

Nuome - Background

- 1) The original colonists are still expecting the fleet of colony ships to arrive.
- 2) After a decade or two had passed, with still no incoming signals from the approaching fleet, doubt begins to spread.
- 3) What instructions were given to the original colonists?
 - a. To establish farming and industry - so that future floods of new colonists can be easily absorbed.
 - b. To optimise the gene pool, (itself optimised in the selection of the colonists), by intermarriage, etc.
 - c. To keep settlements small - and each to build its own Centre of Reception - for receiving its quota of newly arrived colonists. A law limits each village to a maximum population of 200 in a ten mile square block of land. Exceed the population and you put together enough people (with other villages) to colonise the next ten mile block...
Towns - a population of 2,000. In this way largish areas of the planet have been thinly colonised.
 - d. To settle the largest possible area, the original landings would have been scattered, most in the NW corner of the continent, (size and environment of Europe??) but with outlying settlements in Ryadur (slang: the Rear-door settlement = back of beyond), and south of the Great Central Desert are the Digressionists.
- 4) We then get the collapse of the Earth technology. It doesn't really matter whether this takes 1 or 100 years. Components / machines made from local materials are going to prove lethal.
 - a. Whatever, in 100 years we are back to horses.
 - b. Gunpowder? On this world, and made of local materials, whistle too much at it and...? BANG! Or even worse, you accidentally establish an identity link... Part to Whole! Then you fire your Bakkomite Firestock....?
 - c. Therefore once the original ammo runs out, guns become ritual symbols.
 - d. A thaumaturge could create gunpowder scientifically, but it would have to be on the spot, not carried around in your backpack. He would still have to chant over it on principle, but probably something like: "Please don't blow me up, please don't blow me up...."
 - e. Medicines, medical knowledge. A fair amount of knowledge will remain... But how many hard copy books did they bring on the

ship? Er... none! Somewhere in the 2nd century a new equivalent to Claudius Galen (Roman doctor 2nd C. AD) should appear and write down all of the surviving knowledge. (See 'The Last Chance') The key point is what survives:-

- i. Sterilisation of surgical instruments, bandages, etc.
 - ii. Use of catgut for internal sutures.
 - iii. Medical alcohol.
 - iv. Concept of hygiene.
 - v. Antisepsis.
 - vi. Therefore some operations, i.e.: appendectomy and caesarian, are possible.
 - vii. Anaesthetics... Local plants are found which provide substitutes.
 - viii. Blood transfusions...?
 - ix. There will of course be a variety of local plants/extracts that will prove efficacious in treating illness, injury.
 - x. All electric/electronic medical technology will fail, and references to it will become gibberish.
- f. Agriculture. We get a regression to medieval - with certain exceptions. The horse collar, horse powered barn threshers, the horse powered seed drill, and four course crop rotation should all survive, giving an early Victorian level of sophistication and output. No village is going to be able to keep all of its land under cultivation with this level of technology, therefore the planet remains largely afforested. With Victorian agrarian sophistication there will be a pretty large scale food surplus. Starvation will not be a factor in controlling population growth. Rural poverty will be endemic because of the food surplus.
- Native crops include breadroot (a large edible root, perhaps something like a turnip in size - but better tasting - grows in dry loamy soil), longleaf (a green water loving plant that can be cooked something like a cabbage), and spiceweed (a wetland plant which is a nutritious but spicy tasting vegetable - with no direct Earth comparison).
- We mention 'redfruit preserves' used like jam on travelling biscuits. We never decided whether 'redfruit' was native - or imported strawberries.
- 'Travelling fare'. We have specified as hard rations of a dry oatmeal type biscuit and dried salted meat. You re-crumble the plate sized biscuit and add slivers of meat to water to create a stew base, or just the biscuits to get a porridge type breakfast, or simply eat the biscuits (ideally with jam). Actually we don't fancy it much either.
- g. Industry. Hand tools. Maybe horse powered, wind or water power within limits. Wood pulp paper. Hand looms and spinning wheels. Flying shuttle.

- h. Fishing / boats/ ships / water transport. Edible fish. Our gigantic ocean presents a problem, let alone our two moons and lack of compasses. There will be powerful currents and large waves, enormous when they reach land. No twit will call that ocean the Pacific! In 1,000 years we will have Viking longship and cobble type boats for coastal use which can just about cope with the tides and waves. Columbus drowns or is eaten by a plesiosaur - every time. The nature of our ocean is going to put the mockers on the historical longship > cog > caravel > galleon line of progress. We would rapidly progress as far as a longship to a cog derivative solely for river travel, but with a limit on optimum size.... and no use at sea.
 - i. Trade. In valuable luxury goods only over the longer distances. Therefore the trade routes to and from Singlehill, and this world's Spice/Silk Road, the 'Ryaduran Road.' We have specified certain traded goods - apart from gold in 'The Scent of Gold' - which must have come from Digressionist lands.
 - j. There is also a trade in valuable slaves to the Ryaduran lands where slavery is common, especially in concubines. (But also for mining.) There is an historical logic in this. The Ryaduran settlements would have needed to import women to expand its gene pool from very early on. Originally 1,000(ish) colonists. They needed other women for the gene pool at any cost. The Ryaduran Road is ancient, and women are bribed / kidnapped / imported as slaves (or concubines) as a fundamental foundation of their society.
- 5) Warfare / warriors. We've simply reused medieval, with almost identical ideas of chivalry amongst the guild warrior class - 'The Warriors' Code' of honour - but this does not apply to the more lowly merchant and town guards. Likewise weaponry is basically medieval.
- 6) Religion. We have specified five major religions:-
- a. Bakkomite. (back-home-ites) These are the worst of mediaeval Catholicism: holy relics, candles of devotion, shrines, liturgies, priests called 'my pater', etc. They are sticking doggedly to the imminent arrival of the colony fleet as the central doctrine of their faith: "The Second Coming of the Skygods". They will therefore need a crime of heresy from rather early on! (Public boiling was actually introduced on Earth by Henry VIII, but abandoned when the crowds found it so sickening that they walked away. A handful of people were boiled alive in England.)
 - b. Acceptantist. Yes, "the second coming" will happen, er... soon...ish, but in the meantime we accept what is available here by our own labours. So villages and towns can be a little larger than originally ordained. Sort of Church Of England. Rather

- woolly. Like Bakkomites they still build Centres of Reception, which have devolved into a combination temple / youth hostel. Some Catholic features - including crime of heresy.
- c. Nuomist. Rather Calvinist/Puritan. All Bakkomites are doomed to hell! The Second Coming is millennia away, and we ignore it - and the original rules of colonisation. We adapt everything to life here. Nuome is our world. We are Nuomers. That is what the Skygods truly want - intended.... etc.
 - d. Digressionist. Protected by their geographical position from invasion, jihad, etc, they have become atheist. There are no gods. Science is our god. Everything has a rational explanation. Nuome is our world, and our purpose is to investigate and quantify everything in it - to understand it and so to make progress. Greek Natural Philosophy. Thaumaturges are scientists - doing a little scientific conjuring.
 - e. Ryaduran. Also protected by their geographical position from invasion, jihad, etc. The Skygods are false (they were just men), there are true, natural, gods here, who favour the just and the righteous. They are without physical substance, or names, but are omnipresent. We all have an eternal spirit that can achieve oneness with them. They can be called upon by the arts of our priests.... No Earth equivalent. Probably some nutty late 20th Century sect! Acolytes - the equivalent of Vestal Virgins. They hold the ceremonial silver platter, etc., and cook the priest's food. A coveted and prestigious position - looks good on their C.V. when approaching marriage - see-the-world opportunity for young daughters of the rich, and with a high degree of personal safety built in.
 - f. Plus Hibbonites Originally supporters of Hibbon in his theft of the oracle and LRT. (See 'The Last Chance'). Hibbon claimed he alone could bring down the colony fleet. Turn that into Skygods and you have just got a prophet! Now how do you call down the Skygods? Hibbon explained that too. You communicate directly with them. Here, these drugs will help you to commune with the Skygods, and give you a real high too! How much will that cost, priest...? Your Hibbonite priests become drugs dealers to rich people who want to buy a place in the paradise of the Skygods, and get really smashed at the same time. Therefore Hibbonists are the rich - with plenty of spare time to spend stoned out of their minds. For Hibbonite priests, there is nothing like making a profit out of a prophet!
- 7) Population. There are several million scattered over an area the size of Europe and Africa after a millennium. Therefore there have to be inhibiting factors in the growth cycle. The explanation of this is hinted at in Shades Of Smoke. The full explanation comes later.

- 8) Currency. Copper pieces, silver coins - halves, quarters, eighths and half-eighths. Silver piece worth approximately the same as a Roman denarius.... face value of the metal.
Gold pieces worth c. 10 silver pieces.
- 9) Measures - linear - medieval.
 - a. Fingerwidths
 - b. Handspans
 - c. Armlengths
 - d. Armspans
 - e. Paces
 - f. Killoms.
- 10) Flora and Fauna.
 - a. Flora. This is be basically Earth like. It's green (photosynthesis remains similar if not identical - carbon cycle etc.) There are things which the inhabitants will call trees, bushes, grass and flowers. Because they call them that doesn't mean they have to be identical to Earth species. They probably won't be, but the colonists will call the tall coniferous things that grow on hillsides 'pine trees' because they look something like pine trees, etc. We've named some native species, to show their properties, including:
 - i. Breadroot
 - ii. Deathwood
 - iii. Longleaf
 - iv. Groundnuts
 - v. Numbweed
 - vi. Rashthorn
 - vii. Stingweed
 - viii. Spiceweed
 - ix. Thornbush (flowering) rather like gorse.
 - b. Fauna. Including:
 - i. Malhorns.
 - ii. Sandrats.
 - iii. Groundrats
 - iv. Woodeer
 - v. Wild boars (native)
 - vi. Sea-dogs - seal like.
 - vii. Snowrats
 - viii. Nerwolves (native - rodent derivative)
 - ix. Wolves - feral dogs
 - x. Cats - terran - basic tabby.
 - xi. Horses - terran.
 - xii. Dogs - terran.