



Karameikan Character Creation Kit

Hi everybody. This is my next attempt at DMing so be patient! I have designed this kit to help you make your Karameikan character. Please read it all, as I have worked very hard on it. The first part of this kit will give you some information about Karameikos—this is not a history lesson, just what anyone living in Karameikos would know. It talks about the people, their history, their religion, their attitudes, etc. The second part is a step by step character creation process exclusively for your Karameikan character. A character sheet is included in the back of this kit. In just minutes you will be ready to adventure in the exciting, magical world of Mystara.

Part One: What you know about Karameikos

People of Karameikos:

Most of the humans of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos fall into two categories: Native Traladarans and those of Thyatian descent. Other inhabitants of the duchy include elves, gnomes, humans of mixed descent, a few dwarves and halflings, the savage demi-humans in their distant villages, and traders who've settled in Karameikos.

Traladarans: Descendants of the native Traladar of legend, tend to be fairly small (men average 5' 9", women 5' 3") and light of build. They tend to have pale complexions, brown eyes, and dark hair (deep brown to black).

In general, they are a very superstitious people—if you can call it superstition when it's based on truth. They are great believers in good luck charms, omens, and portents (palm-reading, the reading of tea leaves or sheep entrails, interpretations of natural phenomena if it's a strange event, the Traladara consider it an omen), curses and evil eyes.

Outside of larger towns, education is not widely spread. In the more rural communities, most villagers are illiterate, though often a village cleric will be lettered.

For the most part, Traladarans don't care much for Thyatians. They see the Thyatians as the latest wave of bad luck which keeps the Traladarans from re-achieving their Golden Age. Since many of the original Thyatian settlers were rotten land-grabbers, many of the Traladarans see all Thyatians as being the same. (PC's

are entitled to their own opinion on how they view Thyatians).

Though the majority of the population of Karameikos is Traladaran, the court language is Thyatian. Thyatian is the language of official documents and trade and is basically the "Common Tongue" of Karameikos. Most Traladarans under the age of 30 speak Thyatian, usually with a distinct accent which marks their Traladaran origins.

Thyatians: Most of the nobles in Karameikos are of Thyatian descent, and a sizeable proportion of the commoner population is of Thyatian descent.

Thyatians tend to be physically larger than Traladarans (men average 5' 11", women 5' 5"). The Thyatians have had centuries to interbreed with other nations, and so there is no one Thyatian look; hair ranges from dark blonde to dark brown, with occasional redheads (including the duke); eye color ranges from blues to browns and blacks. The Thyatians tan more easily in the sun than the paler Traladarans, who tend to sunburn easily.

The Empire of Thyatis is a large, flourishing empire with powerful armies, strong trade relations with the great nations of the world, lavish arts and entertainments, and a cultural standard equalled in few places in the world. So it's natural that many of Thyatian descent tend to feel superior to the native Traladarans. Among many of the Thyatians, there is a sentiment that Traladarans are superstitious and ignorant, and many feel that Thyatian spoken with a Traladaran accent denotes lack of mental ability. (again, PC's can draw their own conclusions).

Mixed-Blood (Karameikans): In the last few decades, since the arrival of Duke Stefan and his followers, there have been born many children of mixed Thyatian and Traladaran descent. Most of them are the children of Thyatian men who immigrated to the duchy, fought in the Duke's army, then retired to wed local women. Very few are children of Thyatian women and Traladaran men.

A half-breed is likely to be somewhat taller than average for Traladarans, usually with dark hair and blue or light brown eyes. How he feels about Thyatians and Traladarans will depend on the way he was raised, but in most cases the half-breeds recognize that neither Thyatian nor Traladaran has any great advantage over the other; the half-breed gets along well with people of both backgrounds.

Callaril Elves: A merry and hardworking tribe of elves; they are proficient in riverboating, riding, horse trading, hunting, and foresting.

Callaril elves are robust and healthy, with very pale hair (blonde to white) and blue eyes. They tend to wear tunics or robes of green with with leaf-patterns embroidered upon them.

The elves are neutral towards humans in general. They become fast friends with humans who demonstrate honor and humor; they do not cooperate with humans who are pretentious, dishonorable, or rude. Duke Stefan has a guard unit entirely composed of Callaril elves,

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which has given many elves the chance to meet him, and the Callarii are favorably disposed to the Duke.

Vyalia Elves: The Vyalia elves on the eastern border, are reclusive, staying away from human settlements.

Vyalia have pale skin, reddish hair, and deep-green eyes. The Vyalia clans across the border in Thyatis tend to have closer ties with humans, but the clans in Karamaikos prefer to seek the sanctuary and stillness of the deep woods. (Of course PC's would be the exception).

Gnomes: The largest gnomish community, called Highforge, is in the mountain foothills several miles east of the town of Threshold. It's a large and secluded community composed of gnomes (and one allied dwarven clan); It is mostly self sufficient but profits from trade with the the southern humans.

The gnomes are small (about 3' 6") demi-human creatures believed to be from the same base stock as the Mystaran dwarves (at least the dwarves and gnomes believe this and tend to treat each other as cousins). Gnomes are more slender than dwarves, have rather pronounced noses, of which they are quite proud. Their skin ranges from dark tan to woody brown in color, their hair is pale blonde or red running to white, and their eyes are usually a brilliant blue.

The gnomes are well-disposed toward the Duke; they did not observe much of the Thyatian abuses against the Traladarans, but are well aware of the improvement of trade and communication which have resulted from the Duke's building of roads throughout the land.

The gnomes have no preferences between Thyatians and Traladarans.

Dwarves (Stronghollow Clan): The dwarves in the Grand Duchy are either members of the Stronghollow clan up in the gnome community, or are dwarven professional soldiers in the service of the Duke or one of his barons.

Mystaran dwarves are short, stocky demihumans, between, 4' and 4' 6", with ruddy cheeks and bright, almost metallic eyes. Their skin varies from light tan to deep brown, and their hair ranges from black to grey to shades of brown.

When they do express a preference between Traladarans and Thyatians, the dwarves tend to prefer the company of Thyatians, who are practical people, and not superstition-ridden like the Traladarans.

Halfings (Hin): The halfings in the Duchy are mostly immigrants from the Five Shires, and living as professionals within the human communities of the Duchy. There are many halfing traders, craftsmen and innkeepers in Specularum, Kelvin and smaller communities. While there are no large halfing clans in Karamaikos, the halfings (or Hin, as they call themselves) have their own "subculture," and many frequent taverns and other facilities which cater only to halfings.

The hin are a small race of about 3' in height. They have ruddy complexions, sandy to dark-brown hair, and blue or hazel eyes. Their faces are small and childlike,

and as such people often mistake them for human children. One telling trait of almost all halfings is their fur-topped feet.

When hin do admit a preference between Thyatian and Traladaran, they side beside the latter, whom they consider life-loving, romantic, expressive people, instead of the Thyatians, whom they think colder and less sympathetic.

History of Karamaikos:

Ancient History: The people of Karamaikos know their ancient history through an epic work of poetry that explains a great deal about the past. It was passed down by word of mouth for centuries until finally, six centuries ago, it was committed to writing. Pretty much everyone in Karamaikos knows this story well.

Song of King Halav

" At the start of it all, the Immortals created the world from a roiling, chaotic mass, then created animals and man, and for many years let man live in ignorance and bliss.

" In ancient times, this land was the forest home of the Traldar, men and women favored by the Immortals and allowed to live amid such beauty.

" The Immortals let the Traldar live happy, simple lives. The Traldar fished and hunted; the men spent most of their time sporting with one another and offering praise to the Immortals.

" But the Immortals knew that the happiness of the Traldar was to end, from the land where the sun has perished [the west] a race of evil beast-men prepared to march through the easterly lands in search of booty, prisoners, and more hospitable homelands.

" These beast-men had their own Immortal sponsors equal in might to the early patrons of the Traldar, so only a great battle between man and beast-man would determine the fate of the two races.

" The Immortals descended to Lavy, a Traldar village, to find clever youths and give them secrets they could use to defeat the beast-men.

" They visited Halav Red-hair, a maker of stone knives, and taught him to forge weapons and armor of bronze. They also taught him the arts of the sword and the strategy of warfare.

" They visited Petra, a maker of pottery, and taught her the art of the bow, the craft of medicine, the use of a potter's wheel, the spinning of flax, and the use of the loom.

" They visited Zirchev, a huntsman, and taught him how to tame and ride and fight from horses, how to train dogs to fight for their masters, how to walk silent as the cat, swim as the fish, see as the hawk.

" Halav, Petra, and Zirchev went to the people of Lavy and told them what the beast-men intended. The king of Lavy laughed and tried to drive the trio away, Halav, using the bronze sword given to him by the Immortals, slew the king and assumed his crown.

" In the years that followed, King Halav, Queen Petra, and Zirchev taught their secrets to the people of Lavy and brought all the other villages in Traldar lands under their sway. Villages grew into mighty cities, and Halav was renowned for his fairness and wisdom.

" Eventually, the beast-men attacked in endless waves from the west. The Traldar in their glittering bronze armor stood against them. The irresistible force of the beast-men crashed into the unmovable wall of the Traldar, and the war went on, seemingly, forever. Both sides lost great numbers of warriors; each Traldar fighter slew dozens of beastial enemies before being slain.

" Finally, King Halav managed to find the King of the Beast-Men alone on a hilltop. The beast-king was twice the height of a man, with the head of a wolf and a hairy body that was foul beyond compare. It brought its great axe against the sword given Halav by the Immortals.

" This was the final battle of man and beast-man. It raged on from dawn to noon, both kings growing so tired that each could barely wield his weapon. Each was resolute and unconquerable, and sure the other would fall.

raising their weapons and barring the beast-men from advancing.

" The beast-men departed Traldar lands. Queen Petra and Zirchev took up Halav's body and returned home. Great was the lamentation in Lavy when they arrived, but, during the ritual burning of Halav's body that night, the Immortals visited, spiriting Halav, Petra, and Zirchev away.

In case you are not aware, in Mystara, there are no gods. The "gods" of Mystara are known as Immortals. Immortals are beings with god-like powers who at one time were mortals.

Dark Age: The time of King Halav has since been called the Golden Age of the Traldar, for the people of this land sank into a dark age following the death of this great leader and never fully recovered from the devastation brought by the gnolls. According to legends which have sprung up since this Golden Age, King Halav must return to Traldar lands before this can become a mighty nation again.

During this dark time, many evil things appeared in the Traldar forests and mountains. Some evil force cursed the land with vampires, lycanthropes, and other beasts. Today, every village has its legend about a neighboring ruin once occupied by a vampire lord, or some local lad turning out to be a werewolf and a slayer of villagers. Often the legends are true, and every youth knows that the land has its vampires and were-beings.

Because horrid things flourished in the woods, travel between inland villages became unsafe. While coastline villages prospered from foreign trade, only the bravest of traders would risk expeditions into the Traldar interior. As a result, the inland villagers remained isolated and more ignorant than their seaside cousins. Clans of goblins, hobgoblins and orcs also settled in the Traldar lands, away from human communities. They warred upon one another and upon the humans, in general making the land wild and dangerous.

Tribes of elves and gnomes also came to Traldar lands, the elves settling in the central forests of the land, the gnomes in the mountain foothills to the north. Both races traded peaceably with the humans and fought beside them against the less friendly humanoid tribes.

In time, the Traldar recovered from the inhuman onslaughts. They began to call themselves the Traladarans.

Traders from Thyatis and the Minrothad area began making regular trips to the coastal villages, improving their economy. The Traladarans remained a non-nation of independent villages that fought and traded together as the mood struck; they united to repel a foreign invader but had no central government, no King Halav to bring them together under a single banner. A number of petty lords took the title of king, rarely ruling farther away than a day's walk, and often at the length of their sword. Ythron, Ivanovich, and Demara were among these rulers.

" Both proved right. King Halav and the King of the Beast-Men perished upon one another's weapons. Their armies looked upon one another, the beast-men now fearful because their king had perished, and the Traldar resolutely

Marilenev, a village at the mouth of the Volaga River (now officially called the Highreach River), rapidly grew into a town as trade flourished. It was nicknamed "The Mirror Port" by the traders who frequented it, due to the calmness and reflective quality of its sheltered bay.

The Thyatian Invasion: By a century ago, Marilenev was a flourishing trade city of 500 residents and the chief port of the Traladaran region. At the same time, improved communications and trade raised the standard of living within the disparate and previously isolated communities farther inland, recreating a sense of national identity. Had the Traladarans been left to their own devices, the various clans most likely would have united into a single council dominated by a strong leader, possibly a member of the powerful Marilenev Clan.

However, as a result of this growth, the nearby nations of Darokin and Thyatis began viewing Traladara with increasing concern. The forest nation had never posed any organized threat, so neither nation had ever erected any specific defense against Traladara. But, their leaders supposed, what if the Traladaran people should be united under a powerful leader—or, worse yet, conquered by an enemy foreign power?

Darokin began sending merchants and government agents to build commercial ties and alliances with a number of Traladaran clans. The Empire of Thyatis sent troops to Marilenev, the Traladaran capital, and conquered it, claiming Traladara for Thyatis. The Darokinian leaders shrugged at this development but ensured that its border was secure from further Thyatian adventurism.

Thyatis took few real steps to secure Traladara for itself beyond installing a garrison of soldiers in Marilenev. The military commander at the time renamed Marilenev Specularum (which means "The Mirror City") after the reflective beauty of the bay. Taxes were collected on all trade revenue changing hands in the city.

Other than that, the rest of Traladara was left pretty much to itself. The more isolated communities were completely unaffected by the "conquest." Traders suffered a Thyatian tax, but the increased Thyatian interest in Traladara merely resulted in booming trade and increased profits for the Traladarans.

Such was the situation upon the arrival of Duke Stefan Karamaikos to the land that would eventually bear his name.

Stefan Karamaikos III: The "modern" history of Karamaikos began 30 years ago, in the empire of Thyatis.

Stefan Karamaikos III was born in AC 948, the heir to the small but unusually wealthy duchy of Machelos.

His mother died when he was nine, his father when he was twenty, and he became ruler of his duchy at that time. He'd already been an officer in the Thyatis cavalry for three years, and had been participating in adventures and heroic exploits even longer. He was a friend of the Emperor of Thyatis. His future seemed predictable: Years of service in the Thyatis military and adventuring on the side, then retirement to wise rule of his duchy and to advising the Emperor on matters of war and state.

But Karamaikos wasn't content with that fate. He wanted to rule territory shaped by his hands and formed in his own image -- and that description fitted neither the duchy of his fathers or the empire of his friend the Emperor.

He approached the Emperor with an offer. He'd trade the Emperor most of his ancestral lands and properties for ownership of the Traladara region—and guarantee of autonomy.

It was an attractive offer. Traladara had substantial potential to become a wealthy region, but it would take more time and effort than the Emperor was willing to devote at that time. And Karamaikos' lands were here, now, and valuable.

The Emperor and Karamaikos came to terms and came out of their conference each convinced that he'd emerged with the better deal.

Karamaikos surrendered his ancestral lands to the Emperor. The few properties he had remaining he sold for the ships and goods he'd need to rule the region properly.

The Emperor, in return, recognized Traladara as the Grand Duchy of Karamaikos, a sovereign region under the rule of Stefan Karamaikos III.

Both rulers signed decrees of eternal friendship and mutual defense in times of invasion, and the deal was set.

It may seem peculiar to today's students that Karamaikos took the title of Duke instead of King, but he had compelling reasons for his course of action.

Foremost among them was the fact that, by defining Karamaikos as a duchy, Duke Stefan created the impression in surrounding nations that the duchy was beholden to, and protected by, the empire of Thyatis. This was of critical importance in forestalling invasion by outside nations. In spite of the fact that Thyatis sent an ambassador with Duke Stefan and recalled his tax collectors, the common impression in the region's early years was that it was just another duchy belonging to Thyatis.

Settling the Duchy: Immediately after his agreement was signed into law, Duke Stefan sailed for his new duchy, making landfall in Specularum two weeks later. No fool, he presented his articles and orders to the city garrison before assembling the city leaders and then announcing his agreement with the Emperor.

The powerful Traladaran families in Specularum saw the political change as an opportunity to reestablish Traladaran independence. If they could kill the Duke when he was the most vulnerable, perhaps they could then erect a spirited enough defense to make it economically unfeasible for the cost-conscious Thyatians to conquer them again.

However, the Marilenev clan prematurely led an armed revolt against the Duke and was decisively beaten by the Duke and the garrison. Most of the Marilenev men died in the attack. Naturally, from that point on the Duke had his eyes on the other powerful families, especially the Radu and Torenescu clans.

A second attempt was made on the Duke, an assault by hooded assassins in his very bedchamber, but

Stefan awakened in time to seize his weapons and slay his attackers. He never found who had sent them, though the wealthy Traladaran families were naturally suspect.

The Traladaran clans, offended by the Duke's stubborn refusal to accept assassination and overthrow, slowly and resentfully swore loyalty to him. They turned to other methods of combat and began to oppose him in the political, economic, and mercantile arenas.

The Duke, meanwhile, began luring talented and ambitious young nobles from Thyatis. He concentrated his attention on the second and third sons and daughters of Thyatis aristocracy: The young men and women who have been properly trained to rule and hold land, but who would never inherit their own ancestral lands due to their siblings' continued good health.

Many flocked to him, nobles and adventurers and merchants and common folk alike, ranging from single men and women to entire clans.

Notable among these new retainers were:

Ludwig von Hendricks, Duke Stefan's aggressive and theatrical cousin, who received a baronial title and lands in the western part of the Duchy;

Phillip Vorlof, a successful merchant who provided substantial economic support to Duke Stefan and received a baronial title and lands to the east of the Marlienev estate;

Sherlane Halaran, a nobleman and cleric of note, who received baronial rank and lands in the lushly wooded northern region of the duchy; and

Desmond Kelvin, an officer and gentleman who was of crucial importance to Karamaikos during the Marlienev rebellion and received baronial rank and lands north of Specularum, where the Highreach (Volaga) River forks.

Karamaikos' Growth: Duke Stefan spent some uncomfortable years in Specularum after his arrival because he spent almost all his tax revenues on the maintenance of his army and the building of fine roads to span the Grand Duchy.

While he was about these tasks, the new breed of Thyatian settlers spread out from Specularum, founding homesteads, flooding into existing villages, often clashing with the native Traladari, sometimes fraudulently using the homesteading documents issued by Duke Stefan to seize land from its current holders. Duke Stefan, in his youthful exuberance to cement his claim to the duchy and to push along the process of settlement and civilization, was not as thorough as he should have been about guarding against abuses of this type, and so early resentment against him and all his followers was harsh . . . and often deserved.

Not all situations where Thyatians moved into Traladari areas were violent or even antagonistic. Baron Sherlane established himself as lord of the village of Threshold and then ruled firmly but fairly, treating Thyatian and Traladari with equal justice. Desmond Kelvin created a new settlement and named it for himself; since he seized no land and kept his followers in line in stern military fashion, he did not earn the enmity of the surrounding Traladari residents.

Baron Vorlof stole no lands, but began undercutting the prices of the Specularum merchant families and

effectively stole much of their business. These families, already bitter against Karamaikos' followers, now took great pains to oppose the Duke and his followers at every point, publicly or secretly, as revenge for what they'd suffered through at his followers' hands.

Worse still, Ludwig von Hendriks, the Duke's bizarre young cousin, caused immediate and unending troubles for the Duke as soon as he settled in his western lands.

He seized Halag, the largest village on the gulf of that name, by force. Once it was conquered, he celebrated by announcing to the population his appointment as its new baron. He renamed the village "Fort Doom" to suit his sense of the theatrical, dubbing the barony the "Black Eagle Barony" after his ancestral coat of arms.

He pressed many of Halag's residents into service to begin construction of a castle suited to his tastes. He stripped Traladari landowners of their properties and installed his own followers in their place. He installed guards on the roads out of the region and forbade his subjects to leave the barony. He was openly contemptuous of "those ignorant, foul-smelling Traladari swine" and took every opportunity to oppress them.

Reports of his activities did reach the Duke, but Stefan was dealing with similar reports from all over the duchy; most were so exaggerated that they resembled the accurate descriptions emerging from Ludwig's territory, so he assumed that they, too, were exaggerations.

Fortunately, after the Marlienev Rebellion in Specularum there was no further armed resistance to the rule of Karamaikos or his subordinate lords. But Traladari resentment started off high and was fanned by the callousness of many Thyatian lords for years to come.

Growth in Karamaikos Under Karamaikos' rulership, the duchy did prosper. The Duke, no economist or merchant himself, was generally a good judge of character and relied on the advice of intelligent and impartial ministers and friends when deciding policy, arranging trade and state relations, and settling disputes. When the Duke's own common sense was not enough to solve a problem, he used the brain and experience of those who could provide a solution. His personal charisma and reputation for fairness began to endear him to the populace, both Thyatian and Traladari.

Geography of Karamaikos:

North to South: The entire northern frontier of Karamaikos is Mountainous. A continuous line of mountains acts as Karamaikos' northern border.

These mountains tend to be thickly covered with forest vegetation, gradually thinning to bare rock towards the peaks. The average height of the mountains in this range is about 4,000 feet, though many are much larger.

South of this range, you have miles and miles of mountain foothills--also thickly covered with forest. In western Karamaikos, hilly country extends to within half a day's travel of the Gulf of Halag; in eastern Karamaikos, the most southerly foothills are within twenty miles of the coastline.

Much of the rest of the Grand Duchy is flatland, sometimes with gently rolling hills.

The Forests Karamelkos is one of the most thickly wooded nations of the world. In the northern parts of the Grand Duchy, pine forests cover the mountain slopes and the hillsides. The further south you get, the more hardwoods--oak especially--you see; in the southernmost parts of the Dymrak Forest of eastern Karamelkos, all you can see are ancient oaks towering into the sky.

There are three great tracts of forest in Karamelkos: The Achelos Woods, the Radlebb Wood, and the Dymrak Forest.

Towns of Karamelkos:

Specularum (pop.60,000): The capital of the Grand Duchy of Karamelkos., Specularum is the only true metropolis of any size and prestige in the nation--a bustling place with its rough edges still showing. Most of the buildings are of wood or brick, as well as carved stone in the wealthier areas. The main roads are paved cobblestone, but many smaller streets and narrow alleys are the only packed earth. It is a noisy, crowded, busy medieval town.

Kelvin (pop.20,000): A smaller city located up the Highreach river from Mirros, Kelvin is as bustling as the capital. A huge central castle, lavishly appointed and furnished, dominates the area.

Fort Doom (pop.10,000): Fort Doom, a dark, brooding castle and the westernmost community in Karamelkos, overlooks the the Traladaran village of the same name. The village was originally known as Halag, but the cruel ruler, Ludwig von Hendriks changed it to suit him. Humanoids are an everyday site in this gloomy place.

Highforge (pop.7,500): A nonhuman community of gnomes and dwarves in the Wufwolde Hills, Highforge swears fealty to the crown of Karamelkos, but for the most part follows its own course and customs. It is noted for its extensive mining operations.

Vorloi (pop.7,500): The southernmost of the Karamelkan communities, Vorloi overlooks the Sea of Dread from a cliffside perch, its safe harbor allowing some merchant traffic with Minrothad and Ierendi.

Dmitrov (pop.6,500): A sleepy town on the southern coast of Karamelkos, Dmitrov has a hard-working(if unimaginative) population."As dull as Dmitrov on a feast day" is a cutting remark in the Karamelkan court.

Threshold (pop.5,000): A large, open, bright town in northern Karamelkos, Threshold is favored by merchants, fishermen, and adventurers.

Luin (pop.5,000): A large town hunkered down behind high walls, its proximity to Fort Doom and the

Black Eagle Barony has a bad effect on the town's economy.

Penhaltgon (pop.3,750): Situated halfway between Kelvin and the border with Darokin along the Duke's road, this walled community serves as a way station for traffic along the road. It thrives despite a continual humanoid threat from the hills.

Rifilian (pop.2,000): Primarily an elven settlement, this town serves as a trading post between humans and Callaril elves. Its buildings are mostly wood with intricate carvings in the Elven fashion.

Sulescu (pop.950): Sulescu is an ancient village on the southern coast, ruled by the same family for over three hundred years.

Marilenev (pop.900): Castle Marilenev dominates this small farming village, a decaying monstrosity and the seat of the Marilenev family.

Vandevicsny (pop.900): Located along the forests and wilds of the southern coasts, Vandevicsny is a community of farmers and woodcutters, very isolated from the rest of the world.

Rugalov (pop.650): A new village at the mouth of river of the same name, Rugalov is home to fisherman and bargemen who ferry traffic and goods across the tidal flow.

Verge (pop.500): Situated at the foot of the Black Peak Mountains, Verge is sometimes used as a jumping-off point for adventurers bound for Threshold. It has been plagued by goblin and gnom attacks over the past 20 years and twice it has been burned to the ground. A new wall is being built around the village, but construction goes slow.

Other Communities: In addition to these villages, towns, and cities, many smaller communities (population 500 or less) dot the Duchy.

Religions of Karamelkos

Karamelkos has three native faiths, as well as visiting clerics from other nations who have their own beliefs, and those who profess no organized faith. The churches in Karamelkos have differing philosophies, but they all remain dedicated to the strengthening of the human spirit through meditation and observation of moral lessons.

The Church of Karamelkos Most Karamelkans of Thyatian descent belong to the Church of Karamelkos, while half those of mixed descent do. Many of Traladaran descent have been converted by the church's compelling philosophy of the "unstained spirit." In all, 25% of the population of Karamelkos belong to this church, and this segment of the population includes most of the landed nobles and many other powerful political figures.

The prime philosophy of the church is that no evil act committed in the mortal world is so great that it cannot be purified from the spirit by great acts of self-sacrifice. Some adherents, unfortunately, consider this belief a game with rules to bend—they see the church philosophy as a means to get away with doing anything, so long as they subject themselves to the deeds of purification recommended by their church leaders after the fact.

The church also seeks to discourage magical ritual that does not have direct, provable results. Into this category falls all manner of superstition, including good-luck charms, palm and card reading, and similar traditional methods of divination. As the Church of Traladara encourages these actions, the two faiths often conflict over doctrinal matters.

The church attracts individuals of all moral alignments (good, neutral, and evil) and lawful and neutral ethical alignments. There are very few "chaotic" members of the church.

The Immortals venerated are:

- Asterius (patron of Trade, merchants and thieves.)
- Kagyar (patron of Craftsmen; Dwarves' Immortal)
- Itsundal (patron of nature; Elves' Immortal)
- Valerias (patron of Romance and passion)
- Vanya (patron of war and conquest)

The Church of Traladara: The basic philosophy of the Church of Traladara dictates that people should not harm one another, and that when they do the community should punish the wrong the wrongdoer in proportion to the degree of the evil action. There is not much more to it than that, so the church suits the whimsical Traladarans ideally.

The church encourages curiosity and experimentation, and consider tea leaf, palm, and card readings, good-luck charms, evil eyes, and nonmagical amulets declarations of that curiosity and as such perfectly permissible. This practice puts the church on a collision course with the Thyatian-dominated Church of Karamaikos, and relationships between the two faiths remain stormy on this point of dogma.

The church's priesthood and laity can hold any ethical alignment (law, neutrality, and chaos), but must be of either good or neutral moral alignment (evil individuals need not apply, and indeed, would find the nature of the faith an anathema).

Approximately 70% of the population of Karamaikos belongs to the church. Most of these followers are among the common people, since the maintenance of the faith requires little personal effort (unlike the more organized and regulation-driven Church of Karamaikos).

The Immortals venerated are:

- Halav (patron of warfare; opposes humanoids)
- Petra (patron of warrior priests)
- Zirchev (patron of the forest and woodland beings)

The Cult of Halav: Three main beliefs exist within the Cult of Halav, known as the holy trytich:

- King Halav, dead on the field of the final battle between man and beast-man, was taken up by the

Immortals, returned to life, healed, and placed in the deepest sleep;

- The goal of the Immortals in doing this was to return King Halav to Traladara to restore the nation to its former glory; and

- The Immortals have decided that now is the time for that return. They reincarnated the spirit of King Halav in the newborn Stefan Karamaikos, that he would grow up to become the next King Halav.

The cult dedicates itself to the idea that Stefan Karamaikos will make Traladara into a mighty nation once more and will send its countless legions out to conquer the world for the glory of Traladara. However, the first goal of the cultists is to persuade everyone (including King Stefan) of their cause, and this has not been easy to do. This problem tends to frustrate them, but they remain determined.

Cult members can hold any alignment. Their actions appear chaotic, even though their is (in their eyes) ultimately lawful. Only a fraction of the people in Karamaikos belong to the cult, perhaps 1% of the population.

The Immortals venerated are:

- Halav (patron of warfare; opposes humanoids)

Thieves' Guilds of Karamaikos

The Velled Society: This is not a guild for thieves' with morals. This guild primarily operates out of Specularum. Ask me for more info.....

The Iron Ring: This is a slaving organization operating throughout Karamaikos. The most sinister of all the guilds in the Duchy, they hire not only thieves, but also fighters and mages. Ask me for more info.....

The Kingdom of Thieves: This guild, based in Specularum, consists of a close-knit society of burglars who specialize in intricate robberies of well-protected homes. It functions much like Robin Hood's Merry Men. Ask me for more information.....



Myslara

Part Two: Bringing your Karamaikan Character to life

Step-by-step process

Step One~Ability Scores 3d6, reroll one's. These have already been rolled. Now is the time that you select where you are going to place your attributes.

Step Two~Choose a Race: Select your race from the choices in the previous section. Most characters are Humans, but you may be a Dwarf, Elf, Gnome, or Hlln instead. Determine your physical description based on the Information in the Peoples' Section.

Step Three~Choose a Class: Now decide what you want your character to be: an honorable warrior, a mysterious wizard, a humble priest, or a dashing rogue....

Classes available in this campaign are:

- Warrior
 - Fighter
 - Ranger
 - Paladin
- Wizard
 - Mage
 - Specialist Wizard
- Priest
 - Cleric
- Rogue
 - Thief
 - Bard

Step Four~Choose an Alignment: I've decided that all alignments will be available in this campaign, However I want you all to think hard about what kind of character you are interested in playing. If you are evil, for example, I want to know what motivates your character to do the things he does.

Step Five~Record Saving Throws and THACO
Keep in mind, your def adj. under Dexterity applies to saving throws that can be dodged (such as lightning bolts, boulders, breath weapons, etc.). Also, your magical def adj. under Wisdom applies to magical spells that attack the mind (beguiling, charm, fear, hypnosis, illusions, possession, suggestion, etc.).

Step Six~Roll Hit Points: In this campaign, the first and second level is automatically considered max-rolled hp's. Don't forget to add Constitution bonuses.

Die for appropriate class are:

Warrior	ID10
Priest	ID8
Rogue	ID6
Wizard	ID4

Step Seven~Select Proficiencies: On the character sheets, under the Proficiencies section, record the base amount of slots for your appropriate class in the blank for *Initial Slots*. Record the total number of slots you have collected during the progression of the game in the blank for *# Levels*. This will be zero at the beginning of the game. Record the number of languages value from your Intelligence Score in the blank for *Int. Bonus*. Tally up the totals in the blanks for *Total*. The blank for *Penalty* is for the non-proficient penalty due to not being proficient in a weapon.

Your Native Language is free. Other languages may be purchased at the cost of one nonweapon proficiency. Languages of Karamaikos are:

Human Languages

- Thyatian (common)
- Traladaran
- Foreign Human Tongues

Demihuman Languages

- Elvish (Callarii and Vyalla Dialects)
- Gnomish (Highforge Dialect)
- Dwarvish (Stronghollow Dialect)
- Gnollish
- Goblin
- Hobgoblin
- Orc
- Pixie

Characters are required to have a good reason for why they know a particular language other than their own tongue.

The Reading/Writing proficiency is available to anyone who wants it, for free. (note. that is for your native language only.).

Weapon and Nonweapon proficiencies may be swapped at no extra cost.

Step Eight~Equip your Character: Determine your character's starting fund:

Warrior	5D4 X 10
Wizard	(1D4+1) X 10
Rogue	2D6 X 10
Priest	3D6 X 10*

* After a Priest's equipment and goods are purchased, the Priest must return all but 5 gold pieces to his superiors.

Now that your funds have been determined, you need to purchase equipment and weapons, etc.

Step Nine~Create a good Background:

Choose a valid name for your character:

Human/Thyatian

Characters of Thyatian descent origin tend to have given names which are reminiscent of ancient and classical Roman and Byzantine names:

Varis(Varia), Alexander(Alexandra), Valerius(Valeria), Titius(Titia), Claudius(Claudla), Anastasius(Anastasia), etc. Other given names are appropriate fantasy names.

Their surnames tend to be strong, majestic-sounding monickers: Karamelkos, Penhalligon, Korrigan, for example.

Human/Traladaran

Characters of Traladaran origin have names with a strong Eastern and Central European flavor. Some examples follow:

Male names: Boris, Dmitri, Fyodor, Grygory, Ilya, Ivan, Mikhail, Pyotr, Sergei, Stephan, Yakov, Yuri.

Female names: Anya, Darya, Ecatrina, Ilyana, Irena, Katarina, Kuzma, Magda, Misha, Petra, Sula, Zandra.

Family names are created by adding one of a number of suffixes to given names. Such suffixes include "os," "ov," "ev," "nov," "evich," "escu," etc. Example: Ivan becomes Ivanov; Dmitri becomes Dmitros.

Elvish

Karamelkan Elves tend only to have one name, something lyrical and unique. Examples: (Male) Thalaric, Allandaros, (Female) Sythandria, Stellara.

Dwarvish

Dwarf given names are a bit hard-sounding and weighty. Family names tend to derive from wartime deeds or special abilities.

Examples of given names: (Male) Thoric, Boldar, (Female) Friya, Brunna.

Examples of Family names: Shieldcracker, Ironboot.

Hin

Hin given names are just like common English given names.

Family names have several syllables and describe family characteristics or professions.

Examples might include Bill Trenchermann(from a family of big eaters) or Anna Hillfort (from a family with a well-defended hilltop home).

Select your character's age

Select your character's hometown

Select your character's religious beliefs

Select your character's birthdate:

The current date is Lunadain, Ambymont 1, AC 1000. Take your characters age and subtract it from 1000. That'll give you the year you were born. Now choose what month and day:

Nuwmont	Midwinter
Vatermont	Late Winter
Thaumont	Early Spring
Flaurmont	Middle Spring
Yarthmont	Late Spring
Klarmont	Early Summer
Felmont	Midsummer
Fyrmont	Late Summer
Ambymont	Early Fall
Sviftmont	Middle Fall
Eirmont	Late Fall
Kaldmont	Early Winter

Each month has 28 days exactly. There are seven days in a week. The days have names too. Here they are:

Lunadain	Sunday
Gromdain	Monday
Tserdain	Tuesday
Moldain	Wednesday
Nytdain	Thursday
Loshdain	Friday
Soladain	Saturday

(note, don't worry about knowing these days and months. If it ever comes up, just come back to these references.)

An example of a birthdate. Okay, my age is 17.

1000

-17

AC 983. I was born on May 2, so I'll pick Yarthmont 2 as my month and day. So my Mysteran birthdate would be: Yarthmont 2, AC 983.

This will give more flavor to your character.

Choose a social class:

In most cases this will be freeman.

Make up some info on your family.

-What's your parents' names?

-What do your parents do for a living?

-Do you have siblings? How many? What's your birthrank? What's your siblings' names?

-Is your family penniless, struggling, comfortable, wealthy?

Create a personality for your character:

What's your character like? Cautious or Rash? Modest or Proud? Peaceful or Violent? Generous or Greedy? Courageous or Fearful? Forgiving or Vengeful? Energetic or Lazy? Honest or Deceitful? Trusting or Suspicious? Loyal or Unreliable? Close-minded or Open-minded?

Write up an attribute explanation:

Based on your attributes, describe your character. Why is so strong? Working on the farm all his life, no

doubt. Your character isn't very charismatic. Maybe it's because you grew up in the booneys where manners weren't necessary. That or it's the fact that you are butt-ugly!

Doing this will give you a deeper appreciation for your character.

Raising Attributes

Finally, I will explain my new system for raising attributes.

Four of your attributes will rise throughout the game naturally. Three of these four attributes will be decided by your class. The other one will be an attribute that is relevant to your characters' background.

Warrior	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
- Fighter	STR	CON	DEX	---
- Ranger	CON	STR	WIS	---
- Paladin	CHA	WIS	STR	---
Wizard				
- Mage	INT	DEX	WIS	---
Priest				
- Cleric	WIS	CHA	STR	---
Rogue				
- Thief	DEX	INT	STR	---
- Bard	CHA	DEX	INT	---

The Attribute will increase by a percentage (e.g. 14/67, 17/11, 8/89). Once the exceptional number hits /00, the attribute increases by one (so a 16/00 becomes a 17/01).

At the beginning of the game, your 1st number rises by 8D10, the 2nd number rises by 6D10, the 3rd number rises by 4D10, and the 4th number rises by 2D10.

After that, everytime you gain a level, you roll your four attributes, individually. You must fail your rolls in order to add exceptional points.

For example, say your 2nd attribute is 14. Roll a D20. If you get a 14 or worse, you don't get to add points. That way, the higher your attribute, the harder it is to increase it.

Every roll you fail, you get to roll the appropriate number of D10's to add to that Attribute.

Ask me if you don't understand.

A Note on Coinage

In Karamelkos, just as in any country, there are other names for currency besides *gold piece* or *copper piece*. This is what the natives call the coinage:

Gold Piece	Royal
Silver Piece	Crona
Copper Piece	Kopec

There are no Electrum or Platinum pieces minted in Karamelkos. The *emperor* is a Thyatian coin, a Platinum, that is accepted in Karamelkos

So, if you can remember, instead of:

"That ale will be three silver pieces mister" says the barkeep.

"Here's a gold piece"

let's have....

"That ale will be three crona's mister" says the barkeep.

"Here's a royal."

Well It's finally finished--now that wasn't so bad was it?