org is an online platform, collecting, describing, presenting and generating documents of all sorts. It documents documents.

Your path through the collection lead along A peregrine falcon in the internal perimeter, A Fever Dream, A Seismic Change, A Fever Dream, Crocodile Copy, A flowering juneberry signals a beekeeper’s spring, N 47°12.346′ E 18°10.400′, Cobalt, The First Light of Day, Directory, A Bibliographic Reference, This site has been seized, A smoker’s history of energy, The Imaginary Edge of the Roadway, Investment, A Dead Insect on the Trunk of a Cedrus Atlantica Glauca, The Birds, Passing Time Near a Particle Accelerator

What constitutes a 'document' and how does it function?

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymological origin is the Latin 'documentum', meaning 'lesson, proof, instance, specimen'. As a verb, it is 'to prove or support (something) by documentary evidence', and 'to provide with documents'. The online version of the *OED* includes a draft addition, whereby a document (as a noun) is 'a collection of data in digital form that is considered a single item and typically has a unique filename by which it can be stored, retrieved, or transmitted (as a file, a spreadsheet, or a graphic)'. The current use of the noun 'document' is defined as '*something* written, inscribed, *etc*., which furnishes evidence or information upon any subject, as a manuscript, title-deed, tomb-stone, coin, picture, etc.' (emphasis added).

Both 'something' and that first 'etc.' leave ample room for discussion. A document doubts whether it functions as something unique, or as something reproducible. A passport is a document, but a flyer equally so. Moreover, there is a circular reasoning: to document is 'to provide with documents'. Defining (the functioning of) a document most likely involves ideas of communication, information, evidence, inscriptions, and implies notions of objectivity and neutrality – but the document is neither reducible to one of them, nor is it equal to their sum. It is hard to pinpoint it, as it disperses into and is affected by other fields: it is intrinsically tied to the history of media and to important currents in literature, photography and art; it is linked to epistemic and power structures. However ubiquitous it is, as an often tangible thing in our environment, and as a concept, a document *deranges*.

the-documents.org continuously gathers documents and provides them with a short textual description, explanation, or digression, written by multiple authors. In *Paper Knowledge*, Lisa Gitelman paraphrases 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet, stating that 'an antelope running wild would not be a document, but an antelope taken into a zoo would be one, presumably because it would then be framed – or reframed – as an example, specimen, or instance'.
The gathered files are all documents – if they weren't before publication, they now are. That is what the-documents.org, irreversibly, *does*. It is a zoo turning an antelope into an 'antelope'.

As you made your way through the collection, the-documents.org tracked the entries you viewed. It documented your path through the website. As such, the time spent on the-documents.org turned into this – a new document.

This document was compiled by ____ on 04.03.2022 17:06, printed on ____ and contains 18 documents on 40 pages. (https://the-documents.org/log/04-03-2022-3899/)

the-documents.org is a project created and edited by De Cleene De Cleene; design & development by atelier Haegeman Temmerman.

the-documents.org has been online since 23.05.2021.

Notes

- De Cleene De Cleene is Michiel De Cleene and Arnout De Cleene. Together they form a research group that focusses on novel ways of approaching the everyday, by artistic means and from a cultural and critical perspective.
  www.decleenedecleene.be / info@decleenedecleene.be
- This project was made possible with the support of the Flemish Government and KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. It is part of the research project *Documenting Objects*, financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund.

Sources

- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gitelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Accessed on 13.05.2021.

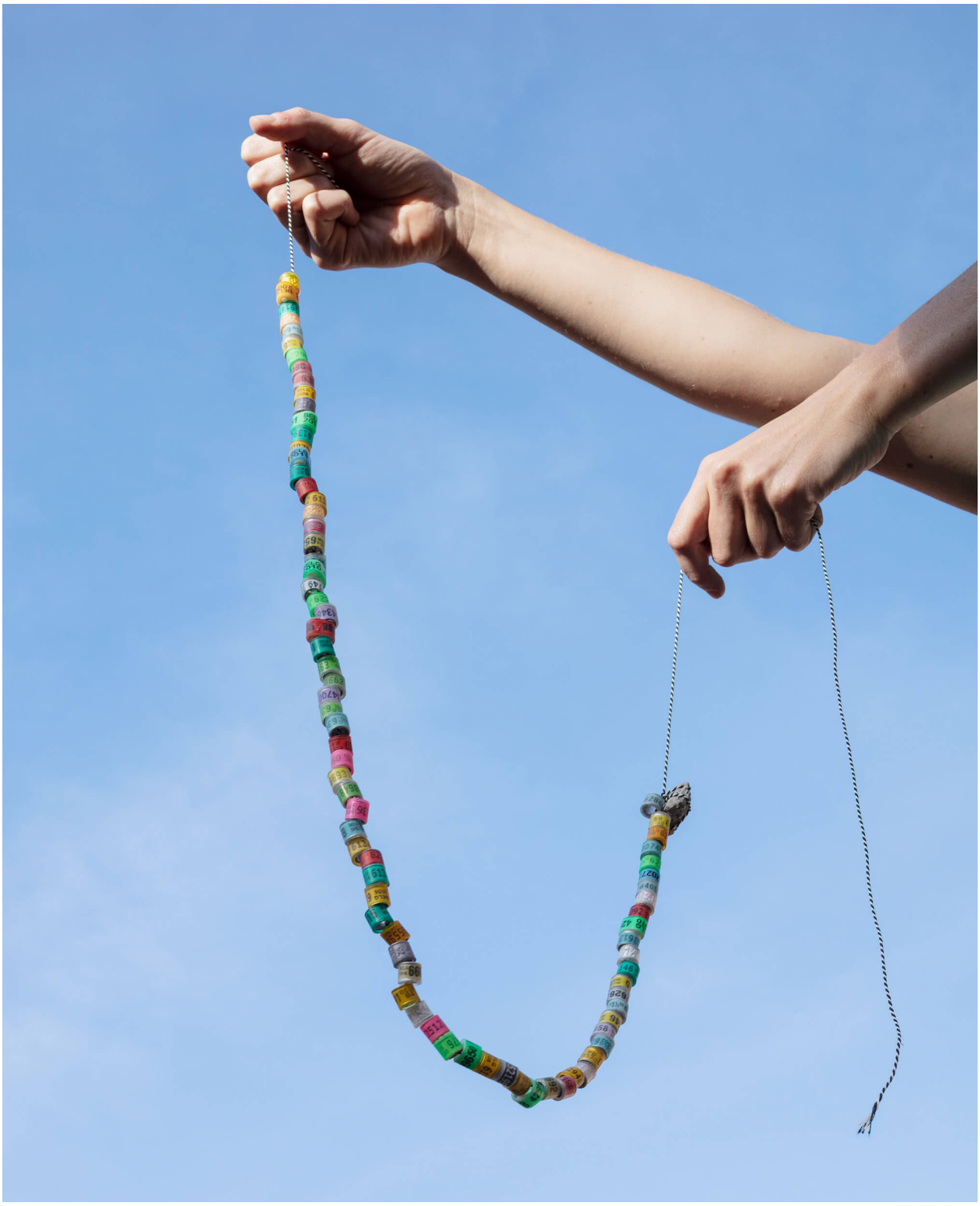
At the nuclear waste processing facility. While the photographer and the head of the communication department are making their way from the processing building to the temporary storage building, they walk past the central chimney.

‘On the highest of the accessible levels of the chimney, operators were finding small steel rings. They gathered them, but soon noticed that new rings were added. At a certain point at a rate of one ring a day.
[…]
It took them some time to realize what they were, so they started collecting them by slipping them onto a piece of rope. By now the rings on the rope span about this distance [spreads his arms to indicate a distance of about 1.2m].
[…]
They turned out to be rings that came from pigeon’s legs.
[…]
On top of our chimney resides a peregrine falcon.
[…]
I was told pigeon fanciers have a tendency to give a peregrine falcon – or any other bird of prey in their area – a hand at disappearing, but this one took up residency in the internal perimeter, where – as you know – access is severely restricted.’

Notes

First published in: De Cleene, M. *Reference Guide*. Amsterdam: Roma Publications, 2019

A peregrine falcon in the internal perimeter



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	02.03.2022	duivenringen_001.jpg	20,04 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
animal, collecting, food, Reference Guide, technology, waste

17:04:09

During the night, both of us get unwell. One of us is shaking, intensely and relentlessly. The windows are open. For minutes that seem to be hours, it feels like it’s freezing. We get extra blankets. Then, it gets too hot.

One of us dreams about *coccodrillos*. It starts out with a single animal, like the one we saw in the National Archaeological Museum, escaping from an aquarium, and ends with lots of little ones crawling all over the place. It’s impossible to know how many have escaped.

The other dreams about seismologist Luigi Palmieri’s unfortunate assistant and his family’s quest to redeem his good name. To deprive him of the burden and guilt set upon him by Luigi Palmieri’s report of the 1872 eruption of Vesuvius, the assistant’s offspring were building a monument just below the observatory in which their great-grandfather fell asleep. The monument was permanently, and continuously, unfinished.

We both dream of hearing fireworks in Naples.

In the morning, we’re slightly alarmed that we both got sick and feverish at the same instant. It’s the middle of January, and the weather has been summerlike all week. A gentle morning breeze flies in from the Neapolitan bay while we wait for the bus to take us to the airport.

Sources

- First published as part of De Cleene De Cleene. ‘Amidst the Fire, I Was Not Burnt’, *Trigger (Special issue: Uncertainty)*, 2. FOMU/Fw:Books, 25-30

A Fever Dream



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	24.02.2022	DCDC_napels_089_vuurwerk.tif	75,46 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
angst, animal, seismology, Vesuvius

17:04:53

the-documents.c

The road down from the top of Mount Vesuvius, at Atrio Del Cavaillo. The sun sets. The last tourist bus has headed down. Then the headlights of the guardian’s car swing their way down. It must be freezing. I am holding an orange-sized piece of petrified lava, probably stemming from the 1872 or 1944 eruption. A kilometer further down the road, the old Observatory is empty. Nowadays, monitoring seismic changes is done in a research centre in the city of Naples. Their seismographic registrations can be followed online, in real time. Two headlights swirling along the slopes, underneath me, are coming upwards.

A Seismic Change



type	date	filename	size	author
audio	15.01.2021	A seismic change.mp3	862KB	Arnout De Cleene

category
automobile, data storage, dusk, seismology, Vesuvius

17:05:09

During the night, both of us get unwell. One of us is shaking, intensely and relentlessly. The windows are open. For minutes that seem to be hours, it feels like it’s freezing. We get extra blankets. Then, it gets too hot.

One of us dreams about *coccodrillos*. It starts out with a single animal, like the one we saw in the National Archaeological Museum, escaping from an aquarium, and ends with lots of little ones crawling all over the place. It’s impossible to know how many have escaped.

The other dreams about seismologist Luigi Palmieri’s unfortunate assistant and his family’s quest to redeem his good name. To deprive him of the burden and guilt set upon him by Luigi Palmieri’s report of the 1872 eruption of Vesuvius, the assistant’s offspring were building a monument just below the observatory in which their great-grandfather fell asleep. The monument was permanently, and continuously, unfinished.

We both dream of hearing fireworks in Naples.

In the morning, we’re slightly alarmed that we both got sick and feverish at the same instant. It’s the middle of January, and the weather has been summerlike all week. A gentle morning breeze flies in from the Neapolitan bay while we wait for the bus to take us to the airport.

Sources

- First published as part of De Cleene De Cleene. ‘Amidst the Fire, I Was Not Burnt’, *Trigger (Special issue: Uncertainty)*, 2. FOMU/Fw:Books, 25-30

A Fever Dream



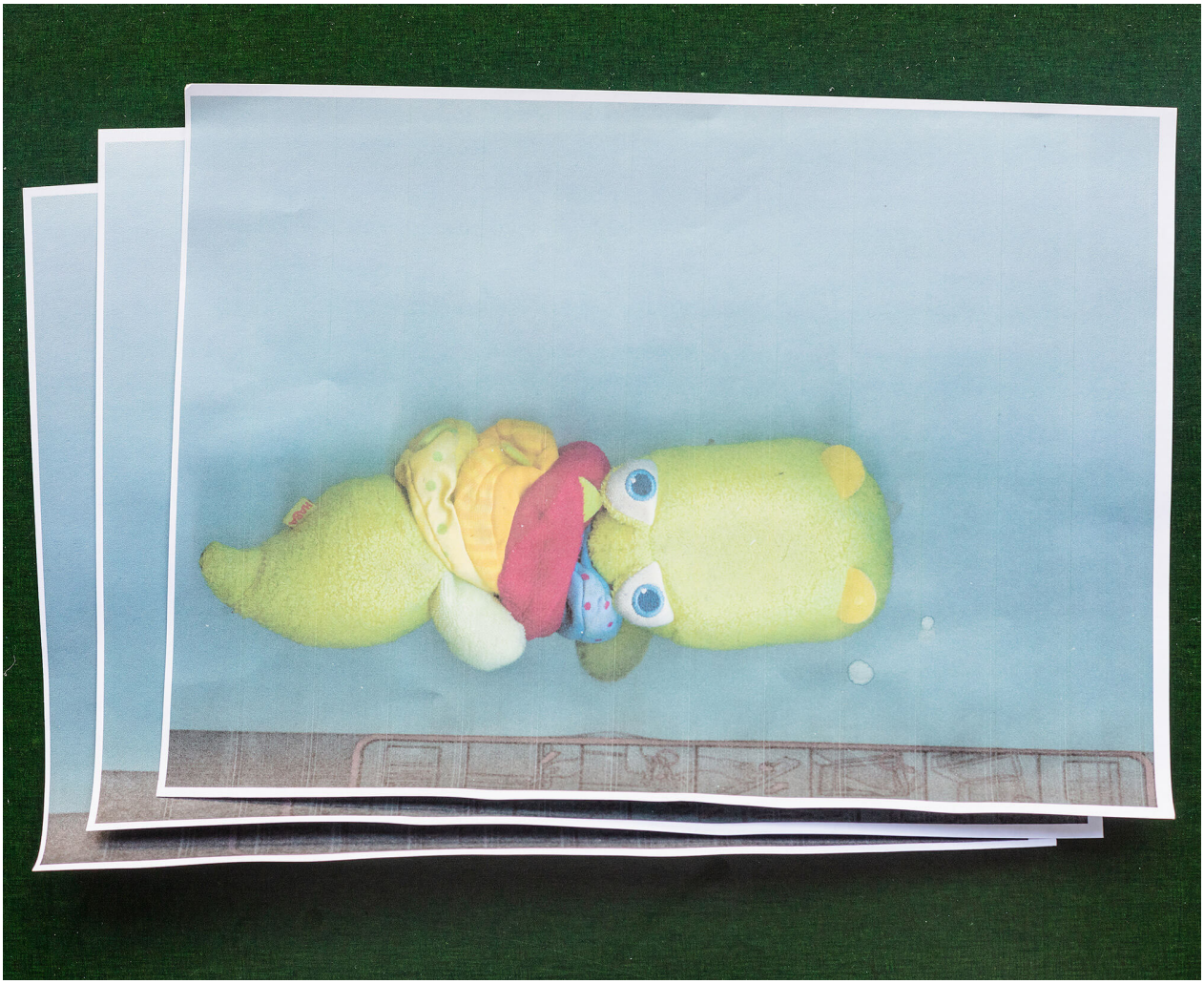
type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	24.02.2022	DCDC_napels_089_vuurwerk.tif	75,46 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
angst, animal, seismology, Vesuvius

17:05:21

Our one year old’s favourite toy he’s not supposed to play with is the *HP Officejet Pro L7590 All-in-one* in my office. I have given up on forbidding him to play with it. We have a new game: he brings me one of his other toys, we put it on the flatbed, close the lid – as far as possible –, press the button ‘START COPY – COLOR’ and wait for the print to come out of the machine. When we place the original onto the copy, he laughs. So far we have copied his blue pacifier, his planet-earth-bouncy-ball and his rattling crocodile.

Crocodile Copy



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	16.02.2021	_44A8728.dng	50,04MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
animal, archive, decoration, house, replica/copy, technology, trompe l'oeil, family

17:05:24

When the juneberry (Amelanchier Lamarckii) flowers, the beekeeper knows it’s time to add a first honey super to the hive. Winter’s over and worker-foraging bees will fly out and come back with their stomachs full of nectar. To avoid larvae in the honey, the beekeeper will place a grid – the so-called queen excluder – between the main compartment of the hive and the honey super.

the-documents.c

A flowering juneberry signals a beekeeper’s spring



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	23.04.2021	_44A0321.dng	45,58MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
animal, botany, food, tree

17:05:30

During the 1950s, as part of the communist reconstruction, a large coal/gas power plant was built close to the village of Inota, Hungary. This is the place where I grew up. It operated until about 1994. In the run-up to the final shutdown of the operation they gradually lowered its output. By this time the coal mines in the neighboring city had shut down as well due to the diminishing yield of the low-quality brown coal they had mined for the purpose of fueling the power plant. This resulted in mass unemployment and general decline in the area. The small lake in the photo is an artificial reservoir that collected all the water from the nearby streams. The substantial flow of one of those rivers powered about 11 water-driven flour mills; I know this on account of my grandmother, who would often pick up bags of flour for bread.

The ruin in the photograph once was a pumping facility that drove the water from the lake to the power plant about 3 kilometres away. In the years following the systemic change of Hungary and its celebrated evolution towards a western-type capitalism in ‘89-’90, the rules of ownership and the perception of public and private property were somewhat elusive. The lack of state control resulted in a transfer of public property to private hands on a monumental scale throughout the whole country, and – by extension – the Eastern Bloc. At the time some of the village dwellers of Inota, driven by the force of a major change and the prospect of a new, prosperous future of capitalist entrepreneurship, gathered to disassemble the water-pumping facility along the artificial lake. Slowly, day by day, under the mist of this elusive moment, they carried away carriageful after carriageful of bricks, disassembled from the facade of the building. It was perhaps a way of taking revenge, but certainly also claiming the moment’s opportunity. The bricks made their way into the walls of the new-built family homes of some of the villagers. The former water pumping facility became a sort of material reservoir for the construction of a new future. The transformation from a water reservoir to a material (and ideological) one and its subsequent exhaustion, left a ruin that has remained untouched for the last 30 years. The bricks that were difficult to reach were left in place, thus forming a curtain around the upper part of the building just above the pillars. Freed from all perimeter walls, the leftover structure appeared as a pavilion-like, open floor plan.

Notes

- The cliffs at the sides of the valley on the photo served as the location for the film *My Way Home* (Így Jöttem, 1965) by the iconic Hungarian filmmaker Miklós Jancsó, about a 17-year-old boy who falls prisoner to the Russian army and forms a friendship with one of the foes. The film is said to display all the main themes of the director: the psychological presence of landscape, the randomness of violence and the arbitrary nature of power.
- In the distance a formation of meadows can be seen in the photograph. Those meadows make up 16 acres of land that were given to my grandfather and subsequently inherited by my mother. It was a reparation for having been stripped of their wealth by the Soviet establishment in the 1950s. The worth of the land is a couple thousand euros as of today. It is part of the largest consistent nature reserve area of the EU.
- While standing on the cliffs and looking south-eastward, the power plant can be seen. The orientation of the photograph is approximately north facing.
- Turning southwards one can see the stone cellar, about a kilometre away, where my grandfather’s adolescent sister had spent more than a year, while two German SS officers occupied their family home. During the advancement of the Red Army, a Russian soldier, entering the cellar, attempted to take advantage of her. The soldier’s superior intervened and shot him in the head without hesitation. My parents store potatoes and apples in the cellar to keep them from rotting in the summer and freezing in the winter. It is easy to say when a potato or an apple comes from the cellar; it has an unmistakable, musty taste.

° Márk Redele pursues projects that fundamentally relate to architecture and its practice but rarely look like architecture. www.markredele.com

org N 47°12.346′ E 18°10.400′



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	08.11.2021	pavilion_.jpg	5,66 MB	Márk Redele

category
architecture, brick, economy, family, government, house, landscape

17:05:44

Cathedral glass, or Flemish glass, lets light through, but distorts visibility. It can show something or someone is present behind it, but not in detail. Often used in front doors, it marks the opaque edge between the private and the public sphere, laying bare their presence, without disclosing their contents.

A blue hand, or a spider (*Cyriopagopus lividus*), traces the cracks that testify to the fact that the jammed door had to be closed with force. The hinges need oiling. Cobalt blue tarantulas are said to be extremely defensive.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	03.11.2021	_44A6301.dng; _44A6305.dng	47,32MB; 54,99MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, house, impact, insurance, mistake, repair, trompe l'oeil

17:05:55

the-documents.c


147

A year ago, mid-August, just before sunrise, the mostly unlit office buildings line the road that leads to the underground parking. I turn off the ignition. I'm in F36. The walls are painted pink. Looking for the exit, I take the escalator and get stuck in an empty shopping mall. The music is playing but all the shops are closed off with steel shutters. So are the exits. I'm out of place. In keeping early customers out, the mall is keeping haphazard visitors in. I'm back in the parking lot. The elevator is broken. I take the stairs and walk by a homeless man, sleeping. There's shit on the floor. I open the door that leads out of the stairwell. It slams shut behind me. There's no doorknob. I find myself on a dark floor between mall and parking lot. People are sleeping; some are awake. Heads turn toward me. I start walking slightly uphill towards where I think I might find an exit, or an entrance. The scale of the architecture has shifted from car (F36) and customer (the closed mall) to truck. I find myself amidst the supply-chain. It takes five minutes, maybe fifteen, maybe more to get out and see the office buildings towering over me in the first light of day.

The First Light of Day



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	15.10.2021	_44A4965.dng	52 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
angst, architecture, automobile, economy, map/plan, mistake, music, parking

17:05:57

In 2020, the print versions of the Flemish telephone books ‘Gouden Gids’ and ‘Witte Gids’ (The Golden Guide and The White Guide), were published for the last time. From that year onwards, the directory could only be accessed and consulted online. The effect of the production of print telephone directories on the environment is considered to be enormous. As yearly updated, ubiquitous books, they were publications that soon turned superfluous. They led to piles of waste.

From the beginning of the 21st century on, both the print version and the online version had been available. This was a period of medium transition. During the last two decades, the print directory increasingly referred to the websites of the companies listed. To search for e.g. someone to inspect the heating installation, it was possible to find such a company’s website via the print directory, and consult the inspector’s services and price online, bypassing search engines such as Google and its complex algorithms. The telephone directory had a thematic and alphabetical order, combined with the possibility to buy additional advertising space.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	02.10.2021	_MG_7415.JPG	8,2MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
book, botany, data storage, technology, waste

17:06:05

‘ORIGINAL. Rire de tout ce qui est original, le haïr, le bafouer, et l’exterminer si l’on peut.’ [‘ORIGINAL. Laugh with everything that’s original, hate it, scold it, exterminate it if you can.’]

Sources

Flaubert. *Bouvard et Pécuchet* (présenté par Raymond Queneau). Paris: Livre de poche, 1959 (with p. 232-233: dried leaf of a ginkgo tree, and p. 324-325: dried leaf of a birch tree), p. 429 [2,00 EUR, Librairie Vic-sur-Cère, August 2021].

A Bibliographic Reference



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	14.09.2021	_MG_7413.JPG	5,2MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
book, botany, tree, encyclopaedia, replica/copy, literature, collecting

17:06:06

Conducting research into the effects on energy consumption of blockchain-based applications such as bitcoin, I was triggered by the fact that many of the facilities making blockchain-mining[1] possible are located in Georgia. Low energy prices and a relaxed taxation policy are said to be among the reasons why companies such as Bitfury locate their plants there.

After a three-day hike in the Caucasus Mountains, on the Georgian side of the border with Chechnya, we are invited to pitch our tent in the garden of Murati, a local farmer in a small mountain village. We are overwhelmed by the scenery and Murati's hospitality. Many of the villages, thrown on the mountain flanks, have tower-like structures of some twenty meters high, making them all look fortified. They have no windows or doors on the ground floor.[2]

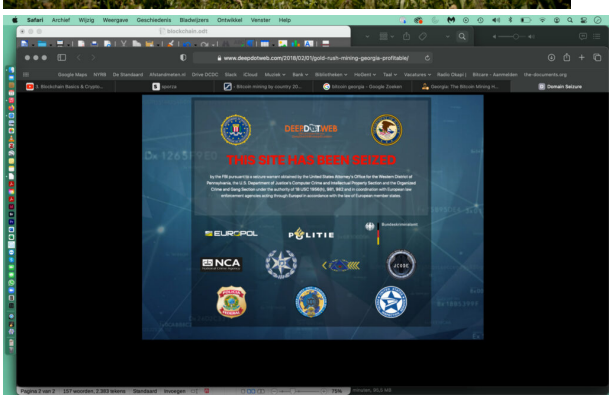
Murati invites us into his house to drink warm milk with his family and brings us cheese-filled bread. One of us speaks Russian. He inspects our backpacks, headlights and drinking bags. He tells us a 500 kilogram pig of his did not return to the house that night. The family is saddened.

In the evening, we see him taking his granddaughter by the hand. They walk to the highest point of the gravel road in front of his house and together watch the last light of the day fall on the snow-covered triangular peak of one of the Caucasus' highest mountains.

I'm mistrusting my memory and look the passage up in the journal we kept. The village is called Zagar. The mountain is Mount Tetnuldi. The granddaughter's name is Anna.

When I click through to one of the websites promising information on Georgia's blockchain economy, I happen to stumble on a dark web-related website and access is denied.[3]

Notes

1. 'Mining' is what is being done when data – a transaction – has to be added to the blockchain (which, in itself, is the sum of all previous transactions, added to each other as data). To do this, computers have to solve a complex mathematical puzzle, which is crucial for the trustworthiness of the system, but for which loads of energy is needed. Criticism on the effects of blockchain-mining is growing, as it has a gruesome effect on resources. In 2018, Andrew North writes, Bitfury used 28 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per month, equalling the consumption of 120,000 Georgian households.
2. 
3. 

org This site has been seized



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	22.08.2021	_MG_6532.JPG, JPEG	5,9MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, impact, economy, landscape, technology, government, house, numismatics, bitcoin, encounter

17:06:07

A mostly empty book designed to collect cigar bands. The bands are glued to the paper at their left side, so the information on the backside, explaining the image and referring to the series it belongs to and the number of different labels the series contains, can be looked up. The book has complete and incomplete series on Christopher Columbus (complete), tanks (incomplete), the origins of civilization (complete), Ancient cultures (incomplete), fashion (complete), South-American sculptures (complete), Ancient columns (incomplete), Nobel Prize Winners (incomplete), an unclarified series of seven men, most of whom are ‘prof.’ or ‘dr.’(complete / incomplete), design plates (incomplete), famous Belgians (complete / incomplete), statesmen (incomplete) and football players (incomplete). The first page in the book is used to present two series. The left column presents the Egyptian dynasty (incomplete). The middle and right column present a series of bands by the brand Jubilé on the history of energy in telling scenes and pieces of machinery.

Series: Energy

Middle column, top to bottom:

- The writing telegraph. Hughes
- Experiment with a sulphur globe. William Gilbert
- Primitive telephone. Philipp Reis
- Wireless telegraph.[1] Guglielo [sic] Marconi
- The arc of Volta. Sir Humphry Davy
- Fire in the wagon. Thomas Alva Edison
- Experiments with lightning. Benjamin Franklin
- Cathode for creating X-Rays. Wilhelm Röntgen
- Rotating magnetic field. Galileo Ferraris

Right column, top to bottom:

- Electric discharge. William Watt
- Magnetic telephone. Antonio Meucci
- Muscels reacting to electricity. Luigi Galvani
- Voltaic pile. Alessandro Volta
- Oscillating circuit. Guglielo [sic] Marconi
- Development of the telephone. Graham Bell
- Telephone, beginning of the 20th century
- Next to his wireless telegraph. Guglielo [sic] Marconi
- Invention of the incandescent light bulb. Thomas Alva Edison
- Morse’s telegraph. Samuel Morse

The series is incomplete.[2]

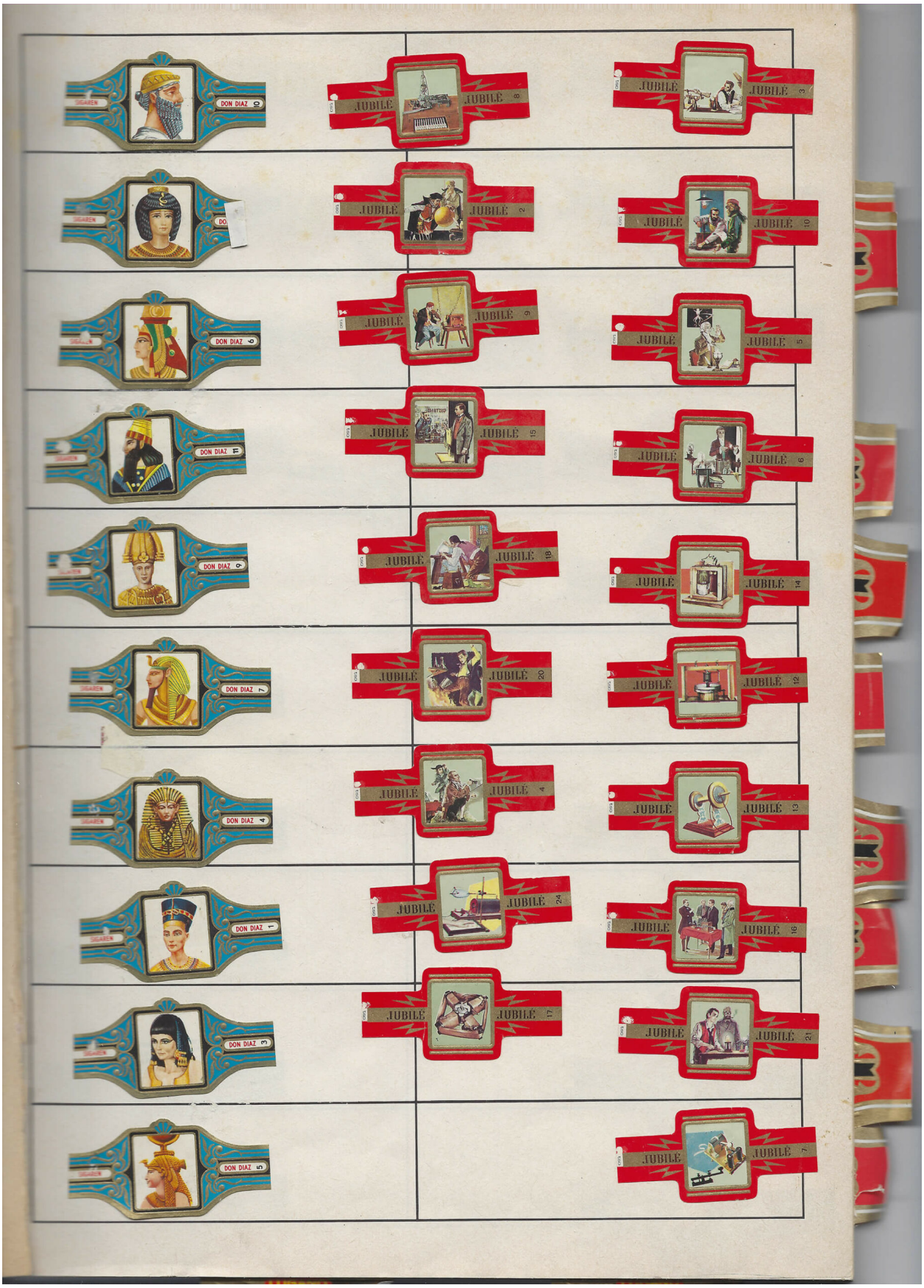
Notes

1 The scene shows a man standing at a desk, sticking out his hand to an officer in a window that reads, in mirror writing: Customs.

2 On eBay a complete series is advertised (15 EUR), with a lo-res picture of the whole collection, including the five bands missing in my grandfather’s collection. The information on the back, however, is not given. It leads to a highly speculative history of energy.

- A man in a gown watching a T-shaped object.
- A child in a cellar, sitting on a stool at a table with gray objects.
- A soldier kneeling beside a child, in front of a train, and in front of a boat.
- A low table with a giant cartwheel of sorts and a box.
- A vertical object with what seems to be a bell on top.

A smoker’s history of energy



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	18.08.2021	Document_2021-07-23_160752.jpg	10MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
collecting, physics, technology

17:06:08

the-documents.c

Article 75 of the Royal Decree containing general regulations for road traffic and the use of public roads, published in *Het Belgisch Staatsblad* on 9 December 1975, lists the rules for longitudinal markings indicating the edge of the roadway.

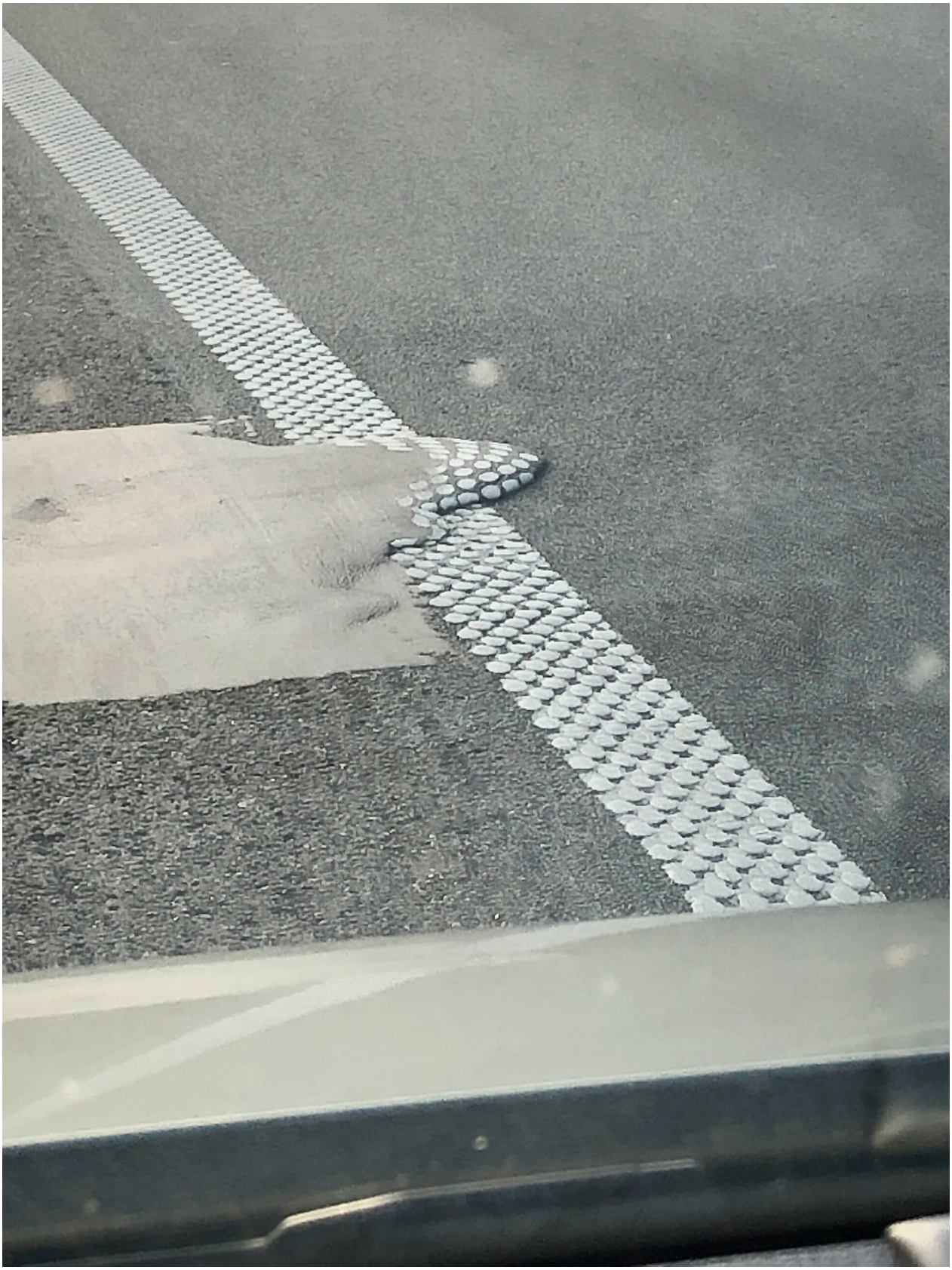
According to 75.1, there are two types of markings that indicate the actual edge of the roadway: a white, continuous stripe and a yellow interrupted line. The former is mainly used to make the edge of the roadway more visible; the latter indicates that parking along it is prohibited.

In 75.2, the decree focuses on markings that indicate the imaginary edge of the roadway. Only a broad, white, continuous stripe is permitted for this purpose. The part of the public road on the other side of this line is reserved for standing still and parking, except on motorways and expressways.

Sources

https://wegcode.be/wetteksten/secties/kb/wegcode/262-art75

The Imaginary Edge of the Roadway



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	08.08.2021	IMG_7943.HEIC	659 KB	Michiel De Cleene

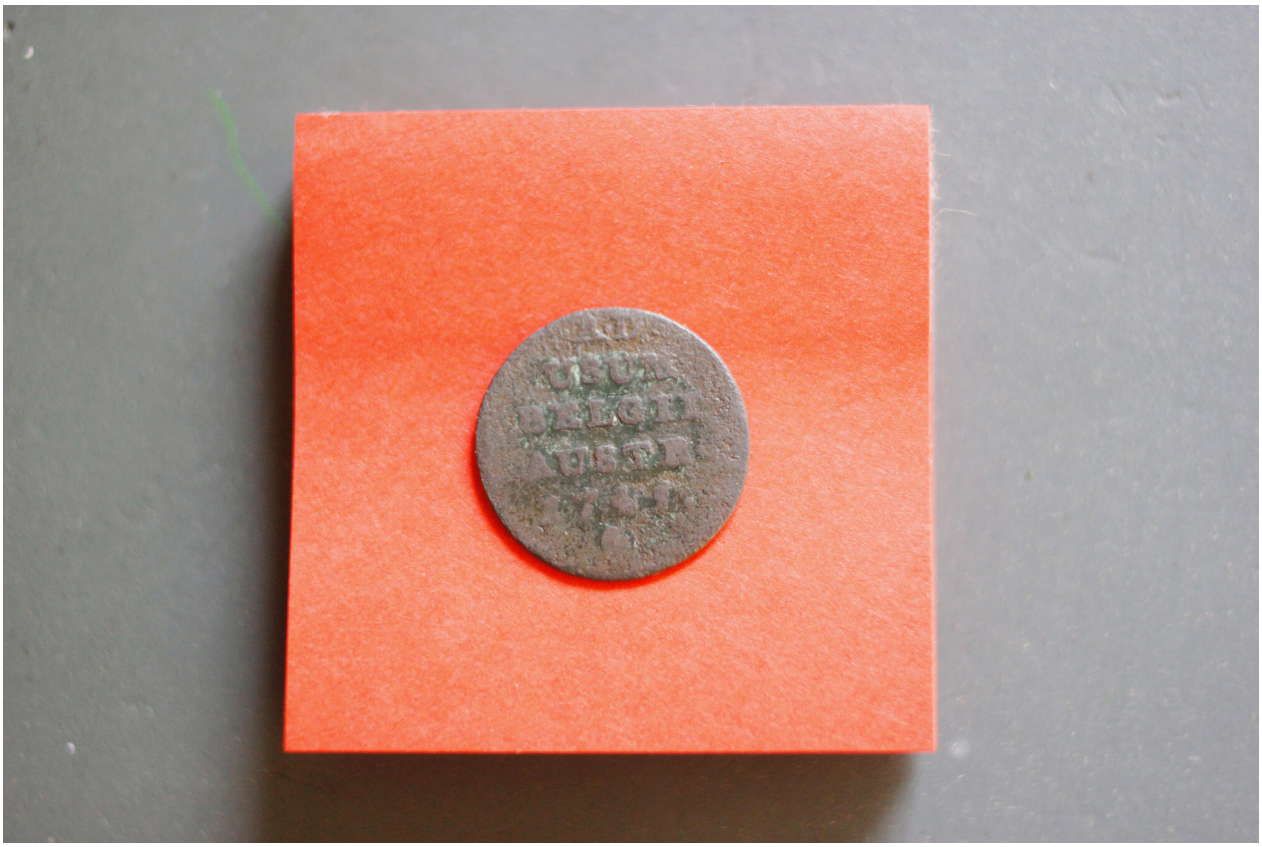
category
automobile, government, parking, repair, sign

17:06:09

The oldest coin in the collection has darkened over time, but upon inspection, the text ‘AD USUM BELGII AUSTR’ (left) and the contours of a (female) head (right) can be discerned. A quick search learns it stems from the middle of the 18th century. The coin was made and used in the Austrian Netherlands, reigned by Maria Theresa, who is the one depicted. My mother recollects finding it in the backyard when she was a kid.

About 40 years later, the euro was introduced. The ringbinder with my mother’s coin collection was taken from the shelf. A dilemma came to the fore: we wondered if we should keep one of each existing Belgian coin and banknote and put them in the binder, alongside Maria Theresa, or if we should exchange them for the new European currency. The decision to keep a coin of five Belgian francs was not difficult to make, but as the amount raised, the answer was increasingly hard to give. This was an assessment of the old currency’s emotional and projected historical value, compared to its current financial worth. It was a decision based on investment principles.

To accentuate the value of the Maria Theresa kronenthaler of 1 liard, I put the coin on a pile of red post-it-notes when photographing it. Coins like these are sold on eBay for prices ranging from 0,70 euros to 16 euros.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	29.07.2021	_MG_6826.JPG; _MG_6825.JPG	6,7MB; 7,7MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
archaeology, economy, family, numismatics, collecting

17:06:16

the-documents.c



It’s early spring. The pool is covered with a sheet of plastic. The deciduous trees are just leafing out. A tree stump serves as a placeholder for the diving board’s foot – it was customary to take it indoors for winter – and keeps people from kicking its threaded rods sticking up from the silex tiles that line the pool.

The upper right corner of the plastic frame is missing. It’s probably where the insect – now dead, dry and yellowish – got in. The frame was left behind in the laundry room overlooking the garden, the pool and the pool house. At the time it hadn’t been used for quite a while. Half empty, the water green.

In summer, when the wind dropped, horse-flies came. You could shake them off temporarily by swimming a few meters underwater.

A Dead Insect on the Trunk of a Cedrus Atlantica Glauca



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	22.07.2021	pool.jpg	38,87 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
animal, botany, cloth, decoration, family, tree

17:06:18

This is the spread one sees upon opening the bird field guide that once stood, as the stamp indicates, in the library of a psychiatric institution.[1] It shows birds' silhouettes, as they can be seen beside the road.

The drawing has a kind of Hitchcock feel to it.[2] The birds seem to be spying on each other, as they also seem to be spying on the unsuspecting passer-by.

The composition of the scene is marvelous. The electric wires, the tree, the wire fence, the double framed list with the birds' names, handsomely positioned in a birdless patch, at once superimposed on the telephone wires, and pushed to the background by the skylark.

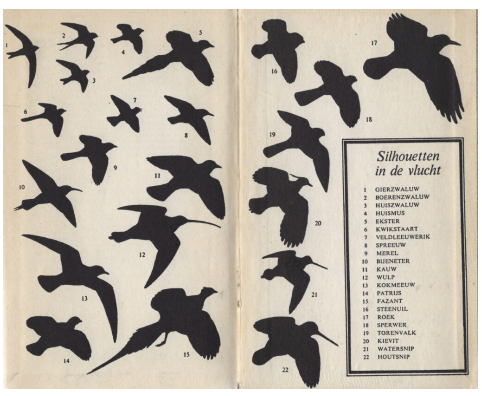
Imagine seeing this scene. What are the odds: to see the silhouettes of Europe's twenty most common species of birds in one glance, from your car's window, as you are driving home at dusk.

Before closing the book, the last spread seems to show the birds fleeing, maybe attacking.[3]

Notes

1 The stamp indicates that, at the psychiatric institution, the book was part of the sublibrary for the Catholic Brothers of Charity. The crossed-out part indicates that there was also a separate physicians' library, to which the book might have originally belonged.

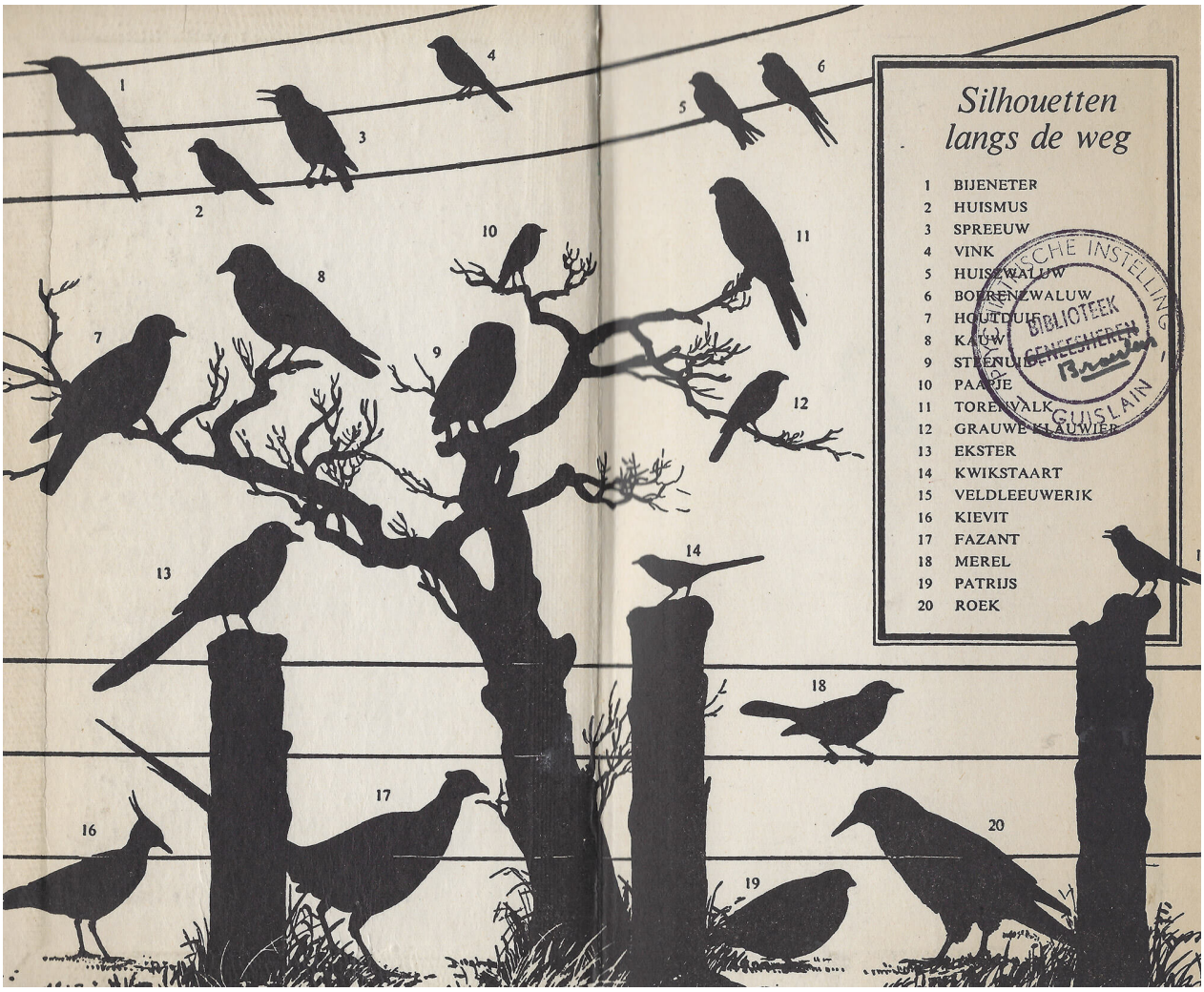
2 On the web, discussions on whether Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963) was shot in colour or in black and white, abound.

3 

Sources

Peterson, R.T., Mountfort, G. & P.A.D. Hollom. *Vogelgids voor alle in ons land en overig Europa voorkomende vogelsoorten* (J. Kist, transl.). 3d ed. Amsterdam/Brussels: Elsevier, 1955.

The Birds



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	19.07.2021	Document_2021-07-19_094741.jpg	7,5MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
animal, automobile, book, dusk, encyclopaedia, landscape, tree

17:06:22

On the second to last day of a research visit at CERN, there was some spare time in the schedule. I took a long walk towards building 282 in search of some excavation samples: cylindrical pieces of rock that were preserved when the tunnel was dug, glued to a block of wood and frequently exhibited in museums over the last three decades as material evidence of the earthwork and as a witness to the depth. The route led me along the back of building 363 where the wind caused young trees – now gone – to scuff the facade over time.

Notes

First published in: De Cleene, M. *Reference Guide*. Amsterdam: Roma Publications, 2019, as W.569.EXC CERN, Towards Building 282, in search of excavation samples

Passing Time Near a Particle Accelerator



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	11.07.2021	cern_011.tif	57,57 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
archaeology, architecture, archive, landscape, physics, Reference Guide, technology, tree, wind

17:06:24