Jaromil's Research 2009

Jaromil's Journal of Musings

November 12, 2010

Almost every day I dedicate 2 good hours to research: nothing in particular, just looking around for inspirations, tools, publications and what not.

Thanks go to the NIMk[1] employing me in research and development.

This diary is still *in fieri*: some links are scattered and still lacking comments, while it will grow complete over time, you might be also interested to read the research diary 2008[2].

:   **Mon, 5 Jan 2009**

John Maddog Hall: `http://www.linux-magazine.com/online/blogs/paw_prints_writings_of_the_maddog/campus_party_brazil_maddog_s_challenge_multimedia_and_free_software`

:   **Wed, 7 Jan 2009**

uscito zeitgeist final ???

Not quite in the zone   Fri, 9 Jan 2009

`http://www.metamute.org/en/content/not_quite_in_the_zone` Ben Watson `http://www.militantesthetix.co.uk/`

Politics in Israel   Tue, 13 Jan 2009

Just before the elections in Israel and right after the massacre of civilians in Gaza, which also included bombing of UN headquarters and public incitations to murder peace activists[3], it's maybe time to have a look at how reasonable people are doing over there.

One impressive campaign is December 18th[4]: at the motto of FREE THE SHMINISTIM" young conscious objectors (among them also the daughter of a former deputy head of Mossad) stepped forward and refused to serve the omnipresent militarization of Israel, the country where they are born and that still forces them to serve IDF for 2 to 3 years.

Since 20 years now (and finally) we had abolition of coercive military service for youth in Europe: this is definitely one of the most important political standpoints for Israel to work on, if it intends to get closer to Europe.

More on what the militarization of Israel is doing to the soul of its children is poetically depicted by the animation Waltz with Bashir[5], the story of massacres in Sabra and Shatila in the eyes and memory of those who actually served the IDF operated massacres in 1982[6].

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[1] http://www.nimk.nl/en
[2] research_2008.html
[3] http://publish.indymedia.org.uk/en/2009/01/418249.html
[4] http://december18th.org/
[5] http://waltzwithbashir.com/
[6] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabra_and_Shatila_massacre

The silkworm dish   **Wed, 14 Jan 2009**

Among the list of efficient food sources, not really vegetarian, but apparently sustainable: eating silk-worms[7].

Al-Jazeera footage released (CC) BY-NC-ND   **Thu, 15 Jan 2009**

The news network Al-Jazeera, originally Arabic and recently also run by English speaking editors, decided to licence all its published materials under a Creative Commons non-commercial and non-derivative license.

The CC.Al-Jazeera[8] repository was launched, archiving all released materials in a organized way and providing download of high-resolution media files.

`http://firefogg.org/`

Obama's stimulus   **Sun, 18 Jan 2009**

An article titled Yes, We Can Make the Stimulus More Stimulating[9] appeared online and bounced across many geek's websites especially because mentioning the "Funding for the Development of Open Software" in USA, apparently a possible concern on the new president's desk Barack Obama.

Social Networking and Surveillance   **Tue, 20 Jan 2009**

Fuchs, Christian. 2009. Social Networking Sites and the Surveillance Society. A Critical Case Study of the Usage of studiVZ, Facebook, and MySpace by Students in Salzburg in the Context of Electronic Surveillance. Salzburg/Vienna: Research Group UTI. ISBN 978–3-200–01428-2.

Study: `http://fuchs.icts.sbg.ac.at/SNS_Surveillance_Fuchs.pdf`
Background Information: `http://fuchs.icts.sbg.ac.at/SNS_E.html`

Anomalous Wave   **Thu, 22 Jan 2009**

We Won't Pay for Your Crisis: Italian Struggles Against Education Reform

`http://www.metamute.org/en/content/we_won_t_pay_for_your_crisis_italian_struggles_against_education_reform`

`http://www.insutv.it/domenicaut/numero-puntata/07`

People's search engines   **Tue, 27 Jan 2009**

`http://geek2live.blogspot.com/2009/01/people-search-engine-or-when-you-want.html`
Community Networks — the Robin Hood Approach `http://blogs.nmss.com/communications/2009/01/community-networks-the-robinhood-approach.html`

UK Gov. abandons piracy legislation   **Wed, 28 Jan 2009**

`http://www.custompc.co.uk/news/605400/government-abandons-piracy-legislation.html`

Forge.mil   **Mon, 2 Feb 2009**

Today US Dept. of Defense announced the creation of its own open-source code repository: Forge.mil[10].
Mjasay writes on slasldot[11]:

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[7]http://sciencenow.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/2009/113/2
[8]http://cc.aljazeera.net/
[9]http://www.truthout.org/011209R
[10]http://forge.mil
[11]http://news.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=09/02/01/1259203

The US Department of Defense, which has been flirting with open source for years as a way to improve software quality and cut costs, has finally burst the dam on Defense-related open-source adoption with Forge.mil, an open-source code repository based on Sourceforge. Though it currently only holds three projects and is limited to DoD personnel for security reasons, all code is publicly viewable and will almost certainly lead to other agencies participating on the site or creating their own. Open source has clearly come a long way. Years ago studies declared open source a security risk. Now, one of the most security-conscious organizations on the planet is looking to open source to provide better security than proprietary alternatives."

This is a very interesting move if interpreted as the potential start for a "planetary intelligence", as much as open-source development created a planetary dynamic that spread horizontally over national boundaries.

Blood and Coltan   Tue, 3 Feb 2009

Am Handy klebt Blut `http://futurezone.orf.at/stories/1502204/`
Vér tapad a PC-khez és a mobilokhoz `http://www.sg.hu/cikkek/65428/ver_tapad_a_pc_khez_es_a_mobilokhoz`

Vilem Flusser award   Wed, 4 Feb 2009

`http://www.transmediale.de/en/critical-consumer-practice-2-event`
overwhelmed... (video)

Empty for one year..   Thu, 12 Feb 2009

429 eviction law denied in dutch high court
`http://www.ravagedigitaal.org/index.htm?2009nieuws/februari/12/nws.php~mainFrame` `http://indymedia.nl/nl/2009/02/57634.shtml`

Labour in high tech China   Mon, 16 Feb 2009

High Tech Misery In China `http://news.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=09/02/15/2020200`

:   Wed, 25 Feb 2009

`http://hardware.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=09/02/24/1918217`

Winter Camp   Sun, 8 Mar 2009

`http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/wintercamp/2009/03/08/opening-eyes-and-earlids/`

:   Tue, 10 Mar 2009

`http://www.radiomundial.com.ve/yvke/noticia.php?20929`

Free market bulldozed in Lagos   Wed, 18 Mar 2009

Speaking of what *really* is free market, some 7.000 traders in Lagos (we're speaking of official members of the Freedom Merchants Association of Awodi-Ora Estate, Mile 2 Oke) have seen their premises bulldozed away by State agents and militars on February this year[12].

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[12]http://allafrica.com/stories/200903180480.html

The story is that of a big injustice, made even more significant if taken as a brutal metaphor of what happened in the "neo-liberist era" to small business initiatives.

Refraining question: what the financial crisis is about?

:   **Wed, 18 Mar 2009**

```
http://www.lavanguardia.es/sucesos/noticias/20090318/53662650766/el-robin-de-los-bancos-pasara-a-dis
html
```
```
http://www.boingboing.net/2009/03/18/newspaper-box-gravey.html
```

:   **Thu, 19 Mar 2009**

```
http://www.repubblica.it/2009/03/sezioni/scuola_e_universita/servizi/scuola-2009-10/brunetta-onda/
brunetta-onda.html
```

Open source gaze tracker   Sun, 22 Mar 2009

Found this very interesting project today, thanks to Caedes:

> Opengazer[13] is an open source application that uses an ordinary webcam to estimate the direction of your gaze. This information can then be passed to other applications. For example, used in conjunction with Dasher, opengazer allows you to write with your eyes. Opengazer aims to be a low-cost software alternative to commercial hardware-based eye trackers.

which actually works! after compiling the source it runned smoothly, tracking the movements of my pupils and moving the mouse across the screen... very cool sensation.

Dyne:bolic at school   Mon, 23 Mar 2009

Just found out that Uncle Paulie is showing dyne:bolic to his classes[14], documenting and coordinating his activity into this blog, hopefully it served the purpose of introducing pupils to GNU/Linux.

Our dyne:bolic live/CD[15] works quite straightforward for the simple tasks it has to accomplish; the dyne:II core hasn't been updated in the past 2 years, we could even argue that's a feature :) still we support old computers, provide a simple and consistent interface for GNU users and the simplest procedure installation ever :)

Later on this year there will be some news about the future of our dyne operating system ;) meanwhile keep an eye on pure:dyne[16] and its active development crew, rowing high to the goal of a multimedia production system with higher hardware requirements.

Cyber-politics in China   Tue, 24 Mar 2009

```
http://chinadigitaltimes.net/2009/03/left-and-right-in-chinese-cyber-politics/
```

:   **Thu, 26 Mar 2009**

```
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/mar/26/anticapitalism-protest-recession-g20
```

:   **Sun, 29 Mar 2009**

```
http://33bits.org/
```

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[13]http://www.inference.phy.cam.ac.uk/opengazer/
[14]http://theskunkwerx.blogspot.com/2009/03/monday-march-23-review-of-dynebolic.html
[15]http://dynebolic.org
[16]http://puredyne.goto10.org

++ http://www.boingboing.net/2009/03/30/scavengers-manifesto.html

    http://www.trashwiki.org

London.c   **Wed, 1 Apr 2009**

londra riots, factory occupations

```c
/*
 * Requiem for Peace (and one dead man in London.c)
 *
 * Cycle 78, year 26 (Ji-Chou), month 3 (Wu-Chen), day 7 (Ding-Chou)
 *
 * (A)m*dam(jrml)
 */

int moment = 0;

int justice = 7;

void *anger = "
  There was a  pause, and an eerie silence, just before  he did it.  A
  green  scarf  masking  his face,  the  man  held  a large  piece  of
  scaffolding  above  his   head  and,  surrounded  by  photographers,
  eyeballed  the unprotected window  of the  Royal Bank  of Scotland's
  branch on Threadneedle Street.
";

void *exception = "
  In that  split second, one voice  amid thousands in  the crowd broke
  the silence.  - Don't do  it -  she screamed -  He did -  This isn't
  violence -  retorted another voice in  the crowd - We  paid for this
  building.
";

unsigned int moment;
unsigned int imacy;
unsigned int cause;
bool represented;

extern void *wave;
extern void *street;
extern void *justice;
extern int death;

while(protest) {

  for(moment=0; moment < justice; moment++) {

    wave = malloc( sizeof( anger ) );

    // wave is filled with people
    democracy[moment] -> reclaim(wave, street);
```

```
        try {

                            // check if they smile[17]

        represented = reality(moment);

        if(!represented) throw(exception);

        }

        if( moment[wave] == death ) {

            // One protester at the scene said the man was in his 30s and died
            // of natural causes, the  Press Association news agency reported.

            imacy  = moment[wave]; // zoom in

            cause  = natural(imacy); // the cause is just an index

            /* Alok,  currently  in Exchange  Square,  would  like to  thank
               Muriel for  lending him  her pen when  his run out.  He says
               there are around 150 people  out in sympathy with the man who
               died and 70 police. */
            imacy -= democracy[cause] -> individual(justice);

            rip(imacy); // the man was there to protest, but he is no more

        }
    // RFC-G20[18]

        if( !listen(moment) ) {
          justice--; // will affect globally
        }

   }

   catch(void *e) {

     printf((char*)exception);

     // Once they  had broken into the bank,  however, the protesters
     // did not quite know what to do.

     printf("justice is %u", justice);
     printf("anger address is %p (out of bounds?)", anger);
     printf("it seems they are still smiling.");
     // seen before, anyway we send the warning

   }

 } // street protest ends, but the wave will hit more shores

  /* this code won't compile alone, it is part of a larger software. */
```

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[17]http://www.repubblica.it/2006/05/gallerie/esteri/berlusconi-obama/1.html
[18]http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/gallery/2009/apr/01/g20-protest

OpenGL in HTML Fri, 3 Apr 2009

`http://blog.vlad1.com/canvas-3d/`

6 april movements Mon, 6 Apr 2009

Today is the 6th of april, a date marking the birth of a movement in Cairo which mostly coordinates and grow online, with a fixed yearly appointment on the streets, see the blogs in English[19] and Arabic[20] languages; and since i really can't keep it inside, let me add more.

We're living in a peculiar period, just before the "Epiphany of a Catastrophe": it is a period in which those who foresee what's happening can be persecuted, lynched, imprisoned, exiled.

An metaphor is offered by the earthquake which stroke Abruzzo last night, for which a polemic now started: the geologist Giampaolo Giuliani who predicted the disaster was called to court for "*procurato allarme*", calling a crime his act of giving an alarm that could have saved the lives of many.

Im not sure what do you think about the last tumults in London City, i guess you have heard, a man was killed by police it seems, for sure he was the last person that they wanted to beat down... factory occupations started in Paris (deja vu?!) with kidnapping of managers[21], also in London a factory was occupied by its workers, the story unfolds on London Indymedia[22] webpages. Way better initiatives for fired workers, compared to those in USA (one dumped by IBM?! what a hot geek gossip) who opened fire in NYC killing 13 immigrants, and another fired-gunman the day after. I mean just yesterday. Quite some shocking news, excuse me the tone.

As time is accelerating, we are also. Online is possible to keep yourself updated, its getting more participative thanks to fluid exchanges of ideas and views. You can even be persecuted for your public opinion - expressed by a simple click - just joining a group on facebook.

I was visiting Cairo exactly one year ago, on 6 of april, when factory workers in the nearby "industrial town" of Mahalla went to engage police in the street with sword fights. have you heard of that? There are times when, for as much as we have heard and seen in the past few years and predictably going to see more, military intelligence had to strike the situation to an end. I just wonder how it is going to happen today, when the most powerful intelligence is media.

And most importantly, how long it all has to occur before we can really represent the state of things? is it the Epiphany of a Catastrophe?

where are thou Orson Wells! with your martians to make us humble??!

RIP Dave Arneson Tue, 7 Apr 2009

RIP `http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dave_Arneson`

Exoskeletons going for sale Mon, 13 Apr 2009

`http://www.hplusmagazine.com/articles/robotics/i-am-ironman`

Cluster computing in javascript Sat, 18 Apr 2009

This is potentially one of the most interesting projects of the year, "map reduce in the browser[23] became very popular among geeks already in march this year. As a result, it received lots of contributions.

Very smart people, exemplar design of such a website and its contents and a very powerful project.

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[19] http://6aprilmove.blogspot.com/
[20] http://7arkt6april.blogspot.com/
[21] http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/industry_sectors/industrials/article5974895.ece
[22] http://london.indymedia.org
[23] http://www.igvita.com/2009/03/03/collaborative-map-reduce-in-the-browser/

Manifesto of Post-Futurism Mon, 20 Apr 2009

Even if i don't really like manifestos, this text by BiFo goes in a good direction declaring the **Death of Futurism** and laying down directions for the Post-Futurist[24] movements to come.

Among all the points made, the numbers 9 and 10 read good:

> We want to ridicule the idiots who spread the discourse of war: the fanatics of competition, the fanatics of the bearded gods who incite massacres, the fanatics terrorised by the disarming femininity blossoming in all of us.

> We demand that art turns into a life-changing force. We seek to abolish the separation between poetry and mass communication, to reclaim the power of media from the merchants and return it to the poets and the sages.

Just a doubt about who are the sages, this might be a bit of a controversy, along with other parts of the text which sound like from the middle-ages. I sense a lack of peer to peer attitude overall, but well it's already a very good step forward from silence; I've never been 100% happy with "post-" movements anyway.

Eucalyptus Tue, 21 Apr 2009

Eucalyptus[25] is the "Elastic Utility Computing Architecture" of choice for Ubuntu Server 9.04, with full compatibility with the "Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (EC2)".

That's now a serious competitor for Google App Engine[26], offering a less proprietary approach at first glance.

GPU Grid Wed, 22 Apr 2009

Great project: GPUGrid[27], finally someone did it!

Wishing it will grow in compatibility with more video cards.

A "cyber-attack" on a city Thu, 23 Apr 2009

Now this is something one could really call "cyber-crime", wondering if the word will get to the right hears: while the policy makers are too busy persecuting kids writing viruses, they are not even aware of the risks involved in building centralised information architectures.

Here Bruce Perens took his time to describe and warn about the situation in Morgan Hill[28] when a few weeks ago unidentified attackers climbed down four manholes and cut eight fiber cables serving the city.

> That attack demonstrated a severe fault in American infrastructure: its centralization. The city of Morgan Hill and parts of three counties lost 911 service, cellular mobile telephone communications, land-line telephone, DSL internet and private networks, central station fire and burglar alarms, ATMs, credit card terminals, and monitoring of critical utilities. In addition, resources that should not have failed, like the local hospital's internal computer network, proved to be dependent on external resources, leaving the hospital with a "paper system" for the day.

Scary stuff, especially considering the military intelligence is too busy developing futuristic warplanes and worrying about who stole them the plans for their new super-secret toys.

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[24]http://eipcp.net/n/1234779255?lid=1234779848
[25]http://eucalyptus.cs.ucsb.edu/
[26]http://code.google.com/appengine/
[27]http://www.gpugrid.net/
[28]http://perens.com/works/articles/MorganHill/

The Narcysist P.H.A.T.W.A. Sun, 26 Apr 2009

The Narcysist[29] released his new music video P.H.A.T.W.A.[30]

It makes it up for a good laugh, expressing well the feeling of youth in multi-ethnic societies about police repression.

Paranoid controls on pedestrians since 9/11 didn't made it any better (and bomb attacks have been all over anyway) while the raise of false positives generated quite a bad feeling against those who try to "protect the citizens".

Geocities falling? Tue, 28 Apr 2009

Geocities was the first place on the Internet where anyone could get a free website, hosting several thousands of websites made available before the third millennium (mostly all decorated with that cheesy look that some of us nostalgically smile at).

Later bought by Yahoo, the company is now dropping the service, letting a huge piece of Internet's history fall away as a trail of its financial crisis.

While the Archive Team is busy saving Internet pre-history[31], let me add that **Geocities is the first world-wide implementation of what we call "social networks" and web-2.0 nowadays**: even if the interface was a simple FTP upload of HTML pages, the social dynamic configured itself as a (very chaotic) social web of people going public on the net.

Still I'll honestly conclude that Geocities hosted some of the most horribly designed pages that ever appeared on the Internet, but that's a part of history we can learn from, right?

Minix plans more development Wed, 29 Apr 2009

ITWorld[32] reports that Prof. Andrew S. Tanenbaum of the Vrije Universiteit van Amsterdam received a trust by the European Research Council for the development of Minix[33] a legendary implementation of a micro-kernel OS.

Tanenbaum's minimalist approach is long time inspiring, be it just in the name of his system, which used to run from a floppy disk and require very little memory. I enjoyed studying in its early times. A discussion about the event follows on Slashdot[34].

I'd be interested to hear what are the plans for the Syllable[35] hackers. The next generation of Minix will be developed by a core team of 6 people funded with 2.5m EUR over a period of 5 years.

Riots in Istanbul Fri, 1 May 2009

Today is May Day and anniversary of the Taksim Square massacre[36] in 1977, when extreme right wing snipers opened fire on May Day demonstrators in Istanbul, killing 34 people.

Just a few days ago the Turkish parliament passed a law making May 1 a national holiday again. It was taken off the public holiday list following a military coup in 1980.

Still, there is very little coverage on the media about what is happening in Istanbul today: an unnatural silence, while even the Istanbul Indymedia website[37] is defaced by some religious fundamentalists.

This recent article Deepening Crisis, Growing Resistance: Workers in Turkey[38] gives a good overview on the situation, while the following press agency is all I could find so far about the current riots:

> ISTANBUL (AFP)—Several hundred May Day demonstrators clashed with police in central Istanbul Friday in battles which saw water cannon fired and several arrests made. Turkish

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[29] http://www.iraqisthebomb.com/

[30] http://vimeo.com/4072264

[31] http://ascii.textfiles.com/archives/1961

[32] http://www.itworld.com/operating-systems/67026/europe-funds-secure-operating-system-research

[33] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MINIX

[34] http://tech.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=09/04/27/2324216

[35] http://web.syllable.org/pages/index.html

[36] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taksim_Square_massacre

[37] http://istanbul.indymedia.org

[38] http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/buglalilar270409.html

riot police staged three charges against hundreds of demonstrators in the Sisli district of the city who had hurled rocks at security forces, according to correspondents at the scene. Several thousand union and left wing activists took part in the annual protest.

RIP Fravia Sun, 3 May 2009

Leaving us a beautiful swansong[39], frankly announcing his imminent death, Fravia passed away today and will be missed by many.

He has been the most influential reverse-engineer of our times, in fact considered to be the father of reverse-engineering in modern age. And not just an "engineer", he has produced a vast amount of documentation, reflections and texts collected since the early Usenet times.

Fravia left us a search engine[40] for all documents he gathered, plus a comprehensive documentation on how to use search engines "beyond their surface". His knowledge base collection, as unconventional as it can be seen from an academic point of view, it is an extremely actual corpus for contemporary studies on digital heuristics.

Rest in Peace Fravia... sperando il prossimo giro avvenga su di un pianeta con meno imbecilli.

Prosthetics with HONF in the fablab Mon, 4 May 2009

Four researchers from the House of Natural Fibers[41] in Yogyakarta are visiting Amsterdam during these days, running a workshop on prosthetics[42] in the Fablab, envisioning new affordable possibilities in development of artificial limbs, which are currently sold at exorbitant prices.

European Telecom Package Wed, 6 May 2009

Today the EU Parliament rejected the Telecom Package[43] while passing the 138 amendment: the controlled regime that Sarkozy and Berlusconi wanted to establish in Europe is far from complying with the current decision.

Still there will be a 3rd reading of the package later this year, while the *Opennet coalition* is actively campaigning against those that want to lock up the Internet, see Blackout Europe[44].

Positions in Flux Fri, 8 May 2009

Today I've taken part in the Positions in Flux[45] symposium held in Amsterdam in occasion of the 30 years anniversary of the Netherlands Media Art Institute[46], formerly known as Montevideo / Time Based Arts.

Rather than a panoramic on projects I'm conducting, still easy to find online for those interested, I've taken the occasion to share thoughts on the current perception of Free Software and Open Source philosophy in art, along with some overdue criticism of the Creative Commons hollow hype, as well of the Creative Industries and their systematised processing of art for the global market.

Even if not obvious, I believe the dynamics of these two phenomenons are related; among the references quoted in the intervention are Benjamin Mako Hill's Towards a Standard of Freedom: Creative Commons and the Free Software Movement[47] and Florian Cramer's post on nettime The Creative Common Misunderstanding[48], while the vigorous critique of the creative industries stands on Rana Dasgupta's essay The Next Idea of the Artist (Art, music and the present threat of creativity)[49].

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[39]http://fravia.com/swansong.htm
[40]http://www.searchlores.org/
[41]http://natural-fiber.com
[42]http://amsterdam.fablab.nl/node/1943
[43]http://www.iptegrity.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=338&Itemid=9
[44]http://www.blacouteurope.eu
[45]http://www.nimk.nl/nl/agenda/detail_agenda.php?id=506
[46]http://www.nimk.nl
[47]http://mako.cc/writing/toward_a_standard_of_freedom.html
[48]http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-0610/msg00025.html
[49]http://ranadasgupta.com/texts.asp?text_id=45

Here below a short transcript:

"Open Source" doesn't mean free access, nor open space or open air; it presumes a seamful[50] approach to design as a response to the increasing reliance on technology and its accessibility; it is interactive without prescribed boundaries, following a combinatorial, generative approach to development; it is peer to peer as no producer can control further interaction patterns; it is grassroot as creations are born out of initiative and cohesion based on needs felt and understood in first person by community members.

About Creative Commons, its motto "Some rights reserved." is a relatively hollow call: the slogan factually reverses the Free Software and Open Source philosophy of reserving rights to users, not copyright owners, in order to allow the former to become producers themselves.

The dis/appropriating loop of creativity must be recursive to be fruitful: not only production means belong to the people using them, further creations should be free to be recombined. rights must be granted focusing on people interacting, not just those providing the interactive infrastructure.

Unfortunately there is a diffuse lack of perception for alternatives offered by the Open Source and Free Software approach over current profit models.

As a present problem, also deriving from the lack of understanding of the importance of grass-root creativity, top-down cultural management is patronising art production: mass-media aesthetics of an entirely sanitised and efficient creativity, of the sort that will not rely on unstable people and can therefore be globally rationalised.

That the great artists of modern Western culture managed to produce what they did, despite the danger and intensity of their effort, was due in large part to improvised social forms built around close-knit networks where thought and affect circulated with high velocity, and where it was possible to try out forms of non-conventional human relationships that would not destroy, nor be destroyed by, a life of art.

Seen from an historical perspective, In the second half of the twentieth century many of the functions of creative networks were already taken over in Europe by institutions (government funding bodies, universities, museums, etc) and much of their excessive feeling was neutralised. This was only a small part of a general process of the time: the absorption of human emotion into bureaucratic channels, and the emergence of a social coolness, an efficiency of feeling.

At this stage in the twenty-first century, we are in the middle of another large-scale restructuring of ideas of creativity and culture. As one of the most significant generators of image and value, creativity now has become a critical resource for the global economic engine. What creativity is, and how it can be systematised and circulated, are therefore urgent questions of contemporary capitalist organisation. As cultural producers are thrust into the full intensity of globally dispersed, just-in-time production, new images of creative inspiration and output are required that sit tidily within the systematised processes of the global market.

Creativity must be rendered comprehensible, transparent and rational: there can be none of the destructive excesses evident in the lives of many of the greatest artists of European history. Creativity must circulate cleanly and quickly, and it should leave no dirty remainder.

For what interests Hollywood, and the market in general, is not creativity as a complex human process, weighed down in bodies and relationships and empty days, but creativity as an abstraction, free of irrationality and pain, and light enough to hover like a great logo above the continents.

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[50]http://www.themobilecity.nl/2008/01/05/designing-for-locative-media-seamless-or-seamful-experiences/

Perhaps, as the logic of systematised production occupies the terrain of human creativity more completely, we will reach a stage where we surrender all knowledge about this troubling domain, and it will become entirely alien to us. Perhaps one day we will be terrified of what explosive dangers might rise up from the creativity of human beings.

Heartfelt thanks to all my colleagues at NIMk for having organised such an interesting symposium which has seen among the guest speakers Wafaa Bilal[51], Marcus Neustetter[52], Femke Snelting and Renée Turner[53], Marcos Garcia[54] and Joasia Krysa[55].

A pattern in prime numbers?   Sat, 9 May 2009

This recent theory (some kind of "hot water discovery", as it was unnoticed for long) has shaken the imaginary of geeks worldwide: a new pattern seems to be found in prime numbers[56]. Mathematicians stated that the prime number sequence can be described by a generalization of Benford's law[57], as the frequency of higher decimal cyphers in the leading digit of prime numbers follows a logarithmic decay.

Somewhat unexpectedly, the leading digits aren't randomly or uniformly distributed. Besides providing insight into the nature of primes, the finding could also have applications in areas such as fraud detection, stock market analysis and cryptography.

Benchmark of serialization tools   Mon, 11 May 2009

A short article came out with results of a benchmark on serialisation tools[58] as java, json, protobuf, xstream and others.

It provides a good evaluation at first glance, with small charts about their performance in tasks as object creation, serializaton and deserialization.

My choice for a overall winner is JSON[59], which i repute well reliable for deployment, considering it is free, has a vast community behind and a flexible implementation in javascript language.

House of Commons washes hands   Sat, 16 May 2009

An interesting signal from London where the corruption of several Members of Parliament (mostly caused by alienating and disproportional cast privileges) is causing the resignation of a minister and the expulsion of two members, while two Lords are investigated.

It seems to have started with the Daily Telegraph publishing MP's expenses[60], an investigative journalism operation that costed 150k GBP to the tabloid. My heartfelt thanks for the investment.

Interesting how media in UK is free to document all this and even play a role in promoting the investigations: quite a different code of deontology in respect to what turned Italy in a media dictatorship.

In the "Mani Pulite" Italian episode in the early 90's media also played an important role *until they could*, while the operation was mostly lead by magistrates; they soon had to leave their jobs, while some became politicians like Di Pietro. Craxi for example had to leave for his villa in Hammamet (Libia), while the highest cast of politicians still welcomes his dynasty today: Craxi's son and daughter. In fact nothing really changed until today: the wages of Italian members of Parliament are the higher in all Europe, double as those of UK members.

I wonder if British MP's also have a "plan B" ready in an offshore villa. . .

[51] http://www.wafaabilal.com/
[52] http://www.onair.co.za/thetrinitysession/index_temp.html
[53] http://www.geuzen.org/
[54] http://medialab-prado.es/
[55] http://www.kurator.org/wiki/main/read/Home
[56] http://www.physorg.com/news160994102.html
[57] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benford's_law
[58] http://www.eishay.com/2009/03/more-on-benchmarking-java-serialization.html
[59] http://www.json.org
[60] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/mps-expenses/

The slackers had it right after all

<div align="right">Sun, 17 May 2009</div>

Here a brilliant article that came out earlier this year on the Boston Globe: So maybe the slackers had it right after all[61] by David Scharfenberg (tanks Aldert), giving a voice to a whole generation of people that consciously decided to slack rather than race for a career.

The author quotes also "Generation X", a book by Douglas Coupland unfolding an interesting narrative spiced by the irony and disenchantment of skilled IT professionals born between the '70s and the '80s.

Still what i find most representative of this generation are the "peculiar intimate doubts" found in writings by Jonathan Alex Gold[62].

dyne:II in Mexico Monster City

<div align="right">Tue, 26 May 2009</div>

Vlax writes:

> Heyall / hola
>
> in the context of the Latin American Free Software Installation Festival (aka FLISOL), the Mexico's Monster City Espora.org[63]'s crew presented the dynebolic II distro and the Spanish version user manual, recently completed.

Shell finally facing reality?

<div align="right">Wed, 27 May 2009</div>

Anyone remember Saro Wiwa[64]? He is the victim of Shell oil corporation, a martyr for the many unpunished aggressions to the ecosystem and people of Nigeria for which Shell is guilty[65].

While people is calling justice for the Ogoni tribes[66] in front of the human rights tribunal in New York, where the court-case against Shell is being held[67], some of the current Shell functionaries and managers are leaving the company (and their responsibilities?)

Dutch newspaper NRC is one of the few daily tabloids reporting news on the topic[68], updating us also about the recent explosion of violence in the Niger delta[69] connected to this court-case.

The state of Video CoDecs

<div align="right">Wed, 3 Jun 2009</div>

Here a very interesting interview with Dan Marlin[70], developer of Matroska[71] and Xvid[72], one of the pioneers in modern video compression systems: small industries all around the World producing embedded video devices and software benefit of the free and open source software that Dan and his team released.

This and more seminal video codec developments are at risk on the non-free market ground of software monopolies: Micro$oft plans to block third party codecs in Windows media player[73], which sets the base for yet another anti-trust court-case against Redmond's falling giant.

A scientific approach to economy

<div align="right">Thu, 4 Jun 2009</div>

The New Scientist came out today with an interesting article profiling possible scientific approaches to economy[74].

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[61] http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/02/09/so_maybe_the_slackers_had_it_right_after_all/
[62] neruda_seabirds.html
[63] http://www.espora.org
[64] http://remembersarowiwa.com
[65] http://www.shellguilty.com
[66] http://www.foxbusiness.com/search-results/m/22379138/oil-troubles-hit-home.htm
[67] http://remembersarowiwa.com/press-release-shell-face-global-backlash/
[68] http://www.nrc.nl/economie/article2260970.ece/Uitstel_rechtszaak_tegen_Shell_over_Saro-Wiwa
[69] http://www.nrc.nl/international/article2260335.ece/Violence_rules_Niger_delta_since_Saro-Wiwas_death
[70] http://davisfreeberg.com/2009/06/02/fear-of-a-mikrosovt-planet-a-conversation-with-dan-marlin/
[71] http://www.matroska.org
[72] http://www.xvid.org
[73] http://www.zatznotfunny.com/2009-06/fear-of-a-mikrosvft-planet/
[74] http://www.newscientist.com/special/can-science-reinvent-economy

It's been a while I'm planning to drive experiments with evolutionary algorithms on different scenarios of economic administration, maybe using the Acovea[75] engine. Anyone interested?

Hands off the Internet in Canada Fri, 5 Jun 2009

The CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) has released its 2009 new media decision[76] on Internet regulations, rejecting to limit the liberties offered by digital networks, basically taking an *hands off* approach. Here below a quote:

> "Regulatory intervention would get in the way of innovation and that a compelling case was not made that additional support through an ISP levy was needed." [. . .] "The Commission is of the view that parties advocating repeal of the exemption orders did not establish that licensing undertakings in the new media environment would contribute in a material manner to the implementation of the broadcasting policy set out in the Act."

Here the full text of the document.[77]

The global lies are dissolving Sun, 7 Jun 2009

Recently there is more emerging of truth than usual around stories of oil exploitation in lands owned by natives, from Nigeria to Amazonia, might be the positive effect of a globally connected society.

The essay Peak Oil, Sustainability and the Problem of Freedom[78] by Kurt Cobb suggests this wave of rationality reaches widely and deeply on how our societies are articulated, elaborating on the concept of Freedom.

N2N peer 2 peer at layer 2 Mon, 8 Jun 2009

Just found a very interesting attempt to implement a peer to peer network protocol on the Layer Two: N2N[79] by the ntop folks.

> In a nutshell, as OpenVPN moved SSL from application (e.g. used to implement the https protocol) to network protocol, n2n moves P2P from application to network level.

> The main n2n design features are: asymmetrically encrypted, community based, NAT and firewall traversal, interoperable with other networks.

Sounds yummie, thanks Shammash for the pointer.

Brain-computer interface, Wed, 10 Jun 2009

The Brown university announced the second round of BrainGate development[80], a new clinical trial towards the ultimate goal of helping patients with spinal cord injury, stroke, muscular dystrophy, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or limb loss turn their thoughts into actions, restoring independence, mobility, and communication.

> BrainGate, an investigational technology being developed to detect brain signals and to allow people with paralysis to use those signals to control assistive devices, is about to begin a second, larger clinical trial. The system is based on neuroscience, engineering and computer science research at Brown University.

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[75]http://www.coyotegulch.com/products/acovea/
[76]http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/NEWS/RELEASES/2009/r090604.htm
[77]http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2009/2009-329.htm
[78]http://www.theoildrum.com/node/5461
[79]http://www.ntop.org/n2n
[80]http://www.physorg.com/news163835209.html

Word clouds   Thu, 11 Jun 2009

Today I was having a look in an appealing technology for text analysis so far neglected in my research, mostly because of lack of time: the so called "word cloud".

Rendering a word cloud implies a fairly complicated algorithm for "packing", which in recent implementations explores the presence of vertical words and different colors.

For a while the state-of-the-art implementation has been closed source, implemented by Wordle[81] as an online service running in a java applet. But a refreshing announcement comes at hand here, offering a code that can be evaluated in Ruby language, thanks Nina Jansen's cloud[82] publication.

Big company doesn't always win   Fri, 12 Jun 2009

An interesting article came out titled The Lies Of The Copyright Industry[83], commenting on the outcomes of a recent "World Copyright Summit".

Released on the same day and by the same author, another publication is worth noting:

The End Of Microsoft Money: Big Company Doesn't Always Win[84] stating how smaller companies are often more innovative and effective at taking on big companies.

Let me just state that there is a clear connection visible between the two issues.

Deforestation doesn't make people rich   Tue, 16 Jun 2009

A recent academic study on economical growth in deforested areas shows that the benefits of this business are short-lived[85] and unsustainable. "Boom-and-Bust Development Patterns Across the Amazon Deforestation Frontier[86]" is the title of this research that was undertaken by academics in Cambridge, Montpellier and Lisbon.

The idea that forests are worth more alive than dead is commonly advocated by natives, but for decades we assisted to their massacres, last but not least the recent slaughter in Peru[87]. Apparently those corporations making a business on deforestation are too short sighted and maybe even a bit sadistic, let me add.

Another study titled "The economics of ecosystems and biodiversity[88]" is running through its first phase in Europe, as if there would be more evidence needed after disasters like that in the deforestation of Malawi[89], Indonesia[90], the well known Amazonian rain forest and many others.

I'm feeling kind of stupid in reporting all this. What really matters is the amount of time that the World needed so far to acknowledge these results: that time is directly proportional to the urgency motivating the actions of networks like E.L.F. - so wouldn't be better to seek common ground and start a peace process, rather than persecuting the so called "eco-terrorists" and keeping current policies?

Hackerspace festival #2   Wed, 24 Jun 2009

Just touched base at the tmp/lab[91] in Paris, getting ready for the second edition of the hackerspace festival[92], which raises already high expectations this year, as it has been noticed even by slashdot[93].

On the first edition we had about 50 registered participants, counting up to 200 people attendance during the whole 3 days; this year we have 200 registered participants, so we'll see how it goes.

I'll be facilitating a round-table on ICT disaster recovery[94] as well taking part to a debate on the

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[81]http://www.wordle.net
[82]http://ninajansen.dk/2009/04/23/introducing-cloud-an-open-source-ruby-wordcloud-generator/
[83]http://techdirt.com/articles/20090612/0850165209.shtml
[84]http://www.techdirt.com/articles/20090612/0032535204.shtml
[85]http://www.businessgreen.com/business-green/news/2244106/deforestation-leads-boom-bust
[86]http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/324/5933/1435
[87]http://www.rootforce.org/2009/06/05/peruvian-police-murder-indigenous-protesters-take-action/
[88]http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/economics/index_en.htm
[89]http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0CE4D81F3FF932A35752C1A9639C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all
[90]http://www.globalforestwatch.org/english/indonesia/forests.htm
[91]http://www.tmplab.org
[92]http://www.hackerspace.net
[93]http://it.slashdot.org/story/09/06/09/0117220/Paris-Hosts-the-Second-Hacker-Space-Festival
[94]http://www.hackerspace.net/ict-disaster-recovery

future of hackerspaces[95].

The Walnut Tree Thu, 25 Jun 2009

```
My head foaming clouds, sea inside me and out
i am a walnut tree in Gulhane Park
an old walnut, knot by knot, shred by shred
Neither you are aware of this, nor the police

I am a walnut tree in Gulhane Park
My leaves are nimble, nimble like fish in water
My leaves are sheer, sheer like a silk handkerchief
pick, wipe, my rose, the tear from your eyes
My leaves are my hands, I have one hundred thousand
I touch you with one hundred thousand hands, I touch Istanbul
My leaves are my eyes, I look in amazement
I watch you with one hundred thousand eyes, I watch Istanbul
Like one hundred thousand hearts, beat, beat my leaves

I am a walnut tree in Gulhane Park
neither you are aware of this, nor the police
```

(Nazim Hikmet, 1 July 1957, Balcik)

Thanks Ozge for this sweet dedication.

Augmented reality (now for real) Fri, 26 Jun 2009

http://www.iema.net/news/envnews?aid=18913
The Evolution of Google[96]

Hackerspace festival account Sat, 27 Jun 2009

Back from tmp/lab[97] in Paris, here is a short account of just some of the interesting things found among the talks. The whole festival was amazing - I'd even say legendary - and surely won't be forgotten by its participants. It challenged everyone in the making, since the place that hosted it was in a really bad condition, it required some practical skills and good cooperation by all people present.

Food was really good. It was delicious and nutrient. Kudos to JNM of craslab.org[98] and all the volunteers who helped. Big kudos to the farmers who brought us a 400EUR worth of biological food (old-school farming, very tasty and healthy) that fueled the whole 5 days festival. Look up the french AMAP[99] networks, they are an awesome alternative to the food industry crisis. There are times when even a 5 star catering can make you hug a toilet after two days of conference food; considered the conditions and the tools, this was some magic "heros feast" spell casted twice per day, with vegetarian dishes for everyone, still filling up the diet very well.

Now let's go through the content of HSF: I'm gathering here some interesting links to things presented, still sorry that this humble account won't cover all the interventions deserving it.

The Gaming Platform Libre[100] was a delight for those of us who dream of game development on free platform and I must admit I wasn't aware myself of the many things being said, even if usually researching on the topic. The YASEP[101] platform was presented (Yet Another Small Embedded Processor) and

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[95] http://www.hackerspace.net/the-future-of-hackerspaces

[96] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XikCnkt86z8

[97] http://www.tmplab.org

[98] http://craslab.org

[99] http://www.reseau-amap.org/

[100] http://www.hackerspace.net/gaming-platform-libre

[101] http://yasep.org

its instruction set explained, all accompanied by these slides presented by Laura Bécognée and Yann Guidon[102].

A well known cryptographer, Karsten Nohl, has illustrated in detail the procedure of reverse engineering integrated circuits as RFID: it was quite an experience to hear such a talk by the one that reverse-engineered the MiFare - CRYPTO1 :)

Among the tools Karsten mentioned a software I didn't knew before: Degate[103] helps you explore ICs, matching logic gates on the imagery given by graphical templates and assisting you in tracing circuit paths.

More on the blinky side of life was the presentation of Kiniou[104] who demonstrated how to import Open Office presentations in Blender, taking advantage of a 3d environment to show your slides. He is publishing this and other stuff on the website knokorpo.fr[105].

The Syn2Cat[106] hackerspace crew from Luxembourg was present all the time, animating a blinkful space in the HSF as well giving an inspiring presentation of their activities, well oriented to animate public spaces, art environments and to leverage the political discourse around civil liberties. Among their code pearls there is a port of LaserTag software on GNU/Linux[107] (finally!!) and their early experiments with Clutter[108].

At the core of the theoretical discussion in HSF there was a very interesting presentation of EGPL[109], a general public license that lets authors "exclude" certain uses for their creations. Under the motto **"Creative Uncommons License"** (acronym CUL) and the symbol (*) it unfolded extremely interesting insights on licensing, ethics, the pitfalls of Creative Commons license and in general a deep reflection on the use values of creations. I've actively participated to the debate trying to defend the total freedom granted by classical GNU licenses, still I must admit that the EGPL arguments aren't superficial as it might seem on the first glance and, until a certain degree, they might even be implementable.

From the Swedish hackerspace Forskningsavd[110] a young phreaking genius named Kugg came to present his experiments interfacing Arduino boards to phone networks[111]: developing the so called Optoshield and, *dulcis in fundo*, releasing his new creation the **Arduino Phoneshield** - all HSF participants got the opportunity to download the circuit scheme of this new shield, soon to be available on the webshop of blushing boy[112]. Feels like back to the roots :) the phreaking scene will never die[113].

During the whole festival, the indefatigable tmp/lab hacker lekernel[114] ran several workshops: how to make bio-diesel[115] (in collaboration Gaëtan), Milkymist[116] (an hardware Vj platform built with FPGA), DIY Vacuum tubes amplifier[117] and at last an half day hands-on workshop on FPGA Verilog[118] development. The guy is a mental Volcano eruption.

Another good interdisciplinary presence in the festival was Milovann Yanatchkov[119]: this visionary architect uses only free software for his work, with good and original results. His workshop was entitled after Paul Graham's book "Hackers and Painters" and ended up illustrating the early concept of perspective in Paolo Ucello as well his experiments with Fluxus[120] 3D live coding engine..

Dulcis in fundo there were several interesting lightning talks, among them the nomadic hacker Meinhard[121] gave three interesting presentations[122] also pointing out this interesting anonet.org[123] initiative,

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[102] http://f-cpu.seul.org/whygee/HSF/HSF2009_GPL.html

[103] http://degate.zfch.de/

[104] http://blog.knokorpo.fr

[105] http://dev.knokorpo.fr

[106] https://www.hackerspace.lu/wiki/Syn2cat

[107] https://www.hackerspace.lu/wiki/Lasertag_linux

[108] https://www.hackerspace.lu/wiki/Clutter_Experiments

[109] http://www.egpl.info/

[110] http://forskningsavd.se

[111] http://forskningsavd.se/PublicWiki/w/Arduino_phone

[112] http://www.blushingboy.org

[113] http://phretech.net

[114] http://www.hackerspace.net/sebastien-bourdeauducq

[115] http://www.hackerspace.net/fabrication-de-biodiesel

[116] http://www.hackerspace.net/milkymist

[117] http://www.hackerspace.net/vacuum-tubes-your-grandpa-s-electronics

[118] http://www.hackerspace.net/fpga-verilog-for-beginners

[119] http://www.rvba.fr

[120] http://www.pawfal.org/fluxus/

[121] http://benn.org

[122] http://sandbox.benn.org/sli/hsf2009/

[123] http://www.anonet.org

which sounds new to me. As well Robin Gareus[124] outlining his new development project at the University of Paris: theartcollider[125], something that will be very interesting for all of us experimenting with Ogg/Theora streaming.

Feeling sorry to have missed it all? well you should since this HSF was really legendary, until the next comes up: **see you in 2010 in Istanbul**!

India making the wrong step   Sun, 28 Jun 2009

http://yro.slashdot.org/story/09/06/28/1538221/India-To-Put-All-Citizen-Info-In-a-Central-Database
Issues on census and the Tsunami

Tor helps   Mon, 29 Jun 2009

http://yro.slashdot.org/story/09/06/29/1230216/The-Technology-Keeping-Information-Flowing-in-Iran

Atari game sources   Sat, 4 Jul 2009

Great news for retro-computing geeks! the historical game firm Atari has released the sourcecode of some of their legendary games[126], among them *Dig Dug*, *Centipede*, *Joust* and *Pac Man*. They were kindly donated to a so called "Atari Museum", while this move arose great interest by retro-computing collectors.

> In an official release, Atari has quoted that the purpose of the release is to give potential developers insight into the Atari's gaming platform so they may possibly build upon the 7800 series.

One step forward towards the recognition of the importance of museum preservation of our digital past.

Society of the Query   Mon, 6 Jul 2009

The Institute of Network Cultures announces a new upcoming conference, which will be presumably followed by an interesting publication: Society of the Query[127] to be held in **Amsterdam on 13 - 14 November 2009**.

> In this query driven society, The Society of the Query conference seeks to analyze what impact our reliance on resources to manage knowledge on the Internet has on our culture. The theory of a semantic web lurking around the corner revives the "human vs. artificial intelligence" debate. The centralizing web demands to critically question the distribution of power, the diversity and accessibility of web content, while promising alternatives for the dominant paradigm surface in peer-to-peer and open source initiatives. Finally, the question arises what role politics and education, after having invested substantially in media intelligence, can play in the creation of an informed users' group.

Satellite navigation threatens local knowledge   Thu, 9 Jul 2009

BBC published today an interesting article about fears that Sat-nav systems are starting to erode local knowledge[128]. It doesn't really sound like primitiveness, rather than a worrying argument on how people driving on sat-nav ignore their surroundings and loose a certain sense of awareness and decision making while navigating. Apparently this is not yet the case, as most frequent travelers aren't relying much on their navigation device. Joe Moran writes:

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[124] http://gareus.org
[125] http://theartcollider.org
[126] http://www.programmerfish.com/source-code-of-several-7800-games-released/
[127] http://lists.dyne.org/lurker/message/20090629.154943.7dea1a02.en.html
[128] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/8133890.stm

We still don't quite trust the electronic voice to get us where we want to go. Since before even the arrival of the car, people have worried that maps sever us from real places, render the world untouchable, reduce it to a bare outline of Cartesian lines and intersections. Sat-nav feeds into this long-held fear that the cold-blooded modern world is destroying local knowledge, that roads no longer lead to real places but around and through them.

Local knowledge is an extremely important feature for any kind of self-motivated operation around a certain neighbourhood, especially if planned outside the given schemes of an architecture; but it seems that sat-nav users are acquainted at loosing information (and power) over their surroundings, a new sort of *alienation*. Still we must say that maps of terrains at high detail, similar to those now employed for bicycle navigation, were once harder to find, mostly provided as military grade information.

Gypsies under siege in Belgrade   **Sun, 12 Jul 2009**

Belgrade's art collective drugascena[129] takes part in Universiade 2009[130] with a strong statement against "intensifying racist measures of Belgrade authorities in Roma settlements near Belville in Block 67":

Members of Druga Scena and friends will be permanent guests in these Roma settlements from the opening of Universiade, Wednesday July 1st. During Universiade, and in cooperation with ghettoized residents of settlement, we will organize a number of informal meetings, art workshops and cultural programs, culminating in cultural show and press conference on Wednesday July 8th

On June 16th 2009, a wired fence was built around Roma settlements, while security and police "guard" it on external side. Recently, wire was covered by promotional banners of Universiade in order to hide Roma people behind it. In addition, police patrol operates along the wire fence inside this settlement! Residents are forbidden to leave the settlement, to walk the streets near Belville, to gather materials from surrounding dumpsters (which is their only source of income). These measures have limited the right to free movement and the right to work for residents of this Roma settlement.

Belgrade authorities have ignored the problems of Roma people for more than decade including refusal to provide them with basic life conditions. Now they went step further in discriminating our fellow citizens, using the security measures for Universiade as an excuse. By building the wired fence around settlement and imposing police surveillance - city authorities have shown that they actually don't want to deal with improving life conditions of people, but just improve media image of this city. The main goal of these measures is to hide the "shame" - poverty and misery Roma people live in, from international guests and public.

We will not let humiliation of our fellow citizens, nor forging the reality. The true image of Serbia consists of images of Belville and Roma settlements next to each other, the corruption on highest level and fired workers, privatization of University and Universiade, sports event that turned out to be more important than human lives and dignity. We demand that wired fence around Roma Settlement in Block 67 is removed IMMEDIATELY, as well as to start working on finding appropriate ways to improve life conditions of the residents of the most vulnerable settlements in the city.

No to ghettos in our neighborhood for the "benefit of city"! No to Universiade against human dignity! No to authorities that value capital over life of people and use racist strategies as a way of management!

We invite all interested colleagues from cultural scene to join us and help realization of cultural programs, art workshops, cooking actions, movie projects.

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[129]http://www.drugascena.org/
[130] http://www.universiade-belgrade2009.com

signed: Drugascena[131], Platform of Belgrade independent cultural and activist scene. Quite a powerful blow to the city council, considering this critical standing point is published today on the main web-page of Universiade (and on nettime, BTW).

Amazon's strings on your property   Fri, 17 Jul 2009

A very worrying news came out today about Amazon deleting purchased books from Kindles[132]. This is very worrying: strings attached to purchased books in digital form, so far that you don't even control the deletion of texts on your own device.

It is very ironical that this happened first with George Orwell's masterpieces "1984" and "Animal Farm".

Graph visualization   Mon, 20 Jul 2009

Just found out (thanks Itzhack) a new graph visualization library called Prefuse[133]:

> Prefuse is a set of software tools for creating rich interactive data visualizations. The original prefuse toolkit provides a visualization framework for the Java programming language.

Meanwhile I've made myself fluent using both Graphviz[134] and Ditaa[135].

Drug decriminalization in Portugal   Sat, 25 Jul 2009

An interesting book titled "Drug Decriminalization in Portugal[136] - Lessons for Creating Fair and Successful Drug Policies" was published recently this year, written by Glenn Greenwald.

> On July 1, 2001, a nationwide law in Portugal took effect that decriminalized all drugs, including cocaine and heroin. Under the new legal framework, all drugs were "decriminalized," not "legalized." Thus, drug possession for personal use and drug usage itself are still legally prohibited, but violations of those prohibitions are deemed to be exclusively administrative violations and are removed completely from the criminal realm. Drug trafficking continues to be prosecuted as a criminal offense.

The objective of the book is to provide an account, complete with empirical metrics, about the changes occurred after drug decriminalization in Portuguese society. The conclusions are quite an impressive lesson for future drug policies in Europe:

> More significantly, none of the nightmare scenarios touted by pre-enactment decriminalization opponents - from rampant increases in drug usage among the young to the transformation of Lisbon into a haven for "drug tourists" - has occurred.

> The political consensus in favor of decriminalization is unsurprising in light of the relevant empirical data. Those data indicate that decriminalization has had no adverse effect on drug usage rates in Portugal, which, in numerous categories, are now among the lowest in the EU, particularly when compared with states with stringent criminalization regimes. Although postdecriminalization usage rates have remained roughly the same or even decreased slightly when compared with other EU states, drug-related pathologies - such as sexually transmitted diseases and deaths due to drug usage - have decreased dramatically. Drug policy experts attribute those positive trends to the enhanced ability of the Portuguese government to offer treatment programs to its citizens - enhancements made possible, for numerous reasons, by decriminalization.

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[131]http://www.drugascena.org
[132]http://gizmodo.com/5317180
[133]http://www.prefuse.org
[134]http://www.graphviz.org
[135]http://ditaa.sourceforge.net/
[136]http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=10080

Farming under Fire Mon, 27 Jul 2009

Certainly this year will be remembered as one of the worst humanitarian disasters willingly caused by the Israeli Defence Force in Palestine, including bombing of schools, hospitals and of the United Nations headquarters in Gaza.

Still as of today the situation doesn't gets better: as denounced on the website farming under fire[137], farmers are denied from harvesting their crops by continuous provocations and aggressions by the bully militias of IDF. The situation seems to escalate pretty fast, following the incursion of Abassan Jedida[138] which injured at least one farmer and killed a donkey.

Zero for Owned Tue, 28 Jul 2009

The hacker e-zine ZFO came out with its 5th issue "Summer of Ham", gaining lots of popularity for the groundbreaking publication of all the "personal digital life" of Kevin Mitnick and Dan Kaminsky, famous showbiz hackers and security consultants, hacked in a pretty lame way in their very home.

The issue is really funny to read, but you need to have some sysadmin and coding knowledge to catch the fun: it actually realizes a wonderful piece of literature in machine-language, developing a narrative exploring the files of the two hacked-hackers and their techniques to keep secure their websites, and those of their customers.

Very nice to see that someone is breaking the ice of representation, this is not an act of terrorism rather than pure poetry declaring the fact that *Security doesn't exists* and those selling it by the pound or waving it at blinky conferences in Las Vegas are just decadent puppets.

Here below an interesting excerpt:

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     Industry check          .-'-.            //o\  _\/_
                         --  /     \  --        |  /o\\
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       We don't talk to police                               |
         We don't make a peace bond


   The security scene  is fucked. You have Dan  Kaminsky lecturing you on
   how DNS poisoning  will destroy life as we know  it. You have Matasano
   harvesting talent  and critiquing everyone,  and then Ptacek  can only
   announce  the release  of....a graphical  firewall  management client.
   There's kingcope  killing bugs and dropping  weaponized exploits while
   making no  other contribution  except putting a  smile on the  face of
   kiddies. There's  iDefense and their competitors  selling exploits and
   only doing  research in how to  make more exploits.  There's Jeff Moss
   running a  conference under the hideous  misnomer "Blackhat Briefings"
   where the same researchers search  for glory and present the same shit
   year after year. There are people who just live press release by press
   release. And on top  of it all, somehow you STILL have  not got rid of
   Kevin Mitnick.  The industry cares  about virtualization one  year and
   iPhones the  next, every  year forgetting the  lessons it  should have
   picked up in the last.

   If you are just someone looking to  pay a fair price to not get owned,
   you find  out quickly  that none  of these people  exist to  help you.
   Very few people in this  industry have their income model based around
   actually making you  more secure. At best, some of  them have it based
   around convincing you that you are better off.
```

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[137]http://farmingunderfire.blogspot.com/
[138]http://farmingunderfire.blogspot.com/2009/07/israeli-incursion-in-abassan-jedida.html

The very concept of "penetration testing" is fundamentally flawed. The problem with it is that the penetration tester has a limited set of targets they're allowed to attack, while a real attacker can attack anything in order to gain access to the site/box. So if a site on a shared host is being tested, just because site1.com is "secure" that does NOT in anyway mean that the server is secure, because site2.com could easily be vulnerable to all sorts of simple attacks. The time constraint is another problem. A professional pentester with a week or two to spend on a client's network may or may not get into everything. A real dedicated hacker making the slog who spends a month of eight hour days WILL get into anything they target. You're lucky if it even takes him that long, really.

Those things should all be very obvious, but whitehats still make the mistake of discounting them. Look at Mitnick. Every time he gets owned he blames his host or his DNS provider. If he's getting owned through them, that's still his fault. Choosing a host is a security decision, it's just like choosing a password. If you choose a weak one you expose yourself. It's still your fault.

It's the same with outsourcing the development of your security-critical code. Mitnick could get someone else to make him a flashy website, and then blame them when it is full of file include vulnerabilities. People do this all the time, indirectly, by using ridiculous CMS or blog software. As an easy example, look at Wordpress. Even easier, look at Wordpress in 2007. Horrid. When considering Wordpress, a blackhat starts reading the PHP, shudders and giggles, and then laughs at the idea of ever using it on one of their servers. A whitehat never gets that far apparently, they just install it and get owned. I simply fail to see how leading security researchers run all kinds of code that is blatantly dangerous. Are they really that bad at reading code? Or do they just not care much if their passwords end up on Full Disclosure? If it's the second option, why is that? Why can these people make a living selling security when they make such bad choices? How do they maintain legitimacy? They take less responsibility for getting owned than do the people who they sell services to.

There's a popular term for people who don't read code.
We call them script kiddies.

You cannot outsource blame. You HAVE to take responsibility for your mistakes, whether they are mistakes in your code, mistakes in code you are using, mistakes by your host, or mistakes in who you trust. These are all security choices. Learn to control this shit. Learn how to read code. A lot of the time it only takes a very shallow audit to realise that the code is crap and is bound to have bugs. In a smarter world, security professionals get paid to stop people from getting owned. End of. These is no limit to the scope of an audit.

Are you professional types really this out of touch? I see all these papers about how to protect yourself from these super-fucking-advanced techniques and exploits that very few people can actually develop, and most hackers will NEVER USE. It's the simple stuff that works now, and will continue to work years into the future. Not only is it way easier to dev for simple mistakes, but they are easier to find and are more

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plentiful.

The  whole concept  of full-disclosure  has backfired.  It  will never
work. It's some slashdot hippie pipe dream. Even you dumbass corporate
types should recognize this. If  you're constantly giving away all the
vulnerabilites you  find, for *FREE*  mind you (and what  other industry
does that?), and the vulnerabilites  get harder and harder to find and
exploit, it will  get harder and harder for you all  to do your "job".
Frankly, I'm  surprised that the non-disclosure  movement didn't start
in  the security industry  in the  first place.  In a  way it  did, by
default.  With full-disclosure,  the security  industry is  all about
show and  gloat, it is not about  fixing anything. A lot  of bugs have
been fixed  from it, but it comes  with the price of  an industry that
likes to cripple itself. Projects  run by teams of trained monkeys are
always eager to add more bugs to replace those that have been fixed.

We hate  the industry because  it is full  of shit. There are  so many
trolls like Kaminsky who just  desperately search for anything new, to
get  attention.  So  many  talentless  buffoons trying  to  scam  the
planet.  A  lot  of  the  actual talent  out  there  is  severely
misapplied. It's  an industry  tied to news  and not  results, because
very few  of you can  even attain results.  When you can't,  who's the
wiser? Your  customers can  hardly tell if  you have really  made them
more  secure  or  not.  Sometimes  there  are  superficial  benefits,
sometimes there aren't. How do you convince the customer that they are
more ZF0-safe than  before, if they were never  targetted and probably
never will  be? And you all lack  the legitimacy to really  do the job
you should anyways. We can only expose so many frauds, the rest of you
can pretend you have changed something.

Very few whitehats  actually go out there and  provide a service where
they make people more  secure. Not just for a day or  a month. Are you
genuinely fixing  the underlying design and logic  flaws that generate
security problems for your clients or customers? If you actually clean
up every exposed security flaw  they have, will they still be "secure"
in six months or a year?

We could go on. Just in general, the industry is failing.
Flat out failing.
You cannot even protect yourselves.
```

Generation M   Wed, 29 Jul 2009

An interesting article came out, worth noting - despite being yet another manifesto - its title is Generation M[139] and describes well the thoughts of a generation I'm also feeling part of.

HackIt 2009 - don't Panic   Fri, 31 Jul 2009

Out of the 11th hackmeeting held in Italy, a video documenting it came out: HackIt2009 - don't Panic[140]. It is mostly in italian language, collecting very good statements on hacking, with a gallery of figures that animated the community since its birth.

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[139]http://blogs.harvardbusiness.org/haque/2009/07/today_in_capitalism_20_1.html
[140]http://www.archive.org/details/HackIt2009dontPanic

Having participated to the growth of this community since the beginning, and learning a lot from it, it was touching to see it.

This "digital community" is coagulating since more than a decade in the hackmeeting[141] gathering, held in liberated squatted places around Italy, without a fixed organiser committee, in a truly spontaneous and grass-root spirit. It won an honorary mention for the Digital Communities award of the Ars Electronica Festival[142] this year.

Paper data storage   Mon, 3 Aug 2009

Paperbak[143] is a free software able to store in an efficient way (well benchmarked by this article on codinghorror[144]) data on paper, to be retrieved later by scanning the paper and processing it back into digital.

Plumbercon   Sat, 8 Aug 2009

Attended Plumbercon[145] in Vienna, mostly populated by hackers from Europe and USA, animating a dense series of talks during 2 days of conference.

Worth noting is the presence of Mitch Altman with a new enhanced version of his TV B-Gone[146], the Toool[147] lock-picking research group, various technical "black hat" presentations on systems security and forensics; dulcis in fundo a "science rock-star" talk quoting some interesting projects like Theo Jansen's Strandbeesten[148].

Clean energy stocks   Mon, 10 Aug 2009

I'm not really a stock market guy myself, mostly because the whole thing is about exploitation of labour which is completely alienated from people's life, a game played by armies of mindless egoistic yuppies.

Still it is interesting to follow market analysis commentaries, especially when written by people with good experience on how decision making reacts to technological innovation: Occidental societies are running on "*gov-less*" systems where the stock market tendencies are actually a valuable resource to interpret their rationale.

Here is a recent article on the so called clean energy economy[149] analysing with good detail what are the actual choices of financial capitals on emerging stocks, in the middle of these years' crisis.

Trying to read in between the lines, a resonating term as "smart grid" is hinting the possibly collective nature of new startups.

Classics archive on-line   Fri, 14 Aug 2009

A good resource for classic literature since long time already, the The Internet Classics Archive[150] maintained at the MIT counts up to 441 texts of classic literature, mostly translated from ancient Greek.

I'm often feeling nostalgic for such kind of readings, somehow a very distant prose from what we are used to read nowadays, still very inspirational if one knows where to look.

Incoming FreeJ 1.0 release   Mon, 24 Aug 2009

Together with various developers and contributors and about 30 people in the audience, we had quite some fun yesterday in the FreeJ release party, celebrating the new upcoming release of our GNU GPL

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[141] http://www.hackmeeting.org
[142] http://www.aec.at/prix_history_en.php?year=2009
[143] http://ollydbg.de/Paperbak/
[144] http://www.codinghorror.com/blog/archives/001292.html
[145] http://www.plumbercon.org
[146] http://www.tvbgone.com/
[147] http://www.toool.nl
[148] http://www.strandbeest.com/
[149] http://seekingalpha.com/article/151525-will-the-clean-energy-economy-become-the-next-internet
[150] http://classics.mit.edu/

Vision Mixing software, sponsored by the Dutch fund Digitale Pioniers[151].

We've used 15k EUR (plus a 5k EUR worth of facilities and hosting) to support a team of a dozen developers over a period of 9 months. Most of us are living in Europe, so this money was more an incentive for volunteering rather than an income, but it served motivating the team to achieve concrete results in an established time frame.

The activity is resumed in the git log[152] and visible in this code swarm video[153]: it triplicated in volume between November 2008 and August 2009. We have major enhancements of the engine thanks to talented coders involved: Xant, Shammash, Robin and Caedes among the others.

In brief now FreeJ became a library with language bindings[154], fully cross-platform, providing applications with a low-latency streaming engine that can be scripted in javascript and controlled from Python or Ruby. A couple of new graphical interfaces are being actively developed, mostly to demonstrate the possibilities offered by the engine, like the Carbon[155] version for OSX 10.5 and the script console in PyGTK. On the web front we also had major enhancements like integration with video RSS feeds (tested on DMMDB[156] and Plumi[157] CMS).

Lots more can be done from now on: broadcasting applications of various kinds, besides more debugging and adjustments on streaming: as soon as Ogg/Vorbis/Theora playback is a stable implementation in HTML5 browsers we will finally get rid of proprietary technology in online video streaming ;)

We will soon tag a 1.0 release, still conscious of known bugs we plan to fix during the 1.x lifetime which should last one or two years. The wide outreach given by OSX and Debian packaging will help stabilizing the engine and maybe gather some community funding. Many TV companies have contacted us so far about collaborations, this is a good time to make plans, we can adapt this new 1.0 framework to different needs.

Hacking at Random   Fri, 28 Aug 2009

Every 4 years in the Netherlands is held one of the biggest hacker camps in Europe: this year it was the time for Hacking at Random[158] in Vierhouten, which hosted about 3000 people for 4 days on a camping field 70km away from Amsterdam.

The event was full of presentations, debates and workshops exploring recent issues in technical and social aspects of hacking cultures, made possible by passionate volunteers who worked day and night, as well international guests of renewed fame.

As of today all the public talks held at HAR are freely available via the website www.rehash.nl[159], gathering an overwhelming quantity of information that can keep you busy for days catching up on what you missed wether you have been there or not.

Most interesting panels include a presentation and a debate on the Wikileaks[160] project, a panel discussion on copyright issues involving BREIN, MPAA and Pirate Bay activists, various updates on privacy and cryptography technologies, a scary and hilarious overview on how insecure are SSL certificates, workshops on lockpicking techniques, reflections on governmental and corporate policy procedures as well on labour dynamics in ICT and open source development and much, much more.

WEB WEB BOY   Sun, 30 Aug 2009

Please don't ask me... this journal entry is obnoxious for most readers and is going to link a website heavy on javascript that will make your browser terribly slow down...

anyway it is too cute and hilarious geeky nifty to be left out of this journal: I'm talking about o–o[161] WEB WEB BOY !

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[151] http://digitalepioniers.nl
[152] http://git.dyne.org/index.cgi?url=freej/
[153] http://video.dyne.org/contents/freej_code_swarm-dl.ogg
[154] http://packages.debian.org/squeeze/libfreej-dev
[155] http://www.xant.net/freej.dmg
[156] http://www.giss.tv/dmmdb
[157] http://www.plumi.org
[158] http://wiki.har2009.org
[159] http://www.rehash.nl
[160] http://www.wikileaks.org
[161] http://o–o.jp/

Hacking RFID

Checking out a "Touchatag" USB device bought at HAR2009, is a decent RFID reader (ACR122U), supporting ISO 14443 Type A & B cards - MIFARE cards (Classics, DESFire) and Topaz NFC Tags. A low authentication layer is the SAM, implemented with a GSM SIM sized card holding the unique ID of the reader.

> The SAM or Secure Access Module is an additional feature in a Smart Card Reader that can enhance the level of security in your Smart Card based application. Normally card authentication is implemented in PC or application level. However with the presence of a SAM, key diversification and mutual authentication can be implemented between card and reader which means that the PC will not perform the authentication but it will be done via card to reader and reader to card authentication making your system more secure and less prone to hacking.

So I'm finally owning something to study RFID passports. There are collections of government released MRTD public keys on jmrtd.org[162] and rfidiot.org[163], but I still didn't hack enough to use them for authentication.

Anti Advertising Agency

This is so cool: the Anti Advertising Agency[164], something Anne Elizabeth Moore is also involved - and well, she is so awesome[165] you know :)

> The Anti-Advertising Agency co-opts the tools and structures used by the advertising and public relations industries. Our work calls into question the purpose and effects of advertising in public space. Through constructive parody and gentle humor our Agency's campaigns will ask passers by to critically consider the role and strategies of today's marketing media as well as alternatives for the public arena. Our work will de-normalize "out-of-home" advertising and increase awareness of the public's power to contribute to a more democratically-based outdoor environment.

I'm wondering if they already surfed on Julian Oliver's collaboration The Artvertiser[166], he recently posted some new demonstration video[167] of the 0.2 version.

Geek Hero comic

This on-line comic strip is awesome: Geek Hero comic[168] by Salvatore Iovene, it really hooks up well on the kind of irony of the most popular xkcd[169], elaborating in an intriguing way on geek's ethical issues at work.

I'd recommend following this comic strip to all computer programmers, for entertainment and educational purposes.

Digital distractions

Web 2.0, mobile device integration with online services and social networks brought an almost over-whelming load of distractions: especially if compared to how browsing the Internet was ten years ago, we are now constantly distracted by the connections available.

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[162] http://jmrtd.org/csca.shtml
[163] http://rfidiot.org/certificates.html
[164] http://antiadvertisingagency.com/
[165] http://www.anneelizabethmoore.com/
[166] http://theartvertiser.com/
[167] http://vimeo.com/3957693
[168] http://www.geekherocomic.com/
[169] http://xkcd.com/

It's probably worth to look closer into it from a psychology point of view, meanwhile there is this funny graph of a hierarchy of digital distractions[170] depicting the behaviour of those whom we call "IPhone and Martini people" - no offence intended if you are one, it's just such an obvious and neo-kitsch stereotype. . .

GTK Flow canvas
<div align="right">Thu, 10 Sep 2009</div>

Just noticed this new GTK widget: FlowCanvas[171], by Dave Robilla who is investing his valuable experience in making this shared toolkit component. His previously named OM-synth application was sporting a sexy patch panel already some years ago.

Code looks clean and well documented, we'll give it a go on top of the new FreeJ engine.

Harder better faster HTTP
<div align="right">Sat, 12 Sep 2009</div>

This autumn bring some interesting new code for serving data on-line, as two new web-servers enter a space that has been occupied almost exclusively by Apache for the last decade: Tornado Web[172] is the python daemon used at Facebook to serve pages, released open-source, while nginx[173] is a mythical Russian implementation, also a small HTTP daemon, very popular in the bot-net and embedded scenes.

Squatting in Prague
<div align="right">Sun, 13 Sep 2009</div>

Indymedia[174] reports violence and police repression against hundreds people in Prague, spontaneously willing to liberate an abandoned space to put it in function for the community as a squatted social center.

Their declaration of intention follows:

> This house has been chosen for several reasons: it's empty since many years, neglected and left to disrepair. Even the smallest reparation works has not been done and the roof is then broken with water coming in. On the other hand, door and windows are very well walled up, so that nobody can live in here.

> According to an auction report, this house would be "an ideal place to build luxury appartements and commercial spaces", that means another victory of profit and not the one of real needs of inhabitants of the city, who can see emerging luxury houses, but no affordable housing, like if the need for it would not even exist. This particular house is constantly secured against all those, who don't have a place to stay, because it's there to serve to the rich and for the commercial purpose, which is a process happening in the whole center of Prague. And it is becoming a display window, deprived of any sign of everyday life of those, who can't afford the expensive housing and who don't go shopping in posh stores.

> The building of the former bathhouse dating back to 1932 is in a complicated situation: the estate agents, who own the house, cannot dispose of it, because it's probably in a bad financial situation and the house is now used as a guarantee. The house went in auction in 2002, but unsuccesfully. It could then fall into much of a worse state in the next few years or it can become a cultural and social space, different from the uniform Prague centre. A place that wouldn't serve only to those, who would live in there, but to a wide public, who miss something specific in the town centre. . .

Several people are arrested and injured after the attempt, more information flows via the website of the Milada[175] collective.

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[170]http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/2009/the-hierarchy-of-digital-distractions/
[171]http://drobilla.net/software/flowcanvas/
[172]http://www.tornadoweb.org/
[173]http://nginx.net/
[174]http://indymedia.nl/nl/2009/09/61595.shtml
[175]http://milada.org

Get greener with Carbon-Colonialism Mon, 14 Sep 2009

"Non Governmental Organisations" hit the market of managing the balance of carbon emissions with a "good old colonialist taste" it seems.

As reported by IPS news[176], the "Forests Absorbing Carbon-dioxide Emissions Foundation" (FACE), a Dutch organisation involved in the voluntary carbon market, has generated controversy as indigenous people in the Mount Elgon region have been displaced to clear the way for tree-planting projects.

> Under carbon trading programmes, companies that release greenhouse gases can either reduce their emissions or buy the right to keep on polluting, by paying for emissions-reducing projects somewhere else.

> The United Nations considers carbon markets an efficient system to guide investments toward cutting greenhouse emissions. The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) established by the Kyoto Protocol allows two types of forestry offsets: reforestation of previously forested areas and afforestation, that is, planting new trees where forests have not existed for over 50 years.

> Carbon trading is divided into two separate markets: the compliance market - as provided for under the CDM and the European Union's Emission Trading Scheme, mandatory programmes worth 32 billion dollars last year - and the much smaller voluntary carbon offset market.

> Voluntary carbon offsets involve individuals, companies and even governments to pay for projects to mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions. These projects range from wind farms and other renewable energy sources, to efforts to reduce methane released from landfills, to forestry.

Hackmitin México Fri, 18 Sep 2009

Here below the call for the first hackmeeting of Mezo-America

The smoke signals are clear: RASTASOFTWARE Tribes are United!

De vuestra querida presencia, hackers do México!

> CALL 4 NODES LLAMADA A LA PARTICIPACIÓN v.1.0

> `..:: conocimiento | tecnología | poder ::..`
> `..:: compartir | construir | resistir ::..`

9–11 Octubre 2009, México DF - `http://espora.org/hackmitin`

> Este mensaje es una invitación a participar en la construcción del Hackmitin 2009 para seguir tejiendo una red de actividades y encuentros en torno al Hacktivismo, el Ciberespacio, la telemática y sus dimensiones tecnopolíticas. Una red que se materializará durante un intenso fin de semana autogestionado y libre, en el ZAM de la calle Xola (Ciudad Monstruo, México DF) del 9 al 11 de Octubre.

> Como ya sabrás, el HM es un encuentro participativo y gratuito en el que la dicotomía organizador/asistente se diluye en el deseo de autogestionar el encuentro colectivamente. Entendemos el Hackmitin como una red de actividades autoorganizadas (talleres, charlas, mesas redondas, exposiciones, posters, etc.) que hemos llamado nodos. Puedes sumarte proponiendo nodos de trabajo/actividad/difusión. Cualquier persona es libre de coordinar, presentar, difundir un nodo dentro del Hackmitin: ÚNETE a La RED.

> Este será el primer "Hackmeeting" que realizamos en México, un experimento con vocación de permanencia a través de la creación de distintos Hacklabs y de repetir el año que viene, quien sabe si de nuevo en la otra ciudad monstruo o en cualquier otro estado, dependerá de las fuerzas e ilusiones que veamos, pero esto ya no tiene freno... decenas de hackers y hacktivistas Mexicanos nos ponemos a trabajar para crear y hacer crecer nuestra comunidad, de manera autogestionada, igualitaria, horizontal y, sobre todo, libre.

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[176]http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48345

GSM finally opening up Sun, 20 Sep 2009

This year at HAR2009 i had the occasion to try out the Open Source GSM Network[177] set up in a tent nearby our village. It worked, even with my 2nd hand phone which is more than 6 years old, it was amazing to see such backward compatibility and the huge potential it has for developing countries.

As Alberto puts it[178], we've been waiting over 20 years to make such a phone call :) while Alejo is already setting something up in Colombia[179], the OpenBTS[180] project seems to be the main reference implementation running on USRP base stations.

This truly is a ground-breaking development, despite the fact it took too long to come, mostly because of "security" seals on GSM communication protocols to endure the business of state monopolies.

European Security Research Tue, 22 Sep 2009

Living in an European community where migrants and asylum seeker are captured in the jungle[181], there are things I'd feel better not knowing: the 1.4 billion EUR fund assigned to European Security Research (FP-7 2009)[182] to move "towards a more secure society and increased industrial competitiveness", whit 45 projects declaring to fight "more terrorism, organised crime and natural disasters".

The picture coming out is that of a society of fear and control, waging wars overseas and hunting refugees at home, in a de-humanizing spiral of projects like "Automatic Detection of Abnormal Behaviour and Threats in crowded Spaces" (ADABTS), or the "BeSeCu" project to investigate cross-cultural and ethnic differences of human behaviour in crisis situations. In the 100 pages document linked above are found key-phrases like "monitor security down to the neighbourhood level" and "intelligent information system supporting observation, searching and detection for security of citizens in urban environment", titles like "IDetecT 4ALL" or "SAMURAI", projects like "TALOS" to develop unmanned patrol vehicles for border controls.

A Kafkian feeling is given by reading this document, while it represents a succulent documentation to understand the imaginary and dialectic of European fears: migration and terrorism are closely related, war threats can be hidden everywhere, urban public space and border zones are at high risk, even private spaces are dangerous, everything can be used against everyone. I have no doubts this is the scenario of a collective paranoid mind, as well for a growing generational conflict, see the Freedom Not Fear[183] protests against the surveillance mania.

Last but not least, all countries involved are actually European, with two exceptions: Turkey and Israel, over-militarised Mediterranean countries definitely not complying with European standards for human-rights, still receiving more security funds. Should we wonder how such advanced technologies will be deployed there?

Better not. I'd feel much better not knowing all this, maybe this should be the next step of Europe to keep the mental peace of it citizens: seamless control and secreted plans for security research. This is the sad paradox for a governance that can either despotically and silently hide an explosion of fear or democratically and transparently implode in paranoia.

NeoConOpticon - The EU Security-Industrial Complex[184] is a related publication by Ben Hayes (Statewatch and TransNational Institute) dealing with the issues I'm mentioning here. The colophon recites:

> Despite the often benign intent behind collaborative European "research" into integrated land, air, maritime, space and cyber-surveillance systems, the EU's security and R&D policy is coalescing around a high-tech blueprint for a new kind of security. It envisages a future world of red zones and green zones; external borders controlled by military force and internally by a sprawling network of physical and virtual security checkpoints; public spaces, micro-states and "mega events" policed by high-tech surveillance systems and rapid reaction

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[177]http://mobile.slashdot.org/story/09/08/17/0014235/Open-Source-GSM-Network-At-Dutch-Hacker-Convention
[178]http://it46.se/entry/380
[179]http://lists.dyne.org/lurker/message/20090918.191705.68409c34.en.html
[180]http://openbts.sourceforge.net
[181]http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/sep/22/french-police-jungle-calais
[182]http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/security/doc/fp7_project_flyers/securityresearch-lowdef.pdf
[183]http://www.edri.org/edri-gram/number7.18/freedom-not-fear-2009
[184]http://www.tni.org/detail_pub.phtml?&know_id=318

forces; "peacekeeping" and "crisis management" missions that make no operational distinction between the suburbs of Basra or the Banlieue; and the increasing integration of defence and national security functions at home and abroad.

It is not just a case of "sleepwalking into" or "waking up to" a "surveillance society", as the Britain's Information Commissioner famously warned, it feels more like turning a blind eye to the start of a new kind of arms race, one in which all the weapons are pointing inwards. Welcome to the Neo-ConOpticon.

Sourcemap   Sat, 26 Sep 2009

Sourcemap[185], "a collective tool for transparency and sustainability" developed at the MIT medialab has entered the public beta stage.

Simply put: We believe that people have the right to know where things come from and what they are made of.

Sourcemap is a platform for researching, optimizing and sharing the supply chains behind a number of everyday products (more info).

Looks like an early attempt for a quantitative analysis tool within the Internet of Things[186] framework, has a good potential especially in industrial production distributed in urban areas, still doesn't differs much from previous consumer association's initiatives and I believe its limits will be analogous. Still, an interesting initiative and of course very well marketed. The mission reads like:

When you invite people to an event, buy the ingredients for a recipe, or design the parts of a product, your choices have a significant impact.

Some things have vast supply chains that stretch across the world while others are completely regional. Understanding the reach of our sourcing is fundamental to improving economic, social and environmental conditions.

Sourcemap is a tool for producers, business owners and consumers to understand the impact of supply chains. Our site is a social network where anyone can contribute to a shared understanding of the story behind products. You can simulate the impact of manufacturing, transporting, using and throwing away products using our Life-Cycle Assessment calculator. This web-based tool uses linked data from geological and geographic resources. Each 'Sourcemap' can be used to help market socially- and environmentally- conscious products and to buy carbon offsets. Supply chains published on the site can be embedded in external websites, printed onto product packaging or linked through QR codes readable by camera phones. As the site grows, suppliers will be able to contribute their products to the Sourcemap database, providing a geographic catalogue of materials

Abbenay Hackerspace Stockholm   Tue, 29 Sep 2009

The global Hackerspace movement is rapidly bouncing initiatives between USA and Europe this year, last but not least this new squatted space in Stockholm called "Abbenay", resisting to threats of eviction and, what's most important, making a good point about its reason to exist. Here below a call of the hacker occupants which openly asks for a dialogue with all players involved, including the owner of the building:

The Abbenay hacklab[187] opened early this month in Stockholm[188], where a housing crisis is at full blow.

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[185]http://www.sourcemap.org/beta/stage/
[186]http://www.theinternetofthings.eu/content/internet-things-critique-ambient-technology-and-all-seeing-network-rfid
[187]http://www.abbenay.org/
[188]http://lekernel.net/blog/?p=544

We are set up in a place that was squatted downtown by Kommando Carl Bildt since late August, called AK4. The house was empty since June, and there was no plans to use it until one year and a half.

Unfortunately, squats are very unusual in Sweden, and the discussions with the landlord and the city of Stockholm are extremely difficult, even though many newspapers speak positively about AK4. The place currently sets a record for the country, with a life time of one month (and counting) while most squats usually get raided by the police in a few days.

We are however facing an imminent eviction threat and police pressure has been significantly increasing lately - with civil cops coming very often to take pictures of the house and sirens waking us up early in the morning.

This call is asking you to contact the landlord to show support to the hacklab and the squat. So far, he has been very closed minded. He only proposed that we leave the place and talked about an expensive and abusive rental contract. It was about a much smaller office, and according to which we would not be allowed to sleep in the premises, we would not be allowed to host concerts, cafes or parties, etc.

The landlord is Fredrik Winberg; he is the CEO of Cementa AB[189], part of HeidelbergCement Global with a revenue of 15 billion euros per year. He also runs the Biteam AB company[190]. We do not believe that he or any of his fellows will turn poor should we definitely get the house in Stockholm, and we think that his behavior is basically motivated by the capitalist idea that the right to stay somewhere must always be paid for.

We hereby ask you to contact him to expose your views on squatting and hackerspaces in order to give him a more comprehensive view on the subject than what he could have had as a capitalist entrepreneur. His contact email is fredrik.winberg at cementa.se and he can be reached by phone at +46 (0)708 25 68 04 (NB: this contact information is available from the WWW).

We do not give a "copy and paste" email to send him, since mail bombing would probably not be effective and only increase tensions. Also, please do not be aggressive nor engage in any other activity (defacing etc.) which would not lead anywhere.

Thank you, The Abbenay Hacklab

Intersquat meeting   Mon, 5 Oct 2009

These days an international meeting of squatters is taking place in France called Intersquat[191], mostly bound to the French and Italian experiences of squatting.

Still far from being completed with a more international dimension, the initiative is hopefully a good start to represent the various and inter-connected cultural activities of squats in Europe.

Also in the Netherlands is found a valuable heritage of squatters, with people and places that have been recognized for fighting endemic phenomenons of house market speculations and letting artists and migrants develop outside of the constraints of the capitalist system.

Just these days the Dutch Parliament hosts an hot discussion about abolishing squatting, which is currently "protected" by granting squatters the right for a regular court-case about their occupation of private property. The documentary Table, bed and chair[192] is in my opinion one of the best explanations of how this all works, done by many of the friends we have in Amsterdam :) we also showed it for curious hackers at HAR2009 in our village.

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[189]http://www.masterclub.se/konsulter.html
[190]http://www.biteam.com/
[191]http://www.intersquat.org/
[192]http://video.squat.net/www.table-bed-chair.tk.ogg

Hotmail passwords leaked

Time is proving that hackers were right criticising the ongoing centralisation of communication infrastructures in the hand of a few mega-corporations and their monstrous server conglomerations, as Internet grew into its "consumerist age".

This is the time of hotmail indeed, as as thousands of passwords were leaked online[193], exposing users to the black market of tapping, making their privacy an unfortunate victim of industrial error.

What happens commonly is also the habit of using the same password for various Internet service accounts, so that this security breach is potentially affecting the integrity of other on-line service industries.

Re-Imagining the City

In occasion of a FreeJ workshop we've held in De Balie Amsterdam, we were invited among the audience of the International Amsterdam Film Festival[194] an extremely interesting panel called Re-imagining the City[195].

The projects presented, mostly dealing with architecture and participative citizenship, are all worth a look: Gecekondu[196] is a research on gypsy buildings built over night, Model Citizens[197] is a framework for collective planning of a neighbourhood by its inhabitants, Lima 2427[198] is a creative response to the bad administration of city developments in Peru and The Cook, the Farmer, his Wife and their Neighbour[199] is a local experiment in grass-root building of a public space with the inhabitants of the Geuzenveld-Slotermeer multi-cultural outer district of Amsterdam.

GNU Debugger 7

A new version of an important GNU tool, completing the set of core applications necessary for software development , has been released a few days ago: the GNU Debugger (GDB) version 7[200].

A remarkable improvement of this new version is the possibility for debugging[201], so that one can step backwards after a break-point in the execution flow. This evidently implies a re-factoring of the internal architecture of GDB, finally achieving a feature already present in other proprietary products.

In software development, the debugger is a vital tool letting programmers dissect and observe the execution flow of their source code, inspecting the contents of variable memory at certain positions and at the occurrence of specific states.

Rich countries cut food aid

The Guardian newspaper yesterday reported an impressive declaration by the head of UN's World Food Programme[202] stating that in a near future several millions of people will be lost to malnutrition, riots and political destabilisation, as rich countries have minimized aid funding for food rations in poor countries.

As extreme as it sounds, this projection could lead to a reality well defined by earlier analysis as that of the Club of Rome and MIT researchers. From the article:

This could be the "loss of a generation" sayd Josette Sheeran, head of the UN's WFP, feeding aid food to nearly 100 million people a year "We are facing a silent tsunami [. . .] a humanitarian disaster".

Quoting some parts of the article:

> The US, by far the world's biggest contributor to food aid, has so far pledged \$800m less than in 2008; Saudi Arabia has paid only \$10m in 2009 compared with \$500m in 2008; and

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[193] http://www.neowin.net/news/main/09/10/05/thousands-of-hotmail-passwords-leaked-online

[194] http://www.iaff.nl

[195] http://www.dnerve.com/IAFF_2009/

[196] http://www.dusarchitects.com/gecekondu/

[197] http://www.osterholtuitentuis.nl/projects/modelcitizens.html

[198] http://lima2427.pe/

[199] http://kkvb-cfwn.blogspot.com/

[200] http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/download/ANNOUNCEMENT

[201] http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/news/reversible.html

[202] http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/oct/11/millions-starvation-food-aid-cuts

the EU has given $130m less. Britain's promise of $69m this year is nearly $100m less than 2008, and, if nothing more is given, will be its lowest contribution since 2001.

[..]

World food supplies are under increased strain this year following a succession of droughts, typhoons, floods and earthquakes that have destroyed crops in Africa and south-east Asia. But human needs are also greater because the financial crisis has led to widespread unemployment. In addition, the remittances from foreign nationals living in rich countries to their families at home are 20% lower than last year.

Last month the UN said that the number of hungry people in the world had increased by more than 150 million in a single year to more than one billion. Aid agencies last week warned of severe food shortages in southern India after heavy floods damaged hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of crops.

[. . .]

This is the worst food crisis since the 1970s. We will lose a generation. Children will never recover," said Sheeran.

More than 40 million people could be affected by the WFP's enforced scaling back of its food rations. Countries most likely to be hit include Bangladesh, where the budget is likely to be cut by as much as 50%, and Kenya, where similar cuts will worsen the plight of millions of extra people made destitute by a long drought.

[. . .]

"We are making hard choices over who to feed. We are very aware that as we dismantle [feeding programmes] it may take out the underpinning of society and leads to political destabilisation," said Sheeran.

"We are very concerned about the large budget shortfall faced by WFP, which means the programme has to cut the food rations to millions of people who rely on this assistance for their very survival," said Fred Mousseau, Oxfam's humanitarian policy adviser. "This will translate into more child deaths, with more than 16,000 children already dying from hunger-related causes every day."

JAHTARI, RASTASOFT et al.   Sat, 17 Oct 2009

Tonight it's show time, with an alchemy between Reggae Riddim and 8-bit, free software development and Rastafari redemption. The gig is hosted by the Worm in Rotterdam[203] and co-organised with Moddr[204] - the coolest hackerspace in the city.

Liberation from mental slavery in software and hardware, chips and tunes.

Free Culture Forum   Sun, 18 Oct 2009

I'm honoured to be one of the participants in the international *Forum on Access to Culture and Knowledge in the Digital Age* organised by Exgae, Networked Politics and Free Knowledge Institute in Barcelona from October 29 to November 1, 2009.

The Forum will be a major international meeting of the most relevant world-wide organizations and individuals who are engaged in reflecting on the social and economic challenges to the dissemination of culture and knowledge in the digital age.

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[203]http://www.wormweb.nl"
[204]http://www.moddr.net

While governments around the world discuss legislation and self-regulation, the Forum will articulate the valuable proposals that are emerging from civil society and find ways of harmonising the recognition of creativity, innovation and investment with people's right to access knowledge in a sustainable and cooperative world.

The Forum will be a space in which to lay down concrete proposals and articulate the work of the more than 60 experts invited to participate[205].

The Forum continues the work carried out by civil society organizations at the Ministerial Conference "Forum for Creative Europe" organised as part of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union in March this year (see attached abstract). This enterprise is supported by the European Commission's Education and Culture Committee, which will continue its involvement through Official Observers at the Barcelona event.

Full program is on fcforum.net[206], Another interesting text is the Exgae paper at the Forum for a Creative Europe[207] as part of the Czech Presidency.

The e-reader race   Fri, 23 Oct 2009

In the last few hours Amazon's stock markets made a remarkable leap (approximately +26% in less than 24 hours), on the hype of their e-reader and the opening market of e-paper press.

It sounds quite logical as Christmas approaches the western world and the e-readers place themselves as a perfect new gadget for yuppies. Nevertheless it is a bit too early to draw conclusions about who is going to win the e-reader market, as the Nook tablet is coming up[208] as well the Asus dual screen EEE-reader[209] which is already rumored to be the cheaper and best.

And while Amazon's Kindle deletes the books from the hands of their customers, these other cheaper models seem to come free from DRM.

The Ghetto Biennale   Wed, 28 Oct 2009

Definitely the most interesting Biennale of contemporary art I've heard of this year, at least judging from the artist's line-up and surrounding statements:

"The artists use all the detritus of a post-industrial global economy which uses Haiti as a dumping ground. They return the compliment, creating astounding bricolages and assemblages which express both the despair and the seemingly endless creativity of Haiti and Vodou. I have visited their ateliers on Haiti's Grand Rue on several occasions over the last four years. I have had a chance to see their sculptures as they were being wrought from their desperate materials in a scrap yard on this wreck of a street, in this wreck of a city, in this wreck of a country. Saying all that, I would also have to add that, like Haiti, their sculptures seem to express the boundless creative energy of a people who are simultaneously the economically poorest, and artistically richest culture in the New World." (Professor Donald Cosentino, World Arts and Cultures, University of California, LA)

The Ghetto Biennale, a Salon des Refuses for the 21st century[210] will open its doors this year, exhibiting among the others our beloved hacker stars Nancy Mauro-Flude[211] and Jessie Darling[212], plus more interesting artists like for instance Ace Lehner and Crow Cianciola with their witty critical project called OINGO, about NGO abuse:

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[205]http://fcforum.net/participants

[206]http://www.fcforum.net

[207]http://conservas.tk/archivos/praha_doc.pdf

[208]http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9139710/Analysis_Nook_could_pre_empt_the_rumored_Apple_tablet_

[209]http://www.engadget.com/2009/09/07/asus-planning-dual-screen-eee-reader-worlds-cheapest-e-book-re/

[210]http://www.yoonsoo.com/ghetto/files/about.html

[211]http://sistero.sysx.org/

[212]http://www.bravenewwhat.org/

Our project looks to the ghetto biennale as a counter exhibition, disrupting conventional art scene exclusions, as well as a bold conversion of global power systems, centers of art production, and cultural transmission. As U.S. artists proposing to travel to Port-au-Prince, Haiti to participate in the Ghetto Biennale it is important to us to be part of a critical dialogue about globalism. There are approximately 10,000 NGO's operating in Haiti, all backed by the interests and finances of the US, France and Canada. Many of these NGOs are immersed in agricultural production. The resulting farms are part and parcel of the global industry of economic assistance. We are interested in utilizing tangerines and oranges from farms that have become part of the Haitian agricultural landscape through the presence of US funded NGO's.

Among the other things found in the documentation of this Biennale there is this fascinating warning for those submitting to the call: "Artists should be aware that Haiti has only a 50% literacy rate and text heavy projects could be problematic for the local audience".

RFID nest attack implemented   Wed, 4 Nov 2009

Researchers at Nethemba[213] released a few days ago an implementation of the nest attack on Mifare Classic cards[214].

We have analysed Czech/Slovak most used public transport and access smart cards (Bratislava public transport card, University/ISIC cards, parking cards, Slovak Lines cards etc) based on Mifare Classic technology. Using various technologies and thanks to public available academical papers, we have demonstrated the possibility of gaining all access keys used for the card content encryption. We have also verified that these keys can be subsequently used for complete reading, altering and cloning the cards that can pose a serious threat for affected transport companies.

Fairly well packaged, this software progressively discovers the keys closing the blocks on the RFID cards, starting from at least one known key (commonly found, as mentioned by Roel Verdult in his "Classic Mistakes" lecture) using the "Nested Authentication Attack" documented by the paper "Wirelessly Pickpocketing a Mifare Classic Card" published by scholars of the Radboud University in Nijmegen.

Theoretically this is nothing so new, nevertheless this is a fully working implementation (and fast, thanks to libNFC) that can let you crack Mifare chips using a 30$ cheap touch-a-tag without more tech skills than compiling a small C code. Tried on the dutch OV-chip card today: it took less than 2 hours to find all the keys of the card and read out all its sectors. Wide open, quite impressive.

Nethemba's head of research Pavol Lupták will soon present in person his findings at the upcoming Confidence 2.0[215] in Warsaw.

The Anomalous Wave hits the Northern shores   Thu, 5 Nov 2009

With thousands of students protesting in Austria and Germany[216], it is now clear that the Anomalous Wave[217] advances inexorably across Europe: it crosses languages as well political and economical differences, uniting a generation of young people increasingly aware of the rights they are being negated and the future they are being stolen.

The "Unsere Uni" movement both in Austria[218] and Germany[219] is blossoming with various initiatives, a grass-root participation in youth protests that can be hardly found in *social-democratic-land* and dulcis in fundo lots arguments and reasons for being hungry against the commercialization of culture. Here below the *Allgemeiner Forderungskatalog* from Austrian students:

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[213]https://www.nethemba.com/research

[214]http://www.nethemba.com/mfoc.tar.bz2

[215]http://200902.confidence.org.pl/prelegenci/pavol-luptak/

[216]http://derstandard.at/fs/1256744077182/Uni-Proteste-Tag-15-Wieder-Zehntausende-auf-der-Strasse

[217]documents/anomalous_wave-eng-nov09.pdf

[218]http://unsereuni.at/

[219]http://unsereunis.de/

Antidiskriminierung:

Wir fordern antidiskriminatorische Betriebsvereinbarungen und Anti-Diskrimninierung als Grundkonsens in allen Bildungseinrichtungen.

- Das so genannte Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz muss in allen Institutionen des Bildungswesens umgesetzt werden. Wir fordern barrierefreies Studieren, Lehren und Lernen. D.h. beispielsweise die Verfügbarkeit von Dolmetscher_innen zur Übersetzung in Gebärdensprache sowie infrastrukturelle Maßnahmen für Menschen mit besonderen Bedürfnissen, Bsp. Barrierefreie Räume und Lifte;

- Wir fordern eine 50-prozentige Frauenquote in allen Arbeitsbereichen des Bildungswesens auf allen Ebenen;

- Wir fordern Quoten zur Förderung von Migrant_innen in allen Arbeitsbereichen des Bildungswesens auf allen Ebenen;

- Wir fordern Maßnahmen gegen Diskriminierung von LGBTQ-Personen (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, queer) und weiteren Angehörigen systematisch diskriminierter Gruppen in allen Arbeitsbereichen des Bildungswesens auf allen Ebenen;

- Wir fordern gleiches Recht auf Mobilität und Bildung unabhängig von Staatsbürger_innenschaft; Z.B.: Keine doppelten Studiengebühren von Drittstaatsangehörigen sowie die Anerkennung von akademischen Titeln aller Länder.

Demokratisierung der Universitäten:

Unser Ziel ist die demokratische Organisation der Universitäten. Dazu gehört eine Demokratisierung der Verwaltung in einer Form, die Professor_innen, Studierende, das wissenschaftliche und nicht-wissenschaftliche Personal gleichberechtigt an der Entscheidungsbildung beteiligt.

- Wir fordern eine demokratische, selbstverwaltete Organisation der Universitäten.

- Wir fordern eine gleichberechtigte Einbeziehung aller vier Kurien: Studierende, Mittelbau, Professor_innen und allgemeines Universitätspersonal.

- Wir sprechen uns gegen die Dominanz von Rektorat, Unirat und Ministerium aus.

- Wir bestehen auf der Zusammenlegung des Ministeriums für Unterricht und Kunst und des Ministeriums fur Wissenschaft und Forschung.

- Wir fordern die Abschaffung des Universitätsrates.

- Wir fordern die Beschneidung der Befugnisse des Rektorats bei gleichzeitiger Aufwertung demokratisch legitimierter Gremien.

- Wir fordern die Abschaffung von quantifizierenden Kontrollmechanismen wie Leistungsvereinbarungen und Wissensbilanzen.

- Wir fordern Budgettransparenz. D.h. die Offenlegung aller Finanzaktivitäten und die demokratische Mitbestimmung bei der Budgetverteilung.

- Wir fordern die Rücknahme der ÖH-Wahlrechtsreform von 2004 und die Wiedereinführung des direkten Wahlmodus.

- Selbst-organisierte studentische Räume müssen geschützt und unterstützt werden. Die derzeitigen Besetzungen zeigen die Notwendigkeit des Austauschs und der Vernetzung in autonomen Räumen.

Keine Ökonomisierung von Bildung:

- Wir fordern den freien Hochschulzugang und die Abschaffung ökonomischer Kriterien für den Zugang zu Bildung, welche den strukturellen Rassismus und die soziale und ökonomische Ungleichheit aufrecht erhalten, d.h. die Abschaffung aller Studiengebühren und die Aufhebung aller weiteren finanziellen Zugangsbarrieren im Bildungsbereich und zwar unabhängig von Staatsbürger_innenschaft, Alter und Dauer des Studiums.

- Schluss mit Unterfinanzierung, Wettbewerbslogik und Elitenbildung im Bildungsbereich, d.h. keine Privatisierung und kein Ausverkauf öffentlicher Einrichtung und Güter.

- Die Qualität von Bildung und Lehre soll nicht durch Zugangsbeschränkungen, sondern durch ausreichende Finanzierung im Bildungssektor gewährleistet werden.

- Wir fordern die Abschaffung prekärer Dienstverhältnisse im Bildungsbereich sowie in der gesamten Arbeitswelt. D.h. keine a-typischen Beschäftigungsverhältnisse wie freie Dienstverträge, zeitlich befristete Verträge, Werkverträge etc. Die systematische Prekarisierung von Lehrenden und Forschenden hat Vereinzelung, Verunsicherung, Demotivierung und Konkurrenzdenken zur Folge.

- Wir fordern die Ausfinanzierung aller Bildungseinrichtungen.

- Wir fordern die Finanzierung von Forschung und Lehre in einem Ausmaß, das die Beschaffung von Drittmittel nicht notwendig macht.

- Wir reklamieren das Streikrecht für Student_innen und Schüler_innen.

Selbstbestimmtes Studieren:

- Abschaffung des Selektionsinstruments der Studieneingangsphasen (STEPs) inklusive ihrer Knock-Out-Prüfungen.

- Schluss mit den Voraussetzungsketten.

- Freie Wahlfächer statt Erweiterungscurricula.

- Abschaffung der intransparenten Anmeldesysteme.

- Abschaffung der Deadlines für Sozialförderungen.

- Die Beendigung des angefangenen Diplomstudiums muss gewährleistet sein. Dazu bedarf es eines entsprechenden Lehrangebots und fixer Äquivalenzlisten sowie der Aufhebung der bestehenden Übergangsfristen.

- Aufrechterhaltung aller bestehenden Diplomstudiengänge.

- Gewährleistung der Anrechenbarkeit von Lehrveranstaltungen und Abschlüssen im In- und Ausland.

- Freie Zugänge zu allen Studiengängen.

  Außerdem sprechen wir uns aus:

- Gegen die Einführung der Zentralmatura.

- Gegen ein autoritäres Beurteilungssystem in Schulen – Sitzenbleiben abschaffen.

Geschichtliche Aufarbeitung:

- Wir fordern die Erhaltung, die Förderung und den Ausbau kritischer und emanzipatorischer Forschung und Lehre.

- Wir verlangen die Restitution aller im Zuge der Shoa geraubten Güter, die sich in „Besitz" der Universitäten sowie anderer staatlicher Einrichtungen befinden.

- Wir bestehen auf der geschichtspolitischen Auseinandersetzung, mit der Teilhabe der Wissenschaft und ihrer Institutionen, an Kolonialismus, Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus.

Wir fordern freie Bildung für alle!

Wir fordern nicht nur einen Stop der Ökonomisierung der Bildung!

Wir fordern einen Stop der Ausbeutung in allen Lebensbereichen!

ICT labour issues **Wed, 11 Nov 2009**

Yesterday Adobe Systems Inc. fired approximately 680[220] full-time positions worldwide.

Meanwhile today in Italy the ICT company Eutelia Spa is occupied by its employees on strike after not receiving their payments since months. Something that quickly escalated as the owner of the company, known for his right-wing connections, organised a "private raid" to force the striking employees out[221]. Nevertheless the occupants resisted and are well determined to keep the place until they'll have their rights respected.

Memorable Mindfck code **Thu, 12 Nov 2009**

Just found that Ku-ma-me[222] posted some time ago an exquisite exercise of recursively polymorphic code in ruby (Quine[223]): it can be interpreted cascading across 12 languages

```
# ruby
l=92.chr;eval s="s=s.dump[r=1..-2].gsub(/("+l*4+"){4,}(?!\")/){|t|'\"+l*%d+\"'%(t
.size/2)};5.times{s=s.dump[r]};puts\"# python\\nprint(\\\"# perl\\\\nprint(\\\\\\
\"# lua"+l*4+"nprint("+l*7+"\"(* ocaml *)"+l*8+"nprint_endline"+l*15+"\"-- haskel
l"+l*16+"nimport Data.List;import Data.Bits;import Data.Char;main=putStrLn("+l*31
+"\"/* C */"+l*32+"n#include<stdio.h>"+l*32+"nint main(void){char*s[501]={"+l*31+
"\"++intercalate"+l*31+"\","+l*31+"\"(c(tail(init(show("+l*31+"\"/* Java */"+l*32
+"npublic class QuineRelay{public static void main(String[]a){String[]s={"+l*31+"
\"++intercalate"+l*31+"\","+l*31+"\"(c("+l*31+"\"brainfuck"+l*64+"n++++++++[>++++
<-]++++++++>+++++++++"+l*31+"\"++(concat(snd(mapAccumL h 2("+l*31+"\"110"+l*31
+"\"++g(length s)++"+l*31+"\"221112111001111120211111102011112120012"+l*31+"\"++co
ncatMap("+l*32+"c->let d=ord c in if d<11then"+l*31+"\"21002"+l*31+"\"else"+l*31+
"\"111"+l*31+"\"++g d++"+l*31+"\"22102"+l*31+"\")s++"+l*31+"\"2100211101012021122
2211211101000120211021120221102111000110120211202"+l*31+"\")))))))++"+l*31+"\","+l
*63+"\""+l*64+"n"+l*63+"\"};int i=0;for(;i<94;i++)System.out.print(s[i]);}}"+l*31
+"\")))))++"+l*31+"\",0};int i=0;for(;s[i];i++)printf("+l*63+"\"%s"+l*63+"\",s[i]
);puts("+l*63+"\""+l*63+"\");return 0;}"+l*31+"\");c s=map("+l*32+"s->"+l*31+"\""
+l*63+"\""+l*31+"\"++s++"+l*31+"\""+l*63+"\""+l*31+"\")(unfoldr t s);t[]=Nothing;
t s=Just(splitAt(if length s>w&&s!!w=='"+l*31+"\"'then 501else w)s);w=500;f 0=Not
hing;f x=Just((if x`mod`2>0then '0'else '1'),x`div`2);g x= reverse (unfoldr f x);
h p c=let d=ord c-48in(d,replicate(abs(p-d))(if d< p then '<'else '>')++"+l*31+"\"
."+l*31+"\");s="+l*31+"\"# ruby"+l*32+"n"+l*31+"\"++"+l*31+"\"l=92.chr;eval s=\"+
(z=l*31)+\"\\\"\"+s+z+\"\\\""+l*31+"\"++"+l*31+"\""+l*32+"n"+l*31+"\""+l*15+"\""+
l*7+"\")"+l*4+"n\\\\\\\\")\\\")\"###########  (c) Yusuke Endoh, 2009 ###########\n"
</stdio.h>

 ruby QuineRelay.rb > QuineRelay.py
 python QuineRelay.py > QuineRelay.pl
 perl QuineRelay.pl > QuineRelay.lua
 lua QuineRelay.lua > QuineRelay.ml
 ocaml QuineRelay.ml > QuineRelay.hs
```

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[220]http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/796343/000110465909064037/9-33303__18k.htm
[221]http://www.agenziami.it/articolo/4983/Ex+Eutelia+raid+dell+imprenditore+squadrista/
[222]http://d.hatena.ne.jp/ku-ma-me/20090916/p1
[223]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quine_%28computing%29

```
runghc QuineRelay.hs > QuineRelay.c
gcc -Wall -o QuineRelay QuineRelay.c
 ./QuineRelay > QuineRelay.java
javac QuineRelay.java && java QuineRelay > QuineRelay.bf
beef QuineRelay.bf > QuineRelay.ws
wspace QuineRelay.ws > QuineRelay.unl
unlambda QuineRelay.unl > QuineRelay2.rb
```

Stubnitz: free Amsterdam? Sun, 15 Nov 2009

A petition is out to free the historical Stubnitz boat from the neo-prohibitionist wave hitting the city of Amsterdam. This is a paradox for such an historical free culture harbour in Europe, but we must admit that Mokum A is showing signals of decline since a while now.

> For centuries Amsterdam was proud of being a tolerant city. Its recent *vertrutting* undermines this.

> MS Stubnitz, 'the ship of 100 subcultures', is a representative of the diverse and tolerant cultural spirit of Amsterdam. For unjust reasons the ship has been shut down by the City of Amsterdam, leaving this independent cultural hot-spot and its crew in limbo: unable to operate the ship and unable to leave Amsterdam. The very survival of the project is in imminent danger.

> Please join our protest in support of the Stubnitz, its crew, and Amsterdam's *onttrutting*. *This event will take place at Dam Square, this Friday, 13 November 2009, from 15.00 till 18.00h. A public discussion on "vertrutting" and "onttrutting" will take place at de Balie, this Saturday, 14 November, from 20.30 till 23.00h. Details of the program will be announced on tolerantamsterdam.jjmdo.com[224].

> Please support the Stubnitz by signing the petition[225].

> Details on the illegitimate closure of the Stubnitz can be found in the document Bezwaargronden[226]" (in Dutch).

> *Save the Stubnitz from capsizing!*

What basically happened is that police smuggled a dozen undercover cops into a Saturday night party held at the Stubnitz, the boat being part of the NDSM cultural evening program, an industrial area converted to art and entertainment, subsidised by creative industry funds.

The silent cops took just notes during the party, emphasising the "drug abuse" happening. The day after, their anonymously signed memorial depicted the boat as a place of perdition for the youth of Amsterdam, justifying its seizing.

If you know Amsterdam you know how ridiculous this is, a trick that could be played on a vast number of public places on a Saturday night, nevertheless the cultural and political significance of the MS Stubnitz seems a defined target for the prohibitionist powers taking over our city. Ai! Amsterdam[227].

Corpus building for minority languages Fri, 20 Nov 2009

A bit of curiosity about the state of ispell dictionaries and independent work done in language research today lead to An Crúbadán[228] a web crawler doing automatic development of large text corpora for minority languages.

It has been around for a while, wondering if it's also thanks to this research that Google today offers an amazing range of translation possibilities between languages.

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[224]http://tolerantamsterdam.jjmdo.com
[225]http://www.clanrewired.com/Steun_MS_Stubnitz_in_Amsterdam.html
[226]http://www.stubnitz.com/0/temp/files/091106Bezwaargronden_bl.pdf
[227]http://www.ailoveamsterdam.nl/geef-de-stad-terug-aan-de-amsterdammers/
[228]http://borel.slu.edu/crubadan/apps.html

The latest Open Source column on ZDNet[229] presents the following article by Dana Blankenhorn & Paula Rooney regarding business models:

> Critics are always claiming open source lacks a business model.
>
> In fact it's proprietary software that is lacking in imagination. They have only one business model:

1. *EULA Ware*: Give me money. Now go away. It doesn't work? Go away. You want your money back? Read your EULA, and go away. You want to see the software? Go away.

> This has the virtue of simplicity. People pay and you really aren?t required to give them anything. But it lacks a certain je ne sais quoi
>
> Don't know what that is? You must work for a proprietary software company. (Go away.)
>
> Telling people to pay you and go away worked for an amazingly long time. It sounds like it shouldn't. It sounds a bit like theft. But software is a miracle, and for decades EULA Ware was the only model there was.
>
> Open source companies, on the other hand, they have to use their imagination. They can't feed people EULA Ware, so they must make money in other ways:

1. **Support Ware**: Pay us money and we'll support the software. We'll answer your questions. Or we'll try to. Over the phone, on the Web, whatever. Pay us enough and we'll come over. Red Hat likes this business model.

2. **Product Ware** : The software is free, you just buy the box it runs in. Android phones use this. So do some network routers. It's number two, but with a bullet.

3. **Cloud Ware** : Our software is in the clouds now. Pay us for what it does. The money goes into the cloud. Later it will rain on us. SugarCRM likes this business model.

4. **Project Ware** : Need something done? We'll do it with open source. Pay us for our work, and pay us for the project. IBM makes a ton on this business model.

5. **SaaS Ware** : Our software is SaaSy. You can rent it, by the hour, by the month, by the user. This is wildly popular. Zoho uses it[230]. So do many other companies.

6. **Ad Ware** : This is a free version of SaaS Ware. You don't pay anything, the advertiser pays instead. Heard of The Google? This is their primary business model. ZDNet also uses this business model.

7. **Sugar Daddy Ware** : Our software has a sugar daddy. Firefox has Google. Eclipse has IBM. Open Office has Sun, or it did. So just use the stuff. Daddy will provide. We believe in daddy.

8. **Foundation Ware** : Our software has a foundation. It has lots of sugar daddies. Want to be one? Linux runs this way. So does Apache. Not to mention Wikipedia.

9. **Beg Ware** : Please give us money. We know you don?t have to. But give us money anyway. Lots of little projects use this business model. Or pretend to.

10. Tchotchke Ware[231] : Wanna buy a t-shirt? How about a bumper sticker? A pen?

11. **Let's Make a Deal Ware** : The programmers who wrote the software support it out of their own pockets until they can figure out something. Wordpress started this way. So did Drupal. Go by Sourceforge and you?ll find tons of folks still using this business model.

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[229]http://blogs.zdnet.com/open-source/
[230]http://www.labnol.org/internet/office/zoho-office-business-model/1705/
[231]http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/tchotchke

The great thing about open source is you don't have to use just one business model. You can mix-and-match as you see fit. You can change. You can go to a more profitable model and buy a suit, or fork the code and go down the stack.

This is what freedom is about. It's about having choices. You don't have to go to Sand Hill Road[232] to get into the software business. If they tell you to go away, go open source and in time maybe they'll call you.

Then you can tell them to go away.

Internet of Things workshop   Fri, 4 Dec 2009

Apparently with great success, the first workshop of the IoT Council[233] was held in Bruxelles as a Lift! event, seeing the participation of several EU officials, rapidly capped to 100 participants already two weeks in advance.

Council is a loose group of professionals with different ideas and opinions. We sometimes differ and will probably clash. We prefer to host the full range of opinions on what will be a small avalanche of disruptive innovations. We do have something in common though. We have been through the full range of emotions and conceptual breakdown that comes with grasping the territory, the full logistical, business, social and philosophical implications of the Internet of Things.

The outcomes of our workshop Tools for mediation in the IoT[234] are resumed by this Human / Tech Mediation[235] mind-map.

:   Sat, 5 Dec 2009

Carsten Agger on nettime `http://somethingmanky.blogspot.com/` `http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/dec/05/climate-change-carbon-offset-copenhagen`

Defective By Design update   Thu, 10 Dec 2009

A mail-out by the FSF today provided a nice round-up about the DRM-free campaign this year:

2009 was the year that music DRM died. But when Apple's iTunes store went DRM-free on music, we celebrated the victory without buying the hype: Apple still uses DRM on virtually everything else they sell (movies, TV shows, games, audiobooks, applications, and of course hardware) - itunes-drm-free[236]

Ebooks and ebook readers took off this year, and so did the threat of DRM on books. When Amazon deleted copies of George Orwell's 1984 from hundreds of people's ebook readers, we collected thousands of signatures from readers, authors, public intellectuals and librarians demanding an end to ebook DRM - amazon1984[237]

At the same time, we praised and promoted the work of authors and publishers who do the right thing and keep their books DRM-free, like Harlequin's new publishing house Carina Press, or the hundreds of publishers who tagged their work "drmfree" - carina-drm-free[238] and blog[239]

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[232]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sand_Hill_Road
[233]http://www.theinternetofthings.eu
[234]http://www.theinternetofthings.eu/content/workshop-6-tools-mediation-iot
[235]http://korova.dyne.org/IoT-WS6-12dec09.html
[236]http://www.defectivebydesign.org/itunes-drm-free
[237]http://www.defectivebydesign.org/amazon1984
[238]http://www.defectivebydesign.org/carina-drm-free
[239]http://www.defectivebydesign.org/blog/1240

Through all this, Defective by Design is proud to be the only voice saying loud and clear that there's no such thing as "better" or "friendlier" DRM. No matter how many devices it works on, or what "features" it includes to trick people into accepting it, DRM robs us of our basic rights and insults human curiosity—it needs to go.

If you believe that the technology we use should be free from arbitrary restrictions, the best way to put that belief into action is by becoming an FSF member[240].

FSF activity for users and developers rights really was determinant, all doe we still miss to give artists better answers and directions out of babylon.

We're all doing our best. Next weekend in Barcelona I'll take part in a panel about video distribution: TOPOLOGÍA, INNOVACIÓN Y POLÍTICA CULTURAL[241].

English Shellcode   Fri, 11 Dec 2009

Thanks Shammash for pointing out this witty paper: English Shellcode[242], an effort to interpret code into English language which suggests developments far beyond its initial focus on security research.

The abstract recites:

History indicates that the security community commonly takes a divide-and-conquer approach to battling malware threats: identify the essential and inalienable components of an attack, then develop stack protection and NOP sled detection. It comes as no surprise then that we approach shellcode detection and prevention in a similar fashion. However, the common belief that components of polymorphic shellcode (e.g., the decoder) cannot reliably be hidden suggests a more implicit and broader assumption that continues to drive contemporary research: namely, that valid and complete representations of shellcode are fundamentally different in structure than benign payloads. While the first tenet of this assumption is philosophically undeniable (i.e., a string of bytes is either shellcode or it is not), truth of the latter claim is less obvious if there exist encoding techniques capable of producing shellcode with features nearly indistinguishable from non-executable content. In this paper, we challenge the assumption that shellcode must conform to superficial and discernible representations. Specifically, we demonstrate a technique for automatically producing English Shellcode, transforming arbitrary shellcode into a representation that is superficially similar to English prose. The shellcode is completely self-contained (i.e., it does not require an external loader and executes as valid IA32 code) and can typically be generated in under an hour on commodity hardware. Our primary objective in this paper is to promote discussion and stimulate new ideas for thinking ahead about preventive measures for tackling evolutions in code-injection attacks.

Deforestation satellite monitoring   Sat, 12 Dec 2009

An interesting concern raises up from an entry posted on the Google developer's blog: monitoring deforestation[243] is now possible thanks to wide access to satellite imagery.

This pleasant situation still leaves unanswered questions on the influence of popular perception on corporate governance - and massacres of indigenous societies, coldly put. But let's turn for a moment our attention to something else: what is exactly "pleasant" in this situation? what lies behind this novel enthusiasm for the universally available monitoring of anti-social behaviours?

Arguably the essence of our enthusiasm lies in the opportunity for a ubiquitous feedback on issues commonly considered of universal importance - at the reach of everyone connected to the Internet.

I really love it, not just related to forests, but to a new image of a world suddenly becomes reachable, if not desirable, when compared to modern architectures of centralised control.

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[240]https://my.fsf.org/join
[241]http://www.ypsite.net/proyecto.php?id=20
[242]http://www.cs.jhu.edu/ sam/ccs243-mason.pdf
[243]http://blog.google.org/2009/12/seeing-forest-through-cloud.html

So why aren't we able to access the cameras in our streets? who should be entitled to watch our cities? considering that satellites were available to a military elite already since years and they never used them to monitor deforestation. . .