



theme: **Place & Landscape**

The local MP finally managed to persuade the chair of OFGEM, the energy regulator, to accept his invitation to visit the islands. He stood this man at the top of a freezing hill without a coat and lectured him about the hyper-efficiency of wind in Shetland and Orkney... the man got the point! I knew what the freezing wind, damp heather, and peaty air had done to the regulator in his suit; knew the islands had got inside him. It took island dirt and salt working from the inside to make him hear. The landscape had kicked-back (as Karen Barad might say) at the regulator.

Archipelago Apparatus

View from trig point at the top of Brinkie's Brae.



theme: **Place & Landscape**

Notes on the ferry leaving Orkney: I feel kind of claustrophobia, a sense of never being able to escape, a sense of always being on an island. Like Russian dolls. Never being able to fully leave, needing and relying on tenuous boats and planes. Will I be able to leave Orkney? Will I be able to leave Britain? Suddenly no where is safe or firm, everywhere is an island that I might be trapped on. There is no terra firma any more. All continents float now for me. Moving is not a given any more. This is knowledge in my bones, which I cannot pass on in words. Orkney has done this to me.

Bone Knowledge

MV Hamnavoe leaving the port of Stromness.



theme: **Distributed-Centred Subjects/Objects**

A local Orcadian said to me: "My Dad said that if you are born here, you are born with a piece of elastic from your belly button. You can stretch it to the other side of the world, but at some time it will go 'ping'." That's what happened to her: the elastic went ping, and she came back. It's a symbiotic umbilical through which person and place flow back and forth, tug at each other. "Orkney is a place that acts through people," explains another. Orkney futures can be gut-wrenching, this place makes things happen, tugs at possibility.

Futures from the Belly

Stromness Shopping Week celebrations, 'Up Hellya' torchlit procession and boat burning.



theme: **Centres/Peripheries**

The UK government locates Orkney at the edge of its energy future: it charges the archipelago more than anywhere else in the country to generate electricity (and potentially makes renewable power unprofitable there). And the closer you go to central London, the cheaper it gets. Parliamentary policy is Thames-centric: political and electrical power is made to flow past the Houses of Parliament on the banks of the River Thames. The policy is geographically and epistemologically located: those who made that future live with London wind and waves. But living with Orkney wind and waves makes different futures; wave energy is what empties the supermarket shelves when the ferry doesn't run.

Archipelago Resistance

Fire-doors must open outwards, which is potentially lethal in Orkney storm-force winds.



theme: **Newness**

Orkney is an experimental place (not in the sense of being some island-laboratory; Orkney is deeply connected by the sea not separated by it). It is experimental in the sense of an experimental tinkering with futures. The version of tinkering that is all about an un-professionalised, expert, self-taught knowledge, and a very personal care. Orkney is a place where futures are not systematically tried and tested, but where futures are very quickly crafted from what is to hand and tinkered with, parts replaced as and when to try something new. The future comes quickly to Orkney.

Experimental Tinkering

Disused freezer storage containers awaiting re-use in a local renewable energy project, Westray.



theme: **Distributed-Centered Subjects/Objects**

'On December 9, 1968, Douglas C. Engelbart and the group of 17 researchers working with him in the Augmentation Research Center at Stanford Research Institute in Menlo Park, CA, presented a 90-minute live public demonstration of the online system, NLS ['oN-Line System'], they had been working on since 1962. The public presentation was a session of the Fall Joint Computer Conference held at the Convention Center in San Francisco, and it was attended by about 1,000 computer professionals ... the mouse was only one of many innovations demonstrated that day, including hypertext, object addressing and dynamic file linking, as well as shared- screen collaboration involving two persons at different sites communicating over a network with audio and video interface.'

The mother of all demos

Still from 'The Demo' (<http://sloan.stanford.edu/MouseSite/1968Demo.html>).



theme: **(Non)histories**

There is an archaeology of the future here on Orkney. It's place where futures happen first, but then cannot be moved, and are abandoned at the edge. Long forgotten state-funded future for a UK wind energy industry rot as concrete platforms in the ground, a derelict visitor's centre. When futures cannot move, they get re-invented as new elsewhere. Who remembers when Orkney is first? All remember when London is first. "We see problems and feedback quickly... we can move quickly, but when it [finally] happens in a in a big metropolitan city, with its money and location, you cannot compete..." explains a local academic.

Future Archaeologies

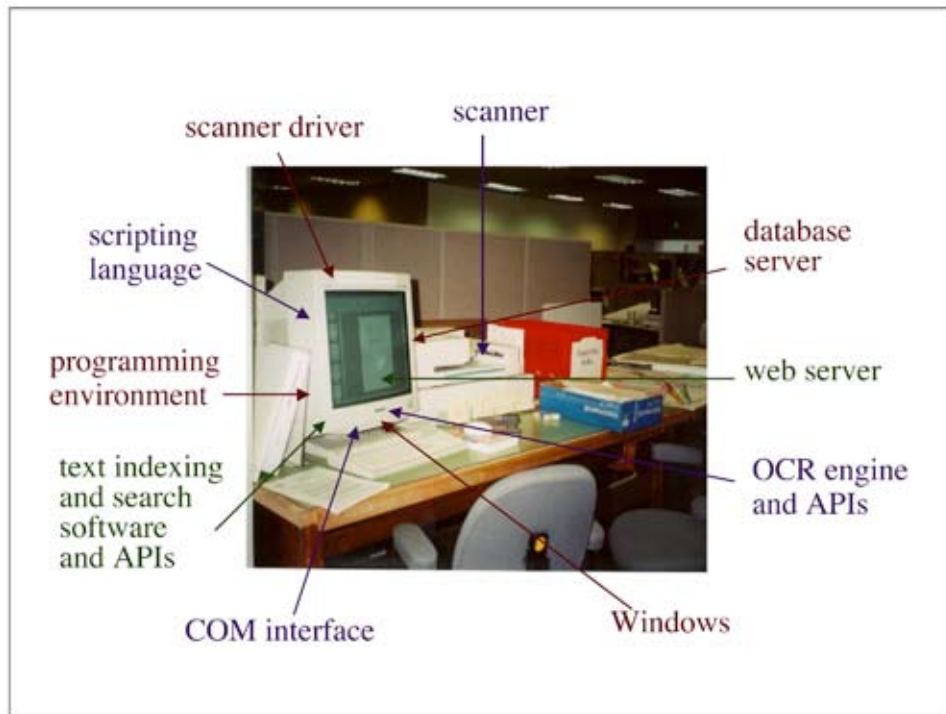
Remnants of the UK's first large-scale wind turbine, installed in 1986.

theme: **Distributed-Centered Subjects/Objects**

Far from the early days at PARC of technological artifacts designed locally and in their entirety by colleagues next door and down the hall, making technologies by the late 1990s consisted in projects of assembly that brought together elements originating across an expanse of far-flung and only partially connected locales. This included identifying appropriate software for document scanning, text recognition, document indexing, database construction and so forth, acquiring those various pieces through a variety of channels (purchasing and downloading) and – crucially – creating the conceptual and computational glue that would connect them together into a coherent and working whole.

Making technologies

Slide prepared for presentation at ECSCW 1998.



theme: **Newness**



A future becomes archival. This image documents the basic components of the Alto workstation – graphical display, keyboard, mouse, 2.5 MB removable discs and drive. In the summer of 1979 the exotic interior landscape of PARC is populated with this magical machine, that becomes a tool as I transcribe audiotaped interviews instructed by a patient and accomplished group secretary. The Alto becomes, for me, a writing machine; one on which over the subsequent five years I create my dissertation. But more, everything about this image evokes an intimately familiar place, from the standard issue PARC worktable and chair, to the signature sounds of the disc spinning in use.

Alto workplace

Standard configuration of Alto workstation at PARC c.1980. (<http://www.draperprize.org/2004.php>).



theme: **Centres/Peripheries**

One of the first things that J&J did on arriving at PARC and being assigned an office space was to transform the latter into something not-PARC; a kind of peripheral studio space making difference within. This involved covering walls and floor with fabric on which they could write and to which they could attach things, as well as using the drop ceiling as infrastructure for enlarged images (themselves ironic commentaries on the corporate environment). Through their space, they enacted themselves as not scientists, as artists/others.

Jeanne at work

Still of the office of Jeanne Finley and John Muse, PARC Artists in Residence, c.1995.

theme: **Place & Landscape**

Frontiers, Anna Tsing reminds us, are “not just discovered at the edge; they are projects in making geographic and temporal experience” (2005: 53). Such projects involve, among other things, disengaging landscapes from already existing forms of life so that they can be figured as an emptiness waiting to be filled. And as Tsing observes, “[t]he activity of the frontier is to make human subjects as well as natural objects... It is a space of desire: it calls; it appears to create its own demands; once it is glimpsed, one cannot but explore and exploit it further” (ibid: 56-59).

Walkway to Door 7

Iconic PARC exterior (<http://www.rsconstruction.com/assets/images/company/photos/xerox.jpg>).



From CPSR mailbox

Date: Thu, 16 Dec 1999 13:55:05 -0800

From: "Douglas C. Engelbart" <colloquium@bootstrap.org>

Organization: Bootstrap Institute

To: Colleagues <colloquium@bootstrap.org>

'I would like to use this Stanford Colloquium – **An In-Depth Look At The Unfinished Revolution**– as an opportunity to share with you a comprehensive strategy that will enable individuals and organizations to begin to cope with the increasingly more rapid pace and constant state of change in modern society. More specifically, the Colloquium will give us a forum to engage in lively dialogue on how we can improve our abilities to leverage our collective IQ. In my view, the concept of collective IQ and its improvement needs to become a core focus and challenge for society ... the organizations, regions and countries that adopt the most effective, large-scale strategy for becoming collectively smarter, will enable broad improvements throughout society and commerce, including e-business. The concept of high collective IQ will, therefore, vitally affect every aspect of governance, security, economy, education, health, business and other societal services.'

theme: (Non)histories

Thirty years after he is celebrated as hero and inventor of the computer mouse and other breakthrough devices, Doug Engelbart is still deeply frustrated by what he experiences as a failure on the part of his audiences to appreciate the extent of the vision that motivates those devices. Framed in terms of augmentations to our 'collective IQ', Engelbart's is a project of global social engineering, for which the devices are only incidental tools. But is this (non)history of Engelbart's vision a failure of hearing? How else might we understand it?

The Unfinished Revolution

Invitation from Doug Engelbart to attend Bootstrap Institute colloquium, from the author's email archive.

Date: 2 March 1982 3:40 pm PST (Tuesday)

From: TaftPA

Subject: Proper use of the Arpanet

To: ARPANET, AHSB:ac, AHSB:net,whst, AHSB:net,henz, AHSB:net,dhs,
AHSB:net,ans

Reply to: Taft

The attached message from the Defense Communications Agency, which operates the Arpanet, is directed to everyone who sends messages to Arpanet recipients. If you don't know what the Arpanet is, you may ignore this.

The Arpanet is operated by the U.S. Government for the purpose of ARPANET and other government-sponsored research and development. It is in our own best interests not to abuse this facility.

=====
ANEWS-11
Code 252
2 Mar 1982
(DC/ACODE252G15)
692-6173

=====
DOD NETWORK NEWSLETTER
=====
TOPIC: - Misuse of the ARPANET
=====

Dear Listbox,

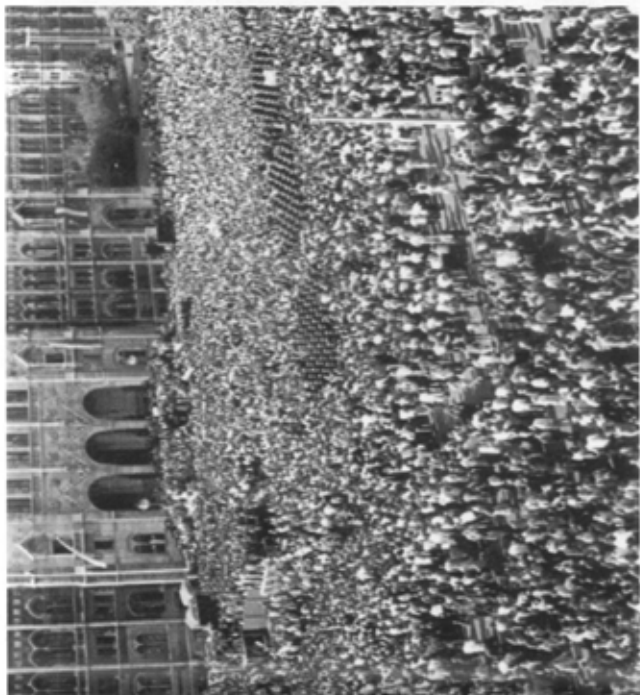
We have received many complaints from users about a chain letter that has circulated around the ARPANET since mid February. Such use of the Net is contrary to DOD policy, and those who participate in such or who permit it's continued occurrence via facilities under their control do so at risk. Early efforts to stop the circulation of this chain letter have been ineffective, and more drastic measures are being considered, up to and including the possibility of removing entire facilities from the Net if appropriate.

Please advise us by informing your users that they must not forward such messages under any circumstances, and that they risk loss of Net privileges by so doing. Some users already have lost their access to the Net because of this matter.

theme: **Centres/Peripheries**

This printed email from 1982 alerts users of the ARPAnet that its use for 'chain letters' is proscribed by the center that manages its operations, and threatens to deny access to facilities that fail adequately to police their boundaries. A different network.

Centering the net
Scanned image of printed email from DCA to ARPAnet users.



185. A harmadik köztársaság kikiáltása (1989. október 23.) az 1956. évi forradalom tüneményén

Proclamation of the Third Republic (23 October, 1989) at the celebration of the 1956 revolution

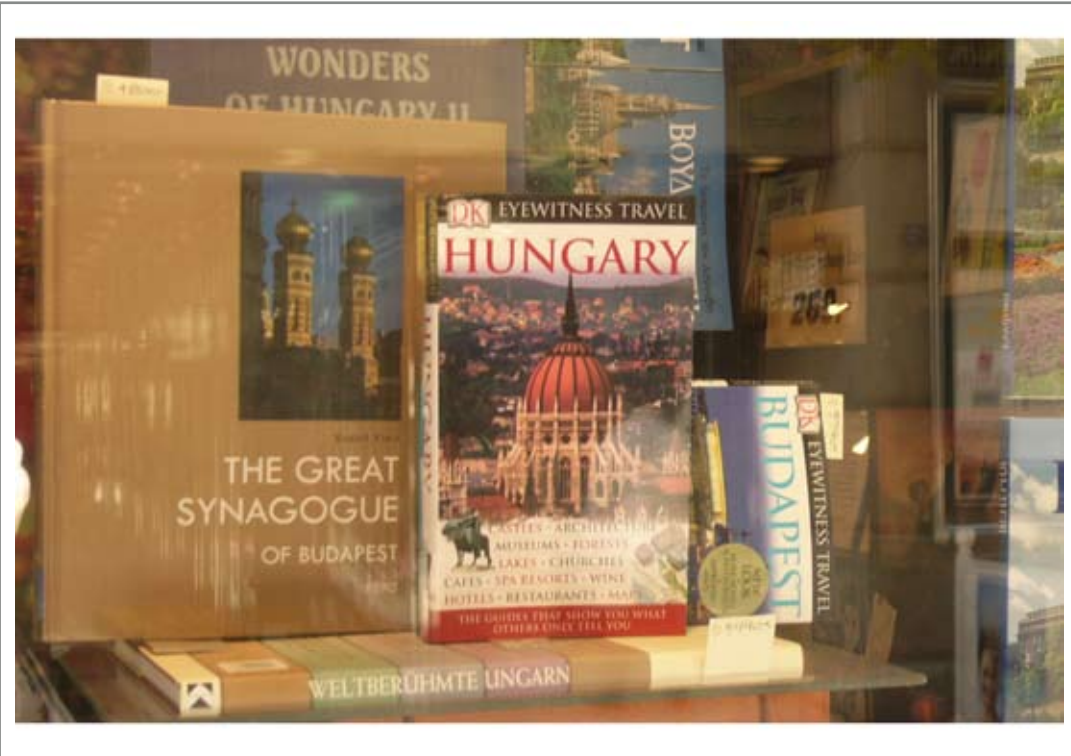
Proklamation der dritten Republik (23. Oktober 1989) am Feiertag der Revolution von 1956.

theme: **Newness**

How old is the Hungarian Parliament? Depending on what we associate it with – a legal abstraction; a gathering of democratically elected representatives; a symbolic building; a professional organisation within a larger political system – the parliament may be 1113, 161, 107, or merely 20 years old. Instead of a single history we have four stories. However, these four stories are not different aspects of a singular parliament. They are not conflicting narratives about the same object. Rather, they tell us about the constant enactment of different political realities, which produce a parliament that is multiple and non-coherent.

Anew democracy

Proclamation of the Third Hungarian Republic in front of the Parliament on the 23rd October 1989 (Source: Barna Mezey et al.: History of the Hungarian Parliament, 1999, Budapest: Osiris, p. 224.)



theme: **Centres/Peripheries**

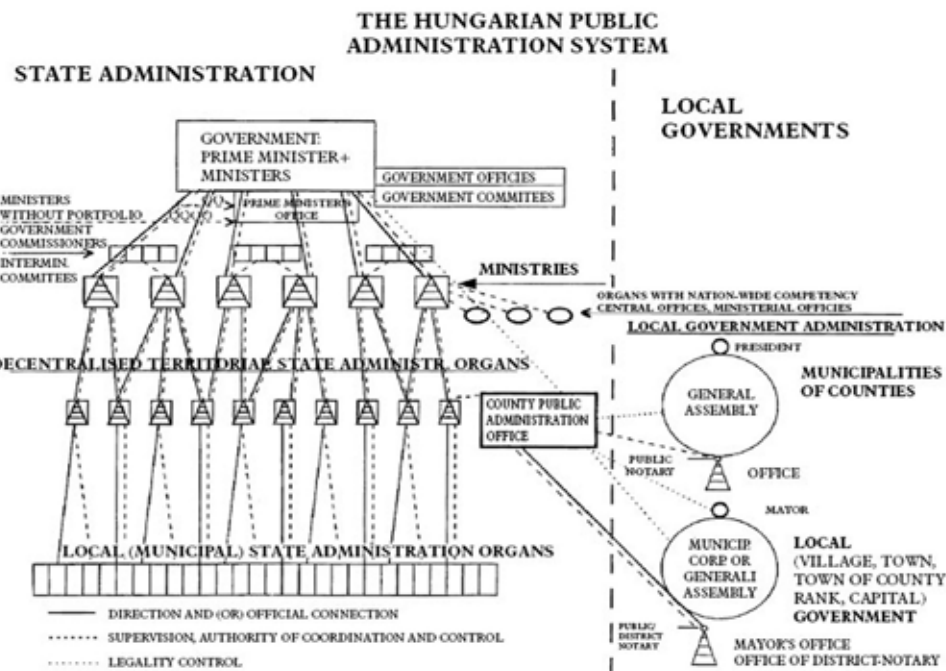
'When the Houses [of Parliament] were built, everyone knew that no significant political decision would be made without [the consent of] Franz Joseph. And the Emperor mostly ruled from Vienna; the Houses of Parliament never were his workplace. Between the two World Wars everyone knew that the Governor of the independent Hungary, who practically held as much political power as Franz Joseph had had, lived and worked in the Buda Castle. In the Communist era, everyone knew that the actual centre of power was the Party Headquarters – which in the 1950s was in Akadémia street, 100 metres south of the Parliament, and after 1956 in Széchenyi wharf, 300 metres north of the Parliament. (Of course, the really important decisions were not even made [in Budapest], but in Moscow.)'

András Gerő: *Tézerő: a Kossuth tér története* [The History of Kossuth square], 2008, Budapest: Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó, p. 33.

The centre is always elsewhere

Shop window of a travel bookstore in Budapest. The Parliament is one of the most often used symbolic buildings associated with both Budapest and Hungary.

theme: **(Non)histories**



'The loose federations of ancient Greece, the Holy Roman Empire and its similarly constituted federal contemporaries, the Swiss Confederation of the Oath, the United Netherlands, the United States of America, and the many United States to the south of it, the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, are all examples of hierarchies of organizations on the political sphere. The Leviathan of Hobbes, the Man-State made up of lesser men, is an illustration of the same idea one stage lower in scale, while Leibniz's treatment of the living organism as being really a plenum, wherein other living organisms, such as the blood corpuscles, have their life, is but another step in the same direction.'

Norbert Wiener: *Cybernetics, or control and communication in the animal and the machine*, 1948, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, p. 155.

Boxes and Arrows

The Hungarian Public Administration System. Source: Prime Minister's Office, 2005 (<http://misc.meh.hu/letoltheto/Kiadvany-angol-0507.pdf>).

theme: **Place & Landscape**



The Hungarian Parliament is literally in the centre of Budapest, in a square named after Lajos Kossuth, one of the leading figures of the 1848-49 revolution. Kossuth's statue faces the statue of another national hero, Ferenc II Rákóczi, leader of the 1703-1711 war for independence against the Habsburgs. The two statues are separated by two memorials of another attempt to (re)establish the independence of Hungary: the eternal flame and the symbolic tombstone that commemorate the 1956 revolution. In this landscape so rich in historical references the Parliament appears not simply as the permanent home of the National Assembly, but also as part of an historical narrative about revolutions and reforms; a series of struggles for independence and Western-type democracy.

Mapping history

Statues and memorials around the Parliament (Clockwise, from top left: Ferenc II Rákóczi; Lajos Kossuth; Holocaust Memorial; 1956 tombstone; Imre Nagy; 1956 Eternal Flame).



theme: **Distributed-Centered Subjects/Objects**

The apparatus of political representation. Similar to famous scientists, politicians are often figured as creative geniuses – history books and political analyses are full of heroic stories about ‘great men.’ How can we rethink such romantic accounts of subjectivity without doing away with the individual? Drawing on Hélène Mialet’s work on distributed centered subjects,* it is possible to consider politicians not as external to, but inherent parts of the apparatus of political representation. They are constituted in diverse material practices that take place in such distinct locations as TV studios, public squares, cafés, or the Parliament.

*Mialet, Hélène (1999) Do Angels Have Bodies? Two Stories about Subjectivity in Science: The Cases of William X and Mister H. *Social Studies of Science* 29(4): 551-581; (2003) Reading Hawking’s Presence: An interview with a self-effacing man. *Critical Inquiry* 29: 571-598; (forthcoming) *Hawking Incorporated*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The apparatus of political representation

Clockwise, from top left: ‘The Politician’ on the cover of a weekly magazine; making a speech at a party congress; participating in a street demonstration; attending a local party meeting; making a speech in the Parliament; giving a TV interview.

“A technological society is one which takes technical change to be the model for political invention.”

Andrew Barry (2001:2) Political Machines

theme: **(Non)histories**

How are technology and politics entangled? This observation alerts us to the relations between how we figure design, and how we configure wider possibilities for transformative change. We need to talk about political economies of design, not on a grand scale but in terms of the micropolitics of design's various entanglements and their implications for critical and care-ful practices. This implies forms of located accountability as a way of rethinking design responsibility. The question at each next turn becomes not how do we determine the future, but instead how do we proceed in a responsible way?

technopolitics

Quote from Andrew Barry's 'Political Machines'.

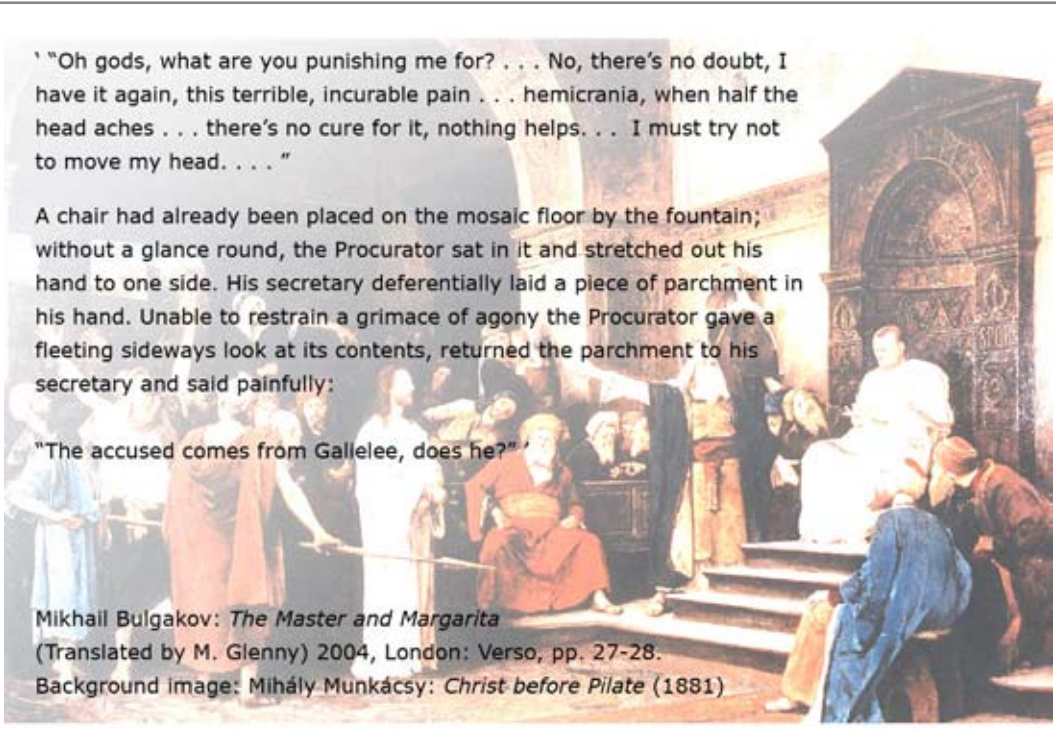
"Oh gods, what are you punishing me for? . . . No, there's no doubt, I have it again, this terrible, incurable pain . . . hemicrania, when half the head aches . . . there's no cure for it, nothing helps. . . I must try not to move my head. . . ."

A chair had already been placed on the mosaic floor by the fountain; without a glance round, the Procurator sat in it and stretched out his hand to one side. His secretary deferentially laid a piece of parchment in his hand. Unable to restrain a grimace of agony the Procurator gave a fleeting sideways look at its contents, returned the parchment to his secretary and said painfully:

"The accused comes from Gallelee, does he?"

Mikhail Bulgakov: *The Master and Margarita*
(Translated by M. Glenny) 2004, London: Verso, pp. 27-28.

Background image: Mihály Munkácsy: *Christ before Pilate* (1881)



theme: **Distributed-Centered Subjects/Objects**

The term 'body politic' as used in the 16th and 17th centuries refers both to the collective that becomes one entity through political representation, and to the representative who stands for that collective. In political theory, however, the term is mostly used in the former sense, while the latter is often neglected. The representative as a corporeal entity may be the subject of anecdotes and biographies, but what embodiment has to do with the way politics as a practice is understood remains rather unclear.

The body of the politician

A quote from Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, with Mihály Munkácsy's *Christ before Pilate* in the background.

*The term is H el ene Mialet's; see: Mialet, H el ene (1999) *Do Angels Have Bodies? Two Stories about Subjectivity in Science: The Cases of William X and Mister H.* *Social Studies of Science*29(4): 551-581.

theme: (Non)histories

Constitution of the Republic of Hungary

Preamble

In order to facilitate a peaceful political transition to a constitutional state, establish a multi-party system, parliamentary democracy and a social market economy, the Parliament of the Republic of Hungary hereby establishes the following text as the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary, until the country's new Constitution is adopted.

...

The Preamble of the Hungarian Constitution, formulated by the National Roundtable in 1989, clearly states the aims of the regime change, but also indicates that the text was meant to be a temporary solution. Subsequent governments, however, found it easier to pass individual amendments instead of initiating a comprehensive constitutional reform –that is why the current Constitution is still called Act XX of 1949. According to many Hungarians, this signifies the incompleteness of the regime change. Arguably, however, 'eternal present' is the only possible temporality a constitution can operate with (as opposed to the logics of linear history and cyclical time).

Eternal present

The Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary.



theme: **Centres/Peripheries**

UNESCO Advisory Body Evaluation, 1986:

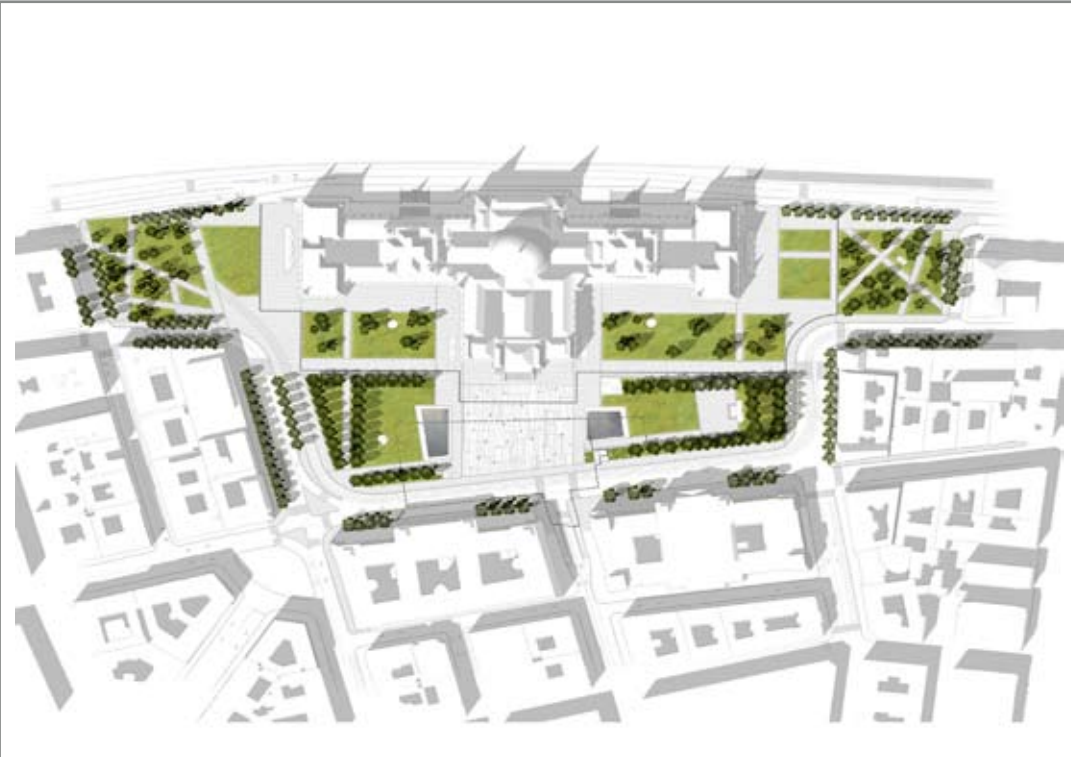
'Criterion IV* can especially be applied to Buda Castle, an architectural ensemble which, together with the nearby old district, illustrates two significant periods of history which were separated by an interval corresponding to the Turkish invasion. But the Parliament is also an outstanding example of a great official building on a par with those of London, Munich, Vienna and Athens, exemplifying the eclectic architecture of the 19th century, whilst at the same time symbolizing the political function of the second capital of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.' (http://whc.unesco.org/archive/advisory_body_evaluation/400bis.pdf)

*Criterion IV for selection: 'to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.' (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/criteria/>).

A World Heritage Site

Night view of the Hungarian Parliament by the Danube.

theme: Place & Landscape

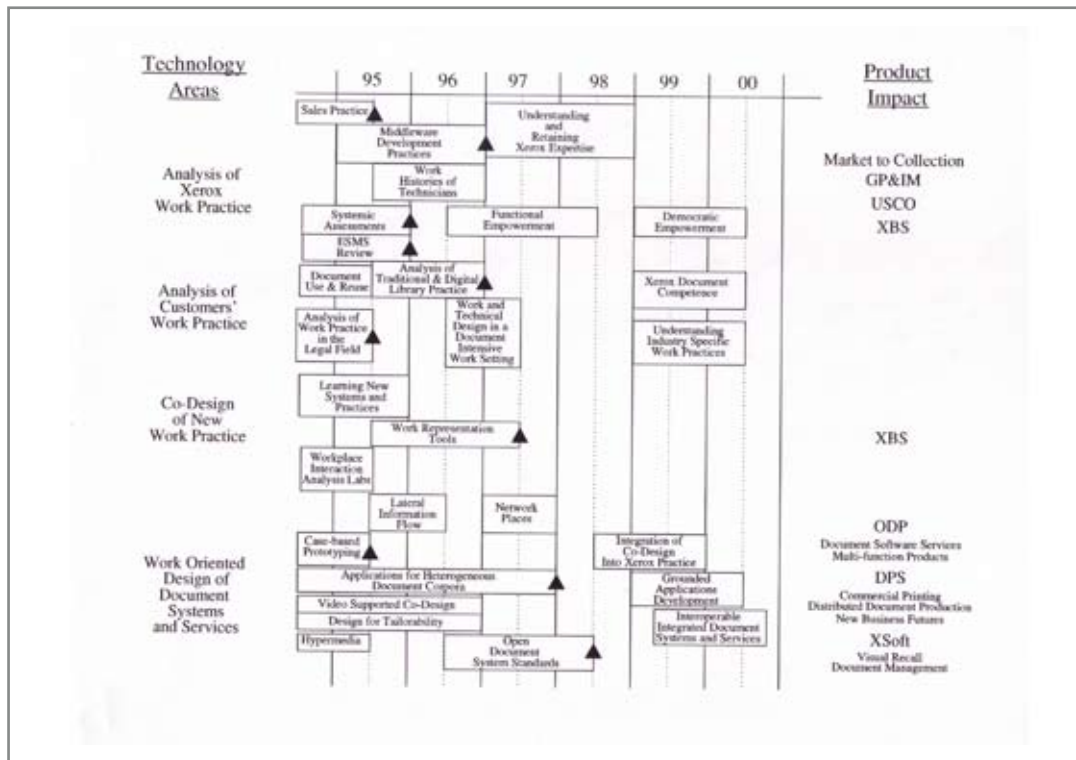


Kossuth tér – the square in front of the Parliament – is probably the most popular place for political demonstrations and public events in Hungary. Several times a year tens of thousands gather together to commemorate historical events, or express their disapproval of particular government policies. In a symbolic sense, it is as important a political site as the Houses of Parliament. Any attempt to re-develop the area, therefore, has always been a highly contested issue. The most recent debate is about whether it should remain a square or become a park—in the latter case Kossuth tér would be surrounded by fences and the gates would be closed for the night, preventing long protests.

Park or square?

Plans for re-developing the square in front of the Parliament – Studio 73 (<http://www.s73.hu/>).

theme: **(Non)histories**



Diagrams like this one (illustrating historic traffic between management sciences and engineering) map time to a space of intervals between a present moment and a future five years out. If maps have politics, the technology roadmap's politics are to be found in a subtext of artful translations between ongoing projects and organizationally-relevant subjects and objectives. The map is a technology of accountability to a narrative of product(ivity).

Technology Roadmap
'Technology roadmap' from 1995-2000.

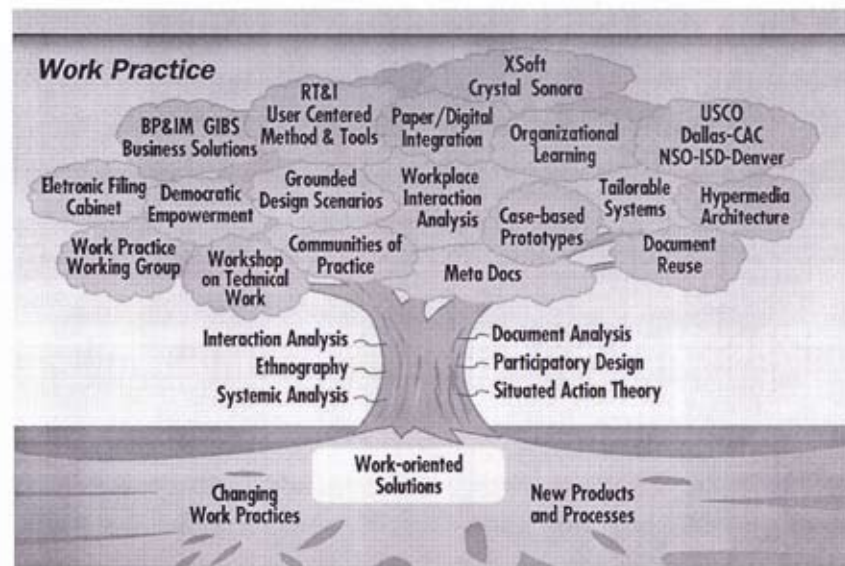


theme: **Newness**

'Annus Mirabilis' –this is how 1989 is usually remembered, the miraculous year when state socialism collapsed in Central and Eastern Europe. However, the same year marks the disappearance of yet another dreamworld of modernity, that of a unified, homogeneous West. 'Against the often-repeated story of the West's winning the Cold War and capitalism's historical triumph over socialism,' Susan Buck-Morss argues that 'the historical experiment of socialism was so deeply rooted in the Western modernizing tradition that its defeat cannot but place the whole Western narrative into question.' Susan Buck-Morss: *Dreamworld and Catastrophe: The Passing of Mass Utopia in East and West*, 2002, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, p. xii.

Disappearing dreamworlds

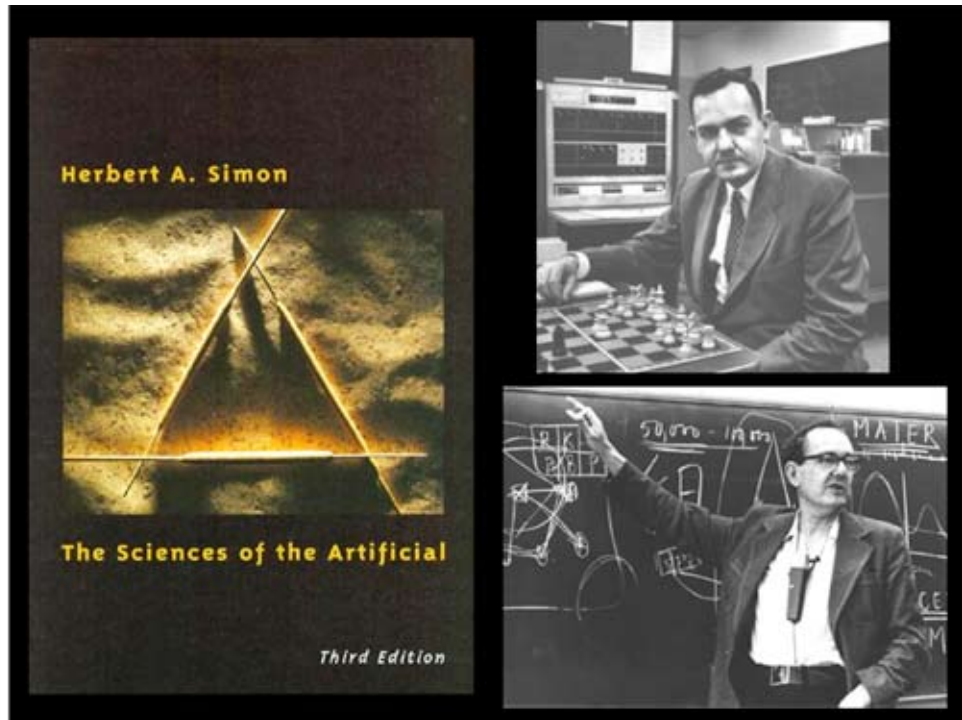
Buda Volunteers Regiment Memorial, Statue Park, Budapest.



theme: **Place & Landscape**

We receive a template that instructs us to represent our research activities and relationships as a tree; we are otherwise left to our own devices in reading the semiotics of the form. The 'roots' become long term object(ive)s, the trunk our own practice fixed as methods, the branches and foliage the fruits of our labors. I am personally chagrined now to find 'Situating Action Theory' here, a neologism of which I've always denied authorship. A shabby compromise in the interest of the tree's sustainability.

WPT tree diagram
WPT mapped into 'tree' template.



theme: **(Non)histories**

The first call for a 'science of design' is commonly attributed to Herbert Simon's manifesto, *The Sciences of the Artificial*, based on a series of lectures delivered at MIT in 1969. Simon's design palette encompassed the multiple sites targeted for a science and technology of enhanced rationality in the mid 20th century, from brains to board rooms. For Simon the road to scientific legitimacy was paved with a requisite reduction in so-called intuitive judgment, in favour of demonstrable rationalities, a move from in his words 'soft ... cookbooky' knowledge to 'a body of ... tough, analytic ... teachable doctrine' (Simon 1969: 113).

Design science

Images of Herb Simon, 'father' of design science and primary referent for the PARC/MIT/CMU network.



'The more adept the West has become at the making of copies, the more we have exalted uniqueness. It is within an exuberant world of copies that we arrive at our experience of originality'
Hillel Schwartz,
The Culture of the Copy
1998: 212.

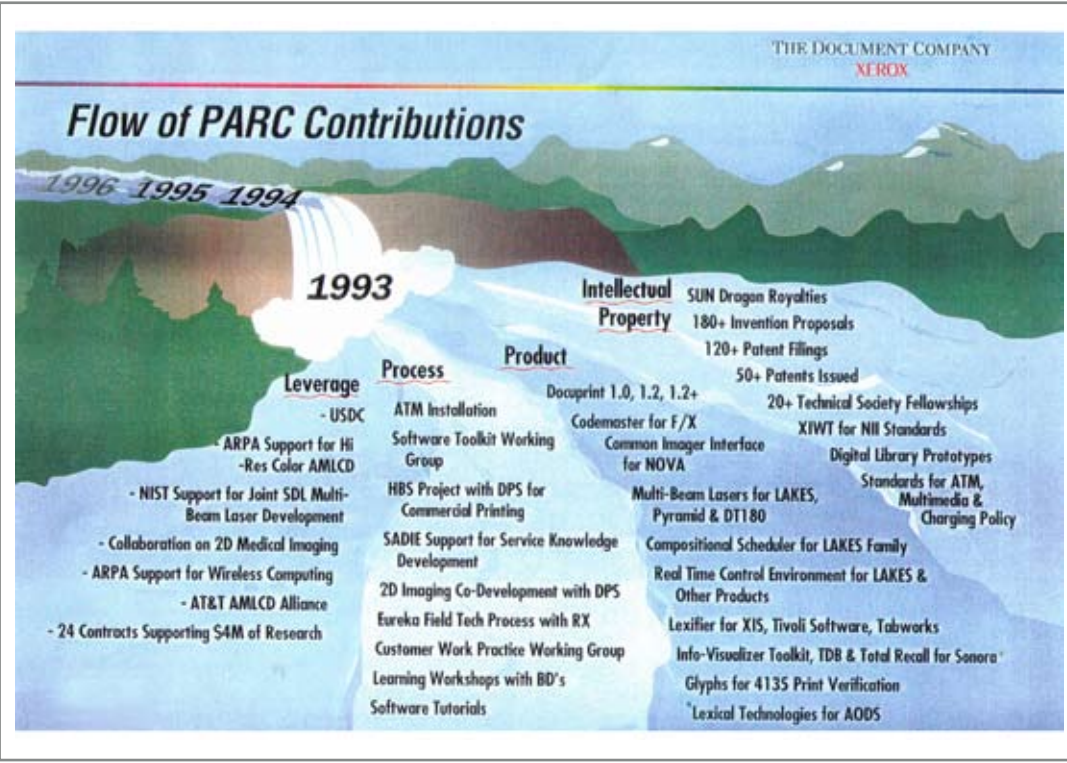
theme: **Newness**

Alfred Gell proposes that we think of technological and other efficacious artifacts as devices 'for securing the acquiescence of individuals in the network of intentionalities in which they are enmeshed' (1992: 43). This includes the identifications that objects afford for their creators, as well as the reverse—the 'disenchantments' by which objects become alienated as undesirable, banal or obsolete. A central problem for invention is to constitute objects not as derivative from existing objects but as observably original. In the context of research and development, successful claims for the inventiveness of objects and persons are mutually constitutive, as is, conversely, their failure.

The Green Button

Advert for Xerox 8200 copier with quote from Schwartz.

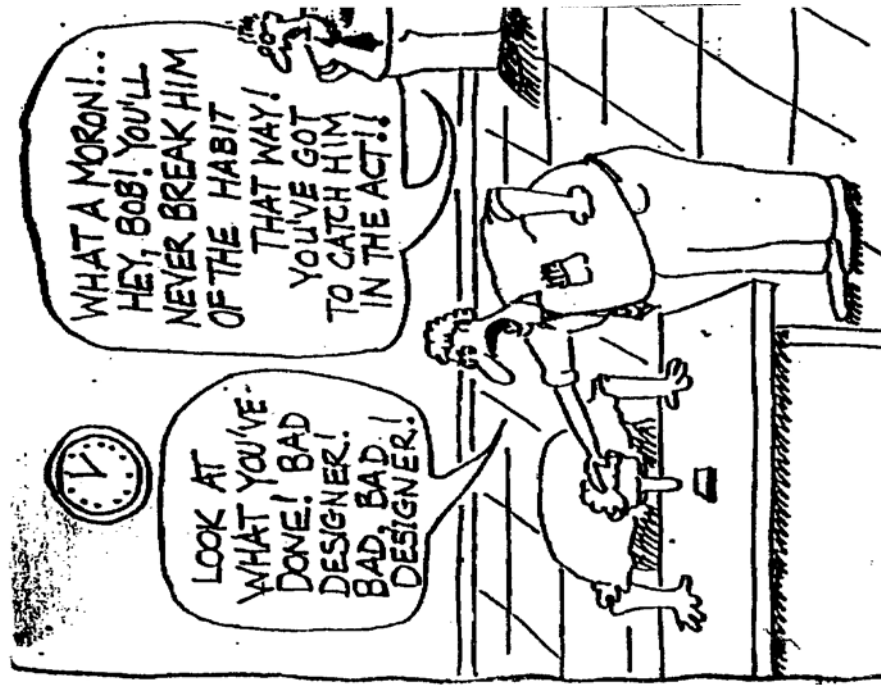
theme: **Place & Landscape**



This 'landscape' invokes the 'cascade' of valuable contributions from the research center (located here in the upper remote margins of the scene) to the sponsoring corporation. Space maps time, as a receding future provides the headwaters, the source of continuous innovation in the present. At the same time, research is fixed and held in place by this representation if, indeed, it is visible enough to appear.

Waterfall of innovation

Representation of PARC contributions to Xerox, c.1993.



theme: **Distributed-Centered Subjects/Objects**

How should we think about good design? Here's one reading of the question. This cartoon figures design as an individual act whose object is a singular device, the quality of which can be read off from the object itself. The solution to bad design, it follows, is a matter of behavioral change. But what if we understand design as an effect of the sociomaterial relations and arrangements through which it's done? One implication would be that rather than an intervention aimed at rewarding or punishing individual behavior, transforming practices of professional design would need to be part of a wider project of social change.

Bad Designer

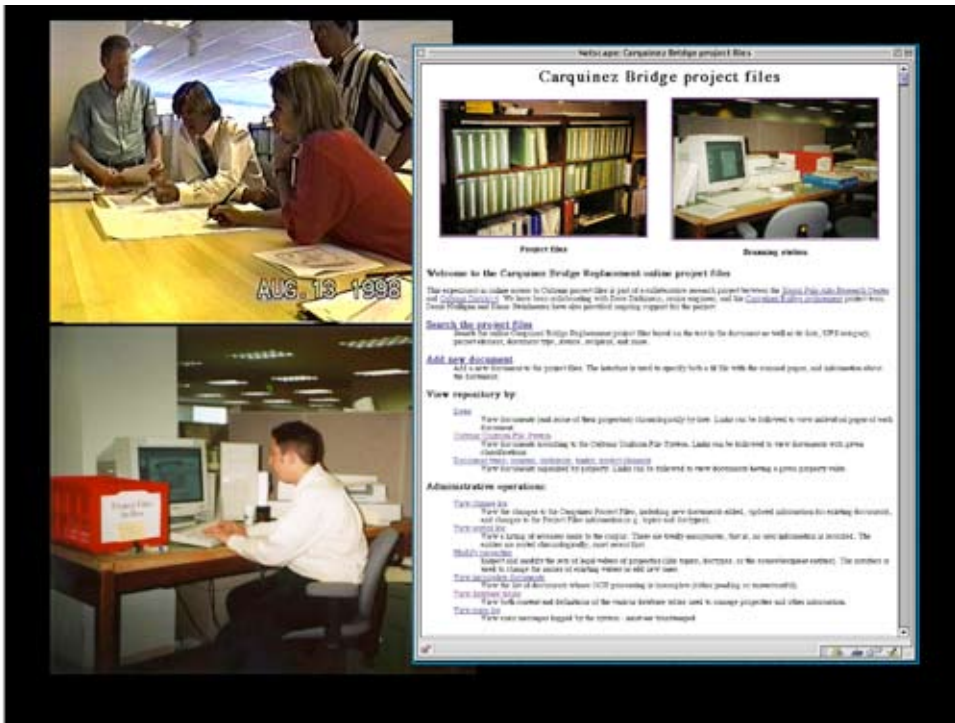
Cartoon faxed to us by a colleague in the Industrial Design/Human Interface group, June 1992.

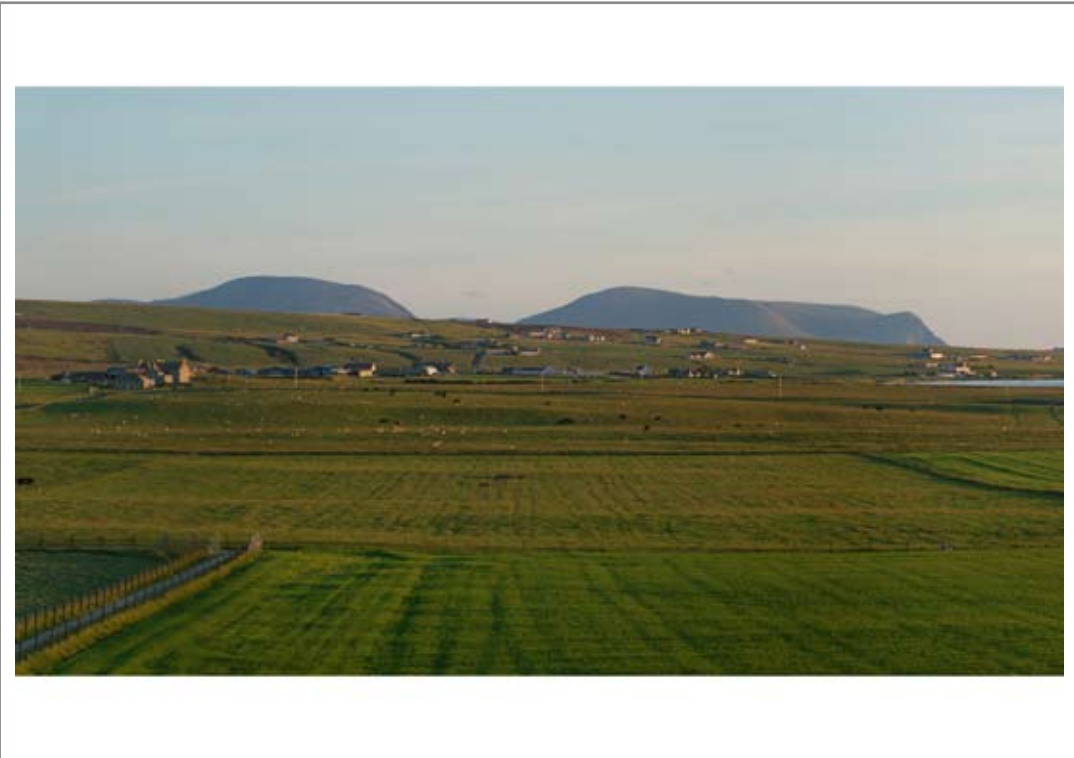
theme: **Newness**

Cooperative prototyping shifts the study of how technologies emerge from a focus on invention, understood as a singular event, to an interest in what John Law has named 'heterogeneous engineering' – ongoing practical activities of enrollment, situated inquiry, demonstration, rematerialization, use and reiteration. Insofar as it is successful, the prototype works as an artifact that is at once intelligibly familiar and recognizably new.

Working artifacts

Images from a collaborative prototyping project (author's papers).





theme: **Centres/Peripheries**

Orkney's landscape is knitted together by micro-climates, by changing experiences as you move through small holdings, farms, dotted houses at the end of pitted, car-aging tracks. There are no villages. Places exist, not as concentration of houses, but as affective landscapes. But this is the UK. The way you do planning requires villages, towns, centralised settlement (geopolitics from the densely populated centre). So the local planning office outlines villages on the map, is building villages. The centre is replicating itself, colonising the landscape of the periphery. But what would the centre look like after peripheral colonisation? How might central futures be different, if they were more peripheral?

Periphery replication

Distributed landscape of mainland, Orkney.



theme: **(Non)histories**

The Ring of Brodgar stone circle, part of the World Heritage Site, is leaky. Following the dissolution of nature-culture, archaeologists have made a past where the landscape is part of the monument, the monument is part of the landscape. The local council and UK government has taken careful note, and a planning 'buffer zone' now floods most of the island. Futures leak through the monument: it has washed away the possibility for wind turbines on one horizon. The making of the past is the making of the future. As archaeologists reconstruct the possibilities for historical monuments, they also reconstruct the possibilities for future monuments.

Reconstructing futures

Ring of Brodgar stone circle and landscape setting, circa. 4500-5000 B.C.E. (Before Common Era).



theme: **Newness**

London consultancy: “[The company] does not make any representation or warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this report and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of such information.” Orkney consultancy: “[The company] and our staff are totally responsible for the information, data, assumptions, knowledge, understanding and conclusions provided in this report... We have spent years trying to understand how the world and society works so that the outputs that we provide contribute to making the world a better place.” Modest Witness, maker of trusty situated knowledges, has she moved to Orkney? Are new futures made through such new accountabilities?

New Accountabilities

View from an Orkney consultancy.



theme: **Distributed-Centered Subjects/Objects**

“People don’t die in Stromness,” the bookseller tells me, dead-pan as ever. “They just move in to a house on some forgotten lane...” There is a quality to the town of Stromness: the tightly woven lanes, of which there seem so few, and yet you never seem to trace them all; odd doorways and hatches in the stone walls; bedrock jutting out in to the paved steps; the incessant taste of salt. It’s a place that works on the imagination, a ready-made diffraction pattern that’s full of inviting gaps, partial absences. It resists completeness. Diffracted and distributed places generate stories, invite invention.

Diffracted Places

Streets of Stromness town at dusk.