



Tracing Information Society

**TECHNOPOLITICS  
TIMELINE**

**TECHNOPOLITICS**  
working group

**TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE** *exhibitions as curated knowledge spaces*

- 2015** 04.09. 1. Project presentation by  
*Tracing Information Society - A Timeline.*  
TECHNOPOLITICS salon @ Vienna Open 2015.  
*#AccumulatePleasureMax.*
- 19.11. TECHNOPOLITICS @ SOCIAL GLITCH.  
Exhibition and TP workshop. (see also salons)  
Transformation of Timeline V.1 to V.2
- 2016** 21.-26.06. TECHNOPOLITICS V.2 @ MAK.  
*Tracing Information Society - a Timeline.*  
*Eine Ausstellung von TECHNOPOLITICS über den Zeitenwandel.*
- 26.01.-05.02. TECHNOPOLITICS @ transmediale / Berlin.  
*Tracing Information Society—a Timeline. New Paradigms.*  
Exhibition, workshops, talks and salons (see there).  
Participants: Wolfgang Ernst, Anselm Franke,  
Margarete Jahrmann, Cornelia Sollfrank, Geoff Cox,  
Jacob Lund, Verina Gfader, Anne Kølbaek Iverson,  
Winnie Soon, Anke Hennig, Clemens Apprich, among others.  
Transformation of Timeline V.2 to V.3
- 16.6.-02.07. TECHNOPOLITICS @ Connecting Space Hong Kong.  
*Tracing Information Society - a Timeline.*  
*An exhibition as a curated knowledge space.*  
Transformation of Timeline V.3 to V.4
- 2017** 24.-29.10. TECHNOPOLITICS @ Patchlab Digital Art Festival, Krakow, Poland.  
*Tracing Information Society - a Timeline, Hong Kong update V.4.*
- 2018** 06.09.-18.11. THE MONOSKOP EXHIBITION LIBRARY, Seoul Mediacity Biennale  
TECHNOPOLITICS Timeline V.4/Object 1. Timeline catalogue.
- 07.-09.11. TECHNOPOLITICS @ SIGRADI conference  
Conference theme "TECHNOPOLITICAS" XXII INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE IBEROAMERICAN SOCIETY OF DIGITAL  
GRAPHICS, Universidade de São Paulo. São Carlos. Brazil.
- 05.-06.11. Timeline workshops, transformation of Timeline V.4 to V.5.  
06.-09.11. Exhibition *Tracing Information Society - a Timeline.*
- 2020** 22.10.-15.11. TECHNOPOLITICS @ Romantso, Athens  
Exhibition: *Imagine you wake up and there is no Internet*  
Timeline V.5.
- 2023** 05.-25.10. TECHNOPOLITICS @ Kunsthalle Exnergasse, Vienna  
Exhibition: *OPEN FLOOR. Practice of a Common Ground*  
Timeline V.5. to V.6

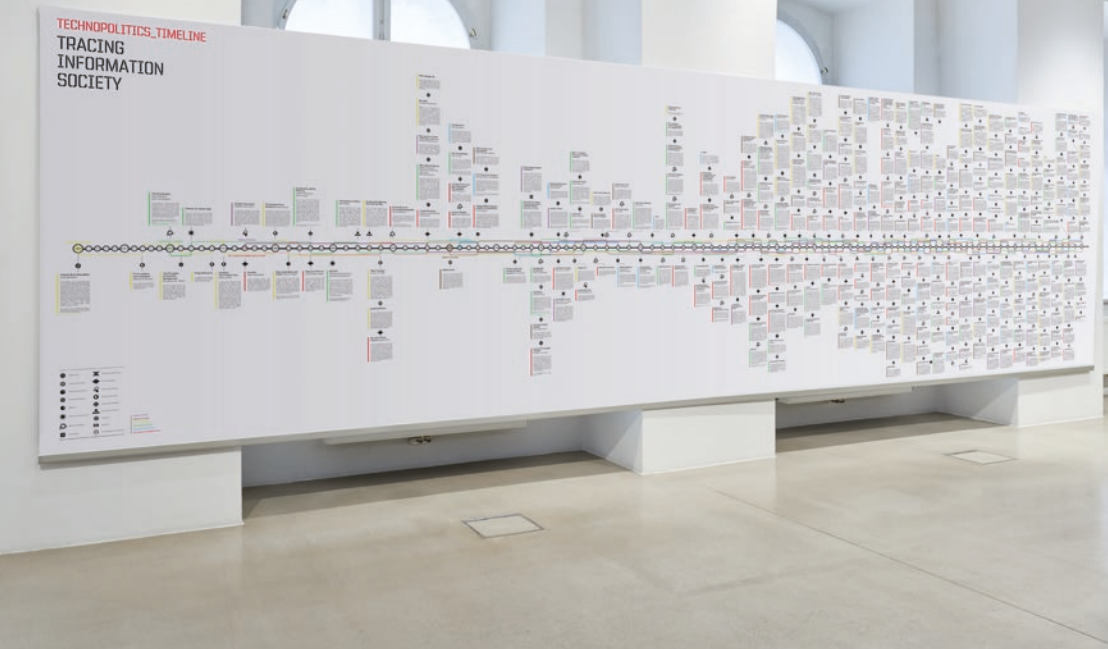
# TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE

## Tracing Information Society

*Tracing Information Society* is a project by the **TECHNOPOLITICS** working group.

The concept of the Information Society, after being over-hyped in the 1980s and 1990s and used as a pretense for many dubious political projects at the time, has fallen out of use lately. This offers us the freedom to re-purpose it as an umbrella term to connect multiple strands that drive complex societal transformations. One strand is the emergence of a distinct techno-economic paradigm, usually called Post-Fordism, following the crisis of the 1970s. Another one is the political transformation since the 1980s that has brought about a system of governance, which privileges market-structures in all areas of life, usually called neoliberalism. In its wake, processes of financialization have become ever more important. A third strand are the social transformations and pluralizations of subjectivity, of gender and of what has become known as the non-human that challenge the dominant models of Western universalism and of patriarchy. A fourth strand has been created by environmental and ecological movements which have begun to transform the human relationship to nature and culture, a task made all the more urgent by the increasingly pressing reality of climate change. Using the concept of the Information Society as an umbrella - like the group's own name, TECHNOPOLITICS - emphasizes the role of technological infrastructures that underpin, though not determine, all of these developments. Culture, society, nature and our own agency cannot be conceived of independently of these technological capacities.

The conceptual and technological foundations of the Information Society were laid in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They became dominant in the USA and Europe in the 1970s and globally after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. There is a considerable debate whether the contemporary transformation following the economic crisis, which started in 2008, necessitates a new umbrella term or not.



### Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE, V.1

Digital print, 700 x 200 cm, September 25 - December 5, 2015  
Photo: Andreas Diem

*SOCIAL GLITCH. Radical aesthetics and the consequences of extreme events*  
An exhibition project at KUNSTRAUM NIEDEROESTERREICH, Vienna, Austria.  
Curated by Sylvia Eckermann, Gerald Nestler and Maximilian Thoman

First public display and discussion of the Timeline project.

#### Panel discussion, 19.11.2015

With contributions by  
Noit Banai, Aneta Stojnić (invited experts) as well as by anonymous exhibition visitors.

The goal of this impossible project is not to produce a new master narrative but to provide a framework for inquiry that is, at the same time, internally coherent and open to heterogeneous inputs and outputs, providing complementary and competing pathways through an expansive and still shifting terrain. The Timeline provides a format that is both clearly structured – everything is organized according to its datum – and open to multiple perspectives as of what constitutes a relevant event. The value of a timeline is not to signal the return to a simple linear chronological model of historical development but to show the parallelism of heterogeneous events. It is the claim of the project that these events, while usually not considered together, are nevertheless directly related to one another. How and why is a matter of debate that TECHNOPOLITICS engages in.

The Timeline shows data on six main layers, color-encoded, and annotated with keywords that are considered relevant for the coming into being of this social formation. As heterogeneous as both the entries and the group are – there is no binding theory – they all come from a critical angle and hence articulate struggles and contradictions as well as turning points (such as major political events and natural disasters) via individual entries in a single but multi-layered Timeline. The idea is to bring things into a relation that is not necessarily a causal one. By showing things together, new associations arise.

The Timeline exists only as a physical object. It is usually presented as a large printout (between 10 and 20 meters long, depending on the exhibition space) because this allows multiple people to view the Timeline together and because this preserves the relation between the individual entry and the Timeline as a whole, as a shared totality. From the ensuing discussions, new entries into the Timeline emerge, and thus exhibitions are accompanied by workshops to further develop the Timeline, to diversify the perspectives and the experiences that underlie it. Because even if we believe that there is something like a shared history, it can only be told through many voices. Hence, the Timeline collects data and narratives from diverse sources and aims to contribute to a new articulation between unity and diversity.

#### TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE core-group:

John Barker, writer | Sylvia Eckermann, artist | Doron Goldfarb, computer scientist | Armin Medoscht, artist, curator, scholar | Gerald Nestler, artist, researcher | Felix Stalder, sociologist, cultural theorist | Axel Stockburger, artist, researcher | Matthias Tarasiewicz, digital artist, researcher | Thomas Thaler, science journalist | Ina Zwerger, science journalist, Ö1.

Timeline graphic design: Fatih Aydogdu, Perihan Keles, Sylvia Eckermann.

TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE

Tracing Information Society





## Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE, V.2

June 21 – 26, 2016  
Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna, Austria



### Table display

The second major material element of the project is a long table. In the depicted MAK version, it consisted of 12 plates, each devoted to one of the vertical tags on the Timeline.

Audio, video and text material related to each category allow a deeper interaction with the entries of the Timeline.

The extensive collection of corresponding material on the table encourages a deeper examination of the subject matter.

Special booklets with collections of texts and images were printed.

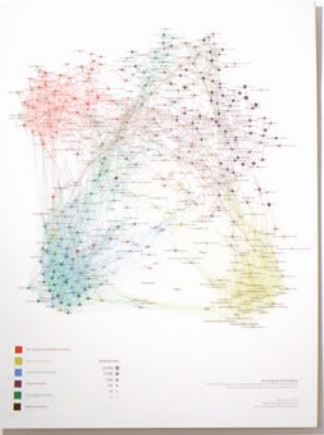


### Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE, V.2

June 21 – 26 2016, Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna, Austria  
Transformation of Timeline V.1 to V.2

Digital print, 1100 x 160 cm, table display, 2 network visualizations, booklets with collections of texts and images, iPads and tablets to display audio and video material curated by the group.

Photos: Wolfgang Thaler



Tracing Information Society - A TECHNOLITICS TIMELINE, V.2  
June 21 - 26 2016, Digital print, 1100 x 160 cm  
Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna, Austria  
Photo: Wolfgang Thaler

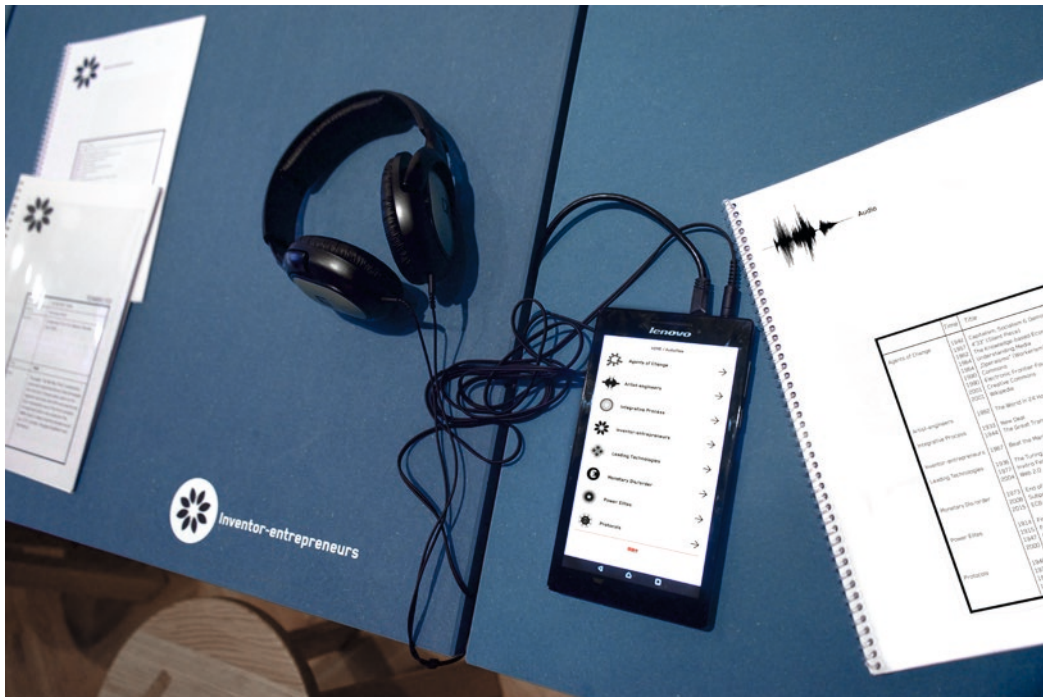


The extensive collection of corresponding material on the table encourages a deeper examination of the subject matter.

iPads and tablets were used to display audio and video material curated by the group.

In collaboration with Ö1, the science and culture program of the Austrian radio corporation, excerpts of radio programs were presented on tablets. Between 3 to 10 minutes long, the pieces explain contents and contexts that refer closely to the entries on the printed Timeline.

The exhibition at the MAK was accompanied by a series of closed workshops and public **TECHNOPOLITICS salons** with lectures and discussions.



Photos: Wolfgang Thaler


















**Conversational piece**

The Timeline is a conversational piece, and among the most frequent questions that start a conversation are:

- Why is x (not) included?
- Do entries that are clustered in one year have more in common than the date?
- Are there any deeper, structural dynamics that could serve as a causation for this co-presence?
- Or is it just a coincidence?
- If you can provide such an overview of the information society, isn't that an indication that it's already over?
- What comes afterwards?

**Ordering system**

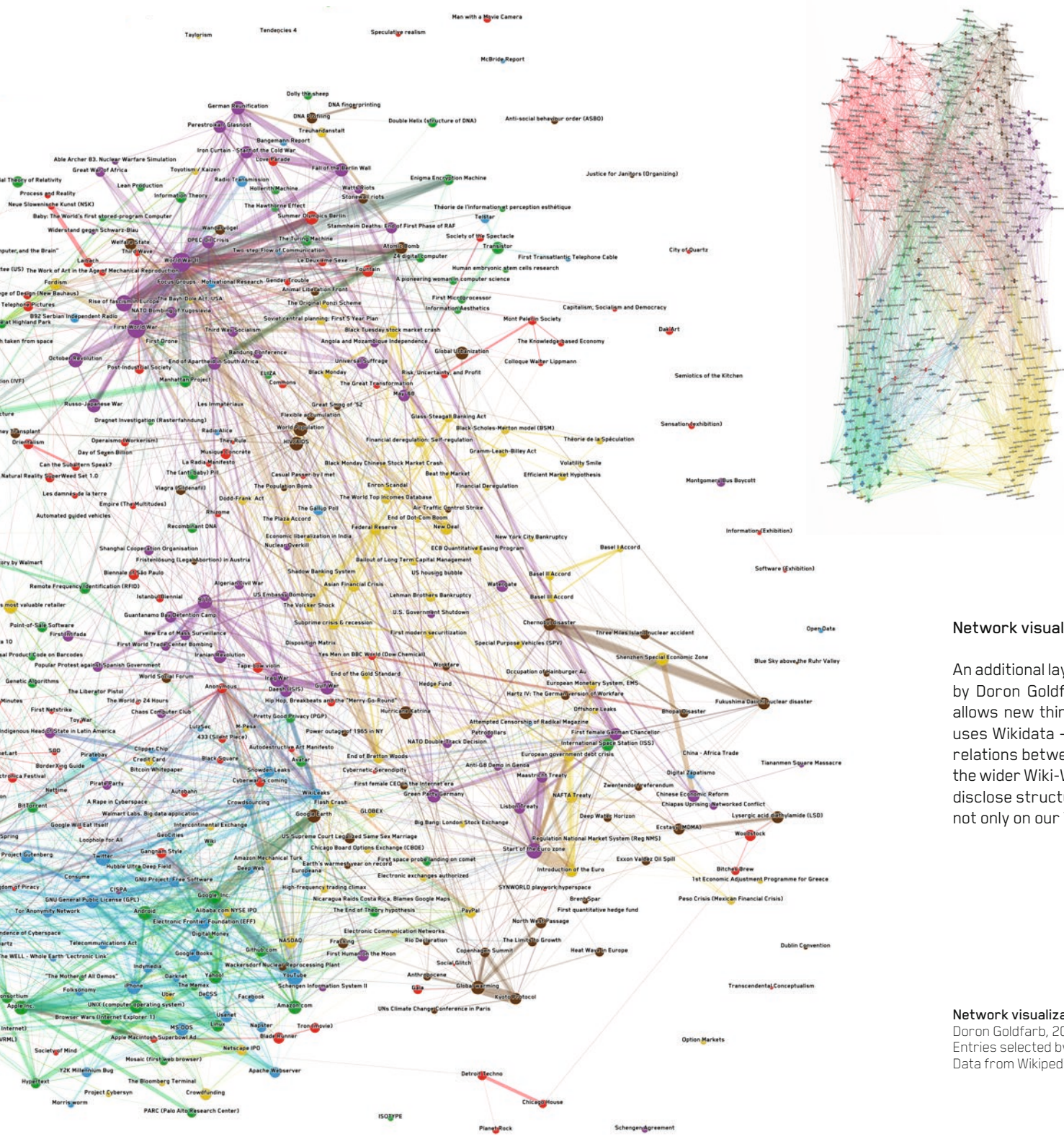
The ordering system according to "tags" enables to break free from the strict chronology of the Timeline, and thus allows for other relationships between the entries to emerge.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Power Elites             |  Multilateral Agreements       |
|  Integrative Process    |  Artist-engineers            |
|  Subordinate Groups     |  Monetary Dis/order          |
|  Productive Process     |  Leading Technologies        |
|  Welfare and Ecology    |  Organisational Forms        |
|  Inventor-entrepreneurs |  Protocols                   |
|  Agents of Change       |  Anti/globalisation Movement |
|  Core Values            |   |



Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE, V.2  
 June 21 – 26 2016, Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna, Austria. Photos: Wolfgang Thaler





### Network visualizations

An additional layer to the Timeline discourse is provided by network visualizations by Doron Goldfarb. His engagement with the data material from the Timeline allows new thinking and the discovery of gaps in a project such as this. Doron uses Wikidata – the database back bone structure of Wikipedia – to search for relations between terms. The visualizations also allow mapping links to entries in the wider Wiki-Web. While the amount of data is exploding today, the visualizations disclose structural issues that have to do with the representation of knowledge, not only on our Timeline but also more generally.

### Network visualization

Doron Goldfarb, 2016  
 Entries selected by TECHNOPOLITICS  
 Data from Wikipedia, Wikidata and DBpedia





**Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.3**  
 Jan 27 to Feb 5, 2017. *ever elusive. thirty years of transmediale*  
 Venue: neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, Berlin, Germany.

**New Paradigms.**  
**Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.3**

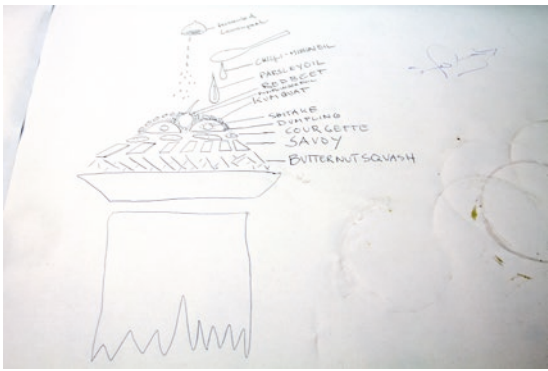
Jan 27 to Feb 5, 2017. *ever elusive. thirty years of transmediale*  
 Venue: neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, Berlin, Germany.  
 Transformation of Timeline V.2 to V.3

In collaboration with the **TECHNOPOLITICS working group**, transmediale presented the exhibition *New Paradigms. Tracing Information Society – a Timeline*, at neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst (nGbK) in Berlin.

*transmediale/art & digital culture* is a Berlin-based festival and year-round project that draws out new connections between art, culture, and technology.

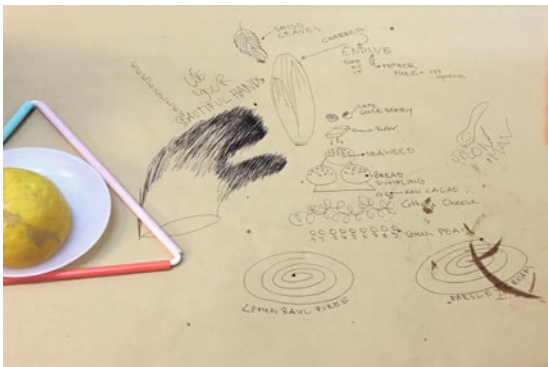
Among the expert participants at *New Paradigms* were: Wolfgang Ernst, Anselm Franke, Margarete Jahrmann, Marian Kaiser, Cornelia Sollfrank, Geoff Cox, Jacob Lund, Verina Gfader, Anne Kølbaek Iverson, Winnie Soon, Anke Hennig, Clemens Apprich.





The communal dinner is an important element of the **TECHNOPOLITICS** salon.

During the Salon at transmediale in Berlin, Hannes Broecker, & Claudia Schötz created sophisticated vegan dishes for us and our guests.



**Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.3**  
 Jan 27 to Feb 5, 2017. *ever elusive. thirty years of transmediale*  
 Venue: neue Gesellschaft für bildende Kunst, Berlin, Germany.



**Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.4**  
Connecting Spaces, Hong Kong,  
Workshops 21.-22.6.2017, exhibition 23.6.-1.7.2017.



## Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE, V.4 An exhibition as a curated knowledge space

June 23 - July 1 2017, Connecting Space Hong Kong  
Installation 750 x 400 x 750 cm, Digital print 1900 x 150 cm



A central aim of this project is to invite collaborators from a wide range of different disciplines and areas of knowledge in order to challenge and expand the notion of the Information Society by discussing and adding events to the Timeline that are relevant from their perspectives.

TECHNOPOLITICS convened a 2-day workshop to discuss and edit the Timeline. The TECHNOPOLITICS team believes that only a multiplicity of concurrent perspectives is capable of developing narratives that are sufficiently complex and flexible to help us understand the present moment.

The workshop consisted of two parts. The first part focused on the Timeline as a whole, familiarized the participants with the structure and the content of the Timeline and explored the potential and limitations of the approach.

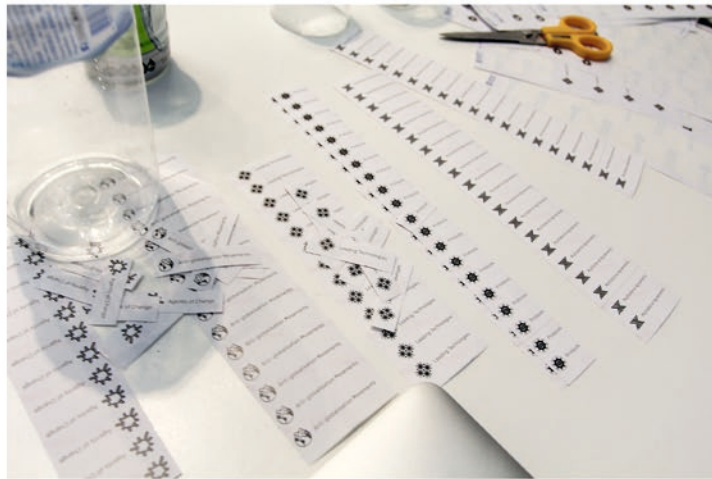
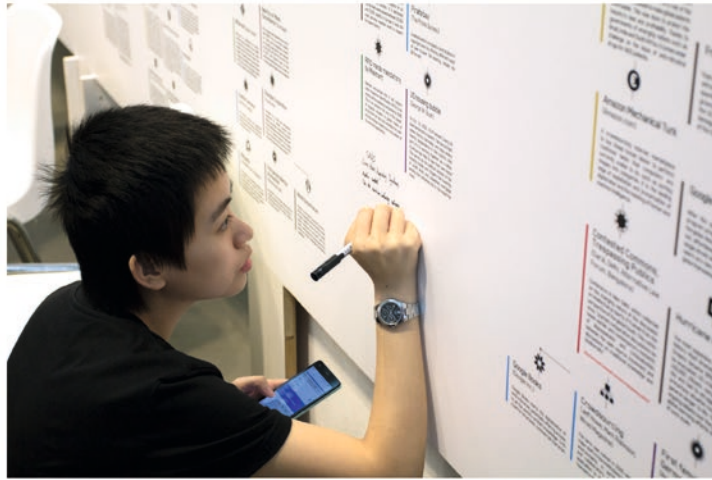
The second part of the workshop focused on the individual entries, and participants were invited to edit the Timeline by adding their own entries based on their perspectives on what constitutes relevant events. The adding of new entries is a discussion that involves the whole Timeline, as each new entry replaces an old one in the process.

The results of the workshop were visible as revision on the Timeline to the visitors of the exhibition, highlighting the processual, open-ended character of the project.

### Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS Timeline V.4

Connecting Spaces, Hong Kong,  
Workshops 21.-22.6.2017, Exhibition 23.6.-1.7.2017.  
Transformation of Timeline V.3 to V.4

With contributions by  
Natalie Chan, Eric Fan, Daniel C. Howe, Margarete Jahrmann, Bogna Konior, Oiwan Lam,  
Lisa Lee Benjamin, Natalia Malysheva, Patrick Mok, Ellen Pau, Marco Spitzbarth, Diane To,  
De Kai Wu, Hu Yong.



## Tracing Information Society and Connecting Spaces, Hong Kong

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of June, at the ZHdK's Connecting Spaces gallery in the center of the Hong Kong city, a group of more than twenty artists, theorists, historians, professors and students gathered in front of a vast 19-metre-long image spread over three walls to spend two long afternoons on taking a deep dive into the history of the global information society.

The project we were looking at was a brain child of an independent trans-disciplinary working group based in Vienna, Austria, and many of its members were now in Hong Kong: Felix Stalder, Sylvia Eckermann, Doron Goldfarb, Gerald Nestler, Axel Stockburger, Ina Zwerger and Margarete Jahrmann.

With their deep understanding of the processes underlying the modern society and years of working of the project, the creators felt the lack of a perspective coming from the outside of the modern Western paradigm more than anyone else. And here they were, in Hong Kong, opening the project to the people from a different part of the world.

The first afternoon focused on the Timeline as a whole, familiarized the participants with the structure and the content, explored the potential and limitations of the approach. Behind the idea as simple as a straight line from 1900 to 2017 lay and waited to be explored a multidimensional interconnected space of color and symbol codes.

Questions started to arrive almost immediately, touching on possibility to have something like a local Timeline when working on a subject of this kind where globality is practically inevitable, on possibility and necessity of objectivity, or lack of those, on aims and purposes of the project.

Already in the first hours the conversation tended to oscillate between the Timeline content, its aesthetics, and fascinating detours into the local history and society. The participants were eager to suggest new entries, too. The most attention was given to the last decades, time when all of us at the table were born already and hence experienced the reality first hand.

The breaks were filled with exploring the Timeline in alternative ways: beautiful info graphics posters, iPads and printouts were a rich source of additional information, enough to spend weeks on.

People in front of the Timeline. The creators say, almost everyone tends to first come and look at the year of their birth.

More discussions, more suggestions, more questions. When the first day of the workshop was over, it took us a long time to finally stop discussing and move those topics to the next day.



**Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.4**  
Connecting Spaces, Hong Kong,  
Workshops 21.-22.6.2017, exhibition 23.6.-1.7.2017.

Day two was even better: it's when the project was opened to all participants in full. Armed with markers, they moved to the Timeline and started adding their own entries while always keeping in mind a simple rule: one doesn't only have to persuade the others in the importance of the added event, but also find the event that would have to be removed, and persuade others in doing that as well. The cruel but necessary limit of 500 entries has made us more responsible and encouraged to think twice.

When we were finished, the Timeline got much denser. Our handwriting was now part of the project, and part of the exhibition that would show the enriched Timeline to the local public starting the next day.

The vernissage itself has granted us an even deeper look into the project: Doron Goldfarb and Margarete Jahrmann gave lectures on topics adjacent to the Timeline data and its possible developments.

Now the exhibition was officially open: a straight black thread embellished with 500 beads: historical, cultural, economical, political, ecological, critical, simply stated, local, global, online events that might have been exactly the reasons of why we were now where we were. Or maybe they were just tiny marks on a vast historical map, telling more about what's unseen than what's obvious. Something worth seeing, something that will fill your head with questions, which are, as we know, more important than answers.

Text: Natalia Malysheva



## Tracing Information Society – A TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.4

October 24 - 29 2017

6. Patchlab Festival / International Digital Art Festival in Krakow Poland.

Patchlab: This edition was dedicated to data art and artificial intelligence (AI), designs using extraordinary material – big data bases, which have an increasing impact on our life and the whole society. Data has become a construction material for sophisticated art forms and a basis for philosophical reflection.

The exhibition took place in Małopolski Ogród Sztuki and at Galeria Bunkier Sztuki. The festival presented artists from Poland, Germany, Austria, France, Greece, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, Iran, Japan and Taiwan.

TECHNOPOLITICS was represented in Krakow by Doron Goldfarb and Ina Zwerger.





TECHNOPOLITICS @ Seoul Mediacity Biennale / Seoul Museum of Art  
curated by Dušan Barok, MONOSKOP 2018, *Exhibition Library*  
Photo: Dušan Barok

## TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.4 / Object 1

TECHNOPOLITICS @ Seoul Mediacity Biennale / South Korea

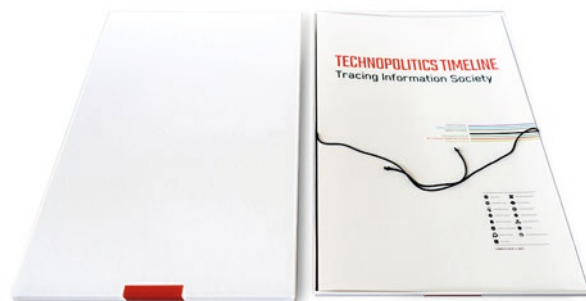
10<sup>th</sup> edition of Seoul Mediacity Biennale  
Seoul Museum of Art, September 5 - November 18 2018

TECHNOPOLITICS was invited to take part in:  
THE MONOSKOP EXHIBITION LIBRARY

The MONOSKOP EXHIBITION LIBRARY explores the notion and medium  
of the art catalogue.

The catalogue is the publishing vehicle of an exhibition and outlives the latter. But  
the imaginative power of this medium has more to offer than mere documentation.  
Hence, MONOSKOP invited artists, designers, curators, poets and researchers  
to explore the catalogue as an artistic medium.

As our contribution, TECHNOPOLITICS converted *Tracing information society -  
a Timeline* into an object-as-catalogue.



TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.4 / Object 1, 2018.  
Print on Fine Art Photo Cotton Rag, 460 x 48,3 cm, Box, Magnifier.





- 07.-09.11. 2018    **TECHNOPOLITICS @ SIGRADI, 2018**  
Conference theme "TECHNOPOLITICAS" XXII INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE OF THE IBEROAMERICAN SOCIETY OF DIGITAL GRAPHICS,  
Universidade de São Paulo, São Carlos, Brazil.
- 05.-06.11. 2018    "Reading the Timeline" and "Writing the Timeline" workshops  
Transformation of Timeline V.4 to V.5.
- 06.-09.11. 2018    Exhibition *Tracing Information Society – a Timeline*.

## TECHNOPOLITICS TIMELINE V.5

TECHNOPOLITICS @ SIGRADI Conference / São Carlos, Brazil

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Congress of SIGraDi takes on the theme of "Technopolitics". It is understood that all technology is generated within cultural, economic and social fabrics, as well as has political aspects in its conformation and its use. However, it is not uncommon for technologies to be autonomously thought of as prefigures of futures and unequivocal solutions to problems not yet known.

Within the format of the curated knowledge space, the Timeline and the associated material provide the framework for an open-ended exploration of the genesis and current configuration of our shared techno-cultural realities. This will be achieved through a transcultural dialogue that is aimed at expanding and transforming the timeline. In workshops and lectures with artists, researchers and students the notion of the Information Society – and the events taken as central to its development – is challenged, assessed, and reformulated. Each new entry that results from these discussions replaces an existing entry and thus opens the Timeline to cultural, social and political diversity.

### WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Cassia Hosni, Didiana Prata, Erica Ferrari, Giovanna Graziosi Casimiro,  
Ana Isabel Sá, Marcelo Maia, Michele Brito, Natacha Rena, María Elena Tosello  
Martin Grossmann, David Sperling, Gabriel Ramos, Mariane Cardoso, Rafael Sampaio.

### TECHNOPOLITICS MEMBERS

Sylvia Eckermann, Doron Goldfarb, Gerald Nestler, Felix Stalder, Ina Zwerger.





TECHNOPOLITICS TimeTunnel (study)  
 Proposal for a subway station, 2016.  
 Simulation: Sylvia Eckermann

**TECHNOPOLITICS** is an independent, transdisciplinary platform of artists, journalists, researchers, and developers who jointly develop innovative formats at the intersection of art, research, science, and pedagogy. Technopolitics was launched as an online discussion group by Armin Medosch and Brian Holmes in 2009. In 2011, it was set up in Vienna as a circle that regularly meets for lectures and discussions. Technopolitics also produces interdisciplinary conferences and artistic research projects internationally. An important common objective is the investigation of large-scale historical processes structured by technoeconomic paradigms from a critical, explorative standpoint. We use transdisciplinary approaches to connect these processes to the cultural forms of the respective historical moment and place, including the participants' own work.

### **TECHNOPOLITICS working group** (2024)

**Emma Dowling**, sociologist, political scientist

**Sylvia Eckermann**, artist

**Volkmar Klien**, artist, composer

**Gerald Nestler**, artist, writer

**Felix Stalder**, sociologist, cultural theorist

**Axel Stockburger**, artist, researcher

**Gerald Straub**, applied cultural theorist, curator, artist

**Thomas Thaler**, science journalist

Photo credits: TECHNOPOLITICS working group, if not indicated otherwise.

TECHNOPOLITICS exhibition activities have been supported by:

