

THE THIRD IMPERIUM

Alien Module 1: Aslan

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Sample file

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INTRODUCTION

The Aslan are the youngest of the great powers, an expansionist race of feuding clans and predatory warriors, eager to seize all the universe has to offer.

In the *Original Traveller Universe*, the Aslan are one of only six races to have independently discovered the principles of the jump drive. These six so-called Major Races claim for themselves a higher status than the so-called minor races and since most of the major races are dominant within known space, the claim has some de facto merit. Although there is no absolute agreement as to exactly which six are the major races, common usage accepts the Vargr, the K'kree, the Hivers, the Droyne, Humaniti (lumping the Vilani, Solomani and Zhodani branches of the human race into one) and the latest on the scene – the Aslan.

The Aslan, the youngest of the major races, are the subject of this *Traveller* supplement. With it, the race can be incorporated into any and all aspects of *Traveller*. Whether the Aslan are to be used as Player Characters, Non-Player Characters, patrons, opponents or just as a backdrop against which adventures may take place, this supplement provides the referee and the players with sufficient information to deal with the Aslan, both as individuals and as a fully visible society.

The *Traveller Core Rulebook* deals with characters as humans within an Imperial society, which is fairly comprehensible to most players. Outside that society, aliens are different in culture as well as physiology and a careful presentation of what shapes an alien's character is necessary if players are to deal with or roleplay those aliens.

Traveller players can find any number of activities which include or deal with Aslan, whether inside the Imperium or beyond its borders. The Aslan Hierate (their empire) is located spinward and rimward of the Imperium. The Aslan sector map shows the sectors of the Hierate in relation to the Imperium.

Where the Imperium and the Hierate touch, humans and Aslan frequently encounter each other. Aslan worlds under Imperial rule are found scattered up to 40 parsecs inside the Imperial

border. Independent Aslan worlds are found throughout the region spinward and rimward of the Imperium. Adventurers in the Spinward Marches can venture rimward through the Trojan Reach to the Aslan colonies in that sector and then further across the Aslan-controlled Great Rift into the Hierate itself. Adventurers in the Solomani Rim can venture through Solomani territory to l'aheako (Dark Nebula) sector, which holds the Aslan homeworld of Kusyu. The Aslan hunger for territory has carried them out from Kusyu to the stars but still they desire more.



ASLAN CHARACTER GENERATION

Character generation for the Aslan follows the same procedures and concepts as human character generation in *Traveller*. However, numerous changes in the details of the system take into account physiological, cultural and other differences between Aslan characters and humans. An Aslan's gender and clan have far more bearing on the character's career choices than a human's gender or family background.

The more detailed rules for Aslan character generation in this book supersede the rules in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

Initial Character Generation

Aslan characters, like humans, are basically defined by six personal characteristics: Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education and Social Standing. Males have an additional special characteristic, Territory, which starts at 0.

Aslan are, on average, slightly stronger than and have marginally greater Endurance than humans. Their Dexterity is slightly lower than humans. Intelligence and Education are about equivalent. Social level refers to Aslan status in Aslan society and cannot be considered to refer to human Social Standing.

To generate the first five characteristics, throw 2d6 five times and allocate them as normal. Endurance, Intelligence and Education undergo no adjustments. Strength gains a +2 bonus, while Dexterity suffers a -2 penalty. The lower limit on characteristics is 1 (below 1 can happen only from wounding and only temporarily); the upper limit is 15 except for Strength and Endurance, which is 16.

Social Standing is determined in the Clan, Family & Pride section. Territory starts at 0.

Traits

All Aslan have a dewclaw, which deals 1d6+2 damage in combat. Attacks with the dewclaw use the Melee (claw) skill.

Aslan have better night vision, hearing and smell than humans, giving them a +1 DM to any Recon or Survival checks involving these senses.

Aslan are capable of bursts of speed. An Aslan may move double the normal amount a number of times equal to his 3+Endurance DM in any combat.

Some Aslan have a vestigial tail; other Aslan have a full tail. A tail gives no benefit in most circumstances but affects the armour that the character can wear.

Gender

Aslan may be either male or female. Aslan biology dictates that there are approximately three females born for every male. As a result, males are in the distinct minority. Players may select the gender of their Aslan character if they so desire. Alternatively, gender may be determined randomly by a die roll. Throw 2d6 on the Gender table.

GENDER

Roll	Gender
2-5	Male
6-7	Female

In Aslan society, males are permitted to be warriors, rulers and diplomats; females are the scientists, technicians, merchants and managers.

Clan, Family & Pride

To determine if a character comes from one of the Twenty-Nine Great Clans of the *Tlaukhu* or from a minor clan, roll 1d6 on the Clan table. The Referee may choose to dictate which clan the character comes from. Note that if any of the Player Characters are kinfolk, they will share a clan and possibly a family.

CLAN

Roll	Clan
1-3	Minor Clan
4-6	Major Clan. +1 DM to Ancestral Deeds roll.

There are hundreds or thousands of families in a clan. To determine the Social Standing of the character, roll on the Ancestral Deeds table and twice on the Past Deeds table to work out what Territory his forebears acquired. Ancestral Territory starts at 0. The first Past Deeds roll is for the deeds of the character's grandfather and the second is for the deeds of his father.



ANCESTRAL DEEDS

1d6 Ancestral Deed

- 1 Your ancestor shamed the clan and you come from a branch long dishonoured. +0 Ancestral Territory.
- 2 Your family's glory days are long gone, all that is left are the tales of great landholdings now lost to upstarts. +0 Ancestral Territory.
- 3 Your family made its fortune in the great expansion after the discovery of jump drive; most family holdings are on distant worlds. +1 Ancestral Territory.
- 4 Your family are the descendants of an ancient hero forgotten by most Aslan. +1 Ancestral Territory.
- 5 Your family's ancestor was a trickster who deceived his enemies. +2 Ancestral Territory.
- 6 Your ancestors were conquerors and great warriors. +2 Ancestral Territory.
- 7 Your family is one of the most influential and wealthy in the Hierate. +3 Ancestral Territory.

PAST DEEDS

2d6 Past Deed

- 2 Dishonoured! Your forebear committed some dishonourable act that caused the clan to strip your family of all territory. Gain Independence o (if male) or Trade o (if female). Lose all Ancestral Territory.
- 3 Your forebear was beset by many foes, one of whom conquered much of your land. Gain an Enemy and Gun Combat o. -4 Ancestral Territory.
- 4 Your forebear was a fool who gambled away much of your land. Gain Gamble o or Carouse o. -3 Ancestral Territory.
- 5 Your forebear suffered from a degenerative genetic disease that you may have inherited. Gain Medic o. -2 Ancestral Territory.
- 6 Your forebear barely managed to hold onto your landhold. -1 Ancestral Territory.
- 7 Your forebear was conservative and cautious. +1 Ancestral Territory.
- 8 Your forebear's brother did well as an *ihatei*. +2 Ancestral Territory.
- 9 Your forebear married well. +3 Ancestral Territory.
- 10 Your forebear conquered his foes. +4 Ancestral Territory.
- 11 Your forebear died gloriously in battle. +5 Ancestral Territory.
- 12 Your forebear was among the greatest heroes of the clan. +6 Ancestral Territory.

Characters have a Social Standing equal to their Ancestral Territory (to a minimum of 2). If your Social Standing is 10 or more and you are male, gain Leadership 1.

Only the first son in the family inherits the family Territory. Next, determine your character's place in the family. In the case of multiple characters from the same family, only the eldest character need roll on this table – all other Player Characters in that family are automatically younger.

2d6	Male	Female
2-3	First Son	Eldest Daughter
4-10	Second Son	Middle Daughter
11-12	Third Son	Youngest Daughter

Finally, at the start of character generation, the character has left his or her parent's pride. The character may become part of another pride through Life Events or form one during play.

Starting Age

Aslan characters begin their careers at 16 Aslan years of age (about 14 standard years). At this point, as untrained and inexperienced Aslan, they embark upon a career in order to gain skills and experience. Careers are resolved on the basis of Aslan terms of service which are four Imperial years (six Aslan years) each.

Naming

The material on language gives some basic guidelines on names and words used by the Aslan. Players may wish to use Aslan names (if so, they are encouraged to pick relatively pronounceable ones!). There is no necessity for doing so, though it adds to the flavour and atmosphere of the game.

Even when names from the Aslan language are chosen, these are unlikely to be the individual's full names, since an Aslan name is a long, sonorous and intricate structure which changes to note the background, accomplishments and life of its owner. Names for game purposes are greatly shortened out of necessity.



Because the particle *ko* on the end of an Aslan name means 'himself' and is used exclusively by the head of a clan, care should be taken that an Aslan name ending in *ko* not be chosen unless the individual is the head of a clan (usually Social Standing 16).

Titles

Aslan do not have titles, as such, though a high Social Standing may be denoted by certain portions of the individual's name. In Aslan society, the social level characteristic denotes the relative status of both the individual and his or her family but no special titles are applied for specific social levels.

Akhuaehrekhyeh (Rite of Passage)

At the age of fifteen (Aslan years), all Aslan characters undergo a rite of passage: the *Akhuaehrekhyeh*. This rite tests the individual's fitness to enter society and has an impact on the service which may be selected by the character.

The actual rite is a test which examines the individual's abilities and qualities; it is only simulated by die rolls. Males and females undergo different rites.

A male Aslan makes a single die throw (2d6) which is compared to each of his characteristics apart from Territory. A rite of passage number is created by adding 1 point for each characteristic which is greater than the throw.

Example: Two male Aslan siblings, Hwelyr and Karinvyr both have the same characteristics: STR 10, DEX 7, END 8, INT 6, EDU 7, SOC 7. Hwelyr rolls a 6 for his Rite of Passage; Karinvyr rolls a 7.

Hwelyr's Rite of Passage number is +4 (Strength + Dexterity + Endurance + Social Standing). Karinvyr's Rite of Passage number is +0.

A female Aslan makes a single die throw (2d6) which is compared to Intelligence, Education and Social Standing. A rite of passage number is created by adding two points for each characteristic which is greater than the throw.

If doubles are rolled on the rite of passage throw, consult the Rite of Passage Event table.

RITE OF PASSAGE EVENT

Numbers Rolled	Event
1+1	The character is believed to have a great destiny and the clan looks for great things from him. The character must excel or disappoint his ancestors. He gains 1d6 Clan Shares.
2+2	Impressive Performance. The character is given Cr. 5,000 as a reward for his exemplary performance in the Rite.
3+3	You befriend one of the other young Aslan undergoing the rite that day. Gain a Contact.
4+4	One of the other Aslan undergoing the rite tries to outdo you. Gain a Rival.
5+5	You are wounded in one of the tests, leaving a distinctive scar across your fur.
6+6	I Will Not Fail! Your rite tests you to the limit but you are determined not to give in. Gain +1 Endurance.

CAREERS

Upon completing the rite of passage, characters examine the available careers and select one to enlist in. Some careers are restricted to a single gender.

Spacer and Space Officer: These two careers embrace all forms of interplanetary and interstellar service which may be carried out by a clan, including operation of all forms of spacecraft. Thus, the career is similar to both the Navy and the Merchants (and to some extent the Scouts) of Imperial society. However, members of this career are strictly concerned with the operation of ships; a clan vessel involved in trade would also carry characters of a management background for the conduct of business.

Males in the Space service are primarily gunners; females are technicians or support personnel. Male officers are pilots, gunners and leaders; female officers are navigators, engineers and staff advisors.

Careers From Other Traveller Books

Aslan living in the Imperium or in other human-dominated societies may use the basic *Traveller* careers instead. Use the Aslan Life Events table for such characters.



Military and Military Officer: These careers are equivalent to both Army and Marines. They represent clan military forces which may be employed in interclan warfare, on Hierate service, as mercenaries or as adjuncts to a corporation's activities where the military force is needed for security or other purposes.

Males in the Military service are fighters or combatants; females are support personnel. Male officers are commanders and leaders; female officers serve as staff and advisors.

Wanderers (Males Only): Many *ihatei* are given vessels by their clans and they then use them for explorations in the hopes of discovering new landholds. Wanderers are much like the Scouts of Imperial space, exploring in a lonely, risky business which provides a wide range of skills but also a large chance of disaster.

Management (Females Only): Many female Aslan opt to enter a business-oriented career, rather than pursuing marriage and family. Such females may rise to positions of importance within the structure of various corporations. The career gives a variety of skills concerned with commerce, finance and relations with others.

Outcasts: Outcast characters for one reason or another do not fit in with normal Aslan society. Generally scorned as misfits, they tend to pick up an unusual assortment of skills; frequently such characters will be more independent but will also nurse a fierce desire to prove themselves and thus rejoin the society which has scorned them.

Outlaws: Some Outcasts become outlaws, travelling between the stars raiding other clans or other races. Such activities represent a deviant subculture within Aslan society; normal standards for male and female pursuits have broken down to some extent, with each learning and performing tasks that the other normally does. Pirates, like Outcasts, privately nurse a desire to return to normal Aslan society but see little chance for success in that aim.

Scientists (Females Only, with the exception of Healer): Individuals involved in the pursuit of the sciences (whether biological, physical or social) can become Scientists. In Aslan practice, most scientists are actually technicians, adept at the creation of mechanisms to accomplish specific tasks.

Envoys (Males Only): Interclan relations are often entrusted to specific Envoys empowered to arrive at agreements and commit clan resources. The term Envoy (rather than Diplomat) is used because the individual represents a clan rather than a government.

Ceremonial: The Aslan have a rich cultural heritage. Those involved in ceremonial tasks occupy a position of great importance within their clans.

It should be emphasised that most careers (except Outcasts and Pirates) are managed on a clan level. The Hierate has no integrated Army or Navy; individual clans maintain forces which may be contributed to the service of the Hierate or not, as the situation and attitudes of the clan dictate.

With a career selected, the character enlists and once in a service, the process of acquiring skills begins.

Qualification

Once a career is selected, the character attempts to qualify for that career. The initial qualification attempt works differently to the normal qualification. The rite of passage number is used as an enlistment DM for all careers, except for Rogue and Scholar, instead of the standard characteristic test. If the character fails to qualify, the character is immediately reduced to Social Standing 2 and becomes an Outcast. He or she may attempt to become a Rogue using the normal Qualification rules or become a Drifter – as found in the *Traveller Core Rulebook*.

Only one basic attempt at qualification is allowed and it must be made at Aslan age 16.

After serving at least three terms in a career other than Outcast or Pirate an Aslan character may attempt to qualify for another career using the standard rules – the Aslan are a more hidebound culture than the Imperium and expect characters to remain in a single career for some time. Aslan who have spent time as Outcasts or Pirates may only attempt to qualify for other Outcast or Pirate careers in Aslan space, as their past is too dishonourable to allow them to enter a more respectable career. Such characters are best served by either leaving Aslan space or mustering out and entering play.

Skills

Skills are determined as normal, with one exception. If an Aslan male rolls Independence on any of the skills tables, he must roll 2d6 and score over his Social Standing to obtain the skill.

Mustering Out

Benefits are granted at the end of career service, as per the normal rules.

Cash Table: Females, being more skilled in handling financial matters, may consult the cash table to the limits of their eligibility. Males are restricted to consulting the cash table no more times than they have levels in the Independence skill; in addition, males receive only half the amount shown on the table.

Benefits Table: Characters may consult the benefits table to the limits of their eligibility. Mustering-out benefits are explained later in this chapter.