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- A As a professor of theory and writing, I am often interested in problems and topics that are tangential to graphic design. For instance, I am interested in a letter-form used by my grandfather (b. 1902), as it was explained to me by my mother. The basis was a creased letter-paper as in the frontispiece.
- His letters started on the front-page, then continued on the back-page, then only he opened the folded paper and wrote inside: first on the left page, and then on the right page. They corresponded with a certain structure: greetings in first, then current matters, personal matters followed, and greetings.
- B This protocol of the letterform has some parallels in what was considered as the front- and backside of postcards in the same period. This I have from Harald Østgaard Lund, who as done research on post-card usage in the same period. The front was the postal side with the address and stamp. This was the official side of the card. The personal message was image w/writing.
- Nothing personal was written on the official side. An indicator of the culture at that time, of how to separate between the private and public sphere. The form of letter I mentioned, however, has the particularity of meddling between the private and public sphere. Since it was built on a clear hierarchy of information, yet with the private contents of confidentiality *docked* to it.
- C What interests me with these protocols is not their formality, but how the schemata of *mark-making*—of which I have mentioned here a few—invited *improvisation* in contact with the letter-form, postcard and social framework. That is, upstage of the public/private border. Neither front- nor backstage. It suggests a performative possibility/opportunity at border-crossing.
- This letterform continues to interest me because it features a different model of media and message: because the letterform features a self-containing logic without closing in on itself. A kind of self-integrity in *performance*, as the signature of an ethical person. One to be counted on in social relations based on trust. Also when pointing out an opportunity, or pleading for help.
- D Pull-pull and then PUSH: and in its wake interception. *Pull*: remembering the letter-form. *Pull*: iterating it in this presentation. *Push*: a surge at the National Library where they managed to produce an example from author Sigurd Undset's correspondence. *Interception*: it came to me through a relative that my grandfather's aunt—with whom he corresponded—was friends both with S.U. & Nini Roll Anker.
- This is not interpretation.* It came with the activation of the letter-form. As we all know, photos were framed or collected in albums with subtexts. Such as also bills, business cards, seating, menus and sometimes topics at major events: weddings and important dinners. I have brought some elements I am working on at the National Library to show. They feature a discipline and playfulness at mark-marking.
- My question is whether it is possible—by knowing and applying the house-rules performatively—to determine forms of interaction with materials of this sort, to understand *economics* (which literally means house-rules in the Greek etymology) on the basis of *cultural value*: its tokens, creation and current evolution. And also as way of querying who people may have been to themselves. *Fiction*.
- E An example of this kind of study, I have found in photogravure at our school. Championed by Prof. Jan Pettersson over a number of years, and extended to the younger generations of professionals in print (as G. Solis). Currently to the photogravure club. It moves from the private eye of the camera, to the public moment of the shoot. Docked to photography, photogravure offers a forensic query of the shoot.
- What was conveyed at the moment of the take *as it hit the lens*, before it was recorded, and convey this moment in print to a continuous grey scale, which is closer to a painting. It is sculptural inasmuch as the 3-day process of photogravure crosses the gap between image- and object perception. Spurring the query into fictional contents that are are not our own, in the form and performance of an object.
- F My intuition is that photogravure—on account of its multiple operations and complexity—can train me to stretch the skills I need to access the deep semantics of a husband-and-wife team, living and working in Norwegian diplomacy: 12 different residences abroad, in the Norwegian Foreign Services. If they have been given fictional names it is not out of discretion, but to give them a chance to reveal themselves.

La Kahina was an adventuress on her journeys with her *husband K*. She is named after a female Berber Jewish warlord in North Africa during the 1st century c.e. *K* is named after the geometer in Franz Kafka's novel *The Castle*. Though he is called to service by the Castle, it is with a great uncertainty insecurity of his task: *what* his job was, and *wether/not* he *had* a commission.

—II—

On this background, I am calling for the deposition of a *witness*: first photogravure as a witness of photography. And the awareness of the technical possibility of this deposition. Is some of it transferable to the scrutiny of *other* archival marks/traces than photographs? Can the combined surrender and deposit of a private archive at a National Library share this technical possibility?

A private archive constituted by 71 handwritten diaries from a period of over 40 years, kept by *La Kahina*, a small collection of public documents concerned with international politics in the oil and energy sectors, plus some photos, scraps, reminiscences and the draft of a diplomatic memoir: would it be possible to conjure *La Kahina* and *K* to witness the changes in their life-time?

I was grateful for the occasion provided by the artistic research project *Matter gesture and soul (DIKU)* to show this lineup, because it allowed offered an occasion to experiment freely with some really tough questions, harnessed with the gravitational pull of an exhibit. Pull-pull-push. What was intercepted during the photogravure session: the feel of her *suede-gloves*, the weight of the *mantilla*, the *gin-tonic*.

G What you see to the left and the right of a Parisian residency in Avenue Henri Martin are the *diary-* and *diplomatic* documents arguably belonging to the domain of letter-correspondence previously discussed. The diary-collection to left is *not entirely* private, and the document-collection to the right is *not entirely* public. They belong to the performatively extended cultural sphere of diplomacy.

The diplomatic residence is a sum of operational hierarchy and cultural conviviality. The home is a space with a regular come-and-go of guests, trends and topics. While the embassy is a space with a regular come and go of documents. Conjointly they describe the developments, twists and turns of agendas. Improvising and making one's mark: here, the Norwegian *industry & trade* in the petroleum sector.

A challenge with the proposed approach is that it could harbour an illusion, rather than featuring a method for the interception of acts. Hence the need for some definitions. *Illusion defines as a world unto itself and contains its own reality*, while the affordance of *fiction is to mediate the deeper semantics of domesticity in aspects that are immanent to memory but to which memory is blind*.

H Hence the corollary: the publication of memories begets fiction. Intercepting the resident principles of a memory and assuming it in our work makes it public. I am borrowing a notion coined by Norman Potter in *Models and Constructs: margin notes to a design culture*: "2. seek always the resident principles and find them where they belong—in the job itself."

This is a kind of performative culture in the service of archives, I found at the dpt. of Media and Conservation, at the National Library. I have had the pleasure of interacting with the dpt. on a number of occasions: seminars, workshops and meetings. In fact, I am wondering whether some of its staff members might be candidate "photograveurs". As the guardians of *deposition*.

—III—

I So, my *humble* beginnings in working with photogravure—on a heavy professorial time-schedule at KHIO—is conceptually upstage of the work I am doing with the archive of *diaries* and *diplomatic documents* in the mentioned private archive that I will attempt to hand over to the National Library, when the work is done: the transposition of hatching a deposition from the private archive.

That is, where **a)** the *handing over* and **b)** the *work of deposition correspond*. Both in the sense of an epistolary relationship with the institution, parts of the staff, and in the sense that deposition is the handing over as a performance. Alternating between the modes of performant participation and -observation. I am presently pledged to determine the technical possibility of this intent.

This is something that I am doing not only as anthropologist working in the design- and art-field. But also developing a practice incorporating artistic research methods, in the mode of the Fuller & Weizman (2021)

called investigative aesthetics. Featuring a forensic approach to archive research, that manages to pick up on the *resident principles* of the material and hatch its *domesticity*.

Does this *have to* make sense? From my perspective, I am asking: or, is it possible to use artistic methods to develop critical scientific theories? That is, using *one* practice to add precision to *another* different practice? To illustrate the possibility and relevance of these questions, I leave my own materials for a tad, and show a video on the [tick stick](#). Have any of you used one/heard of it?

J The tick stick—or, ticking stick—is a method of using *pattern* without metrics to obtain *precise* measurements. Pattern is often core to the composite mediations used by designers to make their point: obtaining precision in non-metric problems. They will typically combined experiment, narrative, format and scenario to size up problems of this kind. Sometimes hitting bull's eye.

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So, after having seen this short video about the tick stick, I will of course ask if some of this can be transposed to technologies that are docked to other technologies: such as photogravure to photography. The docking of the camera-house to the light conditions of a passing moment. The docking of a diary to life lived. The docking of documents to complex socio-technical operations.

K This is a question that I should like to ask my discussant Geir Harald Samuelsen along this vein. Since he, while climbing boulders in the Fontainebleau forest outside Paris, became aware of the technical operations of rock-climbing as a vehicle for an archaeological research on the boulders' ancient marks. Through marks of his own making, intercepting and mediating his experience.

His haptic drawings I understand as *fictionalisation* of the climbing-experience that may connect to the engravings—on similar terms as the tick stick to the wall (video)—or, mediate a *deeper* realm of their semantic *contents*, for which there needs be no words, nor semiotic code. At the margins of contents than are older than us, yet younger than the rocks: a medial zone of interceptions.

Of course, wording can add to precision—in some sense—only if it is already there. That is, it can clarify the terms in which the problem is set (Arne Næss) if the problem is specific. Which it is in the case of the boulder triangle of climbing, rock engravings and haptic drawing. Do I have a similar triangle? The triangle is local (Fontainebleau), interception is semantic, mediation is haptic (linked to touch).

If the triangle is location, semantics and mediation it is relevant at two levels: the diplomatic residence is local, the semantics are deeper and longer than their life-span. The mediation is haptic in the part that is contained by the 71 hand-written *diaries*; operational in the small collection of remarkable *diplomatic* documents. Photogravure extends the mediation dramatically because of its multiple operations.

— IIII —

L So, can we look at these structures archaeologically? It shouldn't be too hard. When they came the oil-rigs appeared on the geological scale. In retrospective they will likely be as mysterious as the subterranean structures of multiple-storey' underground Mediaeval city of Derinkuyu in Turkey. The platforms are monumental in an uncanny way. Like the brutalist modern temples of Louis Kahn.

Øyvind Rimbereid has imagined the future language germane to these locations in mid-sea, between Norway the isles and the coastal mainland of the Netherlands and Germany, in *Solaris Corrected* (2004), which was included into the canon of Norwegian literature already in 2007:

SOMTIMS ven aig svefndrauma kan
 aig draumen ein simpl, silly draum
 SO er den: AIG imago meg self
 lefa innside ein astroide
 vid hundre odder humans
 reisen vekk fra System Sol
 ne meir moons
 FOR all tiim
 onli fara out.

*VUL det einsamme
i uss da fersvinna?*

M What we are looking at here is a digital copy of the Troll platform. It is selected for this presentation because it became K's *pilot case* for the changes in international trade that gave him hopes for Norway. The Troll agreement with France came about in 1986 and included a cultural agreement with France. French Colbertism demanded a Norwegian return for the Troll gas-deal.

So, it entered the portfolio of funds managed by the Foreign Service—at a later point transferred to OCA—the latest report I found on the web is a governmental audit on these particular funds is from 2008: the Troll agreement had reduced to subvent residencies in France to learn French language. In the scope of the oil-trade the agreement had been farsighted in a limited area. Picture from *Teknisk Ukeblad*.

N But what we want to know—in terms of residence—is how it was to live and work for various groups of professionals on the oil rigs in the North Sea. This report from 1983 is from the *Statfjord A* platform. In it, Jorunn Solheim and Jon Hanssen-Bauer flesh out the activity at the platform as a *production data query system* (PDQ) from a compound of hierarchy & communality.

O It is a fortnight-based offshore/onshore work-and-leisure cycle. The hardships of weather and rugged—but advanced—technology imposed a strict *operational* hierarchy. While the conviviality springing out from the canteen was in counterpoint, featuring an egalitarian communal spirit. The authors of the report underscore that the resident professional culture is complex/platform unique.

P What I take out from this is that the tension between external environmental and internal technical pressures, will produce different semantics in conviviality—which the report states that differed between Statfjord A and Statfjord B—depending on *performance*: which leaves its marks and offers a limited, but important room for improvisation. What about a diplomatic station abroad?

Q Well, if seen as *production data query* systems—which is a valid definition for how a diplomatic residences operates—the report on the oil-rig constitutes a valid and active model: since K's official documents and *La Kahina's* diaries correspond exactly to the tensional elements that constrains life on a rig: the operational hierarchy of the service, the conviviality of the residence.

But, when we think about it, photogravure can also be seen as a production data query system. It's technical operations may remind the complex and clanky manoeuvres on an oil-rig. And the conviviality of chit-chat and music *congregates* the operations. Featuring the kind of tension and dialogue between constituency and congregation that Bjørn Blikstad has worked on in his PhD.

R So, the chances are that the excursion to the oil-rig has been key to the progress on the matter on how technology is docked to reality: the production data query system provides a framework for going into detail. The broader problem of docking I have discussed in a double essay forthcoming in DAC—design, arts, culture (e-journal)—on the Project Spinoza: a diary from the C19 pandemic.

S This is the preceding issue. This is the format. This eJournal was initiated during the *pandemic*.

T Turning the page, what I take out from this is that the tension between being together (conviviality) and forming a group (hierarchy), features an intra-operable connection-in-performance, feeding markmaking and contact improvisation below the “radar” of the *congregation* and the *constituency*: that is a third documentary factor determining how the system evolves. The panel shows a project map w/*wind rose*.

U I have used my grandfather's letterform as a template to structure this intervention. This is not entirely random since the letter is a form of deposition: a deposit including an element of surrender to the other. Deconstruction at the private/public border. My work on the deposition of the private archive at the NL, will bring detail of how this deposition must be set. It features an active/performative model.

V What has been clarified through this talk is the idea that performance—when it is caught in the vectorial sum between mark-making and contact improvisation—has the potential of acting as a *production data query* system. A notion reaped from Jorunn Solheim and Jon Hanssen-Bauer's report from work life form on an oil-rig, could be interesting to artistic research because it is both immersive and testimonial.

Since: *if personal data now are matters of national security, where are we going? How far have we come?*

ANNEX—*enter, background, purpose, exit*

(outlines)

enter— We live on the assumption that *walls* are to provide shelter from something. They do. But they also are connective devices; to what lies outside the walls. Through the windows and the hit of sea and weather, but also the moorage to the sea bottom of a construction that exceeds the height of the Eiffel Tower (472m vs. 330m).

If we view such rigs—in this case the Troll rig—as a form of settlement in the North Sea, beyond the industrial exploration and exploitation we are in “the triangle of dwelling”: the way that it is docked to the realities of the North Sea, and with a piping to the oil down below, by a very long stretch of drill.

But this is not all. The Troll agreement came about in 1986 as the European Union was moving to what became in the internal market in 1989. But in the spirit of good old Colbertism, the French government pressed for an agreement where Norway would reciprocate the purchase of gas with something.

Since Europe was in the process of building down borders and custom barriers, the French demand was not well timed. And the agreement that ensued—the so-called Troll agreement—stipulated that some of the proceeds from the sale should be spent on developing cultural bonds with France.

Over the years, this part of the agreement evolved to basically giving young Norwegians grants to spend time in France to learn French language. But it is an example of how oil proceeds enter into a budget—which at the time was managed by the Foreign Ministry (before OCA)—to culturally internationalise Norway through economics (as a political idea).

Now, the key protagonist of this agreement—on the diplomatic side—was *K*. He had been outsourced to the IEA for a while, and spent some years in that dept. of the OECD to produce numbers from the energy trade that were stable enough to appease the US (published in the Financial Times), that was worried about dependency on Soviet oil.

The warnings came from President Ronald Reagan in the early 80s. Europe reacted in unison against American interference. The autonomy successfully claimed was knowledge-based but also abided the changes in the oil-sector. Moving from reserves in the Saudi oil crisis in 1973, to *spot-* and *future-*markets.

That is, deregulation and the privatisation of the oil-sector, where the surplus of oil—in the wake of decreasing oil-sales—was handled by the development and sale of oil-derivates: the variety of synthetic products we know generically as plastic. The presently running spot-markets and profusion plastic waste started then.

On this backdrop the Troll-agreement, from *K*'s perspective, was an alternative to the “wild west”. And it became a pilot case that served him as model of European integration: that could provide a buffer-zone to liberalism and its push for deregulation, ending up with the globalisation of *products*.

background— By this I mean that the separation between *utilities/life-necessities, commodities/generic resources, goods & services*. The present lingo whereby private public agencies as Sikt—who manages for instance Feide and NSD as a kind of private governmental corporation—*sign-post* their products on the web.

The selection of composite investment portfolios proposed by the banks are also sign-posted as *products*. In this way, the big business run by figures thereby evolved into the alienation from the exchange of anything material, while messy spot markets have had an increasing role in logic of *crisis* in economics.

That is, transfers at a maximum speed of resources from where they exist to where they are needed in the moment. Which means that reserves and planning have a limited purchase. Presently each one of us have been enjoined to plan for 3-day survival prepping in our homes. What about it?

Well, this case serves to indicate a gap: the gap *between* two connections to the environment in the oil-business. The *natural* environment and the *trade-*environment. *Within* the trade-environment: between the *messy* spot-markets, and the *clean* future-markets. That is, between material and financial trade.

The purpose of introducing the horizon of a case-based narrative—which I am working on developing—is *not* to propose an expert narrative, but to have a narrative *at all*. That is, to enable ourselves to tell a story that provides the series of crises that are hitting down on us, with an effective backdrop.

What I am betting on is life within the walls—whether it is a oil rig or a diplomatic residence—will be instrumental to a better understanding of economics. And by so doing exceeding the framework of economics as we know it. That is, connecting the horizontality and verticality of what the walls connect to.

In Jorunn Solheim and Jon Hanssen-Bauer's pilot-study from the Statfjord A platform—in 1983—analysed *tensions* between a production unit with articulate operational *hierarchies* and the *communal* sense from festive and leisure interaction, with the catering offshore as the principal hub.

By focussing on this tension Solheim and Hanssen-Bauer proposed to investigate how the offshore system was docked to the realities beyond it. That is, how it related to life on shore, and the robust technologies and its socio-technical workings, docked to the sea-floor piped to wells way down below.

My contention is that this framework can be applied to the other elements in the present walkabout. That is, the operational hierarchies of international diplomacy, that can make or break careers. And the role of the kitchen in the domestic units of the residences as the home and hearth of communality.

purpose— The major difference between the diplomatic residence is that the providers of *communality* in the diplomatic residence—usually the wives—were unsalaried, contrary to the catering (mostly women) working in the offshore industry. The sum of the operational hierarchy and communality features the same tension.

The advantage of considering all 3 as production data query systems (PDQs) is that—as in the design of my panels—is that such systems, as the pilot report points out, can evolve in very different and specific directions: the platform-workers pointed out very different working cultures in Statfjord A & B.

As disordered systems, they would produce a different kind of order than the operational hierarchies growing from internal and external pressures should indicate, depending on the communality evolving *in tension* with it. Featuring the example of the pyjama parties on the previous panel. This is the definition. I have called them *resident* systems.

Disordered systems modelled on natural phenomena as glaciers will feature hetero-structural component layers that cannot be explained by the cross-pressure between internal and external processes alone. Which means that form and matter generate information of sorts that we can easily overlook.

That is, if we consider them as PDQs (*production data query systems*). My contention is that we can also consider photogravure as a production data query system for photography: which is the nature of any forensic inquiry. What they also have in common is a 3-step development of a settlement.

First there is the exploration and discovery of the site's affordances (T_0), then there is the development a platform from the activity on the site (T_1), finally there is the decision to live and work there (T_2). These 3 steps are derived from Arne Næss' idea of his settlement in the mountain cabin at Tvergastein.

And this is the triangle between location, interception and mediation pointed out previously; as the factors of resident semantics that will evolve according to performance. As suggested here, they are operative within different locations: photogravure, diplomatic residencies and offshore docking.

Performance is here seen as an *emergent change*-factor the semantics of which becomes readable within a set of *resident* constraints. The point being that with the awareness on constraints it becomes possible to transpose semantic contents from within different residencies, as an ecosystem in seed.

exit— In the research project where I have been docking my practices from art school unto my research residency at the Norwegian National Library, I am currently launching a more sizeable investigation, based on the presentation of the present concepts in a portfolio-essay forthcoming shortly in DAC (Design Arts Culture, e-journal).

There I am mainly asking what happens when one develops practices for docking computer-surfaces to the realities studied in a field-search: making the computer a resident of the field, as it were. From this I derive a broader notion of residency that either enrich or deplete environmental semantics.

Presently, I am trying out the idea that photogravure can provide a kind of *enskilment* needed to handle the kind of complexity in the private archive that I am working on at the National Library. Based on the intuition that there is an active connection between the training in photogravure and deposition.

That is, the act of surrender and deposit of a private archive at a library with a public archive. The fictional names of *La Kahina* and *K* are hatched to add the kind of readability that I am seeking to develop: that is, if the *La Kahina* and *K* leaves the door open to whom they may have been to themselves.

Rather than locking us to a readability of whom they are *to us* as interpreters of our time-local values and understanding. Fiction allows us to keep the question open—whom they might have been to themselves—and let the question be answered as the query of the deposition evolves with the work.

My bet is—if succeeding at this—that it will add *precision* to the interception of developments presently *under* the “radar” of our historical awareness. That is, that we may pick up on less predictable things, with real consequences in our time. Especially in the area of economics and its semantic depletion.

By semantic depletion of economics I mean its adequacy to provide adequate explanation for human behaviour linked to value—the semantics at cause in our notions of economic value—along with the management of our transactions on location, from what we intercept and mediate in the *meantime*.

No pun intended. *What are we doing in the meantime*—while waiting for the answers from the big puzzle-piece of global crises? This is probably the question we need to ask and actively address, in the scope of answers that may be *postponed* as much as they are *anticipated*. Indeterminately. So, they may never happen.

In sum, by reversing the elements of my grandfather’s letterform I am attempting to show what it could mean, in terms of applicable steps, to use photogravure as a training ground—as an open container—for the kind of *enskilment* needed to pull off the deposition that I am working on at the National Library. Is it possible that a practical approach to cultural value might be performant in our crisis-mongering present, and help economics from crashlanding into the illusion of inflated present, without care of fact/detail.

Evidently, deposition and lineup are two related concepts—we are not looking for a murderer, but are still pondering what happened and how it reverberates in the deep semantics of the take. And by the vehicle of investigative aesthetics we can tap performatively into the take. I am imagining that to many of us oil-rig workers, veterans from Afghanistan and diplomats are lineup materials.