

Maztican Region

Nexalans

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Human, Nexalan

Regions: Huacali, Kultaka, Nexal, Pezelac, Tukan.

Racial Feats: Discipline, Militia, and Theocrat.

Nexalans are a strong folk. They have survived for centuries in the barren wastelands of Maztica, and managed to bring together a lush empire equal to those of Faerûn that lasted for some two hundred years. All Nexalans can be said to be extremely capable warriors and cunning tacticians. In building their empire they have also become devious diplomats, as well as cultural patrons. They have a rigid culture, one that was built on ceremony, and many things will endure despite change.

Nexalans are commonly mislabeled as Mazticans, which describe applies to all of the native groups of the True World. They are descended from the people of the Metahel lands, which traveled south to the valley of Nexal. Soon taking control the tribes and city-states around that region. They soon, conquered the lands of Huacali and Pezlac at first, spreading their culture instantly. Eventually the lands of Kultaka fell, and their reputation spread throughout the True World. One could say Nexalans have explored most of the True World, although their campaigns of conquest never took themselves above the to the lands of the Metahel or Lopango to the south.

Nexalans tend to be of a reddish-bronze hue with smooth skin. One could say tall, with long, lean physiques. Nexalans have dark thick hair, although males tend to be absent of any facial hair. Eye color leans to the brown to dark-brown end of the spectrum. Although some physical influences from the Dog People, Green Folk, and Payit may occasionally show up.

Nexalans have come to conquer most of the True World. This was done mostly through warfare, with the single goal of pleasing their god's hungry appetite for sacrifice. Obedience to their god and martial prowess, may have eventually lead to their empires downfall. Yet despite all this they have endured, dwelling in the lands of Huacali, Kultaka, Pezlac, and the City of Tukan.

History

Nexalans trace their ancestry to the prehistory of the True World. They were one of the many people that were brought out from the underworld, into a barren wasteland. It wasn't until a man by the name of Tecco received a prophecy from Zaltec, the god of war, to journey south into the lands of Nexal. During these early centuries, the Nexalans mixed with their neighbors. Their ally, the Tezat, secured the Azatl and Zokil tribes. Through all this, the Maztican were beginning to build their empire, which began 1121 DR.

The first elected Reverend Counselor was named Ipana, he fully absorbed the tribes of Nexal save the Tezat. Zaltec's cult soon grew, as each tribe was added. It wasn't till 60 years later, under the rule of Ipana II, that the Tezat was finally absorbed.

During the reign of Ipana III, 1168 DR to 1219 DR, was when Maztican cultured flourished. Marriages between nobles cemented the Nexalan bloodline, as Ipana III was determined to leave a grand legacy. Art, culture, and science began to flourish. It was at this time when Zaltec began to overshadow the importance of the other gods. Zaltec hungered. Peace and prosperity do not feed a god of slaughter. Ipan III began the ritual of the Feathered Wars, ritual warfare that would feed their god. Huacali would soon fall, when they realized even their Feathered Wars would not be enough.

Over the reign of the next couple Reverend Counselor, the ritual warfare continued over the years. Paved roads between the growing cities of the empire began to appear. Yet the continued testing the mettle of the neighboring lands, conquering Pezelac, with Kultaka being the only to withstand them.

During 1261 DR to 1287 DR, under the rule of Izco I and Izco II, culture grew and trade with the lands of Payit flourished. However, Zaltec's disfavor showed even though a new layer was added to the Great Pyramid. Mt. Zatal, the slumbering volcano adobe Nexal erupted. The Feathered Wars were start anew.

During the next 14 years, under Pakli, simultaneous revolts erupted throughout the empire. These years of conflict insured that the Zaltec's appetite would be fed with great cost to the nation.

As things settled after the years, a new age of cultural growth would take place. Interests in their history and origins were explored, and trade began to flourish. Finally after about two centuries, Kultaka was

absorbed during the reign of Axatl.

Naltecona, is known as the last Reverend Counselor of the Maztica. His reign began in 1351 DR, but the time from 1353 to 1363 would be the years that would be forever burned in the minds of his people. For those ten years, omen appeared hailing the coming of the end of the True World. Each omen occurred a year apart: A great ball of bringing light hovered above Nexal for twenty days, the sky grew crimson for a day, Mt. Zatal belched smoke and ash for 12 days, a monstrous feathered stag was spotted, a dream of the arrival of Cordell, a great sound storm raged throughout Tezca for 6 days which revealed the House of the Gods, the snow on the Mt. Zatal turned blood red, Naltecona's second wife gave birth to a stillborn son who was pale white, the four lakes of the Nexal valley rippled by an unknown force, and finally the expedition of Cordell arrived a year later in 1363. It was during this year that the empire of Maztica fell, finishing in great clash between the god Zaltec and the god Helm. The capital now lies in ruins, its inhabitants cursed and twisted by the power of Zaltec.

Despite the empire's destruction, many Nexalans still exist within the regions of Huacali, Kultaka, and Pezelac, and the City of Tukan.

Outlook

Nexalans are a hardy, proud, and enduring people. Nexalans have a very strong mindset and instinct for survival. They have survived constant warfare and the hunger of an insatiable god. They are very adaptable, with the maxim "survival of the fittest" running through their veins.

Nexalans do come from various regions, adding some particular characteristics. Nexalans from the Pezelac region are very sheepish in their behavior. This is largely due to the fact of years of oppression from the central valley. They tend to be followers, and can be very fatalistic in their outlooks. Often relying on fortunetellers to predict outcomes. Those from the Huacali area are very clannish. They tend to form strong bonds with associates and family. They are very loyal when one is finally accepted into their circles. Kultacans though value strength above all. In their eyes, an enduring warrior is a powerful and well-respected man. Though merchant and diplomats are despised, for their power lies in deceptive words.

Nexalan Characters

Nexalan characters are very capable fighters. Males are taken at an early age and taught the arts of war. Nexalans have a strong grasp of military tactics. Clerics, Druids, and Shamans [1] make up the next popular classes. Clerics are often hold great political power within cities, while druid and shamans serve the rural communities. Rogues in the traditional sense are almost unknown, since the concept of personal property is much less evident here. However they fill a function as acrobats, bureaucrats, merchants, diplomats, and scouts. Bards are found here in numbers, keeping alive the many of the traditions and legends of the people.

Arcane spellcasters are extremely rare and limited only to sorcerers. Many individuals that possess such power are usually pariahs of the community, hunted down as valuable sacrifices for Zaltec. Those that manage to survive, quickly learn to hide behind the façades of Hishna or Pluma user.

Prestige Classes: Most Nexalans take fighter prestige classes. The highest honor one could receive is to be inducted into the Eagle or Jaguar Knighthoods. The other popular classes chosen usually bend toward divine spellcasters.

Nexalan Society

Since they have been the most dominant nation of all the True World, they tend to be very proud of their accomplishments. Many monuments of incredible stature are found within cities, dedicating victories and celebrating the gods. Before the destruction of Nexal, examples of such monuments were the great pyramids temple, beautiful mosaics and murals found decorating the plazas, as well as the lavish flora flotillas filling the canals of the city. When they do something, they tend to do it on a large scale.

Language and Literacy

Nexalans speak Nexalan, the official language of the empire. However certain regions have kept their language intact, such as Huacali and Pezelac. These secondary languages share some of the common base words, which can usually be understood by anyone with a working grasp of Nexalan. You can often tell what region a Maztican hails from, as regional accents come through strongly. The languages of the Payit

and Kolan are also learned.

The languages of the True World are often written in pictographs, similar to those found in with the Mulan. It is a very complex form of communication to follow, with thousands of characters expressing thoughts and ideas as opposed to signal syllables. However, scholars from Amn favor using the Draconic alphabet when representing Nexalan words.

Nexalan Magic and Lore

The extent of arcane magic has not been evident with the Nexalan people. Many Nexalans however are drawn to the divine, for clerics often wield political power besides divine might. However, the gods Zaltec and Qotal did pass on a gift to those who wish to embrace it, Hishna and Pluma Magic. The practitioners of these gifts are very similar to Shamans (see 3E Oriental Adventures). These spellcasters with an evil bent often draw from Hishna, while those with good tendencies lean toward Pluma.

Sorcerers themselves are not unknown, but often live in the fringe of society. If such sorcerers are found, they are usually given as a sacrifice to Zaltec, for in their blood runs with power.

Spells and Spellcasting

Nexalans tend to favor spells that evoke the power inherent in nature or provide some protection against various entities. The magic of shapechanging is also highly useful.

Spellcasting Tradition: Nexalans tend to be drawn to divine magics. It is what they know. The practitioners of Hishna tend to favor aggressive and predatory like spells: Bane, Deathwatch, and Hold Person. Those who practice Pluma refer passive and defensive spell Bless, Endure Elements, and Create Spring.

Unique Spell: None.

Nexalan Magic Items

Nexalans with access to Hishna or Pluma magics often make all the magical items known in the True World. Most though are small talismans [2].

Common Magic Item: Practitioners of Pluma can create any Qotal 's [Quaal's] Feather Tokens. Garments made of brilliant feathers have many of the same proprieties similar items made into cloaks and robes.

Practitioners of Hishna create weapons that have a poisonous nature to them, as well as items of entrapment. Iconic Magic Item: None.

Nexalan Deities

Nexalans are very devout people. Their lives are built around ritual and ceremony. Evidence of the gods presence are everywhere after all. Nexalans traditionally revere Zaltec, the god of War. Azul and Tezca come in second, with the rest of the pantheon falling behind. When the Nexalans first left their barren wastelands, it was Zaltec who showed them the path to the promised valley. It was he who favored these warriors from the north. The worship of Zaltec, god of war and the eater of hearts, allowed the Nexalans to prosper and conquer their enemies. Tezca and Azul have held their place only because they provide the necessities of life, the sun and the rain. The Pezelac were one of the few regions that kept the worship of Qotal strong with the Nexalan empire.

When the Amn began their conquest of the True World, they also brought the worship of foreign gods.

Those Nexalans, like many Payit, have been converted by force to worship of Helm.

(See Appendix for Deity listings of the Gods of Maztica)

Relation with other Races

Nexalans have only encountered two other races, halfling and dwarves. Halfling tribes have been encountered in the wilds of Far Payit, but they have always resulted in bloody battles. These halflings are as bloodthirsty as Zaltec himself.

The dwarves of Tezca were encountered during the empire's later explorations. Tales of these strangers have circulated regarding kind hermits assisting desert travelers. Nexalans merely associate them as lone hermits that live in the desert and not a separate race.

Unknown to many, the Drow of the True World did have dealings with the cult of Zaltec for some time. It is unknown when exactly they took an interest, but they have been in the shadows for centuries. What there purpose or goal is unknown.

It wasn't until after 1363 DR, that the Nexalans had to deal with other races. Elves, Dwarves, Halflings,

and Half-Humans made their way with the Amn and other foreigners. The average Nexalan tend to view these races based upon their individual merits and with some curiosity. They do not judge them or have any particular bias toward them. Only those Nexalans that have traveled to Faerûn have had the chance to actually associate with these races in full. Unfortunately, Amn has been successful in restricting contact between those from Faerûn and the True World (mainly the Payit). Some have attempted contact with the other strangers, the Waterdavians of the Borderlands.

Nexalan Equipment

Nexalan still engage in some trade, but mostly everything they have need can be found within their lands. Tools made from stone and wood are common, tools in need sharp edges often are made from obsidian. Tools made of gold and copper can be found as well, since both metals work well. Stoneware is used in almost everything, items made of clay are most common. Textiles are not unknown, so clothing and other items made from cotton are found here.

Arms and Armor

Weapons commonly used are made of stone, though sharper weapons are constructed of obsidian. Spears, daggers, axes, and various bows can be easily constructed. Again some weapons made from copper can be found, but are mostly reserved for the wealthy.

The favored weapon of most fighters though is a maca, which is very similar to a spiked war club.

Nexalan armor tends to be light and non-cumbersome. Padded cotton armor is the cheapest thing sold, while more experienced warriors use stiffened fibers that can turn the blows of most weapons. Although Warriors who have been inducted into the knighthoods often have special suits of armor constructed for them. These armors often of made of jaguar skins or carefully weaved bird feathers. Shields constructed out of wood are often taken into battle as well.

Common Items: Obsidian knives, quarter staves, slings, spears, and stone axes.

Unique Items: Maca

Animals and Pets

Nexalans usually favor rather practical pets, birds being the most common. They are often prized for their vibrant plumage. Many varieties are very popular, but songbirds are highly prized. Various types of colorful parrots are also found among the more affluent Nexalans. These birds possess an amazing capability of being able to mimic human speech.

Dogs are then next the common type of pet, but mostly are used as guards or for hunting.

Some more exotic pets can be found on temple or palatial grounds. Great cats such as panthers and jaguars are often kept in the royal palaces, domesticated when they were mere cubs. Small monkeys from the jungles of Payit can be found in the market place, making interesting playmates for small children.

Associated Creatures: Small rodent type creatures (armadillo) are also found within the city. They can be kept as pets, but are also severe as a food source. These creatures have a scaly hide, and can even roll up into a ball.

Nexalan Region

Nexalans hail from a variety of climates, from desert-like to mountainous shrub regions. They have learned to adapt and flourish. The characters described here reflect a hardy and prepared individual. One who has tasted combat and survived in harsh climates. These individuals are commonly found among the remnants of the Nexalan Empire or those traveling abroad along the Sword Coast.

Preferred Classes: Nexalan males are trained from birth as warriors. Fighters make up the majority of the populace. With Clerics, Druids, and Shamans making up the next strong majority of professions.

Automatic Languages: Nexalan

Bonus Languages: Huacali, Kolan, Pezelec, Payit,

Regional Feats: Discipline, Militia, and Theocrat.

Bonus Equipment: (A) Maca and Wooden Shield, (B) Stiffened Fiber Armor and a Stone Axe, or (C) 1st level Pluma or Hishna Talisman.

*May substitute the prerequisite an orc with human for Blood the Warlord feat.

APPENDIX

MAZTICAN PANTHEON (Mythos of the Nexalan, Payit, Green Folk, and Dog Peoples)

Deity- -Align- -Symbol- -Portfolios- -Domains- -Favored Weapon

Azul- -LE- -Frog- -Rain, Water, Storms- -River[*], Storm, Water- -Spear
Eha- -CN- -Smoke- -Air, Gases, Winds- -Air, Divination[*], Travel- -Bow
Kiltzi- -CG- -Flower- -Family, Hearth, Love- -Charm, Family, Healing- -Knife
Maztica- -N- -Mountains- -Nature, Womankind- -Earth, Nature[*],Renewal- -Club
Nula- -CN- -Monkey- -Animals- -Animal, Knowledge, Nature [*]- -Quarterstaff
Qotal - -LG- -Feather- -Air, Goodness, Peace- -Air, Nature [*], Pluma- -Quarterstaff
Plutoq- -LN- -Rock- -Earth, Stone- -Earth, Plant, Stone [*]- -Great Axe
Tezca- -CE- -Fiery Lizard- -Deserts, Fire, Sun- -Fire, Flame[*], Sun- -Spear
Watil- -NG- -Cactus- -Plants- -Nature [*], Plant, Wood [*]- -Spiked Club
Zaltec- -CE- -Bloody Skull- -Destruction, Death, War- -Fury, Hishna, War- -Maca
(Deceased)
Kukul- -N- -Star- Father of the Gods, Mankind- -Cannot Grant Spells- -None

NEW DOMAINS

Hishna Domain

Deities: Zaltec.

Granted Power: Increase damage die to next category 1/day.

- 1 Trance [*]
- 2 Kiss of the Toad [*]
- 3 Possess Animal [*]
- 4 Snake Dart [*]
- 5 Heart Ripper [*]
- 6 Stoneskin
- 7 Power Word, Stun
- 8 Creeping Doom
- 9 Energy Drain

Pluma Domain

Deities: Qotal

Granted Power: Plumaweaving Feat for free.

- 1 Trance [*]
- 2 Calm Emotions
- 3 Create Spring [*]
- 4 Remove Fatigue [*]
- 5 Summoning Wind [*]
- 6 Dance of the Feathered Dragon (Dance of the Unicorn) [*]
- 7 Control Weather
- 8 Legend Lore
- 9 Sympathy

NEW FEAT

Plumaweaving [General]

You know how to blend colorful and bright feathers into your weavings.

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13+, Craft (Featherweaving) 4.

Benefit: The character knows the art of weaving beautiful creations made out of feathers. This includes item such as cloaks, capes, rugs, liters, pendants, etc. These creations are always considered of a masterwork quality for purposes of magical item construction.

This type of weaving is a relaxing and mentally health activity. The character can create 1 square inch of

material per hour, and gain back 1hp per square inch weaved.

REFERENCES

Maztican Box Set, TSR1066, Douglas Niles.

Lands of Intrigue Box Set, TSR1159, Book Two, pgs 60-63 .Steven E. Schend.

Fires of Zatal, TSR9333, Jeff Grubb & Tim Beach.

[1] Oriental Adventures 3E, pgs 22-24.

[2] Oriental Adventures 3E, pg 61.

[*] Domains and Spells Taken from Oriental Adventures 3E.