

INSTITUTION AS PRAXIS

NEW CURATORIAL
DIRECTIONS FOR
COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

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NOTES TOWARDS IMAGINING A UNIVERS(E)ITY OTHERWISE

Pujita Guha and
Abhijan Toto
for the
Forest Curriculum

As we began to write this text, student protesters in Hong Kong are clashing with police in what many see as a desperate last stand. They are being brutalised and beaten; their bloodied faces stomped on by heavy jackboots and riot gear.¹ Closer to home, students of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi have been attempting to defend their university against increasingly vicious attacks from the current, fascist government, an ever spiralling concoction of funding cuts and cuts to student numbers, academic and political censorship, and privatisation and fee hikes, all of which alludes to a public university system in jeopardy.² Universities have increasingly become a battleground the world over—a frontier of our increasingly privatised present. And yet, as we stand alongside our colleagues, shoulder to shoulder, we also attempt to think through the university as a form, its architecture and its façades, its inheritances and its legacies.

In many places across the global south, the university is a colonial inheritance—for Hong Kong and for India they are an inheritance of the British imperial imagination—and, in fact, it could be argued that the colonies gave form to the university in the imperial country too.³ The university bears the legacy of an Enlightenment structuring of knowledge: a categorising, cataloguing restrictive impetus, a disciplining of thought.⁴ It has always been a space that excludes those

1 — Lily Kuo and Micheal Safi, "Hong Kong: Police Say Surrender is Only Option for Protestors," *Guardian*, November 18, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/18/hong-kong-protests-up-to-800-trapped-as-police-lay-siege-to-university>.

2 — Soumyabrata Choudhury and Heba Ahmed, "Why Is JNU Vital to Public Education and Discourse in India? A Student and a Professor Argue for the Institution," *Firstpost.com*, November

21, 2019, <https://www.firstpost.com/india/why-is-jnu-vital-to-public-education-and-discourse-in-india-a-student-and-a-professor-argue-for-the-institution-7682251.html>.

3 — Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998).

4 — Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010 (1969)).

for whom long ages were spent outside of the definition of the human (women, people of colour, and other non-humans). The gradual, grudging admission of us became a process of producing supplements to a rigid body, and our lives—in inhabiting this body—unfolded and negotiated varying degrees of precarity.⁵

The university remains part of an economy of extraction and accumulation of knowledge. It extracts value from those and that which it studies and delegates the circulation of knowledge to regimes governed by an exclusive logic of expertise. This logic always attempts to disentangle and to separate the figure from the ground. With his feet firmly on the ground, the university-educated, enlightened man is a well-grounded individual—his expertise rooted in years of fieldwork.⁶ In a world of constant flux and precarity, this separation between figure and ground indicates a self-contained stability, an unrecognition of all the forces that enfold us and with which we could never be intimate. How then might we ground knowledge, or indeed grind it down for dispersal? How might we imagine the production of knowledge and its circulation as entangled processes? What protocols are we to develop that would allow us to encode entangled forms of responsibility into the processes of knowledge production? To reorient ourselves towards another way of instituting the university otherwise requires us to imagine another mode of producing such protocols, one that does not attempt to extend a logic of governmentality, but rather, is able to introduce contingency into this process. Imagining the university otherwise is not, therefore, about universal protocols, but rather about working from

5 — Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005).

6 — Melody Jue, *Wild Blue Media* (Durham and New York: Duke University Press, forthcoming).

events and situations of encounter, to produce *enfolding*s resonating in multiple directions.

What then is it to move beyond discipline? The supplementary logic of the pluri- or the interdisciplinary continues to presuppose an already existing model of disciplining that might be gently (or sometimes perhaps not so gently) reformed to move towards some immanent form that allows the body to survive, to absorb the infections from within.⁷ To this, rather, we propose “indisciplinarity” as method. Indisciplinarity is a term we borrow from artist, activist, and media theorist Jessika Khazrik.⁸ To move indisciplinarily is to move away from praxis; it is to shift towards the emergent. To move indisciplinarily is to move with the rhythms of the “undercommons”; to not replicate their form into one that becomes governable, but rather to create situations of enactment and also of potentiality.⁹ It is here that we turn to forms of artistic research as a model for interdisciplinary thought—to view these forms as not merely devices for the production of artworks, but rather as possible templates for collective speculation. It allows us to imagine expertise otherwise—no longer bound by inherited knowledges—and to recognise expertise in multiple registers, and in different forms—in care work, in indigenous knowledge, and embodied knowledge, amongst others. Indisciplinarity is an unruly “skidding”—it calls upon a method and a frame and simultaneously demands its combustion and dispersal. And yet this combustion is not consumption, nor a self-absorbing decrepitude. It is the event of emergence; the moment we potentiate our forces

7 — Here, we mean both the “rigid body,” but also the gendered and racialised hegemonic body, upon whose position the current form of the university has been predicated.

8 — Personal conversation with Jessika Khazrik, September 2019.

9 — Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (Wivenhoe: Minor Compositions, 2013).

and our intensities are led astray. It is this skidding that we take seriously, a form of praxis that allows us to spatialise knowledge production and yet be *askew* in relation to disciplines, to knowledge, and to epistemes.

It is in this spirit of *askewness*, that we turn to Zomia: an aberrant landscape that enacts a spatial embodiment of indisciplinaryity. Zomia is a zone that coincides with the forested regions that lie in the altitudes above 300 metres, including northeastern India, the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, the borders between Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, and perhaps—according to our willingness—stretches into the tropical jungles of the Malay peninsula and the Cordillera Central mountain range of the Philippines.¹⁰ When colonial cartographers wanted to map Guizhou in southwest China, they especially noted how “vexingly numerous and ill-disciplined” the landscape was.¹¹ They furthered that the landscape would require a “pile of documentation,” miles of description that could attest to the milieu’s vitality, its teeming forth with information and life.¹² However, extending beyond a singular emphasis on its structural vexatiousness, the Zomian forests augur a spatial indisciplinaryity, which is neither modern transnational conduct—bound to the arbitration of the colonial cartographer—nor a Cold War regional/area studies approximation. This indisciplinaryity weaves together the margins of all the nation states it traverses, encompassing a shared history of civilisational refusal.

Zomia is a “zone of refuge,” a site that inheres the precarious and yet anarchist existences of those who flee the conscriptive regimes of the adjoining lowland valleys and the rice producing states whose plantations attest to

10 — James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).
11 — Ibid., 1.
12 — Ibid.

disciplinary regimes in and of themselves.¹³ Bracketed between a history of (counter)insurgency and the animism that guides the forest tribes, the Zomia forest speaks to an indisciplinary history—limpid bodies, *aswangs*, and hidden tree trunks that perform an opaqueness, unready to surrender to an “enlightened” search for truth.¹⁴ Attuning to the vexatiousness of the forest is not a mere reconfiguration of the senses to a differential phasing of every hoot, rumble, or vein that glides through the forest. We understand the forest as a conceptual space that evokes a perceptual challenge—demanding of curious onlookers a (re)attunement, a perceptual rewiring to acclimatise to the dense, labyrinthine maze. A (re)attunement to the forest opens us up to the otherwise imperceptible rhythms of nature, which remain hidden and almost simmering in the realm of the subliminal, if not the realm of the forgotten. Attunement exceeds its status as mere technological mediation of our phenomenological selves, opening us up to a world hitherto unknown and moving towards radical interconnectedness that more fully acknowledges the role of materials and the different life forms that make up a shared cosmological vulgate. Attunement performs an ethical inclusion of the other: it intends to open out, reach out, and listen to space that is increasingly under duress. Attunement, thus, is a necessary act with which we resonate with the forest and bodily (re)orient ourselves towards an otherness, aligning with an other. Attunement is a recalibration towards a history that leaves its fading mark amongst the trees, miscegenates with the soil, and yet attests to its fossil-like timelessness.¹⁵

13 — Ibid., 1–40.

14 — *Aswang* is an umbrella term for shape-shifting monsters in Filipino cultures.

15 — While we understand the word “miscegenation” and its history, as people of colour we understand the need to miscegenate in a world that wants to keep things pure. We

As a site that inhabits the multiple scales of history and cosmological thought, Zomia is the terrain from which to queer the Anthropocene—a geological proposal that posits the “human” as a singular species inheriting a damaged planet.¹⁶ It is to challenge this pervasive “planetarity” of the discourse and the insistence on species and planetary singularity that we turn to Zomian cosmologies as ways to reformulate our ecological subjectivities.¹⁷

What, then, is cosmology? It is deixis; a simple grammatical function by manner of which we orient ourselves to anything that is *not* us—a “this,” a “that,” a “there,” a “here,” and a “who,” “when,” “what,” “how,” or even a “why.”¹⁸ And yet, to keep this indisciplinarity alive, a Zomian deixis is not a grounding in truth or a search for lithic permanence. It is much like the forests’ ever-entangling vines, webs, and

accept racial difference—as a cultural and social production—as a fact: there is no getting away from it. Miscegenation, then, is an act that is to be redeemed, not condemned. We are seeking to validate such miscegenation in a world that conscribes, borders, and polices. We also support the use of the word in the context of Adivasi (indigenous) and Dalit (lower caste) movements in India, where upper caste existence is always considered in terms of “purity.” The lower castes—who are also called “untouchables”—have been pushed aside or made to remain aloof within the caste order, in scriptures and in practice, while the upper castes lead a life of extractivist exploitation and existential “purity.” Miscegenation, thus, can be seen as a radical act of existing, a belief in entanglement in a world obsessed with so-called purity.

16 — Paul J. Crutzen, “Geology of Mankind,” *Nature* 415 no. 23 (January 3, 2002): 23, <https://doi.org/10.1038/415023a>.

17 — Our notion of “planetarity” derives meaning from legacies extending from colonial and, later, Cold War expansionist, technological/mediated imaginaries, which sought to map the planet as a whole, thus birthing cultural and popular notions of the planet as a singular geophysical and, by extension, cultural, and philosophical entity. It glosses over lived and historical difference while accounting for connectivity through satellite and other communication forms. For more, see Elizabeth DeLoughrey, “Satellite Planetarity and the Ends of the Earth,” *Public Culture* 26, no. 2 (April 2014): 257–80.

18 — Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, “Exchanging Perspectives: The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies,” *Common Knowledge* 10, no. 3 (Autumn 2004): 463–68.

lichens—a method of constantly resituating ourselves, constantly combusting and redeveloping, revisiting and retuning our orientation to that which is *not* us and yet with which we are familiar or intimate. A Zomian cosmology is about relationality but, true to an indisciplined method, it is not a frictionless transition between actants, scales, and propositions. Just as fractals that awkwardly sit together make for an un-extractable crystal, an indisciplined cosmology fidgets and shifts, discomfited by the power hierarchies that find their way into the forest. A Zomian cosmology, then, is not a reduction to a materialist proposition regarding the planet, or even its astronomical extension. It is how we formatively relate to life and matter, the indisciplined relationships between science and myth, history and geology, and humans and non-humans—the plenum for all interspecies communication in this world.

If cosmology is about communication, on what basis of exchange is this communication premised? And—far more fundamental even—how do we value exchange or value itself? To return to our extractivist obsessions, how could these exchanges be non-alienating, their figures and tokens enfolded in a Zomian cosmological indisciplinarity? To reconfigure communication in a Zomian cosmological ethos would be to reimagine value as an “event in itself,” a collective expression that moves, shifts, and mutates in time.¹⁹ To move across worlds is to move with varying rates of exchange. How, then, does our currency (or currentness) transform in the course of these jumps? How do we render interoperability across worlds, as shamans do? How do we move with communities and with stakeholders in

19 — Erik Bordeleau, “Zero Degree Project for Cooling Off Capital – Part 2: Elements for a Cosmo-Financial Proposal,” *Medium.com*, July 15, 2018, <https://medium.com/>

economic-spacing/zero-degree-project-for-cooling-off-capital-part-2-elements-for-a-cosmo-financial-proposal-8370dccc737d.

knowledge? And how do we learn to assert that commensurability cannot be taken for granted? Rather, every act of commensuration must be viewed as an event, produced through the active assent and consent of each of the parties involved. Thusly, situations of co-implication or of mutual stakeholding might be produced. These relationalities are not imagined as a network—in a linear relation—but as intersecting terrains. To move across these terrains—and in learning from the denizens of Zomia—requires us to shape-shift, perhaps even become monstrous. And perhaps this askew expression could be the indisciplined disjuncture/conjuncture of currencies—a spatialisation of knowledge forms where each currency carries “the senses and flavours of the community issuing and backing them” into the cosmos.²⁰ Perhaps this cosmological currency would detail the textures of the “local expressive forces” and accrue a “pile of documentation” akin to the Zomian landscape.²¹

These cosmological revaluations would help us catalyse new calibrations between the quantitative and the qualitative, between how much we *endow* currency with—i.e., how much we value currency itself, and what expectancies and affordances it has to offer—and how much we endow *currency* with—i.e., the rates of valuation and exchange it enables in everyday practice. Cosmological revisions, therefore, entail the very redistribution and revisions of the value of the constituents that are deemed valuable for extraction and exchange. A Zomian cosmology endows currency with life—with denotation and difference—inasmuch as it no longer sees nature as the standing reserve of pure extraction, ready and malleable to the service of the modern world. A Zomian cosmology sees nature as vitally powerful, in terms of kinship and non-alienating

20 — Ibid.

21 — Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, 1.

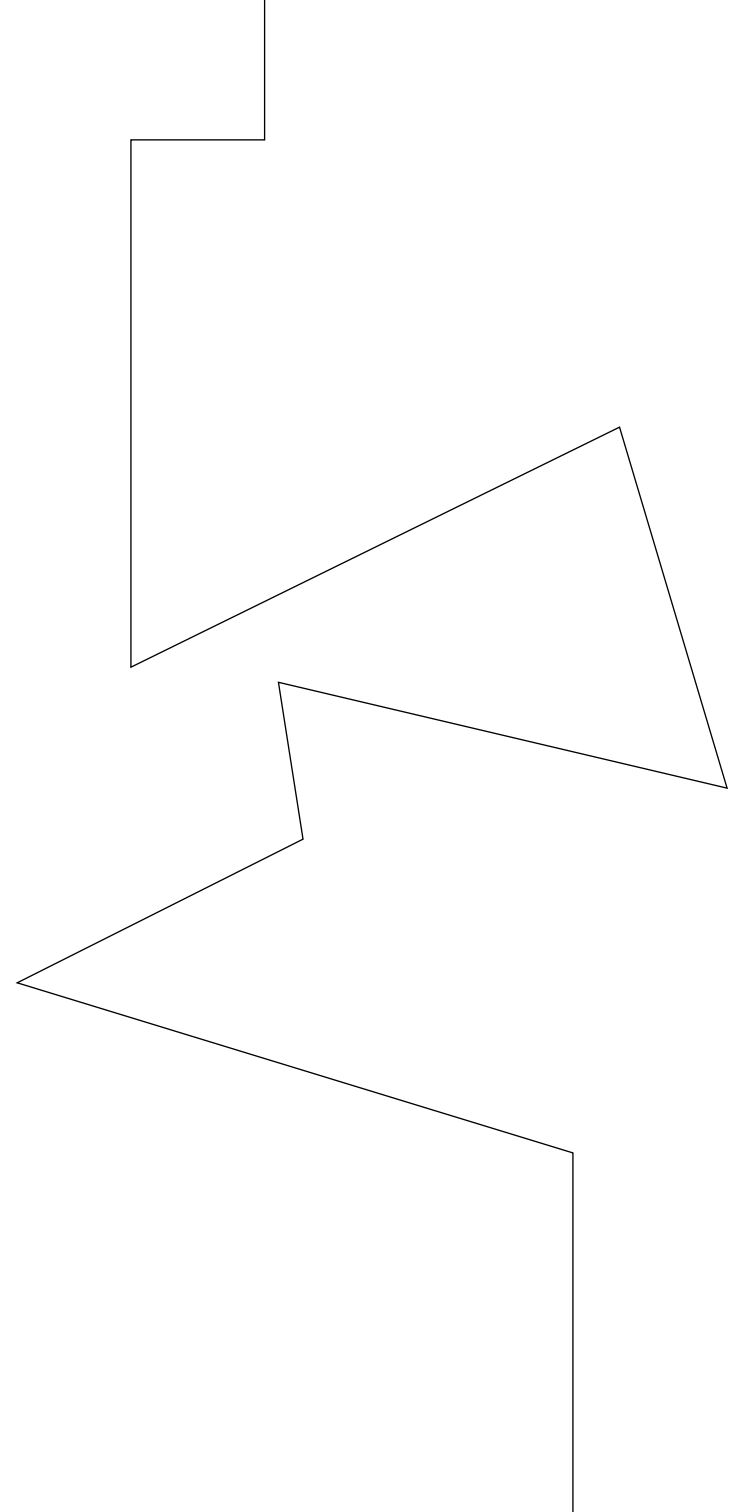
relationships, which would no longer appropriate questions of vitality to neoliberal needs.

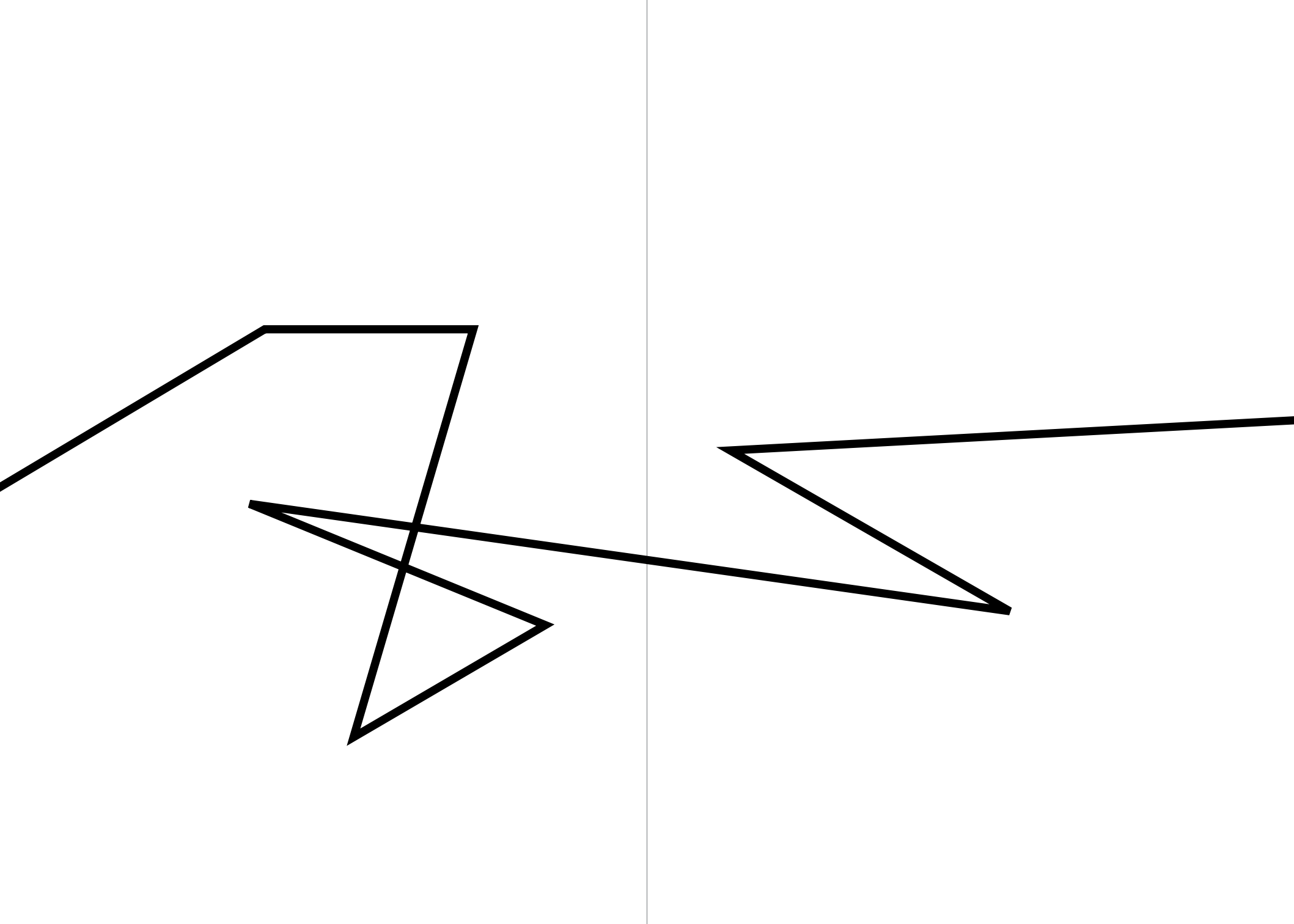
A revision of what cosmological value is—of what fundamentally constitutes nature and culture—could in turn produce the necessary indisciplinary in the university, undermining the schism between the humanities and the sciences, which are embodiments both of the qualitative and the quantitative, and the subjective and the objective respectively. These schisms have been a violence fundamental to the birth of the modern university itself. At such a time in the history of the university, when epistemes of science and technology accrue public validation, government funding (often tied to military and security systems); we believe that the value not just of the humanities needs to be restored but also the value of a non-humanist humanity itself—a Zomian cosmology instituted to the university itself. What might be of value is not the exploitative demands on labour that the university institutionalises, but life itself. As we finish writing this text, armed police and paramilitaries, in an attempt to control and throttle anti-state protests, are storming Muslim-majority university campuses in New Delhi and Aligarh—the Jamia Millia Islamia (national Islamic university) and Aligarh Muslim University respectively—attacking their students, illegally detaining and assaulting them in prison, and firing bullets as well as teargassing a library, mosque, and hospital.²² Some people who had been praying or studying in the library have lost their eyesight or limbs

22 — The Citizen Bureau, “What Happened in AMU During the Night of December 15,” *TheCitizen.in*, December 17, 2019, <https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/9/18025/What-Happened-in-AMU-During-the-Night-of-December-15>.

and a few remain missing, feared dead. What is lost in this situation is the fundamental belief that the state and the university could guarantee rights to ethnic or religious minorities, endow value or life to what it—the state, that is—considers non- or unworthy of life or living itself. At the same time, we raise our voices in solidarity with similar students who suffer and protests in Chile, Colombia, and other places. At times like this we must affirm our commitment to the urgent as much as the necessary and begin our work from the points of entanglement between the two. It is precisely from these points of entanglement that we will be able to work towards forms of “emergent instituting.” To reiterate: this means to work from *events* and situations of encounter in order to produce *enfolding*s resonating in multiple directions, a topology of inflections, a Zomian landscape.

Acknowledgements
We are indebted to Erik Bordeleau
for his inputs throughout our conversations.





BIOGRAPHIES

Bill Balaskas is an artist, theorist, and educator, whose research is located at the intersection of politics, new media, and contemporary visual culture. He is an Associate Professor and Director of Research, Business and Innovation at the School of Art & Architecture, Kingston University, London. His works have been widely exhibited internationally, in galleries, museums, festivals, and public spaces. He has received awards and grants from: the European Investment Bank (EIB) Institute; Comité International d'Histoire de l'Art (CIHA); Open Society Foundations; European Cultural Foundation; National Sculpture Factory (Ireland); and the Association for Art History (UK), amongst others. He is an Editor of the *Leonardo Electronic Almanac* (LEA), published by MIT Press. His writings have also appeared in edited books and other publications such as: *Journal of Visual Culture*, *Third Text*, and *Revista ARTA*. Originally trained as an economist, he holds a PhD in Critical Writing in Art & Design and an MA in Communication Art & Design from the Royal College of Art.

Leonhard Bartolomeus is a curator, researcher, and passionate teacher. He graduated from the Jakarta Institute of Arts, with a degree in ceramic craft. In 2012, he joined an Art Critics and visual culture Writers' workshop organised by ruangrupa and, later on, he became involved in many more of the collective's programmes and events. From 2013 to 2017, he was actively working as a member of

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BIOGRAPHIES

Mélanie Bouteloup is Co-founder and the current Director of Bétonsalon – Centre for Art and Research and Villa Vassilieff. Over the last fifteen years, she has curated numerous projects in various forms that anchor research in society on process-based, collaborative, and discursive levels, following different time spans, in cooperation with various local, national, and international organisations. In 2012, Bouteloup was an Associate Curator, alongside Artistic Director Okwui Enwezor, of La Triennale, Paris—an event organised on the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and Communication/ Directorate-General for Artistic Creation (DGCA), the Centre national des arts plastiques (CNAP), and the Palais de Tokyo. In 2014, she was conferred with the French honour, Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters.

Carolina Cerón works and lives in Bogotá, Colombia. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Curating at the Art Department of Universidad de los Andes. She is interested in initiatives on experimental ephemera and alternative sites for curatorial discourse. She also performs—from an eminently self-reflexive position—the task of organising, exposing, interpreting, reading, and writing about art and the metabolisation of other sorts of viscosities. She holds a BFA from the Universidad de los Andes, a postgraduate diploma in exhibition format design from the Elisava School, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, and an MA in Culture Industry from Goldsmiths, University of London.

Anthony Downey is Professor of Visual Culture in the Middle East and North Africa, Birmingham City University. He sits on the editorial boards of *Third Text* and *Digital War*, and is affiliated

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Pujita Guha and **Abhijan Toto** founded and co-direct the Forest Curriculum, which is an itinerant and nomadic platform for "indisciplinary" research and mutual co-learning. It proposes to assemble a located critique of the Anthropocene via the "naturecultures" of Zomia, the forested belt that connects south and southeast Asia. The Forest Curriculum works with artists, researchers, indigenous organisations and thinkers, musicians, and activists. Abhijan Toto is an independent curator and researcher, who has previously worked with the Dhaka Art Summit; Bellas Artes Projects, Manila; and Council, Paris. He is the recipient of the 2019 Lorenzo Bonaldi Award for Art, GAMEc, Bergamo. Pujita Guha is currently a GCLR Fellow at the University of California, Santa Barbara and is widely published on south and southeast Asian cultures and "ecosophical" thought. The Forest

Curriculum organises exhibitions, talks, film programmes, and other public activities in addition to leading and conducting research groups and independent investigations. It also indulges in new forms of research in addition to teaching and developing programmes for academic institutions. The Forest Curriculum collaborates with institutions and organisations in south and southeast Asia and beyond, including: the Arts Network Asia (ANA) for “The Forest As School” Summer Academy programme; SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin; Ghost:2561 art series, Bangkok; SUGAR Contemporary, Toronto; Hanoi DoLab; and IdeasCity, New Museum, New York.

Joasia Krysa is a curator and scholar whose research spans contemporary art, curating, and digital culture. She is Professor of Exhibition Research and Lab Leader of Exhibition Research Lab (ERL) at Liverpool John Moores University, in partnership with Liverpool Biennial. She has curated exhibitions at the intersection of art and technology and commissioned online projects as part of the curatorial team for documenta 13, 2012; as Artistic Director of Kunsthall Aarhus, Denmark, 2012–15; and as Co-curator of Liverpool Biennial 2016 and 2018, amongst others. Her first “software-kurator” experiment was presented at Tate Modern in 2005 and published in *Curating Immateriality: In Search for Spaces of The Curatorial* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2006). Recent publications include the edited books *Systemics (or, Exhibition as a Series)* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2017) and *Writing and Unwriting Media Art History: Erkki Kurenniemi in 2048* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2015) as well as chapters in *Networks* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014)

and *The Routledge Companion to Art and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015). She has been appointed as an international Advisor for the first edition of the Helsinki Biennial, 2020, and Sapporo International Art Festival (SIAF), 2020, Japan.

Vali Mahlouji is a curator, Advisor to the British Museum and the Bahman Mohassess Estate, and Director of the Kaveh Golestan Estate. In 2010, he founded Archaeology of the Final Decade (AOTFD), a nonprofit curatorial platform which excavates cultural materials that have been subjected to erasure, censorship, and destruction. AOTFD has placed artworks in international collections including: Tate Modern, Smithsonian Institution, Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (MAM), British Museum, and Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). Mahlouji’s recent curatorial work includes exhibitions at: the Dhaka Art Summit, 2018; Whitechapel Gallery, London; Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow; SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin; FOAM, Amsterdam; MAXXI, Rome; Bergen Assembly; Sursock Museum, Beirut. An upcoming exhibition will take place at the Asia Art Centre (ACC), Gwangju. He has been published by various institutions and publishers, including: Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Asia Society Museum, New York; and Yale University Press. His upcoming book is being published by the Whitechapel Gallery, London, in 2020.

Je Yun Moon is a curator and writer from South Korea. She has worked in the fields of art, architecture, and performance at: the Sonje Art Center, Seoul; Anyang Public Art Project;

Venice Architecture Biennale; Nam June Paik Art Center, Yongsin; and the Korean Cultural Centre (KCCUK), London. From 2017 to 2018, she ran the visual arts programme of the Korea/UK season, a programme of extensive cultural activities in collaboration with twenty-one arts institutions in the UK, including: “I Believe My Works Are Still Valid” by Kim Yong Ik, Spike Island, Bristol; “Jewyo Rhii and Jihyun Jung: Dawn Breaks,” The Showroom, London; “Rehearsals from the Korean Avant-Garde Performance Archive,” KCCUK, London. She is currently the Head of Programmes at Liverpool Biennial. She holds a doctorate in Curatorial/Knowledge from Goldsmiths, University of London, where her doctoral research delved into contemporary choreographic practice as a particular strategy of performing exhibitions.

Andrea Phillips is BALTIC Professor and Director of BxNU Research Institute, Northumbria University & BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art. Andrea lectures and writes about the economic and social construction of public value within contemporary art, the manipulation of forms of participation, and the potential of forms of political, architectural, and social reorganisation within artistic and curatorial culture.

Emily Pringle’s undergraduate and postgraduate training was in Fine Art. During her doctoral research at the University of London, she focused on the relationship between artistic ways of knowing and teaching. She joined Tate in 2009, following ten years as a researcher and writer on museum education, creative learning, and socially-engaged art practice. From 2010 to 2019 she was Head of Learning Practice and Research during

which time she established the Tate Research Centre: Learning. In 2017, she was awarded an AHRC Leadership Fellowship, which allowed her to take a sabbatical to examine how collaborative, practice-led research can be embedded within art museums. Her research has been brought together in the publication, *Rethinking Research in the Art Museum* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019). In February 2019, she was appointed Head of Research at Tate.

farid rakun was trained as an architect (B.Arch, Universitas Indonesia; M.Arch, Cranbrook Academy of Art), and wears different hats, depending on who is asking. A visiting lecturer in the Department of Architecture, Universitas Indonesia, he is also a member of the artists’ collective ruangrupa, with whom he co-curated Sonsbeek 2016’s transACTION, Arnhem, Netherlands. As an instigator, he has permeated various global institutions such as: Le Centre Pompidou, Paris; Venice Biennale; National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MMCA), Seoul; Sharjah Biennial; São Paulo Biennial; Harun Farocki Institut (HaFI), Dutch Art Institute (DAI); Creative Time, New York; Haute école d’art et de design (HEAD), Geneva; and BAK basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht. He has worked for Jakarta Biennale in different capacities since 2013, and currently serves as an Advisor.

Carolina Rito is a researcher and curator whose work is situated at the intersection between knowledge production, the curatorial, and contested historical narratives. She is Professor of Creative Practice Research, Research Centre for Arts, Memory, and Communities, Coventry University; an Executive Board Member

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ruangrupa is a Jakarta-based artists' collective established in 2000. It is a nonprofit organisation that strives to support art within urban and cultural contexts by encouraging artists and individuals from other disciplines—such as social sciences, politics, technology, and media, amongst others—to foster critical views in relation to Indonesian urban contemporary issues. ruangrupa also produces collaborative works in the form of art projects, such as exhibitions, festivals, art labs, workshops, and research, as well as books, magazines, and online journal publications. ruangrupa has been involved in many collaborative and exchange projects, including participating in: Gwangju Biennale, 2002 & 2018; Istanbul Biennial, 2005; Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, 2012; Singapore Biennale, 2011; São Paulo Biennial, 2014; Aichi Triennale, Nagoya, 2016; and Cosmopolis #1 Le Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2017. In 2016, ruangrupa curated Sonsbeek 2016's transACTION, Arnhem, Netherlands. ruangrupa is the curator of documenta 15, 2022.

Nora Sternfeld is an educator and curator. She is currently documenta Professor at the Kunsthochschule, Kassel. From 2012 to 2018 she was Professor in Curating and Mediating Art at Aalto University, Helsinki. She is Co-director of the ECM (educating/curating/managing) MA programme at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna. With Renate Höllwart and Elke Smolics, she is part of trafo.K: Office for Art, Education, and Critical Knowledge Production, Vienna. With Irit Rogoff, Stefano Harney, Adrian Heathfield, Massimiliano Mollona, and Louis Moreno, she is part of *freethought*, a platform for research, education, and production in London. She publishes on contemporary art, exhibition theory, education, the politics of history, and anti-racism.

Sian Vaughan is a Reader in Research Practice at Birmingham School of Art, Birmingham City University. Broadly, her research interests concern the pedagogies that underpin research in art and design and the mediation of public engagement with contemporary art as well as its interpretation. Her research focuses on artistic practices that involve archives, history, and institutions, with a particular focus on creative research methods as knowledge generation. Her educational research is focused on the practices and pedagogies of doctoral education and, in particular, how these respond to creative practice in research. She enjoys working collaboratively and across disciplines and has disseminated her work widely through peer-reviewed chapters, journal articles, and conference papers on the subject of public art, museum studies, archives, and education.