

The Wisdom of the Tenizidi

Those who choose to seek insight and understanding

We are the Tenizidi. We are watching you.

A thousand years ago, the offspring of the ant made war on the offspring of the snake and their masters. When the Illini were destroyed, some chose to flee from the horrors of the battle renouncing violence and some chose to embrace violence seeking to make war the essence of their existence. A few discovered the truth in the war with the Illini and chose to embrace all these paths but to follow none. We became the Tenizidi.

The first discipline of the Tenizidi is patience. There is a time to act and a time to watch, and patience teaches us to sense the movement from one time to the next. Seek to remain still when you move.

The second discipline of the Tenizidi is privacy. If the body is in motion while the mind moves then thoughts and desires play across it like ripples upon the pond. There is no reason for an outsider to see your home, or to know your secrets. Strive to become private when you are in public.

The final discipline of the Tenizidi is ruthlessness. Once the time for action is upon you, there is no action that is not appropriate to take in its pursuit. Mercy, compassion, forgiveness, compromise these are not disciplines of the Tenizidi. When the passions of battle fill your soul, become the empty jar.

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The Lives of the Tenizidi

The tradition of the hives arose during the great war with the Illini. The hives came together to eradicate the Illini and in doing so they grew to a greater understanding of each other. After the Illini were pulled down some hives clung to the tradition of unending warfare and were named Tlaxti. Others renounced the violence that had shattered the world and sought new ways to survive. They became the Azarch and the Solarians. A handful of hives had discovered a truth beyond anything their enemies could comprehend and they took the name Tenizidi.

Tenizidi dig great tunnels deep under the ground searching for the secrets buried there but any myrmidon can dig, this is not what makes us Tenizidi. Tenizidi dig pits and traps to capture the unwary but even a snake can set a lure, this is not what makes us Tenizidi. The Tenizidi are those hives that chose to set themselves on a path of understanding and enlightenment.

We are warriors to match the Tlaxti, builders to rival the Azarch and philosophers beyond the wit of the Solarians. We are the greatest of all the people of the Ant for we alone train both mind and body in search of enlightenment. It is this choice that makes us Tenizidi.

The outward traditions of those hives that chose to be Tenizidi has changed little since the Illini were destroyed. The Tenizidi still build their fortress-hives beneath the ground in a network of interconnected tunnels that may stretch for many miles. Privacy and security are of paramount concern, no stranger must be allowed within the tunnels of the hive. All Tenizidi recognise that the hive is for the hive alone; outsiders enter a hive only if they are to be used as hosts for warriors. For an outsider to see the secret places of the Tenizidi and escape is a dreadful thing that can rouse an entire hive to hunt that individual down and destroy him and anyone who he has associated with. The secrets beneath the earth are for the Tenizidi alone.

When the Tenizidi claim an area, they usually begin seeding the surface above their hives with traps, deadfalls and tricks designed to trap (or more rarely directly slay) intruders. If warriors or drones can be spared to check these traps then anything that falls victim is taken below to serve as the host for a new myrmidon warrior, but this is not the true purpose. Traps symbolize a key aspect of the Tenizidi philosophy, the art of making war upon an enemy without engaging them. The Tenizidi have no use for walls or fortifications. Instead they craft defences designed to actively destroy their enemy if they are foolish enough to encroach. The Tenizidi claim that the greatest way to fight is to turn the motion of an enemy upon himself and their warfare reflects this belief.

When they must engage an enemy, the Tenizidi are expert at using the terrain to conceal their movements and positions; they dig shallow pits and hide within them, or take advantage of dead trees, or even construct camouflaged "hides" from which to observe game trails and the traps they have set. A trespasser can be entirely surrounded by Tenizidi warriors and never know it until they suddenly attack, capture him, and carry him below the ground to become a host. This also reflects the philosophy of the Tenizidi, to observe without motion then to act without contemplation.

Tenizidi seem to value patience above all other qualities, but also value stealth and subtlety. If a design can be plainly seen, it can be countered. Secrecy is a cloak that penetrates any defence. Yet they also seem to value honesty. If a Tenizidi warrior says he will perform an action, it is considered very bad form indeed to doubt his ability to do so. It is also considered bad form to say one will do something and fail in the attempt. Yet this is nothing next to the stigma that falls on a warrior who says he will do something and then fails to even attempt it.

Poison is a tool that the Tenizidi appreciate. Anyone that has skirmished with the Onontakha knows the value of poison, and the Tenizidi have developed several useful poisons of their own that they use to enhance their ability to take hosts back to the hive. Tenizidi poison is rarely fatal, generally rendering the target helpless. A helpless, living host is believed to provide the best warrior. Tenizidi poison is a closely guarded secret; even its existence is not admitted to outsiders.

The Tenizidi occasionally move the location of their hive, without warning, and without being observed. A Tenizidi hive might expand into a new area suddenly, and begin seeding it with traps and observation posts. This is especially true when an old hive becomes too large, in which case a proportion of the existing population simply leaves to build a new hive. Great ceremony surrounds such a split; those who leave the established hive give up their claim to be members of that hive. Their autonomy costs them the right to enter that hive's lands and they are from that point onwards considered strangers and outsiders.

A few Onontakhan braves consider it a mark of manhood to enter land claimed by the Tenizidi and return with some token to show one has overcome the trickery of the underground myrmidons. The Tenizidi welcome or even encourage such behaviour as it ensures a steady supply of fresh hosts.

Almost all the work in a Tenizidi hive is performed by the drones. They dig the tunnels that the Tenizidi use to connect

their hives, construct their buildings, and gather their food. The Tenizidi value several traits in their warriors. Unlike many myrmidon cultures, they especially respect a warrior that is capable of independent action. Warriors will often be separated from other members of their hives for extended periods of time as they watch or guard an area, and the Tenizidi need those warriors to be able to act in the interests of the hive.

"Rank" within a hive is generally represented by fine clothing and jewellery. In their extensive tunnelling the Tenizidi often uncover interesting metals, strange and beautiful gemstones and even more peculiar things. These raw materials are exploited where they are uncovered, and the Tenizidi have learnt many simple mining techniques that would seem like magic to less advanced hives. Many of the raw materials they produce are used by the warriors themselves.

The Tenizidi make surprisingly delicate jewellery. They are known for an appreciation of beauty that strangers sometimes see as being at odds with their stealthy and ruthless natures. The Tenizidi themselves see no conflict here; they simply consider it appropriate behaviour for a warrior to own and wear beautiful jewellery, and many Tenizidi adorn themselves with clothes and even paint in a way that would confuse a Tlaxti warrior. The Tenizidi see this as another element in their appreciation of the individual as part of the hive that the Tlaxti are simply too coarse to comprehend.

The Tenizidi also reinforce their weapons with chunks of metal and stone, and trade their surplus to strangers at their trade posts. Several hives enjoy good trade relations with Azarch hives with myrmidons of both cultures showing an appreciation for the qualities of the others' metalwork. They also trade with the Solari for delicate clothing and beautifully crafted wooden goods to adorn their homes with.

There are places that the Tenizidi set aside where outsiders may meet and deal with them in some safety. These trading posts are public places, and their only purpose is to allow Tenizidi to meet and observe strangers in conditions that appear neutral but where the Tenizidi still have the upper hand. Trading posts are easily recognizable. They lie on the very edges of territory claimed by the Tenizidi, and they are generally surrounded by recognisable taboo markers and broad, safe paths that let visitors reach them without being killed. If anyone strays from these wide paths, or ignores the taboo markers, if it steps outside the accepted bounds that the Tenizidi have set aside for it, then it is mercilessly killed. There are no exceptions.

And this is all that others believe the Tenizidi are. Myrmidons who choose to dig deep burrows and surround their hives with all manner of traps. A passion for jewellery and art, peaceful in trade, ruthless when invaded. And this is exactly as it should be, for the truth of the Tenizidi, like the privacy of our hives, is always hidden from those who are not Tenizidi.

What lies below the surface

Some Tenizidi know that the act of digging into the ground is a physical expression of the search for truth within themselves. It is this search for enlightenment that characterizes the Tenizidi and which they hide from all other beings. Leave the Solarians to engage in their pitiful attempts to study the world around them, let the Azarch and the Tlaxti crawl on their bellies before their gods, the Tenizidi know that true

enlightenment lies inside one's own soul.

All intelligent mortal beings consist of a soul enshrined within a body. The soul is the seat of reason and is contained within a mystical animus that cannot be seen but resides within every part of the body. The flesh is the physical shadow of this animus and in lesser creatures it reflects the thoughts of the soul. By watching and observing a non-Tenizidi in action you can learn to understand its soul and its thoughts.

The first thing a Tenizidi learns is to prevent feelings and thoughts reflecting upon their faces and bodies. The lesser axiom, become private when in public, means many things but the first understanding is that a warrior must learn to completely separate the movement of the mind from the movement of the body. When the mind is in motion, when you are observing those around you then your body must become still. This is not simply the stillness of the hunter, although some Tenizidi do practice such stillness for many hours for absolute immobility may be misconstrued as hostility or tension. Rather it is a stillness in which the movements of the body have no relation to the movements of the mind and in this way the thoughts of the soul are concealed from enemies and spies.

The idea of motion and stillness are of great importance to the Tenizidi. One of the lesser axioms states that you must become still when you move. Only when the body is trained to be still does the soul become free to move. But the reverse is also true, the body is only truly free to move when the soul becomes still. This is the source of the patience of the Tenizidi, when you watch and observe your enemies then your mind is in motion, contemplating everything about you, but the body becomes still.

But when the time for actions comes, the Tenizidi know they must surrender themselves to it utterly. For the body to succeed the soul must become still; the warrior must utterly embrace his course of action and fill his mind with a single thought only. This is the last of the lesser axioms of the Tenizidi, when your soul is filled with the passion of battle, you must become the empty jar. When you act to become free from anxiety, fear, compassion or doubt you must be freed from thought itself. Thus a Tenizidi hunter will lie in darkness for hours observing his enemies and noting their every thought and deed, but the moment they stumble into his trap then he will strike and destroy them utterly without a moments hesitation or thought.

The Tenizidi warrior then seeks to control his own soul as much as his body. The great secret of the Tenizidi is this; there are no gods. There is no Coyote delivering his wary followers from danger, no Basilisk urging one to conquer all. Gods are a delusion invented by the lesser beings of the New World who have no way to understand that this power resides within themselves, inside their own soul. Their "gods" are simply reflections of the real truths that lie within. Only by devoting itself to one of these philosophies can a Tenizidi warrior grow in strength.

Many Tenizidi hives devote themselves utterly to the philosophy of the Grinding Wheel, the desire to seek elegance and perfection and eradicate imperfection and waste. A majority of Tenizidi hives follow the Turbulent Gyre, the philosophy of the eternally patient warrior who ruthlessly draws all truths within himself where they can be concealed. Adherents of the Ceaseless Spindle avoid rest and relaxation seeking to keep their souls eternally alert and watchful for danger. Those who follow the Whirling Mote are known for their excess in battle, glorying in the lusts of their body. The Rolling Mountain is the name of the ideal of those who seek to place their souls in an ordered hierarchy, striving to unite warriors so that they act upon a single shared thought.

The lesser hives call these beliefs gods giving them countless different names and few Tenizidi would bother to correct them. Let them delude themselves that they live their lives in service to some great tyrant, enlightenment can only be sought, it cannot be given. When conversing with beings from outside their hive, the Tenizidi will usually adopt the god names that the lesser hives use to describe the Great Axioms simply because it makes it easier to deal with them. Only the Tenizidi know the truth, that initiation by a master allows a warrior to pledge their mind to a Great Axiom, that dedication to this Axiom allows you to access the power that lies within your own soul. This is the truth that those from lesser hives call blessings.

Lesser creatures petition their primitive "gods" for aid through prayer, supplication and sacrifice, but the Tenizidi see these activities as futile exercises in self-delusion. While a less enlightened creature might pray and beseech the gods, the Tenizidi engage in meditation to collect and focus their own thoughts through their axiomatic philosophy to attempt to enact a change on the world around them. When less aware creatures pray, the Tenizidi uses the quiet of contemplation

The City of the Dead

Occasionally, when an especially blessed Hunahpa hero dies, a priest may arrive and request that the body be handed over. The priest is always masked, and dressed in a ceremonial shawl of rainbow feathers and white scales that hides the entire body. He or she is always accompanied by thirteen slaves and seven silent warriors, at least one of whom bears the soul symbol of an Immortal eidolon. Sometimes they are said to travel on a barge of black wood decorated with gold that moves silently along the rivers to bring them to their destination, sometimes the priest travels in a wheeled contraption pulled by slaves. Some Hunahpa say that it is the same priest each time, and has been since time immemorial.

The body of the dead hero is taken to a hidden city where it is apparently placed with great reverence in an alcove inside a temple of black stone. The Hunahpa call this city Cha Kuk Ya, and say that it is guarded by eidolons and by a cadre of holy temple-warriors who possess immortality and powerful blessings from all the gods. It is said that the heroes interred there live among the gods in a position of grace, but will rise again from the dead as chosen servants of the Favoured Ones when they return.

to place their thoughts and memories in order and dedicate themselves to a certain course of action.

Politics and Individuality

Every Tenizidi knows from the point that he becomes aware that he is an individual. He might be part of a Hive, but he knows that he is special and unique within that Hive. He knows that he needs to seek enlightenment, and that nobody else can provide it to him – it must come from within. He knows that he must walk his own path as he considers best, and that while he might listen to the advice and opinions of others they cannot live his life for him, not can he live their life.

This awareness of the self as unique is something other myrmidons would find difficult to understand. The savage Tlaxti, Azarch and Solarians subjugate their identity as individuals to their Hive or their Gods. They're afraid to examine and accept the idea that they are ultimately responsible for their own destiny. Only the Tenizidi have the strength to celebrate their individuality while still being able to play a role in the prosperity of their Hive.

As an individual, it is typical for Tenizidi to engage in highly political behaviour within their own Hive. They co-operate with one another only because the individuals involved have decided to do so. There is often clear benefit to each individual in any collaborative effort, although that benefit most often comes in the form of promises of future assistance on personal projects rather than physical reward.

The Hive provides a framework within which the individuals operate. It has a history that is longer than the history of any of the individuals that make it up, and it is accepted that it will continue after the individuals are all dead. It provides context to their behaviour. The safety of the Hive represents the safety of each individual, and as it prospers so the individual prospers. Within the physical structure of the Hive there exists an awareness of the Hive as an individual in its own right, especially in those Hives where many honoured warriors have been preserved.

Endangering the Hive or its secrets is endangering each individual within it. While the Tenizidi might manoeuvre against one another for control of an asset, or to manipulate others into providing materials for their quest toward enlightenment, few Tenizidi would be foolish enough to allow an outsider to see anything other than a united façade because doing so would endanger themselves as much as the others in their Hive.

A Tenizidi hive that is too still, that turns in place, runs the risk of becoming stagnant. Avenues of thought become atrophied through long use and custom. Motion becomes habitual, and repetitive motion is a trap. The Tenizidi know that from time to time they must break out of old modes of thought and motion, and move in a radically different way. Sometimes this new motion takes place in the world below, as new avenues of thought are explored. Other times this motion takes place in the world above, leading to the mobilization of the hive to seek out new territories. This becomes especially true when the traps the herds from which the Tenizidi gather new hosts are depleted, or come instinctually to avoid the areas where the Tenizidi hunt.

Shaping the Worlds

Jewellery and sculpture play an important role in the lives of the Tenizidi, not just as a medium for art and expression but as a way to train the body. The finest Tenizidi jewellers learn to make exquisitely delicate chains, often in linked sets that are designed to be attached to piercings in the chitin plates on the face or the back of a claw. The slightest movement will set the fine silver or gold chains in motion, helping a young Tenizidi warrior become aware of the movement of its body so that it may better learn to control it. The most revered Tenizidi warriors, often wear massively intricate head pieces of silver or golden jewelled chains as indication of their great mastery.

The Tenizidi know however that there is more to a beautifully crafted piece of art than just its practical application. The creation of beauty is an end in itself. Beautifully crafted item, especially a piece of jewellery, holds up a mirror to the soul of the creator. While “naturally” beautiful things and places are esteemed little by the Tenizidi, many cultivate a finely-tuned aesthetic sense for anything that has been worked by mortal hands, even those of savages. An exquisite golden jug or silver ring can communicate much to a Tenizidi warrior; the movements of mind and body that go into transforming raw materials into a crafted item tell of the strengths and weaknesses of the crafter himself. Even though the crafts of lesser races are innately flawed, a Tenizidi might still uncover insight into his own soul from viewing the aesthetics of a lesser creature.

The best source for such information about another's soul is the item that the crafter does not wish you to see - the items that they keep in their private places communicate much more about the craftsman (and even his people) than the items they offer for trade. By taking the things of your enemy, you steal a little of his soul away. The more he values the thing that you take, the more power you steal from him and the easier it will be for you to understand him.

This philosophy of expressing, expanding and revealing the soul through creation is core to the Tenizidi understanding of reality. The soul of the individual can directly shape the world around it through physical action, and in the same way the Tenizidi say that the physical world can influence and shape the internal soul. By exerting their will to change their surroundings, the Tenizidi change themselves and come closer to enlightenment. This crafting of the world takes many forms, the most obvious of which is the Tenizidi understanding of manipulation and warfare.

Warfare and Manipulation

Unlike the ignorant Solari, the Tenizidi know that in spite of their enlightened souls, the world above cannot currently be shaped through contemplation alone. In the same way that gold ore will not become a delicate mandible-ring by itself, so the world below must often be shaped by action in the world above. To try and shape the world in such a way, however, is to encounter opposition from the savages who live there.

While trade is an acceptable way to gain resources, it is innately flawed. Traders only present merchandise that they are happy to give to those who might be their enemies. Their most revealing and unique goods they keep in their own Hives for their own use. The crafted goods they offer reveal only a fraction of the truth in their souls, and may even be

misleading, because these are their least private selves. The only way to gain access to the truth within the souls of others is to take from them the things they prize the most, the things they are most unwilling to give up.

The Tenizidi also understand that the weight of ignorant souls is a great impediment to the ability to shape the world below through action in the world above. For each delicate Tenizidi soul that works to craft the world below, there are a hundred ignorant Onontakhan savages or Tlaxti soldiers. While the ignorant do not understand the nature of the two worlds as the Tenizidi do, their untrained dreams pollute the worlds and keep them in their current unrefined shape. Only by removing these ignorant dreamers can the Tenizidi hope to transform their world.

Furthermore, the Tenizidi possess secrets. There are those who covet these secrets and might try to gain access to the private places of the Hive. In this case, the intruder must be dealt with without mercy, annihilated and made to serve the Hive through the only acceptable means – as food or hosts for new warriors. A Hive can never be certain that they have ended a threat until they have dealt not only with intruders and spies, but with all those they may have shared their intention with – or who might speak of the Tenizidi's ways and create more curiosity among the savages. So if a handful of Onontakhan braves seek to break into a Hive, it is the way of the Tenizidi to destroy not only those braves but their entire tribe, and all witnesses to the action.

So for these reasons at least, the Tenizidi have enemies. While the Tlaxti would raise a massive army of drones and warriors and throw it against those they want to conquer spreading only discord and destruction, the Tenizidi see this as wasteful action, where movement is expended randomly to little real gain. The best way to defeat an opponent is to undermine him using the weakness at the heart of his supposed strength. A face-to-face conflict in the world below is a waste of resources and energy, when the same result can be acquired patiently through out-manoeuvring the foe and leading it into a trap where it destroys itself.

To this end, the Tenizidi will use any tool at their disposal, and one of the most useful tools they have discovered is to manipulate two groups of enemies to fight each other. Faced with an Onontakhan tribe that has become too numerous, a Tenizidi hive might manipulate a Tlaxti Hive into destroying them. They might use apparent diplomacy to persuade the Onontakhan tribe that they are powerful enough to fight the Tlaxti, they might allow the Tlaxti to discover the location of a common tribal camp so they are caught unawares, they might arrange for one side or the other to learn of a hidden route to the others territory. There are hundreds of different, subtle ways to manipulate others into expending their energy on your behalf. The best outcome, of course, is that both sides are weakened so that the Tenizidi can destroy the victor. It is important to remember at all times that the Tenizidi manipulations serve a purpose – there is little point to manipulating another for its own sake.

Understanding the enemy – and anything outside the Hive may be considered an enemy – allows you to exploit, manipulate and ultimately consume him and use him for nourishment of the soul, the body and the Hive. This is the ultimate purpose of any interaction with outsiders. While the Hive may pretend

to diplomacy, or to an interest in trade, ultimately they have no compassion or empathy for those they deal with. They are not real people, after all, and their value lies entirely in the resources they provide to the Tenizidi. While the Tenizidi may present themselves as neutral or even friendly, they do so entirely to make it easier for them to eventually manipulate the outsider to the point where it can be effectively destroyed and consumed.

Meditation, Dream Walk and the Two Worlds

The Tenizidi know that what appears to be one world is actually two, the physical world, often called the world above, which is inhabited by the body and the spirit world, usually called the world below, which is inhabited by the soul. Normally these two worlds move in unison, a change in the world below is reflected in the world above and vice versa. Thus when an Azarch thinks a treacherous thought in the world below, this will be reflected on his face and in his body and speech in the world above. A skilled Tenizidi warrior learns to read the movements in the world above and thus discern the movement in the world below.

Skilled Tenizidi also learn how to move in the world above without moving in the world below and vice versa. Such techniques make the Tenizidi masters of concealment, able to keep an ambush for hours, able to read their enemies without being read themselves, but this is a trivial application. The real power derives from learning to allow the soul to move in the world below free from the constraints imposed by movement in the world above. Contemplation and meditation are the basic techniques that the Tenizidi learn to allow them to move solely in the world below.

Contemplation is considered exceptionally important by most Tenizidi. Individuals often spend time alone in deep contemplation, reviewing the actions that have taken place in their lives, the actions of others and their plans for the future. However enlightened Tenizidi warriors will sometimes lead group meditations focussing the thoughts of all present on a single topic through verbal and visual instruction. By bringing together powerful Tenizidi warriors an enlightened one can focus the communal efforts of their souls to bring about powerful changes in the world. Such efforts are difficult and fraught with dangers for the soul is not well understood, even by the Tenizidi, so most Tenizidi are very careful when engaging in meditation, but the results can be very powerful if the souls involved are sufficiently enlightened.

Meditation usually involves carefully prepared speech by the leading warrior or wise one who has gathered his associates to consider an issue, but it can involve music and ritual dance or stylised combat manoeuvres. Such movement that takes place is usually carefully practised to the point where it can be done without conscious thought as it is important for the movements of the body to become disconnected from the movements of the mind. Only then can the enlightened mind move freely in the world below bringing about changes in both worlds that could not otherwise be achieved by movement in the world above.

Another technique commonly used by the Tenizidi is Dream Walk. Most mortal creatures dream while sleeping, but only the Tenizidi know that dreams are actually the soul in motion

in the world below. Most creature's dreams are weak and irrelevant, they are incapable of controlling their motion in the world below except through conscious control of their body so they can achieve nothing. A skilled Tenizidi warrior can use meditation techniques to gain control of his soul's motion in the world below while the body sleeps in the world above, a technique called Dream Walk. Enlightened Tenizidi often gain valuable information from a Dream Walk.

Artistic expression is one of the few times that Tenizidi actively seek to move the body and the soul in unity. When creating paintings, embroidery or weaving fine cloth the Tenizidi allows the movements in the World below to be reflected in the world above. The most important form of art is jewellery, the crafting of exquisitely beautiful items in silver or gold represents a unique opportunity to many Tenizidi. There is very little substance in the world below, so movement in the world below is usually ephemeral – but by capturing the movements within the precious metals the Tenizidi warrior can immortalize the movements in the world below. Most of the inert world above has no reflection in the world below, by working materials like silver and gold into beautiful art the Tenizidi give them a reflection in the world below.

The potential power of movement in the world below is limitless, they can quite literally remake the world above into any form, but precisely because of this power they are potentially very dangerous. Eidolons are an excellent example of this. Eidolons are in fact a portion of the experience of the soul made manifest outside a warrior's body, in effect they are a reflection of the subconscious thoughts of the Tenizidi (and other creatures). Such reflections are not actually real and they can be dispelled, like banishing a thought from your mind, but they cannot be destroyed any more than an idea can be. Encounters with eidolons, while dangerous, are considered highly momentous and important, a moment in which a respectful Tenizidi warrior can confront his own mental limitations and potentially unlock the power within himself. The most disciplined Tenizidi can interact with these embodiments of their own thoughts and learn to turn them against their enemies. Inevitably such encounters will often be clouded with talk of gods and gifts, the Tenizidi are prey to the same superstitions that plague the lesser hives, but the true warrior strives to see the truths that lie within the allegories.

Death, Decay and Preservation

On death, the soul returns to the world below and becomes part of it while the body remains in the world above and becomes part of it in turn. The same processes of decay occur in both worlds. As the rotting body can nurture creatures and fungus, so the rotting soul can nurture the Queen's egg and produce a new warrior. This process of nurturing is what the creatures outside the Hive are for – to provide nourishment for the Tenizidi.

Most Tenizidi warriors know that they are destined to undergo this twin process of physical and spiritual decay to nurture the Hive. However, some Tenizidi are considered too valuable to the Hive to serve as mere nourishment. A Warrior who has shaped its soul well through understanding and action in service to the Hive may be preserved beyond death. The enlightened crafter who knows how to preserve a soul takes the dead body while the soul is still present and before decay has had time to set in. and preserves it physically in chist,

preventing the soul and the body from separating. The body is then returned to the hive, and ceremonially preserved within the very fabric of the hive itself. As the body is honoured by becoming part of the Hive, so the soul of the deceased is honoured with a golden death-mask that allows the soul of the dead hero to recognize his physical body after death, and encourages him to remain nearby. Rather than decaying, the soul sleeps and contemplates within its deceased body. While their deceased forms remain still, their souls move through the Hive speaking in dreams, especially to those who are meditating in the vicinity of the honoured dead.

Those Warriors who receive this ultimate honour continue to shape the Hive even after death. They enjoy an intimate connection to the souls of all Tenizidi that goes beyond anything they might have experienced in life. The Hive is usually very protective of its honoured dead; they are in a very real way the heart of the Hive in a way that even the Queen is not. The outrage caused by the idea that an outsider might see or – worse yet – tamper with them is difficult to put into words, but would represent the most monstrous intrusion into the privacy of the Tribe. Likewise, the idea that a foreigner – even a respected Tenizidi of another Hive – might be preserved and become part of the soul of the Hive is a violation of that Hive's essential nature.

Obviously, to preserve an honoured warrior requires a certain amount of gold, and what the Tenizidi cannot render from the earth themselves they must trade for or take by force from primitives.

Recent Developments

All the most enlightened Tenizidi warriors seek to learn how to move the world below producing extraordinary results. In early times such movements usually concerned ensuring the privacy and safety of the hive. As the Tenizidi have grown more powerful however, they have sought new challenges and some bold Tenizidi warriors have begun meditation about the nature of the world below seeking to alter the very nature of the two worlds.

It is these movements that have caused the recent changes in the world above, the arrival of the newcomers who claim to travel over the oceans and the creation of magic. Magic is an entirely new art, clearly distinct from meditation and Dream Walk, it requires movement in both worlds simultaneously and produces results in both worlds at the same time. Tenizidi scholars argue whether magic is a movement in one world with a reflection in the other or truly a movement in both simultaneously. Whatever the truth it is clear that the Tenizidi should make themselves the masters of this new discipline before the lesser races abuse it.

The newcomers are another thing worthy of study. There have been recent incursions into your territory by the newcomers and experiments on their bodies have shown that they possess a soul and can be used as a host. This proves that they are not a reflection of some aberrant soul from the world below as was initially assumed as the body of an eidolon cannot be used as a host. It is theoretically possible that they really do come from across the oceans, possibly called to these lands by a Tenizidi Meditation. They are clearly powerful and warrant investigation whatever the truth of their existence.

Coyote Tales, The Dreaming Queen

Some say that, in the time before the Illini, there was a Queen whose Hive was great and powerful. The Queen was called “Dreaming Queen” because she spent her time in eternal meditative reverie, waking only to eat and to lay eggs for the next generation. Her people prospered because the dreams of the Queen were so powerful that they shaped the world above to the betterment of her children. When the Illini came, the Dreaming Queen dreamt a dreadful dream that took her Hive and her children away from the Illini and let them hide inside the world of dreams itself. To this day there are Queens who seem to emulate the Dreaming Queen, and to reach out to her in the world of dreams.

Others say this story has a hidden truth; that the Tenizidi are the children of the Dreaming Queen, and that it is her dreams that shape the world so that the Tenizidi can prosper within it. They go further and suggest that the Dreaming Queen dreamt the entire world into existence, and that everything in it is as she dreams it. If she ever awakens fully, the world would disappear without a trace. By learning to walk in their own dreams, the Tenizidi become closer to the Dreaming Queen so that should she wake, they will be able to continue the dream on her behalf.

These adherents to the philosophy of the Dreaming Queen say that the Queen dreamt the Newcomers and their Other World into being to test the Tenizidi, and to provide them with useful tools with which to destroy their enemies. The world that the Newcomers talk about is not a real place – it is just a dream that they have been provided by the Dreaming Queen.

Rules

Axiomatic Faith – Most Tenizidi do not subscribe to the superstitious beliefs of lesser creatures. They know that what other people call gods are in fact reflections of their own beliefs and subconscious drives. The Tenizidi study the soul itself and have developed a better understanding of the paths by which the soul can become more powerful. The Tenizidi call these paths the Great Axioms and there are five in all, the Rolling Mountain, the Turbulent Gyre, the Ceaseless Spindle, Whirling Mote and the Grinding Wheel. The countless “gods” of the New World are nothing more than labels for one of these five Great Axioms, and present the only route to understanding that lesser creatures are capable of.

Tenizidi characters who choose a devotion at character creation are assumed to have chosen the equivalent Axiomatic Faith. The Tenizidi have no use for the superstitions of the other races, no supplications or prayers, but they are able to access the power of these ceremonies at a more fundamental level. Tenizidi characters who are devotees of one of the Great Axioms are encouraged to engage in Contemplation. To do this you should complete a prayer form by writing down the thoughts and ideas that your character is contemplating.

Tenizidi characters who purchase one or more of the ceremonial skills at character creation will receive the more potent Tenizidi equivalent skill. E.g. A character that purchases the Supplicate will receive Mediate, a skill that allows a warrior or queen to lead a group of followers of a great axiom in meditation to achieve movement in the world above and the world below.

Please note that the Tenizidi knowledge of the world above and the world below has not been released to any other member of the player base. Few Tenizidi see any value in revealing the truths that define the Tenizidi culture to lesser creatures, preferring to converse with them in terms that they can understand. We believe that some of the advantages available to you will be lost if this information become widely known and would encourage you to be exceptionally careful who you share it with.

Hive strength — A group of players starting a Tenizidi hive receive certain benefits for free, depending on the number of players starting in the hive. The hive strength is equal to the number of players who have a Tenizidi primary character booked to attend a Profound Decisions event at the point where the first member of the hive attends an event. The greater the hive strength, the more assets the group begin with. Hive strength has no effect after character creation.

A starting hive automatically begins with 5 warriors, 10 drones and 100 square miles of land with a complete tunnel network for every point of hive strength. In addition they receive one subterranean breeding chamber, and one subterranean storage chamber filled with food for every five points of hive strength they possess. These additional buildings will be placed with a single tunnel nexus near the centre of the hive’s lands.

Tenizidi Buildings

The Tenizidi use different buildings to the ones available to the colonists that are listed in the player guide. Any starting Tenizidi that spends points on the building advantage will have their building automatically substituted for the nearest Tenizidi equivalent.

All Tenizidi buildings are constructed deep underground so they must be built in areas where an existing tunnel network already exists. Such buildings are hidden and are very difficult for those who live on the surface to find, so their existence should never be revealed. Some explanation of these buildings is given below.

Breeding chamber – a breeding chamber is essential to allow the hive’s queen to lay eggs in hosts. The more breeding chambers a hive owns, the more warriors and drones they can produce each spring provided they can find enough bodies to serve as hosts.

Capture pits – a capture pit is a series of pits and traps that connect to the tunnel network. If you set drones or warriors to work a capture pit then the pits will produce food as they capture wildlife. If potential hosts blunder into the area then they may also be captured in the pits.

Mushroom cavern – a mushroom cavern is worked by drones to produce edible fungi. Mushroom caves are essential to produce enough food to support a growing Tenizidi hive but an area of land can only support one mushroom cave at a time.

Storage chamber – a storage chamber is a deep subterranean cave designed to hold food in a cool dry location to prevent it rotting. Any food which is not placed in a storage chamber will rot at the end of downtime. A storage chamber can hold up to forty tons of food.

1 pt Colonial Building	Tenizidi Equivalent	2 pt Colonial Building	Tenizidi Equivalent
Barracks	Breeding Chamber	Carpenter's workshop	Trading post
Farm	Capture pits	Church	Chamber of souls
Guild House	Mushroom farm	Deep water port	Spider hatchery
Palisade	Tunnel traps	Fortified wall	Deadfalls
Shrine	Sacred cave	Goldmine	Gold spoil sorter
Silver mine	Silver spoil sorter	Goldsmith's workshop	Lava forge
Warehouse	Storage chamber	Shipyard	Toadstool cavern
Watchtower	Capture pits	Smithy	Spider hatchery

Tunnel traps – Tunnel traps fortify tunnel networks preventing them from being infiltrated if they are discovered. These are essential to protect the privacy of the hive and they are very effective at securing a tunnel network but they have no effect on the land above.

Sacred Cave – A sacred cave is a large subterranean cavern that has been enlarged so that the acoustics serve to amplify the words of any Tenizidi warrior that uses it help to encourage stillness, contemplation and meditation.

Spoil Sorter – A spoil sorter is built in areas near veins of silver, gold or precious metals. Drones that are set to work the spoil sorter can excavate the nearby veins and sift through the resulting spoil to locate the precious metals.

Trading Post — Often some distance from the main hive, trading posts are designed to allow swift and easy exchange of harvested and stored food. Travellers come to trading posts to exchange food for rare items such as weapons, jewellery or magical items.

Chamber of souls - A chamber of souls is a deep chamber designed to hold the mummified remains of the most enlightened minds in the hive. If a Tenizidi body, correctly preserved and with a suitable death mask, is added to the chamber of souls then the soul remains present allowing an enlightened Tenizidi member of the hive will be able to commune with the dead soul.

Spider hatchery – A hatchery is designed to incubate the eggs of the venomous Rainbow-Wolf Spider. Rainbow-wolf spiders can be sent to hunt food on the surface, they are trained to return to their tunnels with the victims which can be used as food or hosts if they are suitable. They can also be used in battle to terrify the enemy.

Deadfalls – These are basic Tenizidi defences designed to keep intruders from entering areas unbidden. Deadfalls are relatively easy to find, but can be built anywhere. Careful explorers can avoid deadfalls but they will cause casualties amongst warriors or hunters that enter an area.

Lava forge – A lava forge is a deep chamber that uses heat from subterranean flows of lava that allows precious metals to be heated and worked.

Toadstool cavern - A toadstool cavern is littered with decaying matter that allows poisonous fungi to grow freely. If ten drones are set to work they can collect the toadstools and distil them to produce a single dose of the feared Tenizidi paralysing venom.