El Tio De Cerro Rico. This is the devil watching over the mineshaft entrances in the mines of Bolivia where much of the nickel used in the devices has its origin (Isak Wisløff, KHiODA, search word: dopamining)

The Rheme is the part of the clause that gives information about the theme. In our display this clause is a visual one, and composed with a lineup of 3 images painted at a negotiated price by digital-assemblage workers near Pergatron (China). Designer Isak Wisløff got the price down from $5 to $1.8. The paintings are part of his work with artistic research at KHiO, in design.

What the project got me thinking of—while reading recently some OECD reports on the oil business from 1985—is that part of the development of *environmental care* at the terrestrial level, has to crack the logic of *economics* in the sense that the logic of economics determines what *ecologic* means. Isak's point with the project appears to decode a certain pact with the "devil".

The way I receive his work, his strategy is to go downstream of the industry of digital assemblage (East Asia) in order to get to the extraction and brokering of rare earths around the world (e.g., South America)—at heavy environmental and social costs—in a *situation* where the dominant global community sees reality through screens (causing a certain "blindness" to it).

This community is made up of—in Bruno Latour's term—of extraterrestrials. That is, people who see the world through the lens of what hubs and satellites will give them (as their "cut" of the truth). At this end, part of the problem is a kind of "ideological knowledge" of the computer: its beginnings, how it evolved, its present protocols, algorithms and, more recently, big data.

The problem with this ideology is that it continues gravitating towards the upstream knowledge sharing protocols of the early days of the internet, while what is actually going on is a landslide of downstream markets where business is accelerating and transforming whatever is left of the internet into a global vending machine. This goes *both* for digital goods *and* services.

Question: can we really be surprised at this? Well, if we look back, a similar phenomenon already happened in the oil industry in the mid 1980s. In the 60s oil companies were part of a political landscape defined by nation states. The products and early derivates were closer to utilities—like water and electricity —than to goods & services. It evolved into a commodity and refined products.

The production at the refineries paradoxically became more complex and more specialised, as the sales of crude oil went *down*. The companies were unhinged from their governments stewardship (deregulation) and were left to their own means. Which is how and why they become increasingly dependent on the sales-end, with accelerating impact of spot- and future- markets.

That is, markets where cash and oil were exchange with no delay—hence downsizing storage and reserves—and speculation on future price develop-meant in the financial world, of oil (with no actual exchange of oil). It is a market development resembling too much the digital components-markets to be ignored. So, here's a possible link between rare earths and assemblage.

In the energy sector Statoil/Equinor was one of the few exceptions to the global trend pointed out above. The acceleration of downstream market business—and the demise of political stewardship of storage and reserves—was of course facilitated by the speed and monitoring-capacity of the computer. The oil- and computer- business are comparable in scope and size.

The question of storage is also parallel: if the internet and joint computer power (big data) depend on storage, what is the role of governments here? The point of this leaflet series is to monitor the evolution of the query in the exhibition week (44) in the Vitrine of our library at KHiO. It also aims at exploring the place of the *lineup* in a learning theatre. More to come...

theodor.barth@khio.no [*attempt*] **31.10.2022**