

TWC3

# CLAW AND STING

SCORPIONFOLK OF THE TRUE WORLD UNDERDARK



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## INTRODUCTION

*“From beneath the sands they came. First one, then five, then twenty! Before we knew it we were surrounded by the half man, half scorpion monstrosities! The Legion stood strong, but they just kept coming! I would never have fled the battle had I not realized Helmsport must be warned!”*

-Alanza DaNosta, acting General of the Golden Legion in 1364 DR the Year of the Wave

## MAZTICA ALIVE!

In the 1990 Maztica Boxed Set, the name “Maztica Alive” was given to the game book designed solely for the dungeon master. In 2010, when a name was needed to represent the legion of remaining fans and the community that they were slowly forming, there was in truth no name that could have been more appropriate. Fittingly, this community began exactly two decades after the introduction of Maztica. “Maztica Alive!” therefore, has come to represent a growing community of game enthusiasts who are determined to see Maztica survive in each new game incarnation. Currently, the group is most active in the Yahoo Group of the same name. To join the group, simply follow the link provided:

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/MazticaAlive/info>

Also, discussions are actively growing in the community known as The Piazza:

<http://thepiazza.org.uk/bb/index.php>

Though the intention of this netbook is to draw in new fans, the group itself is always looking for new authors, artists and contributors. Please feel free to join us at either site and participate in the conversation. Perhaps your material will shape the events in countless future campaigns for future fans!

Keep an eye out for future products from “Maztica Alive!” under the following tags:

TWC – *“True World Core.” A Maztica Alive Core setting book*

TWA – *“True World Adventure.” A Maztica Alive! Adventure book*

TWN – *“True World Novel” A Maztica Alive! Novel*

TWM – *“True World Mini” A Maztica Alive mini-sourcebook*

## WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK?

This accessory is a thorough description of the scorpionfolk of Maztica. In it you will find descriptions of their culture, their history, and the incredible importance of their all-consuming faith.



## SCORPIONFOLK

Also known as stingers, manscorpions, or tlincalli, the scorpionfolk have made themselves known more so in recent years than ever in the past. Many have left their world in Maztica's Underdark and have come into conflict with the aboveground races to which they previously had little or no contact.

Much has been learned in these past years, including information on their various deities and a number of previously unknown variants that may be far more common than man, dwarf, or halfling ever believed possible. When one refers to a "manscorpion," the more common races are beginning to ask for more specific descriptions, because the race is no longer painted all under the same brush. Even the word tlincalli, one of the names that they have been so commonly known by, has been proven to be a

misnomer. Tlincalli, in fact, is the name given to the inhabitants of only a single nation!

## SCORPIONMAN OR STINGER?

So what's the difference? Why so many names?

Scorpionfolk have been called a variety of names in the past. Here are the origins of the most common.

**Stinger.** Although they are rare in Toril's "main" continent of Faerun, scorpionfolk have shown up in various myths and legends, particularly among the more primitive folk and in the more uncivilized areas. This name developed simply due to the absence of an "official" race name and was given because of the scorpionfolk primary attack form. The name is slowly falling out of use and native Mazticans will snicker when Faerunians use the term. Scorpionfolk themselves have never used it and



would be as dumbfounded as if a human fighter were called a “sword swinger,” or a giant simply called a “rock thrower.”

**Tlincalli.** Scorpionfolk of the T’lincal nation almost exclusively refer to themselves as the tlincalli. Other nations use similarly unique names, but since the tlincalli represent nearly 80% of Maztica’s scorpionfolk population, most folk who even know of this name assume it represents all scorpionfolk.

**Manscorpion.** This is still a widely accepted name in Maztica, but those who have come across a female tlincalli diviner knows that it is not necessarily the “man” in manscorpion that strikes such fear into their hearts.

**Scorpionfolk.** The name most widely used today to refer to the race is scorpionfolk. Above all others, it most accurately describes the humanoids as they consider themselves.

## SCORPIONFOLK CULTURE

Unknown to most surface folk, scorpionfolk are a deeply religious people. Divination and communion with their pantheon of deities dominates every bit of the social aspects of their lives as well as playing into their city design, magic and even their reproductive habits. They are also an industrious folk, and the average scorpionfolk would be honored to work itself literally to death. Laziness is seen as the ultimate sin; a universal trait even among the different subraces. Survival is also a key motivation, but only of the colony as a whole. With the exception of the most powerful diviners, individual lives are only a secondary consideration.

Much like the surface races above, scorpionfolk have a long history of bloody sacrifice. Scorpionfolk sacrifice humans and other sentient races in much the same manner as the priests of Zaltec are known to do on the surface world. Hearts are cut out with great proficiency by clerics of their 11 deities (9 and two demon lords in actuality), and the typical sacrifice is accomplished in 17 seconds or less!

Scorpionfolk sacrifice their own kind far less frequently, but do so in a bizarre ritual which they claim affords them a great divination and direct line of communication to their patron deity, Huoxopica. When such a communion is desired, two to twenty volunteers burst from the Underdark and run in seemingly random directions. They move at full speed stopping only to fight if attacked or prevented from continuing their run. Eventually, the scorpionfolk will die of exhaustion, particularly since this event most often occurs in the wilds of the Sands of Itzcala – directly above the Underdark city of T’lincal. What observers may not realize is that deep in the temples of T’lincal, scorpionfolk diviners scry both the path taken and the location of each death. Huoxopica will code his most important messages and visions of the future within the created pattern. Needless to say this event, which is naively known to Faerunians as “stinger racing” is a rare one, and only occurs when the scorpionfolk anticipate a dire threat.

In addition to the infrequent stinger races, upperworlders have observed other seemingly random behaviors from scorpionfolk. They believe that their gods are always attempting to communicate with them and every member of their society considers itself able to read into at least some of these messages. This will cause a manscorpion to act in a manner that often seems irrational and chaotic. Sometimes they attack random strangers without provocation or oddly enough, will even occasionally assist one! To the scorpionfolk, this behavior is decidedly lawful behavior. Every move has a purpose and goal, even if the observer cannot understand exactly what they are.

Scorpionfolk hive cities are bustling centers of constant motion and endless toil. Sedentary scorpionfolk are either sacrificed or banished from their homeland with no opportunity to return. City design does not always follow the most practical arrangements of buildings and common areas, but instead forms a grand mosaic that the diviners use to assist their rituals. Sacrifices are almost always carried out in the centermost region of any layout. Households

combine features of natural caves and scorpion dens with some basic humanoid amenities. Stairs almost never exist and ceilings are four to five feet higher to accommodate their greater size.

Diviners are considered the spiritual leaders of the hive cities, and although the more martial types are respected, they will always defer to the will of the theocracy. Unlike other races (like the drow), there is no jealousy in the status quo. Among the diviners themselves, rank is completely based on merit.

The titles of the most influential scorpionfolk in a city are Lord Diviner (the most powerful diviner in the whole settlement), War Chief (typically the cleverest martial minded scorpionfolk who makes most of the wartime decisions, but is still considered beneath the diviners) and the Nest Keeper (responsible for protecting the well-being of younglings).

Scorpionfolk culture has remained consistent for hundreds, if not thousands of years, but today Obox-ob is a decidedly chaotic force afflicting the tlincalli. Originally, his cult was not welcome in their lawful society, but since the coming of Cordell, Obox-ob's breed of anger and hatred appealed to the race. The diverse pantheon of deities is not happy with the obyrith lord's influence.

## THE SUBRACES

Only the ignorant believe that the scorpionfolk are of a single race and a single outlook. Mankind, elves, dwarves, gnomes and halflings share much in common but all in all, there are as many differences as there are similarities. The same is true of the various subraces of scorpionfolk in the True World. From the diminutive opistacanthi to the massive and ancient palophonti, there are almost as many types of scorpionfolk as there are different humanoids, and each has their own story to tell.

### TLINCALLI

The tlincalli are the race of scorpionfolk generally known throughout greater Faerun, and for good reason. The nation of T'lincal, deep beneath the Sands of Itzcala, harbors the largest population of scorpionfolk anywhere on Toril. Their complex lives can seem almost human in many ways. They trade, raise families, eat, kill, and work incessantly. Many tlincalli also live in communities outside of the main city, and many families have brave the dangerous Maztican Underdark alone.

The tlincalli's pantheon calls for many sacrifices, yet there has always been a sense that sacrifice was for the good of the nation as a whole. Their deities provided for them all that is necessary for the city to prosper and the tlincalli diviners rarely sacrifice out of sheer malice. The gods are always hungry, but in return for the bounty of blood, great wisdom is imparted on their diviners in the patterns of death itself. For ages, this has been the status quo for tlincalli race. It is a strength that has gone mostly unchallenged, until now.

Obox-ob the obyrith lord has always been one piece of the complex zodiac of the scorpionfolk, yet as recently as 1345 DR, he has renewed his interest tenfold. Why exactly the deposed Abyssal prince has developed such an interest remains a mystery, but what is known is that the tlincalli have changed since that year. Somehow, Obox-Ob has managed to keep his intentions secret from even the great divinations of Huoxopica himself.

The age of stability enjoyed by the tlincalli is certainly in danger. Between Huoxopica's secret child, unrest among the pantheon, Obox-Ob's subtle influence, the coming of the Golden Legion, the Spellplague and subsequent Sundering – change is inevitable.

### PALOPHONTI

Giants among scorpionfolk, the palophonti's upper halves are more accurately described as those of giants, rather than humans. Their lower halves are also unique in that they bear the form of ancient sea scorpions; creatures no longer

thought to exist except as fossils. The sea scorpion's form has not even evolved to the point where it has developed a fully functioning stinger, yet it is no less deadly. Fine filaments in a palophonti's whip-like tail carry a terrible disease known as the slimy doom instead of poison.

The palophonti are an ancient race whose origin is not entirely known. While most scorpionfolk believe they were Huoxopica's children as are all scorpionfolk, a few maintain the belief that the palophonti have an even more ancient origin.

Although some palophonti are known to pay at least lip service to the pantheon, the majority of palophonti maintain secrecy in their true beliefs. Palophonti discuss close to nothing of their religion or origins but clues are likely to exist in the deepest parts of the western seas. They are a rare species and have only come into contact with humans from Kolan or Huacli in the past, though few of these humans have survived to tell the tales.

## IMPERATONTI

Powerful and barbaric, yet perfectly content to be left alone, the imperatonti are perhaps the only subrace of scorpionfolk that might not capture or kill in a chance encounter with a human. This is fortunate for mankind because the subrace is truly fearsome to behold and their courage is as legendary as that of their hero-deity Vulkoon.

Much like the species of emperor scorpions from which their bodies are modeled, the scorpion half is near black in color; while their heavily muscled human torsos display a wide variation of skin tones. If an imperatonti's human half were on a full human body, they would be nearly 8 ft. tall.

The tlincalli consider their southerly cousins exiled and there is no love lost between the two races. Vulkoon and Obox-ob despise each other and this enmity frequently passes on to their mortal priesthoods. Tlincalli do not exist in Lopango mostly because of this enmity.

## OPISTACANTHI

The opistacanthi are one of the few races of scorpionfolk that exist in as great a frequency on the surface as they do the Underdark. They are tree dwelling beings who form massive nests in the boughs of ancient jungle trees. They are halfling sized and favor the use of poison on their weaponry, much the Maztican halflings themselves.

Opistacanthi are nimble predators who will cooperate to take down foes far greater than any one of them can handle, and typically do so with envenomed arrows. They have been known to come into conflict with both the Green Folk and tabaxi.

## CHARINTI

Until very recently, the charinti were thought utterly extinct. They have not been seen by other scorpionfolk (and certainly not by man) for well over six centuries, but rumors among the tlincalli have claimed that one matching their ancient description was observed in the presence of the obyrith-touched. The gods have remained suspiciously quiet on the subject, even to the tlincalli diviners.

The charinti were created by the god Ek-Chua as servants to the tlincalli, a specialized race of bureaucrats charged with endlessly cataloguing the treasuries of their lords and ensuring fair trade. To better equip them in their inventories, and to ensure they remained servile to their masters, the charinti had no tail stingers. Instead, Ek-Chua gave them long whip-like feelers attached either in pairs beside their legs or in a bundle four, five or six sprouting from the base of their thorax. The feelers spasmodically darted in random directions as they counted the wealth of the tlincalli.

Over the centuries, Ek-Chua's interest in mercantile pursuits waned in favor of warfare, and his interest in the charinti also dwindled. Neglected by their god, the charininti fell under



the sway of Obox-ob. With his encouragement, the charinti began to quietly hide away significant measures of their masters' riches. Their deceit was eventually discovered, and Ek-Chua was outraged. The auguries of the tincalli diviners were unanimous in their message: annihilate the charinti and the genocide began.

## THE OBYRITH TOUCHED

While not truly a subrace per se, there are enough obyrith-touched scorpionfolk as a whole to warrant concern. In the early 1340s DR, Obox-Ob renewed his interest in the scorpionfolk, particularly the inhabitants of the nation of T'linal. It is rumored that Obox-ob, after eons of existence, is seeking to ascend to godhood. The worship of these horribly malformed scorpionfolk is his greatest opportunity.

As they are infused with pure evil and chaos, the obyrith-touched may only coincidentally

resemble one another, but they can all sense the presence of others of their kind, no matter how varied the appearance.

The obyrith-touched either avoid, slay or convert all others of their kind to the worship of their dreaded obyrith lord. There is said to be a complex ritual that severs them from Huoxopica's great sight forever as it simultaneously warps their minds and bodies into horrid shapes. They are universally reviled by all other scorpionfolk, with the exception of the faithful that have not (yet) been transformed.

## MYTHS AND LEGENDS

The history of the scorpionfolk is hopelessly intertwined with that of their gods. Little changes in their societies without a corresponding shake up in the realms of their deities. The myths and legends of the scorpionfolk below are widely accepted to be



*Obox-ob holds significant influence over the minds and bodies of obyrith-touched.*

true, but the details are usually embellished depending on which subrace tells the tale.

## RACIAL ORIGINS

Tlincalli agree that their race was created ages ago by the deities Huoxopica and Ixtilli. Where exactly the two deities came from is unknown, but they are believed to be interloper gods who altered the forms of primitive men to represent a merging of their own (Ixtilli appears to be a human female and Huoxopica a great scorpion).

While most tlincalli believe themselves to be the oldest of the subraces, the palophonti know this to be untrue. They are highly secretive of their own origins and rarely need to explain themselves to other scorpionfolk considering their immense power and isolation in the deep seas of Maztica's western waters.

Some imperatonti believe that they were created by Vulkoon, but even his priests deny this rumor. It is more likely that the imperatonti

(and likewise the opistacanthi, though some say Axipotl had a hand in their evolution) simply changed due to environmental factors.

The charinti were created by the god Ek-Chua as a servant race and the obyrith-touched were created in a fit of chaos by the demon lord Obox-ob.

## THE EXILE OF VULKOON

One of the earliest scorpionfolk legends refers to the barbarian hero god Vulkoon, who began life as imperatonti. An upstart demon lord known as Rr'ikin'aka attempted to subvert the worship of the entire race and declared himself the "Scorpion King." With the help of the mortal Vulkoon, rival demon lords Obox-ob and Tharzax imprisoned the Rr'ikin'aka deep in the Abyss. Eventually Vulkoon's heroism earned him the worship of the imperatonti, and he led his people to the southern Underdark of Lopango. His worshipers cleanly rejected Obox-ob and Vulkoon eventually ascended to



divinity.

Vulkoon is the 11th deity of the scorpionfolk which is a very sacred number to the race as a whole since it represents the number of appendages found on their bodies.

## ENCOUNTERS WITH MAN

The scorpionfolk remained relatively unchanged for thousands of years following Vulkoon's departure, but they grew greatly in number and established many small settlements.

Mankind had come into contact with the scorpionfolk since the time of the Crown Wars, but the first recorded conflict was written by Tenoch II, the sixth Revered Counselor of Nexal. Tenoch II attempted to expand Nexal downwards after discovering passages into the Underdark and the tlincalli that he encountered reacted brutally. The Revered Counselor knew that full scale war would be disastrous so he instead offered the Lord Diviner 1,000 of his best warriors as compensation for the affront.

This setback likely prevented Nexal from greater expansion during Tenoch II's reign.

Unfortunately, the sacrifices also gave the scorpionfolk gods a taste for human blood.

The blow given Obox-ob's cult by the departure of Vulkoon was one that affected the cult for thousands of years, but during the arrival of Cordell and the Amnians, the cult saw resurgence. The demon lord taught his diviners and thralls a unique ritual which created a gate to mainland Faerun, and 1,000 strong Tlincalli teleported to form a kingdom known as Oaxaptupa after destroying the resident fire elemental creatures of the abandoned dwarven kingdom of Xothaerin.

## THE LEGEND OF CHI'KATA

Far off the west coast of Maztica there is a small tropical island known as Barshudo. Few know of the island, and those who happen upon it and explore too deeply invariably hear a deafening roar coming from somewhere deep in its jungles.

If the warning is not heeded the invaders will soon meet their doom at the claws of Chi'kata the Red Scorpion.

Chi'kata is the unwanted child of Huoxopica and a powerful immortal (possibly a deity) from Kara-Tur who undoubtedly had strong ties to the power of thunder and lightning. Huoxopica's wife Ixtilli knows nothing of this tryst or the child it begot and a huge shake-up in the politics of the scorpionfolk pantheon could emerge should she become aware. Huoxopica is frightened of that possibility, but does not know of a good way to dispose of the creature without alerting his wife. Therefore, he has simply banished the abomination to this forgotten island far off the coast of Maztica where it lives virtually alone and seething in anger over its abandonment.

Perhaps Huoxopica could come to some form of deal with non-scorpionfolk adventurers to slay the beast. He certainly would not risk revealing its existence to his worshipers as it would take the thoughts of only one devout of Ixtilli to let the secret out.

Chi'kata will initiate combat with any creature that it senses has trespassed on Barshudo. He fears nothing and knows no mercy. Chi'kata is particularly vicious when it comes across other scorpionfolk, and will target such creatures first, though some palophonti are known to live in the vicinity of the island.

Chi'kata is said to have an enemy of equal power known as the vagnosaurus that lairs somewhere near the island. The two titanic beings have battled many times, repeatedly resulting in two horribly wounded, but stalemated enemies.

Should Chi'kata be defeated, the victor will earn the gratitude of the greater god Huoxopica, be they scorpionfolk or not. Huoxopica has divined that if the creature is allowed to live much longer, and Ixtilli were to find out of its existence, it could mean war amongst the pantheon. This would be a terrible event for scorpionfolk as the war would certainly carry over into the mortal world. Mankind would be

unwise to think of this as a good thing, because the bloodshed would also expand into the lands of men.

## GODS AND RELIGION

Life revolves around omen and divination; and according to the tlincalli all divination comes from the gods. Each day to the scorpionfolk is preordained and they believe their gods know all that has happened and most of what will (despite some glaring blind spots that some of the gods have). They also believe that their deities are always trying to speak to them through even the most mundane of events, imparting their vast wisdom. Great investments in time are spent attempting to interpret these messages.

The scorpionfolk are particularly superstitious when it comes to the number eleven. With eight legs, two arms and a tail, eleven represents not only the “perfect” form of their bodies, but also in the eleven signs of the scorpionfolk Zodiac, six vices and five virtues, and particularly the number of immortal beings they venerate.

## GODS

The deities themselves are undeniably strange and most are bloodthirsty and aggressive. They are also quite alien in mentality to a human, but they do share one thing in common with many of the other Maztican deities – a love of sacrifice.

Blood offered upon Tlincalli altars go directly to the gods’ throats and with eleven immortals to feed, sacrifice is an almost constant activity (ten actually, considering one does not partake

in the bloodletting).

Individual deities and demon lords are described below.

### AXIPOTL

#### *The Venomord*

Axipotl is the patron deity of the opistacanthi scorpionfolk and appears much like one of that tree dwelling offshoot. As the smallest of the gods he is often seen as an outcast, but he is still respected for his unbeatable marksmanship with a shortbow and theft of the strange human magic known as hishna. When angered, the deity’s eyes glow with a fierce green light.

Axipotl is somewhat of a loner and avoids contact with the other gods. Historically, he has been subservient to Huoxopica, but since his relatively recent theft of hishna magic, he has come into his own. The human god Zaltec is furious over the theft of hishna, however, and actively hunts the small scorpion god.

Much like Zaltec’s enmity to Qotal, Axipotl has grown to despise Pachutalixi and the feathered scorpion’s pluma magic. The worshipers of each respective god are typically enemies because of this rivalry, though Pachutalixi’s do not tend to initiate any sort of combat.

### CORANTLIL

#### *The Unceasing*

Corantllil plays a huge role in the everyday life of scorpionfolk. Work is considered second only to sacrifice in sating the gods’ appetites and Corantllil is said to be the fountain from which all industriousness flows. He appears



*The symbol of the Venomlord*

as an incredibly large and muscular scorpionfolk with 16 legs instead of eight. His tail is capped with a fine chisel (though it can still inject poison) and one claw has been replaced with a massive iron hammer.

If friendship can be said to exist among the deities of the scorpionfolk, it is best exemplified by Corantllil's relationship with Pachutalixi. The two are not brothers, but act as if they are so, and even with their vastly differing outlooks and alignments, they are quite overprotective of each other. Together, the scorpionfolk deities encourage their worshipers to create healing potions in massive quantities to counteract the great amounts of bloodletting the other gods demand on a daily basis.

Corantllil's work (and that of his worshipers) forging weapons, tools and shelter are also looked on favorably by Huoxopica, which keeps the worst of their ire from Corantllil's merciful friend. Malinalxochitl has had fleeting relationships with Corantllil in the past but he often chooses to return to work rather than waste

time on such fripperies. This annoys the Seductress to no end.

## Ek-Chua

*The Black Merchant, The Black Star*

Ek-Chua holds two very different roles in the scorpionfolk pantheon. As the patron of merchants and trade, he once had a more neutral outlook, but in recent centuries he has become violent and bloodthirsty. Some believe he has become addicted to the pleasures of sacrifice, and so now he desires conflict and warfare over a mutually beneficial trade. While many of the scorpionfolk deities desire ritual sacrifices, Ek-Chua seeks them out on the battlefield itself. All blood spilled in senseless warfare is said to go directly to Ek-Chua.

Ek-Chua has grown in power since he began focusing more on warfare. Many other deities now fear his rise and wonder if one day he will seek to usurp their own divinity. Huoxopica, however, sees Ek-Chua as his right claw, and

### DEITIES OF THE SCORPIONFOLK

Deity	Alignment	Domains	Symbol
Axipotl	CE	Tempest, Death	Stylized Scorpion
Corantllil	NE	Tempest	Anvil with a Scorpion Tail
Ek-Chua	CE	Life	Lance on a Black Field
Huoxopica	LE	Nature	Black Scorpion
Ixtilli	LE	Knowledge, Nature	Clear Egg with Scorpion Inside
Malinalxochitl	CE	Life, Light	Scorpion on a Rose with Thorns
Nantzintli Coloti	NE	Light, War	Tribal Scorpion (see pg 1)
Pachutalixi	NG	Nature	Winged Scorpion
Vulkoon	CN	Death, War	Tail Stinger and Pincers

### DEMON LORDS

Demon Lord	Alignment
Obox-ob	CE
Rr'ikin'aka	CE

turns to the god for all matters that involve warfare. Ek-Chua is a master tactician and the pantheon's leader knows it.

## HUOXOPICA

*Scorpionlord, He Who's Throat is Never Dry*

Huoxopica is the Scorpionlord, the true king of the pantheon and undisputed ruler of the scorpionfolk. Such has been the case since he found a tribe of primitive man struggling to make fire and transformed them into the powerful creatures which they are today.

His own form is that of the perfect scorpion. The glow that radiates from his chitin is so dark as to be nearly a void, and none but the other gods can remain in his presence.



*Ixtilli astride her husband*

Huoxopica has foreseen the fate of his creations and it is a destiny of greatness. While the future is never truly set in stone, if the scorpionfolk continue to follow him their ascension is guaranteed. He is consumed with bestowing his divinations upon his people, but such power requires fuel – fuel in the form of blood! Much like his wife Ixtilli, Huoxopica is addicted to the blood of sacrifice and demands increasing amounts as the centuries pass by.

Huoxopica came to Toril long before the continents the world looked as they currently do. He arrived as an interloper god from a far away, alien world and starving from lack of worship, he found no creatures suitable for his attentions. Instead of fading away on this world, he instead chose to take one of the lowliest of creatures and change them into a more suitable form. In the caves, forests and deserts of this new world he found primitive mankind and gave them a gift of great power. He painstakingly crafted each of their new bodies, and the scorpionfolk would be his forevermore. This he had foreseen, for Huoxopica was the god of divination and of fate itself.

Huoxopica rules his pantheon with an iron fist and allows no dissension. In truth, he sometimes fears his own wife Ixtilli. Not for the fear of her power, but instead for the fear of what war amongst the gods could do to his favored creations. Even in this, it is not that he cares for the scorpionfolks' welfare, but for the disruption in the steady flow of sacrifice he has received for so long.

Huoxopica's talent for divination has helped him avoid any attempts upon his power, and he has been merciless with challengers in the past. He currently has two problems which he fears will lead the scorpionfolk into unknown times. First, he has had numerous affairs with other deities and immortal beings. If his wife were to discover his infidelity, it would be a complete disaster. Secondly, he has avoided the attention of the human gods for millennia, but now with the coming of the



*The Seductress*

Ixtilli is said to determine the successful reproduction of scorpionfolk and thus has as much power over fate as it has power over her. If she so willed it, every scorpionfolk in existence could become barren or exceptionally fertile; therefore she has much power over the race itself. The goddess Malinalxochitl suspects that Ixtilli cruelly cursed her barren body and holds a terrible grudge for her sister.

Much sacrifice is offered in Ixtilli's name to sate her appetite while simultaneously beseeching her for many broodlings.

She is also a jealous goddess and were she to ever discover Huoxopica's tryst with the Kara-Tur being that produced Chi'kata, the repercussions would be drastic.

### MALINAXOCHITL

*Grass Flower, The Seductress*

mainlanders, Pachutalixi and Axipotl's use of human magic and the influence of Obox-ob, the humans can no longer be avoided.

### IXTILLI

*Nestmother*

Ixtilli is the wife of Huoxopica and claims to be the mother of the scorpionfolk race. She shares much in appearance to her sisters Malinalxochitl and Nantzintli Coloti, but has almost no physical traits in common with the scorpion itself. This leads many to speculate that she was once in fact a human deity, but those who claim as much to her worshipers live very short lives. Ixtilli enjoys surrounding herself with all different sizes of true scorpions.

As the mother of the scorpionfolk race, not even Huoxopica is willing to challenge his wife when she sets her mind on a course of action. Her sisters are jealous of her high standing and power, but would never raise their voices in protest.

Malinalxochitl is the beautiful and sultry sister of both Nantzintli Coloti and Ixtilli, though she sees both women as bitter rivals. She is incredibly beautiful by human standards and the males of very few species can withstand her charms. Malinalxochitl often appears completely naked, even shunning common items of jewelry or other adornments.

Malinalxochitl has few friends amongst the gods of any pantheon, including her own. As the sister of Ixtilli, she is considered part of the royal line and it is this fact that has prevented the others from destroying her. Malinalxochitl has had brief trysts with each of the male scorpionfolk gods at one point or another, but the goddess herself is barren and cannot produce offspring. Some of the most ancient texts claim this curse was brought upon her because she ate the entire clutch of her first offspring in ages past.

Corantlil is the closest she has come to a true relationship, simply because of all the male gods; he has been the most unconcerned with garnering her attentions, and she sees him as a challenge.

As a goddess of sorcery, Malinalxochitl receives much of her worship from scorpionfolk diviners, but she wisely does not flaunt this for fears of angering Huoxopica. Though she feels she could easily seduce and distract the god should they come to blows, her ever present sister Ixtilli could make it more difficult than necessary.

### NANTZINTLI COLOTI (GLAU)

#### *The Huntress in the Dark, Lady Scorpion*

The sinister, aloof deity named Nantzintli Coloti is the patroness of hunters, cold-blooded rangers and druids. She is primarily a scorpionfolk deity but she is also one of the only deities to also have a small following among mankind, and in Faerun, she is known as Glau.

The Lady Scorpion dispatches her minions to hunt down and murder all those who cross her path and sometimes even the paths of her worshipers. The huntress is relentless, cold and methodical, making her quite popular among the fatalistic

scorpionfolk. In Faerun, she is known in Anauroch, where her cult is outlawed by most of the Bedine tribes.

Nantzintli Coloti appears more human than scorpionfolk. A trait she shares with her sisters Ixtilli and Malinalxochitl, though she is not quite as alluring.

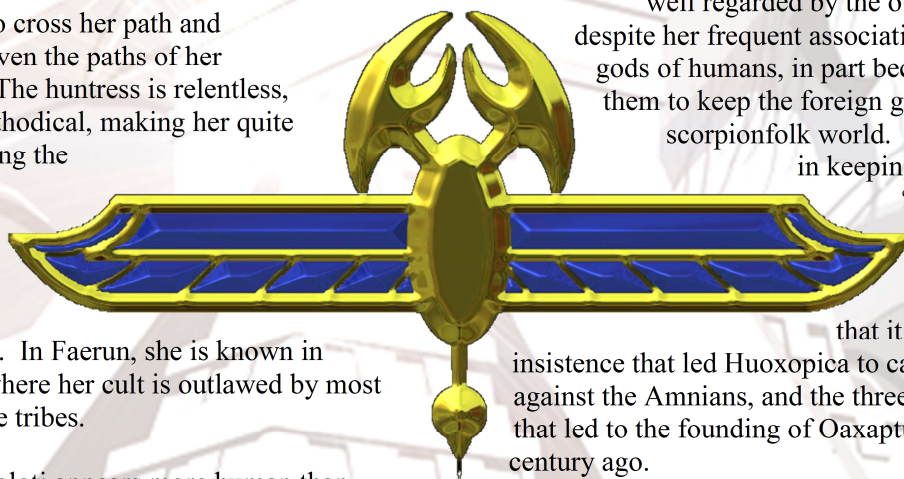
The church of Glau is a primal one, with very little in the way of formal scripture or liturgy. Followers of Nantzintli Coloti honor the Huntress in the Dark every night as the sun sets and the time to hunt begins, while those who worship her as Lady Scorpion offer their prayers at the stroke of midnight and any time they use their poison to claim a meal or a rival.

In days gone by as a deity of Faerun, it was said Glau had a rivalry with Bhaal, one that ended

only at the insistence of Malar. Malar, according to the tales, is either Nantzintli Coloti's father or her lover (some legends say it's both), but this would make her only half-sister to Ixtilli and Malinalxochitl.

Glau is bitter rivals with Talona and a sworn foe of Lolth, who she considers clumsy and heavy-handed in her malice. She has a strange sort of friendship with Mask and even Sharess; another Faerûnian deity said to have trysts with Glau. It is known both sometimes visit Glau's lair which are known as the Caverns of the Blacktalon. Most good deities despise Glau, and she is especially hated by Torm, Mielikki and Eilistraee (who thwarted a long-ago scheme by Glau to worm her way into the hearts of renegade drow).

#### *The Feathered Scorpion*



Amongst the scorpionfolk, Glau is well regarded by the other deities despite her frequent associations with the gods of humans, in part because it helps them to keep the foreign gods out of the scorpionfolk world. She is vigilant in keeping her people “pure” and secluded. What few realize is

that it was her insistence that led Huoxopica to call for revenge against the Amnians, and the three year ritual that led to the founding of Oaxaptupa over a century ago.

### PACHUTALIXI

#### *The Tolerated, The Feathered Scorpion*

As the only god of the scorpionfolk with a strong sense of morality and an absolute abhorrence for sacrifice, Pachutalixi is a pariah amongst the gods. Though he has no humanoid traits, his brightly colored and feathered wings make his appearance far less threatening than the other deities. The rare good scorpionfolk almost exclusively worships this god.

Often picked on as the “weak” god of the scorpionfolk, Pachutalixi might have been slain



long ago were it not for his close relationship with the well-respected Corantllil. In addition, Pachutalixi and his worshipers lend their powers to helping Corantllil develop powerful healing. Pachutalixi avoids gods other than Corantllil lest they be tempted into slaying him and taking his divinity.

Though Vulkoon rarely interacts with his pantheon at all these days, Pachutalixi is attempting to befriend the barbaric god of the imperatonti because he has seen some kindness in the patron of the imperatonti.

In order to counteract Axiptol's discovery and theft of hishna magic, Pachutalixi has made contact with the human god Qotal. Qotal has taught the well-meaning scorpion god the magic of Pluma and he now shares it among his own worshipers. There are a significant number of Pachutalixi's diviners who are in fact talented plumaweavers.

## VULKOON

### *The Emperor Scorpion, The Divine Scorpion*

*\*Vulkoon is described in detail in TWC2 Lopango – Land of the Sacred Sun. That information is briefly summarized here.*

Vulkoon is an ascended mortal who once assisted Obox-ob in imprisoning the equally vile Rr'ikin'aka in the Abyss. Vulkoon was never comfortable with Obox-ob's treatment of its own worshipers, however, and eventually he led his followers to seek out other lands. Vulkoon became king of his people and eventually their deity. Vulkoon's powers are certainly on the rise.

To Vulkoon, survival of the species is more important than the individual. The greatest honor one can have is to die in the service of scorpionfolk as a whole.

## DEMON LORD: RR'IKIN'AKA

The self-titled King of Scorpions is no longer a major player in the politics of the scorpionfolk. Ages ago he made a grab for ultimate power with the scorpionfolk and scorpions in general.

Huoxopica's wrath was immediate and unmerciful. He enlisted the help of the obyrith demon lords Obox-ob and Tharzax to either slay or permanently remove the threat.

Obox-Ob in turn, enlisted the mortal (at the time) scorpionfolk hero Vulkoon as bait to capture Rr'ikin'aka within the Wells of Darkness on the 73<sup>rd</sup> layer of the Abyss.

Few scorpionfolk these days still revere the imprisoned demon lord, and those that do receive little power from him. Rr'ikin'aka still exists in some strange form and has been known to manifest himself, though he is only a vestige and is therefore powerless.

## DEMON LORD: OBOX-OB

Obox-Ob has been a part of the scorpionfolk pantheon for thousands of years. This unknowable obyrith demon lord cares nothing for his worshipers, but he is worshiped with devotion nonetheless. The most evil of scorpionfolk call him patron, and Huoxopica is too busy demanding his own sacrifices to care.

Despite his (its?) alien nature, Obox-Ob is an opportunist. A century ago, he saw the invasion of humans in Maztica as an opportunity to wreak much havoc and evil, both upon the invading humans and the scorpionfolk themselves. In this move, he may have finally overstepped his bounds and come to the attention of both Huoxopica and Vulkoon (who already despised the demon lord).

## **LOCATIONS**

There are dozens of locations, if not hundreds in the Maztican Underdark that are related to the scorpionfolk; and there are certainly countless others that have little to do with them, but are interesting nevertheless.

In this section you will find descriptions of some of the more important locations that fall into both categories.

## ABYSSAL LAYER: ZIONYN

Zionyn is the 663<sup>rd</sup> layer of the Abyss and it is indisputably ruled by the obyrith demon lord Obox-ob. The layer is crawling with vermin, of both a normal and demonic sort. Vast hive cities dominate the landscape where all else is jagged badland and oceans of a thick syrupy resin. These hive cities are occupied by the cruel ekolid, insectoid obyrith demons of the most foul nature. When the ekolids capture the rare intruder, they dip their victims in the thick oceans, which harden at the moment of suffocation resulting in grotesque statues that adorn the hive cities.

Though they bear little resemblance to humanoid markets, it is said that any known poison in the universe can be found among the ekolid cities in addition to thousands of slaves waiting for egg implantation. The obyrith have no patience for mortal visitors and wise poisoners would do well to stay out of the hives.

The life of a Zionyn slave is quite short and choice captives are implanted with the eggs of ekolid nobility. As a favored pastime, the obyrith will gather in great numbers to watch performance hatchings, where the more gruesome deaths of a host creature are honored.

Needless to say, Zionyn is not a realm to visit by mortals. Even the few mortal worshipers of Obox-ob would do well to avoid the ekolid.

## T'LINCAL

T'lincal is the capital city of the tlincalli scorpionfolk and it has a population of approximately 1,500 residents (nearly all of the aforementioned subrace). It is located deep underneath the Sands of Itzcala near the center of that vast desert.

### Map Key

1. *Underground lake:* Known only as Ak-Hom (meaning watering hole), this lake

teems with aquatic scorpions and the blind cave fish that serve as their prey.

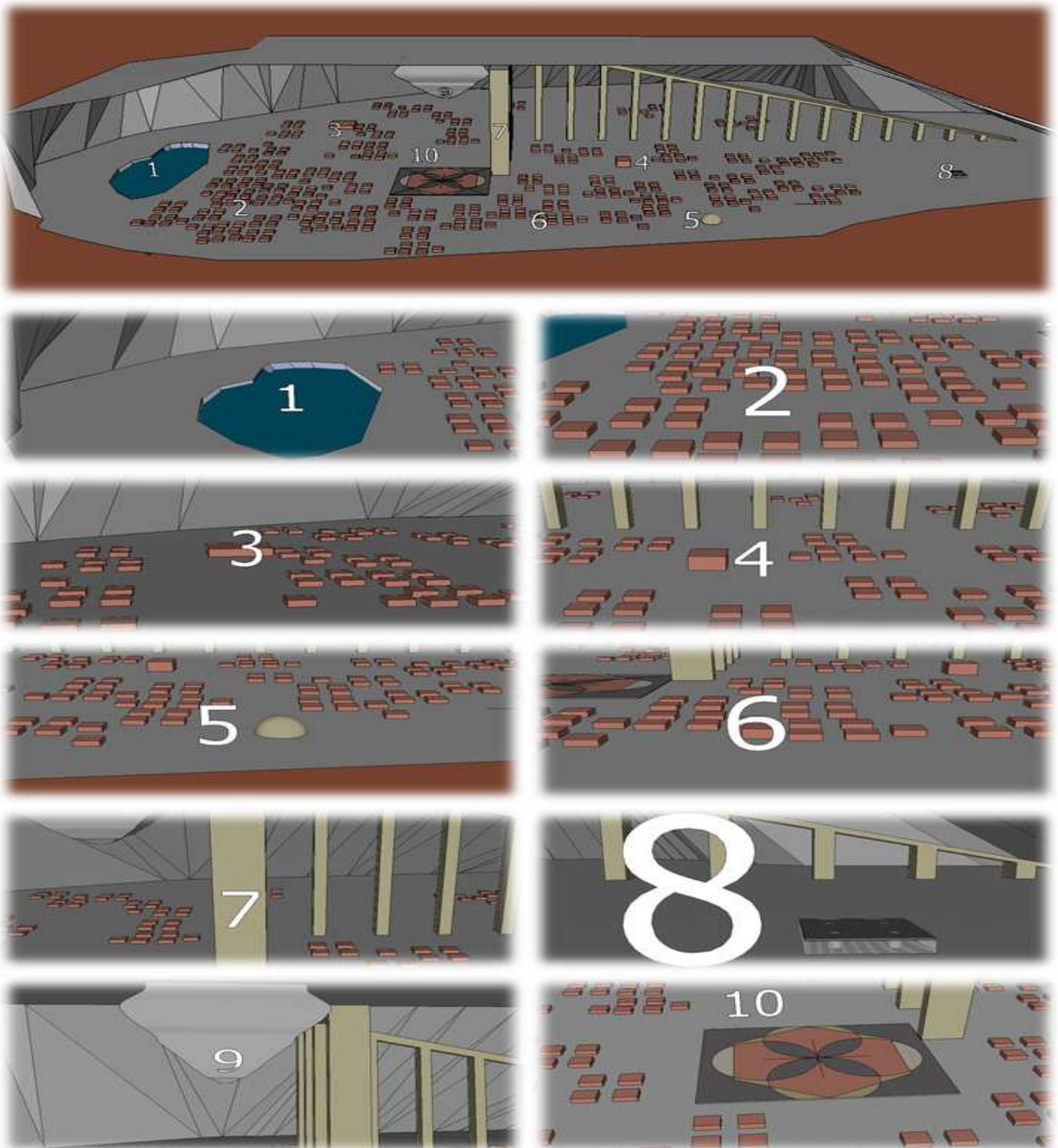
2. *Tlincalli abodes:* The visible part of the tlincalli homes are only the surface portion of much grander homes carved from the rock below. In truth, homesteads are designed more like worked caverns than the human-like homes that appear aboveground. Most tlincalli homes do not even have a "surface" abode in T'lincal.
3. *Workshops:* Though it might seem strange to imagine, tlincalli still have some very basic human needs. Shops and blacksmiths dominate this portion of the city.
4. *Huoxopica's Temple:* Though the mosaic is largely considered Huoxopica's holiest site, official, non-sacrificial ceremonies are usually found in this largest of T'lincal's structures.
5. *Great Stone:* In the earliest days of T'lincal's existence a great creature was said to be imprisoned by Huoxopica himself (others say by Vulkoon). The Great Stone is rumored to be the "lid" to this eternal prison.
6. *Temple District:* The entire scorpionfolk pantheon is worshipped in the many temples found in this district.
7. *The High Walk:* A unique form of sacrifice and divination in T'lincal is generated by throwing victims from atop the High Walk to the Mosaic below. The unfortunate results of this form of sacrifice are said to symbolize various future predictions.
8.  *Holding Pen:* A great unmovable stone covers a pit where future sacrifices are held until their time comes. Tlincalli diviners use magic exclusively to enter and exit the mostly underground structure.
9. *Corantlil's Eye:* This unstable stone eternally seems to be on the precipice of falling and destroying a significant portion of the city. It is in fact quite stable, and is the remnant of a stalactite that was destroyed long ago in the city's creation. Many tlincalli claim that if the city's inhabitants were ever to grow lazy, Corantlil would cause it to dislodge to punish the scorpionfolk and remind them of the holiness of endless labor.
10. *The Mosaic:* If it were not so frequently covered in the gruesome remains of

sacrifices from the High Walk, many would consider the Mosaic beautiful. A wonder of art created by Huoxopica's diviners throughout the centuries, the Mosaic is the most holy site in all the Tlincalli nation. The fortune in precious and semiprecious stones used in its creation could buy

kingdoms.

## IERCALOI

Iercaloi is the name of the greatest feat of architecture developed by the Tlincalli located



deep underneath the Valley of Nexal in a vast waterlogged vault. A massive stone column formed by eons of dripping mineral rich water, the stone was painstakingly carved for decades to form a perfectly symmetrical pillar. Thirty-three entrances (a multiple of the sacred number eleven) circle the pillar and within it lies a bustling community of scorpionfolk.

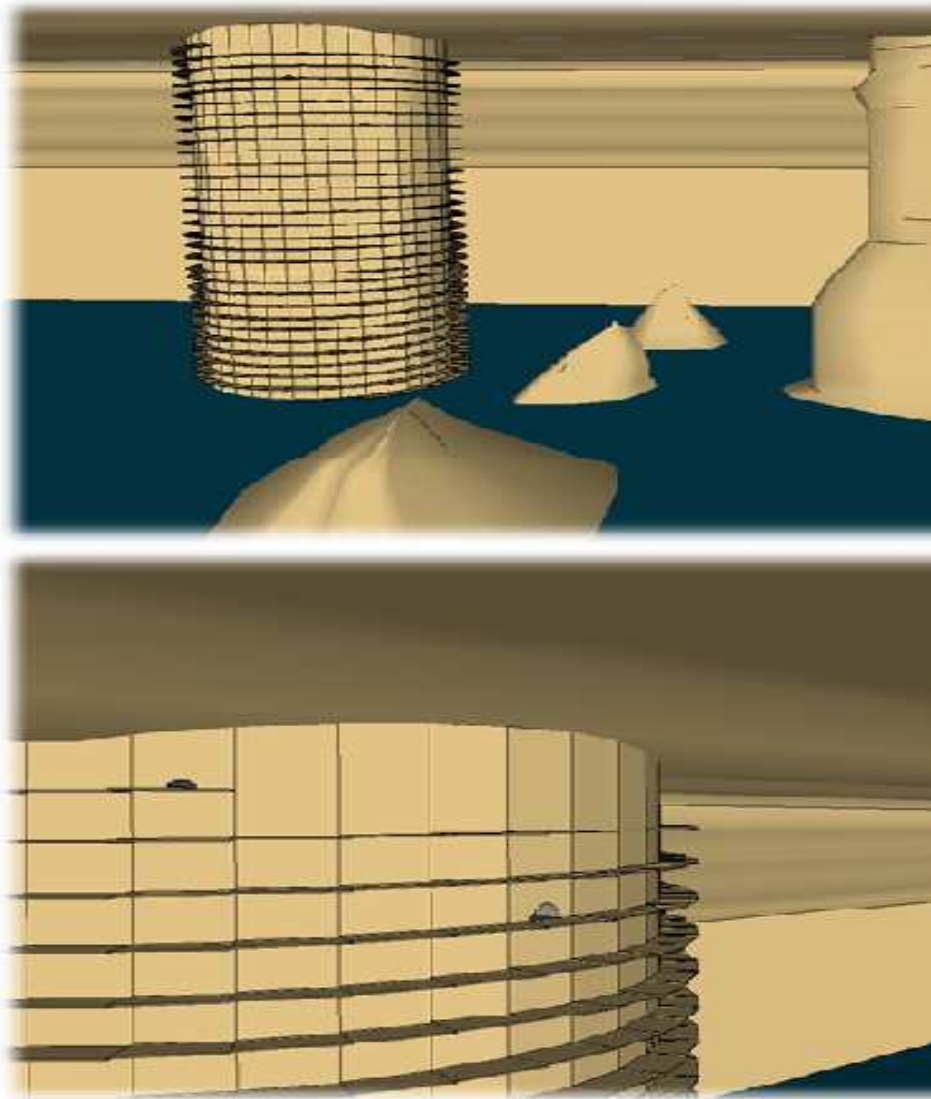
The vault itself is in some ways a wonder of nature. Phosphorescent lichen and swarms of the luminous scorpion-like creatures known as the cantharellus cibarius illuminate the entire vault with the strength of a clear starry evening in the world above. The dim reflections in the vault's shallow liquid floor give the entire chamber a dizzying and surreal effect. The vault stands at nearly a mile in height but at its longest point, it reaches nearly 5 miles in length.

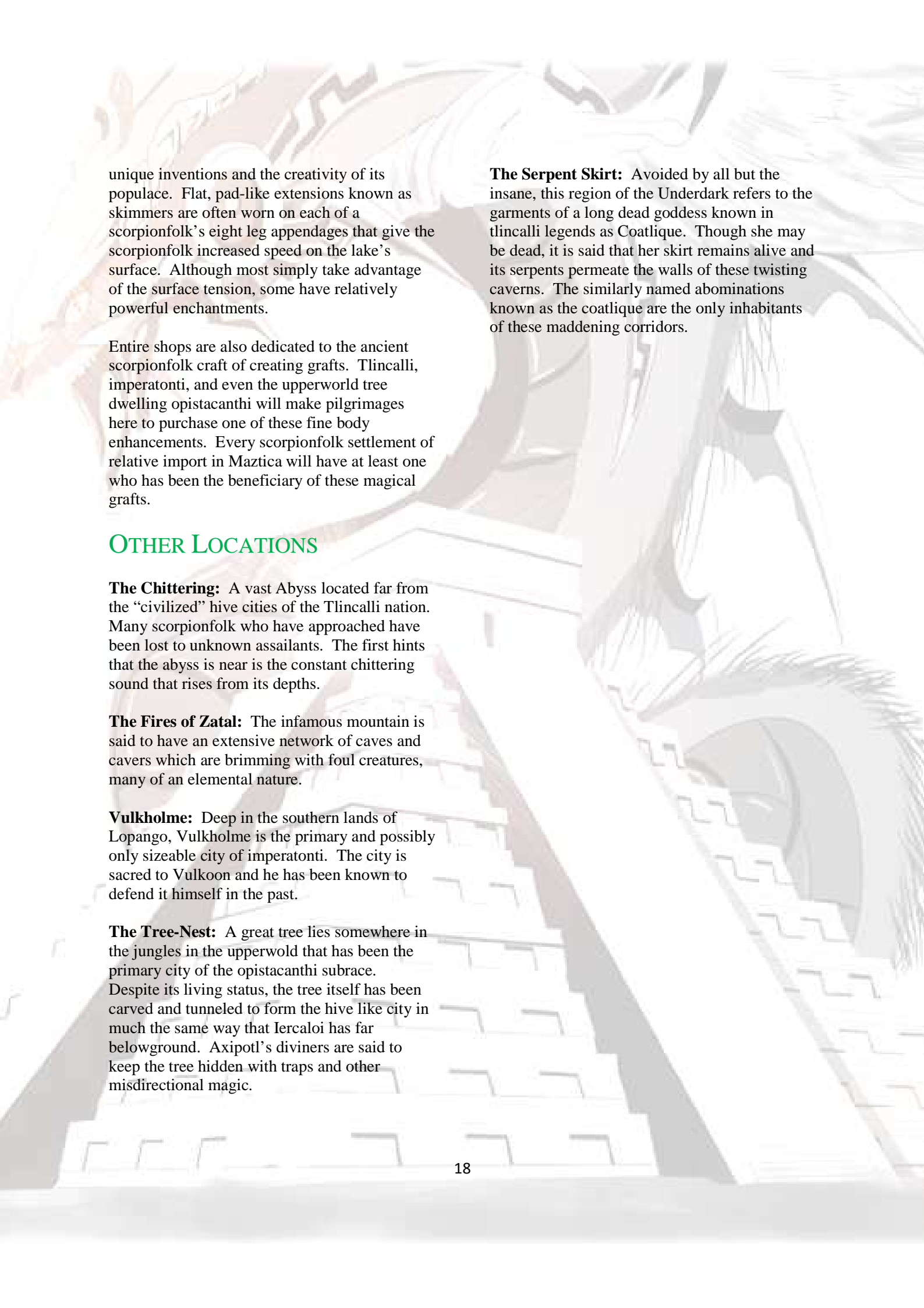
In a long forgotten age, equilibrium was established so that approximately two feet of water stands on the vault floor with little variation from end to end. In fact, the water at its deepest part couldn't drown an adult scorpionfolk and land only breaks the surface at the various stalagmites and columns of the vault. This shallow lake is remarkably fresh and a gentle current flows from one end to the other. The water's sources are the infamous lakes of Nexal in the distant world above filtered through miles of purifying, carbon-rich stone.

Even the various omens that have manifested themselves in the upperworld lakes have not affected this ancient stability.

Humans have rarely encountered the scorpionfolk of Iercaloi, and Corantlil (tempered by his friend Pachutalixi) is almost as highly regarded here as the primary tlincalli deity Huoxopica. Ek-Chua once held sway here as well, but his worshipers have since abandoned the civilized life for the more warlike wilds of the Maztican Underdark. Regardless of their opinion of humanity, encounters are so rare in this deepest of realms that the whole concept is almost moot.

The community is also known for some of its





unique inventions and the creativity of its populace. Flat, pad-like extensions known as skimmers are often worn on each of a scorpionfolk's eight leg appendages that give the scorpionfolk increased speed on the lake's surface. Although most simply take advantage of the surface tension, some have relatively powerful enchantments.

Entire shops are also dedicated to the ancient scorpionfolk craft of creating grafts. Tlincalli, imperatonti, and even the upperworld tree dwelling opistacanthi will make pilgrimages here to purchase one of these fine body enhancements. Every scorpionfolk settlement of relative import in Maztica will have at least one who has been the beneficiary of these magical grafts.

## OTHER LOCATIONS

**The Chittering:** A vast Abyss located far from the "civilized" hive cities of the Tlincalli nation. Many scorpionfolk who have approached have been lost to unknown assailants. The first hints that the abyss is near is the constant chittering sound that rises from its depths.

**The Fires of Zatal:** The infamous mountain is said to have an extensive network of caves and cavers which are brimming with foul creatures, many of an elemental nature.

**Vulkholme:** Deep in the southern lands of Lopango, Vulkholme is the primary and possibly only sizeable city of imperatonti. The city is sacred to Vulkoon and he has been known to defend it himself in the past.

**The Tree-Nest:** A great tree lies somewhere in the jungles in the upperworld that has been the primary city of the opistacanthi subrace. Despite its living status, the tree itself has been carved and tunneled to form the hive like city in much the same way that Iercaloi has far belowground. Axipotl's diviners are said to keep the tree hidden with traps and other misdirectional magic.

**The Serpent Skirt:** Avoided by all but the insane, this region of the Underdark refers to the garments of a long dead goddess known in tlincalli legends as Coatlique. Though she may be dead, it is said that her skirt remains alive and its serpents permeate the walls of these twisting caverns. The similarly named abominations known as the coatlique are the only inhabitants of these maddening corridors.