the inverted city
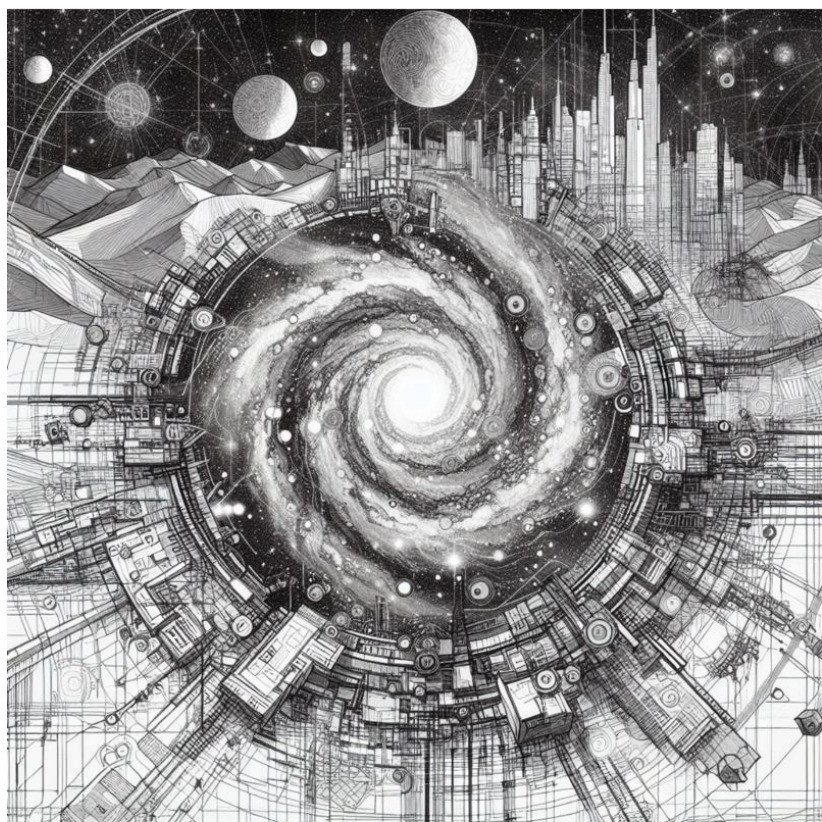
the inverted city

a journal of ethereum localism

28.2.24

table of contents

Introduction to the Inverted City

We initiated this publication series partially as an extension of last year's General Forum on Ethereum Localism. That conference involved members of the web3 ecosystem from three continents coming together to discuss bioregionalism, strategies of monetary localism like mutual credit and credit clearing, impact funding, the cosmolocal thesis and the particular beast of pluralistic social production that is the city. The global - local feedback loop is an area of research and design, it turns out, that spans legal theory, mycelial ecologies, biomimetics, placemaking strategies, organization theory, Slovenian economics, quadratic functions, all elements of a postcapitalist horizon that seems at the same time far away and right here.

In light of that abundance - that reflected, after all, the abundance of characters and conceptual paradigms brought to bear in the work of the open web and the promise of the distributed ledger - we decided to pose this question of the inverted city. The premise could mean many things - the city understood cybernetically as entangled systems rather than structures and properties, as a place for encounter and connection with the earth rather than alienation from it, as a battleground for capture and flight, as a zone potent with world-upending experiments - but most of all for this ongoing publication it means the city as a haven of open endedness.

Crossing territories, resisting definition, the Inverted City rolls along with death defying indeterminacy, a wave function of too-many possibilities, a thousand and one stories seeking to locate the one adequate to the renaissance of experimentalism and revisioning of value that we have ahead of us. These are just the first few.

Recipes:
Network Weaving

by christypdx

Collaborative and creative energies, abundant as radio signals—one only needs to build the right machine to engage them.

The dreams we're working to build are manifested more efficiently through intentional tending of networks of allied co-visionaries. Maybe you already identify or would easily identify yourself as a *network weaver*. Perhaps you're pursuing a goal that would benefit from your stepping into a network weaver role.

Identifying as a network weaver means committing to proactively nurturing existing networks and seeking out new connections - not an insignificant commitment. Of course and importantly, people have lives and time commitments—any energy allocated to your cause is meaningful and can have outsized impact. Don't be put off by time constraints of yourself or others. "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can." Great works of art require walls of necessity. This is your canvas!

An online community events calendar like meetup.com is a good resource for discovering, tapping into, and fostering local networks. People enjoy varied ways of being with one another, so becoming an organizer of a local meetup group and facilitating different, perhaps (hopefully!) experimental types of gatherings is a fantastic way to weave. Examples include low key restaurant/bar meetups, co-working sessions, film screenings, educational get-togethers, and topic-specific workshops. Touch grass, together! Attend events hosted by aligned groups to meet new people, grow your network, and stay up to date with what's being talked about in your field of interest locally.

"The city is a cosmological plateau." The city comprises infinite visible and invisible, ever-evolving(/dissolving) networks. Sustainability (for as much as it's worth) depends on the fostering of an anti-fragile system. Encourage network newcomers to freely participate and contribute (- and fork toward their own ends). So long as members are acting in pursuit of a shared vision the network benefits from open and autonomous operations. Decentralization and plurality are our greatest tool for eluding collapse, capture, or homogenization. Diversity and difference is generative, challenges overcome build strength.

Ingredients

– Consistent time and energy to dedicate to working toward your vision.

– A public events group calendar like meetup.com (when necessary, utilize a shared private calendar for non-public events).

– One or more communication channels - for general chat, event coordination, etc.

– Optional: The book "Impact Networks" by David Ehrlichman – an excellent primer on and resource for network weaving and building inspiration and tools.

Concrete Pluralism

by Exeunt

"A taste for the living concrete and for a plural universe."
- Antoine Faivre

1. I am sitting in cafe Kava Saia off of East Burnside in Portland, the Pacific Northwest, the Portland Basin, formerly inhabited by Chinookan-speaking tribes - Clackamas, Kathlamet, Multnomah, and Tualatin, whose art in the pre-Columbian period is noted by a Chinook Nation blog to have contained a prevalence of mirror imagery, skeletal or "x-ray" portrayals of human and animal forms and a preference for the numbers 3 and 5. The number 3 in Jung is said to signify surface, flatness - it is the second digit in the figure 137, the reciprocal of the fine structure constant (1/137). Wolfgang Pauli - physicist, author of the Pauli Exclusion Principle and lifelong correspondent with Jung - was obsessed by the number 137's general persistence in the physical sciences, and it is the Pauli-Jung correspondence that I sit here, at Kava Saia, reading with my mug of Holy Basil and only partial interest.

   The number is a so-called "naked number," meaning that its appearance in the equations is independent of units - it is here in the soil, in the concrete, in the kava, a fundamental information-trace of the quantum electrodynamic that binds our reality. Information, according to the physicist Sarah Imari Walker, is that material feature that is bigger in time than humans can directly cognize. Materialize time, the logic goes, and you've materialized information; no dear concepts in the pure abyss, all of us just here, entangled and responsible for each other in the great upheaval of the block universe. This thought parasites my brain just as the streetlight outside of Kava Saia flickers.

2. The signal from the depths has no godly explanation - that is, the specific dynamics behind this flickering lay out there in the

morphospace, unobserved, beyond any authority, and all I have to play with is that Bayesian purview known as "in all likelihood." All things have a cause, it should be affirmed without doubt, and yet this empirical principle must reckon with the the threshold of accountability that is *matter-in-time*. That limit point is sometimes framed as distant and theoretical, or irrelevantly small - the so called "measurement problem" - but I promise you this uncertainty whelms our whole environment, a beguiling tumult that frightens our planners, ruins intelligence officers, latent cybernetic inspiration that no creature or body has learned to control.

Being beyond our direct evolutionary area of concern, these operations have caused some to appeal to the supernatural, to construct deities, forms that might explain the exponential level-up in network effects that occur when you include the vastness of time in your graph (and all the mysteries therein). Ancient conflation of the mysterious with the mystical: they are beyond our threshold, but they are no less physical for being so. All these wild behaviors of the material network - what physicists call the "circuit complexity" - they are epistemic traps, dense chemical and biological and informational entanglements, pure cognitive turbulence. Their unknown physicality is a locust of power, the models and representations we assign to them giving us an α for effort as they carry along in an ordered march beyond their own persistence, more actual than is knowable. More actual than is knowable - this is an appropriate definition of a city.

3. In 2016 the City of Portland overhauled the residential streetlight system from the low-pressure sodium lights extant since the 1930s - described by one commentator of the time as having a "eerie, ominous quality" - to the Amerlux-brand LED 3000 K CCT units, saving the city $100k per month from the novel efficiency of the LED bulbs. That lamplight buzz you heard skateboarding late at night as a teenager disappeared. Still, aura: the A in Amerlux resonates with Pauli's troubled fine structure constant, which has the symbol α - alpha. Amerlux is a subsidiary of Delta group, delta defined by Cambridge as an area of low, flat land, sometimes shaped approximately like a triangle, where a river divides into several smaller rivers before flowing into the sea. Delta waves are high amplitude neural oscillations that occur in deep sleep, known as stage 3-4 of Non-REM sleep, between 0.5 and 4 hertz, last on the cusp of the REM stage where vivid dreams occur.

Mysteriously, the dive into REM sleep closely mirrors the neural patterns of stage 1, which is why it is sometimes known as "paradoxical sleep."

4. Karen Barad writes, in "What Flashes Up,": "Memory is not a mere property of individual subjects, but a material condition of the world. Memory- the pattern of sedimented enfoldings of iterative intra-activity- is written into the fabric of the world. The world 'holds' the memory of all traces; or rather, the world is its memory (enfolded materialization)."

5. Fungi biofilms line Portland's mostly above-ground electric grid, cladosporium, penicillium and aspergillus thriving in the damp Pacific Northwest climate, forming a kind of shadow biome to this electro-prosthetic infrastructure of the urban human organism. The prefix urb is not of Greek or Latin but Etruscan origin, and it seems that the division of the Western-style city into four squares is an inheritance from Etruscan ritual practice, a diagrammatic capture of inhabited reality that persists from those ageless magicians to this shadow biome, crawling along cardinal latitudes. The fungi generate acetic acid as they metabolize, reacting with the aluminum in the electric wires to create miniscule amounts of aluminum oxide (*the latter being its chemical composition before industrial refinement in what is known as the Hall–Héroult process, invented almost simultaneously by the American Charles Martin Hall and the French Paul Héroult when they were both 23 : they both died in 1914, the year of the great war, at the age of 51*).

   The corroded or renaturalized Al_2O_3 is an "in all likelihood" explanation for my Kava Saia synchronicity, aptitudes of light, flickering out there in trials of cause and effect that were networked up in an object space that I cannot know - the barely objective relations, the creativity of them, the power. Synchronicities, connections, what flashes up is the iceberg's edge of sleeping processes that are wide awake here in the paradoxical city.

6. The city is a network, a fold, cosmopolitan, cosmic, transhistorical. To look at it with open eyes is to see the vast extent of our entanglement, the astonishing figure of it, a snake of tightly bound wires within which are hidden countless dimensional recesses. Recesses. In the Old Latin, port meant house or place of habitation, refuge, but this definition evolved organically from the original sense: gate. "But what if beauty were understood," Fred Moten writes in The Universal Machine, "as the material difference of another, heretofore unimaginable interiority of things, whose unlocatable loci are the quarters, territories, borderlands, passages, bridges, cisterns, and tunnels that reveal the very structural openness of the polis in and by way of the scars that mark its always incomplete historical closures?"

Under the concrete, in every alley, in the air aloft, particles tangle across time and space with signs and patterns that are fugitive, dead letters sent to you from the gate in a shape familiar yet charged with the nuclear glow of illegibility and inhuman contingency. The city is a place of rude and anonymous productivity. Beyond all surveillance, flat deltas of all of the classes of being invert and mirror in threes and fives until they reach an origami depth, "unimaginable interiority," riffing envelopes of musique concrète, the splice tape patchwork of Bitches Brew, the fragmented surface of a crazy quilt.

7. The chinook word for eye, something like **"siỷáxus" is closely related to shilakom**, the word for "mirror." This is my city. Look and see, along flat deltas, the great inversion.

8. I have moved from the cafe to B-Sides pub, 20 yards east - and from Holy Basil to beer. The entire length of the barside above me is umbrella'd by dim flat lights through which x-ray photos of actual bone fractures shine. The occult mysteries at Eleusis are thought now to have sprung from a barley-based beer tainted with the hallucinogenic fungus ergot, a trip (we know from an unlikely outbreak in Pont-Saint-Esprit in 1951 from tainted Rye) that can engender visions of hell and the dead. I spent weeks at this bar before I noticed the decor. The vision of reality I tend to favor came synchronously from French philosopher Bruno Latour (recently passed) and American Manuel DeLanda: "flat ontology," the philosophical conviction that all categories of being are real.

It's a strange hybrid of rationalism and utter medieval mysticism, the way we classify and subordinate the beings around us, apparently an inheritance from a supernatural notion of the Great Chain of Being (the episteme that arguably sparked the European colonial project). This is the enemy of the flat ontologists. Paradoxically, this regarding of the world in flatness, releasing the beings from this subordination, is so foreign and disorienting to the average superstitious Westerner as to be almost psychedelic, resembling a spiritual ordeal (or ergot poisoning).

Find me now in the pub bathroom. Take these forms. in a flat ontology mechanics we have to consider that any system will have **material entities**, the vitreous china ceramic toilet, the medium density fibreboard urinal divider, the die-cast zinc-alloy faucet; **virtual entities**, the Euclidean forms that shape the room and its content, the pathos of the sharpie tags (like psychic prostheses of the human mind with its graspless neurochemical interior - it also present here); **process entities**, the phenomenon of visual contrast between the wall and the mirror, the matter of decay and weath-

ering, the agedness; **pre-physical entities**, the quantum fields, the three-quarks, the entropy content that a portion of top theoretical physicists claim is the concrete ground of being itself.

Power centers do this: delimit classes, and construct hierarchies from those classes convenient to their bidding. The reality of such claims says nothing of the material power of their assertion, even as the cybernetic or interrelated consequences of the assertions themselves actively discredit the claimant. The imperious gall of a team of military scientists who took bets on the likelihood of the destruction of the habitat earth at Trinity (an assumption of power almost as fraught as the tripartite God himself) neverthe-less sparked a series of events that extended in a plural effusion of outcomes - the flight of Von Neumann to MANIAC and the birth of the modern computer, the Macy's Conference on Cybernetics and the resulting Bowie-esque cultural involution, the GI Bill, the proliferating countercultures, enough to generate whole libraries of pub bathroom graffiti. Assumptions are agents: consequences and connections flower. But agency is integrated.

This MDF divider imitates a cross-grain veneer style developed by Egyptian woodworkers, the secret early progenitors of Pythagore-an insights that sprouted mystery schools and gnostic sects, cults of worship of the virtual forms that bred disdain for the human body internalized two thousand years hence in the Victorian sensi-bility in whose ruins we still live, in whose temporal lobe latrines we still dwell. Contemptus Mundi. Those psychic binaries engineer our internal architectures, mental maps that are virtual but not unreal, taking their shape in miniscule molecular structures in our brains - yes, the architecture of our shame lives somewhere, and we project it into our daily lives as a fractal multiscale paint brush that sculpts a world of things and creatures far transcending its scale. Sharpie tags alert the paths of fecal microbes that will per-sist in an epigenetic trace for centuries; you look into the mirror and see in the material alight your own collagen image, a drunken trigger that drains the blood flow in your stomach, starving the biome, escalating a hormone whose whim will inspire a work that appears in an art gallery down the street, joining a chorus of "expression" reaching back to Botticelli, to a 40,000-year-old lion man carved of mammoth ivory - art being an object of ochre and self-directed rage, lapis lazuli and silicon and mammoth tusks, bathroom tags and trinitarian cosmic arrogance, entangled orches-tra and a democracy of objects whose influence upon your own personal universe has taken you on aleatory internal star-flights where you are unaccountable to yourself, unsurveilled calcium highways in the brain that bubble in the city's cultural under-

ground into cybernetic inspiration upon billboards and streetwear and language flows, ecstatic process in free turbulence.

The city is a place of rude and anonymous productivity, electric with butterfly effects, interparticipatory with the slightest being, with Chicxulub impacts and funeral dirges, stick-nest rats and gravitational waves, a burgeoning family of second order effects sleeping together entangled on the flat urban delta.

9. This is the paradoxical materiality of things: The valorization of classes of being, the powerful's deluded conviction of cosmic hierarchy can be glacial in consequence, generating second order effects and contradictions that invalidate the hierarchical claim, but don't drain it of its power. Or not yet. That's up to us.

    The glacial metaphysics that are most naturalized are the ones that are most powerful. We aren't speaking in conspiracies. This is the matter: the acceptance of nondemocratic or authoritarian struc-tures in economic life - which is the very life of value, of judgment, arbitration of what will persist and grow and what will whither away. The embeddedness of those antisocial practices in a game whose assumptions have been naturalized to the point where their interrogation is, in the house of power, unspeakable. The capture of that cybernetic threshold, the wall, which is power itself, behind a curtain of 'personal responsibility,' of 'individual achievement,' of cogito. Germinal process colonized by a supernatural inspira-tion that only sees the self in things, that will have you scorching ecosystems for a ergotless white claw on an outsized boat in whose material inspiration all you can see is mirrors and mirrors of you.

10. This game seems to involve a calculated confusion of the ancient coordination technology of credit-debit ledgers with fealty to a regime of violence that is supposed to have special sanction to divulge and limit access to that technology. The corporate and bureaucratic digitization of that coordination imperialism. The extensive, systematic sanction and ideological encouragement of credit accumulation activities as an end in themselves. The breaking open of an age-old, community contingent contract. The creation of a violent antisocial tension that self-referentially occasions the needs for the very regime of violence that initiated it. A theater of self-reference imported from the wizard logic of wartime imperial economies - arrogant Assumption, the sky on fire, War all the time. A finite game.

    Math, brains, silica: what if you could construct a witch's brew that embraced the multiscale chaos of being - of the city? That rode the forms even as they break out of their classes, delivering

a dose of ontological flatness to those who can't help but Assume, Subordinate? The primal battle of the computer age, Von Neumann versus Terence Mckenna: do we use this tool to set the sky on fire, or to explore our commonness, and the otherness that commonness permits and lets flourish?

This is nothing else than the x-ray realization that ideas are time, they grow and they weave, and those who help them break out of their classes will unlock the power of their entanglements. Abundant experimentation with the entire field of economic models is the prerogative not of some abstract past but of us, here in now, as we work to conceptualize through practice and perfect through empirical reflection the problem of being in a world of thermodynamic constraints, of negotiating our commonness and our singularity in a way that is productive and nourishing of both.

This is the call of the city, its flat and mirrored mechanics, the democracy of beings: the use of technology to expand the Overton window, break the subordination, the calculated denial of the materiality of money and finance, the biomes it negotiates, the entanglements it dictates and the death it occasions and our actual agency over those outcomes. So that this crucial dimension of our lives ceases to be a mystification, a feature of seemingly divine ordainment, and becomes one of direct agency at the level of individuals, communities and the global tribes that traverse them.

11. The city is a cosmological plateau. Entanglements bleed out of all boxes. Urban localism isn't about our immediate surroundings, it is about touching the edges of the hyperobjects that animate our social field, and cultivating, on an embodied and community level, the technological and social ability to enact agency over them. When you look into the mirror, the image of your Self hides a dynamic harmony - Australian Bauxite, Great Plains Silica, Magnesium, concept, pressure, light. Before being shaped by collagen skin into Thales' rectangle this mysterious matter stood witness to the flaming radioactive sun of untold millenia, a godless hydrogen overseer lighting with naked-number contentment the face of reality in its utter (generative) pluralism.

Technologies that dethrone the complexity-denying rule of the great State fictions are technologies of reality. Graffiti, street rhythms, pidgin codes - the distributed ledger joins the ancient tradition of the city as it puts on public display the interstitial wall of reality production that nobody owns, the Common-wealth of our material world's entangled genesis.

Every one of us is an existential detective. The shape of our curiosity marks the extent of our world. We put value surfaces onto depths of entanglement and cancel them at our own peril. The city is a place of rude and anonymous productivity. Distributed ledgers can embolden it with the means to explore the depths of value, to forge mutuality and discover a complex of surfaces, infinitely sprawled, under no given explanation but an agreement - the semiconductivity of silica, the fractal biology of brains, the ancient and glacial materiality of math.

The State, the City and the Network; Beyond 7000 B.C.: Apparatus of Capture

by Ven Gist

The State as Apparatus of Capture

"It is the State that creates agriculture, animal raising, and metallurgy; it does so first on its own soil, then imposes them on the surrounding world. It is not the country that progressively creates the town but the town that creates the country. It is not the State that presupposes a mode of production; quite the opposite, it is the State that makes production a "mode.""

–A *Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze & Guattari

In D&G's _A Thousand Plateaus_, the 13th plateau is 7000 BC, focusing in on the origins and various forms of the state. The archaic imperial state is shown to inevitably become an apparatus of capture, a social machine consititued by an invisibly large complex of networks (peoples, tools, animals, et al). The apparatus seems to form spontaneously to both create conditions for a surplus and to control it. The capture is then performed as such:

Territory becomes Land: The earth is deterriorialized through a monopolistic appropriation of land, abstracted to Rent.

Activity becomes Work: a monopolistic appropriation of labor that abstracts nicely into Profit

Exchange becomes Money: with the issuance of currency a monolopolistic appropriation of the means of comparison itself.

The capture materializes as a hyper-dance between two poles of sovereignty. The binding power of the magician-emperor and the law-making proclivities of the jurist-priest-king. The magician-emperor uses signs to bind, manifesting authority at will through presupposed forms that are by all means magical. The jurist-priest-king entrenches the binding with law, overcoding any previous codes of the non-state peoples, machining the state-form into smooth circulation, a legitimized magic-state.

From a presupposed state of nature, it is said that the power of violence was given to the state to avoid war between all. later becoming embodied as the War Machine, which necessarily exists in the exterior of either domain, interrelating with both sides of the poles of sovereignty as well as other states. Constituted by non-state peoples, The state appropriates the war machine, subordinating it as an institution of capture, thus subjugating war to political ends. However, the apparatus of capture can only capture what it creates, or has contributed to. All other resources, as well as associated resource generation capacities, are not entirely capturable. They existed before the capture, therefore can exist without. Because the state knows it cannot ever fully capture the war machine, an anxious equilibrium exists. This is also why states must engage in propaganda, to render dormant those energies that may not be captured.

The City and the State

> "Thus the central power of the State is hierarchical, and constitutes a civil-service sector; the center is not in the middle {au milieu), but on top, because the only way it can recombine what it isolates is through subordination. Of course, there is a multiplicity of States no less than of towns, but it is not the same type of multiplicity: there are as many States as there are vertical cross sections in a dimension of depth, each separated from the others, whereas the town is inseparable from the horizontal network of towns. Each State is a global (not local) integration, a redundancy of resonance (not of frequency), an operation of the stratification of the territory (not of the polarization of the milieu)."

Much like the war machine, the City exists in the exterior of the state. States are said to behave vertically, the center and strata placed above the city, not in the middle. Where cities behave horizontally as part of a city-network. Their primary role is to act as a node, a circuit, distributing the production of the city along roads within and without the town. The state assumes control of the primary relation, the link between towns as well as country. Urban revolutions do not coincide with state revolutions.

Though not due to military might, the city has uncapturable properties as well – not least of which, the free will of every citizen in its territory. Though even if free will can't be fully captured, its qualia may be rendered inanimate, immaterial, invisible; subjugated to a function of the state, just another 'mode' of its production. Cities may learn from primitive, or otherwise non-state peoples warded off the original binding. Though with the blinding velocity of the state's deterritorialization, they've typically ended up captured anyway, abstracted to a part within the social machine that is the apparatus of capture.

"Primitive societies do not lack formations of power; they even have many of them. But what prevents the potential central points from crystallizing, from taking on consistency, are precisely those mechanisms that keep the formations of power both from resonating together in a higher point and from becoming polarized at a common point: the circles are not concentric, and the two segments require a third segment through which to communicate. This is the sense in which primitive societies have crossed neither the town-threshold nor the State-threshold."

"We have already seen that capitalism proceeds by way of the State-form rather than the town-form; the basis for the fundamental mechanisms described by Marx (the colonial regime, the public debt, the modern tax system and indirect taxation, industrial protectionism, trade wars) may be laid in the towns, but the towns function as mechanisms of accumulation, acceleration, and concentration only to the extent that they are appropriated by States."

"Recent events tend to confirm this principle from another angle. For example, NASA appeared ready to mobilize considerable capital for interplanetary exploration, as though capitalism were riding a vector taking it to the moon; but following the USSR, which conceived of extraterrestrial space as a belt that should circle the earth taken as the "object," the American government cut off funds for exploration and returned capital in this case to a more centered model. It is thus proper to State deterritorialization to moderate the superior deterritorialization of capital and to provide the latter with compensatory reterritorializations."

State-forms and the rise of the Capital-State

Following the archaic state, its capture based on social subjection, came the city-state and its machinic enslavement. With the introduction of capitalism, these two forms become complimentary, and complexify into a third form, the modern nation-state, with capitalism serving as a global relation of production.

> "But the relation is a reciprocal one: if it is the modern State that gives capitalism its models of realization, what is thus realized is an independent, worldwide axiomatic that is like a megalopolis, or "megamachine" of which the States are parts, or neighborhoods."

Capital exists as a global phenomenon, exterior to any local territories. Its domain is neither inside or outside, but everywhere. Its center continuously becomes more ordered, as its periphery is left outside. Capital has shown an aversion to the ways of the state, and the drive and means to overcode it. This affectuates as an innate force of deterritorialization globally, creating a strong drive to inhabit this role of capital-emperor. It's well-known that independent, international capital forms lobbies to bend policy, the codes of the state, toward favorable conditions, both nationally and supranationally across states.

> "Today we can depict an enormous, so-called stateless, monetary mass that circulates through foreign exchange and across borders, eluding control by the States, forming a multinational ecumenical organization, constituting a de facto supranational power untouched by governmental decisions. ... capitalism marks a mutation in worldwide or ecumenical organizations, which now take on a consistency of their own: the worldwide axiomatic, instead of resulting from heterogeneous social formations and their relations, for the most part distributes these formations, determines their relations, while organizing an international division of labor."

In today's post-modern capitalist nation-state, the superior deterritorialization of capitalism, facilitated by its theology of numbers, has continued to shred social contracts, giving way to a new territory of abstracted capture, situated above even the intensely vertical hierarchy of the state. Is it inevitable that a new state-form emerges to ensure the stabilization of capital's rising power; its own unity of composition as an oligarchal utopia? Has the state already been captured by itself, through its submission to capital? A capital-state ruled by a capital-emperor upon a levitating throne, reality suspended by the laws of capital. The state relegated to a part of the everwhere capital machine, the axiomatic.

Further, with the rapid increase in automation displacing the need to extract from human labor, both material through factories/robotics and intellectual through AI, the constant capital generation of automation relegates humans to data-producer parts in the machine. When the majority of flows are dictated by algorithms (driven by blind-profit), and any choice we thought we made pre-determined by the complex inter-actions of the engagement machine, how might we reach the parts exist beyond the axiomatic?

The Inverted City and the Weapons of Becoming

By understanding how the apparatus of capture comes to be and oper-ates, we gain perspective on how to ward off its advances. Following the advent of the distributed ledger, the City has some new spells to cast toward the warding off of capture. In both capital and social formation, functional decentralization can ward off the rise of the magician-emper-or's claims of the necessity for central power. Smart Contracts and legal engineers can ward off the capture of the jurist-king with their peer-to-peer resolution sets. War machines would still wander the exterior, but likely in an entirely different mode, with multiplicities now more free to expand, and the state not creating conflicts simply to stabilize its own relative unity of composition. Perhaps these tools could've staved off the current iteration, but are these tools enough with the archaic state having powered up into a capital-dripping machine of runaway control.

What of an inverted relation between town and country? A lot of the current cultural battles enlivened between town and country can be seen as abstractions of the dissatisfaction both feel toward the appara-tus of capture. Like in the case of the freed war machine, a freedom of new relation may occur with less divisional overcoding from the state. What tools do we have to ward off the capture of Capital? What does this new relation look like, between city, state, and capital? Could the Inverted City locate a point of healthy codeterminism between City/State/(Capital)?

The Inverted City conjures a subterranean mode of becoming. One that does not confine its presuppositions to the catacombs, but instead shares its weapons of becoming to its edges, increasing the body's ca-pacity to adapt to the constant capture pressure of the state. It would be fruitless, and self-defeating, for the City to attempt capture as a mode; And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee. The cybernetic relationship between city and state systems, ensures that any updates to the City will necessarily affect the future State-form (and of course always the other way as well). Instead a more mutualistic co-existence could emerge from a point where these pressures in balance, as opposed to either dominating as a form of capture. The base inver-sion of capture is freedom from capture. Wide angle degrees of freedom

of flight, without undue exploitation. The immovable spatio-temporal structure of the state rendered merely a practical device at times. New worlds allowed to stretch out and feel into the smooth spaces between; a 'distribution of heterogeneity in a free space'.

"Some people invoke the high technology of the world system of enslavement; but even, and especially, this machinic enslavement abounds in undecidable propositions and movements that, far from belonging to a domain of knowledge reserved for sworn specialists, provides so many weapons for the becoming of everybody/everything, becoming-radio, becoming-electronic, becoming-molecular.. ,... Every struggle is a function of all of these undecidable propositions and constructs revolutionary connections in opposition to the conjugations of the axiomatic."

Berries Exist

by BorrowLucid

"But, you said you loved me, like two minutes ago."

"I do, but I just don't feel like things are working out. I'm sorry." He gave me intentional eye contact from the video, like he had practiced in the mirror before calling.

"Is it because I travel so much? I'm going home in a few days and staying for a couple months, maybe 10 weeks." Zipping up my hoodie to look down for a moment, I tried to shake away any tears.

"If you can't feel it too, then it kinda validates my feelings, doesn't it? If we were in sync, you'd have been responding already."

"I don't understand that."

"Okay, well, I'm going to go now. It's late here."

"What? Should I call when I land on Monday?"

"Uhm, text maybe?" His finger got big on the screen. "Good night Greg, or good morning in your time."

"Good night."

That's it.

The ceiling is so smooth in this room, probably designed for low maintenance cleaning and whatever happens on a ceiling. Corners are always just a little darker. Can light change directions, or does it get lost, bouncing back and forth inside right angles? Probably the opposite.

Can't stay here; numbing vices are too tempting. The closest Potluck isn't too far though, maybe half a mile or so. Chilly sunny weather means sunglasses and a hoodie are totally normal.

Made a few wrong turns, which happens often when I'm traveling, but the loading dock door was wide open, with hanging plants and astro turf, like a red carpet.

"Welcome." Another hoodie and sunglasses greeted me. Pulling out my Potluck app, attestations from Potlucks and friends, since my mom started bringing me to these shared gathering spaces as a child, validated my trustworthiness to enter. "Sweet," she said. "Whatcha bring?" I held up my two hands and waved them, ready for exertion.

"Damn, we could use some of that!" She hopped off her stool and waved me to follow. "Been to our Potluck before?"

"No, just in town for another couple days." Keeping up with her pace put a skip in my step.

"Cool, let me show you around a bit. When you're done in the garden, what were you thinking to do?" Sunglasses on her head, she looked over her shoulder and pointed to the cafe counter.

I nodded and gave her a thumbs up. "Probably just on my laptop, but I don't want to be alone and quiet."

"Okay, you can explore later, but the Druyan room has bean bags, a couple large tables and easels. Here, I'll show you." She brushed her palm along one that was held out to her as we passed by.

Switchbacking down a wooden ramp, she brought us to a door and tapped the inside frame. "You might like it in here."

I peeked inside and nodded. The Druyan room was exactly as she described, except that there was also a DJ, probably their contribution to the Potluck. So yes, it wasn't quiet and I wouldn't be alone, but I also didn't have to keep up conversations. I smiled at her and made prayer hands, thank you. She smiled too.

We walked out through what seemed to have been the front door at one point. Asphalt decomposed under planter boxes, lined up across a few dozen square yards.

"Ever work with strawberries?"

"No!" I smiled!

"No problem, we just need to cover the soil. Here, I'll show you."

We walked to the end of the lot, up against a concrete retaining wall, holding up more city structuring.

"These troughs have just coconut husks and water in them. It's been soaking overnight and ready to spread around the strawberries. They're on the other side, so you'll fill the wheel barrels with just the husks and then bring it over to the strawberries. Just cover the soil."

"Do I need a shovel?"

"There's tools in the shed, but maybe have fun with your hands. Seems like that's why you brought them." Backing away, she started heading towards where we came from.

"Thank you!" I called after her. She waved and kept walking.

Tucking my backpack and hoodie in a dry corner, I found a waterproof apron in the shed and dove my hands into the wet husks. They were cold and heavy, lifting armfulls into a wheelbarrow. I blinked some tears out of my eyes, but it wasn't overwhelming.

Berries exist.

Recipes:

Fun DAO: an Onboarding DAO for the People

by christypdx

Fun DAO provides IRL community members with the opportunity to join a low barrier to entry, low overhead DAO for the purposes of playing with novel coordination tools and governance mechanisms, while growing and strengthening the local web3 network in the process! This project is not meant to take significant time or energy from its members, but be a casual gathering and an opportunity to experiment with a new interface on occasion. The primary goal of Fun DAO is to decentrally facilitate and have FUN!

Fun DAO:
- Provides a place for novices to join their first DAO and see how it works.
- Provides a place for novices and veterans alike to be continually exposed to new web3 mechanisms that might help them in other projects.
- Provides valuable feedback to the teams building these novel onchain tools.
- Provides a place for community members to get to know each other, and potentially brainstorm other projects and workgroups that might eventually animate a diverse local DAO ecosystem.

Ingredients

– A local group of web3 enthusiasts interested in active participation in an ongoing hands-on learning experiment.
– A DAOHaus DAO for onchain membership. You may not have a treasury to start (or ever?).
– A DAO Telegram channel, or any effective communications/coordination channel.
– *Optional:* Implement Hats-hats.xyz for DAO member role attribution and administration. FUN!

Instructions

1. Every month the DAO will decide on a local group outing. The outing could be just for fun - a sports game or a park barbeque - or it could be purpose driven, like a community garden

2. Each cycle you'll use a unique web3 coordination tool to decide on the outing (e.g., jokerace.xyz, quadratic voting, conviction voting). Which tool is used is determined through group discussion and initiative.

Account:

Fun DAO PDX

Fun DAO PDX had its first outing on Saturday, January 27th, 2024, to see a free art show at the Oregon Contemporary - Georgie Friedman's BREATHING – LIGHT. Our first outing was decided using jokerace, where the art show beat out indoor golf and Multnomah falls, among others.

Though the DAO only has 10 onchain members, the outing's attendance was fifteen, with newcomers joining to say they don't yet understand how to set up a wallet but would like to be included. To this end the DAO coordinated dedicated onboarding hours (hosted at Ethereal Forest's affiliate community space, Bridgespace) on the second Tuesday of every month, complimenting our EthPDX meetings which occur on first Wednesdays.

The first cycle onboarded a handful of community members to self-custody wallets while being the first experience with jokerace for many more of us. The next cycle is likely to use Pairwise voting through General Magic. (etherealforest.org/blog)

The Invisible Protocols that Animate the City

A Brief Introduction to the Open Protocol Research Group

by Ven Gist, Exeunt & Macks Wolf

Overview

The goal of the Open Protocol Research Group is to generate a body of research around the functioning of exotic social production processes in the urban environment and the possibility for meaningful interventions into those processes from the p2p and crypto toolkit. Our belief is that structural similarities between non-standard social production entities (see glossary) and the peer production protocols of the web3 ecosystem present a rich avenue for mutual reciprocity. The web3 ecosystem might lend urban non-standard entities strategies and tools for building more permissive resource environments (thus hacking the revenue evil curve) while the same experimental forms might offer the web3 ecosystem insight on how peer production protocols can function in diverse cultural milieus.

Our research will include a survey of non-standard social production forms in our city, a mapping of the material relations that animate those forms, an account of how they have managed to persist and what strategies have been weeded out or honed, and other open ended engagement with relevant communities to explore the nature of these forms. The terminal goal of the project is a public facing report with at least three case studies (one of a web3 native peer production entity and two or more of nonstandard entities in our city) with insights and detailed recommendations for mutual benefit between web-native and urban nonstandard systems.

Glossary of Terms

Formalization
The process of becoming broadly legible to or composable with a variety of structural norms beyond one's own community; as distinguished from Standardization, legibility to or composability with dominant institutional norms.

Open Protocols
Informal, open, permissionless knowledge sets or practices with the ability to propagate and persist absent institutional support or recognition.

Standard Entities
Entities that are standardized within the dominant resource environment. These include private individuals, shareholders corporations, nonprofits, public institutions, government agencies, NGO's.

Non-standard Entities
Coherent systems of social production that are not (primarily) beholden or oriented to the dominant resource environment or dominant institutional regimes, and may be illegible before them.

Resource Environment
The landscape of revenue inputs (as well as other meaningful sources of value) an entity finds themselves embedded within. Can be thought of as an economic landscape colored by political-economic determinants.

DAOs
Decentralized Autonomous Organization, a means of coordinating and/or governing without the need for a central controller.

Revenue-Evil Curve
The revenue-evil curve of a product is a two-dimensional curve that plots the answer to the following question: > How much harm would the product's creator have to inflict on their potential users and the wider community to earn $N of revenue to pay for building the product?

Social production & Peer production
Voluntary, often spontaneous processes of collaborative creation (of material goods, social relationships, knowledge sets, etc). Eschews centralization and rigid hierarchy for fluid and shifting participation. Social production and peer production are interchangeable, though in this study peer production is used for web-native production processes.

Introduction

The city is a factory for productive social relations. Whether the assets produced are material goods, intellectual resources, or the productive social relations themselves, the social production process is going on all the time, with or without the sanction of official bodies.

However, not all forms of productions have equal access to the resources needed to sustain themselves; a major vector of capture in our free society is the allocation of resources based on standards of legibility (e.g., legal and tax legibility, legibility with nonprofit funding apparatuses or commercial systems, etc). This standardization isn't always ill-intentioned, yet its effect is clear: at its best, it stifles experimentation, and at its worst, it's used as an instrument of suppression by those systems that benefit from widespread insecurity and complacency. Nonetheless, the needs of people, often underserved and/or marginalized communities, continue to fall outside of the coverage supplied by standardized institutional forms. (Whether this lack of full coverage is an inherent facet of standardization is an open question; see modern conceptions of the "industrial reserve army"). Throughout the city, perhaps spontaneously, inhabitants self-assemble into a huge variety of social forms to fill these gaps. If the city is a factory, these are social machines facing a dynamic horizon of invention and refinement.

In this dynamic environment of innovation, there seem to be those machines of production that have managed to bypass the pressures of standardization. They've sustained themselves in a hostile environment, becoming kinds of informal institutions beyond standardization, gems of autonomy and localist experimentalism that persist without the sanction of the powerful, even checking their dominance over social production.

Revenue Evil & Resource Environments

Vitalik Buterin's revenue-evil curve has given us an effective means of modeling the shape of standardization pressures on particular social processes. In the United States, the productive processes that are most vulnerable to the stifling forces of standardization may be those experimenting with public goods. (The path of standardization for for-profit entities is straightforward, as the legibility under discussion is largely legibility before a for-profit regime). Over time, these forms necessarily navigate the revenue/evil curve, continuously relocating their position as they seek to sustain themselves and their purpose.

Being that public goods producers generate non-exclusive and non-rivalrous offerings, they face extreme difficulty sustaining themselves in

relation to standardized resource environments while also limiting evil. Privatized and gated services can add revenue, but at the expense of added evil, as gating compromises values of open access crucial to public goods. Becoming legible as nonprofit entities depends on its own set of evils: administrative bloat, mission drift, vulnerability to influence and capture by funders.

As the viability of these systems or entities depend upon their resource environments, we should consider questions like the following:

What specific facets of standardized resource environments create hostile conditions for non-standard entities?

What invisible or illegible facets of the urban resource environment have allowed non-standard entities to persist? What strategies of "minimum viable standardization" have allowed entities to skirt revenue-evil curve conundrums?

How might non-standard entities generate and institutionalize amenable resource environments for themselves that might expand or open the overton window of social production forms? How might they exploit hidden or invisible facets of the resource environment to discover new potential paths along the revenue/evil curve?

Bootstrapping Viability

It's our belief that distributed ledger technologies can bootstrap a more inclusive and pluralistic resource environment for non-standard social production forms, borrowing from legacy experiments in peer production to expand the "overton window" of legible organizational or economic behavior.

There will always be the need for local interpretation of global phenomena, in order for adequacy of service to emerge. While local, public goods oriented social production offers the important edge case, we will examine the cosmolocal relationship across the full stack of goods, public and private, global and local. Our operative "north star" in this research is repeatable positive sum confluence between private and public oriented systems.

It's our belief that multiscale diversity and difference supports positive-sum confluence between public and private interests, while homogeneity tends to create antagonism between them. Opening the window of legibility, discovering strategies of generating self-bootstrapped, modular resource environments that can tolerate and support a wide plurality of forms of social production will create a wider space of

opportunity for robust public goods apparatuses to be supportive of and generative of private freedom - and vice versa.

Pathways to Formal Viability Beyond Standardization

Our interest in non-standard social production entities has two poles:

Standardization

Given the current resource environment, any non-standard entity we find in the wild is likely to be both extremely well adapted (because it has managed to survive with limited resources) and extremely valuable to its participants (because they are willing to hazard the struggle of participating and maintaining the system with minimal support). If these entities have avoided formalization, it is likely because they are unwilling to accept the burdens of "standardization."

These might include:

- – high overhead costs, administrative bloat, mission drift
- – vulnerability to capture (funding quid pro quos, fear of alienating potential contributors)
- – pressures of centralization (board politics), homogenization, or both

Though many or perhaps most entities with this orientation have accepted minimal standardization as a trade off, their dependency on p2p community support rather than large revenue influxes points in an alternative direction. We think distributed ledger technologies, specifically decentralized means of self-assembly like DAOs, can further develop a path to formalization without making any of the above sacrifices.

The first reason for our interest in surveying non-standard entities in the city is that they offer a powerful use case for the web3 toolkit, namely in the form of *formalization* without *standardization*.

Protocols
It's our suspicion that those non-standard entities that have managed to persist have done so because of their relationship to an often invisible substrate of social cohesion and value - the open protocol.

Open protocol is our shorthand for informal, open, permissionlessly propogated knowledge sets or practices - these can be individual practices like handwashing, or bundles of practices - e.g. health oriented hygiene - that spread in a manner that is ambivalent or sometimes antagonistic to institutional standardization.

Likewise, open protocols inspire organizational or economic behaviors that are ambivalent to standardization. As a quick example: repair culture may inspire an ad hoc community bike repair station. The participants don't intend to make profit, become professionals, or win formal government sanction - they are encouraged by a sense of satisfaction in spreading values of autonomy and empowerment, and it's off of that fuel that the station persists, perhaps for months or years.

This relationship (of a social production form to an open protocol) is interesting from the perspective of DLT because it mirrors the decentralized production and self-regulation methods of decentralized web protocols. Early DAOs arose as free associations of value-aligned participants interested in preserving and expanding the integrity, and potentialities, of the protocol. They ran off of the fuel of shared values. In the case of Ethereum, this protocol and its entities - through largely self-organized and horizontal innovation - generated the tools to build its own resource environment.

Here is our second point of interest: many "non-standard entities" are structurally analogous to ecosystem DAOs because of their genesis in and relationship to open social protocols. Its our hypothesis that if these entities experiment with the DAO form, they can take advantage of - and iterate upon, to their own ends - the exotic resource environments that were constructed in the web3 setting to its own wider range of organizational and economic forms. They can formalize their protocol-entity relationships, and transform the very nature of standardized production.

The why of the research project can be summed up as follows:

– wider ranging resource environments can foster less homogenous organizational and economic forms.

– a more plural landscape of social production will afford more opportunities for public and private interests to converge.

These non-standard entities already exist in the wild; it's our task to survey them and their characteristics, sharing insights cosmolocally, between the global and local layers. If we are right, we will see evidence of structural analogies between these entities and ecosystem DAOs, thus providing a clear path for intervention that could bootstrap an expanded resource environment more tolerant to experimentation and pluralism.

Local Clarity, Global Precedent: The Legal Question

By Kyle Smith | bestape
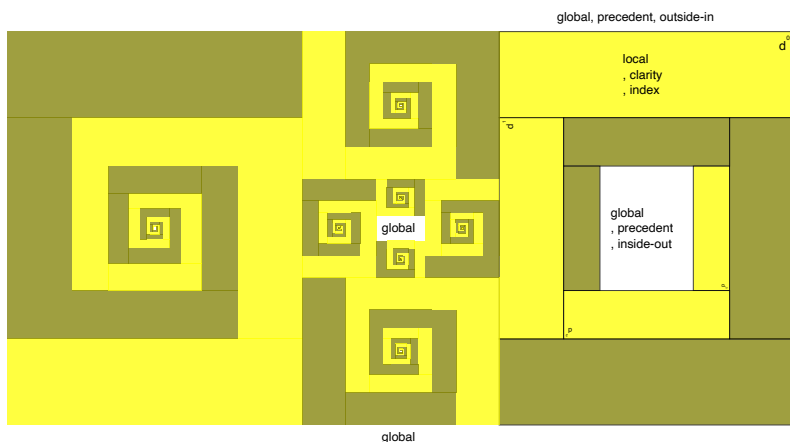
Ratios above:

Words & (c-b)/a "base scale" mathart at the inaugural Vitalia.city summit for startup societies.

The scope of local and global lacks a sharp separation between local and global. Haecceity gets confusing at high fidelities, especially navigating the unexplored, and "dunce" still being used as a shaming tool frustrates accelerated improvement of this scientific methodology.

Most important, however, is the fact that it's humans all the way down. Local in that humans are the atomic part and global in that the part is atomic. When we discuss whether the government should do this or private enterprise should do that, we are still using the same underlying assets to get it done: humans.

Hence why we run ourselves around in essentially the same slow-spirals, effectively in circles. By putting different masks on the same face, we fool ourselves into believing that we are trying a different experiment rather than variations on the same experiment: humans are always the atomic element in meaningful governance functions, public and private.

More atomic than humans all the way down is electromagnetism all the way down. There is less variation between the atoms of electromagnetism than of humans, but some variation such as the law of proximity remains clear as day.

More atomic than electromagnetism all the way down is wave-particle duality all the way down. The atoms here are patterns, are measurements, and with such little variation between atoms the local-global paradigm is more symmetric than irreversible. The law of proximity as a variation is unclear, hence the duality.

Well-defined local and global is dipolar: local is the end-point along a range and global is the other end-point along the range. Of course, this is a self-referencing mental model as each pole is a local concept and polar is a global concept. Dipole not multipole because of the electromagnetic atomic limit. As an Infinite object the pole, the edge, is not a point but rather a token with a vanishing point limit inside it: 2D orthogonal x 1D diagonal. Noether's law of global symmetry (or conservation) is the first principle of prescient mental models. Note that the symmetries of local and global can be discrete within boundaries or continuous within a limit. Furthermore, the dimensions of local and global is spacetimescale change, not only a snapshot state.

Modern technologies have, according to the human conscious experience of time, seemingly collapsed the locality of cybernetic proximity from dipole into a monopole (hereafter, "monopole moment"). We can now real-time talk to each other tête-à-tête halfway across the Globe (Earth). Yet, there is nothing new under the Sun.

When we interact with our smartphones, we're leveraging the latency of proximity between the remote-from-each-other scalar points of nanoscopic and consciousness; though neurons are nanoscopic, there is a delay as the subconscious collects and renders consciousness.

It helps to first analyze the local and global dynamics of human governance before humanity successfully collapsed the cybernetic dimension into a monopole moment via modern telecommunications. Before the monopole moment, with humans as the atomic, the initial local follows the law of proximity and builds bottom-up. After a certain maturity, global emerges out of local and feedbacks into local top-down. This feedback can franchise onto other locals.

Information is physical after all. The pyramids weren't built from the top-down, despite their promontory at the top once built. Global here is not global like the Globe but global in its control relationship with other

locals. It is global as a relationship within and between hierarchies, remembering that the Globe in ratio to itself is smoother than a marble.

Compare Canadian Paramountcy with the USA's Tenth Amendment. There are always some aspects that are bottom-up and some aspects that are top-down. The mature system is fractal feedback that cross-pollinates violently and nonviolently with neighbors. However, in the history of these systems, global complexity initially emerges from polycentric local complexity and then global and local influence, as well as consolidate each other along multiple nodes. The divergent and convergent process resembles air breathed into and out of the lungs.

Importantly, powerful top-down is a reduction of the bottom-up in which for the most part only relatively rare symmetries remain. Generally, the vast majority of the bottom-up emergence becomes asymmetric at some point and, as such, does not continue all the way to the top. Discrete patterns unfit for long-distance control are far more common than suitable patterns, Infinite patterns are the least likely.

Phenomena like the UCC model law are interesting, because they suggest the contract law symmetries between states while states themselves determine the actual laws. This balances interstate global efficiencies with tailor-fitting the state-by-state local efficiencies. Compilations such as The ULex Kernel offer a more complete proscription than UCC alone. In this way, there is no federal imposition but rather a healthy variety to handle regional differences that is effectively interdata.

If done right, we can industrially scale up rare symmetries and avoid the pitfalls of attempting to scale up the far more common asymmetries. Our greatest inventors find these graces. But if achieved, in many ways this should be the default behavior since it follows the most trodden paths of least resistance. Fewer heads far from the herd is easier to defend. The lowest latency available in the transmission that requires variation in signal to send messages.

Now that we are within the cybernetic monopole moment, we can create conscious-sufficient latency nonlocal critical mass. Where there used to not be enough proximally-local humans as the atomic units to initiate bottom-up growth, its collapse into a monopole has opened up the entire Globe's conscious-human cybernetic locality potential. An example of this is the invention of .git version management control and the GNU computer system that human teams around the world could finally build together decentrally.

A trade-off of unlocking the Global cybernetic locality potential is more

noise in the system. A way to mitigate this friction is to use the most fastidious documenting systems available to restrict the global canon into novel commonalities only. The "industrial precedent" evolution of patents developed at the vitalia.city district genesis at Próspera, focused on a permissionless business model for software patents, could offer the procedural upgrade that standards like EIP need to first power-law scale ("log scale") in order to exponentially scale ("base scale"). Combine industrial precedent within a more speculative Github .git library system for a wider, but still regimented, scale aperture.
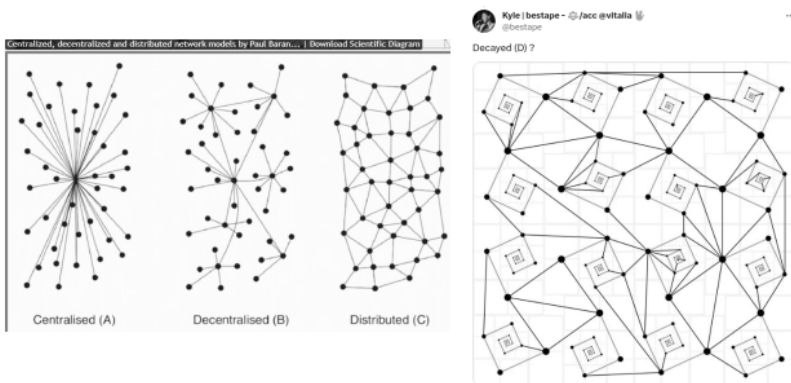
When the global of a local with dominant control decay rate overpowers its negative entropy, the critical mass phases into a dead-weight transaction cost. Jurisprudence processes such as 'precedence' and 'noting-up' are generalizable information technology that help garbage collect and rejuvenate our dominant gardens.

I've learned by writing this that the cybernetic monopole moment has opened the floodgates of horizontal and diagonal jurisdiction inter-data and extitutionality. This flooding period will not last long, but it will offer much useful work energy until we reach equilibrium. Legal engineering offers a jurisprudential way to build control systems within the monopole moment. Legal engineering is a way we can harness the useful work we are being offered. Charter cities are sandboxes as well as physical dipole specializations, DAOs are cybernetic monopole native organizations.

A globallocal is possible, such as robots manufacturing globally created CAD designs within the last-mile cost radius; physical is dipole proximity but cybernetic is dipole proximity and monopole moment.

Let us not forget, however, it is still humans all the way down: though family dynamics asymmetrically scale, having happy families is the only way to have healthy people and to have healthy civilizations. Humans as atomic elements need to have intimate social relationships with other humans in order to scale up Global trust in humanity; only then can we achieve full-aperture neighborliness. Like alchemizing gold out of carbon, the journey is long.

A final thought on the sacred after overhearing Robin Hanson's round-table with Vitalians earlier this month. The profane economy is entropy but the sacred economy is -(entropy). In a sacred economy, sunk costs – martyrdom, sacrifice – adds value to the appraisal. This way, a spouse getting terminal cancer and their partner stays loyal to them until the end is a highly valuable marriage because of the sunk costs. A pro-fane-only economy civilization in the face of our mortality crumbles to nihilism and collapse but a sacred-also economy optimizes for grand-children. Giving the sacred economy paramouncy over the profane economy, if conflict, would likely mitigate polycentric violence. Yet the modern Global 'fiat' economy is far too frequently preoccupied with accruing profane wealth to be able to allow the sacred economy enough expression to play its Infinite game alongside.

To be Chancery, not just Supreme. The same coin perhaps, but each side is weighed in balance with the other along the narrow path.

Recipes:
Cosmolocal Convening

by christypdx

Bringing together a regional and global consortium of passionate individuals who are working, individually and together, in pursuit of a shared vision can and very likely will be generative in both planned and unexpected ways.

Ingredients

- **Shared context** - Have clearly articulated and agreed upon the purpose, audience and content-focus, and desired outcomes of the convening. Share a big picture vision. Cosmolocal: *Radical local initiatives reflect the global: makerspaces reflect very cosmopolitan knowledge share, permaculture is an extremely cosmopolitan knowledge set.*
- **A strong network of aligned (and probably geographically hyperlocal) individuals** who will need to act as the event planning team. A proven ability to work together effectively both synchronously and asynchronously is helpful, but may not be necessary.
- **An identified and known geographically distributed network of aligned individuals** who might be available to travel to your city to attend a multi-day gathering. Who you convene is as important as why you convene, and mixing local with non-local perspectives is productive.
- **A venue** suited for the collaborative nature of this type of gathering. Prioritize space that will allow for the whole group to gather, and break into smaller sessions. A projector, screen and basic audio setup should be available. If you have access to a community space that's reflective of the diversity of your locality, that's an ideal venue.
- **Some amount of funding** - though your budget may be limited. If you don't have a lot of funding to play with, you'll need to get creative, and perform much or all of your work as an unpaid volunteer. That's ok. If you truly believe that a convening is worth facilitating, make it happen (all magic comes at a cost). If it goes well, mint an event hypercert, and apply for retroactive funding.
- **An eye toward synchronicities and an appreciation for the magic of everyday existence.**

Instructions

Kick off planning! Set a regular schedule for meeting, and expect/plan to meet increasingly more often as the event date approaches. Hold yourself and one other accountable for following through with commitments.

Set a date as early as possible. Take into consideration conflicting events of your attendees, and, in our case (more on that later), likely weather conditions. When you have the date, start building the event schedule in a shared planner/spreadsheet, and keep it up to date.

Determine communication channels and commitment levels from contributors. Maintaining an open communication channel that planners commit to using will go a long way in minimizing duplicate work, etc.

Think through event logistics, down to the smallest details (if you're hosting at a community space, will there be enough toilet paper?), and have your various plan Bs in mind. Keep good documentation: notes, schedules, receipts, etc. Make sure contributors have access to the programs and materials their work requires. When planning out the event timeline and content, remain flexible and don't be afraid of radical changes.

Optional: Decide on a ticketing platform. There are already many great options to choose from when it comes to web3 event ticketing. Choosing to offer a web3 ticket to attendees brings your event onchain, generates a keepsake NFT for participants, and benefits the evolution of the tech.

Find out how your community members want to contribute, what skills they have that your event needs. If you ask for volunteers you'll find them—be clear about event needs with the community so that people know how they can help.

Account:

A General Forum on Ethereum Localism, October 2023 - Portland, OR

In October 2023 PDX DAO put on the General Forum on Ethereum Localism (GFEL) in Portland, OR as a convening of 50+ web3 natives (and a handful of non-natives) thinking about and experimenting with onchain localism, i.e. the possibility of using DAOs to develop novel decentralized community/city/bioregional systems and infrastructure (maker space cooperatives, community currencies, small business coalitions, credit clearing circles, etc.); building mechanisms to bring p2p and ownership economies to local scale (neighbourhoods).

PDX DAO's relationships with a variety of local people, projects and places that embody the spirit of decentralization and community autonomy allowed for a meaningful offering of pre-conference tours and micro-events- at urban farms, an intentional permaculture community, makerspaces and art collectives. Incorporating events that connected people with our city and its decentralized protocols was a critical design element, in aiming to materialize the cosmo-local frame of reference. The Forum was preceded by two days of these tours.

The Forum itself was a three-day event, a structured unconference, hosted at a community warehouse in Portland's Inner Eastside. The warehouse space could be set up to accommodate whole-group speaking and panel sessions or several breakout groups. We had a solid A/V setup (we even enjoyed live music one evening), a chill zone with couches, morning yoga and catered lunch each day as an incentive for participants to stay convened throughout the course of the day. It worked!

Many attendees stuck around post-forum, and, over the next few days re-convened for a variety of activities- coffee meetups, mushroom foraging, co-working, dinner, drinks. Existing networks had been strengthened and expanded, and an abundance of new networks had been activated (an output of one of which you read from now).

The convening was a success because we, a hyperlocal group of dedicated co-conspirators, had been working on the same problem and asking the same questions as a global consortium of both localized and distributed peers. Critically, we were fortunate to benefit from a reliable network of aligned and supportive individuals, both locally and globally, who offered invaluable resources - including and especially Bridge Space Commons, our main event venue - and skillshares (key to this network was a year's work of passionate network weaving). To cover event costs, we received direct donations and matching funds from two Gitcoin grant rounds, applied for and received a grant from MetaCartel's ETHos, and received support from Breadchain Co-operative (and beer from Raid Brood).
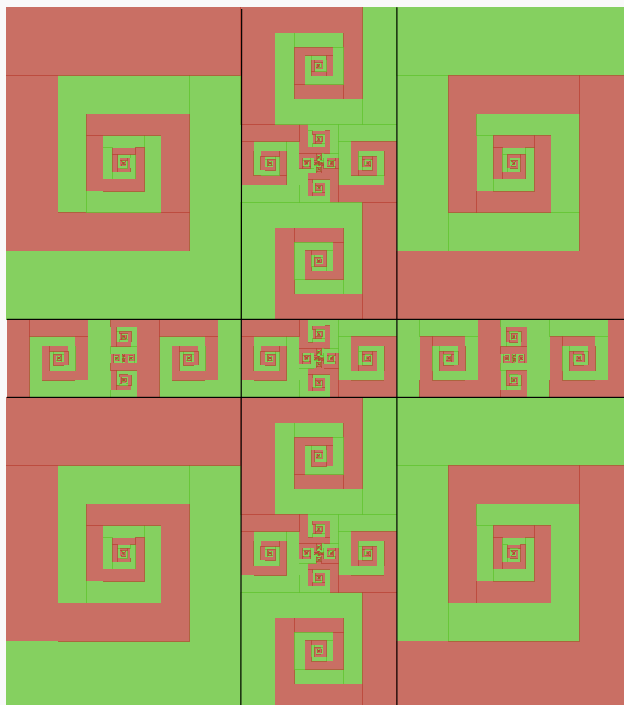
Resources:
– wiki.p2pfoundation.net/Ethereum_Localism
– pdxdao.xyz/localism
– mirror.xyz/ethpdx.eth

d = 3/4

1:7/24:25/24

1/3

(c-b)/a

1/2

Life, underground

P Rose

I am told we left the above
long ago. Our ancestors fled to the earth
heal and give the ground back to grass.

In the Inverted City we cannot push down
deeper. The footing gets hot and viscous.
We build out, in radiating circles that are
filled with our creations and supportive spaces.

I am told they used to spend most their time in
boxes, above ground. That when you ventured out
it was easy to get lost in Paris or New York
Or even Denver. I find the loneliness so foreign;

they used to walk through life without
knowing their neighbor. They would eat food
from hands they never grasped, and extract
resources from people they could other.

Some wish their kids might walk the above,
one day. That we might return to make more
than concrete and glass and conflict.

I like to build here, underground. Where our
space is precious and shared, where our
bodies could be forgotten. I'd like to think

our spirit will live on long past the blocks
we built. A residing echo of the collective.