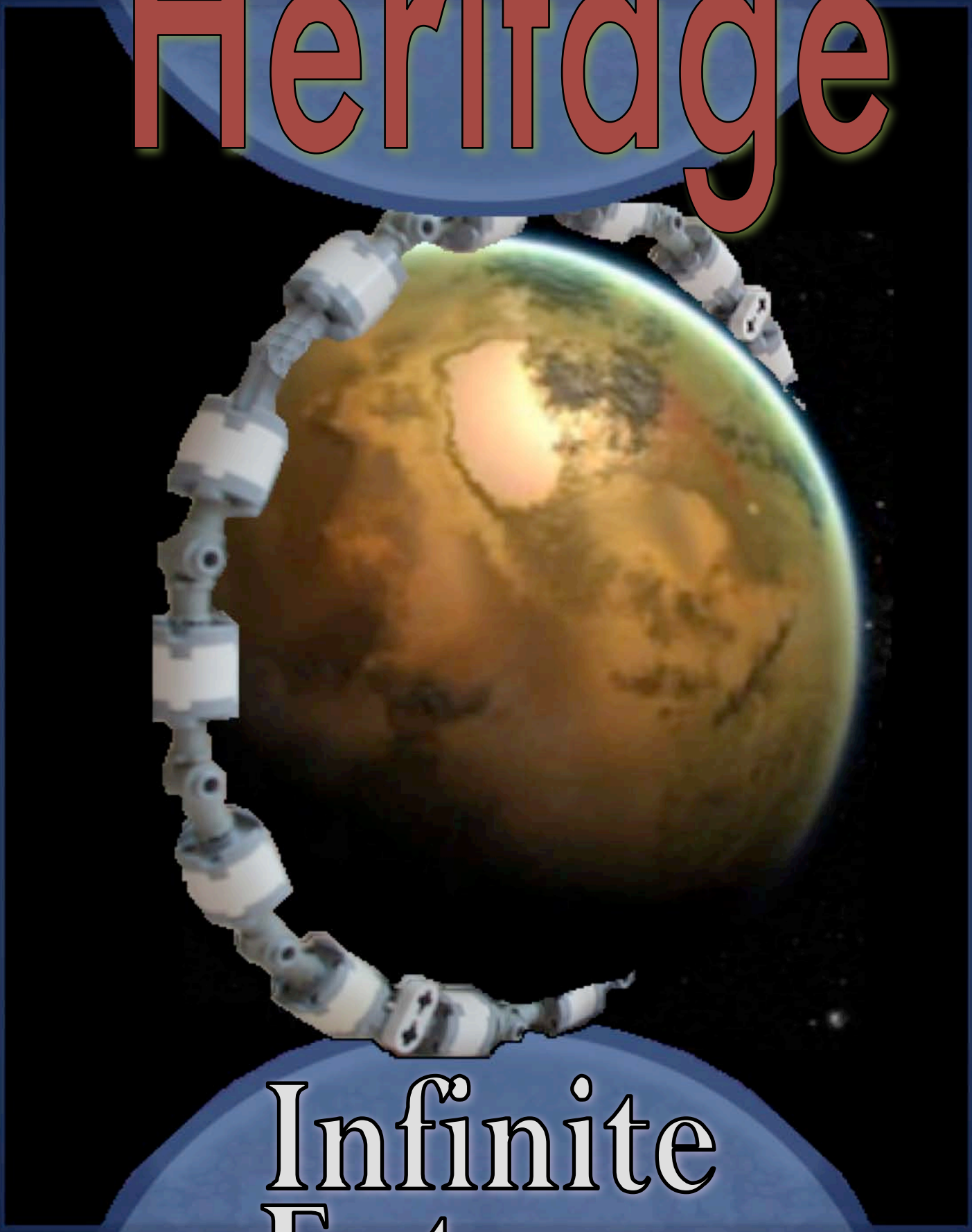
Heritage



Infinite Futures

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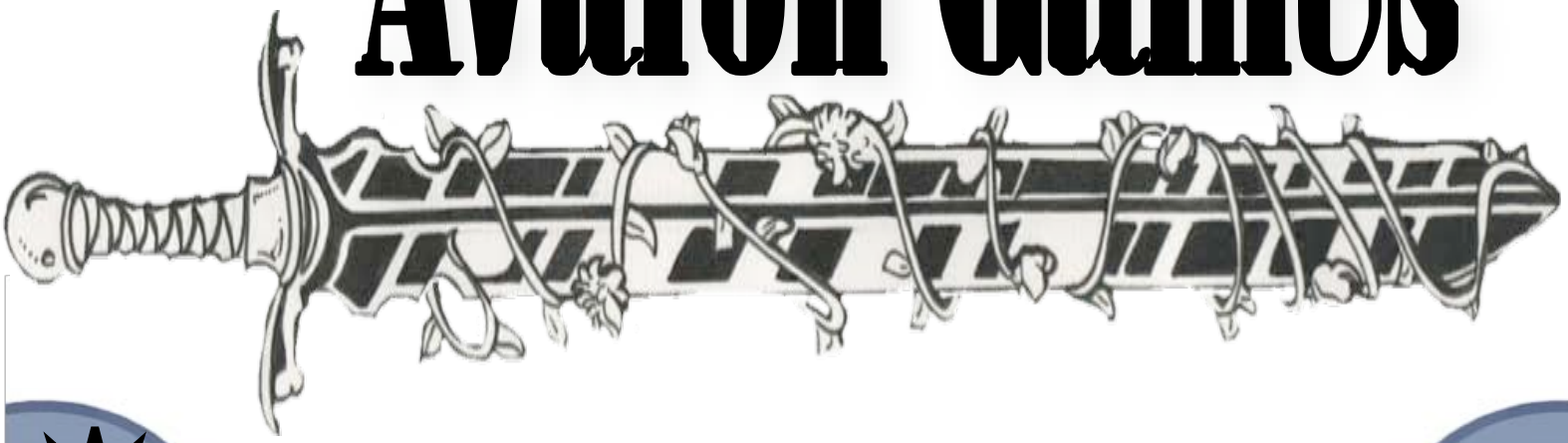
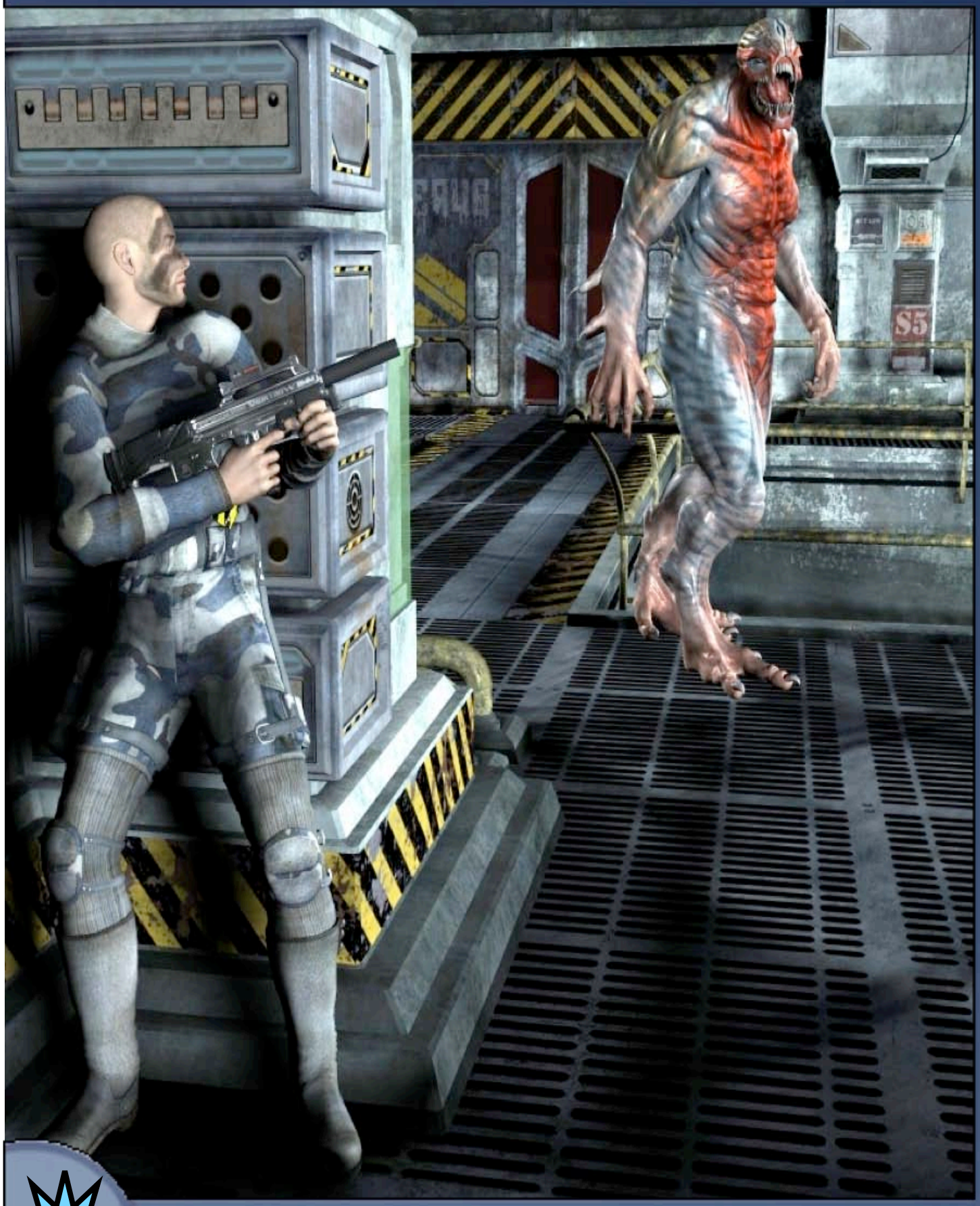


Contents

Introduction Page 4
What is the Heritage Campaign Setting? Page 4
Using this Book Page 4
A Brief History of Human Space Page 5
The Age of Isolation Page 5
Discovering Humanity (the modern age) Page 5
Theories about Mankind's Origin Page 6
The Traditional Theory Page 6
The Progressive Theory Page 6
World-Bridge Basics Page 6
Creating the World-Bridge Page 7
Language Page 8
The Heritage Universe Page 10
Searching for Our History Page 10
The Worlds of Known Space Page 11
Pulse-Gates and the World-Bridge Page 11
Power Brokers Page 11
The Transit Authority Page 11
History Page 12
Purpose Page 13
Division of Power Page 13
Political Entities Page 13
Religious Establishments Page 14
Economic Interests Page 15
Places in the Heritage Universe Page 16
Adversaries Page 16
Sample Worlds Page 17
World Generator Page 22
World Builder Template Page 29
Adventures and Campaigns Page 30
Building Adventures Page 30
Campaigns in Heritage Page 30
Customizing the Setting Page 32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Introduction

Your heritage is what makes up who you are, it represents what you strive to be and what you fear to become. In the Heritage Campaign Setting, mankind has diverged into separate bloodlines with distinct physical and psychological traits. Humanity has changed over the ages, forced to adapt itself to a host of alien environments. These various groups often seem quite strange to each other. The game is set in a universe where the worlds of human space are discovering each other after spending their histories in isolation.

The Heritage Campaign Book tells the story of humanity's search for an identity and a place to call home. Heritage is a game where a diverse collection of human civilizations has come together in a quest to uncover our past and make contact with the rest of mankind.

What is the Heritage Campaign Setting?

Like any role-playing game, the Heritage campaign setting is about imagination. There is no limit to the kinds of stories the GM can create and no limit to the choices characters can make during an adventure in this universe. The stories of the campaign unfold across the myriad landscapes of human space. The worlds of human space provide an endless variety of settings. They also provide endless opportunities for conflict and intrigue, danger and reward. The setting provides a backdrop full of diverse human bloodlines, new worlds to discover and ancient mysteries to solve.

More than anything Heritage revolves around exploration and the search for the origin of our species. Humans have lost contact with where they come from and what they once were. Tracing mankind's fractured migrations across the stars is the key to recovering our heritage and connecting with the rest of humanity.

Using this Book

This game is powered by the Infinite Futures / Pathfinder system and requires the use of the core IF rulebook to use. Naturally, the game is compatible with many other Pathfinder and d20 products. The Heritage Campaign Setting offers GMs a wide range of environments and technology levels to work with when creating a campaign. This allows the GM to incorporate almost any kind of additional material into his campaign from stone-age to ultra futuristic.

The Infinite Futures Core Rulebook contains some material that is not necessarily appropriate for this campaign setting. This is only natural because Infinite Futures is designed to be broad and cover a wide range of science fiction settings and sub-genres. A campaign setting is more focused and selective. Myriad alien species, spaceships, and other staples of science fiction can offer wonderful features of other settings but the Heritage universe offers a different approach sci-fi roleplaying. GMs should keep this distinction in mind when bringing in material from other books. Obviously every gaming group has its own preferences and some will choose to incorporate some of these elements into this campaign setting.

There is a lot of material from Infinite Futures that can easily be incorporated into a Heritage campaign. Races such as androids, cyber-sapiens, and enigmas can be used in this setting without alteration. The same can be said for the classes and most of the equipment from Infinite Futures.

This book does not contain the rules for creating player characters in this setting. IF also has everything that the GM and players will need to create characters and adventures and in the Heritage universe such as a world generator, adversaries and an overview of the most influential entities in known space. The alien races offered in IF though are nor used in this setting, although alternate human backgrounds (adaptoids) will be offered in future issues of Infinite Horizons, Avalon Game's E-zine dedicated to Infinite Futures.

A Brief History of Human Space

The Age of Isolation

For untold millennia mankind has spread across the galaxy. No one knows where we came from or how many of us there really are. In the era of sub-light travel, colony ships had to travel for decades and even centuries across the void between one star and the next. Some colonies thrived while others failed. Some lost their technology while others built civilizations capable of sending out colony ships of their own. Thus, the cycle continued and world after world became home to human settlers, each developing in isolation from the others. For thousands upon thousands of years this was the pattern of life; one civilization giving birth to another, which gives birth to another over and over again. During the long Age of Isolation mankind's early history was lost and the truth about our home world became shrouded in tens of thousands of years of ignorance, myth and false doctrines.

Most people thought they knew which planet their species called home. Some cultures could trace the migrations of their ancestors back across a half dozen star systems to a supposed point of origin. Many of these cultures believed that themselves and a few sister worlds comprised all of settled space. Other people had begun to believe that they were native to their own planet, that their civilization was all their was of the human race. Many historians argue that this period should rightly be called the Age of Ignorance because not only were the different planets of human space isolated from each other, they were largely unaware of each other's existence.

Discovering Humanity (the modern age)

The long Age of Isolation finally ended when the world-bridge was established. The world-bridge is a network of planets that are interconnected by pulse gates, devices that make it possible to cross light years of space in an instant. The technology that led to the first pulse gate was discovered by accident on the planet Agrius over one hundred and fifty years ago. The people of Agrius later devoted an enormous amount of their resources to develop pulse gate technology. The first gate was used to make contact with Iros, the Agrians' "home world." This older planet quickly replicated the Agrian's breakthrough technology and constructed a pulse gate of their own. The construction of this second gate marked the official establishment of the world-bridge and lead to the era of planet to planet travel.

That's when the human race changed forever. The Agrians were shocked to discover that the planet their ancestors came from was not the birthplace of humanity. Rather, Iros was one of several sister worlds colonized by a common planet, which was itself founded by another, still older world. These early pioneers created more pulse gates in an effort expand the world-bridge and trace this "family tree" of human occupied worlds. It soon became clear that the course of mankind's many migrations had left a vast myriad of cultures on scores of planets. From this time forward humans no longer thought of themselves as a single people, confined to a single planet. People now view each world as one unique part of a vast and complex network of planets.

The human race is discovering itself; that much is clear. In the modern age over one hundred planets have been connected to each other through the miracle of the world-bridge. This elaborate network of constantly shifting routes allows human worlds to trade, exchange information and explore new worlds. In order to locate other human civilizations, explorers must trace the course of man's many migrations across the stars and connect with both long lost colonies and ancient parent-worlds. Each new planet that is added to the world-bridge brings with it a unique history as well as the possibility of trade, new technologies and new clues about our early history.

Theories about Mankind's Origin

The Traditional Theory

The traditional theory of human history holds that mankind left its planet of origin within the last 20,000 to 30,000 years. This theory states that known space probably represents the majority of settled human worlds. Proponents of this theory believe that archeological projects on known worlds will eventually lead to man's home world.

The traditional theory was developed in the first few decades after the development of the world-bridge. Early origin tracers were confident that the dead world, Helaxus was the birthplace of the human species. As the grandparent-world of Iros, Helaxus was a logical candidate. This theory was altered after a long-buried colony ship was discovered on Helaxus. Refusing to abandon their timeline of human migration, the remaining supporters of the traditional theory insist that Helaxus' mysterious parent-world will prove to be mankind's planet of origin.

The Progressive Theory

A more recently posed theory holds that humanity probably took to the stars about 35,000 to 75,000 years ago. The progressive theory speculates that known space represents only a portion of settled worlds and that many unknown human cultures still exist. Supporters of this theory concede that Helaxus may be the ancestor-planet of many planets in known space but this world is not a direct link to our new home.

Proponents of the progressive theory of human history point to the discovery of planets that are not linked to Helaxus or its known colonies. These “broken branches” of the human family tree must connect to the Helaxian line at a much earlier point. This means that humanity has been wandering space for a longer period of time than the traditional theory would suggest. Since we have been migrating longer, it is logical to assume that our species must have colonized more planets.

The Radical Theory (Unknown Designer)

The most controversial theory of human history is the notion that mankind does not have a single home world. Advocates of this theory claim that several planets were seeded with similar ecosystems and then an unknown creator goaded the human race into existence on these worlds over an extremely long period of time. Proponents claim that some of these worlds developed advanced technology and founded colony-planets, becoming the ancestors of modern cultures. Humans from other breeding grounds might never have developed technology and still live as hunter-gathers. According to this theory, humanity may have been travelling known space for over 100,000 years and known space represents only a small fraction of all settled worlds.

Supporters of this theory present as their evidence the existence of primitive worlds where no trace of advanced technology or interstellar spacecraft has been found. They also claim that multiple home worlds would explain the broken and disconnected chains of world to world colonization. The radical theory's many detractors dismiss it as nonsense, saying that planetary archeology is a long-term process and future generations will eventually discover how people came to live on these suspect primitive worlds.

World-Bridge Basics

The world-bridge is the name given to the web of human planets that are connected by a series of constantly shifting pathways. Travelers and goods transfer from one planet to another via a pulse gate. A pulse gate is a large platform that converts matter into energy and beams it into space. The energy pulse's destination is a wormhole that lets it jump across space. Once on the other side, the beam is directed toward a pulse gate on the destination world.

Wormholes are a naturally occurring space phenomenon but a pulse gate is equipped with the