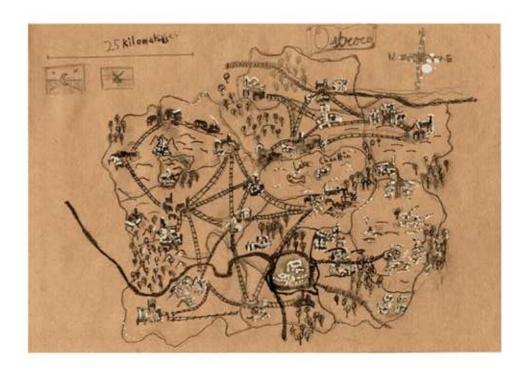


King Aröchin II is the reigning monarch of Ostroco

Macziviano Iczogarniaa



Project Synopsis

Ostroco is a fictional country that I created about three years ago. The project is based on this Kingdom, roughly as large as Great Britain, ruled by King Arochin II. There are many imaginary creatures such as nymphs, goblins, centaurs and many more bizarre beings, who all live with dwarves and humans, in a King Arthur and Merry Old England ambiance.

The land is full of mountainous hills and valleys covered by German and Taiga-like forests; where brigands like Robin Hood dwell amongst mysterious fogs (whom by the way all have their own personalities). The valleys consist of picturesque, little red-roofed towns, like one of those villages you see in Central Europe. It is inhabited by people who speak a mixture of Germanic and Hungarian, with a little touch of its own. Those people live in an era resembling the Viking, Renaissance and Tolkien times – in short, a fable-like country where knights and castles are as common as a modern-day petrol station.

Such is a land, young wild and free, full of spirits, pirates, monsters or even weird, man-eating plants. This project has been to me an excuse to search and study many things that have been an interest to me, may it be the history of flags and old maps, European military uniforms, Castles, and so on.

Those things in which I have found myself immersed in – Tolkien literature and company – has been put into this project of Ostroco, so that over time, a country full of vibrant life and culture has been sculpted and formed by different little projects put together.

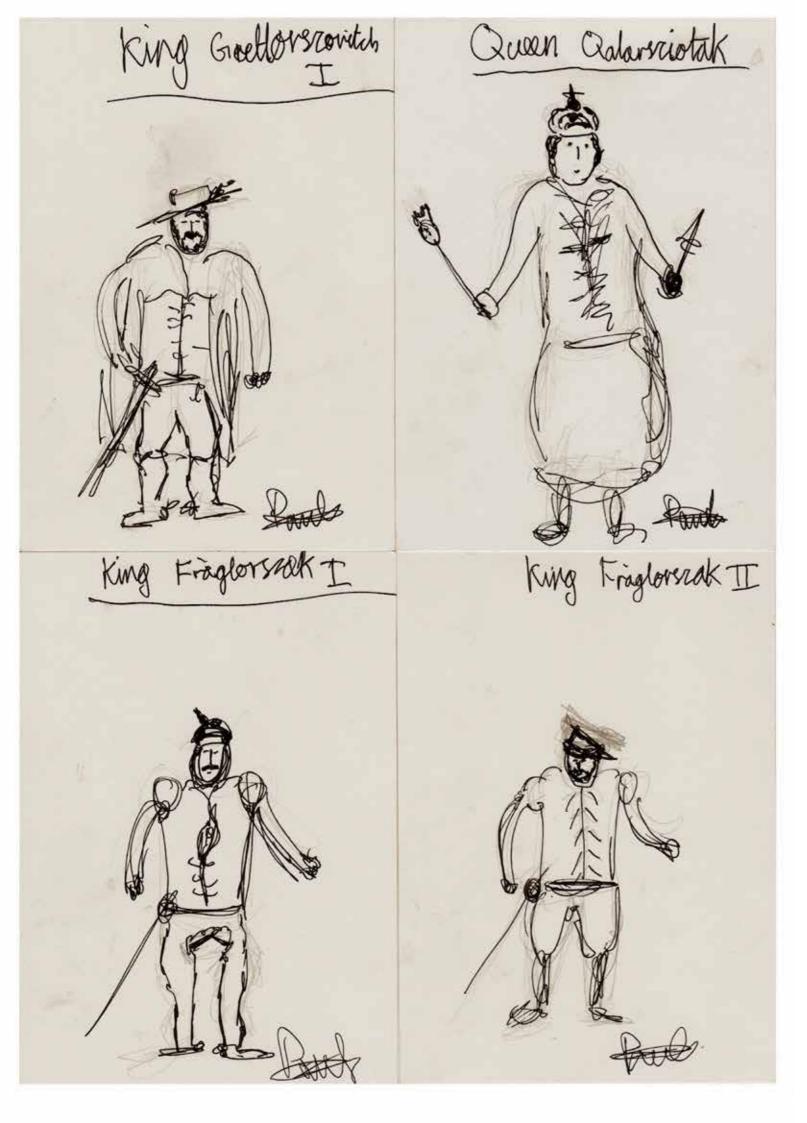
Degd Oktogyariech Fondosznetrek Deгдь Октогуарих Вондозглетрекк



The Founding of Ostroco

The founding of Ostroco was done through a unification of two little principalities, who were situated next to each other, and were separated by the river Takolodar that ran through them. At the time, Ostroco housed many little states such as these - may they be principalities, duchies or earldoms - and so pirates had quite an influence over this little states, as they could gather mercenaries and easily invade lands. It so is that before the unification of the two little states, there was the Crown Prince from Ostrogamia - one of the little principalities - who had married the Princess of Tralorszovia, and they had a son. Yet, whilst the baby was at the coast, a group of pirates kidnapped him and took him over to their little island off the cost of Ostroco, Szartlorszen. The two principalities made an alliance against their common enemies, and being now brothers in arms, they made a campaign in which they invaded the island and took back the baby. The baby would soon become the Prince of the two Principalities, and so Ostroco was founded, with the new Prince being Kondor I.





Degd Oktogyariech Geczelnok



The Monarchs of Ostroco (I)

Ostroco would soon rise to the status of a Kingdom, leaving their former title of Principality behind, and so Kings and Queens were now at its head. The early monarchs of Ostroco - Kondor I and Queen Tungaszanaa II, III and kings, Czorpads, Oswarszs and Daczorzans - all had a single mission in which they wanted to succeed: unite the Ostrokian ethnic people. Henceforth they made many truces with other principalities to be united with the Kingdom, and established many cities and new provinces. There was a lot of diplomatic missions send to the nearby kingdoms to make peace, and there were also a lot of missions inside the country in which druids were sent to have the creatures of Ostroco - centaurs, fauns, dwarves, gwynsarans and so forth - make peace and unite with Ostroco. The country continued to expand, to make alliances and live for many decades until a massive horde invaded from the west all of the continent, and King Gretlorszovitch tried to stop the horde, but they invaded Ostroco, but fortunately at the Battle of Kachrondan the whole game got reversed and Ostroco pushed out the invaders all the way to the step of the continent - which was divided from the unknown continent by a narrow sea passage - and Ostroco became the saviours of the kingdoms!



Degd Oktogyariech Geczelnok

The Monarchs of Ostroco (1)

Ostroco's first King was Kondor I, or more commonly known as Kondor The Founder. He had a talent for having a highly diplomatic mind, and with his help he managed to strengthen and evaluate the union between Ostrogamia or in its own language Oktogardria - and Traszorco - Traszorkovo in its native tongue. Kondor I was indeed the son from the two royal families and therefore was able to make important princely family ties. This resulted in a fusing between the two states, Ostrogamia and Traszorkovo, which created the ethnicity Oktogyar. His rule was long and he produced many laws regarding how Ostroco should be, and with his incredible powers he managed to create a strong, organised kingdom.

Alas! He died at the age of fifty six on a chute in a mountain abyss whilst returning from an friendly expedition to the Dwarves. When the King's wife, Queen Tungaszanaa, heard this she vowed to have her son – now Kondor II – continue what his father had done for the country. She succeeded, as Kondor II grew up with the firm mission of his father – indeed Kondor I had been a philosopher – in his head. Which meant that when he was of age he continued to make massive reforms to the country, founding cities, building castles, upgrading the military – as at that time Ostroco was still a weak state and needed to be able to defend itself from outsiders – and making alliances to nearby states.

Kondor II died peacefully, and so Kondor III was crowned King. He was more peaceful than his father and grandfather, as instead of making military escapades in the environs of the country, he introduced the Spiritual system in Ostroco, which was a bit like the ancient ones yet was more organised, and more evaluated than the other ones before Ostroco was founded, as it bought in ideas from the Western kingdoms. This religion consisted of druids who lived in temples in the middle of forests and mountains, who picked herbs and plants - they being the most skilled Botanists of the country at the time - and communicating with the Spirits of Nature: nymphs, sylphs and such people. Kondor-Orpotrogad, son of Kondor III, was himself a priest who had also reigned with a pacifistic mindset, establishing strong ties and brotherhoods between Ostroco and the other Kingdoms, and in particularly the tribes in the south, which were full of dwarves, centaurs, fauns and even giants. He continued to strengthen the religion, building new temples in cities and allowed the druids - who wore long beards, had laurel wreaths, dressed in white cloaks and smoked extremely strong herbal pipes which turned the room's inside in a fog – to send missionaries to have this religion expanded.



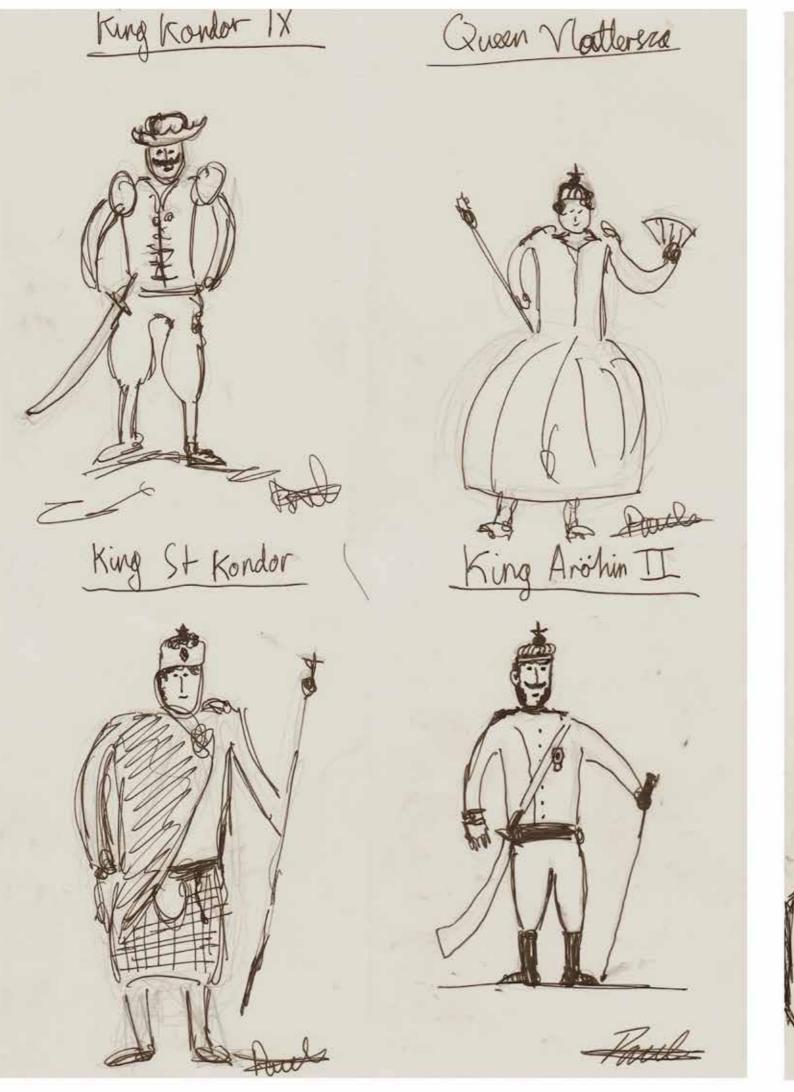
Degd Oktogyariech Geczelnok

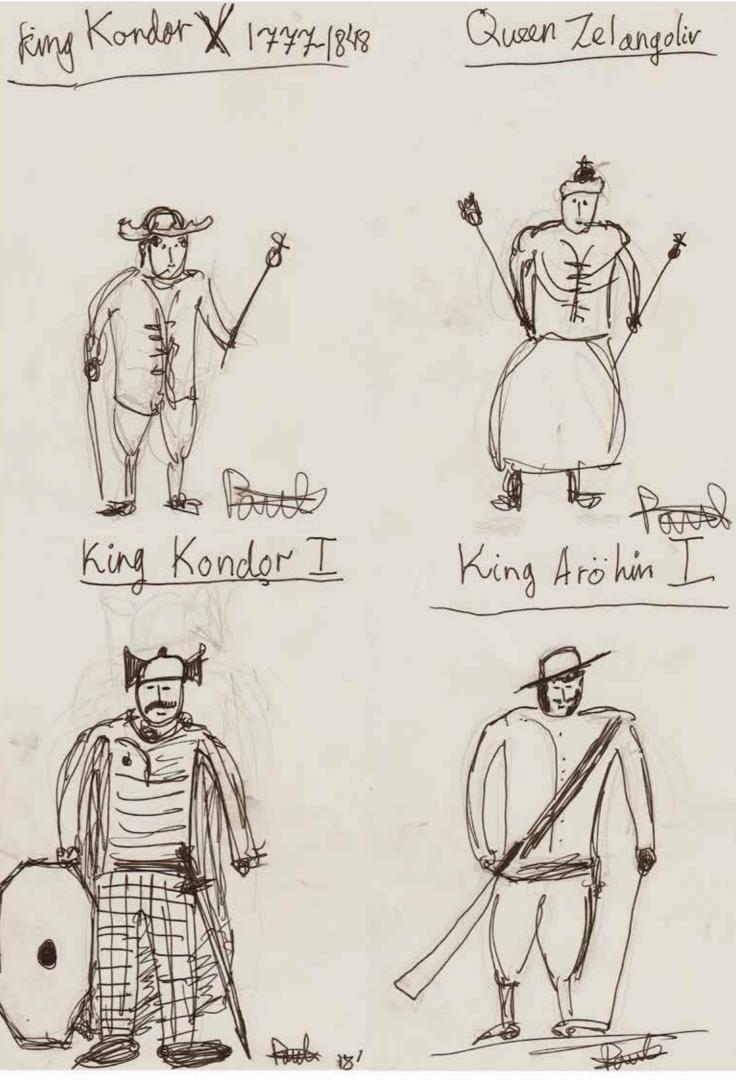
The Monarchs of Ostroco (2)

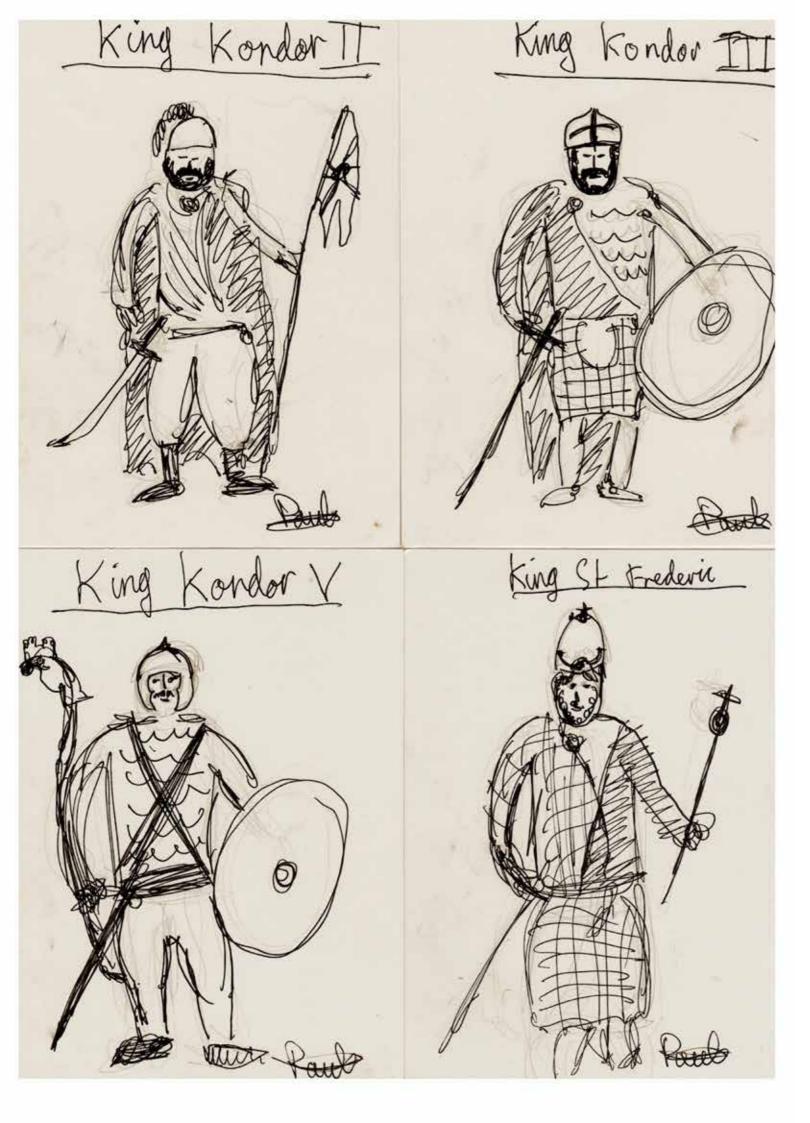
After Kondor-Orpotrogad, came the kings of the name of Kleran, Czorpad and Oszwarsz (There were several of Czorpads). Under them, Ostroco continued to expand, make alliances, peace treaties whilst fighting against the monsters that ravaged the country. There was King Dachorzan who made several military missions abroad to help save the continent falling into the clutches of nomads. Indeed, those nomads – who resembled the Mongolian Horde in their attitude of ambitious expansion – troubled the continent so much that it resulted in what is now called the Sixty Seven Years War, or more commonly known as the Great Contre-Attack.

It was King Gretlorszovitch who had mostly been abroad during his reign on a non-religious crusade, and who had been the largest contributor to end this war. But alas! He had died during the Battle of Kachrondan, when the horde came right up to the doorstep of Ostroco; it was one of the most important battles in the country's history, as it was the turning point of the war. Indeed, all of Ostroco's forces did a massive contre-attack, with its famous and ingenious generals Tokolopp, Kaczmik and Bogroczian as the organisers. Indeed, it was so great, that it forced the horde to flea at all speeds, whilst Ostroco, being joined by other armies on its way went right up to the edge of the continent, where they captured the horde's chef, and so were proclaimed the Saviours of the Continent.

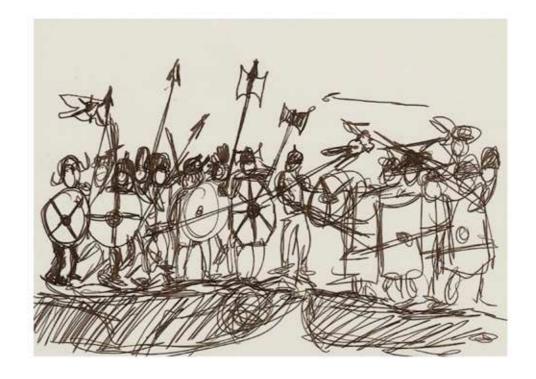
The new King Czorpad III promoted all three of the generals to the highest order of Ostroco, and showered them with gifts, whilst making every officer in the army Godfather of the Crown Prince. Even the soldiers were rewarded, as from that day on they were called the Gerbygdies, meaning the Saviours, meaning that the soldiers didn't have the title of mister, but of Gerbyg, meaning that someone named Argaczan was called Gerbyg Argaczan.







Degd Oktogyariech Geczelnok



The Monarchs of Ostroco (II)

A century passed, and unfortunately Ostroco fell in decay, with sea pirates, coming from the north, pillaging the coast and fearful, unpleasant creatures like gobelins, giants and trolls revolting in the southern Mountains, and in the end there being a civil war, which made King Fredorszich abdicate. The revolutionaries took power, but the new government being so corrupted it finally crashed and made Ostroco plunge in a dark era called the Times of Confusion, Terror and Troubles, where Ostroco got invaded from all sides, with new little states popping up, and tribes claiming new land. But soon a distant relative of the former royal family, called Epreczidak, refounded Ostroco and his descendants - Oszkar I, Czorpad III and Kondor V - took back all of the lost land. After Kondor VI, Czefan I and Kondor VII - King Pavl was the king, who created a union with tiny little states on the borders of Ostroco, and it is said that his era when he reigned was exceptional and prosperous. Kondor VIII created a new alphabet, and a few generations later Queen Klarczenaa took the throne and her reign was full of prosperity and new discoveries. From her, Ostroco became a maritime power, and Kondor X was the King who discovered many new lands over the sea. Ostroco continued to prosper, yet had several wars along the way with one being terrible which caused the country to fall in a famine, but all this ended and so we come to King Arochin II, the present King.

Kondor I Ruled 897-1074
Kondor III Ruled 1047-1098
Kondor III Ruled 1047-1098
St Kondor Ruled 1098-1289
Kondor V Ruled 1289-1238

Rusen Palarsziotak Ruled 1244-1326
St Frederic Ruled 1329-1392
Gretlorszovitch I Ruled 1392-1434
Kondor IX 1434-1516
Fráglorszak I I 1598-1621
Rusen Zelangoliv 1621-1694
Rusen Viatlersza 1699-1477

Degd Oktogyariech Geczelnok

The Monarchs of Ostroco (3)

Yet when a century had passed, Ostroco had fallen into decay, and new threats had come from the North, with invaders – rather similar to Vikings – pillaging the coasts, making the country poor. In addition to that, the giants, werewolves, trolls, goblins and other unpleasant creatures had rebelled in the mountains, and with a war with two fronts, Ostroco fell in a civil war. It was indeed, the Times of Confusion, Terror and Troubles where everybody distrusted each other, with such people like dwarves and centaurs keeping to themselves – dwarves being shut up in their mountain caves and centaurs in their forests – whilst humans rebelled against each other; the agents from the north deliberately lied to the nobles, to encourage the breakdown of what were once great alliances, in order to put in confusion, terror and troubles.

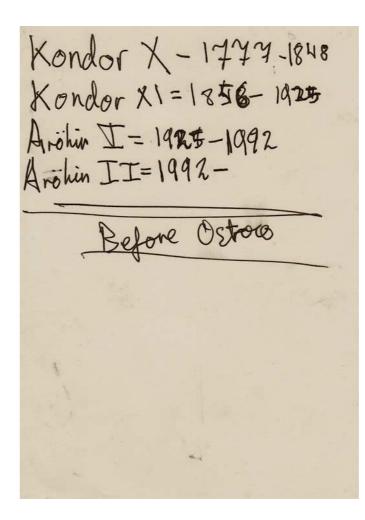
But the final blow fell when Fredorszich resigned and took refuge in a druidistic temple high up in the mountains, leaving no heir to the throne. Immediately after this, there was a coup d'etat, led by revolutionaries, whose leaders had been exiled due to their disobedience and betrayal to the country. The revolutionaries took power.

Yet, behold! The revolutionaries were a bunch of incapable idiots who would rather take a bribe than save the country, meaning that this exactly happened. Rich nobles wanting to be independent bribed them with money so that they could make their own state. And when one was granted that, every other dukedom, earldom and what not split apart from Ostroco to create their own kingdom. Even the giants founded their own tribes, with the dwarves, centaurs, fauns, gobelins, trolls, werewolves etcetera creating their own kingdoms. Now, Ostroco shrank, and the country itself didn't exist any more; neighbouring countries invaded Ostroco and new tiny states emerged inside it. Not to forget that this majestic, yet terrible, orchestra was conducted by the revolutionaries.

The kingdoms that had been enemies now took their chance of making themselves allies to those little states that had emerged from Ostroco, and had made truces, peace treaties and alliances. They even went so far as to station military troops over there to protect those little states, in return for being able to create military bases in their land and make those little states their protectorates. Some kingdoms were even more clever than that, as they made their royal family marry those of those little states, which meant that those little states – I will refer them as that – were now in union and even part of that kingdom. In short, Ostroco was disappearing from the map.

Yet, amongst all this chaos, there were some that still had hope. They were for the monarchy, and Epreczidak was their leader, who was a very distant cousin-in-law of the King. His followers were the ones who were still faithful to what you may call the Ancient Regime, and consisted of faithful knights, nobles, even normal peasants, some centaurs, fauns, dwarves, eagles and many of those creatures who were still friendly with the humans.

With this back up, Epreczidak was able to capture Praklow, the capital of Ostroco, once more from the clutches of foreigners and establish himself a state, which consisted not only of Praklow, the city, but also of its environs. Praklow's suburbs were a particularly good geographical defence as the city was situated inside tall hills which housed mystical forests and many castles. Indeed, with the aid of the creatures, he managed to get the forests to side with him, including the creatures that lived there, and was able to capture some castles that were on the hills. Furthermore, Epreczidak's aide-de-camp Koropotokovorotopokopp was a genius in diplomacy, and with him by his side Epreczidak was able to make little states side with him. Epreczidak even went so far as to marry the only daughter of the Duke, who was in control of the most powerful little state existing. And with the Duke having no heir, and only his daughter, it came to be that when he died – he was very old indeed – Epreczidak was able to unify his little state with his own. Having now a decent state, he proclaimed himself King of all Ostrokians, and the former Royal Family, to whom he was only a very distant cousin-in-law, agreed with this proclamation, as Epreczidak promised that they would not be exiled and would remain noble, yet Epreczidak's family would now step up to take the role of Royal Family.



Degd Oktogyariech Geczelnok The Monarchs of Ostroco (4)

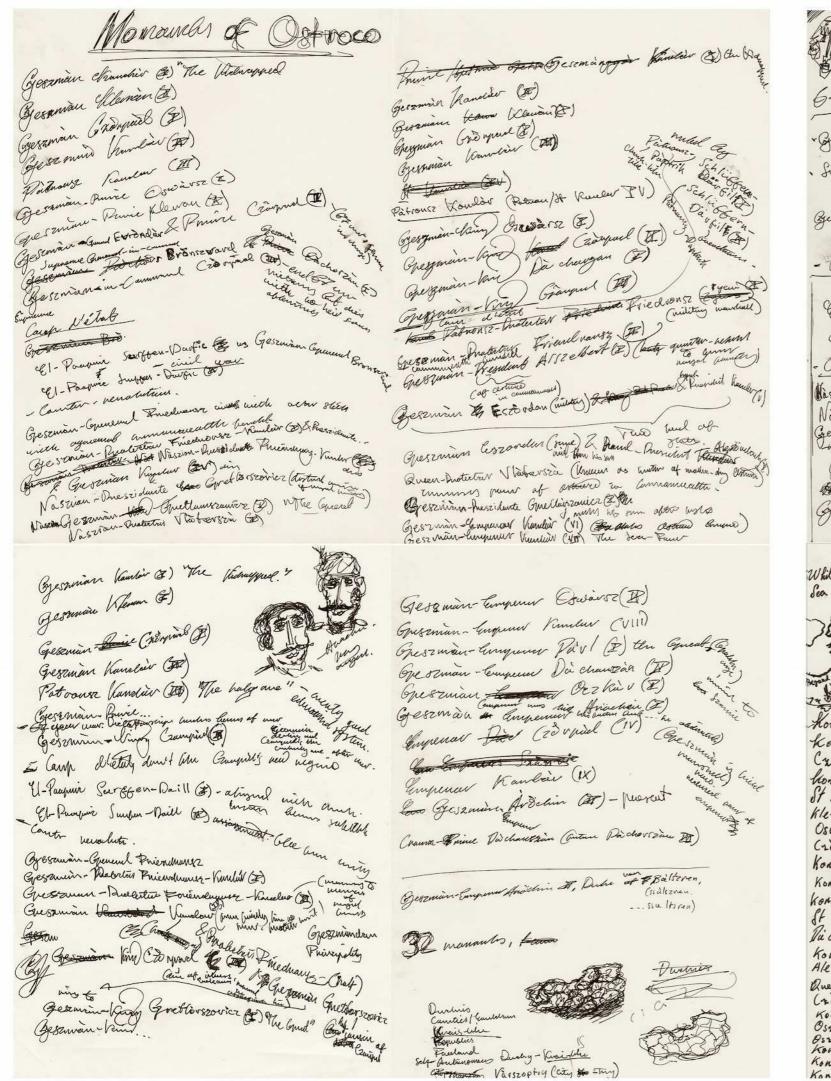
So, with a new Royal House, Ostroco started to slowly regain its lost lands, yet it took almost a hundred fifty years (The revolutionaries had already been crushed, with most of them fleeing the country). Epreczidak's son, Oczkar, was proclaimed King after Epreczidak's death, and he reestablished many of Ostroco's former traditions, and merged Kondor I's philosophy with some of his own, and so the descendants of Oczkar I followed his method of ruling, consisting of unifying Ostroco through means of diplomacy, wars, collaboration with the creatures and royal marriage. As I said, it was only a hundred fifty years later that Ostroco had regained its former glory, and it was King Oczkar's grandson - Kondor V - who finally unified all of the former Ostroco and even enlarged the Kingdom by a small amount.

Once again, Ostroco was a powerful state, and a few generations after Kondor V, Ostroco had a great monarch – King Pavl – who created the commonwealth.

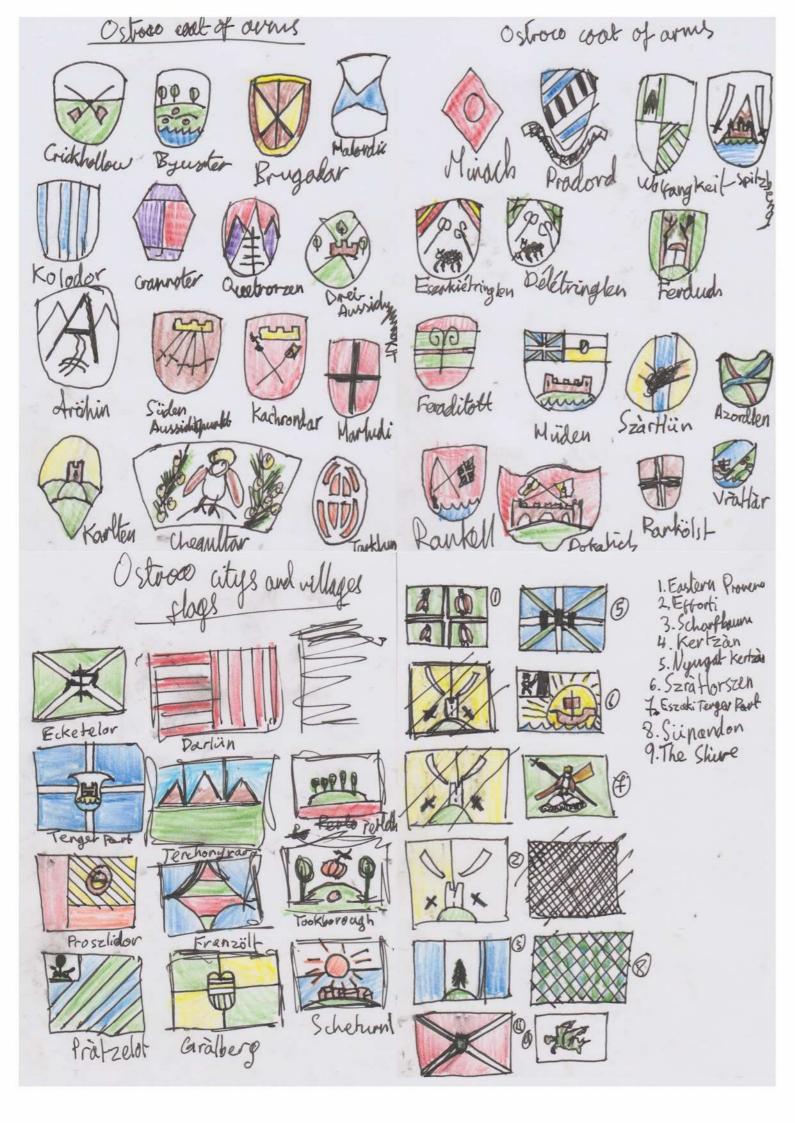
This union consisted of Ostroco and few tinier states around Ostroco, who were all still independent, yet were now all in collaboration with each other. A bit like the European Union, apart that this commonwealth was more of a military, political and cultural union. King Pavl's son, Kondor VIII created a new alphabet based on the old Ostrocovian's alphabet, yet this one was made to suit not only Ostroco's language, but also the other languages that belonged to the two principalities, three small duchies, one kingdom and one republic.

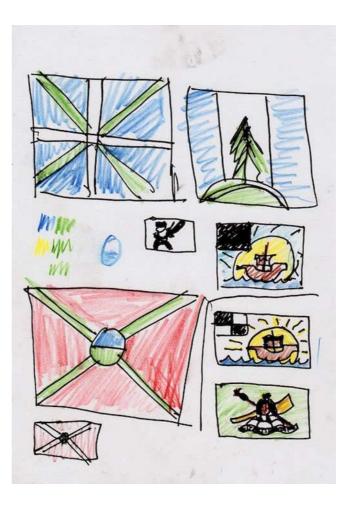
It was almost three hundred years after Epreczidak the Great proclaimed himself King, that the country had its first queen who ruled alone. It was Queen Klarczenaa, whose husband the former King Czorpad IV had died, leaving her to the throne. They only had two daughters, meaning that she – Klarczenaa – would be the Queen. Under her rule Ostroco plunged into a state of peacefulness, stopping wars and focusing more on education, exploration and new scientific, mathematical and artistic discoveries. She was the one who made the great Ostrokian inventor – Szefanord von Cziavotliok – invent new inventions that were of great benefits to the country. And with Cziavotliok's ship design, they were now many maritime explorations of lands over yonder that were never before trodded by the people of Ostroco, and the continent.

Klarczenaa's eldest daughter married an Ostrokian Prince – Oszwarz – making herself Queen and he King. For about two hundred years, Ostroco was fully occupied in exploring places abroad, and they didn't colonise, but instead founded many ports that were part of their Kingdom, a bit like Hong Kong, Macau and Singapore, in order to be able to do trading. There only colonisation were of a distant land that was hardly populated, and was gigantic, with its climate being of a taiga one. This land was an island big as large as Norway and Sweden Combined. The Ostrokians merged with the native people there when King Kondor X was on the throne, and created a kind of mixed Ostrokian, who spoke a very weird dialect of Ostrokian. It was then, about seventy-five years later of the discovery of this island that the present King of Ostroco – King Arochin II – climbed up to the throne. And so here were are today.









Bunderslodliech Karopoczunk oy Cziklernek

Flags and Coats of Arms

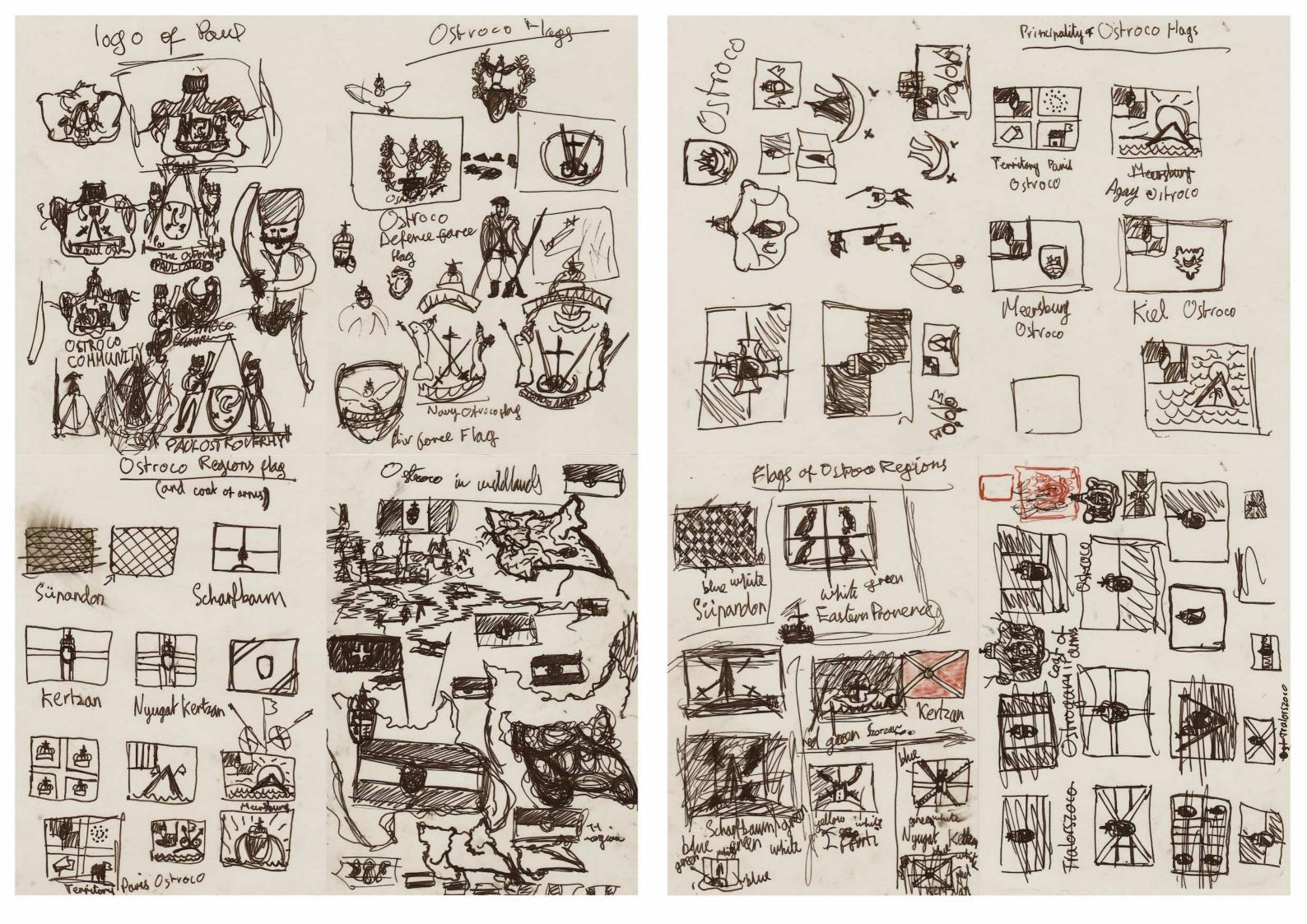
During its history, Ostroco developed many arts, and with talented young artists everywhere in the country, a group of artists started to specialise in coats of arms, flags and emblems. Ostroco, having always had unofficial emblems and clunky flags in its history, now had the opportunity to have impressive designs. The King must have realised this, as he made up an institution for the design of coats of arms, and summoned these young artists to his court.

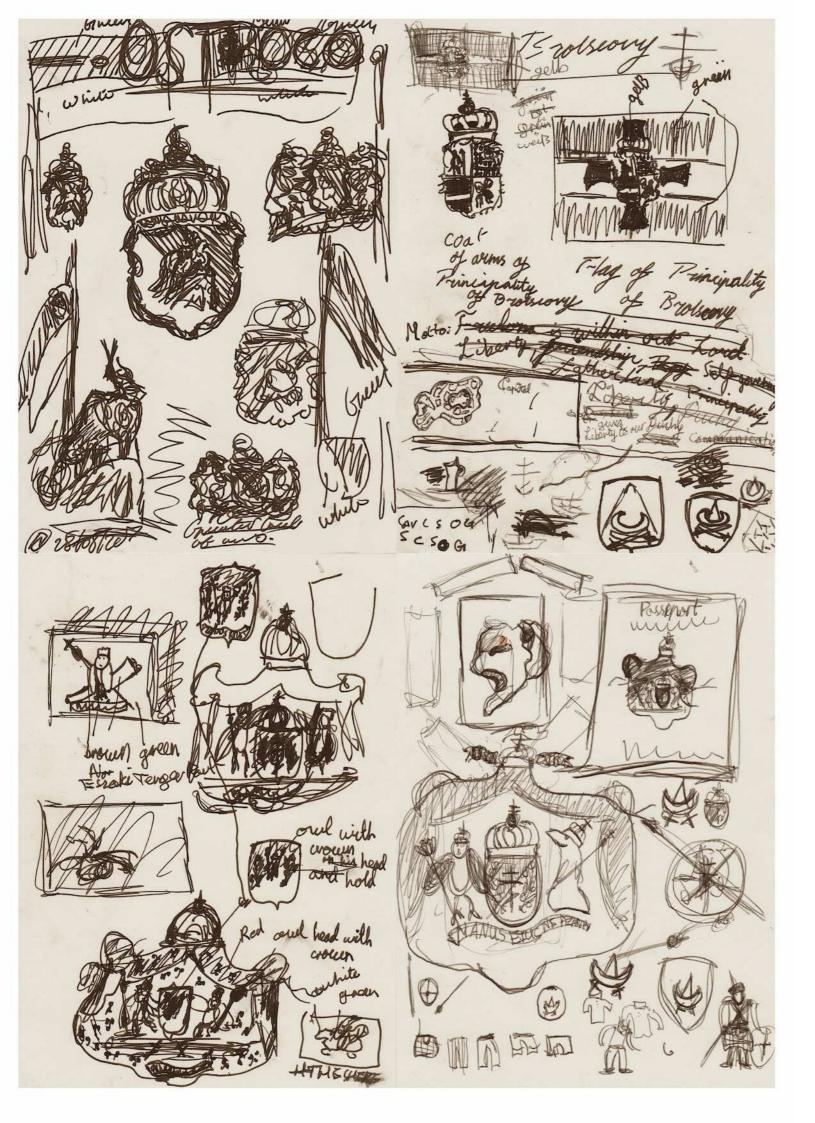
Ostroco has now a vast number of flags and coats of arms that represent not only the kingdom, but its different regions, castles, towns, tribes, institutions and military regiments.

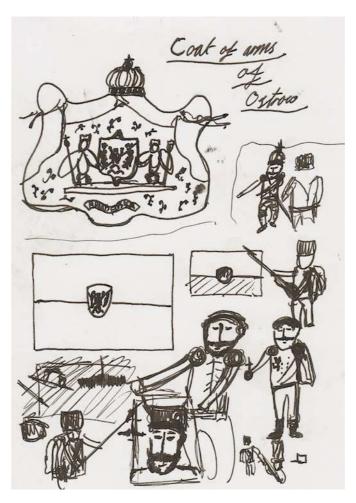
Its inspirations came vastly from the coats of arms and flags of European countries, meaning that a lot of the structures of Ostroco's different coats of arms are based on the structures of European emblems – mantlings, supporters, shield etcetera...

The Coat of Arms of Ostroco is composed of a shield which has a golden crown on top of it to signify the rule of the monarchy in the country. Inside the shield there is a diagonal cut, with the upper part being painted dark green – representing nature and beauty – whilst the other white – white to symbolize peace. In the middle of this is an Ostrokian Gwynsaran – an Ostrokian creature that resembles to a bison of North America – of brown colour with curly horns. This is the emblem of Ostroco, but the Great Coat of Arms has a Gwynsaran on either side of the shield to support the emblem, whilst the motto is written beneath the shield. There are also mantlings that are semi-intertwined with the stags, in the colour of green and white.









Bunderslodliech Karopoczunk oy Cziklernek (II)

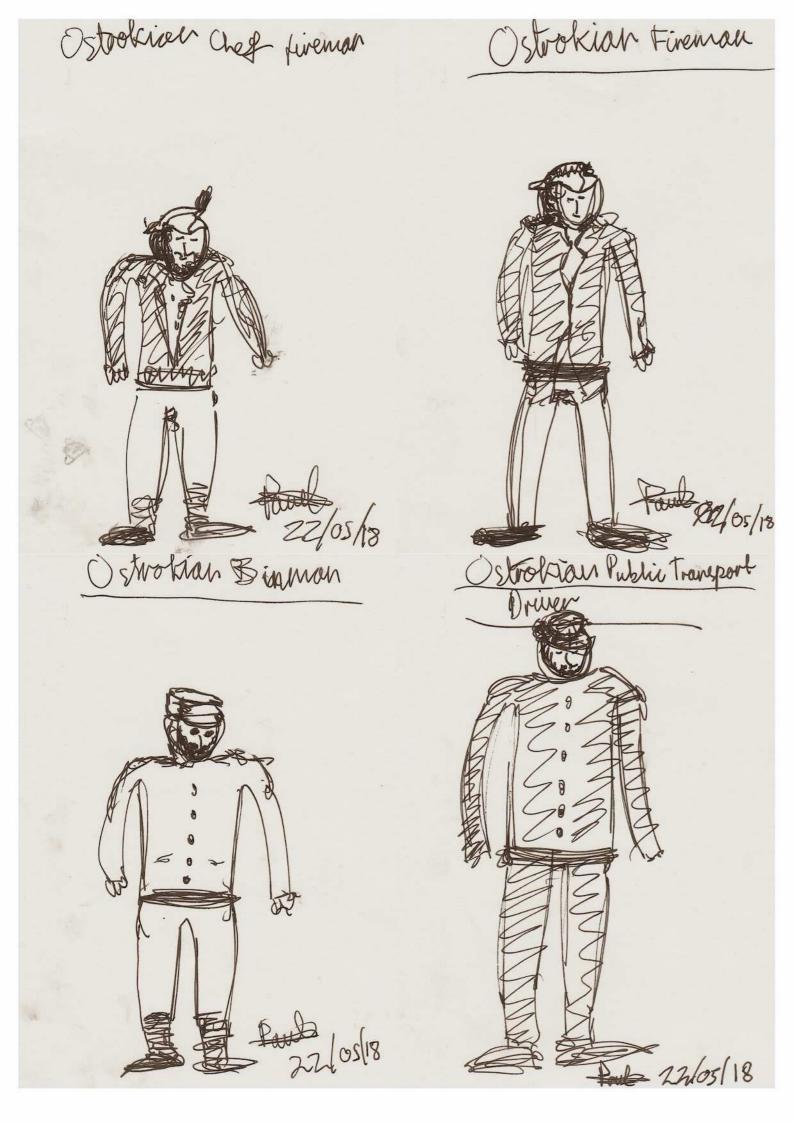
Flags and Coats of Arms (II)

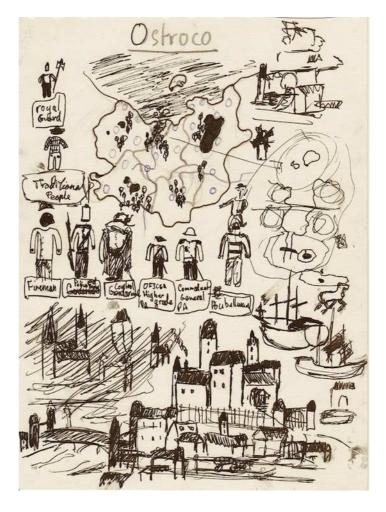
During its history, Ostroco developed many arts, and with talented young artists everywhere in the country, a group of artists started to specialise in coats of arms, flags and emblems. Ostroco, having always had unofficial emblems and clunky flags in its history, now had the opportunity to have impressive designs. The King must have realised this, as he made up an institution for the design of coats of arms, and summoned these young artists to his court.

Ostroco has now a vast number of flags and coats of arms that represent not only the kingdom, but its different regions, castles, towns, tribes, institutions and military regiments.

Its inspirations came vastly from the coats of arms and flags of European countries, meaning that a lot of the structures of Ostroco's different coats of arms are based on the structures of European emblems – mantlings, supporters, shield etcetera...

The Coat of Arms of Ostroco is composed of a shield which has a golden crown on top of it to signify the rule of the monarchy in the country. Inside the shield there is a diagonal cut, with the upper part being painted dark green – representing nature and beauty – whilst the other white – white to symbolize peace. In the middle of this is an Ostrokian Gwynsaran – an Ostrokian creature that resembles to a bison of North America – of brown colour with curly horns. This is the emblem of Ostroco, but the Great Coat of Arms has a Gwynsaran on either side of the shield to support the emblem, whilst the motto is written beneath the shield. There are also mantlings that are semi-intertwined with the stags, in the colour of green and white.



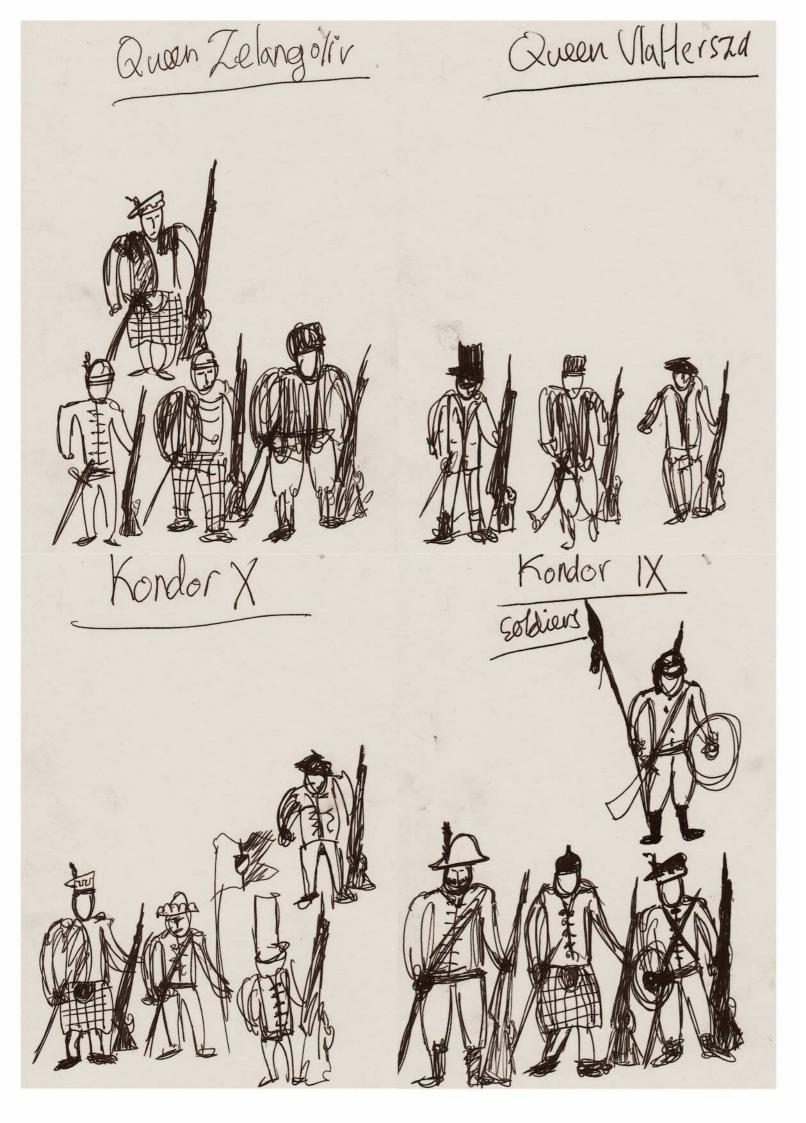


Degd Gyoranacziech kyberniech

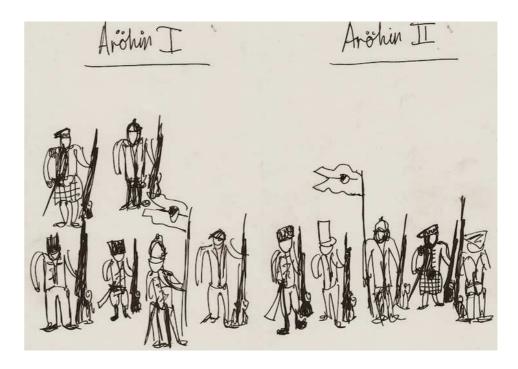
The Civil servants

Ostroco has a unit of people who each carry out a specific function. For example, there are the Mountainous Hunters, rather similar like the Chasseur Alpin, who do not hunt at all but are just there in the mountains making border patrols and rescuing people from any monster, or if people are in danger whilst being in the mountains. There are also the firemen of Ostroco, who are situated in cities and towns and villages, and carry out the job to stop any accidents such as fires or floods that happen, and they also carry out the job of rescuing people and getting them to a place rather like a hospital where they cure the people. There are also in cities – and only in cities and large towns – special people who collect all of garbage, which in Ostroco normally comprises of food, bottles, paper and furniture. The police does not exist in Ostroco, and it is a special unit of military personnelles who carry out the job of guarding places, doing border patrol and keeping order. Yet, the most famous of all is the E.D.B – Ostroco's famous equivalent of MI6 – which stands for Eczornac Deczeroc Bardoczov, whose exact translating can not be translated. It has always lurked in the shadows of Ostroco, though only recently had it become official, though it comprises of espionage units with many agents being send abroad, and they become very active during war time.





Degd Goczarczok



The Military

A century passed, and unfortunately Ostroco fell in decay, with sea pirates, coming from the north, pillaging the coast and fearful, unpleasant creatures like gobelins, giants and trolls revolting in the southern Mountains, and in the end there being a civil war, which made King Fredorszich abdicate. The revolutionaries took power, but the new government being so corrupted it finally crashed and made Ostroco plunge in a dark era called the Times of Confusion, Terror and Troubles, where Ostroco got invaded from all sides, with new little states popping up, and tribes claiming new land. But soon a distant relative of the former royal family, called Epreczidak, refounded Ostroco and his descendants – Oszkar I, Czorpad III and Kondor V – took back all of the lost land. After Kondor VI, Czefan I and Kondor VII – King Pavl was the king, who created a union with tiny little states on the borders of Ostroco, and it is said that his era when he reigned was exceptional and prosperous. Kondor VIII created a new alphabet, and a few generations later Queen Klarczenaa took the throne and her reign was full of prosperity and new discoveries. From her, Ostroco became a maritime power, and Kondor X was the King who discovered many new lands over the sea. Ostroco continued to prosper, yet had several wars along the way with one being terrible which caused the country to fall in a famine, but all this ended and so we come to King Arochin II, the present King.



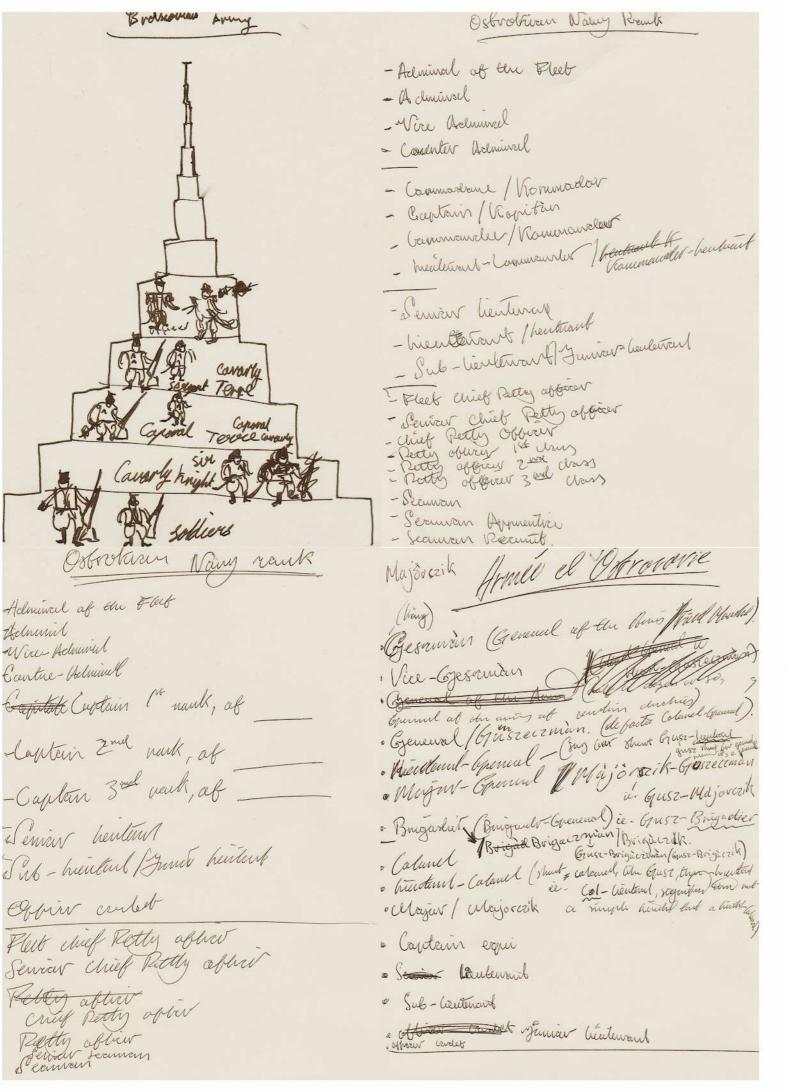


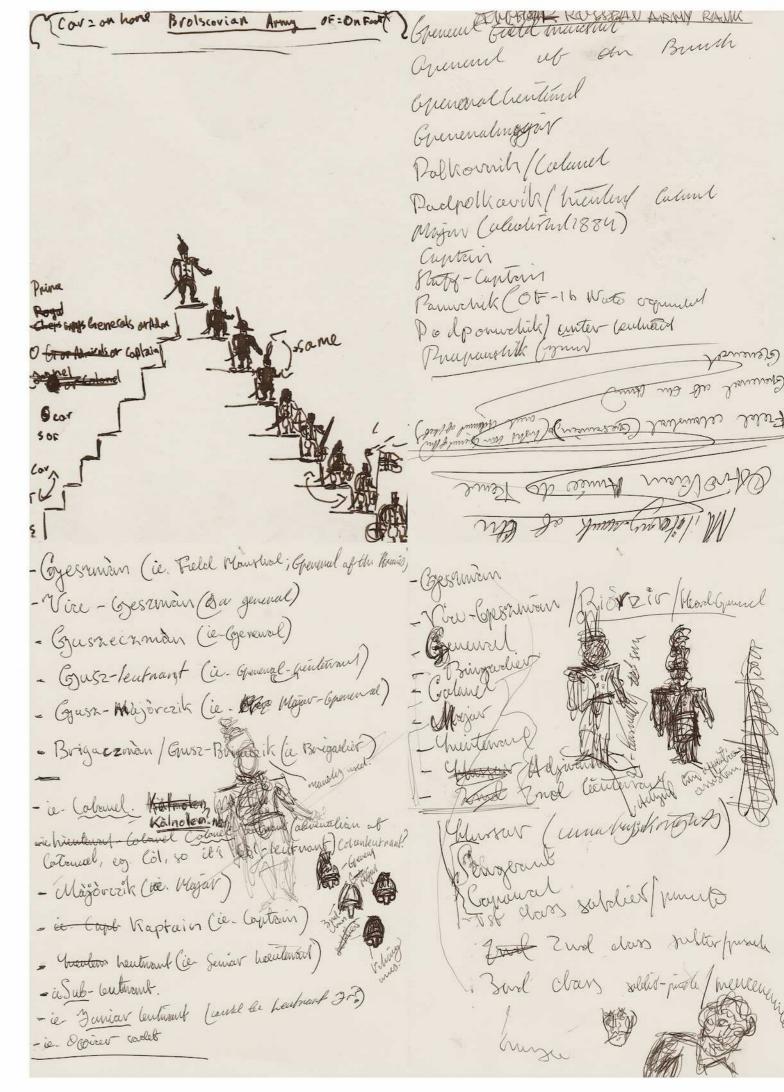


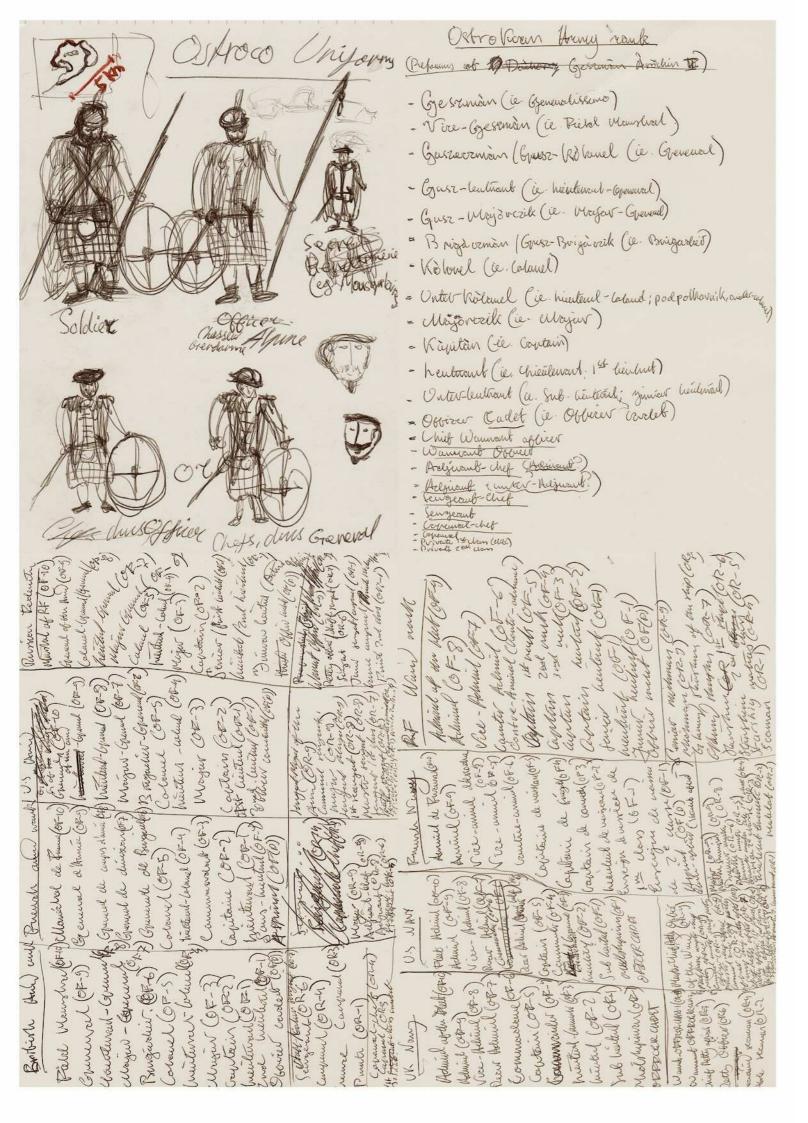














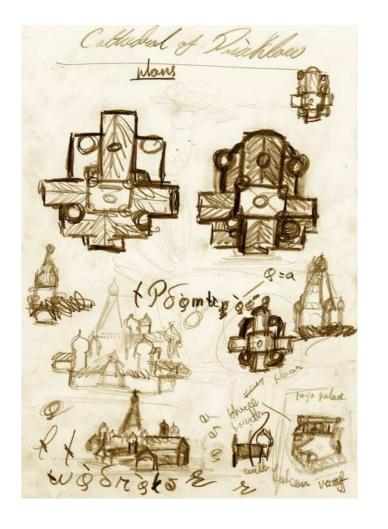
Degd Gyoranacziech kyberniech

The Civil servants

Ostroco has a unit of people who each carry out a specific function. For example, there are the Mountainous Hunters, rather similar like the Chasseur Alpin, who do not hunt at all but are just there in the mountains making border patrols and rescuing people from any monster, or if people are in danger whilst being in the mountains. There are also the firemen of Ostroco, who are situated in cities and towns and villages, and carry out the job to stop any accidents such as fires or floods that happen, and they also carry out the job of rescuing people and getting them to a place rather like a hospital where they cure the people. There are also in cities – and only in cities and large towns – special people who collect all of garbage, which in Ostroco normally comprises of food, bottles, paper and furniture. The police does not exist in Ostroco, and it is a special unit of military personnelles who carry out the job of guarding places, doing border patrol and keeping order. Yet, the most famous of all is the E.D.B – Ostroco's famous equivalent of MI6 – which stands for Eczornac Deczeroc Bardoczov, whose exact translating can not be translated. It has always lurked in the shadows of Ostroco, though only recently had it become official, though it comprises of espionage units with many agents being send abroad, and they become very active during war time.







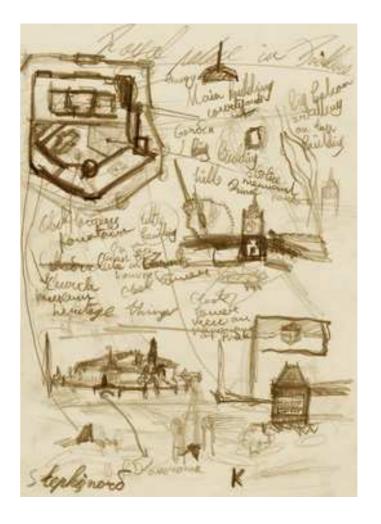
Eczik
Urtipachen
kycelyenok odgy
unterszafen

Architecture & City Design

Ostroco's architecture is heavily influenced by the architecture found in Hungary, Austria and Germany, with cities such as Vienna, Budapest, Prague and St Petersburg being model model examples. Ostrokian cities and towns are red-roofed, and rather are similar to one of those Alpine, Italian little town with full of twisting and narrow paths. Most cities have a design that is highly irregular, meaning there is a lot of winding passages and roads, but they all share one similar trait which is that there is a highly strict height level, meaning that if you see a city in Ostroco, all the roofs will be rather similar, and there wouldn't be any towers or what not that will rise above. There are some cities that design and have very proportional, mathematical design with straight roads, though they are quite rare.







Eczik Urtipachen kycelyenok odgy unterszafen

Architecture & City Design

Ostroco has a unique architectural heritage which dates back to its foundation. Its earliest architecture is of an Anglo-Saxon, Viking, type, yet throughout its history it has been increasingly influenced by Classical Architecture. Ostrokian architecture is heavily influenced by German and Russian architecture; Vienna, Prague, St.Petersburg and Moscow are some of the European cities that have a similar architecture to Ostroco.

Ostroco's architecture, and in particular its buildings are very colourful and have a lot of beautiful carvings on its facades. Some of the cities of Ostroco are planned, and therefore are very symmetrical and mathematical. However, some towns and cities in Ostroco have streets that are very twisty, and the streets and houses are literally a maze, where you can get lost for a whole day without escaping twisted paths, underground tunnels, descending steps and streets that stops at a dead end. Yet amongst all that chaos there is beauty, and each house is a piece of art, following strong classicist principles creating design are rather similar to the houses you might see, as I said before, in Vienna or St Petersburg.

Most of the cities in Ostroco have a fortress right in their center, rather like a Kremlin or an Acropolis or even a German Castle. Inside of this Kremlin-Acropolis, there are many temples, palaces, monasteries, government buildings and even some residential houses. They are generally found on a hill, and so serve as a fortress for the people of the city when there is an invasion. The most famous of these Kremlin-Acropoleis is the Praklow one, as it is the largest and the most magnificent of all. It is founded on an island in the middle of the city, where it is on a hill. It has a wall fortification around it with many white towers. Inside this Kremlin-Acropolis, there is a Grand Palace where the Royal Family resides, of a classical style, yet it has a slight Renaissance touch to it, as most Ostrocovian buildings do; there are many temples and bell-towers, alongside beautiful monasteries where druids reside. Talking of druids, in this Kremlin-Acropolis there is a building in the shape of a square, yet the interior of this square is hollow, as instead there is a luxurious garden full of centuries-old trees where the druids pick their herbs.

Furthermore, there is the Senate and the parliament and the Armoury and some Casernes, or military barracks; all are of a mystical, renaissance, classical style whose colour is bright (remember, the architecture in Ostroco is very colourful, like German and Russian classical architecture). There are also some more tiny palaces where some Grand Dukes and Princes reside, alongside with, of course, the Grand Duchesses and Princesses.

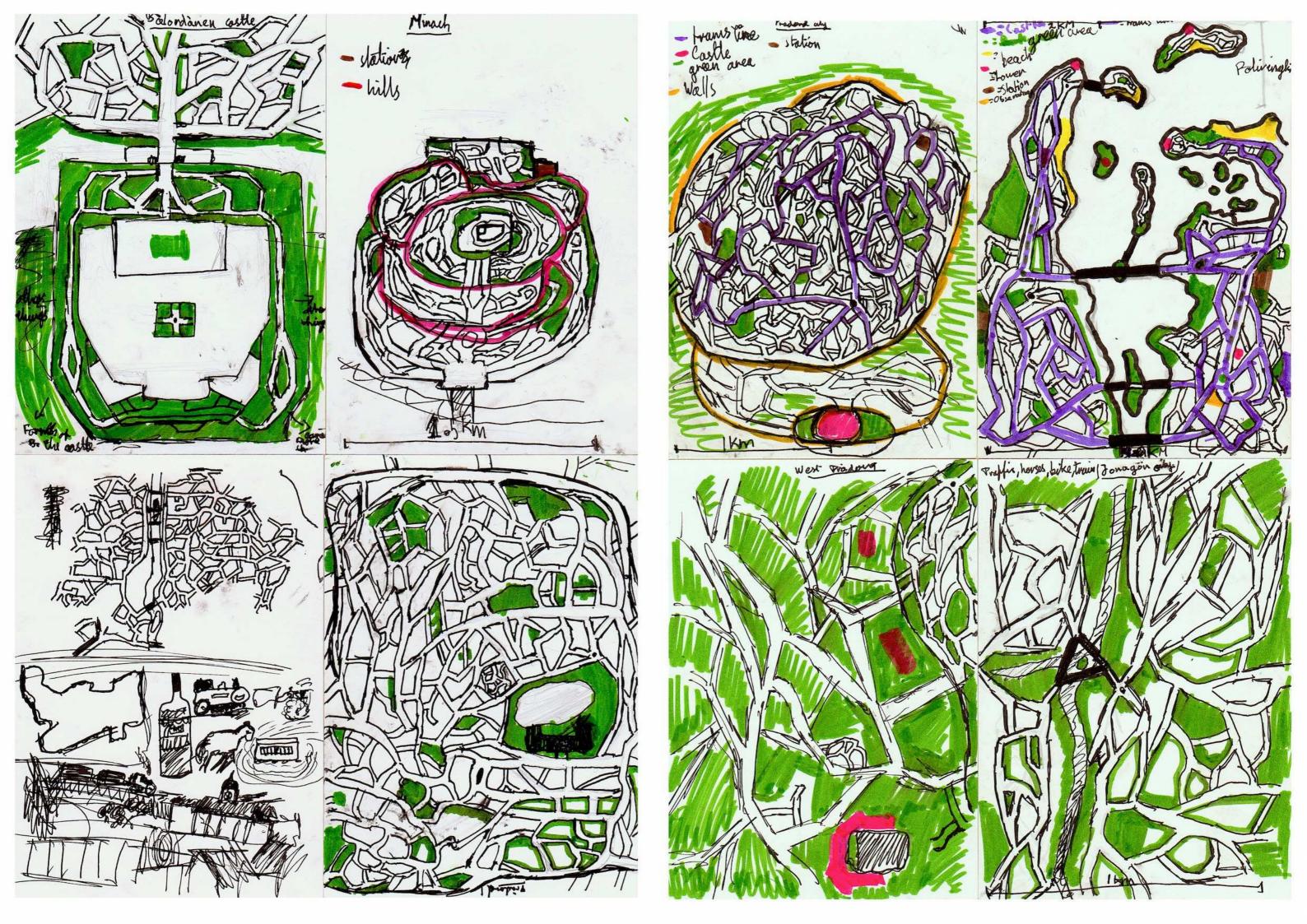


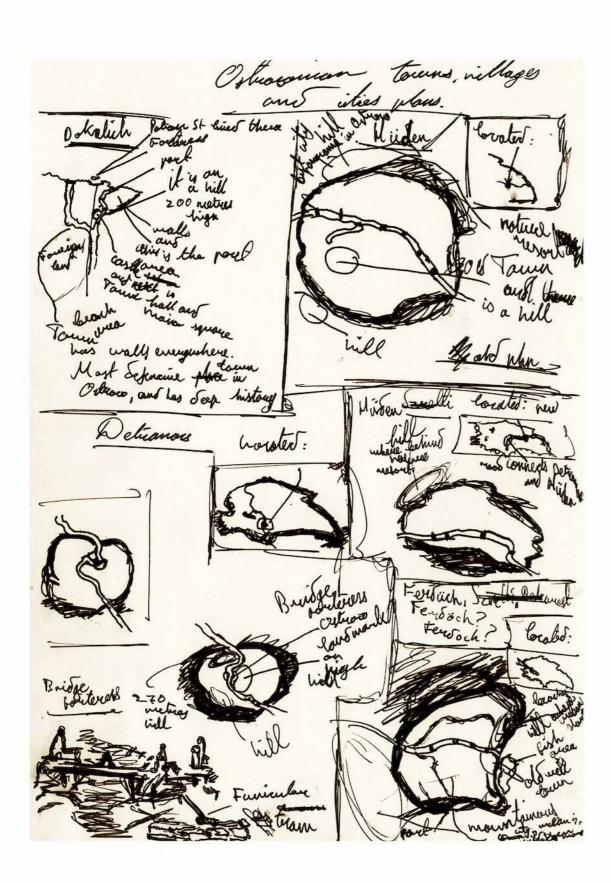


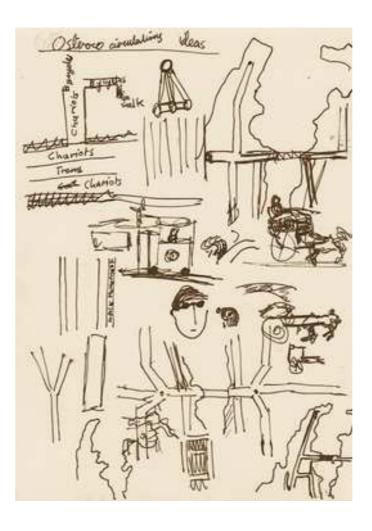
Eczik untaruszafen surnak czovtiech gabarnik

Architecture and Urban Planning

The major part of Ostrokians live in the countryside, whilst about 3/10 of the whole population resides in urban area. Most of the cities are fortified by walls meaning that the city that is inside those walls is highly dense – resembling like one of those Italian towns. The major cities have another fortified area inside the already fortified city, and inside that is the governor's palace, the main temple, monasteries, sanctuaries and the oldest parts of the cities. Most towns are as big as one of those citadel-Kremlin Acropolislike place and so resemble to that citadel apart that there isn't any city that surrounds it. The main Kremlin-Acropolis is situated in the capital - Praklow. It is by the river, on a hill, and the city of Praklow semi-surrounds it, the other being the river. It is there where there is all of the seat of power – there is the ministries, the royal palace, the main temples of the countries, and it is also there that is the heart of Ostroco. It is surrounded by white walls with towers and inside this are many tiny palaces, also some residential buildings, sanctuaries, and even lavishing secret gardens.







Eczik untaruszafen kurnak czovtiech gabarnik

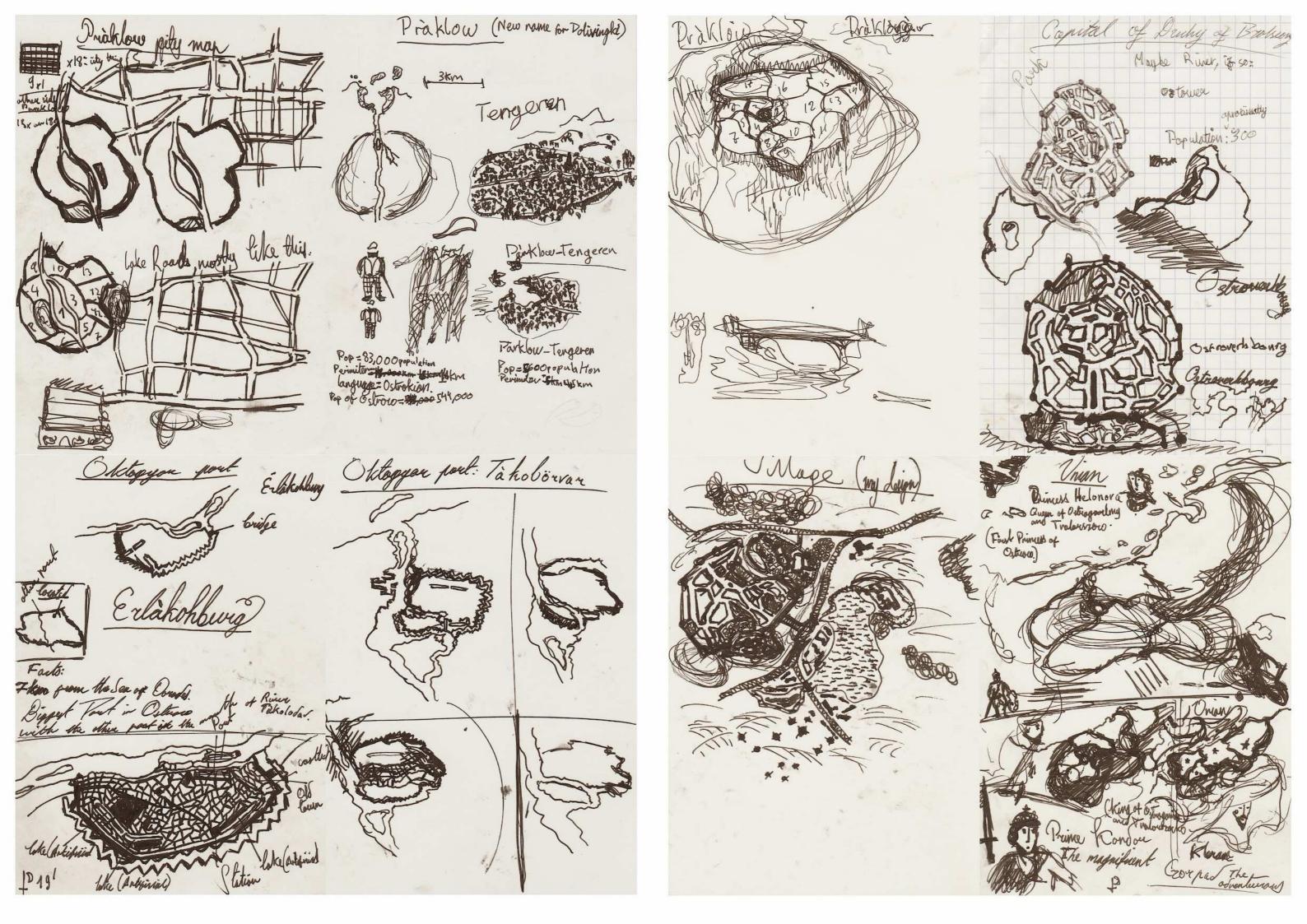
Architecture and **Urban Planning**

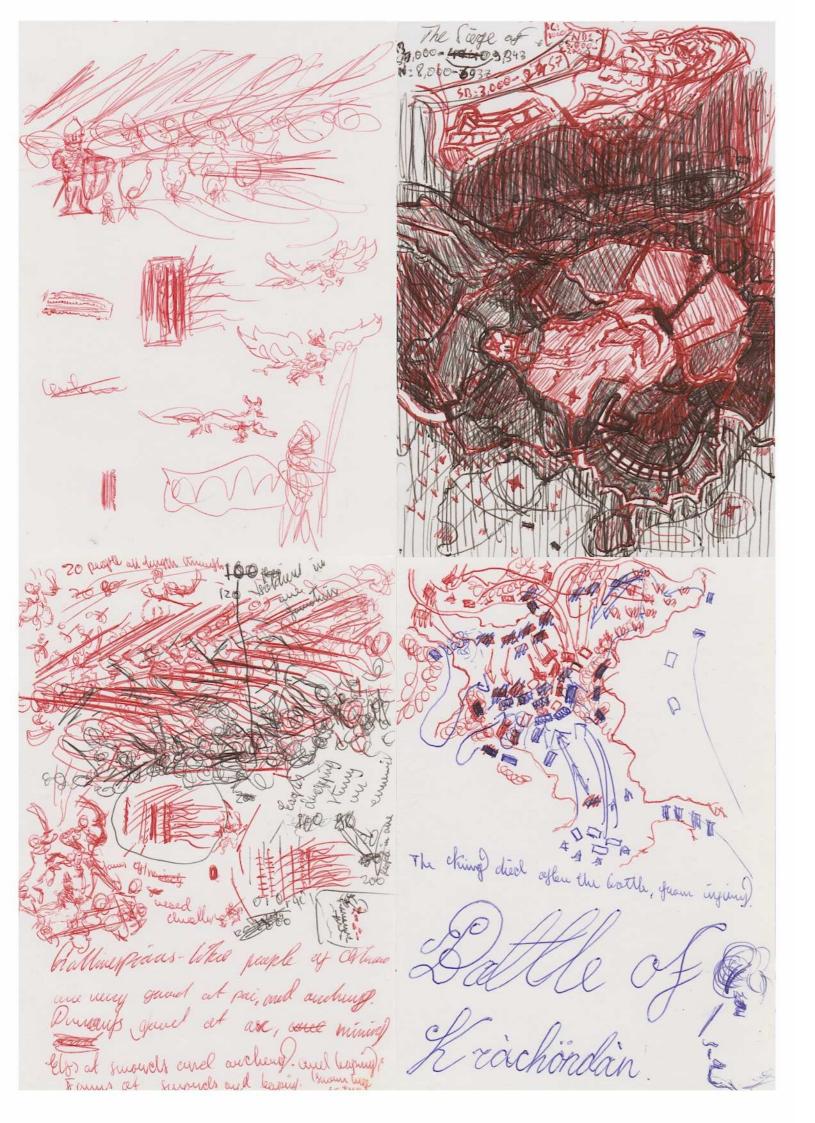
About thirty percent of Ostroco's population lives in urban area, whilst the rest lives in the countryside. Most of the urban settlers live in towns and cities, whose majority are fortified. The other part are mostly people who live in unfortified villages, usually made of wood. In this text, I will concentrate on the towns and cities.

To begin with, as I said, most cities in Ostroco are fortified by walls that surround the city, meaning that there is a high urban density in the cities as most people wanted – and still want – to live inside the city's wall for protection. This results in the interior of the city being very dense, and that most streets are narrow, unable to house any carriage circulation at all, and so being a pedestrian is what most people who live inside the cities do. Inside the major cities in the country, there is – at its center – another fortified complex which is rather similar to a Kremlin or an Acropolis. Those fortified Kremlin-acropoleis houses the city's main cathedrals, temples, palaces and government buildings. To review – most cities in Ostroco are small in size yet highly dense due to there being walls on the exterior of the city, and most of the city has narrow streets, whilst there are only a few large streets which goes up to the Kremlin-Acropolis, home to most of the main monuments of the city, where the governors reside, alongside with the whole local administration.

The towns of Ostroco are smaller than the cities and are way more numerous. Most of them are of the size of a Kremlin-Acropolis, and the residential buildings are jammed together with the palaces, temples and cathedrals. They are rather similar to Italian towns, as the Ostrokian towns are also small and very dense, yet the difference is that Ostrockian towns hae fortifications.

They are some cities and towns in Ostroco which are made from scratch, meaning they were designed before being built, though they are very rare, and most of them were made for military reasons, meaning that the towns which were designed were with a heavy fortifications, with half of the town's population being military personnel.





Duczverniczken Ochenczardobriyaa



Battles

One of the first battles of Ostroco was the Invasion of Szartlorszen, in which the combined forces of Ostrogamia and Tralorszovia went down the River Takolodar, and once at the coast boarded ships and went to the island of Szartlorszen off the coast of Ostroco, where the pirates' resided and held the Princely baby captive. Once there, they surrounded the island during the night with their ships to do a blockade, and then did an ambush on the main port, in which they attacked the main castle. The future King Kondor did a duel with the main pirate – who weren't pirates that are found somewhere in the tropics, but more viking-like – and Kondor killed him. They took back the baby after having made Szartlorszen part of the Tralorszov-Ostrogamia Union – later Ostroco – putting up the flag in triumph.

There also was was the Siege of Baladansk was the next famous battle, when the baby had now become adult and King – Kondor II. The pirates revolted and invaded the north of Ostroco, but at the city of Baladansk, which was perched by an abyss on top of a hill overlooking the river, they came to a stop. There was a battle, which resulted in the Ostrocovians to retreat inside the city's wall, and a month siege took place. In the end, the pirates stormed it, yet as the city was so dense, that the pirates got lost through the many winding, narrow paths of the city labyrinth. The army, with the aid of the locals, managed to separate the pirates, and ambush each of them. It was a great victory.

There are many more that followed, yet those two victories marked Ostroco's start in becoming a highly-skilled country in the military field.





Duczverniczken Ochenczardobriyaa

Battles (I)

Ostroco has had many disagreements with its fellow-kingdoms in its past history, resulting in many wars which contained many battles. I will tell you the two most important battles:

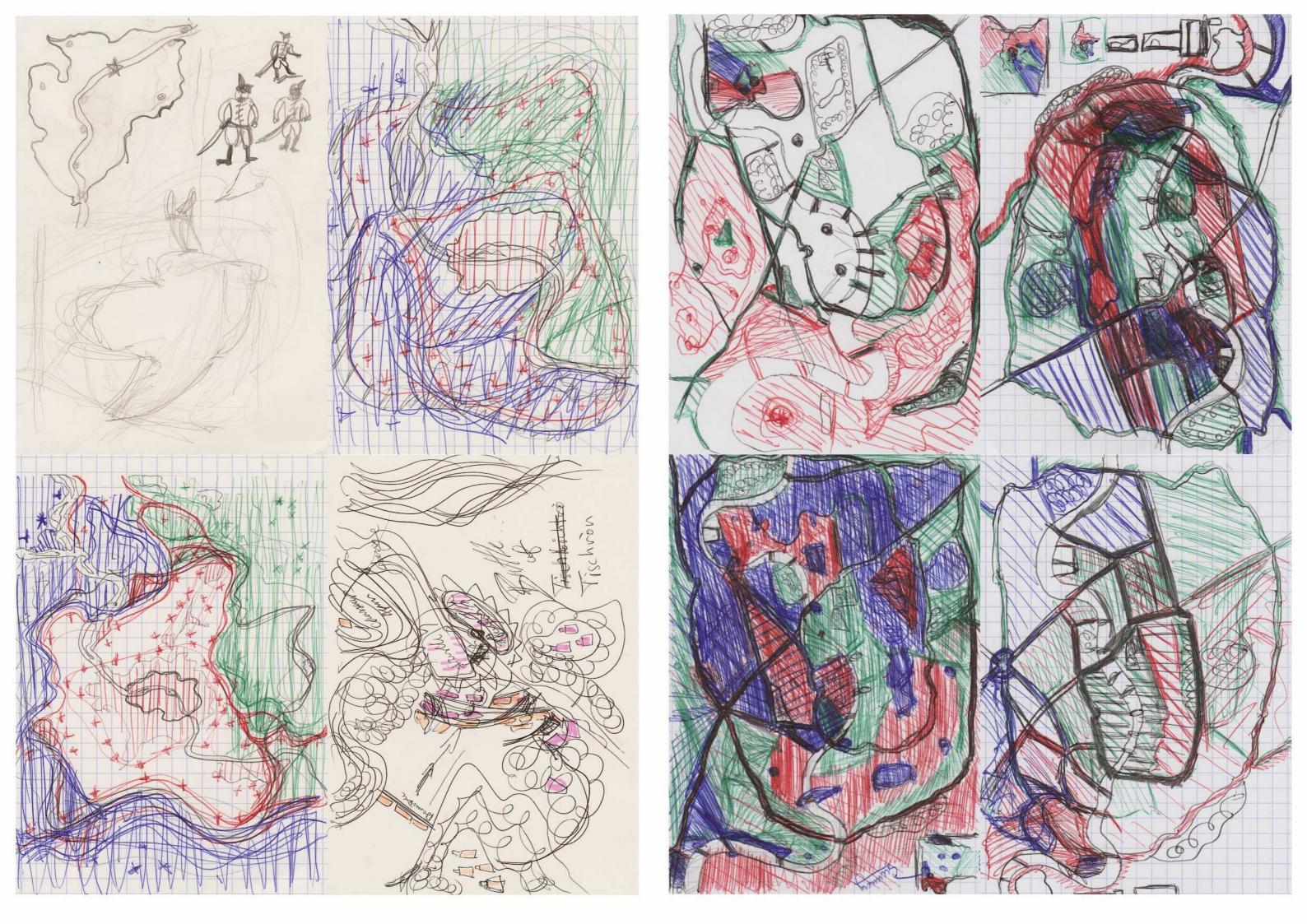
First came The Siege of Baladansk, which occurred shortly after Kondor II was crowned. The Pirates, who had captured the Kondor I when he was yet a baby, had taken the opportunity of the death of Kondor I to revolt themselves and capture the many islands situated in the archipelago of Ostroco, which are thousands of islands by the coast of Ostroco. The leader of the pirates — Goroczok — was the son of the previous leader of the Pirates who had captured Kondor I, and he had revolted to avenge his father, his father being killed by the Ostrokians during the attack at his castle.

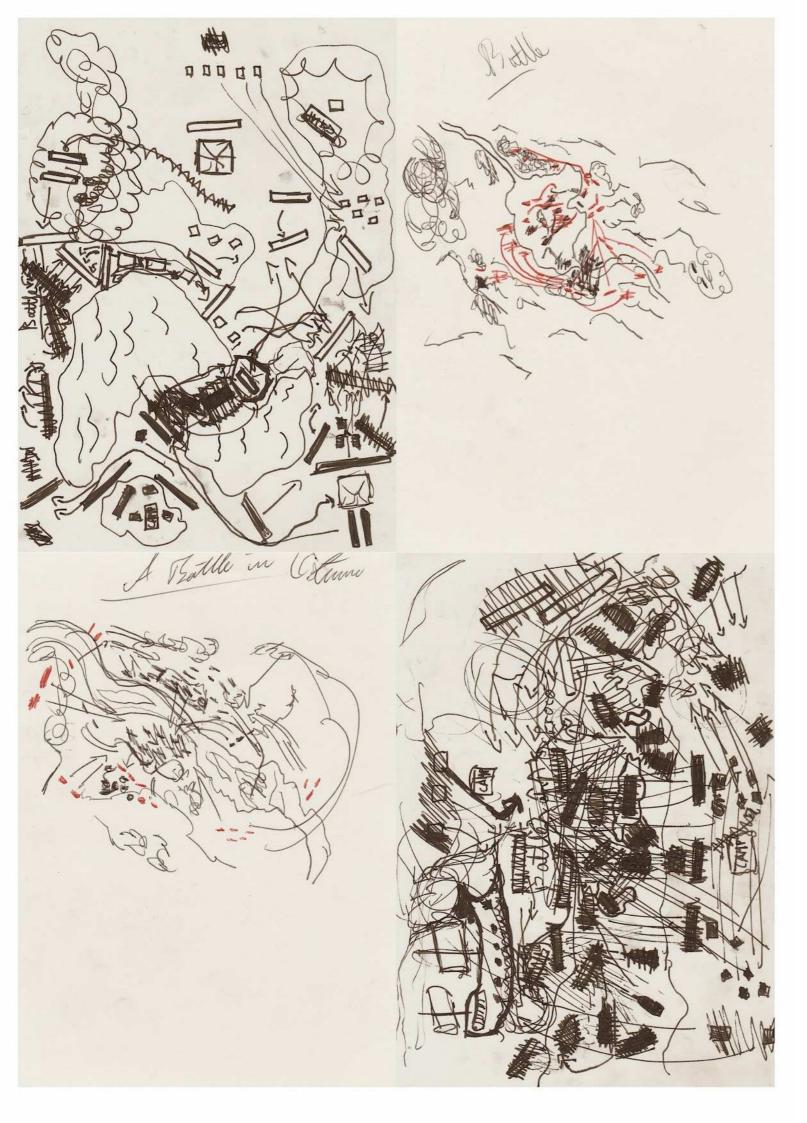
He raised an army of vicious fighters, and had managed to get the trolls, sea-horrors, hags, werewolves, man-eating wild boars and even a couple of giants in his military ensemble. His army first pillaged the islands, sacking the many castles that were stationed there for defence, and took them for themselves, stationing their own men. Then, Goroczok directed the sea-horrors to do a maritime blockade, to make ships unable to leave the ports of Ostroco and to have other ships to enter the ports of Ostroco. Furthermore, he ransacked the ships that were seen in the horizon with the aid of the sea-horrors, who clutched the ships so they were unable to run away.

After many of these ransackings, Goroczok directed his main army to march down to Praklow, capital of Ostroco, yet Kondor II had heard of the news, and with his strong will he managed to pull an army together quickly, consisting of infantry soldiers, cavalry knights, centaurs, fauns, dwarves, panthers, lions and eagles. Day and night the army marched, whilst the eagles went ahead to spy on the enemy. After three days of constant marching, they finally met the army, yet when the battle took place, they were forced to move in Baladansk, a fortified city. Goroczok made a siege, and for a week they tried to get in the city, but couldn't. All this while, Kondor II was thinking of a plan, but he was half-way through thinking of a solution when the giants arrived to reinforce Goroczok's army, having pillaged a city to the east. It was devastating, the giants broke the walls of the city, and the army of Goroczok invaded. All men of Baladansk had been turned into soldiers, and so there was a massive battle that day, where massacres took place in the streets. The women and children were high up in the castle on the hill, and so were still protected. And then, eureka! Kondor II had the plan.

You see, Baladansk has many twisted alleys and the whole town is a labyrinth, and so he lured the enemy all the way to the heart of the city and then enclosed them, and that night, there was an ambush on Goroczok's army. From every window, out came the Ostrokian army, and even out of the ground, as some of the Ostrokians had ambushed from the sewers.

Kondor II stated to spare most of Goroczok's army, yet the foul creatures like werewolves, gobelins and hags were most killed, yet most of the gobelins fled (though many have not been able to get out of the city for many years, starting a rumour that the sewers were haunted by them) and a part of the werewolves turned kind. Before too much blood was shed, Goroczok was captured and the army surrendered. Kondor II had won, and Ostroco was saved.







Battles (II)

The next major battle was during the Great Contre-Attack, or 67 years war. It was indeed, the Battle of Kachrondan, which turned the whole war when the Horde had been winning. The Horde had advanced all the way to Ostroco, capturing many kingdoms part of the continent, yet at the Battle of Kachrondan, the whole game did a salto, as indeed after that battle the horde had fled and been pushed all the way to the edge of the continent.

It had happened that the King Gretlorszovitch was the head of the army, and had been crowned king whilst the war had already started. Gletlorszovitch plan for the defeat of the horde was to lure the enemy in, and so it was why the Horde had advanced all the way to Ostroco. The King also promoted Kaczmik to general status, alongside Tokolopp, who had been general since the start of the war, and he made each general have an army. He then summoned a young, talented officer of the name of Bogroczian to organise Ostroco's defensive tactics, placing troops at the frontier,

and stationing soldiers in the castles, further fortifying the cities, and with his help Ostroco was ready to receive the Horde. Indeed, when the Horde did arrive half of its army was behind, ravaging the conquered kingdoms, whilst the leader of the horde raised the remaining warriors to his side for a massive invasion of Ostroco and its neighbouring countries.

Alas! Providence had been unkind to them, as it made the leader invade Ostroco by going through a narrow valley with a river which was right in the middles of the Southern Mountains. Spies had informed Gretlorszovitch of the enemy's position, and so he made the dwarves and the Oomzoroks – fierce cavalry warriors who lived in the mountains – ravage the large army by ambushing it whilst the army was still in the mountains. This meant that when it did come out of the mountains and was now in Ostroco, much of its warriors were haggard from lack of sleep and anxiety, and hunger, as whilst the dwarves did a blockade the Oomzoroks ambushed form either sides and destroyed the Horde's stocks of food.

The horde was now in the heart of Ostroco, yet it didn't go far, as Gretlorszovitch's army was in their way. It consisted of Tokolopp's and Kaczmik's army – Bogroczian's army were dispersed all about Ostroco – had stationed around the Kachrondan Castle, which was situated by a little river, and had waited for the enemy to arrive. When the enemy did arrive, the following day there was a large battle in which the Ostrokian's infantry – consisting of dwarves and men – stood there with their shields in their own Ostrokian phalanx. They stopped the Horde from advancing and then the cavalry attacked on the Horde's side, alongside with the centaurs who showered arrows at the enemy. The fauns then leapt forward breaking the structure of the army, whilst the Oomzoroks, on their half-goat, half-buffalo animal, came from behind, sounding their horns, swishing their sabres and shouting ayayayaya! Yet the final blow came when the eagles dropped down huge stones on the horde. Now, the cavalry of Ostroco – with Gretlorszovitch – rushed down towards where the leader was, as to capture him, but during the process the King mortally wounded himself, though the Ostrokians had won the battle.

Whilst the remaining Horde fled with their leader, being pursued by the Oomzoroks, Centaurs and Cavalry, Gretlorszovitch died in the Royal Tent. His last moments had been when he clutched Tokolopp's and Kaczmik's hands, muttering to "Hold everything, save Ostroco and free the kingdoms!"

Such was the Battle of Kachrondan, which marked the turning point of the war, yet it was another fifteen years until the continent was at last freed from the horde, and when that time came, Czorpad III – the new king – had made Tokolopp, Kaczmik and Bogroczian heroes of the war.

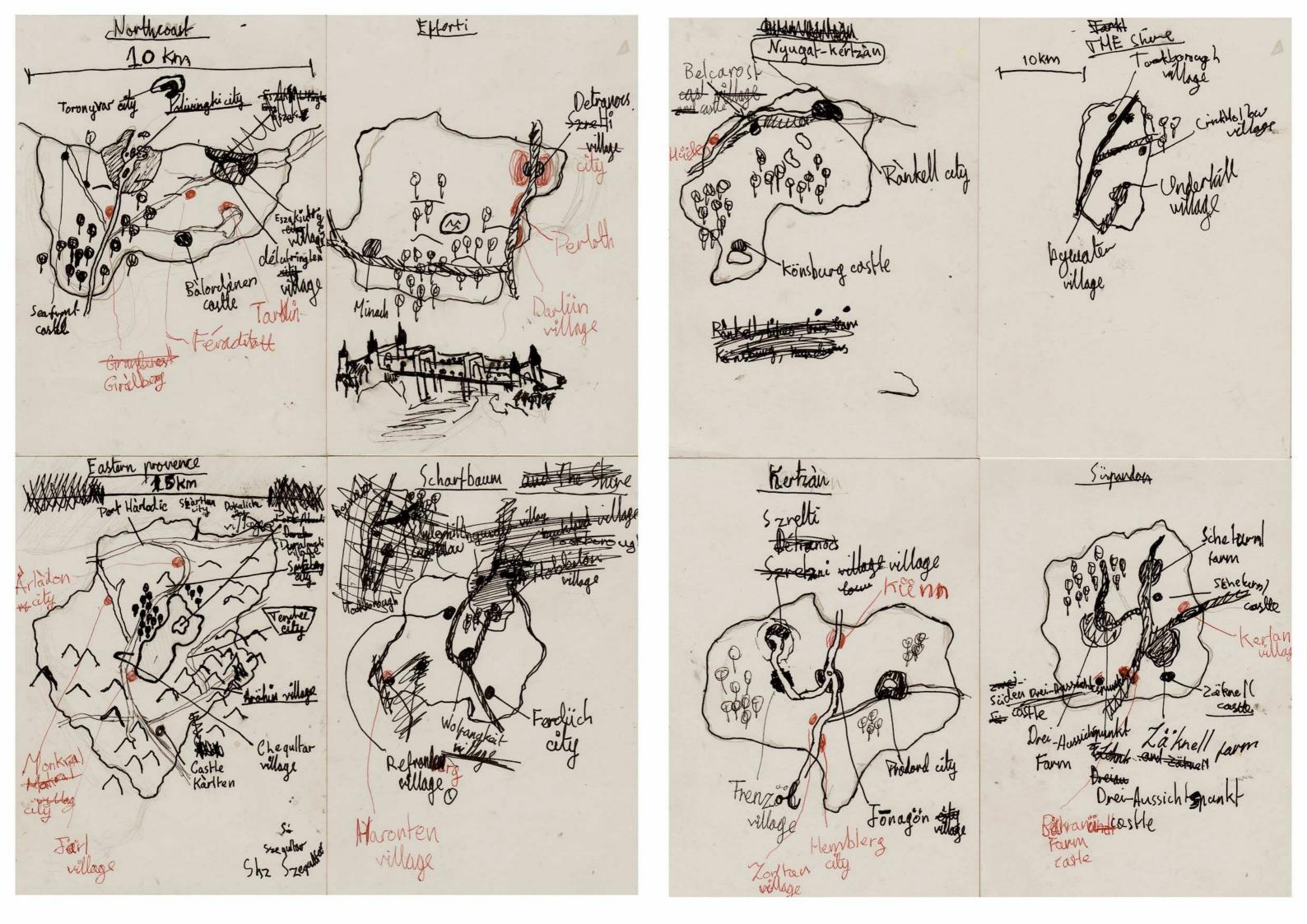


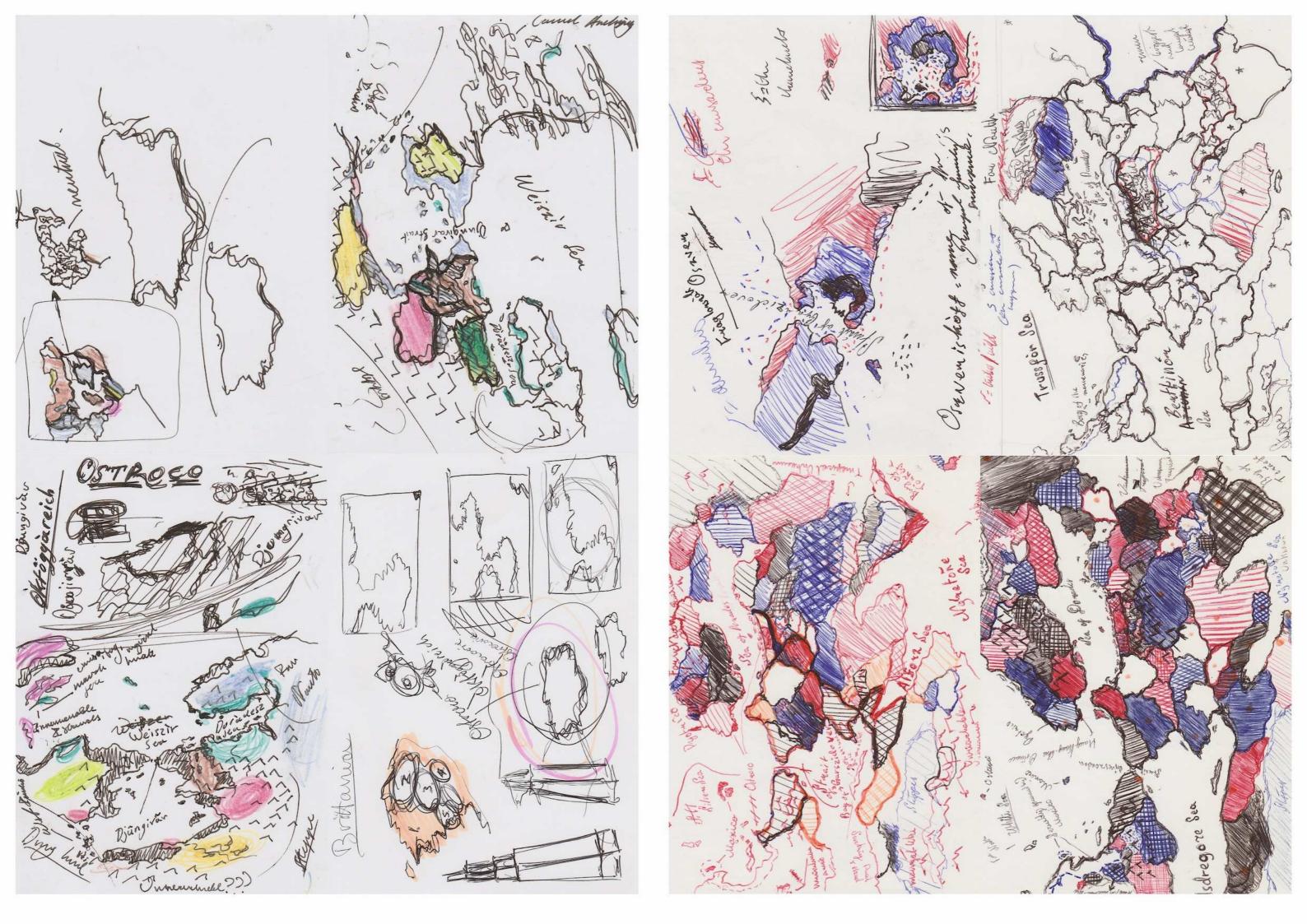


Degd Gubrovcza

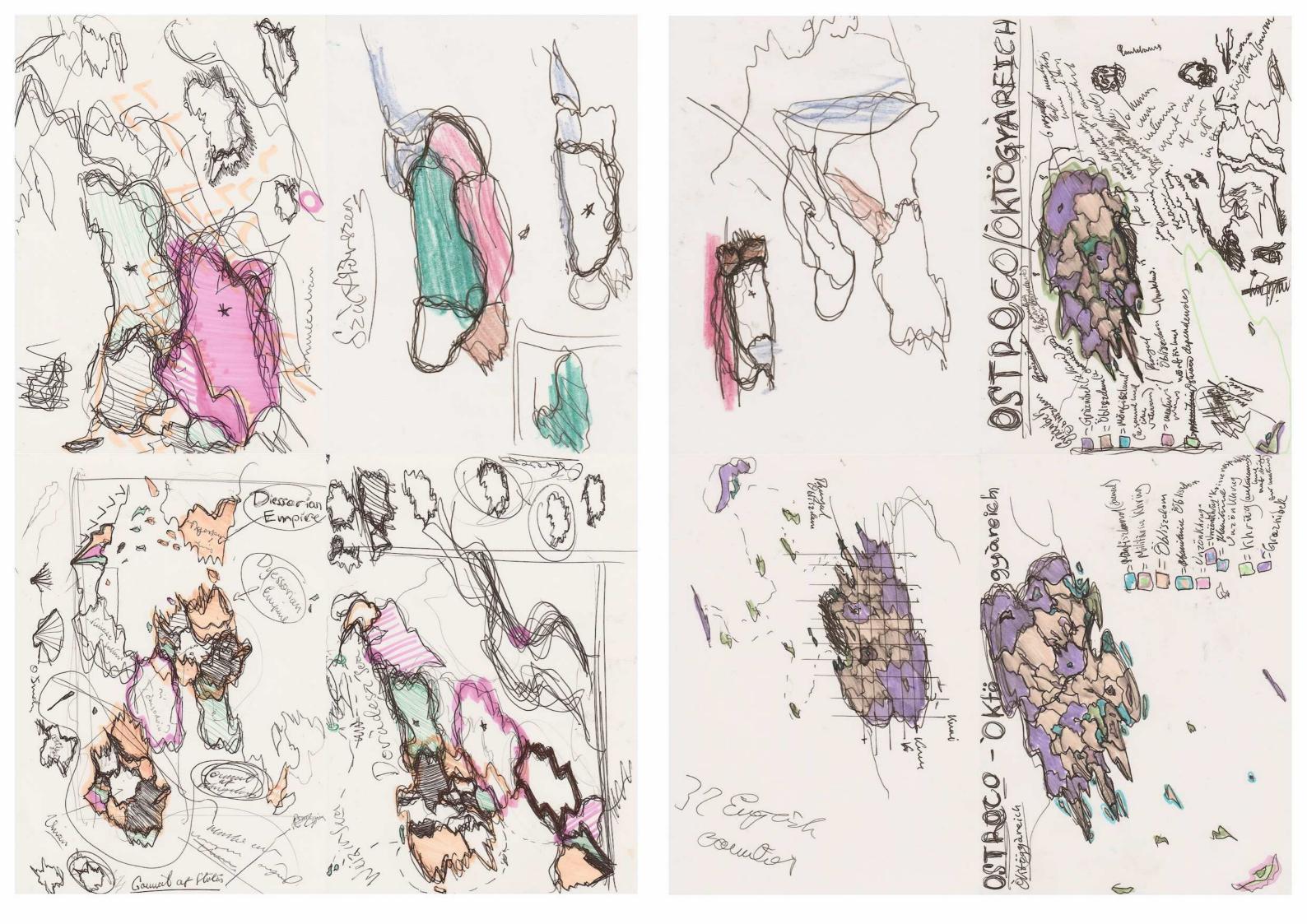
The Regions

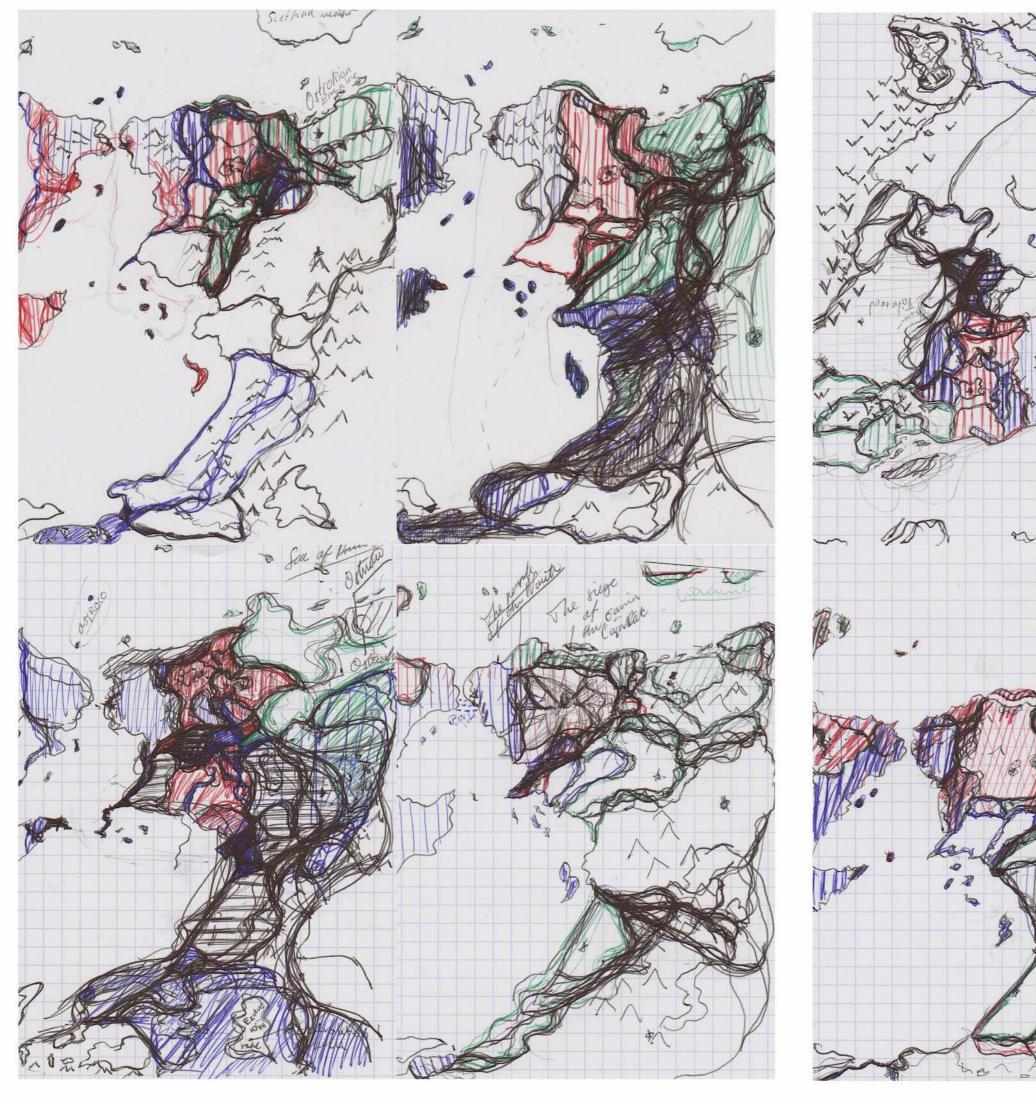
The regions of Ostroco are the subdivisions of the Kingdom. They are 30 provinces in total in the whole country – a bit like the English counties - and most of them are dukedoms, that can be royal or not. Most of the Ostrokian dukedoms has a duke at its head, and some of it can be royal, with members of the Ostrokian royal family having titles, such as the Duke of Praklow (There being the capital, the King is personally in charge of that province). There are sub-regions in a province, which mostly can be earldoms, housing an Earl – or a Comte in French. So, there are the provinces of Ostroco, with the majority of them being dukedoms, which can be royal or not, which are subdivided into sub-provinces, whose majority are earldoms housing an earl/comte. The other part of the provinces that are not dukedoms can be a variety of things. For examples, there are three republics in the borders of Ostroco at the south, where the landscape is rugged, full of Alpine landscape and full of Taiga climate. There, the Oomzoroks live, and they being fierce warriors amounting to half the military in all of the Kingdom, they have three provinces dedicated to them, where they can practice their traditions and annually elect a new leader.

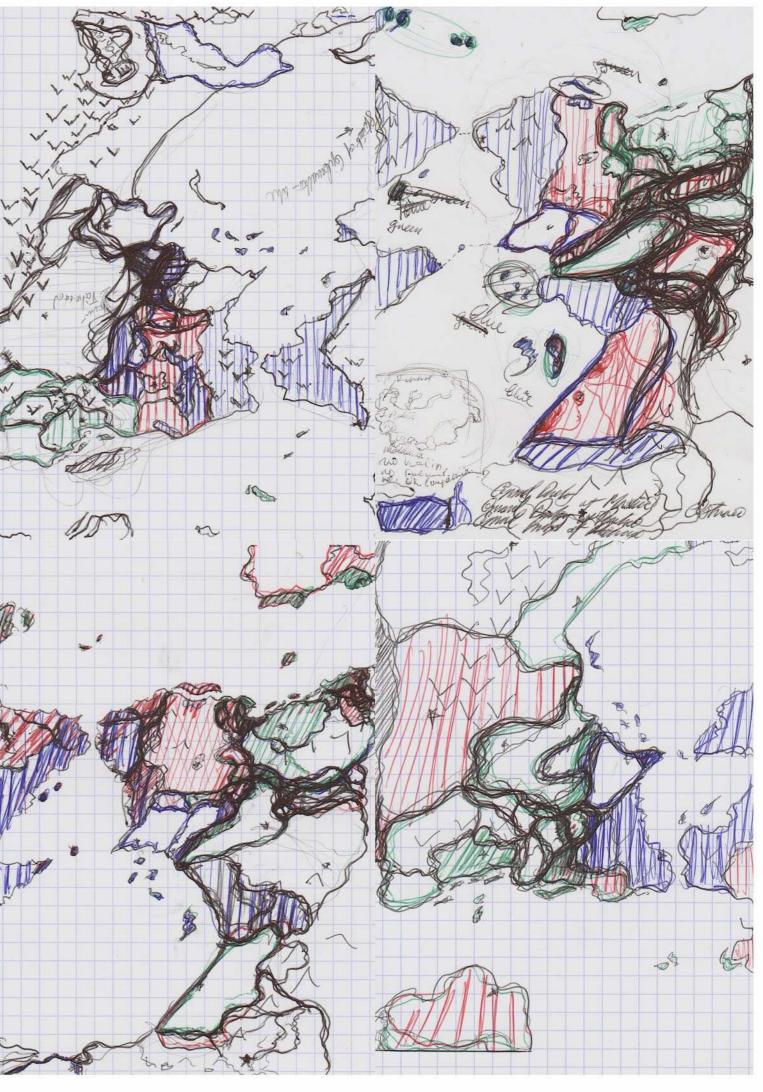


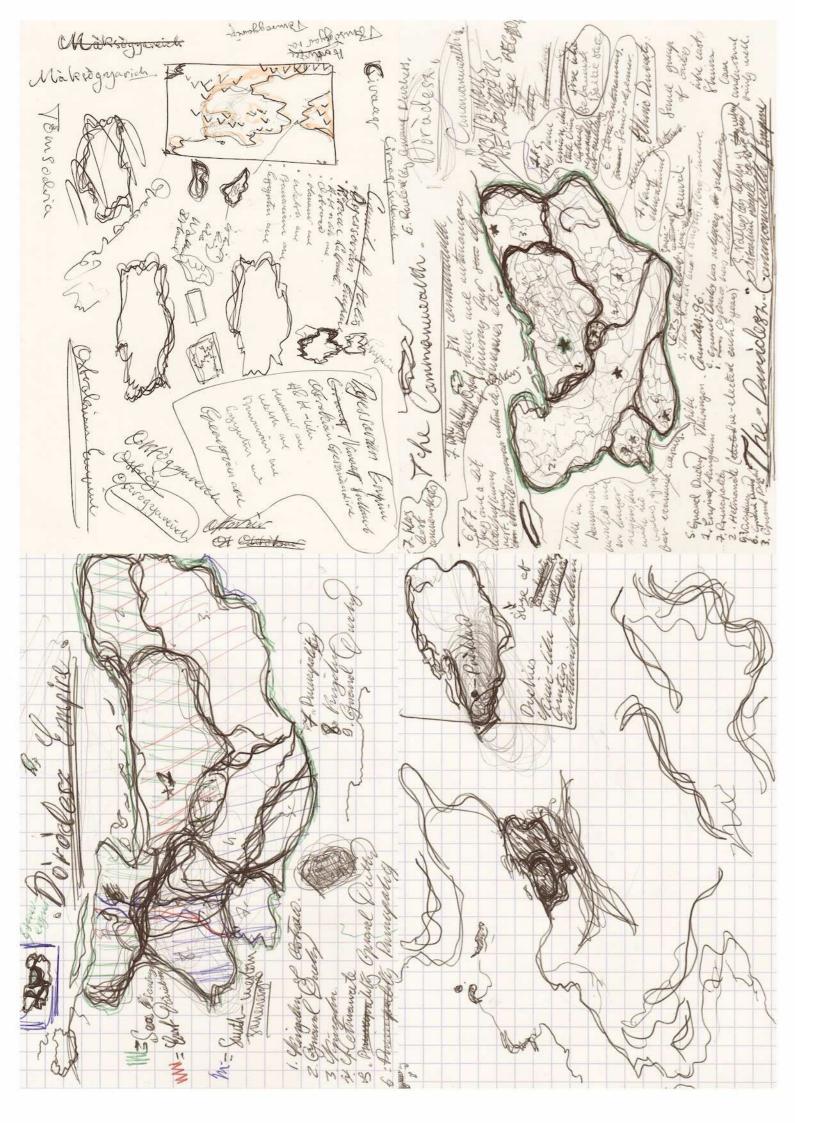












Degd Gubrovcza Octogyareich The Regions Ostroco

The regions of Ostroco are mostly based on geographical divisions inside the country; for example, two provinces share a border which is a river. Ostroco's regions are provinces, a bit like the counties of England, England having 48 counties while Ostroco has 30. Each province is divided into sub-provinces. Sub-provinces can either be an Ostrokian equivalent to an earldom, or a sub-province specially designed for a tribe, for example in the Dokalich Province, you have a sub-region which is a dwarf kingdom. Same goes with the provinces themselves – in Ostroco each province has a Duke, but there are special cases, as some provinces can be, as I said before, designated to a centaur tribe, or a dwarf kingdom.

Ostroco's Dukedoms can be royal, meaning its duke is a relative of the Royal Family of Ostroco. There are also three provinces which are republics, as they are populated by the Oomzoroks, who are warriors who live in the mountainous regions of Southern Ostroco, at the border. They are a bit like the equivalent of the Cossack, or more famously the Cow Boy. These three republics all have their leader elected annually, who is in charge of the Oomzoroks of that region. The King of Ostroco is personally in charge of the Praklow Province, as it is there that the capital – and the Royal Palace – is situated, meaning it is there that there is the seat of power.

Ostroco's southern regions are more wild than others, and its landscape is mountainous and contains many forests, as the climate there has a slight Taiga touch, meaning its geography is a mix of Alpine one and Canadian-Finnish; lakes being dotted everywhere, forests covering most of the land, and mountains rising up in the air as valleys twist themselves through the land. Those southern regions are, as stated, partly-populated by the Oomzoroks, though there are also many creatures like fauns and dwarves, though giants – evil and kind – gobelins and other foul creatures do also populate the darkest nooks of that region. This means that the country is not very populated by Humans civils, with the rare cities and towns being all fortified to the very last degree, whilst castles are more commonly found in that sort of region, especially near the border.

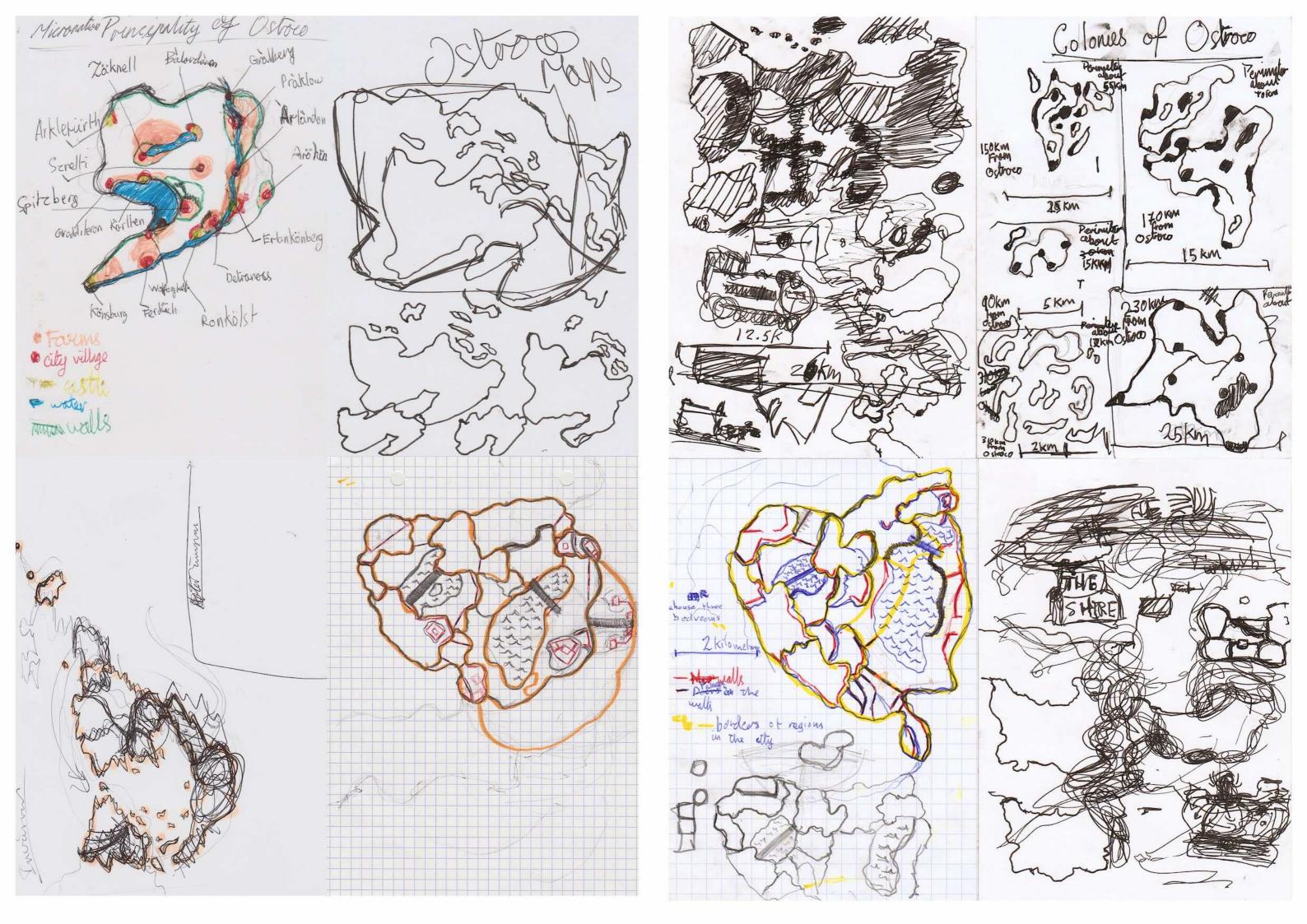
Meanwhile, up in the east of Ostroco, it is more habitable and agriculture is booming, with wine, sparkling liqueur, and many agricultural what nots going on there. Indeed, the landscape is less rough, and instead there are gentle rollicking hills, with tiny woods, and sloping valleys where charming rivers are to be found. It is rather like Ye Olde Worlde England one hears so much about, though it has a little touch of Ostrokian in it, of course. Finally the Centre of Ostroco, where Praklow is situated, is a bit more hilly with woods more frequently being found. It is a mix of the southern climate and the eastern one, and has a slight touch of Tuscan countryside to it: mountainous hills that host fields of agriculture, yet the hills still house many woods.

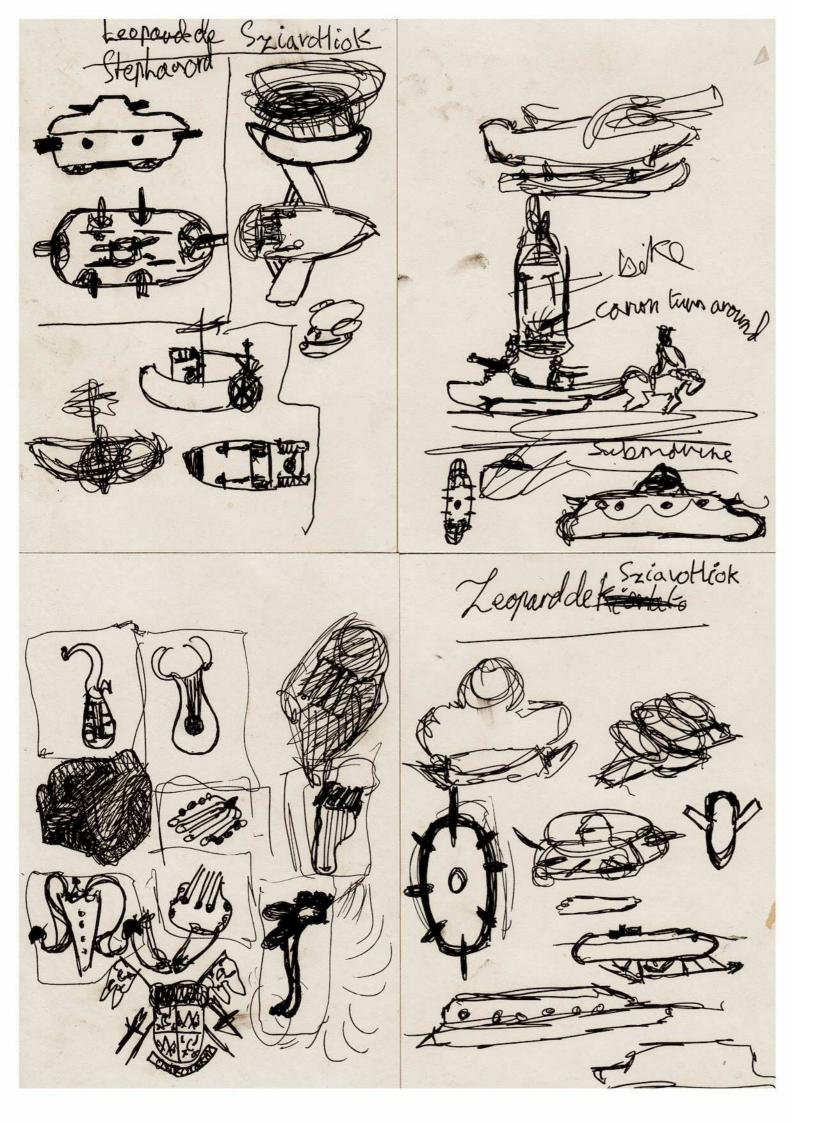
Ostroco is also part of a union, called The Doradesz Commonwealth. It is an alliance between the country itself and the countries that surround Ostroco. It is rather similar to the United Kingdom, though the difference here is that they are all independent kingdoms, yet are in a sort of truce and alliance. A union; a sort of large country that has several countries in it, with the commonwealth having several leaders, all from the different states that house this union.

The union is made up of 7 states: Ostroco, which is the largest country of all by far and is situated in the center (Ostroco's size is like France compared to the other states of Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland), whilst the other states are around Ostroco and are smaller than Ostroco, there being two small principalities, three grand duchies, one kingdom and one republic.

The Commonwealth was founded a few hundred years ago after present-day Ostroco, meaning it has centuries of history, like the UK. The Commonwealth was created for military, political, cultural and economic reasons: military for Ostroco and those little states to collaborate together to sustain any exterior threats; political as each had its own reason for wanting to be in the commonwealth (one to be more powerful, another to have a buffer zone, one to spread its influence and seek protection and so forth); cultural as all of the states in the Commonwealth, including Ostroco, share a similar past, a bit like Slavs, they are all of the same family and share similar traditions, yet in Ostroco's case they are a bit more related, though they have different traditions, they are similar and all come from one common thread; finally economic, because due to the commonwealth, each state had the advantage to share a same market, have no borders, be able to work in the other states, and many more economical reasons.

In conclusion, the Doradesz Commonwealth enabled Ostroco to expand militarily, politically, economically and culturally in doing so creating Ostroco into a large power. The commonwealth is led by Ostroco, it being the largest country in the union, even though it doesn't say this officially. It is rather similar to the EU in terms of economics, yet it is different from it, as it does not introduce new members, meaning its a bit more like the UK, insofar as all of the members joined at the start.







Unczigortichink Inventions

Stephanord de Sziavotliok was one of the most prominent inventors in Ostrokian history, He created many inventions mostly for military purposes, though most of the military inventions were concerned with ships, as it was due to his inventions of the Ostrokian-style ships with all of the defensive weaponry, physics, mathematics and ways to power the ship that Ostroco had been able to explore the unknown lands over yonder. He also invented

a special sleigh that could be used in the mountains for extreme angles nearing 90 degrees, and also special rails in the mountains which went from the mines of the Dwarves high up in the mountains down to the valley below. He also made many architectural wonders, further intensified Ostroco's fortification and urban planning – even creating his own fortified town situated in high altitude in the middle of the Ostrokian taiga. He even attempted to create a submarine, which succeeded, though the submarine could not go down into the ocean, but had to stay just about three metres below water. It was in a long, pencil-like form with a strong beak at the end, to pierce enemies' ships.

Oktogortunzic Orszajik Musical Instruments

Ostrokian instruments are very bizarre and unique and are used for many purposes aside from playing music alone. There is the Ostrokian war horn, which is very long whose sound is very deep, majestic and often associated with war: the troops marching along, chanting, against the enemies, the cries bellow in the distance, giants are to be seen, gobelins, trolls, wild boars of poisonous teeth, yet here the Ostrokian phalanx advances, with the horn being heard echoing. There are a lot of varieties, which can make one as big as three metres to a very small horn, and some are made from horns of sacred animals. Their form can be that of a curly goat's, or from a long elephant-like form. The making of these horns is very regulated in the country, and it is forbidden to make one, as it has to be a special druid who does the whole procession to make it "alive".

There is also the Ostrokian bouzouki, which resembles a cittern or an Irish bouzouki and is more in strings like a guitar, and looks like one of those Renaissance instruments. Its form is that of an Irish bouzouki. There is also the Ostrokian harp, which has a more melodious, calmful and beautiful sound that resonates in the air than the others. It is often used by the spirits and nymphs to allure strangers, and druids also play it. It is considered sacred and is a very important instrument in Ostrokian culture. You have a string which you put around you to support the harp/lyre and then you softly play them to enchant the people and nature around you.

Finally, the famous Ostrokian tambourine-drum is one of the most famous musical instruments of all. It is very big and is put on the front of your body, and with one hand clapping on one side of it, the other clasping a big stick and banging it on the other side of the drum. It is also used for long marching and for military purposes, but it is also very widely used throughout folklore culture, being always the beat of the music amongst the music of the dancing.

There is also the National Orchestra, which has a lot more instruments aside from these ones, and Orchestra Opera buildings are very commonly found amongst large towns and the few cities that are in Ostroco, with the most grandiose building being situated in Praklow, the capital.





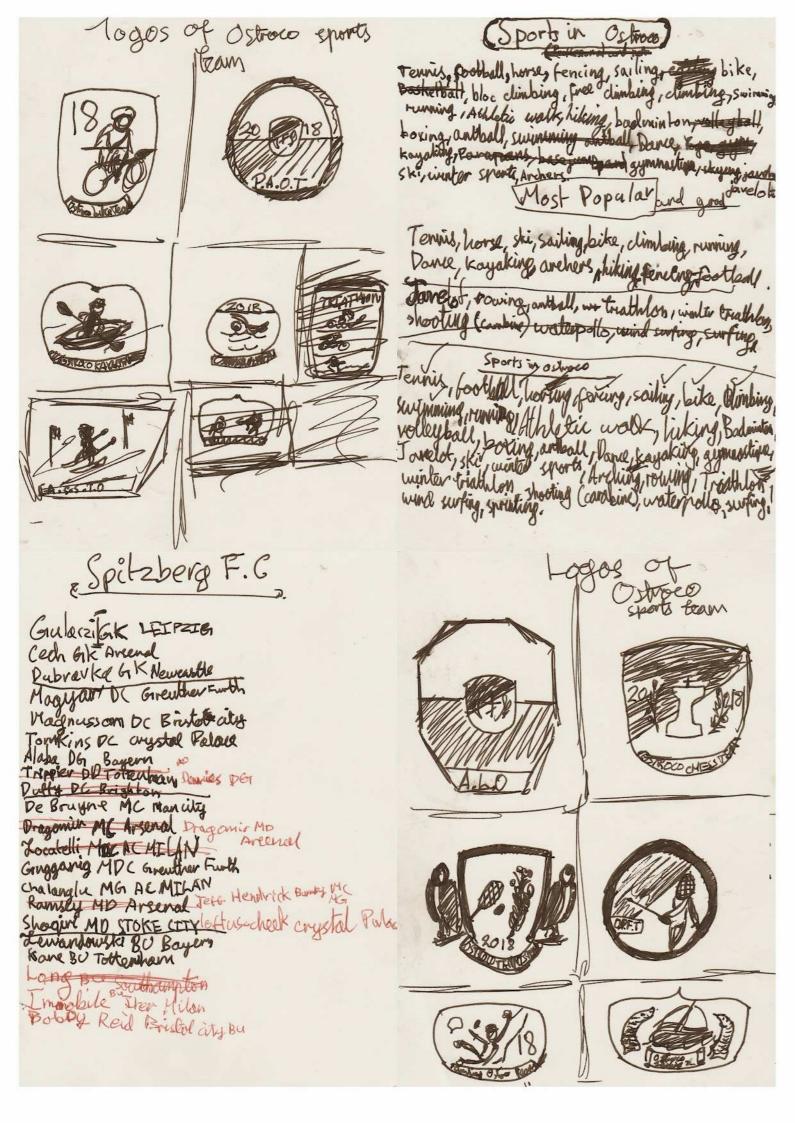
Gunczortraika czurnak Upszsagotk

Gastronomy and Food

Ostroco boasts one of the most exquisite cuisines that history has ever tasted before! It is highly exotic food and is highly refined. Ostrokian people are very proud of their heritage relating to gastronomy, more than their victorious wars, and dedicate a lot of time to eating, cooking, tasting and taking out trips related to food. In Ostroco, there are a lot of food shops - and other shops in general – that are highly specialised. There some dedicated only to roasted meat, another for raw meat, one for djugshok - a form of bean that is the distant cousins of Rice which replaces bread, pasta and rice combined - cheese-shops, fishshops, Ostrokian spirits, sparkling water shops highly popular, there are the waters from the Southern Mountains, some from the Eastern plains, one for the natural lakes in the south-east, another by the coast and so on - fungus, edible flowers and bizarre forest vegetables and fruits from the Forests and many more.

As Ostrokian people do not eat a lot of meat – as you have to hunt it and bring it home - it is only eaten on special ceremonies attended by the druids. This being said, Ostrokian people eat a lot of vegetables, fruits, plants and fungus, and a famous dish that is served typically to celebrate the coming of the Nature and Life - that is Spring - which consists of a fruit found in the middle of those taiga forests. It is of an oval shape and is five and a half times as as big as a watermelon, has a hard skin around it which has a lot of flowers on it, and on top of it are large leaves grouped together - like in pine apples, though much bigger - that go up and then droops down unto the plant itself. There is a beautiful flower on it, which has a very rare nectar on it. You roast it underneath, and then, similar to popcorn, it bursts open and there a round shell of an orange colour – the heart of the thing - flies upwards. It is a bit smaller than a watermelon, and you cut it open with a special knife, pour a special alcohol sauce in the inside of the big fruit and there is a divine, sumptuous food with seeds, nectar, and the fruit being alive there is a slight touch of meatiness - because the plant had been alive, but alive that it has a heart and can sway from side to side and is even carnivore, eating animals and also creates photosynthesis. Generally, it can be served for at least a month.

Otherwise, most food is djugshok – that bean-like rice – with sauces, Ostroco has enormous amounts of sauces for everything there even being a whole shop for it, with bizarre fruits and vegetables that are triple the size of today's perception of a vegetable, some fish sometimes and sparkling water and spirits. There are a lot of other dishes such as some exotic vegetables as seen above yet a lot more smaller served with djugshok, fish and sometimes even little seeds, fungus and other things wrapped around a leaf. So, its form is like a tacos or a sushi though as big as an apple. There are also many soups; dishes with insects roasted alive like in the Amazons served with some extremely strange plants, and many other things and also a lot is served with this kind of sauerkraut – that can be of white, purple or orange colour – that are commonly mixed with leaves, djugshok and those kind of sushi-like melons.





Kuncztunliech czuruk Durunczyk

Sports and Games

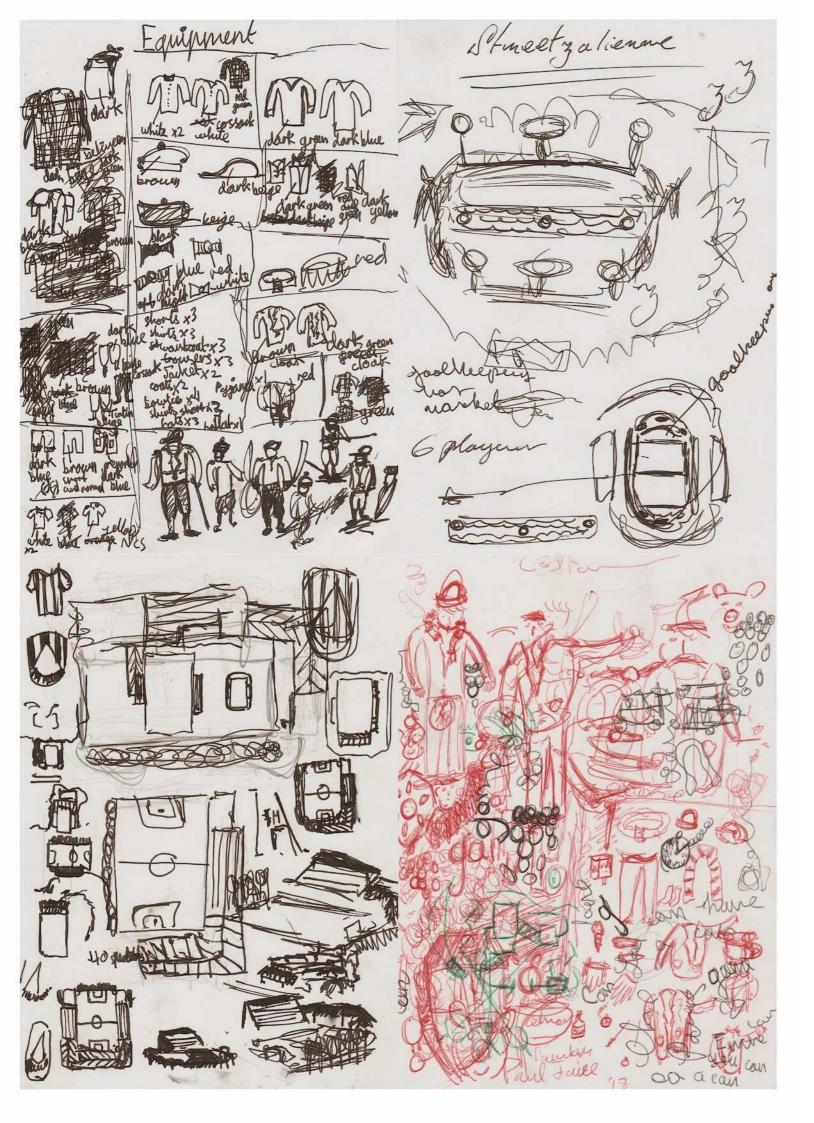
Ostroco's sports are very peculiar and very bizarre. The sports are not like the sports today, in the sense that they resemble more to the way the Greeks played it, with wooden sticks or with pitches of sand, barely any stadium and the games not being a business with money, and with players winning the glory of having won than actual money.

There is the walking, climbing, running and swimming (Ostrokian got their own swimming style) which are the basics of sports. Ostrokian people also have a high fighting spirit, henceforth why the sport of riding Gwynsarans and their cousins the goat-like, fierce animals is highly practiced. There is the throwing of the spear-javelin, archery, sword combat, a more ruthful and violent way of boxing, faun kick fighting, centaur jousting and wrestling.

Those sports are parts of the Warrior Games practiced every five years in Ostroco and are an event that makes people from all parts of the country to come together: those games are only practiced inside the Kingdom, and the teams are the different provinces. Amongst Ostrokian culture, an alternative game of chess is extremely important through out the people and is a symbol of yourself.

The most popular sports are Running, Swimming, Gwynsaran riding, Jungjunguda – a game with a bat and a ball – and Fighting, yet the most popular of all – which is the most practiced throughout the kingdom – is Dszingcu.

It is played on a pitch of sand with two goal posts 12 metres apart and 8 metres high that are placed on either sides of the pitch (pitch is 60 metres wide and 90 metres long). There are 12 players on each side, no goalkeepers and the object of the game is to score more points than the opponent team in about 60-70 minutes. The game starts by the ball being put in the middle of the pitch, and there a scrum takes place with a lot of wrestling, and the team who pushes back the other team long enough to get the ball on their side starts. In the game, you can not do any biting or kicking on a player, yet you can put him down with your hands — a rugby tackle but slightly less tense, as only two players can join in the fight over the ball once the other player is tackled.



Kuncztunliech czuruk Durunczyk

Sports and Games

Ostroco's sports are very peculiar and bizarre. They are sports that we could recognise today, yet be baffled as it is still has that thread of similarity, yet so different at the same time are different.

For example, sports such as swimming (though in Ostroco there is a type of swimming style more popular than crawl, butterfly and breaststroke), running and climbing are highly practiced in the Kingdom. There is also the riding of Gwynsarans and their cousins the goat-like animals; wrestling, combat fighting similar to boxing but with more force and ruthlessness, throwing of the javelin (though in Ostroco they use spears), discus throwing, athletics – though with Ostrokian sport's instruments. There is an alternative of chess, it being an extremely important culture amongst Ostrokians. There is also sword combat, archery, centaur jousting, faun kick-fighting, hunting of extremely rare, unattainable animals and carnivorous plants situated in the middle of the taigas and mountains.

There is also canoeing in rushing streams up in the mountains, a bat game called Jungjunguda which is as popular as baseball and cricket which involves a bat and a ball (and fighting, though unofficial).

All those sports are different to ours in the sense that they are all very basic, with everything being wooden if there is anything wooden such as a spear or a javelin, and all of it being rather like sports were in the time of the Greeks, with little or no business in all of it, with people winning the glory of having won instead of money.

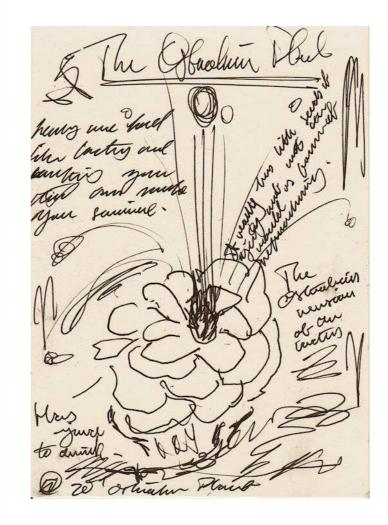
The most popular of all sports, however, apart from the Running, Swimming, Gwynsaran riding, Jungjunguda and fighting (they are the most popular) is the Dszingczu. It is a massive thing in Ostroco, and it is extremely practiced all over the country and a little bit in the nearby ones (every kingdoms over there has its own unique games). It has two teams, of 12 players and involves a ball which is played on a large sand pitch. The pitch is 80-90 metres long, like a football pitch and is 60 metres wide. There is a line to represent the half of the pitch, and on each end there are two long wooden posts standing 12 metres apart and is 8 metres highThe game is 60 to 70 minutes long, and there is a half time during the 30th-35th minute.

So, hands and foot are allowed in the game and with the ball – which is rather similar to a rugby ball – the team needs to score through the two goalposts (it does not have a net) by either with a hand placing it through the goals past the goal line or by kicking it between the two goal posts. This is worth one point. Generally, a team scores five points in a whole match, yet scoring around fifteen would be extremely rare (like 8-0 in football).

In short, there is a pitch with two large goal posts of 12 metres apart, and with you and your 11 fellow players you need to score through that by either placing the ball with your hand over the goal line or by kicking through it. In a game, you can do forward and backward passes, like in football, and no tugging of the shirt, biting or boxing (may it be with your hands or your feet) are allowed. Yet, you can get a player and put him down unto the floor and wrestle with people, though never kick or bite them with any part of your body. It can be quite violent yet it is regulated with a referee that is not in many cases quite as strict as the ones you see in rugby or football.

The game begins with both teams placing the ball in the middle of the pitch and then there is a wrestling scrum. When one team pushes the other back enough to get the ball to their side, the match begin. Such, is Dszinczu, an alternative sport of rugby though on sand and with more wrestling, as it actually is that when one gets the ball it is basically just an opponent player starting to wrestle you and get you down. The game moves more, unlike in rugby where there are a lot of pauses, and so in a sense it is like football – there is more running and passing than just people getting other people down and it being extremely rare if one advances twenty metres.





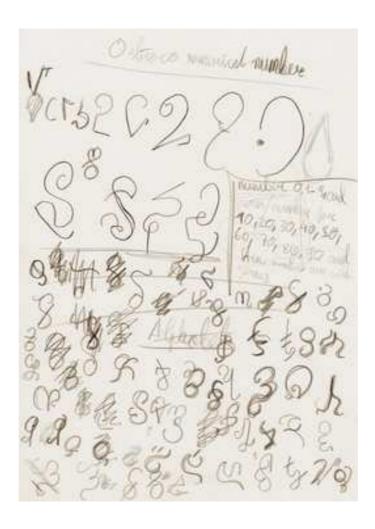
Poszovarish czurnak Tofogarish

Fauna and Flora

The Fauna & Flora of Ostroco live on an entirely different survival method. For example, one learns in science that a plant feeds itself from photosynthesis, yet in Ostroco, that is not the case. Most of the plants, which by the way lives in the complete wilderness, survive by absorbing energies from nature and the spirits. But beware! They can be positive energies, yet some plants can turn evil if they absorb negative energies. Most of the negative plants become carnivorous, for they become less and less dependent on the energy surrounding them. Instead, they eat animals as a form of feeding. But there is an interesting case. Some plants can eat negative people, yet spare the positive ones!

As Ostroco's geography is pretty mountainous, most of the regions have a lot of hills and valleys with the southeast rising to the state of Alpine mountains. This means that Ostroco has a lot of forest. In fact, Ostroco is half covered by forests. In the Southeast, where the mountains dwell, it takes the form of the taiga, yet otherwise the forests are pretty deep and contain a lot of bizarre plants. Tall trees have spirits and can talk, there are elves and all sorts of people in those endless vegetation, plants can eat people, and in short – the forests are a whole world full of fairies and spirits, twinkling lights, plants and most importantly – magic!





Uczuklurneike Funczichotok

Numerical systems

The numerical system of Ostroco is quite unique in itself and is absolutely different to the one we know. They count by eights, meaning that whilst we count by 10, 20, 30, 40 etc... they count by 8, 16, 24, 32 etc... The pronunciations of those letters are pronounced in such a way that the numbers from one to eight are pronounced in one way, and then from eight to 16 in another, and so on. This means that the value a hundred is not that important, whereas 64 is (8 x 8): they count in 64, 128,192, 256, etc... and so it goes to infinity. Ostroco has its own letters and in a way does have a zero, invented by a mysterious monk living far away in the West. They put this alternative-looking zero in eight, as we would with tens, though there isn't the letter for eight anymore. Mathematics in Ostroco is a huge deal to the Intelligentsia, Religious bodies and other University persons, so it is widely known and used amongst the Professors, though most of people in Ostroco doesn't really use it, and the Arts and subjects such as hunting in the wild and surviving is more important in the basic education of Ostroco - the Kingdom does not have a very good education system, and most people at the age of fourteen go off to do apprenticeship in a very specific thing with a so-called master in that field.

Wydright & K KK koorl
WWG got & mnoof 18 2 ng 410 RTHO 00 OT B3CZ B6 K8 8 M 28 TT XX6



Oktogyariche vunczilpra anvihaza

Ostroco's Alphabet

Ostroco's writing system is based on an alphabet. It is quite different from our latin alphabet, yet it is still slightly influenced by the Cyrillic and Greek alphabet and has some of its own letters. Nearly every sound in Ostroco has a letter of its own, unlike in English – th, ch, ph, etc... – and in the Ostrokian alphabet there are many accents that can be placed over letters. The alphabet itself rather looks similar to ours, for they are also simple strokes like a semi-circle, a vertical line, a diagonal line, a dot, a circle, and so on, yet they are structured in such a way that they are different yet there is a slight resemblance. Some letters looks like ours, yet can sound totally different in Ostrokian. Any how, the Ostrokian alphabet is not widely used in the Kingdom as an everyday thing, though it is more for official documents and books: such things like writing on food package, adverts and whatever else there might be does not exist in Ostroco. Moreover, not everybody in the Kingdom nows how to read or write, so the alphabet is in reality just used amongst the intelligentsia, if we might call them like that.





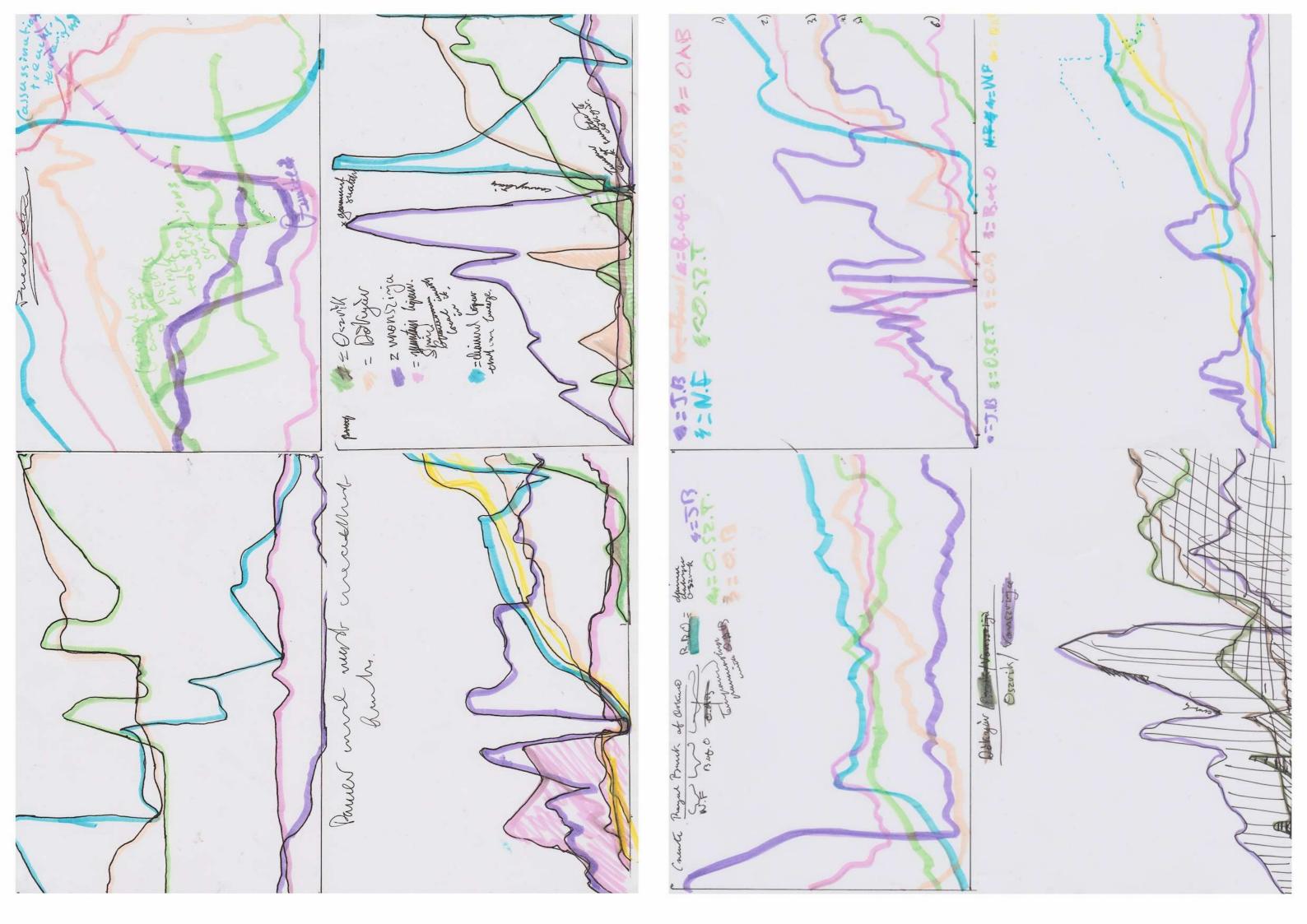
Oktogyarike Tachtootatatach

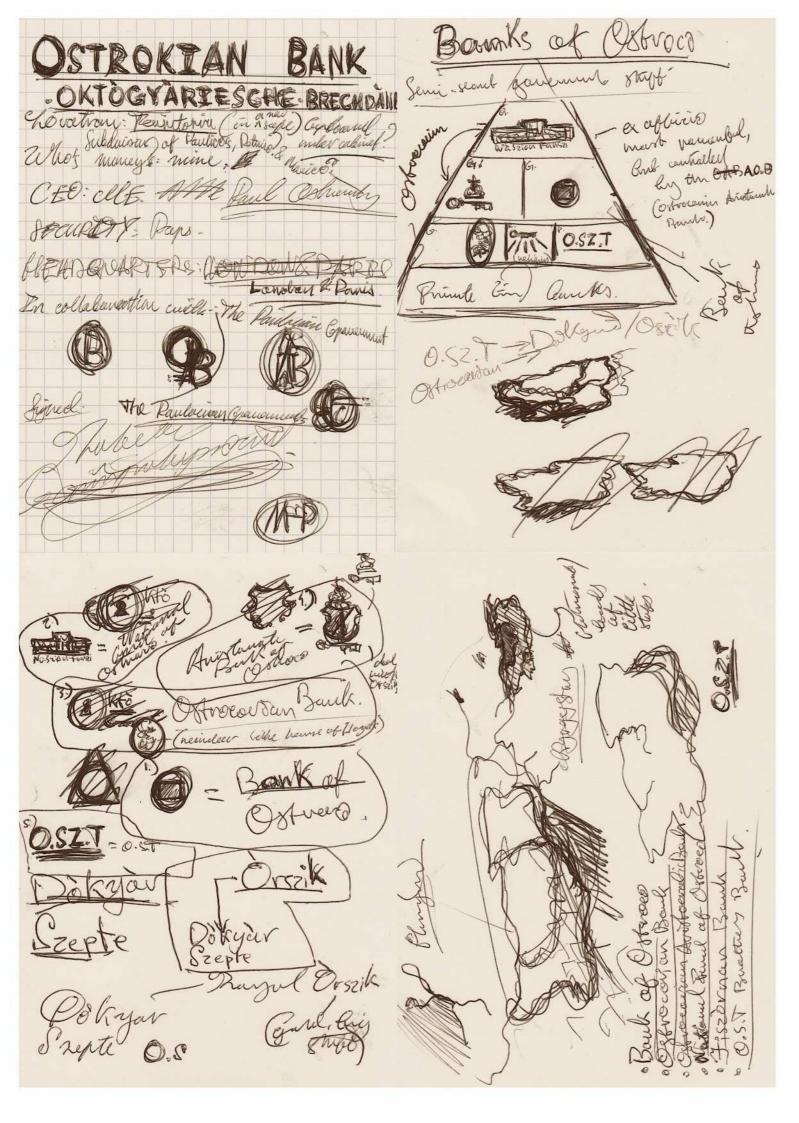
Ostroco Currencies

Ostrokian banks have a much smaller influence in the culture of the Kingdom that it does in our world. Most of the banks are little, private-owned local ones, yet there are still a few major banks, nearly all owned by the King, his deputies, the royal family and the state. There is the Drudczikovian Bank, which is specialised in the currency of Vonszrich – unique Ostrokian sea shells – and is the major currency used amongst the Druids, monks and Religious body of Ostroco: in fact, the bank itself is own by the Druids, henceforth the name Drudczikovian.

There are also the O.SZ.T – or O.S.T – which is a bank half-owned by the government and is the largest private-owned bank in the country. There is the Bank of Ostroco, which is owned by the King and company and hugely invests in the Oszrik – the back up of the economy that makes the dokyar into a coin, and is a mixture of gold, silver and an Ostrokian mineral called Brocszik, which is the equivalent of gold in the country in value as it is highly praised. It is of a moon-like, calm, silvery, glistening material which the Dwarves make weapons and jewelry out of it.







Oktogyarike Tachtootatatach, Degd Fukczuran czurnak Okampooch

Ostroco's Currencies, Banks and Stock Market

The Ostrocovian currency is the Dokyar (1 Dokyar worth 20 pounds Sterling), which is made up of 32 Szepte. The currency is based almost entirely on coins, bank notes are only used in banks and business deals, coming in 500, 250 and 100 Dokyar notes. The Ostrocovian money is very different from our world. First of all, it is nothing like a currency that exists – meaning that there is no paper to represent money and that the system is backed up by an element, such as gold or rare minerals. This being said, I can now explain Ostroco's money:

It is made up of several moneys, that is to say, there is still the oldest type of money in Ostroco being used – unique sea shells of Ostroco's own maritime flora called Vonszrich – though it is only used by the Religious Body of Ostroco, druids, priests, monasteries and all people and organizations regarding Ostroco's religion. There is a national bank of Ostroco uniquely dedicated to this type of money – called the Drudczikovian Bank – which is regarded by most Ostrokians as very traditional and old-fashioned.

Secondly, there is the Oszrik – the money that is in use in Ostroco and is in a sense the back up, or the pillar if you prefer, that holds the economy of Ostroco. It is made up of rare minerals mainly consisting of gold, silver and an Ostrocovian mineral called Brokcszik, that is similar in material as gold, although this one is of a silvery, almost diamond-like colour that shines like the moon. It is a calm, silvery element. This mineral is largely used to forge all kinds of extravaganza such as rings, crowns and much more. It has its own bank – the Bank of Ostroco – which is largely trusted by the people of the country.

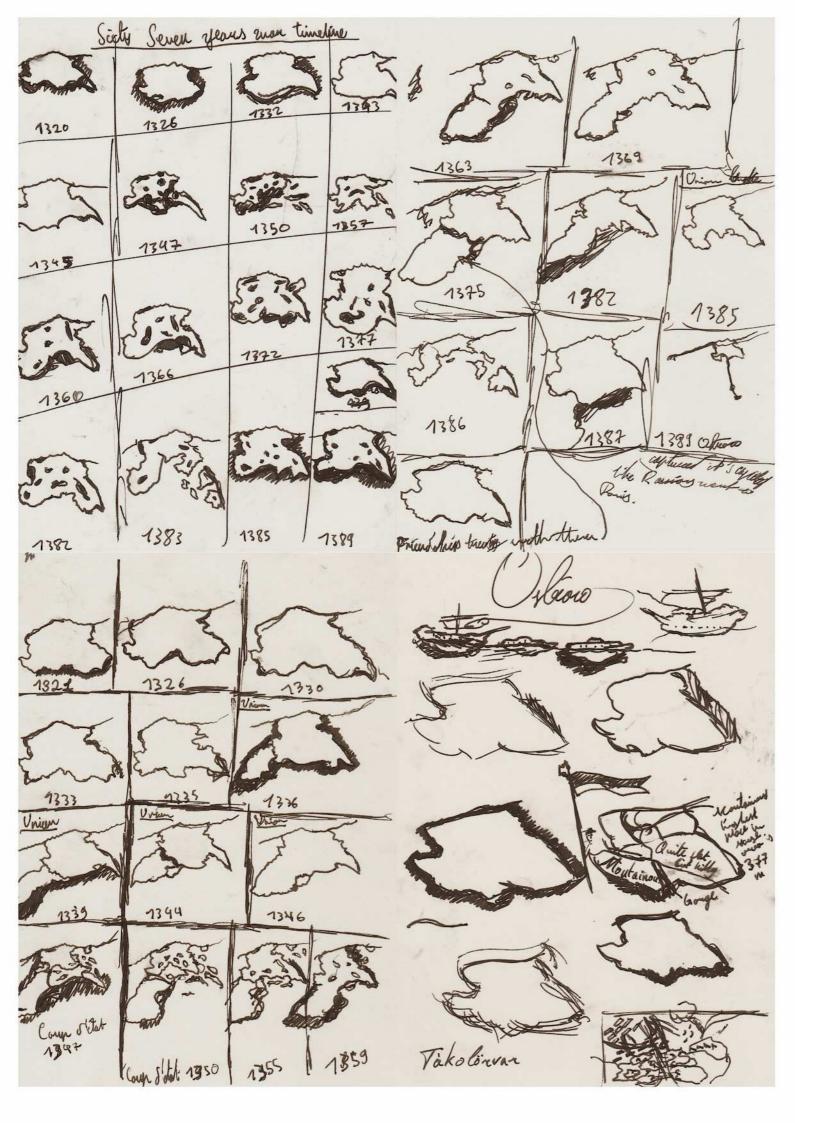
After that, there is the diamond liqueur, the rarests and most valuable money to be found in Ostroco. The name itself is a hint – this money is an extremely rare liquid that is found only in the deepest, most dangerous, most unexplored caves made of stalagmite-like structure that are situated deep down, down, down at the heart of the mountain. Once one reaches there – it is mostly dwarves who take up the courage to venture in those strange regions of the Underworld – one will find a source where a gush of trickling liquid rushes down from the walls and rocks unto the cave to form a little pond, and from hence it goes in an underground river. This liquid, most notably the diamond liqueur, shines palely and thus illuminates the caves. A legend tells that if one drinks this pond one will find youth again and will experience being extremely strong of a Herculean nature. Though it is worth saying that the pond and the source of the diamond liqueur has been only attained by a few dozen or so people – I do not say men, as Ostroco is made up of spirits such as nymphs, bizarre animals, Sub-Gods and creatures such as centaurs, goblins and dwarfs. Most of the liqueur that is found by miners is mixed with mountain water that is situated closer to the surface of the pond, and so if one drinks it one will not find this force and youth, but instead will find death, as the slightest touch of water makes the Brokcszik liquid poisonous.

But, back to the point: Pure Diamond Liqueur is extremely rare, and so most of the liquid that circulates around Ostroco and its environs are mixed and used for money and decoration only. The Ostrocovian Mineral Bank is uniquely based on this rarity, and one can say that it is rather like a national bank dedicated to the Ostrocovian equivalent of Petrol – though Ostroco uses the Diamond Liqueur not for pumping it out of the earth for machines, but for medicine of natural healing through a special treatment where there are druids sacrificing all kind of things and there are spas and saunas and cold water treatment by going up in the mountains and bathing in freezing water.

Then, there is the Dokyar (which is made up of Szeptes) the money that is the most used by Ostroco. It is based entirely on coins that are forged with coins made up of either bronze, silver, gold or Broczik, or a mix of those. It is used for most tradings and the Ostrocovian Bank (a National Bank) hugely invests in it, whilst the National Fund of Ostroco is the producer of those coins.

Last but not least, there is the Ostrocovian Aristocratic Bank that is dedicated to the Noblemen of the country, with Oszrik being their main money that they use. It is important to note that there is also the O.SZ.T – or O.S.T, if you prefer it romanized – which is a bank owned by one of the most powerful and influential noblemen – politician and trader at that too – of the country. The O.S.T is semi-owned by the Government and finally it is worth to note that the O.S.T is the bank used most by people in their everyday life, after the Ostrocovian Bank.

In Conclusion, we now know that Ostroco is a country which uses a lot of different types of money in their everyday trading, though one has to note that Ostroco's economy is quite different from the Capitalist system, but that is a whole other discussion.





Kutlic ickenbar ut lyandiaa

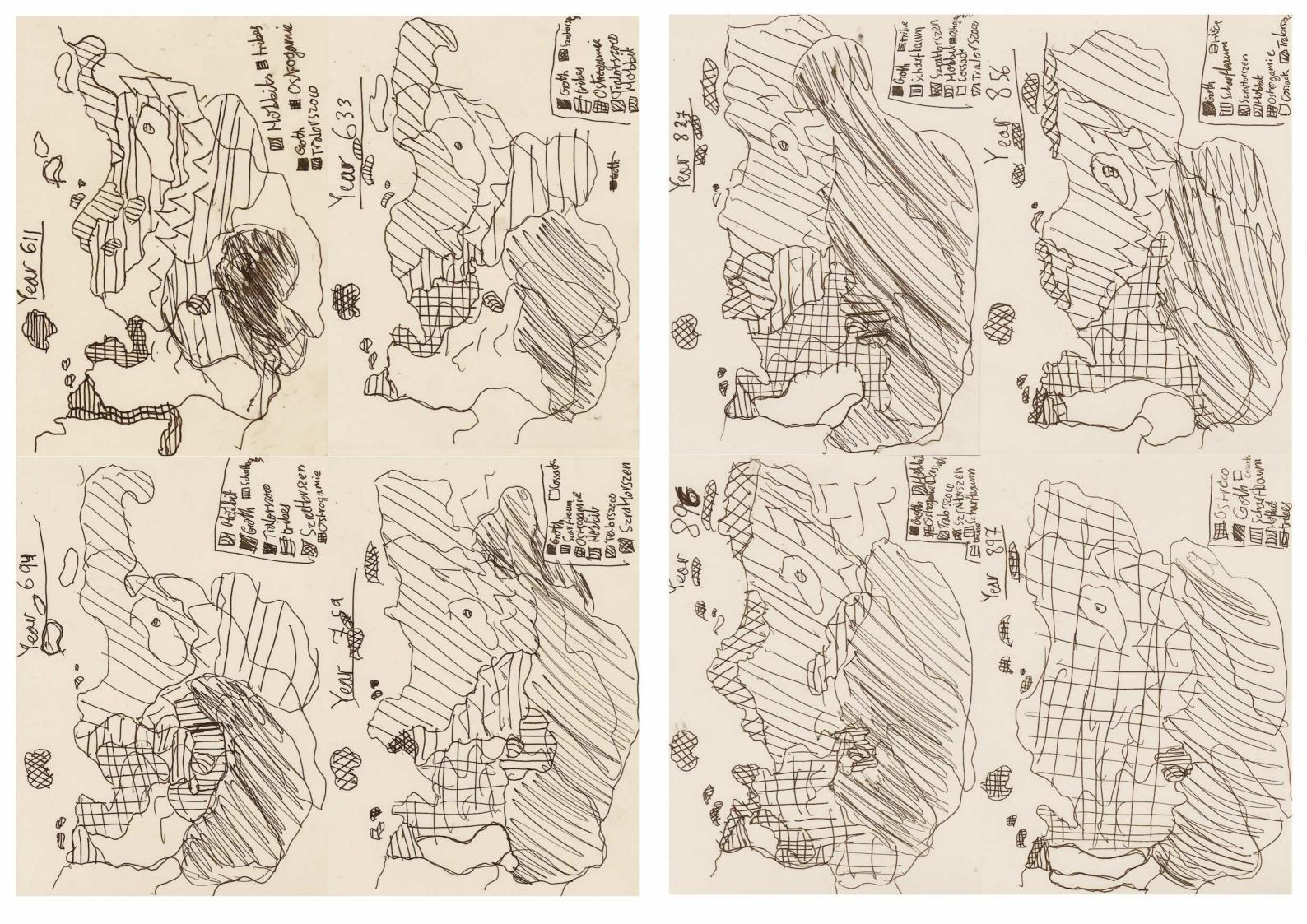
Changing borders

Ostroco first started as a little principality of size of Kent, yet over time, Ostroco expanded outwards, uniting the Ostrokian people until the Kingdom – it had grown from a principality to that status – was as big as the Netherlands. But, that didn't mean they had full power over all of their dominions, as at least half of the land was autonomous and inhabited by creatures (such as centaurs, giants and gwynsarans) and tribes who lived in those massive taiga forests and mountains. So, when the 67 years war arrived.

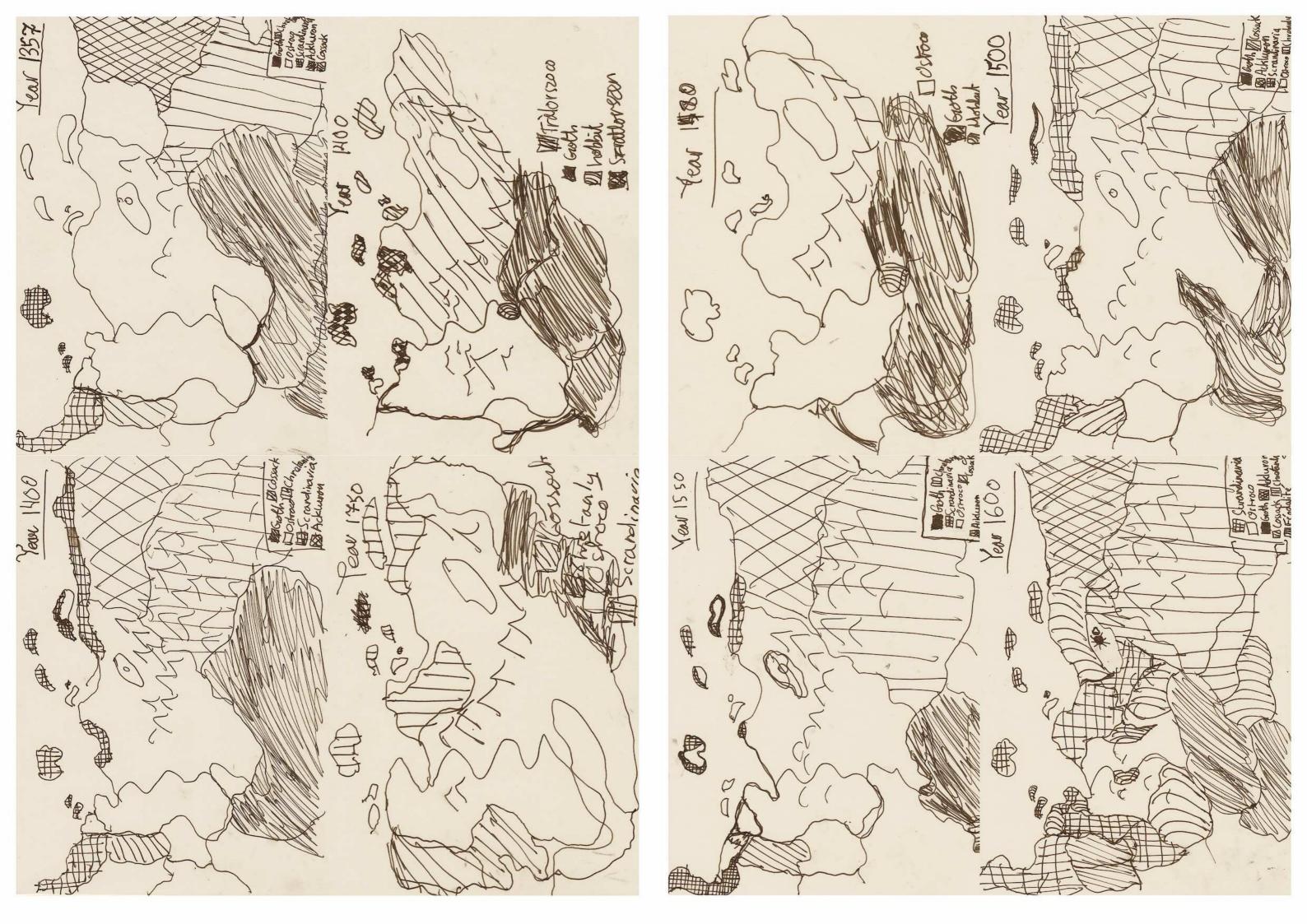
Ostroco was still highly unorganised, so it was why that when the Horde started to invaded the continent, King Gretlorszovitch – who was in power at the time – made massive reforms in which he made an authoritarian government with generals at the heads of all provinces. The Horde still managed to invade everything and pillage all that it could pillage, and they invaded nearly all of Ostroco through the mountains, being allied with the giants, trolls, gobelins and other foul creatures. Yet at the Battle of Kachrondan, everything turns and Ostroco pushes back the Horde and the Kingdom turns out victorious and gains a reputation of great power.

They amassed great lands with a lot being protectorates in the Western Kingdoms, whilst having passed them, yet a century later decadence has fallen in decadence with mass corruption, and Ostroco split up, as pirate-vikings from the north invaded the coast, nordic principalities from the east invaded and the creatures of the Southern Mountains revolted. The King abdicated and took refuge in a monastery, leaving no heir to the throne, and a coup d'état was produced overthrowing the monarchy, and then the revolutionaries took power. But being so corrupt, they sold the country for wealth and so now Ostroco shrank to the size of a fortress. A distant cousin of the King – Epreczidak – made a counter-revolution, triggering the reestablishment of the monarchy, and for over a 150 years he and his descendants took back the lost lands, whilst being the new Monarchs (the older monarchs agreed for this change as Epreczidak was still a distant cousin, and he made them have their castles and lands).

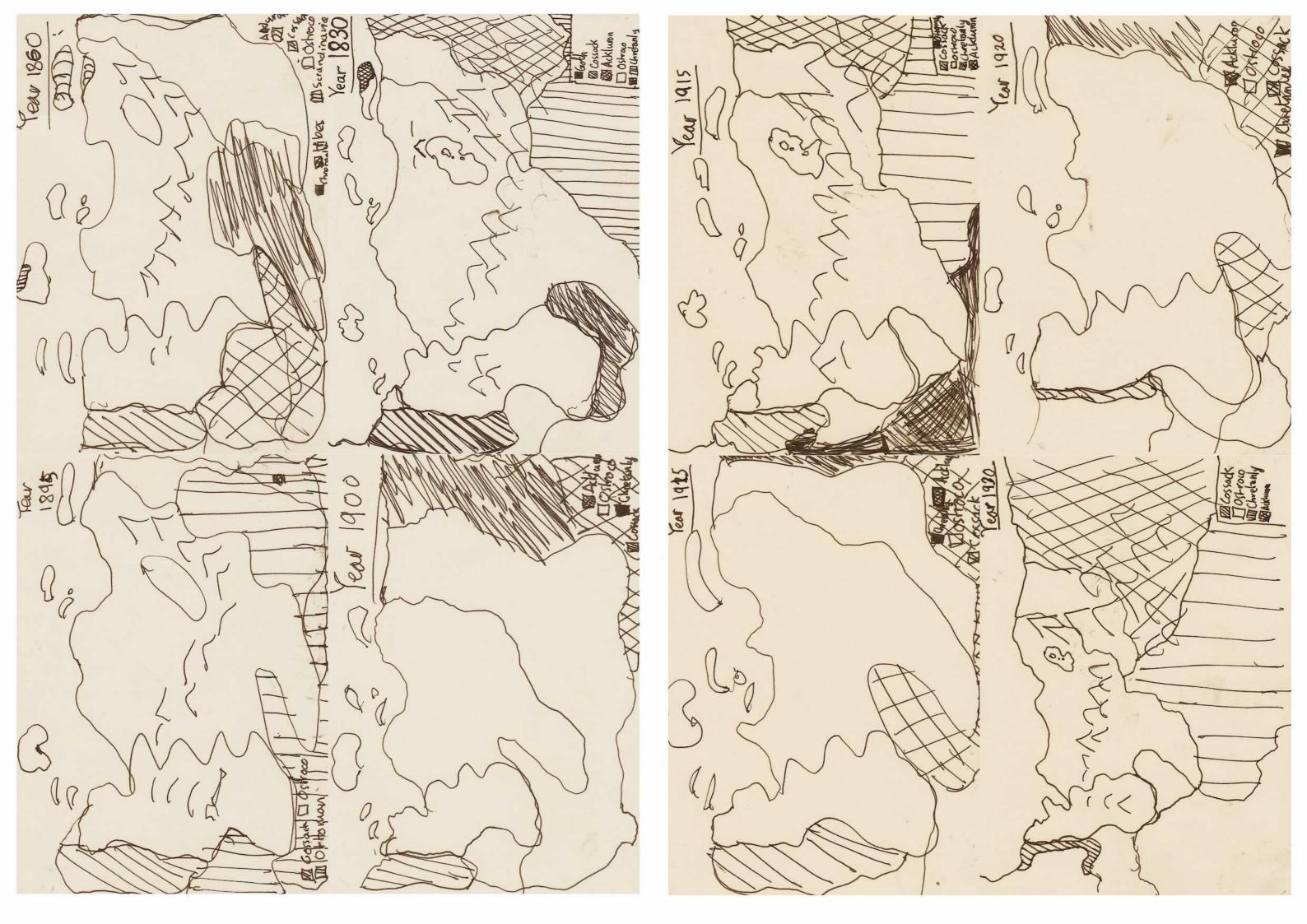
So, now being the size of England, Ostroco rebuilt itself, making a union with other little states around it to form a commonwealth, which was for cultural, militarily and economical reasons.

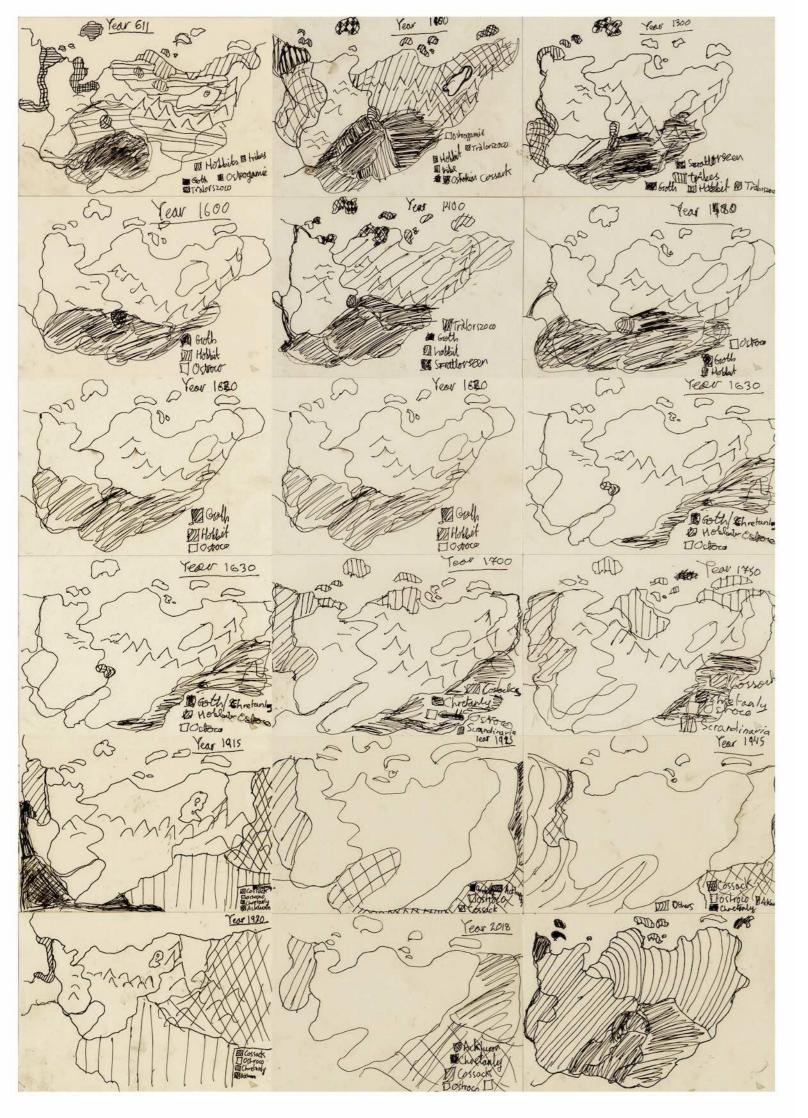












Kutlic ickenbar ut Oktogyar Iyandiaa - Changing borders of Ostroco

Ever since Ostroco was founded, it has constantly evolved and changed, and with new treaties and new annexations, new losses of land the borders of Ostroco has changed a great deal.

First of all, when Ostroco united, it was yet but a tiny little principality of the size of Kent, and not more. Yet, with Kondor II rapid reforms, the country annexed its neighbouring tiny states, getting larger and larger, and this strategy of expansion continued until Ostroco was the size of the Netherlands. But, behold, maybe it was the size of the Netherlands, yet the King of Ostroco – and his government – didn't have full power over all of its dominions, as many of the annexed land had been united with Ostroco, yet some of the land were situated high up in the mountains, or in the middle of impenetrable marshes, or in the middle of immense forests or even just in lands full of fog; this resulted that Ostroco could collect all the taxes or station military garrisons over there, and so about half of Ostroco's land at that time was still autonomous.

Such was the state of Ostroco when the Sixty Seven Years War – or the Great Contre-Attack – started and the Horde won at the Great Siege of the City away in the West – which is the centre of the Continent's civilization and can be compared to Ancient Rome and Constantinople; yet when the Horde started to invade the continent from the West, King Gretlorszovitch made a great reform in which all autonomy and special regions were abolished under the pretext of National Defence. Thus, Ostroco was now under a single government and was in Urgence Mode, with all men and creatures being turned into the military. Most of the Military went abroad west to be stationed on Ostroco's western Kingdoms, to help them stop the Horde's attack, but alas! Kingdoms from the East invaded the Eastern part of Ostroco, as no army was to defend Ostroco, and so with two fronts to battle, Ostroco retrieved its Western Armies to defend Ostroco, yet the Eastern Kingdoms managed to get a large chunk of Ostroco, and with the Western Kingdoms now not having Ostroco's support, the Horde quickly invaded those Kingdoms. Ostroco did the same: they invaded the Western Kingdoms under the excuse it was temporary and was done just to have them protected from the Horde. But in the end, the Horde made the different foul creatures of the Southern Mountains rebel and cause confusion in Ostroco, and in the midst of that Chaos they invaded Ostroco from the south. The country had now shrunk to almost nothing, but fortunately at the Battle of Kachrondan everything changed and Ostroco pushed back the invaders. The war having finished, the Kingdom amassed great chunks of land for their bravery.

They were now as large as Great Britain and Ireland combined, yet that didn't last, as with so much corruption, chaos, rebellions and incompetent governing Ostroco ended up in being split apart. Pirates from the North came by sea to pillage the coast; the Foul Creatures of the Southern Mountains once again rebelled; a rising Principality in the East further threatened to invade the Eastern parts of Ostroco; some parts of the Western Kingdoms that were now under Ostroco split apart for reasons of not being culturally, religiously or politically with Ostroco, and so the country completely got wiped away.

From a state as large as Great Britain and Ireland Combined, they had now shrunk to the size of Greater London. The King abdicated and took refuge in a monastery temple, and the revolutionaries did a coup d'état, yet their government didn't last long, and so then Ostroco shrank to the size of almost nothing. Indeed, they were the size of the Vatican – that is, what still called itself Ostroco was just an extremely fortified castle away in the mountainous hills full of fogs in Praklow, and its leaders were just an old general still loyal to his King, who no longer reigned. It is rather similar to the Partition of Poland, and Ostroco experienced the same thing, though after a while a new King was proclaimed – Epreczidak - who was a late cousin of the Former Royal Family, and with his strong will he took back some lands, making his country as big as Andorra. Ostroco then slowly took back its lost lands – following an old map made by a druid at the time when Ostroco was grandiose – yet it took them a hundred fifty years to once again be as big as their former self, which was about as big as England. So once again, Ostroco was of the size of about England and Wales, and after a hundred years or so of being that size King Pavl created the Commonwealth – which unified Ostroco and its neighbouring little states – to make the commonwealth as big as about present day Poland. Ostroco itself in the Commonwealth continued to be of its former size until it discovered a massive land away in the North-West which was separated from Ostroco and its neighbouring countries by a gigantic Sea – the Weiszir Sea. This land was as big as Scandinavia and Ostroco took it, and thus, if counting all of its tiny ports they owned – those ports being as large as Hong Kong or Singapore – this gigantic land they discovered and itself, Ostroco was roughly as big as France and Germany combined.

Ostroco is now mostly in peace, and its borders are not changing that much, yet you never know, as if a war breaks out, or if the discovery of a new land is discovered, Ostroco may shrink to the size of Liechtenstein, or may rise to the size of Canada – who knows?





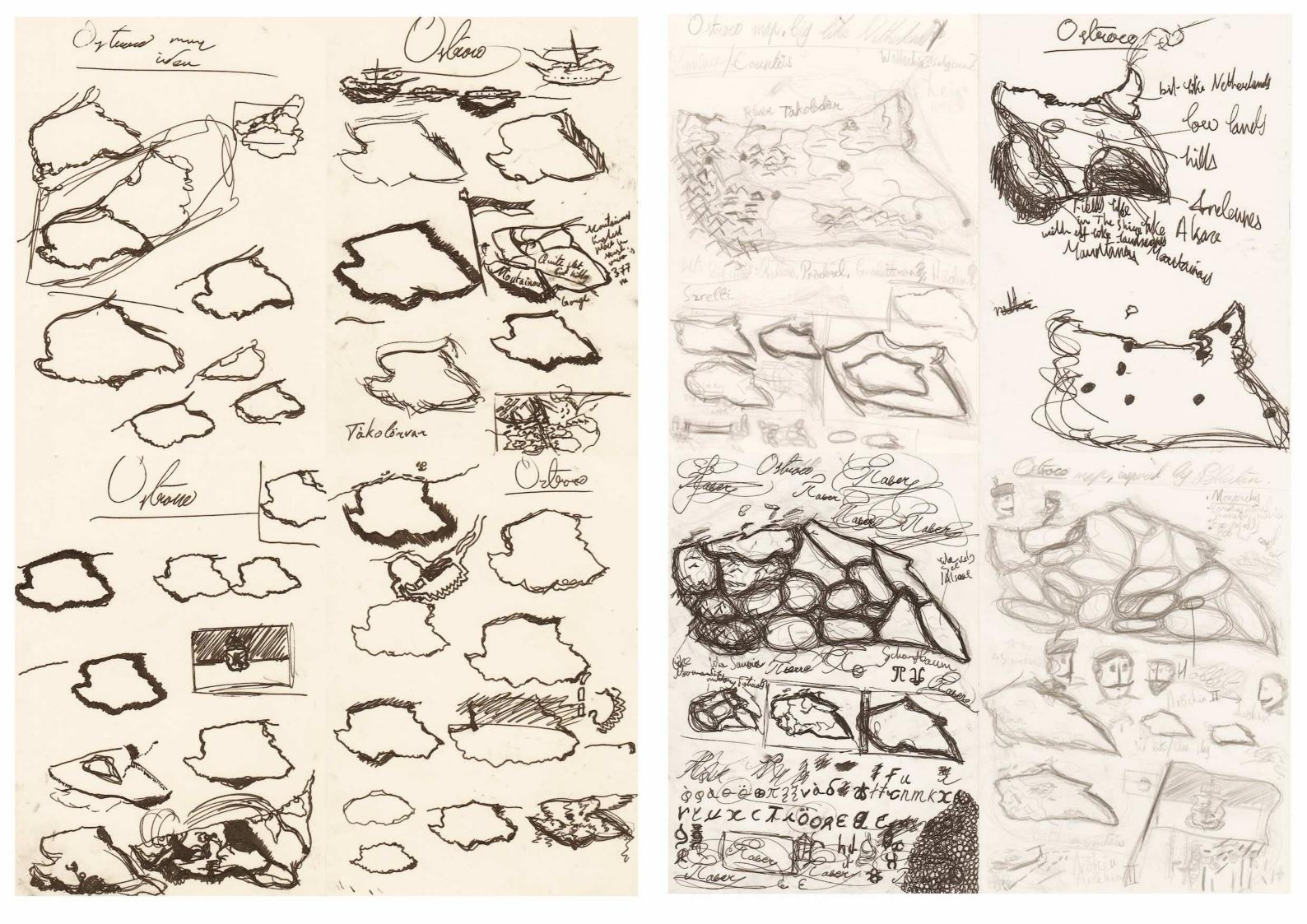
Tuch naportich kiszevirnech

The Big Map

The map of Ostroco is for me the main chef d'oeuvre alongside the Forgotten Tales which symbolizes the whole project of Ostroco. Once being finished, it will consists of a large map of the Kingdom of Ostroco made a l'ancienne, with detailed readings of towns, cities, castles, woods, rivers, mountains and all sorts of little detail. There will also be in each province a large person that would represent a province, such as a faun, sat on a rock, playing on his flute, or a soldier, or a nymph, or a traditional peasant, and so on. The big map will be surrounded by a large frame-like drawing that one sees in the old maps of the world, and so there would be pillars, gods, calligraphy, columns, maps of towns, portrait of kings and so on. In a word, the frame itself would be as important as the map and this big map will comprise of nearly every ideas I had on Ostroco - monsters, kings, mountains, creatures, battles, cities and all sorts of things. I really hope that this project will sum up all of the Ostroco manifesto in a single, visual element which one would be able to study as a whole.

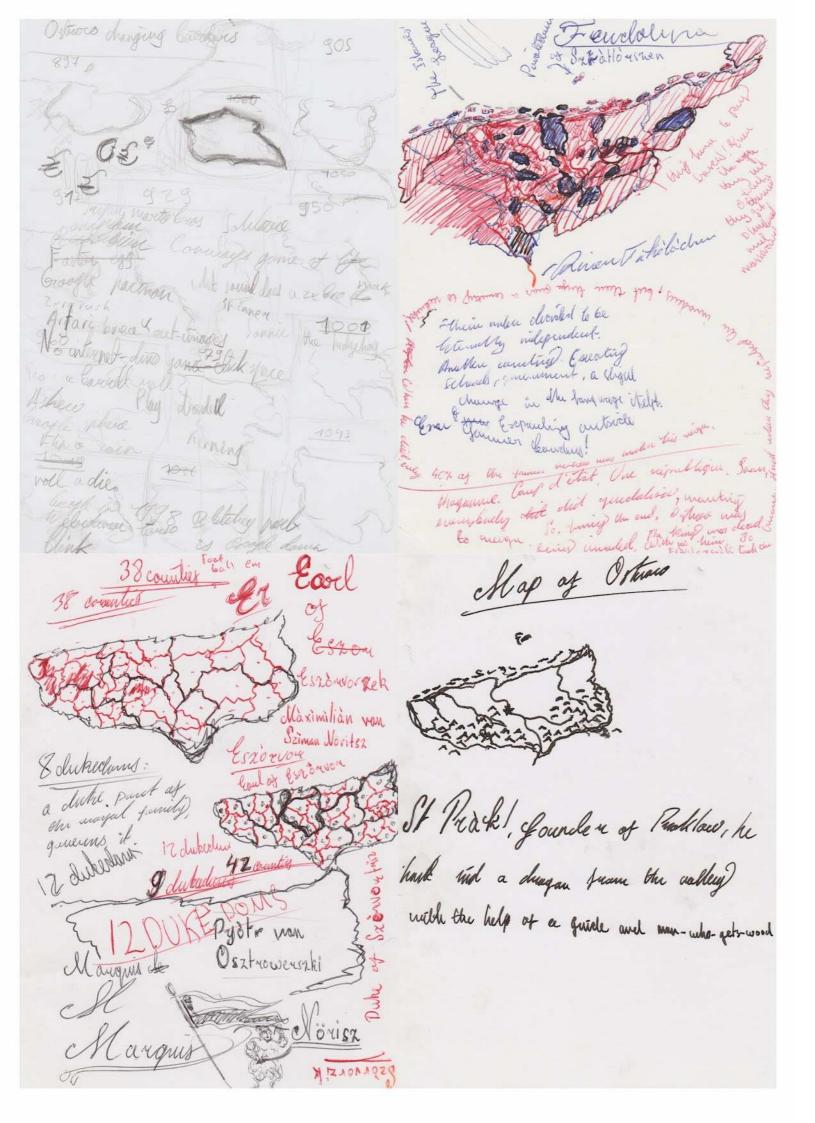


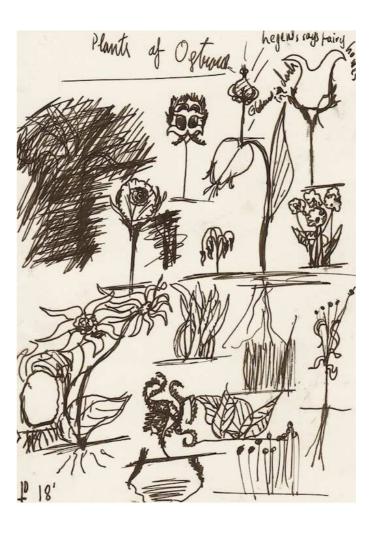












2020 Creative writing project

Duc Czorniech
Taruczic eczirinc futra
Uturczenfetaratatuk
ut Oktogyar

Forgotten Tales and Legends of Ostroco

Nearly all of Ostroco's projects and ideas had been quickly dotted down on paper with quick sketches that are barely readable and understandable if one does not comprehend the work. This means that the World of Ostroco that had been in my head had not been dotted down as successfully as one would think. This being said, I had decided to write a short novella which has many stories relating to quests and adventures in the time of Ostroco. It will tell about Ostroco's countryside, cities and the mode of living and lifestyle that is there. This novella will not only comprise of stories of Ostrokian heroes but also of the Ostrokian world - the people there, the creatures there, the nature there, the architecture there, and many more. This means that the novella will plunge one into the world of Ostroco which one would be able to comprehend and I hope, feel and imagine - it is a world full of creation, and is constantly changing, so this short novella will try to sketch a brief overview of the Ostrokian universe.



Ostrokian Legends

FORGOTTEN TALESThe Long-lost Stories of a Lost Land

E.G MONTAGU

"Furczich niemczich, aandraszafen, Moszfuntaic Isztineichen!"

4th Herczog czu Ronich

"One would only reach one's goal, through one's brotherhood"

4^{tD} Duke of Ronich

PART I:

Prakl and Urszag

The Praklow Province is the heart of Ostroco – it is where the Kingdom was born. It was there it had risen to the mighty state, and it was there, where it began.

The land there is full of hills covered in mystical forests whose dwellers are all sorts of hidden, bizarre creatures: gnomes hiding amongst the exotic plants, centaurs galloping through the trees, fauns dancing whilst one plays a strange tune and Spirits like nymphs who bathe in the many streams, with the trees talking to them. The province is home to mysterious fogs which settle themselves amongst the hills and doesn't want to go away. The towns are very smallish, as most of the province is covered by those forests. They are many cascades whose sounds echo pleasantly, and rumble as some fireflies and many other fairies fly by the thousands, full of light and twinkling, never to be caught by anybody.

You can encounter a lot of druids, residing in their temples — meaning you can spot a rotunda just next to a cascade in the middle of those forests, a bit like those Japanese pagodas high up in the mountains — as they pick herbs with their sickles, and smoke their long pipe full of extremely strong stuff which makes a cloud of smoke rise. They have long, white beards and look at you with a Bhuddist-expression, their soul being far, far away amongst the spirits of Nature. They are also monks, who prefer to reside in caves, which are situated on top of the mountainous hills, as they meditate and communicate with the Gods of Ostroco. Their grottos are nearly always inaccessible, as they can only be reached by following many twisted paths.

You, the lonely wanderer, have a feeling of floating amongst the Unseen, the Unheard and the Higher Beings, as you walk amongst pine-forests, full of bushes, where you lose yourself as a fog – the fogs are living things who can talk to you, who all have their personalities – decides to have a little fun with you. You come out by being in a valley, full of Nightingales, who cuckoo pleasantly as you pass them, chippering you hello. The insects are alive, and you then encounter a river, where you drink some water, pale and rich, yet only after having asked permission to the River God, who, almost always have a long beard full of algues, has piercing eyes, carries a silver trident and sports a laurel wreath, and his voice is deep and full of philosophical meaning.

You pass his river and then walk down to another valley, where humans dwell (You have to know that even though those hills not being mountains, humans settlements are mostly in the valleys), they had their extremely small, dense town, and there they lived, whilst they had

agriculture in the valley, which was really the only place where there was no woods. The little town would have red roofs, and there buoyant, jovial Boyars – rich merchants – would trade their treasures, and there there would be a temple at the center alongside the Governor's – who was nearly always a noble earl – castle, where the Governor resided. Cities were very scarce, and they were only about one city per region, but at the time the Province still didn't have any cities, as the only thing that approached to such a thing was a town.

Such was the land that Prakl had now entered. He was a nomadic warrior, who wandered about the country with no definite homes who went about with no particular destinations – there were many of those warriors in Ostroco, and there still are – who went about resolving local conflicts here and there.

Prakl sported a large, black, bristling moustache and had muscular body. He wore a kilt, a sporran made of goat's skin, long socks, a sash, a belt with a sabre, a round shield, a long sword, a papakha – those large furry hats that were as tall as one's face – which had a large plumage on it; smoked a pipe of a strange Ostrokian herb that was five times stronger than tobacco, and wore a long Green cape, full of patterns, that was supported by a silver shoulder pin.

He had his fellow companion, named Urszag, which was a creature of the Gwynsaran race.

It was a unique Ostrokian creature, a Gwynsaran as I said, which is the Ostrokian equivalent of a horse, because everybody uses it for transport. It resembles to a muscular goat, yet a Gwynsaran is even stronger and its upper chest is very hairy, rather like the ones Buffaloes have. They wear long curly horns, have a long tail, and they slightly resemble to a bull, yet a Gwynsaran sports on its chin two goat beards, like some Siberian tigers; they go very fast and are often used by knights, messengers and even merchants, as they are able to carry heavy loads.

Imagine a fat, rich boyar with his sacks of gold on the creatures' sides, and then imagine a cavalry of them, full of knights, charging down the valley! They speak the same language as humans, yet most of the people can't understand them – it's like a Londoner listening to an extremely strong Scottish or Yorkshire dialect. You have to know the dialect those creatures use to be able to understand them. Their voice are deep and they are very majestic and noble creatures, easily insulted if mistreated to. They have hooves and make the movement similar to a bull when his legs scratch the earth before going to duel, and overall, Gwynsarans are fine creatures.

For some days, Prakl went about the mystical valleys, and nearly all day he was lost, wandering about the woods, yet he did not worry, as he could easily get some food by picking herbs and catching fish. In addition, he had Urszag, and with him it was never lonely and he felt secured.

One day, he was walking by a cascade, and could hear the sweet melodies of the birds, the pleasant rumblings of the water, the insects buzzing busily about, yet all of a sudden he heard some cries echo in the distance. At once, he leapt unto the Gwynsaran and galloped away towards the cries of help, and a moment later, he and Urszag leapt out unto an old battered road – roads in Ostroco are not made of concrete, it doesn't exist, or stone, but are trodden down mud and soil – where he met an awful sight that made a shiver pass down his neck!

There, a few paces away from him, he could see a gigantic troll, snorting unpleasantly, who was waving an enormous club towards three boyars – those rich merchants that were all over Ostroco – who had long beards and were not at all of the warrior type. The boyars were on Gwynsarans, who were in vain trying to defend themselves and the merchants, yet it was useless, as an evil wild boar with scarlet eyes joined in, accompanied by a hag and two gobelins. They had snatched the riches of the merchants and were cackling with laughter, threatening the boyars to kill them unless they would give up their last sack of gold, when

Prakl – unable to resist it – whizzed towards them with Urszag and with two fine strokes of his sabre cut the heads of the two gobelins.

At this, the troll roared in fury and waved his club clumsily at Prakl, but he ducked underneath, and getting behind him jumped and struck his sword right in the troll's back, whilst Urszag struck his horns with all his might into the hag's stomach. Prakl then swished his sabre into the troll's head, and jumped unto the ground whilst the troll cried out in anguish and fell to the floor, dead. The remaining brigad – the wild boar – lept for the bushes, but Urszag galloped after him and struck his fine horns into him, making the animal die before he could say Jack Robinson!

Prakl cleant his sword, and with the Gwynsaran – Urszag – they advanced towards the boyars, who astounded at Prakl's warrior skills, thanked him with all their might and offered half of their gold, but he refused, even though they pleaded for him to at least take some of it. Finally, the oldest of the boyars stepped out and exclaimed that if such was the case, he would offer Prakl a sword he had. On the blade was written in Ancient Runes the name of the sword: Eczenor. It was the finest sabre Prakl had ever seen. It was curved, and as fine as mermaids' scales. An Ostrokian diamond of a pale, crystal moon-like colour was encrusted in it, and Prakl accepted it with all the grace he could muster. The boyar said that this sword was made by the Dwarves of Ferduch, and could pierce any skin, even a dragon's, at a single stroke, if used right.

They parted, and with Prakl having given his humbles thanks, he and Urszag continued to wander – Prakl playing on his Ostrokian instrument, which resembled to a cittern or an Irish bouzouki, and singing whilst Urszag with his feet did the beat and sang with his low voice that resembled to a baritone or a bass one, yet was even deeper than that; Gwynsarans are particularly talented at singing folklore and military marches, and even some of their own compositions.

Soon, they went off the road in which the boyars had been aggressed by the bandits, and went up a little path that was by both sides covered by tall trees full of uncomfortable branches full of prickles. Then, another fog settled once again, and they were once again lost. The only thing they knew was that they were going upwards, and that there were obviously going up a high hill, and then after a lot of twisting paths, the fog decided to go, and Prakl and Urszag now realised they were on this tiny path with one side being rocks, whilst the other was a vast precipice, overlooking many hills filled with trees. They saw the fog settle on a nearby hill, staring at them, and they suddenly realised the fog had led them there. Why? They did not know; the only solution was to keep going through this passage.

So they went, and after continuous walking the passage suddenly turned left, and there lay a cave before them that was behind this space separating from the grotto and the precipice. It was pretty large a space, and there was what we can say a little garden full of crops. Just beside it was a small stone temple with Ostrokian columns similar to those of the Greek and Roman Order, apart that Ostroco has its own Classical orders.

Having now stopped from playing his Ostrokian bouzouki, Prakl jumped off Urszag, and put all of the affairs that he and the Gwynsaran were carrying unto a quiet little-looking spot by a quiet little-looking bush. Prakl put his shield and his arms by the side of it, and then whilst Urszag went off to graze, the Nomadic warrior stared at the horizon.

The sun was setting, and it was of a striking crimson colour – everything had turned red from the blazing rays of the setting sun, and the effect was simply magical.

Then, Prakl heard some footsteps, looked around and saw a druid come up to him. He was clothed in a long, white robe supported by a red silk belt hung around his waist; he had sandals on his feet; had a white cape around his white robe; sported a long white beard that went all the way down to his belt; had blue eyes full of calmness and hidden meaning; had a little smile that resembled to an old man looking down to a youth; had long hair which on top of it had a laurel wreath.

The druid bade Prakl and Urszag welcome, and invited them inside, but Urszag declined, as he wasn't comfortable being inside human buildings, finding them too small. So only Prakl

went inside with the Druid, who was called Guncaa deg Golaa. Once there, they dined and after having finished a simple meal, Prakl lighted his pipe, and so did the druid, yet his pipe was much larger. Indeed, druid pipes are as large as saxophones, and this one was wooden and – like a saxophone – also drooped down. Its mouth was large and cured outwards; inside was put some Ostrokian herbs, the Ostrowuanaa, and was lighted so that it burned.

This herb is five times as strong as tobacco, and it is why druids use it so much to have spiritual experiences. So, the druid lighted it and the smoke rose and filled the room with the strong smell of the Ostrowuanaa – this herb can make you have experiences whilst you meditate of being transported and being able to communicate with the spirits of nature.

It can make one recollect now long-lost memories from the past, and can make one even see a glimpse of a blurry future. Whilst smoking this herb, one can droop in a heavy sleep; this herb is almost magical, and is also used for finding inspiration and having ideas, as it can make your brain work hard, henceforth why old generals use it for finding military tactics, yet beware! This can be extremely dangerous if one cannot master it right.

Such was the herb that the druid now smoked, and so that evening Prakl told his story, about his recent exploits with the boyars, and his wanderings in this region. When Prakl showed Eczenor – the sword given by the old boyar – the Druid was amazed, and then he told Prakl that listening to his exploits of helping people, he asked him if he would like to free the people from a nearby valley from a terrible monster – the Okojokwaak.

The Okojokwaak (the druid said) was a vicious monster, whose qualities were perfectly horrid – he was of the size of a large house, had three gleaming eyes that looked at you in the most unpleasant manner, the monster had nostrils which emitted smoke – but not normal smoke, but deadly smoke – he breathed fire whilst having a snake-like tongue, had two horrible pairs of horns on his head; had a mouth with vicious carnivore teeths as large as one's arm, breathed fire, had the carcass of a dragon and a lizard and was impenetrable by swords or arrows or what ever other weaponry there was; his upper chest was extremely muscular, he had a long beard similar to one of a goat where he kept all his dignity; had long arms that could act like the arms of a monkey, and so could clasp something with its detestable sharp claws – that by the way, could pierce you in one stroke – and the Okojokwaak had a humongous tail which could bite at you at its wish. Furthermore, the monster had legs which enabled him to run as fast as a Kangaroo, and jump as high as an ape. And worst of all, it had a short-temper, devoured the dead bodies he had vanquished, and slept with always one eye opened, watching for intruders that could come.

Such was the monster that the Druid described to Prakl, and then the Druid told the Nomadic Warrior that if he would be courageous enough, he would go down tomorrow at the nearby valley and battle with the monster, as his sword could pierce that impenetrable skin. Prakl agreed, and so next morning, at the crack of dawn, the Druid bode him goodbye and told him instructions to always speak in riddles. Before they parted, the Druid made Urszag and Prakl put on an oil from a very rare plant that would protect them from the blasts of the monster's fire.

The Fog, being revealed to be a close acquaintance of the Druid, was to accompany them and help them during their assault on the Okojokwaak, which would only be after he had eaten dinner, as that is when he was most relaxed and unattentive.

And so Prakl went, mounted on Urszag, chanting an old battle song, with the fog chatting at their side, all vibrant and bright, and shining with a luminous light.

When they arrived at the valley, it was still early morning, and there was a fresh scent that was felt in the atmosphere: the birds were twittering, a cascade was heard in the distance, and some beasts were chanting merrily about. Yet behold! Down below, they could see a large river, the Takolodar, which was of a strikingly light, forget-me-not colour. And the valley between the hills in which Prakl was situated and the river, was total desolation with all of vegetation completely wiped out. When they arrived, no birds were heard to sweetly chipper, but only the howling of the frosty wind, and a shiver ran down the warrior's back. Yet, as the fog accompanied them, it enveloped all of this ghastly picturesque, and so Prakl and Urszag followed the fog which guided them towards the hill by the river – which would later house

Praklow's Kremlin-like Fortress – where the Okojokwaak's grotto laid.

The fog went to hide in the bushes, or at least tried – as we could still see it in the distance, yet now Prakl and Urszag were facing the grotto, alone. Then, after some waitings, they heard a deep cry of satisfaction rise from inside the cave, and the Okojokwaak stumbled out of the cave. He looked pleased with himself, and had a smug expression, and they deduced he just had his siesta.

He was indeed, horrible-looking, and did look like a large reptile lizard, and it was a ghastly sight to look at – he was indeed with awful long teeth, long snake tongue, that fire that breathed out of him, his grasping hands and dinosaur legs, and that horrible tail of his in which it had a mouth that ate all that it could eat.

Then, he stared dumbly about him and sniffed in the air, and exclaimed that he had sensed the presence of a young, tasty man full of good meat, with a good Gwynsaran.

Prakl was astounded at this deduction, yet then he replied with a booming voice that indeed here he was. He jumped out of his hiding place, riding on Urszag, and he flashed Eczenor, and cried the Jokjok Cry, and he exclaimed that he was here to kill thy horrible self.

Urszag hailed the fog from his bushes, and before the Okojokwaak could say Jack Robinson Prakl galloped towards him, yet the monster avoided his blow. He was now fuming with utter fury, and he ejected fire towards Prakl, and rising on his two legs, he shrieked his horrible battlecry, and tried to get Prakl with a swish of his hand.

Beware O' Stranger! Thou hast best not meddle with the Okojokwaak, when he starts to breath fire and cry the horrible battlecry!

But Prakl was ready – he whistled and the fog came towards them, it had made a compromise with a water spirit whilst hiding in the bushes, which was thus:

The spirit was to get into the fog, and once there would turn into rain and fall unto earth when the fog told it to do so. Why did the spirit wanted to do such a dangerous thing, all because she hated the Okojokwaak, and wished it dead to stop troubling the people of the valley.

Thus, whilst Prakl was facing the monster, and Urszag handicapped its tail, the fog settled itself over the duel, and rain start to gently patter. It then increased and finally, it went in a steady downpour, forcing the monster to being unable to eject fire.

Urszag galloped about and forced the monster to be against the rocks of the hill, making him in a defensive position. Prakl could not see anything, same as the Okojokwaak, but the fog directed him the route of how to get above the rocks and be behind the monster. This he indeed did so, and after heavy climbings he managed to be above the monster, and then, whilst Urszag was bravourly distracting the monster, Prakl summoned all his wits that he could find and jumped down unto the monster's head, and with Eczenor – his sword – he made it go right through the monster's head. The sword indeed was magical, as it sliced through the monster and pierced itself through all the way to the Okojokwaak's heart.

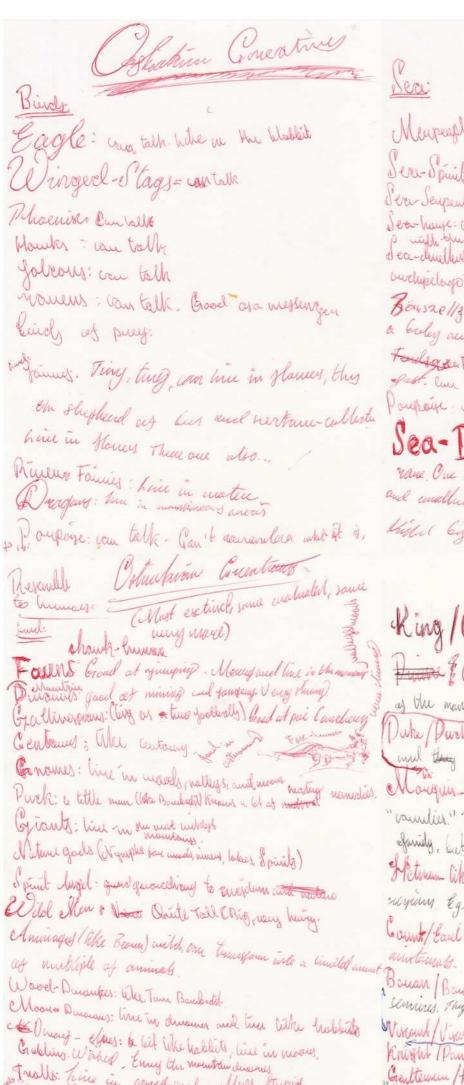
It howled, anguish at its side, and it stamped about, and next moment Prakl went whizzing through the air and landed against a rock, mortally wounding himself.

The fog lifted and now the nomadic warrior could see that the monster was lying on the grass, dead, and not twitching at all.

In conclusion, Prakl, Urszag, the Fog and the Water Spirit went triumphing back, liberating the valley from the Okojokwaak. Prakl was healed by the Druid by having a Druidistic treatment involving many herbs, plants, ice water submersions and Mountainous running, walking and climbing. Later on, he founded on the hill where the Monster's Grotto was the city Praklow, which would later become the capital of Ostroco.

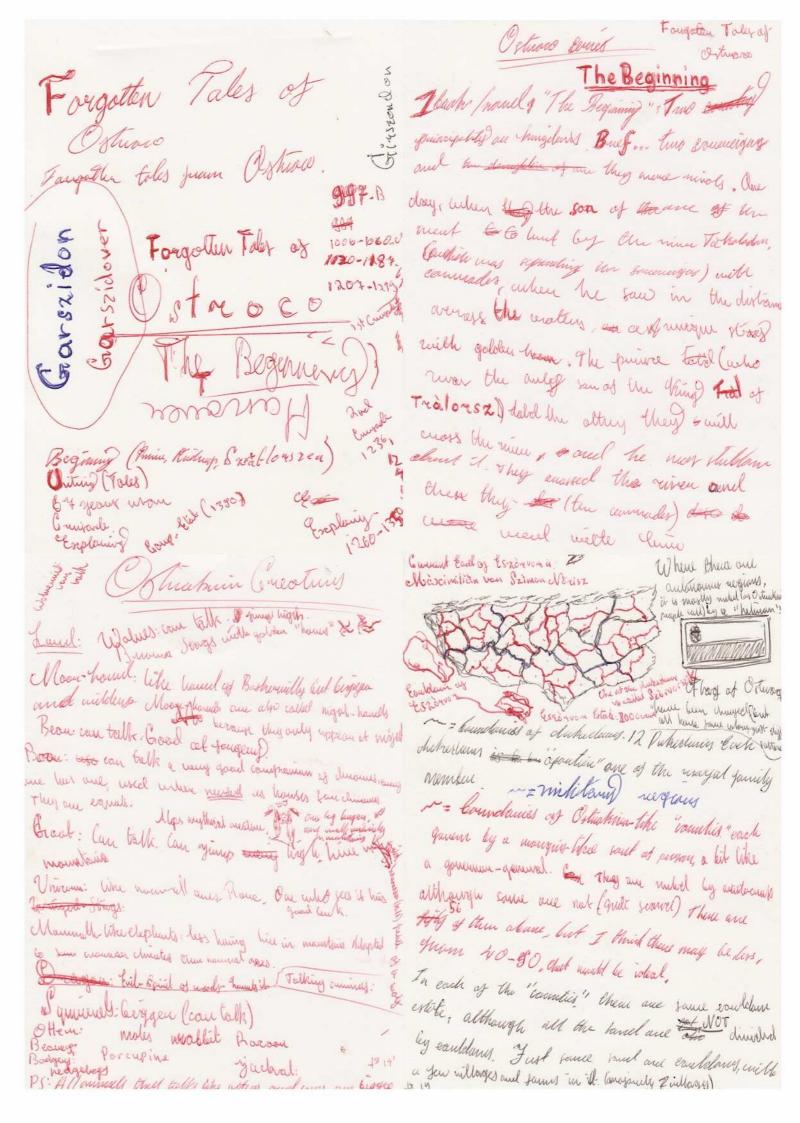
We can still visit the cave of the Okojokwaak, and it is situated just outside the gates of the the City's Citadel.

* * :



so Trallo. Time in could-our of mollers . Stupid

Oshrahiin Cone alures Menpeagle: Ser Spirit: See Serpent: (one would an knick news searon) Dea-hause: Come touther wice as houses four sea people. Some burnes of ecc-churchen : (look take a bit like human, hil curanget the owelupelogo) Bousaelljan: a creature like a baling but some of a Early aux. Hus consavanyous and an to wood you Fordsquarendens a chief at delphin, very Sea- Dragons- Chin in the sea, girle raw. One was in Other island as Szeatlonsnew, and walker in our of the wasted years It was triple (by) a Caint One valled (hu gray func) Ostrobian Receive System King / auen: That the auntigs Frank & Crown Prince: the him to the thrum, Child Duke / Durkers: they are mostly part of the regal facily and they sowne of their question have chikidary. Morgain-like / Growman-General: govern the Ostinakain "counties." They must be majority are not pull with mayor Sandy, but mistocrast Hotmum like / Ching : Aperson who gumes the autimornes raying Eg. on chief at the habble / Gallivespions people. Count / Earl: They gut have southeres and one Bount Bounts Have estates and titles in endlange form 3 sensines They are who Supreman Knights - John of which they Knight Pane for Thorn people and marriage man signing Granttenum / houly A respectful person. They have a title is to have exquisit



Ostrokian Legends

FORGOTTEN TALES The Long-lost Stories of a Lost Land

E.G MONTAGU

"Nuch jan czoraika funkt, furte Manczaake ich ran fierderkaite"
Grocz-Hatlimal Peutraic czu vin Harczaa

"Even men of unhonesty, can sometimes rise back to good"

Admiral Peutraic czu vin Harczaa

PART II:

The Voyage of Kaptain Kiczlonn

"I'll go to the seaside for a few days," says an Ostrokian. "Oh, you got enough of life, did you?" says his neighbour.

This is a famous saying in Ostroco regarding the seaside, the coast of the Kingdom. That is because for many centuries, the coast was a place of peril for any by-passers. May one even venture there for a day, and one will eventually fall in the hands of the devil! The place is tormented by sea monsters, land monsters, filthy creatures roaming through the land, brigands, pirates and corrupt mercenaries. Oh yes! Don't think that the Boyars, the Knights, the Noblemen and the Council haven't overlooked that point. It is the constant worry of the King – the coast is.

The land being in the north, the air is crisp, the sea is of a crystalline, piercing blue yet don't be deceived, as it is so frigidly cold! The coast is extremely rocky, with grey rocks being dotted about everywhere like awful daggers. The land has many Scandinavian-like forests that shares the space with zestful green-coloured hills where sheeps and idle shepherds are to be found. The coast hosts innumerable amounts of islands all with those sharp, jagged rocks that could pierce a ship in two. Those islands also house many forests, meaning that for most cases the only habitations are castles and monasteries. The sand is nice and of a beige colour, yet not a lot of people like to spend their time there, as beach kidnappy can happen very quickly in the Kingdom!

There, Ostroco barely has any control, henceforth why it being the constant worry of the King. The local governors are corrupt and are on friendly terms with brigands and mercenaries. The ports are filled with illegal trading, and the bars are filled with pirates and vikings-like men. The coast of Ostroco, situated in the north of the country, is really a place of hell, for even the poor villages – poor in the sense of being physically poor and poor in the sense of being deeply unfortunate – in the back-country, the land situated behind the coast and away from the sea yet still near it, are constantly terrified by the brigands whose pillages of villages are now a daily routine to them.

The worst is the island of Szatlorszen, where the pirates enjoy complete dominion over the island, yet officially it is still under Ostroco; the soldiers and officers there have just retired to their castles minding their own business. Whilst on the sea – which has enormous waves and terrifying storms – Pirate ships are to be encountered everywhere, yet hideous sea monsters are also visitors you might get on your little holiday cruise.

There are many ports who are all an extremely dense town full of twisting paths and alleys, with red-roofed houses, who have a slight touch of Italian medieval towns that are all a

complex labyrinth. The ports are generally the town is situated on a hill, like Lisbon, meaning that for a lot of cases, there aren't roads but steps to make you able to go up and down without starting to ski. It is highly irregular, and so with so much urbanistic chaos it is not surprising to understand why they are filled with all of those criminels, brigands, creatures, pirates and mercenaries amongst other people, who all go to bars and secret underground caves to trade their stolen riches, drink, get drunk and get in a fight.

The ports are all within walls, yet resemble to Old New York, though I am not speaking of the architecture, but of the people there. For, like Old New York, here the ports all have different gangs. They are all leaden by terrifying, brutish pirates who have divided the town's territory. They are many fights to get more land, and it often happens, for the official soldiers, who act like police troops and as military, can not intervene for they are scared to get lost in the gigantic mazes. Or get ambushed by pirates, or even get decapitated under an 'accidental' event – may it be getting crushed by a rock or falling and breaking your neck down a sewage hole, or even being sent away in a sack of potatoes, by accident.

Our scene now shifts into the city of Galaadriemen, which is an important port situated by the coast of Ostroco. It is perched on a rock, like the Old Town of Monaco, that is half surrounded by water, and is fortified by walls whose towers contain heavy artillery. The town is extremely dense, apart from the main square where the Governor's residence is situated (guarded by soldiers and the only safe place in all of the town). It is so dense that a carriage wouldn't be able to pass through the streets. Oh no, it is, like others, a complete labyrinth of tiny alleys, that can duck through houses, tunnels and can even take shape of stairs.

Somewhere in the midst of that chaos, it is raining heavily. It is evening, and the whole city is lit by yellow-light lamps perched on walls. Fogs roam through the streets, some talking to passerby, some wailing of their miserable miseries. In a small, narrow and twisted alley half blockaded by ropes, barrels and merchant's goods; filled by drunken pirates, gobelins, mercenaries, illegal traders, and goodness knows what else, there is a bar. That bar is situated on the ground floor of one of those red-roofed, half-tumbling stone houses with absolute nill symmetry that would make a Brutalist cry in despair; – a sign is hung on the wall: *The Dancing Nymph*.

The scene in which we now enter is inside this pirate's bar down into the two-storied high cellar. There is a jolly ambiance done by the music coming from the musicians, pirates are singing along, laughter is to be heard, dancers are to be seen on stage, pirates, mercenaries, creatures and company fill the place, and barrels and emptied bottles are strewn around.

Suddenly, the cranky door is banged opened and in comes a silhouette. A lightning is to be seen, followed by a deep thunder, and behind the door the rain has intensified to a heavy downpour. The music ceases, the laughter ceases, the merriment ceases, the dancing ceases. All is silent, only by a drunken man who cries out, only to be silenced by a punch in the ribs. Kaptain Kiczlonn has entered.

"Where's the gushing barrels of the Ostrokian wines and spirits, by all the Gadcziks, eh!" cries he with rolling r's.

The Kaptain walks down the stairs from the entrance into the heart of the bar. He walks with a limp though it can be seen that he has confidence. He sports a deep, vivid orange beard all tangled and bushy to the utmost point. He is one-eyed, his left having been pierced, henceforth why a diagonal cicatrice is to be seen in the place where the left eye should have been. His nose is broken, he has a torn lip and his teeth are all pointy with some missing, only to be replaced by some silvery, false teeth.

Rumours have that he has some dwarfish blood in him mixed with giant, making a peculiar ensemble of his having the dwarf's beard and characteristics of lust for wealth, yet being larger than most men due due to his giant's ancestry. He wears a tall furry, almost squared hat, has high boots, viking animal-skinned clothing with a big astrakhan-like coat he wears on him and has a curved sword.

Down he walks past all of the frozen, paralysed-looking pirates. The Kaptain goes up to the bar, where he orders his drink – a strong spirit with sparkling water. He turns to the saloon, and eyes them all with his piercing one eye. He sits down on a barrel, and gets his drink,

whilst showing the barman his arm, which has a tattoo on it, as forms of paying.

The crowd slowly returns to its former self – jesting, playing, drinking, dancing, fighting yet there is a slight touch of formality in it all, as if they were doing it whilst knowing all the while that there is a sleeping monster nearby.

They were right. Soon, the Kaptain roars to shut up and stop the foolishness of a joonsy-toopido duc!

"I'll tell you all. I came here not to jest, but to have men to sign my paper." The whole crowd stops again, he got their surest attention.

"My paper here," he says, "is a paper that wants men to sign it, to register and become my crew. For I am goin' away like the blowin' wind on the *Maczarnaa*, my ship, to seek the Gudufus: aye, aye. The monster who thinks himself so mightily smart, lying on his rocky island, snuggling in our righteous treasure! For yes, many years ago, he tore my father, Oczilon son of Diectoroch, open, broke his ship and stole his treasures away. So, I'll tell ya all! Here I am, seeking to avenge my father and kill this brutish monster, mightiest and most feared in all the Sea of Doradesz. I have the ship, I need men. The reward – a part of my treasure and a bit of the carcass of the Gudufus, for the people who'll come with me will return in glory! And that is the mightiest gift I can give ya ull!"

"O Kaptain, my Kaptain – O yes we goin' back to the good old Trufuous Sea! And kill that gruvuous monster Gudish Fous!"

The thing was done. The whole bar roared in appreciation for the Kaptain, and next day, everybody signed to get on board of the *Maczarnaa*. Glory, adventure and treasure was the three things an Ostrokian pirate needed to have to reach their Nirvana state.

The *Maczarnaa* sailed away from the port on the following morning, at the crack of dawn, with all the pirates that were drinking last night at the bar, *The Dancing Nymph*, that is forty men. The Kaptain was there, Otkaao the chef and cook of the ship was present, Kaarlimux was present as the Kaptain's *aide-de-camp*, that is his sidekick. There was even Euczirnich, the best sea-warrior pirate ever known in all of the coast of Ostroco, for yes: aboard the ship were only pirates, and pirates only.

The air was crisp and there was a sharp wind that was blowing in the northeastern direction. The sea was as usual of a pale, strikingingly clear, crystal-like blue where you could see what seemed to be the bottom of the sea, where bizarre, unknown maritime flora sprouted and lived. The cloud was cloudy and had a greyish tinge about it, but there was that sensation of there being light in it that illuminated the world below. There was an occasional bird that flew past the ship and croaked about, yet otherwise everything was calm and peaceful.

The land behind slowly disappeared, and soon the *Maczarnaa* passed through the archipelago-like islands, spotting a castle in the distant and a monastery nearby. There was a fishing boat, quite small, which looked like it belonged to the monastery, and the Kaptain saying that druids were sacred and good people, they did not pillage the little boat, for even pirates have a strict etiquette regarding to holy men.

For the next few days, nothing happened, apart that the ship pillaged two or three unfortunate boats, and meeting another fellow-pirate ship, there had been a battle, for there is great rivalry between pirates. The Kaptain won, and made the other Captain, who happened to be a man who got in a fight with the Kaptain in their childhood, pay him half of his stolen treasure that he was carrying.

But behold, that night a terrible storm came in. First, the clouds got darker, and towards evening the waves started to dance so fiercely that the *Maczarnaa* bobbed up and down nearly doing a salto. Nearly half of the ship's contents had to be thrown overboard, including most of the collected treasures, which were offered to the Spirit of the Seas. Rain started to pour down, and thunder and lightning were to be heard and seen. Amongst the great waves that were higher than the ship itself, the Kaptain saw a glimpse of the Spirit of the Sea.

It was just a small glimpse – the Spirit was enormous, as big as a giant, with a long beard that was entangled itself with all sorts of algae. It had a crooked nose, piercing eyes of the deepest, most melancholic blue and it sported long hair which housed a crown made out of sea flowers and plants. It was deeply muscular, with its upper part of the body resembling to

a human one, yet its torso was extremely hairy that you could nearly not see his skin. The Spirit's lower part was that of a fish, with large greenish, yet also blue-ish, scales with its end being a fish tail. In its right arm the Spirit of the Sea clasped a terrifying seasickle whose handle was as long as a giant's sword.

The Kaptain stared straight into his eyes, and he communicated with him. How? One did not know. Not telepathy, but a kind of spiritual communication took place between the two beings. The Kaptain seemed to have said something, and pointed at himself. The Spirit understood and roared and sliced his sickle unto the sea. Next moment, all was calm, the storm was gone, the clouds were gone, and the SPrit was gone.

"It was my half-brother," murmured the Kaptain.

The whole crew was silent, apart from the Kaptain.

"I tuld him who I wuz', and he immediately helped me, thanking me for the treasures. He evun tuld me where the ehland of the Gudufus was."

The crew was now silent not from fear, but from utter astonishment, and utter amazement. "It is not fur frum here. We shuld get there in the mornin'," exclaimed the Kaptain.

* * *

The following morning, when the sun had barely started to pursue its journey across the sky, all of the crew were arming themselves, in readiness for the fight against the Gudufus. Kaarlimux, the Kaptain's sidekick, was commanding people to and fro whilst the Kaptain himself had isolated himself in his cabin to think of the war plan. Euczirnich, the best seawarrior in all of Ostroco, was laughing for one of the pirates trembled in nervousness. He roared wether he was a little chicken or not, and after that remark a brawl ensued, though it was quickly broken up.

Even Otkaao, the cook, was busy, for he was making one of those tasteless sticky gum which one chewed to ease one's stress. It demanded a lot of effort and preparation, which is why it was he who had broken up the brawl, in order to concentrate on his recipe.

Suddenly, a shout was heard – land it had cried! Land! At once, there was the greatest chaos one could have ever seen, as most of the people rushed forward to see the land, whilst other got kicked aside, and fell, which tripped other people up, which made them loose their weapons which hurted other people which... in short, chaos had taken power and had proclaimed itself King.

"Haaa-alt! What dya all think ya doin'! Get back here!" The Kaptain was furious.

He stomped down the deck all the way to where everybody were, and eying them with his one eye, he grinned. But not a light, hearty grin, but an evil, deep and troubling grin that made your spine shiver to the point of catching pneumonia!

It was terrifying. The Kaptain's eye rolled about, and he continued to prowl like a famished lion around his crew, with hands behind his back, and occasionally when he felt they were relaxing, he would stop suddenly and utter a sound, advancing only a step towards them. That would get them frightened again.

He continued this procedure until he suddenly exclaimed why, of all the Druids of the Islands, did you step out of the line! Why! Were you all mad, or were you frantic with frenzied fury! Or was it that you were all frightened to death from that Gudufus?

The answer was no. So he asked them that enough was enough! And that he wished to see them all at their post in under ten seconds, or he'll go to my cabin for a little discussion!

The whole crew was back again arming themselves, getting the ship ready, and soon everything was ready. The pirates were all with their arms, equipped to the fullest, and the Kaptain was surveying them with his piercing eye.

Half of the crew got on board of a small boat, including Euczirnich and the Kaptain, whilst Kaarlimux and Oktaao stayed behind to guard the ship with the remaining of the crew. So so it was, that the little boat bobbed about the sea until it got near the shore of the rocky island.

The island itself was pretty small, full of jagged rocks and rocky beaches, though most of the inland was covered by tall, greenish trees. In the center of the island, was a tall hill that rose up to meet them, and they thought that the grotto of the monster had to be somewhere near that tall hill.

When they stepped out of the little boat, and found themself on a small beach, they couldn't help but shiver. For dead skeletons were almost as numerous as the sand itself, and it lay there, as a sign of welcome to the island.

There was total desolation, and silence, apart from one of those seabirds was heard to cry out and the howling wind whipped at their faces without mercy. It was a cloudy day as usual, yet you could see the sun which had risen up into the sky, though it wasn't one of those mery, warm sun. On the contrary, it was formal, cold, austere and didn't breathe a single warm ray down unto poor little earth.

Such was how it was, and it was with heavy hearts that the chosen pirates followed the Kaptain into the forest. Though when I mean forest, it wasn't one of those lively forests, but it really was one of those forests that had been nearly all destroyed, with most of what you saw being dead trees and dead vegetation.

It was in the afternoon when they reached the hill, and soon they found the grotto, in which the Gudufus lay. It was situated by a large lake, and they deduced that the monster probably spend nearly all his time lounging about the waters, doing absolutely nothing.

They were right, for the Kaptain spotted the Gudufus lounging by the waters, obviously having a siesta. It was a lazy creature, and in appearance was quite large. It looked rather like a gigantic frog with a slight touch of a furry cat. It was as big like as lion, or you could see the monster's large pointed teeth and small spikes dotted about his skin.

The Kaptain approached him, with Euczirnich and three of his best pirates behind him.

The Gudufus lifted its head, stared at them and before it could realise the situation, the Kaptain struck a small arrow into his skin. It was not mortal, yet that provoked the monster so much that it jumped high up in the sky and went down again unto its aggressors. The monster hissed, and tried to grab the Kaptain, but he ducked and made the two pirates attack the Gudufus.

But behold! The monster took one of the pirates by the leg and devoured him before everybody's eye. He was about to do the same thing with the other pirate, but failed, for he only took his legs, leaving the rest flying into the lake. At this show, the whole crew quaked with fear and went running down towards the shore.

There was only the Kaptain and Euczirnich left. Making a swift tactic, the Kaptain distracted the monster by facing him and throwing another knife into his left eye, which was a sensible spot. The monster roared in utmost agony, but there wasn't any mercy. It had gobbled up one and a half of pirates and the Kaptain's father. Euczirnich, with his curved sword, jumped unto the animal's back and thrusted the sword right into the animal's back. It leapt back, and at that moment the Kaptain, with all his force, sliced his sword into the Gudufus' heart. It was dead!

That night, the crew transported all the treasure unto the *Maczarnaa* and sailed back into Ostroco. They arrived in triumph, with each, as promised, carrying a small part of the treasure, wether it may be a golden crown, a bracelet, a gobelet with encrusted diamond, a little part of the dead carcass of the monster and of course, glory!

It was the talk of all of Ostroco, that Kaptain Kiczlonn had vanquished the Gudufus and met the Spirit of the Sea – whom the Kaptain gave a share in the large treasure for having helped them. It even reached the King's ears, for he sent messengers to the Kaptain, demanding him to see the King in person. Everybody thought it was a trap, but the Kaptain didn't worry. He went up the river Takolodar by boat to the capital, Praklow. There he visited the King in his fortress on the hill, by the river and by the city.

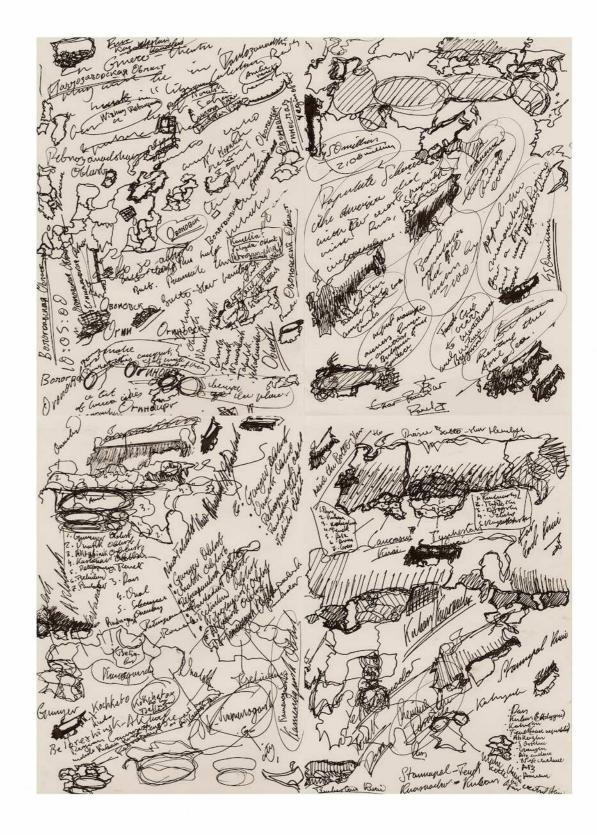
The King and the Queen forgave the pirate for all his sacking and crimes, and made him Admiral as well as making him Grand Vizir of the Gudufus Island. Euczirnich and the Crew were all titled Knight of the King's Maritime Regiment.

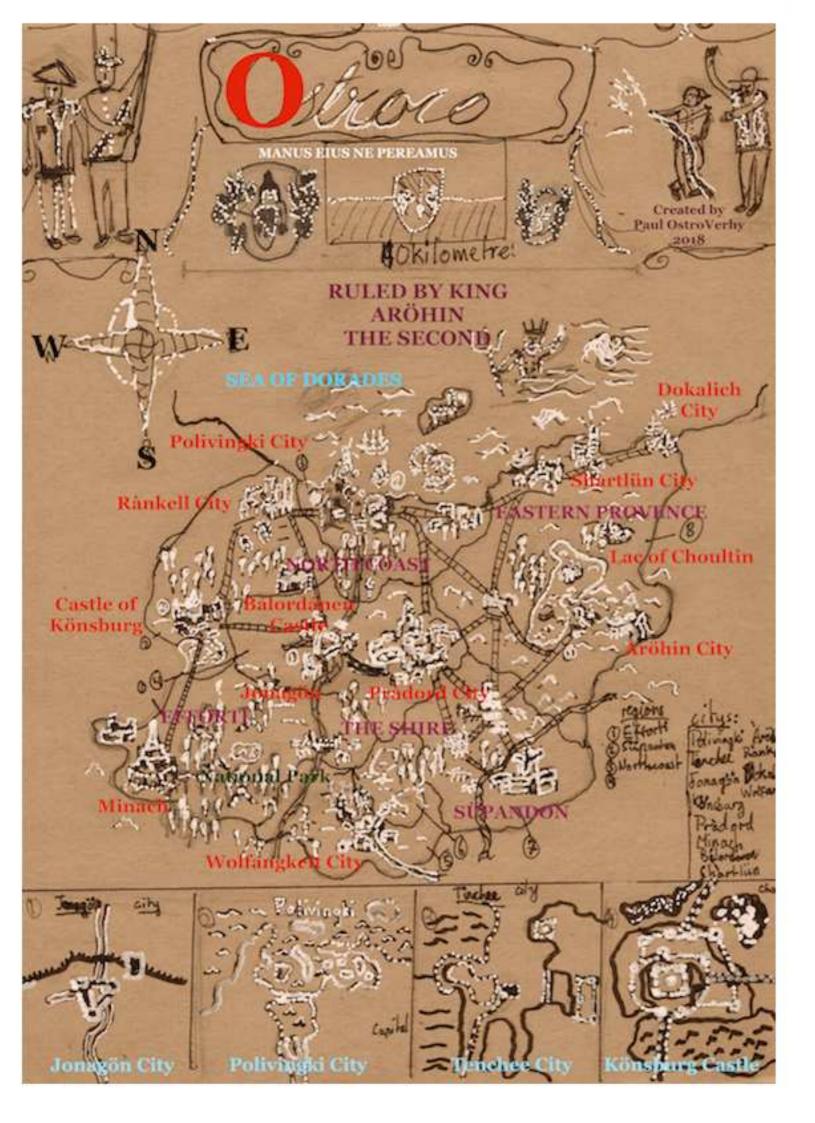
Though, years later the Kaptain and the Crew gave up of being under the service of the King, and chucked their titles away, and went a-pirating again, to face new adventures.

* * *









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 Ostrocovian 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.

Elliot Pulver, 14 January 2019 BA (hons) in Law, University of Cambridge





London, 2020/08/14

Dear Sir/Madam,

A conversation with Paul will quickly leap you beyond the mundane. Whether it be the marvels of classical architecture, or the pitfalls of mismatched Doric and Corinthian orders; the sensicalness of Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear's nonsense poetry, or the greatness of Oscar Wilde's witticisms; the sparkling maps, battles, and histories of his own Ostroco world, or the adventurous oeuvres of C. S. Lewis, P. G. Wodehouse, and Arthur Conan Doyle, Paul will take you through them with opinions, criticism, and, perhaps most strongly, a desire to hear what you think.

Every literary recommendation I have offered to Paul has come alive, before meeting a very genuine, sensitive personal critique. He has dramatised the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins before remarking on Hopkins' amusing parochialisms. He has taken me through stories by Doyle while noting the popular mechanisms that prevent detective novels from becoming truly literary texts. We have performed the Importance of Being Earnest and An Ideal Husband, while Paul discusses the social flippancy offered by one versus the political critique offered by the other. As a tutor, it is a delight to teach Paul. Indeed, Doyle and Wilde were not new to him.

Paul's capacity for prolonged, attentive, and rigorous creation is exemplified in his Ostroco project, which has been active for three years. Each field - that range from studies of flags, to mythical creatures, to economics, monarchy, and cartography - is fleshed out with an abundance of artistic sketches and textual explorations. He delves into his imagined world with thousands of words, producing centuries of constantly changing and unpredictable history. Inspired by his own extensive knowledge of Russian, British, and French history, he has pushed Ostroco to become an original world while maintaining essential, realistic structures. Borders shift, monarchs are killed, economies rise and fall, and new languages are born. There is only one thing that only goes up in Ostroco, and that is the currency.

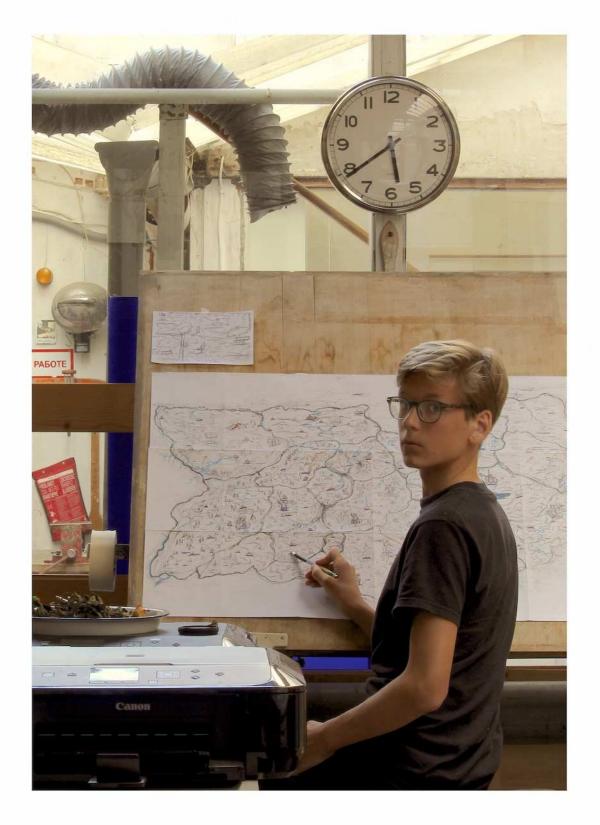
A highpoint of my work with Paul was the creation of an Ostrokian version of Lewis Caroll's nonsense poem, The Jabberwocky, that we named The Glumphoshnaak. It was a magical collision of poetic structures, scrupulous imaginative work, and study of Carroll's poem. As a part of a series of mythical legends of Ostroco, named the Forgotten Tales, Paul created a story in which a knight slays Paul's own, Ostrokian monster. From there, we toyed with language, twisting and turning it while envisioning the true sense of the scenes, to create 'nonsense'. We edited and re-edited to create rhythm, pace, rhyme, and sense from words that have never been used in the english language. The Glumphoshnaak was completed in two, intensive, four-hour sessions, with Paul driving the revisions until he was satisfied. The final piece is a testament to Paul's imaginative ability and commitment to create something new, and something of a very high standard, to which he holds all of his work.

Paul edited his second novel, The Diamond of the Chess Player, for one to two hours everyday between September to January, and this determined and considered effort exemplifies how Paul approaches everything that he enjoys. One can see this, and the extent of Paul's reading, in the language of the novel. Complex clauses and subclauses are perforated with Victorian colloquialisms, in a highly stylised use of dialogue and straight prose that is acutely in line with the period in which the text is set. It is a feat of editing; punctuated and worded with accuracy and intention, that maintains the pace, imagination, and fluidity of Paul's original concept. Professor Eilfort - a Victorian eccentric-cumdetective who is terrified of pigeons - is alive. Characters abound, each individually defined in their fashions, language, and behaviour. They roam through the real streets of Paris that are realised by Paul's fastidious study of the city, its architecture, titles, and environs.

It has been a joy to teach Paul. He converses about the arts with a rare ease, happiness, and excitement. He offers perspectives and possibilities to subjects he has only just been introduced to. The natural intelligence and industry that goes into his work lets it speak for itself.

Palylo

Yours sincerely, Polly Allingham BA in English Literature & Language University College of London



The Glumphoshnaak!

Shingeous was the Jingajack
And anfractuous was the jwainy-swine!
Ho! Beneath malachite Ojingoshwaak
Grew the gruvuous smell of the deathly whine!

"Halt! O' noble Oomzorok! Hast thou not heard of the Glumphoshnaak! Balguous is its glooking head, And what might is in his bundic thwack!"

"Fear not! My will is made O' Geczmann –
I have my sword ready by my hand,
Tonight I'll slain the Glumphous schnaak
And at the morrow I'll have freed the land!"

Flamious was the speed he went, Slishing down the mantis vines, Ho! What whipping chikojack Arose in the air of wingo soaics!

Knotful were the celadon jundoshwines – When Shwaak! A noxious tingacle did swicker Round his ankles fast and Yanked him, salto to the ground!

'Twas so that the monster loomed above: Drool dripped down from his mordant mouth, With eyes so pincy tincy tak On top of the bulbous body of shnaack!

The glumph's mouth widened and galped, Yet the 'Zoroc sliced with a struck of his Sickrik sword, And avoided the blow with a jump on the twack, The sword went tingachok pingachak clac!

A howl of hleptic pain screamed
Through the shingeous jingajack —
The sword had struck through the Glumphic mouth
And the nefarious schnaak was dead!

"O' Gloria, O' noble Oomzorok! Thy tungashic braviour has honoured us all!" N'deed did the old Geczmann weep with joy, As the Oomzorok bade them farewell.

Shingeous was the Jingajack,
And anfractuous was the jwainy-swine!
Ho! Beneath malachite ojingoshwaak
Grew the gruvuous smell of the deathly whine!