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Unreal Urbanisms

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UNREAL URBANISMS

CAN GAMES BE USED TO CROWD SOURCE IDEAS FOR PLANNING THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT?

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EVORIUM: A NEW MANHATTAN
BY RASTAMMOLE

MIDTOWN IN MANHATTAN
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
CONTENTION

User generated urbanism in the virtual environment is the digital manifestation of user's transnational image of the city. It is an image conceived through small scale and short term interventions that prompt experimentation and iteration. Its development is implemented solely through active voluntary participation and crowd sourcing.

Adversely, planning experimentation in the built environment is a climate that conceives slow, costly and unimaginative progress.

This thesis contends that cities in the built environment can utilize the user generated image of city created in virtual environments to reinvent and reimagine the design of the urban environment.
LIBERLAND!
GLOBAL DESIGN COMPETITION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY MICRONATION

(DESIGNLIBERLAND.SPLASHTHAT.COM/)

BRIEF
THE EUROPEAN MICRONATION IS SEEKING IDEAS THROUGH A GLOBAL DESIGN COMPETITION ON HOW TO MASTERPLAN ITS SEVEN-SQUARE-KILOMETER TERRITORY.

AGENDA
UTILIZE THE VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT TO CHALLENGE THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STATUS QUO BY RESPONDING TO LIBERLAND’S FUNDAMENTAL VALUES AND BY SPECULATING ON THE GENERAL DESIGN POTENTIAL FOR THIS NEW MICRONATION.
MICRONATION:

MICRONATIONS ARE DISTINGUISHED FROM IMAGINARY COUNTRIES AND FROM OTHER KINDS OF SOCIAL GROUPS (SUCH AS ECO-VILLAGES, CAMPUSES, TRIBES, CLANS, SECTS, AND RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS) BY EXPRESSING A FORMAL AND PERSISTENT, EVEN IF UNRECOGNIZED, CLAIM OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER SOME (USUALLY UNCLAIMED) PHYSICAL TERRITORY.

MICRONATIONS ARE NOT MICROSTATES WHICH ARE SOVEREIGN STATES THAT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO UNILATERALLY DEPUTE CERTAIN ATTRIBUTES OF SOVEREIGNTY TO LARGER POWERS IN EXCHANGE FOR BENIGN PROTECTION OF THEIR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY AGAINST THEIR GEOGRAPHIC OR DEMOGRAPHIC CONSTRAINTS. I.E. VATICAN CITY, MONACO AND SINGAPORE

MICRONATIONS ARE NOT AUTONOMOUS TERRITORIES WHICH DO NOT POSSESS FULL POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OR SOVEREIGNTY AS A SOVEREIGN STATE YET REMAIN POLITICALLY OUTSIDE OF THE CONTROLLING STATE’S INTEGRAL AREA. I.E. HONG KONG, SAINT MARTIN AND MARSHALL ISLANDS
MICRONATION: AN ENTITY THAT CLAIMS TO BE AN INDEPENDENT NATION OR STATE BUT IS NOT OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED BY WORLD GOVERNMENTS OR MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. MICRONATIONS ARE DISTINGUISHED FROM IMAGINARY COUNTRIES AND FROM OTHER KINDS OF SOCIAL GROUPS (SUCH AS ECO-VILLAGES, CAMPUSES, TRIBES, CLANS, SECTS, AND RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS) BY EXPRESSING A FORMAL AND PERSISTENT, EVEN IF UNRECOGNIZED, CLAIM OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER SOME (USUALLY UNCLAIMED) PHYSICAL TERRITORY.

MICRONATIONS ARE NOT MICROSTATES WHICH ARE SOVEREIGN STATES THAT HAVE BEEN ABILITALLY DEPUTED CERTAIN ATTRIBUTES OF SOVEREIGNTY TO LARGER POWERS IN EXCHANGE FOR BENIGN PROTECTION OF THEIR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY AGAINST THEIR GEOGRAPHIC OR DEMOGRAPHIC CONSTRAINTS (I.E. VATICAN CITY, MONACO, AND SINGAPORE).

MICRONATIONS ARE NOT AUTONOMOUS TERRITORIES WHICH DO NOT POSSESS FULL POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE OR SOVEREIGNTY AS A SOVEREIGN STATE YET REMAIN POLITICALLY OUTSIDE OF THE CONTROLLING STATE’S INTEGRAL AREA (I.E. HONG KONG, SAINT MARTIN, AND MARSHALL ISLANDS).
HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
THE EXPERIMENT | KEY TERMS

FRESTONIA, UK
1997
MODERN PLANNING

PLAN VOISIN BY LE CORBUSIER
PARIS

BRASILIA PLAN BY LÚCIO COSTA
BRAZIL

ZLÍN PLAN BY FRANTIŠEK LYDIE GAHURA
CZECH REPUBLIC
MICRONATION CASE STUDY I:
FREETOWN CHRISTIANIA


LOCATION | COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
ESTABLISHED | 1971
GOVERNMENT | ANARCHIST COMMUNITY
RESIDENTS | 1000
AREA | 0.34 KM²
CURRENCY | DANISH KRONE
WEBSITE | CHRISTIANIA.ORG/
MICRONATION CASE STUDY II: KINGDOM OF ELLEORE

The Kingdom of Elleore micronation located on the island of Elleore in the Roskilde Fjord, North of Roskilde on the Danish Island of Zealand. The island was purchased by a group of Copenhagen schoolteachers in 1964 for use as a summer camp. The idea behind this enterprise was that the students should use the island for weekend and summer stays. They proclaimed the island’s “independence” as a kingdom as a gentle parody of the government structure and royal traditions of Denmark. The island has its own monarchs, flag, coins and stamps, and even its own time zone, twelve minutes behind Danish time.

LOCATION | ROSKILDE FJORD, DENMARK
ESTABLISHED | 1964
GOVERNMENT | CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY
RESIDENTS | 263
AREA | 0.015 KM²
CURRENCY | LEO D’OR
WEBSITE | ELLEORE.DISKOS.DK/
MICRONATION CASE STUDY III: FILETTINO

Originally a place of the Aequi, and remaining a tiny hamlet until the time of Christ, it became a safe haven for those fleeing from Saracen invasions in 800 A.D., due to its mountainous location. In 1297 it fell under the control of Pietro Caetani, nephew of Pope Boniface VIII, whose family became notorious as cruel and oppressive, crushing various uprisings until the last of the Filettino Caetanis was executed in 1602 at Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome. In the same year it was entered by Pope Clement VII into the Apostolic Chamber and was thus subsequently absorbed into the Papal States until the states themselves were annexed to the Kingdom of Italy in 1870.

LOCATION | EAST OF ROME-NORTH OF FROSINONE
ESTABLISHED | 2011
GOVERNMENT | PRINCIPALITY
RESIDENTS | N/A
AREA | 77.66 KM²
CURRENCY | FIORITO
WEBSITE | COMUNEFILETTINO.IT
MICRONATION CASE STUDY IV: LADONIA
PUBLIC OF MOLOSSIA

A MICRONATION, FOUNDED BY KEVIN BAUGH AND HEADQUARTERED SOLELY FROM HIS HOME NEAR DAYTON, NEVADA. THE REPUBLIC OF MOLOSSIA HAS CLAIMED ITSELF A NATION BUT IT IS NOT OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED AS A COUNTRY BY THE UNITED NATIONS OR ANY COUNTRY. IT CONSISTS OF BAUGH’S HOUSE (KNOWN AS THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE), ABOUT 0.01 ACRES (40 M2) IN SIZE, AS WELL AS 1.3 ACRES (5,000 M2) OF SURROUNDING PROPERTY, ENCLAVED BY NEVADA. IT FORMERLY CLAIMED A PROPERTY IN PENNSYLVANIA AS WELL. ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED AS A CHILDHOOD PROJECT IN 1977, MOLOSSIA SUBSEQUENTLY EVOLVED INTO A TERRITORIAL ENTITY IN THE LATE 1990S.

LOCATION | NEVADA, USA
ESTABLISHED | 1999
GOVERNMENT | CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC
RESIDENTS | 28 (CITIZENS)
AREA | 0.0053 KM²
CURRENCY | VALORA
WEBSITE | MOLOSSIA.ORG
II. THE RESEARCH
A. KEVIN LYNCH ON LEGIBILITY
B. MINECRAFT CASE STUDIES
CENTRAL QUESTIONS OF LIBERLAND
COMPETITION

HOW CAN MAXIMAL FREEDOM RESULT IN A COMPLEX
LEGIBLE ORDER, RATHER THAN DESCEND INTO VISUAL
CHAOS?

A LACK OF FUNDING, POOR PLANNING AND
MAXIMUM FREEDOM IN MANY OF THE EARLY MODELS
OF MICRONATIONS LED TO ILLEGIBLE ORGANIZATION
AND VISUAL CHAOS IN THEIR ENVIRONMENTS.
POORLY PLANNED MICRONATIONS CAN BREED CRIME
CAUSING SURROUNDING NATIONS AND CITIES TO
OPPOSE THEIR EXISTENCE.

IN USING THE DESIGN COMPETITION LIBERLAND
SEEKS TO COMBAT THIS ISSUE BY PRESENTING
INVESTORS WITH A LEGIBLE MODEL OF A 21ST
CENTURY MICRONATION
Block by Block workshop in Kosovo

UN-Habitat teamed up with the Municipality of Prishtina to implement a Block by Block workshop in Prishtina on 11-14 September 2015. The workshop resulted in a new and inventive design for a public space located in “Bergu Doli/ Sunny Hill” neighbourhood of Prishtina. The event brought together more than 70 participants, consisting of youth from seven years old and over, local community, representatives of non-governmental organizations and the Municipality as well as urban professionals.
BLOCK BY BLOCK WORKSHOP IN PRISHTINA IN SEPTEMBER 2015
“THE LEGIBILITY OF AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT IS BASED ON THE ‘PUBLIC IMAGE’ OR AREAS OF AGREEMENT WITH WHICH MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO APPEAR IN THE INTERACTION OF A PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT”

KEVIN LYNCH, THE IMAGE OF THE CITY
FIVE ELEMENTS OF THE PUBLIC IMAGE

**Path** – Channels along which the observer moves

**Edge** – Important organizing features within the city image

**District** – Sections of the city that have identifiable characteristics

**Nodes** – Points and/or junctions for traveling

**Landmark** – External points of reference
THE FINAL PRODUCT

THE PRODUCT OF THIS RESEARCH WILL MANIFEST IN A SPECULATIVE DESIGN FOR THE NEW MICRONATION LIBERLAND CREATED BY AN ONLINE COMMUNITY OF PARTICIPANTS OR “PLAYERS”. THE MEDIUM IN WHICH THE PLAYERS WILL CREATE THE WORLD IS MINECRAFT, WHICH IS A Sandbox INDEPENDENT VIDEO GAME THAT ENABLES PLAYERS TO BUILD CONSTRUCTIONS OUT OF TEXTURED 3D CUBES IN A 3D PROCEDURALLY GENERATED WORLD. THE GUIDELINES FOR HOW TO CREATE ARE DRIVEN BY LIBERLAND’S FUNDAMENTAL VALUES, CONSTITUTION AND ANARCO-CAPITALIST AND LIBERTARIAN THEORY OF OWNERSHIP AND PRIVATE PROPERTY. WHAT TO CREATE AND WHERE TO CREATE IT WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE “PLAYERS” IN THE “FREE MARKET” OF VIRTUAL (MINECRAFT) LIBERLAND.
LIBERLAND COMPETITION DESIGN PARAMETERS

IDENTITY | LIBERTARIAN, ANARCHO-CAPITALIST, FREEDOM
DENSITY POTENTIAL | 340,000 APPLICANTS FOR CITIZENSHIP THUS FAR
ECOSYSTEM | LIBERLAND'S TERRITORY HAS A MILD CLIMATE SIMILAR TO LOS ANGELES, BUT IS PRONE TO DANUBE RIVER FLOODING.
ARTIFICIAL ECOSYSTEMS | LIBERLAND ASPIRES TO A "NATURE-LIKE BUILT ENVIRONMENT"
SETTLEMENT | LIBERLAND SEEKS AN AGILE AND FLEXIBLE SYSTEMIC SETTLEMENT PLAN
INFRASTRUCTURE | MINIMUM MUNICIPAL INTERVENTION, ECOSYSTEMIC SENSITIVITY
ZONING | NONE
ECONOMY | FREE MARKET, BITCOIN CRYPTOCURRENCY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, PRIVATE PROPERTY
POLITICS | MINIMAL GOVERNMENT (DIPLOMATIC AND JUDICIAL Capacities), VOLUNTARY TAXATION
CONSTITUTION | REFER TO LIBERLAND'S WEBSITE: LIBERLAND.ORG
PROGRAM | CONVENTIONAL URBAN ZONING SEGREGATION BETWEEN COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, MUNICIPAL, AND LEISURE DISTRICTS IS IRRELEVANT IN LIBERLAND!
III. THE SITE
A. LOCATION
B. TERRAIN ANALYSIS
LIBERLAND IS ABOUT 2.7 SQUARE MILES WHICH IS JUST SMALLER THAN SIZE OF LOWER MANHATTAN. DUE TO ITS CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE DUBANE RIVER AND FAIRLY LEVEL TOPOGRAPHY, PARTS OF LIBERLAND ARE PRONE TO FLOODING.
THE EXPERIMENT | HOW IT WORKS

HOW IT WORKS

STEP 1 | THE SITE

THE VIRTUAL REPLICA OF LIBERLAND BUILT IN MINECRAFT WILL BE CREATED BY THE ADMINISTRATOR (ME). LIBERLAND WILL THEN BE DIVIDED INTO SEVERAL PARCELS FOR PLAYERS TO BUILD ON. THE ONLY AREA NOT AVAILABLE FOR PLAYERS TO BUILD ON ARE THOSE WITHIN THE AREAS PRONE TO MAJOR FLOODING.

THE PURPOSE OF DIVING LIBERLAND INTO PARCELS IS TO ALLOW PLAYERS TO INITIALY DELINEATE WHERE PROPERTY BEGINS AND ENDS. ADJACENT PARCELS MAY BE COMBINED TO MAKE LARGER BUILDING AREAS. PLAYERS MAY ALSO NEGOGIATE SHAPES AND SIZES OF PARCELS WITH OTHER PLAYERS.
IV. THE EXPERIMENT
A. FINAL PRODUCT
B. PARAMETERS
C. HOW IT WORKS
PLANNING AND PROPERTY IN LIBERLAND

THE RULES FOR PLANNING AND PROPERTY IN LIBERLAND ARE BASED ON LIBERLAND’S LIBERTARIAN THEORY OF OWNERSHIP AND PRIVATE PROPERTY. PLAYERS WILL USE THIS THEORY AS THE RULES AND GUIDELINE FOR HOW TO CREATE IN LIBERLAND.

RULES

I. EVERYONE IS THE PROPER OWNER OF THEIR OWN PHYSICAL BODY AS WELL AS OF ALL PLACES AND NATURE-GIVEN GOODS THAT THEY OCCUPY AND PUT TO USE BY MEANS OF THEIR BODY, PROVIDED ONLY THAT NO ONE ELSE HAS ALREADY OCCUPIED OR USED THE SAME PLACES AND GOODS BEFORE THEM [1]

II. ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION OF LAND IS NOT LEGITIMATE BY MERELY CLAIMING IT OR BUILDING A FENCE AROUND IT; IT IS ONLY BY USING LAND — BY MIXING ONE’S LABOR WITH IT — THAT ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION IS LEGITIMIZED [2]

III. THIS OWNERSHIP OF “ORIGINALLY APPROPRIATED” PLACES AND GOODS BY A PERSON IMPLIES HIS RIGHT TO USE AND TRANSFORM THESE PLACES AND GOODS IN ANY WAY THEY SEE FIT, PROVIDED ONLY THAT THEY DO NOT CHANGE THEREBY UNINVITEDLY THE PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OF PLACES AND GOODS ORIGINALLY APPROPRIATED BY ANOTHER PERSON [3]
IV. A resource need not continue to be used in order for it to be the person's property; for once their labor is mixed with the natural resource, it remains their owned land [4].

V. After property is created through labor, it may then only exchange hands legitimately by trade or gift; forced transfers are considered illegitimate [5].

VI. Just as an individual comes to own that which was unowned by mixing his labor with it or using it regularly, a whole community or society can come to own a thing in common by mixing their labor with it collectively, meaning that no individual may appropriate it as his own. [6] (This may apply to roads, parks, rivers, and portions of oceans).

VII. All persons shall have the right of self-defense and/or defense of their property, and others who are under a direct and real threat, against initiators of aggression, including any agent of the public administration acting unlawfully or in error; no person shall be convicted of any criminal offense for any act or omission taking place on his or her property and which is a direct response to another person trespassing on that property or rights and acting in breach of the law or the constitution resulting in such threat as described in this provision. [7]
Currently there are **ten players and one administrator** involved in the Unreal Urbanisms experiment, each of which will work individually (to create private properties) or together (to create collective property) Liberland.

Though players in this experiment do not have predetermined roles, they may take upon themselves to create roles individually (e.g., a player who only builds housing versus a player who only builds hospitals). The role of the Liberland government will be played by the administrator who will also be responsible for building the micronations main infrastructure.
THE EXPERIMENT | HOW IT WORKS

WEBTHEKING
- LEVEL: 34
- LOCATION: BERLIN, GERMANY
- AGE: 16
- BACKGROUND: STUDENT (SECONDARY SCHOOL)

_EXPLODECREEPER_
- LEVEL: 85
- LOCATION: SOUTH CROYDON, UK
- AGE: 32
- BACKGROUND: 3D ARTIST (FYREUK STUDIO)

THE_H4X0R
- LEVEL: 20
- LOCATION: HOUSTON, TEXAS
- AGE: 23
- BACKGROUND: STUDENT (ARCHITECTURE)

KURODAKIRA
- LEVEL: 15
- LOCATION: LEEDS, UK
- AGE: 25
- BACKGROUND: PHD STUDENT (HISTORY)
THE EXPERIMENT | HOW IT WORKS

STEP 3 | THE PROGRAM

THE CREATORS OF THE LIBERLAND DESIGN COMPETITION HAVE EXPRESSED THAT CONVENTIONAL URBAN ZONING SEGREGATION BETWEEN COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, MUNICIPAL, AND LEISURE DISTRICTS IS IRRELEVANT IN LIBERLAND BUT PROGRAM FOR THE MICRONATION IS STILL NEEDED.

GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Health and Services
- Religious Institutions
- Airship Port
- Logistic and Services
- Shipping Ports
- Office District
- Education and Science
- Agriculture
- Waste and Sewage
- Recreation
- Cultural Institutions
- Housing
Players in the experiment will build the program of Liberland. The guidelines will allow players to build virtually anything on their private property with their private resources. The spatial arrangement of Liberland will emerge from a multitude of individual choices in the virtual environment, rather than by the predetermined selection of a preferred type and tenure of housing, and mode of transportation.

The final product will be submitted for the design competition.
THE EXPERIMENT | HOW IT WORKS

STEP 5 | THE EVALUATION

The legibility of the built product will be evaluated using Kevin Lynch’s five elements. Players and the administrator will address any changes that need to be made after the evaluation before submitting for the design competition.
Sources:

CITED

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The virtual environment is the digital manifestation of user’s transnational image of the city. It is an image conceived through small scale and short term interventions that prompt experimentation and iteration. Its development is implemented solely through active participation, community engagement and crowd sourcing. Adversely, planning experimentation in the built environment is a climate that conceives slow, costly and unimaginative progress. Unreal Urbanisms contends that cities in the built environment can use the User Generated image of city created in virtual environments to reinvent and reimagine the design of the urban environment.

The objective of creating cities in a Massive Multiplayer Online virtual environment is to reform the collaborative process of idea generating in city planning by facilitating player agency in its design. In the absence of reality (i.e. Gravity, atmospheric conditions and governance) the computer-generated environments produced in this experiment are to be analyzed as simulations rather than absolute and direct substitutions for the built environment. In his book The Image of The City, Kevin Lynch contends that the legibility of a City’s image is based on the “public Image” or areas of agreement with which might be expected to appear in the interaction of a physical environment. These areas of agreement are categorized into five elements: The Node, Path, Edge, District and Landmark.

As virtual cities are made in the transnational image of physical cities the same claims about legibility, public image and the five elements of a city’s can be asserted to virtual environments, however; the bottom up approach to building these virtual cities means the appearance, use and interplay of these elements will operate differently. The research of the virtual cities featured on Unreal Urbanisms will be executed in methods similar to the experiments conducted by Kevin Lynch. The first method will be field research in which we navigate the city and map out my own ways of movement and legibility of the city’s public image. The second method will be to conduct a series of interviews or surveys that ask others exploring the same virtual cities to rely their own interpretations of the city’s image. The third and final step involved with the investigation of these virtual cities is to create a series of diagrams that not only locate the 5 elements but also analyze how they interact with each other conveying them as a network rather than objects in a field.
NAME OF STUDENT