

Eknapata Desert

By Kevin Goebel ("Royal Scribe")

On the eastern edge of the Gold Coast region of Dóriant lies a vast desert, the largest on the great continent. Though the desert goes by many names by the disparate people of Dóriant, those on the western edge of it call it the Eknapata Desert.

The region is governed by a number of warlords with shifting and mostly indeterminate borders. They have styled themselves with any number of different titles, including pharaoh, maharaja, and sheikh, among other titles.

The most stable area of this region lies around the great city of Khemtufu, the largest city in the western area of the desert, sustained by the largest oasis for hundreds of miles. It is home to the 18-story Temple of Fah, where the pharaohs of Khemtufu have been interred for many hundreds of years.

The next largest city in the region is Nekhmatunis, located at the edge of the desert where the mighty Eknapata River flows out of the desert and into the neighboring Kingdom of Travi. Farther up river lies Kukaar, the third largest city in the area.

Few venture to the source of the Eknapata River in the Sakherna Hills, for the area is home to ancient ruins that are said to be haunted. Whether they are truly haunted is hard to know, for few who dare to travel there ever return.

South of the ruins, the mysterious monks at the Taniyn Monastery study monastic traditions said to have been taught to the monks centuries ago by an ancient dragon.

To the south, southern villages like Iunet and Zawty are largely isolated from their northern neighbors. Visitors have two options to get there, both deadly. Some travel across the dunes of sand, nicknamed the Shifting Sands, where building roads is impossible and navigation challenging for all but the most experienced guides. Another route passes through a stretch of stone spires known as the Devil's Backbone. Though the ground is more solid here, the route passes by a 35-mile-long fissure that emits foul fumes, and it is said that demons from The Abyss crawl from its depths of the fissure late at night.