

An Appraisal of Paul Ostroverhy's Work

The creation of the fictional country of Ostroco has been an independent creative project of Paul's for over two years. The scope of this project is so vast that the result is a holistic and detailed account of Ostroco, covering: military and monarchic history, cuisine, sports, environmentally friendly design, architecture, music, language, numerics, heraldry, vexillology, topography, and cartography. From the design of the buttons of the uniforms of the royal guard, to the most elaborate urban planning of some of the port cities, there is no doubt that this project has an abundance of breadth and depth.

Paul has completed this project entirely independently in his spare time without prompt, demonstrating his naturally creative spirit and capacity for independent learning. His world-building has been clearly inspired by the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, Ostroco including a hobbit settlement as a nod to one of Paul's favourite authors.

Paul has produced over 500 sketches, plans, and drawings in preparation for this project and adopted a methodology used by designers and architects to enable him to perfect his sketches by drawing and redrawing the same sketch until he was happy with the result (Paul also used this technique without the benefit of layout paper). His progression from multiple pencil drawings to a final ink piece shows an elaborate use of the sketching methodology which consists of going from the general aspects of the object to particular detail. His masterpiece is a geographical hand-drawn map of Ostroco complete with 64 cities and towns.

Paul has developed of a comprehensive history of Ostroco (dating from 997-present day), including specific histories for each of the regions' wars and border changes, being used to explain the specific cultural characteristics of each region. Each region and city also has its own coat of arms and flag, for which Paul spent a lot of time researching and designing.

In undertaking this project, Paul has developed and honed his research skills, making use of the internet and books. His research has led him to come up with detailed designs of military uniforms for every era of Ostroco (with historical accuracy as to military dress in Europe at the time). His topographical research of European nations has assisted Paul in his vision for Ostroco, the various details being inspired by detailed historical investigations. His vexillological research has also led him to the mature conclusion that cartography is inescapably subjective - as the design of many maps contains some kind of hidden political agenda, even if not immediately obvious.

The Ostrocoonian language is a mix Hungarian and German and his fascination of the Hungarian language led to him creating the names of the cities. Ostroco also has its own numerical system, being based on 12 digits which Paul also designed.

An environmentalist at heart, Paul has given particular attention to the ecology and sustainability of Ostroco; there are no cars, the houses are eco-friendly, and the country is 100% nutella free because of the harmful effect of palm oil farming on the environment.

Paul has also created a number of inventions for Ostroco, many of which are attributed to Stephanord de Sziavotliok, Ostroco's answer to da Vinci. These range from military vehicles to musical instruments.

Paul's self-motivated dedication to this vast project is exemplary of his academic rigour and creative expressiveness. The meticulousness with which Paul has fleshed out the detail of this project is most admirable, and his commitment to research has even led him to attempt cooking the traditional cuisine of Ostroco! It is clear that Paul's imagination knows no bounds and that he has the self-discipline and creative ability to realize his imagination in an detailed and expressive fashion.