



Unsigned

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We are developing a new manifesto based on the Bogota Declaration of 1976 in which eight equatorial countries claimed sovereignty over the geostationary orbit. The declaration is a somewhat forgotten document about inequalities in technological power, the physics of orbit and its contested spaces. We will try to discover what the geostationary orbit can mean to us and define our own protests, rituals and love songs in relation to it.

We were struck by the way this United Nations document reads like a poem. It is full of fervour, challenging the great powers and at the same time describing the extraordinary architecture of this necklace-like ring of satellites encircling the Earth.

The geostationary orbit is where satellites orbit the Earth at 36 000 km above the equator, such that they appear to be stationary over the Earth below them. If it is thought of as an architecture, as a part of the human-made built environment, then it can be likened to the compelling circles of prehistory, such as Stonehenge in UK and those in Senegambia.

Described as a 'limited natural resource', the most coveted spots in the orbit were taken early on by the United States and the Soviet Union, leaving latecomers to bear the cost of less favourable positions. The signatory countries, Brazil, Colombia, Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda and Zaire were drawing attention to the inequality of bay allocations as well as the usefulness of this orbit to their own development needs. The issue has never been ratified, though it has been debated ever since within the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPOUS).

We are working to build up a common voice and stand that strives to raise awareness of this orbit, its political complexities and its poetics. The base and technology for the project is the Dorkbot subwiki of Medellín, Colombia. This lets us collaboratively rewrite and rework the document, in Spanish and English to start with, to allow the meanings to become more fluid and for us to shift perspectives through the language. We anticipate that further language translations will happen through collaborators and that this will

be part of opening up the emotions, metaphors and protest of the document, besides invigorating its distribution. The project is open to participation through the network of the wiki and the networks that emerge through the acts of making work.

Beginning with writing, the new manifesto will extend to song writing, drawing, experimental music and events, exchanged online, on the ground and through space. There is the possibility of transmitting results to the geostationary orbit and beyond via the Goonhilly Satellite Station in Cornwall, UK. Besides this, the geostationary orbit is itself made up mainly of communications satellites (INTELSAT, INMASAT and INTERSPUTNIK) taking internet, mobile phone and TV signals via networks that make the passage of information enigmatic, almost impossible to trace. Our work will unavoidably find ways to travel there.