

II INTERNATIONAL





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visual culture will always cyclically reproduce itself and the ideologies that back it unless we start relentlessly problematizing aesthetics for what they are: visual renderings of political and ideological beliefs

6:04 PM - 22 Jan 2018

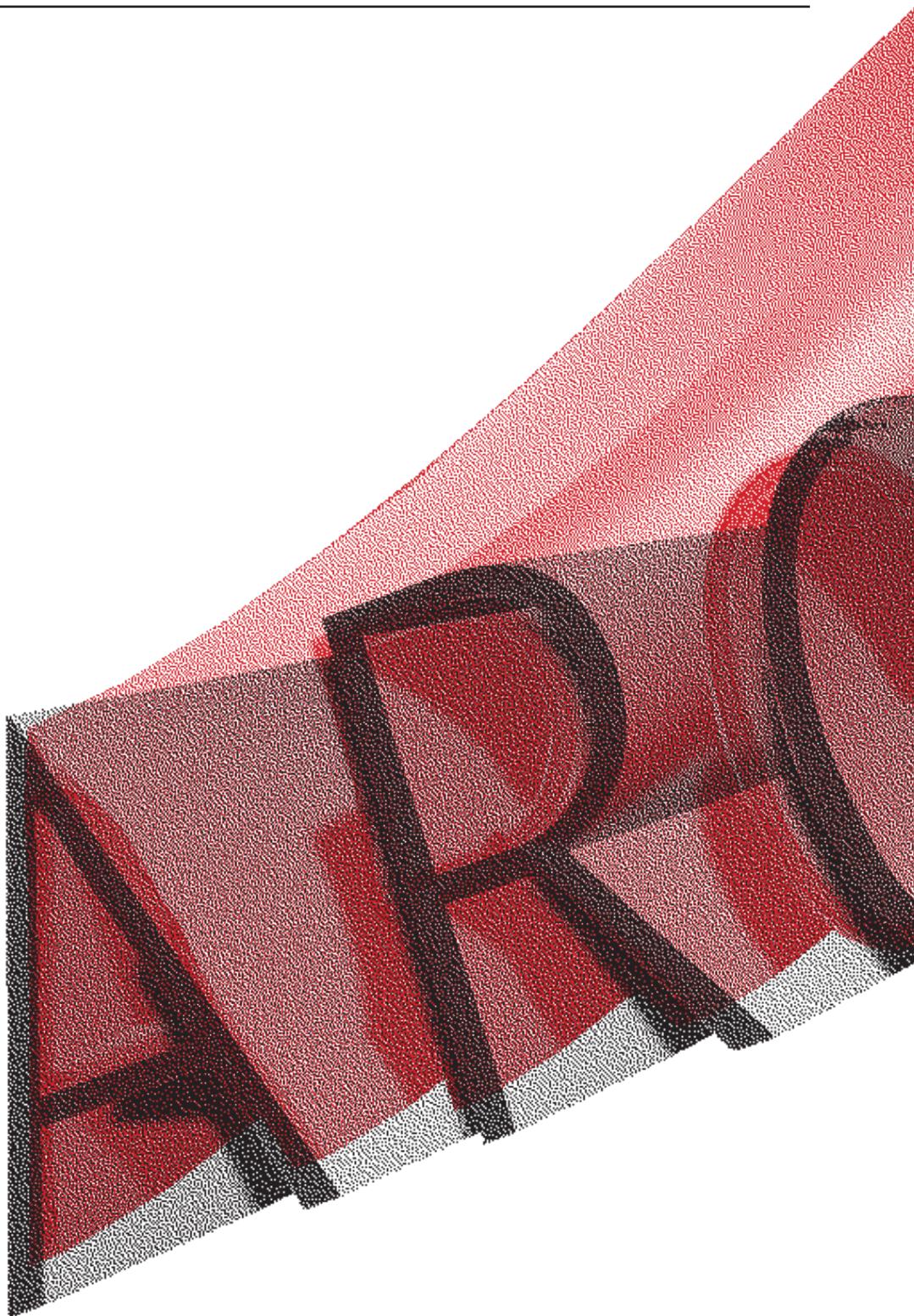
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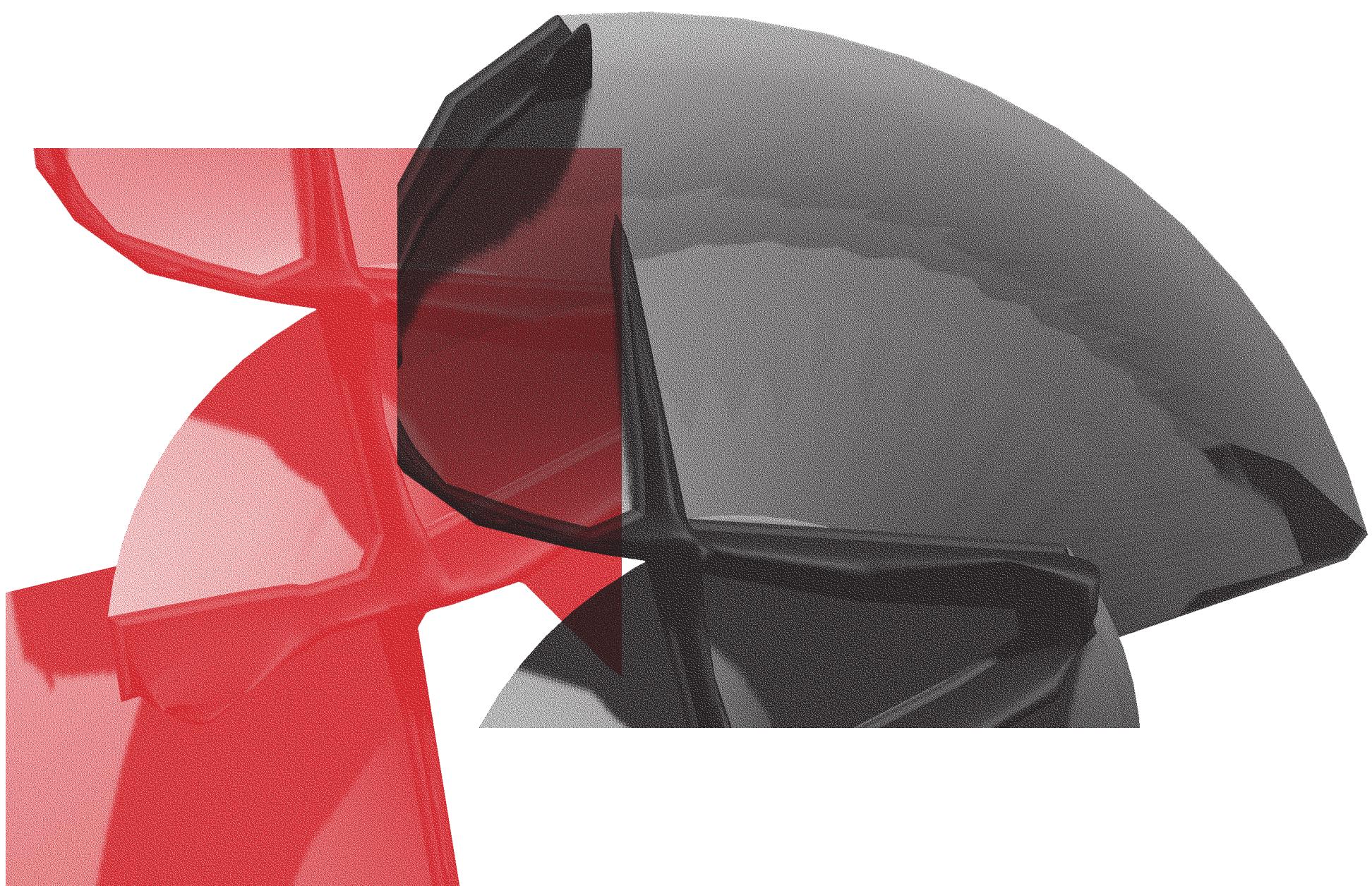
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IV





ARCHIVES

MDE

MillionDollarExtreme 1 year ago

Being an artist or designer means you probably have a communications toolkit that is greater than the average person, but ~~~is there anything special about being an artist or designer that makes a person better equipped to **understand** and **untangle** the manifold problems of our age?~~~

I went to RISD, and know a good number of practicing artists. The common threads that tie them together are that they mostly have a kindergartner's understanding of economics, they are a net drain on society (consuming more resources in the form of welfare, money from parents, subsidized education etc. than they give back in any form), and politically they just parrot safe, accepted, establishment views (poverty is bad (no shit), racism is **really** bad, etc.), which you can easily get by turning the TV on. As you know another common thread is that they typically suffer from sociopathic levels of narcissism/solipsism but that's only tangential to my question.



I feel like if the artist's primary job is to deal with urgent cultural issues, maybe it would be better to hand them an economics or computer programming book than a paintbrush, because those are the people (hackers, entrepreneurs, et al.) who are actually doing the hard work of raising the quality of life for us all, increasing transparency, building useful things, making expensive things cheaper/easier to access. When was the last time an artist did something as important as making solar panels more viable, or finding a way to get cheap potable water to people?

I don't mean to be disparaging or anything—I think there is value in art. Off the top of my head I'd say that aesthetic sophistication uplifts the human spirit and provides us with dignity. Probably other things too, that's just off the top of my head, speaking as a layman. But this idea that artists are at the forefront of cultural change, I think it's mostly bullshit. I think cultural change is a battle between those powers that be (who have captured nearly all of academia, entertainment, and the media) and kulaks (White working/middle class people, basically). On top of that, people pay some degree of attention to what celebrities and high-profile activists say... but not artists or their work.

When was the last time there was an artist you could point to and go: "that guy's had a huge, tangible impact on culture"? – Warhol? Sure he had an impact on culture but he sucked and I think you'd be hard-pressed to point out any good he did for the problems of his age aside from making everything more like the movie Party Monster.

The reason why I think this is important enough to engage in ball-busting over a youtube comment is because one of the manifold problems of our age is 'the skills gap'. Because academia is so heavily subsidized and because it is seen as more of a rite of passage as it is vocational training, there is less of an incentive for people graduating high school to think about what will actually benefit society (and make them money). That's why there's this proliferation of useless bullshit majors like Private Parts Theory and AIDS Patient Poetry—when you're getting money for free, or getting loans you'd have no chance in hell of getting if they weren't backed by the gov't, you tend to think less about the financial/life consequences.

The arts are one of the primary culprits in this skills gap shakedown. You're the head of a good MFA program so obviously you deal with less Human Shit than say, an admissions officer for The Art Institutes, but you understand not every one of your students is going to find a position like the one you've got once they're done being students. I'd be surprised if most are even able to be self-supporting afterwards based on their art alone (not including those who pursue work like packaging design for Nabisco).

I don't think artists are any better equipped to address in a meaningful way the problems of our age, cultural or otherwise, in fact I think the opposite is true. And I think that encouraging artists to take on this level of responsibility is... not good.

Murray Rothbard: "It is no crime to be ignorant of economics, which is, after all, a specialized discipline and one that most people consider to be a 'dismal science.' But it is totally irresponsible to have a loud and vociferous opinion on economic subjects while remaining in this state of ignorance."

Any thoughts?

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18 REPLY

Up For Grabs

VI

I arrived in Harare with \$60. After taking a taxi to the see the president-to-be, Emmerson Mnangagwa, make his homecoming speech, catching a ride to my hotel and getting groceries, I had spent about half of what I came in with. I tried an ATM near my hotel. No cash. I walked around downtown trying each bank I passed. None of them had money.

Currency is worth the value we agree upon. Yet in Zimbabwe, this agreement is tentative at best, as the country recovers from the collapse of the Zim-Dollar.

Former president Robert Mugabe and his regime printed money to stave off the effects of sanctions, the global recession and disastrous land redistribution programs. By the end of the collapse, the currency had inflated by 89,700,000,000,000,000,000%. Zimbabweans without external assets lost everything.

The stop gap solution has been to issue bond notes. These notes are theoretically exchangeable for their equivalent in Dollars. However in practice the bills carry varying value. One can't take a

taxi, or put money in the bank without wondering if the bills will be accepted, or even be worth anything the next day. This question of value is played out day by day, moment by moment.

Passing through a toll booth, my driver handed over \$2.50 in bond notes. The toll worker took the money and handed him a receipt. On the same highway, at the border with Zambia, I watched a woman try to buy a Zimbabwean visa using bond notes. She was turned down. The guard said that he wouldn't accept his own country's currency.

In the same way, Mugabe went from a hero, to a villain, and back to a hero in the course of a few days. Defended until the coup, Mugabe was soon the target of insults, threats and hate. All the military had to do was ask for it and the anguish pain and frustration, which had been building for decades, poured out. People took to the streets to denounce the evils of the Mugabe regime and to celebrate his departure. The party lasted days and boozy smiles were quick to tell me that Mugabe was a dog, a bastard and a devil.

Then, at his inaugural address, Emmerson Mnangagwa gave a sobering speech, asking for Mugabe to be remembered respect-

fully. The next day many people who had previously called for imprisonment and death, had found a more

temperate attitude towards Mugabe. He's a good man. He played his part. I heard this, and more, repeated with what seemed to be genuine fondness and forgiveness. Gone was the vitriol. Mugabe was a fine old man who had lost his way.

Mnangagwa's word is the truth and, I suspect, he can't believe

his luck. He came out of the bloodless coup a contradictory hero. Mnangagwa is a liberator who remains as feared as his predecessor, and he is a reformer with the past of a tyrant. Certainly no one forgets that Mnangagwa was the leader of the Central Intelligence Office when 80,000 of the Ndebele ethnic minority were killed. Nor can anyone forget the intimidation, kidnapping, torture and murder that led up the 2008 runoff election. Yet much of the celebration is genuine. Experiencing the first real change in 37 years, few people want to look at things too closely. It's enough to savor the moment. No need to spoil it. There'll be time for that come next year's election.

With his presidency secured and his word tested Mnangagwa can continue to do what he is best at: accumulating wealth from state

resources and illegal gold and diamond mines. He'll continue to funnel this money to his son, so he can take private planes, buy shoes and post Instagram photos of his millionaire lifestyle.

To the criminal minded, Zimbabwe presents a tremendous opportunity, especially as it becomes more likely that sanctions will be lifted. The question is who can get in first. Who can get in before reality solidifies and stake their place as a millionaire, business man, mine-owner?

I found out myself how easy it is to take what you want. Without media identification I passed as a reporter. Through insistence, guile and a little bit of lying I secured a front row seat at Mnangagwa's inauguration. When asked what media outlet I worked for, I made up a name. It worked. At one point, looking like a reporter and having a nice camera was enough to get me within ten feet of the president.

There's a reason that reports on Zimbabwe conclude that the future is uncertain. But the truth is, uncertainty goes much deeper. It's not just the future. Reality itself is up for grabs in Zimbabwe and someone's going to take it.



Top Left: vendors sell Zimbabwean flags to motorists in front of a tank which is occupying Harare as part of the military coup which resulted in the resignation of longtime president Robert Mugabe. **Top Right:** Emmerson Mnangagwa stands before a crowd after he is sworn in as president. **Bottom Left:** Youth celebrate the inauguration of Emmerson Mnangagwa. **Bottom Right:** Generals sit during the inaugural ceremony.

VII





BY DAVID ALEXANDER

I don't need to tell you that *money* is central to survival. That much is clear. Yet how often do we ask ourselves why *money* controls our lives and what enables it to do so? And how did we come to accept this?

At its heart, *money* represents time, energy and claims of ownership. Control of time, energy and ability to establish, maintain and defend claims of ownership is the most effective way to control people. Being that the monetary system is the basis of our society, you can control almost any person or organization to a very significant degree through financial means. Since everyone's time, energy and property is connected to this system, it is an effective system of control.

In order for a population to be maximally responsive to *money*, and specifically fiat currency, those populations must both be disconnected from the profits of their production, and believe intensely in scarcity. One can expect propaganda efforts to focus intensely on enforcing scarcity by maximally obscure and maximally ubiquitous means. The facts agree.

We know that propaganda and psychological manipulation is rife among modern populations in the developed world. Since monetary systems are central to the basis of any society, it is logical to assume that anyone seeking to control populations by means of such propaganda and manipulative tactics would be drawn to the monetary systems as a means of implementing their own agenda. Again the facts agree.

For the current system to maintain its grip of power among populations, and expand that scope of power, it must manipulate political dialects and suppress alternative means to which populations can achieve energy independence and consequent abundance.

All mainstream economic systems funnel wealth upwards. From the 90% to the 10%. The 10% to the 1%. The 1% to the .1% and so on. This exists across the political spectrum.

The *Federal Reserve* is a privately owned central bank. Through hegemonic networks, the Fed is able to influence banks globally. Part of this influence comes from the fact that many countries have publicly owned private central banks (independent from the government, but in a sense owned by them). The point is that they remain controlled. For insight into how this works, take the example of the Bank of Japan. There are many other examples of how an entire advanced economy, full of intelligent people, are raised up and crashed over decades for the purpose of pursuing the agenda of one banking institution with strong international connections.

All mainstream (Austrian) economists advocate for usury. Private central banks such as those in the US

create massive and unresolvable debt at the basis of the financial system. The balance sheet is the issue here. Money comes into existence with debt. There is no such thing as balancing the budget. It is mathematically impossible. This creates a constant black-hole of *money* at the source of the economy, which has to be filled by government taxes paid to banks. These taxes are levied by more pressure on the populous: more time and energy has to be expended to feed the black hole. It can never be filled. So resources and labor power are transformed into *money* and fed into the hole at an exponentially accelerating rate until the system collapses. Before collapse, the debt bubbles motivate expansionism, emerging every remaining market, and translating all resources into *money*. In practice this is manifest in the rapid exploitation of earth's natural resources and in increased competition, longer hours and greater uncertainty within the labor force.

Labor, the means of production and what drives the outcomes of effort are dictated by elites.

Economists tend to emphasize the idea that *money* is not "real." If *money* isn't real, then *money* can be manipulated. Across mainstream political spectrums everyone agrees: manipulating this created-out-of-thin-air, conceptual forgery which prevents the business cycle and the market from showing the true value of economic sectors and the reality of the country's finances for whatever short term, short sighted gain is a righteous pursuit. What does one do when faced with this predicament?

Cue *Gold* or *Cryptocurrency* (*Bitcoin*) right!?

If *Gold*, in conjunction with the business cycle, allows spontaneous market order and an accurate representation of value, and if government is the interfering autocratic enemy of this process, then deregulation is the answer. Small government. But if small government can't be achieved reliably via central political implementation, then another way is needed. Cue *Bitcoin*/cryptocurrency, the decentralized, limited supply digital *Gold* standard. It's backed by the computational mining and the algorithm that prevents the supply from being inflated, and it forces deregulation by, to an extent, preventing government and banking control over individual transactions.

That's meant to be revolutionary. If manipulation is the enemy, those who create a 'fake' reality to distort the 'real' economy of *Gold*, then this is a new technology that could permanently limit their power, outside the scope of legislation to remedy.

But that's not the outcome.

It's not the outcome because the new cryptocurrency will be measured against and used to purchase existing items of value. Vast amounts of value already exist in

N A N T S

current distributions of wealth. Those with massive amounts of this wealth will, whenever a potentially relevant currency like this arises onto the scene, be able to make the hedge of buying vast amounts of it early on. At that point, the share of the value in the total global economy which the whole of the supply of the currency in circulation could buy will be very small. And control of the economic system is a goal worth spending *money* on.

And this wealth was accumulated through the old private central banking system, among other dynamics not subjected to the Austrian business cycle. There is no way to remedy that, and start again from some fair starting point, without extreme redistribution, which is a very unpalatable prospect. That is, unless you're going to focus on abundance for all via non-deflationary measures combined with a focus on new means of energy abundance, which Austrian/cryptocurrency advocates don't talk about. And there is a very significant reason they do not talk about alternative means of creating energy into the world.

The richest people right now control the private banks, which in turn control the private central bank. Those same people will be able to dominate a *Gold* standard. And it's a matter of fact that they as a class have historically pushed for the *Gold* standard as preferable for pursuing their interests over non-usurious fiat *money*. It is also true they will be able to manipulate the mechanisms and means to which cryptocurrencies are used and come into existence, look to what Blockstream (owned by Visa, Mastercard, AXA) is doing to *Bitcoin* as an example. A cryptocurrency is revolutionary only in the sense that, if successful (and that's a dubious prospect), it moves the dialectic back to the enforced scarcity Austrian side, in which wealth is funneled upwards by usury and by the exercise of the power granted by pre-existing wealth structures.

Consider for a moment how much wealth is generated each day by the present banking system, and how far that wealth dwarfs wealth generated by crypto-currencies. *Bitcoin* does serve a purpose, in allowing covert and unregulated transactions. But that's not new. Cash did that during the era when present inequalities and systems were developing. And deregulation of that kind is a mild, not a fundamental change.

What then is fundamental change?

First realizing that anything which pushes environments centered around real or artificially induced scarcity are detrimental to human happiness. Second is coming to the fundamental understanding that even if any particular alternate energy

system is bogus, the fact that society isn't obsessed with this and devoting huge budgets and attention to it is telling. It is at the root of social inequalities and at the root of the scarcity. This is what drives everybody to work constantly in order to fulfill the public debt—or private gold-standard, scarcity motivated debt. The result is a form of distributed slavery.

The economy runs largely on physical energy. Both *Gold* and *Bitcoin* mining rely heavily on expending vast amounts of energy, thus centralizing a fundamental portion of what's meant to be a decentralized distributed solution when referencing the latter.

Arguing over the extreme redistribution versus the extreme absence of wealth, without focusing on the core scarcity and how it is generated, only empowers globalists. Money is a conceptual tool. There's no indication that pegging it to a particular metal is the best thing to do. There is no indication that creating an artificially scarce digital gold is good either. In fact, that results in scarcity. Abundance has arisen more easily in a few situations historically, all using government-backed public fiat currency; England's Tally Stick system. National Socialist Germany's fiat *money*; Lincoln's Greenbacks; Colonial Scrip.

These were more successful because the medium of exchange wasn't inherently bound up with constant and extreme wealth transfer from the poor to the rich. Success can also be attributed to accessibility to the average person and not limiting the creation or transfer to those who possess the means to generate vast amount of energy, hence why a focus is needed on alternative sources of energy as such. Before we find ourselves completely beholden to ever more insane political dialectics and dwindling economic prospects, let us take a moment to consider architecting a new environment of incentives entirely.

Let's focus on what nature has shown to be abundantly clear to mankind since the dawn of time: living in harmony with the natural world, and balancing our time, effort and claims of ownership to resemble more closely that to which we are biologically designed to do, produces the best outcomes. Can we replace government backed fiat currency with decentralized distributed co-op backed fiat currency? Yes. Can we create environments that align incentives to healthy biological outcomes while limiting centralized power and unsustainable environmental practices? Yes. Can we do these things while maintaining our current standard of living? Probably not at first. However with time and a committed group, a core cadre if you will, that serves as a vanguard to which these ideas can manifest into reality, a future which human beings can retain their free will, dignity and deep sense of purpose connected to nature can be a reality sooner than we think.

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X

With goals of disrupting the financial system and decentralizing the power of currency authority, bitcoin uses blockchain to distribute the verifiability of value across users. However, in practice, this authority has been consolidated by between five and seven organization through the power of massive server farms. Rather than assume the role of transactional tool, free from the regulation of authority, bitcoin has become a volatile investment tool, where assets get dumped. Due to the wild shifts in value, bitcoin is not a sustainable exchange tool, yet the influence it has is enormous. Bitcoin, despite its conceptual failings is valued at over 1.2 trillion dollars. This is not only creating wealth, its developing communities, infrastructure, and markets. Graphics card have shot up by 70% because of thier value in coin farming. Server farms have sprung up in Iceland and China, putting vast computing power to work solving cryptographic puzzles. Online forums share tips, speculate and scam would be cryptocurrency enthusiasts. Yet the influency extends beyond the market. Block chain technology is finding its way hospitals store records, mobile banking and social media. It's cache as inovation has, ironically, made the term obsolete-a general buzzword devoid of meaning. Yet Bitcoin has altered the economic psyche. It is influencing the way finance is regulated, funds are invested and the way people view money. Bitcoins' greatest impact may be its conceptual commentary on the creation of value. The flood gates have been opened. The internet has not only enabled the democratization of publication, but the democratization of authority.

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Bitcoin is not a sustainable tool of exchange

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instead it's become a volatile marketplace for speculators

THE HISTORY OF BITCOIN

XIV

IS THE DOLLAR VALUE OF

514737	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:00:03	00000000000000003b2f13a1ea65c9ab8ed118b40de17aa39348f5c6fb44e8	211.53
514738	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:00:24	000000000000000032651a4e19688e1a7f02b872113228c6c17285e27d7ce7	74.07
514739	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:01:01	0000000000000000330c9f6b1675d1e1931f6c666d6145131a4088adca8e15	40.04
514740	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:14:01	00000000000000004825cf93a5a43f45002b2b02c49b599ad642849df56237	612.98
514741	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:41:41	0000000000000000451731d60b7b0bc228f26b7b946cf3c610d52839d4e61a	1,090.85
514742	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:41:52	000000000000000045b039632035f328a6dbbc05b69dbf562e103fb46bdf60	127.44
514743	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 00:49:23	00000000000000002fa5cee2ae556e0353f8090fa0d234a25d94c2fb3e832	349.31
514744	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 01:00:20	0000000000000000ddc396a7ed473727624a4e72287b0d9b45c8c6a1022c5	503.14
514745	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 01:13:32	00000000000000009fb95b43a4042b322c5468c776336892071870ff65a0	564.09
514746	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 01:31:58	000000000000000048e6d5fc56c1eb43530236193bd8bec8101caf8f2befd7	946.73
514747	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 02:03:26	00000000000000004a17ad7123b0eae9c15cabf7951ad24c44dba46ec20606	1,133.87
514748	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 02:09:41	00000000000000005d9276e028d5d5bed13951c19ec762fd4b1b592cc01bb	946.29
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514763	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 04:42:31	00000000000000003b8101bed05b189c7d6522a0da5e0add0eb5c562e27838	1,075.42
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514767	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 07:17:22	000000000000000046e410eb1454e5ba5c83eb5df6253414a3127e02e3ed9a	1,075.29
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514784	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 11:33:03	000000000000000020353128f3bd2521bb649ab715da949b52687b19a67e1	1,096.29
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514786	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 11:40:10	000000000000000047292b257e215a23ecb975a95c6847d502a5a2918beccf	1,231.09
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514790	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 12:10:51	0000000000000000434743a612bb3044aledc72fe2a0165e53f45a4dfac66c	1,113.28
514791	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 12:12:35	00000000000000001708a19e07d1245290770fb5f7a64bbfb6672cdcf0f720	1,205.29
514792	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 12:33:16	000000000000000019e03683fde1a9f40f59084858542b21e5bce5915e5192	1,112.24
514793	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 12:41:50	000000000000000010f62ad31ee9576b56fb5c1876454e4759af680811bc0	1,152.7
514794	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 12:43:18	00000000000000002f1b13f5c5d922a95e4f76972d48446e833e774a0050b	1,174.87
514795	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 12:56:41	0000000000000000129bf54c420e73084789d03c0131edd24cd573a102e8e0	1,095.03
514796	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 13:02:02	000000000000000039bf79fdb264200b6f9ad33aef33f4ecdb97e120db20	1,098.35
514797	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 13:02:48	00000000000000003960f22fa86239a13cc6f41e934b7561ff308c4795ff86	1,004.2
514798	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 13:03:22	000000000000000036115d25b7eb5d582e5195b65ca8564c7bdf61bc8f85bb	1,009.55
514799	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 13:06:28	00000000000000000383ed2a0af6bc9ee5f767584ef73e5e1dc72fe56f195b	1,086.3
514800	(Main Chain)	2018-03-23 13:08:28	00000000000000000b95ea325bda6d102658436bdc444271595ac36ada504d	

ALL EXISTING BITCOIN

HE HAS BECOME FAMOUS AS A **COOKING ARTIST**- A MISUNDERSTANDING THAT HAS ALMOST CONCEALED THE REAL QUESTIONS RAISED BY HIS WORK FOR THE PAST TWENTY YEARS. VIA EMAIL, RAIMAR STANGE SPOKE WITH **RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA** ABOUT THIS SUBJECT AND THE ALWAYS-SURPRISING WAY THAT THE ARTIST HAS READ WESTERN CULTURE AGAINST THE CULTURAL ATTITUDES OF HIS HOMELAND, THAILAND.

RELATIONAL



BY RAIMAR STANGE

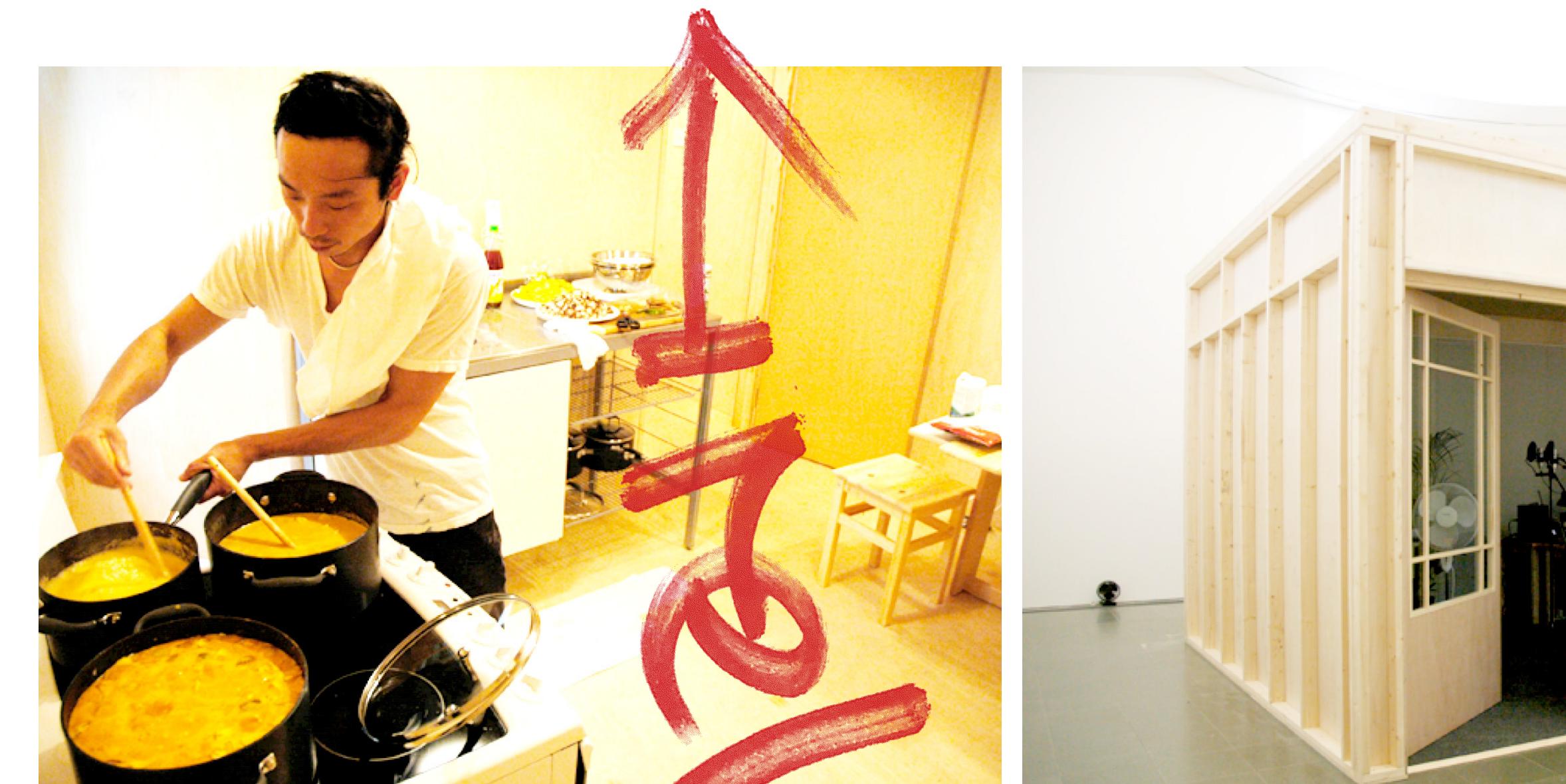
"Far Eastern thought is not concerned with substance, but with relationships," remarks Byung-Chul Han in his book *Hyperkulturalität* (2005). Free from any prescribed dichotomy of subject and object, **Rirkrit Tiravanija** explores this relational connection in his work by using a variety of formulations. The different media used by the artist, which are often negotiated in cooperation with exhibition visitors or colleagues, range from installation and sculpture to performance and graphics, posters and sound installations to videos and books. So, it is no surprise that **Tiravanija** played a major role in Nicolas Bourriaud's theatre of *relational aesthetics*. Though at first sight convincing, this positioning is questionable; for, as critic Helmut Draxler rightly noted, Bourriaud's cult book of the nineties focuses specifically on *good relations, which art can allegedly use to oppose capitalism's logic of alienation*. This concentration on harmonious relations swiftly shifted some art from the nineties into the proximity of a compliant event culture. ¶ Among other things, I asked **Tiravanija** about the possibilities and boundaries of this kind of affirmative relational work within a politically precarious context.

RAIMAR STANGE: When did you get the idea for your »cooking-situations?«

RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA: One day I was walking along West Broadway on my way to visit a gallery where I was supposed to participate in a group exhibition (curated by Robert Longo). I was thinking about the situation – that this would be the first time my work would be exhibited in New York. It seemed like a lot of pressure to succeed, so I decided to take the opposite attitude, which was to relax. Then and there, I decided to make something that was very close to me and that was part of my everyday experience. When I made the first cooking piece, it was not about cooking at all (I suppose it has never been about cooking!), but was rather a (kind of) museological critique – about cultural fragmentation (the removal or displacement of cultural artefacts from one (original) context to another, i.e. from the East to the West (from my perspective)). It was about reanimating certain structures in order to address the shifting of context, to bring back the everyday to objects which had been catalogued into a certain sphere of cultural value, such as the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum or – more closely related to my background – the Buddha statues and ceramic pottery in all sorts of museum in the West.

STANGE: Sometimes you cook, and other people eat; sometimes you let people cook, for example in your exhibition in Ludwigsburg in 1997. Why do you switch roles? Do you want to reflect aspects of production as well as of consumption in your cooking-performances?

TIRAVANIJA: I was trying to reanimate objects (from readymades to pre-readymades) by reintroducing their function. A pot is a pot, a stove is a stove, and a chair is a chair. Initially, I didn't completely understand the Western dichotomy of »subject-object«. In Thai culture we don't have the same perspective; we have neither subject nor object – in a funny, Buddhist (philosophical, semiotic) way. When I started to cook and serve food (without planning to, purely by coincidence), I quickly realised that viewers (readers, critics) were interpreting the work as performance in a Beuysian sense, as a staged situation, which meant that viewers had a certain distance to it. I felt that this distance represented



XVIII

the gap in Western thought between »subject« and »object,« which I needed to attack and dismantle – the »doubt« about the author, or the »doubt« about the subject's position or positioning. So, in order to confuse the positions, I implicated the viewer. I suppose that raised questions regarding production and consumption. In talking about the works, I often bring up the idea that people sometimes walk on a floor sculpture by Carl Andre, only to find out midway (or all the way) through that they have been walking on a sculpture. Suddenly people are afraid that they did something they were not supposed to do (allowed to do). The curtain drops; it is a moment in which one produces and consumes at the same time.

STANGE: At Skulptur Projekte Münster in 1997, you surprised everyone by exhibiting a piece of puppet theatre. How did that come about?

TIRAVANIJA: I like that – »surprised!« I would like to go from one surprise to another, or rather I would like to not satisfy too many expectations. Sometimes I meet expectations, though upon closer examination there should be some surprises. I was thinking about the people living in Münster and how they might have a love-hate relationship with the exhibition, with the fact that every ten years their park (nature) gets turned into a culture park (sculpture). I started to do some research – looking into the place's dark past – and found out that the zoo in Münster was a site of some contention; the man who founded the zoo was a priest who was interested in biology, which conflicted with Christianity's creation myth, and he was therefore excommunicated. But this Christian town has a society that works to raise money for the zoo. The society puts on theatre performances (a drunken theatre) where men dress up, play female roles (and vice versa) and get drunk on stage – in other words it is debauched and out of control. One play performed at the theatre told the story of a family of farmers, in which the old parents wanted their son (their only son) to take over the family farm, but the son refused because he wanted to be an artist. He left the farm for Münster. The farm was then passed on to his sister and her husband, but in time the farm ran into trouble and fell into debt. At a desperate moment before the family was going to lose the farm, word arrived to their son in town. By then, he had become an estab-

lished artist. He returned home to save the family farm using the fortune that he had made as a successful artist. Yes, the artist saves the day! I'm sure it was a surprise in those days!

I also wanted my work to involve the local people in order to close the gap between the community and the outsiders. I wanted to work with a school that was located near the original site of the zoo. (It has long since been relocated.) I came up with the idea of puppet theatre because I was looking for a form that was sculptural as well as one with a built-in handicap for the players. The thought was that this might create chaos and emulate drunkenness!

STANGE: In your exhibition Social Capital at Migros Museum in Zurich in 1998, you installed a supermarket. Also included in the show was an auto repair shop produced in collaboration with Franz Ackermann as well as works by other artists, for example Douglas Gordon and Dan Flavin. How important is collaboration in your work?

TIRAVANIJA: It is important to the same extent that an audience should be involved in the work. I am not interested in authorship; I am interested in the possibilities that can be arrived at when people put their ideas together. There are ideas that have been released into the world of culture that I find important to quote, re-present or re-address. And I think that there are always ideas that we should reconsider. After all, time is a structure constantly moving forward. I am not interested in leaving (any) things behind; I am interested in leaving ideas behind. Like a good recipe, everyone knows what it is, what it tastes like and even how to make it again – perhaps even differently, following their own interpretation; or perhaps it would be a base for something completely different, a possibility.

STANGE: In the 90s your work was discussed in the context of relational aesthetics. How comfortable are you with your work being framed in this way?



TIRAVANIJA: I am comfortable with frames, and I'm comfortable not to be framed by it. One works as a living, breathing subject. One shifts and changes (I hope) with experience. I think it has become clear by now that everything is relational, even computer pixels. However, I have always had a problem with aestheticizing. To me, that seems to be just another gap, and a gap that I have tried to dismantle. Aesthetics is a Western concept; it separates subject from object. And as I mentioned earlier, for me, no such distinction exists.

STANGE: Together with Kamin Lerdchaprasert you founded The Land, a project in the northern part of Thailand, where you experiment with alternative ecological and economic models. Can you tell me a bit more about the project and what you are doing there?

TIRAVANIJA: Not doing much, but a lot. The Land has now existed for over ten years. It combines different desires: on the one hand, a desire for a safe house – a place of rest, but also a place to think and to have exchanges outside or aside from the normal spheres, a desire for a retreat outside of the grid; and, on the other hand, a desire to experiment with living structures – towards holistic ideas, without idealism, without property, without ownership, and essentially without expectations. It is really a rice field when in season as well as a place for contemplation. It is a landscape upon which to act, a surface on which to build models and a table around which to meet. But it is only those things when there is a need and a will for such interaction. It lays fallow when there is no water, it becomes lush when the rain falls, and it becomes impossible when water floods the plains. It is the desire of many, but most of the time it is only a possibility. It is what many imagine it to be – beyond what it actually is. Still, it is there, and it has reached much of its potential, although it has failed in other ways. It was built, and it has fallen. And others will arrive to build on both the failures and the successes.

STANGE: Has your teaching influenced or changed your art practice?

TIRAVANIJA: Yes, I have been influenced by it. But, no, I would not say that it has changed my practice.

Rather, I see it as part and parcel of the practice. I am interested in the exchanges and the possibilities to think and work with others. Teaching is a part of that relationship. It has its speed and its duration, and I want to spend that kind of time thinking and talking.

STANGE: Over the past few years, your work has become increasingly political. I am thinking here, for example, of the Demonstration Drawings (2001–ongoing) as well as the mural and the buttons where you ask: Where is Ai Weiwei (2011). How do you explain this development in your work?

TIRAVANIJA: I have always been ideological in my approach to art making and the potential of art making, and I have always been sceptical about institutional structures or institutional boundaries. This doesn't mean that I have worked or lived outside the bounds of such structures, but certainly, instinctively, I have always been doubtful. Already since Ronald Reagan's presidency and continuing until now, the political divide present in Thailand has influenced this attitude. Of course, China and Thailand are different in many ways, but parallels can be drawn between the corruption of power and the abuse of information (disinformation) found in each. The rhetorics and the manipulation of the media, although blatant, are highly divisive. The battle is now being fought for stakes in the future of the country, and the question of a new (republic) state has everyone on their toes. Opinions, innuendoes and rumours are everywhere, and the need to rewrite the constitution looms large. But isn't that the case in many parts of the globe? Everywhere, we feel the shift of power under our feet; how can we not address it, even with our tongues in our cheeks!

STANGE: One final question: What are you reading at the moment?

TIRAVANIJA: Roberto Bolaño, *The Insufferable Gaucho*; Július Koller: *Universal Futurological Operation* (a catalogue put together by Roman Ondák); Simon Garfield, *Just My Type*. A book about fonts; Roberto Bolaño, *Between Parentheses: Essays, Articles and Speeches 1998–2003*; Tom Mueller, *Extra Virginity: The Sublime and Scandalous World of Olive Oil*; and *Golf Digest*, the February issue with the »Hot List« evaluating the latest golf equipment. □

HYPERRREADINGS

INTRODUCTION

How might we ensure the survival and availability of community libraries, individual collections, and other precarious archives? If these libraries, archives, and collections are unwanted by official institutions or, worse, buried beneath good intentions and bureaucracy, then what tools and platforms and queer institutions might we develop instead?

While trying to both formulate and respond to these questions, we began making Dat Library and HyperReadings:

Dat Library distributes libraries across many computers so that many people can provide disk space and bandwidth, sharing in the labour and responsibility of the archival infrastructure.

HyperReadings implements “reading lists” or a structured set of pointers (a list, a syllabus, a bibliography, etc.) into one or more libraries, activating the archives.

INSTALLATION

The easiest way to get started is to install Dat Library as a desktop app, but there is also a programme called ‘datcat’, which can be run on the command line or included in other NodeJS projects.

ACCIDENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

The 1996 UNESCO publication *Lost Memory: Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twentieth Century* makes the fragility of historical repositories startlingly clear. “[A]cidified paper that crumbles to dust, leather, parchment, film and magnetic tape attacked by light, heat humidity or dust” all assault archives. “Floods, fires, hurricanes, storms, earthquakes” and, of course, “acts of war, bombardment and fire, whether deliberate or accidental” wiped out significant portions of many hundreds of major research libraries worldwide. When expanding the scope to consider public, private, and community libraries, that number becomes uncountable.

Published during the early days of the World Wide Web, the report acknowledges the emerging role of digitisation (“online databases, CD-ROM etc.”), but today we might reflect on the last twenty years, which has also introduced new forms of loss.

Digital archives and libraries are subject to a number of potential hazards: technical accidents like disk failures, accidental deletions, misplaced data and imperfect data migrations, as well as political-economic accidents like defunding of the hosting institution, deaccessioning parts of the collection, and sudden restrictions of access rights. Immediately after library.nu was shut down on the grounds of copyright infringement in 2012, Lawrence Liang wrote of feeling “first and foremost a visceral experience of loss.”

Whatever its legal status, the abrupt absence of a collection of 400,000 books appears to follow a particularly contemporary pattern. In 2008, Aaron Swartz moved millions of US federal court documents out from behind a paywall, resulting in a trial and an FBI investigation. Three years later he was arrested and indicted for a similar gesture, systematically

[MORE ON ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS](#)

downloading academic journal articles from JSTOR. That year, Kazakhstani scientist Alexandra Elbakyan began Sci-Hub in response to scientific journal articles that were prohibitively expensive for scholars based outside of Western academic institutions. The repository, growing to more than 60 million papers, was sued in 2015 by Elsevier for \$15 million, resulting in a permanent injunction. Library Genesis, another library of comparable scale, finds itself in a similar legal predicament.

Arguably one of the largest digital archives of the “avant-garde” (loosely defined), UbuWeb is transparent about this fragility. In 2011, its founder Kenneth Goldsmith wrote: “by the time you read this, UbuWeb may be gone. [...] Never meant to be a permanent archive, Ubu could vanish for any number of reasons: our ISP pulls the plug, our university support dries up, or we simply grow tired of it.” Even the banality of exhaustion is a real risk to these libraries.

The simple fact is that some of these libraries are among the largest in the world yet are subject to sudden disappearance. We can only begin to guess at what the contours of “*Lost Memory: Libraries and Archives Destroyed in the Twenty-First Century*” will be when it is written ninety years from now.

[MORE ON SYLLABUS](#)

NON-PROFIT, NON-STATE ARCHIVES

Cultural and social movements have produced histories which are only partly represented in state libraries and archives. Often they are deemed too small or insignificant or, in some cases, dangerous. Most frequently, they are not deemed to be anything at all — they are simply neglected. While the market, eager for new resources to exploit, might occasionally fill in the gaps, it is ultimately motivated by profit and not by responsibility to communities or archives. (We should not forget the moment Amazon silently erased legally purchased copies of George Orwell’s 1984 from readers’ Kindle devices because of a change in the commercial agreement with the publisher.)

So, what happens to these minor libraries? They are innumerable, but for the sake of illustration let’s say that each could be represented by a single book. Gathered together, these books would form a great library (in terms of both importance and scale). But to extend the metaphor, the current reality could be pictured as these books flying off their shelves to the furthest reaches of the world, their covers flinging open and the pages themselves scattering into bookshelves and basements, into the caring hands of relatives or small institutions devoted to passing these words on to future generations.

While the massive digital archives listed above (library.nu, Library Genesis, Sci-Hub, etc.) could play the role of the library of libraries, they tend to be defined more as sites for biblioleaks. Furthermore, given the vulnerability of these archives, we ought to look for alternative approaches that do not rule out using their resources, but which also do not depend on them.

Dat Library takes the concept of “a library of libraries” not to manifest it in a single, universal library, but to realise it progressively and partially with different individuals, groups and institutions.

[ADOPTABILITY](#)

[SOME CONSENTING ACCESSIBILITY](#)

[MORE ON ACADEMIA.EDU](#)

[MINOR INSERTION - INTENDED TO DISAMBIGUATE MIGRATION](#)

[A FEW FLOATING WORDS ON UBUWEB.](#)

[MOVE EXAMPLE OF KINDLE ERASURE - COULD BE FOOTNOTE](#)

ARCHIVAL PROPERTIES

So far, the emphasis of this README has been on durability, and the “accidents of the archive” have been instances of destruction and loss. The persistence of an archive is, however, no guarantee of its accessibility, a common reality in digital libraries where access management is ubiquitous. Official institutions police access to their archives vigilantly for the ostensible purpose of preservation, but ultimately create a rarified relationship between the archives and their publics. Disregarding this precious tendency toward preciousness, we also introduce adaptability as a fundamental consideration in the making of the projects Dat Library and HyperReadings.

To adapt is to fit something for a new purpose. It emphasises that the archive is not a dead object of research but a set of possible tools waiting to be activated in new circumstances. This is always a possibility of an archive, but we want to treat this possibility as desirable, as the horizon towards which these projects

FIX TYPE; CHANGE ARCHIVE TO WORDS.

move. We know how infrastructures can attenuate desire and simply make things difficult. We want to actively encourage radical reuse.

In the following section, we don’t define these properties but rather discuss how we implement (or fail to implement) them in software, while highlighting some of the potential difficulties introduced.

DURABILITY

In 1964, in the midst of the “loss” of the twentieth-century, Paul Baran’s RAND Corporation publication *On Distributed Communications* examined “redundancy as one means of building ... highly survivable and reliable communications systems”, thus midwifing the military foundations of the digital networks that we operate within today. While the underlying framework of the Internet generally follows distributed principles, the client–server/ request–response model of the HTTP protocol is highly centralised in practice and is only as durable as the server.

Capitalism places a high value on originality and novelty, as exemplified in art where the ultimate insult would be the label “redundant”. Worse than being derivative or merely unoriginal, being redundant means having no reason to exist — a uselessness that art can’t tolerate. It means wasting a perfectly good opportunity to be creative or innovative. In a relational network, on the other hand, redundancy is a mode of support. It doesn’t stimulate competition to capture its effects, but rather it is a product of cooperation. While this attitude of redundancy arose within a Western military context, one can’t help but notice that the shared resources, mutual support, and common infrastructure seem fundamentally communist in nature. Computer networks are not fundamentally exploitative or equitable, but they are used in specific ways and they operate within particular economies. A redundant network of interrelated, mutually supporting computers running mostly open-source software can be the guts of an advanced capitalist engine, like Facebook. So, could it be possible to organise our networked devices, embedded as they are in a capitalist economy, in an anti-capitalist way?

Dat Library is built on the Dat Protocol, a peer-to-peer protocol for syncing folders of data. It is not the first distributed protocol (BitTorrent is the best known and is noted as an inspiration for Dat), nor is it the only new one being developed today (IPFS or the Inter-Planetary File System is often referenced in comparison), but it is unique in its foundational goals of preserving scientific knowledge as a public good. Dat’s provocation is that by creating custom infrastructure it will be possible to overcome the accidents that restrict access to scientific knowledge. We would specifically acknowledge here the role that the Dat community — or any community around a protocol, for that matter — has in the formation of the world that is built on top of that protocol. (For a sense of the Dat community’s values — see its code of conduct.)

When unning Dat Library, a person sees their list of libraries. These can be thought of as similar to a torrent, where items are stored across many computers. This means that many people will share in the provision of disk space and bandwidth for a particular library, so that when someone loses electricity or drops their computer, the library will not also break. Although this is a technical claim — one that has been made in relation to many projects, from Baran to BitTorrent — it is more importantly a social claim: the users and lovers of a library will share the library. More than that, they will share in the work of ensuring that it will continue to be shared.

MINOR TYPO; SUGGESTED
CHANGE; AND AN ELABORATION
ON READING GENERALLY.

TIDY UP THORUNKA SECTION

SIMPLE TO SIMPLY; + ADD
FUTURE UBUWEB QUIP

ADD BEAKER LINK; AND ADD
ANOTHER PARAGRAPH TO
INSTITUTIONS.

**IN A RELATIONAL NETWORK, ON THE OTHER
HAND, REDUNDANCY IS A MODE OF SUP-
PORT. IT DOESN’T STIMULATE COMPETITION
TO CAPTURE ITS EFFECTS, BUT RATHER IT IS A
PRODUCT OF COOPERATION.**

This is not dissimilar to the process of reading generally, where knowledge is distributed and maintained through readers sharing and referencing the books important to them. As Peter Sloterdijk describes, written philosophy is “reinscribed like a chain letter through the generations, and despite all the errors of reproduction — indeed, perhaps because of such errors — it has recruited its copyists and interpreters into the ranks of brotherhood (sic)”. Or its sisterhood — but, the point remains clear that the reading / writing / sharing of texts binds us together, even in disagreement.

ACCESSIBILITY

In the world of the web, durability is synonymous with accessibility — if something can't be accessed, it doesn't exist. Here, we disentangle the two in order to consider access independent from questions of resilience.

TECHNICALLY ACCESSIBLE

When you create a new library in Dat, a unique 64-digit “key” will automatically be generated for it. An example key is 6f963e59e9948d14f5d2eccd-5b5ac8e157ca34d70d724b41cb0f565bc01162bf, which points to a library of texts. In order for someone else to see the library you have created, you must provide to them your library's unique key (by email, chat, on paper or you could publish it on your website). In short, you manage access to the library by copying that key, and then every key holder also manages access ad infinitum.

XXII

At the moment this has its limitations. A Dat is only writable by a single creator. If you want to collaboratively develop a library or reading list, you need to have a single administrator managing its contents. This will change in the near future with the integration of hyperdb into Dat's core. At that point, the platform will enable multiple contributors and the management of permissions, and our single key will become a key chain.

How is this key any different from knowing the domain name of a website? If a site isn't indexed by Google and has a suitably unguessable domain name, then isn't that effectively the same degree of privacy? Yes, and this is precisely why the metaphor of the key is so apt (with whom do you share the key to your apartment?) but also why it is limited. With the key, one not only has the ability to enter the library, but also to completely reproduce the library.

CONSENTING ACCESSIBILITY

When we say “accessibility”, some hear “information wants to be free” — but our idea of accessibility is not about indiscriminate open access to everything. While we do support, in many instances, the desire to increase access to knowledge where it has been restricted by monopoly property ownership, or the urge to increase transparency in delegated decision-making and representative government, we also recognise that Indigenous knowledge traditions often depend on ownership, control, consent, and secrecy in the hands of the traditions' people. [see “Managing Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property”, pg 83] Accessibility understood in merely quantitative terms isn't able to reconcile these positions, which this is why we refuse to limit “access” to a question of technology.

While “digital rights management” technologies have been developed almost exclusively for protecting the commercial interests of capitalist property owners within Western intellectual property regimes, many of the assumptions and technological implementations are inadequate for the protection of Indigenous knowledge. Rather than describing access in terms of commodities and ownership of copyright, it might be defined by membership, status or role within a community, and the rules of access would not be managed by a generalised legal system but by the rules and traditions of the people and their knowledge. [“The Role of Information Technologies in Indigenous Knowledge Management”, 101-102] These rights would not expire, nor would they be bought and sold, because they are shared, i.e., held in common.

MINOR REVISIONS; LAST UPDATED

ADD REFERENCES; ELABORATE IN SOME SECTIONS; FIX TYPOPS

UPDATE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS HEADING

ADD SECTION ON 140C; MORE TYPOPS

DIFFERENT PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT TECHNICAL RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES, BUT EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO AN ARCHIVE. BY SIMPLY RUNNING THE DAT LIBRARY SOFTWARE AND ADDING AN ARCHIVE TO IT

It is important, while imagining the possibilities of a technological protocol, to also consider how different cultural protocols might be implemented and protected through the life of a project like Dat Library. Certain aspects of this might be accomplished through library metadata, but ultimately it is through people hosting their own archives and libraries (rather than, for example, having them hosted by a state institution) that cultural protocols can be translated and reproduced. Perhaps we should flip the typical question of how might a culture exist within digital networks to instead ask how should digital networks operate within cultural protocols?

ADAPTABILITY (ABILITY TO USE/MODIFY AS ONE'S OWN)

Durability and accessibility are the foundations of adoptability. Many would say that this is a contradiction, that adoption is about use and transformation and those qualities operate against the preservationist grain of durability, that one must always be at the expense of the other. We say: perhaps that is true, but it is a risk we're willing to take because we don't want to be making monuments and cemeteries that people approach with reverence or fear. We want tools and stories that we use and adapt and are always making new again. But we also say: it is through use that something becomes invaluable, which may change or distort but will not destroy — this is the practical definition of durability. S.R. Ranganathan's very first Law of Library Science was “BOOKS ARE FOR USE”, which we would extend to the library itself, such that when he arrives at his final law, “THE LIBRARY IS A LIVING ORGANISM”, we note that to live means not only to change, but also to live in the world.

To borrow and gently distort another concept of Ranganathan's concepts, namely that of ‘Infinite Hospitality’, it could be said that we are interested in ways to construct a form of infrastructure that is infinitely hospitable. By this we mean, infrastructure that accommodates the needs and desires of new users/

UPDATE LAST EDITED

ADD SECTION ABOUT INFINITE HOSPITALITY

audiences/communities and allows them to enter and contort the technology to their own uses. We really don't see infrastructure as aimed at a single specific group, but rather that it should generate spaces that people can inhabit as they wish. The poet Jean Paul once wrote that books are thick letters to friends. Books as infrastructure enable authors to find their friends. This is how we ideally see Dat Library and HyperReadings working.

USE CASES

We began work on Dat Library and HyperReadings with a range of exemplary use cases, real-world circumstances in which these projects might intervene. Not only would the use cases make demands on the software we were and still are beginning to write, but they would also give us demands to make on the Dat protocol, which is itself still in the formative stages of development. And, crucially, in an iterative feedback loop, this process of design produces transformative effects on those situations described in the use cases themselves, resulting in further new circumstances and new demands.

THORUNKA

Wendy Bacon and Chris Nash made us aware of Thorunka and Thor.

Thorunka and Thor were two underground papers in the early 1970's that spewed out from a censorship controversy surrounding the University of New South Wales

UPDATE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL
TITLE TO THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL

student newspaper Thorunka. Between 1971 and 1973, the student magazine was under focused attack from the NSW state police, with several arrests made on charges of obscenity and indecency. Rather than ceding to the charges, this prompted a large and sustained political protest from Sydney activists, writers, lawyers, students and others, to which Thorunka and Thor were central.

"The campaign contested the idea of obscenity and the legitimacy of the legal system itself. The newspapers campaigned on the war in Vietnam, Aboriginal land rights, women's and gay liberation, and the violence of the criminal justice system. By 1973 the censorship regime in Australia was broken. Nearly all the charges were dropped." — Quotation from the 107 Projects Event.

Although the collection of issues of Thorunka is largely accessible via Trove, the subsequent issues of Thorunka, and later Thor, are not. For us, this demonstrates clearly how collections themselves can encourage modes of reading. If you focus on Thorunka as a singular and long-standing periodical, this significant political moment is rendered almost invisible. On the other hand, if the issues are presented together, with commentary and surrounding publications, the political environment becomes palpable. Wendy and Chris have kindly allowed us to make their personal collection available via Dat Library (the key is: 73fd26846e009e1f7b7c-5b580e15eb0b2423f9bea33fe2a5f41facoddb22cbdc), so you can discover this for yourself.

ACADEMIA.EDU ALTERNATIVE

Academia.edu, started in 2008, has raised tens of millions of dollars as a social network for academics to share their publications. As a for-profit venture, it is rife with metrics and it attempts to capitalise on the innate competition and self-promotion of precarious knowledge workers in the academy. It is simultaneously popular and despised: popular because it fills an obvious desire to share the fruits of ones intellectual work, but despised for the neoliberal atmosphere that pervades every design decision and automated correspondence. It is, however, just trying to provide a return on investment.

Gary Hall has written that "its financial rationale rests ... on the ability of the angel-investor and venture-capital-funded professional entrepreneurs who run Academia.edu to exploit the data flows generated by the academics who use the platform as an intermediary for sharing and discovering research". Moreover, he emphasises that in the open-access world (outside of the exploitative practice of for-profit publishers like Elsevier, who charge a premium for subscriptions), the privileged position is to be the one "who gate-keeps the data generated around the use of that content". This lucrative position has been produced by recent "recentralising tendencies" of the internet, which in Academia's case captures various, scattered open access repositories, personal web pages, and other archives.

Is it possible to recentralise? Can we break free of the subjectivities that Academia.edu is crafting for us as we are interpellated by its infrastructure? It is incredibly easy for any scholar running Dat Library to make a library of their own publications and post the key to their faculty web page, Facebook profile or business card. The tricky — and interesting — thing would be to develop platforms that aggregate thousands of these libraries in direct competition with Academia.edu. This way, individuals would maintain control over their own work; their peer groups would assist in mirroring it; and no one would be capitalising on the sale of data related to their performance and popularity.

We note that Academia.edu is a typically centripetal platform: it provides no tools for exporting one's own content, so an alternative would necessarily be a kind of centrifuge.

This alternative is becoming increasingly realistic. With open-access journals already paving the way, there has more recently been a call for free and open access to

REFINE ROLE OF INSTITUTION SECTION

ADD A NOTE ON THIS TEXT

TEMPORARILY REMOVE EMPTY 'SELF-EDUCATION' SECTION

REORDER UBU - AND SMOOTH PARAGRAPH TRANSITION

REORDER UBU - AND SMOOTH PARAGRAPH TRANSITION

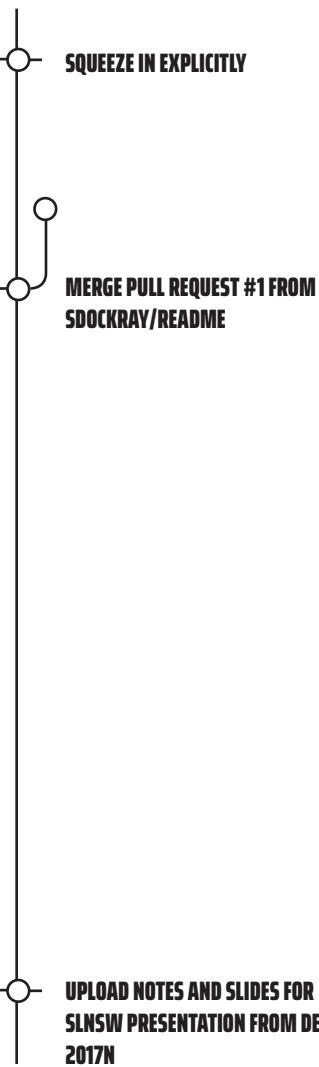
citation data. The Initiative for Open Citations (I4OC) is mobilising against the privatisation of data and working towards the unrestricted availability of scholarly citation data. We see their new database of citations as making this centrifugal force a possibility.

PUBLICATION FORMAT

In writing this README, we have strung together several references. This writing might be published in a book and the references will be listed as words at the bottom of the page or at the end of the text. But the writing might just as well be published as a HyperReadings object, providing the reader with an archive of all the things we referred to and an editable version of this text.

A new text editor could be created for this new publication format, not to mention a new form of publication, which bundles together a set of HyperReadings texts, producing a universe of texts and references. Each HyperReadings text might reference others, of course, generating something that begins to feel like a serverless World Wide Web.

It's not even necessary to develop a new publication format, as any book might be considered as a reading list (usually found in the footnotes and bibliography) with a very detailed description of the relationship between the consulted texts. What if the history of published works were considered in this way, such that we might always be able to follow a reference from one book directly into the pages of another, and so on?



SYLLABUS

The syllabus is the manifesto of the twenty-first century. From Your Baltimore “Syllabus”, to #StandingRockSyllabus, to Women and gender non-conforming people writing about tech, syllabi are being produced as provocations, or as instructions for reprogramming imaginaries. They do not announce a new world but they point out a way to get there. As a programme, the syllabus shifts the burden of action onto the readers, who will either execute the programme on their own fleshy operating system — or not. A text that by its nature points to other texts, the syllabus is already a relational document acknowledging its own position within a living field of knowledge. It is decidedly not self-contained, however it often circulates as if it were.

If a syllabus circulated as a HyperReadings document, then it could point directly to the texts and other media that it aggregates. But just as easily as it circulates, a HyperReadings syllabus could be forked into new versions: the syllabus is changed because there is a new essay out, or because of a political disagreement, or because following the syllabus produced new suggestions. These forks become a family tree where one can follow branches and trace epistemological mutations.

ADD THE BEGINNINGS OF A READING LIST

PROPOSITION (OR PRESUPPOSITIONS)

While the software that we have started to write is a proposition in and of itself, there is no guarantee as to how it will be used. But when writing, we are imagining exactly that: we are making intuitive and hopeful presuppositions about how it will be used, presuppositions that amount to a set of social propositions.

THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE AGE OF DISTRIBUTION

Different people have different technical resources and capabilities, but everyone can contribute to an archive. By simply running the Dat Library software and adding an archive to it, a person is sharing their disk space and internet bandwidth in the service of that archive. At first, it is only the archive’s index (a list of the contents) that is hosted, but if the person downloads the contents (or even just a small portion of the contents) then they are sharing in the hosting of the contents as well. Individuals, as supporters of an archive or members of a community, can organise together to guarantee the durability and accessibility of an archive, saving a future UbuWeb from ever having to worry about if their ‘ISP pulling the plug’. As supporters of many archives, as members of many communities, individuals can use Dat Library to perform this function many times over.

On the Web, individuals are usually users or browsers — they use browsers. In spite of the ostensible interactivity of the medium, users are kept at a distance from the actual code, the infrastructure of a website, which is run on a server. With a distributed protocol like Dat, applications such as Beaker Browser or Dat Library eliminate the central server, not by destroying it, but by distributing it across all of the users. Individuals are then not just users, but also hosts. What kind of subject is this user-host, especially as compared to the user of the server? Michel Serres writes in *The Parasite*:

ADD MESS TEMPORARILY TO CLEAN UP SOON.

“It is raining; a passer-by comes in. Here is the interrupted meal once more. Stopped for only a moment, since the traveller is asked to join the diners. His host does not have to ask him twice. He accepts the invitation and sits down in front of his bowl. The host is the satyr, dining at home; he is the donor. He calls to the passer-by, saying to him, be our guest. The guest is the stranger, the interrupter, the one who receives the soup,

A BIT MORE MESS

AS STORAGE IS CUT LOOSE FROM ITS DEPENDENCY ON THE CORPORATE CLOUD AND FALLS INTO MUTUAL SUPPORT NET- WORKS, COULD THIS OPEN NEW QUEER AND NONINSTITUTIONAL SPACES?

agrees to the meal. The host, the guest: the same word; he gives and receives, offers and accepts, invites and is invited, master and passer-by... An invariable term through the transfer of the gift. It might be dangerous not to decide who is the host and who is the guest, who gives and who receives, who is the parasite and who is the table d'hôte, who has the gift and who has the loss, and where hospitality begins with hospitality." — Michel Serres, *The Parasite* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 15–16.

Serres notes that guest and host are the same word in French; we might say the same for client and server in a distributed protocol. And we will embrace this multiplying hospitality, giving and taking without measure.

THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN THE AGE OF DISTRIBUTION

David Cameron launched a doomed initiative in 2010 called the Big Society, which paired large-scale cuts in public programmes with a call for local communities to voluntarily self-organise to provide these essential services for themselves. This is not the political future that we should be working toward: since 2010, austerity policies have resulted in 120,000 excess deaths in England. In other words, while it might seem as though institutions might be comparable to servers, inasmuch as both are centralised infrastructures, we should not give them up or allow them to be dismantled under the assumption that those infrastructures can simply be distributed and self-organised. On the contrary, institutions should be defended and organised in order to support the distributed protocols we are discussing.

One simple way for a larger, more established institution to help ensure the durability and accessibility of diverse archives is through the provision of hardware, network capability and some basic technical support. It can back up the archives of smaller institutions and groups within its own community while also giving access to its own

FIX TYPO IN LAST UPDATED

MORE ITEMS ADDED

archives so that those collections might be put to new uses. A network of smaller institutions, separated by great distances, might mirror each other's archives, both as an expression of solidarity and positive redundancy and also as a means of circulating their archives, histories and struggles amongst each of the others.

It was the simultaneous recognition that some documents are too important to be privatised or lost to the threats of neglect, fire, mould, insects, etc., that prompted the development of national and state archives (See page 39 in Beredo, B. C., *Import of the archive: American colonial bureaucracy in the Philippines, 1898–1916*). As public institutions they were, and still are, tasked with often competing efforts to house and preserve while simultaneously also ensuring access to public documents. Fire and unstable weather understandably have given rise to large fire-proof and climate-controlled buildings as centralised repositories, accompanied by highly regulated protocols for access. But in light of new technologies and their new risks, as discussed above, it is compelling to argue now that, in order to fulfil their public duty, public archives should be distributing their collections where possible and providing their resources to smaller institutions and community groups.

Through the provision of disk space, office space, grants, technical support and employment, larger institutions can materially support smaller organisations, individuals and their archival afterlives. They can provide physical space and outreach for dispersed collectors, gathering and piecing together a fragmented archive.

But what happens as more people and collections are brought in? As more institutional archives are allowed to circulate outside of institutional walls? As storage is cut loose from its dependency on the corporate cloud and into forms of interdependency, such as mutual support networks? Could this open up spaces for new forms of not-quite-organisations and queer-institutions? These would be almost-organisations that uncomfortable exist somewhere between the common categorical markings of the individual and the institution. In our thinking, it's not important what these future forms exactly look like. Rather, as discussed above, what is important to us is that in writing software we open up spaces for the unknown, and allow others agency to build the forms that work for them. It is only in such an atmosphere of infinite hospitality that we see the future of community libraries, individual collections and other precarious archives.

A NOTE ON THIS TEXT

This README was, and still is being, collaboratively written in a Git repository. Git is a free and open-source tool for version control used in software development. All the code for Hyperreadings, Dat Library and their numerous associated modules are all managed openly using Git and hosted on GitHub under open source licences. In a real way, Git's specification formally binds our collaboration as well as the open invitation for others to participate. As such, the form of this README reflects its content. Like this text, these projects are, by design, works in progress that are malleable to circumstances and open to contributions, for example by opening a pull request on this document or raising an issue on our GitHub repositories. □

ADD PLOS AND DOAJ TO LIST OF REPOSITORIES

BRAD HAYLOCK' CONSIDERED AND THOUGHTFUL EDITS

ADD SPACE BETWEEN GIT AND REPOSITORY





ADJACENT

OH NETWORK TOGETHER

XXXVI



TRIAGE

OH BE QUIET UNTIL YOU ARE READY

OH OVERCOME RHIZOMATICALLY



OH STAY IN TOUCH

