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INTERSTITIAL SPACE
Marius Stoica

1

The private is broadly speaking a notion found in law and cultural norms. Still, there is a deeper meaning to it. For instance, when we recall various childhood memories: our favorite hiding place or the time spent with our parents (gazing at the sky or shaping clay). The private nature of these memories pertains neither to identity and property protection (like the way we speak about our Facebook page or our car) nor to human dignity and sovereignty (like when we talk about the government spying on us), but to what I intuitively dub *natural privacy* and the concept of *interstitial privacy*. What matters here is the relationship with other beings, with objects in themselves, and with space, the way in which knowledge and meaning are contiguous, and reality is both lived and represented. Privacy can be defined not just as a construct and cultural norm applicable only to humans, but as a real, physical state, through which we can describe the continuous, persistent, and defining way by which things make up reality.

2

Usually and commonly, privacy means that:

- EACH INDIVIDUAL MUST BE ALLOWED TO REGULATE ACCESS TO HIS OWN THINGS AND MATTERS (HIS OWN BODY, SPACE, IMAGE, IDENTITY, ETC.)
- INTERACTIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS MUST BE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE TO THEIR PREVIOUS POINT

It seems that the two points of this definition are equally important. But that's not the case. The part about interaction is more important – it is, in fact, a condition. Privacy wouldn't have to be subject to norms if social interaction didn't ask for it. Or, in other words, we must regulate privacy in order to regulate and homogenize social interaction. But is there a type of privacy to name and aim for if social interaction doesn't call for its norming?

3

I indeed believe that the notion of privacy is based on a tacit understanding of life quality which doesn't depend on social interaction but on the interaction with everything else. If our life is prosperous, we can distinguish, name, and norm parts of it as private, if our life is just a struggle to survive, we have very little to name and norm as private. When I say survival, I'm not referring to the social, cultural, and economic aspects of our lives, but to the primordial confrontation with nature. We can't associate normative privacy with indigenous, archaic cultures. But, at the same time, we also can't conceive that humans of such cultures don't experience, don't have some kind of representation of privacy.

4

Norming privacy is intersubjective and social in nature, while living and experiencing privacy is object-oriented, contingent. To understand privacy, we must understand objects around and how our insignificance faced with the absolute power of the Elements is annulled by our intimate relationship with them. This is the understanding of privacy that I will use here: not socially-normed privacy, but lived, experienced privacy.

5

One definition for privacy could be the following: privacy is a relation of proximity between objects, which doesn't endanger their existance, but instead makes them thrive. It is a

general definition that doesn't fit the notion of normative privacy. For one thing, this definition situates privacy in the context of contingency. Privacy is not where the law places it, but where there happens to form a relation of wellbeing between things, and this happens rather by chance. We can't see the house in which a child subject to domestic violence lives as his private space, but there where he might feel secure and free. Secondly, privacy is not subject-centered, is not unidirectional; on the contrary, it is object-oriented, multidirectional, and mutual. Let's take as an example the balance of an ecosystem in which all life forms thrive due to the relations between them; in his way, each living being influences the private space of all the others. Thirdly, privacy is more dynamic and transitory than static and permanent. The house in which we live is a private space not because it is in our property, but because it offers us a feeling of emotional and material wellbeing and this is something that can change in time.

6

Survival and the threat of extinction condition and circumscribe the existence of privacy, forcing things, beings, and entities to create humoral, interstitial buffer zones. For the human subject, these are perceived as comfort zones created for him. Therefore these areas are seen as sterile zones in which only the human subject is active (this is the underlying assumption of our common understanding of privacy – normative privacy). But this is by no means the case. These comfort zones represent a negotiation with the things, beings, entities that are part of or come into contact with the human subject. Wellbeing and prosperity do not represent the end of the struggle for survival, but only its amelioration. The threat of global warming stands as a testimony of how important understanding extinction is for achieving wellbeing. If the negotiation with things is lost or avoided, by attempting to master, cancel, destroy them, we slip into a game/process of extinction, which, though at first glance we seem to control it, it pushes extinction in our proximity, increasing the chances of becoming subject to the obliterating power of the Elements, our very own extinction.

7

The negotiation that creates humoral space is a communication between objects – things, beings, entities. Its unit of measurement is the difference that each object brings to the

whole through its presence. This difference is in turn codified differently than in the case of every other individual object. Each difference hosts other differences and is hosted by other differences in a never-ending flow.

8

The amelioration of the struggle for survival is realized when objects enter this flow of communication with other neighboring objects. Maintaining this flow leads to a prosperity/wellbeing that mustn't be understood as the end of the road, as an aim in itself, but as the sum of the areas of interstitial privacy, which do not oppose a space of commonality, but are in fact the area of commonality passed through recursively by the differences generated by objects and by the multiplicity of their transmission. The persistence in time and space of interstitial privacy leads to a vital plasticity of materiality by means of the objectification of the flow of communication and its transformation into a new object – thing, being, entity.

9

Thus, interstitial privacy has a twofold existential inside-out, or object-oriented, role:

- FROM A HUMAN POINT OF VIEW, INTERSTITIAL PRIVACY IS THE LOCUS OF KNOWLEDGE AND MEANING, THE LOCUS OF WISDOM
- FROM AN ONTOLOGICAL STANDPOINT, THE AREAS OF SELF-PERPETUATING INTERSTITIAL PRIVACY LEAD TO FUSION AND THE GENERATING OF NEW OBJECTS

Privacy is in every place where we find life rather than death.

FROM PRIVATE TO PUBLIC TOWARDS THE COMMON.
HACKING FOR THE FUTURE
Anca Bucur

Both *public* and *private* sectors are defined by comprehending and relying on a historically debated and constructed concept, that of *property*, which is always inherently coupled with its economically germinated appendix – the concept of *ownership*. None of them, whether it is the private or the public department, is penurious in exercising *property* as a mechanism of control, as none of them is barren in yielding accurate, different forms of regulation and hierarchization. They both envision systems of financial, social and political exclusion, even though they are theoretically and methodologically employing distinct devices for owning and managing environmental and knowledge resources, as well as their means of production. Reclaiming property as a social and biopolitical relation, which is nevertheless re-enforced by judicial proceedings, the public and private sectors join in responding to a governmental model, which is at once internal and external to the state, since it is exactly "the tactics of government that make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private, and so on." (Foucault 1991: 103) It is, therefore, this constant regulation within the dynamics and tactics of governmentality that runs both sectors and maintains their dualism viable

by reclining now and forever on power. They are both organized accordingly to patterns of stratification, separately replicating a pyramidal structure of control, assembling clusters of apparatuses aimed to capital accumulation by commanding the instruments of production. The dispute over holding property resides not only in granting *access* to material and immaterial goods, but more importantly in legitimating *the allocation* and *distribution* of these goods by virtue of competitive circumscription and class, gender, racial or ethnical exclusion. Whether it is the public or the private sector, they are each describing and exerting a form of monopoly, one which dwells on state codification, while the other functions on a non-governmental system of signs, unvoiced, but known to and ratified by the state's lawful authority. Rather than portraying a relation of radical opposition, articulating a rigid dichotomy, the public and the private, although operating with divergent, but akin embodiments and usages of property, exist in close association, symbiotically actualizing a hierarchical scaffold, that is endorsed, reproduced and strengthened by micro and macro social grouplets.

However, longing to overrun the dualism between private and public, a third term, which places itself outside the realm of property relations, enters this oppressively claustrophobic debate – *the common*. For Hardt and Negri, the common designates the environmental material world, its resources together with the products they provide, as well as the products resulted from cultural and social interaction, such as knowledge, codes, language(s), information or affects (Hardt and Negri 2009: viii). Assimilating nature to culture and culture to nature in the attempt to envision a naturalcultural common wealth, Hardt and Negri insist on surpassing the standard bifurcation between the private and public regimes, within which the later recurrently disguises into a synonym for shared access, obscuring the common as a real alternative, rendering it difficult to be observed. The common not only cuts open and surfaces the binomial construct drawn by the private and public discourses sheltered by the capitalist frame, but it also grasps new possible configurations of the contemporary world. The ascending rate of privatization, along with market globalization through which everything is labeled in accordance to its economic value, brings in the urgency for phrasing and expanding the common. Moreover, this proves to be an even more stringent assignment since the current prevailing forms of production relying on (codified) information require open access to and unrestricted usage of networks and

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platforms, circuits and data banks. It seems as though the contemporary hyper-techno-capitalist system is starting to undermine itself, opening up the borders of ownership, by meeting its own demands. Yet, even if the mirage of the common preserves its colors bright in the capitalist mist, the specter of property appears fleshier than ever. The common remains untamed as long as it serves the capitalist logics of production. Adjoining the private and public property, a new form of digitally engendered property emerges in order to represent the recently raised control over the vectors along which information circulates. While re-negotiating the means of production and labor, intellectual property, following a third stage of abstraction from land to capital to information, lodges another layer to the social stratification formed by the vectorialist and hacker juxtaposed classes, within which the first, naming the class of commodification, is economically subjugating the second, that designates the class of production (Wark 2006: 172). Nevertheless, the sense of the common stays immanent to the current techno-economic regime. Before being confiscated, enchained and turned into private property by the vectorialist class, information is born free and immaterial, carrying all the prerequisites for entering the shared, open flows of communication. The

challenge then to make the dominant caste bend and to dethrone its power of exclusion and monopolization afforded by ownership and commodification resides in the detournement of the practices of production, endeavoring to ontologically and politically rethink them in order to compel the capitalist conventions. The exercise of *detournement* not only summons the negation of the commodification mechanism, but it enables a process of equally *de-valuation* of the material and immaterial resources, surrendering them free for common use.

Being a product of the arbitrary communication among singularities, resulting from collaborative practices, the common is immanently relational, accompanying the pragmatics of everyday life. Subjecting it to a valuation model and thus validating a capital structure of tangible or intangible assets' transactions, the common drowns indeed into the spectacle of commercialization only to proliferate again. Because, the common, borrowing language's means of circulating, succeeds in avoiding incarceration, entirely by exi(s)ting through excess. Therefore, prospecting a common, open, free-accessed platform, allowed to everyone's participation and voided of profit infringements, demands developing hacking abilities. Becoming a hacker in the postdigital

age implies not only developing technical and cognitive skills for ripping, leaking and sharing environmental and knowledge, material and immaterial, geological and disembodied resources, discharging them of the commodification sentence, but first and foremost unbinding the common appetite and flows of desire, branching agents and machines for detournement actions. Hacking for a common future means both rebelliously injecting trojans, bugging, short-circuiting the techno-capitalist system by forming new modes of association to react to the commodity economy, and constantly circulating the remnant excess, traced by the private-public dualism, so that it can exceed the sphere of ownership. The hacker, whether s/he voices the farmer or the worker, must acknowledge that the common is routinely produced and actualized in the biopolitical practices and processes by which life itself is articulated. Hence, the challenge for engaging the future stands not in inventing the common, but in acknowledging its close proximity, always accompanying our biotic and abiotic existence.

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OPEN SOURCE AS A TEST CASE FOR A POST-HUMANIST COMMONS
Florian Cramer

Underground culture and non-institutional arts of Eastern Europe, North America and Western Europe of the 1970s/1980s often included experimentation with the dispensation of individual signatures and identities, in favor of pseudonyms and collective-anonymous identities (Deseriis, 2015). This included dispensation of ownership and property - including copyright. A parallel phenomenon existed in computer hacker culture where, since the 1960s, freely sharing information and even one's personal computer logins became part of a "hacker ethic" (Levy, 1984). This culture gave birth to Free Software, later branded Open Source, and its "copyleft". The Free Software practice of collective project development on the basis of giving up traditional authorship had existed for decades, but only became wider known in the 1990s and 2000s with the rise of the Linux operating system and, some years later, Wikipedia whose open-collective authorship is based on the development model and copyleft principle of Free Software.

Both traditions - collective-anonymous (sub)culture such as in underground and samizdat publishing, zine culture, Mail Art, punk as well as Free Software, Open Source and copyleft - could be seen as working practices of "the commons", in a time where the commons are broadly advocated as an alternative to capitalist

production and as an antidote to the imminent ecological catastrophe from over-exploitation of resources and anthropocentric blindness for the earth as a system. Contemporary Open Source culture can even be seen as a showcase for a post-humanist worldview, since most of it originates in collaborations of human and non-human actors, human developers and automated software agents.

But as a real-life test case for a post-humanist commons, Open Source exhibits the flaws of these models: unclear governance with lack of democratic participation, in the worst case oligarchies disguised as meritocracies and corporate politics disguised as community service.

Before drawing these conclusions, I would like to sketch a cultural history that involves both cultural activism and Free Software copyleft. Aymeric Mansoux' PhD thesis *Sandbox Culture* (2017) reconstructs and investigates this history more comprehensively.

GIFT ECONOMIES

'Potlatch' is a traditional Native American gift exchange ceremony. In the twentieth century, the word was adopted for a radical politics and aesthetics of the public domain. The *Lettrist*

International, a group of poets, artists and political activists that preceded the Situationist International, published its periodical *Potlatch* free of charge and free of copyright. From 1954 to 1957, *Potlatch* appeared in Paris and the Dutch section of the Situationist International published its own issue of the bulletin in 1959. In an essay included in the Dutch edition, Guy Debord explained gift exchange as a way in which to 'reserve and surmount' the 'negativity' of modern arts (NOTBORED, 2017). With 'negativity', he not only meant aesthetics, but also economics. The successor to *Potlatch*, the journal *Internationale Situationniste*, was free of copyright too. This way, Lettrists and Situationists sought to pre-emptively undermine the collector's and art market's value of their work, at least in theory. In practice, none of the major participants kept up anti-copyright.

Around the same time, in the 1960s, Fluxus sought to fundamentally rethink the economics and public accessibility of art when it focused on street performances and on its own genuine invention 'multiples': the production of artworks (from artists' books to small sculptural objects) in affordable editions. Fluxus' founder and theorist George Maciunas did not literally use the terms 'access' or 'accessibility', yet radically addressed them on both an institutional and

aesthetic level. By moving contemporary art from museums and galleries to bookshops and streets, Fluxus sought to give it 'non-elite status in society' (Maciunas, 1971). This, by itself, does not differ much from other programmes of bringing art into the public space, for example as open air sculpture. But Maciunas also sought to radically change form and language of contemporary art for this purpose. He wanted art to become 'Vaudeville-art' and 'art-amusement' (ibid.). Art should become 'simple, amusing, concerned with insignificances, have no commodity or institutional value … obtainable by all and eventually produced by all' (ibid.). This eventually lead to Fluxus being perceived, like Situationism, as counterculture rather than as contemporary art in its own time. Today, both are mostly seen as forerunners of contemporary performative, conceptualist and political art, although their radical anti-institutional agenda is being overlooked. Little attention has been paid to political-economic visions in both movements: a radical public domain without commodities and private property.

This did not prevent Lettrist, Situationist and Fluxus work from ending up (or even being produced) as collector's items wherever this work had a conventional material form, such as auto- or serigraphs, objects, installations, performance remnants, photographs or original copies of *Potlatch*. When the World Wide Web became a mass medium in the mid-1990s, the first avant-garde and contemporary art that became available online were Situationist writings from the 1960s; works that were conventional text with no collector's value. Thanks to their non-copyright status, they could easily be retyped and uploaded. Works from Fluxus and closely related conceptual and intermedia art movements (including concrete and sound poetry, video and audio art) became the foundation of UbuWeb (www.ubu.com). Created in 1996 by poet and conceptual artist Kenneth Goldsmith and still maintained by him today, UbuWeb is the largest online library and electronic archive of avant-garde audio-visual documents. It has become the historically most successful public access initiative for contemporary arts, since it gave artists' books, recordings and videos a public visibility which pre-Internet museums, archives and libraries could not physically provide. In addition, UbuWeb turned this art into a common good since all content of the website is freely and easily downloadable for any Internet user.

In her 1973 book *Six Years*, art critic Lucy Lippard characterized the performative, conceptualist and intermedia art of the late 1960s and early 1970s as a movement towards

the 'dematerialization of the art object'. In 1983, Jean-François Lyotard, founder of postmodernism as a philosophical concept, organized the exhibition *Les Immatériaux* at Centre Pompidou in Paris, which combined art installations by, among others, Daniel Buren and Dan Flavin with extensive displays of scientific inventions and computer technology. If one were to construct a genealogy from Fluxus and conceptual art via Lippard's 'dematerialization' and Lyotard's postmodern 'immaterials' to UbuWeb and the online Situationist text archives, then the latter might be seen as the ultimate realization of 1960s gift economy promises. Promises which, at the time, were still held back by analogue material constraints. Even cheap media such as print have affordances that can be prohibitive: printing, shipping and storage costs, the limited number of print copies versus the unlimited copying of digital files. Live performance art in public spaces was non-reproducible and therefore reinforced the aura of the unique artwork.

In such a reading, UbuWeb delivers the original yet unrealized promise of Maciunas' Fluxus Editions from the 1960s. Likewise, the Situationist servers—but also: every other electronic book, audio record, film, game copied and shared among people—provides the *Potlatch* that the Lettrist bulletin symbolized rather than

realized. Digital technology, with its inherent facility of copying a file in infinite generations without quality loss and at comparatively negligible costs, would then have been the final missing building block for a working 'gift economy'. This idea had also influenced the first generation of net.artist in the 1990s, including jodi, Heath Bunting, Alexei Shulgin, Vuk Ćosić and Olia Lialina, whose work mostly circulated outside exhibition spaces and suspended notions of 'the original'.

Concepts of a 'gift economy' based on 'the commons' did not only exist in the arts. They became generally popular with the Internet. By the 1990s, two popular phenomena substantiated them: Firstly, the GNU/Linux computer operating system, a fully working alternative to proprietary computer operating systems such as Unix, Windows and Mac OS, programmed by volunteers and available for free downloading, copying and adaptation. Secondly, the popular culture of freely sharing music in the MP3 format through decentralized Internet services such as Napster. Kenneth Goldsmith, founder of UbuWeb, later described Napster as his 'epiphany': 'It was as if every record store, flea market and charity shop in the world had been connected by a searchable database and had flung their doors open, begging you to walk away with as much as you could

carry for free. But it was even better, because the supply never exhausted; the coolest record you've ever dug up could now be shared with all your friends.' (Herrington, 2015) Linux received similar artistic appreciation, when in 1999, the Ars Electronica festival awarded it with its Golden Nica in the '.net' category, a prize meant for electronic media art. The jury cited Linux' cultural 'impact on the "real" world' as a reason for its decision, along with the intention 'to spark a discussion about whether a source code itself can be an artwork'. (*Linux Today*, 1999)

As if to prove that avant-garde art still does justice to its own name and historically runs ahead of popular culture, the fringe 'gift economy' concepts of Lettrists, Situationists and other counter-cultural groups became mass phenomena with Linux and MP3 file sharing three decades later. In his 1998 essay *The Hi-Tech Gift Economy*, British cultural studies scholar Richard Barbrook therefore called the Internet 'Really Existing Anarcho-Communism'. He credited the Situationist International as a forerunner but criticized that it 'could not escape from the elitist tradition of the avant-garde'. For his references to Linux, Barbrook drew on the software developer Eric S. Raymond who, in the same year, had helped coin the term 'Open Source' for the new collaborative software development model.

In 2000, Raymond's paper *Homesteading the Noosphere* characterized the 'The Hacker Milieu as Gift Culture', arguing that 'Gift cultures are adaptations not to scarcity but to abundance'. The promise of digital technology and the Internet was that electronic replication of digital zeros and ones had overcome the constraints and affordances of mechanical reproduction. In that light, Lippard's 'dematerialization' in conceptual art and Lyotard's postmodern 'immaterials' seemed to be issues that the digital commons had resolved.

Raymond and others effectively paraphrased social-liberal economist John Maynard Keynes who, in 1930, had predicted that thanks to automation 'the *economic problem* may be solved … within one hundred years' so that an 'age of leisure' would follow (Keynes, 2010). Keynes' theory was influential in French post-war sociology and most prominently adopted by Guy Debord's teacher Henri Lefebvre. Debord and the Situationists expected a transformation of society into a leisure society, propagated machine-made 'industrial painting' and based their 'Potlatch' on a firm expectation of the near end to economic scarcity.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the debate on the Internet as a gift economy found its most prominent voice in law professor

Lawrence Lessig, who saw the technology as a means to a *Free Culture* outside traditional intellectual property and media industry regimes (Lessig, 2004). In 2001, Lessig co-founded the Creative Commons, a non-profit organization whose licenses encouraged people to apply the distribution principles of Open Source software such as Linux, including free copying and modification, to creative works of any kind, including texts, images and sound recordings. Wikipedia, founded in 2001, is among the best-known projects licensed under Creative Commons, and has become, besides Linux and MP3 file sharing, a poster case for the Internet as a 'digital commons'. Today, most academic Open Access publications are released under the terms of a Creative Commons License, too.

The underlying assumption is that in the age of digital media technology traditional copyright is too restricted for works to be truly publicly accessible, since it doesn't permit downloading or sharing. When the World Wide Web and social media were still new, these issues were not seen as issues of access and shifts in consumption of culture, but rather as a paradigm shift in cultural production. This was perfectly in line with Maciunas' pre-Internet vision of art being 'obtainable by all and eventually produced by all' (Maciunas, 1971). When legal scholar

Yochai Benkler (2006) coined the notion of 'commons-based peer production' in 2002, he saw Wikipedia, Creative Commons and blogging as living proofs of a participatory 'Wealth of Networks', as opposed to traditional mass media with their sender/receiver and producer/consumer hierarchies. On a larger economic scale, 'wealth of networks' implied that economic egoism would be overcome and would lead to more effective and sustainable production. Where Keynes saw automation as the key to overcome economic scarcity, Benkler advocated network collaboration. In 2008, the cultish 'Zeitgeist Movement' advocated a 'post-scarcity economy' in which economic and political decisions should be delegated to a central computer. Zeitgeist became a major force behind the *Occupy* protests in New York City and Frankfurt, Germany, both taking place at the center of the two cities' banking districts.

The latest Internet-cultural iteration of Benkler's optimism and Keynes' 1930s post-scarcity visions is to be found in the so-called Maker movement (Mansoux, 2017). It was founded on the idea of using 3D printing and FabLabs for fully self-sufficient fabrication outside classical capitalist production and distribution chains. Bestseller writer and political consultant Jeremy Rifkin propagates

a 'Third Industrial Revolution' based on these technologies. In his vision, they will lead to a 'Zero Marginal Cost Society'. With nearly costless production, according to Rifkin, 'the Internet of Things, the collaborative commons' will lead to an 'eclipse of capitalism' (Rifkin, 2015). In other words, Linux, MP3 file sharing and Wikipedia were seen as working commons because of their 'dematerialization' – with software and data being no longer subject to the material constraints of industrial production. But now this vision has transcended software and data to the point where even material products are expected to become shareable, like MP3 files. What Goldsmith had written about record stores 'begging you to walk away with as much as you could carry for free' with 'the supply never exhausted', would then apply to any store and *any* commodity.

From the 1990s to the early 2010s, these visions and debates remained largely exclusive to hacker culture, media activism and specialized areas of Internet art and media theory. This changed only recently. In 2013, artist and filmmaker Hito Steyerl brought the issue to the centre of contemporary art when she coined the term 'circulationism' in an essay for the *e-flux journal*. Using filmmaking terminology, Steyerl (2013) stated that, in the Internet age, image production is superseded by 'postproduction'.

She suggests:

What the Soviet avant-garde of the twentieth century called productivism - the claim that art should enter production and the factory - could now be replaced by circulationism. Circulationism is not about the art of making an image, but of postproducing, launching, and accelerating it.

The label 'circulationism' is not only a good fit for the endlessly 'post-produced' visual memes on image boards and moving image remixes on YouTube. The older Internet gift economies of Linux, Wikipedia, MP3 file sharing, UbuWeb and Situationist web sites are 'circulationist', too, since they are all sites of postproduction: Wikipedia with its policy not to publish any original research but only information from 'reputable sources', GNU/Linux as a clone of the Unix operating system that AT&T had developed in the 1970s. Steyerl concludes her essay with a Rifkin-esque extrapolation from software and data to hardware:

Why not open-source water, energy, and Dom Pérignon champagne? If circulationism is to mean anything, it has to move into the world of offline distribution, of 3D dissemination of resources, of music, land, and inspiration.'

This view is shared in the contemporary philosophical movement of accelerationism.

In their 2016 book *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*, Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams, authors of the 2013 '#ACCELERATE MANIFESTO for an Accelerationist Politics', advocate 'full automation' in combination with universal basic income.

What is envisioned in these scenarios is the maximum expansion of the public domain, through the abolition of work and any form of property. Yet the political backgrounds of these writers and actors are extremely diverse, sometimes even contradictory: democratic socialist (Barbrook), neo-Leninist (Srnicek/Williams), right-wing libertarian (Raymond), liberal (Lessig), cyber-new age (Zeitgeist movement). On top of that, they range from contemporary art (Steyerl) to political consultancy of EU governments (Rifkin).

THE DOUBLE MEANING OF THE 'PUBLIC DOMAIN'

Strictly speaking, a gift economy, and a potlatch, can only exist if the difference between gift exchange and other forms of economic exchange is still in place. In a Keynesian full-automation, post-scarcity future, everything and hence nothing would be a gift. From the Lettrists to the 'Third Industrial Revolution', the gift thus covertly disappears from the scene. What's more, technology gradually replaces culture as agent and site of economic change. This results in artists' real-life public domain practices, from Lettrism to net.art and UbuWeb, being less and less acknowledged, even in the writings of artists such as Steyerl.

For their concept of the gift economy, Lettrists and Situationists drew on the French anthropologist Marcel Mauss (like Georges Bataille before and Jean Baudrillard after them). In the 1920s, Mauss had described the Potlatch as an 'archaic' economy of reciprocal gift exchange. Despite its common understanding as a counter-model to modern Western economic models of accumulation, the Potlatch ultimately is no less consumerist than modern capitalism, since it is based on social peer pressure of excessive giving and taking (Mauss, 1954).

In the contemporary art market, where 19th/20th century-style production and sales business models rule and economic visions such as Rifkin's or Srnicek/Williams' are out of question, gift economies nevertheless remain a provocation. They squarely contradict the art market's principle of selling items to collectors and its creation of value through balancing an item's scarcity against collector demand. There could thus be no sharper contradiction than the

one between a Potlatch, whether in its traditional or in its Lettrist form, and a contemporary art fair such as Art Basel or Frieze.

Reformation-age pamphlets and graphic prints, including Dürer's, can be interpreted as early Western forms of an art in the public domain that circumvented traditional art markets (most of all, clerical and aristocratic patronage, churches and palaces). With early 20th century Dadaism as their precursor, Situationism and Fluxus pioneered a practice of the public domain that transgressed the two realms of publishing media and public space. Merriam-Webster defines the public domain both as 'land owned directly by the government' and as 'the realm embracing property rights that belong to the community at large, are unprotected by copyright or patent'. Contemporary English and Romanian ('domeniu public') gravitate towards the second definition, the public domain as creative works that are free from individual rights claims. In other European languages, however, the double definition of 'the public domain' is still more pronounced, for example in the French expression 'domaine publique' and in the Dutch 'publieke domein'. Legally, the concept thus refers to (a) physical property and (b) intellectual property: to physical territory that is not privately owned, and to creative work—writing, pictures, audiovisuals,

designs, technical inventions—whose copyrights or patents have either expired or been given up.

The cybernetic utopia of circulationism, accelerationism, the Third Industrial Revolution, Open Source thus is to collapse both definitions and areas of the public domain into one: When the Dom Pérignon bottle becomes infinitely downloadable, there is no more sense in differentiating physical from intellectual property. De jure, however, intellectual property has a clearly different status from physical property, being a metaphor born out of the invention of the printing press. Western jurisdictions put most intellectual property violations under civil law yet physical property violations under criminal law. 'Property' thus does not equal 'property'.

FROM PEER PRODUCTION TO NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

In 2012, *Forbes Magazine* estimated the total operating costs for the Internet at $100-200 billion per year (Price, 2012). The figure only reflects operating costs of Internet service providers, excludes public investments into network infrastructure, costs for cell phone and telephone networks, expenses of Internet and media companies for maintaining their own services as well as computer hardware expenses

of private households, public administrations, educational institutions et cetera. The Internet is not, to use Lyotard's word, an 'immaterial'. Optical fibre cables, its infrastructural backbone, are a degrading organic material that needs to be replaced every ten years. Scarcity of Internet resources may not be visible today since its infrastructure still benefits from massive private and public investment, and from slave labour combined with massively unfair trade in the production of electronic hardware. The current picture of data abundance might be skewed in the same way as the picture of electricity and oil abundance was skewed in the 1950s and 1960s.

With the world population projected to grow to ten billion people and more, global warming, depletion of natural resources, scarcity of energy, scarcity of raw materials needed for electronics and industrial production and, leaving hyperbolic prophecies aside, no realistic perspective that artificial intelligence robotics will soon make the bulk of manual labour obsolete (which would still beg the question on what energy and material resources those machines would run?), Keynes' hope that 'the *economic problem* may be solved' and create an age of leisure, appears dated. It is one of the contradictions of our present times that some of the same thinkers who subscribe to a philosophical 'new materialism'—with its focus on ecology, a 'parliament of things' (Latour), 'object-oriented ontology' and worries about the ecological catastrophe of the anthropocene—also believe in total leisure through total automation, as if computing and robotics operated in some immaterial void where the laws of physics, economy and natural resource exploitation are suspended.

Likewise, a critical look back at radical public domain projects of artists and media activists reveals countless flaws: The anti-copyright publishing of the Situationist International was only possible because the group was financed through gallery sales of paintings by its co-founding member Asger Jorn (Kurczynski, 2014). Fluxus' alternative business model of selling multiple editions faltered after less than a year. None of the participating artists followed the initial suggestion to sign over their individual copyright to Fluxus Editions (Kellein, 2007). Most Internet public domain projects were only possible through infrastructural support of public arts or educational institutions. UbuWeb, for example, runs on a university server in Mexico. Kenneth Goldsmith periodically warns users that the website might cease operation any day because of technical or legal difficulties, and recommends that people download its contents to their home computers. Unlike Fluxus

Editions, UbuWeb does not have an economic compensation model for the artists whose works it provides, thus assuming that they have other sources of income (including the art market). The support infrastructures for Internet art in the public domain are, in the end, identical to those for traditional public art.

The most prominent digital commons projects have, in the meantime, become corporate. Linux started as a student project at a public university but is now financed by an IT industry consortium consisting, among others, of IBM, Intel, Samsung, Huawei, Oracle, Hewlett Packard, Qualcomm, Google, Facebook, Ebay, Toyota and Hitachi. In 2014, statistics (*InfoWorld*, 2016) showed that more than 80% of Linux kernel code is currently written by corporate employees, with the mobile and embedded devices industry and its agenda driving the development of the software (among others, because Linux forms the basic software stack for micro controllers and for the Android smartphone operating system). This does not change the fact that Linux is Open Source and freely available to anyone to download, use and modify. But ever since the Linux commons has become a corporate commons, it is evident that a commons does not necessarily need to be democratic; it is not necessarily a public domain under public

governance. Two and a half decades after its first release, Linux has arguably become *the* technological backbone of today's platform capitalism – as it has been analyzed, among others, by Nick Srnicek (2017).

In comparison to Linux, Wikipedia might be considered a step-up towards a truly participatory commons, since it is profoundly easier for most people to contribute to an encyclopedia article, using the Wikipedia's edit button, than to write operating system kernel code in the C programming language and submitting it via the Git version control system. Wikipedia should theoretically be more open to participation since contributions do not have to pass a multi-tier human review process, but immediately end up on the site. First-tier quality has been automated with editing bots which currently create 15 percent of all edits. Yet this has also lead to a post-human dystopia where these bots are fighting each other, endlessly overwriting each others edits (Tsvetkova et al., 2017). In its human matters, Wikipedia and its sister project, the Wikimedia Commons, are subject to similar issues of governance and community representation as Linux. 90% of Wikipedia's editors are male and most of them work in the technology industry. The non-profit organization running the encyclopaedia

experiences major internal conflicts over organizational policy and transparency, and is being criticized for being 'increasingly run by those with Silicon Valley connections'. (Atlantic Media Company and Motherboard, 2016).

Academic Open Access publishing, which is modeled after Open Source and was founded to replace publisher monopolies with an academic knowledge commons, has now turned—squarely against its original intentions—into a revenue model for publishers that charge extra fees for giving up exclusive distribution rights.

Given their present state, none of these projects still fit the 1990s/2000s narratives of 'Anarcho-Communism' (Barbrook), 'bazaar' development (Raymond), 'read/write culture' versus 'read-only culture' (Lessig) and 'commons-based peer production' (Benkler). Instead, as a result of matured and professionalized organization, their ways of working have aligned themselves to those of industry consortia and design committees. It is difficult to spot organizational differences between non-profit Internet projects such as Linux, Wikipedia and The Creative Commons, and the general sector of non-profit organizations, with their mix of volunteer and payroll work. The same questions that concern internal governance and external influence of non-profit, non-governmental organizations thus also concern the major Open Source and Open Content projects, despite the fact that they are based on open participation and ecologies of sharing and reusing resources.

TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS

Activist arts projects weren't free of these pressures and dynamics either. *Potlatch* ended up being reprinted as a book by Gallimard, France's most reputable publishing house. The book cover does not attribute it to the anonymous collective of the Lettrist International, but reads 'Guy Debord présente Potlatch (1954-1957)', with 'Guy Debord' typeset as the book's author's name. On page 7, the book bears the copyright mark '© Éditions Gallimard, 1996'.

When the ecologist Garrett Hardin coined term 'the commons' in 1968, he intrinsically linked it to the idea that they were doomed to fail in a 'tragedy'. In his paper, Hardin used the term in a way similar to the first dictionary definition of the 'public domain', namely as commonly used space. However, he did not focus on the space as such but on its economic exploitation. For Hardin,

"The tragedy of the commons develops in this way. Picture a pasture open to all. It is to be expected that each herdsman will try to keep as many cattle as possible on the commons. … As a

rational being, each herdsman seeks to maximize his gain."

As a result, the herdsmen will have their cattle overgraze the shared resource:

"Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit - in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all."

Today, Hardin's theory seem to be backed up by facts like the one that the world's biggest fifteen ships create as much environmental pollution as all the cars in the world because their engines run on waste oil, on open oceans (Vidal, 2009). Yet his notion of the commons has been criticized for lacking any differentiation between unregulated 'open access resources', such as open oceans, and policy-regulated 'common-pool resources', such as fisheries and forests, to use the terminology and examples of Nobel Prize-winning economist Elinor Ostrom (2008). Ostrom's notion of 'open access resources' must not be confused with 'open access' as in Open Access publishing. It concerns the exploitation of material resources while Open Access publishing is about the creation of immaterial goods. Furthermore, Ostrom's

'open access resources' are 'open' in the sense that their access and exploitation is completely unregulated, while Open Access publishing involves standards and rules for both, such as the provisions that an Open Access publication may not be commercially exploited or incorporated into a non-Open Access work.

The various theories of the commons from Hardin to Ostrom indicate the lack of a generally agreed-upon concept of 'the commons'. Terms such as 'Creative Commons' avoid these issues by offering practical solutions rather than theoretical definitions. Yet the issues remain unresolved.

It is even questionable whether the notion of the commons applies to such a globally standardized system as the Internet. In its current status quo, the Internet can hardly be called a commons. It is, in Ostrom's terms, neither an open access resource nor a common-pool resource, because of the private ownership and control of most parts of its technical infrastructure. As it exists today, the Internet is also driven by industrial manufacturing of electronic hardware in low-wage countries, the inexpensive, ecologically questionable extraction of natural resources for manufacturing and electricity, and finally the concentration of Internet traffic and, increasingly, physical network infrastructure onto

only a handful of large corporations (Google, Facebook, Amazon).

If one nevertheless suspends these objections and hypothetically assumes Benkler's belief that the Internet is a commons and that projects like Linux and Wikipedia constitute true commons production, then Hardin's 'tragedy of the commons' still provides a useful critical perspective. Increasingly, Linux and Wikipedia are exploited to serve as 'back-ends' for private services. Google's search engine now relies on Wikipedia for its top-ranked search results and uses the free encyclopaedia to auto-generate information summaries on search result pages themselves, thus encouraging users to remain on Google's advertising-financed site. By putting a proprietary service layer on top of Linux that, among others, heavily tracks user behaviour, Google's Android operating system effectively turns Linux into a proprietary operating system while legally conforming to its Open Source license. In a 2012 critical paper on Android, Kimberly Spreeuwenberg and Thomas Poell (2012) therefore conclude that the 'exploitation [of Open Source] has not only become more pervasive, but also more encompassing and multifaceted'.

Hardin identifies economic growth and surplus extraction as the ultimate reason for the tragedy of the commons. This is just as true for a case such as Linux whose Open Source availability may be pessimistically interpreted as a driver for surplus extraction like Google's - which conversely results in wasteful gadget production and resource consumption. Yet for Hardin, commons 'may work reasonably satisfactorily for centuries' if there is no economic growth and population numbers do not increase above 'the carrying capacity of the land'. Gift economies, however, from Potlatch to Kenneth Goldsmith's cornucopian record stores and Hito Steyerl's open-sourced Dom Pérignon, *are* economies of excess. They never pretended to be ecologically reasonable. Against communist interpretations, Georges Bataille (1988) characterized the Potlatch as 'the meaningful form of luxury' that 'determines the rank of the one who displays it'. The gift economies of Lettrism, Situationism, Fluxus, Mail Art, 1980s postpunk culture and later net. art involved excessive production of ephemera—pamphlets, multiples, performative leftovers, badges, pamphlets, code works—whose exchange was poor people's luxury and whose volatility was part of this 'circulationism'. In that sense, the tragedy of the commons, violation of the commons' rules of constraint, is a crucial part of these practices. 'Circulationism', if taken as

an umbrella term for everything from Berlin Dada to UbuWeb, is not about ecological-ethical self-constraint, but it amounts to a bohemian antithesis to scarcity, including the artificially created scarcity of gallery art.

In this perspective, the Internet has only been a temporary accelerator (in the late 1990s and early 2000s perhaps more than today) for a history that is politically, not technologically driven. Being neither commons nor gift, the public domain now exceeds separations of 'public space' and 'free information', as these cultural practices and excesses show.

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OBFUSCATION AESTHETICS IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION
Germán Sierra

ALL WAYS ARE WAYS-OUT

In the fourth episode of David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* season three, there is an intriguing scene in which Mike, the one-armed man in the Black Lodge, tells Dougie Jones—just before he collapses into a small golden bead—that someone manufactured him for a purpose. Two questions immediately arise: Who did it? And for what purpose? The return of his evil doppelganger seems to be a non-negotiable requirement for agent Cooper to exit the Black Lodge, so Dougie Jones's role seems to have been the substitution of Cooper's evil double when the exchange is due—as it actually happens later in the same episode. In consequence, the manufactured double may have been created by an unknown "someone" with the purpose of hacking the exchange dynamics, obfuscating Cooper's originally dual identity. We might deduce that Dougie Jones was created as a decoy by Cooper's evil doppelgänger to avoid returning to the Black Lodge, but the possible intervention of other anonymous forces can't be excluded.

According to the Wikipedia, 'obfuscation' is the willful obscuring of the intended meaning of communication by making the message difficult to understand, usually with confusing and ambiguous language. Obfuscation works

in different ways here: First, the existence of a second double affects the osmotic balance of the labirynthic energy flow connecting the Black Lodge to the physical reality. It produces a disruption in the exchange rules, allowing the simultaneous presence of two Coopers in the same spaciotemporal dimension, reminding of those time-travel tales in which the traveller interacts with her past self, opening an endless time-loop. As Nick Land writes about Rian Johnson's *Looper*, "narrative ruin is the time-travel effect. When it works, it eventually raises the suspicion that something else has happened instead". But there's more: as Cooper is exchanged for a second double, he returns to the physical reality to be inserted in a parallel narrative trajectory. He doesn't come back to the continuation of the previously interrupted agent Cooper's role—while, at the same time, the evil Coop is being initially recognized by the FBI as the "real" agent Cooper—, but he's ejected into the second double's life. The obfuscation process works simultaneously at many levels: it covers the identity of the perpetrators while simultaneously blurring agent Cooper's identity both at the 'public' and at the 'private' levels—temporarily hiding his identity from himself. Obfuscation produces a break in the functioning of both reality and unreality.

The deceit might not last forever, but the glitch has disrupted the system (the exchange system) with impredictible consequences.

In some ways, obfuscation aesthetics is closely related to the modernist literary and artistic project. Quentin Meillassoux, writing about Mallarmé's *Coup de dés*, claims that the poem is coded and that the ability to crack the code is a condition of the true comprehension of the poem. But for the Modernists—and to some extent for the Postmodernists—the end is reached when the code is de-cyphered and the meaning revealed. For the Modernists and Postmodernists there is still a subject and the possibility of a hermeneutic analysis of the artwork and, once unveiled, meaning is added to the subject. But this has changed now: *The only way to go forward is to erase your own history*. And, in the process, to erase our own identity, not by becoming anonymous or by producing a set of heteronimous selves, but by entering new technological realms of obfuscation where everybody has the same name:

"/1404ER/ SPENT TIME AT A FEW OF THE BOARDS, BUT HIS FAVORITE WAS /1404ER/. THE PLACE HE GOT HIS NAME FROM. EVERYBODY WAS NAMED /1404ER/ THERE." (B.R. YEAGER, *AMYGDALATROPOLIS*, P. 3)

Human cognition occurs precisely in the reality/unreality exchange system, and human culture develops along consensual lines connecting both. Strictly, there is nothing private in the human mind, as every aspect of human condition is the product of shared perception. Definitions of the public and private cognitive spaces are thus dependent on the particular sets of relations conforming the processes of individuation and socialization—fictionalization processes that are determined by what we could call, in a very broad way, technologies of communication.

"Language formed moat around our commonwealth"—writes B.R. Yeager in *Amygdalatropolis*—"Words standing as close enough to nothing: scratches of symbol. Cavernous and quasi sub-masonic. Words not meant for ears, or paper or posterity. That was our strenght and right to prosper. We kept separate the names. Names were refused. Names beget annihilation, like hope ensures castration." (p. 9)

So my first hypothesis is that our use of communication technologies decides what is public and what is private, and art has two ways of dealing with that: it might take advantage of the communication technologies, or it might produce non-communicable artifacts to disrupt them. My second hypothesis is that, technologies being way ahead of the art (cita mía), the first strategy is now impossible.

In a recent article on the e-flux platform, Dena Yago writes: "One form of resistance is to go dark, to stop making artwork that can in any way be represented on the platforms that facilitate these forms of recuperation. But even if you as an artist don't post images of your work on social media, other people might. You could institute a Berghain rule and administer stickers over phone's camera lenses upon entering an exhibition, but then, hashtags are indexable forms of language that don't require images and are still a useful metric for brands. You could literally never show your work to anyone. You could embrace chaos and illegibility, creating visual or written work that is non-instrumentalizable, but legible across many parts over a longer period of time. This might mean making work that operates at a different tempo than that of branding and social media, work that occupies multiple sites and forms, work that fights for the complexity of identity (as artist or otherwise) and form, and believes in a creaturely capacity for patience with a maximum dedication to understanding."

Amy Ireland, *The Poememenon*: "Affirming an occulted Outside from within is meaningless

unless affirmation also functions as invocation—and all good demonologists know that invocation requires a diagram. As well as modelling cyberpositive modernity's unfolding from the inside and foreshadowing its fate from the outside, the spiral has a third, recursive function. It auto-invokes. Because negentropy engineers its own temporality—an 'intensive transition to a new numeracy' marking 'a change in nature'—anastrophic modernism commands a nonlinear relationship between cause and effect, riding the convergent wave generated by its own assembly 'back' to the present to install the conditions that will have been necessary for its emergence. Hyperstition—the production of cause from effect—becomes the modus operandi of such an agenda. Encoding the cues for the future-it-arrives-from into the present-it-infiltrates requires an arsenal of occultural tactics—robust conceptual impregnation, clandestine memetic direction, proliferation of carriers, calculated obfuscation, the implantation of cognitive primers, and so on. The Human Security System seeks to repress anastrophic insurgency by enforcing chronology, but in doing so, inadvertently provides cover for its enemy. In this way, the future, operating under chronological camouflage, stealthily invokes the conditions required for its own truth."

We're living in times when communication technologies have become platforms (no technological way out of *priblic* platforms) (Bratton), fast-forwarding machines (no technological way out from communication strategies) (Hansen), and swarming (no way to predict communication dynamics) (Galloway). In fact, there is now way out because all ways are way-outs. Artworks are not objects or products anymore, but a display of conditions that might open possibilities for the "viewer". Art's public is not just the human, but machines, networks, algorithms, and unknown possibilities of emergent order. The role of the artists is to produce evanescent disturbances, system glitches that open possibilities to unknown sets of relations. Art, like science, is experimental not because we can obtain a definitive result from an experiment, but because it is an endless process of threatening reality.

As Nick Land writes: "The only thing that makes the modern sciences elevated beyond epistemic procedures seen in other times and other cultures is the fact that there is a mechanism beyond human political manipulation for the elimination of defective theories. Karl Popper is on that level just totally right. If it's politically negotiable, it's useless, it's unscientific by definition. You don't trust scientists, you don't

trust scientific theories, you don't trust scientific institutions in so far as they have integrity, what you trust is the disintegrated zone of criticism and the criteria for criticism and evaluation in terms of repeated experiments, in terms of the heuristics that are built up to decide whether a particular theory has been defeated and eliminated by a superior theory. It's that mechanism of selection that is the only thing that makes science important and makes it a system of reality testing. And this is obviously intrinsically directed against any kind of organic political community aiming to internally determine—through its own processes—the negotiation of the nature of reality. Reality has to be an external disruptive critical factor."

Vince Garton: "The unconditional accelerationist dismisses the question. On its very terms, human agency has already been elevated to become the guide and measure of the world, and this, conceptually, is intolerable. It is precisely against this view that accelerationism defines itself as 'antihuman(ist)', and against the fundamental question of praxis that it offers 'antipraxis'. This can hardly mean 'Do nothing', of course: that would mean not just to return to the fundamental question of praxis, but to offer perhaps the most numbly tedious answer of all. The unconditional accelerationist, instead,

referring to the colossal horrors presented to the human agent all the way from the processes of capital accumulation and social complexification to the underlying structure, or seeming absence of structure, of reality itself, points to the basic unimportance of unidirectional human agency. We 'hurl defiance to the stars', but in their silence—when we see them at all—the stars return only crushing contempt. To the question 'What is to be done?', then, she can legitimately answer only, 'Do what thou wilt'—and 'Let go.'

We insist, then, that there is no promised land, no socialist Prester John waiting ready and hidden either in the icy winds of human political temporality or in the solar-hot chaos of urban intensity. Far from discouraging the unconditional accelerationist or beckoning her to the grim convent of asceticism, however, the ruins in which this realisation contemptuously leaves us are the terrain of a genuine, even, properly, horrific aesthetic freedom that is liberated from the totality of a one-directional political teleology. 'Do what thou wilt', since with human agency displaced, the world will route around our decisions, impressing itself precisely through our glittering fractionation. Taking the smallest steps beyond good and evil, the unconditional accelerationist, more than anyone else, is free at heart to pursue what she thinks is good and right

and interesting—but with the ironical realisation that the primary ends that are served are not her own. For the unconditional accelerationist, the fastidious seriousness of the problem-solvers who propose to 'save humanity' is absurd in the face of the problems they confront. It can provoke only Olympian laughter. And so, 'in its colder variants, which are those that win out, [accelerationism] tends to laugh.'

This freedom is what antipraxis means, and this uncompromising conceptual opposition not to the practice, but to the very capacity to regulate the transcendental diagram of acceleration, and the overthrow of normative commandments this provokes, constitutes one form of its unconditionality. And with this, we can hear the murky waters already rushing down the streets."

DARKENING PLACES

"There is an infinity of worming spillages at work within every single one of us"—writes Adam Lovasz in the introduction to Mark Horvath's *Darkening Places*—. "Heterogeneity and homogeneity, far from contradicting one another actually compose a single chaosmotic series." In this *chaosmotic series*, or through a series of topologically-interacting stacked levels of reality, the traditional binary opposition between 'public' and 'private'—in the political, artistic, identitarian or even in the biological sense—becomes meaningless. The difference between 'self' and 'non-self,' conventionally used to define the individuality of complex living beings, is not a clear-cut line anymore. We speak of swarm intelligence and swarm consciousness. All spaces are at the same time public and private; simultaneously proprietary and shared, and dependent on the continuous interaction of de-territorializing and re-territorializing forces embedded in the pseudo-transparency produced by the contingent crystalization of temporary sets of relations.

The Spanish writer Agustín Fernánde Mallo once said that we used to write from knowledge but now we write from information. Nevertheless, some authors are starting to challenge this diairetic-informational approach to produce texts that creep deeply in the disinformation marsh to unleash all the camouflaging, ofbuscational power of occult metaphors. Extreme camouflage—being that of the author, the intention, or the poetical purpose of a work—becomes a common practice in cognitive environments in which every gesture is susceptible of sequestration by swarming meaning-machines. In this condition, the intended

obfuscation of textual works tends to follow the xeno-logic of the transformational parasite. What Adam Lovasz reveals about John Carpenter's Thing perfectly describes the functioning of contemporary obfuscational metaphor-machines: "The line-of-flight of the Thing leads it underground, revealing this entity as a vehicular worm. Unusually, we cannot have any inkling of what this worm could have originally looked like. There is no guarantee that the alien visitor itself was not already infected."

Writing agains information in a platform-organized world means not to hide yourself, to find your encrypted crypt, but to endlessly produce fake selves, fake accounts, mirror sites, bots. In a collapsed geography there's no place for what it used to be called 'privacy': the platforms are public and private at the same time—platform ownership is distributed, but not evenly distributed, content ownership is shared but, at the same time, a property of the platform, so the content availability policies are, simultaneously, censorship and fair commercial decisions. Furthermore, platform space is a topographical space: location is not steadely mapped, but relational and flowing, so the only way to hide is to multiply. Writing against information doesn't mean to find niche spaces but strategies of redundance.

Obfuscation aesthetics experiments with the possibility of Dionysian networks. They produce discourses that are neither theoretical nor practical, but contingently performative. As Mellamphy & Mellamphy explain, "the built-in duplicitious interface of Dionysus and Apollo is a mechanism that collapses not just all subjectivities but all ecosystems of thought and experience." Obfuscational aesthetics are a chaosmotic response to the *priblic* (private/public) space not just by infecting the multifarious postdigital discourses, but by, at the same time, unconditionally accelerating their consequences, and preventing to know if any of those discourses—the artistic, the political, the technical, the scientific, the personal...—was not already infected.

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A SCORE FOR HUMANS
Adriana Gheorghe

First, the space (speak it while it grounds you, all)

Talk about the abstract (higher, inherent) space. [don't say much, find a bad place, speak from that place, stay silent from that place, for a very long time].

How can I look at them as if they are dying, how can I connect to them only in the light of their mortality? How can I not look at them as if we are dying. [don't even look or address them with this; read it from a scrap of paper, while sinking within the bad interior space hosting you]

That is right though, the sea, a big wave, any enormity will easily make me get into our own perspective.

Let us keep it artificial. [and understand anxiety as a meeting in the real, can you]

Although we are all almost in a row [I like best to have my audience on my right and on my left], like entering the water, we make it clear that it is a technicality – in the meeting and the different possible combinations between the voice and the perspective, *there* is where the abstract space appears. Examples: 'Genele Sale cercetează pe fiii oamenilor'; 'Ai așezat masă înaintea mea

împotriva celor care mă necăjesc' [try and postpone clarity still]

Keep it a lecture, so there is expectation for the deliverance of knowledge; for you to share something softly with them. Remind us that theatre and theology might not be so different in the use of addressing, counterintuitive language or of masquerade. [it might have been anxiety defined as a sign of the real, do not neglect the seeing, go for a philosophy of the faces if only one can only contemplate]

Why? […]

So that we can all live with it together.

Don't give up language, but trust the things haunted and any wistful movement inside understanding [and, procedurally speaking, any play on perspective].

I don't believe, I know. [see also Cixous' approach on the Scripture as the unconscious, maybe]

Back to you and I (voices) with the perspective of us all. When I woke up the air was stuck [we all felt it at ODD].

You were not there when I presented the anxiety lecture but you were human, you woke up remembering that you were human, and you liked it. You, my human, you wrote to me during the lecture, about its splendor and beneficence. My human doesn't ask out loud but wonders why I take so many pictures of her – her surface is eye candy, it is, and I know that I [just accept that Coetzee is the answer and that you still have a long way but that this is the future, yes, simply turning the second person into the third, somehow]

Then, love

Era o liniște în holul acela din fața camerei lui, de început de lume și de început de zi și mă obliga să-mi amintesc lucruri de copil. Nu existau hol și camere, doar o cameră mare și înțelegeam încontinuu viața fără să-mi dau seama [example of an inherent really bad space; go for a Jodorowsky panic character]

În loc să mă mângâie, mă ciupește (m-a programat la fel) și pentru că sunt slabă vrea să-mi dea din cărnița ei [example of a nice space of interiority from where to say cruel literal counterintuive true stuff like Children are a disease, not like etc.]

Explanation kills art but this is only space. Interiority pulled outside energically and exteriority invested performatively dubiously totally waiting for a more quiet talk between the new spaces that appear.

The truth is that love is not different from space. Whenever you can tell to my soul (how can you) 'to fly away into the mountains', whenever the comforts of You and I are demanding, we could go back to the third person and do like them (ideology behind the religious, ideology behind humans) – 'behaving like resident aliens, whose citizenship is really elsewhere, they obey the prescribed laws, but in their private lives, they show love to all'.

And then try to go back once again to the problematic addressing, but instead of proposing a third person voice with a mobile perspective, mine, yours, a strangely shared new entity bread by the elegant indirect style libre etc., you, my human, try to speak your first person voice while also considering all their perspectives with it, or ours. [and simply say: 'I have panic attacks']

[all this time doze your own performative investment following the rules of your soul; change gazes from surfacing to abandonment towards what you receive, from participating in them one by one to withdrawal in the neutral or resting and recharging in representational recognizable modes; wait for love to come; it generally does not; it might, immediately after your lecture is finished]

The true act of love is, clearly, company in the hard anxious space, you say. And the human's sensing of the so simply having (her) own space from where to.
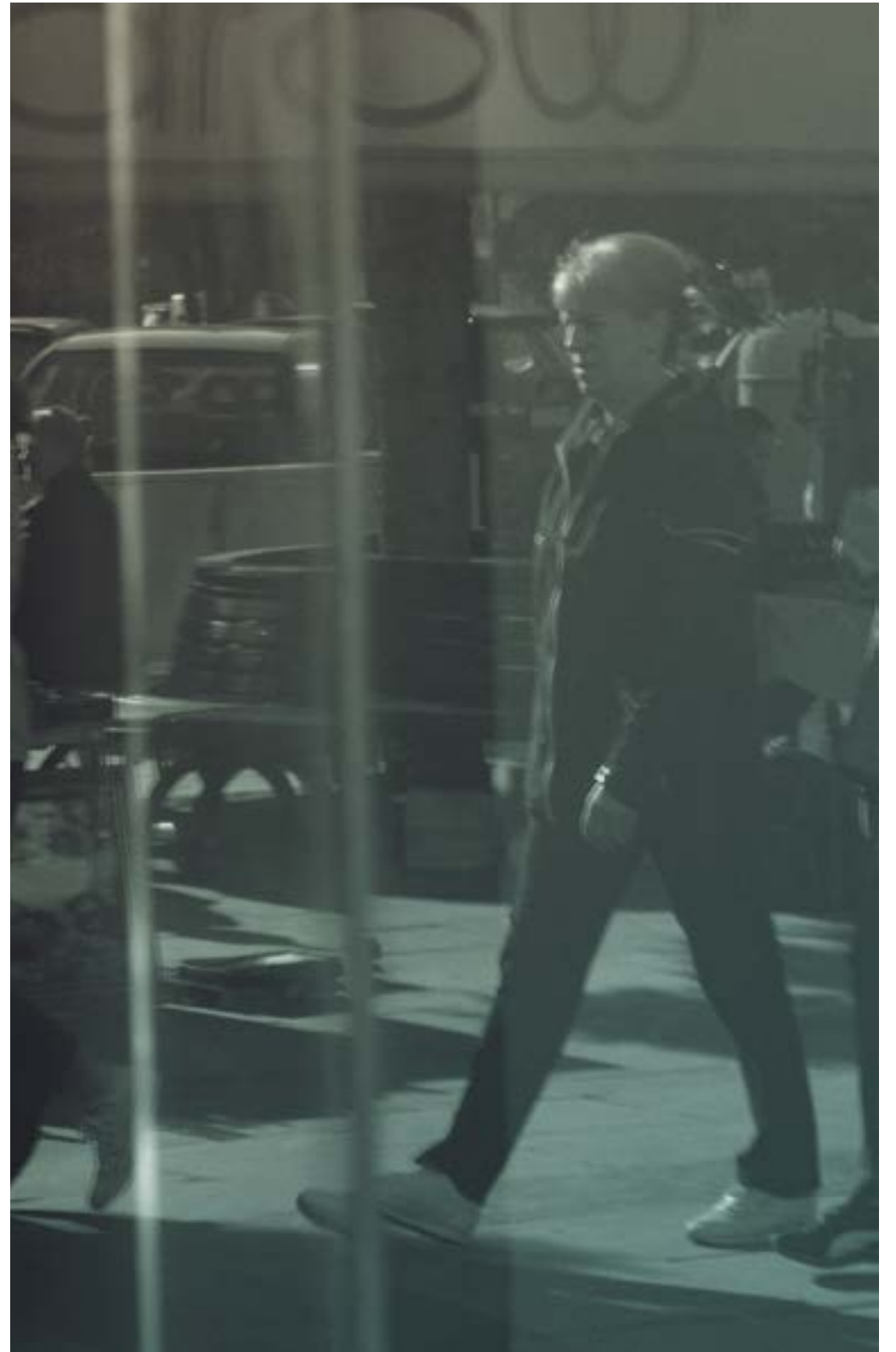
[literally go to each participant and show love, take time, follow them outside if necessary]
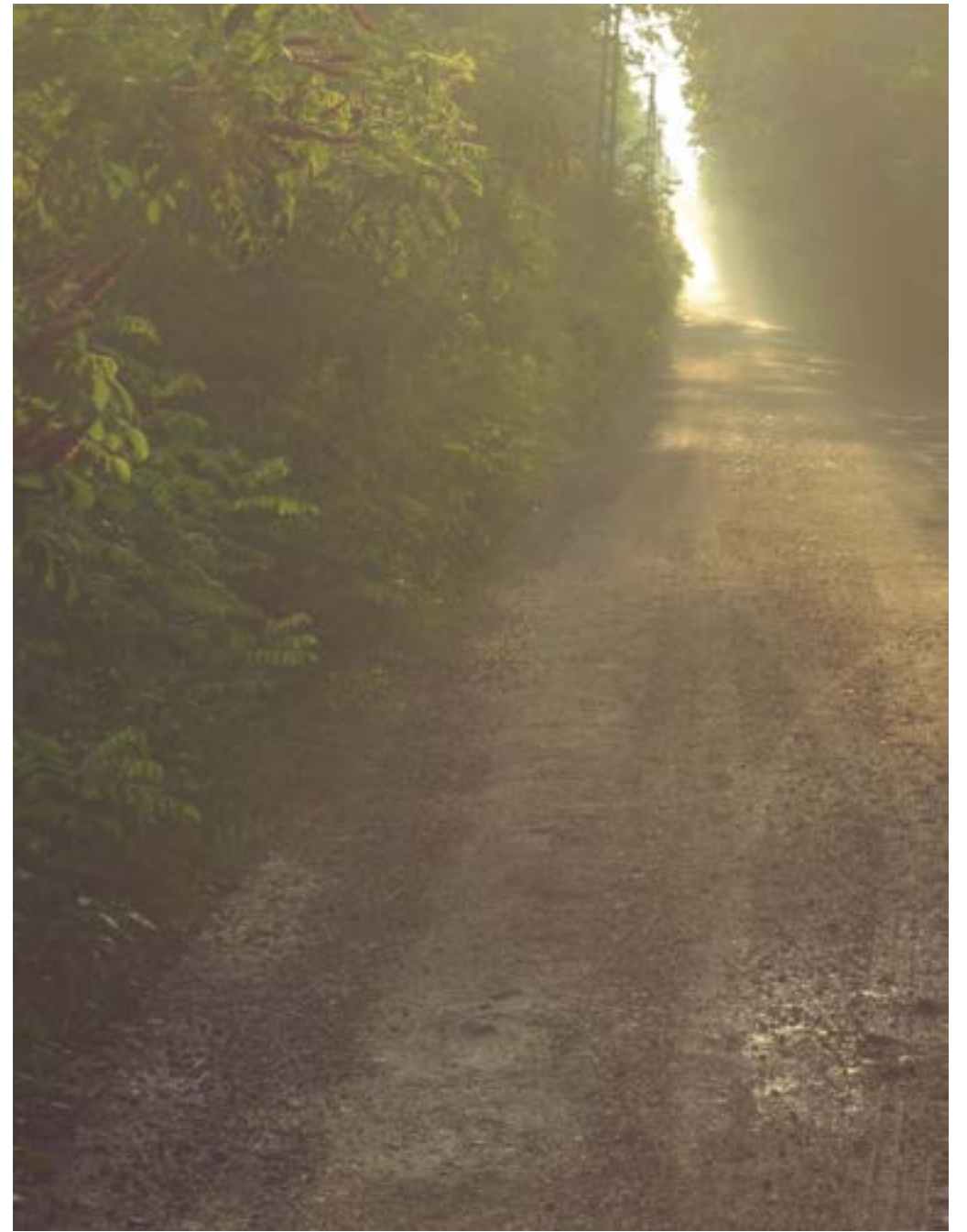
MADONNA CU BLUGII RUPȚI
Bogdan Lypkhan

Am senzația că sunt un cap înfipt într-un par, captură de război într-un gard la marginea unui sat de sălbatici. Scalpul meu provine din comunism.

Unde îmi căutam viața pe atunci.

Când eram tânăr și citeam romanele obsedantului deceniu, încercam să-mi imaginez viața tânără din stalinism. Veselă, erotică, nebirocratică.

Dar acum am rămas acest cap înfipt în par, suspendat între 2 epoci.

Ca individul blocat într-un butoi de ulei în filmul *The Silent Flute* (ăla cu maestrul orb, David Carradine) – el stătea în butoi să i se dizolve ștremeleagul, să-i ajungă o rădăcinuță inofensivă, astfel încercând el să transceanda sexul, o tentativă jalnică, evident.

Cam așa stăteau lucrurile și cu viața privată în comunism. Dintr-o perspectivă medială chestiunile private erau doar niște rădăcinuțe palide dintr-un ierbar abscons la a cărui alcătuire partidul nu participa. Viața privată era de-privată. Dacă la nivelul limbajului cotidian, cele ale vieții se dezbat/discută, în film, artă,

literatura era mai complicat. Exista o decență indusă a așa-zisei societăți socialiste, care nu permitea arborarea de extaz.

> ## În comunism fericirea era neoficială

De aceea, în anii 80 ne uimeau cărțile de joc porno nemțești (sau chiar poloneze?), fantasmele filmului erotic iugoslav, mirajul filmului porno *Trestia*, filmat în Bulgaria, în care ar fi jucat Florin Piersic și Corina Chiriac (sau Aura Urziceanu?).

Însă ca adolescent nu puteai să dibui multă viața privată – câteva cărți de sexologie redegiste sau autohtone (nu aveai norocul miraculos al unui Manasia de a da peste colecția interbelică a revistei *Trup și suflet* la bunici), în care dacă găseai o planșă a vaginului cu părul pubian desenat, era bine!

Câteva bulane ale modelelor românești pe la sfârșitul almanahurilor sau, tot așa, vreo postură sexy prinsă cu greu în ilustrațiile vreunei cărți de cinema (și, ah, da, poate chiar revista *Cinema*, sau almanahul revistei *Teatru, Gong*, cu Ion Cristoiu boss).

Nu aveai la ce să-ți faci o labă, mai prindeai, așa, un fragment de crac, un corp pe care se mula vreo rochie – tot Neckermanul era mai apetisant!

Pudibonderie, epurarea instinctului, nonrevoluției

Naturalețe? Omul comunist era un tip cu instincte sănătoase, nu un perv.

O morală țărănească, ori precaut mic-burgheză părea să guverneze partidul.

Doar Nicu Ceaușescu, șef UTC, era excepția – un excelsior al extazului, un Krishna flămând de trupuri, nepedepsit, dincolo de morală. I se spunea Prințișorul, era o proiecție a libertății absolute, un icon al nonreprimării.

Dacă te uitai în pozele politice: oameni grei, gravi, la costum, nu sfidau gravitația. Un aer greoi, teluric, o tragere în jos atârna în poze. Htonian, prea htonian, aceste fotografii conțineau o vrajă profană.

De unde acel feeling de gravitație înăbușitoare, de oameni de pământ (un fel de pământ greoi, al unchilor, bunicilor - plus senzația unei generații cu ceva străin în ea, complet străin de libertatea

portantă a unui copil), acea gravitație închisă, insuportabilă?

Poate era minciuna, crima morală, cea care îi îngreuna.

De aceea gravitația portretelor politice la clasă era apăsătoare.

Oameni gri și greoi (apăsare și neant), oameni apăsători, oameni care îți transmiteau doar o doctrină mincioasă, de pământ. Ceva complet nenatural! - exclami taoist.

Gravitația în fotografie — o temă uriașă

Înmormântările demnitarilor aveau din acest punct de vedere, o încărcătură insuportabilă, un aer atât de crispat și nenatural, încât satanic: parcă se ducea la groapă un obelisc, parcă se îngropa o piramidă, parcă se ocupa aerul.

Și atunci, viața privată era doar imaginată, (în afară de a fi performată cotidian). Mult mai puțin reprezentată, comentată, disputată.
Poate va trebui să căutăm în poveștile romanului polițist ceva (dacă nu vom da tot peste minți de milițieni scriind despre milițieni), poate va trebui

să investigăm de cât suces s-a bucurat colecția *Romanul de dragoste* a Editurii Eminescu și de ce scene erotice (amputate sau nu) au avut parte cititorii.

Va trebui să cercetăm cum vorbeau comuniștii îndrăgostiți în romanele unui Corneliu Leu sau alți obscuri autori. Va trebui să înțelegem ce a însemnat explozia filmelor cu liceeni după romanele lui George Șovu (cap de serie, *Declarație de dragoste*), unde, totuși, se manifesta discret-plenar un val de kinky-erotism liceal, cu uniforme și plimbări prin parcuri plus disconights de apartament - romantisme de liceu preerotice destul de bine îndrumate spre corp, deși ambalate în "realismul" pedagogico-moral scrobit al unei vieți școlare de pe atunci (markeri: decență, pregătire, internat, intrare în viață, responsabilitate, seriozitate, opțiune, profesie, familie, devotament).

Când eram mic găseam ascunse prin casă un soi de…baloane mai ovale, greu de umflat, așezate între niște coperte de carton mici, făcute în China, cu un fluture desenat pe ele. Le umflam cu trudă. Tata mă avertiza că, totuși, nu sunt baloane…

În comunism existau și prezervative spălate, refolosite. La o adică se putea afirma despre

o femeie că spală prezervative dacă era prea zgârcită (aveam o mătușă care făcuse asta).

Și apoi, da: în materialele tinerești ale almanahurilor mai sprințare, *Gong, Scânteia Tineretului* etc, mai un articol despre Maradona, desigur, clasicul flagel al drogurilor, o poză înfățișând-o pe Madonna cu blugii rupți…

Faptul că în anii 70, 80 exista o boală a caricaturii în presă românească (de la *Urzica* la almanahuri, în special, plus cărticele independente) cu multe poante vizând mai ales mediul birocratic, iarăși indică ceva despre staza epocii.

Unde era bd-ul vital, făurit pentru fantasmele copiilor (alt soi de trăire privată, elansată, libidinal–anticipativă). *Cutezătorii* ofereau doar o pagină, iar multe din episoade erau cu luptele de la 23 august și muncitori în acțiune.

Da, existau și unele reviste, mai rar, unde apărea o dezlănțuire bd (trebuiesc revăzute), chit că bd cu contaminare daco-romană, spre exemplu.

Dar ce era asta pe lângă splendoarea trupurilor dintr-un *Rahan*?

Forță, putere, virilitate, sănătate, omul blond, colonizator. Femei de trib.

Rahan, crucificat pe marginea unei prăpăstii. O femeie străină va veni și-l va dezlega, după ce îi va da să bea ceva dintr-o tigvă?

În publicațiile românești ale epocii, geamătul era ascuns, imaginea libidina greu (o adevărată vânătoare).

Lasă că *libidina viața*

Viața cut off, cumva (nu se permite).

Atunci, ce făceau fotografii, artiștii, regizorii – cum libidinau ei? Cum făceau viața?

Îmi povestea un operator cu pulsiuni fotografice: făcuse o fotografie uriașă pe o coală foto mare, cu soția lui tânără, nud, și ca să o transporte a legat-o de portbagajul mașinii. Și a traversat așa orașul. A trecut așa pe lângă un troleibuz. Tot troleibuzul *încremenise*.

Așadar, va trebui să tăiem, să decupăm, să mapăm, să colecționăm ce a mai întrescăpat, printre toate nișele morale, tipografice, fantasmatice, cinematice, cenzorale, aurorale.

Îmi povestea un asistent al lui Mircea Drăgan că la filmul *Columna*, Piersic a comunicat unor cetățeni că mâine se filmează scena în care el o fute pe…Dochia. A 2-a zi, problemă: o mulțime de oameni fugea după camionul în care era încărcată aparatura de filmare (cu Piersic cu tot), să asiste la scenă, în munți. Iar camionul fugea de oameni, să se poată filma undeva, în liniște, sărutul etnogenezei.

(Ernest Maftei, ce mai libidinal, porcos în snoave erotice personale. Un adevărat obsedat sexual cu touch de humuleștean. Compensa o epocă întreagă, bădia Maftei. Nu s-a putut dezlănțui decât în privat sau după 90 la niște emisiuni mondene. Lumea nu știa să capitalizeze povestioarele acestui Creangă obscen. Uzul lui era subteran, personal.)

Privat, prea privat

Daneliuc, *Probă de microfon*: în sfârșit un film cu o poveste de dragoste ardentă, toridă, zgâlțâită, optzecist-profanăț de o naturalețe infinită, semioticizată perfect în upercut.

Vor trebui studiate omisiunile. Materialul tăiat. Ce se tăia, spre exemplu din proza lui Groșan, *Adolescent*?

O profesoară se dezbracă în pădure, un elev o surprinde neprogramat: "(...) Privirea lui rămase fixată pe fesele mari, orbitor de albe, *și-n clipa când, la o răsucire a ei, mai zări, într-o mică străfulgerare întunecată triunghiul echilateral, cârlionțat, de sub pântec, simți cum, deși nu mișcase, sub el ceva mișcă frunzele, ca și cum s-ar fi așezat pe un șoarece adormit.* (...)"

Iar mai încolo în text, se taie: "(...) *ci păsărica lui, dintr-o dată dreapta, tare, alungită, durându-l ușor.*"

Comunismul prefera organele de mașini

În logica aceasta, a elipsei narative, am conceput și segmentul 3 al expoziției Calodemonic Explanations, *Vederi îmbătătoare/Așa s-a clădit extazul.* Deprivarea prin de-privat. O colecție de imagini din anii 80, destinate decupării și lipirii pe panourile din școli. Mașini, unelte, agregate industriale. Hardly a man. Câte o pictură românească de canon modernist-uapist. Frigidere goale. Ironic – unul e umplut totuși. Mosoare. Mașini de țesut. Aro. Imagini cu restaurante noi

sau noul centru de calculatoare, un troleibuz roșu trecând, o passer by minusculă cu o fustă mini. Aranjate în flux abby warburgian.

Încerci să fantazezi omul lipsă sau viața omului prin/în peliculă.

Unde sunt pionierele de altădată?

Cred că poate există și o lectură prin elipsă a acestor imagini, a unor relizări din care omul lipsește, când e prezent. e doar ouvrier. Muncitoare în halate, țesătoare. De-nudat, de-privat.

Dacă viața e în altă parte, atunci, prin omisiune, aceste imagini ilustrează ceva. Substituie realitatea. Ghicesc în ele o realitate pe lângă, o realitate supliment.

În viața din ele a rămas aerul oamenilor care chiar trăiau. Trebuie să fi trăit. Atunci, ca într-un bd gol, abstract – trebuie să decretez, să legitimez eu. Să recompun viața de pe lângă. Pe lângă viața.

De ce viața în comunism era o pe-lângă-viață?

Ca și cum viața nu se putea. (Uneori se putea: Tatos căuta ca viața. Sau: doar viața.)

Lipsa de considerația a comuniștilor pentru ce a fost: depozite de peliculă incendiate, arhive neglijate, imagini fărâmate, istorii ratate, arhitecturi eliminate, mutilate.

(Dacă cauți viața, vei găsi propaganda – dacă vei căuta propaganda, te vei gândi la viață. Ca suprafață.)

Și atunci: înapoi.

Din anumite puncte de vedere, una din cele mai importante explozii pentru mintea unui copil în comunism se petrecea pe plajă, la mare.

Când un țigan sau o țigancă, traversând nisipul torid, vindea gumă cu surprize.

Iar mica foiță împăturită în 4 îți exploda în fața ochilor cu o scenă de bd.

Iar bd-ul ce e altceva decât viață (privată, expandată) fantasmată, viața visată, evaporata?

Pregătire pentru viață. Viața aventurata.

Corolar: Faptul că am avut un bd prost, stupid (compensat, paradoxal, chiar prin importurile Partidului Comunist Francez, *Pif, Rahan*) nu arată că am fost o societate fanată?

Că ne-am ratat societatea? Că privatul nu a început niciodată?

La maghiari: acel artist care mixează footage din socialism (clădiri, șantiere, activități) cu scene ale vieții private (peliculă, foto, trupuri, intim) capturate doar în regim comunist.

Institut care colecționează viața privată. Jurnale, fotografii, pelicule, istorii orale, benzi magnetice.

Gemete din comunism. Povești.

Ce ai pățit pe lume?

Depozit al istoriei orale. Acolo – da, acolo se tura/rula viața privată. Markerii ei enigmatici, de transmis mai departe prin poveste. Semioza. Substitutul vocal al povestirii.

Dacă aveai noroc mare, tovarășa învățătoare putea deveni prima ta experiență sexy

Instinctul comunismului de a înăbuși fantasma. Dacă libidinalul se scurge, e pericol. Proletarul reprimat, nerecompensat.

În comunism: viața erotică se scurgea spre noi prin canalele neoficiale ale videorecorderelor.

Oamenii voiau să vadă viață

Încheiem acest text, cu o notiță privată, descoperită într-un anticariat, într-o carte, ce pare să fie alcătuită în urma unui buletin de știri și comentarii tip Radio Europa Liberă.

Din care rezultă că securiștii erau cei mai de seamă investigatori ai vieții noastre private. Din păcate, azi, balastul înregistrărilor făcute de ei, a rezumatelor etc, se dovedește inept, nul, inutilizabil cultural.

- etaj 21 – Intercontinental
- semne pe devize
- nici proectantul nu știe cum va arăta bulevardul
- se opresc mașinile când se trece EL

——————————
joc Olimpic=popor
statul trebue reînoit=guvern
1975 prima clauză - erou al socialismului
consolida comunismul cu bani americani
1978 - 1/5 cel mai ridicat din lume
        pachet scrisoare de schise
        interceptarea telefoanelor
        microfoane la telefon
        bisericile și sinagogile au microfon
        evreii scoși din partid
Vasile Zăpârțan preot asasinat – terrorist Palestina
4 scrisori cu bombe la emigranții Români
în aug. 1975 - externe, interne, eu
        plătit cărțile și articole în ziare pentru EL
        s-au plătit Românii din America ca să
        manifesteze pentru clauză

DATING THE STATE.
LOVE AS CRIME IN 90S ROMANIA
Vlad Levente Viski

In 1995, in the city of Timișoara, Eastern Romania, a young man killed himself after a couple of humiliating years spent in prison and tribunals, fighting for his freedom to be gay. Marian Mutașcu, age 22, was arrested in 1992 for engaging in homosexual relations with Ciprian Cucu, then 17 years old. The Mutașcu-Cucu case made waves at that time and came into national spotlight. The *Homosexuals* from Timișoara, the perverted, the enemies of the state, the cosmopolitan, the abnormals. Newspapers published personal information about the two young boys, such as full names, birthdays, home addresses. Their private lives were brought in the public arena, without their consent.

The aforementioned arrests came after Cucu's sister found his *diary*, in which he admitted to being gay. She turned the document to the local police, which in turn accused both of them under article 200 from the Penal Code. For almost thirty years, between 1968 and 2001, Romania had one of the harshest laws criminalizing homosexuality, even between consenting adults. The Ceașescu regime controlled the private lives of its citizens, and democratic Romania did nothing to reverse these policies. In 1995, an Amnesty International report cites over sixty people in prison, sentenced for homosexuality. In 1994, one gay man writes,

"[i]n Romania I've been arrested and sentenced to 5 years of prison, together with 33 other intellectuals (doctors, professors, engineers, jurists, students etc.) in 1987, and released on grounds of a decree of general amnesty issued by Ceaușescu. (…) since 1991 an intense campaign has begun on TV, radio, in newspapers and magazines, in the Parliament and even within the Presidency, against homosexuals and 'apparently' prostitution. In March 1992, they began arresting gays again, in Timișoara, Arad, Deva and Bucharest."

During those difficult years of criminalization, a gay Romanian living in San Francisco, Adrian Newell Păun, sets up a correspondence club for homosexuals from Romania. Hundreds of letters started pouring in from all over the country. *SAVAGED pINK. A history of 90s gay media* brings to light these incipient signs of a common identity, in a territory where a gay identity was forbidden. The private is once again exposed, but not in a brutal manner, rather in an attempt to track the history of an oppressed minority, trying to identify those common traits that are to be found in each and one individual.

One thing that surprises in the letters sent to Adrian Newell Păun is the sense of selfhood, the ownership of the gay identity. These men are not questioning their sexual orientation, they just find ways to express this identity while escaping the prejudices that persist in society and the expected invasion of the private space by the state. That's how we find out about the meeting spots in Bucharest and other cities in Romania. Public toilets, parks, cafés, hotels, swimming pools, these are common cruising places.

Some, if not most, of the men who write to Păun are married, even with children. In times when social respectability was associated with having a family, you adapt to the norms that regulate society. One man writes, "[w]hat could I say about myself; I am 30 years of age, I've studied History in Bucharest, I've been married, and what makes me happiest is that I have a seven-year-old boy."

Under such conditions, gossip became the norm for information diffusion. Some letters sent to Păun talk about the politicians known to be gay, the minister of foreign affairs, the chief of the police, an ambassador, etc. In an almost desperate attempt to see hope in a difficult situation, identifying homosexuals in the state aparatus is seen as a victory, potential allies in the quest to decriminalize homosexuality. Needless to say that in many regards the mentioned politicians did little to improve the lives of gays during those times.

Dating the State. Love as Crime in 90s Romania

Vlad Levente Viski   132-133

Similar gossiping goes around about students and possible gay colleagues in school. For marginalized, almost invisible communities gossip becomes the glue that binds together individuals, the way information circulates, the main mechanism for survival.

This doesn't mean complete repression of ones inner self. That's not always the case, in smaller cities, such as Baia Mare, in northern Romania, things seem to be a bit more gloomy: "[here] everything is 'brown,' just like in Bacovia's poetry, including my loneliness, because the city is so small, we don't have places to meet (bars, sauna), which sometimes makes me lose it, and run as far as my eyes can reach, because our life in all aspects is extremely bitter."

The private-public divide remains the core space for contention when it comes to defining the gay identity. How does one picture itself as an individual based on some sexual characteristics? At the same time, is sexual orientation something definitive for a person? Obviously, the answer is yes, but it becomes even more important in the context of power relations between an oppressive majority and an oppressed minority. This relationship is not one amongst equals, but rather a way to reproduce hegemony over sexuality. In this context bringing the private in the public arena becomes a political act, of ownership, of so-called *pride*, a tool to glue together a common identity, when lacking a common past, language or other cultural traits.

SAVAGED pINK. A history of 90s gay media puts forward instances of private life in order to shed light on certain realities, as described by those experiencing the oppression. The literature on homosexuality in Romania has mostly focused on political processes and stages of emancipation of an emerging community. However, the one missing piece from the puzzle was the voice of the *Homosexuals* themselves. Hidden behind the curtains, in order to survive a violent state, gays developed an underground culture, limited though to simpler interactions and with only a few manifestations of an *Identity*. Uncovering these islands of a shared history becomes a political, and necessary, act of self-determination, with deep repercussions even today, when the process of emancipation for gays has gotten a whole new meaning.

THE PRIVATE SPACE OF A COMMUNITY
Cosmina Moroșan

Maybe the Euclidian representation of space was one of the roughest steps towards any territorial parcellation. Maybe geometry reflects the first callous decalogue of propriety (at least this is what some pretty cool theoreticians are pleading for). I mean, besides the crime of naming your self "the owner of…". Private space becomes a smarting issue once you feel completely aware of two major / almost eternal problems of humanity: violence and poverty. We're talking actually about a pack of terms that are interfering, of course, and there is more to solving the problem(s) that meets the eye. But we're on a fine track, some of us, more optimistic and maybe a bit naive (like me), think.

There has always been a drive for thinking alternative ways of sharing a space. I will not recap what happened before the XXth century, referring only to a bunch of communities that fitted my pragmatical-esthetical ways related to private / public space. After the colossal Freudian system's installation on the social / psychic / cultural grounds, Europe faced an intelligently dispersive movement of breaking the creepy ice of family imperatives. Those absolutists piles that were (and are), actually, sustaining an obviously neurotic, twisty vibe in any type of institution: we're often dealing with rough "family" hierarchies in school, corporations, hospitals

etc. – being almost obliged to feel as "part of a family" / subsumed to a brackish mix of feelings (the need / the hate / the perverse love for an authority, the feeling of guilt or release because of approvals etc.). But, apparently, this event of putting problems into the right terms might occur especially through and in the middle of marginals: the poets / artists have always imagined reclusive dynamics, feasible and utopian concomitantly – I remember a book of Gabriel Tarde in which he displays the world as a big esthetic machine, one of his main points being that people should get married only after deep artistic fulfillment – this rule actually being the heart of a society's good running. This is something I will try to lay out in this micro-essay.

Privacy is the possibility of keeping silent, of leaving the big crowd. Intimacy gives you the joy of inventing things, literally making a world, a territory that conquers through its (your) magical signature. The price for this emotional "room of our own", often misunderstood, installed near diagnosis or other stereotyped framings, was payed, by various intelligent minds, with dangerous (due to their authenticity) ways of thinking or expressing the new. Artaud or Hannah Arendt, Van Gogh or Max Weber, Jaspers or Whitehead. The only (open and extraordinary)

security in the world is definitely that of an ethics.

The heavy reaction of experimental psychiatrists from the 60s and 70s in front of the *normopath* way of thinking a clinic's dynamics incarnated into various fresh communities: Kingsley Hall, La Borde or Deligny's village-installation from Cevennes, around autistic children. Laing was living in the same house as his patients, at La Borde, everybody (the patients, the doctors, the nurses) was involved in the same flow of tasks, Deligny – the pedagogue – lived and worked together with the autists. The variability of each schedule from this kind of institutions allowed total openness to spontaneous events. Celestine Freinet's or John Dewey's educational proposals also endorsed pragmatical and connective approaches to nature or any other intellectual material (Freinet had a phobia about children using notebooks in schools, for example). They built real communities, with their own innocent privacy or a positively cracked intimacy absorbing and delivering complexity to the world.

Into this often crazy and destructive and paranoic social soup there are optimistic (and interconnected, I hope) islands of joy. I'm talking about that responsible and curious exultation that prolongs the creative dimensions of each

entity. In order to proliferate this palpable Weltanschauung, breaking any assumed enclosing privacy or, on the contrary, an invasive pretense that asks us to "express ourselves" even when there isn't actually any context for building a problem, I'm trying to built a digital platform called Cooperativa Pasional. The main principle of this virtual affective maze will be the emotional recommendation. Each interviewed guest, each author or artists on the page will lead us to their obsessions. I hope to get this page to look as a techno-neuronal incredible source: a ground for love – through links, through pure knowledge, actually. A private-public infinite space, a liminal territory, as Turner was calling "the brain": "operating somewhere between the genetically fixed and radically free." (Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, PAJ Publications, 1988)

THE ODD SCALE
Cristina Bogdan

What I try to do at ODD is mark a ground where a set of interactions is encouraged – pertaining less to formal artistic activities and more to hybrid gestures, idiosyncratic reactions and self-reproducing curiosity. Not constrained by an institutional frame, the choices I make do not require public justifications, however they stem from the urgency of private encounters, taken as starting points for addressing the world.

ODD started in a large house in which I was also living, together with any guests, from residents to those who spend the night after a gig. The public would roam the entire house, my room was often used as a bar, artists would work during the day in the gallery space, which at night would turn into a projection room or a dancefloor. I was living a chaotic life, staying up long nights to discuss work or engage in active dreaming; it was difficult to draw borders between my private life and my work, and for a while I didn't feel there was a necessity in that, better said, they didn't seem to me like two different things.

Only after I moved ODD to a previously connoted gallery space did I understand the very particular situation that I had been acting in. I finally had the necessary distance to assess the main findings of my work, which were not, as I had initially thought, political in a strong

public sense, rather relevant for what one would call lifestyle or personal positioning. I had no interest in exhibiting art; instead, I wanted to rehearse artistic gestures with all my guests – "artists" or "public". These gestures cut across intimacy and became relevant within physical as well as virtual gatherings. There was no need to make distinctions in terms of discipline, however it was easier to mark everything as contemporary art – this grid for reading other disciplines and safe space for radical attempts of all origins. Bucharest is no different to other centers where art gets wrapped up in its own world and meaning, but it is still a place where the limits of art have not yet been tested. Art propositions have relevance to the restricted group of practitioners and trigger the curiosity of passers-by. When embodied, they have the power to displace unconscious rituals and bother even those in the know.

      The question of privacy quickly surfaced in my plans for action in this new context, where everything I did was going to be read as art in a way I wasn't entirely comfortable with – the conventional way. Art as object, clearly not art as process or even as set of disparate gestures with no flagrant outcome. I had to counter that from the very beginning and decided I would simply follow my interests and work with people

and ideas I found relevant. More and more, the relevance became tied to the local context: my question became how to respond to the needs and aspirations of the local scene, even to those they wouldn't acknowledge. How to frame the need for art and the artworld in our city, even in our region. Privacy brought together questions of ownership, display, borders, visibility, technology, ethics, future, method and strategy.

      From where I stood during this year when ODD first attempted a schedule fully curated in advance, the crucial question was that of scale – and it became even more so at the end of this common effort. How to give the support and strength one usually finds in an institution, without becoming one, with all its current blockages? How to create a space for knowledge and curiosity, where as many practices as possible meet and blend, without expanding one's space and multiplying rules of usage? The preliminary answer was to rehearse privacy in the public space of the 'gallery' – a privacy that would not amount to biting off public space, but to allowing small-scale interactions to take place outside of the shielded space of the home or the group of family/friends. We attempted to move the borders of the private in a non-violent way, to include as many people and gestures inside them, until the public could be experienced as a more

complex, yet equally responsible, form of the private.

The question of scale remains relevant, because what matters is for it to be constantly addressed, not shelved after one, perhaps satisfying, answer. Having considered privacy as both content and method, ODD needs to start addressing connected issues and further provide tools for action and resistance to all those seeking to craft and take pleasure in our world.

ZONA DISTRUȘILOR
V. Leac

Ce facem noi, cei fără ambiție, cărora ne place
să ținem monoloage continue, pe care n-o să le redăm niciodată?
Noi, cei care știm că suntem prinși în meschinărie și oboseală,
și orice lucru ni se pare imposibil și îndepărtat?

Ce facem noi, ăstia prinși în blocaj, veșnic nemulțumiți?
Când se întâmplă să avem o seară mișto
ni se pare că totul e atât de ușor, iar mai târziu,
când rămânem singuri, murim încet și fără sens.

Noi, blazații, care nu dorim mișcare și ergoterapii;
noi, care ne dorim în secret să fim teleportați
în rezervație, unde e petrecere cu alcool și morfină,
de unde știm că nimeni nu mai pleacă.

Cei pentru care religia nu mai înseamnă nimic,
familia nimic, natura nimic, animalele nimic, copiii nimic…
Știința nu ne mai satisface imaginația și inteligența.
Noi, ăstia, care ne dorim atât de mult să iubim, iar când se
întâmplă ni se pare imposibil și obositor.

Ce facem noi, cei care ne pierdem în amănunte, care vedem
defecțiuni peste tot, care nu-i suportăm pe onctuoși, dar ne lăsăm
uneori prinși în capcana lor. Noi, care trăim pentru scroll și
lucru mecanic, pentru confuzie și deșeu?

Noi, ăstia, lipsiți de energie și șansă, rămași în așteptare…
Când obținem ce dorim nu ne mai dorim ce am obținut.

Consumatorii de filme proaste, de umor sec și texte dubioase.
Pentru noi trecutul nu înseamnă nimic, prezentul e paralel,
viitorul imposibil.

Ce facem noi, cei care ne-am săturat de poezie și artă?
Cei care stăm prost cu orientarea și viața, cu skill-urile?
Noi nu ne dorim decât să fim lăsați în pace, să ne milogim
prin baie și holuri întunecate, ca niște zombie care nu pot muri.

Noi, cei care n-am vrut niciodată să ne maturizăm;
care n-am vrut să cunoaștem ridicolul și lipsa de sens.
Ce facem noi, cei care n-am înțeles schemele și-am rămas
blocați, pentru totdeauna, aici, în zona distrușilor?

Zona distrușilor