

(a) P2P money manifesto

A proposal by Olivier Auber, published under the Free Art Licence.

While the global monetary system seems to fall apart on all sides, alternative currency models (ACM) are popping up everywhere¹ [1], like spontaneous generations of new living species within a transitioning ecology. All ACM are competing with one another, as they try to proliferate on the same playing field of our form of monetary exchange. We know that they will eventually combine, mutate or disappear until a new revitalized ecosystem emerges. In order to accelerate the transition to a legitimate and sustainable model, this manifesto proposes that the agents of change (i.e., us), not simply comply with current models, but to instead behave as purposive selectors, that is to say, to apply to them some criteria of Darwinian selection to ACM.

Explosion of codes and the political origin of language

The first explosion of "codes" is called "**abiogenesis**", which is a concept describing the transition of a world without biology to a world with biology. Every living being (prokaryotes, eukaryotes, metazoans) was defined by a code governing its form and its reproduction. Most species that emerged after abiogenesis disappeared or mutated, while a small number have proliferated into the present.

The second explosion of "codes" was recently named² "**atechnogenesis**": it is the passage of a world without technology to a world with technology. One can trace back the atechnogenesis to the emergence of the genus Homo, that is to say, to the emergence of a proto-language among some hominids.

The event that triggered this second explosion of codes was according to some researchers³ the invention of weapons, even before the invention of fire. The weapon, in its most prehistoric version, made social order based on physical domination brutally obsolete, as it allowed hominids to kill without risk, not only wild beasts, but especially dominant peers.

This political crisis put enormous stress on the species. From then on, individuals whose behavior seemed more adapted to survival in these dramatic conditions were selected. The selected individuals were those who proved capable of both identifying signs of danger or opportunity and communicating them to peers by a hand gesture, a vocalization, and later an increasingly articulated language. Thus, language overthrew brute force to become the driving element of our social structure, as well as most of our activities. Language was our Evolutionarily Stable Strategy⁴ to escape the political crisis.

Money as a weapon

Both our prehistory and our recent history can be interpreted as reflecting the evolving sophistication of our language and its interaction with technology. If weapons were the trigger for language, the two continued to evolve together until they were almost inseparable, so much that we now live within their complex entanglement. Even more refined than military weapons, there exist other invisible, immaterial and essentially logical weapons: capital and money. Currency, with the source code that we know, was forged for 5000 years ago⁵, and is a machine to concentrate the capital, which itself is primarily invested in ways to concentrate the currency. This tautological loop,

offensive or deterrent according to circumstances, establishes our social order that is currently in crisis.

Indeed, the monetary order has cracked recently: capital - traditionally seen as the accumulation of stocks and means of production-, suddenly dematerializes in the form of complex economic and symbolic values, robots and artificial intelligence working automatically to their own power. This exponential concentration leaves around her vast desert areas, where money as other economic and symbolic values are maintained under perfusion.

This carnivorous monetary code, based on its mode of creation by debt, thus appears more and more like a bug that inevitably leads to the destruction of the quasi-living system that spawned it. Thus, it is as if the runaway of its tautology made brutally outdated the social order based on the control of language, because it allows a kind of machinery to kill safely our fellow humans indiscriminately, at which point our species now seems submitted to political stress similar to the one which led to the invention of language.

In response to this crisis, alternative currency codes are created. No doubt, there are many weapons that can bring about a new social order. Among them, is hiding our new Evolutionarily Stable Strategy. How to detect it, build it, select it?

Anoptical perspectives

To assist us, we can try to observe a fact relatively unnoticed since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, particularly since the emergence of telecommunications: it is the irruption of two new "perspectives" that are analogue to the "**Optical Perspective**" (**OP**) of the Renaissance.

Indeed, the networks that determine every economic and symbolic value, can operate in two architectures, either centered or acentered. These architectures carry out constructions "in perspective" such as finding their vanishing point, in the first case in a physical center (for example, a server), in the second case, in a "code"; the means by which the agents in the network exchange (it is their sign of recognition in some way).

In the case of centered architecture, it's a "**Temporal Perspective**" (**TP**): the network's own time as set by the interaction among its members, emerges moment by moment from the center.

In the case of acentered architecture, it's a "**Digital Perspective**" (**DP**): an arbitrary digital code (vanishing code) guarantees the emergence of the network's own time in each of its nodes.

Most often without even knowing it, we build, perceive and evaluate the networks on which the above-mentioned quasi-living species proliferate by using these two perspectives. Without knowing it, because unlike Optical Perspective that address our eyes, these new perspectives address our entire cognition. Thus, they are called "**Anoptical Perspectives**"⁶ (**AOP**), i.e. non-optical.

These two new Anoptical Perspectives share numerous topological and symbolic attributes with the Optical Perspective; in this regard we can also talk about "Legitimate Perspective"⁷, as painters and architects did during the Renaissance.

Refounding the legitimacy at the time of networks

As network agents structured by these Anoptical Perspectives, we are most often in the position of the “selected”, leaving them to shape our imagination and our judgments. On the other hand, by becoming aware of these perspectives and questioning their “legitimacy”, we can choose to be in the position of the “selectors” of the quasi-living species structured by these perspectives.

To summarize, three criteria allow any agent to evaluate the legitimacy of any given network to which it belongs:

- **A) Does any agent A have the real right to access the network if he requests it? Can A leave the network freely?**
- **AB) Is any agent B (present or future, including agents that conceive, administer and develop the network) treated like A?**
- **ABC) If agents A, B and C (where ABC is the beginning of a multitude) belong to a network that meets the first two criteria, are they peers?**

Note that these three criteria propose a reformulation appropriate to networks of ancient and somewhat forgotten principles, for example those of the French Republic "LIBERTY - EQUALITY - FRATERNITY". Thus, this manifesto is in line with many other attempts of mankind to enter an era in which systemic predation would disappear. This new era could be called "**aethogenesis**" (from a world without economic ethics to a world with economic ethics). With the help of everyone, this would lead to a new explosion of "codes" respecting the beings of all species, starting with our own.

* * *

As an exercise, everyone can try, for some networks, to distinguish if they are part of a Temporal Perspective (TP) or a Digital Perspective (DP), and submit them to the proposed criteria of legitimacy. For example, we can see that Facebook is a TP which does not meet criterion AB because its creator (Mark Zuckerberg) is not treated just like any agent A or B. We can also see that the currency network defined by the Euro (or Dollar) is a DP which does not even meet criterion A, as it is almost impossible to not trade in Euro (or Dollar) within the economic zone defined by this currency. We can see that the stock exchange network (NYSE for example) is TP which meets none of these criteria, particularly because it favors Artificial Intelligence agents (High Frequency Trading platforms) that human agents cannot recognize as peers. Finally, we can see that emerging alternative monetary models (ACM) are mostly DP type. Bitcoin is very far from being legitimate (a present A is not treated as a future B because Bitcoin gives great emphasis on first entrants). We'll see eventually that other models are close to become legitimate, especially those based on a Universal Dividend⁸.

* * *

Olivier Auber is an artist and independent researcher, member the research cluster of the P2P foundation, affiliated researcher to ECCO (Evolution, Complexity and COgnition group) at Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) <http://ecco.vub.ac.be> and to the Global Brain Institute <http://globalbraininstitute.orgs>

¹ Bitcoin, IEML, Ethereum, MaidSafe, OpenUDC, Ucoin, complementary currencies, hypothetical Facebook or Google currencies, the standard gold, etc.

² Cadell Last : “Deep Future of Big History” (2014)
<http://theadvancedapes.com/deep-future-of-big-history/>

³ Jean-Louis Dessalles : «Why talk?» (2014). In D. Dor, C. Knight & J. Lewis (Eds.), *The social origins of language*, 284-296. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
<http://perso.telecom-paristech.fr/~jld/papiers/>

⁴ Evolutionarily stable strategy:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolutionarily_stable_strategy

⁵ David Graeber : «Debt, the first 5,000 years», Melville House Publishing, 2013.

⁶ «Anoptical Perspectives» as defined by the author within the Poietic Generator's research:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poietic_Generator

⁷ Leon Battista Alberti: “De pictura”, 1435.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_pictura

⁸ Universal Dividend, as defined by the Relative Theory of Money (RTM):
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relative_theory_of_money