

The Discovery of the Fifth World

Stealth Countries and Logo Nations

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[META HAVEN PROJECT]

The Principality of Sealand is a man-made island in the North Sea.¹ Formerly a defence fortress in World War II, this tower, standing some six miles off the British coast, is a kind of emergency building, a *favela* of the High Seas. The eye meets a nameless, joyless, rusty structure that is nevertheless inhabited. During the 1960s, this fortress and a few other ones in the area were in use as pirate radio stations. All of them were abandoned and destroyed, except one: Roughs Tower. There operated radio amateur Paddy Roy Bates, an ex-major in the British Army. He was about to embark on an endeavour that would get him what money couldn't buy: fame. In 1967 he proclaimed the abandoned war platform, located in international waters, a sovereign country, named Sealand, his own Principality, with himself and his son Michael as princes, and his wife Joan as princess. Bates claimed complete independence from the United Kingdom; UK laws did not apply to Sealand territory and a blurred photocopy allegedly from the British tax authorities (and available on the Internet)² states that while on Sealand, Bates doesn't need to pay UK taxes. The name 'Sealand' sprang from the idea that, with some imagination, the platform is to be considered 'land'. But not just any land. Land within the sea, as a result: Sea Land, I See Land, ©Land. The Principality of Sealand, freedom's last resort, is the subject of this text.

Risky Business

In almost 40 years of existence, Sealand has built on a vast amount of myth potential. A nautical gypsy camp, a legal example on the verge of sovereignty, an archaic dream image, a contemporary ruin, issuing 'identity carriers' such as coins and stamps, and attracting media attention from a variety of focal points.

What does it mean to be on the verge of sovereignty, to be almost a nation? The concept of nation cannot be taken for granted. It developed in the rise of interests of Western Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries. As such, it seems sobering to be reminded of the novelty of the nation state; nothing is fixed. According to Ernest Gellner, one of the most important scholars on nationalism, the concept of nations has been artificially constructed. Nations are "the artefacts of men's convictions and loyalties and solidarities".³

Sealand or any other artificial landmass claiming to be an entirely 'independent' country could qualify as a prime example to confirm Gellner's argument.

Being prince in a state like Sealand, one can only hope for sovereignty, knowing that it is a privilege given to some and not to others. The 'mutual recognition' of states as described by the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States⁴ is carefully excluding those entities that have not yet achieved or have been refused sovereignty. This is why Sealand, an unrecognised nation, can simultaneously be seen as a private business island, an imaginary place, a piece of art,⁵ and a counter-nation. Different kinds of businesses, such as casinos and tax havens,⁶ were considered to gather national income for Sealand. None worked.

But meanwhile successful business was conducted without Sealand's approval: in Spain, 'fake' Sealand passports were for sale. In the 1970s one apparently could travel to various destinations carrying a Sealand passport without questions being asked. One of such counterfeit passports surfaced in 1997 after the murder of fashion designer Gianni Versace; the passport was in possession of the murderer's landlord who further claimed diplomatic immunity as a Sealand representative. There even exists a complete fake Principality of Sealand, based in Germany, which is publishing for its so-called 'business club' disclosed documents from the Third Reich and the Stasi period of the German Democratic Republic.⁷

Finally, in 2000, a deal was signed between Sealand and Internet start-up business HavenCo.⁸ The idea was to turn Sealand into a web storage facility, an offshore data centre. Out of reach of whatever authority, hosting whatever forbidden or risky information, HavenCo envisioned a 'data haven', free zone on the web, in its concrete form on Sealand. Investors were found, an agreement was made and the Sealand/HavenCo data haven was launched. At this stage, Sealand started to sympathise with the Tibetan government in exile just as the Internet community in general sympathised with the Dalai Lama. Tibet, a 'nation looking for a home', was offered free web space hosted by Sealand. A few years after, HavenCo's founding team has left the company, each of the founders now working on other projects still based on the dream of creating a 'free' space outside of jurisdiction. HavenCo is now a state-owned Sealand corporation, and Roy Bates' son Michael, also prince, is its managing director.

Freedom Prisons

As much as Sealand seeks to liberate its citizens physically, they can do only very little with that freedom. Life, habitation of the platform, is limited to a security guard named Colin, an ex-marine who has lived on the platform for over 20 years.⁹ Effectively, he emigrated to Sealand. What else is Sealand but a prison in the name of freedom? The platform is both: a free haven 'in one's own backyard' on the one hand, a remote detention camp on the other. The six nautical miles to the mainland are more than just a physical distance to the real world; they are an unbridgeable gap. Paradoxical as it may seem, the supposedly liberated and 'free' island contains even a prison cell.¹⁰

Recently, the idea of the offshore prison was made a new reality with the Bush administration's Guantanamo Bay base in Cuba. This detention centre functions outside of

America's own jurisdiction regarding citizens' rights to legal representation. A negative version, a reverse, of the offshore tax haven, Guantanamo Bay pushes itself to the forefront of contemporary imagination of the island, free from the burdens and limitations of law, Guantanamo Bay uses this so-called freedom deal with crimes that, because of the absence of legality, can no longer be called crimes.¹¹

Even though Roy Bates wished to open up new possibilities for state power, helped by traditional ideas about sovereignty and government, the actual territory of Sealand remains deserted. When juxtaposing this sovereignty to all other existing recognized states, Sealand's position remains void since there is no community, no political agenda, and no cultural value, only symbolic value. Gilles Deleuze once stated that "the essence of the deserted island is imaginary and not actual, mythological and not geographical".¹² Sealand's existence as a sovereign state is kept alive in the imagination only, and its constant reproduction of myth value uploads it with actuality and with presence in the contemporary world. To the outside world, and to the political rulers of Sealand, its continued existence turned this 'deserted island' into a model, a prototype of experimental nation, an ImagiNation. It is important to realise the impact of this word: ImagiNation. Not only does it suggest that nations are linked to the imaginary, but also that a nation could entirely consist of images.

The State of Imagination

Utopia, in its most general meaning, refers to a hypothetical perfect society. Utopia is also used in reference to actual communities trying to create a perfect society; and it is used to describe places or locations that achieve a temporary state of independence, as in Hakim Bey's 'temporary autonomous zone'.¹³ Sealand and utopias alike do not recognize the idea of reason. To reason would imply the aim for a logical explanation of utopia, for a reduction of its potential, ultimately losing imagination altogether in a boring exercise of practicalities and either/or decisions. If Sealand were a reasonable construct, it would have built its statehood altogether differently; but most likely it would not exist at all. Some utopias, however, and especially Thomas More's hypothetical 'perfect society', have what Sealand lacks: an agenda.

There is no reasonable explanation for Sealand's existence, and still, Sealand is. This status may trigger incorrect understandings or explanations: imagination does not pre-require the place to exist for real. So, images of Sealand, the ImagiNation, have become completely disconnected from their host carrier, a real place somewhere, somehow.



Imaginary places and buildings have a primordial role in our culture, being saturated with symbolic meaning. The Tower of Babel was built by a united humanity in order to reach the heavens. Another, kitschy, example is Atlantis. This former island in the Atlantic was first mentioned by Plato, who argued that the island was lost through natural causes about 9,000 years earlier. Utopias, Atlantis, imaginary buildings, invisible cities and Sealand alike, are situated at a crossroads of the territorial and the fictional; apparently there is something exciting about imagining another space, another world. A 'Fifth World', perhaps.¹⁴

Believe it or not, the self-proclaimed Fifth World exists. It has its own flag, combining UN and Greenpeace aesthetics as if it were some ecological peace force.¹⁵ The Fifth World is the world of the micro- or experimental nation¹⁶, a nation that lacks territory, population, and most of all: recognition. A world of borderline phenomena with the sovereign state as a model and the Internet as its home base.

The Montevideo Convention describes when and how nations are defined and recognized as such, in which the key issue is mutuality. A state should have a permanent population, a defined territory and a government. It should have the capacity to establish relations with other states, which requires mutual recognition: something very different from the 'territorial happy hour' that the Fifth World suggests. The limited amount of space available on earth has already been divided; conflicting views suggest we should either see the Fifth World squashed in between those defined areas, or as another layer on top of the existing political map of the world. Currently, the Fifth World creates images of its 'national identity' as if its sovereignty were territorial and absolute. Micronations issue passports, striving to count as one of the boys.

In this context, what exactly are real and fake passports? And taking this further: what is a fake fake passport? Is a falsified passport of an unrecognized, or 'fraud' nation then maybe no longer fake? Falsification here is applicable in two ways. First, as imitation of, in order to create an indistinguishable copy, which can perform or authorise the same actions as its original. The second form of falsification is quasi-scientific; falsification here means the search for evidence to prove an assertion wrong. An assertion such as: "Sealand is an experimental nation state". Or: "Sealand issues real and original passports".¹⁷

Carriers of national identity, however, can also be used to undo a state's value, credibility and recognition, as happened with the fascinating introduction of iron coins in ancient Sparta that were almost valueless. As a result, Sparta stood completely on its own, without the ability to trade, in a position of autarky, not unlike that of a contemporary micronation.¹⁸

The experimental nation's search for state-like recognition moves it in exactly the opposite direction of its desired freedom; the nation becomes imprisoned in power-based



images that have to upload it with similarities to real nations. Through their representation, experimental nations become amusing parodies of statehood, staging a symbolic play with the aid of passports, stamps, coins and networks of non-existent government bureaucracies.

Nation as Model

However, Sealand will always, or at least as long as the platform resists the weather, remain an imaginary construct, a place 'somewhere', in order to question, experiment and revolutionise the highest values and moral foundations of predominant state ideology. Here, it seems no longer relevant whether Sealand qualifies for the status of nation or not. The difference between Sealand (being an unrecognised minority) and the alliance of 'traditional' nations (being recognized majorities) does not lie in their sizes. "A minority may be bigger than a majority. What defines a majority is a model you have to conform to: the average European adult male city-dweller, for example",¹⁹ or the UN General Assembly with its 191 members with the exclusion of Taiwan, Vatican City and the Democratic Arabic Republic of the Sahara (DARS). So "when a minority creates models for itself, it's because it wants to become majority, and probably has to, to survive or prosper (to have a state, be recognised, establish its rights, for example). But its power comes from what it's managed to create, which to some extent goes into the model, but doesn't depend on it".²⁰

Sealand makes visible what to a large extent 'recognised' nations can hardly represent any longer: the nation as model. Whereas Sealand exists as a man-made, but rough, 'concrete' island in mid-sea, its political rulers have seriously counterfeited every archetype of national identity that there is: be it coins, stamps, passports, even their own national anthem and flag.

Nevertheless, "sovereignty is the ideal unity of the state".²¹ "To Hegel the state is not only a part, a special province, but the essence, the very core of historical life. It is the



alpha and omega. Hegel denies that we can speak of historical life outside and before the state. If reality must be defined in terms of history rather than in terms of nature, and if the state is the prerequisite of history, it follows that we have to see in the state the supreme and most perfect reality".²²

Yet, Sealand is not perfect reality. It has always existed at the crossroads of reality and imagination. Sealand does not want to be perceived as the absolute ideal to the outside world, nor does it strive for this medal award. It rather prefers to stick to its outsider position. Even if Sealand would attempt to tackle 'world' affairs, its appearance, combined with its political non-agenda, leaves only room for symbolic representation of its own status as experimental nation. Sealand could also embark on total disinterest and desertion. Sealand's rulers therefore deny the question of the "best state", which has been so eagerly discussed since long before Plato. "But Plato is not concerned with this question. What he is asking for is not the best but the 'ideal' state. That makes a fundamental difference".²³



Sealand's status can be described as in-between "totalitarian despotism and anarchic individualism".²⁴ The lawlessness on Sealand is more than its best friend. It is a married bond. It is Sealand's free ticket to economically survive the 21st century. But if sovereignty is not present on Sealand, nothing can be actual, even if things may be assumed to have some visible presence. Even a "bad state is one which merely exists; a sick body exists, but it has no true reality. A hand which is cut off still looks like a hand, but it has no actuality".²⁵ Sealand can therefore either gain symbolic presence or slowly disappear in the international waters of the North Sea. It could also disappear metaphorically, which will be discussed later.

Even if this fortress succeeds in symbolically existing as experimental nation, "no nation does merely exist in isolation. The state is for itself, but second, it is also for others; it must therefore be recognised, and in

the modern period many collisions have arisen. Not only individuals but also states require recognition and must undergo a struggle for recognition with other states. The sovereign state, hitherto regarded as a universal in comparison with its individual members, is now considered from the international perspective as an individual among other individuals; externally sovereignty refers to the problem of the recognition of the state by other sovereign states. (...) Just as little as an individual can be an actual person without relations to other persons, a state cannot be an actual individual without relations to other states".²⁶

What then does Sealand signify to the outside world? Because of the fact that it is physically separated from other jurisdictions by water borders, Sealand has gained, as an experimental nation, the ability to function with minimal externalities. Its territory could potentially make ideal laboratories for the study of social, technological, and ecological experimentation. Its isolation also reduces the impact of any outside variables, making these experimental nations easier to establish, study and control. The probability of experimental nations being governed with the foundation of alternative philosophical premises is much greater than that of a larger country being ruled on the basis of similar grounds. If experimental nations can ever develop in a cost-efficient manner, they can serve as political laboratories or creative think tanks to effectively test principles of decision-making, conflict resolution and policy. Experimental nations have the benefit of not having any kind of previous history. They are established without pre-existing traditions, laws, or culture.

What is a citizen of Sealand called? A Sealander? And what would be the advantage of being an approved citizen of the Fifth World? In fact, this might be our opportunity to do without any labelling. It seems that citizens with some sort of relationship to Sealand are only bestowed with symbolic value. Since its own foundation in 1967 up to the present day, instead of influencing "identities by constructing mythic pasts made up of legends and literature, traditions and celebrations, customs and caricatures",²⁷ Sealand constructed its own stories of invasions, hijacks, kidnappings and forged passports in the past. This is Sealand's history, and all this we might call mythmaking.

"Indeed, the more one examines national identity, the more one uncovers ill-thought-out, irrational and contradictory beliefs, which switch between vague national symbols, an imaginary past, and evocative regional".²⁸ Sealand remains an ImagiNation struggling to make up its own *de facto* national identity as an old-fashioned 20th century Principality. The



result is an even more reactionary visual identity than any 'traditional' nation could have possibly imagined: heavy-bolded heraldry, tacky but cute slogans, combined with total meaninglessness. Sealand's presence becomes totally representational (visible) or totally non-representational (invisible).

Logo Nation

Sealand, protagonist of the Fifth World, has from a design point of view really two scenarios to go. One is the symbolic scenario: despite its non-existence as a political or historical entity, Sealand fulfils a role in collective imagination, as a logo nation. Striving for real



statehood will eventually block every possibility of presenting an alternative to the nation state. By remaining a partially fake or unrecognised surrogate-country or Ersatz-nation, a counter-nation, Sealand can propose alternative ideas about statehood and the world. These ideas can be played out in the symbolic realm. The visual and symbolic references accumulate in Sealand as if it were a Christmas tree. Sealand becomes the so-called floating signifier;²⁹ the deserted island becomes the starting point for an overload of iconographic experiments and associations; from heraldry based on search engines to Sealand's web site as an information monument. Coins based on the typology of the CD-Rom. Data ruins. In non-linear historical accounts, the incomparable is merged together; from Ceaucescu's presidential palace to the ruins of Delphi in Greece, from Mastermind to Versace, from Google to the so-called 'GreyCards', credit cards for notorious offshore banks operating in their island-based tax havens. A universe of icons that emanate the aesthetics of statehood, fed by the unstable conditions of the information society. Search-based design. The advertising campaign 'Mainport to Imagination' proposes a new publicity strategy for Sealand. A series of ads seeks to develop a political ideology for Sealand when there is none. Sealand's non-

agenda in terms of its socio-political, cultural and historical values makes it very difficult to visualise what Sealand could become or represent to specific global targeted audiences. The proposals attempt to open up a new international context in which Sealand can be imagined to operate. These proposals create fictive, but often subversive models that could all equally become 'Sealand'. Rather than simply brand Sealand, the different proposals

should disrupt our day-to-day reality and transfer Sealand's existence into our own day-to-day observation of everyday politics. Here, Sealand exists beyond the binaries of good and bad, legal and illegal. The ambiguity and contradictions of the different target groups and subject matters emphasise that Sealand is in fact lacking an ideology.

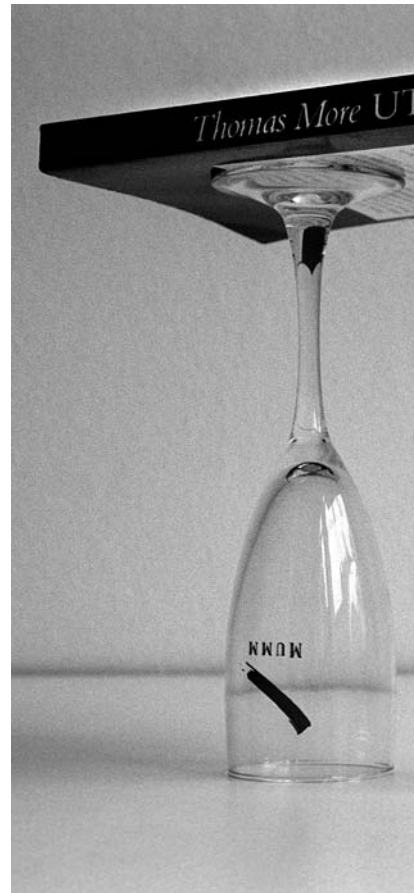
P.S.: What is the opposite of signal? Silence: not being noticed.

Stealth Country

We live in a world where everything seems to be noticed. Our lives are under surveillance. Not many things can escape the combined all-seeing eyes of security satellites and tracking systems, and even if we are not under observation already, our daily routines draw a flawless map of where we are, who we are, and what we do. Our data paths of mobile phone conversations, money withdrawals, electronic payments and Internet connections makes our existence as moving targets evident; as evident as an aircraft or merchant ship blinking on a radar screen. When we finally go on holiday to enjoy ourselves (at last, privacy and disconnectedness!) we have to report to local authorities before being allowed into the mountains. In case we do not arrive at our destination in time, helicopters will start searching (in the near future, at our own cost). Where in the world is a place where we can properly disappear?

After the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, Osama bin Laden, the alleged terrorist mastermind, was addressing the world from inside a cave. The contrast could not have been more literal and more striking; a skyscraper is brought down and the perpetrator is hiding in a prehistoric shelter. This 'cave' immediately became subject of architectural debate. Rem Koolhaas claimed that his now-cancelled hotel project for Ian Schrader (together with Herzog and de Meuron) in New York used the typology of the cave. Bin Laden was told to have access, in his cave, to the communications facilities of a hotel, especially television, phone and the Internet. An 'infocave' was described, a place both invisible and connected. At the same time out of reach of media exposure and surveillance systems, but equipped with the tools needed to participate effectively in the information society. The contours emerge of an entity that has all the capabilities to engage in the world, but cannot be recognised as such by the world. A non-identity, a vanished identity. A stealth country.

Since "nation states are primary important to socio-economic organisation and identities alongside their



novelty and tendency to recompose", Sealand obtains instead a dynamic stealth organization: its invisible data haven. According to Anthony Giddens, "the overwhelming majority of nation states have been created in conditions of war and all are sustained by possession of credible defence. War and preparedness for war have been fundamental contributors to the nation state. Preparedness for war (i.e., a credible defence capability) is a requisite of all nation states, a principle that has repeatedly been put to the test throughout modern history".³⁰ To Sealand, any preparedness for war is not actual; it is rather a metaphor (expressed by its heraldry and its military origins) and a strategy to live up to the 21st century.

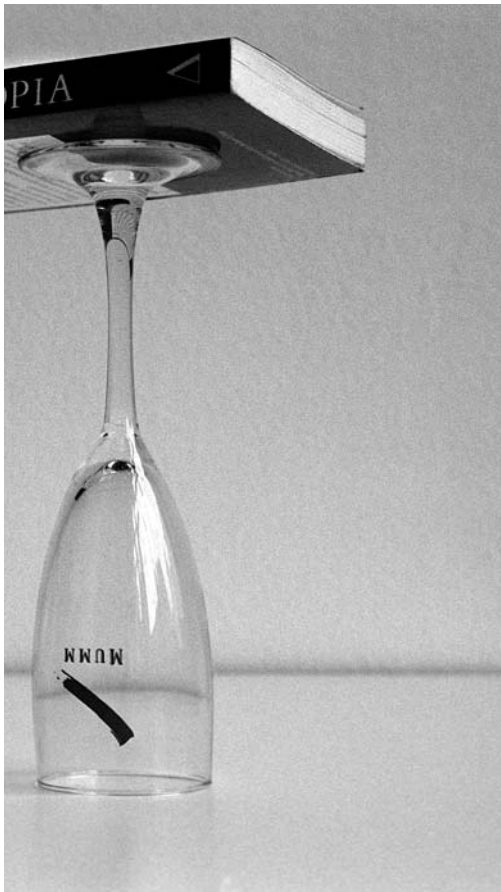
Sealand becomes a cryptographic and invisible³¹ structure. The often semi-legal affairs suggested by its semi-legal existence and lawless data haven further support the ambition to become a stealth organisation, invisibly active.³² Here, we attempt to theoretically and visually approach what cryptographic architecture can be, or is, and how it can be perceived in the context of Sealand.

Sealand embodies cryptography not only in a linguistic sense, but within spatial, informational and architectural meanings as well. In cryptography, information is converted from a comprehensible into an incomprehensible form in order to hide a message. The very essence of architectural space (Sealand's platform) could function in similar ways. Cryptography could become embedded in the whole architecture of a building, within the architectural landscape of the city, the region or a country. It can also be transformed into the virtual realm, its data haven. This could happen voluntarily, planned or accidentally.

So, "what happens when the 'Network of Terror' meets the 'Network Society'?"³³

Larger secret spaces and unofficial, undefined areas of terrain vague are becoming evident: hidden and secret locations, enclosed and unknown regions, terrains that have been (un)officially withdrawn from public use, territorial zones that exist off and between any legal jurisdiction, the infrastructure of the internet and satellite telecommunications, or simply public or privatised no man's land.

Cryptographic architecture could therefore be inscribed into the secret matrix of the



political space in which we are presently living. Examples: Sealand, North Korea and the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) between North and South Korea, the Trans-Dniester region between the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Ukraine, official buildings of intelligence services such as MI5, MI6 or the Pentagon, transnational terrorist networks such as Al Qaeda), military and publicly withdrawn test-sites such as Area 51, Nevada Test Site, Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station (US), Marshall Islands, Guantanamo Bay; or the more secret detention centres such as US ships USS Bataan and USS Peleliu.

In disciplinary and controlled societies, such as the former German Democratic Republic or the Soviet Union and contemporary North Korea, we often detect an officialised information deficit, closed networks, mind control, uncertainty and suspicion. In the capitalist information societies of the late 20th century, information and data are transformed into economic values; knowledge is turned into a precious commodity exchange through ever-developing technologies that host constant symbolic exchange markets between information societies. Here, we may consider binary oppositions such as information abundance and censorship, open and controlled networks, organisation and routine surveillance, individuation and individuality, certainty and fear. Precisely these information societies have, in the development of the contemporary world, turned into control societies in which "the control of communication is on its way to becoming hegemonic".³⁴

Fade to Grey

The political meaning of Sealand (and any Fifth World nation) would increase if it worked on its own vanishing off the world map, its 'invisibility'. What we need are grey areas and unknown terrains. If these territories want to constitute an alternative (mind) space to existing global state powers as their *raison d'être* suggests, they need to become invisible entities, stealth countries, that disappear from the map like the stealth bomber disappears from a radar screen.³⁵ The infodynamics of the stealth bomber were designed to avoid radar detection; the form of the plane is more related to the information it produces than to its aerodynamics. The idea that the appearance of things in today's information society is at a certain point no longer primarily visual, but informational, could become a key notion in a more contemporary view of identity. Sealand could be a model, without logo or identity, constructed from trash, books and everyday objects, like the Devil's Mountain in Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Sealand could be just a shadow, or a deceptive mirror, in which visual signs, and eventually Sealand itself, disappear. Sealand could claim the colour grey as its national colour. 'Data grey': the colour of information networks. It is the colour of the cloudy sky above, the colour of the surrounding North Sea, the colour of computer desk tops, the colour of business suits, the colour of the brain, the colour of concrete. Sealand's grey is more than neutrality; it puts its stealth organisation under complete secrecy; Internet service provider HavenCo is veiled under the umbrella of dark grey.

Sealand's initials become P.S.: Post Script, Principality of Sealand, and even dead-end streets will refer from now on to this stealth country, this entity that enacts an alternative to the contemporary world order from its illegal home base desert island, in complete and total secrecy.

NOTES

1. Further reference can be found on the Principality of Sealand's official web site: www.sealandgov.com
2. Alleged letter from British tax authorities can be read at www.seanhastings.com/havenco/sealand/taxletter.gif
3. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cornell University Press, 1983) pp. 6-7.
4. The 1933 Montevideo Convention is often quoted in the recognition process to promote Taiwan's independence from the People's Republic of China. For further reference, see www.taiwandocuments.org/montevideo01.htm
5. See www.escape-artist.com
6. The tax haven is a financial paradise from where corporations, mostly banks, can offer themselves and their clientele a tax-free environment. Tax havens are often tropical islands; the Cayman Islands are the world's most prominent tax haven, where hundreds of so-called 'brass plate banks' have their seats. The tax haven offers a grim look at statehood; no taxes means no public sphere. Although Great Britain was 'not amused' with the alternative nation of the Bates family, it has always applied a *laissez-faire* policy on which Sealand has relied for decades. Great Britain would not easily allow a nearby tax haven to exist, or permit other shady businesses on Sealand, for that matter. Britain's attitude towards Sealand mirrors Margaret Thatcher's famous saying: "There is no such thing as society".
7. The fake Principality of Sealand or 'Fürstentum Sealand' is a structure operating independent from Sealand itself. Once its obvious hope was to be mistaken for the 'real' Sealand. Politically, the Fürstentum is undoubtedly a dubious entity. See its web site: www.principality-of-sealand.de
8. Further information on HavenCo's web site, see www.havenco.com
9. See Marten Minkema's radio report on Sealand for VPRO (Dutch radio), www.vpro.nl
10. Sealand's isolated fortress (and second safest place on earth) could become home to suspected transnational terror networks or worldwide intelligence services. As a legal deadlock, it resembles a 'state of exception' to be just always prepared. But prepared for what? A war on Sealand? In the 1970s, Sealand's on-board jail was used to imprison hijackers, or invaders, of the platform, an important part of Sealand's national mythology. See www.sealandgov.com
11. In his lecture 'The Obscurity of the States of Emergency' at the conference State of Emergency: Territorial Identity in the Post-Political Age, curated by Meta Haven and organised by the Jan van Eyck Academy at the Stedelijk Museum of Modern Art, Amsterdam, 23/09/2004, Slavoj Žižek states: "This is the reality of Rumsfeld's dismissive statement that the Geneva convention rules are "out of date" with regard to today's warfare. In a recent debate about the fate of Guantanamo prisoners on NBC, one of the arguments for the ethico-legal acceptability of their status was that "they are those who were missed by the bombs": since they were targets of US bombing and accidentally survived it, and since this bombing was part of a legitimate military operation, one cannot condemn their fate when they were taken prisoners after the combat; whatever their situation, it is better, less severe, than being dead. This reasoning tells more than it intends to say: it puts the prisoner almost literally into the position of the living dead, those who are in a way already dead (their right to live forfeited by being legitimate targets of murderous bombings), so that they are now cases of what Giorgio Agamben calls *homo sacer*, the one who can be killed with impunity since, in the eyes of the law, his life no longer counts. If the Guantanamo prisoners are located in the space "between two deaths", occupying the position of the *homo sacer*, legally dead (deprived of a determinate legal status) while biologically still alive, the US authorities that treat them in this way are also in a kind of in-between legal status that forms the counterpart to the *homo sacer*: acting as a legal power,

their acts are no longer covered and constrained by the law...they operate in an void space that is still within the domain of the law. And the recent disclosures about Abu Ghraib only display the full consequences of locating prisoners in this place "between two deaths".

In this context, Dieter Lesage argued in his conference paper "Empire's Design: on Identity, Resistance and Europe": "After all that has been said about the legal non-status of the so-called 'detainees' on Guantanamo Bay, article 6 of the Declaration makes it plain and simple: "Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law". (Taken from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights; further references on the United Nations website www.un.org/Overview/rights).

12. Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953-1974* (Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series, 2004) p. 12
13. See Hakim Bey, *Temporary Autonomous Zone* (Autonomedia, 1995, New York).

14. We should consider the usage of First, Second, Third, Fourth and also Fifth World terminology more as a rough guideline than as a clear-cut definition. The terminologies 'First' to 'Fourth' World were, besides for journalistic purposes, mostly used during the World Wars. Yet, afterwards, the political and economical status of the categorised nations changed with no redefinition accordingly.

The term 'First World' was used widely to designate the economic powers of the West. The 'First World' was sometimes used also to refer to economically successful ex-colonies such as Canada, Australia and, less frequently, South Africa, all of which were linked to a network of global capitalism and Euro-American defence alliances.

The term 'Second World', during the Cold War, referred to industrialised, developed communist states aligned with the Soviet Union. Since the end of the Cold War, the term is not used as much as before. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the former 'Second World' became independent and democratic. It is not clear how to categorise these countries after 1989 since they can neither be considered Second World, nor First World.

The Third World is usually defined as consisting of 'developing countries', but the guideline for what is 'developing' is seen according to Western standards. During the Cold War the term was used to differentiate countries that neither aligned with the US nor with the Soviet Union. 'Third World' has become synonymous to poverty, disease and war, 'emphasising the increasing radicalisation of the concept in its Western usage'. The 'Third World' was, however, also used as a general metaphor for any underdeveloped society or deprived social conditions anywhere: 'Third World conditions', 'Third World educational standards', etc.

The terminologies have mostly excluded China. Numerically, the Third World dominates the United Nations, but the group is culturally and economically very diverse and the unity is only hypothetical. Oil-rich Third World nations, such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya, and newly emerged industrial states, such as Taiwan, South Korea, and Singapore, have little in common with poor nations, such as Haiti, Chad, and Afghanistan.

The 'Fourth World' refers usually to ethnic and minority groups not represented by a nation state. Sometimes they have a government, a specific religion, and even the visual representation belonging to a nation state, yet no recognition as described by the Montevideo Convention.

The term 'Third World' was introduced to designate the economical low end of the world: countries like Argentina, for instance. The 'Fourth World' was an even more underdeveloped 'Third World'. Another definition of the 'Fourth World' refers to nomadic groups or 'placeless' peoples. American sociologist Manuel Castells, uses a totally different definition. In an interview he explains the Fourth World as consisting of "black holes" that are "(...) areas of social exclusion that can be marginalised and at the

same time the system doesn't suffer at all. They're not valuable as producers, consumers; in fact, if they would disappear, the logic of the overall system would improve. If you are outside the network, in other words, you don't even exist". To Castells, the 'Fourth World' is not a socio-political-geographical bloc. He includes under this category Africa, the inner city ghettos of the US, as well as drugs trade and crime. Castells doesn't believe in a Third World, nor its 'development'. (Excerpted from Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (eds.), *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (Routledge, 1998) p. 231f.

15. See website of the Fifth World: B.webring.com/hub?ring=fifthworld
16. See website on the explanation of micronations: www.angelfire.com/nv/micronations/enter and www.micronations.net
17. Forgery is the act of making an illegal copy so that it looks genuine. Genuine passports give access to foreign countries, they pinpoint the possessor's identity, and allow the possessor to be registered into a thousandfold of systems and networks. So a passport's value is not only determined by 'originality', but foremostly by mutual recognition in between countries, and by simultaneous and mutual reliance from the point of individuals and institutions. The same goes for money and stamps. Since a Sealand passport, coin or postage stamp is not recognised mutually, but unilaterally by Sealand, it is already, in a way, a fraud in its original form. Then: can scientific falsification further verify that Sealand's claims to the outside world are untrue and therefore fictitious? At this juncture, Sealand exports 'familiar'-looking visual representations of nationality to the contemporary outside world. So to what extent is what can be conceived as a Sealand identity carrier 'original' and 'authoritative'? And how are we able to read these *de facto* national identity carriers in the communal exchange market of recognised nations, as they appear to transmit familiarity among the identity carriers of approved nation states? Because this imposed and simulated visual identity is to a certain extent estranged, supposedly 'original' to both Sealand and the outside world, Sealand's identity carriers are positioned in-between their presence as 'original' or 'authoritative' and their articulation as 'repetitive' or 'different'. This thought developed from Stuart's Hall remark in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (Sage Publications, 2000, London).
18. Taken from Plutarch, "Life of Lycurgus", in *Ideal Commonwealths*, ed. Henry Morley (Routledge, 1985): "First he (Lycurgus) stopped the currency of gold and silver coin, and ordered that the Spartans should make use of iron money only. Then he assigned only a small value to a great quantity and weight of this iron money, so that to store the equivalent of ten silver coins you would need a whole room, and to move it would require a yoke of oxen. When this iron money became current, many kinds of injustice ceased in Sparta. For who would steal or take a bribe, who would defraud or rob, when he could not conceal his booty, when he could not gain any glory from the possession of it, nor even use the iron if he broke it in pieces? For we are told that when the iron being made into currency was hot, they dipped it in vinegar to make it brittle and unmalleable, and so unfit for any other use. In the next place, he took steps to eliminate unprofitable and superfluous arts. Even if he had not done so, they would mostly have died out anyway when the new iron money became current, because luxury goods could no longer find buyers. The iron coins were not accepted in the rest of Greece, but were ridiculed and despised, so that the Spartans had no means of purchasing foreign curiosities, and merchant ships no longer landed cargoes in their harbours".
19. Gilles Deleuze. "Control and Becoming". In *Negotiations 1972-1990* (Columbia University Press, 1995) p. 173.
20. Deleuze, *ibid.*, p. 173.
21. Robert R. Williams. *Hegel's Ethics of Recognition* (University of California Press, 1997) p. 334.

22. Ernst Cassirer. *The Myth of the State* (Yale University Press, 1946) p. 263.
23. Ernst Cassirer, *ibid.*, p. 69.
24. Robert R. Williams, *ibid.*, p. 334.
25. Robert R. Williams, *ibid.*, p. 338.
26. Robert R. Williams, *ibid.*, p. 349.
27. Frank Webster. "Information, The Nation State And Surveillance". In Anthony Giddens, *Theories of the Information Society* (Routledge, 1995) p. 59.
28. Frank Webster, *ibid.*, p. 60
29. See John O'Reilly. "Liechtenstein+Sealand: The Floating Signifier - Branding a Nation May Be Just a Matter of Saying Everything There Is To Say about Nnothing". *Eye Magazine*, No. 53, Vol. 14 (Autumn 2004) p. 40-43.
30. Anthony Giddens, *ibid.*, p. 61.
31. In his lecture "The Obscenity of the States of Emergency" (at the Conference States of Emergency, *ibid.*), Slavoj Žižek described his concept of the invisible enemy: "In other words, the omni-present invisible threat of Terror legitimizes the all too visible protective measures of defence (which pose the only true threat to democracy and human rights, of course). The power that presents itself as being all the time under threat, living in mortal danger, and thus merely defending itself, is the most dangerous kind of power. In other words, the difference of the War on Terror with previous 20th-century world-wide struggles such as the Cold War is that while, in the preceding cases, the enemy, in spite of its spectrality, was clearly identified with the positively-existing Communist empire, the terrorist threat is inherently spectral, without a visible centre. It is somewhat like the characterization of the figure of Linda Fiorentino in *The Last Seduction*: "Most people have a dark side...she had nothing else." Most regimes have a dark oppressive spectral side...the terrorist threat has nothing else. The paradoxical result of this spectralization of the enemy is an unexpected reflexive reversal: in this world without a clearly identified Enemy, it is the US themselves, the protector against the threat, which is emerging as the main enemy..."
32. The consultant and researcher in organisational networks, Valdis E. Krebs, used the terminology of "stealth organisation" in relation to the asymmetric terror network of Al Qaeda. In his article "Uncloaking Terrorist Networks", he attempted to unveil and disrupt networks of terrorist cells and network patterns, and further described these as "amorphous, invisible, resilient and dispersed" (see www.orgnet.com).
33. This question has been put forward in J.J. King's article "'Terror is a Network, and the Network is You: Asymmetric Warfare in an Age of Full Spectrum Dominance". In *Mute Magazine*, Issue 23, March 2002, pp. 24-31.
34. Frank Webster, *ibid.*, p. 69.
35. Stealthy strike aircraft such as the F-117 are usually used against heavily defended enemy sites such as Command-and-Control centres or surface-to-air (SAM) batteries. Enemy radars will cover the entire airspace around these sites, with overlapping coverage, making undetected entry by conventional aircraft impossible. Stealthy aircraft can also be detected, but only at very short ranges on the radars, so that for a stealthy aircraft there are substantial gaps in the radar coverage.