

MAPPING presentation notes

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Introduction: Why is everything hidden?

[larger marconi image]

- How can one hide before that which never sets? [or... how can one remain concealed...]

[Heraclitus. Fragment 16]

To define this question first - what do we mean by this - that there is not transparency in the world, that knowing something of the world implies searching, looking within, behind, making visible...

at the same time there exists the very possibility of hiding something - paranoia and its inverse.

an obvious or naive question - that which is obvious being precisely that which is in plain sight for all, that which is exactly not hidden.

thus, we will ask a non-hidden question about hiding, about that which is rendered non visible.

this question - why is everything not EXPOSED or evident, in the light?

example of radio waves - [marconi detector image we have here] - renders visible (a light is illuminated) or audible (a bell rings) the kick of a spark gapped oscillation (the spark is visible, not its travel across the void, the aether) - explain!

in the case of the lightbulb it's a spectral shift from one part of the so-called electromagnetic spectrum - (low frequency) radio waves to high frequency visible light. a simple shift reveals that which was never hidden.

just as we can listen to the sonar of bats by dividing down the ultrasonic frequency of their emissions into the audible domain. the beyond reach is brought to hand.

but in this case something different is happening - an invisible hand pinging the bulb or ringing the bell at a distance. we are reminded of the quote from James Clerk Maxwell (whose equations made this visibility possible, opened up this part of the spectrum and all parts to investigation and exploitation):

In an ordinary belfry, each bell has one rope which comes down through a hole in the floor to the bellringer's room. But suppose that each rope, instead of acting on one bell, contributes to the motion of many pieces of machinery, and that the motion of each piece is determined not by the motion of one rope alone, but by that of several, and suppose, further that all this machinery is silent and utterly unknown to the men at the ropes, who can only see as far as the holes in the floor above them. [James Clerk Maxwell]

which is again about hiddenness - that the mechanism of this belfry domain will remain essentially hidden and blackboxed. this becomes the model for all (primarily computational) technology.

descartes - a god or an evil demon who deceives us as to the nature of reality, of the material world (Meditations - otto roessler)

- reframing these questions around an obsession - where exactly does this thing called software (or spirit) take place materially or imaginarily?

[3 x manfred boden haunted computer images]

I recorded a few minutes in all three rooms. I recorded the toilet flushing and the shower running. I recorded the water running in the kitchen sink, the rattle of dishes and the opening and closing and hum of the refrigerator. I recorded on the balcony. Now I lay down on the bed and read some selections from The Magus into the recorder.

[William S. Burroughs. Cities of the Red Night]

... the necessary knowledge is that of what to observe

[Edgar Allen Poe. Murders in the Rue Morgue]

we are the detectives...

types of hiding and how science and technology take part in these

[component - peter halley]

- intentionally hiding - it is evident that something is hidden (cryptography)
- hiding in plain sight (Poe - Purloined letter)
- hiding the very fact that it hides (steganography)
- making it look like something is hidden when it isn't (sleight of hand - number stations, electronic voice phenomena)
- we imagine that something is hidden (paranoia)
- nothing is hidden, it only appears to be (enlightenment, spirit, gnosticism)
- something is hidden. it can be revealed. it's nature is not to be in plain sight (relation to software?)
- hiding as operational/instrumental (scientific abstraction, black-boxing we saw)
- hiding as a necessary part of the world/reality - as the nature of that which IS. can we say that it is really hidden -
- that it is not just revealing or un hiding - making visible that which is always hidden. the invisible is not another side or the inverse of the visible.

works in relation to hiding:

these different places where software might be executing. where there is both a revealing and hiding...

where software might be happening = inside geological machines, the psyche as a place-psychogeophysics, on the skin, in the earth

detektors

electromagnetic/other mappings, psychogeophysics, skin

curie's children

exposure image from book

computer traces/diff in june

- run trace TEST where?: /usr/bin/self
- diff binary excerpt:
- text page 1

earthcode-earth signals ERD

void / shift register - from Bordeaux

- what are the techniques of revealing and what can these tell us about visibility, exposure and hiding - forensics, archaeology, muon tomography

mummies - robert smithson quote: a "tombic communication"; "the medium is the mummy"

... void sensing through cosmic rays, radiocarbon dating (Willard. F. Libby)

dissolution works

the special case of alchemy - defined as a certain set of traditions, defined as both hiding a certain knowledge and attempting to access a hidden, occulted or forgotten/defaced/decayed natural/book of nature/knowledge

techniques of hiding = Decknamen, dispersal, multiple symbols - no straightforward encoding, fanciful allegory

here is an example Twelve keys of basil Valentine (1599):

[show valentine image]

“The precious water in which the bridegroom needs to have his bath must be made most cleverly and carefully from two fighters (understand two contrary things)... It is not useful for the eagle to make his nest alone at the top of the Alps, for his young would freeze from the snow high up in the mountains. But when you introduce to the eagle the old dragon who has dwelt long among the rocks, and who creeps in and out of the caves of the earth, and set the two upon a hellish seat, then Pluto will blow strongly and drive out from the cold dragon a flying, fiery spirit whose great heat will burn up the feathers of the eagle and prepare a steam-bath so that the snow on the highest mountains must melt entirely and turn into water, whereby

the mineral bath is rightfully prepared and can give the king good fortune and health”

From Lawrence M. Principe: The Secrets of Alchemy, decodes:

- eagle is sal ammoniac/ammonium chloride (as it sublimates or flies - also natural, hair and hooves)
- dragon lives in caves - is salpeter (potassium nitrate)

when mixed as here we shall do - places in a furnace (a hellish seat) and heated strongly (Pluto will blow strongly) results in distillation of aqua regia - a mineral bath which is capable of dissolving gold - the bridegroom (like cyanide) - full circle - mercury figure is dissolution - it has wings!

We have tried this experiment. . .

IMPORTANT:

- hidden language of alchemy dealing with revealed mystery vs. that science deals with that which is not in plain sight, that uses the plain language of abstraction

closing notes

interested in alchemy and its expressions as marking an historical transition from intentional hiding to abstraction - to the bell ringers of maxwell. . .

finally that language is maybe a kind of hiding - not JUST that it is something which is hidden or makes it possible to hide things (which it does) but that its nature partakes and even produces the hiddenness of the world - as knowledge, as a lost Adamic language - Babel, Burroughs techniques. . .