

Thesis Research Brief

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I will be researching the contemporary relationship between natural systems and humans through the lens of Dark and Political Ecology and the context of design solutions. These two books, or rather philosophies, approach future systems and thinking in the age of escalating environmental decline. They are particularly interesting and relevant in identifying and proposing the subversion of human-centric political systems, ideologies and ecosystems. I will explore how artists and designers have approached this subject through different contexts and scales, with discourses around climate change and agrilogistics (ex: nature modification). This will involve analyzing how their aims may or may not align with an adequate critical approach to this alarming existential issue. Analyzing a spectrum of scientific, socio-political, ethnographic and artistic sources to examine this question, I will be taking into account two main factors:

1. How is the contemporary relationship between humans and nature (plants) defined?
2. Have the artists and designers been able to create an effective mediums to reflect these themes whilst been able to use relevant technologies to elevate it the contexts?

Through this I will be taking into account both the artist's medium, methods and aim. Whether mediums used nullify their intentions, or elevate it as well as the agency and political context they create in. In addition to directly approaching and analyzing artists' and designers' works with presented intentions; I will be pursuing a theoretical and scientific research within the lens of Political and Dark Ecology as well as other alternative schools of thought such as the Eco-Feminism. This will enable me to draw parallels to the varieties of the approaches as well as analyze the contexts and ideologies that fit within the artistic contexts or these creators - and thus revealing political and social alignments of these artist. Some the artists and designers I will be looking into will be Olafur Eliasson, Daan Roosengaarde, Jean Nouvel, Eduardo Kac and Benjamin Hubert.

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