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the online journal of columbia university's graduate program in modern art: critical and curatorial studies

Notes on Immaterial Labor

Posted on January 26, 2012 by interventionsjournal in Discussion, Vol. 1, Issue 2: Framing the Internet.

*by Burak Arıkan and Deniz Gül **

In the context of Temporary Office for Contemporary Art, "-1" on Saturday, 25th April 2009 17.00

within the exhibition program of Relative Positions and Conclusions, Arcade of Syria in Istanbul, Turkey

with the invitation of Anna Heidenhain, Borga Kantürk, Kristina Kramer, Önder Özengi with the participation of Banu Cennetoğlu, Burak Arıkan, Deniz Gül, Elmas Deniz, Metehan Özcan, Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz, Orton Akıncı, Vahit Tuna

Deniz Gül: It all began a few months ago with me being really bored. I look at images, I look at people's works, I watch movies, and I go to exhibitions... So, what are we doing? In such an abundance of production and constipation, while probably repeating ourselves, what are we doing? The non-existence of art criticism that nobody is writing about what we do, we becoming writers, writing for ourselves... Our affirmation of what we do... What our discomfort is about; we should open this to debate, make it visible. Let us educate us, expose what we do and discuss it. With an invitation from Borga Kantürk related to my blog writings about these issues, today we're going to speak with Burak Arıkan regarding immaterial labor. Our context consists of art production, art product, art system, art economy, and art service... Narrowing space, visual production, production of a brand new reality, copy pasting and distribution. Burak is an artist working on systems; he's been producing works using the Internet, networks and technology. This is not an artist display, thus we'd like this conversation to move on with your questions and comments. Throughout the conversation, we're going to focus on the relationship between artistic production and immaterial labor and how this relationship evolves. Let's start with the classic

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expression “immaterial labor”.

Burak Arkan: My work has been focusing on the immaterial labor for some time. First, I'll try to explain what immaterial labor is and where it stands in cultural production. Immaterial labor is, in a nutshell, “labor that is not material.” We are long past the concept of “labor with muscle power.” We're living in service economy; workers today, whether in banks or in factories, produce information consequent to their labor. Such production can always be measured; if I offer a consultation or work in a bank or a restaurant, I receive payment in return. In their book *Empire* Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt name everything that is done in service as immaterial labor. In Maurizio Lazzarato's text “Immaterial Labor,” immaterial labor is divided into two types: the first one is the provision of service during a particular shift, while the other one occurs off-work hours – when walking down the street, shopping — as the product of the labor in the midst of social life. For example, while I have a certain brand of shoes on, my friend sees them on me and he goes off to buy a pair of his own. Consciously or not, I do recommend him those shoes. I produce a value while living and the shoe company benefits directly from this value – my recommendation. Labor has a century old description, starting from Marx to our day. It's an issue profoundly discussed in philosophy and political economy.



DG: We're talking about a series of events that are not considered as proper businesses due to labor referring to immaterial products and events that produce cultural content. In other words, events inclined towards defining and shaping cultural

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ARTIST PROJECT:

Dana Lok

January 23, 2015

“Tilted Bather, ink”, ink on paper, 18” x 24”, 2014. Traditionally a painting treats you to the most expensive seats in a theater, and you

A Radical Disregard for the Preservation of Art: Robert Rauschenberg's *Elemental Paintings*

January 23, 2015

*By Charlotte Healy
Above: Figure 1: Robert Rauschenberg, *Dirt* Painting (for John Cage), ca. 1953 *Dirt* and mold in wood box 15 1/2 x 16

and artistic standards, towards fashion, tastes, consumer norms and public opinion in a strategic way. Why are we relating artistic production to immaterial labor?

BA: Division of work and leisure time is not clear in an artist's life. The debate on the artist's life being the actual art product is still out there (since the Fluxus), you know the "life as art" phenomenon. If the life is the product, how much it is? There's a natural ambiguity in the division of the material and immaterial of an artist's work. Elmas gave an example a few days ago: An artist participating in the Istanbul Biennial wanders around Istanbul. He's rather broke. He barely gets by. However his artwork is brought from Zurich with \$10.000 insurance. What's the cause of this chasm? Which shareholders hide in this sum? What sort of tumult is this Biennial that the gap between an artist's allowance and price of his work are so far apart?

DG: Let's say that an exhibition budget is \$100.000 and spares you \$1.000 for the project production. Artist fees are not usually paid – it might change depending on the value of your name although you might be given a residence. After all, we don't really know all the calculations that go into the whole process or how the culture industry uses such an outcome value. For the artist, the value she creates can materialize in 10 years, or maybe 2... We're talking about an unknown, uncontrolled and uncertain environment. However this environment is being altered with the Internet. The role bestowed upon the plus value creator; the artist and the communicator are in a different work cycle. The people meet with the creator, even create the environment, use it and re-create to re-use it. The value production that was produced among the creator, mediator and the consumer is now realized between the creator and the consumer thus the mediator "falls off." We're talking about a shift in economy here. Alex Bruns calls this "produsage": simultaneous production and usage. We're approaching to an era where both can co-exist; there are content, information, expression, and creation of experience that accumulate in multi-environment, with multi-users. Let's adjust this to culture industry. Via his works, Burak has a proposition: We can now measure immaterial labor. What is it exactly? How will the changes in the Internet and the economy affect art production and what possibilities will it provide to the plus value creator?

BA: In *The Society of Spectacle* (1967) Guy Debord says, "The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images." Today, the spectacle is digitally measurable. In the past, what happened in the social life was confined to the physical world only. Now, what happens is recorded and it becomes the information that can be re-used over and over again. For instance, when we go to a cafe -Urban, for example- you drink some beer, chat with your friends, and order the same type of beer. A friend passing by tags along and joins the conversation etc. Normally when things are over, you go home. Now let's say that all you did was recorded. Not only sound, but all actions. Who ordered what, when, how many does s/he order in every visit, what was spoken... Imagine all this data recorded and stored by the proprietor. That's what happens in the digital social web. Every move you make, e-mails you send, events you join in Facebook, likings, tags, photos, videos,

ARTIST PROJECT: *Hung* by Brie Ruais

January 23, 2015

Begin with 134 pounds of clay. On the floor, spread this clay out radially from a central mound. Spread the clay to a thickness of

ARTIST PROJECT: *Ilana* Harris Babou

January 22, 2015

Above and below: Ilana Harris Babou, Excerpts from *Untitled*, 2014. HD video, Max/MSP and Processing software. Click the images or here to try additional excerpts from *Untitled*.

"Inside me, the earthquake": Materiality and Embodiment in the 1996 Fractures Exhibition

January 22, 2015

*By Carrie Cushman On January 17, 1995 at approximately 5:45AM an earthquake of immense magnitude occurred in the Kobe-Awaji area of Western Japan. Reports documented over

"What If?" Digital Documentation as

chats... We are living in the digital counterpart of what Guy Debord called the society of spectacle, that is, a recordable and analyzable version. Who is the owner of these nascent values? Who are using them? In the current situation, it's the owners of these platforms, that is Facebook, Youtube, Flickr, Twitter etc. For instance, when you sign up on Facebook for the first time, the agreement says Facebook owns all photographs, information and all digital content you post, it may share it with third parties. Forget Facebook... Think about a bank. Think about your credit card expenses; the location of your expenses, their amounts, your account status during the transaction... Again all your actions are recordable. Amongst banks, third parties involved with them, information shared with marketing companies... With my works, I emphasize this situation to make it more visible. Now, let's talk about computer mediated social life again. Using Delicious? It's a social bookmark site. In 2005, its owner was asked: "What is your business plan?" He replies: "Users pay us with information." What he says is quite clear: People pay us with information they create. Upon first glance, it makes sense. You use it for free and in return you view advertising. The important question here is this: How much do you put in the system, and how much do you get as a result? It's an issue of the balance, what is given and what is received, which is always vague. The founder of Facebook, in an interview, said in 2007, "Facebook is a commercial-supported service, therefore it's free." It's the television/magazine business model. But Facebook is a 4-5 years- old company, with a value of 15 billion dollars. How can this capital accumulate this fast?

DG: The capital can grow faster when it can be measured.

BA: This is called post-capital or hyper-capital; the capacity of the capital to accumulate faster than ever before. Digital accumulation, constant gauging...

DG: Traceability, being able to define... Watching a created value day by day... Talk about *MYPOCKET* (2008) project.

BA: Like I said, what happens on Facebook happens in banks. Using customsoftware, I downloaded and analyzed my transactions in Bank of America. I checked my expenses for the past three years and made predictions. The algorithm tries to predict what I'm going to buy the next day by checking on the past information along with some rules.

DG: How does this information benefit you?

BA: It doesn't. Apart from the fact that it's an interesting question for an artwork. Ultimately I'm not pursuing the information. The prediction says "You are going to withdraw 40 liras from the ATM"; I may or may not do this. I create an experiment that is to be observed by others.

DG: Actually, what sort of information does this give us? So much awareness, traceability, definitiveness, specificity, how can this benefit an artist? Doesn't the artist

Performance and the Body as Archive in Deborah Hay's *No Time to Fly*

January 22, 2015

*By Linden Hill Dance is like a living thing. You can't force it, you can't catch it. You have to make yourself aware and it

Artificial Artifacts: Paul Sietsema and the Work of Conservation

January 21, 2015

*By David Crane 1. The whole thing stands unceremoniously on a pair of sawhorses: a scale replica of Clement Greenberg's apartment circa 1961, replete with

Purposeful Impermanence: Biodegradable Art and Its Challenge to Conservation

January 21, 2015

*by Caroline Barnett
Modern artists turned to unconventional materials throughout the twentieth-century as a way to signal their departure from traditional artmaking. But the shift

require some vague and untraceable situations?

BA: Of course. But this is not what I mean.

DG: You're talking about the right to measure this accumulation of information put together with tools such as surmounting, re-creating, co-producing, tracking, interpreting, copying, pasting- provided by the access granted by these platform owners. In this aspect, the value provided by the artist to the platform owners and the cost of his/her production can be measured. With this transformation, the artist can demand the accounting of his/her labor and observe the labor s/he produced. On the other hand, the Internet also provides a vast indefiniteness. It's so undefined, so fast and so uncontrollable that the result or the effect of what you created is still vague. It seems to me that there are conflicts on each end. You are actually letting the content you create between the definite and indefinite dynamically reform every day.

BA: What I do in *MYPOCKET* is causing an experiment, in which I put myself as the subject. As I confirm the software's predictions it gets better. So the software and I adapt to each other over time. This mutual adaptation is an experiment open to your observation, your view, and your research. I completed my thinking by creating this continuous experiment.

Elmas Deniz: Actually, the information you provide should be purchased... If I am the producer of something, my guessing whether you can buy it or not is worth in gold. This means I can make huge amounts of money.

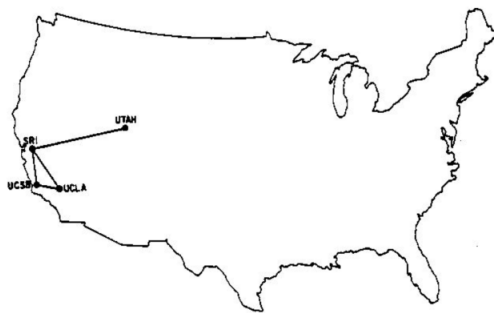
DG: That is where the production is heading after all. What happens today is that the producer estimates the destination of the product before producing it. It is some sort of reverse chain.

BA: *MYPOCKET* as an ongoing experiment enables the observation of that reverse chain.

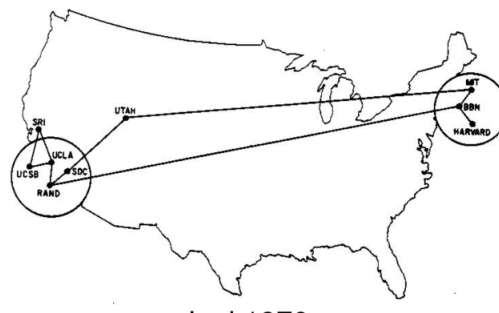
DG: You are building a system.

BA: That is the second point I'd like to underline. Why am I doing work in this way? The world is not only complicated organically, but also mechanically. Let's look at how the Internet developed since 1969. This diagram you see here with five nodes was first made in 1969. It's a network diagram showing how several universities in the U.S.A. were connected to each other. Each circle represents an institution. In 1971, the network seems to have expanded. In 1974, the expansion is greater. In 1977, it starts to change into the schematic of a small computer chip. In 1987, Europe is involved as well; communications become intercontinental. By the year 1998, what we see is like the visualization of a brain; lots of small nodes tied up to one another. In 2005, it becomes something that can no longer be visualized. We're talking about an environment that is constantly expanding as we speak. It's a living phenomenon.

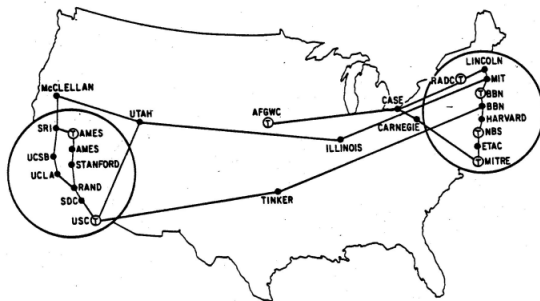
Therefore, to be able to make sense of this complexity, I have to build software systems; this is urgent for me.



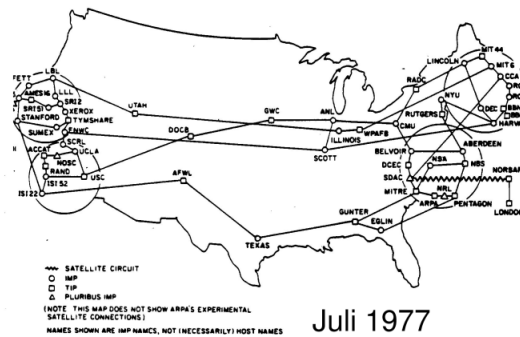
Dezember 1969



Juni 1970



März 1972



Juli 1977

DG: The systematic or network construction of arts, its existence through social relations is not much of a surprise. In physical space, this began after the 60s. To most people, visual or artistic product wasn't enough so they started creating via networks and positioning. Are we actually talking about a really distinct economy?

BA: In the Internet, we simply leave tracks, which generate complexity.

DG: Do you think that the artist is becoming increasingly unable to be singular? With the Internet, the singular, personal and workshop-bound production style has become something completely different. Are you necessitated to co-produce and be additive? Will the artist become the one who constructs networks? Will artistic production – due to this network basis – require creating systems, establishing connections, and being interdisciplinary?

Mürüvvet Türkyılmaz: In this situation, the issue is the socialization of the artist: How does this take shape when we distinguish virtual socialization and physical socialization, with the artist congregating with the spectator in the social environment of his/her own making? Will there be a need for a physical space to meet?

DG: We live multiple realities at once. There are simultaneous realities. Bearing in mind the Internet's delocalized nature in which we are equally distanced to all... In daily life, we're not equally distant to everything, but online everybody is at the same level of distance to each other. There are some fractures here. While experiencing the

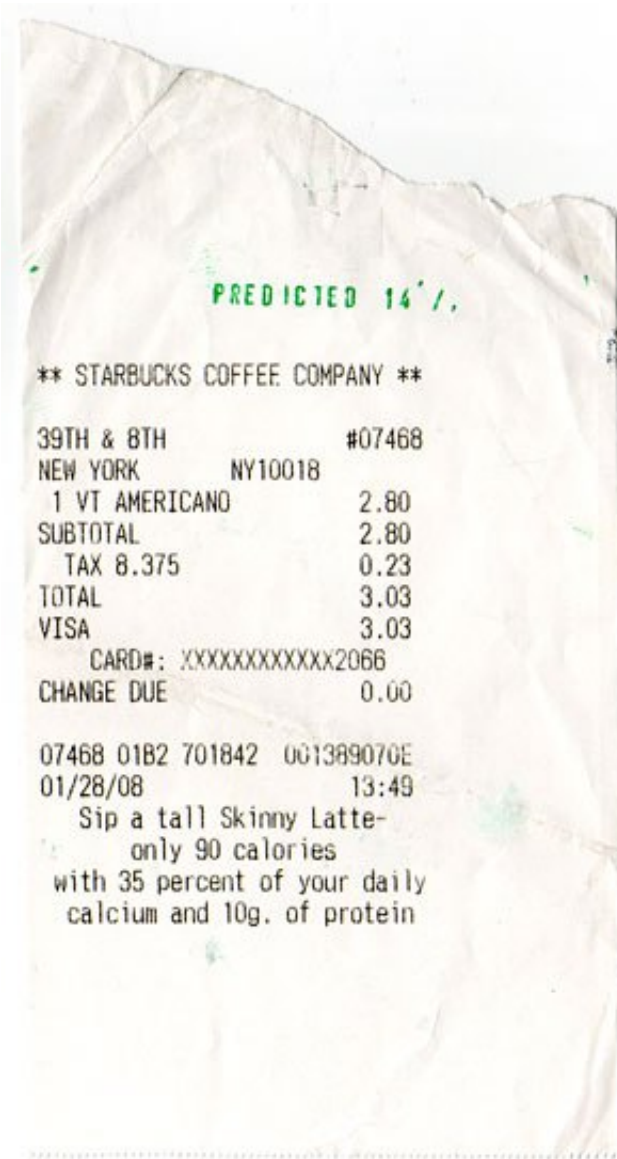
reality in an exhibition hall reality arrives through different veins. On one hand, life exits online; on the other, it occurs in notebooks, in artifacts, in journeys or in conversations you make about your artwork. With reference to the artist, I guess we're at a really different point than "I signed it and this is my artwork."

MT: The experiment involves the change of a physical experience, a virtual experience or a situation into a laboratory. The artist's venue is the virtual studio or the virtual lab. Which one do you prefer?

BA: I don't think there's a separation of physical and virtual today. I can get online via my cell phone right away; I can physically show the blog entry I made yesterday on dugumkume.org. We can check the incoming comments. All things are connected.

DG: It's the "plus value" we're talking about. With the Internet, it'll be -as Burak mentioned yesterday in another conversation- a "multiplied value." In physical terms, you create a plus value, but on the Internet, with the completely altered balance -with it being recorded and measured- you create cross values. Materially you see its return as cross value. Initially, there is no physical space, there is an infinite one. There is an infinite transmission and manifestation of information in an infinite space. Imagine a child browsing Wikipedia. He begins life having seen more photographs when he's 10 years old than Man Ray has seen when he was 50. Some people's experiences and expressions -rather than objective information- are uploaded there. In that environment, we are talking about a completely different reality. We are talking about a cross value on a spiritual basis. It can be measured but also; the cross value stems from stacking accumulation and vagueness.

BA: The biggest sign of the cross value is a company such as Facebook reaching a cost of 15 billion dollars in last 4-5 years. I cannot comprehend how that much capital can accumulate. If we return to the experiment, to that studio state you just mentioned, as an issue of learning and being open -experimenting is just that. *MYPOCKET* project is using that particular hybrid state by creating something material. There are three outputs from this project: One of them is a list, that is, the daily list of the estimations. They are published online as RSS feeds which means it is extraopen. It is not being published via a website; in an RSS format it's easily distributed. Even on your cellular you can check my expenses. The second output is a network diagram -the 'Transactions Graph'. It is the diagram of how I built the estimation mechanism. The last output is comprised of the estimated items. If the expense is estimated, I dub the receipt "estimated item" and that item's existence is foreknown. I record the estimation percentage: 14%, 20%, and 35%. This is a part of the experiment. Ultimately it's a physical product derived from a completely digital process.



Vahit Tuna: Does the estimation affect your shopping?

BA: Sometimes it does, sometimes it doesn't... I used to check it from my cell phone.

Orton Akinci: Do you want the prediction to be successful?

BA: I do, but that's not my only desire.

DG: You can probably route it.

BA: It's like painting better or adjusting the colors of a photograph to make it look better. But conceptually, it is irrelevant to my desires.

ED: This is how much we are able to control, we are aware of it. However there's this immaterial labor we mentioned, which is paid back for or not. What is there to do to

defend our rights, and what are we supposed to do? What is the stance the artist is supposed to take? Can you tell us something about this?



DG: Burak suggests that capitalism will soon get to the point where for instance you drink coffee at Starbucks, thus giving it a value, but the aspect of leaving without getting anything in return will change. With the ability of measuring -given by the Facebook example- you will be able to demand your right. The economy is evolving that way. This predicts a terrific shift in artistic production; enabling the artist who consciously creates immaterial labor to control and to demand accounting for his/her unconscious production of fashions, trends and currents.

ED: I am afraid that as an independent artist, you cannot use logos of big corporations such as Coca-Cola in your work. The copyright issues interfere.

BA: It is an old problem.

ED: An old but still persistent problem.

OA: I was wondering when the conversation would come to this point. It is the first time that the money is being spoken about. Isn't intellectual property the definition of copyright, after all? Because the thing called capitalism is founded on the object, the material. When that object is removed, copyright is revealed as last defender and last reciprocates of intellectual property. Apart from that, the economy changes due to the fact that information is the most vital input for production. Therefore there's no such thing as the object anymore... In fact, criticism of capitalism is the starting point. Lack of the object is the antagonist of capitalism because capitalism can build anything through the object. The credit card as money is the detachment of money from the object. Everything is detaching from object: music as mp3, film as xvid, literature as e-books... This "dematerialization of the world" is the enemy for capitalism. However the only material return capitalism requires is possible by copyright laws. Copyleft is

another important concept. Copyright, as it is today, is a product of this economy, of capitalism: things given to the artist to resume his production. On the contrary, with the involvement of the culture industry, it has become something that produces a surplus, transcending the artist and becoming his/her source. There's a really nice term: free software. What does "free" mean? It has two meanings. Say, software is free, for many it means no cost. But the statement is different. It's "Free as in speech, not as in beer." Thus we're not talking about "without charge," we're talking about freedom. Something's being costless or not has not much to do with its being free or not. At the end of the day, do we charge for what we do? Carlos Basualdo, in his exhibition *Worthless: Invaluable* in Ljubljana, says: "There are two artists; one has paintings in his studio which are worthless. The other has one painting in a museum and it's priceless. How related is what makes them valuable/invaluable with their exchange value? How much of it does the artist want? How necessary is the mediating culture industry? In the old times, the culture industry that was built upon reproduction, multiplication I'd call in fact, and distribution was vital for the cultural productions to reach the masses. However, today -I'm not referring to websites- while there's something called "Peer to peer" (P2P) and while the artist can share and distribute his own work through his own self, what do we want in return for what we call immaterial labor when the culture industry is gone?

DG: Let's not forget that the culture industry is behind the power ruling the world. Hasn't culture industry consolidated itself deep in our bowels?

ED: I gave an example from Britain on the subject yesterday. Since almost the last decade, Britain has prioritized culture industry in its economy (Editors note: The term used by the UK government and civil societies is Creative Industries). It is not the artists who think about this or work for this. When the state tries to discern whom to give money, it is the economists who sit at their table. It's the same in Turkey. The taste will improve and then the middle class won't buy just any sofa in the house but a better designed one. Then the middle class will choose a life style, adopt it and like it... It's seriously lucrative.

DG: Along with all these, whether it is measured or not, whether the artist earns money or not, s/he attains a certain level of autonomy.

Banu Cennetoğlu: It is shown as if there is the system and there are the artists. Those who want this system to work, those who make it work within museums, within galleries, those who make the system are the artists. So, which group wants it how? What sort of change can you make? The majority is on the other side now. Therefore one shouldn't refer to a vast and generic crowd as artists. It's a normal thing: If it is professional, I can have a gallery – I can buy and sell. Apart from this, not many artists have much intention to change or save the world. So where are we standing? To whom are we talking? Where is the majority? This has to be observed. Ultimately, it is us who feed this system. You are declining one exhibition then accepting the next...

DG: Are we reaching to a state where we can leave this cycle? I am equivalent to an anonymous online content producer. How do you distinguish yourself? How do you assess the arts?

BC: There is the "Substitute" issue. You can be replaced. It doesn't matter. Somebody will say, "yes" to something to which you've said "no". It is over. In the old days, where there was an irreplaceably valuable production.

ED: We individually choose the most convenient option for our personal gains which are motivated by our short-term plans. However this is something that will destroy us all in the long run. Even if we had this knowledge we would still go for the short-term benefit. If we don't abandon our cars today, in 70 years we won't be able to breathe. But everybody says: "I use it to get to work thus it's practical for me." In fact this is the situation on the mass-scale. I wrote it on the blog: There, I used the word "altruism." You participate in a cycle for the benefit of others more than your own but you're not its first user.

BC: Ego is an important thing. The reason behind Facebook's big boom is a really human thing. You get curious; you expose your privacy. You want to be wondered about, be seen, and be approved. It's very selfish.

ED: Everybody is racing to conform to the system thus nothing remains distinct.

BC: Then produce for yourself. I see this as the only way out. There is a pattern. Try to exist on your own. Try to unite with those like you.

DG: Another topic is the product's course that leads to eventual melting. With the Internet, we are actually talking about a constant process and something incomplete. Orton, you were mentioning the lack of product as capitalism's ultimate state. However, art's product centricity and its validity of working through institutions are still major problems.

BA: Product is permanent and I think it will always be so. What it is, whether it's material or not, is another issue. Or is the system a process?

OA: There are ways to salvage the system. I don't want to go off-topic but I want to make a point. A surplus value is obtained. Culture industry gets the biggest share and the artist is spared a rather small one. What do we want? For the artist to acquire the money s/he made.... Is there such a thing as a "gift" in art production? I am using "gift" for a reason. Metaphorically with the work of Marcel Mauss in mind, something happened to demonstrate the possibility of another world's existence – the fact that what bound sharing, good will and society bases on these notions. Copyleft is crucial thing here. When you call something copyleft – differing from the licenses of Creative Commons- somebody who is using the network cannot shut it down and it can be

opened to distribution. If some part of the work is accessible while other parts are not, an surplus value can be produced for it. If people exposed their expenses online like Burak did, then they become unavailable for marketing because the information is already there... The point I am trying to make is: If the artist presents his work copyleft, every work that's done related to that work will be referenced to the artist. Problem solved... However, its distribution over a website is another big problem, particularly regarding network economies. The network's value is equivalent to those who use it and sometimes even exceeds those users. However P2P eliminates centrality. Anders Weberg has a project called "P2P Art". He shares his artwork and deletes it from his computer after somebody downloads it. It's only P2P thus the work exists nowhere until the last person deletes from his/her sharing folder. What does this show? If people want the piece, it will never be trash.

BA: You can share a medium on P2P but how can you share a system? That's not possible. Think about *MYPOCKET* project. That's a multipartite system. The credit card machine, bank card, my software, the bank itself along with a whole system working behind that... How will I distribute this? It is impossible for me. I cannot distribute it with P2P. Creative Commons lawyer Lawrence Lessing mentions copyrighting videos and distributable stuff. But there are a lot of things that cannot be distributed. Especially when you consider the physical world, there are a lot of things that can't be distributed. If it is a system or a performance, it can't be distributed. I'm not talking about the documentation; I am talking about the performance itself. I reckon this is a question open to expansion.

OA: You may say that the Internet isn't providing the revolution it enabled on other fields. I mentioned P2P only as a form of logic, differing from Client-Server model. This is a system that can reveal a distinct and true value. Maybe you can adjust it as a system, maybe you cannot...



Metehan Özcan: Wouldn't cultural industry survive on the Internet? The linear thing in reality is like passing on from the small goblet to a bigger one. Wouldn't the same thing occur online? Everybody is trying to be at the same spot simultaneously, like a school of fish... Even the most marginal person is trying to go where everyone's seen and money is there as well. Doesn't the Internet still operate on a corporate level while it liberates? When will the corporate cease to process or will there ever be such a time? I'm talking in the context of art. Everybody is putting his/her works up online, in an alternative spot. As it is perceived, it's getting dragged to somewhere where everybody would want to look and so, doesn't the last become the first anyway? The value of the information rises accordingly...

OA: Value is something that is defined within the culture industry. That's what the culture industry does: Top Ten lists. Listen to these; don't mind the rest. For instance, a video uploaded on Youtube by a renowned director may have an advantage or head start. But after a while, the value created by the masses can reveal it's worth independent of money.

DG: Do you think that this value emerges democratically? Ultimately, can we say that the artwork of the artist with the most rating is the most valuable; that it'll sell for the highest amount? I don't think we can.

OA: There used to be an accessibility problem. But it's not the case on the Internet. Let's think about public art. The sculpture is falling squarely on the middle of the road.

It's pretty but it's lengthening my path. I have to walk around it. There's no proof on whether it's wanted there. However on P2P model -metaphorically- as long as there's the will of a person to hold a particular file on their computer, there emerges a value independent of monetary worth.

DG: Then, let's address the difference between an artist and a merchant. We got rid of all the institutions appraising art. Let's imagine that the concepts of high art and low art approaching each other by the virtue of accessibility and equal distance that Orton mentioned. Don't we see the difference between the artist aiming for the popular culture and the artist aiming for the museum surmounted? Instead of a unique art product, will there be objects and installations interacting with multiply-spaced art systems? Will there be "producer-artists" creating images and traveling artists trading culture? Will there be art merchants on the brink of actualizing a new public utopia? There have been "art" producing corporations since the 90s. Is that independence? There was this example Elmas gave. Would you give your artist example?

ED: This is really interesting. Perhaps that's the essence of the whole thing. It reads in an economics book: The best profit can be obtained first, by art, then property and then – for example- gold. So it goes. In the same book, there were also professions and their economic values lined up. On the top of the list were bankers or sector creators. Below, there were white-collar workers. Down you go and at the bottom of the list: Cripples and artists. Artists, as the class that comes after the cripples, become those who are unaware of the values they create.

DG: Naturally, the system situates in such way that you become receptive and docile. Some sort of resistance can also manifest. No? I don't want to be below the line because I'm producing value. I possess value and have right to it. If you stand up for yourself as such, maybe a change will come. After all, we're in an period of turmoil where activities of creative professional groups, communicators, artists and businessmen approach each other; where concepts corrode; where relationships - social, political, economic- are redefined...

Thanks for the contributions...

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