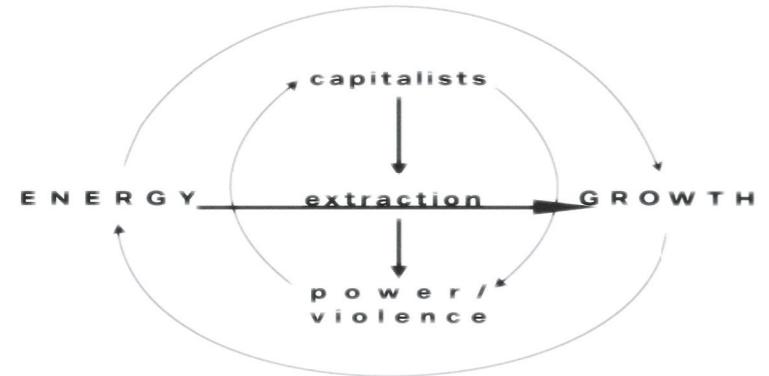


**handbook**  
**against [E]nergy**

**handbook  
against [E]nergy**

**Revolutionary anarchist  
thought in words,  
but chronic incapacity  
in action.**

A [handbook] is a hyperbolic, flamboyant,  
political dildo.



Sit with it!  
Sit with it!

Just as Audre Lorde would say: "Sit with that anger".

Sit with the impossibility of finding the solution,  
the answer to a problem that has grown so large,  
entangled and impossible to grasp  
and whose immense destructive impacts  
around the globe can not even be imagined.

Sit with it!

Sit with the stupidity of greenwashing our brains,  
our companies, corporations, in order to keep living  
the stupid life we are living in a stupid capitalist system.

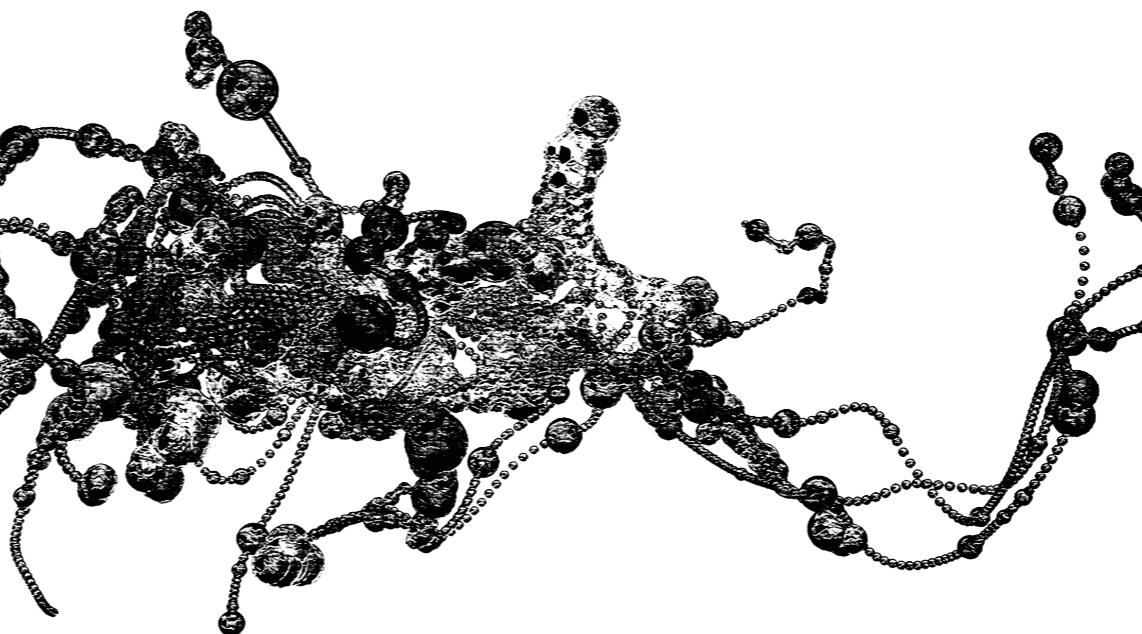
The gesture of change  
interacts with the impossibility of change.  
The gesture of change is an embodied action.  
The embodied action, the gesture, is to sit with it.

Sit with it!

Sit with the feeling that creates the anger,  
which might be the impossibility of change.  
Sit with contradictions.

Sitting as a gesture of resting.  
Sitting as a gesture of opacity.

Sitting is the practice of change.  
It is about asking questions of how to sit with it,  
how to move through it and be with it,  
be with the anxiety.



## 0. point of departure

We exist to render [E]nergy visible. To fragment it again and stumble and stab ourselves in its splinters. We exist to locate and redirect anger toward Growth. We exist to re-think the relationships to [E]nergy, Accumulation, and the Self. We do not want to suggest an alternate solution but unravel the random and artificial entanglement that [E]nergy is.

The power of [E]nergy is what is of our concern. The symptoms of [E]nergy is what we look at. The oil extraction, the working day, speculation, the heating invoice, oil wars, the West, migrants, plummeting mental health, the destruction of the future, the hopelessness, the killing of the environment, the capitalist master's domination, the fluidification of the self, the oil sticking to bird wings, the living net of companies, the children of the alien world.

# 1. [E]nergy is a Master Norm

1

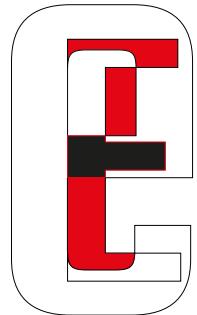
[e]nergy long precedes human existence; indeed, without [e]nergies, human existence would well be impossible. People have always used various forms of [e]nergy to help them do work, even if they didn't refer to them as [E]nergy as we do today. They did not have one word that was able to describe all the different forms of [e]nergy: wood, the stream of waters, the moon that moves the oceans, the horse that pulls the plough, just to name a few.

**Only the term [E]nergy made it possible to think of different things as the same.**

For most of human existence, people have lived in respect of nature, they got everything they needed from the land: Food, building materials, and wood for their fires: everything imaginable came from the fields and the forests. Human needs were inseparably linked to nature's needs. Over-exploitation and large scale destruction would have been beyond human imagination.

**The term [E]nergy, as we know it today, was invented in the 19th century by British physicists and capitalists.**

At the dawn of the industrial revolution of the British Empire, around the 1850s, with the emergence of capitalism and the increasing longing after growth and ever more profit there was a break, a rupture in the way [e]nergy was being understood and used.



## [e]nergy | [E]nergy

Different Forms of [e]nergy are now opposed to [E]nergy.

[e]nergy is intentionally initialized with a lowercase [e] and [E]nergy is intentionally initialized with an uppercase [E]

to draw attention to their differentiation.

There is no clear line to be drawn between [e]nergy and [E]nergy, their division is obscure and indistinct. Nonetheless, the easiest way to highlight the difference is to describe the human attitude towards the two shapes of [e]/[E]nergy.

# [e] nergy

- + [e]nergy can be understood as the obscure basis of all life, as an all pervading medium that directs the cosmic cycle.
- + The interaction with [e]nergy was always attached to moral frameworks and respect. People have tried to understand and sometimes to govern the flows of specific [e]nergies. In the beginning of site-specific agriculture, people diverted streams so that the fields could be supplied with water to produce food for the community. But they only took what they needed, not more just for the sake of profit.
- + [e]nergy is not commodified.
- + [e]nergy stands for balance and harmony and does not comply with the West's bias towards progress and continuous growth.

It is incredibly important to understand the break, the rupture in [e]/[E]nergy as a historical moment which is intrinsically linked to the industrialization and the beginning of capitalism.

As for something to grow, to expand beyond infinity, which is one of the features of capitalism, Man needed a form of [e]nergy that was seemingly limitless.

The transition from water power to steam engines and the invention of thermodynamics were of immense importance for this development; the consolidation of many different forms of [e]nergy into one all-encompassing concept of [E]nergy.

# [E] nergy

- + [E]nergy combines: ordinary motion, mechanical power, chemical action, heat, light, electricity, magnetism, and all other powers - known or unknown - which are convertible or commensurable with these. The result of all this practical work of "making different things the same" was a gigantic, open-ended abstraction and master norm called [E]nergy, which subordinates all other specific forms of [e]nergy to it.
- + The term [E]nergy is in itself an abstraction from multiple, specific [e]nergies.
- + Due to the influences of capitalism and the spread of its values, human interaction with [E]nergy is more vicious in the sense that it involves the blocking and misuse of [e]nergy.
- + [E]nergy is a commodity, it can be bought, sold, and owned
- + [E]nergy is a perfect representation of the constant longing for growth and linear progression as a western value.
- + [E]nergy appears as an object of politics

## from water power to steam engines

For a long time, water power was much cheaper and less prone to breakdown than steam power.

However, the mechanical power of the water mills could not be reliably guaranteed 24 hours a day. And when the struggle of the workers for a limitation of the working day to 10 hours was successful, the productivity of the widely scattered water mills decreased even further.

19th century capitalists needed a new weapon to squeeze the maximum value out of labor. This new weapon was the steam engine, as steam-powered factories were much better at micromanaging labor at minimal cost.

Unlike the waterfalls scattered over the hills, steam engines could be placed in the middle of cities, where it was easy to find workers.

Unlike water power, steam engines were powered by a transportable fuel and were thus no longer tied to specific locations nor the cyclical rhythms of the day and the seasons.

This newly established abstraction, which moves further away from a concrete materiality with each day passing, disguises the close entanglement of [E]nergy, Work and Power.

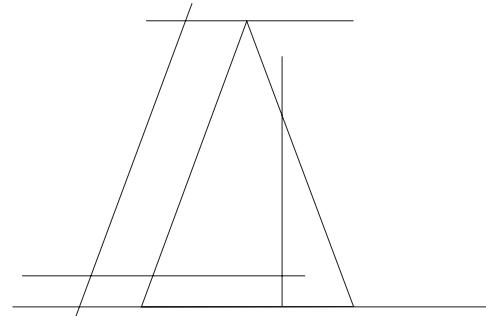
### Thermodynamics

The close entanglement of [E]nergy, Work and Power was partly established and reinforced through the science of [E]nergy: Thermodynamics.

*Thermodynamics is not a neutral practice of science, if there even is a thing like that at all. "An economic point of view formed the root of thermodynamics ... Economic and physical ideas grew up together, sharing a common context". (Theodore Porter)*

***The disconnection from time and space builds the basis of the modern ideology of [E]nergy as a transhistorical, cosmical, and mystical master norm.***

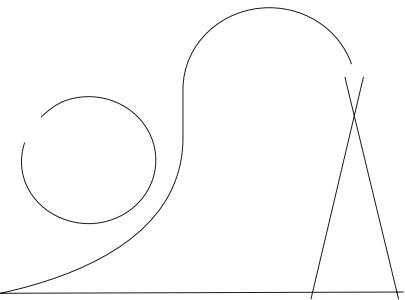
**stability**  
**timelessness**  
**reversible**  
**conservation**  
**balance**



### *The first law (manly, godly patriarchal)*

of thermodynamics states that the [E]nergy of the universe is constant. But if [E]nergy is conserved across all transformations, then science still could not explain why heat engines —or life itself— could not run in reverse. As a result, the first law of thermodynamics, tidy and comforting as it was when applied in a closed system, struggled to make sense of heat engines. The first law contained the seeds of its own contradiction, which necessitated a second law that would attempt to neutralize the problem.

**change**  
**time with direction**  
**progress**  
**irreversibility**  
**dissipation (waste)**



### *The second law (the devil, entropy, chaos, waste)*

states that the entropy of the universe tends to a maximum. Entropy is, roughly, a measure of how diffuse [E]nergy is. The world of the second law unfolds toward a destination of maximum entropy, until the sun eventually burns out, the universe slows to a cold equilibrium, and life becomes impossible. The second law meant that any loss is not actually a loss of [e]nergy per se but instead a loss of a useful type of [E]nergy from the capitalist perspective of work. 19th Century physicists wanted to show that irreversibility can be a conceptual partner to [E]nergy conservation rather than a challenge to it. For them the two laws re-solved the paradox of [E]nergy.

## [E]nergy

is a historically specific concept-thing, full of contradictions, it relies upon the erasure of its history. [E]nergy reflects the desires and beliefs of its discoverers rather than being a thing of nature. The two laws of thermodynamics reveal the paradox at the heart of the concept of [E]nergy, between balance and change, or stability and progress.

[E]nergy laws were used to endorse an ethos - namely, the ethos of the engine, of maximum work and minimum waste.

### **Thermodynamics builds the basis of the modern ideology of [E]nergy as a transhistorical, cosmical, and mystical master norm.**

The thermodynamic rendering of [E]nergy —as the measurement of productive, valuable work — has arguably become so dominant in the modern West as to crowd out other possible ways of imagining [e]nergy. (Daggett)

[E]nergy as we know it today, [E]nergy as a master norm did not travel across history, neither is it a unit free of context.  
[E]nergy as we know it today,  
[E]nergy as a master norm is clearly operating according to capitalist, exploitative principles.  
[E]nergy as we know it today,  
[E]nergy as a master norm is, by definition, a materialization of social relations. No piece of coal or drop of oil has yet turned itself into fuel, and no humans have yet engaged in systematic large-scale extraction of either to satisfy subsistence needs.  
[E]nergy as we know it today,  
[E]nergy as a master norm is thus violent and toxic in its mere existence.

## 2. the master norm itself is invisible and unreachable because it does not exist as a fixed entity

[E]nergy is the Master Norm. The Master Norm acts as a hyperobject. [E]nergy is a hyperobjectMeaning, [E]nergy is a phenomenon so big, it can't be seen, understood, or described in an ordinary sense. It occupies every crevice of human doing and thinking. The idea of [E]nergy rests everywhere:

[E]nergy, productivity, growth, progress - like scabies:  
hardly beneath the surface eggs have been laid under our and  
all skins, organic, artificial, transforming.  
These eggs or rather, imaginations of accumulation through  
[E]nergy, define the individual's experience from day 0;  
its understanding of itself, the border to the outer, the meaning  
of work, and the axiom of having to work.  
[E]nergy is ingrained into everything, resulting in every trial of  
deconstructing  
[E]nergy being a deconstruction of the Self. Due to  
[E]nergy's all-encompassing presence, it is nowhere.

the will it takes for you to get out of bed  
the morning piss  
the food you swallow to power your body  
your thoughts running around preparing for the day or  
thinking of the past while sipping on black coffee to  
kickstart  
the glimpse to the clock, the progression of time  
the run to the station, the bike, the car, the bus,  
the walk, the hours, no end, the working day  
the gossip at lunch  
the contract, the measure of hours defining  
the salary, the worth of yourself  
the stroll to the supermarket, the denial of the card,  
just to pay in cash  
the streaming, the reading, the masturbating,  
the showering, the snacking, the knitting, the  
screaming,  
the scrolling, the phoning, the staring,  
the thinking, the typing, the sending, the crying,  
the fucking, the cooking, the errands,  
all before bed  
sleep

# A hyperobject is a philosophical concept

2

[1] **viscious**

[2] **nonlocal**

[3] **temporally undulated**

[4] **phased**

[5] **interobjective**

It describes phenomena that (1) are always present, (2) are not locally bound to a place, (3) cover a huge timespan, (4) can never be entirely grasped from a human perspective and (5) have an influence on everything, while being influenced by everything. In its being everywhere, it becomes unlocatable, almost nothing, untouchable

[1] Honey, you have to find a job, you are too old not to work, what will become of you, if you continue like that? you feel the stress

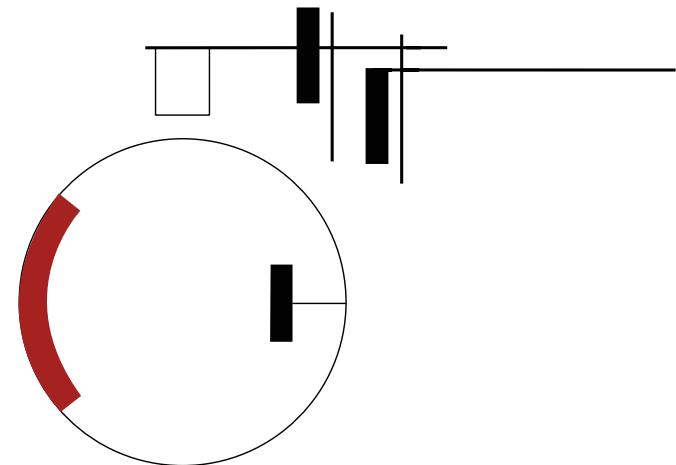
[2] You plug in the toaster, of which you know, a powerplant just three miles from here provides the power, for the toast you eat, with the butter you spread, a glimpse to the clock, while you forget out of stress, the folder for the meeting that calls in at 8:30. You split. Your stomach growls, it is too empty to think, you're running low, on whatever it is.

[3] Do you remember how a forest feels? The smell of moist leaves, the light that plays with, the branches, the trunks, a spider net, and the rain. I wonder if you're the type to touch things or if you're too disgusted by the feeling of resin on bark, wet leaves in your toes, and the shit of a bird right next to your nose. That shit with the leaves, the bark, and the bones, just lay there for ages and ages on end, compressed by the weight of sediments and sand, to form a mass in a million or two, extracted by hands that call it fossil fuels, refine it and pump them right into machines. Let's take a car for example and it's sugar daddy gasoline. You understand?

[4] + [5] We don't know how to do this one, might as well stop. What about you? do some work! Try at least and think of something Nestlé, maybe Bayer, or Deutsche Bank? Ah and think of climate change.

The effect of [Capitalism], in sum, has been to corrode the world with [E]nergy. [Capitalism] has a negative Midas Touch—everything it touches turns to shit.

[E]nergy does not die, it exhausts at most. It is transformed, 'tis the basis. There is always the same amount, it's a matter of scientific improvement to control and restrain, straight to eternal growth. It will always change and parts will erode, but the memories stay, the omitted force will always live on, **but can we stab and watch?** The essence is running out.



(whispers) But the tale speaks of capital, of accumulation, of linear progression, of intensification, of machines, the industry, of work, of economy, of welfare, of productivity, of money, of growth.

## **Now rendering: the difference between invisibility and non-subsistence.**

(1) It exists, you just can't see it (2) it exists, it just doesn't have a body or material manifestation (1) You can speak about it, address it (2) a lack, nothing to talk about, not even metaphors or approximations, no logic of decimation, too big to be decimated (1) e.g. "*I wish I could be invisible to sneak in and out of wherever I can*" or "*I have a headache, the blue of my MacBook just burns after a while*" and "*the CO<sub>2</sub> cannot fuck the planet up, I can't see it, so it mustn't exist*" (2) e.g. "  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_" or  
"  
\_\_\_\_\_"  
and "  
\_\_\_\_\_" (1) local manifestations can be checked with special equipment, e.g. microscopes, geiger counter (2) no special equipment can ever see, too all-encompassing is it

**[E]nergy as a Hyperobject is of non-subsistence, the parts which we can grasp scientifically and theoretically are for the most part still invisible but graspable in abstractions.**

It is untouchable as a whole, but local manifestations are easy to pull out with a high-pitched scream and the pull of a door. It is permeable, but just to a degree, a lack of words, holds it tight in a sanctuary, its ominous presence makes it forgettable.

We religiously  
believe in [E]nergy,  
just like money or god.

A function is, per definition,  
the purpose for which  
*something*  
is used for, the role it is given in its existence.

An effect is  
*something*  
that is produced by an  
agency or cause, a consequence, a result.

It keeps our straitjacket firmly tightened behind our backs.  
Who put it on us in the first place?



### **3. The master norm is only visible through its effects, never its function**

The master norm was designed and takes on the role to obtain the current capitalist system (function).

In order to keep generating profit, in order to keep stimulating greed, and to uphold power relationships, in order for it to keep itself alive, it creates needs only the master norm itself can fulfill.

The most essential aspects for our survival are forced to depend on it:

The generation of heat. The generation of electricity. Transport systems.

Now, the master norm itself can never be directly observed, rather, it is only visible through its effects on its surrounding environment.

**We see the effects of the master norm at work when looking at the oppression of most, the prosperity of a few and the labor exploitation of the 99%.**

The world around us and ourselves are put to work, our [e]nergies are extracted and we are told we need to work in order to survive. It is the master norm's tight grip that makes sure we use the little air we have left for breathing to survive, so we stay exhausted and out of [e]nergy to assure that we never even dream of uniting our revolutionary forces to turn against it.

**We might not notice it at first sight (or ever) when we spend hours scrolling on our phones to zone out, when we drink and stay out all night, when we go on vacation to get away from it all.**

But then we do see it so very clearly when it's 19°C degrees on New Years Eve, when the gas and electricity bills are so high we compromise on buying pasta and canned food only in order to being able to pay for a bearable temperature in our flats and to afford illuminating our room in times of darkness and we feel it in our bodies when we are anxious and depressed and don't know how to handle it all, but are told to meditate every morning and to listen to self-affirmation mantras before going to bed.

**The master norm itself is never directly visible, it can only be observed and felt through its effects on its surrounding environment, which results in all the -isms, crises, exhaustion.**

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## 4. The master norm

**operates out of a power hierarchy and its function is to uphold that relationship.**

## 5. The domination of the master norm implies

**the existence of other potentialities kept in the dark.**

Knowledge production occurs in *centralized spaces*. These spaces are *institutional* and *inaccessible for many*. Due to the emergence of the sciences being tied to the rise of the capitalist way of production, conflicts of class, race, and gender are heavily intertwined with this system of knowledge production. Academia implies the existence of **a knower, the one who produces knowledge**. This power hierarchy applies to the construction of thermodynamics in the 19th century, the “science” of economics, and the resulting [E]nergy politics. The naturalization of this kind of knowledge production legitimizes large-scale extraction and exploitation in the capitalist system.

Economists model reality according to their beliefs and calculations. These models imply possibilities of *limitless growth and eternal progression* but are only partly connected to our everyday reality. There is no independent instance that could practice research within the field of economics. The story of the objective researcher is a fairytale.

**Economists aren't scientists. They are storytellers telling the story of [E]nergy, efficiency, and growth to control and exploit labor power.**

Because even reason itself is defined out of a power relationship. The hierarchy between the one who has the power to define reason and the one who does not will determine what is and what is not reason. Economists are artists whose job it is to model the term [E]nergy according to the goals of growth. Economists are the henchmen of the master norm, one of the means to control and govern laboring bodies, the non-human and the earth. They tell the story of [E]nergy, efficiency, and growth to exploit labor power. **They build walls, hiding [e]nergies and untold stories, non-institutional knowledge, behind them, where they are demeaned to be unreasonable by the actors operating from the top of the hierarchy.** For reason to exist, it has to define the non-reason in opposition to itself and as a justification for its own existence as a dominant position. Thus, the master norm is always busy upholding those walls and rewriting its narrative of growth. The master norm is redirecting suspicion and anger towards symptoms in order to distract from the root; that all this bullshit is constructed.

## **The master norm is a master of disguise. And one of its most powerful weapons is language.**

The term [e]nergy itself is not inherently violent. However, language has a tradition of being weaponized. Capitalism, striving for more and more profit, has activated the term [E]nergy, idealizing and ideologizing “[E]nergy” for the goal of growth. The way we talk about [E]nergy today, especially during a so-called “[E]nergy Crisis” implies an inherent dependency on the capitalist’s notion of [E]nergy. We religiously believe in [E]nergy, we are numb. The construction of a supposed universal necessity inherent to the Capitalist’s notion of [E]nergy has taken away our ability to discuss various forms of [e]nergies, we blindly accept [E]nergy. And by accepting [E]nergy, we approve of all the violence tied to it. This misuse of the term [e]nergy disguises all of the non-violent [e]nergies existing among us kept in the dark. Those must exist all around us and even within us. We are surrounded by them without ever knowing it.

**We cannot name this hidden knowledge,  
but we can be sure of its existence due to its  
absence.**



