

[slide 1: title]

DEVELOPING ORGANIZED NETWORKS **The Imaginary Example of Special Embassies**

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[slide 2: aims]

Aims

To share a set of stories and experiences,

In the process of re-imagining an institutional form and practice

To attempt to communicate the concept of 'organised networks'

To give an short overview of representational diplomacy and summit gathering

as a historical background to similar practices in the cultural field

Give a selection of examples - networked-events and initiatives –

from new art and medi /network cultural field which I believe hints at this form of organised networks.

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[slide 3: position]

Talking from the position of

artist-organizer – (socially-engaged arts / media and network culture)

cultural producer based in Helsinki, Finland.

My work often has variable roles of initiator, participant, author and curator, according to **different collaborative and cross-disciplinary processes**

Participatory arts practice through workshops, performative events, and storytelling. Inviting others into processes, to be involved, to contribute, to explore, to experiment.

Across different fields of interest: media/ network/ environmental activism,

Interest in political theory & social science issues, and some of these issues emerge in my informal and formal doctoral investigation.

Mobility and festival gatherings between different cultural organisations in Baltic / Eastern Europe..

'Paper-exchange' is common bringing & **distributing knowledge and cultural production** between different active persons, collectives and geographical regions.

The establishment of self-organised new art and media centres/labs in Central/Eastern Europe in particular, since the late 90s, has contributed to this **network exchange culture**.

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[slide 4: rossiter book1]

Organised Networks

Ned Rossiter in his book '**Organised Networks: media theory, Creative Labour, New Institutions**' (Institute of Network Cultures, Nai Publishers, 2006) begins..

"There is an urgent need for new institutional forms. The uncertainties of labour and life within network societies and informational economies have all too clearly exposed the limits of prevailing institutional systems and structures. The key institutions of the modern-era –

union, state, firm, university – have proven inadequate to the task of organising and managing populations in the past 15-30 years...

The challenges of contemporary governance can be addressed through the creation of new institutional forms that are responsive to the logic of social-technical networks and non-representational democratic processes.

Communication within networks is about relational processes not representational procedures.” (p.1)

A story to begin which illustrates of how the idea of re-imagining the institutional form of 'embassy' appeared to me..

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[slide 5-13: case of l'ostia tv]

The Case of L'Ostia TV

The idea of a 'special embassy' mission emerged thanks to **a request by two friends**, who had been working in collaboration with others, **to represent their work on their behalf**.

March 2007 : new friends **Manuel Bozzo** and **Lucy Sombra** had been working on an experimental artistic street-tv pilot called L'Òstia TV. In gentrifying sea-front Barceloneta, Barcelona.

I **attended early discussions** – returned home to Finland, kept in touch over email, **returned to Barcelona** about 1 month later, just **after the broadcast** had been made.

Appreciation of the project and idea of what was involved.

I was returning to Spain to attend an **'Alternative TV' seminar in Zaragoza** that was gathering a wide variety of practitioners sharing different strategies, from the different regions of the country.

My friends, the **producers** of L'Òstia TV, **were travelling outside the country**.

Their **collaborative partners, Universitat Pirata** were **under threat of eviction** from their Miles de Vivendes building [4]

so **neither were available to travel to the seminar** event.
I was **asked to present L'Ostia TV for them**.

With the **help of a translator**, I introduced the L'Òstia TV project, **how I understood its intention**, and **showed** the accompanying DVD documentation.

The work took its place among peer street or internet-TV projects originating in different locations around Spain.

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[slide 14: re-thinking diplomacy]

An Embassy - a diplomatic mission - "is a group of people from one state or an international inter-governmental organization (such as the United Nations) present in another state to represent the sending state/organization in the receiving state" ("Wikipedia":<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embassy>).

In taking the **role of representer**, to be comfortable presenting someone else's work, **I believed I should be transparent at the beginning, and highlight the responsibility entrusted in me to act, and speak in the best interests of those who I represented.**

That is: a **temporally-defined** and **located community** (of practitioners, social/cultural centre, even to some degree neighbourhood)

with whom I was partially familiar with, appreciating and/or sharing similar identifications and ambitions for engaging with one's surroundings and the wider city, region and world.

The experience of being nominated or indeed self-appointed 'envoy' raised **questions** about the history and the **boundaries of representation**.

[slide 15: history of diplomacy]

History of Diplomacy / Practices of a Resident Ambassador.

To explore the **questions and imaginations of what a 'special embassy'** might be, is necessary also to consider the **development of diplomatic network relations,**

'**special envoy**' and '**ambassador**' roles, and the functions of embassies **over history.**

Generally..

diplomacy can be defined as "negotiations between political entities which acknowledge each other's independence" - **formalised agreement** to 'live and let live', **giving and receiving a right to exist**

coexistence reflects mutual dependence, to a degree

Messengers, heralds, envoys and ambassadors have **brokered this condition** for **various forms** and sizes of **political entities**, from ancient civilisations, tribal confederations, city-states, empires, modern nation-states and transnational organisations.

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[slide 16: ancient]

Ancient

carrying the message

Heralds of the Greek Homeric period (8th Century BC): agents of negotiation and were renowned for their good memory and a loud voice

Roman diplomats who followed, were more administrators and nourished skilled archivists.

Ambassadors were **ceremoniously received with grand protocol** between the Great (Persian Safavid Persian and Mughal) **Eastern Empires**

Envoys of a fading Byzantium were talented orators but skilled observers who could provide home detailed reports of internal politics

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[slide 17: medieval]

Medieval period

formation of resident network

15th Century North Italian city-states appointed permanent ambassadors in other cities

Catholic Church and Papal vassal had representatives in each affiliated believing country

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[slide 18-19: medieval]

18th C.

modern profession

The French pioneered the model of profession of ambassadors
modernist nation-building and decolonialist shifts in international relations.

Uneven bilateral deployment between sending and receiving missions

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[slide 20-21: late 19th C.]

Late 19th C

beginnings of multilateral gatherings

Trans-national social movements of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, such as First International (**International Workingman's Association**) and the Second (**Socialist**) International, led the organisation of congresses and conferences, with delegates from all over the world attending their respective gatherings

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[slide 22-23: Post-WWI]

Post WWI

transparency

League of Nations was formed after the perceived failure of old-style diplomacy.

Renewed ambition for negotiation to reduce conflict and maintain global prosperity within the Capitalist system

Third International (also known as Comintern) held huge multinational congresses with delegates who held as many as 40 languages as native languages between them. Translation and digesting procedures meant that these events could last over 1 month.

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[slide 24-25: Post-WWI]

Post WWII

international, cold-war and post-colonial development

50s-60s-

Foundation of International organisations such as the **United Nations**, and Bretton Woods institutions (**World Bank, IMF**)

Establishment of UN 'Permanent Multinational Embassy' in New York.

Governmental leaders attending annual summit.

Communist and **Soviet-aligned republics** maintain or set up their own socialist national & international institutions.

[slide 26: 70s-80s]

70-80s-

Reduced visibility of resident Ambassador; Increased big-summit media exposure. Global justice movement returns

Trotsky-Marxist Revolutionary socialists continued to hold **Fourth International Congresses** in 60s, 70s, 80s, gradually diminishing in 1990s. Aligning with directly with World Social Forum in 2000s.

World Economic Forum set up for leading corporate financial interests in 1971.

G6 (later G8) was formed as a forum for the world's major industrialized democracies in 1975, following 1973 oil crisis. Attended by government leaders

International identification and representation through the contemporary social movements of labour, feminism, environmentism and indigenism.

Increasing **globalisation processes** movement of people and capital expands the variety of corporate, science, culture and special-interest summits, congresses and conferences.

[slide 27: 90s-00s]

90s

Widespread development of telecommunications and internet in developed world

[slide 28-29: 2000s]

2000s

'Movement of movements' and **Social Forums** at World, Regional, National and City levels

Coordinated border control (e.g. Schengen)

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[slide 30:berridge book]

Practices of a Resident Ambassador

Berridge G. R. (1995), *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, Prentice Hall, London

[slide 31:practices of an ambassador2]

Representation

Prestige

"often overlooked or naively minimised function of diplomacy, is chiefly concerned with prestige, certainly can be conducted by ministers, officials in direct contact with their foreign opposites."

Symbol

"Permanent embassies – centrally located and impressively housed – are a permanent reminder of the importance and traditions of a state, as well as a symbol of the understanding that diplomacy is a continuous rather than episodic process"

Hosting

"When government leaders or important officials go abroad on representative duties, it is generally indispensable for the security of their communications that they should enjoy the support of a local embassy."

Ceremony

"ceremonial occasions when for either practical or political reasons it is simply more convenient to be represented by a resident ambassador rather than a special envoy."

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Promoting Friendly Relations

"function of the resident embassy should be to promote friendly relations between sending and receiving states"

However,

"The first duty of an embassy, or any diplomatic agency for that matter.. is to **promote its country's policy** – and this might require a diplomat to behave in an unfriendly manner"

"if the ambassador can **achieve the respect of the local decision-makers and get along well with them** (emphasis added by Berridge) the interests of the state will be well served"

"a well 'networked' embassy will obviously find it easier to gain influence and gather **information**; it will also be better placed to handle a crisis in relations should one subsequently develop. It is for this reason, as well as others, that **a good embassy will honour local customs (provided they are not flagrantly at odds with the values of its own country), mark important events in the annual calendar of the country in question, and engage in extensive social contact**; in other words, representation is concerned with promoting friendly relations as well as prestige"

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Negotiations

"Like it or not.. ambassadors **sometimes have to be permitted to play a leading role in important**

negotiations if only because their political masters cannot be everywhere, or in sustained and informed telephone conversation with everyone, at the same time."

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Clarifying Intentions

"When embassies engage in negotiation they may (they also may not) seek to clarify the intentions of their political masters on the subjects concerned."

Negotiating on terms that affect bilateral agreement between two governments..

"Depending on the situation, another government may, need to be reassured, alarmed, encouraged, or deterred."

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Information gathering/Political reporting

"Gathering information on the local scene and reporting it home has long been recognised as one of the most important functions of the resident embassy. The state of the economy, foreign policy, the moral of the armed forces, scientific research with military implications, the health of the leader, the balance of power within the government, the likely result of any forthcoming election, the strength of the opposition, and so on, have been the staple of ambassadorial dispatches."

"Immersed in the local scene – scouring the media, mixing with the population in a variety of social and regional settings, routinely contacting government officials and military officers, swapping information with other members of the diplomatic corps, and in some cases regularly encountering government leaders themselves"

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Policy advice

"The tradition of listening to, if not necessarily accepting, the advice of ambassadors has perhaps also been reinforced, as least in the West, **by the fact that the persons sent to important postings have often been eminent in their own right – and cogent in the expression of their views"**

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Consular services

Nationals of one state **touring, studying in, resident in, or doing business with another** have varying interests which may be usefully supported by a resident mission."

"As states have become more directly involved in economical life, and as foreign travel has become easier and cheaper, this kind of work – traditionally described as consular – **has generally become more important in resident missions or at satellite outposts"**

"This is particularly true of those trading nations"

Think cultural exports!

"As well as protecting the interests of individual citizens abroad, **consular services also embrace the processing of categories of potential travellers to the home country who are legally subject to entry control,** notably those seeking permanent settlement."

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Propaganda

"It is **political advertising designed usually to persuade a government to accept a particular view by persuading to a like one those with influence upon it:** its own general public, the media, pressure groups, and foreign allies."

"In the absence of a high-ranking visitor from home, the ambassador is the most accessible

spokesperson for his or her government; is likely to have mastered the sound-bite and the after-dinner address."

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Despite the rise of multilateral diplomacy and summits, the resident ambassador is maintained.

To summarise:

A resident embassy "is an extremely versatile institution"

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[slide 32:rossiter book 'organised networks vs networked organisations]

To return to Ned Rossiter's concept of 'Organised Networks..

p.14

The term network has become perhaps the most persuasive metaphor to describe a range of phenomena, desires and practices in contemporary information societies.

"fluid, ephemeral, transitory, innovative, flowing, non-linear, decentralised, value-adding, creative, flexible, open, collaborative, risk-taking, reflexive, informal, individualised, intense, transformative and so on and so forth" (p.46)

"Network models of sociality made possible by **information and communication technologies** have resulted in new forms of social-technical systems, or

emergent institutional forms of organised networks"

While these networks can be called institutional forms in so far as **they have a capacity to organise social relations**

they are radically dissimilar to modern institutionalised forms – 'networked organisations' –

such as governments, unions and firms

whose logic of organisation is predicted on vertical integration and representative tenets of liberal democracy.

Such dynamics are profoundly **unsuited to the collaborative and distributive culture of networks** peculiar to digital communications and their attendant socialities.

organised networks are **co-emergent with** digital communications media while

networked organisations typically pre-cede the advent of ICTs

Special significance..

organised networks are often staunch advocates of open source software and culture while

networked organisations adopt intellectual property rights as regulatory architecture for commerce and institutional partnerships.

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Experiences of

sharing, feedback, flexibility, and friendship

are primary to the culture of networks

"However it is a mistake to think the horizontal, decentralising and distributive capacities of digital networks are immune from a tendency to fall back into hierarchal and centralising modes of organisation and patterns of behaviour."

However, sometimes that is necessary. Decisions have to be made!

The challenge is

“To create structures of communication within networks that enable the distribution of resources and the income they generate.”

The mechanisms of worker's representation in the form of unions or parties or government “is subject to the post-Fordist logic of flexibilisation, risk and uncertainty. Disorganisation within an informational mode thus corresponds with a broader crisis in representational democracy..

Organisation, not disorganisation, is the challenge facing network cultures. How to do this within non-representational social-technical systems of communication”?

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[slide 33:transdisciplinarity]

Transdisciplinarity

p.17

Rossiter, sees one concrete way for organised networks to research this subject is **transdisciplinary autonomous education, “to learn from the histories of experimentation in organisation as it relates to institutional form.”**

This is an enquiry which is **“all too often neglected when thinking about issues of sustainability and collaboration within network cultures and social movements.”**

“Transdisciplinarity can be understood as an experimental research methodology and pedagogy that emerges within the logic of networks are they transverse institutional forms.”

To this end it is a practice interested in the educational capacities of network cultures.

Precedents for independent educational networks across Europe, ranging from **autonomist learning centres in Italy**

and the numerous **educational workshops run by migrant networks and activists,**

often in tandem with **cultural festivals** or **social forums**

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p.20

Example of Institute for Social Research

led by Max Horkheimer, it returned after WWII from Los Angeles and New York, to Frankfurt, Germany.

Key to its success in transdisciplinarity / collective research says Rossiter, was that..

“Collective research was a proto-network structure which saw the Institute manifest as a number of international branches at any one time, ensuring also the maximum potential for survival should any node happen to collapse. Consider this as a form of packet-switching for the pre-ARPANET age.”

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However, this is not to say it is indestructible..

p.22

“organised networks consist of loose affiliations where participants have the freedom to come and go, they are particularly susceptible to the disruptive force of the constituent outside..

This is both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand it is a source of renewal, reinvention and mitigates tendencies to excessive bureaucratisation often associated with institutionalisation.

And on the other hand, the constituent outside holds the potential to wreak unexpected demolition.

For these reasons, the scalar transformation of organised networks is always a fragile, uncertain process.”

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p.30

“What is necessary is to assemble a network of networks, as a unique platform of delivery and dissemination of educational materials permised on open source principles.”

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[slide 34:imaginary border academy]

**Imaginary Border Academy, 2007-
<http://borderacademy.org/>**

The Imaginary Border Academy (L'Académie de la frontière imaginaire) was initiated at the third Artivistic gathering in Montreal, 25-27 October, 2007;

It is our aim to provide copyleft pedagogical resources for engaging all forms of borders.

As was agreed with the clink of two Caribs by an incomplete decision making body, the Academy is within the tradition of Autonomous Education, Free Universities, Community Education and Free Skools.

The Academy strives to cultivate a non-hierarchical pedagogical approach to understanding, subverting and undermining borders.

The Academy is furthermore a mobile and tactical space where the latter is undertaken.

Statement of Purpose

Of BORDERS we want:

Spaces of clarity, relation, consensus, communication, exchange;

The opportunity to know our limits and push them;

The creation of hybrid zones and identities;

Porosity and dynamism, and the opportunistic spirit that allows us to exploit this suppleness;

The occasion to bend them to our will; to navigate them in order to to meet our creative, political, and intellectual desires.

Of LEARNING we want:

The ability to explore and develop our practices without making conclusions, and without needing to anticipate all of our outcomes;

The humility and adaptivity required to love and learn from our failures;

To develop accessible, user-friendly, and open-source tools for learning about and working with borders in practices that are at once creative and political;

An inclusive arena for the exchange of knowledge that can only work when power relations are fluid (so wherein there are no "teachers" or "students").

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[slide 36-37:practices of an ambassador]

Upgrade International Network, 2001-
<http://www.theupgrade.net/>

Ars Electronic 2006 Talk

http://www.aec.at/podcasts/files/FE_20060903_12_upg_E.mp3

International decentralised network of artists and events.

Nodes in an international network

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"Upgrade! is an international, emerging network of autonomous nodes united by art, technology, and a commitment to bridging cultural divides. Its decentralized, non-hierarchical structure ensures that Upgrade!

**(i) operates according to local interests and their available resources; and
(ii) reflects current creative engagement with cutting edge technologies.**

While individual nodes present new media projects, engage in informal critique, and foster dialogue and collaboration between individual artists,

Upgrade! International functions as an online, global network that gathers annually in different cities to meet one another, showcase local art, and work on the agenda for the following year.

Upgrade! Background: Since April 1999, a group of new media artists and curators have gathered in New York City. The first meeting took place at a bar in the east village with Tim Whidden & Mark River [MTAA], Mark Napier and founder, media artist Yael Kanarek. Upgrade! New York partnered with Eyebeam in March 2000."

<http://www.theupgrade.net/mission.html>

Short..

Met in *New York* bar, then moved to a pizzeria in 1999

Upgraded to Eyebeam *New York* in 2000

(2003)

New York, Vancouver

(2004)

New York, Vancouver, Boston, Montreal

(2005)

New York, Vancouver, Boston, Montreal, Scotland (Glasgow & Dundee),

(2006)

New York, Vancouver, Boston, Montreal, Amsterdam, Belgrade, Caracas, Chicago, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Lisbon, Munich, Oklahoma City, New York, Seoul, Scotland, Salvador, Skopje, Sofia, Tel Aviv - Jerusalem, Wellington

(2008)

New York, Vancouver, Boston, Montreal, Amsterdam, Belgrade, Caracas, Chicago, Istanbul, Johannesburg, Lisbon, Munich, Oklahoma City, New York, Seoul, Scotland, Salvador, Skopje, Sofia, Tel Aviv - Jerusalem, Wellington, Sao Paulo, Zagreb, Paris, Eindhoven, Berlin, Warsaw, Brussels-Ghent, Tijuana, Seattle, **Second Life**

WE: met in a New York bar in 1999; moved to a pizzeria; upgraded to Eyebeam in 2000; produced the network performance cabaret Call and Response at The Kitchen; held the Warhol Hijack in SoHo in 2001; became a network with Vancouver in 2003; expanded to Montreal and Boston in 2004; crossed the Atlantic; kicked off a two city node in Glasgow and Dundee in 2005; held the 1st international gathering Show, Gather, Share in New York City in 2005; crossed the Pacific; connected through Antarctica to Wellington; wrote a mission statement; resolved to meet in Oklahoma City; grew from 10 to 21 nodes during 2006 including Johannesburg and 4 nodes in the Balkans; changed venues every month in Sofia; visited studios and ate Korean food in Chicago; gave birth to tiny noise; held the first ArtCamp in Vancouver; attempted to stuff the Nettime list into the Society for Arts and Technology during MUTEK in Montreal; explored Berlin; passed through Belgrade, Sofia, and Istanbul with HTMLies EXPORT2; celebrated Scotland's first year anniversary with an Upgrade BIRTHDAY CAKE; held the 2nd international gathering, Do It Yourself, in Oklahoma City in 2006; made a catalog; experienced an ice storm and got chased by feral dogs; got stranded in an airport strike in Tel Aviv; lost luggage; shared underwear and socks; co-curated the net art exhibition D.I.Y. or Die with Rhizome and Turbulence; breakfasted; presented B-Side DIY Drive-in; inspired P2P videosharing; made great plans and failed to execute them; opened a Flickr pool; considered a post-national pavilion at the Venice Biennial; supported Critical Art Ensemble with a Cabaret Auction that included parking signs stolen from Montreal city streets; took Seattle from posthumanism to swans and back again; poured a floor of concrete and pure data in Salvador in 2007; screened P2P videos during the White Night in Skopje; reached consensus; made out in secret; doused a flame-war; organized a European tour for a Brazilian artist in a week; met in a Dutch art center café; discussed pros; discussed cons; invited curators and scientists to join art/tech discussions; met sporadically for loud glasses of wine in different countries and cities; paneled at Ars Electronica; lectured at PAN museum; summered at Belef in Belgrade; became electric in Melbourne; lunched at ZeroOne; sought the right place for the Second Life node on the world map; searched for collaborators in the Arab world, failed, tried again; agreed to hold the next international gathering in Skopje; felt network loyalty in São Paulo; streamed a 48 hour meeting during Economie 0 in Paris; debated cultural economy in the Balkan region; weighed art world failure against cultural success in Chicago; ate potluck; hibernated; came to life; had babies; lost friends; danced the carnival in Salvador in 2008; lived together as art; had A Day In A Life in Munich joined by Brisbane, Brighton, Sendai, Skopje and Curitiba; raised money; gathered more than 50 people, and arrived at Skopje for the 3rd international gathering, Chain Reaction.

[slide 37: chain reaction skopje]

Chain Reaction

<http://line.org.mk/projectdetail.php?id=8>

http://www.chainreaction-community.net/?page_id=11

"The meeting theme "Chain Reaction" illustrates the network itself, the way it works and functions, correlates and interacts. The Upgrade! International started as a creative spark that gradually grew into an international group of nodes influencing each other continually through permanent communication. The meeting gathers Upgrade! nodes into one core event in Macedonia and will hopefully cause a positive chain reaction. Upgrade! network gathers annually or bi-annually, each time in a different city for a festival by artists who participated in the Upgrade! meetings around the world.

"Chain reaction" was initiated by 5 partner nodes (Upgrade! Belgrade, Upgrade! Berlin - Public Art Lab, Upgrade! Sofia - InterSpace, Upgrade! Istanbul - NOMAD and Upgrade! Skopje - Line Initiative and Movement) that are responsible for the main coordination and communication of the project with other nodes from the network.

The outcome of the meeting is a 4 day festival with various activities that are created by common effort of the Upgrade! International nodes. On this occasion 50 international artists, curators, and arts producers will gather in Skopje to meet, present art projects and further develop the network. The artistic program of this project is rich, diverse and presents the latest developments of the new media scene on international level."

[slide 38-39: Canadian members of IBA in Skopje]

Imaginary Border Academy in Skopje

Thursday September 11, 2008 IBA Workshop, 15:00-18:00 (CET), Cultural Centre "CK" (Skopje)

Anik Fournier & Sophie Le-Phat Ho (Montreal): Accustoming Canadians to Sublimation

Introduction to the workshops series, parallel events, wikis, reader & installation, as part of the Accustoming Canadians to Sublimation project by the Imaginary Border Academy and presented by Upgrade Montreal.

Savić Rašović a.k.a Pirun (Boston):

Reporting from <http://www.konzulatsfrj.com/>, the consulate of SFRJ (former Yugoslavia), in Tivat (Montenegro). Every year, on the 25 of May, thousands gather from all over to receive the passports of a country that does not exist...

Ana Valdes (Stockholm):

Borders, prisons, walls and fences are now the common grounds in a world where panopticons and control towers rule. From Spain to Palestine, a cavalcade through illegal refugee camps, jails and activists networks, an alternative geography and an alternative lifestyle.

Farida Heuck (Berlin): The Visa Wait and Walk Tour

The immigration control system is changing and migrants are divided along economic and demographic policy interests. That becomes obvious when one takes a closer look at which institutions are involved in issuing visas. On my walk through various institutions, I am interested in seeing how the strategy of blocking, and controlling, recruitment will already appear in the buildings. The walk will also take place in Skopje where the institutions involved in issuing Schengen Visas are haunted. Come and join the Skopje Visa Wait and Walk Tour!

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[slide 41-44: special embassy]

Friday September 12, 2008 IBA Workshop, 15:00-18:00 (CET), Cultural Centre "CK" (Skopje) (Parallel event with Kitchen Budapest media lab, Budapest)

Contributing to the Imaginary Border Academy workshop, this seminar will explore further the concept of a 'special embassy'. This seminar will happen between persons present in both Skopje and Budapest venues, including Kitchen Budapest researchers. We will investigate, via participatory exercises and short presentations together, the types of diplomatic services an embassy for autonomous and mobile groups could offer to those who interface with it. The results of the seminar period will contribute to the dedicated 'special embassy' wiki.

Saturday September 13, 2008 (Action/Performance, 12:00-14:00 (CET), Skopje City Park)

tobias c. van veen (Upgrade Montreal): Chain Letters of Reactionary Love

+ on a piece of paper, write a love letter to someone you miss and have not seen in many years, and would like to be here with you, where you are now. include your email address. + once all letters are ready, fold into paper airplanes. + scale the highest possible structure in Skopje, by whatever means available. + throw the letter in the direction of where you currently believe the person to be. (with Mobicases)

Saturday September 13, 2008 IBA Workshop, 15:00-18:00 (CET), Cultural Centre "CK" (Skopje):

Vladan Jeremic & Rena Raedle (Belgrade):

Vladan Jeremic and Rena Raedle will talk about cultural and political activism in Belgrade, including new initiatives and open space for interventions; the local political context in Serbia and relations to wider contexts; conditions of work and possible ways to continue..?

[slide 45-54: special embassy]

Sunday September 14, 2008 Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, Skopje...

Kayle Brandon & Heath Bunting (Bristol): TransEuropean Fence Climbing Summit 2008 (2pm Central European Time)

Synchronise watches and prepare for a unified hand and foot transeuropean fence climbing tour. Become physically engaged with fences, barriers, walls and all infrastructure designed to bounder space. The summit is a celebration and an action study of barrier fabric. As a stranger or lover to climbing take too it; climb alone or with a group, mark out route or just drift. The intention is not to overwhelm and penetrate the boundary but to surface, traverse, scale and ascend it. As one hand takes hold of a fence in Warsaw, a foot will lift a body onto a wall in Budapest, a person will get to the top in Skopje and a hand will reach for the next hold in Berlin In the evening at 8pm (CET), consider joining in on a mass online post climb conference.

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[slide 55-56: rossiter: vectors of inquiry]

As a conclusion..

I borrow again from Rossiter. p.34

"Through the primary vectors of inquiry – protocols, self-organisation, scalability, sustainability –

the project of organised networks both assesses and undertakes the construction of new institutional forms

that engage diverse populations in creating mechanisms and resources for labour and life in information societies,

bringing new models to international challenges of cultural diversity, migration, creative innovation and open education.

The problem remains, however, that organised networks do not yet exist as recognised actors either within the stratum of policy discourse, or as concrete potentialities.

What we have none the less, is a steady accumulation of energies, best practices, concept translations, situated projects and so forth."

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[slide 56: interdisciplinary research]

The concept of 'special embassy' asks, and tests in a transdisciplinary way, if the representational metaphor of a 'special envoy' or 'ambassador' can be applied. in relation to a temporary, bounded, autonomous, or precarious micro-communities.

p.44

"Political organisation can never again take the form of a revived Internationalist workers movement. Aside from the primacy of class as the condition for possibility, Internationalism fails to comprehend one of the central lessons of Marxist analysis: the geography of uneven development if it does not also take into account the situation of communication. This is perhaps more so than ever, as communications technologies become the primary means by which production, distribution and exchange are managed, to say nothing of social life."

The logic of networks is a non-representative form of politics.

This, in my interpretation, opens one within the network to fill the role and re-invent the ambassadorial and consular form for 'ourselves'.

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[slide 57: questions]

If so, **what other diplomatic roles or services between the send and receiver organisations** may be imagined?

Which social collectives or practices would you be willing to represent through your own situated and constantly refreshed choice?

Essentially **who and what do you believe in, beyond yourself?**

[appendix of trans-national summit development]

Trans-national social movements and development of global politics.

Political Internationals as an organisation of political parties or activists with the aim of co-ordinating their activity for a common purpose.

First International

1 Saint Martin's Hall Meeting, London, 1864

(members from **Great Britain, France, Italy: International Workingmen's Association** was founded, as an **alliance of diverse groups**, including French Mutualists, Blanquists, English Owenites, Italian republicans, followers of Mazzini, and other socialists of various persuasions, including Karl Marx). Over its short life it grew into a major movement, with **local federations** in many countries developing strong bases of **working class activism**)

2 The Geneva Congress, 1866

3 The Lausanne Congress, 1867

(attended by **64 delegates** from **Great Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy and Switzerland.**)

4 The Brussels Congress, 1868

5 The Hague Congress 1872

Second International (Socialist International)

It continued the work of the dissolved First International, though excluding the still-powerful anarcho-syndicalist movement and unions, and was in existence until 1916.

1. **1889 – Paris Congress** (delegates from **20 different countries**)
2. 1891 - Brussels
3. 1893 - Zürich
4. 1896 - London
5. 1900 - Paris
6. 1904 - Amsterdam
7. 1907 - Stuttgart
8. 1910 - Copenhagen
9. 1912 - Basel (Extraordinary Congress)

Zimmerwald Conference 1915

international socialist conference held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, from September 5 through September 8, 1915, regarding role of the proletariat in the First World War.

beginning of the end of the coalition between **revolutionary socialists (communists)** and **reformist socialists (social democrats)** in the Second International. **38 delegates** from countries such as **Russia, Poland, Italy, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, France, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Norway.** (No Norwegians actually participated in the Zimmerwald Conference, but the Swedish socialist Ture Nerman represented Norway)

Third International (Communist International aka Comintern)

international Communist organisation founded in Moscow in March 1919 until 1943.

They decided that an Executive Committee would be formed with representatives of the most important sections, and that other parties joining the International would get their own representatives.

(There were 52 delegates present from 34 parties, including variable scales of organisation, countries and regions)

Attended: the Communist Parties of Russia, Germany, German Austria, Hungary, Poland, Finland, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Byelorussia, Estonia, Armenia, the Volga German region; the Swedish Social Democratic Left Party (the Opposition), Balkan Revolutionary People's of Russia; Zimmerwald Left Wing of France; the Czech, Bulgarian, Yugoslav, British, French and Swiss Communist Groups; the Dutch Social-Democratic Group; Socialist Propaganda League and the Socialist Labor Party of America; Socialist Workers' Party of China; Korean Workers' Union, Turkestan, Turkish, Georgian, Azerbaijanian and Persian Sections of the Central Bureau of the Eastern People's, and the Zimmerwald Commission

Fourth International

A **Communist international organisation working in opposition to both capitalism and Stalinism**, following doctrine of Trotsky. The "**World Party of Socialist Revolution**", the Trotskyists were publicly asserting their continuity with the Comintern, and with its predecessors. Their recognition of the importance of these earlier Internationals was coupled with a belief that they eventually degenerated. Although the Socialist International and Comintern were still in existence, the Trotskyists did not believe those organisations were capable of **supporting revolutionary socialism and internationalism**.

#1 1938 – International – Paris

Thirty delegates attended a founding conference, held in September 1938, in the home of Alfred Rosmer just outside Paris. Present at the meeting were delegates from all the major countries of Europe, and from North America, although for reasons of cost and distance, few delegates attended from Asia or Latin America.

1940 – underground International - New York

1944 – underground European - St Germain-la-Poterie

The Fourth International was hit hard during World War II. Trotsky was assassinated, many of the FI's European affiliates were destroyed by the Nazis and several of its Asian affiliates were destroyed by the Empire of Japan. The survivors, in Europe, Asia and elsewhere, were largely cut off from each other and from the International Secretariat.

#2 1946 -

#3 1951 -

#4 1954 - (reorganised sections in Britain, France and the U.S.)

#5 1957 -

#6 1961 -

! 1963 - Split and Reunified Forth International forms

#8 1965 - Taunus Mountains in Germany

#9 1969 - **in Italy gathered 100 delegates and observers from 30 countries including new sections in Ireland, Luxemburg and Sweden and rebuilt ones in France, Mexico, Spain and Switzerland.**

#10 1974 – where? with **organizations from 41 countries**

#11 1979 - **gathered 200 delegates from 48 countries.**

#12 1985 - Over 200 delegates

#13 1991 - was one of the most ambitious, addressing a systematic change in the global balance of forces. Its resolutions spanned the 'New World Order'

1993 - Fourth International (ICR) held a world conference of 44 sections in Paris

#14 **1995 – Rimini – addressed the collapse of USSR** and the resulting realignment in the Communist Parties and the international workers' movement. Attended by 150 participants from 34 countries

#15 **2003 - Belgium** In many countries, **sections of the International had reorganised as tendencies of broader political parties, while the International had established friendly relationships with a number of other tendencies.** The congress resolutions were debated by more than 200 participants included delegations from sections, sympathising groups and permanent observers from Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Britain, Canada - English Canada and Quebec, Denmark, Ecuador, Euskadi, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Ireland, Japan, Lebanon, Luxemburg, Martinique, Morocco, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spanish state, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, and the USA

2004 - It organized an International Meeting of Radical Parties at the 4th World Social Forum.

#16 **2010 – Fourth International World Congress**

* The World Political Situation. In the opinion of the International, the developing forms of resistance to neo-liberalism suggest changes tasks for revolutionaries.

* Europe. The building of broad anti-capitalist parties is a key theme: The sections of the reunified FI have had different experiences with this tactic, and are in debate with the International Socialist Tendency over tactics.

* Climate change and the ecological movement. Campaigning on climate change is a priority for the international

Revolutionary strategy in Latin America. The situations in Brazil and Venezuela of particular interest.

**League of Nations Annual summits in Geneva, 1919-1946
(greatest extent from 28 September 1934 to the 23 February 1935, it had 58 members)**

International organization founded as a result of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919–1920.

Origins in Immanuel Kants idea of 'perpetual peace', where a league of nations that would control conflict and promote peace between states.. However it was only after the catastrophe of WWI, and the perceived causes of **arms races, alliances, secret diplomacy and the freedom of sovereign states to enter into war for their own benefit.**

Perceived remedies: **create an international organisation** whose aim was to prevent future war through **disarmament, open diplomacy, international co-operation, restrictions on the right to wage wars** and penalties that made war unattractive to nations.

Council met up to 5 times a year:

permanent members: Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, (+Germany in 1926)

non-permanent members were: Belgium, Brazil, Greece and Spain

In total, 107 public sessions were held between 1920 and 1939.

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United Nations 1945- present

international organization whose stated aims are to **facilitate cooperation** in international **law**, international **security**, economic **development**, **social progress**, **human rights**, and achieving world **peace**. The UN was founded in 1945 after World War II to replace the League of Nations, to stop wars between countries and to provide a platform for dialogue. Financed from assessed and voluntary contributions from its member states.

There are currently **192 member states**, including nearly every recognized independent state in the world. From its headquarters on international territory in New York City, the UN and its specialized agencies decide on substantive and administrative issues in regular meetings held throughout the year. **Permanent Diplomatic representation in one place**

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Financial and economically-oriented summits

World Economic Forum 1971- present

Geneva-based non-profit foundation best known for its Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland which brings together top business leaders, international political leaders, selected intellectuals and journalists to discuss the most pressing issues facing the world including health and the environment.

In 2006 the Forum opened regional offices in Beijing, China and New York, USA. It is impartial and not-for-profit and is not tied to any political, partisan or national interests. It has observer status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is under the supervision of the Swiss Federal Government. Its highest governance body is the Foundation Board consisting of 22 members including former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Queen Rania of Jordan. The Forum's mission is "committed to improving the State of the World".[3]

The Forum is **funded by its 1000 member companies**. The typical member company is a **global enterprise with more than five billion dollars in turnover**, although the latter can vary by industry and region. In addition, these enterprises rank among **the top companies within their industry and/or country** and play a **leading role in shaping the future of their industry and/or region**.

In 2008, some 250 public figures (head of state or government, cabinet ministers, ambassadors, heads or senior officials of international organization) attended the Annual Meeting

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G8

The Group of Eight (G8, and formerly the (G6) or Group of Six) is an **international forum** for the governments of **Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union** (the EU is represented within the G8, but cannot host or chair). The G8 can refer to the member states or to the **annual summit meeting** of the G8 heads of government.

The holder of the presidency sets the agenda, hosts the summit for that year and determines which ministerial meetings will take place. Lately, both France and the United Kingdom have expressed a desire to expand the group and include five developing countries, referred to as the **Outreach Five (O5) or the Plus Five: Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa**.

World Social Forum 2001- present

annual meeting (each January) held by members of the anti-globalization (using the term globalization in a doctrinal sense not a literal one) or **alter-globalization movement to coordinate world campaigns, share and refine organizing strategies, and inform each other about movements from around the world and their issues.**

According to the World Social Forum's (WSF) Charter of Principles, 'The WSF is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, [and the] free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action' by groups and individuals opposed to neo-liberalism and imperialism.

open space in the WSF, as a space for free and open exchange of ideas, it starts to become clear that there may be a difference between the principle and the practice. In fact, there is evidence of a growing hegemony of ideas developing, hiding behind the notion of open space. Many have complained about the increasing dominance of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) and other organisations, that seek adaptations to rather than the destruction of, the capitalist system in its current phase (neo-liberalism).

The World Social Forum is a non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party space characterized by plurality and diversity. It proposes to facilitate decentralized coordination and networking among organizations engaged in concrete action towards building another world, from the local to the international level. It does not intend to be a body representing world civil society. The World Social Forum is neither a group nor an organization.

#1 2001 – Porto Alegre

#2 2002 – Porto Alegre

#3 2003 – Porto Alegre

#4 2004 – Mumbai

#5 2005 – Porto Alegre

#6 2006 – Polycentric: Caracas, Bamako, Karachi

#7 2007 – Nairobi

#8 2008 – Global Call for Action: various locations by autonomous local groups on 26th January.

#9 2009 – Belem

Criticisms of WSF..

Limited ability of mobility of the poor in poorer parts of the world to attend (eg Africa)

NGOs compete with popular grassroots movements for access

Anarchists argue over forum as central location for decision making (like 2nd & 3rd Internationals)

Regional or National Social Forums 2002 -

http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/quadro_frc.php?cd_forum=9

European (2002 – Florence, 2003 – Paris, 2004 – London, **2006 – Athens (over 35,000 attended), 2008 – Malmö (over 13.000 attended), 2010 - Istanbul**)

"ESF is a unique space for organisations, movements, networks and individuals engaged in building a more sustainable, democratic and equitable society. Tens of thousands of activists and a broad range of organisations come together to share experiences, debate ideas – and not the least to formulate proposals and to build new alliances for mobilisation and effective action."

<http://www.esf2008.org/about/what-is-esf>

Asian (2003 – Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, 2008 - Beijing)

Mediterranean (2005 – Barcelona) over 5000 attended.

Interregional consisting of movements from Europe, Maghred and Med. Middle East

<http://www.fsmed.info/>

<http://www.fsmed.info/uno-en.htm>

Americas (2008 - Guatemala)

Southern African (2003 - Lusaka, 2004, 2005)

Dutch (2006), Italian, India (2004, 2006), Galicia (2008), Burkina (2008), Sabana (2008 - Facatativa)

United States (2007)

US Regional: Southwest Ontario, Northeast, Midwest, Southeast (2006),

Liverpool (2008), Maine (2006), Boston (2004), Los Angeles (2008), Melbourne (2007),

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Open European Social Forum

<http://openesf.net/projects>

OpenESF is a platform for social activism provided by the European Social Forum.

OpenESF is the simple way to bring groups together, promote your cause, make plans, get things done and make another world possible.

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