quite likely that this will only be the first part of a much longer campaign, as described in the following entry.

War!

Khetorash can easily be the setting for a truly epic set of adventures, either when its people rise up in full rebellion against their draconic masters (see above), or when the galaxy at large learns of the world and seeks to plunder its wealth by force. In either case, if the characters find themselves opposing the Masters, they will have their work cut out for them. Hundreds or thousands of spacefaring dragons would be a challenge for even advanced spacefleets, and their arcane powers (extradimensional travel, time manipulation, mastery of the elements and ioun technology among others) would make any conflict long and utterly catastrophic. It is also possible that the balanced factions of Khetorashi dragons, destabilized by contact with the galaxy, or by the arrival of the characters themselves, finally turn on each other, plunging the world into out and out civil war.

Should Khetorash be ravaged by war, whatever the cause, characters will have a wide range of missions and adventures available. They may be spies, seeking out enemy strengths and dispositions or freedom fighters, working behind the lines with hard-pressed humanoid partisans. They may command space fleets or armies, or work to smuggle refugees out of war zones, or get vital supplies to the rebels. It is also possible they may be able to contact factions within the draconic hierarchy, and find the rare wise individuals who see the futility and ultimate disaster of war and seek out peaceful solutions, or even in extreme cases, throw their lot in with the rebels against their fellow dragons.

As noted above, this scenario rises naturally from others, including first contact and rebellion adventures, making a massive campaign that can possibly follow characters from first level on up.

Ioun Smugglers

Should the characters not have a taste for inciting rebellion and leading the freedom-loving humanoids of Khetorash in a near-hopeless struggle, there are a number of other options, including learning about the world’s unique ioun technology. The myriad uses of *ioun*

stones and the wide range of stone types and powers will dwarf those feeble stones used elsewhere in the galaxy, and those adventurers who can escape with more stones, or with the knowledge of where they come from, would all become wealthy and powerful.

Naturally the dragons are loathe to let anyone, let alone outsiders, learn the secrets of their magical stones, and any attempts to steal these items, or to find out more about how they work and where they come from, is sure to draw much unwanted attention. Opposed first by the dragons’ humanoid minions, then by the outerkin and finally by the outer dragons themselves, ioun smugglers will have to run a deadly gauntlet if they hope to escape with their ill-gotten loot.

Outside Khetorash of course, smugglers will face constant pressure and demands to reveal where the great stones came from. Should the secret of Khetorash and the *ioun stones* ever get out, it will trigger a gold-rush of adventurers, piercing the nebula and risking the dragons’ many defensive measures. It will also forever end Khetorash’s isolation from the rest of the galaxy and possibly even lead to some of the conflicts described above.

Prime Directive

It doesn’t all have to be blood, thunder, and crime. A more measured approach to this fascinating world might also be possible, for galactic scholars, governments, and corporations may want to thoroughly explore and understand the world before making the next move.

In this case, adventurers would take the role of explorers, diplomats, and scientists, journeying to Khetorash *incognito*. Advanced probes and surreptitious observation will have established many local customs, languages, and behavior, allowing characters to go in disguise, seeking out the fascinating and unique aspects of Khetorashi culture, gathering information, artifacts, folklore, and current events to help their employers form a full picture of this hidden world and its strange ways. Under no circumstances, the heroes are warned, should you interfere with or change the planet’s indigenous culture.

Adventurers can once more engage in many different events this way — exploring and delving, collecting treasure and participating in Khetorashi society — though discovery would lead to disaster, with the dragons learning that the outside galaxy has discovered them. In this case, they may wish to actually make peaceful contact, or (as is more likely) double down and prepare for conflict. It’s possible that the characters’ own skills may prevent this, allowing them to actually talk and reason with the normally-alooft and arrogant dragons, persuading them that it might be best to negotiate rather than fight.

Natives

In addition to all of the campaign ideas above, the most radical (and in some ways, most interesting) of these options is simply to start the characters as ordinary inhabitants of Khetorash, a world ruled by dragons. There are several ways this can go, some of which might require some outright subterfuge on the GM’s part. It’s possible that a campaign starts out as fantasy will take a sudden sharp turn into science fiction when outsiders arrive, or when the PCs discover the truth about their world through such plot twists as the discovery of a crashed starship, the arrival of outside explorers, etc. Needless to say, GMs should be aware of their players’ characters and how well such a twist will go down before trying it — a group of players primed for fantasy adventures who find themselves facing epic space opera might take umbrage. If the players are game however, a band of adventurers who move from a strange but familiar medieval setting into intergalactic exploits might have a great deal of fun.

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Planetarium: Khetorash

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