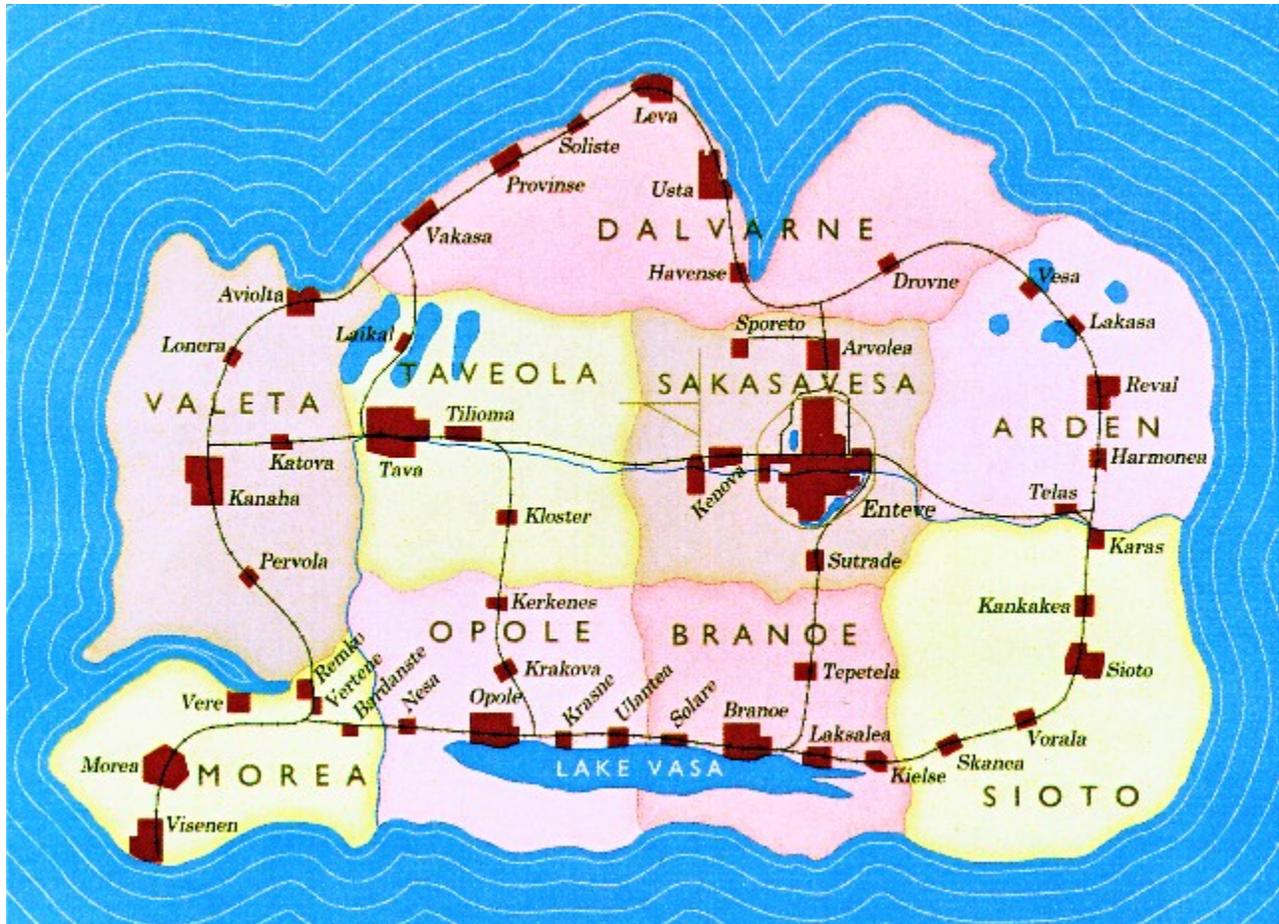


# Geography of Alphistia

by Anthony Skaggs



(map drawn by Adam Parrish)

## INTRODUCTION

This land was chosen by us to become our home, which we call the "iesenum". We came here to build a new country - Alphistia. Our homeland is a very small part of the world, but it is important to us. When we are away from Alphistia, we get homesick. We miss the sound of our own language, the beautiful countryside and our pleasant towns. We miss the love for learning of our fellow citizens, and the rich cultural life in our country. We miss the clean air and the quiet that come from electric cars, buses and trains. We miss the measured pace of life that comes

from balancing work and leisure.

Our homeland is unique in these and many other ways. Many people around the world today live in places, not communities, and while they are citizens of countries, they do not have the sense of belonging that our lesenum gives us. It's no wonder that we are glad to come home.

Our home is truly a homeland, not just the country where we live, because we created it and developed it ourselves. The result is a country in which we are cared for and where we care for one another. We have given ourselves and our children the chance to learn all through life, enrich our distinct culture, and work with dignity. In our country, everyone is secure in the knowledge that children grow up in a healthy environment and attend good schools. They will not only prepare for their working lives, but become cultured citizens. As adults, they have the security of a job, but also adequate time for their personal lives. And they can grow old in security and comfort as well.

How is it that we have these benefits? The answer is that we have chosen to have a society like this and have worked to achieve it.

We live in peace and safety under the rule of law. We have democratic elections and our lives are not subject to undemocratic political and economic forces outside our borders and beyond our control. Our constitution guarantees us the full range of civil and human rights, and our national consensus includes social rights that are legislated and regulated for the benefit of all.

Since we chose our territory and developed Alphistia ourselves, we nurture our natural resources and protect our environment. We live with our world, not against it, and the beauty of our countryside and our towns shows that we have succeeded.

It is obvious that we have built a country that we are happy to live in and return to. This book describes the geography of Alphistia: physical, economic, and cultural. Hopefully it will help those abroad how we've created our country, and why we believe it is important to preserve and protect it.

## **BASIC INFORMATION**

Alphistia is located on the Reservat, an area of land which Project Alphistia acquired for establishing the lesenum. The Reservat consists of the territory of Alphistia, plus the use of several lakes which it shares. Alphistia is located on 868 square kilometers of land (335 square miles) . From east to west, Alphistia measures 38 km (25 miles) at its longest, and 25 km (16 miles) north to south.

The Reservat was obtained through international negotiation and has resulted in a 99 year lease for Project Alphistia, with a guarantee of sovereignty for this new country. When the land was turned over to the Project, development could begin for the immigration program.

During the first five years, the Project began intensive construction of the infrastructure for a modern state. It was important to adhere to the principles of the Project, developing in harmony with local environmental conditions. An electricity-oriented society was planned, with electric power plants providing clean energy, using hydropower, wind power, and solar power. The railway system is fully electric, and all vehicles in the country are electric-powered. Settlements are compact and oriented to pedestrians and users of public transport.

Immigration in the early years was small, with most of the population involved in the construction of infrastructure. The following decade though saw up to 20,000 new arrivals each year. This meant housing construction had to keep pace with the growing population. New towns were built throughout the country, all connected to the grid and electric railway lines.

In recent years, immigration has stabilized, with the population now at 285,000. This is near the optimal size planned by Project Alphistia, with slow growth toward a maximum of 500,000. Recent immigration indicates that Alphistia will not reach that figure for a long time.

## **PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

Alphistia's terrain is generally hilly, with low mountains to the south of Lake Vasa and between the Sestean Lakes in northwestern Taveola province. Rolling hills are dominant in Dalvarne and northern Valeta provinces, while the center of the country is relatively flat and used primarily for agriculture and is where more than half the country's population lives. Along the Sioto River is a valley with low hills, except for the deep valley along the Sioto-Arden provincial border, noted for its natural beauty.

Alphistia borders large lakes on the north and its southwest corner, with several other lakes internally: notably Lake Vasa in southern Opole and Branoe provinces, the Lake District of Arden, and the Sestean lakes in Taveola. All these lakes are important for recreation and fishing.

The climate is moderate continental, with 4 distinct seasons. In January, the average daytime temperature is around 3-4 degree celsius. In July, this average is around 23 degree. Winter lows are generally more severe than summer highs. Temperature readings above 30 degrees celsius are very rare.

Alphistia receives abundant rainfall, and in winter there is frequent snowfall in January and February.

Alphistia does not have a wide range of natural resources. There is forest cover over 30 % of the country's area, which is used carefully, although at the time of Alphistia's settlement, forest cover of the territory exceeded 85%. Since then, much land has been converted to agricultural use and space for settlements.

Alphistia has enough clay for brickmaking, cement for making concrete, and sand for glassmaking. Timber is used mostly for interior finishing and furniture. Stone is not widely used in construction, except for major civic or cultural buildings.

The climate and soil is exceptionally good for market gardens, and small farms and household gardening meets the population's needs for many food products. The lakes and rivers provide enough fish, and dairy farming, poultry, cattle and pig farming meet domestic demand as well.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Electric Economy**

Alphistia has developed a sustainable economy based on electric power. Hydroelectric power plants are supplemented by wind and solar energy. Six power plants have been built around the country. Four of them are predominantly hydro power plants and two are combination wind and solar plants. Alphistia does not use oil or coal-powered resources to generate electricity.

Many buildings in Alphistia have solar panels installed on their roofs for heating water and to provide (free) residential electricity. All cars and trucks are electric-powered, and nearly all these vehicles have been built in Alphistia as well. The nation's railway system is also completely electrified, and the three largest cities have electric tram networks.

The resulting gains in cleaner air and the health of the population are immeasurable.

### **Railways and Roads**

Alphistia has a highly developed railway network for both passenger travel and freight. All the country's settlements are connected by rail, and there is also a link to the international airport outside Enteve. More than half of the freight carried is by rail, mostly at night when passenger service is less. Farmers generally live within three kilometers of a railway station, and electric minibus service is provided between towns and villages directly that otherwise might involve lengthy trips by rail. In any case, the country is small enough that nearly every part of the country is accessible to any other part with no more than 90 minutes travel. All parts of the country are within one hour's travel to Enteve.

Alphistia has a four-lane highway which connects Usta in the north to Enteve, the National Airport, Tava, and then proceeds southwest to Morea. The rest of the country has good quality two-lane roads. All these highways have bicycle lanes flanking the roadway. There is also a network of lanes which can be used only by walkers and bicyclists. These are mostly in the countryside or the garden allotment areas on the outskirts of the towns.

Most Alphistians do not own their own cars. The public transportation system is excellent, and most people find that taxis and rental cars serve their needs more efficiently than the expense

of owning their own vehicle. Most private farmers and small business owners have their own electric mini-vans.

### **Air and Water Transport**

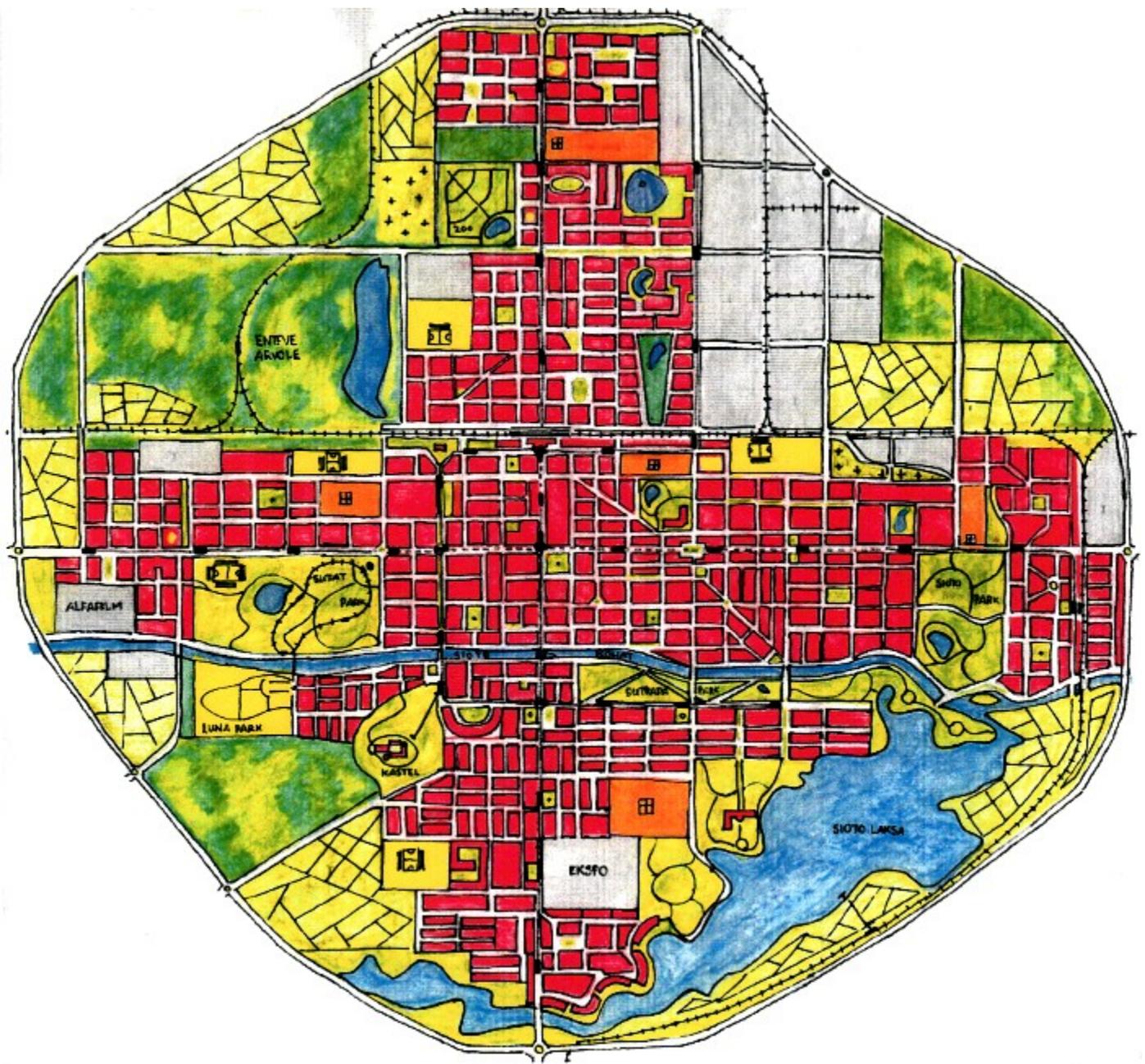
Alphistia has its own national airline, called Aveal. It has three midsize jets and provides daily service to several international airports from the country's only airstrip 3 km west of Enteve. There are also freight airliners bringing cargo to the country and finished products for export.

Inflot provides passenger and freight service on Alphistia's lakes and rivers. Most of this is leisure related passenger trips taken during summer months, but some cargo is also carried by this method. Most of the boats are paddle-wheelers or steamboats.

## **PROVINCE BY PROVINCE**

### **SAKASAVESA**

Sakasavesa is Alphistia's largest province by population, with 139,000 inhabitants. It is located in the east-central part of the country, bisected by the Sioto River and with a relatively flat landscape. Enteve - the capital of Alphistia and its largest city, is in Sakasavesa.



Enteve has a population of 124,300. Although relatively small compared to other world capitals, it is a lively city. Enteve is the political, economic, educational, and cultural center for Alphistia. Since Alphistia has a small territory, it is easy for residents of any part of the country to easily reach Enteve within one hour by car or train. Alphistia's only airport is located just outside of Enteve at Kenova. Aveal, the national airline of Alphistia, has flights to several foreign countries each day. The airport is connected to the main railway line, and passengers can reach Enteve or Tava's train stations in just 10 minutes.

Enteve's center is on the north bank of the Sioto River. The Kilrete (parliament), Radek (council of ministers), and Stat Kort (supreme court) have their buildings at the north end of Republik Prospekt. To the east of this is the main shopping and office area along Pravikense Prospekt and around Alvestea Planse. To the west of Republik Prospekt is the campus of the University of Alphistia and the main City Park.

North of the railway station is a large residential area, and to the northeast, the main industrial park for Enteve. Here there are more than 100 workshops of small and medium-sized industrial enterprises, as well as larger co-operative factories. Enteve produces Alphistia's lightbulbs, lamps, and many of its bricks, concrete panels, books, toys, bicycles, and plastic household goods. Much of the country's furniture, tiles, roofing, and glass is manufactured here as well. Enteve is also an important food processing center.

South of the Sioto River is the city's only real hill, with a mock castle constructed at its summit. This is a children's leisure center, reached by a funicular. Alphistia's trade and exhibition center is located in the south of the city, and there is extensive parkland here too.

The city's main residential districts are to the east of the city center. Small workshops that do not pollute are located in these neighborhoods too. In the western district there is the ALFA Film Studio, where most Alphistian movies and television programs are produced.

Enteve is characterized by its greenery, mostly lowrise (but high density) residential neighborhoods, and its well-planned shopping and service centers located at transit stops. For a city of only 125,000 inhabitants, Enteve has an extremely well-developed mass transit system. The Metrotram network has more than 40 stations, 8 of them underground. The three lines connect all the neighborhoods to the center and to the industrial areas. No one lives more than 500 meters from a station, most live even closer. Car use is restricted in the center, and most households have not found it necessary to own a car. Taxis and rental cars are readily available, there is an extensive network of bicycle paths, and it is easy to walk around the city.

The country's main cultural institutions are located in Enteve: the National Theater, the National Library, the National Museum, the Alphistian Museum of Art, the Enteve Opera, the Enteve Concert Hall, and the Enteve Theater, as well as the city's main House of Culture and neighborhood cultural centers.

The University of Alphistia is in Enteve, and has more than 8,000 students. There is also an extensive network of adult education centers and specialized institutes in the city. The Alphistian Academy of Sciences has its main headquarters in Enteve.

To the west of Enteve is the town of Kenova, a satellite of Enteve with its own industrial area and a warehouse district located next to the airport. To the north of Enteve is the satellite town of Arvolea with 8,000 inhabitants, modelled in part on the beautiful city of Tapiola in Finland. Just to the west of Arvolea is the small town of Sporeto. Every summer, the Sporeto Festival

takes place here, with concerts by the National Symphony and plays by the National Theater.

South and east of the city are farming and recreational areas. Many residents of Enteve have small garden plots just outside the city, and these provide many fresh fruits and vegetables for the city's markets.

## **TAVEOLA**

The province of Taveola is located in the central region of Alphistia, bordered on the east by Sakasavesa, on the west by Valeta, on the north by Dalvarne, and on the south by Opole. It is Alphistia's most industrialized province, although agriculture is important, and there are recreational areas as well. The population of the province is 34,300.

The capital of the province is Tava. This is the second largest city in the country, with 24,110 inhabitants. It is situated on the Sioto River. Tava has been planned as a very pedestrian-oriented city. Most of the city center is carfree, except for the vicinity of the railway station.

There are pleasant residential districts east and west of the center, and these areas are adjacent to industrial parks. Tava has Alphistia's only automobile factory, which designs and builds electric vehicles, many of which are exported around the world. This is located in the eastern industrial park. The southern industrial park has more than 10 factories affiliated with the Ko-Op organization, producing many everyday consumer goods. There are also many smaller firms located here. Each industrial park is within easy access of one of Tava's tram stations.

There are six residential districts plus the city center. Each has its own kindergartens, basic school, shopping center, polyclinic, and sports facilities. Each district has its own tram stop, but is linked by bicycle paths and streets to the center and the other districts.

The nearby town of Tilioma is the seat of Tilioma University. The cathedral for the United Church of Alphistia is also here. The United Church is the largest Protestant denomination in the country, uniting Anglican, Lutheran, and Methodist congregations. Tilioma has 8,000 inhabitants and a student population of 2000.

The area south of Tava is made up of farms and market villages in what is the northern part of the Prater region. The village of Kloster is modelled on the farming co-op of Harmonea. It is a town almost entirely inhabited by Catholics, and there is a monastery and convent here. The Kloster brewery and winery is well-known for its products throughout the country. Its cheeses and milk products are also known for their quality.

To the north of Tava is a hilly area with the Sestrean lakes. The town of Laikal is a spa town and resort. In summer it is popular for fishing and camping, and in winter there is a ski camp, with an artificial snow machine for use in mild winters. Also in the winter each year the Alphistian Film

Festival is held here. The cultural center in Laikal has a large cinema complex for showcasing Alphistian films and the best from foreign countries.

## **DALVARNE**

Dalvarne is the largest province in Alphistia by size. It has a population of 28,800. It is in the northern part of the country, and borders Lake Usta. The capital of the province is the city of Usta, with a population of 15,500.

Usta is an industrial town and the country's largest fishing center. It is located on an inlet of Lake Usta. The town's center is on the shore of the lake, while the residential area is up the hill behind the center. A tramline connects the residential districts to the center and the industrial area in the northern part of the city. The Alphistian Technical University, known as the Tekna, has two campuses in the city – one in the heart of the city, and the main campus at the last stop on the tramline in the western residential area.

The railway line continues north of Usta along the shore of the lake, through several towns popular with vacationers. The towns of Provinse, Leva, and Vakasa all have many hotels and spas. There are nice beaches along the lake, and many camp sites and cottage colonies. These towns are also important fishing centers.

The inland area of Dalvarne is mostly forested hills, except for a level area in the eastern part of the province. Here there are located many private farms, especially dairy farms around the village of Drovne, which is a farming commune modelled on Harmonea in nearby Arden province. The industrial town of Pranvere with 5,200 inhabitants is also here.

Outside the town of Vakasa is Alphistia's largest electric power plant. Dalvarne's factories also produce plastics, shoes, coats, piping, concrete, bricks, pavement stones, glass, pharmaceuticals, medical instruments and supplies, and paper, cardboard, and boxes (mostly from imported materials which are then recycled). The province's farms are important suppliers of pork, poultry, potatoes, berries, root vegetables, and mushrooms. There are also windmill farms which connect to the electrical grid. Fish processing is important since much of the country's fish supply comes from Lake Usta.

## **VALETA**

Valeta province is located in the western part of Alphistia. In the last census, its population was 17,200. It is part of the main industrial region of Alphistia, with the towns of Kanaha and Katova along with nearby Tava forming the largest conglomeration of factories outside of Enteve.

Valeta though also has many farms and forested areas. The northern part of the province however, is notably wooded and hilly.

The capital of Valeta is Kanaha, with a population of 8,100. It is a factory town, but like all Alphistian towns, it is well-planned and Kanaha is a pleasant place. Its biggest industry is plastics, especially recrafting of imported recyclable plastic materials into new products. There is also a furniture factory, lumberyard, and a brewery. The town of Katova with 4,000 residents is the location for Alphistia's domestic appliance factory. It produces all the country's refrigerators, electric stoves, and washing machines. The town of Aviolta in the north is an energy center. A hydro-electric plant is just to the north of the town. Fishing and fish processing is an important industry here. Its population is 4,000.

There are many private farms in the province, most situated in the southern area around Pervola village. There are dairy and poultry farms, but the biggest product is apples and berries. Pervola has a canning factory for jams and juices.

The hilly area north of Kanaha is a popular recreation area. The village of Lonera has a spa and holiday home on a beautiful pond.

Kanaha has its own House of Culture with a library, theater and clubrooms. Aviolta and Kenova have their own cultural centers as well.

## **MOREA**

Morea is located in the southwestern corner of Alphistia, mostly consisting of a peninsula surrounded by Lake Morea. It is an important farming and industrial region of the country. Its two main towns - Morea and Visenen, have many workshops and small factories.

The capital of the province is the beautiful town of Morea, carefully designed on the model of a traditional European-style market town. Its brick streets and buildings are very atmospheric and the town is one of the most popular places in the country to live, although the population has been limited to no more than 10,000. Most Alphistians then have to be content to visit Morea, and the city has a very lively tourist industry.

Most of the industrial enterprises in the province are located in the nearby town of Visenen (population 8,000), although small and unobtrusive workshops are located in the town of Morea too. The province produces electrical supplies, bricks, stones, and has several food processing factories. Morea is one of the most important agricultural areas in the country, producing large supplies of milk, eggs, poultry and cheese, fruits and all kinds of market vegetables, as well as much fish from Lake Morea.

The Alphistian Academy of Sciences has established a research center in co-operation with the Tekna in the village of Remko. Nearby is the village of Vertene, which has the country's largest music studio. Many of Alphistia's most popular musicians are frequent visitors here. The farms in Morea are privately owned. There are farming villages at Vardanste and Vere. These villages are also popular weekend cottage communities.

## **OPOLE**

Opole province is located in the south-central part of Alphistia, bisected by Lake Vasa. The terrain is flat and much of the settled parts of the province have been cleared of forests. Like in Branoe province to the east, the area on the south shore of the lake is a forest preserve. All the towns are to the north of the lake. The population of the province is 12,900.

Opole city is the capital and an industrial center. It has a food processing plant, factories for dishes, cutlery, glassware, ready-to wear clothing and shoes. The population in the last census was 10,100.

Opole has a popular music festival of Alphistian songs which takes place each year in early June in an open-air theater on Lake Vasa. There is a music school in the city as well, which has an excellent concert hall. The House of Culture has a theater, library and clubrooms.

The villages north of the lake are farming communes. Krakova is well known for its carpetmaking and is a center for milk and egg production. Further north is Kerkenes, which is part of the Prater Region that extends to the area around the village of Kloster in Taveola. These villages were settled by monks and nuns of the Catholic Church. There is a monastery a convent in Kerkenes. There is a large church here, since the Prater Region is one of the largest concentration of Catholics in the country.

The Prater Region is well-known for its dairy farms. The monastery in Kerkenes makes a large variety of cheeses and has its own brewery as well.

The villages of Krasne and Ulantea are to the east of Opole city along the northern shore of Lake Vasa, and are popular recreation areas. They are also centers for fish products.

To the west of Opole is the village of Nesa, which has a bicycle factory and is surrounded by dairy farms.

## **BRANOE**

Branoe province is located in the south-central area of Alphistia. The landscape is flat and the province is divided into two by Lake Vasa. North of the lake is the province's settled area. South of the lake is a protected forest zone.

In the last census, Branoe had a population of 10,200. The capital is called Branoe as well and its population is 8,300. Branoe city is located on the north shore of the lake.

There is a direct north-south railway to Enteve which connects Branoe city with the line that circles the country. Branoe is important for both its agricultural and industrial production, particularly as a supplier to nearby Enteve.

Branoe city has half a dozen factories and many smaller workshops. They produce ironware and tools, a large variety of plastic products, wheels, herbs and herbal medicines, toys, shoes, draperies, carpets, tiles, and wood-carved household goods. The village of Kielse is known for its craftsmen making musical instruments. The village of Tepetela is the center for beekeeping and honey production in Alphistia. There are fish canning facilities in the lakeside villages of Solare and Laksalea.

Branoe, Solare, and Laksalea are all located along the north shore of Lake Vasa and have extensive recreation areas. There are beaches, swimming pools, and hotels in each place, as well as many weekend cottages and rest homes in Solare and Laksalea. The lake is very popular for sailboating.

Branoe is a modern town with a lively market and shopping area. There is a popular Writer's Workshop each summer sponsored by the Branoe House of Culture, and the Alphistian Literature Museum has been established in the town.

The village of Tervetela to the north of Branoe city was the first farming commune established in Alphistia. It is structured on the same principles as the Harmonea community in Arden province: the farmers have their own plots of land but pool their resources for tools and machinery. In addition to honey production, Tervetela has its own cannery for jams and a juice factory.

There are several dozen private farms surrounding Tervetela. The village of Solare has a fishing co-op and issues licenses for private fishing too.

A ferry crosses Lake Vasa from Solare to the Vasa Forest Preserve in the southern part of the province. There are camping huts and trails in the Preserve, which extends into Opole Province to the west as well. Except for the personnel of the preserve there are no permanent residents.

## **SIOTO**

Sioto province is located in the southeastern part of Alphistia. It is an important agricultural area with its many private farms surrounding the capital Sioto. Sioto is a pretty town, planned on traditional lines, with a population of 8,100. A park encircles the city center, with the buildings of the Sioto House of Culture reminiscent of a castle. Sioto has an electric power plant, and the town is well-known for its furniture factory, sports and camping equipment, and tailoring. The small industrial town of Karas with 3,000 inhabitants is known for its toys and tools.

The villages of the province are not only market towns for nearby farms but production centers for quality artisan and handcrafted goods, musical instruments in the village of Voralá, tools and hardware in Skanea. Sioto's farms produce root vegetables, tomatoes, greens, and berries. Poultry and pig farms are important too, and the country's largest sausage factory is in Sioto.

The Sioto River valley is along the province's northern border with Arden. This valley is popular

for daytrippers from nearby Enteve, because it is picturesque and a bikeride of less than an hour from the capital. Outside the village of Karas is the Alphistian Folk Park. Here there are replicas of houses from the many homelands of Alphistia's citizens. A summer folk music festival is held here each year and is extremely popular.

## **ARDEN**

Arden province is in the northeastern part of Alphistia. It is known for its lakes, hilly wooded landscapes, and its farming communes. The capital is Reval. In the most recent census, Arden had a population of 8,600 people.

There are four larger lakes in the north of the province, and another dozen smaller ones in the same area. The lakes are mostly surrounded by wooded hills, but there are two farming communes with truck gardens and greenhouses in the vicinity.

In the central part of the province, south of the lake district, is a hilly area with the valley of the Arden River passing through it. Reval is located here, with its population of 6,000.

The southern part of the province is flatter but still largely wooded, although the farming commune of Harmonea and some family farms are situated along the railway line. The railway turns west at the town of Telas as it enters the Sioto River valley. Telas is Alphistia's most well-known spa town, with the Fontanesvea hotel beautifully located on the side of the hill overlooking the valley.

Reval is a typical provincial center, and has a busy market for the province's farmers. There is also a big variety of local industries. There are factories for furniture, bedding and mattresses, paints, canning of fruits and vegetables, a lumber yard, and a brewery. There are dozens of small handicraft workshops as well, producing items such as garden tools, jewelry, picture frames, paintbrushes, toys, and even a small winery. Two of the farming communes have a greenhouse which grow grapes under glass, and most of Alphistia's domestic wine production comes from Arden province.

The farming communes of Vesa and Lakasa are modelled on the kibbutzim of Israel. The members farm the land in common and live together in their own villages. The farming commune of Harmonea however is not as communalist as the others. Although the farmers live in their own village, they farm individual plots, pooling tools and machinery. The Harmonea model is the more popular form of agricultural co-operative, with several other villages in the country organized in a similar way.

Politically, Arden province is a stronghold of the Pravikense Felad, the most leftwing of Alphistia's political parties. This reflects the radical traditions of the farming communes and the well-organized artisan co-operatives in Reval.

Reval has a large House of Culture with a multipurpose auditorium, a library, and clubrooms. Each of the farming communes has its own cultural facilities as well. An important part of the communalist farm philosophy is to provide cultural opportunities for all.

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