

Welcome

Dear visitor please make yourself comfy, take a break sit and enjoy the sketches and notes detailing my project :)

Statement

I come from the small island of Curaçao, a paradise that has an extensive and dark colonial past. Whose byproducts such as racism, colorism and poverty is still very much alive, where dark-skinned individuals like myself have historically been denied a good education and a chance to truly prosper in society. As a result many people instinctively build defenses to cope with this, in my case this was my imagination. A world for me to escape to, constructed out of all of the media that I consumed while growing up. This act of piecing together a story out of many different sources inadvertently found its way into my practice. Each one of my pieces encapsulates a period within my biography, producing an amalgamation of memories, experiences, interest, curiosity to name a few. All stored in creative documentations that range from writing/ world building, performance, painting, installations and video. Consistently shapeshifting to strategically encapsulate and portray the subject at hand. In the case of my graduation project, this is through restructuring my ancestry and heritage to fit within a fictitious world of my own creation.

Story of the Four

Story of the Four (SotF) is a multi perspective narrative that deals with topics such as racism, colonialism, the transAtlantic slave trade and slavery in the Europe's colonies in the new world. With emphasis on the Caribbean and Curaçao in particular. This narrative takes place within the fictional world of Bèrdah and is set in three different installments SotF, Imperator and Fear. In this document I will be focussing on SotF as it's the one that I'm currently writing/ world building and will be presenting as my graduation project. This part of the story mainly revolves around a young boy (referred to as "The Boy") and the supernatural island (Mireali) that he created. The island was created by the boy when he ran away from his home island (Kahas) and headed out into the sea to escape enslavement at the hands of Hein, a ruthless businessman who ran a trading company.



Illustration of a unique/ magical mineral, found only on Mireali.

Next to Mireali he also created and projected himself into four different supernatural entities, who also acted as his guardians; these were: Stubborn, Intellect, Imperator and Fear. Things quickly go awry when Fear is revealed to be malicious and Imperator is nowhere to be found. Forcing the trio (The Boy, Intellect and Stubborn) to alter their plans. This is further exacerbated when the trio realizes that their island has been discovered by foreigners, one of which is Hein. Who in turn colonizes a massive portion of Mireali, setting up mining sites among others and importing slaves to extract its unique mineral. Small spherical crystals with the diameter of an inch, whose potential is only limited to one's imaginative abilities. Enabling them to be used for the betterment of mankind or weapons of mass destruction alike. Their discovery and subsequent exportation inadvertently caused a power struggle to surge between various nations, escalating into a conflict that would eventually plunge Bèrdah into catastrophe.

Different variations of the aforementioned minerals.





Bèrdah

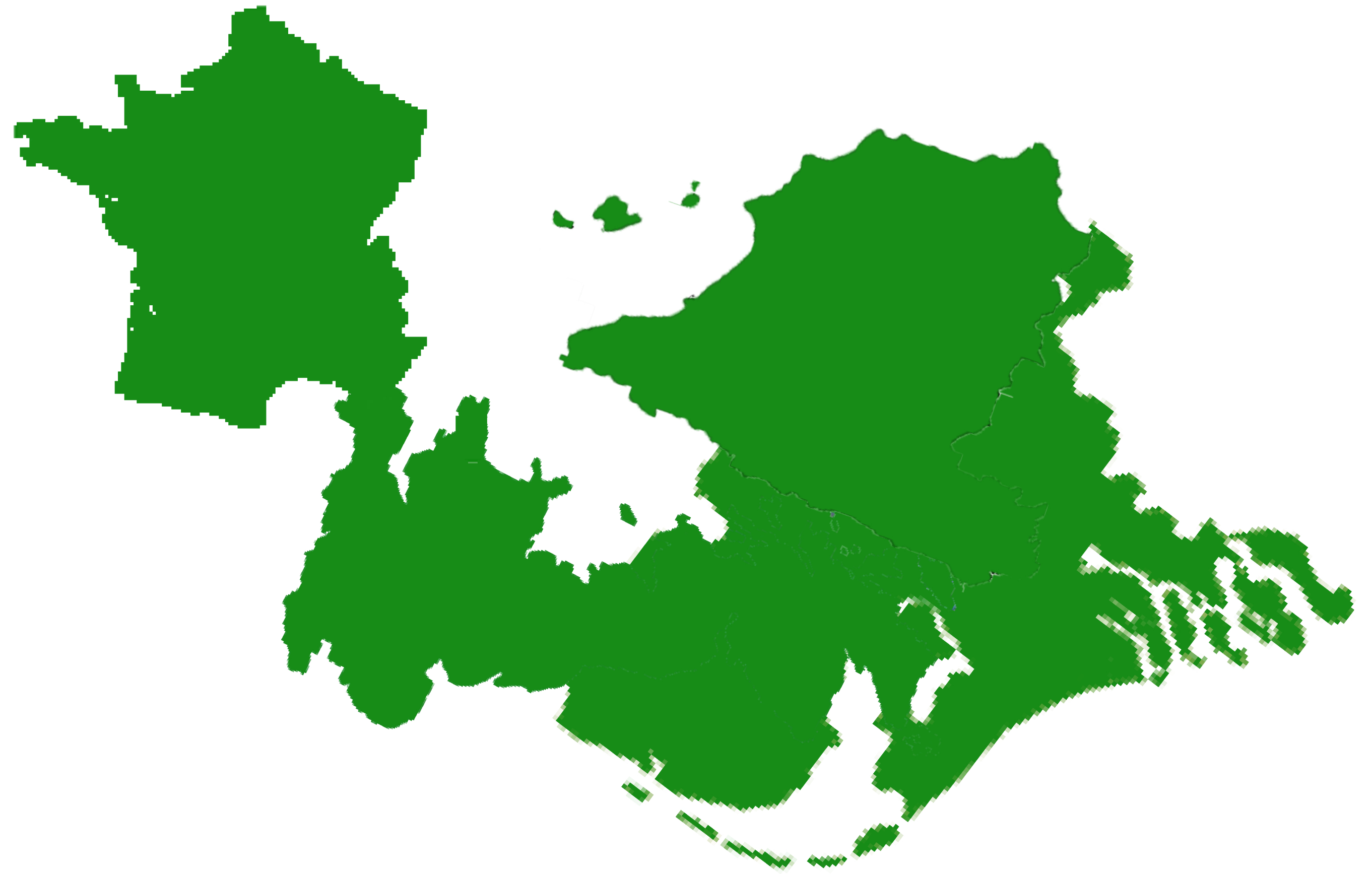
"Bèrdah" is the name of the fictional world where Story of the Four takes place. Currently it consists out of three continents, The West, Kahas sometimes called Kas and Elba, though this is subject to change. Other areas that have changed since the creation of this first draft is the shape and size of Mireali, as the island is now much smaller then it originally was.

Elba

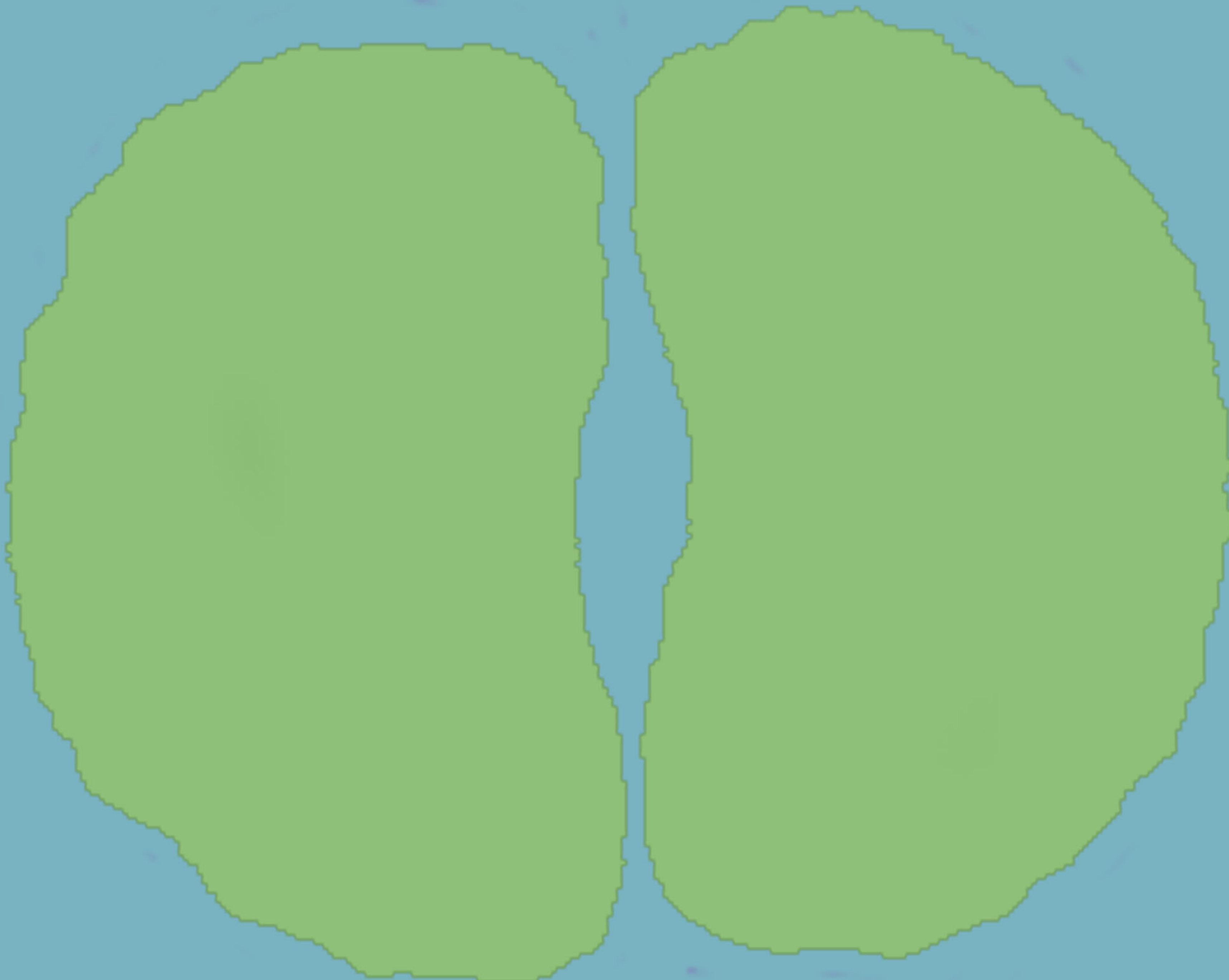
The shapes and sizes of the landmasses is also an aspect that I'm dedicating a lot of time to, none more so than Elba. In the original draft I've used an inverted image of North America but since then I've been reconsidering this. I'm now opting instead to recreate the landmass using the shapes of Spain, France, the Netherlands and Great Britain, countries who at one point or another in history subjugated or attempted to invade Curacao. My reasoning behind this is to create an image with the continent that tells a story in of itself, as is the case with Kahas. Whose name is inspired by "kas" meaning home in my native language while having this land be in the shape of my home island. For The West, besides giving this continent an official name my plan is to keep its shape relatively the same but have it be more affected by geological forces, such as plate tectonics.



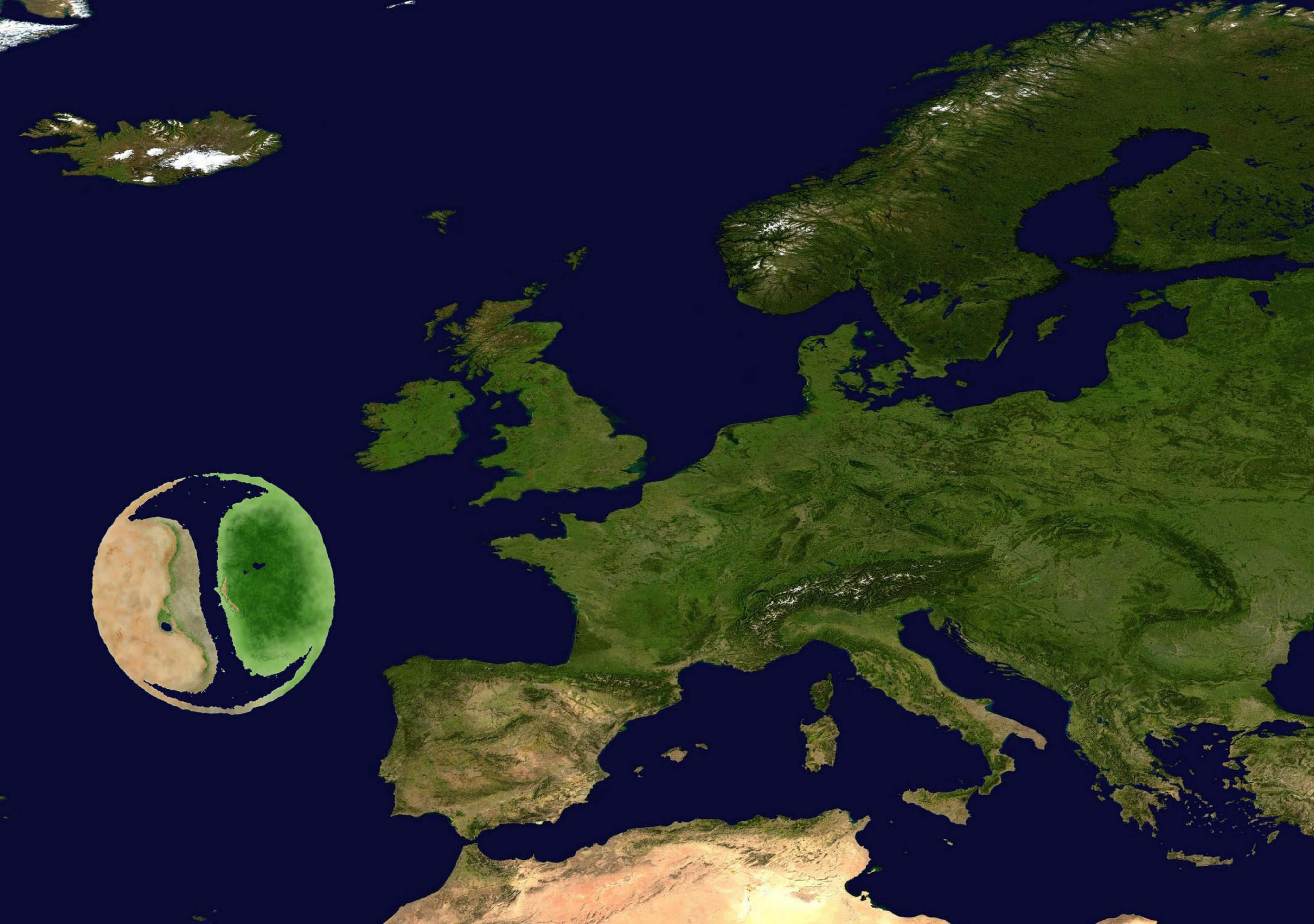
Sketch 1



Sketch 2

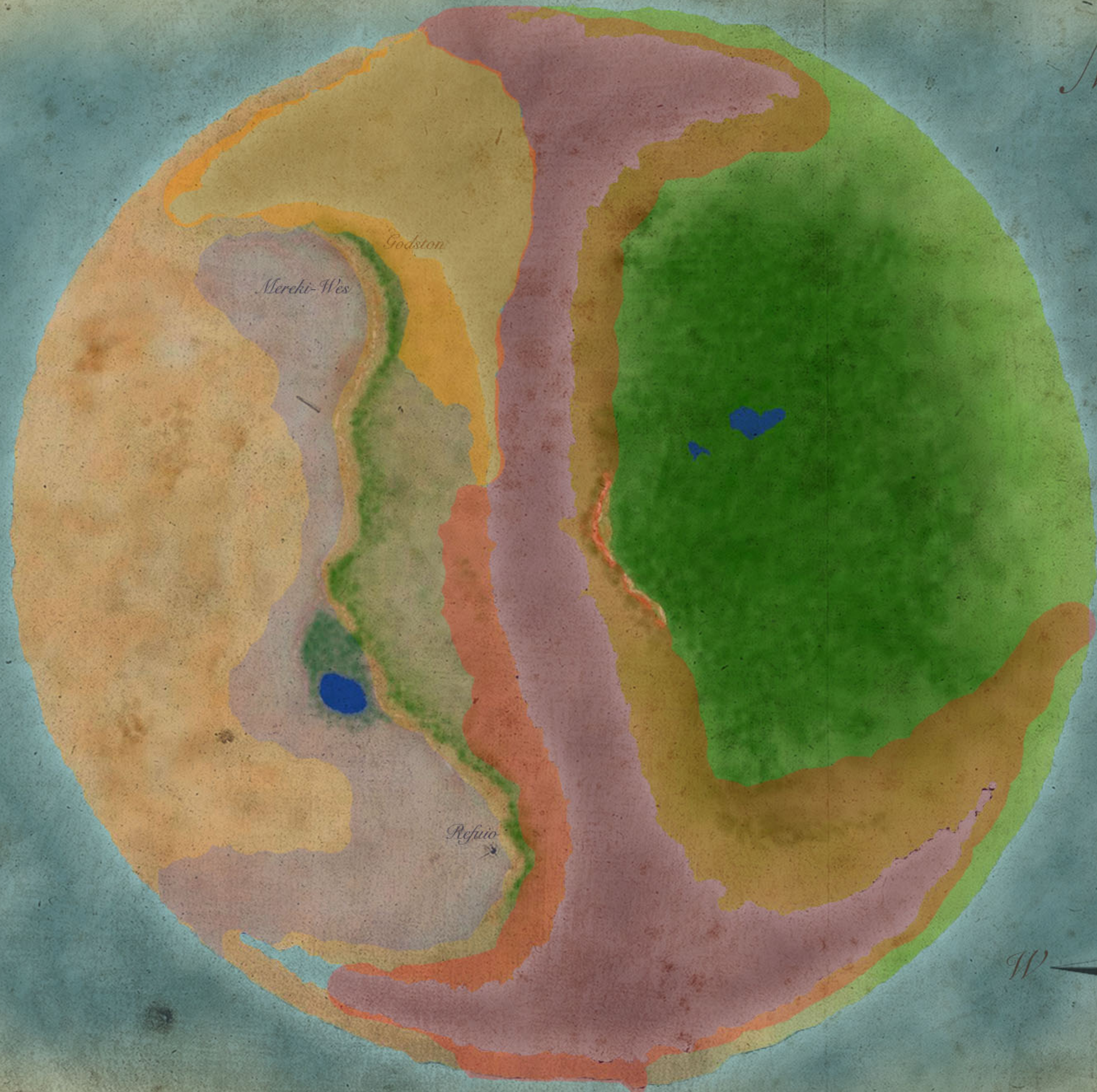


The original draft for the island of Mireali.

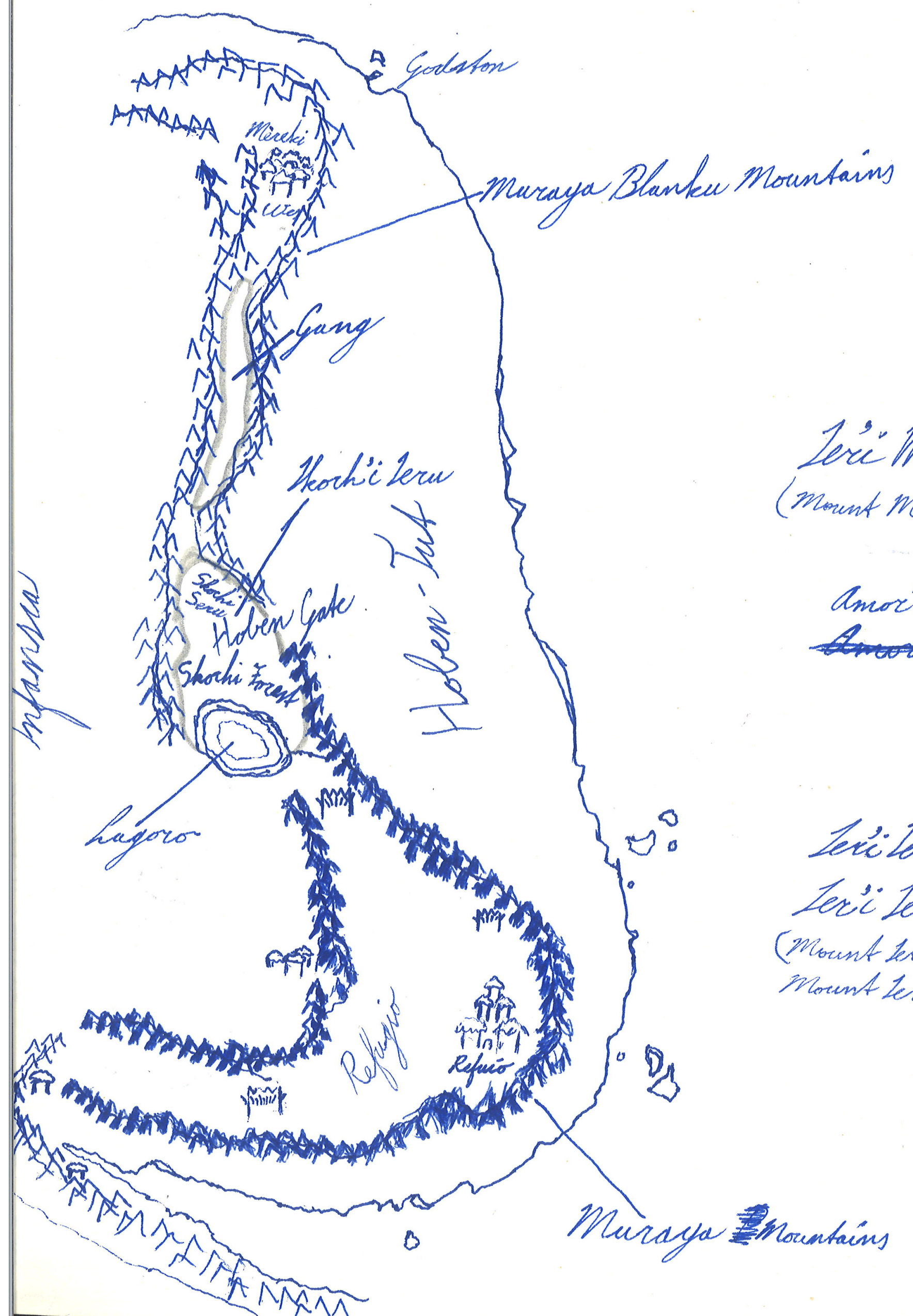


Mireali compared to Europe for scale.

Mireali



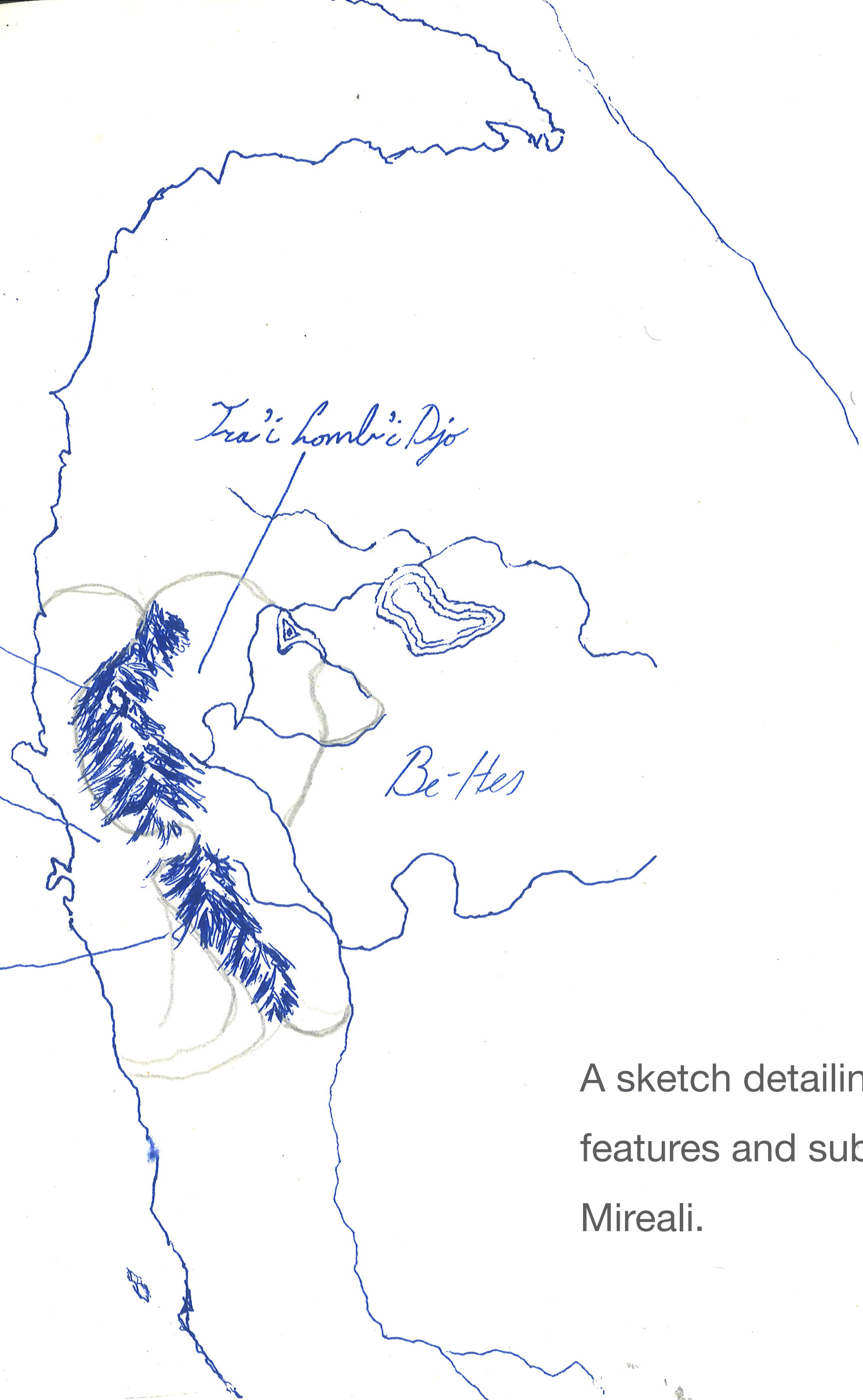
The colors indicates territories and the different groups who controls them. Blue belongs to the Nosklabo, orange to the people of Godston and red to Hein and his company.



Teri Merick
(Mount Merick)

Amori Djo
~~Amoridjo~~

Teri Terinity
Teri Teri
(Mount Terinity)
(Mount Teri)



A sketch detailing geological features and sub regions on Mireali.



Strategically placed forts (red), giving Hein control of both the south and northern entrances into the inland sea of Mireali.

The two largest settlements on Mireali are Refuío (pink) and Merek'i-Wes (blue) they're located west of the Muraya mountain range, their inhabitants are the Nosklabo, former slaves brought to Mireali by Hein. But has since then managed run away and sought refuge outside of his reach. The oldest settlement, Godston (yellow) is located on the northeastern shores of Hoben-Tut where foreigners first stepped foot on Mireali. Hein's settlements, posts one til six sprang up around shipbuilding harbors, mining and logging sites as well as strategically placed forts. Running along the whole western shore of Madures and the south east end of Hoben-Tut.

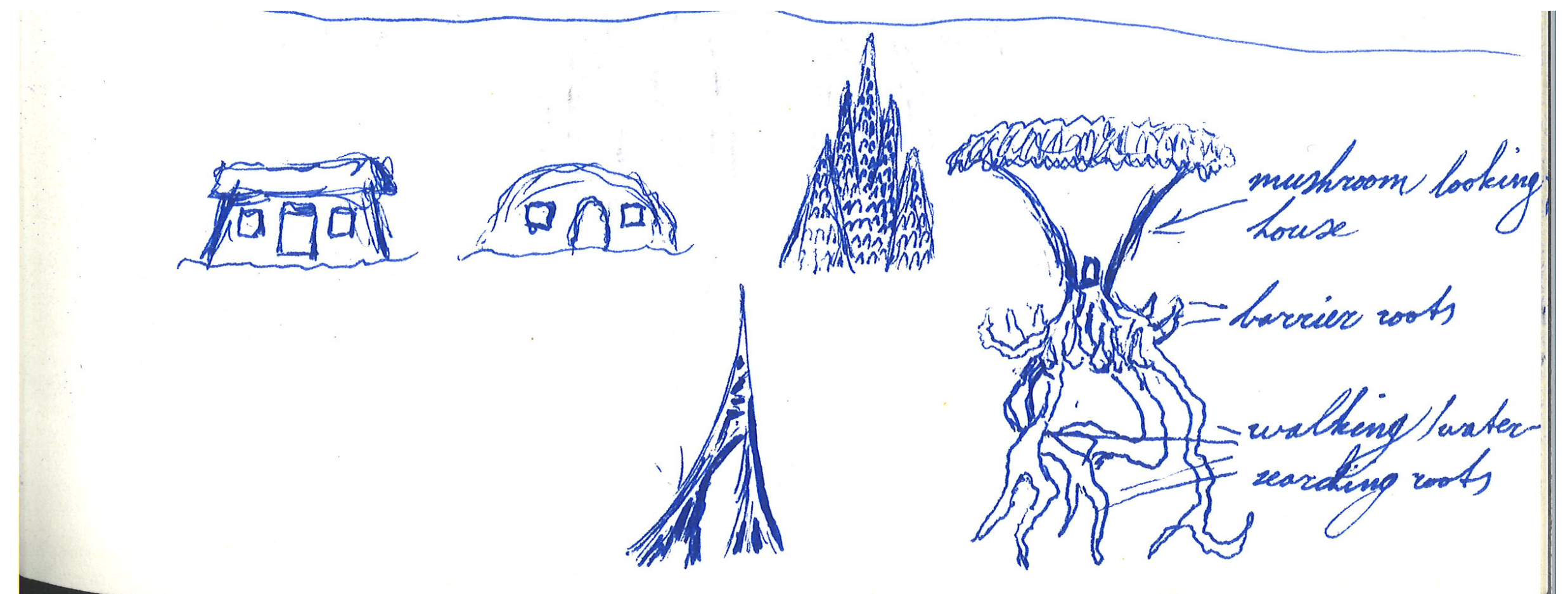
I've previously mentioned that Mireali's resources have special properties but this is true for the island as a whole.

To get to it you can't just sail there, when you're at the right coordinates you need to scuttle your ship without abandoning it, once completely submerged it will resurface and only then the island will be visible. Mireali also ignores the laws of physics, imagination takes hold of reality and influences how you view or interact with everything. The land itself can't be altered but one's appearance and man-made objects are all subject to this effect. Consumption of Mireali's fruits can temporarily prolong an individual's lifespan. Time is also experienced differently, one day there equals a month in the outside world.

At the bottom right of the sketch next to this text is a theoretical idea for a nomadic house on Mireali. It has long legs that have the dual purpose of navigating from one point to another as well as functioning as roots. When settled onto a location these roots would burrow deep into the ground to tap into aquifers.



One of the many fruits found on Mireali



Meality / Mireali island
 "Created by 'the Boy'" * The settlements on the island is perceived
 by everyone differently
 When on the island, you are how you view yourself
 To get to the island you must sail to the right
~~desired~~ coordinates, ^{submerge} ~~with~~ your ship without abandoning it
 once the ship has ^{completely} ~~submerged~~, it will surface again and
 Mireali will be in sight
 Has 4 different regions, the desert of Infansia, the semi arid
 land of Hobon - Tut, the meadows and woodland of Maduwa
 and the rainforest of Be-Hes
 The land communicates with it's inhabitants, it introduces itself, ^{the names} ~~of everything~~

Magic in Bèrdah isn't only limited to the island, the Nosklabo
 have a practices that comes from their ancestors in Kahas.
 One of which is the ability to telepathically share
 consciousness or whole life experiences with each other
 through the practice of braiding their hair together into a
 single braid.

- * It has 4 mountain ranges, with the two tallest ~~being~~
 being "Teri Merrick" and "Teri Teri" short for Teri-
 Terenity * A sonic boom can be heard everytime someone enters
 the border of the island no matter where you are on the island
- * Your emotions, will and imagination determines how
 you will appear on this island and how you
 view inanimate objects (apart of the landscape itself)
- * Magical island
- * Only place where ~~the~~ "Cores" can be found (a crystal like
 mineral with special properties)

- * Spiritual
- * ~~the~~ Managed by Heim
- * Civil unrest
- * Slavery
- * Colony of Elba
- * Darker skin population
- * Braiding hair
- * Casting spells
- * Conflict between old and new beliefs
- * Warm weather
- * Salt mines, guano, sulphur
- * Identity crises
- * Very religious
- * Brain washed by Elba
- * Not a very big country
- * Gained independence
- * Civil war
- * Hair is not just a feature of the body, it is an extension
 of ones emotions, wellbeing and status as well as the
 connection point of ones soul * Orishas,
- * Corruption
- * In the old days, people would share ^{their} whole life experiences
 with each other by braiding their hair together into a single

~~settlement~~ ~~multiple~~ / Refugio / E Baranka
 * Biggest ~~settlement~~ in Mireali
 * ~~Most~~ Populated majorly by free folk
 * On an island, middle of a river, in the province of Refugio, safe in between the mountains
 * A thorn in Hein's side * People live off the land
 * Recovering souls * Very little contact with Berdat
 * Preserving old traditions * They refer to themselves as "Nosklabo"
 * 111810.71.6 1.3119
 * Underground movement to help slaves escape ^{from} Hein's
 * It was destroyed through an earthquake caused by Imperial G moving the ~~sea~~ mountains to encircle Hein's army
 * It was rebuilt but ultimately abandoned not long after
 * Small army to protect ^{from} and keep an eye on Hein's movements

In Mireali people are limited only to their ~~own~~ imagination

Do we work only with what's possible, or do we make what's new?

~~Merek'i-wes often mentioned by foreigners as Refugio~~

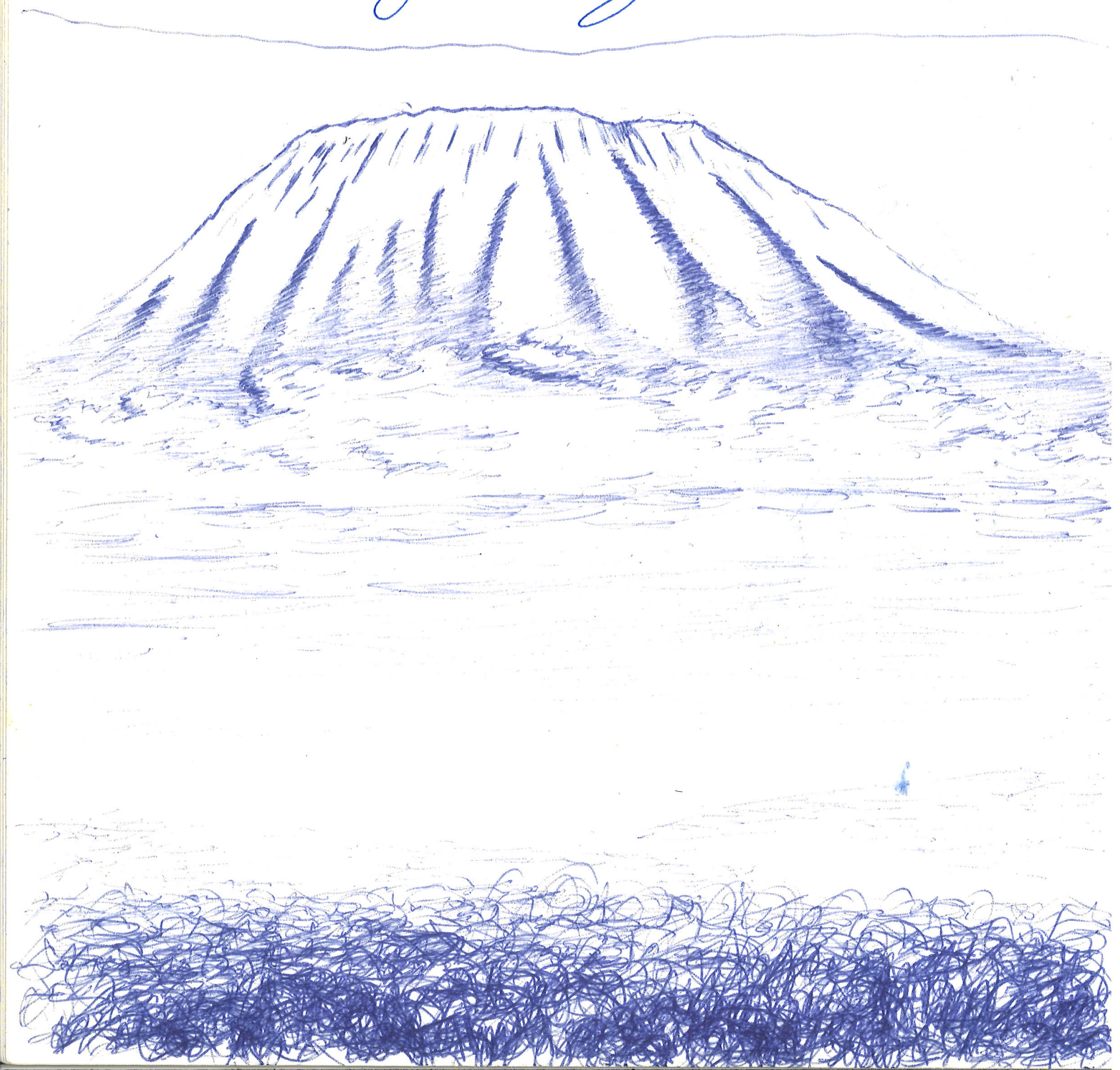
It's largely thanks to this practice that the Nosklabo managed to make such structured settlements despite their large sizes. Countering the island's supernatural forces by aligning their minds to the same imaginary vision where the majority of the inhabitants of these settlements (Refugio & Merek'i-wes) perception of them is relatively similar. This is not the case for visitors, who upon first their visit can view the settlements as being atop a mountain, floating, under water in a river, underground depending solely on the mindstate with which they entered these settlements.

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On worldbuilding
place names
countries, cities, places

Hello future me
youtube channel

- * consider making a lexicon of words in the regional language for those places in your fictional world.
- * things like forest, river, hill, valley, farm, castle, village
- * names connecting to history



A sketch of Ser'i Merrick/ Mount Merrick, the tallest mountain on the island and the whole of Bèrdah. It has a height of roughly 12574 meters. Its name was also the inspiration behind the city Merek'i-Wes (Merrick of the west).

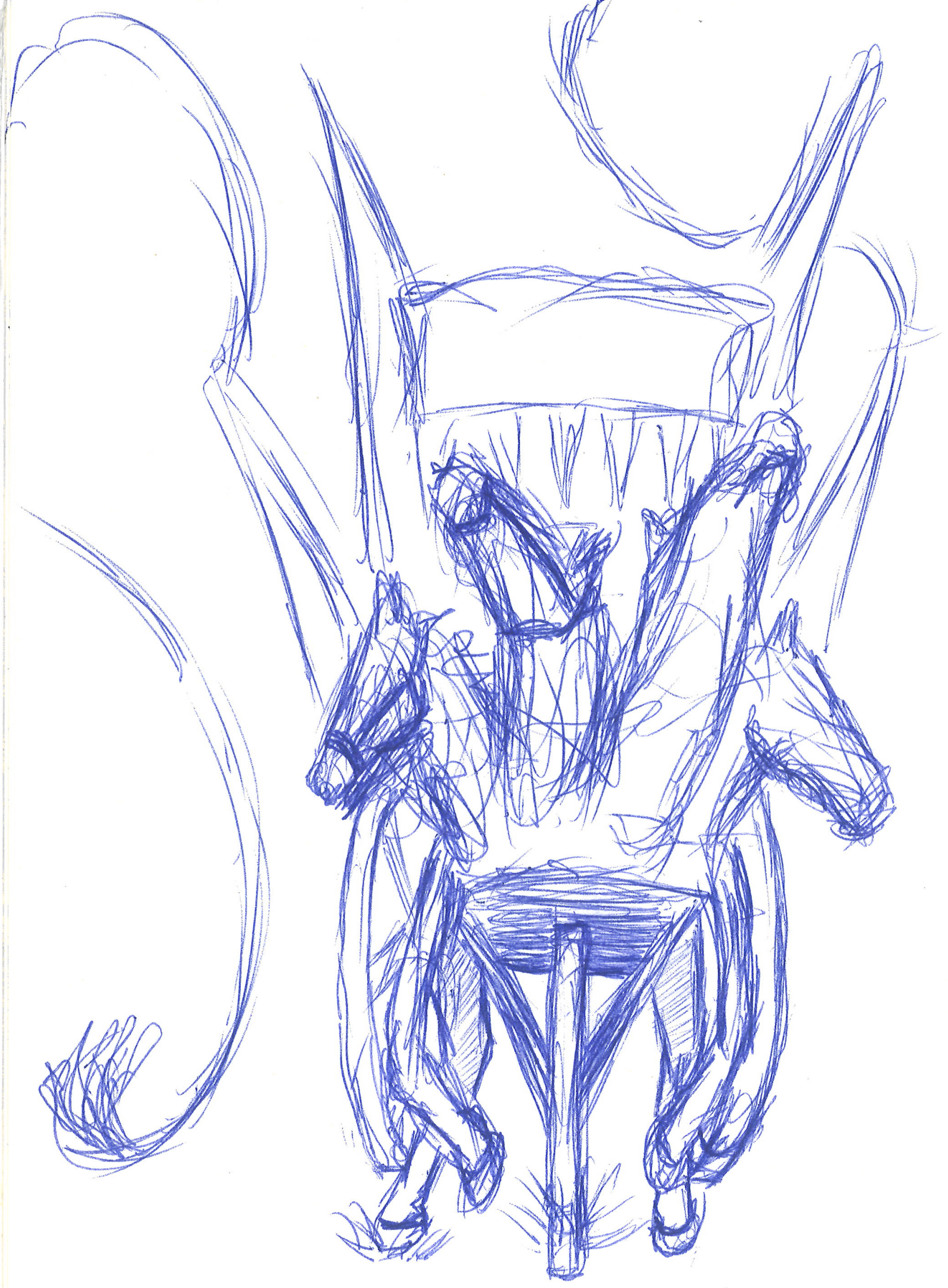
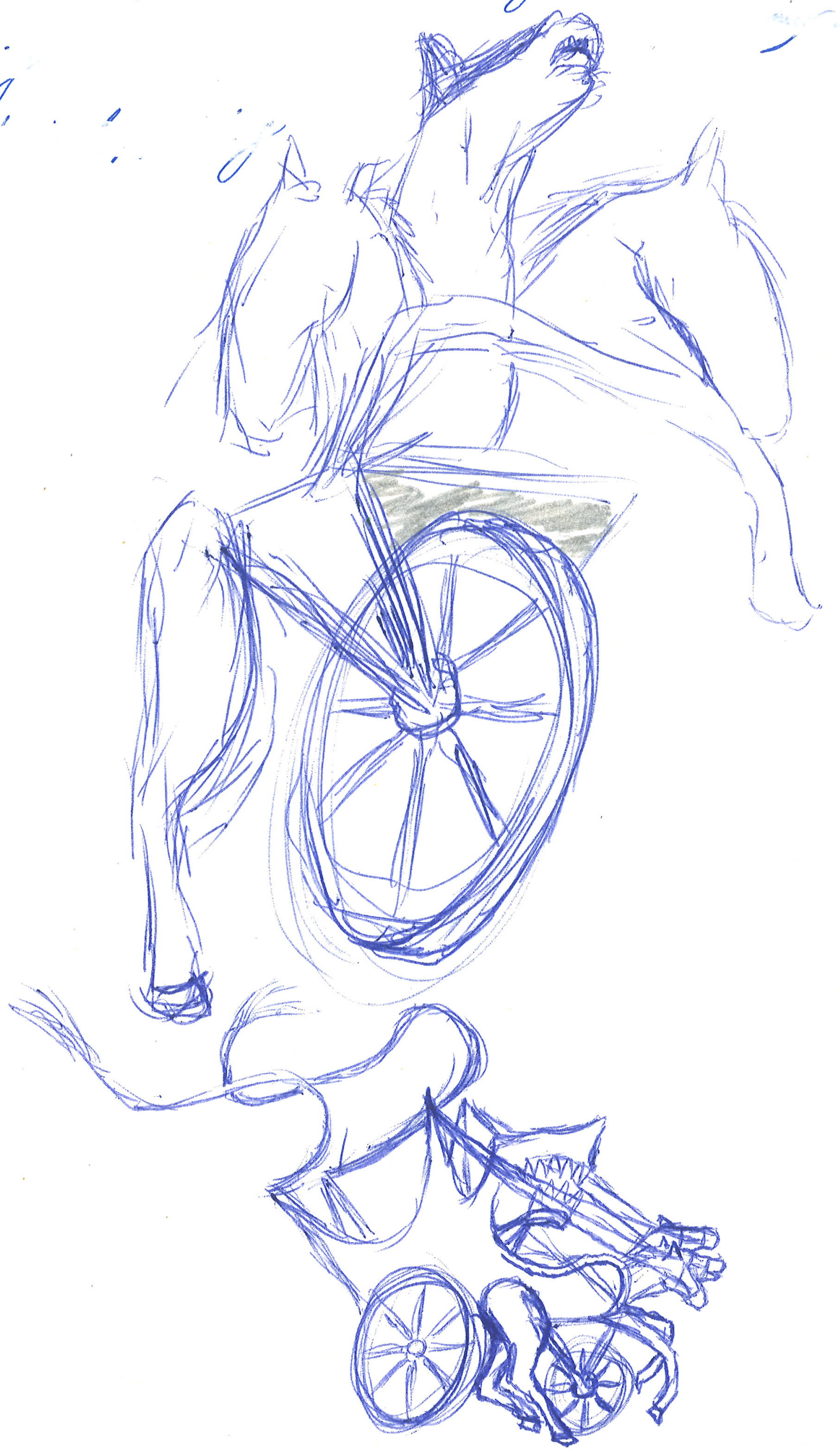
- ~~Hein~~ Hein van Rein
- * Elban
 - * Colonizer
 - * Ruthless
 - * Businessman
 - * Discoverer/explorer of the coes (3) (4)
 - * Slave ~~trader~~ trader
 - * Pale skin, blonde, greyish/white hair, during the events of Toff. and tall (sturdy build)
 - * Goes mining, during the events of Toff.
 - * ~~He~~ Wants to have a kingdom of his own
 - * Willing to do anything to get it
 - * Loves his daughter, rather as an extension of himself rather than for who she is
 - * ~~Overseer~~ Helped started but later took over a ~~the~~ large ship building ~~company~~ company
 - * This company later expanded into trading goods and mining
 - * The exploding mothers ~~event~~ ^{incident}, slave women who were pregnant were taken to Mireali, to study how they would imagine the experience of giving birth, things went horribly wrong as quite a few exploded, ~~less~~ or worse during labor
 - * In the end his palace was attacked by ~~the~~ the free folk with support of Hubbard/Imperial G and J, Hein escaped but J gave chase forcing him ~~to~~ into Be-Hes where he went missing

Notes on the character of Hein. Hein was the original owner of "the Boy" (the creator of the island). The Boy ran away from home to get away from him, though by complete accident Hein ended up discovering the island. Though he was not at all aware that the Boy was also there. Realizing the island's potential from both a economical and warfare point of view, he established various forts, trading points, mines as well as building an army.



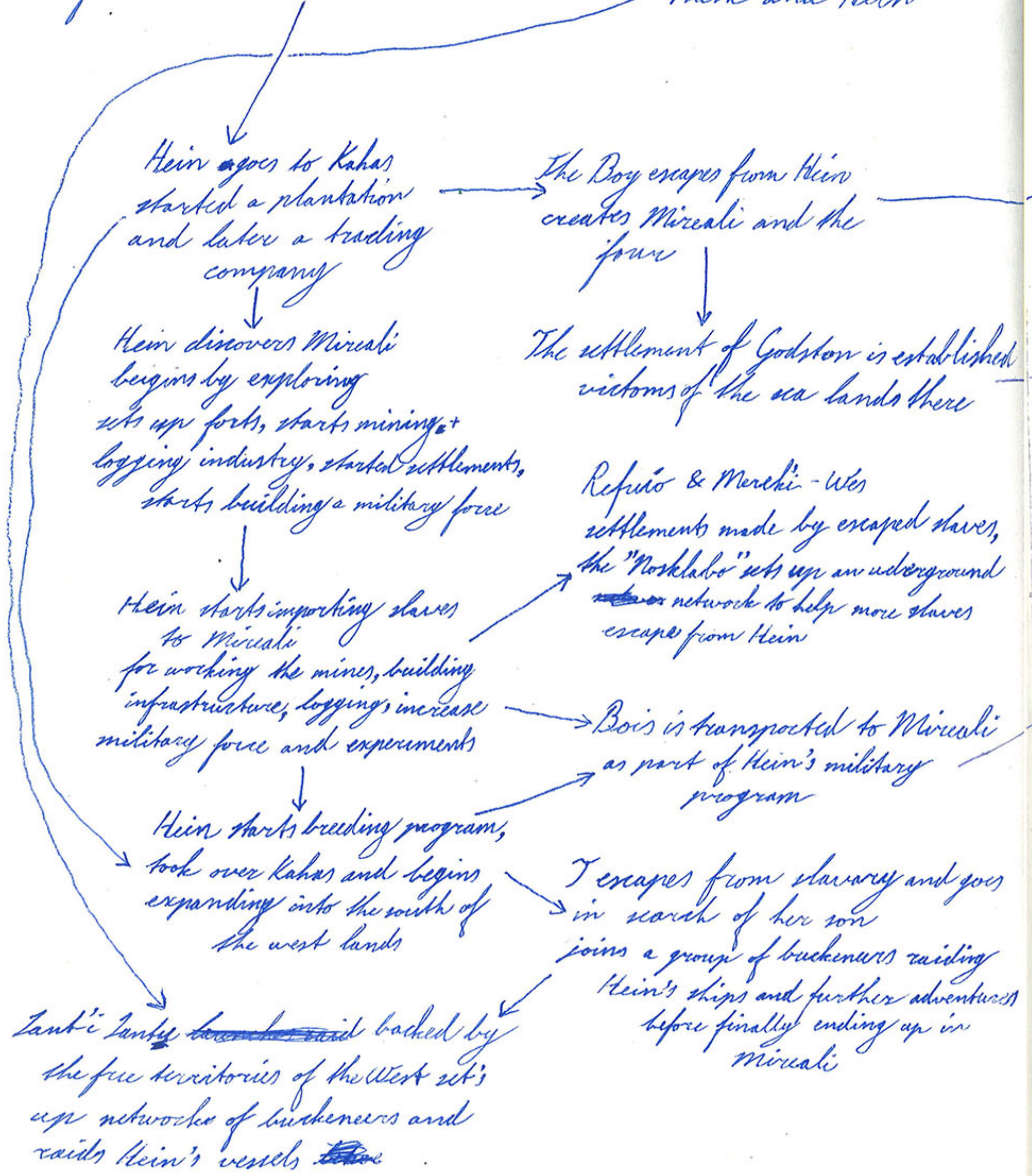
What about the animals on the island? A question that I've recently begun looking into. To the left of this text and on the following page is a sketch of a group of horses that have been infused with their wagon. Mireali's reality altering atmosphere does not only affect humans, this is also the case for animals. What is often the case is that these animals can turn into monstrous creatures, some absolute giants while others can become very dangerous. This is because the distorting effect that the island has on its inhabitants is heavily connected to emotions. The more emotional turmoil a creature is experiencing the more dangerous it could become. Though this is in part a man made problem as Mireali originally did not boast any fauna. All of the animals now roaming on it were brought there as cattle or stowaways.

* ~~about 1000 years ago~~
...
...
...
...
...
...



The first expansion
Elbas crossed the ocean for the
first time

3 Territories of the West
wedges from Elbas,
conflict arises between
them and Hein



Toff starts here

The duo begins their journey
the Boy, intellid and stubborn

The trio runs into Leva
and Bois
after leaving the temple
of Imperator

~~Hein's daughter~~ Allegiance
between the people of
Godston & Hein
Hein sends his daughter
to oversee things
in Godston

The invasion of Mercki-Wes
& Refugio

believing that Leva was kidnapped
by the Nosklabo Hein with the ^{preparative} people of Godston ~~is~~ a dual
attack on both Refugio & Mercki-Wes

Hein's daughter goes
missing
Leva along with
her personal servants
among which is Bois
gets caught in a storm
and their ship sinks

Notes depicting a timeline of
events happening in and around
Mireali as well as the characters
involved in them and how these
events connect to one another.

8̄ 1̄ ḥ̄ ī 1̄ 8̄ ß̄
 6̄ p̄ (̄ ʔ̄ 1̄ p̄ ð̄
 6̄ 1̄ 1̄ ḥ̄ 1̄ p̄ ð̄
 8̄ ḥ̄ 8̄ ß̄ 1̄ p̄ ð̄
 8̄

0.08	1̄	1.6 ^{2c}	1.1	17
0.16	1.2	0.6	1.07	18
0.25	1.4	0.7	1.05	19
0.33	1.6	0.8 ^{2c}	1.23	20

The world of Bèrdah has a different writing style than what we have, this is also an area that I've recently begun working on. Though there is much more that needs to be done in this field.

The following is an account by Stubborn, one of the Four and one of the many characters present in SotF.

Stubborn

"I remember it started with me being immersed within the waves of Infansia, wondering just how dark it was. Joking to myself, joking that I should've added glowing dunes when I had given light to this place. If the boy needed it and asked for it, I figured, I sure didn't need light. It was dark but, the knowledge of that place along with all of Mireali is imprinted upon the hull of my brain. Every dune, like a bump on the back of my hand. "Great, another one" I thought, as I lifted another dry, small, almost fossil looking branch off of the ground and tucked it away under the valley of my arm, along with the others. It must be getting late, I thought. I've been out there looking for firewood since before the sun had landed and delved beneath the ocean. I wondered how far away from the others I was. I must have been 70, no, 80km away from them, I couldn't believe I had to walk that far to collect a decent amount of firewood. I wasn't complaining of course, after all, I figured it would have taken me just 5 or 6 mins to get to them, it's just, sometimes I would forget the sterility of Infansia, especially the area we were in.

But we wouldn't be in the desert for long, I reminded myself, on a good pace we would be at the arm of Infansia in 2 days time. It would be greener, we'd have easy access to the sea, go for a swim, teach the boy how to fish. I remember thinking that hopefully Intellect and the boy could keep up. "They'll do fine" I answered myself, "Mireali's big, but not too big". But before that thought had retreated from my shores another had crashed into it, I thought again of the size of Mireali and thought that, despite it not being very big, it would sometimes feel very lonely when I remember that we're the only ones here. As I thought of that, a weird feeling came over me, it reminded me of a sound that I had heard earlier that day. I remember it sounded like thunder somewhere in the far distance but also different at the same time. I also felt as if there were more than just 6 feet being imprinted upon that beautiful island. A weird feeling, I just couldn't get it out of my head. Right after another thought crashed onto my shores, a familiar one, reminding me that I should really be getting back to the others. And so, I held on to the branches tight, took a deep breath as I took a big step propelling me many meters forward, then I took another, it propelled me over many kms, then a third and before I knew it, I was in the clouds."

The account is from Jonah, a character that would go on to live in Godston, he's describing his trip across the ocean from Elba to the West. as he gaze at Strea the brightest star in the night sky.

Jonah

Strea, you beauty of the sky, a vibrant manifestation of the tangible in the never-ending black sea of nothingness of a moonless night's sky. Luring me into the unknown, like a diamond dangling from the hands of carefree gods far into the heavens teasing the infinite hunger of the greediness of us mortals. Or a precious heirloom that slipped out of the pockets of their divinity falling to Bèrdah, only to be pocketed by the sky itself. I look down, it's no different from above. The ocean's just as dark reminiscent of my situation, in a world of the unknown with only a dream resting just beyond the horizon guiding me into a new chapter. Though there's many beautiful memories, everything else seems dark, my future, my plans, running away from home is awful. Regardless I couldn't stay, even if I wanted to. I made too many mistakes that I could not undo, yet leaving everyone behind harbors no relief in me. It's like hacking off a limb only to learn that that limb spawned a whole new body and went on to live a much wealthier life than you. " You okay?" Jannes says as he approaches me, good ol Jannes thick as thieves we are, literally. So much so that the ship's crew saw fit to embroider us with the name "JJ". "So how are the affairs of the ocean, have you spotted anything of interest? " He asks.

Conclusion

Coming back to what I mentioned at the beginning, my plan with this project is to have it published in three books. With each one increasing the maturity of the subjects at hand while continuing the overall narrative and exploring the wider world of Bèrdah through the lens of other characters such as Imperator and Fear. Each one digging up and exposing some of the dark secrets that it's prequel only hinted at/ skipped over. With SotF I'm aiming for an audience as young as eight, of course breaking down the story and having it in a much more simpler way than it currently is. Think for example of Avatar the Last Airbender, an animation that deals with very heavy subjects such as genocide but does so in a light hearted manner where it's still acceptable for younger viewers. My ultimate goal is to create a series that the coming generations of Caribbean kids can grow up with. For the coming months my immediate focus is to produce much more in terms of writing as well as images for Mireali and the world abroad. But also getting in contact with professionals who can proofread this, help me translate it into my native tongue (Papiamentu) also and lastly getting in contact with publishers.



Click <https://www.worldanvil.com/w/berdah-limitlusum-imperiatum/map/07ac5e92-d47c-40ce-af70-ba58b41425b9> to view an interactive map of Mireali that I'm currently constructing.