

STARCLUSTER 2
THE WORLD OF
BURN



PHYSICAL DATA

Burn is the name of a star system between the Loop and Katmandu systems. Burn is a red sun and thus fairly cool, but the only planet in the system, also called Burn, lies in a close orbit around it and is rather warm. The world of Burn orbits its star at a radius of 52 million miles, or nominal Orbit 2. The orbit of Burn is slightly elliptical, and is synchronized with its orbital inclination (25 degrees) so that perihelion always occurs during the southern winter. This means that southern summers are cooler than northern summers, and southern winters are warmer than northern winters.

Burn is a thoroughly terrestrial world. The atmosphere is composed of 25 % oxygen, 70% Nitrogen, and various trace gasses. 66% of the world's surface is covered with liquid water, much of it locked in the polar ice caps. The land is generally lush, covered with a sprawling green forest which looks black under the red sunlight. The life forms are also astonishingly terrestrial, but this is a case of convergent evolution rather than transplantation of Earth ecosystems, as hap-

pened on Adma, Faren, Jalan, and Tamana.

HISTORY

Being located between two heavily populated systems - Katmandu has three Humanoid states and two Kertu-Drua states while Loop has one Humanoid state and four colonies as well as a Kertu-Drua state - the world of Burn and its moon Baby were long ago mapped and claimed. Unfortunately, both Katamaran and Loop claimed settlement rights to Burn, and a legal battle raged for over 100 years in the courts.

Ultimately, the settlement rights to Burn were awarded to Katamaran, and settlement of Burn began in the year 50. The site chosen for the colony was a large peninsula of the antarctic continent which projected into the southern temperate zone. As the original Diasporan settlers of Katamaran were of Northern European and Han extraction, that racial mix prevails on Burn also.



THE SETTLEMENT OF BURN

The first settlement on Burn was made at Korland, at the base of a wide, island studded bay. The site is surrounded by hills and mountains, and threaded by well-watered river valleys. The scenery anywhere on Burn is stunning, and Korland was founded at one of the most beautiful places on Burn. Fifty thousand settlers were carried from Katamaran to Burn on the Colony Jumpship 'Theresa Wang', which remains in orbit as the Colony's spaceport. The first settlers planted seeds from Katamaran, and struggled to push back the stubborn native flora. The native Burn plants and animals are, for the most part, edible to humanoids, and vise-versa, though there are some easily treatable allergen problems.

The colonists found several native fruits and vegetables to their liking, notably Karfruit, Horn Melon, and Sweet Burr, and began cultivating them alongside their Katamaran-derived flora.

Meanwhile, others were carrying out the exploration of the hinterlands. Prospectors found gem quality corundum stones in the mountains behind Korland, and mining began quickly. Biologists and explorers penetrated far into the peninsular mountains, bringing back samples of native flora and fauna. Several local herbs were found to be medically useful, and a local drug industry began growing up to exploit them. A rancher named An Li Weiss began domesticating the native Pranzelope for meat with excellent results. These, along with fishing and a bit of eco-tourism, form the basis of Burn's native economy.



At this point, the mining industry remains concentrated in the mountains behind Korland. The stones mined for export are various corundum types and an astonishingly yellow variety of diamond. There are also commercially viable placer deposits of gold found near Emden at the mouth of the Linden River which are being worked. Iron is common around Leipzig, and some small ore extraction is performed there. Farms are located all along the Verdana and Linden river valleys, with Sweet Burr farms prevailing in the Three Rivers area, and Horn Melon grown mostly in the sheltered Verdana Valley.

Karfruit orchards are found most notably along the steeply sloping southern shores of Lake Ximin in the Lake District. The drier and cooler Vos Valley uplands have most of the colony's Pranzelope ranches, along with the characteristic Katamaran Blue Sheep. Cattle ranches predominate in the lower and wetter Dahlgren Basin. Pranzelope meat is exported as a luxury, but the beef cattle are raised entirely for domestic consumption.

There are drug refining companies headquartered in the Korland area, and also near Dahlgren and Leipzig. From here, herb harvesters fan out over the peninsula collecting the valuable native herbs. Fishing for export and domestic consumption is carried out from Lee on the Xadong Peninsula, where the boatbuilding industry is also headquartered. One may also hire sport fishing boats for hunting the dangerous Red Snark, popular with adventurous tourists who don't mind signing the liability waiver.

Hiking and climbing in the Capitol Range behind Korland is also a popular destination for tourists, but for those who long to see the 'real' Burn, the only solution is the expensive but rewarding Explorer Holidays. In these excursions, the tourists, with a guide, are flown off the relatively tame peninsula and out to one of the other continents, or to one of the offshore islands, to see the strange unmarred beauty of Burn as the first exploration expeditions found

it. Usually, the tourists and guide make their way across a stretch of virgin wilderness for a period of time, and are collected at the end of that period at a rendezvous point.

THE VOS VALLEY

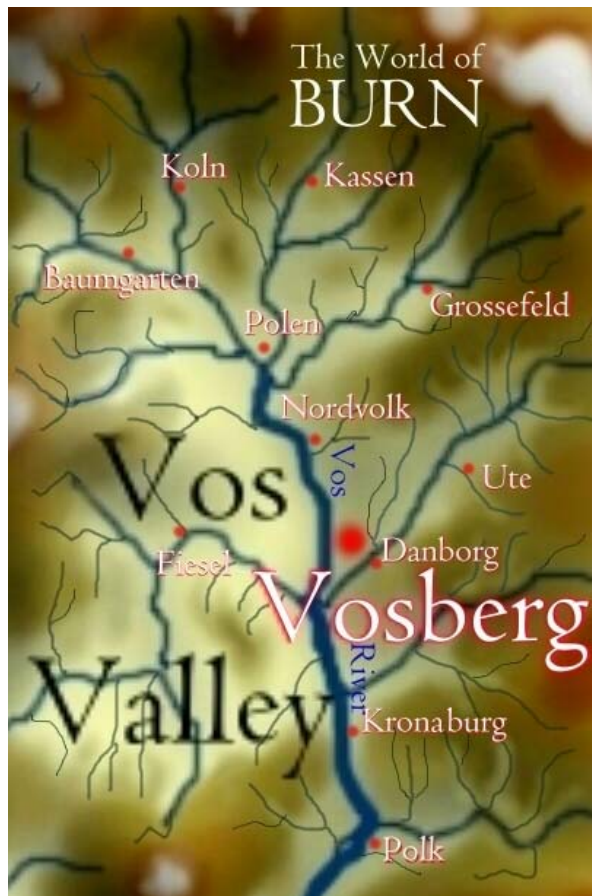
The Vos River winds its way south from the Teutoberg Range north of Kassen to the Vos Gorge south of the town of Polk. The only city in the valley is Vosberg, situated on a bluff overlooking the Vos near its confluence with the Dan River. A-Grav transit shuttles fly passenger routes from here to Korland and Dahlgren, and to the orbital spaceport.

The main reasons for Vosberg's prosperity are the Pranzelope ranches in the higher reaches of the basin, around Ute, Grossefeld, Kassen, and Koln. The lower parts of the basin are home to the cattle and sheep ranches which supply the colony with meat and leather. The highly prized Pranzelope meat, which some epicures declare the most succulent of meats, is mostly sent off planet to help pay off the colony's debt.

In the lower, more watered regions of the northern part of the valley, the Blue Sheep of Katamaran are raised. Blue Sheep are wool sheep, raised primarily for their lustrous blue wool, but they are used for meat as well. The ranches around Baumgarten, Polen, and Nordvolk are enormous in size, and quite wealthy. The shepherds ride flycycles to keep the sheep herded. Their highly trained dogs, Rothunds for the most part, are also instrumental in keeping the herds under control.

The southern part of the valley, near Danburg, Krona, and Polk, is mostly given over to cattle ranching. The cattle are raised for meat, and driven in great herds into Vosberg once a year. There the packing plants butcher and store the cattle carcasses to supply the colony for the next year. The leather is also used extensively, in clothing and in tools. The bones are ground, and used for fertilizer and in gelatin. Vosberg, the

main city of the region, is situated in a high bluff overlooking the junction of the Vos and Dan rivers. The sandstone bluff is honeycombed with tunnels and storage areas on the lower levels. Along the face of the bluff are located most of the housing of the city, with the balance on the plateau at the top of the bluff. Inside the bulk of the bluff are the packing and fertilizer factories and the tanneries, along with cattle pens and huge water cisterns.

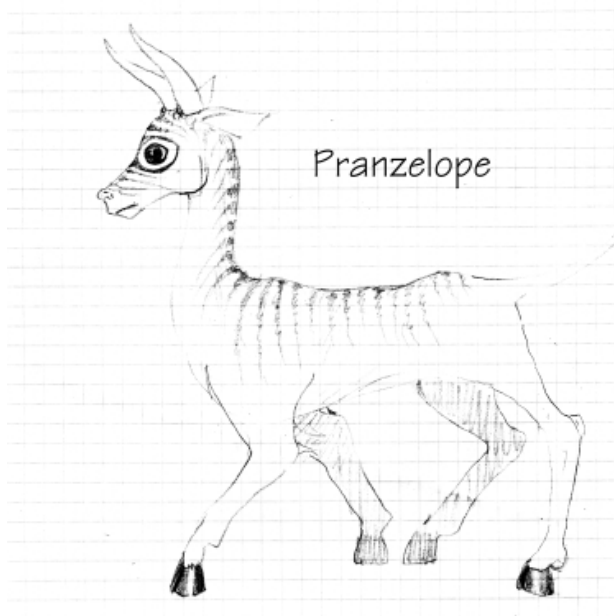


Vosberg is the transport hub as well as commercial and retail hub of the region. The shuttleport is located on the back of the bluff, on the north of the city. A-Grav shuttles fly daily from here to Korland, Dahlgren, Emden, and Leipzig, and there is much private traffic. A-Grav freighters depart from here to Korland all the time, carrying meats and leather goods, as well as wool and fertilizer.

THE DAHLGREN BASIN

Further down south, the Vos runs through a steep sided valley near Xiaodong, and empties into Lake Dahlgren at Vosport. It flows out again in a southeasterly direction, then heads southwest and into the sea. The Dahlgren Basin is much more heavily settled than the Vos Valley. The land is lower, more sheltered, and much less arid. Some farming is done around the shores of the lake and along the Vos itself, but the main business of the basin is cattle ranching. These are not the tall, grey, long-horned, free ranging cattle of the upper Vos, but large meaty cattle of a deep black color, short legged and polled. The variety is known as Olsen Black, and was developed in the years of isolation on Katamaran. The meat is fatter and softer in texture than the free-range beef of the north. The cattle are mostly kept in pens and fed on grain grown locally.

Manure collected from the ranches is made into fertilizer shipped throughout the colony. This prevents nitrogen run-off from contaminating the lake, and augments the economy as well. The





THE THREE RIVERS

The Three Rivers is a distinct region lying east of the Linden River. It is a well-watered land of gently rolling hills, with rich topsoil ideal for farming. It is a wide open region, with cool winds coming down from the mountains to the north and east. The Three Rivers, along with the Verdana Valley further south, has the best farmland in the colony. The principal export crop grown here is Sweet Burr, a native fruit which grows on low, thorny bushes. The burr itself is ovoid, about 5-6cm long and about 2-3cm in diameter. It is covered in a prickly outer sheath which secretes from its prickles a mildly hallucinogenic toxin known as "Burrfeiberhersteller", or "Burrfie" for short. It provokes a loss of inhibitions and a low fever, with mild auditory and visual hallucinations. The sheath opens when the fruit ripens, and the fruit drops to the ground. The fruit is deep purple in color, and contains a number of tiny, edible seeds. It is firm but gelatinous in texture, and has a sharp, refreshing sweetness. The Sweet Burr fruit itself contains none of the toxin found in the sheaths. The fruit is harvested separately from the sheaths, and is made into jams and preserves, made into brandies and cordials, or placed immediately in time stasis containers.

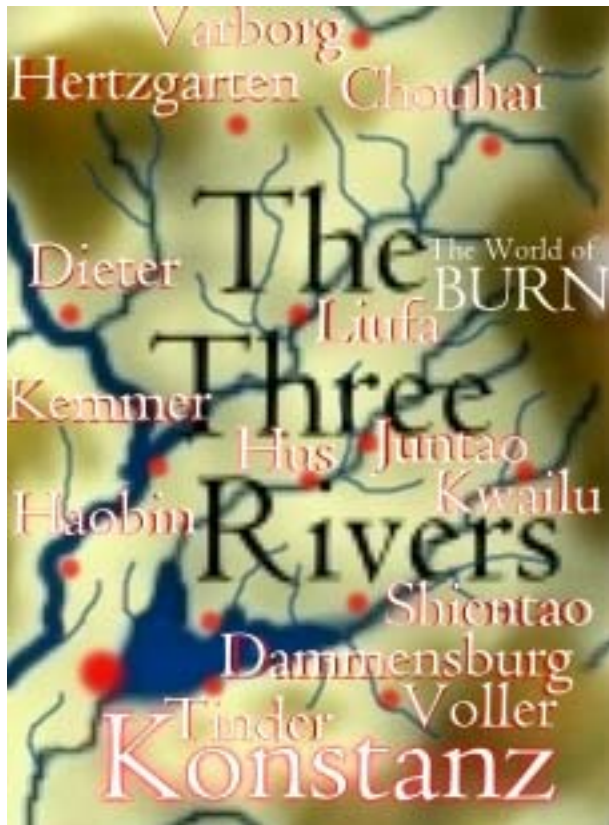
The vast majority of the Sweet Burr fruit harvest goes offworld, mostly to Katamaran. The sheaths are collected immediately after the fruit drops out, as they dry up in a day or two otherwise. The Burrfie toxin is collected and made into various drugs in the pharmaceutical labs in Korland and Liepzig. Burrfie toxin and the drugs derived from it are intended for medical use, but it is easily abused, and a substantial amount of the Burrfie toxin is sold on the black market.

The district also produces a large portion of the colony's vegetable produce for local consumption, as well as the Sweet Burr. Horn Melon grows well in the southern parts of the region as

main fertilizer factories are located in Jaijen, south of the lake. The leather from the Olsen Black cattle is thin, and inferior to that of the grey long-horns, and thus is only of local use. Vinland and Trauben are both centers of wine production. The sheltered sandy soil is perfect for growing grapes for wine. Plentiful water is available from the river as well as from rain. The land elsewhere in the basin is not as suitable for grape growing as it is here. This wine is not export quality, but is suitable as a table wine locally. The city of Dahlgren is the center of trade in the basin. A-Grav shuttles run hourly to Korland and twice daily to both Vosberg and Konstans, and once daily to Praha and Emden.

The city itself sprawls out on rolling upland between the Vos and Nan Rivers. The smaller towns of Nanquin and Vosport are satellites of Dahlgren, and Vosport is Dahlgren's main water port. The city has a number of nice buildings in the downtown area designed by local architects out of the city's School of Architecture. The predominant line is horizontal, with low, sweeping curves in the rooflines. It also hosts the Dahlgren School of Pharmacology, as well as several drug refining factories.

well, around Lake Konstanz. A large part of the population of the region is uplifted animals and androids, who are working off their indenture. The Three Rivers is densely populated. After the Capital District around Korland, it holds the largest portion of the Burn population. Konstanz, the main city of the area, is itself not very large. It is the commercial and transportation hub of the district, but has less than half the population of Dahlgren. The population of the district is mostly distributed in a large number of towns and smaller cities like Juntao, Chouhai, Kemmer, Dammensburg, and Hertzgarten. Local A-Grav shuttles run hourly to Korland, twice daily to Dahlgren and Leipzig, and daily to Lee and Emden.



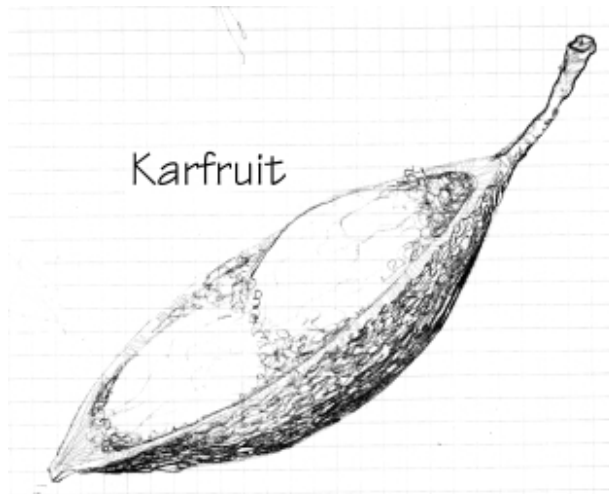
THE LAKE DISTRICT

The largest lake in the colony area is Lake Ximin. It lies in a long valley north of the Capitol District. The Lake District is a peculiar micro-climate, as the lake is warmed by under-



water thermal vents. The ever-present mists rising off of the lake make the sight of the sun a rarity, but the warm, wet climate makes raising of Karfruit practical far to the south of its original range. Karfruit is a sub-tropical tree originally found on the southern coast of the continent of Andersen by an exploration party. Seedlings were brought back to the Colony Area and planted in various sheltered places. None survived the winter except in the Lake District. The trees grow particularly well on the southern shore of the lake, on the steeply sloping hillsides from Liederburg to Vissel.

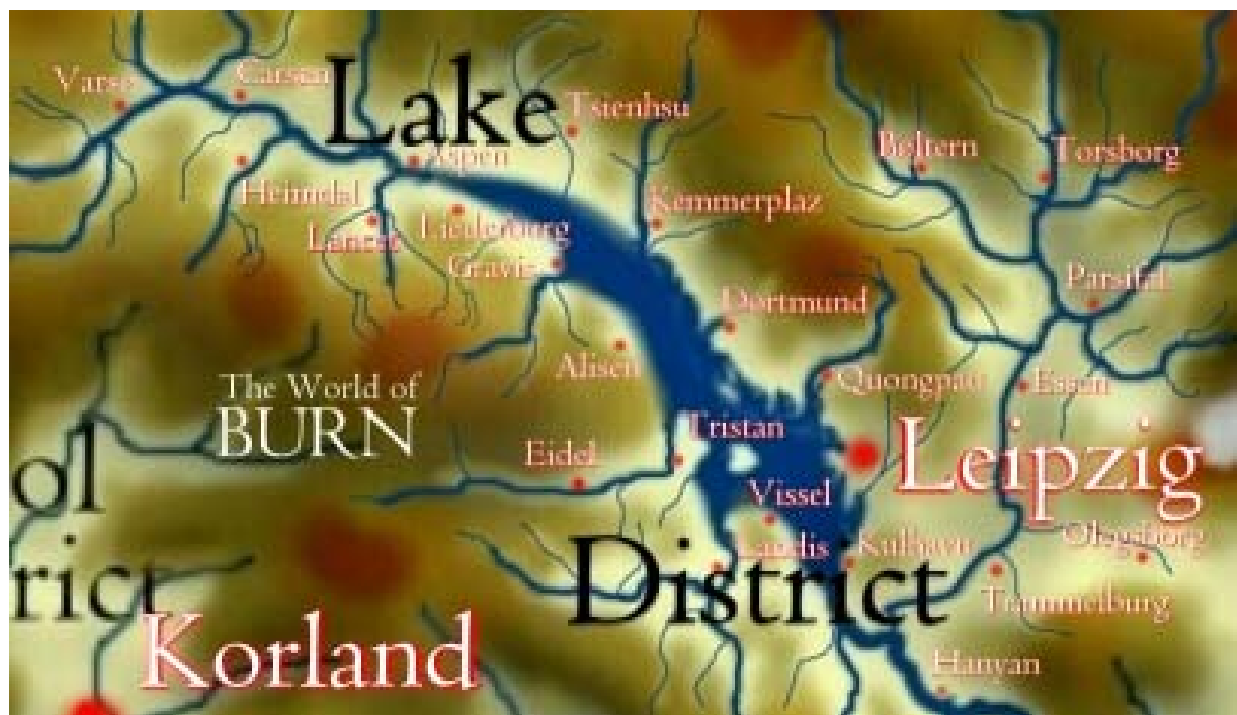
The fruit itself is contained within a hard, woody pod about 20cm long, with a texture something like the shell of a Brazil nut. Inside the pod are two soft skinned fruits, one magenta, the other chartreuse. Both are quite flavorful, but different, the magenta fruit being more spicy and the chartreuse being almost minty. Contained within the fruits is a large pit or stone, flattened and heart shaped. This stone is the seed of the Karfruit tree, those from the magenta fruit growing into female plants, while the stones from the chartreuse fruits grow into male plants.



The fruits are sold raw locally, and are quite popular both as eating fruits and as ingredients in local dishes, but for export, the fruits are distilled into liqueurs. These are the two colors of Karwasser, red and green. Karwasser is made in distilleries in Leipzig, and exported to the entire Cluster, where it has become quite popular. Karfruit orchards are not labor intensive, as they bear slowly but continuously throughout the year, but they are time and land intensive. The land suitable for their growth is very limited, and already Karfruit orchards are being started on

marginal lands north of the lake. Karfruit trees also take twenty years to mature, and do not produce any crop at all until then. On the north shore of the lake, in addition to the Karfruit orchards mentioned, grapes for wines are grown. These wines are also distilled into brandies, at small distilleries located in the vineyards themselves, each one producing a distinct local variety of brandy. These brandies are sold locally and on Katamaran under the Pelikan label.

To the west of the lake is the Pommer River, which feeds into the Linden just below where it exits the lake. The Pommer river valley is too cold for Karfruit, but grows large amounts of maize for local human and animal consumption. In Leipzig are located the Karwasser distilleries as previously mentioned, along with granaries and mills for storage of the grain produced in the Pommer valley. What little manufacturing is done in the Lake District is done here in Leipzig, primarily iron smelting and steelmaking, as well as pharmaceutical manufacture. The local shuttle port is located to the west of town, along the shores of the lake. From here freighters head out to Korland carrying Karwasser and Karfruit, and to Vosberg carrying grain.



Regular passenger shuttle service is available to Konstanz and Emden twice daily, and hourly to Korland and Vosberg.

THE VERDANA VALLEY

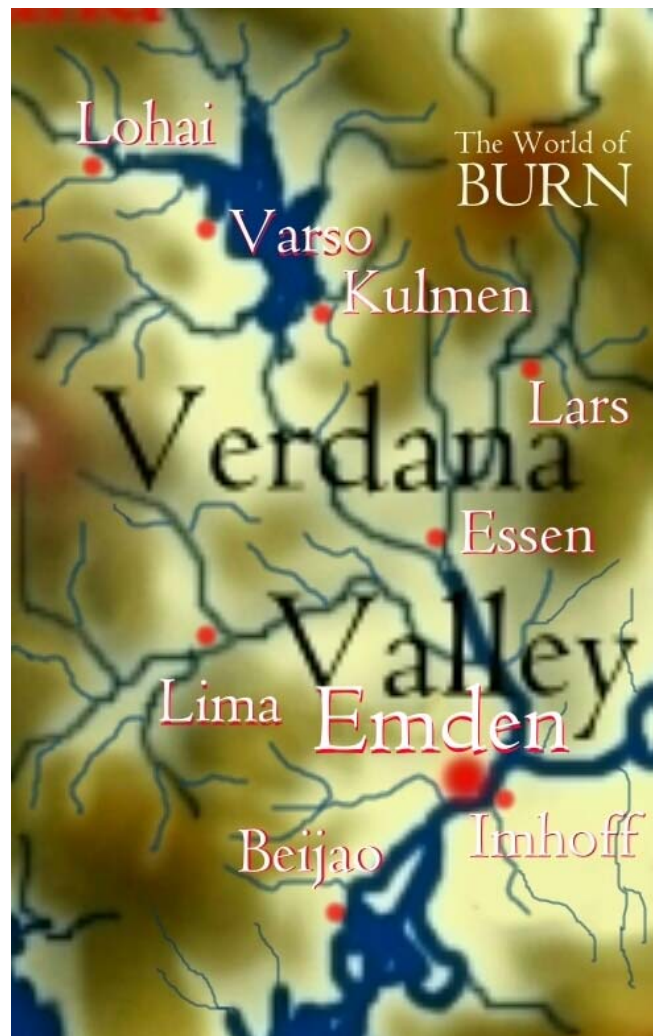
The Verdana River arises in the highlands some 50km west of Korland. From there it descends quickly into a lush, broad, high valley, where it pools into a large lake, also known as Verdana. The lake is some 100 km long, and irregularly shaped. Many other streams flow into the lake from the encircling mountains. The river leaves the lake heading south before turning to the southeast. It meets up with two other large streams, the Lars and the Lima, before itself emptying into the Linden River just north of Emden.

The Verdana Valley District is thus defined by the river, and is divided naturally into 5 sections: The high valley which rings the lake, the lower valley from the lake to the Linden, the Lars Valley to the northeast, the Lima Valley to the southwest, and the lower course of the Linden from the confluence with the Verdana to the sea. The upper valley is home to a lot of mixed vegetable farming, but particularly the cultivation for export of Horn Melon, a native plant. The lower valley is the center of wheat cultivation, while barley and beans are raised in the Lima Valley. The Lars valley is particularly rich in dairy farms, with the excellent Lars Green and Sweet Verdana cheeses being exported to Katamaran. The lower Linden is the population center of the district, and holds all the manufacturing as well as a fair bit of placer gold mining near Emden. More than half the population of this district is android and uplifted animals, contracted to work on the farms.

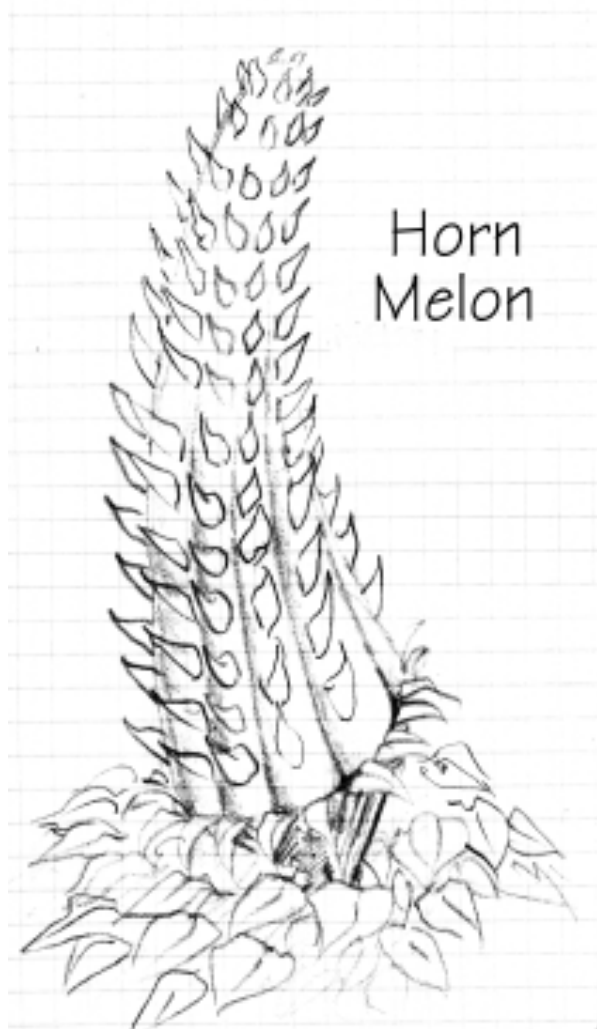
Horn Melon is a low plant, native to this region. It consists of a trailing vine which spreads out as ground cover in a 2 meter wide area from a central stalk. From the stalk a large, curving horn-

shaped fruit grows starting in early summer. By the time it is harvested in the autumn, it can exceed one meter in length, and weigh up to ten kilos. The fruit is covered in wicked thorns of between 2 and 3 cm length. If it is not harvested, the stalk will break under the weight of the fruit, and the horn will come crashing down, breaking the fruit open to be eaten by the local fauna, with the seeds being spread in the droppings.

Horn Melon has a delicious, bitingly sweet taste, with a firm but moist texture. When harvested too early it can be astringent, if one waits too long, the stalk breaks and the fruit is lost. Horn Melon does not keep well, and cannot be ripened off the vine. It is shipped in stasis boxes, and is thus quite expensive away from Burn.



There is a distillery opening up in Emden to



produce a liqueur from the melon, hopefully to enjoy the same success as the Karwasser distilleries of Leipzig.

The gravel beds near Emden contain a fair amount of gold, and are easily worked. The gold is used primarily in the local electronics industry, which is also centered in Emden. Most of the humanoid population of the district (almost all humans from Katamaran) lives in or around Emden. Here are located the shopping centers and industrial complexes of the district. Emden is the second largest city on Burn, and is home to two universities, the Emden Military Academy, and the University of Emden. There is also the Burn Mining College in Imhoff across the Linden, and the Agricultural College of Burn in Lhasa, a couple kilometers south of town, mak-

ing Emden the educational center of the colony. Emden is also the transportation hub of the district, with shuttles leaving hourly to Korland, twice daily to Leipzig, and daily to Konstanz, Dahlgren, Lee, and Vosberg. There is also a direct shuttle to the orbital spaceport available daily.

THE SOUTH SHORE

Extending along the coast of the Leanai Sea from the Xiaodong Peninsula to the southward bend where the Laotung Peninsula bulges out is an area of wet forest and sand known as the South Shore. The principal output of this district is fish and lumber. The towns along the mainland are mostly logging towns, while the towns in the islands are concerned mostly with fishing. The soil in this area is too shallow and acidic to support much farming, with a few patches of gardens being typical in a settlement. The foggy, rainy, cool weather, however, supports a magnificent temperate rain forest.

Damask and Sinterwood trees predominate, but the rare and beautiful Dusk tree also grows here in large numbers and to prodigious heights. Vertical extraction via A-Grav makes selective cutting of these giants practical and economic, reducing the ecological impact of the logging tremendously. These woods with their beautiful fine dark grains fetch prime prices offworld. Bulk timber is - of course - never exported. Instead, local furniture and woodcarving shops process the wood into gorgeous objects of very high quality.

Fishing in the South Coast is mainly concerned with the huge runs of Hassod which spawn yearly in the small, clear streams and rivers of the district, and with the enormous schools of Brisfisk taken by nets in the ocean nearby. Hassod is a fine eating fish which is canned, frozen, and stasised in enormous numbers over a three week period beginning in the early spring. It has a strong, unmistakable flavor, and is a favorite export. Hassod is taken mostly to supply the

fishmeal and oil industries. It is a disagreeable eating fish, being very oily.



The chief, and indeed only, city of the district is Praha on the island of Wessel, though there are many prosperous new towns. Praha is the newest city on Burn, as the South coast is the latest district to be settled. Canning and stasis factories line the wharfs and piers of the harbor, and the winding streets lead upward towards the high ground in the island's center. There is a small College of Aquaculture less than five years old located here on the heights. The only other institution of higher learning in the District is the well respected Forestry Institute located in Richter on the mainland. Shuttles leave from Praha daily for Korland and Dahlgren.

THE CAPITOL DISTRICT

The Capitol District is the area first settled on Burn, and is by far the most densely populated. Korland is the capital and site of the main shuttleport, and is twice as large as Emden, the second largest city. The District consists of Korland Bay, a huge, island studded inlet of the Leanai Sea, and the land that drains into the bay. The bay is ringed with mountains, so the bay is protected from the fierce winter storms that rage across the sea. The land is pleasant, fertile, and

well-watered. The two main rivers, the Vlis running from northwest and the Ort running from the northeast, meet 25 km above Dursen to form the tidal Durse River. The Vlis-Ort-Durse valley system is the main farming area for the capital, and the grain and vegetables harvested here form the main part of the diet of the citizens of Korland. Gems are mined in the mountains near Felix, Astin, and Danningen, and are exported to Katamaran. The miners are androids working out their birth contract. The Xiaodong Peninsula forms the southern boundary of the bay.

The peninsula is heavily populated, with the large city of Lee situated near the tip. Lee is the center of the Altisk fishing fleet. Altisk is a huge, meaty fish, distinguished by its long beard of barbels. It is a popular meal both domestically and on Katamaran, and the fishing is lucrative. Altisk is shipped in stasis boxes directly from the fleet, arriving on Katamaran still alive. Altisk can weigh upwards of 200 kg. each. Red Snark is also hunted from here, even though one out of 80 snark fishing boats never returns to Lee.

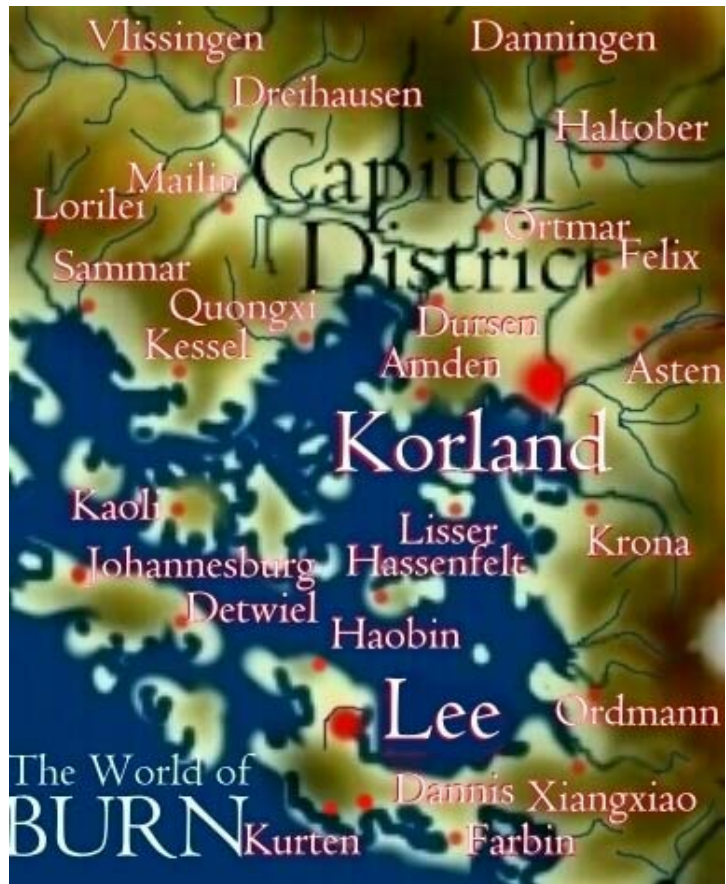
Many Guide services operate out of Korland, bringing tourists everywhere in the Colony and out to the non-colonized lands outside. Tourism is a huge part of Burn's economy, and most of the money goes towards retiring the colony's sizable debt to Katamaran. Hiking holidays are very popular, and rich tourists pay hundreds of credits to take Explorer Holidays to exotic locales, many discovering new wonders as they go. Pleasure sailing in the bay and on the ocean is also a popular tourist recreation.

Korland is the center of the colony's huge pharmaceutical complex. Drugs refined from native plants are shipped out to the parent companies on Katamaran, realizing excellent profits. Trained plant collectors travel around the world in small a-grav vehicles, collecting the raw material and finding new plants. The Colonial Birth Labs are also located here, a government

monopoly operated by the Hauser Company. The labs are the only legal source of android workers for the colony, and the only place where pre-birth modifications may be performed for citizens.

There are two Universities in Korland, the University of Burn, and the Physical Institute of Korland. The University offers a liberal arts education, while the Institute concentrates on the Sciences. There is an Ichthyological Institute at Lee, which studies the native 'fish', and at Danningen is the Burn Mining School.

Korland is also the center of administration, with the Governor and bureaucracy sitting here. The taxes generated go to pay for improved infrastructure and debt retirement, and towards settlement of new areas when it is appropriate. Almost two million people live in the Capitol District, and there are at least four million more in the rest of the colony.



WOODRUNNERS

There are also those who have left the colonial area, and are living in the wild. There are runaway workers who have despaired of earning their freedom from indenture, adventurers and guides who have fallen in love with living in the wild, and opponents of the Colonial Administration who have chosen to flee the settled areas. The Government estimates that about 2% of the population of Burn, or about 130 thousand individuals, live in the wilderness areas. Explorers and tourists in these areas are continually noticing signs of habitation in these areas, sometimes coming into visual contact with these people as they flee. The Government advises they be left alone and reported only to the authorities, but people talk. These wilderness folk are called "Woodrunners" among the people of Burn.

CHARACTERS FROM BURN

Characters from Burn all have the Mother's Milk skill of **operate**, as so much of the colony is mechanized. There are no roads as such on Burn, as the entire colony was planned with A-Grav in mind. Thus all characters receive the skills of **driving** and **orient 3D** so that they may move about. The other Mother's Milk skill depends on the district the character was raised in. The only exception to this rule is with woodrunners, as detailed below.

- All characters raised in the major cities, no matter which district they are in, have the same Mother's Milk skills. Networking and knowledge are key to life in any large society, so these characters receive a bonus skill of **streetwise**.
- Characters from the Vos Valley are independent ranch hands. As such they learn early on to ride the characteristic flycycle derivative of Burn, called a "stunter", to herd their animals. They therefore receive a bonus skill of **ride**.
- The Dahlgren Basin has characters of a more settled sort. Here the focus is on raising food of a more domestic type. Thus characters from this district receive the bonus skill of **husbandry**.
- Characters from the Three Rivers raise Sweet Burr as a cash crop, more for the toxin than for the fruit. These characters receive a bonus skill of either **drug** or **biology**, their choice.
- Those from the Lake District are familiar with both orchard cultivation and with distillation, so these characters can receive the bonus skills of either **grow** or **brewing**, their choice.
- Characters raised in the Verdana Valley have the peculiar cash crop of Horn Melon. They receive a bonus skill of either **grow** or **husbandry**, their choice.
- Those characters from the South Shore can be from either a fishing or timber background. Thus, they have the choice of either **forestry** or **extract**.
- Those from the Capitol District have the widest choice. They can be from mining, tech, or farming backgrounds, and thus have the bonus skills of either **extract**, **repair**, or **grow**, as they choose.
- Woodrunners are a special case. They do not take part in the mechanized, A-Grav world of the settled areas of Burn, thus they have different Mother's Milk skills entirely. These are **herbalism**, to learn the uses of native plants, **snare** to capture food animals, **bow** for hunting, and the choice of either **melee** or **blade** for defence from predators.

THE SITUATION C.150 (GAME MASTER'S SECTION)

The population of Burn is far more than is officially accounted for. From the beginning of the colony, indentured workers have bolted from their work and gone into the bush. Because Burn is so hospitable to humanoids, they have multiplied in the woods and mountains. Official reaction has been to become stricter and stricter with the indentured animals and androids, with workers being held under close supervision at all times. The mining is particularly hellish, with a 10% mortality rate yearly. The indenture contract is being twisted in many subtle ways to eke out a longer servitude, and the workers know it.

The people of Burn are basically good natured folk, and many have assisted the indentured workers in running away, hurting production so much that the civilian governor has been replaced by a military governor, with 10,000 Katamaran troopers located as follows: 2500 in Korland and Emden, 1500 in Konstanz and Lee, 1000 in Leipzig, 500 in Praha and 500 in Dahlgren.

The runaway workers, along with many political outcasts from the colony, have formed a rebel guerilla force. This force funds itself largely by diverting a fat percentage of the Burrfie drug trade into the black market. The guerilla force is estimated to be about 10000 strong, but far less well equipped than the Katamaran troopers, who are elite professionals. They are moreover spread out in small bands throughout the larger colony area, living in camouflaged villages deep in the native forests.

The rebels are merely the tiniest tip of the actual non-official population. There are more than 3 million sentients roaming the woods of Burn, mostly uplifted animals, as the androids cannot breed, but also including a large number of disaffected humanoids. Many settlers just leave and

"go native" under the enormous pressures of colonial debt. The officials are actively hunting the "native" settlers as well as the rebels, but even 4 million people is a dusting on a whole planet. The very terrestriality which allows the colony to thrive also allows the colonials to effectively disperse with little or no trace. The government is proposing a new colonial area on some islands to the northwest of the original peninsula. This area will be used to 'resettle' those who are rounded up by the troopers.

The military governor and the higher ranking officials of the planetary bureaucracy are entirely corrupt. They are making vast sums of money siphoning off underreported fees and taxes. They do not want to be removed from power, but have prepared for it with large deposits in secret accounts in Thieve's World banks. The colony as a whole is slowly increasing in sentiment for independence. It is against Katamaran's interests to allow Burn independence, and the official population figures allow them to deny it legally. They do not know the truth, but they are not eager to find out. The military government knows the truth, and is frantic to prevent it from being found out. Even the 'natives' have no idea just how many of them there are. In fact, Burn could, if an accurate census were taken, show compliance with all minimum standards for admission to SaVaHuTa as a State.