

Circlopia

Capital: Circlonia

Official language: English

Ethnic groups: 100% Circloopian / *Crop Circle Society*

Demonym: Circloopian

Government: Totalitarian (communist) rule

Area: 3,142 sq km

Population: 114634

Currency: none; no private property is allowed

Internet TLD: .cs (internet access is restricted to .cs-domains only)

Summary

Circlopia is an autonomous island situated in the Pacific Ocean. All inhabitants are members of the *Crop Circle Society* and believe in one thing and one thing only; the unconditional truth of the significance of (crop circle) symbols. A governmental authority called the *Planning and enforcement body* or *PEB* assigns the actual meaning to these symbols.

Symbols are found everywhere on Circlopia, and its inhabitants (both the authority and citizens) continuously derive social, political, cultural and economical meaning from them.

Family planning and childbirth

As Circlopia has no intention – and neither the possibility, as it is an isolated island – of expanding, the *PEB* enforces a two-child policy (one boy and one girl) to ensure a constant population. The day of the conception of a child defines whether it will be a boy or a girl; during its first ruling days, the *PEB* assigned a ‘boy-symbol’ to even days of the year and, consequently, a ‘girl-symbol’ to uneven days. Note that a year on Circlopia consists of 360 days (see *calendar*); an even number to ensure the balance between male and female citizens.

Newborn citizens of Circlopia undergo a ritual similar to baptizing. A deputy of the *PEB* interprets the constellations present at the day of birth and the symbols they represent to assign a future to the child. This assignment includes social aspects such as future spouse and friendships, but also cultural and economical aspects such as education and future profession.

The ritual is finalized by applying a permanent tattoo-like symbol to the neck depicting the destiny of its bearer and thereby, due to the unconditional truth of the significance of this symbol, inducing compatibility between free will and authority-imposed destiny.

Autonomy and its consequence in terms of efficiency

As Circlopia is completely autonomous and cannot afford sub-par performance of, for example, the food production chain, all decisions, or rather the symbols that are consulted to make decisions, are based on minimal loss of time and resources.

In practice, this means spouses are chosen in such a way that they are catalysts to each other; a male with the assigned future profession of butcher will marry a female farmer who concentrates on the raising of cattle and pigs, and, consequently, together they will befriend a couple who runs a food store. All this, of course, caused by predetermined destiny based on the interpretation of the deputies of the *PEB*.

As such, human emotions and their consequences are considered inefficient. Because human emotions cannot be denied, the *PEB* devised a way to 'feed' the daily dose of emotions to its people in a short period of time. Large television screens, situated throughout the island, display a short film five times a day. All Circlopians are obliged to stop what they are doing and watch the film; as the importance of the film is undisputed by the citizens of Circlopia, social control makes sure that in fact, everyone always watches the film.

The film displays 11 basic feelings (prosperity, hope, loss, perspective, change, death, sunrise, relax, worry, boredom) and is accompanied with music that strengthens the emotion that these words evoke. By watching the words and listening to the music, one experiences, in a short period of time, most of his/her emotions for the day, effectively making personal emotions throughout the rest of the day redundant.

Calendar

A year on Circlopia consists of 360 days; each day represents one degree of a full circle. The 360th day is called *full circle day*, while the 1st day is called *new circle day*.

Full circle day is celebrated throughout Circlopia as it implies the impending new circle day, which signifies the start of, indeed, a new circle and therefore a fresh start. On this day, the *PEB* is allowed to change the meaning of symbols.

March 14 (03-14) is a national holiday; adults hide sphere-shaped chocolates, and the children will have to find them.

Controversy

The *PEB* is said to 'interpret' meaning from symbols (for example, the interpreting of constellations to 'baptize' a newborn citizen and determine its future). While this may sound as a nearly shamanistic ritual, it is in fact simply the consequence of rational thinking and planning; the *PEB* determines what is needed, now and in the future, for Circlopia to stay prosperous, and, accordingly, assigns meanings to symbols in a way that they fuel these needs.

However, once significance is assigned to a symbol, it becomes unconditionally true; Circlopians then believe in this truth as if it were not authority-imposed, but timeless and universal.