

BOOK 2

Aslan Mercenary Ships



INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to give *Traveller* players and referees a grounding in the organization and operation of mercenary units which might be encountered on board the Aslan Mercenary Ships described elsewhere in this package. In addition, it provides further information on the Aslan themselves, one of the six Major Races known to the Third Imperium.

The booklet leads off with a recap of material already provided elsewhere on the race, plus some new additions which fill in previously undisclosed facts on the attitudes and behaviour of the Aslan, especially as relates to warfare and mercenary activities. The composition and organization of a particular Aslan mercenary unit is also discussed at some length, providing an example of a typical force that might be encountered. Naturally, though, there is great variance from one unit to another (probably even more than between one human unit and another, given the fragmented nature of Aslan society). The information provided should, however, assist in creating forces to meet in *Traveller* or *Striker* situations where Aslan encounters are called for.

A complete unit organization is provided for a typical platoon from the regiment. This is given in terms of *Striker* rules. It can be used in conjunction with *Striker* miniatures (a set of Aslan figures are available from **Martian Metals**). In addition, counters provided with this package include a set of troops keyed in to this platoon organization. This can be useful if counters are to be substituted for regular miniatures in a *Striker* situation, or when used in conjunction with the deck plans in this package and rules from *Snapshot* or *Azhanti High Lightning*.

Referees are advised that the material presented in this booklet is, on the whole, intended as a sourcebook for *Traveller* information. Descriptions of unit organizations, equipment, and the like are not meant to be taken as gospel; they are intended as guidelines only, from which adventure situations and encounters suitable to a specific game or campaign can be tailored at need.

THE ASLAN AT WAR

Fiercely competitive to a point far beyond any human understanding, Aslan clans vie with one another over land, resources, and position within the Hierate almost constantly. Though they present a greater unity of purpose as a race than do the fragmented Vargr states, the nature of Aslan competitiveness makes war virtually a full-time occupation in almost any area where Aslan clans dwell. Though in some ways this has weakened the Hierate, turmoil and strife have proven useful. Centuries of warfare on various levels have kept the Aslan fighting spirit strong, and made the individual Aslan warrior the fierce fighter that he is today.

Warfare between Aslan clans, though intense, is also limited and controlled by the force of tradition. The nature and scope of a war is usually set in advance — including weapons to be allowed, numbers of troops to take part, area of the fighting, tech level of equipment permitted, and many other factors. These restrictions are enforced, first, by the innate sense of honor which predominates in Aslan society, and, secondly, by members of neutral clans who are called in to inspect and “referee” such conflicts. To be selected as a refereeing clan in such a dispute is a great honor; when chosen, referees are scrupulously fair and honest under any and all conditions (even if one or both participants are particularly friendly or hostile to the referees). Bribery, of course, is never a factor in such supervised wars; even if the participants had so little honor as to propose such a thing, no refereeing clan would ever consider accepting a bribe. This is particularly true when it is remembered that the actual referees are males with vast combat experience, who would never understand the concept of ignoring the dictates of honor in exchange for mere money.

Aslan wars are highly formal, totally bound by these rigid rules and customs. The concept of an interclan war is not strictly confined to the settlement for disputes on a battlefield, though this is, indeed, a popular recourse. There are other modes of “warfare”, though, that include wars of assassins (in which rules are set down to attempt to overcome a rival clan through attacks on clan leaders) and many other interesting variations. Some interclan wars are even bloodless; a process of “counting coup” is substituted for actual killing of opponents in these situations. There are Aslan mercenaries versed in many different modes of war, but, for the purposes of this booklet, the strictly military aspects of Aslan mercenary units and operations will be the center of attention.

When fighting outside opponents, the traditional limitations of the interclan dispute are, of course, ignored. The Aslan do not observe the same niceties in these conflicts. But, though they certainly fight to win, a certain amount of chivalry and honor do spill over into their conduct of such conflicts. The Aslan tend to prefer confrontations in which they can kill their opponents face-to-face or, at the least, through their individual, personal skill and expertise. War, for the Aslan, has remained a far more personal profession than it has for other technologically sophisticated races.

Contingents of Aslan often hire out as mercenaries. Organized by females who see war as just another way to turn a profit, the units are usually composed of clanmates and lhatei looking for a stake of land, or for personal honor and glory. They are hired out to assist in interclan warfare, in support of Aslan corporations, or, occasionally, by one or another of the 29 when forces are required for warfare beyond the borders of the Hierate. Mercenaries are often needed to conduct these

“foreign wars”; the Hierate has nothing like a standing army, or even concerted government planning or action.

Aslan mercenaries are also popular outside the Heirate. Units hired by foreign governments are directed by agents of the employer, enjoying the same status as the unit’s owner (or her representative). This can lead to tension when foreigners actually attempt to direct the activities of the unit in person, as friction between the employer and the owner over unit operations can frequently develop. Another problem arises when the employer fails to understand Aslan unit procedures. A common mistake is for a non-Aslan to attempt to interfere in unit operation, something which the owner does only on very rare occasions.

To avoid this kind of friction, the Aslan prefer it if the employer’s people do their work from a separate ship or planetary base. A female staff officer can be assigned to the employer for liaison purposes. In this case, many of the problems that can arise from working with non-Aslan can be, if not avoided, at least lessened.

It is, of course, extremely rare to find a non-Aslan leading, or even fighting beside, Aslan troops on the field of battle. Differences in physiology and psychology make such a situation virtually unthinkable.

TEAHLEIKHOI: REGIMENT OF THE FALLING NIGHT

Organized and operated as a regiment based in the U htaa subsector of Reavers’ Deep, the Teahleikhoi regiment (loosely translatable as “Soldiers of the Falling Night” or “Knights of the Setting Sun”) is fairly typical of mercenary units that are found in the Hierate. The corporation controlling the unit was organized some 150 years ago by an unmarried female of the Iyhlua clan, and has maintained continuity through a series of handpicked successors to this day. The current owner, Iyhli, is a distant relative of the founder. Like all of the corporation’s senior executives, she will hold her post until she dies or is married; at that time, her own chosen successor will take charge of the business.

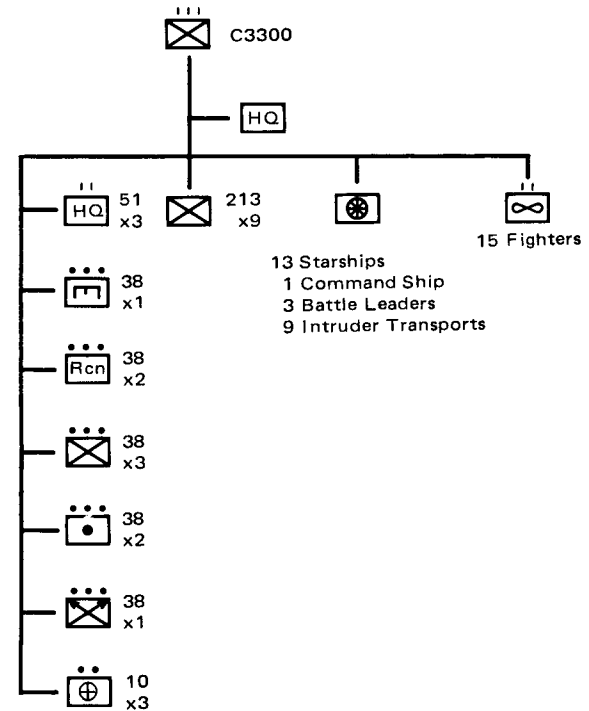
The regiment proper is set up to handle a variety of situations and circumstances, from formal clan wars within the Hierate to operations without rules outside the Aslan sphere of influence. Ships supplied by Larleaftea Hryawaorwya, the prominent shipbuilding firm, are essential to the unit’s operations, giving the regiment flexible interstellar mobility, and control and support at the scene of battle.

The regiment can mount operations of any size that may be required, from actions involving a single company up to the commitment of the entire regiment. There are thirteen ships available to the unit – nine Intruder Transports for company-level transportation, three Battle Leaders for command and control purposes, and a large regimental command ship of 5,000 tons equipped to coordinate large-scale operations. This last ship can carry a small fighter squadron, and transports various other support units as required when the regiment as a whole is committed in combat.

In the discussions that follow, this regiment will be examined in greater detail. It is typical of any regiment-sized mercenary forces employed by the Aslan, though there are many variations from one unit to the next. Even the composition of the Teahleikhoi regiment itself has varied in the past, as it has adapted to a variety of changing circumstances. Through it all, though, one essential fact has remained unchanged. The regiment is still Teahleikhoi, with history, traditions, and honor

unchanged over a century and a half of warfare in and out of the Hierate. That fact is a proud tradition for the soldiers of the regiment to bear.

REGIMENTAL ORGANIZATION



The regiment is responsible to the owner and her assistants. She normally travels with regimental headquarters (along with a small retinue); when the full regiment is not employed, the owner appoints agents to travel with and supervise each smaller unit which is being employed independently. The owner or her agent, by and large, do not interfere in the workings of the unit being accompanied. However, they provide the ultimate authority in all business decisions, and sometimes will intervene in operations when they feel that the owner's best interests are threatened by a proposed action. It is the owner and her staff who deal with negotiating contracts and tickets, and otherwise supervising business and financial matters for the mercenary unit.

Regimental headquarters, including not only the senior officers of the unit but also the fighter squadron, regimental artillery, and other supporting units, are carried on board a 5,000 ton regimental transport. This ship is rarely encountered; when it is employed, it remains in a position of relative safety to coordinate regimental activities. Since it is so infrequently met, further details of this ship are not important in this discussion. If referees are interested in the ship, they should feel free to develop it on their own, using the rules from High Guard.

The regiment is commanded by a Colonel, an Aslan male of high social level. The colonel leads the unit in combat, making tactical decisions and fighting alongside his troops on the field. He is backed up by a large staff of female officers, who handle various aspects of supply, intelligence, administration, strategic and operational planning, and other work for which the males are temperamentally unsuited. Between battles, it is the female Regimental Executive Officer who actually runs the unit on a day-to-day basis. She has considerable authority, practically equal to that exercised by the colonel himself.

Regimental headquarters also includes a Fleet Commodore (male) and Fleet Exec (female), officers with naval experience who coordinate the movements of the starships attached to the unit. The Fleet Commodore is subordinate to the Colonel in rank, but may appeal to the Owner for release from ground control on certain rare occasions — when, in his view, the ships are threatened if they remain under orders from ground-based personnel. His Exec is in charge of all non-combat squadron procedures and operations.

The regiment is employed as a whole only on infrequent missions. In most cases, a Battle Group (two or more companies under a Group Commander on board one of the unit's Battle Leaders), or even a single Intruder Transport carrying a reinforced company, will operate independently. When this is done, the owner appoints a representative to oversee the detachments activities. This individual is an addition to the personnel normally serving on board the ship; her presence may displace the ship's officers in order to provide extra cabin space. When this happens, it usually causes the ship's Exec to share quarters with one of the other female officers aboard.

INDEPENDENT OPERATIONS

For the most part, the regiment tends to conduct several different operations at the same time, hiring out smaller units for a variety of individual missions. This is done largely because of the need for smaller units; in addition, separate employment of several units can, generally, bring in more money than the single regiment does. Because of this need for self-containment, each unit of the regiment is organized and equipped for independent operations. Provisions are also made for coordination and control of forces larger than a single company, but smaller than a regiment.

Individual companies can be sent on independent missions, with or without the addition of one of the regiment's specialty platoons. Each company is wholly contained aboard an Intruder Transport type starship. An owner's agent will join the vessel; ground control is exercised by the company commander while the ship's captain is in command in space. Single company missions are perhaps the most frequently required of all the regiment's operations.

When a company operates on its own, and a specialty platoon is also present, this unit will almost always be a combat or recon platoon. The extra unit will be directly integrated into the company.

Some tickets require more than this, but still do not need the presence of the entire regiment. In such cases, a Battle Group is formed. A Battle Group is an ad hoc battalion created for a specific mission or task. Two to five companies are generally assigned to a Battle Group (the usual number is three). Special platoons carried on each of the Intruder Transports in the force are assigned according to need. One mission might require engineers, while another might be better off with artillery or recon units instead.

The Battle Group is coordinated from the decks of a Battle Leader type starship. The ship carried the unit headquarters (an HQ platoon, command and staff officers, a battalion aid station, and the faculties of the ship itself). With an array of sensor gear, communications equipment, and other electronics, the Battle Leader makes an excellent control and coordination vessel in the absence of the regimental command ship.

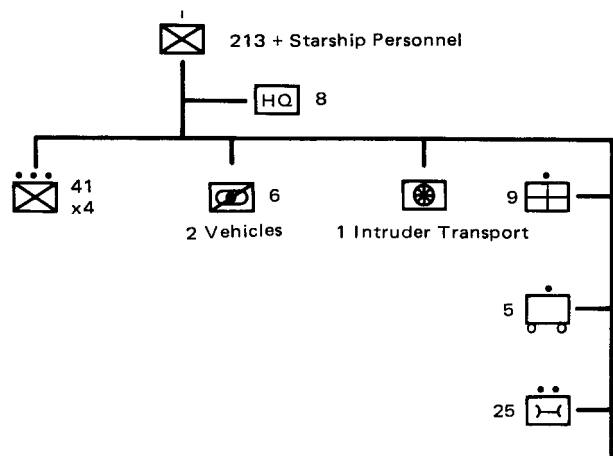
A male officer of rank 04 or 05, drawn from a pool of such fighting officers with regimental headquarters, command the Battle Group. A female Exec assists him. Other officers are mostly females, in charge of all manner of staff duties and liaison operations. The commander, of course, fights on the ground with the troops, leaving it to the staff to actually coordinate the unit in battle.

Subordinate to the Group Commander is the Squadron Commodore, who commands the ships of the Battle Group. He is also assisted by an Exec. As with the Fleet Commodore aboard the regimental command ship, the Squadron Commodore can ask for release from the ground force's control, if circumstances warrant it and the owner's representative agrees. Aside from this and other special cases, though, the owner's agent rarely becomes involved in the unit's active operations.

Independent companies or Battle Groups can operate on their own for extended lengths of time, though it is often necessary for them to rely on their employers for logistical support in a prolonged campaign. Battle Groups are strictly temporary formations, having no permanent existence in the unit's command

structure: they may, however, be formed during the course of a full regimental operation as well as being employed on their own. In all cases, flexibility is the keynote, for the unit must be able to perform under a variety of circumstances, and meet all with equal ease.

COMPANY ORGANIZATIONS



The heart of the regiment is composed of nine companies, each designed to function equally well as independent entities, or melded together into a force of Battle Group or regimental size. Each company numbers 213 individuals, organized into four combat platoons plus support personnel.

Company Command: The company is headed up by a Company Commander (rank O3), a male Aslan who directs the unit in combat. He is assisted by a female staff (generally an Exec of rank O3 and two assistants of lower rank). The female officers run the unit at all times except during combat, while the commander takes charge during battle situations.

The company commander is backed up in the field by a senior NCO, plus two other soldiers (driver and radioman). A driver is also assigned to the female staff officers. Two of the six air/rafts on board the Intruder Transport are assigned to the headquarters personnel.

In combat, the male commander and his team will be found in the forefront of the fighting; the female staff is employed at a headquarters in the rear. The Intruder Transport carries no troops at all during these times: it fills the role of heavy fire support, called in as needed by the HQ staff to break a stubborn position.

Company Casualty Station: Six medics are required to run the Company Casualty Clearing station, which is set up on the ground in the rear of the company. Three drivers, each controlling an air/raft from the Intruder Transport, are also part of this group. They are used to help retrieve casualties from the front. The company casualty clearing station provides good front-line medical support. In combined operations, the battalion aid station carried on board each Battle Leader effectively backs up the company-level medical unit; use of the Battle Leader's Medevac pinnacle enables serious casualties to be transported from the ground to the orbiting Battle Leader for treatment.

Logistics: Two individuals from the company are required as logistics personnel and cooks. An air/raft is available to them; in addition, launches from the Intruder Transport (or sometimes, if space is available, an extra transport vehicle) are used to ferry supplies from the ship. Crewmen assigned to the launches are part of the ship's crew, not the logistics staff. Troopers assigned to logistics are generally females or low-caste males; the role is never filled by combat soldiers.

In the field, Aslan soldiers eat prepared rations, getting hot meals only on occasion from the ship. They do not, however, suffer adverse morale effects for the lack of such meals, as per Striker rules.

Mechanics: Aslan vehicles and equipment must be maintained by specialists, females and low-caste males with a technical background. Fighting troops are incapable of performing maintenance chores — they lack the knowledge, even if they had the temperament — to permit them to take part in such tasks. Thus the need for mechanics is even larger in Aslan units than in those of human armies, since there is no possibility of preventive maintenance by those who operate the equipment. A total of 25 individuals are required in this company organization.

A maintenance van with an installed workshop is often available to the unit; if it is not, the workshop is set up on the ground, ferried down by one of the launches and set up in a convenient rear-area position.

Company Fire Support: Two of the eight vehicles carried on board the Intruder Transport are indirect fire support vehicles. These vehicles are normally given a crew of three (commander, driver, and gunner), and mount MRLs as their primary indirect fire weapon. Exact designs will vary according to the unit's employment and requirements. These basic notes should serve, however, as a guideline.

Combat Platoons: Four platoons make up the front-line fighting force of the company. These are discussed in greater detail further on in this booklet. Each consists of forty-one individuals and one vehicle.

The Intruder Transport: The Intruder Transport vessel described in the Aslan Mercenary Ships booklet is used as the company's transportation between worlds. It also provides fire support as needed in combat.

The ship carries a single company. Eight vehicle bays are provided, four for the vehicles used for platoon fire support, two carrying indirect fire vehicles, and two others holding vehicles are required by the mission and special needs of the unit. This usually means that one vehicle bay is used to carry a vehicle required by a specialty platoon (if present on board), while the other vehicle may be used by the medical unit, the logistics team or to transport a mechanical workshop. There are many different possibilities: the exact types of vehicles carried on board will differ from one to another.

In combat, the Intruder Transport is commanded by its captain, but this officer is subordinate to any squadron or fleet commodores present in the system. In the absence of these individuals, he takes orders from the company commander.

When the ship is functioning independently, a representative of the owner will be assigned to oversee unit operations. She remains on board, and for the most part does not interfere in the operations of the ship or the mercenary unit.

THE PLATOON

The basic building block of the fighting force is the Combat Platoon, a unit containing forty-one individuals mixing light infantry and low-level vehicular fire support. Four combat platoons form the fighting core of each company. Similar units are also maintained as special units, outside the bounds of regular company organization, and are assigned as needed to strengthen various units in the field.

The platoon is led by an officer of rank 01 or 02; he is assisted by a platoon NCO. For purposes of Striker, each is elite, and mounted separately. The remaining 39 soldiers are divided into four infantry squads and one vehicle squad.

The support vehicle has a crew of three (commander, driver, and one gunner). It mounts a fusion-Y gun for anti-tank work, with a VRF Gauss gun for anti-personnel and point defense combat. This vehicle is employed in the field in support of the platoon. Exact vehicle designs vary according to circumstances.

A squad contains a squad leader (elite, mounted separately,) plus two fire teams of four men each.

Troops in the platoon are generally armed with gauss rifles, and carry RAM grenades as well. Each squad (except for the vehicle squad) has one PGMP-14 for support fire. Each section also has one medic assigned; this individual is a lower-class male who is not armed. Some details in the organization will vary from unit to unit; equipment is often varied according to special restrictions for inter-clan wars. This, however, is a good basic picture of the way an individual platoon is set up.

Platoon Leaders; elite; gauss pistol; morale 15, high initiative

Platoon NCO; elite gauss rifle; morale 15, high initiative

1st Squad

Morale 15, high initiative

Squad NCO; elite; gauss rifle

A Fire Team; morale 9; average initiative

Veteran; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; PGMP-14

Regular; gauss rifle

B Fire Team; morale 9; average initiative

Veteran; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; PGMP-14

Recruit; gauss rifle

2nd Squad

Morale 12, average initiative

Squad NCO; veteran; gauss rifle

C Fire Team; morale 9; average initiative

Veteran; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; PGMP-14

Recruit; gauss rifle

D Fire Team; morale 9; average initiative

Veteran; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Recruit; gauss rifle

Recruit; medic

3rd Squad

Morale 12, average initiative

Squad NCO; veteran; gauss rifle

E Fire Team; morale 9, average initiative

Veteran; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; PGMP-14

Recruit; gauss rifle

F Fire Team; morale B, average initiative

Veteran; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Recruit; gauss rifle

4th Squad

Morale 12, average initiative

Squad NCO; veteran; gauss rifle

G Fire Team; morale 9, average initiative

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; PGMP-14

Recruit; gauss rifle

H Fire Team; morale 7, low initiative

Regular; gauss rifle

Regular; gauss rifle

Recruit; gauss rifle

Recruit; medic

Vehicle Squad

Morale 15, high initiative
Vehicle Commander; elite
Drivers; Veteran
Gunners; Regular

SPECIALTY PLATOONS

A variety of additional platoon-sized units, not integral to any particular company, are also available to the regiment for special assignments and operations. Room to carry one such special platoon is provided aboard each company transport. These positions may be left vacant on independent missions, or may be filled by a specialty platoon deemed useful for the operation in question.

Combat Platoons: These platoons are essentially identical to those which are assigned to each company. They are often added to a regular company to provide additional firepower to a standard unit. There are three such platoons in the regiment at this time.

Commando Platoon: One platoon of elite troops, heavily trained in special operations (recon, demolitions, and other tasks) is available to the regiment. Members of the unit are equipped with grav belts for mobility. Unlike other fighting units, the commando platoon does not have a fire support vehicle present.

Engineering Platoon: One platoon available to the regiment consists of females and low-caste males trained in combat engineering. The unit is built around one (sometimes two) vehicles fitted for engineering work, equipped with a bulldozer blade, special detection devices, demolitions gear, and other engineer's tools. This engineering APC can carry one section (nineteen men): this includes the vehicle's driver.

Recon Platoons: The regiment has two recon platoons available for scouting purposes. Recon platoons are very lightly equipped. No fire support vehicles are provided for them. The well-trained picked troops in these units are all equipped with grav belts for individual mobility; at times, though, gravcycles (individual anti-grav vehicles) are substituted instead. The unit acts as a scouting force, and as a mobile screen probing ahead of an advancing force. In combat, harassment tactics are heavily employed by such platoons.

Regimental Artillery: Two artillery support units are available to the regiment, in addition to the battery-sized force attached to the headquarters ship. These smaller units consist of a commander — male — who controls the unit's command observation post. He is supported by a small female staff and a squad of combat troops, and acts as the forward observer for the actual artillery. The remainder of the unit — the artillery itself — is composed of females and lowerclass males who actually control the guns. These guns are, usually, mass drivers or MRLs.

A female officer skilled in forward observation techniques is used to call in fire by these vehicles. The company commander assigns her to individual platoons which will be in need of support.

Headquarters Platoons: Each Battle Group includes a headquarters platoon. This unit is basically similar to the standard combat platoon, but lacks a direct fire support vehicle. Eight of the ten air/rafts on board a Battle Leader are used by the HQ platoon (which has sufficient drivers) to give the force a great deal of mobility on the field of battle.



LIBRARY DATA

Aslan: The Aslan are a race of intelligent beings with an established interstellar empire spinward and rimward of the Imperium; in addition, large numbers have settled within the Imperium. Aslan stand roughly human-sized, averaging 2.0 meters in height and weighing about 100 kg. They are descended from four-limbed upright, bipedal carnivore/pouncer stock, originally adapted to a solitary arboreal existence. The earliest Terran explorers saw in them a vague resemblance to the Terran lion, and they have been described (by Terrans) as lion-like ever since, although there is very little true similarity. The derivation of the word Aslan is unknown. There are two sexes, male and female. The most notable external difference is the increased size and mane of the former. Females outnumber males by 3:1.

Aslan have a single highly specialized claw under each thumb which folds back jackknife fashion into a horny covering in the base of the thumb and palm.

A vast Aslan-dominated empire (the Aslan Hierate) lies far to rimward; but Aslan themselves have ranged far beyond its borders, with many settling within the Imperium and attaining full status as citizens. As citizens, they subordinate themselves to Imperial authority, although they have remained culturally apart from human society. Aslan serve in the Imperial armed forces; they achieve noble positions; they pay taxes; they run businesses.

Aslan Society: The Aslan are a warrior race, proud and noble, devoted to those in authority above them. An individual Aslan is usually a member of a family of from 2 to 12 individuals under a patriarchal leader. Several families will combine into a pride with one family dominant. A number of prides form a clan again with a top pride. Aside from military organizations and the ruling council (within the Hierate), the clan is the highest socio-political organization among the Aslan.

A deep-seated territorial instinct causes the Aslan to have an inordinate (from a human standpoint) concern with land. For male Aslan, owning land is a major goal in life. An Aslan's stature is determined by the amount of land he (or her husband) controls, and the amount of land controlled by any higher lord under whom he may be vassal. The lowest classes of Aslan are landless, and provide the farmers, laborers, craftsmen, and factory workers. A holder of large territory will often grant authority over it to vassals (usually sons, brothers, or male relatives by marriage) who administer the land in his name.

The sexes have very different roles in Aslan society. Males (in all but the lowest classes) are concerned mostly with military operations, acquisition of territory, and political affairs. Females are concerned with trade, industry, and the accumulation of knowledge. Upper class males have little conception of money and are literally incapable of functioning in a technological society without aid, and are thus seldom encountered without the supervision of a wife, mother, or other female relative or employer. For instance, a typical Aslan mercenary unit will be organized by a wealthy married female, who will then assign its operation, for a share of the proceeds, to an unmarried female relative. The battle commander and most of the troops will be unmarried males (many of them also relatives), hired with the promise of land grants (and the opportunity to gain honor and reputation in combat); however, staff, operations, supply, and intelligence officers will generally be female.

Aslan Hierate: Interstellar, multi-sector government of the many Aslan clans. Aslan society centers on the clan. Within the Hierate, the family structure of the Aslan and the governmental structure are the same. The highest governmental functions are performed by a council of twenty-nine clan leaders chosen from amongst the most powerful clans. "The 29" (as they are called) have quasireligious status and represent the essential unity of the Aslan race. To be chosen on of "The 29" is the highest honor to which any Aslan can aspire. The 29 meet continuously on Kuzu to adjudicate inter-clan disputes and decide matters of group policy. No member of the 29 speaks for the Hierate as a whole, nor does the whole 29.

There are no Hierate military forces; each clan is its own, and they rarely act in concert with those of other clans. The Hierate itself can call upon military forces only insofar as the clans themselves agree to provide such forces. Even the minor forces conveying the 29's decisions are actually under the control of individual clan leaders.

The Military: There are no Hierate military forces; each clan retains its own, and they rarely act in concert with other armies. For the lower classes and the second sons of most classes, service in the military is the quickest way to gain a landhold. In addition to medals, Aslan warriors are often granted estates for acts of extreme gallantry, and officers are sometimes given conquered territory along the frontiers to administer.

The military is the segment of the Aslan culture which is the least family oriented, since soldiers are drawn from all social classes (mostly lower class and second sons).

Aslan in the Imperium: Large numbers of Aslan have settled outside the Hierate borders. Entire planets of Aslan lie within the Imperium, swearing fealty to the emperor and holding land from him personally. Aslan mercenary units are in great demand (even though they must be employed in all-Aslan units because of their equipment requirements) and Aslan merchants ply trade routes throughout most of known space.

PLAYING THE ASLAN

Playing the Aslan

The player who chooses to be an Aslan should bear in mind that while they have many similarities to humans, they are not human, and should not be played as such. Two hints for the prospective Aslan:

1. The underlying characteristics of Aslan society (pride and loyalty) make behavior much like samurai of the "Age of War".

2. Avoid actions that are out of character. Aslan, for example, are very loyal to their friends, and it is inconceivable for an Aslan to desert a friend in danger if there is a chance of rescue.

The six basic characteristics are determined as per book 1, page 4, with the following exceptions: Add 1 to the strength and endurance throws: subtract 1 from the dexterity throw. Social standing applies only to inter-Aslan relations.

Skills may be acquired as per books 1, 4, or 5. Brawling and blade skills automatically become dewclaw skill. In combat, treat the dewclaw as a knife. Aslan receive +1 to their morale throws if using Book 1, +2 if determining morale for a unit of Aslan per Book 4.

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