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/ Hi I'm Bahar Noorizadeh, artist, writer, and currently a PhD candidate at Goldsmiths Art Department. My research focuses on the convergence of art and finance around speculation. The question is whether this relationship is only one of total subsumption of art under finance, or that their ontological promiscuity can open up a way of art being able to act upon finance.

○ I am coming out of a three-year long exhibition project *The Kids on Communism* and a book *Being Together Proceeds* that was focused on the potentials of communism. So, starting with the 99th anniversary of the Soviet revolution of 1917, for which the exhibition was dedicated and out of this I'm developing something called *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia* where the idea is to learn from Soviet experience about our own times. To give an example: Shock work, which is something that arises with the first five-year plan of 1929, is one of the first attempts to get out of Fordism. And so, we can look at shock work in relation to social media today for example. Alexei Stakhanov, a coalminer from East Ukraine, can teach us on Kim Kardashian. Exhaustion and excitement on social media, in an economy of attention and circulation, follows the ways shock work was exceeding quotas of production. When Kanye West went to Trump, it reminded Stakhanov going to Stalin in the 1930s. But instead of industrialization we have here the digital as these two men personify its manic aspects of manipulation. As an event of technology, subjectivity, governance, all those things together, work like they did when Stakhanov went to Stalin. The only difference is that Stakhanov had to do it and West chose to do it. Which makes you questions choice altogether... Another thing, that I think is more relevant to what we're talking about today is a book I am working on – *Metastability*. In it the gesture of contemporary art curating comes to embody a logic that is the logic of finance and cloud-computing that is the logic also of the environmental, and public health collapse and is the logic of so many other things... So, within this I'm looking into the relations of the artificial.

□ Hello, I am Kristoffer Gansing and I work as the artistic director of transmediale, a festival in Berlin for Art and Digital Culture. I've been doing this for nine years and I guess I can bring in different kinds of ideas and materials from the festivals we go along, especially in terms of artists that have engaged with the artificial in the context of artificial intelligence. I should also mention that before transmediale, my backround is both as an academic, having a PhD in media studies and as a curator / artist working independently in between Denmark and Sweden before moving to Berlin. In my research as well as cultural practice, I've been investigating what I like to call 'transversal media practices', trying to look at specific media, old and new, and how they are activated or working across institutional, technological and subjective contexts.

✶ Hi I'm Sébastien Pluot, I'm an art historian and curator, co director with Maud Jaquin, of *Art by Translation*, which is a research and exhibition program based in Europe and North America. The topic we're addressing since 5 years is the aesthetic and ideological issues of translation in the arts. We produce exhibitions, seminars, workshops, symposiums and of course artworks.

Basically we identify three kinds of translation: The first is the more obvious 'inter-linguistic' – which is a translation from one language to another. The second is called 'intra-linguistic' which is for example: the metaphor the '*Id est'*. ' In other words'. When you reformulate something, it's an act of translation... The last one is called the 'inter-semiotic translation', which is translating from one medium or one semiotic system to another.

So we mainly examine these issues through various theoretical systems and artworks from the beginning of the 20th century onward. We develop various research trajectories through the lens of translation theories involving existing and commissioned artworks. The various ways artworks are engaging translation process are revealing of specific ideologies. Each aesthetic system is also always associated with specific translation procedures. For example, there was one important project that we keep developing called the *House of Dust* by the Fluxus artist Alison Knowles. This prolific work gathers the three kinds of translation I just referred to. It's one of the first computerized poems, that she did in 1967, where she used a computer to generate random permutations of specs for houses: the materials, the context and situation, the light systems and people inhabiting houses.

And so she asked James Tenney, an engineer at Bell Lab, to generate random permutation... So she used the artificial language of the computer to translate ordinary language. It generated more than 84 000 unexpected meetings between these specs. She then translated one of the quatrains into a house that was itself translated by other artists. Technology is commonly used to enhance or to optimize systems or to generate more effective and functional objects. With the *House of Dust*, Alison Knowles misuses the computer, to go against the grain of technology. She conceived open translation procedures to widen the imaginary potential of architecture that people can translate for themselves. This poem is a score that we reopen to new interpretations through a series of exhibitions and symposiums.

О　Okay.

/　Do you want to start?

О　Yes. Thank you. My contribution to this idea of artificial is informed by a dual understanding. There's the image on the front piece of *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes in 1651. This was made by Abraham Bosse. It's a drawing turned into an etching, turned into a print of the sovereign made out of tiny, tiny people. This giant is seated on the horizon, hovering over the countryside, a city, a fortress. This sovereign has a crown and is holding a mask and a sword. So within contemporary art discourse, we have for example, these matters of fact turned to matters of concern, in the spirit of the 'Making Things Public' project by Bruno Latour. In it, Latour goes back to this image and basically says that society also has objects in it that are of course coded and so on. This is of course very Latourian and contemporary art, to leave these objects as is, as if they were not in themselves products of labour. Because by a quite simple Marxist reading, it is obvious that someone had to make that sword.

Those same people who were looking at the sword as a symbol of power are also the people who made it, so the fetish comes in of course and with it alienation. So that was my understanding of that image.

◻   When fetish comes in.

⭘   Yeah. So that was my understanding of it. But then actually when you read Hobbes, it generates this idea that we are now in the moment of its construction, in a way where he says that "...the sovereign is an artificial soul." An 'artificial soul' for him means manmade. Soul in the sense that it has wants and needs but it is manmade, in the sense that it is a legal and civic institution, and therefore artificial in that sense. It's a legal construct that then someone has to fill, someone has to sit there and be the sovereign like in flesh and blood. But as much as there is a monarch, it's a metaphor the 'artificial soul'. In the front piece we see that the artificial soul is made of this multitude. And then on the other hand, we have this idea of artificial intelligence now. There are many ways to describe artificial intelligence and I think some of you have more knowledge of this than me, but from what I understand, it's again a metaphor, for something that is not really intelligent in the sense that it's reflective. It is again an agglomeration aggregating life: the movement of people, with the feedback back from the movement, for example. So, all those kinds of those apps to avoid traffic for example, that's how they work. So it's moving all the time and everybody's informed. Who's ever registered to the app is informed of their location in relation to others in traffic. So, I was thinking of the image that we usually assign to artificial intelligence, which is this cultural differentiation that we can do between a Chihuahua and a blueberry muffin. This kind of tapestry of the dogs and pastries is easy for us to differentiate, but very hard for a software. And that's also a multitude of the faces standing for artificial intelligence. In this case, and with Abraham Bosse in 1651, the image for Leviathan, it's also a multitude of faces making the sovereign.

✷   Well, there's something ironic... To shift from the 'rabbit duck' to the 'chihuahua muffin'.

⭘   Yeah, that's the multistable... that's what is happening right now, right? for example you have the British Prime Minister doing this Schrödinger Brexit: it will be and it won't be part of the EU in Northern Ireland, and the same goes for his actual office. I mean, he is the artificial soul, the Prime Minister, but it's supposed to be the Queen. And so the Parliament is sending a letter to the EU and he at the same time sends another letter to the EU, although that first letter is also his, because he's representing the Parliament. The same goes to the US with all the corruption of the President. You are compelled to ask, is he presenting his position as sovereign or is he promoting himself? The artificial soul and the soulless person... We see how that whole mechanism of the artificial soul is, kind of, collapsing. And something that... It's not so common to believe that this system that was built back then works anymore. And so we shift from sovereign as artificial soul to control as artificial intelligence. This corresponds also to other elements of governmentality for example, from state to corporate. So that's kind of where I am with this...

✱ It made me think about what could Quantic computer do to politics. So far computers are based on 'zero and one', and recently engineers have been developing quantic computers that allow another dimension: 0 and 1 + something that can be both. Epistemologically, what this uncertainty can do to the idea of truth that the calculation was implying.

Even though… all the catastrophe in politics today are generated by leaders who brings complete chaos, precisely saying "yes" and "no" simultaneously in various ways. Trump who does not know what he is saying but also French president Emmanuel Macron who pretends his politics is at the same time left and right, a self-claimed pragmatic way to erase ideologies and conflict. Whereas his politics is simply neoliberal.

☐ Yeah. Quantum politics. Quantum futurism. But are you suggesting there is a shift in the paradigm of the artificial or not – in relation to intelligence, in relation to the political reality of Hobbs? Many faces? Because it seems to me that your thesis would suggest that then actually, an artificial intelligence sovereign would be much more adequate because you wouldn't have the ambiguity of that personality and then the general intelligence.

⬡ So I think that is what informs the imagination of the making of artificial intelligence, that it comes from that world, definitely. Even though we think of these as new things, but they're basically trying to cement those structures but at the same time, those structures are losing… So like to give another metaphor: I live now in Philadelphia and they're all about the constitution there, and they love this document and it's a document that it's imaginary is the steam engine. So you have self-regulating system, you have a balance of power… Those kind of ideas come from the actual steam engine of the eighteenth century in England. But it's like 17th, 18th century kind of imagination. And with the digital, like you're saying, with the zero and one, you see that that whole thing doesn't work. I mean, they hit a wall time and time again. While some of the political elite still really believe in those scenarios that these documents enabled, those scenarios are based on steam engine logic, I would say, and we are now in something else. So I think applying that imaginary, like you're saying Kristoffer, applying that imaginary of the artificial soul of like a 17th century political theory to today, that's what the technological elites would say, but it doesn't seem to actually work either.

☐ So Bahar will you-

✇ Yeah, I feel bad for shifting the conversation… Yeah, so I thought maybe it would be easier to approach it from a more pragmatic artistic position. You probably know all about this, you also might have… I assume you've heard the story of Soviet cybernetics in the '60s, '80s, they tried to regulate the command economy in the Soviet Union. And I kind of… I don't know if I'm talking to an audience or I'm talking in this room, but maybe it would be good to, kind of like, just open it up because I think it's related to thinking about protocols and the sovereign especially in the context of the Soviet Union.

But, yeah... So I actually made a film about this last year or two years ago which kind of goes over these ideas, that mainly emerged after the financial crisis in 2008, and a lot of people started to talk about this, including Nick Dyer-Witheford then Benjamin Peters.

Benjamin Peters has a very good book on the whole story, from the beginning to the end. But basically the way they kind of frame the story... It all starts from this social-ist calculation problem which was posed by the Austrian School Economics named the Socialist Calculation Problem and back then they're basically... And they're right. Basically, they're saying that there's so many calculations that socialist economics requires, like, it's impossible because you have to... It's not only about scale, but there's also a question of time because you have to constantly, in every millisecond, recalculate the supply and demand of the whole system and come up with the best possible form of distribution. And on the other hand, they propose 'market' as this su-percomputer. I mean they didn't know what a computer is yet? But the way that they're describing it is a description of computers... that's what I'm kind of trying to get at.

It's more like an AGI, like a general intelligence, rather than like what we know as old school cybernetics. Because of this idea of the Adam Smith – 'invisible hand' that, kind of like, carried on towards there... So there's this kind of mystical thing about the spon-taneity and the emergence and things that are still like indescribable, but they kind of boiled it down to the individual at the center of the market that embodies this. So yeah, and as we know today... I mean many people again wrote about this again: The famous quote by Fredric Jameson who talked about Walmart as... The image of utopia looming through the mist and it's Walmart. So the possibility is there, and everyone's talking about that centralized economy can happen, and that the infrastructure is in place.

Amazon, Google, whatever. And actually two days ago, Google announced, I don't, you probably saw it, the 'Quantum Computer's Development'. I don't know how reliable is this news or it sounds like just one of those. But yeah-

◯   Also the guy who runs Alibaba. I think he said, and he'll come from like a Chinese perspective, now that "technology enables us actually to have a plan, a totally planned economy, get rid of scarcity and everyone can"... So it's within, kind of, what you were saying about the technology-

/   Yeah, no worries. I don't want to go over too much, but I'm gonna just maybe shortcut to where I was going with this. But I think one major, kind of, issue with thinking around economics, and that's kind of like how I'm trying to approach it from an artistic perspective, is this figure of the future is somehow constantly denied and even, in its time to financialization, like finance kind of becomes a symptom almost for this denial of contingency that was always present in economics.

And still, in practice, finance is approached with algorithms and it's actually highly computerized and digitized, the whole system. Whereas like, it's pointing to a crisis. So people who write about finance, philosophers like Elie Ayache, Suhail Malik, they kind of try to maybe frame this problem.

But I think yeah, that contingency has something to do with the artificial, that's how I'm trying to think about artificial as something that might be more related to a notion of time that's missing in the system and the system, as you say, how we think about it, is a set of protocols or like, what moves where; people and resources and whatever. And yeah... I mean in a way, I was just thinking yesterday maybe AI appears in science fiction.

And like, as we think about that, we think AI appears in science fiction because in our imagination it's in-accessible but maybe there's actually something ontologically related to the future. And artificial intelligence, that's not necessarily a matter of futurity of the scenario. And there's this anecdote that Francis McKee, a curator in Ireland, he... I really like the way he frames it. But he talks about telecommunication technologies as... They're all invented from the inventors trying to talk to the dead. So there was always this drive of like talking to the dead that was the initial kind of instigation for technology. So I think with AI, there is something about this, like... Something is transposed from the past to the future. And yeah, the rest of it I can get back to it later.

✳   Of course, when you propose this word 'artificial', I immediately jumped to the most obvious topic of Artificial Intelligence and the issues it raises, specifically how it is supposed to have generated epistemological and anthropologic shift that the industry is self proclaiming. Recently Google declared we are now in a new era of quantum Computers I was refereeing earlier. And it made me thing that some years ago, when a computer won against a chess master it was considered a crucial event. I remember a mathematician was asked to react to that, and he said that it was not so much revealing that the machine is super intelligent, it was just revealing the fact that chess is not such an intelligent game.

And it made me think about when in the early 20th century, the inventor of the IQ test, the intelligence test, called Alfred Binet was asked, what was his definition of intelligence. And he answered: "It is what my test measures." For me it tells a lot about the fact that it's easier to define the measure than what is supposed to be measured. Meaning, what a thinking human head is and can produce. And this, I think, is an interesting symptom of what is already in the etymology of the term 'artificial', something that falsifies nature... And the idea of replacing nature with something that is impossible to dispute. A machine that is aimed to deliver the truth without ambiguity. This machine is supposed to be fully reliable. If we are going back to the history of the automaton and the use of mathematical artificial tools it was not only aimed to copy nature or human capacities but to enhance and increase these capacities.

These technologies are always for the sake of increasing human capacities. Artificial intelligence, takes its roots in a history that we can trace from Pythagoras' attempt to mathematize sound and music. And we know that since then the modelization of music has never been resolved. Later, there was Leibniz' idea of a universal philosophical language that will be based on mathematical models in order to convey transparently ideas that wouldn't be interpreted.

This is Leibniz' definition of what we now call formal logic. This Mathematical language is not supposed to be interpreted, it does not allow translation and therefore it does not allow the possibility for the other to exist. So that became later, the dream of people such as Warren Weaver, the cybernetician who thought that an artificial algorithmic system would enable to translate transparently from one language to another. He thought the main problem causing wars and dissensus is the differences between languages. Like Weiner, he thought language is too chaotic, uncertain, ambiguous. People misunderstand each other's. His idea was to use the computer and mathematics to translate transparently, therefore to erase the idea itself of difference. What I want to stress here is how what is supposed to be artificial is modifying what it's pretending to imitate. In the field of art, architecture and urbanism, many projects in the '60s were using algorithms as a way to transform the environment and resolve each and every conflict. A very famous one was called 'Flatwriter' by Yona Friedman. The inhabitant could use a keyboard to write down their environment. A computer would calculate the possible conflicts with the neighbours using feedback and self-regulating systems in a complete magical way. So you want to change your room, the wall, it immediately moderates and performs it live. It was presented as a god-like democratic government tool.

Also, in 1970, the project "SEEK" was showed in the exhibition *Software* at the Jewish Museum in New York, curated by Jack Burnham. Mice were immersed in an environment equipped with sensors that filmed their behaviour. A computer analyzed their movements, preferences and a clamp continuously reorganized hundreds of small cubes as an attempt to optimize the configuration of the space according to the movements made by the animals.

O   Like a crane?

✱   Yeah, exactly. So there was this crane grabbing these little cubes to move them according to the movements of the mice. The computer was supposed to organize the environement in order to enhance the desire of the animals. "SEEK" used the process of feed back that Norbert Wiener conceptualized as a way to evaluate and control the effects of an action by the statistical calculation of information and to adapt future behaviour through past performance. These cybernetic principles were applied to the study of language, human behaviour, and messages as a means of controlling machinery and society, the development of computing machines and others, such automata, certain reactions upon psychology and the nervous system. This holistic approach lies on an analogical conception of thought and calculation. Its task lies in controlling the mind. "It is the purpose of Cybernetics to develop a language and techniques that will enable us indeed to attack the problem of control and communication in general." Its aim is to find order out of chaos. "SEEK" software was parameterized according to a principle of homeostasis: the mice disrupted the model which had to be corrected in order to restore a balanced system. It can be emphasized that self-regulating modes of functioning are identical to the neo-liberal functioning that fantasizes a fluid adaptability of individual and social behaviours, economic and technical apparatus. It is interesting to notice that the mice eventually became aggressive and died in an environment covered with shit.

○   Was it because they were thinking of an application of the environment they gave them instead of the environment they need to sustain the life?

✱   Yes, Negroponte ultimately envisioned "SEEK" and cybernetics in general as a tool to resolve housing, demographic and circulation issues of a city. It is for him a metabolic planner, dealing with any problems in 'real time'. Artificial intelligence is for him a problem resolving tool not only to sustain life, but increase the wellbeing of inhabitants and the environment in a kind of calculated heaven governed by the notion of truth. Numbers never lie! These kinds of systems, like administration, are always for the sake of increasing a system. It seems that the mice didn't really got it.

/   Appreciate it.

✱   And of course if we go back to the origin of cybernetics, its proclaimed aim is to govern and control human language and human behavior. And of course it leads to think about what ordinary language can become when it is in competition with artificial language. Being based on the notion of mathematical truth, artificial language leaves no alternatives: it governs in a totalitarian way since you can hardly contest numbers. When Barthes entered the College de France, his speech was called "is language Fascist?". He oppose a language that administrates and a language, the one of art, that emancipates. The most tricky thing is that cybernetics pretends to enhance any kind of system: democracy, the environment, choice making, desires...

○   That's really powerful stuff. Yeah-

◻   I made a lot of similar reflections before coming here to the bunker and I scribbled things down. But instead of, like, going further into the cybernetic heritage and also discussing its relation to the current AI craze, I would like to kind of ground us actually, in the situation of *the bunker*, in relation to the term of the artificial. So this is a little bit like, homegrown philosophical attempt so excuse me for that. But, I was really trying to reflect around this question, what is artificial to you? I mean, or to me then in this case... And think about this in relation to sitting here in this bunker, isolated from the outside world, doing a talk proclaimed as a clandestine talk and well... Coming to this term 'artificial', I immediately started thinking about it as something that is fake, that is fictitious, that is aligned with poetry, but also current terms like 'fake news', 'propaganda'... And it seemed to be everything that this situation in the bunker is supposedly not. So here we're kind of engaged in an intimate conversation where, we'll come to this pragmatic letter later, but we're not online, we are online but let's say we are not online. We are dis-intermediated and we are entering into an ideal personal discourse, discursive network with each other. And then we can also think about this current political moment and about populist politics and the kind of revolt against artifice, against the language of true people and not the expert, for example. So there's this whole play of course of authenticity in this term.

    And I perceive this site as potentially authentic. So, there is something maybe positive in this about the artificial, on the kind of superficial level that...   **8**

Yeah, no it brings us into a real constellation, a relation with each other. But then this is of course a contingent idea also. Artificial can only be, kind of, formulated in relation to something which is then not artificial, and so I came to the bunker as possibly off the grid, possibly non-mediated. But the fact that we are actually online, we are being streamed, contradicts this of course totally. I would have wished for, in this idea of the artificial, I would have... And also an authenticity against each other, somehow I would have wished for a much more radical approach of course and that nothing had been kept-

... Announced also or documented online. That nobody even, probably, knew which topics. Maybe there could be a cloud somewhere with some associated term, like also in the artwork... But really people wouldn't be able to access so fine grade information as it is now so... But I'm recognizing this also as my personal kind of desire for living off the grid, in a world where one isn't constantly beset by communication networks and precarious work and so on. So I want to criticize this, kind of desire, at the same time to make this polarity. And I came up with the statement that we have *always* been artificial. I would like to embrace this as a kind of starting point, and then I would go actually to very similar reflections to what you made Sébastien but rather than doing that immediately, we can continue or somebody else can pick up the thread from that.

✱   Let me think about this idea of an artificial reality... I don't refer to Slavoj Zizek so often, but he said something that I thought was really interesting about virtual reality. Someone told him about these kinds of people who are completely derealized, or artificialized because of virtual reality. And he said that "in a way, the term 'virtual reality' would imply that there would be something existing such as 'real reality.'" Slavoj Zizec refers to Lacan saying that there's no such thing as reality. We are "naturally" artificialized since we are functioning within a relation between the imaginary, the real and the symbolic.

And this was something Avital Ronell referred to as well. As soon as some technological apparatus states itself to be completely disruptive and sets another kind of paradigm, she's always deconstructing it in such a way that we could think "oh, but it has always been like that even before this new technology came up." She's talking about these people walking hands in hands in the street but each of them talking with someone else on their telephones. These people are physically stuck together but connected somewhere else with someone else, they are physically with the others but living in virtual world. Ronell says that this schism already existed before the invention of the telephone but without the tool.

☐   Exactly this concept actually on the virtual, I forgot the point now, but I would like to consider also the bunker as a virtual space and it's much more virtual reality than when you go and see here on the biennial... Virtual reality work, putting on work, putting on these helmets. I believe that the situation we're in here now is much more, kind of the virtual idea of coming together in this physical material space while actually existing for the sake, also at the same time, of mediation and an institutional wish to bring us together that we comply with and can interact with of course, and perhaps alter in some way. But definitely this virtuality is so close to artificial. And the contingency again of the concept, I think.   **9**

/   Well, I was thinking in the past week, as there has been the uprisings in Beirut and there's a very similar bunker. I don't know if you've seen that. It's the egg building, which was this brutalist architecture supposed to be turned into a cinema but it's just... It's been left there for this construction project for decades. So now people basically occupied the egg and these AUB academics who have been on strike basically started to run lectures there. So then the function of the bunker is transformed and this is happening, they can parallel to this bunker.

O   That's nice. What you were discussing before I was thinking Kristoffer, is how truth demands protocols while authenticity, I mean also has protocols, but it's perceived as if it doesn't have. In the sense that – take Donald Trump, he is not telling the truth but he's authentic at the same time.

✱   And what kind of authenticity is it?

O   Yes. I mean people perceive him as authentic... He's saying what's on his mind. And when you need to have protocols, for example: Journalism, you have to compile sources and so on, or think about a legal language, all those things that can be immediately criticized as "you speak in this kind of coded professional language" I mean truth has protocols. Different civilizations devise different ways to come up with the idea of truth. And so, for example with law and so on, of course it's very limited, it's all about factuality and those kinds of things, which is only part of the truth. But those kinds of things are undermined by authenticity. So truth and authenticity are now on different polls.

✱   Can we talk about Bas Jan Ader rather than Trump? Well I'm thinking about *I'm Too Sad To Tell You*, which I think is a fascinating work regarding this issue of authenticity. The supposedly authentic emotion versus a kind of rational truths. The film starts with the hand written sentence: "I'm Too Sad to Tell you"... He is using discursive language to state the fact that he cannot say something. And what he shows then is himself crying, which is supposed to be, the kind of an embodied expression of a sincere, authentic truth.

What I'm interested in is how he puts us in front of a double dilemma. He states for the unsayable to deconstruct both the opacity and the transparency of meaning. We can be moved in front of his face crying but it's ambiguous. He is acting someone crying; therefore, he completely breaks the authenticity of his supposedly sincere somatic expression. It's a fake authenticity. So in a way he brings the late 18th and 19th century early romantic ethos, the ürphanomen. He moves the romantic deep resonance with nature which is supposed to be authentic to highways, cars and movie industry of Los Angeles in the '60s.

O   I have a question. So, okay. You remember In Godard's *La Chinoise*, Jean Pierre Léaud is telling this story about the Chinese students. Basically, it's the summer of '67, these students took over one of their parents' house because they went on *vacance*, and this is a mockumentary of sorts.

So, he's asked a question from behind the camera and he then repeat the question, "What is an actor? I'll tell you what's an actor." And then he does this thing that for me is like on many, many levels operates as a demonstration of what is it to demonstrate. Basically, he has this medical band, you know to cover wounds, this long band, and he starts covering his face and while he's covering his face he's telling the story: Chinese students were standing in the red square and were demonstrating against the Soviet government, because of its revisionist stance, because of Brezhnev. This is while China is going through the cultural revolution and so on. Then these students were attacked by police, brutally. The next day they come again and now by that time Léaud finishes to cover his face. They come again and one of the students is covered, his face is covered with bandages like he just did. And then all the press is coming to him, flocking and taking pictures, *France Soir* etc., everyone trying to figure out what's going on with this guy. He's shouting, "Look what these revisionists of the Soviet union did to me. Look what they did to me", and he started to unveil his face and nothing happened. Léaud gradually unveils his own face, and he continues. So all the journalists and press are shouting at the Chinese student "What is this?", "He's a liar", "He's a conman", "What does this mean?" And then Jean Pierre Léaud is saying to the camera, "No but you have to understand. This was true theater, this was a reflection on reality." And I would even say, this is the difference between representation and demonstration. So, when we cannot represent, you know with metadata, algorithms, all those things that are beyond our vision, we cannot see, you know... Machine vision doesn't need the same conditions we do. What we can do is demonstrate. Demonstrate relations, demonstrate how things work, kind of. In your video, Bahar, *Beyond Scarcity*, what you have is actually demonstrating in relation with reality, not just, you know, representing it because we need to show, to represent it, like you're saying because of language, because of our relation to language actually are kind of distrust with it. So anyway, this is... I was just thinking of... Because this example goes with me, like, for different reasons, but this kind of relation between representation and demonstration is an interesting shift.

✱   That leads to question the notion of recognizing the ethics of the irreducible insincerity of any statement and the danger that consists in self proclaiming a fully conscious sincerity. The suspension of belief that the logos seemingly pretends to achieve. I recently listened to a conference of someone who is a specialist of the 'affect' in the Middle Ages. He completely transformed the classical 19th Century conception proclaimed by Michelet who analyzed that Middle Ages people behaved emotionally like kids. Even Kings were publicly crying, yelling, and they were, like over demonstrating their emotions. Michelet conceived emotions in a teleological way from an ancient mode of emotional affect towards the rational, from the visceral to the logos, based on a conception of evolution toward a more rational way of behaving in modern times.

According to him we are supposed to be grown up rational beings. A joke!! A more recent interpretation of these very intense emotions tells something completely different. In the Middle Ages, people acted very strongly, demonstrated emotions theatrically but in very rational way. It was very coded, it must have looked like artificial, but it was socially articulated by precise conventions. It's a historical bias since for us today, it seems childish and visceral.

/   Almost ritualistic-

✱   Ritualized, yeah-

/   Which actually makes me think about... Because even with performative, I'm not very convinced that that leaves out the representational. Because of this presence of the ritual. Like, there is something that's maybe socially constructed, which goes back to language again. And it's finally like, we're going around so many psychoanalytic notions, like the mistrust for language with Lacan or yeah, the missed... They really don't believe in someone crying in front of them, that doesn't mean anything, the presence of affect. But there's also this... Andy Warhol had a famous quote. He said, "What happened to emotions after the '60s?" And then he said, "Nothing. They're still out there but they are no more ours." So it's like this kind of... It became a cloud. It turned into something else, it's just a disembodiment.

☐   Well, there's this whole field of course, and they're so called affective computing. And 'Affectiva' is probably the most famous example of this startup that works in this domain. I mean-

✱   Artificial emotion?

☐   -Stating the obvious of... Yeah, artificial emotion, but actually, as you're always talking about optimization - optimizing our own emotions through technology, that in turn has then objectified and data-fied and established a model of human emotion. I mean, this is the basis also-

✱   But on rational basis.

☐   Yeah. Well, I mean they're here and you don't have, I think anymore, this opposition between the rational and the emotional or even the affective domain. And actually going back to Shannon and Weaver and the mathematical theory information, this famous paper from 1948, I'm not sure if it's the same paper you discussed, but there they also clearly say that actually this theory doesn't have anything to do with the meaning in a hermeneutical sense iof messages. It's the signal to noise ratio is what matters and how that information is classified and therefore also human emotion can be of course stratified in this way. And that's why new patents have been registered not so long ago. Also in relation to Amazon's Alexa, just to name one example, where the software is detecting emotional timbers in the voice of the user and perhaps suggesting a certain of course of action based on that. So I don't know where, how we came here-

✱   Think about the artificial voice and how the computers tried to fill it with emotion in order to be truthful. There was this 1961 advertising by Bell Lab showing its new fantastic tool. A computer filled with punch cards adding progressively human tones to the artificial voice that makes it less artificial. And at the end, what they do is – they ask the computer to sing a song. So they add another punch card with a song.

And the computer sings *Daisy,* this song "Daisy Daisy, give me your answer to..." it's a story of marriage. They don't have a lot of money, but they will be happy. So it's a kind of a... It's a *'mise en scene'* of a kind of wedding between human and machine, where machine is making an artificial copy of what is supposed to be the more human emotions. And what's funny is that it's exactly the same song that Stanley Kubrick used at the end of *2001*, where he unplugged the punch cards and the computer dies. And the computer 'AI' is asking, "Can I sing you a song that my creator, my engineer used to song for me?" And it's "Daisy, Daisy" again. So this is how Kubrik celebrated the divorce between the human and the machine.

☐   Can I tell a story? Because my grandfather used, he's passed away, but he worked in the Swedish taxation system, so to speak. He was like a boss of a local county office. And he was involved in the computerization of the Swedish tax and civic registration, which was like the biggest computerization project in the welfare state in the '50s and '60s. And what happened was that a colleague of his was running one of these kind of first data centers, which was basically a whole cellar with an IBM system, 1401 system. And there they discovered that by using, or they didn't discover it there, but the engine... The people who were working there were using the system also to produce music, through the punch cards and a specific printer, which was one of the first kind of mass produced and kind of office printers.

But it had, like a revolving or heavy revolving chain on which the print hammer was hitting and it could produce, apparently also a range of three octaves. So by feeding this punch card systems with nonsense data, nonsense in relation to kinds of civic and tax registration, they were doing exactly these kinds of songs like, actually *Daisy* or *She'll Be Coming Around The Mountain When She Comes*. Somebody at IBM maybe in the US had figured this also out and spread this further to the Swedish bureaucrats. And it so happened that they got a visit from a Tanzanian exchange student group. There was a lot of, kind of third world like development cooperations going on with Sweden and the newly, kind of postcolonial States at that time. And what they did at this particular tax office was to take reprogrammed, or they created a program where they could play the new Tanzanian National Anthem, which was co-written by Julius K. Nyerere, was one of these famous kind of first post-colonialist leaders in Africa.

So this meeting within the human and the machine, and the kind of post colonial context. Yeah, for me it's like a story that really it talks about, also a little bit that, this kind of the breakdown of course on the functionality of using the systems within. Against the grain... But also like the very mundane character of all these so-called 'artificial intelligence systems'. Because I really believe that we can call most of software development 'artificial intelligence', the ordering and sorting through algorithmic operations, data based on some kind of human organization or activity. It is what artificial intelligence is mostly about. It's not about creating this general emulation of intelligence that we don't know what it is in the first place. But, where we start looking at these kinds of instances where some kind of creative gap or some kind of dialogue, as in this case, you have to kind of analyze it further I think to see also problematics in it...

But, this kind of... These white engineers who wanted to demonstrate the amazing wonders of their system, but they came up with doing this music. I think it's kind of... It's this reinsertion poetics sometimes that may be also, make us see the limits of the systems and, kind of, ground a little bit more our understanding of them rather than buying into their 'Ray Kurzweil' singularity.

○   I remember being... As a kid, they would have this joke about appliances if it's expensive, "What, it can also make tea?" Like, if you would get a basic computer then why so expensive? So it's like you're saying, it has also other functions that are helping us outside of what it was designed for.

✱   'Against the grain', I think is something extremely important that... It not only comes from artists, I was talking about the *House of Dust* by Alison Knowles earlier where she's going against the grain of technology. But the first computer-generated poem was earlier, 1957 by Theo Lutz and who was an engineer. And what he did was to produce random permutations of sentences coming from, and he didn't choose it by chance, coming from *The Castle* by Kafka... Which is of course the emblematic description of the nightmare of administration and of dictatorship and the super controlled environment and political system.

And I saw that it was like something readdressing Kafka's... And in a kind of a clandestine way, inserting it into the machine to go against its grain and to also re-shuffle Kafka... Like, using the 'Kafkaian' machine in order to reshuffle for today. So, what with these words that Kafka put on paper, that was printed, should continue to be translated for today and continue to address a whole, the artificial technologized human based on these kinds of rational incontestable parameters or mathematics, could like address... Like, continually because the poem is endless. You can reshuffle Kafka's text endlessly.

☐   So within the first so-called electronic literature as you can align it.

／   I have a bit of a, maybe abstract, opposition to the kinds of, the hacking scenarios. Because I think what it mostly at least, like as we see happening these days, the whole discourse of hacking does this, in a kind of twisted way, essentializes the medium as – this is the only way it can be... But as, like if you think about it, something like internet, again going back to the Soviet case, there is something about the contingent history, which is – it could be something else... But it doesn't mean that this thing at the moment is, you know... Yeah, it has the potential as if it's not necessarily in the present of the medium.

We can think about it more on a timeline, in a nonlinear way maybe. But yeah, I think especially with finance, I find it a bit difficult when people try to experiment with the medium as is now. Whereas like there might be ways of just like thinking about it radically, differently. It's like... It's so much like – fatalism has determined engaging with the machine, I think that's what I'm trying to say... That you don't even try to get near it. It's like you gave it off to Google and whatever and that's it. And-

○　Okay, so we focused on the device, right? to go back to something Kristoffer said and also specifically give an example of, kind of – the being without the device. You gave this example of Avital Ronell with the people with the telephones. So I'm thinking of, sorry, it's again a Godard example, he has this TV series *Six fois deux – Sur et sous la communication* with Anne-Marie Miéville. They have so many masterpieces, but this is also a masterpiece, it's a TV series, it's all available on YouTube if you're interested.

/　What's it in English?

○　It's called the *Six Times Two; Over and under the media.* it's made up of images and then they describe them, but then when they are formulated as words, they change their meaning totally. And back and forth and back and forth and really like, it's really fantastic and I think there's a lot of humor and invention in it, you know the kind of, the playfulness that Miéville I feel brings to their collaborations. In any case, there's a moment where you see a kind of found footage situation and you see someone walking a dog and the voice is of a conversation "What do you see?" And he's saying, "I see a man walking a dog. No, I see people on a telephone" because the person is communicating with the dog through a cable, right.

✱　Before the Wi-Fi...

○　Yeah, totally. But I mean to say that at the same time we know that devices are apparatuses and they come with a set of operational protocols operating on us, and especially when it becomes algorithmic and this system we're in feels hermetic, in a way. So, things are amplified a million times more than they used to. Today, you have children trying to kill themselves because of bullying in school that then is extended and amplified by social media. Maybe in previous times they wouldn't have because that environment that bullies them didn't encapsulate their whole life. Nowadays there's not a moment that they can get out of it. And so this is the amplification of the system. What I mean to say, maybe it's more like kind of biblical that the device brings new laws. When Moses comes with the tablets, it's new laws.

/　And this is a very good description of AI actually, as the generation of the new is actually in the rules. Not so much in content. I mean it's an interesting way of looking at it. Maybe not-

▢　That's why AI is so good to playing chess, because it's a rule form... It's a formal rule-based system.

○　But I understand that when Kasparov was playing, he played three times, so he lost. But then the last time he won because he didn't play to win. Because the computer, it was programmed that the other side is trying to win. But if he was playing not to win, which is a capacity a human has to kind of improvise on that level, and so he was able to counter the computer.

✱   So meaning the computer was programmed against someone who is willing to win?

⭘   Who only wants to win, but he was going for a tie or for losing. And so it confused...

/   Trump strategy.

✱   Historically, psychological experimentations, started like early 20th century with a shrink who identified the fact that when someone on a bicycle is cycling alone, he'll go less faster than if he is cycling with someone else. Being two is supposed to generate a competition. So, the kind of modelization of behaviors was always for the sake of winning in terms of quantification: to go faster. But the bicycle man was not asked instead, "Do you prefer to bike alone or with someone nice and pleasant? Do you prefer cycling watching a sunset?" Psychological experimentations were measuring "speed" and not the pleasure to bike. So that's interesting that the mission failed as soon as he wanted just to enjoy moving the chess and have fun without a goal.

/   It's also, I mean, I'm thinking with 'adversarial neural networks', the way they work... Maybe the basic form of them you know better, Kristoffer, but basically there are two competing algorithms and it's actually a very productive form of sabotage. Like, you can think about it as, like 'Capitalism 2.0', like they actually – in trying to defeat each other, they'd learn and they grow together. So, this idea of, like winning is a bit twisted because basically there're multiple actors in the system. So it's not you as yourself as this singularity trying to win. Yeah.

☐   I think this change of behavior in Kasparov, it's definitely related to so-called 'generative adversarial networks'. It's something which was becoming much more and more, like a thing today... Is this, we call adversarial attacks, which are not actually hacks in the sense of "Okay, I'm breaking into the code," but you realize that the machine or the algorithm is reacting to data in a certain way. It's trying to optimize a certain way of behaving and therefore you could also start to optimize slightly differently. And it produces, maybe not like a formal error in the system, it's not like you broke the code, but you broke what it was trying to achieve in relation to what we perceive as the goal of the system from the designer's point of view, or from the...

I mean, with self driving cars for example, this is like something which is now being discussed. That, you can put just objects there that will be a misread, so it will think there is a road there. And actually for the machine there is a road there but it's actually just, like a black hole or... Like, this kind of actually soft, non-code ways of hacking. It's also referred to now as 'adversarial hacking'. So a new book by Meredith Broussard I think, which is this 'Artificial Unintelligence', which doesn't actually mention I think adversarial, but it's all about those kinds of errors.

⭘   What's her name?

◻   Meredith Broussard like a French sounding name, but she's at MIT. Yeah.

/   It's like tough love.

○   I also feel there is a shift from when we talk about let's say 'reproductive labour', because you said tough love, so... And love and supporting life, creating life, the entanglement also basically reproducing ideology that is oppressive to the people who are reproducing it. But then with automation, I feel there is an assault on women directly. I am invited to do studio visits in different Art Schools in the US and I had, in the same school, two female artists. One is a painter and one is a sculptor and while they are doing their work, both of them are doing something called 'camming'.

    'Camming' is a form of porn online - you go online to a website, you have to pay or you don't have to pay. And there's a live stream of a girl basically doing, kind of like a striptease but it's... She put it, it's a laptop there, right? In a room doing that, and you can write her and she comes to the computer and she writes back and sometimes she has a neck mic so you can hear what's going on. So one is a painter, while painting doing camming. And the other one she is a sculptor doing it in this way. So what is the place for women in this kind of, the digital? It's camming. After reproduction is taken from them, with all that is the oppressive nature of how it is managed in our society, what are they given? I think this extreme violence towards women, in France, in Israel, in the US, in Mexico, these places where you have this kind of horrible domestic violence taking place, huge numbers every week. It has to do with this crisis of meaning and the economic crisis generated by automation. The shift that we're all experiencing – from struggles in the point of production to the point of realization, is also related to this. No one's talking about workers' rights, but you will talk about rents or you will talk about gentrification or consumer boycott. There's a joke, where the guy is on the plane and there's Wi-Fi and everybody is so excited because it's the first time you have Wi-Fi on a flight but then the Wi-Fi doesn't work for a second and the guy loses it, he's so frustrated... Also road-rage in the US it's like, it's all those things that have to do with... There's also, buffering, the rage of buffering-

✱   Is the syndrome of prosthesis that generate disabilities.

○   Yes. But we don't have political vocabulary for these phenomena.

✱   How do you relate that with the idea of artificial, the idea that the machine artificially generates a desire?

○   The idea that life can be produced outside the female body. Like, there is this imagination, right? And there's the imagination of eternal life for the super rich. In Silicon Valley they have these ideas, like a vampire kind of logic. So all those things are kind of embedded with this misogynism and a denial of, basically a person who is perceived as a woman from any agency. I think that's what digital is and it's-

✱   Not so much her word that has value, it's her body producing the work, which is filmed?

O   That used to be the case, like that's reproductive labor. Basically a woman is twice being impoverished because she is producing and taking care of the labor power that will then be exploited, and she doesn't have access to organized labour when she is employed. So, if you think about it, I mean I have this idea – US 2008 the elections, the primaries were Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. He's supposed to be this figure that stands for the civil rights movement and she's for the history of feminism, but you knew that both of them will give Wall Street whatever it wants, right? So you're in a situation where those two histories came crushing. What we call feminism is basically a two-income household. It's a necessity. It has nothing to do with feminism and real equality. In a world where labor moved from those big industrial centers in Europe, and in the US somewhere else, one income was not enough and then women had to also cover for that. And now when labor is leaving even the assembly line for automation, then I think again that we can see how women are those who are paying for that, now in the point of realization.

/   I don't follow that end conclusion. How do you-

O   Under capitalism, technology is a counter-revolution. The digital revolution was women 'camming', can be simply perceived as a counter-revolution. I mean, is the digital a female project? A feminist project? On the level of the reality it's not, you know what I mean?

☐   Well, I have to invoke cyber-feminismthough.

O   For sure, I'm taking all these ideas from cyber feminism. At the same time that you have Amazon going, you have states in the US reinstituting a 'ban on abortions.' For me, it's not competing. It's not like this is backward and this is forward. No, they're both of the same moment because that forward is just another extension of that backward.

☐   Yes. On the topic of 'camming', I watched only last week a two hour documentary on Chinese live streamers which covers exactly this phenomenon. But the filmmaker, she had chosen to focus, not on like the celebrity streamers because live streaming has become a huge phenomenon in China, now they're censoring and closing down some of these platforms, but the focus was really on like marginal, people really on the margins of society, like handicapped or, I don't know how to say, unemployed or very low wage, very precarious labor, crane drivers. Like, there's such a variety of sweatshop workers and people that are actually streaming just from their everyday situations. Maybe, initially with some hope that they would become internet celebrities and you can earn some money, so they constantly get these messages – "So and so user has gifted you two tiger coins" and they're like, "Thank you" but actually they're very, very lonely but you get like a reciprocity feeling that the people watching them are also quite lonely.

But what this film, in a way, conveys is a little bit contradicting this idea of – it's a purely kind of exploitation, because clearly these people have no friends and have almost no chance of getting any friends to relax. So, this whole idea of the internet as a space to actually connect and make friends, and to have a, kind of an artificially produced social life in that very basic sense of the artificial and I think this is not unresolved just by applying the Marxist perspective. I think that there is still this tension within that culture. However, we think it's all platformed and it's all data-fied and it still affects people on this level.

⭘   Fireworks in China, are the same chemical substance as gunpowder in Italy, right? I agree, the device can do different things, it's how we use it... But it also comes with, like the world in which it was developed. And for those art students, sometimes it's the idea that painting takes so much time, how can I do something else while I'm doing this? Or, I need money, so how do I generate an income while I'm doing my art? Okay, I'll do this 'camming'.

/   Especially with the art economy. It's interesting that this 'post fordism' is around the art market, because your work doesn't sell anyways. So, I mean if you do paintings maybe, but-

⭘   I asked them, if you need money when you finish your degree, go into banking, that's where you make money. Nobody went to these kinds of things and came out with money. Maybe the agents or whoever owns the platform make money but the person who is actually performing, that's not what happens with them usually.

✴   Even though in some art schools they train them to, in order to perform a way to sell their work. They're very trained-

⭘   And so in their critique they would talk to them about Annie Sprinkle and I am not sure it has anything to do with that. Annie Sprinkle is like someone who actually asserts authority through irony.

/   So do they make it part of their practice or?-

⭘   If we think of their practice, then painting while camming might men looking at someone like Yves Klein; take your body, cover it with paint and use it on the canvas.

✴   He was a good businessman.

⭘   Yes. But for that art student today it's better business to go into banking anyway, I think.

◻   It's also really the moment when the network having become so infrastructural that it is similar to TV. So kind of, you turn on the TV while cooking or constantly have TV on in your home. Now you have a instead a stream that is constantly on. But there's nothing sensational about it, it's the new medium, the new network infrastructure, media condition in that sense, right?

○   This is a great example of something that I think we can consider with some historical referencing. When Martin Luther has to talk about images, I think it's 1529. He has this sermon about the printed image and he says that unlike the Catholic, it's not simply a representation. These are kind of low res woodcut that then becomes a print so everybody knows that it's not this amazing baroque embodiment of Christ on the cross like the Catholics have it, but it's something else. And so what is that thing? He calls it memory image. And the memory image is exactly what you're talking about. What are we doing when we touch the screen? What is the camera… The camera on the telephone works basically only knows what it already knows, it's based on what you already took – photos… It's also true to your digital camera, when you had to adjust from landscape to portrait in the past because it has a reference of what it's about to look at based on what it already knows. So every image is a memory image. So, for Martin Luther memory image means – every image reminds you of divine law.

□   It's a "Gedächtnisbild" as they say in German.

○   For us, what is the memory image? What is the material from which digital is made? Capital. Finance. Everything is a reminder of that streaming, just turn on the streaming, it's… In order to be in the world in a way. Because when you all by yourself just cooking, you're in the bunker or something. Thank God we're streaming because we're in the world, you know what I mean? And the digital is kind of even these tubes, it's like the people with oxygen masks in the, like that we're wearing now, the oxygen mask in the hospital is connecting us to the veins. The digital, is that formation of something else, which is capital. Martin Luther was my way into it, but I feel you gave the example that it doesn't matter what's going on. It's not sensational, but it's to remind us, it's like a memory image rather than a representation.

✱   Regarding this notion of artificial and what you just said, and it might sound weird to jump from that to that, but I've been thinking about the statement of Marcel Broodthaers where he declared himself inauthentic at the moment he shifted his practice from poetry to visual art. He said something like that: "Me too, I would like to become successful and make money therefore I will make an inauthentic visual artwork." And immediately he's describing the contract with his gallery and so on… And I was wondering what remains today of this possibility to critically deconstructing the notion of authenticity. What his way of unveiling the artificiality of the art system looks like today. How criticizing the system of art and its relation with finance and reactionary positions can exist today without stating inauthenticity beforehand?

○   Like poetry is the truth, right? As opposed to art where there's a market. So it becomes tainted and therefore you can be like… So, basically every person in the art world is an artist no matter who, but what kind? A con artist, right? On that kind of level, the gallery is the curator of the artists, everybody's kind of trying to get a better deal from everybody. While a poet is supposedly just speaking the truth, I don't know if that's true knowing poets. Yeah-

✱   Broodthaers was deconstructing these issues then and I'm wondering who today we could identify as artists who critically deconstruct, acknowledge artificiality without being cynical... This is what I first thought of Hito Steyerl for example. But I have the feeling that she moved away from this kind of position.

○   But I would go back instead of forward in the sense that, once poetry was what, then science took over and that is the way to tell the truth. This is wholemeal, you tell the people what happened in the world, what's happening, how the world works. This is supposed to be poetry too. We pulled about, all the human experience possible and then comes science and takes over the... And it holds to this day to an extent this, kind of authority of whatever is scientifically proven is also limited in time because the whole apparatus is supposed to be that they will be proven wrong because there's a new thing that approves it. So until it is, how's it called? "It's true until it's proven to be untrue." Yeah, so this logic that science has kind of took over from politics. But what do you mean with Hito Steyerl that shifted or...?

✱   Oh, because she was using the field of art simultaneously as a case study for her forensic examination of corruption and cynical behaviors and as a forum to promote her work and not analyzing the artificiality of this manovre. She very strongly revealed some hidden aspects of the kind of artificial probity and progressivity some people in the arts are engaged in. She showed what is happening behind the artificial progressist facades. She shows what we all know: how some self-proclaimed progressists left wing, agit prop institutions are treating their employees like animals and behave in the most outrageous neoliberal way. But what happens when she does that using exactly the same tools as the ones she is criticizing: The very same institutions and heavily produced installations, very advanced and expensive software for composing virtual reality. Yet, she never analyzes to my knowledge how artificial her position is.

/   I'm thinking about inauthenticity.

✱   I am talking about this statu-quo, this way of hiding this inauthentic probity.

/   I think the relationship between the inauthenticity here is interesting to indeterminacy as Suhail Malik describes, which is I think that's where you're going at with the Hito case and the indeterminacy is more of an intentional inauthenticity. I think it brings us back to, like what would be an intentional inauthenticity, which is the condition of neoliberalism. That's what allows art market to survive, that's what he's saying. That you need to be free in a sense to be mobilized on a free market. And the freeness is like open-enededness and wishi-washiness and just a criticality that doesn't quite work. Yeah, I'm thinking about that twisted inauthenticity.

✱   No, I'm talking about Hito Steyerl because at some point, the work became so heavily produced. There's so much money in the production of her work, that at some point you can, like... What's the point of denouncing something from a place where she's, kind of became a symptom of-

/   Or, like the whole Whitney biennial every two years. Everyone's waiting for the Whitney crisis this year, what's going to happen?

☐   But this is, in a way, it's called demise of institutional critique, that you were speaking about. I remember that one of the books I have on this subject, *Institutional Critique*, it is called is co-edited by Hito Steyerl. But I think already there, this book is already like 10... 15 years old. This whole trajectory is being described how, from the artists criticizing the institution to the institution criticizing itself and then-

✱   The institutionalization of critique.

☐   Yeah. And the critique of critique as such of course. But-

✱   I know it's the industrialization of critique.

☐   Industrialization of critique also, but I think there's also a being self-aware about the futileness of critique and being meta about it as an art institution is something even that is now, like very much a strategy or a kind of a disarming of critique by ascribing to the critique of critique as well. And then finding artistic trends that corresponds to this. Whereas on the other hand, I think there's some big greater public awareness and not so much tied to the individual artistic gesture anymore of the demand for more actual transparency in the art and the culture world. And, I mean from everything, from wages to sponsorship to environmental politics. And that's something I feel also as an organizer of a festival and this increasing, actually push *against* the artificiality of cultural events that has really become much more heated. It's been there for a long time, but in the past few years you have much less manoveral room today to, kind of be playful as a cultural institution, thinking that it doesn't have consequences.

⬤   I mean, we're kind of short on time, so I'll just say that it's a generalization, but n artist like Hito Steyerl you can say makes metonymies, meaning that there's a whole system that we cannot see, but you find an image, even she would show you a static image – it's just this, kind of static snow on TV. And then she would tell you that this is from the 'Snowden Files' and this is actually American technology on an Israeli drone. And that Israeli drone was bombing Gaza, and there was a glitch and there wasn't a documentation of the explosion and so you have this static, and a girl lost her eyesight. So it's all based on facts. And so that image becomes the image of blindness of the victim. So this lyrical, kind of metonym, she would do that. This way of working, taking a detail and explaining the whole system through it, I think this shift goes hand in hand with an asserted critique. But at the same time, this model, where you play out a system which comes from the Soviets basically, "Let's see what cinema can do." So again and again you'll see workers, fine, but every time cinema is doing something else. So in *Enthusiasm*, Dziga Vertov is doing some-thing different than what is going on in *Strike* by Eisenstein. But when you show it in class, it's all this black and white workers but no, it's the playing out of a system. When you need a lot of resources for the project, in the Soviet Union it means you need the state to give you the facilities to see how you play out the system.

/　　It's like… Yeah, like we have to consider, in a Marxist sense, the material conditions of authenticity too. In the '60s… Martha Rosler was giving a talk when I was in Hong Kong in the summer, and she's talking about being against the institutions and, you know, living in New York. She lives in New York and she's, like teaching her students, "Don't become part of the system" or whatever. It's like, how in these current conditions, how do you actually suggest them to do it? Because when you're started your career things were radically different, and she knows it too but-

○　　Yeah. And not only that, there's a lot of literature on, the meaning of '68… And you can see after World War Two, China, Iran, Vietnam against the French and then the Americans, Algiers, right? It's happening around the world. And then when it gets to the centers of the industrial world nothing happens. And what comes out of that, is I think a lot of what the kind of, I don't know if Martha Rosler was, but her generation is, counter culture. Which it not the beginning of anything, if anything, it's the end of a lot of things. We were born into this, kind of - the individual artist and the gesture is supposed to save us. But any political struggle will teach you, it's not about individuals, it's about organizing. It's another, different project altogether. And the infrastructure doesn't exist for us anymore…

□　　I wanted just quote this famous book title by Fred Turner, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture*. So it led to something for sure, it led to the actual artifice that we made as the basis of this discussion.

○　　I would say, "from hobbyists to Nazis." You know what I mean? From that kind of culture of home-brew computing to home-brew fascism, on the 4chan. That's also the history of the digital.

□　　It's not the only history.

○　　Yes.

□　　But it is definitely… Yeah, it's true. But also that, I mean that's something that I'm super interested in is… But now I'm actually bringing it more to the question of alt-dividal cultures in general. Maybe we shouldn't go there. But the fact that the story is often told from counterculture to cyberculture, but also like, actually it's exactly the same point you already made about the Soviet cyberneticians and the possible alternative development contingent with what actually happened, that it could have been maybe realized in another way. I don't mean this in the way, naive way, another world is kind of possible, but there were always alternative trajectories also in the, kind of 'digital network infrastructure AI' that we were discussing. And I find super fascinating to find this, kind of… In computer language we also call this kind of 'forks'. How could you have forked differently?

○　　There's this daily newspaper of MIT, the newspaper the students, the students newspaper 'Tech', it's all online and I was researching this for an exhibition I curated, *In The Liquid* (2018), and you see there that they had 'sit ins' in was basically a CIA-run program for intervening in other regimes.

It still exists this institution to this day and I saw a panel discussion with Salim Tamari about Palestine when it was 70 years to the state of Israel. So that institution still exists, which is all about American foreign policy. But t the time, they had 'sit ins', and Chomsky was still a young professor and he was one of the four who called for having in the labs a day of no research to kind, as they couldn't have a strike. This was mainly round March '69, they had all these things because they realize that they are working for the war machine.

☐   'Paraculture', no?

○   There was resistance to and understanding of where the system is going from the beginning by some.

☐   And sometimes through the integration of that resistance as even... Cautious kind of cultural, alternative, cultural diplomacy. "Let's tolerate these people, let's actually amplify them." Interesting, countering the counter.

✱   When you are talking about how an idea can be twisted from counterculture to mainstream fascism I have the feeling that it does not so much pay attention to what lies behind the systems that twists. In other words, the sets or configurations on which idea can go through. In other words by which way or tools a speculation, a fiction can be applied scale one. I think the way we can attribute a value to artificiality depends on that. It made me think about an event that happened in 1920 in the German studio of UFA during the shooting of the film *Deception* by Ernst Lubitsch. Four thousand extras were ready to play the scene of an upheaval. The extras were unemployed poor people wearing 16th century costumes in exchange of a sandwich. But the food was late and when some politicians arrived on stage for a quick visit, the extras started demonstrating for real. So the field of artificiality of a movie set shifted to a real stage.

/   It's almost like trauma theory to... The reenactment of the event, in a way as the artificial that gives rise to the original. Like, the original actually happens in the reenactment.

○   Right. Actually true, right? With all these reenactments on the storming of the 'Winter Palace'. But what you're actually saying is that the dream is – that reality will penetrate again-

✱   I've no idea if what we see in the film is the real revolution or the fictitious, the artificial revolution.

☐   I mean most populist, or if you also look at fundamentalist religious movements, as well are based on the reconstructed ideal past that never existed. So, they're based already on this kind of simulation, this artifice, and I see it as an attempt to call that into reality actually. It never existed is also but now it exists! Apparently.

○   So I have a kind of an anecdote and from November '89, when the Berlin Wall was falling, the national television in the Soviet Union had these sessions with a hypnotist that was supposed to hypnotize the people in the Soviet Union. He was all about healing them and would tell the viewers "If you have a problem with your heart, sit next to the TV on this side, on this side." But it was a way also of distracting them from what was going on. And the reading was exactly this, that supposedly real existing socialism was just a dream, maybe a nightmare, but the idea, you know the beautiful idea is a dream – unrealistic and so on. And the breaking of the Berlin Wall, was perceived as reality penetrating that kind of hallucination, this massive hypnosis, that is socialism. But we are now 30 years later, and there's this term 'false awakening'. Like, in a Buñuel movie – you think you wake up but you're still inside the dream. So I think '89 was this false awakening, but actually you are deeper in the dream and now you don't have a reference for reality because you think you woke up. But also you don't have a reference for a dream because you woke up from a dream in your dream. And this exactly would be a metaphor for the digital – this is where we are neither able to dream, nor able to act. So how do you bring reality, the real back? And to think even more in relation to this, so you know, the Cyber the Greek word. I am sorry, this is my PhD. In Plato's dialogue, Alcibiades A, it's a conversation between Socrates and Alcibiades. He's asking Socrates about governance. In this dialogue they use the word Kivernesis which means steering, like steering a ship. Navigation we call it. And in Hebrew, which takes lot from Ancient Greek, the word for a sea captain is "Kvarnit." It comes directly from Greek. So they're talking about this, right? Navigation, but as a metaphor for good governance. Now when we are now here in this, kind of false awakening, you can say. I mean navigation is supposed to be Cyber, navigation in the active sense, but the reality is that we are navigated, we are governed. It's not that we are governing. But then you have these hero female captains who are actually taking African refugees into Europe, right? These different women like Pia Klemp and Karola Rackete. I think they are doing Cyber in its original meaning – navigation s good governance. And this, I think is one of those moments where you have this penetration of the real into the false awakening.

/   So you're actually talking about governance now as a non-digital...

○   Well, where would that be? That's like blood and... That's like flesh and blood, right? What is supposedly outside that? If anything. I don't know, but I just mean that this direct action that they're doing is also disrupt the whole system of-

/   I mean I'm thinking, sorry. I think this is exactly where I, kind of started with, because this is where my thinking in general ends in this question of the governance versus the contingency. Like, do we want to leave something open at the end of this cybernetic planning. And then now, there's like these uprisings everywhere on the planet and no one has the language to even describe it. Or when we try to describe with just, like piled them together as, like... Look at the whole planet, it's erupting.

But there is no specificity to it, I don't know. I'm thinking... Yeah, this sounds really old school, but what is the revolution actually doing here in terms of the contingency? I feel like even when I was in Hong Kong, this summer, this is my anecdote, but I was really troubled actually in the beginning, because I couldn't figure out the coordinates... Like, it's such a strange landscape, political landscape to try to figure out. You know, what are the dynamics when you're just transposing something onto it. And then you see, like people with British flags, asking for Trump to chime in and it's like, what's going on. But then a friend of mine kept telling me, you know, "Just like have faith in the contingency of the event." And it's very hard to be embody that. But I don't know, I still... I'm not sure about the contingency value here when we are talking about–

O   Or how far you can take an infrastructure and–

/   Yeah, exactly. Yeah, should we be cynical? Or–

O   2011, is when you don't have an infrastructure. So in Egypt, the Muslim brotherhood has infrastructure, the military has infrastructure. So they take over. Yeah.

/   But then again, I'm thinking maybe this moment... There is something specific to this moment that might go against that logic too. If the scale is vast and if there's different types of interconnectivity that can happen that wasn't part of the scenario before, I don't know, maybe I'm just naive... But again, I don't know what's the contingency would play into it. Is there a way to think about the contingency of the social events now, that's more productive?

O   What do you think of Foucault writing for *Corriere della sera* from Iran about the demonstrations in the late '70s, and then at the end when seeing what's going on with Khomeini he's saying, "Nevertheless, we should have uprised, we should have revolted. With all that I know now, still we did what should have been done."

/   Yeah, I agree with that actually.

O   But you see, it relates to what you were saying basically. It is no other–

/   There is no alternative in that moment. There is no fake or original or artificial. It's just – you actually reached that moment of, you know... It's actually absolute contingency. There is nothing that is in your hands to decide. Like, how it happened with Lebanon it was just – no one predicted this. That there was, like no indication that such a thing is going to happen in this state. Everyone's just going about their lives and then it happens within seconds.

☐   Maybe here, to bring up some abstract theorization Karen Barad's idea of intraction and entanglement where materiality and the action is inescapably already, you know... They're even, kind of are brought into existence with each other in a way. It's kind of the quantum idea again, right? Which is maybe a deadlock politically for some, but it's maybe also in other instances, something that is very generative.

⭘   Very generative is a great way to end. So we should end, yeah?

✱   Then we'll go out from the bunker... See if the world still exists outside.

⭘   Yeah. Okay guys, thank you so much.

❘   Thank you.

⭘   And with all the describing – the fact that we're on the platform somewhere, this was also-

☐   YouTube.

❘   No, but I mean... One of the, kind of a, 'once in a lifetime', 'one of a kind' experience for me to be able to meet all of you together in the same room... That they were able to, that they brought us together. So I want to thank everybody who took part in this and especially to you guys. Same. Thank you. Thank you.

⭘   Thanks to Lara.

✱   Yes, thanks to Lara. Of course.