



stability of these mining farms, all working together on a single task of adding transactional records to the Blockchain, in this way mining the valuable cryptocurrency Bitcoin.

The methodical procedure of mining uses graphics processing units, made to produce high-end computergraphics in videogames. Back in 2009, a fairly decent gaming computer could be used, however - reminiscent of the early years of the gold fever- the temptation for quick capital rapidly forced the mining business up to speed. As competition grew, the technical requirements for a feasible mining setup (determined by the ratio between mining revenue and electricity expense) increased drastically, as large-scale mining operations entered the game. The most successful, working from specially built datacenters located in remote areas of China, where the price of electricity is at its absolute lowest. These businesses now dominate most of the global mining industry, warehouses of endless rows of professional ASIC mining units, roaming away at more than fifty thousand terahash per second.

In a completely other world: the pageant lands of Azeroth, inside the massive multiplayer online role-playing game World of Warcraft, a somehow similar kind of resource extraction is taking place. This is accomplished by performing repetitive actions, such as slaying an infinitely spawning horde of monsters or crafting a particular set of items together- the aim of this to generate gold: the main currency in WoW. Creative gamehackers or 'gold farmers', distribute this task to supposed botnets: networked infiltration-apps, virtually taking the role of the avatar within the game, in order to systematically raid it for valuable resources. Bots are prohibited by the game developer's Terms of Use Agreement, but can often be spotted by cyclic movement patterns and automated chat replies.

Both assets of highly fluctuating and inflationist value, Bitcoin and World of Warcraft gold, like any resource, are exchanged for real money on secondary markets. Albeit the extraction methods bare no witness to physical work, this intangible and economy thrives by the ever increasing workforce of it's adhering servants: mining processes formed by mechanical equations, ceaselessly sowing and harvesting a boundless meadow, as an accumulation of surplus value in a world of immaterial labor....

