



# kohl zine

6



Ukraine think many China. The Chinese simply don't think Ukraine.

# April'19

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# Настоящий джентльмен

Одним холодным осенним утром Господин Жирнович решил пойти на прогулку. Надел своё пальто, шляпу, расчесал усы и, напевая под ними песню, вышел из дома. Мир, который медленно готовился к долгому сну был красив: разноцветные деревья, приятная холодная температура и прелестное озеро.

Жирнович медленно проходил уже второй круг вокруг маленького водоёма, когда вдруг сильный порыв ветра сорвал шляпу с его лысины и бросил её в центр озера. К счастью, то, что мы называем озером, было настолько маленькое, что наш тучный герой смог дотянуться до своей шляпы палкой, которую он нашёл в растущих недалеко кустах. Но то, что он смог до неё дотянуться ещё не значит, что он достал её обратно. Помехой этому стал огромный сом, который жил в этой большей луже. А именно, это было так: в тот самый момент, когда Жирнович уже хотел поднять шляпу на палке к себе, эта огромная рыба схватила головной убор, который ей понравился и грубым басом сказала:

«Меня зовут Сом, я есть король всех сладких вод. И с этих пор эта шляпа будет моя!»

# Real gentleman

by Poleball

One cold autumn morning, Mr. Zhirnovich decided to go for a walk. He put on his coat and hat, combed his mustache and, singing a song under it, left the house. The world that was slowly waking up from a long sleep was beautiful: colorful trees, pleasant cold temperature, and a lovely lake.

Zhirnovich was slowly passing the second circle around a small reservoir when suddenly a strong gust of wind tore his hat off his bald head and threw it into the center of the lake. Fortunately, what we call the lake was so small that our obese hero could reach his hat with a stick, which he found in the nearby bushes. But the fact that he was able to reach her does not mean that he pulled it back. The huge catfish that lived in this greater pool became a hindrance to this. Namely, it went as follows: at that very moment when Zhirnovich was close to bringing his hat on a stick to himself, this huge fish grabbed a headdress, which she liked, and with a rough bass said:

“My name is Som, I am the king of all sweet waters. And from now on this hat will be mine!”



Наш герой, который был настоящим джентльменом, поклонился и сказал:

«Уважаемый Король Сом, извините, что за мой вопрос, но вы бы не могли подумать над тем, чтобы отдать мне мою любимую старую шляпу? Я, конечно, знаю, что она сейчас ваша, но я привык к ней, и без неё я чувствую себя немножко лысым.»

Сом завертел усами и ответил: «Хммм, нет.»

Немного смущаясь, но всё равно сохраняя спокойствие и проявляя уважение (благодаря его хорошим манерам) Жирнович предложил принести Важной Рыбе его самую лучшую шляпу из дома, только если бы Сом отдал ему эту старую вещь. Но Король даже не ответил и поплыл вглубь озера.

Без чего-либо, что защищало бы его блестящую голову перед миром, став беднее на одну (свою самую любимую!) шляпу, Жирнович вернулся домой.

На следующий день, на берегу озерка, с элегантной бутылкой под мышкой и с цилиндром на голове, наш Герой кашлянул так же элегантно, как и в целом выглядел. Через нескольких типичных для аристократии длинных минут, Король неспешно выплыл на поверхность воды. И когда «подданный» ещё кланялся, крикнул своим полным авторитета голосом: «Чего?!».

С полной теплотой улыбкой Жирнович ответил: «Дорогой Король, Владелец всех сладких вод, у меня есть для вас подарок». Тут он высунул руку с бутылкой пятидесятилетнего виски. «Не подумали бы Вы, Уважаемый Господин, поменять эту старую шляпу, которую Вы вчера очень умно и ловко решили присвоить Себе и Своему Государству, на этот совсем новый цилиндр? Это соглашение мы могли бы отметить стаканчиком этого хорошего виски.»

Our hero, who was a true gentleman, bowed and said:

“Dear King Som, excuse me for asking my question, but could you think about giving me my favorite old hat? Of course, I know that she’s yours now, but I’m used to her, and without her, I feel a little bald.”

Som swung his mustache and said, “Hmmm, no.”

A little embarrassed, but still keeping calm and showing respect (thanks to his good manners), Zhirnovich offered to bring important fish his best hat from home only if Som gave him this old thing. But the King did not even answer and swam deep into the lake.

Without anything that would protect his brilliant head before the world, becoming poorer on one (his own favorite!) hat, Zhirnovich returned home.

The next day, on the shore of the lake, with an elegant bottle under his arm and a cylinder on his head, our hero coughed as elegantly as he looked. After several long minutes of delay typical for the aristocracy, the King slowly floated to the surface of the water. And when the “subject” was still bowing, he shouted with his voice in full authority: “What is that ?!”

With a warm smile, Zhirnovich replied: “Dear King, Owner of all sweet waters, I have a gift for you.” Then he extended out his hand with a bottle of fifty-year-old whiskey. “Would you, Dear Sir, think of exchanging this old hat, which you very cleverly and deftly decided yesterday to assign to yourself and Your State, for this brand new top hat? We could mark this agreement with a glass of this good whiskey.”

Король подумал, промурчал и согласился на это предложение. Жирнович с улыбкой, под специально для этого случая уложенными и навощенными усами, начал вынимать из маленькой, закрытой на замочек, деревянной коробочки. Но перед тем как он успел полностью открыть замок, огромная рыба выпрыгнула из воды и схватила коробочку со стаканами, бутылку виски и новый цилиндр. Её громки смех ещё какое-то времена звенел у Жирновича в ушах. Через минуту наш герой смог закрыть открытый от удивления рот. Сказал, что-то не совсем по джентльменски и вернулся домой.

Король Сом сидел на дне Озера в своем дворце со шляпой на голове и медленно пил новый отборный виски. Внезапно что-то появилось за его окном. Владелец первый раз видел такую штучку, была она продолговатая и цилиндрическая, а сверху из неё выплывали пузырьки. Король не успел понять, что это такое, как его дворец и целое дно озера оказались на высоте пятидесяти метров над землей.

Жирнович подошёл к бывшему озеру, нашёл свою к сожалению мокрую шляпу и, насвистывая под усами, вернулся домой.

т.Польшар





The king thought, murmured and agreed to this proposal. With a smile, Zhirnovich, under a mustache laid and waxed specifically for this occasion, began to take it out of a small wooden box that was locked. But before he could fully open the lock, a huge fish jumped out of the water and grabbed a box with glasses, a bottle of whiskey and a new top hat. Her loud laughter for some time rang in Zhirnovich's ears. A minute later, our hero was able to close his mouth open in surprise. He said that it was not quite gentlemanly and returned home.

King Som sat on the bottom of the Lake in his palace with a hat on his head and slowly drank a new choice of whiskey. Suddenly something appeared outside his window. The owner had seen such a thing for the first time, it was oblong and cylindrical, and bubbles were emerging from above. The king did not have time to understand what it is, as his palace and the whole bottom of the lake were now at a height of fifty meters above the ground.

Zhirnovich went to the former lake, found his unfortunately wet hat and whistling under the mustache, returned home.





## A Farmers Life: Part two

by Germanball

### Honest Work\*

A glistening light dazzled Bernd as he stepped out the door. With his eyes closed, it took him a long time to get used to the light. His eyes were burning, his lips were dry and brittle, his bones hurt and he smelled of old sweat and bad breath. How long had Bernd been in his hut? Probably only a few days, but it seemed to him that months had passed since this first sexual experience with Dette. From then on he only left

\* Previous chapter can be found in issue 5

his bed to carry Dette through the hut looking for pieces of furniture he could bend her over to fuck her. “Hey, Bernd!” someone shouted to him. Slowly his vision cleared up and he began to see the old man at some distance. “Haven’t seen you in a few days. You’re busy in there, aren’t you? I think you’re planning on getting the farm back on track. Well, I’d recommend you start with the broken fence or the feral lawn. My son Hank has a lawnmower tractor in his barn that you can borrow from him if you want. I’m Walt, by the way. I guess I hadn’t really introduced myself the other day.” Bernd, somewhat overwhelmed, just said “O-Ok” for a moment before he went back into the house. He was exhausted and had a headache. The last days he had done absolutely nothing but fuck and write about it on image boards until he was banned. He really needed to do something. First of all Bernd decided to put on a pair of trousers.

Water! Bernd walked quickly towards the drinks department of the shop he was in. He took a large carrier of water and put it in his shopping basket. Soon this was full of junk food and Bernd stuffed himself on the way to the checkout, just quickly stuffing some things into his other pockets. Behind the register was a brunette girl. Bernd began to sweat more and more on the way to her, because the shop was quite



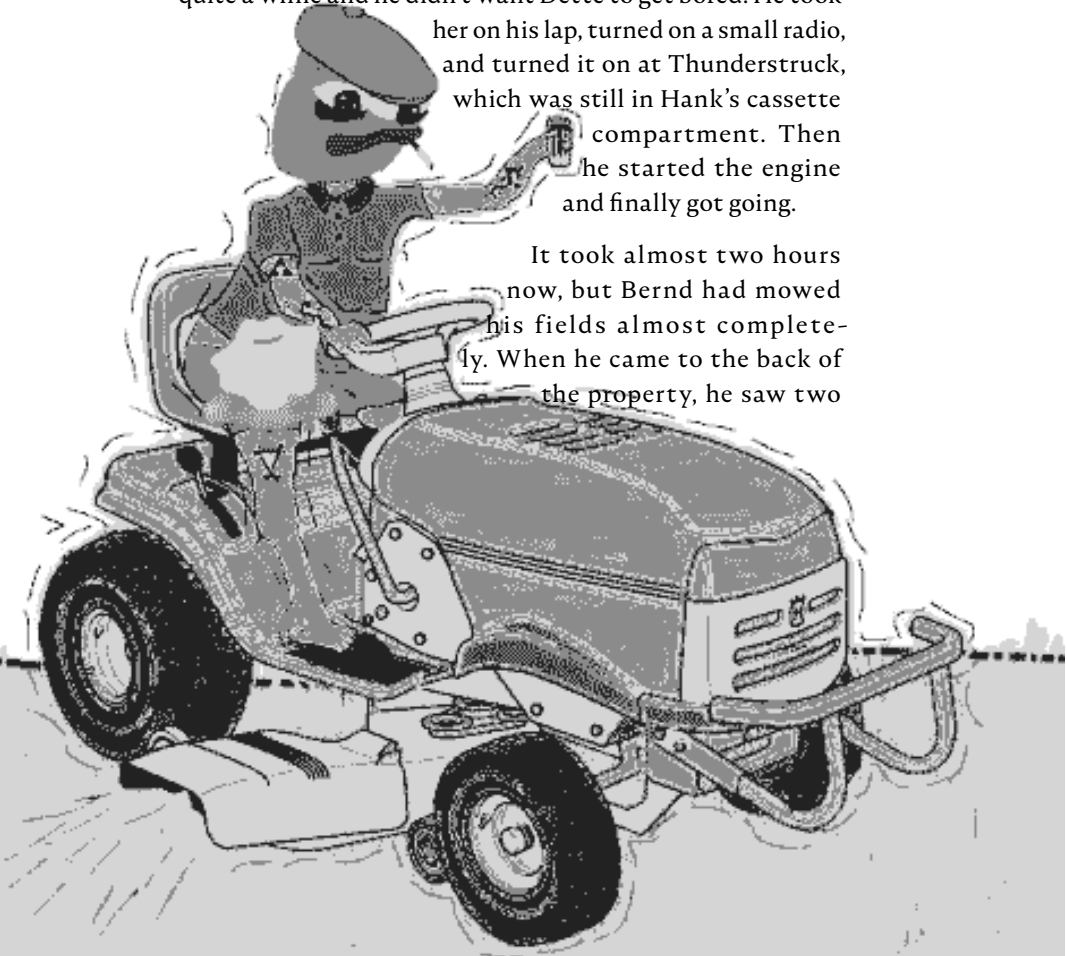
empty and the girl seemed to smile at Bernd from a distance. At least Bernd thought he saw this. But then it happened. She looked directly at him. Overtaxed with the situation, Bernd quickly turned his gaze away and stared into the shelves to his right, pretending to be looking for something else. But it didn't take long and Bernd stumbled exactly into a small shelf which was in front of him. He dropped his basket and landed straight on the ground with all his spaghetti falling out of his pants. He looked up and only saw the woman at the register looking down on him and visibly working to suppress an upcoming laughter cramp. Bernd collected his things and unwound the purchase as quickly as possible before storming out of the store. Arrived outside Bernd first had to get rid of his nausea. He ran into the side street behind the shop and, barely having arrived there, had to puke immediately in a high arch. "Man, you can't take anything either, can you?" Frightened, Bernd turned around. On the back of the shop there was a man in squatting, drinking a can of foreign beer. "I, uh. . . No" Bernd replied. "I am Ramùnas. I'm always here, actually. It's pleasantly lonely here behind the store. But you're welcome to join me," said the rocking man. But Bernd still had some plans for the day and so he made his way home again. It didn't take long and Bernd was back at his property. He brought his groceries into the house, had a drink and then went outside again. The property was really run down. Bernd decided to accept his neighbor's offer and borrow his lawnmower. He ran over to Walt's farm and asked about it. He was sent a little further to a building. After Bernd knocked on the door, a tall and elderly gentleman opened it. He was a little pale, he lacked a lot of hair and wore sunglasses. He was naked upstairs, which didn't seem to bother him. He stared at Bernd for a while, then took a sip from a white can. \*sip\* "Yeah, what's up?" he just said. Bernd described the situation to him. "Well. Nice to meet you, Bernd. I'm Hank. Then come with me." Bernd followed Hank

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to his barn a few meters further on. "Okay, there's the good piece in there. Take good care of it, and when you're done, just put it back in there." Bernd was really happy about the helpfulness of his neighbors. Hank went back to his house while Bernd went into the barn. He stood there in all his glory. Quite a chunk from a lawnmower. He looked very well groomed. Since the keys were stuck, Bernd started it without further ado. It roared loudly and began to vibrate strongly as the machine spirit in it awakened to new life. When Bernd had familiarized himself with the shifting, he drove off to his farm, where he first stopped. Bernd decided to take Dette with him at work. After all, this would take quite a while and he didn't want Dette to get bored. He took

her on his lap, turned on a small radio, and turned it on at Thunderstruck, which was still in Hank's cassette compartment. Then he started the engine and finally got going.

It took almost two hours now, but Bernd had mowed his fields almost completely. When he came to the back of the property, he saw two



younger men talking at the fence. The container with the mown grass was full, so Bernd switched off the engine and turned the radio down. Bernd greeted briefly with a wave, which was reciprocated before he descended and began to dismantle the container. "Congratulations" Bernd heard one of them say. "Wow! Is that one of those Move Pro cameras? Thank you, Andy!" "No problem, buddy. They can be attached to headgear with a pointed tip. This will allow you to easily evaluate your hits the next time you shoot clay pigeons." "Really cool. Let's try them out a bit." "Sorry, but I can't today. I have to stay at the house. I'm still waiting for a new shipment of fertilizer for my Geofarm." "Oh, that's too bad. You've been getting a lot of this stuff lately. You want to grow a lot this year, huh?" "Oh yes, the harvest will certainly be fruitful. Just you wait." The two young men said goodbye just as Bernd had finished emptying his container. The remaining one of the two now turned in his direction. "Oi, mate! Nice to meet you. Thought I was living next door to a ghost farm lately. I'm Harrison, but you can call me Harry." Bernd didn't know what it was, but Harry was sympathetic to him right from the start. Maybe it was the accent. He couldn't hear where it was coming from. But this could also have been because Harry seemed to be quite drunk. Anyway Bernd introduced himself and the two talked for quite a while. At some point Harry said goodbye and Bernd went on to mow the remaining few tracks of grass. It didn't take long, and he was done. At the end he opened a can of energy drink and proudly looked at his work. It felt good to have done something. Bernd drove the tractor back to the neighboring barn. Not a second too early as it seemed, because a few meters before he arrived, the petrol ran out and Bernd had to push the monster. But that shouldn't be a big obstacle anymore. But when Bernd arrived, he was astonished to find that the door to the barn seemed to be locked. Bernd first wanted to turn around to get a key from Hank, but then he

heard a noise in the barn. He walked around the building and saw a small window. It was quite high and Bernd had to climb on a bale of hay to see through it, but this should not be a big problem. But what Bernd got to see from there made his breath falter. Inside, a pretty girl could be spotted. Just so old that the reader won't go to jail for it. She had red hair tied to a plait and was wearing a sweaty shirt under jeans dungarees. Bernd loved to imagine the smell. Optically she would probably have been called Tomboy if it weren't for her longer hair and her feminine facial structure. But it wasn't her appearance that set Bernd's blood racing, but what she was doing in this barn. She was sitting on a heap of straw in one of the empty stables. Actually, she was lying more than sitting. Anyway, she had wiped off one of the straps of her trousers and was deep in it with her hand, where she seemed to be pampering herself in her crotch. Bernd's pants became a little tight themselves, and when the girl also stripped off her second strap and then began to knead her chest, he couldn't help but free his cock. When he got him out and started jerking off, all he heard was a quiet beep from Dette, who was next to him and looked up at him with interest. "Psst! Not now, Dette!" He quietly gave it back while he didn't turn his eyes a second away from the girl in the barn. Dette looked through a gap between two wooden boards and saw the girl now too. She didn't look like she was going to stop doing what she was doing soon. She put her shirt over her head and exposed her naked upper body. She didn't need a bra. If Bernd had to estimate, he would have typed B, at most a small C cup. And they were pretty tight, too. When Bernd saw her naked body,



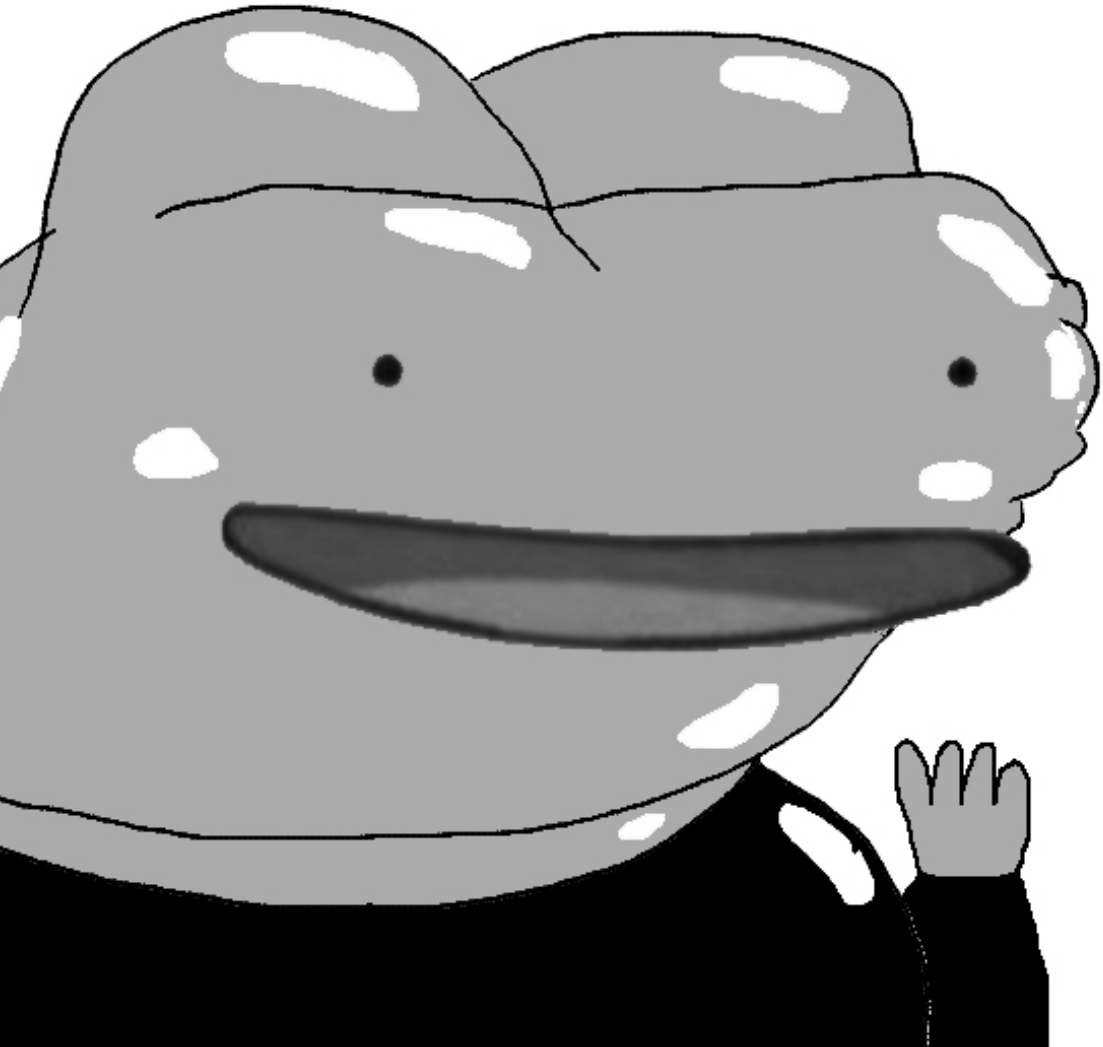
from the belly hub upwards, shining through the sweat of hard work, he sighed. She was so close, and yet such a girl would hardly want to sleep with Bernd. “I really wish I had such a girlfriend. . . “ he said to himself as he wanked faster and faster to the scene he was facing.

The girl finally stripped off her pants. She had nothing on underneath. Bernd could now clearly see how she pampered herself with her fingers with her partially shaved mussel. It only stopped once briefly and abruptly. But then she continued immediately and moaned with a lovely voice. Bernd didn't intend to come so early, but when he thought to briefly feel her gaze, it just happened and he splashed a full load on the wall in front of him. Bernd just put his cock away again when someone suddenly grabbed him by the arm. He scared back and almost had a heart attack when he panicked and slipped his foot off the straw. He didn't fall deep, but he hit the hard grass ground with his back. The view was a little blurry at first, but then he saw it right above him. The girl from the barn. Still completely naked. But how could she have got here so quickly? There was no doubt about her person at all. Her flawless skin, her firm breasts, her neck, her lips, her eyes. The eyes! “D-Dette?” Bernd received the answer in the form of a smile and a typical squeak from Dette, who apparently had copied the shape of the girl from the barn. Bernd knew about Ditto's transformation arts, but he would never have thought that they could also work with humans. Well, it didn't look that perfect. The eyes are still those of Dette, which Bernd found quite creepy and a little disturbing. Only there was another problem. She was naked and standing here outside with Bernd, in the middle of Hank's property. Bernd heaved his body up, took off his shirt and threw it over Dette's head, which now turned confused in a circle. He took her by the hand and pulled her towards his farm as fast as he could. Soon he reached his property. A little



further his neighbor apparently just received a truckload with some sacks. He just waved laughing as he took note of the two half-naked ones. But by then Bernd was already half-way to his hut. Sweating and wheezing, he closed the door behind him. His breathing slowly normalized as he looked at the sweet butt of “Dette” and realized that he had just been given almost unlimited possibilities by fate.

to be continued





## A Fetishist Kiwi's conversion

by Brazilball

*A new zealand's neet going over to the store to buy his usual pack of fags and some booze for cunt destroying but at the central square he was approached by a woman offering islamic teachings*

„Will you, Ms, be barefooted whilst praying?“ I desperately said, involuntarily, as response to her inquiries. And as I've noticed her surprised reaction I resumed before she could scream for help for trying to rape her with offensive words

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„I can pray behind you if your answer is yes --- I'd like to see you without shoes as our prophet Allah (may peace be upon him) have written, he's already enoughly magnanimous just by allowing our kind to enter his temple. In this viewpoint, as I am suggesting that we're entering a sacred place that we aren't worth to experience, we must present ourselves to him with the most humility, am I right?" then I finally concluded, smiling with an witty expression.

So, in a brief way, I tought „If you're OK about praying with these meaty steamy soles over my lascivious face whenever I drop my head onto the floor like a animal, I'm fine". Heh, it's not like she knows I'm into feet or some ‚creepy fetish', jackpot, ain't it? I mustn't lick them, though.

„Mhmm... I'm good as long as you're comfortable, brother" said the voluptuous woman with a slightly confused look. Mashallah! Would I had just ignored her inquiries and getting straight to home by now I would've be regretting my decision. Mashallah a hundred times!

Then we agreed on going praying together and while we walked she was trying to convince me of the beautiful blessings and her Lord's legitimacy as the one and only God in the Abrahamic Religions, she was trying hard to convert me, to teach me the ways of The Qu'ran, and said that the most fitting nickname for our civilization, the West, is Wect, as she feels disgusted whenever consuming our entertainment. Sometime later I could hear an admixture of the usual pray with a kind of song „Mawlaya salla wa sallim daiman abada", sang a bearded man that didn't seemed to shower daily „Allah... habibika khayril khalqi kullihimi", he continued, which made his song sound practically like martial music, it must be The Jihad, yeah, the cultural war they have been battling with the Wect is called Jihad. Oh, at last we've came into the so-called temple.

Both of us entered the holy site without wearing anything on our feet, nor socks or any of those footwear that touched dirty places and are seen as obliged in the world of slavery, our modern world that enslave us all. The slavery being forcing us to not only wear but too buy from them their clothing stores, as they are more suitable for the environment we should work in. Pffft. As sister said along the way, there's no such thing as suitable in the Qu'ran, only right and wrong, only prude clothing which enrich your person as you won't be seen as who you wish to present yourself, but above all, only for how you behave, how much value you see in your person.

Fast-forwarding straight to the topic of my tale: she finally prostrated herself before those sandniggers' patriarchs images and sitted her perfect round ass at the top of her soles, forming an erotic image that reminded me, without any doubt, of women's subservience, resembling the utmost BDSM-like thing a person could do outdoors. „Hnnng”. Behind me, as I have only seen a glimmer of her figure when I entered the temple and haven't said before, there was another woman, younger than the former, nearly the same age of our prophet's (may peace be upon him) last wife, Aisha. This younger sister had her head closely at the reach of my feet thus I could feel her nose breathing sweetly through my soles. „Hnnnnng”, my dick got stiff, what a privileged position, must I say.

Fuck Brenton Tarrant or whoever is the reactionary beta this time, really. I must own those women and only after becoming one with Islamism I will have this. I may even deeply sniff these women parts, intimately, as the Qu'ran ways makes me deeply inspire - toughfully of course, heh. Must I sacrifice my pride and convert myself? I felt like the lady from the beginning was taking the lead over my beliefs, I felt like my world was crumbling. Piece by piece Wect's narrative that empowering whores is good, that letting our

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morality disarray is good, was crumbling. In the summers of old, the bride in the marriage would wear white as it used to represent her fertility but most importantly, her immaculate maidenhood. Nowadays, the groom should wear white and his woman, sadly, black.

But, reader, if you allow me to continue with my ramblings: as both roses were wearing niqabs or at least hijabs as they're more accustomed to, how Allah (may peace be upon him) had preached, to preserve their innocents souls and images from corrupting the men, I could only extract sexual meaning from their glances and from their feet, which became from that moment thereon the most sensual openly visible area that they have graced me with the vision. They dressed with a meaning and not as an end, not like western women with their dressings codes which only consists of almost showing your uterus and men, weak men, should perceive you as a brave woman - God forbid if they emit any objection -, therefore a good housewife, don't they have any modesty or decency... oh, but their beautiful feet. Oh, my eyes, you will be my downfall!

„Inshallah! I'm almost at the point of shedding tears, the smell in-between your toes --- I mean... I mean, the spiritual significance of our act is unbearably beautiful. Indeed, beautiful it is!" I said from time to time, while waiting for my little friend to calm himself and casually cleaning my face with the back of my hand as I was drooling. This is how I converted.

# pottery zone

Your alarm app rings  
While I'm still fast asleep  
Go out serve your kings  
I've got no promise to keep  
You fight the real world war  
I'm posting from my bed  
You have to pay your car  
I'm opening a thread  
I'm pissing in a bottle  
You have to get a shave  
I never have to throttle  
You have to play it safe  
Just get a little taste  
I bet you won't be sorry  
The NEET life is no waste  
Oh, Normieeee


t. Germanball

*One-sided Love*  
In violet gardens  
my hearth goes wide,  
his dick hardens -  
and silent is my cry.  
in enormous pain my cheeks part,  
nothig can escape - not even a fart!  
so wild, so savage -  
he just wont stop!  
Tarnishing the cabbage;  
throbo after throbo!

t: Germanyball

*Ur*

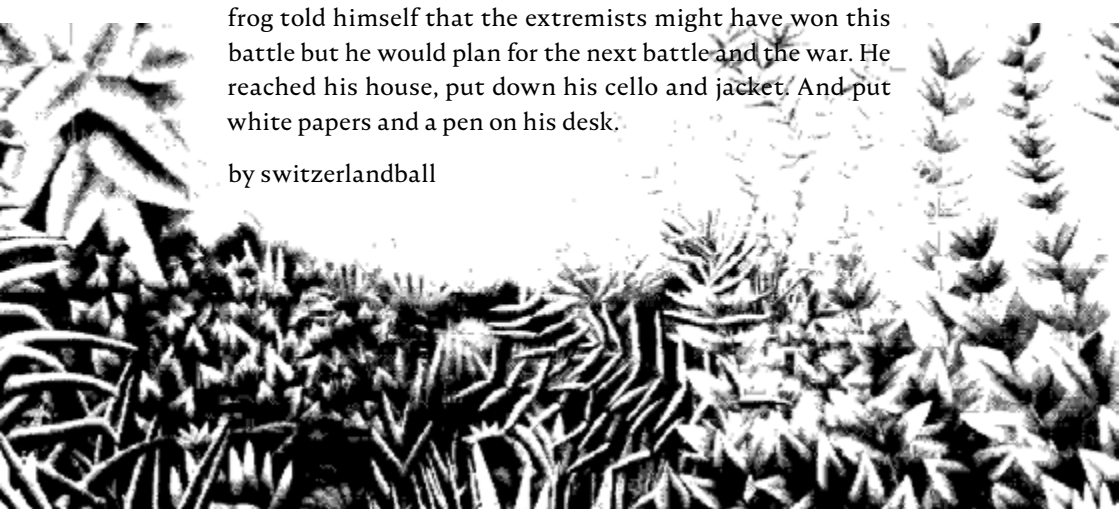
Another birthday without GF. Wojak wanted to change his life. Now or never. He went to a park in the city and intended to speak to every individual he encountered. He didn't follow through. But he spoke to everyone carrying an interesting item or wearing an accessory. One day he spotted a frog carrying what looked like a violin or guitar in a case. Wojak inquired: „Which instrument is that?” - „It's my cello” replied the frog. - „Are you taking cello lessons?” - „I just had another lesson, indeed. Why?” - „I'm just curious. What is your name?” - „Pepe” said the frog. - „What a nice name.” - „Thank you.” Wojak and Pepe kept talking for several minutes. All of a sudden a group of protestors appeared at the entrance of the park. They carried banners such as „We're the non-



binaries” and „Boycott Peterson”. Wojak was taken aback. „What does nonbinaries mean?” - „I think they want to make people believe in more than 2 genders. I watched a documentary called Hjernevask, that means brainwash in Norwegian, where such people were interviewed. - „Ah it’s that group of transgender people and other misfits?” - „Exactly. In that series they talked about one case. These extremists tried to make Victor into Victoria at a young age and mutilated his body. He was never asked and looked extremely broken. And now these people are protesting for more rights to surgically manipulate little kids? I can’t stand it. I think it’s time to take responsibility in our own hands. - „What are you going to do?” inquired Wojak.

„I want to stop them from poisoning the minds of people, especially naive students. I wish I could do something right now.” Pepe retorted. - „But they are too many. And you are carrying your cello. There’s no point in picking a fight here.” - „I suppose you are right. You say they are so many. But we are the silent majority. And the silent majority needs to gather and point out the transgressions of such radicals.” - „You mean we should organize a counter-protest.” stated Wojak. - „Protests are a thing of the 20th century. We need to connect our brightests minds on the internet. And win the war for the hearts and minds of the people who stare at the screen every day without critical thinking.” Pepe asked Wojak for his phone number and they went their separate ways. The frog told himself that the extremists might have won this battle but he would plan for the next battle and the war. He reached his house, put down his cello and jacket. And put white papers and a pen on his desk.

by switzerlandball





# Homines Duri

by Germanball

In the 12th and 13th centuries, trade brought together people from a wide variety of social groups and from a wide variety of legal organizations. The real traveling merchants are homines duri - tough, violent men. The clergyman Alpert von Metz describes the merchants of Tiel an der Waal at the beginning of the 11th century. Alpert did not think much good about this kind of human, the merchant. His manners seemed rude to him, and worse was that the merchants arrogated their own law, a special right, which they claimed had been given to them by the emperor. The abbot lived his whole life in the hierarchy of aristocratic society and church and was naturally opposed to the cooperative right of self-determination of the merchants. In addition, the trade had a kind of „international” merchant law, which had emerged in the centuries before and was passed on verbally. This right, too,



differed in many ways from what was familiar to the abbot, who was used to rural conditions.

The Tiel merchants are descendants of the group of merchants who had been under King's protection since Carolingian times. He had provided them with letters of protection in which he instructed his officials to provide the required protection and exempt them from all public charges, except customs duty at certain checkpoints.

Merchants like the Tieler were on the road most of the year, escorting their goods and the servants and pack animals transporting them. At the destination they themselves led the negotiations with the local rulers and concluded their business.

As merchants were always traveling they were always strangers in foreign countries. Strangers were basically defenseless in the Middle Ages. Therefore, the merchants usually traveled together in groups and formed caravans and larger travel communities. However, sometimes there are records of individual merchants traveling, but of course not alone, always with some servants for extra security.

For their protection merchants had the right to carry the sword. Since Charlemagne, it has been recorded in writing - under Emperor Frederic I Barbarossa in the Reichslandfrieden of 1152 it was more specified - that they are not allowed to carry the sword on their belt. Either they attach the sword to the saddle or carry it on the carriage. The reasoning is: The merchant should not hurt an innocent person, but rather only protect himself against robbers. The lawmakers wanted to prevent that the merchant attacks his counterpart - supplier, customer, competitor - in a dispute already in the first affect with the weapon. An example of the violent readiness of the merchants is the prehistory of the Artlenburg privilege.

The Artlenburg privilege is an agreement or contract of Henry the Lion from the 18 October 1161. The document was signed at a meeting on the Ertheneburg at the Elbe crossing. It testifies to a seemingly very bloody and violent conflict between the merchants of the island of Gotland who were trading in the Baltic Sea and those of the city of Lübeck, which was heavily subsidized by Henry at that time. In the contract we can find the following passage:

„In the name of the holy and indivisible Trinity. Henry, through God’s charitable grace, Duke of Bavaria and Saxony. All Christ’s present and future followers should learn that out of love for peace and out of devotion to the Christian religion, but above all from contemplation of eternal retribution, we have won the dispute that has long raged disastrously between the Germans and the Gotlands in favor of unity and conciliation, and that we also settled the numerous evils, outbreaks of hatred, enmities, and murders that arose from the disunity of both nations, with the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit in everlasting permanence of peace, and then favorably received the Gotlanders in the grace of our reconciliation.”

The second group of merchants were the persons in different forms of serfdoms, the non-free merchants of dioceses, monasteries and abbeys as well as secular rulers. On behalf of their masters they supplied their courts with goods by the means of regular sales trips.

The ministeriales formed the third group. They were also unfree servants of a dukes or someone similar. Entrusted with responsible administrative or military tasks, this estate succeeded in removing the features of serfdom until the end of the 13th century. The best known of the ministeriales are the knights, which developed from the ministeriales ones who executed war services with horses. Less well-known are



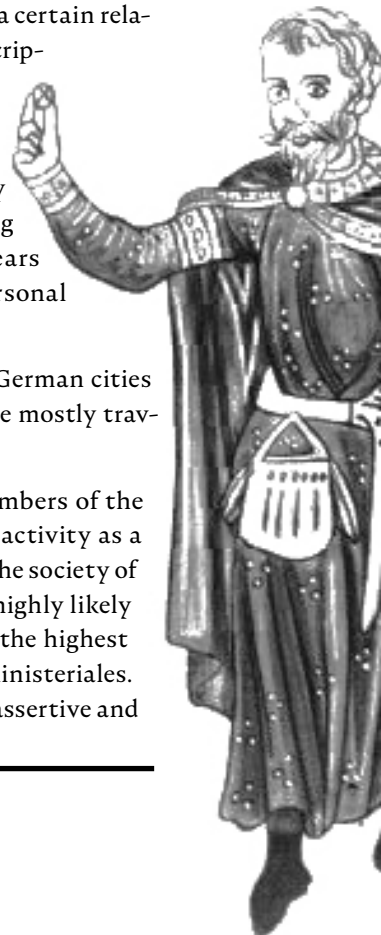
the „colleagues” of the knights who had the same estate rank as the knights and lived in large cities performing administrative services for their Lord’s. They were an important, if not the most important, group of people emancipating cities from their rulers. Through administrative functions in market- and customs-supervision, stately coinage and other activities, they dealt with the merchants and manufacturing industries of their city. They were responsible for the supply of the court of the city owner and therefore had to have contacts with the local, regional and long-distance trade or carry it out themselves. However, they were also able to act as merchants through the commercialization of the commodities’ income.

This also applies to another group from which merchants could be recruited: the free people. They were independent and not subject to a master. Many were originally from outside the city, but often belonged to the social leadership of cities. Many free people volunteered (sometimes unwillingly) to join the ministeriales in order to obtain the protection of a powerful lord, but also to obtain a tolerable fief, a vogue or a court office.

Further information on the business of merchants of this time is provided by Middle High German poems such as the epics of Tristan and Isolde or of Parzival and Gawain. They were created almost all in the period of the 12th and 13th centuries. The audiences, to which these discussions were presented at court, expected from the stories a certain relation to reality, so we can expect that the descriptions should at least not have contradicted the actual real conditions. Based on „Parzival” we can find out how the traveling community of merchants could have looked. In the history of Gawain, merchants visited the camp of King Artur. They lead warhorses, shields and spears with them. Not as a commodity, but for personal protection.

Similarly the merchant groups from the low German cities met abroad, only without horses, as they were mostly traveling over sea.

These traveling groups were made up of members of the different estates. What united them was the activity as a merchant, not a common estate. But because the society of the high Middle Ages was a divided one, it is highly likely that these groups were led by those who had the highest reputation and standing amongst them: the ministeriales. They were accustomed to giving orders, were assertive and



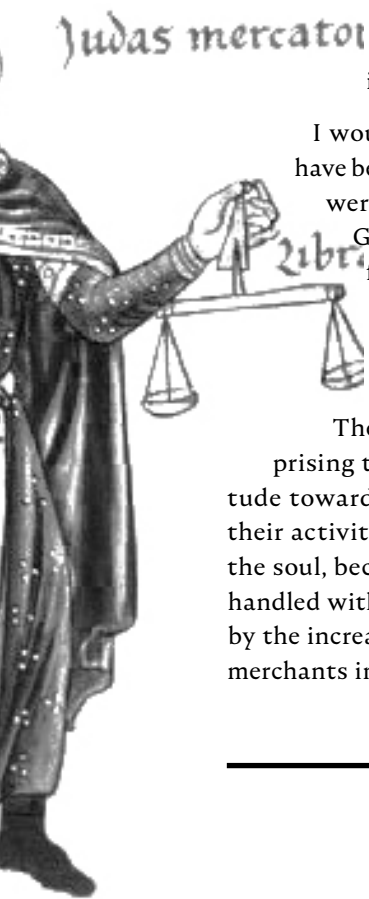
powerful enough. Additionally they were trained in dealing with noble men. They knew how to behave at court and were therefore able to best represent the interests of the merchant groups.

The equality of rank of the ministeriales compared with the knights and the general line-up of these driving communities ensured that knights and merchants were easily confused with each other. Which led to the fact that the disguise as a merchant was perfectly acceptable for a nobleman, which could only succeed because the merchant was „internationally reputable, protected and respected”. Because he was well equipped, with armed servants and weapons, this disguise was well suited especially for high-ranking personalities.

Even Richard the Lionheart traveled dressed as a merchant when he was at last captured in 1192.

I would love to know how those merchant must have been whose salient behavior and character traits were conveyed in their bynames and surnames: Gyr(Gier/greed), Hardevust(harte Faust/hard fist), Vulpus (Geier/vulture), Unmaze(Unmaß/excess), Rapesulver(Raubsilber/”Robberysilver”). Men with such names lead the cooperative merchant associations.

These names are not accidental, so it is not surprising that the church generally had a negative attitude towards business people. The church claimed that their activity is extremely dangerous for the salvation of the soul, because hardly any commercial business can be handled without fraud. This opinion is intensified over time by the increase in trade and the increase in the number of merchants in this period, leading to an attitude according



to which merchants practice a godless trade, are fraudulent, greedy and addicted to usury.

And yet, it was exactly these men who were to ensure that the decisive cornerstones for the emergence of the Hanseatic League were laid. Bit by bit, these men took over political power in the Low German cities. They occupy the „Schöffebänke“ in these regions of the empire where the „Schöffen“-constitution prevailed, and the council chairs where the council constitution predominated. Both types of constitution have the same result: members of this leadership group hold the executive functions - even at the time when political power is still in the hands of the city lord. The merchants supremacy is based on the fact that they preside over the court (first in the mandate of the Lord), the markets, supervise market traffic and have the tax authorities as customs officers, mint masters and exchangers.

More and more city-related rights are coming into the hands of the citizens, or rather into the hands of the leadership group, that is the merchants. The city lords who are always in need of money sell or pledge thus gradually the rights to the merchants: first economic and later political rights.

As cities begin to emancipate themselves from their noble city rulers, the ministeriales residing in the cities must decide whether to remain in the service of their Lords, as in „follow them to the land,“ or whether they prefer the urban way of life and economy.

Many choose the city.





by USAball

# **Concrete Alienation: A Journey through Brixia's 56 Minutes**

Nothing could be more emblematic of the Anglosphere's success in this post-globalization world than the spread of Rock'n'Roll. With minor exception, almost every industrialized nation is home to dozens of active and recording Rock bands supported by thousands of fans spanning all ages. As each nation would interpret the music differently and develop local analogues to more popular bands, politics (local and global) would find their way through Rock'n'Roll. While the vast majority of active recording artists come from apolitical, liberal or leftist



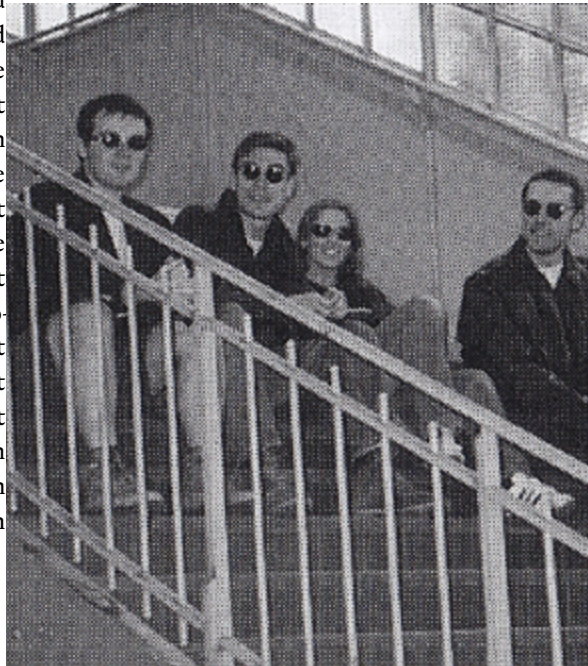
persuasions, it comes as no surprise that others on the further fringes sang from an entirely different hymn sheet: Nationalism.

Perhaps France's earliest known Nationalist Rock musician is Jack Marchal, famous for forming the student activist block Groupe Union Défense along with Alain Robert and four others at Panthéon-Assas University in Paris. After enough hours covering Rolling Stones with close friend Olivier Carré, Jack would team up with Italy's Mario Ladich, best known for his leading role in the MSI-affiliated act Janus, to record "Science & Violence", an album that could roughly be described as the right-wing analogue to Syd Barrett-era Pink Floyd.

As distribution of such music proved difficult, Nationalist Rock would stay in obscurity until the White Nationalist skinhead movement took the Anglosphere and Western Europe by storm. For better or worse skinheads bequeathed Nationalist Rock with the much needed edge previous iterations sorely lacked, but with that edge came years of controversy that would plague Nationalist movements. With the cultural clout shifting leftwards in no small part due to increasing Americanization along with the long march through the institutions across Western

Europe, young artists would be faced with the choice to co-opt this revolutionary genre or lose the culture war to the rising tide of leftism and new laws stymying their firmly rooted convictions.

Enter Rock Identitaire Français. Eschewing the image of hardened urban guerillas exemplified by their skinhead peers, this new generation of soft-spoken Frenchmen would express their views with much-needed respectability in both image and art form, and a student activist named Aude Bertrand (later Aude Bertrand- Mirkoviæ or simply Aude Mirkoviæ) would play her part carrying Nationalism towards a broader audience. Like Jack Marchal in his youth during the '68 protests, Aude was profoundly influenced by



France's political situation under President Mitterand, but of greater significance was the music that inspired her to become a recording artist. It was no accident that Dolores O'Riordan's lyrical poetry inspired the fledgling musician, having sung about subjects that fit comfortably into the metapolitical narrative of Nationalist politics. Dedicating both albums to her Irish idol, Aude would channel her menagerie of feelings into a pastiche of alienation, longing, introspection, enthusiasm and the revolt against rootless cosmopolitanism.

Inspired by such fervor and recognizing her songwriting talents, Jack Marchal took the aspiring woman under his wing and composed a few songs for both of her acts. Named after a Gallic goddess who symbolized strength tempered by femininity, Brixia would record and release 14 songs focusing on the personal rather than the polemical. It was serendipity that the band would coalesce into an identifiable group of musicians because Aude's intentions were to keep it as a personal studio project. Previously assisted by longtime friend Virginie Deleuvre along with Jack Marchal and Julien Beuzard, Brixia would undergo several line-up changes before enlisting the aid of pseudonymous guitarist

Charles Schlivovitz who drunkenly approached Aude after a show with a demo tape in hand. Leaving quite the impression, he successfully joined the young artists and would later record with the band.

### **Mon clan et les miens**

Brixia's first five songs would appear on an EP titled *Mon clan et les miens*. The songs' collective emphasis on atmosphere brings the listener on a contemplative journey where man reflects on his alienation from the modern world before rebelling against the very source of dispossession. Drum machines and synths set the beat while the guitars alternate between acoustic flourishes and hard riffs that ring out. Everything here is smooth and even-keel. Aude's soft timbre reminisces of a timid being in search of meaning, but her talents really shine whenever she sings out. Recorded on a limited budget, the production values underscore the musicians' collective grasp beyond their reach, but with humble means yields a passion that refuses to be extinguished by convention.

Written in Aude's teens while at Brittany, "Littoral celte" expresses one's aspirations towards the infinite through dreamy synths, brittle guitars and ethereal imagery capturing the fog and spirit of her nation's





ancestors while solemnly contemplating one's mortality.

Our singer gently entrances the listener, transporting them to the Celtic coastline where man maintains his blood ties while aspiring towards the ideal. The blend of somber moods with spiritual musings fit the opening track.

In contrast comes the uptempo "Tenez bon on arrive" featuring some sharp guitars propelling the song. The lyrics beseech the listener to stand firm in their convictions and reject defeatism as fiercely as the corrosive media complex. It is here that we see Aude come out of her shell and sing with confidence. Towards the end the guitars indulge in some

wah-wah soloing that is neither here nor there. Mixing here was critical, because her friends' attempts to join in on the second chorus are undermined by their volume being set too low.

"La vérité est libre" is a gloomy yet soothing tune driven by somber keys and acoustics dedicated to political prisoners. The song condemns a corrupt system that monitors the faintest murmurs of dissidence and consequently imprisons men who dare to speak candidly, ending defiantly with a passage that roughly translates to "The stones will scream if they try to silence us." Such strong subject matter demands a fittingly strong performance, but Aude sadly could not bring out her best all made worse by the instruments being mixed too loud.

Mean guitars return on "Appellez-moi" with even more wah-wah that works to the rhythm's advantage. It seems Aude's confidence was directly correlated with the energy of the guitars because she shines singing paeans to French landmarks. For her, the monuments serve as manifestations of a nation's rich history that instill a sense of pride in one's heritage. The chorus pleads for the indifferent to hear her cry.



The EP concludes with its title track that can be described as the French analogue to “Ode to My Family”. Featuring what must be the clumsiest metaphor in music history, she sings that there is room for the answering machine in her heart and assures her people that she will always be close to her kin. In spite of the goofy songwriting, the tune bookends the album on a warm note with its gentle acoustics and lyrics, but still leaves the listener yearning for more.

While the compositional aspects of the music demanded professional studio quality production to achieve the idealized sound, Brixia still managed to produce a competent, if somewhat derivative, pastiche. It would be later in the band’s discography that they would come closer to their vision.

### **Monde de timbrés + Sur les terres du RIF - Acte II**

1999 was a busy time for Aude Bertrand. After recording and releasing her first EP as Brixia, she would perform a benefit concert in Belgrade on April 25th during the height of NATO’s bombing campaign with fellow French Identitarian bands In Memoriam and her husband’s Rap group Basic Celts.

The event occurred in the evening near the Prince Mihailo Monument

to an audience of what appears to be nearly 100. Aude would later reflect on that night in awe of the warm reception. Amid all the attendees showering the stage with flowers and crying tears of joy, she asserted her unconditional support for the Serbian people in face of bombardments that ended in June of that year.

Upon returning home, Brixia hit the studios again to record the sophomore *Monde de timbrés*. The smooth Virginie Deleuvre returns on guitar contrasted by the hard rocking Charles Schlivovitz who replaced Jack and Julien. On bass came a gentleman only known as Guillaume who does a serviceable job during his time on record. This new line-up would add some new instrumental




sensibilities while keeping the core themes intact.

Both the debut and sophomore releases' strong structures owe a fair share to Dream Pop as well as anything traditionally Rock-based despite the latter still being front and center. Indeed, the cold beats from the artificial percussion sounds more at home on an EDM record. Most importantly, the shared electric and acoustic guitar work serve to layer the atmosphere in heightening the listening experience. The music emphasizes mellow and serene soundscapes even at its quirkiest moments. The acoustic flourishes imbue the sound with the much needed organic tone demanded by the subject matter. Aude's vocal capabilities shine on downtempo tracks where muses autobiographically in a neutral Alto octave that stays comfortably in the middle register, neither undersinging nor oversinging.

Having been recorded a year after the debut, *Monde de timbrés* takes the listener on a deeply personal journey through Aude's life exploring her strongest passions and chilling fears. "Je reviendrai" continues where the previous release's title track leaves off with the lyrics' pastoral imagery bringing the listener as much comfort as the conveyed nostalgia




brings the singer ease. The tune here is much more beat-driven but still grounded with mild rhythms. Immediately after comes the contemplative "Tourner la page" featuring spacey guitars that guide the listener towards spiritual ascension. Aude reflects on the uncertainty in coming-of-age when faced with the damning choice of leaving behind ideals in exchange for presumed responsibility. When writing this song, she remarked that too many people she knew resigned to a life of mediocrity whereas others paid lip service to their supposed ideals while still behaving like insolent teenagers well into their adulthood. For her, growing up was an opportunity to turn the page (literal translation of



the song) while still staying true to your fundamental beliefs.

“Monde de béton” laments urban man’s disconnection from his roots in a world where no rivers run and city lights obscure the night sky. The song solemnly asks the question that roughly translates to, “Concrete world, where’s your soul?” Full of quirky jams and wah-wahs, “Amnésia” continues the theme of urban alienation in a club where drug addicts are lost in a perpetual haze. Our singer finds relief once finally outside away from all the noise. Ending the album are two tracks emphasizing the talents of Mr. Schlivovitz’s sharp electric guitars. While the guitar tone would sound much better given proper production values, the harder rhythms take the listener back to reality without losing any focus on the atmosphere. Bringing us full circle is the aptly titled “Change!” whose chorus cries, “You don’t like the world? Change it!”

Monde de timbrés certainly moved one step forward from Mon clan et les miens in spite of lo-fi limitations, but one cannot help but yearn for so much more. A listener can only spend so much time in the clouds before needing to return to earth, and the songs driven by heavier guitars demanded so much more than Brixia could provide. Still, this



little album’s experience would satisfy anyone pining for a trip into the Nationalist’s soul.

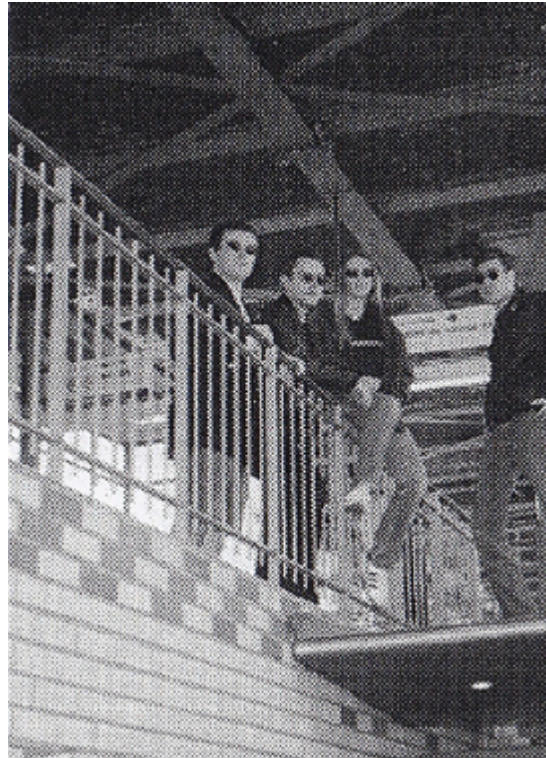
Brixia’s last two songs would find their way on Mémorial Records’s second various artist compilation Sur les terres du RIF – Acte II. Most distinct about these two songs are real drums and guitars more in line with Hard Rock or Grunge. Reminiscent of “Zombie” by The Cranberries, “Complainte rurale” enters with mournful acoustics before beefy guitars enter over the refrain that indicts bureaucracy for decimating the countryside. The fiddle played over the verses seems tacked on for the sake of folksiness. Despite the tale of woe, Aude still stays optimistic on the following track. Featuring

heavy guitars and a mean saxophone to boot, “Renaissance” calls for the Frenchmen to rise up and challenge the political order, hopeful collective action will usher in a new era. It is a shame the band apparently could not produce one more album, because a full-length release in this style would have been so much more promising.

### **Life After Music**

After Elendil and Brixia called it quits around 2001, Aude would earn a law degree from Panthéon-Assas University that same year. She would later become a lecturer in criminology and private law at University of Evry. Most famously, she is known for her public opposition to surrogacy

and medically assisted procreation (called PMA in France), sharing her views regularly on conservative commentary and occasionally making media appearances to debate others. In 2017, she published a novel titled *En rouge et noir*. Aude and her husband Nikola briefly returned to making music as guests for the Québécois Punk band *Fleurdelix et les Affreux Gaulois*, appearing in the music video for “Salut les copains” and singing live before returning to France.









# MMORPGs suck fucking ass but they dont have to

This KC tyre rant was written right before  
the release of Warlords of Draenor

by USAball

The new World of Warcraft expansion is more of the same shit and if you resubbed for it, you will quit in three months or less. That's the truth and you know it is. Some of you might not care, but I know there are some few out there who long for the 'vanilla' days when the World of Warcraft was more of a world and less of a craft. But WoW has always been a Skinner box MMORPG, it is the ultimate refinement of what Everquest started. Contemporary Blizzard has a talent for exploiting psychological quirks of the human mind to create a game that's precisely the right amount of fun. Not too fun, because when the highs are too high, the lows must be proportionately low. The sensible chuckle kind of fun, the PG-13 kind of fun, that's what they shoot for and hit the mark on startlingly often, across multiple genres.

Perhaps the worst outcome of this extreme refinement of the form has been the fact that the genre is now creatively castrated. MMORPGs are an incredibly expensive venture due to the amount of assets and server infrastructure required to populate and maintain a persistent digital world, businessmen are not going to throw that kind of money behind something that's not going to bring a return on investment. They see WoW's huge numbers and assume that they just need to make a game like that to slice off some of Blizzard's market share. But the reality is that any new abstraction of the EQ formula still has to compete with what WoW is today, a juggernaut with a decade of content and a massive though increasingly disillusioned fanbase behind it. None of these games amount to anything more than an over-glorified WoW expansion pack and as such, people play them for two or three months then dump them unceremoniously. The 'indie MMO' scene is a joke that is better at making grandiose promises than delivering on very basic game functionality, these games are either vaporware or become abandonware within a year or so of launch.

So that is where the industry stands. Technological developments should be allowing the genre to push to new horizons in terms of the depth, intricacy and interconnectivity of a digital world. It should be allowing for gameplay that goes deeper than autoattack (or the current trend, the pseudo-auto attack where you have to click for each attack that still ultimately operates on a dice roll) and spell cycling. Yet ironically the genre is stuck in a deep winter driven by high costs of market entry and low probability of success. Games are not getting deeper, but rather shallower and simpler. League of Legends MOBA style combat is seen as the path forward in an MMO and things like instancing and dungeon finder are shrinking and compartmentalizing worlds. All of this begs a simple question: How do we escape?

The problem is that we fail to escape in the first place. The MMO is the penultimate piece of digital escapism media. In games with freer rulesets and more open worlds such as Ultima Online, Star Wars: Galaxies, and the last survivor, EVE Online, in-game drama is permitted to approximate real world dramas. There is espionage, betrayal, and most importantly loss. Loss is perhaps the most loathed thing about life and is something that MMOs increasingly avoid whenever possible. In early MUDS, permanent death was a frequent fixture. Characters were fragile and ephemeral things just like human lives are in the real world, just like characters in the old tabletop games that they were based on. UO, the first big graphical MMO, softened this formula to merely losing the items on your person. Games like EQ and SWG further softened this by instead having you drop your items, but not permitting anyone but yourself to retrieve them. Everquest 2 and WoW distilled loss into a virtually painless experience, with only a minor loss of time and gear durability.

But of course, without loss, without the possibility of a painful and damaging defeat, no victory feels truly satisfy-

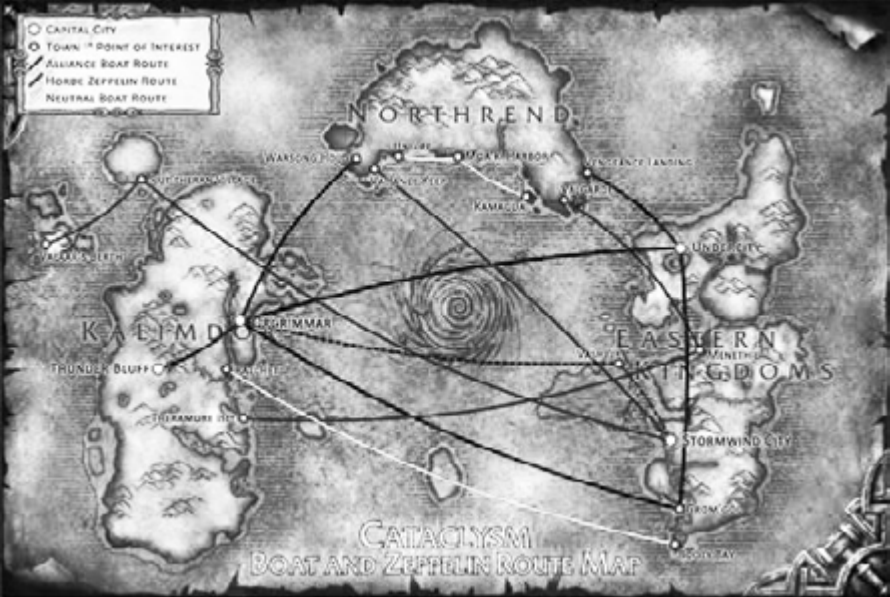
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ing. Without the schadenfreude of knowing that you have deprived your enemy of what was once his one cannot feel that primal massaging of the will that we are so frequently denied in an increasingly soft and feminized reality. World of Warcraft and its mindless clones seldom force players to suffer loss, to make irrevocable choices or risk meaningful damage and as such they do not offer the deeply addictive rush of victory, but rather provide a much more stable and insipid form of empowerment through a slow and steady sense of progression provided by level up dings and item drops. Without the potential of loss and defeat we cannot fully engage with the world, the immersion, the sense of risk and adventure, are completely absent. Instead, as you prepare for an instanced raid, you get the same sensations of a salaryman driving to work.

Just as the lack of loss fuels a disconnection from true escapism so does the compartmentalization of worlds. Instancing is not a new fixture of MMOs, even EQ and SWG made use of it to some extent. However the majority of content was world content or 'contested' content. Players fought over resources. When they couldn't PK for control of farming spots as in UO, they would often grief, training or stealing encounters in order to compete with other players. This negative interaction caused quite a bit of bitterness, more so the trolling than the outright murder which was possible in UO. This led EQ2 and WoW, as well as all games after them, to make much heavier use of instancing. This sealed players off from each other, creating perfect little environments where only they and their friends could interact. The 'drama' that people claimed they hated about the games was greatly softened. Eventually even PvP became a predominantly instanced affair, with complaints of world PvP in WoW often being unfair. Wars were no longer possible in the world of Warcraft. Player verses player interaction devolved into a family friend-

ly sporting event where nobody lost anything, everyone made a little progress just by participating. After that the advent of dungeon finder even cut out the very basic social interaction required to form groups to do these instances, often pairing people from across servers. There has perhaps never been a feature more corrosive to the community aspect of an MMO, ironically by expanding the selection of players that can form a party the ability to form lasting bonds with your party mates has been destroyed. They are ephemeral beings, they come to help you with your task then vanish back to their server, possibly never to be seen again. This to me highlights an important feature of MMO development, that these games are not actually developed, but undeveloped as time goes on.

Take for example, the amazing shrinking world paradox. Something which is almost universally true of MMOs is that paradoxically, as the world gets bigger, the amount of it players actually occupy shrinks not only in relative, but also in absolute terms. Restrictive, grindy leveling systems and wiki-enabled powergaming invalidate much of the world. For farming/grinding purposes (ie, most of what people do in a contemporary MMO) players are actively discouraged from spending their time in most of the world. They then, quite reasonably, request ways to reduce the time they have to spend traveling through these comparatively barren parts of the world, which from their view only exist as bridges between areas of real content. Flying mounts, player city starports, teleportation, all of these things reduce the effective population of a game world as surely as instancing does. The new players, oblivious to the unwritten rules of the game which say zones X and Y are objectively inferior to zone Z, will enter these places and feel as though the game world is dead even though the population might be similar to what it was at the game's launch.



The solution is surprisingly simple. Reverse the way in which a game is built. MMOs as a phenomenon tend to follow a regressive pattern, they start as full-fledged worlds and slowly cede ground to player complaints and become more infantile worlds until eventually they end up sterile, barren, compartmentalized and insipid like the World that Warcraft became (and was from the outset, compared to earlier digital

worlds). What if instead of building a world and then adding instances for more content as time went on, the developer were to build a very small, very dense world as a starting point. Perhaps just one city, or perhaps several similar but not identical city instances interconnected by fast travel, with each city acting as a 'server'. Within these cities we could find instances including dungeons and PVP arenas that could easily be slotted into the existing infrastructure.

All of these instanced areas can act as a sort of development laboratory, letting developers understand better how players interact with the world to inform their construction of the later 'open world' overworld outside of the city's gates and immediate vicinity. Doing this would reduce the age old issue of low content density areas, as new overworld areas could be added slowly and carefully with an eye to ensuring that they are populated. None of these areas would be merely a means to an end, the road to an instance, but destinations in their own right. It would also deal with some of the problems of incentive structuring where in most games, new instances tend to have more rewarding content than old overworld areas. In this model of development, the player starts off in an infantilized world and is slowly weaned from his dependence on the safety of carefully moderated player interaction, slowly pushed out into the 'real world', a more ambiguous and dangerous place. From the cost perspective, the reduction of playable space relative to a typical MMO with a large overworld should result in a reduction of the burden of asset creation.

Removing the heuristic of player levels is also ultimately desirable for this process, as all levels do is place artificial barriers between players and content. A new player of WoW has absolutely zero chance of even damaging a level 100 player. Even games without levels tend to end up in the progression spiral trap, a game like EVE makes it almost impossible for



a new player to reasonably compete without being twinked and even then places them at a long-term or even permanent disadvantage compared to more experienced players. That being said, a skill based system is still a superior way to handle progression since it doesn't necessarily place a hard barrier between new players and old players where old players are able to put out damage numbers in excess of a thousand times what new ones can muster.

The biggest problem of the typical MMO which typically seeks to counter World of Warcraft is that it wants to be everything and it wants to be everything at the same time. There is little patience for a development schedule which might span decades. They promise 'esports' competitiveness, territory control, resource conflicts, customization galore without ever realistically approaching how this is all going to be accomplished. Businessmen are typically shorter sighted and want speedy and more importantly reliable returns on an investment. But for as old and shitty as Everquest is, it still, twenty years later, has a relatively healthy player-base, particularly on the newer progression servers. Several servers still have enough people that every relevant named encounter has someone camping it. How many other games from 1999 can say that? Despite constant accusations and assumptions that World of Warcraft is a sick man of the gaming world, it continues to have a massive subscriber base and healthy margins. The MMO inspires player dedication (customer loyalty in businessspeak) like no other genre because of its nature as the penultimate form of escapism. Progression invests the player in the game world, which is why virtually every game is trying to include some sort of progression component these days. This structure fits best in the MMO context as it is not merely an individual character that is progressing, but the game world as a whole around it.

I'd like to finish this rant with a piece of MMO history:

## **If You Want Something Done Right. . .**

This week I accepted a position as Associate Game Designer with **Blizzard Entertainment**. Specifically, I will be designing quests for **World of Warcraft**, Blizzard's MMORPG based on the popular **Warcraft** series. In addition to my duties as Quest Designer, I will also be expected to contribute to helping design the end game content for **World of Warcraft**. The reason I am sharing this information (besides the fact that I have a masochistic love of reading rants and flames about myself) is because I know that the fans of this site are hardcore MMORPG players. The readers of this site have also come to know my personal opinions on what constitutes a fun gaming experience versus what feels like a complete waste of time or poorly designed encounter.

You've all read my opinions on such things as tedious key camps, obvious time sinks devoid of any story or linear narrative, quests which reward the lucky over the skilled and quest rewards which are out of synch with the amount of time and effort required to complete them. I hope that my association with **World of Warcraft** will serve to comfort MMORPG fans that "one of us" is on the other side of the fence, looking out for the interests of the player.

The collective vision behind **World of Warcraft** is what really won me over. The folks working on the game are focused on making the world of Azeroth fun for all kinds of players, ranging from the casual gamer to hardcore people like you and me. To put it bluntly, they don't want you reading a book or watching TV while playing their game at the same time. The game is captivating enough where other distractions aren't necessary.

Blizzard's desire to provide well designed high-end content will prove to be a breath of fresh air for the readers of this site. Unfortunately, I cannot go into much detail at this time but I can say that there are ideas being discussed for the hardcore, end-game player which are nothing short of groundbreaking. You guys, the fans of this site, know how discerning I am when it comes to "uber" content in a game. Trust me, you have much to look forward to.

And to top it all off, the game simply looks amazing. I was blown away by what I saw. MMORPG fans have some very exciting things dawning on the horizon.

So with all that is going on with me, you'll have to excuse any lapses in updates to the site here. I will try my hardest to give you slackers something to read while you should be working. But in the meantime, there's a whole world of NPC's that need to learn the words "cacksuger" and "mo faka" and the like. . .although something tells me I'm already in trouble with the boss.

--Tig

This was the blog of Jeff Kaplan\*, one of the primary designers of WoW as we know it today. He was an infamous Everquest powergamer (and whiny, raging, easily trolled asshole) who, despite his talk of wanting to make a game that had something for everyone, ended up being one of the main forces driving World of Warcraft down the path of being a raid/item progression centric game. Whether or not you agree with his opinions or actions what we can see here is a player of a last gen game taking control over the next generation of development and guiding the genre down the path he wanted it to go down. That is precisely what has to happen for any of this to matter.

\* <http://web.archive.org/web/20090608034937/http://www.legacyofsteel.net/oldsite/arc27.html/>

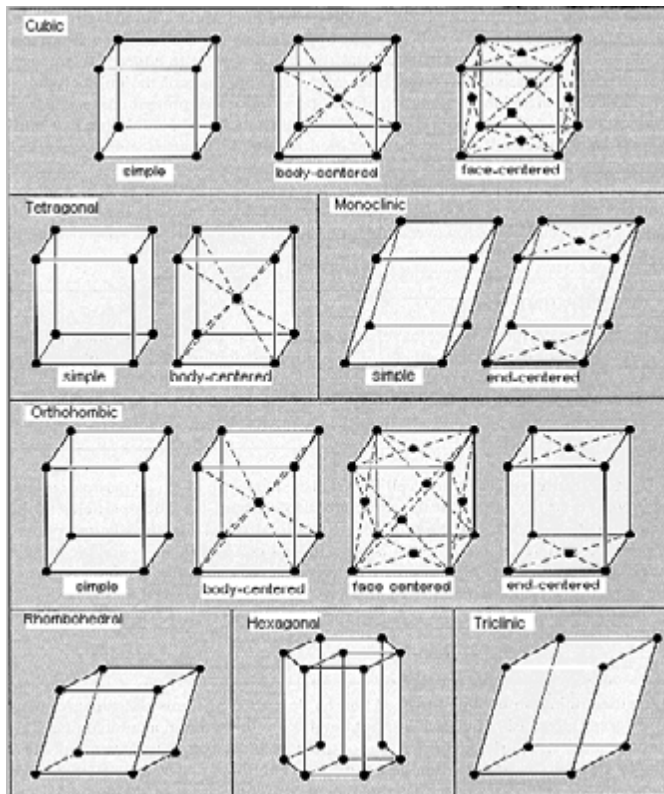


# Metallography

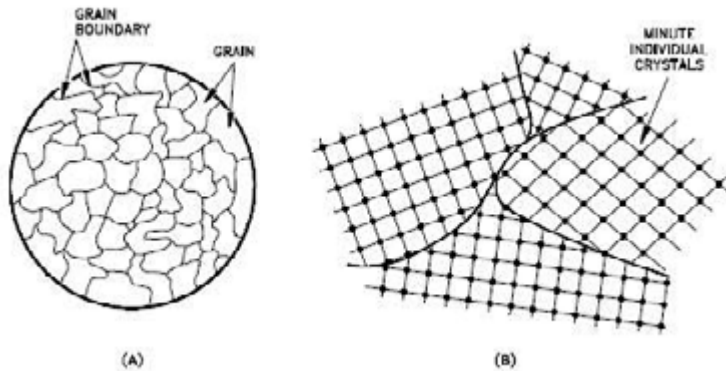
by Cataloniaball

When people are prompted with the question “What defines a material?” they usually ask “It’s composition.” and, while being truth, this only tells you a part of the truth. Imagine a diamond and a bunch of graphite: they are nothing alike but, surprisingly, both have the same chemical composition. Same with water, ice and vapor. In these cases, what defines the substance is not what it’s made of but how its pieces are organized. Metals are like this also and, being so important in the industrial output of any civilization, the study and analysis of them it’s required. Any technique that allows this is called a Metallography.

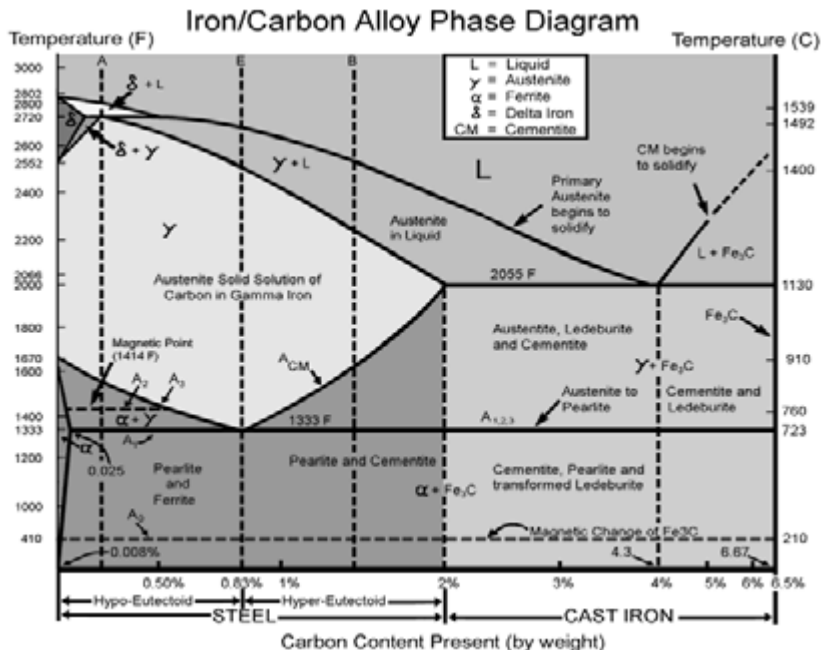
But first of all we should discuss how metals are usually (I’m looking at you, mercury) structured. The atoms organize in cubic and prismatic structures called “unit cells”.



These cells repeat themselves until they form a “lattice” which is the crystal. In a monocrystalline material this is the end of the story since the crystal is the material but in a polycrystalline one you have multitude of different lattices interacting with each other and forming “grains”. This is very common in metals.



To add even more confusion to this, polymorphism is also a thing. Different types of crystals can exist in the same solid which means you can have a solid made of a multitude of crystals made by a bunch of different unit cells. We will call to every type of crystal that a substance can adopt “phase”



and it's dependent on things like temperature, pressure and composition. As such, every phase is unique and has its own properties.

So, how do we see that structure? Well, first of all we need a sample. If the material you have is not small enough you need to cut a piece of it carefully and in controlled conditions because any change in temperature can change the structure of the material making the analysis useless.

Now you have the piece but it can be difficult to manipulate. What is needed now is a process called "mounting" and it consists in the creation of a base for your sample. There's two types: cold and hot. In hot one, you introduce the sample and a polymer in a mold and use heat and pressure during some time. The resulting is, obviously, the sampled mounted in a polymer base. The cold one uses resins stable at room temperature (like epoxy or acrylic). Both have their cons and pros and should be chosen depending of the material and the means you have.

Your sample is now small and easy to use but if you try to see something you will not see anything, not even on a microscope. In order to do so it's required the polishing of the surface you want to analyze. The objective of the polishing is to erase the marks the cutting process and leave the sur-





face flat. In order to do so the sample needs grinding. Using abrasive paper (SiC) with low mesh (the lower the mesh, the bigger the grain of the paper is) and generous lubrication, the sample should be grinded until only the marks of the paper are visible. After that the sample is again polished using paper of higher mesh. After using the paper with higher mesh you will see the surface is still not very polished. In the next step the abrasion is done by a liquid, powder or paste (usually diamond) on a cloth disc that spins. These abrasives also have different sizes and should be treated as the previous step, going from a bigger grain sizer to a small one.

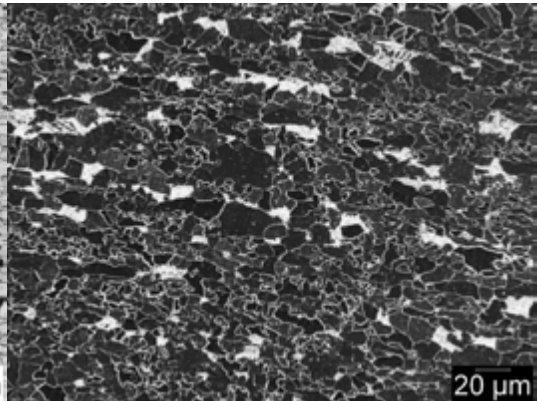
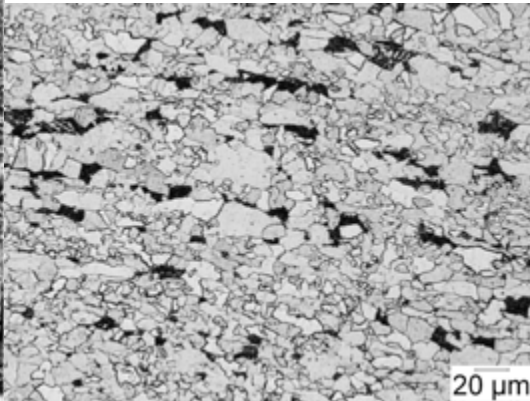
The surface of your material is now flat and will not tamper with the analysis. Let's take a look in the microscope. Wait, are you telling me you are not seeing anything yet? Well, most of the time the surface needs to be attacked in order to reveal its structure. Acids are used to attack the structure in a process called "etching". This means you will need some information about your material in order to select the appropriated chemical. As it turns out, impurities and grain boundaries are the most chemically active zones in the metal so using the acid will create a contrast between each of the grains and the impurities. Some types of etching even use tints to create even more contrast between the phases and the grains.



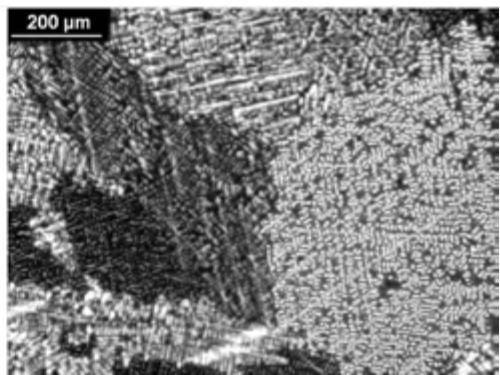
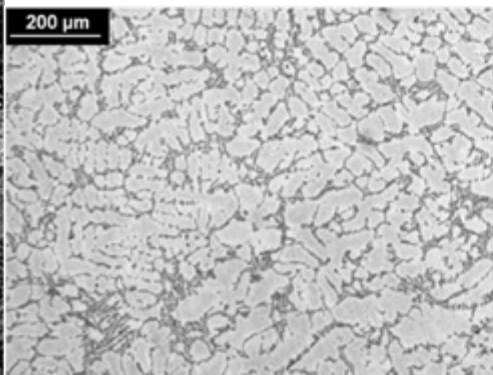


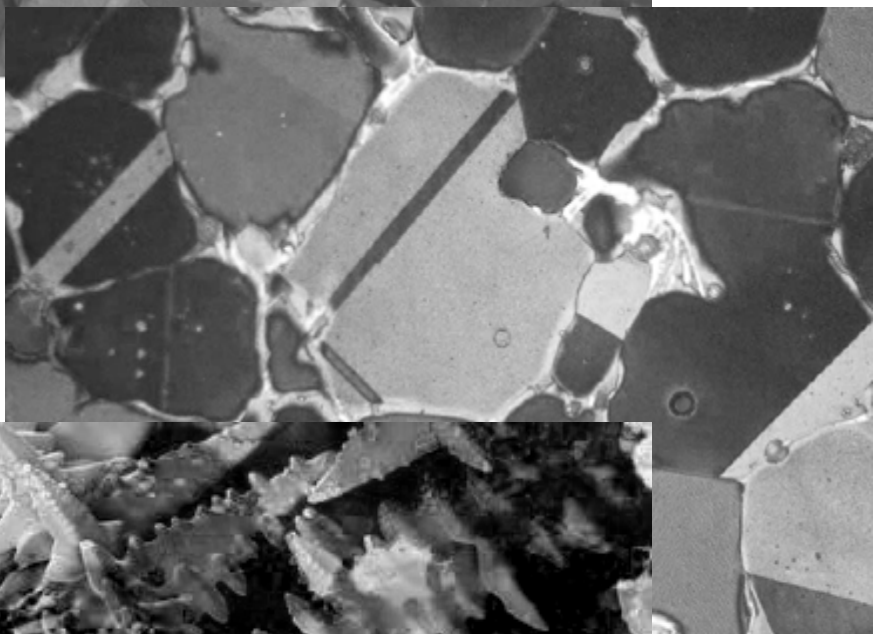
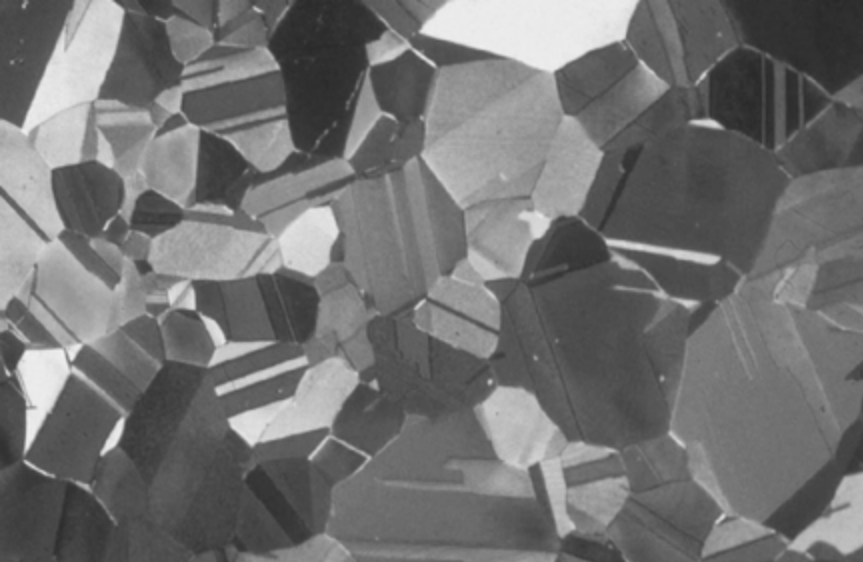
This way we can see what phases and precipitates are in our sample, their distribution and the average size of the grain. Sometimes this can be done with the naked eye but it's advisable to use some kind of magnification device. There are different techniques to do so:

Light optical contrast (LOM): Your usual microscope. Differentiates between flat surfaces and anything else. This can be subdivided in two more types: Bright-field and Dark-field. In the Bright-field one any surface perpendicular to the incident light will be seen as bright or white while in the Dark-field one the same thing will be seen as dark or black. In other words, one is the inverse of the other.

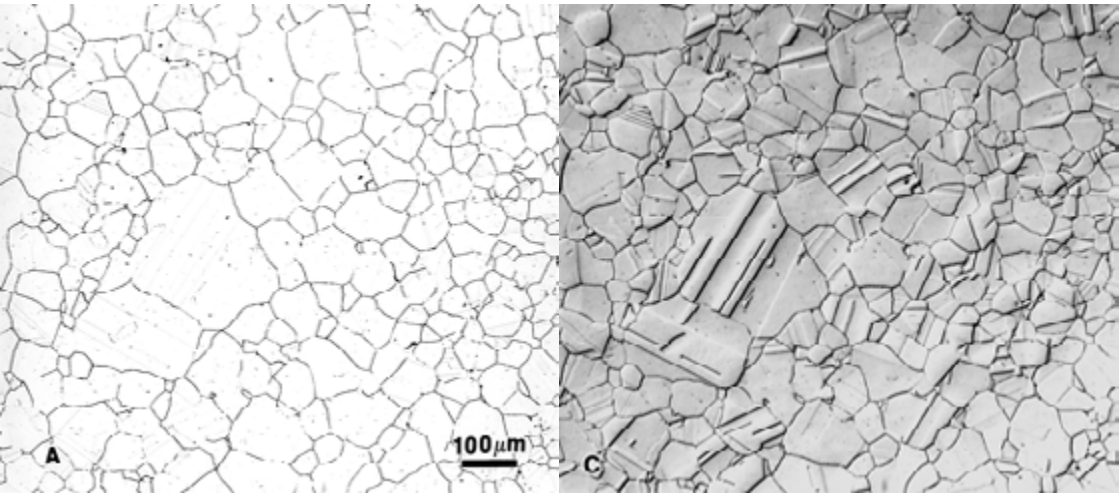


Polarized light (PL): This method consists in the usage of polarized light to analyze the sample. It can be really useful as the rotation of the light through the sample can create huge contrast between the different parts of the sample. The next figure highlights the same substance. Hard to believe.

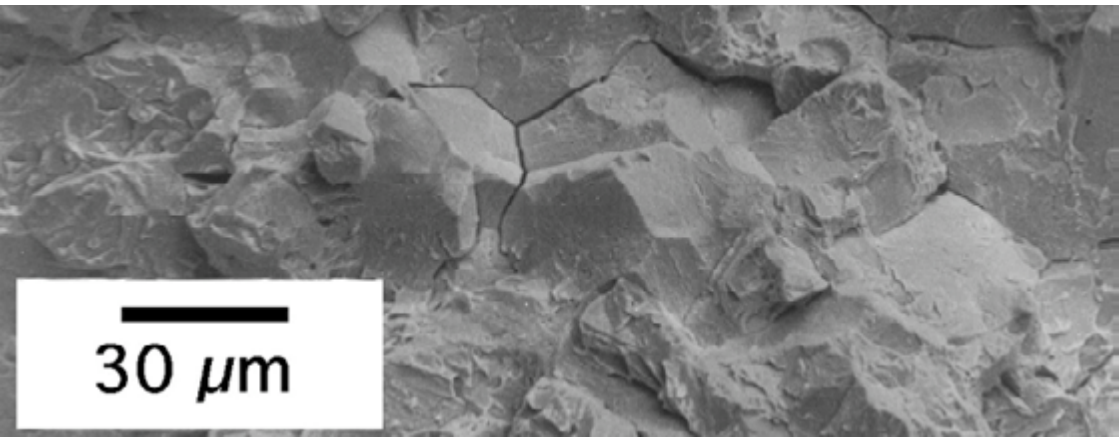




Differential interference contrast (DIC): Also known as Nomarski microscopy, uses polarized light and a complex system to introduce new detail to the images. This new detail usually translates in a sense of depth that the other images don't have. This system also replaced the Oblique illumination system which consisted in making the surface not perpendicular to the light in a LOM set-up in order to see the shades that the variations of height could produce.

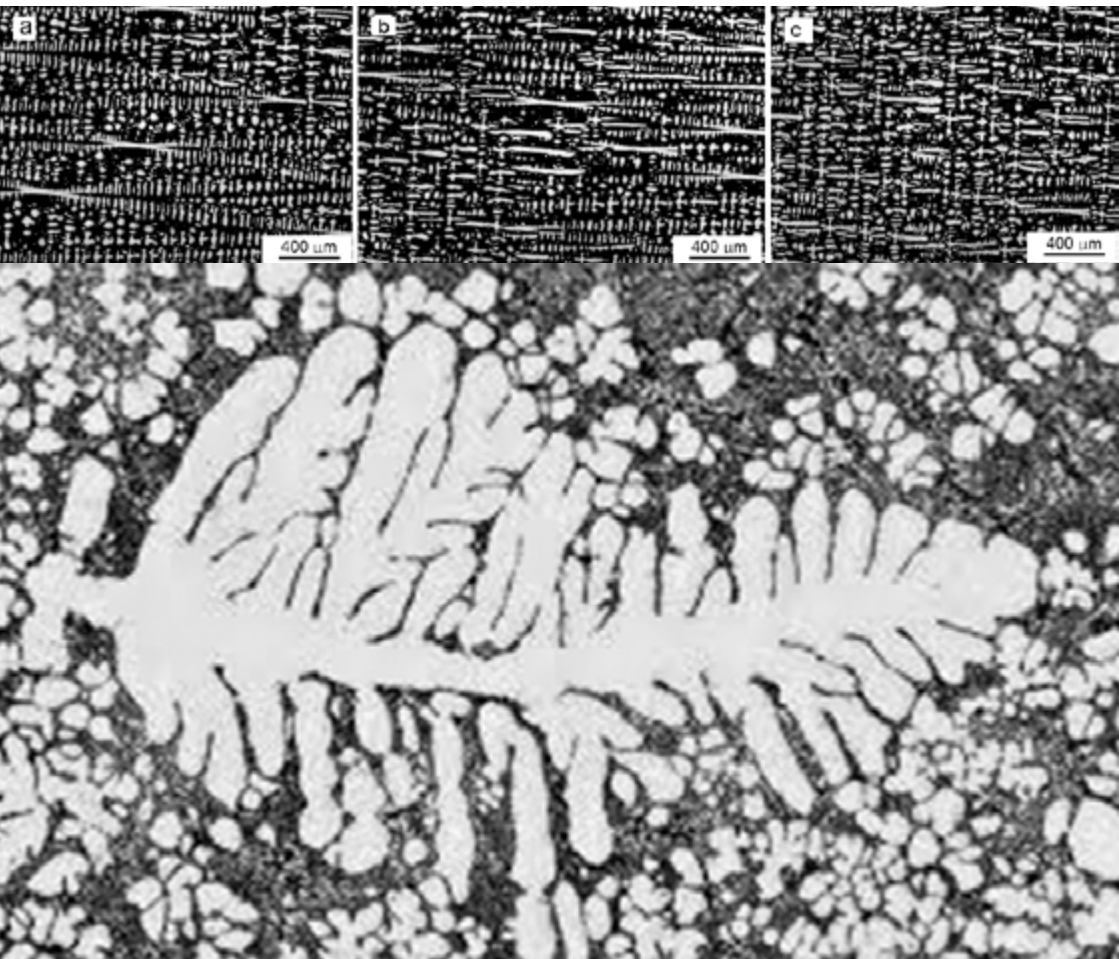


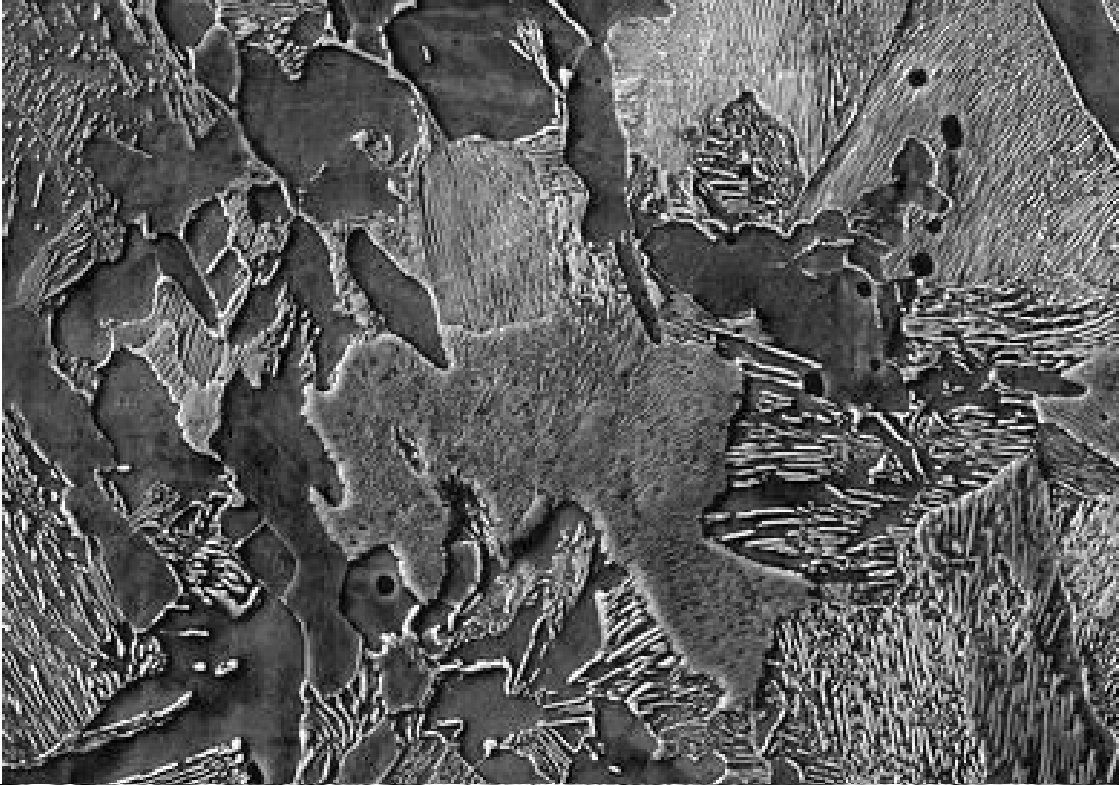
Electronic microscopes: This method is also used in the industry although not as much as the other ones since they are slower and more expensive. It works in a range of magnifications greater than the optical solutions and gives pretty unique images with striking detail.



X-ray diffraction techniques (XRD): The crystalline nature of the metals allows us to predict the how the x-rays will behave in the material making it possible to know what material are we facing without having to do any optical exam.

With these images you are know able to see any structural faults and, if you are experienced, say what type of metal you are working with and/or its properties.





## FAQ

### How can I contribute?

You can write an article, a poem, make pictures or submit something else creative.

### Where can I submit something?

Current thread, email or discord.

### When is the next deadline?

Generally every two-three weeks, depending on the amount of content. For exact dates see the thread or contact us

### Do I choose the pictures for my articles?

You can choose/make them yourself if you wish to, otherwise someone else can decide for you.

### Is there a length limit?

Generally we try to keep articles between 700-3.000 words. If necessary or justified by interesting form or content, exceptions are possible.

### What topics are suitable?

Alle, since any topic is KC-tier with the right approach.

### How do I know if my text is good enough?

As a rough measure see the already existing texts.

Some are for assburgers, other are less serious.

What needs to be present is at least an attempt to bring some structure into your text, since we don't want a zine made out of random thrash.

We are not grammar nazis, runglisch, weird stylistic choices and grammar abuse are fine, as long as you reread your text and try to be understandable.

### Contact

kohlzine@tfwno.gf  
discord.gg/juAshwD