

• T E R E N U T H I S •

HISTORY

The City of Geb, like so many of Khemti's cities, developed almost by accident. The spot it now occupies, in the midst of the Yor Delta, is one of the single most fertile spots in all known Khemti, and has been since well before the Wasting. Dozens of nonhuman farmers and their families flocked to this area before the creation of mankind, and that number expanded into the hundreds upon humanity's arrival. As most farmers honor Geb, it only made sense to construct a central temple at which all the locals could express their devotion. Around that temple, trading markets and vendors of tools slowly gathered and expanded. At some point, the balance tipped, and Terenuthis became a city surrounded by farms, rather than a collection of farms with a central gathering point.

For a time, Terenuthis was a major power in the politics of the kingdom. A primary source of grains and other foods for many of the surrounding cities, even Pharaoh himself had to pay attention when the nomarch spoke. This all changed with the coming of the Wasting. While an agrarian city, Terenuthis was accustomed to defending its wealth from the occasional raiders who would steal its bounty. As the Wasting destroyed other farmlands, however, people grew fearful. Suddenly, Terenuthis was facing raids and assaults from neighbors who had been their friends and allies, communities determined to steal enough food to see themselves through the rough times ahead. Terenuthis appealed to Pharaoh for aid, and he agreed — provided the nomarch of the city swore thenceforth to remain separate from kingdom politics and policies unless invited to participate.

Thus did Terenuthis become the first (and one of the very few) non-military cities in Lower Khemti to have a substantial military presence and a general assigned to it, a tradition continuing to this day. Unlike many other cities with a dual power structure, the nomarch and general of Terenuthis usually get along well with one another, due to some strict divisions of authority laid down by Pharaoh many years ago.

PEOPLE

The majority of Terenuthi are farmers, as they have been for hundreds of generations. While the largest farms surround the city, many of the people who live within Terenuthis itself work the land as well, from vegetable gardens to orchards. The city has its share of craftsmen and smiths and merchants as well, of course, but the focus of the community is clearly on agriculture.

The citizens of Terenuthis are largely apolitical. They understand their importance to Lower Khemti, for their city is something of a grain silo for all nearby portions of the

kingdom. Any arrogance or self-importance such a position might breed has long since been squelched by the relative impotence of the nomarch, by the constant presence of the military, and as the ever-looming threat of that military presence reminds them. Terenuthi know they are vulnerable; raiders consider them a ripe fig to be plucked, and Upper Khemti would no doubt consider them a prime target in the

event of war, no matter their distance from the border. Rather than worry about events they cannot control, the citizens of the city go about their business, tilling their soil and raising their crops, and trusting to fate, the gods, and the soldiers of Pharaoh to keep them safe.

Life in the city is simple, and based around the farming calendar. Terenuthi hold celebrations at the changes of the season, for planting, and for harvest. They work hard during the day, socialize in

the evening, and live remarkably simply for people so vital to the life of a kingdom.

Despite their presence for so many generations, the soldiers are still something of an outside element. The citizens don't dislike or shun the soldiers; in fact, both groups intermingle freely when socializing, and many friendships and even romantic liaisons cross from one group to another. Nevertheless, the mindset of Terenuthis' citizens divides the people into two groups — villagers and soldiers — and it seems unlikely that this distinction will ever fade.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CROWN

Despite their general lack of involvement in political matters, the people of Terenuthis strongly support Pharaoh Wennefer. They, more than any other citizens of Lower Khemti who do not dwell on the border, dread the possibility of war with Upper Khemti. The people here are happy with their lives, for the most part; the notion of years of fear and death — an almost certain result of war, given their importance as a military target — is horrifying. Even General Heqaib and his men, staunch soldiers all, fear what might happen to this place in the event of open conflict.

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

PORT-SIDE

Terenuthis sits on the banks of one of the many fingers of the Yor leading into the Sea of Uatch-ur, and it is via the Yor many of the city's goods ship to those who need them. During harvest season, this part of the city is abuzz with constant activity, as barge after barge and boat after boat unload trade goods and load up on grains and vegetables destined for the other cities of Lower Khemti. It almost rivals the docks of Per-Tefnu at these times, so busy does it become.

T E R E N U T H I S

Patron Deity: Geb.

Population: 45,105 (Human 76%, Halfling 12%, Dwarf 7%, Elf 3%, Other 2%).

Ruler: Nomarch Timat (*halfling male aristocrat 2/expert 10/priest 5, LG*).

Other Important Figures: General Heqaib (*human male begu 14, LN*).

Resources: Fruits, grains, vegetables.

Allies: Per-Tefnu, Tjekut.

Rivals: None.

• TJEKUT •

HISTORY

Tjekut has been a place of violence since even before the city stood. The priesthoods of Horus and Mentu clashed here during the spread of man, as each wanted this fertile and secure location for their own. Thus was the soil fertilized with blood from the very beginning, and the city that grew here seems forever touched by war.

From that day to this, Tjekut has served as a bastion against the barbarians of the wild. Even the Wasting did little to change the city; they simply guard against desert raiders now, rather than jungle raiders. The city has a strong martial tradition, with soldiers and warriors respected above almost all others. Over half of Lower Khemti's greatest heroes and generals hail from Tjekut, including the Pharaoh Mentu-heru, who temporarily united the two kingdoms.

Unfortunately, the conflict in which Tjekut participates is not limited to rivals outside the city. Over the years, three separate factions struggle for control of the city, and while these conflicts remain largely in the political arena, they degenerated into outright violence several times throughout Tjekut's history. As with all cities of Lower Khemti, the nomarch rules officially, governing in Pharaoh's name. The soldiers of the city, however, believe — as this is, indeed, a military stronghold — their own general should lead, for the good of the nation and the safety of the region. Finally, some of the extreme members of the priesthood of Horus maintain, as it was their brethren who founded the city so many ages gone, it is they who should wield true power over Tjekut. For a brief time, during Mentu-heru's reign, all three factions united, for the appointed nomarch was

also the general and a follower of Horus. For the most part, however, these three factions continue to struggle, their desire to protect their homeland now inextricably intertwined with personal ambition.

PEOPLE

Tjekut is a disciplined city, where even the farmers and merchants tend to have something of a military mindset. Located on the Red Land frontier, everyone who dwells here is fully aware of the constant danger of attack. The citizens drill constantly, primarily so they know how to flee to safety without interfering with the soldiers, but also in methods of combat should raiders win past the army. At various points throughout its history, Tjekut has required mandatory military service, something largely unheard of elsewhere in Khemti. No such law currently exists, however. It's not really needed; given the high regard in which soldiers are held here, General Mokhtar's forces are rarely lacking for recruits.

The current nomarch, Ineni, is a rigid and unpleasant man, disliked by most of those over whom he governs. While Ineni is a competent governor and military leader both, it is well known he gained his position due to his devotion to Wennefer II. General Mokhtar, on the other hand, is a folk hero among the people of Tjekut. He personally led forces that have not only repelled Redlander raids, but actually followed them into the desert and decimated them. A charismatic speaker and a flamboyant warrior — Mokhtar and his soldiers hold regular parades and demonstrations, the better to assure the people of their skill — the general would enjoy almost complete public support, were he to formally assume power over the city. To date, his respect for the government and the chain of command, if not for those who actually occupy the relevant positions, have prevented him from doing so.

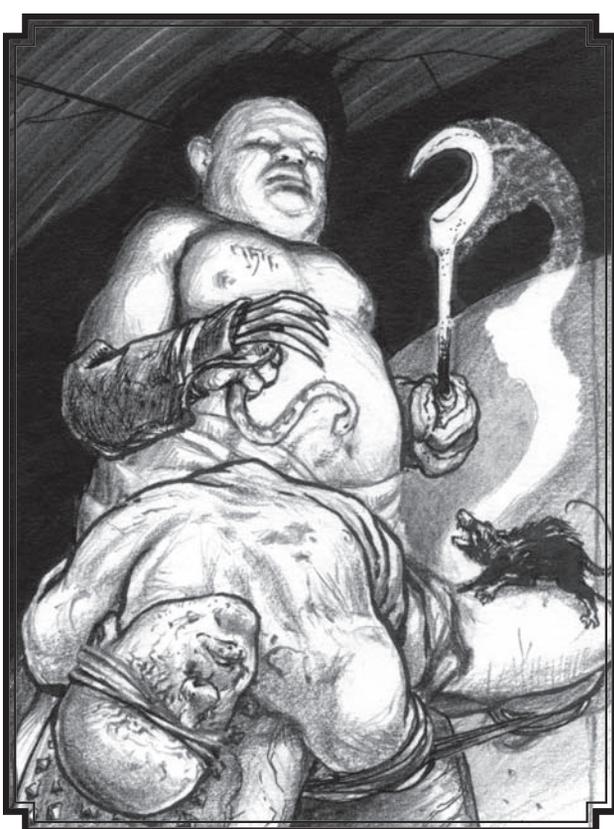
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CROWN

Nomarch Ineni is a staunch supporter of Wennefer II, though how much of this is the result of actual political opinions and how much simple loyalty for being given a position of such importance is unclear. The majority of Tjekut's citizens, however — along with both General Mokhtar and Baktre, high priest of Horus — have little respect for the current pharaoh. Mokhtar believes that a strong pharaoh would have led Lower Khemti in a successful campaign against their southern enemies long before now. He believes the current détente accomplishes nothing but to give Upper Khemti a chance to strengthen its armies. Even a weaker pharaoh than Wennefer would be an improvement in Mokhtar's eyes, for if Upper Khemti attacks, he and the other generals of the kingdom could easily take control and wage a skillful war despite the new pharaoh's inexperience.

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

THE CITADEL OF HORUS

Heavily fortified as Tjekut is, it is nothing compared to the center of Horus' priesthood. Located on a small rise along the coast, the Citadel of Horus is perhaps the single greatest fortress in all Khemti, beyond the palaces of the pharaohs themselves. This enormous stone structure consists of multiple levels, each of



which has windows for archers, too small to allow ingress to an enemy. Each level of the citadel is built like a maze, its twists and turns known to the soldiers, with plenty of alcoves and chambers designed for ambush. Several outer palisades of sharpened wood prevent a massed charge. The temple of Horus is itself located on the first level, the only one to which the common citizenry is allowed access. General Mokhtar commands the local garrison from his offices on the second level. The halls and chambers are constantly filled with the din of combat, as many of Tjekut's soldiers train here regularly.

MOKHTAR'S PRISON

Prisoners of war are not an uncommon sight in the various cities of Khemti. Those who pose too great a threat are executed; most, though, wind up as slaves. Mokhtar, however, ordered the creation of a prison, and now fills it with captured Redlanders. The general uses these prisoners as sources of information on the combat capabilities and the lifestyles of the various Red Land tribes. Many of the people of Tjekut attribute his success against the khasti raiders to the information he has obtained

HISTORY

The original name of Qarta Nefu is long forgotten, for the city lay in ruins from the time of the Wasting until only a few years ago. During that time, bandits, many monsters of the vast desert, and Redlander tribes seeking short-term shelter from the elements, occupied the remains of the town. A few years ago, however, someone took it upon himself to change all that. Siptah, king of one of the greatest of the Red Land tribes, decided abruptly he and his people were moving in — not on a temporary basis, but for good. Many objected, of course, for Redlanders often view city-dwellers as soft and weak. Still, Siptah held sufficient power and popularity he was able to force the issue.

It didn't take long for his people to realize even if city life was easy, turning these ruins into a city worthy of the name would not be. It took Siptah and his tribe nearly a year to clear out the various beasts. It took them longer still to repair the crumbling walls, the hole-ridden roofs, and the rubble-filled wells. In truth, Siptah's people simply had neither the knowledge nor the skills necessary to make the city livable again.

TJEKUT

Patron Deity: Horus.

Population: 52,603 (Human 78%, Dwarf 9%, Halfling 6%, Half-elf 5%, Other 2%).

Ruler: Nomarch Ineni (*human male aristocrat 5/expert 5, LN*).

Other Important Figures: General Mokhtar (*human male begenu 15, LN*), Baktre, God's Father of Horus (*dwarven male priest 9/begenu 4, LN*).

Resources: Fruits, grains, vegetables.

Allies: Terenuthis.

Rivals: Qarta Nefu.

from these prisoners. Rumor suggests Mokhtar might even be considering a campaign against Qarta Nefu, if the next Pharaoh will provide him the necessary resources.

THE TJEKUTAN WAR COLLEGE

As it is by far the most martial of Lower Khemti's communities, it comes as no surprise the city of Horus is most concerned with training the next generation

of warriors. For many centuries, the War College of Tjekut has been widely known as one of the preeminent schools of war in all Khemti; it is certainly the oldest still existent. Those students good enough to be accepted — only a fraction of those who apply for admission pass through the doors — learn everything from melee combat to strategies for maneuvering entire armies to how best to take advantage of magic on the battlefield. Since his rise to power, General Mokhtar has funneled substantial monies and resources into the college, building and expanding it well beyond its previous size. It is this focus on the college, as much as anything else he's said or done, that has convinced much of the populace the general works toward some objective.

• QARTA NEFU •

The self-proclaimed king ordered his people to make raids on the nearest Black Land communities, where they were to take laborers and craftsmen alive. Dragged back to Qarta Nefu, Siptah made each one of them a promise. If they worked to aid in the restoration of the city, they would receive a place of honor and respect among its citizenry when all was done. If they tried to escape, they would die.

Every one of the prisoners was astounded when Siptah proved good on his word. After months of labor, when the city was indeed habitable, those who aided in the rebuilding gained positions of power in the new government, and were permitted to partake of the wealth the tribe gathered through its communal efforts. Siptah permitted those who wanted to leave to do so, so

long as they swore to spread the word that Qarta Nefu sought new inhabitants, farmers and craftsmen and bureaucrats all, and that none would be turned away if they proved willing to work. The city swiftly became a safe haven, not only for those Redlanders who had grown tired of the harsh desert life, but also for city-dwellers seeking a new start. Even fugitive criminals were welcomed with open arms, so long as they proved both useful and law-abiding.

QARTA NEFU

Patron Deity: None (Qarta Nefu is Khemti's only exclusively kama'at city).

Population: 34,817 (Human 86%, Half-elf 5%, Gnoll 4%, Other 5%).

Ruler: King Siptah (*human male begenu 9/wildwalker 9, LN*).

Other Important Figures: Asru, Spiritual Advisor to Siptah (*human female kama'at 9/dunewalker 5, N*), Cheropthses (*gnoll male khasti 12, CN*).

Resources: Grains, food animals, weapons.

Allies: Djeby.

Rivals: Djakaptah, Qarta Sebkh, Tjekut.