



M8

M8 – Summit of Micronations

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Heterotopia as Utopia

On The Pleasure of Micro Politics

By Max Ryyänen
Helsinki-based Philosopher of Art

At the dawn of the millennium humans still celebrated black-and-white utopias. Their paradise could be built upon one colour (red), one symbol (cross), or an idea of universally applicable (Western) values.

The daydreamers of yesterday's uniform world peace and global handshakes, appear suddenly to be imperialist idealists, conservatives, and fundamentalists, as we have a hard time believing that the whole world could or should be forced to march in the same rhythm.

Currently there dominates intellectually an idea that Others – small communities, sub-cultures, and folk groups – should be given space to flourish on their own, with the possibility to preserve, to reinforce, and to cultivate smaller and smaller differences.

In this sense, the present democratic, feminist, Marxist, and neo-capitalist utopias are all of the same breed. They accept and sometimes even celebrate the heterogeneous state of reality. They even have to, as the mantra of diversity, with its roots in biological diversity, has invaded sex, culture, politics, and consumption.

Other ideals, values, religions, cultures, and choices of consumption have become a vast horizon we are increasingly conscious of. We feel less and less authorized to criticize them, as we know that we don't understand everything that other people do, and we feel humans should have a right to live as they choose, as long as this choice does not put too many restraints on other people. We feel that we shouldn't try to force others to match our own way of feeling, thinking, and living.

While the word 'utopia' originally referred to a place which doesn't exist, heterotopia as a concept points to 'the other place', a place with real or just imagined possibilities, but anyway, a place which haunts the human in search of a better life.

But the utopia of heterotopia could as well point to a world-

view built upon an ideal of heterogeneity.

Twentieth century modern culture pulled us towards universal solutions. We were supposed to go for big coalitions. For decades we laughed at the fact that Germany used to be 300 small states, and the 'bizarreness' of Counts and Dukes who ruled small peripheral areas.

After a long period of oppression, localism is back, but in a more democratic and environmentalist form. If we are not in some sense even living in a time of dialects, perma-culture, and village thinking, a powerful wave of admiration and interest for the small and the superlocal is rising.

On this growing wave of consciousness, micronations gather an aura of pioneering (some central tenets of) the spirit of our era. Welcome to the ocean of 'differentialism', 'federalism', 'segregationalism', and 'autonomism'. From out of the blue, the small and wild ones surf in, tanned by their freedom of distant, yet not found shores, untouched by the painful prisons of everyday bureaucracy which all big states, communities, and alliances from China to Coca-Cola, United Nations, and even overgrown computer game communities have to surrender to.

The times are changing, who knows how and to what extent, but at this peculiar moment of world history the rebellious Hobbits of nationalism and state ideology are a newly-found wonder, bringing us a scent of far away islands with necklaces of utopian promises draped around their necks.

Cast

LIM KONG SOON	Masuda Takahiro
STEPHEN GASKIN JR.	Lauri Kontula
PHILIP SWANK	Heikki Herva
PRINCESS MAUREEN-LEE	Eeva-Maija Haukinen
JOHN SILVERSMITH	Jukka Ruotsalainen
OLGA LAGERFELDT	Nastaran Nasirzadeh
RUDOLF KNEZ	Jan Bitar
JOCA MIES	Oskari Martimo



“I want to make sure that every button in Singapore works.”

LIM KONG SOON (76)

Retired Politician, Republic of Singapore

Lim Kong Soon (LKS) is the founding father of post-war Singapore. Although retired from day-to-day politics, he is still driven by his great aspiration: to foster the stability and prosperity of “his child” - the city-state of Singapore. LKS has set up the Mini Summit of Micronations - M8 - to push forward the futuristic makeover of the small island state. Micronations might, after all, offer a shift of perspective – an evolutionary leap- or if nothing else, the possibility to grasp the present as history – something that can only be achieved when the present is transformed into a distant past by a future perspective.

Lim Kong Soon strongly believes in progressivism (constant human progress – there are always things to improve), elitism (the world is a social pyramid in which members of an elite rule by virtue of their superior talent), geneticism (talent and intelligence are inherited and can be improved by eugenics) and cultural evolutionism (culture is a transient and ephemeral entity – a tool to be wielded from above by a progressive elite). While these four beliefs are so embedded in his thinking that one could call them faith, LKS is ready to abandon any other idea or system in exchange for new ideas as long as they promise improvement towards his Confucian ideal*. He praises air-conditioning as the ultimate

invention which brought control, comfort, and prosperity to South-East Asia. The air-conditioner provides a suitable metaphor for LKS’s vision of society.

**Confucius: The Record of Rites, Book IX, “The Commonwealth State” “When the perfect order prevails, the world is like a home shared by all. Virtuous and worthy men are elected to public office, and capable men hold posts of gainful employment in society; peace and trust among all men are the maxims of living. All men love and respect their own parents and children, as well as the parents and children of others. There is caring for the old; there are jobs for the adults; there are nourishment and education for the children. There is a means of support for the widows, and the widowers; for all who find themselves alone in the world, and for the disabled. Every man and woman has an appropriate role to play in the family and society. A sense of sharing displaces the effects of selfishness and materialism a devotion to public duty leaves no room for idleness. Intrigues and conniving for ill gain are unknown. Villains such as thieves and robbers do not exist. The door to every home need never be locked and bolted by day or night. These are the characteristics of an ideal world, the commonwealth state.*



“Nature does nothing uselessly
In the green we are all rednecks”

STEPHEN GASKIN, JR. (33) **Son of Founding Member, The Farm**

Stephen is the son of the founder of The Farm – Stephen Gaskin, who was later the capitalized candidate for the American presidency in 2004. The Farm is an eco-village founded in 1970 south of Nashville, Tennessee, ca. 35 miles away from the birthplace of the Ku Klux Klan. The Farm tried to achieve self-reliance by providing its own resources in a sustainable way: food, government, banking, industries, water and electricity, sewage, clinics, social services and even its own telephone system called “Beatnik Bell”. The Farm was a role model for many other small-scale utopian communities, and was based on the widespread premise that mainstream society drifts towards the apocalypse and that it was necessary to re-build society from scratch, independently, as a network of small, self-sustained utopian communities.

Hippiedom had blossomed in the City of Love, and Stephen Gaskin Senior’s eclectic lectures on mysticism, politics, alternative lifestyles, and LSD took on a life of their own. It was called the Monday Night Class and as many as 2,000 stoned seekers followed Gaskin to Playland by the Beach. In 1970 Gaskin led a caravan of 50 altered school buses across the United States. The tribe – dubbed the tie-dyed Amish – eventually landed in the green rolling hills of southern Tennessee, a magical place but

also one of the poorest counties in Tennessee, where the rednecks learned to love the hippies.

Stephen Junior grew up at The Farm among many other hippie youngsters. At a very young age, he got involved with some Farm members who ventured into early computer networks and started the first electronic community called ‘Whole Earth’s Electronic Link’, a.k.a. THE WELL. Gaskin Junior later started his own net business developing the first prototypes of Massively-Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG) which strived to simulate architectures of society beyond the existing world order. He sold the company in the early ’90s and became an independent financial adviser specialising in ethical investments incorporating environmental and socially responsible investments. The company also runs its own Gaia Global Green Investment Trust, building a portfolio of businesses operating in six key areas: water management, clean energy, green transport, waste management, sustainable living, and environmental services. His investment company was extremely successful in the wake of the environmental disasters and climate catastrophes in the United States. Every year he returns to the place of his upbringing for several months to live there and discuss with Farm members the possibilities to develop international alternative businesses which apply sustainable technology and permaculture design as tested at The Farm.

Stephen has arrived in Singapore as a critical helper to ensure Singapore’s success as a model in developing sustainable systems for the whole of Asia. He is especially worried about the impact of China’s growing middle-class (with their love for air-conditioning) on world ecology.



“From the Sea, Freedom.”

PHILIP SWANK (52)

Undersecretary, Bureau of External Affairs, Principality of Sealand

The Principality of Sealand is one of the oldest micronations in existence today. It is also one of the best examples of a nation which exists through the work of the media. Lim Kong Soon knows about Sealand’s involvement with Data Havens. He wants to figure out if and how such Data Havens might be a threat to Singapore’s security and what possibilities for co-option might exist. On the other hand, he is curious about the Sealand experience in offshore living and if there are cost-efficient possibilities for colonies of Sealand clones to compensate for the lack of space in Singapore. For Sealand, the invitation to the M8 is a form of de facto recognition, an important objective of their 40 years of work. The people of Sealand are excited to develop new business opportunities, on one hand; on the other, they do not absolutely trust the invitation. Sealand has a history of set-ups, kidnappings, and government conspiracies. Therefore, the government sends a lower-ranking official – Philip Swank – to check out the situation without putting the Royal Family into danger. The representative is in contact by a hidden wireless microphone with a certain Mr. Roger McCall*, the spokesperson of Sealand, who in fact is the only one capable of keeping negotiations on such a high level.

Philip Swank is a buddy of Prince Michael of Sealand; they have spent more than a few hours in the Ferry Boat Inn to discuss Sealand matters. Philip works in a fish processing plant owned by Prince Michael, and has lived all his life in Felixstowe, a small fishing and harbour town. Philip is simple minded, not too bright, and he knows that. But he is a most valuable asset because of his absolute, unquestionable loyalty to Prince Michael. Philip’s sheer physical power and awesome bodily features have helped to resolve more than one conflict in the history of Sealand. During an assault on the Royal Family, he simply sat on the attacker until any form of resistance was extinct. From time to time, he indulges in extreme power fantasies. His assignment for Sealand is the closest he could get to act out such fantasies; nevertheless he is constantly pushed and joked at by McCall, especially for Philip’s love of fake Rolex arm watches, excessive imitation gold jewellery, and eccentric neck ties, which Mr. Swank wears with a certain instinct for self-irony.

** Mr. Roger McCall is a multifaceted old fox: he is trained in international law, advised the Thatcher government, became involved in diplomatic missions in Africa, helped to built East German telecommunication systems, and worked for NASA. He is sharp like a knife and in good condition for being 80 years old. McCall, an old army friend of Prince Roy who founded Sealand in 1968, is the mastermind behind Sealand’s diverse activities. Thanks to McCall’s diplomatic negotiating skills and his versatile handling of journalists, the Principality has survived for 40 years. The name ‘Roger McCall’ is actually a cover used by the ‘real’ McCall when working on Sealand-related matters. The pseudonym might be derived from the villain of the 1953 Western “Iron Mountain Trail” played by Grant Withers.*



“Excellence can be attained if you Care more than others think is wise Risk more than others think is safe Dream more than others think is practical Expect more than others think is possible.”

PRINCESS MAUREEN-LEE (65)

Head of State, Principality of New Utopia

Princess Maureen-Lee represents New Utopia, a scheme for a libertarian island paradise to be built on pontoons in the Caribbean Sea. Citizens will live in a tax-free constitutional monarchy. Absolute economic freedom – Capitalism in its purest form – shall reign supreme in this new country. Utopians will enjoy classical architecture, immaculate public parks, a small but effective governing body, and a stable political structure, with freedom from crime and taxation. Marijuana will be legal and polygamy tolerated. Resident citizens and visitors will experience it as a ‘tropical Venice’, complete with waterways and gondolas. New Utopia promises state-of-the-art cosmetic surgery techniques, together with high-tech anti-aging and age-reversal treatments and therapies, to be made available at the Robert A. Heinlein Memorial Rejuvenation and Longevity Clinic. New Utopia’s belief system belongs to a form of libertarianism known as Transhumanism, which envisions overcoming the poor limitations of the human body by experimental science.

Princess Maureen-Lee, the daughter of third-generation immigrant potato farmers from Ireland (“Idaho Potato King”) developed an obsession with cosmetics at an early age. She became Miss Idaho in 1963, a victory that helped her to set up a success-

ful beauty salon known for its light-hearted use of ‘cutting-edge’ technologies. After experimenting with illegal human growth hormone, Princess Maureen-Lee came in contact with the authorities. She was arrested and sentenced to eight days of community service work: picking up garbage on public roads. This clash with the state inseminated the seeds for her libertarian leaning nourished by the readings of Ayn Rand and Robert Heinlein. Through the application of growth hormone, she experienced a ‘re-birth’ and a second youth with her future husband, John Foley, whom she met at the funeral of Robert A. Heinlein in May 1988 in Santa Cruz. Heinlein’s ashes were scattered into the Pacific Ocean. Soon after, Foley started to identify himself with Lazarus Long, the hero of Heinlein’s novels, who holds forth as an ageless man of wisdom and sex, hurtling through the centuries with fabulous naked babes on his arm, and dispensing philosophical titbits with wit and humour.

The elitist motto of New Utopia (see above) relates to the beliefs of Singapore’s LKS. The idylls of colonial nostalgia are not unrelated to this utopian vision, reminding us that the original Utopia was in fact a settler colony. While critical of libertarianism, LKS sees Transhumanism matching with his own beliefs of progressivism, elitism, and geneticism. He sees opportunities for nurturing a super-elite capable of providing the prosperity of Singapore in the future. The idea of a post-modern theme park is appealing as well. New Utopia sees the M8 as an opportunity to earn some big money and a possibility to turn the (so far very bad) fortunes of the Principality. Access to pharmaceutical laboratories and research facilities is a top agenda item for Princess Maureen-Lee.



“It’s not the one brilliant decision;
it’s the five hundred smart decisions
that really make things good.”

JOHN SILVERSMITH (35) **CEO, Space Frontier Republic**

John Silversmith represents the Space Frontier Republic, the first (self-declared) sovereign country in outer space. The thought game of the expansion of Singapore into outer space into a 100% human-controlled environment – a Biosphere 3 – challenges an administrative mastermind such as LKS.

John grew up in Gallup, a small town established in 1881 as a railhead in New Mexico and probably the last real outpost of the Frontier West. John was adopted by Mary Silversmith of the Bitter Water People Clan – a well-known rug weaver who used natural vegetable dye. She enjoyed sewing, cooking, ranching, and gardening.

John Silversmith became interested in computers at an early age as the only means to escape the narrow-minded world of Gallup. His occasional eccentric appearance in the old business district of the town – dressed as an extra-terrestrial – made him the local weirdo. Nevertheless, the rugged character of his hometown had implanted the frontier mentality deeply into his sub-consciousness. He said about himself: “I was sort of an amoral little jerk when I was young. I was arrogant about being smarter than other people. I spent a year in a juvenile home for a first offence after an evaluation by a psychologist went very badly.” Silversmith

attended the University of Missouri – Kansas City for two semesters before dropping out to work as a freelance programmer. Silversmith co-founded a computer game development company in 1991. He was one of the lead programmers of the legendary games Wolfenstein, Doom, and Quake. From the fortune Silversmith made with his software company, he finances Armageddon Aerospace, an enterprise dedicated to space colonization. A near-future scenario developed by the company is based on squatting in the abandoned fuel tanks of the Space Shuttle. This modular station would be the first stage of the establishment of the Space Frontier Republic. John believes that he will spend his pension in outer space.

Silversmith also helped to program the system metabolism of Biosphere 2, in particular the heat balancing systems. Huge air conditioners controlled the inside temperature to avoid killing the plants within. For every unit of solar energy which entered the structure, the air conditioners would expend approximately three to cool the habitat back down.

John Silversmith is a true DIY personality, a self-made millionaire who never grew up, and has the means to turn his childhood fantasies into reality. In this way Silversmith seems to have the power to dream ‘effective dreams’, those which, in other words, change external reality itself. His enormous proxy power could be used to change the world for the benefit of humankind.



“They [the dead] never do anything, they just wait around, moon like vegetables”.

OLGA LAGERFELDT (48)

Citizen, Kingdoms of Elgaland & Vargaland

Olga Lagerfeldt is the wise elder of a gypsy family. She represents the Kingdoms of Elgaland & Vargaland. Olga visited the embassy of KREV in Helsinki and entertained the Kings Leif I and Michael I with her stories from the times when she and her family were living as nomads. King Michael and King Leif invited Olga to become a citizen of Elgaland & Vargaland and have kept in touch for years. The kings thought it to be a canny idea to send Olga to represent them in Singapore, and she was honoured by the offer. Olga's participation in the summit is a deep journey into myth. It is similar to “Macbeth”; Olga could be one of the witches in “Macbeth” but instead of stirring cauldrons and intoning dread incantations she lives in a tree house, which was built by her son and her husband. She could also be compared to the character of the ‘Oracle’ in the film “The Matrix”: a cookie-baking housewife with an uncanny ability to know the future. The Kingdoms and Olga Lagerfeldt are a celebration of human creative powers and their passage to the limit, even across it: magic, madness, twilight zones, and the world of the dead are the territories of the Kingdoms. The possibility of contact with the dead intrigues LKS. The ghost stories are, after all, a compensatory product, a reaction-formation triggered in resistance to the more general

social development of a society without a historical memory, a society reduced, in other words, to an aggregate of nuclear families from which little by little the very storytelling of the past slips away. This compensatory product could in the end be developed to a commodity which rapidly could be colonized by the growing (Singapore) entertainment industry.

Olga Lagerfeldt provides the summit with a guide to a post-atomic universe. She possesses verbal knowledge about the future as well as practical kinaesthetic knowledge and control of inorganic matter. She has special access to the dead. But she finds them not very interesting: “they never do anything, they just wait around, moon like vegetables.” She has six children and 15 grandchildren, among them Caroline Eugenie Lagerfeldt – well remembered from her appearance in “One Life to Live” (1968), centring on the lives of the citizens of the fictional town of Llanview, Pennsylvania. The show was one of the first daytime dramas to depict an interracial relationship, drug addiction, dissociative identity disorder, cultism, out-of-body experiences, international espionage, time travel, and underground cities.



“Politics is the highest form of art, this politics, which is the most encompassing, comprehensive force in the whole social world, this politics is art that triggers senses by mental power, which changes images in our heads, gives meaning to life.”

RUDOLF KNEZ (50)

State Philosopher, Dept. for Pure and Applied Philosophy, NSK State in Time

It has often stereotypically been observed that the opposite of Utopia is history: this is at any rate what we find to be the case of NSK. NSK is a synthesis of positive and negative terms, which witnesses the coming together of the future (the non-territorial state of the universe) and the past (nostalgic objects and collections).

During a rare moment of inactivity, LKS saw Laibach performing “Life is Life” on MTV. Besides being impressed with the militarist aesthetics, LKS got scared about the possible demographic outcomes of Singapore. For Lim Kong Soon, NSK represents a concrete dystopic future scenario of Singapore. What if his ‘child’ Singapore becomes the monster which visits him in his dreams? A living creature, no doubt, but an old man only from the chest up, and then the rest of him is a tangle of pumps and hoses and dials trailing behind?

LKS disguises the lack of accountability of the NSK-State; still he is fascinated by the ability of this state – a state which does not give anything to its citizens – to build cohesion and a devoted citizenship despite the state’s absence of accountability. Can the Retrogarde principle be applied to Singapore? Can something be learned from the successful re-invention of the quasi totalitarian

collective NSK into the first ‘transglobal borderless state of the universe’, the NSK-State in Time?

Rudolf Knez was born in the post-war confusion to a German mother and a Slovene Partisan fighter, who earned some income as a supporting actor in the numerous Partisan movie productions in Yugoslavia. The father often took Rudolf to the film sets. The film world fascinated the boy, and he soon started an acting career in addition to his studies of German philosophy with a focus on Heidegger. Knez became incurably obsessed with Marshal Tito and started to collect everything that was available from his hero: archive footage, news clippings, speeches, clothes, and even cigar stubs. He rehearsed Tito’s style of speech and rhetoric in front of a large mirror in his mother’s house, where he still lives today. He later expanded his collection to other dictators as well, from Hitler to Castro and back. Today his ‘Archive of World Dictators’ is the most comprehensive of it’s kind. In the early ’80’s Knez started to give speeches from balconies in Ljubljana spreading his dense philosophical-spiritual sermon to passers-by. This brought him to the attention of the NSK collective, which offered Rudolf a membership in NSK and a position in the Department for Pure and Applied Philosophy. This department operates in a similar fashion as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the Vatican. Knez, who is deeply Catholic with manic-depressive tendencies, became an important figure in the transformation of NSK into a state of its own. More recently, he pondered upon the question of the sense of life – in other words, is there anything in life besides its finite chemo-biological structure? In Knez we find the helper and therapy and schizophrenia all at once. Knez might be a pseudonym derived from a character of the Yugoslav movie “H-8” (1958) in order to hide his activities from his strict mother.



“Here we are citizens, not subjects.”

JOCA MIES (35)

Founder, First Transnational Republic

Joca Mies represents the First Transnational Republic and the United Transnational Republics – new formalisations of old dreams: citizenship without territory, over-lapping jurisdictions, competing governments, global citizen representation. Transnational republics are composed of a multitude of creative agents. The citizens of such a republic do not have to become the same or renounce their creativity in order to communicate and cooperate with each other. They remain different in terms of race, sex, sexuality, and so forth. Transnational republics have the potential of true collective intelligence. They swarm their enemy: innumerable independent forces seem to strike from all directions at a particular point and disappear back into the environment. Their appearance is formless, something like a swarm of birds and insects in a horror film, a multitude of mindless assailants, unknown, uncertain, unseen, and unexpected. However, one can see that the swarm is organised, rational, and creative. It has swarm intelligence.

Joca Mies was born in Costa Rica. His father – a German aviation engineer – remained in Costa Rica after his self-designed airplane crashed near Puerto Limón during an adventurous round trip of South and Central America in October 1971. He was hospitalized for 10 months, five of them in a coma. The nurse who took patient

care of him became later his wife and Joca’s mother. The young family moved to Germany in the early ’80’s, where an inheritance allowed them to live a financially independent life. During this time Joca’s father started to work on a revolutionary design for a light-weight aircraft diesel engine. Joca was talked into studying aviation engineering at the Technical University in Munich. Already during his studies, Joca had worked with his father on the ambitious diesel engine. People in the academic world and the industry laughed at the undertaking as quixotic. Joca and his father weren’t bothered. They knew that they had to build the engine from scratch, a work of 25 or more years. During his studies Joca came in contact with Ashraf Ibrahim from the Engineers for Democracy movement. Joca realised that the democratic system that exists in the Western world is deeply flawed – it is badly designed. While technology has made a quantum leap during the last decades, the democratic system has not changed much since the 19th century. The design flaws of democracy were even reinforced with the rise of transnational corporations, which became more powerful than single countries – without any mechanism to keep them in check. Joca became attracted to the ATTAC movement and other radical groups in Munich. He hosted a weekly informal gathering in his father’s mansion for a wide cross-section of the local scene. At one of the gatherings, the Manifesto of the First Transnational Republic was hammered out – apparently under the influence of consciousness-expanding drugs (according to an anonymous source). Even if the idea was born out of a lucky coincidence, it made complete sense, and it has held Joca in its grip since then, as much as the diesel aircraft engine. The proposal owes much to the idea of open source software development: if people from all over the world can work together on such a complex task as a computer operating system, why can’t people devise an operating system for the world government which is better than what we have now?

Set Photographs

















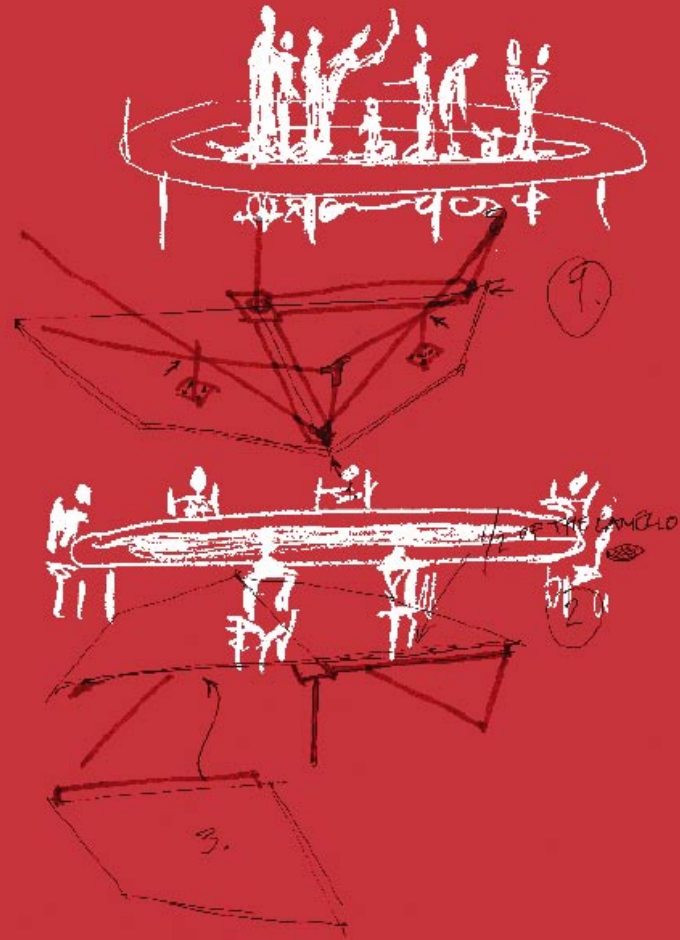


The Round Table

To bring a genuine group together is difficult. A cause or ideal is a matter of passion and temperament. Groups are often regarded as the result of homogeneous and homogenizing forces which tend towards identity and reinforce unities of various kinds. The centrepiece of M8, the Round Table presented by YKON at the Singapore Biennale, is a symbol of just such unifying group mechanisms. The form has been around as long as Homo sapiens have gathered for one purpose or another, from the days of the campfire circles onward. The grouping/fusion is then a system in which, by virtue of constant rotation around the table, everyone is the centre in turn and there are no privileged positions, not because these have been eliminated but rather by virtue of the omnipresence of such 'privilege' which is passed from one participant to the next like the magic objects of myth and legend.

In M8 YKON proposes the need, within unifying groups, for fundamental internal dissonances and contradictions. The passion or impulse YKON calls upon to cement group relations and stimulate internal group dynamics is of a sort that organizers and administrators are normally concerned to neutralise or eliminate. The impulse to laugh has something diabolic about it. Henri Bergson as well as other 20th-century observers sensed in laughter an air of trying to storm the very heavens. At pretty much the same time Charles Baudelaire sensed that the self-display of the humorist conceals troubling, even terrifying, inner uncertainties. Laughter, he wrote, caressing the paradox, 'is satanic, it is thus profoundly human'. And since it is essentially human, laughter is essentially contradictory, at once a sign of infinite grandeur and infinite misery.

There is a symptom of weakness in laughter, a desperate hopping against hope. In laughter we turn all alien, but perhaps a people could unite around something weak but still continuous and obstinate?



The Size and Absurdism of the State

An Abstract of a Research-Report

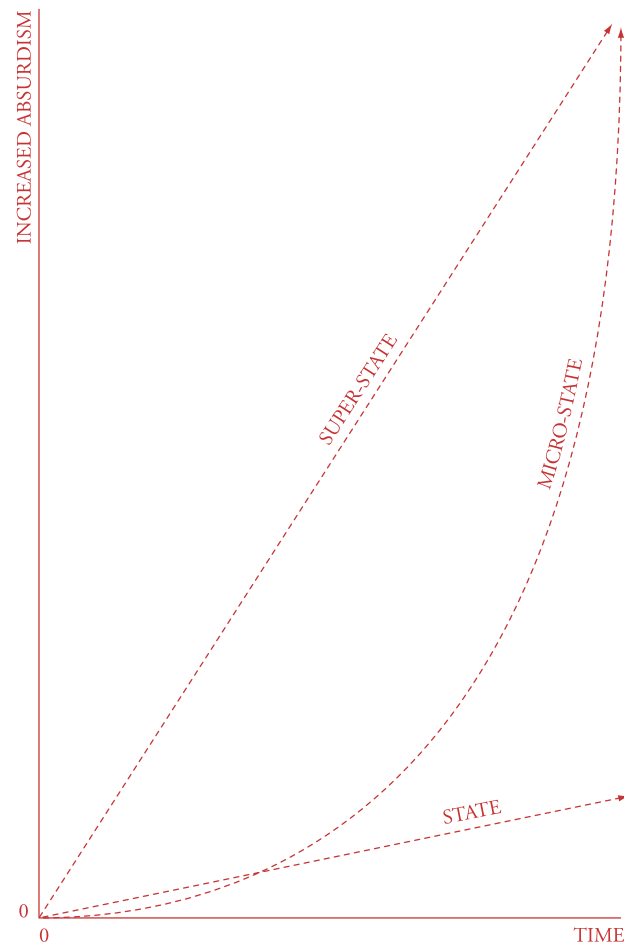
By Petri Sirviö

Director of the male choir, The Screaming Men

The purpose of the study was to estimate the incidence of absurd gestures and the general incidence and significance of absurdism in nation states of various sizes.

The study was commissioned by YKON, following on from our previous collaboration on microstates, and from the concept of the nano-state (a micro-state with no verifiable existence) which I proposed as part of this. This viewpoint has been extended using the methods of participatory observation and with case studies of absurd state gestures in small, medium, and large real states, and in super-states. State absurdity is used directly and indirectly. Its traditional task has been the legitimisation of power, and, as is well recognised, its means are also used to gain operative advantages in intra-state or inter-state crisis situations, or in drastic strategic reversals. The intentional use of state absurdity in entertainment that became common at the end of the last millennium also appears to be retaining its importance in contemporary societies.

The study unequivocally demonstrated that the size of the state affects the frequency of the incidence of absurdity and the prevalence of its intentional use as an instrument of power. A graphic representation of the prevalence of absurdity follows a sine curve; in nano-states absurdity almost never occurs at all, but in microstates it is conspicuously present. In small real states absurdities as an instrument of power lose their meaning, while, at the same time, more covert forms of absurd gesture emerge. In super-states absurdity occurs regularly and is a major influence, but precise measurement of it, along with that of the other main variable (the size of the state), is, of course, more difficult. The study did not precisely define the difference between conscious and unintentional absurdism, but the instances which emerged in the study represent purely conscious absurd state gestures. This viewpoint, along with the mechanisms of indirect absurdism, merit further clarification in continued research.



YKON is a collective working on the phenomena of micronations. Group fusion, curiosity about utopian fantasy productions, and interest in the emergence and drying-up of alternative architectures of society unite members Sasha Huber, Tellervo Kalleinen, Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen, Petri Saarikko, and Tomas Ivan Träskman, who became friends in the aftermaths of the First Summit of Micronations which was organised in Helsinki in 2003. All five members had different inputs in this unusual event. YKON was formed in 2005 in order to organise the next Summit of Micronations on the Brioni islands in Croatia.

www.ykon.org



YKON

Sasha Huber, Tellervo Kalleinen,
Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen,
Petri Saarikko, Tomas Ivan Träskman
www.ykon.org

M8 – SUMMIT OF MICRONATIONS

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Jani Kurtelius, Rupert Singleton

Thanks to all micronations!

SUPPORTERS



UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS
SINGAPORE



FILM

Concept YKON

Director Anna-Maria Hutri

Laughing Tutor Essi Tolonen

Actors Jan Bitar, Eva-Maija Haukinen,
Heikki Herva, Lauri Kontula,

Oskari Martimo, Nastaran Nasirzadeh,
Jukka Ruotsalainen, Masuda Takahiro

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Table Design Mikko Paakkanen

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Production YKON, Maria Lappalainen

Make Up Maria Lappalainen

Set Design YKON

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Still Photographer Heidi Piironen

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Concept, Design & Editing YKON

Writers YKON, Max Rynnänen,

Petri Sirviö

Translation & Proofreading Mike Garner

Print Fabulous Printers, Singapore

THE EVENTS AND CHARACTERS
DEPICTED IN THIS FILM AND
IN THIS BROCHURE
ARE FICTITIOUS. ANY SIMILARITY
TO ACTUAL PERSONS, LIVING OR DEAD,
IS PURELY COINCIDENTAL.