The "Electronic Concentration Camp" of National Cryptocurrencies
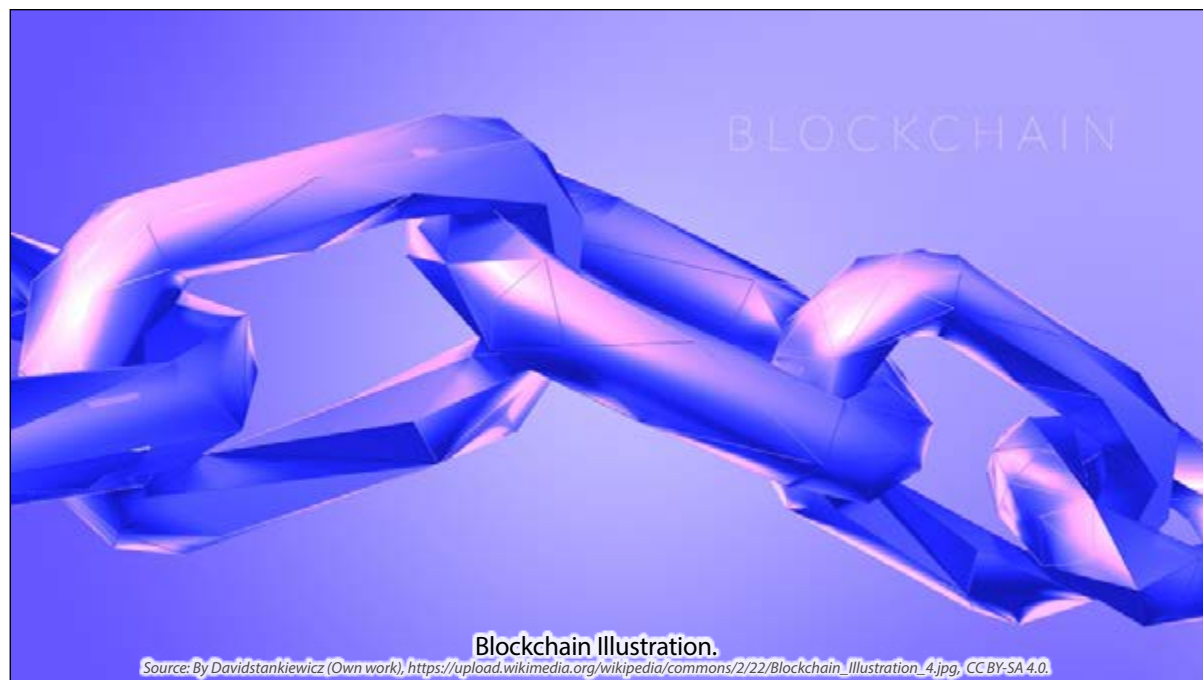
OE Watch Commentary: The current Russian-language Internet universe has been described surprisingly still very much in "Wild West mode" as far as netizens' ability to speak freely and imagine the worst. Russian-language web participants on a wide variety of websites have teased out the idea of a national cryptocurrency to its potential dystopian end: total state control of Russian citizens via the country's financial system.

As the idea of a blockchain-based government takes hold, tech-forward web users have started writing about how the proposed cryptoruble and blockchain-based banking will make it possible to trace and check every money transaction of every citizen. According to the author of the first excerpted article, state control over money flows is likely to grow exponentially. The author anticipates the government will sell the idea by claiming blockchain will help intensify its fight against corruption, against syphoning money off from the government budget, and against tax evasion and money laundering. As one user concludes in the comments to this article, "for sure whatever awaits cryptoruble users, it's nothing good," echoing widespread negative comments about the cryptoruble found on the Russian-language internet.

In the second article, the author speculates about the long-term effects of introducing a cryptoruble. In the Orwellian future described, the state would be able to completely control individuals' behavior with the threat of excluding them from the financial system altogether. The author makes the case for readers to resist moving to a cashless society, because they would be giving up their independence, allowing themselves to rely completely on – and be at the mercy of – the central banking system.

Calling e-government a "fashionable trend", the author practically begs people not to let themselves become "bio-objects" the government would be able to manipulate. With full access to all financial transactions for every individual, the government could put people on state-authored social black lists for bad credit or missed payments (as reportedly practiced in China recently), or even cut them off from the economy entirely by eliminating their access to bank accounts, and thus, their ability to earn money. **End OE Watch Commentary (Hall)**

> "*The only thing left will be to declare a dictatorship for a made-up reason, like, 'this is all for your safety'...after which they'll be able to manipulate people as they wish.*"

Blockchain Illustration.
Source: By Davidstankiewicz (Own work), https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/22/Blockchain_Illustration_4.jpg, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Source: mr-kryply59. "CryplyNews. Крипторубль и криптоюань, сразу два убийцы биткойна" (Cryplynews: The Cryptoruble and Cryptoyuan – Two Bitcoin Killers at Once), *Golos.io*, October 16, 2017. https://golos.io/ru--bitkoin/@mr-kryply/cryplynews-kriptorubl-i-kriptoyuan-srazu-dva-ubiicy-bitkoina

I suggest simply calling the cryptoruble and cryptoyuan electronic blockchain-based currencies – that's the real idea behind the creation of these cryptofrankensteins.

I assume it will be mandated that all non-cash payments for business and the government be replaced [with the cryptoruble]. The non-cash ruble will be squeezed out and completely replaced by the cryptoruble in the near future...

Bitcoin itself gave authorities the technologies for complete inventory and control of money operations. And it would be dumb to think the authorities would pass up such a fantastic opportunity.

Source: nalivaiko43. "Электронный концлагерь получится. (It's Going to End up Being an Electronic Concentration Camp), *Golos.io*, October 16, 2017. https://golos.io/ru--konclagerx/@nalivaiko/elektronnyji-konclager-nacionalnykh-kriptovalyut

In the long-term we're going to have an electronic concentration camp. If cryptocurrencies mean anonymity in all financial operations, then in the case of national digital money, it immediately becomes clear: all financial and physical movements are under control. Everything is recorded and copied from miners.

The only thing left is to declare a dictatorship for a made-up reason, like, "this is all for your safety", "we're fighting against corruption, terrorism, extremism, and money laundering", after which they'll be able to manipulate people as they wish.

And if anyone starts to voice any liberal, free-speech values, like, it's unacceptable to get into our private lives and record everyone and everything, those anarchists can immediately be excluded from all sources of income – by that time they'll all be digits in the blockchain.