

The Postimperial Etiquette and the Affective Structure of Areas

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Abstract: This essay examines the role of translation in building the affective structure of postcolonial/postimperial areas, identifying *ressentiment*, erudition and disavowal, and homolingual address as the three main aspects to be studied. The postimperial etiquette is an agreement concerning the recognition of “legitimate” subjects and objects formed in the crucible of the apparatus of area inherited from the imperial–colonial modernity. This agreement functions as an ideology for contemporary cognitive capitalism. The essay ends by suggesting strategies for transforming the postimperial etiquette and proposes that energy be redirected away from both resubstantialized objects and anthropocentric subjects towards social relations that are both the point of departure for and the final determination of intellectual work.

Translation as a “Bridging Technology” with Ideological Functions

There is a series of terms beginning with translation that needs to be mapped out and connected, end-to-end. This is the series that runs through translation–culture–nation–race/species and can be rehearsed as follows: Translation is what enables people from different cultures to bridge the gaps that separate them, yet in the age of nation–states, culture has been appropriated by the practices and discourse of national identity. As for the modern nation itself, none of its claims to natural, organic status can hide its birth in colonial theories of race and species (which I shall denote by the term “anthropological difference”). Though translation therefore bears some intrinsic historical connection to anthropological difference, how are we to understand it today?

The culture–nation–race/species nexus takes us directly to the heart of historical capitalism. If we follow Elsa Dorlin as she charts the birth of the French nation in colonial theories and practices of anthropological difference, then we will agree that these

theories arose principally as a historical response to the new and accelerated practices of human migration growing out of mercantilism and colonial conquest (Dorlin 2009, 211). Dorlin's analysis, which is too interested in bringing our attention to the sadly overlooked connection between gender and race to make room for a full consideration of capitalism, draws my attention for one further reason whose importance to this essay will become greater as we proceed: the role of the body. The transition from royal to popular sovereignty was accomplished, according to Dorlin, by substituting the body of the nation, composed of supposedly natural traits (what would later be called "national character"), for the royal individual. The need for these nationalized traits to be "natural" unleashes an essential imbrication between race and gender that forms the core of Dorlin's important account, leading her to conclude that "[t]he question of the nation constantly refers back to its corporeality" (Dorlin 2009, 208). My interest in citing this passage will be to show how translation operates today as a somatic technology, tethering bodies to the apparatus of area that hides the matrix of anthropological difference by naturalizing the nation-state.

Following the new and growing visibility of the "constant crisis" that is the state at the end of the twentieth century, a broad spectrum of theorists, activists, and artists have been interested in exploring the potential of a nonrepresentational politics. My interest in nonrepresentational politics is limited exclusively to its potential ramifications for disrupting the schema of anthropological difference that forms the backbone of our common, global modernity. This article assumes that representational politics, that is, the politics of identity, is invariably tied to the state. The state is the point of reference that makes it possible to imagine complete congruence between taxonomies of anthropological difference, social organization, and divisions of knowledge without which identity politics would be meaningless. Hence, a nonrepresentational politics is by nature insurrectional, which means that it must fight against the "agents and agencies active in the invention of the ideological practices of everyday life in support of the reproduction of state power" (Kapferer 2010, 5). In relation to translation I would argue, in other words, that it must be considered in light of the reproduction of stateness (which is a way of producing and managing "anthropological difference" for the sake of capital accumulation), and that

it (translation) plays a crucial role in the management of the transition to a new type of world order based on the “corporate–state.”

While an analysis of the world order imposed among and by corporate–states is beyond the purview of this essay, it will be helpful to offer a quick review of the period prior to this time, the period of a world order constructed around the nation–state. If we follow Antony Anghie’s work on the colonial origins of the modern world system based upon state sovereignty, we are struck by his assertion that international law instantiates or “postulates” a “gap” within the global human population and then, having naturalized this gap, proceeds to enumerate for itself the task of developing all manner of techniques to bridge the gap (Anghie 2004, 37). Of course, you will immediately see the irony of a technique that is itself responsible for the problem that it is supposed to solve. (Perhaps Anghie has found the most economical definition of humanism around.) The reason that irony has remained largely hidden, we may conclude after reading Anghie, is to be found, with regard to the discipline or field of international law, in the ideology of cultural difference. As long as the “gap” of cultural difference was assumed, as the field of international law asserted, to preexist the practices of colonial encounter (just as the practices and institution of modern state sovereignty supposedly developed in Europe were assumed to preexist colonialism), the only viable question left for the development of that field of practice concerned the appropriate types of political and social technologies to bridge that gap. Now, this is exactly the role that translation has been called upon to play in the modern era of nation–states. Operating at a quotidian level, with a reach equal to or perhaps greater than law, translation has been a crucial technique for the establishment and consolidation of *areas*—that quintessential apparatus of modernity that correlates via a system of geo-mapping subjective formation to hierarchical taxonomies of knowledge and social organization.

I say it is a quintessentially modern apparatus precisely because of its importance to the fundamental project of modernity. According to modernity’s self-definition, the “modernity-project” should be defined through the principles of liberty, equality, and reason, but I think that we are now ready to admit that there is another side to the project of modernity, the succinct definition of which would be: a belief that technological progress and aesthetics

can be joined together in a single effort to develop the perfect race/species. Modernity is thus a project in species-being the work of which is manifested or located exactly in the body. This body should ideally be understood as the physical manifestation of an *area*, which is neither climate (Hippocrates) nor temperature (Aristotle), but is rather an instrument of endogenous genotechnology (Dorlin 2009, 209). This “area” is hardly a unitary phenomenon, but rather a series of nodal points relayed in constantly shifting assemblages among bodies, tongues, and minds. These assemblages are then grouped into populations. Hence, the project of perfecting the species through a concrete population of bodies grouped into areas invariably has to posit a split within the human species. This split, which was also present in Kant’s contradictory definition of “humanity” as both a universal quality shared by all members of a species and an ideal that was nevertheless unequally realized by different members or populations, has been a core component of the “modernity-project” throughout its history. I see a precursor of this Kantian strategy in Anghie’s description of Vitoria’s characterization of native peoples, who share universal reason but are burdened by a “personality” (which will later be called, once again, “national character”) that causes them to deviate from the universal norm. I do not wish to dwell on this history, but merely call attention to the need to provide a critical counterhistory that will provide an account of the political and governmental technologies invented and mobilized, as translation has been, “to bridge the gap,” when they were in fact participating in the consolidation and prolongation of the entire anthropological edifice of the colonial/imperial modernity (a racism vaster than any phenomenon known by that name today, for it includes virtually all other manner of social difference). It is my hypothesis that we do not see (or at least have not seen up to now) the ideological effects of these technologies precisely because we are (or at least have so far been) so deeply invested in the apparatus of area. These technologies, such as translation and international law, hide the essential strangeness of the areas into which the globe has been divided, as a means of population management for the benefit of capital accumulation, through the history of colonial/imperial modernity.

Ostensibly resembling the latter-day inheritors of premodern empires, kingdoms, feudalities, et cetera, these areas (typified

by the nation–state) could best be understood as an enormous apparatus of capture designed to subsume the productive capacity of society into the needs of capital. Within the organizational structure of the nation–state, the work of perfecting the race/species is always an aesthetic question as much as a technological one. Hence, we might refer to the anthropological work of modernity as *perfictioning* (a neologism that combines the two words “perfection” and “fiction”) inasmuch as it invariably involves a typology of fantasized images concentrated around, or projected upon, the link between bodies and nations.

As capitalism transitions to a new historical form, the role of the area–apparatus is undergoing a concomitant change. Today’s areas are designed not so much to capture as to “pool” populations within. As capitalism moves from its industrial phase to a cognitive phase, the “pooling” of population takes on its greatest significance within the emerging bioeconomy of semicapitalism and the corporate surveillance state. The call-word of this configuration is “life is code, primed for transaction.”¹ Although the contemporary configuration draws its symbolic resources from the cultural imaginary of the imperial–colonial modernity, its greatest ideological use is to cover up the total subsumption of population into the bioinformatic economy. No longer a source of surplus value simply through its role as labor, population is becoming a source of value through its role as an inexhaustibly mutable source of bioinformatic code. Population is, other words, pooled not just as labor—that is, producers—nor even just as consumers, but also for its role as source-code. The reason why the corporate-state “needs” to put just about everybody under surveillance ultimately amounts to the potential of all source-code to be “pirated.”

Translation today continues to play the role of ideology, preventing us from seeing how the “bridging technologies” are in fact prolonging the agony of the domination under which we live, labor, and perish. In the hope of providing elements for a critique of this ideology, I attempt in this essay to describe the affective structure of area, typified today by what I call the postimperial eti-

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¹ My thanks to Julian Elam for this phrase, which he developed in our seminar “The Apparatus of Anthropological Difference and the Subjective Technologies of Speciation,” held at Université Jean Moulin (spring, 2013).

quette. I propose that one part of the insurrection-to-come against the postimperial etiquette of the corporate surveillance state will emerge out of the subjectivity of the translator–subaltern.

Translation and Subjectivity

Naoki Sakai has been telling us for a long time that translation is a *social practice* (Sakai 1997). In it, the essential indeterminacy, hybridity, and openness of social relations is evident. Yet, Sakai also tells us, the dominant form of sociality established through the regime of translation in the modern era deliberately effaces such originary hybridity. The technical term that is used by Sakai to denote this form of sociality is the “schema of cofiguration,” which is premised upon the representational practices of the “homolingual address.” The identities created out of cofiguration are posterior to the translational encounter and mutually codependent, yet claim to be anterior and autonomous. This is the form of sociality that is essentially codified in the homogenizing machine of the nation–state, which would always like to present itself as an organic, historical entity when it is in fact an apparatus of posterior superimposition. The reason Sakai uses the term figuration is because the figure stands for an absent totality that cannot be grasped experientially and for which the imagination substitutes a schematic figure, like a map, that is essentially *aesthetic*. It is important to remember that in Sakai’s account the totality does not correspond to anything other than the schema itself. Rather than absent, it is fictive, in an active, generative sense. The power of this fiction is that it enables originary difference to be captured and plotted onto a grid of identifiable positions. Hence the schema of cofiguration is much more about establishing a *field of representation* in which identities are constructed in such a way that they appear to precede the establishment of the representational field upon which they depend (and within which they will certainly be organized in hierarchical fashion) rather than being about the content of specific identities.

Against representation, Sakai invites us to engage in the “heterolingual address.” Seen in light of Sakai’s critique, the difference between the hetero- and homolingual forms of address assumes the character of a political choice, bearing clear ethical dimensions. The ethics of national language, which Sakai identifies

with racism, exemplifies the stakes involved. It might be useful to point out, however, that the ethics of national language is not a characteristic unique to this or that particular language but rather a common denominator shared by all languages when they are “counted” according to a “Romantic Ideology” (Agamben 2000, 65) of cultural individuation (Sakai 2009). This understanding views both language and people as individualized, determinate entities, and assumes an organic link of equivalency between the two. The “schema of configuration,” as described by Sakai, is precisely the means by which the “Romantic ideology” of language and people is transformed into an ethics and an aesthetics of everyday, lived experience. To engage in the practice of heterolingual address constitutes a refusal of the aesthetico-ethical constellation of configuration and a desire for liberation from it.

The Affective Structure of Area and the Postimperial Etiquette

If, as Balibar writes, “the emancipation of the oppressed can only be their own work, which emphasizes its immediately ethical signification” (Balibar 1994, 49), then the emancipation from the apparatus of area, which oppresses all or else oppresses none, can only be undertaken collectively. Yet by the same logic, the repression of emancipatory movements against the apparatus of area can be expected to have a definite collective face as well. This is the difference between *complicity* and *cooperation*. Bearing in mind recent discussions that underscore the displacement of this problem at an ontological level by contrasting different forms of collectivity (often positing the state/people pairing against that of the Common/singular), I would like to direct our attention to the problem of affect, where it immediately becomes evident that the practice of *ressentiment* is by far the most ubiquitous response on both sides of the colonial/imperial divide to a refusal of configuration and an exodus from the apparatus of area.

The phenomenologist Max Scheler, who devoted a monograph to the subject of *ressentiment*, argues that one of the reasons it arises is because one side or the other in a typical social dyad (such as Master and Slave, or Male and Female) experiences the existence of the other in terms of existential foreclosure: since I can never have/be/feel what the other has/is/feels, I am motivated by an insatiable rancor. The critique of “egalitarianism” at the heart of

Scheler's work, which mistakes social equality for exchange value² rather than indeterminacy (and leads Scheler to see Jews, women, and socialists as representative sources of *ressentiment*), is not the subject of my concern here. Rather, I would like to suggest that there is another form of *ressentiment* undetected by Scheler, the type that arises not between the terms of a dyadic pair, but in the *relation of complicity* that unites them. In the midst of their difference and relative struggle, they nevertheless work together. Although their mutual fear is undeniably real and strong, it is not as strong as their mutual fear and anticipation of the emergence of something new, something that neither falls within the dyadic pair nor is part of its trajectory. It is, rather, this form of *ressentiment*—a form of crisis management that aims to sustain a certain regime of biopolitical production—that is most common today. *Ressentiment* is not a personal psychological problem; it is an affective structure peculiar to the institutions of national translation in which we work, and it opens up subject positions for bodies placed within. Those who pretend that they are free from this structure are precisely the ones who contribute, through their disavowal, to the structure's reproduction—even when they are deemed to be “fighting the good fight.”

The reasons why this form of *ressentiment* is now evident but was not yet visible a century ago when Scheler was writing are as much historical as methodological. Besides the revolution within phenomenology led by Martin Heidegger in the first part of the twentieth century that led to the rise of the philosophies of difference in its latter half (paving the way, in effect, for the ontological shift to which we alluded above), there is also the progression of geopolitical events that brought a formal end to colonialism and destabilized the sovereignty of the nation–state, gradually replacing it with the transnational corporate–state. As the philosophies of difference began to infiltrate humanistic disciplines outside of philosophy, the foundational oppositions of civilizational difference and national sovereignty were being thrown into disarray by the collapse of the Eurocentric system of international law that had dom-

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² Ironic, since Scheler bemoans the effect that exchange value has wrought upon social relations. To understand how equality can be understood as a form of indeterminacy in the social, it is necessary to link it to liberty, forming an inherently contradictory and unstable pair that Étienne Balibar calls the proposition of equaliberty. See Balibar 1994.

inated the world system throughout several centuries of colonial/imperial modernity. In other words, the “constant crisis” that is the state (Kapferer 2010) became visible. With the visibility of this crisis it suddenly became possible to imagine, *in the concrete arena of history*, subjectivities and relations that were completely unforeseen by the old oppositions between the “West” and the non-“West,” or between the native and the foreign.

Yet alongside these historical openings, we also undoubtedly see today a reinforcement of those anachronistic oppositions that take the form of complicity. A particular feature of capitalism, one which was undoubtedly present throughout its history but which has become easily visible today, lies in its penchant for creating profitable crisis. Under neoliberal “biocapitalism,” crisis has become a more or less permanent mode of operation for capitalist accumulation, so much so that there is a greater interest in the prolongation of crisis through regimes of permanent crisis management than there is in the resolution of crisis.

Within that context, academic exchange and the modes of address in today’s world are characterized by a relation that I would like to call the *postimperial etiquette*.³ My hypothesis is that the postimperial etiquette constitutes an affective structure, or subjective technology, that plays a crucial role in the contemporary biopolitical production.

Ressentiment, as I have proposed, is the first of its essential affective structures. The second element essential to the affective structure of postcolonial etiquette is an *investment in the homolingual address*, such as I have previously analyzed in twentieth century thinkers such as Michel Foucault (Solomon 2010, Solomon 2011), Jean-Luc Nancy (Solomon 2013), Giorgio Agamben (Solomon 2014), and Ernst Cassirer (Solomon 2009). The regime of translation constructed through the homolingual address lures even these great figures of twentieth century thought into projecting between retroactive and proactive alternatives: the images of a past-that-never-happened and those of a future-that-will-have-to-be-abandoned—that is, the West as both a tradition and a destiny.

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³ Although it is a postcolonial/postimperial phenomenon, for the sake of convenience I will use the term postimperial.

Recently, I have been trying to work out the implications of Sakai's critique of translation with respect to a phenomenon, which I call *speculative superimposition*, that is characteristic of modern postcolonial/postimperial societies in general (Solomon 2012). Here, we may refer to the affective trait of *mournfulness* expressed by deconstructive authors such as Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe when faced with a world beyond the apparatus of area. In a 1992 conference in Strasbourg, "Thinking Europe at Its Borders," Lacoue-Labarthe centers his intervention on the question of "afterwardsness" (*l'après-coup*⁴): "In its most abrupt, and hence most paradoxical, definition, afterwardsness designates the belated—but recognized—manifestation of something that did not happen or did not have even the slightest chance of happening. Of something that took place, thus, without taking place" (Collectif Géophilosophie de l'Europe 1992, 74). I am hardly persuaded that the "retroactive" quality identified by Lacoue-Labarthe as the philosophically essential movement of European modernity can be simply contained within and ascribed exclusively to an area called "Europe." On the contrary, this is, I would argue, a characteristic of the modern logic of area in general. As much as the modern nation–state would like to claim organic anteriority, it is always both an internal imposition and an expropriation from the outside. (This predicament is what eventually disqualifies the distinction between constituent and constituting powers, forcing the search for "destitute" powers instead—see Nowotny 2007.) The same "afterwardsness" is evident in the construction of the "West," which relies on translation to superimpose upon the image of spatiality a temporal process that leads to "exceptionally universal," metaphysical subjects. The deconstructive school of the postwar philosophies of difference that formed the locus in which Lacoue-Labarthe and other philosophers, such as Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy, worked was steeped in an historical awareness of the "end" of the "West." Hence it is no wonder that Lacoue-Labarthe warns us (or is it invites us to lament?): "afterwardsness can also, quite simply, take the form of regret or repentance" (Collectif Géophilosophie de l'Europe 1992, 76). Re-

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⁴ Lacoue-Labarthe explicitly takes up the Freudian–Lacanian theme of *Nachträglichkeit*. English translations of this term are either "deferral" or "afterwardsness," neither of which is fully satisfactory.

gret differs from repentance with regards to the recognition of guilt and the desire for repetition. One may regret the past not just because of some regrettable action, but simply because it is past, or has been fantasized as past, and hence desire its repetition without the slightest iota of contrition, much less repentance. Nostalgia for the bonds of a fantasized “lost community” that never really existed (or has been idealized and turned into an image) forms, according to Jean-Luc Nancy (1991, 9), one of the essential structures of modernity.

The phenomenon of “afterwardsness” through which areas are constructed finds expression in the postimperial etiquette through the affective quality of *ressentiment*. The reason why we use the French term, instead of an English translation such as “resentment,” is because of the etymological structure of the French word, which emphasizes a temporal dimension (*re-*) of repetition. *Re-sentir*: to feel again and again what one has not really experienced (which is the same as turning experience into a phenomenological fetish). *Ressentiment* plays such an important role in the affective structure of the postimperial etiquette precisely because it is intrinsically related to the temporal construction of the modern area–apparatus.

The regime of translation constructed through the homolingual address lures subjects into projecting between retroactive and proactive alternatives: the images of a past-that-never-happened and those of a future-that-will-have-to-be-abandoned.

The past-that-never-happened refers to the representation of translation as an encounter between two discrete languages. Sakai shows how this idea can only be retrospectively superimposed upon the translational exchange as a schema or an image. What this superimposition effaces is the essential hybridity and indeterminacy seen in the position of the translator, as well as the peculiar interruption of linear temporality in translation. This aspect of the translator corresponds to the problem of individuation, which makes it impossible to speak of language(s) as one would speak of countable nouns (Sakai 2009).

The future-that-will-have-to-be-abandoned refers to the way that the homolingual address guides action towards the future. Sakai explains:

By the schema of cofiguration, I want to point out the essentially “imaginary” nature of the comparative framework of Japan and the West, since the figure in cofiguration is imaginary in the sense that it is a sensible image on the one hand, and practical in its ability to evoke one to act toward the future on the other. (Sakai 1997, 52)

The “future” that is thereby constituted is reduced, according to the figural logic of the schematism, to a spatialized representation. The dimension of future temporality as irruptive discontinuity is effaced. “This is why,” writes Sakai, “difference in or of language that incites the act of translation comes as a representation only after the process of translation. Involved in translation is a paradox of temporality that cannot be accommodated in the worldly time of the past, the present and the future” (Sakai 2009, 86). Acting toward the future according to the schema of cofiguration constituted by the homolingual address produces a spatialized representation that effectively cuts off the temporality of the future as unrepresentable negation and creation. It eliminates, in other words, the possibility for new subjectivities that do not correspond to the oppositions installed by the schema of cofiguration. As an affective structure, the homolingual address operates exactly like that “angel of history” seen in Paul Klee’s painting and famously described by Walter Benjamin as being propelled “into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward” (Benjamin 1969, 258). The “future” promised by this form of sociality, typical of the apparatus of area, is a future of ruins. One of the characteristic symptoms of this mode of capturing the future particular to the apparatus of area is the peculiar dialectic between historical preservation and environmental destruction everywhere in evidence today. One does not have to look to ancient Mayan temples in the Guatemalan rain forests, regularly “mined” for gravel by developers to see the concrete nexus of this opposition. A much more potent example could be seen, for instance, in postwar France, one of the active world-leaders in the institutionalization of historical monument preservation and which holds it to be an absolute human value essential to collective identity. Yet as a nation that derives $\frac{3}{4}$ of its energy needs from nuclear power and is one of the main exporters of nuclear technology around the globe, France can be said to be playing an active, if ironic, role in the production of the ultimate form of “preserva-

tion”—the radioactively contaminated wasteland.

The third element in the affective structure of area to which I would like to draw attention is *erudition*. In the meaning to which I would like to ascribe to this term, it refers not just to the problems of access and class mobility, but also more generally to the socially meaningful qualification of “knowledge” and the distribution of it among bodily bearers. Erudition operates through *division*—the division of labor, to begin with, but also the disciplinary divisions of knowledge, the economic divisions of affect, and finally the individuating divisions of the body. Translation and address play an important role here, too, as erudition excludes or devalorizes certain kinds of knowledge that cannot be “translated” into the quantitative forms and standardized denominations to which the definition of “knowledge” is limited. In today’s neoliberal regime, such exclusion is exercised through the standards set by financially motivated evaluation bureaucracies. In today’s neoliberal regime, such exclusion is exercised through the standards set by financially motivated evaluation/surveillance bureaucracies, intellectual property regimes, and disciplinary boundaries.

Erudition is *time-consuming*. It signals both an unprecedented expropriation of the intellectual worker’s time, such that one is never fully off work, as well as a consumption of time by making affective experience a direct source of value (“consumers hungry for new experience”). Working-too-much, often under precarious conditions, is fast becoming the main way in which subjective disavowal, a fetishism of the object under the sign of erudition, is instituted, even among those of us who would otherwise like to be alert to the problem of disavowal. The technical term that Marx uses for “working-too-much” is absolute surplus value, typically produced by extending the worker’s labor time. Several decades ago, Gayatri Spivak used Marx’s technical term globally to characterize relations between the West and the non-West in the post-colonial era (Spivak 2009b, 123). Today, it would appear that the extraction of absolute surplus value through excessive labor time is fast becoming one of the principal ways to assure not just a hierarchy of relations but the unquestioned acceptance of the field of oppositional terms through which hierarchies are constructed and reversed. What is being forgotten is that the terms of specific difference, such as the West and the non-West, always contain a core

component of negativity, freedom, indeterminacy, and antagonism, and are never simply given.

Due to a Cartesian habit, we might not think of erudition in terms of affect, but under the definition that I would ascribe to it, affect “sneaks” into erudition through the particular way it individuates the body. Erudition constitutes a singular appropriation of the relation between body and knowledge by granting exclusive legitimacy to the abstract, accumulative form that we call, in English, the body of knowledge. The affective form that is closely related to this appropriation of the multiplicity of the body is the sense of knowing. Nationalism is precisely the modern political form that turns *knowing* into affect. While foreigners can know about the other nation, they cannot understand it in the same way as nationals; they cannot, in other words, partake in knowledge as an affective structure of feeling that is based in “experience” and shared among members of an imaginary community. Yet the category of experience-that-can-be-shared-sympathetically is determined in advance by the arena that capitalism, in the process of appropriating the state, establishes for the process of valorization. This is the arena of exchange value. Sympathetic knowledge, or national knowledge, is the form of exchange value that is being applied to the act of knowing understood in terms of fantasy—the fantasy of shared experience reflected in knowledge.

As an apparatus of fantasy, erudition’s most important role is found in recoding the body. It is not simply that *distantiation*, based on the Cartesian stance of objectivity, becomes the principle mode of relation, with all of its known symptoms. Erudition is also a means of maintaining an attitude of *indifference* or *disavowal*. The most common form of this attitude of indifference with regard to knowledge in the postimperial configuration can be seen in the institutionally sanctioned assumption that issues related to anthropological difference fall under the purview of specific disciplines or fields within the human sciences—what are commonly termed “area studies” in North America. The matrix of anthropological difference *per se* as an organizing principle for the human sciences must never be brought into question at an organizational level. The organization must be naturalized so that participants never see their own disciplinary commitments, including language and object-choice, in terms of the history of social relations under conditions

of colonial population management. It is not simply that objects reflect the desires and tastes of certain kinds of subjectivity (forming in effect a socially instituted form of prejudgment or simply prejudice), but rather that objects become means of disavowal by which people can ignore and forget the mediations and negations that constitute subjectivity as a social practice.

As an affective form, erudition is thus characterized by object-obsession and subjective disavowal. It is globally institutionalized and legitimized through the supposedly “natural” correspondence between disciplinary divisions in the order of knowledge and various social divisions in the order of political organization. And while it may look as if the university institutions in North America, in which greater anxiety about the status of objects is often seen (accompanied by all kinds of institutional innovations to accommodate interdisciplinary approaches), has an advantage in this respect, the truth is rather that an imperial nationalism, such as seen today in the United States, invariably calls forth performative gestures, such as transdisciplinary object-anxiety, in order to garner the sacrifice of minority populations for the benefit of the capital-state nexus. Disciplinary rigidity and obsession with the legitimacy of “pure” objects as seen in the other nations today outside North American high academia is not a sign of their “backwardness,” but simply the function of cultural nationalism formed *in relation to* imperial nationalism.

In short, the regime of erudition oversees the silent articulation of the reproduction of cleavages (reason vs. myth, speech vs. writing) and identities inherited from the imperial/colonial modernity to the neoliberal production of value through affect. The bearer of various forms (racial, ethnic, national, gendered, sexual, linguistic, et cetera) of social domination and exploitation that have accompanied modernity, erudition is above all concerned with *bodies of accumulation*. Whereas *capitalist* accumulation produces the bodies coded by political economy and *translational* accumulation produces bodies coded by civilizational and anthropological difference, *erudite* accumulation produces normalized bodies of knowledge as well as bodies normalized by knowledge.

It is through a process of identification with the body of knowledge as a site of accumulation associated with specific “areas” that intellectuals continually abstract themselves from the

production of knowledge as translational, social practice. In the postimperial scholar, this is seen most readily in the prolongation of disciplinary divisions and linguistic competencies and homolingual modes of address that form the obverse complement of the postimperial area studies specialist. The postimperial specialist of philosophy, for instance, is not expected to acquire linguistic and affective competencies associated with postcolonial areas, and typically relies on the homolingual address to negotiate anthropological difference. Or again, the postimperialist specialist of racism studies does not have to negotiate the composition of her classes and articles in relation to the demands of an academia-publishing industry complex in a postcolonial language organized by a postcolonial state that is itself composed through various forms of institutionalized racism.

Given the recent demonstrations of admiration for public intellectuals in the “West” whose politics are characterized by their admirers with epithets such as “fuck off!” (Rancière),⁵ or who gain notoriety for scandalously scatological humor (Žižek), it might be necessary to explain just what we intend to get at by a critique of “etiquette.” *Etiquette* is part of the “immunitarian” apparatus described by Alain Brossat in his critique of modern liberal democracy. The English usage of the word, which is associated with “good breeding” (Merriam–Webster), underscores its relation to the theme of racial exclusion that forms the hidden backbone of liberalism (Cole 2000)—and modern sociality in general (Quijano 2000). As such, it is a biopolitical technology, for which Brossat offers a wonderfully succinct description: “the distribution of bodies in a dense space, via the mediation [*truchement*] of a system of rules named etiquette” (Brossat 2003, 36). In the dense space of knowledge, the trio of erudition, homolingual address, and *ressentiment* constitutes the affective structure according to which bodies of knowledge are constituted and areas populated. It is *immunitarian* to the extent that it protects the anthropological matrix that supports capitalist accumulation in the colonial–imperial modernity from being overturned.

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⁵ <http://critical-theory.com/who-the-fuck-is-jacques-ranciere/> accessed on May 20, 2013.

Brossat uses the French word *truchement* to speak of a mediating role played by a “system of rules.” Although the term’s usage here certainly refers to a general effect of mediation, it is worth noting an older, yet still current, literary usage of the term that refers to a translator and translation. We might thus take this usage as an invitation to think about what would happen were we to substitute *traduction* for *truchement*—that is, “translation” for “mediation.” Doing so, we would find that etiquette is precisely the governmental technology that uses translation as a means of distributing bodies across dense space—that is, the space delineated by the apparatus of area. This definition of etiquette approximates Naoki Sakai’s understanding of translation based on homolingual address. As such, it constitutes the main operation of capture exercised by the apparatus of area.

Can the Subaltern Translate?

The importance of subjective transformation in the postimperial/postcolonial age was highlighted at the beginning of North American postcolonial studies in 1988 by Gayatri Spivak in her famous essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (Spivak 2009a). In that work, Spivak deftly displaces the practice of cultural knowledge production in the wake of colonialism and capitalism away from the image of objects, no matter how marginalized or “illegitimate” in the eyes of dominant representations they may be, towards the production of subjectivity. It is the role of intellectual elites—on both sides of the imperial/colonial divide—that is targeted by the critique of subjectivity in Spivak’s essay.

As usual, translations of the postimperial discourse into a postcolonial context can be extremely helpful for understanding the stakes involved. In the discussions of Spivak’s article in Taiwan, two of the most common translations of “subaltern” are 庶民 (*shu4min2*) and 賤民 (*jian4min2*). These are classical terms that both share the same cognate *min2* as part of their two-character compound. Skipping over the possible parallels between *min2* and the Latin-derived word “people,” what the two Chinese terms share in common is a description of the people as common or low. In other words, what we have here are translations that add a biopolitical element to the original term subaltern (which describes not a people but a quality of subjugation, and is hence technically limited to the

element of politics). The biopolitical translation risks resubstantializing the term “subaltern” through the matrix of anthropological difference—which, as I will show, is precisely what Spivak fights against. Needless to say, this resubstantialization has received privileged institutionalization in the postimperial academic world, and it is precisely here that a look at translation becomes especially informative.

Let me explain this message by citing another variant translation of the term “subaltern” that I have seen circulating within Taiwan: 從屬階級 (*cong2shu3 jie1ji2*), the “class of subordinates.” Once again, this translation runs afoul of the reading of Spivak’s article that I favor. The inclusion of the word “class” (*jie1ji2*) in the translated term effectively reintroduces the very point that Spivak’s essay problematizes: people are something else before they are a class or a type or a figure—before they are a people, which is always what the state elites *and* their prefab minorities want them to be. “Subalterns” share aspects of the “unrepresentable”—except that they do not stand heroically “outside” the register of representation guaranteed by the state form of social organization, but are rather hidden or silenced in the biopolitical warehouse of the industrial reserve army, the “pool” of a genetic population, or the sweatshops and brothels of illegal migrant labor. Here, representation is not a formalistic problem, but a practice connected to capital’s appropriation of species-being precisely at the point where the mode of production meets the mode of subjection. Hence the necessity Spivak felt to remind her readers of the difference between relations of domination and relations of exploitation, and the need to read across both registers without conflating the two in a schema of representation. Needless to say, a recuperative reading of the subaltern that reinstates the original Gramscian formula (“subaltern class”) that Spivak had explicitly attempted to rework (by eliminating, first of all, the term “class,” which always refers us back to the state), is hardly a problem limited to Chinese translations. Indeed, the existence of such a translation can only be explained by the realization that it is, of course, a translation not of “the text itself,” but rather of the way in which the North American university-publishing complex has bestowed upon it the honor of domestication by canonization. So, it is not a mistranslation at all, but a translation that is coldly accurate. The subjective effects of this domesticating canon-

ization become all too apparent when one considers the frequency with which the term “subaltern” becomes conflated with or simply substitutes for “the non-West,” leading to the use of nonsensical terms such as “the non-subaltern” to refer to the West.

For Spivak, the precise location of this appropriation cannot be *identified*, it can only be reconstructed as it were, on the basis of a rift in subjective formation. Through a series of brilliant readings of Marx, Foucault, and Deleuze, Spivak shows that there exists a split in subjective formation that corresponds to the two meanings of the English term *to represent* (which are treated, in the vocabulary of German philosophy utilized by Marx, through the two verbs *vertreten* and *darstellen*). These two meanings correspond to the difference between the subjects formed in relations of domination and those formed in the relations of exploitation. The former requires an analysis of relations to power, the latter an analysis of relations to production. It is the modern state—which of course can now include suprastate organisms and nonstate ones as well—that offers the promise of “fixing” the relation between the two, offering a precise location, as it were, such that two projected images seem to merge, just as happens in the optical viewfinder of a coincident rangefinder camera. The image, or fiction, of this “place” in which location and identity, past and future, language and people coincide is an essential feature of the aesthetic representation crucial to the modern apparatus of area. Spivak’s essay thus contributes to the classic Marxist notion of class, which is summarized, as Jacques Bidet would say, by the formula “the state is always a state of class.” Spivak shows, by displacing domination and exploitation, that the notion of “class” must be expanded (without losing the specificity of “class”) far beyond the limits of political economy to accommodate a vast tableau of dynamic, minoritarian relations (of which gender is only the tip of the iceberg) within the construction of anthropological difference. The “subaltern” is thus the name for the spacing that is undecidably *both* the concrete body of this or that downtrodden and marginalized individual *and* the possibility of a being that can no longer be configured through the matrix of anthropological difference. Not “humanity,” not species-being, not an inheritor of the entire anthropological project of the colonial-imperial modernity devoted to perfectioning, but a true (and truly caring) stranger.

From the perspective of a concern with translation, the reasons for the necessity of this expansive analytic find themselves in the correlation between the history of linguistic transformations under the auspices of the modern nation–state and the transitions of capitalist “development.” Although the creation of national language in Europe was linked to class through the rise of the bourgeoisie and their need to create a political community opposed to that of a kingdom, this narrative obfuscates that part of the European nation that was forged, as Elsa Dorlin shows, in the colonies. There, the class element was concomitantly fused to an anthropological element (beginning with race and gender). “Europe” and its nations only became “European” through this process of fusion (between gender, race, class, language, ethnicity, sexuality, et cetera) that established the anthropological matrix of modernity and naturalized it via the apparatus of area.

The crux of Spivak’s essay lies, as we have said, not with the identification of objects and their historical deconstruction, but rather with the constitution of subjects, particularly the subjects of knowledge forming under the shadow of capital and the state in the apparatus of area. For this reason, I must confess that the one thing that is strangest to me in the extraordinary reception this widely circulated essay has received is that so many commentators have looked at the subaltern *as a problem to be solved or an idea to be applied*, rather than, as Spivak writes in an entirely different context (one that is actually about translation), *a locus to inhabit* (Spivak 2005, 95)—or, as *an invitation to cohabitation*. We need, in other words, to develop practices of “being there” that are different from those normally catalogued under the Apparatus of Area.⁶ This is not a call for a new aesthetic piety of place, but rather a plea to definitively end the essential project of modernity: the idea that technological progress and aesthetics could be allied together in the creation of a perfect species—what I want to name by the neologism “perfictioning.”

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⁶ I do not think that I have yet compiled a complete catalogue, but there are several series whose importance is evident: 1) typology: character–figure–image; 2) ontology: origin–individuation–hylomorphism; 3) anthropology: animal–human–milieu; 4) economy: production–exploitation–accumulation; 5) statistics and logistics: temporality–event–control

While her emphasis on unrepresentability leads Spivak to conclude that the subaltern by definition cannot speak (which means that the subaltern always disappears under the weight of representation when subjects are made to conform to identities that ignore their constitutive, originary difference), she does not consider her startling answer from the perspective of translation. Or, more precisely, the position of the translator. The translator, of course, is in the position of someone who speaks without ever meaning anything herself. She is never authorized to say “I.” Strategies based on the disclosure of the “invisibility of the translator” (Venuti 1995) are important to the *politics* of translation, and for that very reason they ultimately amount to a reinvestment in the nexus between modes of production and modes of subjectification through the category of identity. In lieu of *invisibility*, Sakai (1997) calls attention to *the hybridity and indeterminacy* of the translator, and he proposes a practice of heterolingual address that accounts for discontinuity as a constitutive moment of the social. This outline of the position of the translator leads me to suggest that for *the professional university-based intellectual* the ethical response to the problem of subalternity will not be found in speaking or listening, but rather in “translating.”

To suggest that an ethics of subalternity can be found in translation is quite different from suggesting either that the subaltern “herself” translate or that intellectuals translate “for the subaltern.” A negative example will help to illustrate my point, and prevent the confusion that might occur by modifying an idea that was first described in a remarkable text by a North American graduate researcher in political science, Jay Maggio, titled “Can the Subaltern Be Heard?” (Maggio 2007). This article, which demonstrates formidable familiarity with Spivak’s *oeuvre*, proposes translation as a viable means of displacing Spivak’s original question.

The genius of Maggio’s formula is, however, not well served by its elaboration. Symptomatically, the article falls into the well-populated ranks of those respectables who have assigned themselves the task of finding “a possible solution to the Spivakian puzzle” (Maggio 2007, 438). More disturbingly, the author relies upon a notion of cultural translation, whose presuppositions of homolingual address we do not share, to “advocate a benevolent translator in the West who offers a sympathetic reading of the subaltern”

(Maggio 2007, 437). Although the rhetoric of benevolence and sympathy—as well as “respect” (Maggio 2007, 435)—offers a fine opportunity to remind ourselves about the merits of Christiane Voltaire’s (2007) more materialist analysis of the politics and aesthetics of humanitarian aid in its relation to war, the arms trade, and the politics of “regime change,” I would like to focus our attention on this idea of being “in the West.” In spite of the unmistakable spirit of charity and humility that characterizes this text, the one reform that is not contemplated is subjective—the crucial one, as far as subalternity is concerned. If “the translator must recognize the implicated relationship of the Westerner and the subaltern” (Maggio 2007, 434), the translator in Maggio’s text never dislodges itself from its self-assurance about identity. In order to get a sense of the magnitude of this self-assurance, I would ask the reader to bear with a lengthy list of textual citations that refer to the “West,” including: “Western discourse,” “the Western translator,” “the Western academy,” “Western thought,” “the intellectual Western scholar,” “a Western critic (citizen),” “Western philosophical traditions,” “the Western approach,” the “Western viewer,” “the Western self,” “the modern Western subject,” “Western metanarratives,” “a uniquely Western notion of the subject,” “the very Western concept of an active speaker,” “the careful Western [*sic.*],” et cetera. Such self-assurance might be taken in this postimperial era as the sign of humility and respect; countless theorists of much greater sophistication than myself and Maggio have been known to engage in the same repetitive obsession. Essentially a catalogue of translational tropes, this manner of invoking the West inevitably leads the author to ask, halfway through the article, “how can the Western scholar study the subaltern?” (Maggio 2007, 431).

My response to this question is to repeat the mantra “away from the study of objects and back to the formation of subjects and social composition.” The lessons that the subaltern has to teach us about representation and its objects extend equally to the translator. Even the longest list of supposed civilizational traits combined with the most well-intentioned discourse that “recognizes the conditional nature of the constitution of both the dominant group as well as the subaltern” (Maggio 2007, 436) cannot immunize the translator against her own essential hybridity—much less against what Foucault dryly terms the “form of a relation with power” (Foucault

2000, 162). Hence it is no surprise to find discussions of subalternity, among those who would like to treat it as an ethical relation to objects of study, conducted in a confessional mode whose ultimate effect is to reconstitute identity as a subject of representation. Undoubtedly, there is a postimperial etiquette at work here. Given that the history of colonialism is seen as a massive project of expropriation, the postimperial scholar signs on to a pact (the postimperial etiquette), in which his identification with the West is to be taken as the sign of a historic eschewal of the politics of imperialist expropriation. An overwhelming proportion of today's postimperial scholars—even the ones who specialize in postcolonialism—have embraced this ethics of positionality associated with their respectful acceptance of the area in which they are supposed to be assigned.

It is precisely at this point that Naoki Sakai's unique account of the position of the translator really shines. What is revealed here is an essential, original hybridity and indeterminacy, present in every social relation, yet whose presence can never be fully represented or conveyed or captured. I would like to suggest that it is this "position" that is the only viable option for the intellectual *of any location* on today's postcolonial/postimperial geocultural map who is concerned about the ethics of subalternity. So, for professional intellectuals, *it is a question of becoming subaltern with regard to the postimperial etiquette, and then of using this process of becoming to expand the ranks of subalternity without end.* This process of becoming must not be viewed through the terms of sympathy, much less appropriation; *it must not, in other words, become an aesthetic project of mimesis and figuration through which the modern project of perfectioning, or fabricating racial/species perfection, can be realized technologically!* Instead, the process of becoming subaltern has to be directly aimed at the apparatus of area, which is the main impediment to the maximization of subalternity without end. That injunction means that intellectuals will have to undertake or commit to a series of revolutionary changes in the oppositions that structure the "area-institutions" in which they work, beginning, in the context of a discussion about translation, with the valorization of authorship over that of translation, and extending beyond that specific context to the affective economy that is mobilized in support of the apparatus of area. The invention of new forms of inhabitation outside of the apparatus of area—or, to use a

less jargonistic language, the abandonment of the postimperial/postcolonial, civilizational state and the exodus from the future-ruins and past-images in which it has trapped us—is, to my mind, the only way to “adequately address the damage done by colonialism” (Maggio 2007, 431). Which is to say, of course, that the only form of reparation that makes any sense in the face of *that unrepayable debt* is to recycle the affective debris of area into a being that does not accumulate, but grows through shedding.

Transforming the Postimperial Etiquette

A collective pact concluded precisely over the apparatus of area could never function without an affective component. In a recent work, Franco “Bifo” Berardi has described what he sees as the major affective traits of “semicapitalism” (Berardi 2009a). Chief among them is the pendulum that swings between depression and panic, from bear market to bull market. Berardi talks about interrupting the obsessive repetitions in order to create alternate refrains. My very un-Spinozist response to Bifo is that we replace depression with *sadness*. In the context of this essay, I will define this as the positive affirmation associated with carefully observing the way in which the trio of homolingual address, *ressentiment*, and erudition entraps us and prevents our liberation from the apparatus of area. Such sadness becomes the platform not for rejecting the affective structure of area, perhaps claiming ourselves to be liberated from it while others languish (or revel) within, but for embracing it within the transformations of the collective bodies–tongues–minds assemblage(s). In other words, while depression is individual, sadness is transindividual. Depression is the form that sadness takes as it goads us into individuating in the retroactive–proactive way that is typical of the apparatus of area. Sadness is affirmative in the sense that it restores depression to its transindividual element.

Undoubtedly, this transformation of affect from the individual to the noncollective transindividual is part of an ontological shift. Scheler’s text on *ressentiment*, for example, can be read, as Olivier Agard’s neat analysis of Scheler shows (Agard 2009), through the twin themes of an antihumanist problematization of hylomorphic anthropology and resistance to capitalist modernity. First published in 1912 and rereleased in an expanded, revised edition

in 1915, Scheler's work in this text presages his incursions in the 1920s into the debates over philosophical anthropology taking place in the Weimar Republic. Agard's excavation of Scheler's work reveals a philosopher who stands, problematically, at the center of a paradox between an "anthropocentric tendency" and an "inverse tendency towards a rupture with anthropomorphism" (Agard 2009, 185). As both the "measure of every reality" and a "cultural construction" or bit of "stardust," summarizes Agard, "man is both central and decentered at the same time" (Agard 2009, 185). In *Ressentiment*, Scheler bemoans the way in which modern capitalist society perverts the Christian notion of love, directing it towards humanity in its generic qualification as a species (Scheler 1994, 99). Under capitalism, "the will of the species" substitutes itself for the good, which is reduced to a function of utility. As a result, a "new man" is produced. The new man is a hylomorphic type, defined by his relation to animality (not God). For Scheler, it is precisely this sort of hylomorphism (a word that he does not use, as far as I am aware) that creates of man a figure that oscillates between the "overman" and the "overanimal" (Scheler 1994, 105; my translation of *Übertier*). Even as Agard warns against conflating Scheler's antihumanist problematization of anthropology with the likes of Michel Foucault (leaving aside the details of Agard's fascinating, yet brief, comparison between the two thinkers), his description of Scheler implicitly recalls the Foucaultian critique of man as an empirico-transcendental doublet. Agard concludes that "[t]his dilemma remains valid today" (Agard 2009, 185). The conclusion I take from his analysis is that, at its base, *ressentiment* arises when the nonhylomorphic pair "Common/singular" (Virno 2009) is diverted to serve the interest of accumulation, becoming a state–people nexus instead. When Scheler speaks of affect in terms of a contrast between being a "passive feeling" (what is translated into French as a "state") as opposed to an "action" and "movement" (Scheler 1994, 93), he betrays the productive negativity in his antihumanism and falls back into anthropology. The vocabulary of state, act, and movement is political as well as physical. Behind this physics of power lies a Hobbesian anthropology. In place of this classical political physics and its attendant anthropology, it would be well to recall what Bifo says about power: it is not a force, but a field of relations (Berardi 2009b, 118).

With regard to reclaiming erudition, the most stubborn obstacle to a reappropriation of this relationship today is the colonization of time. I feel embarrassed to admit that the only strategies I can propose in the face of this time-consumption system are the refusal of work and volunteerism. The latter is undoubtedly a compromise, and bears an uncomfortably close resemblance to the way in which “free” labor is an integral part of the neoliberal model of labor management. The former is simply not an option for many—work, in the capitalist logic of surplus population, refuses them. For these reasons and others, the liberation from the colonization of time through the refusal of work is only the beginning, and could never be an end in itself. The most important ways of reappropriating erudition will have to come from transformations in the relation between knowledge and the body. This is another facet of permanently leaving behind the anthropological project modernity. We start by refusing to adopt an exceptional position, such as seen in the Cartesian split. For professional intellectuals, this means first and foremost that the construction of disciplinary objects must always be contested, if not refused. First, by questioning codes of domination in the objects presently considered “legitimate”; second, by questioning and rejecting the institutional imperative to devote one’s work to disciplinary objects at all. In place of disciplines devoted to objects that accumulate in the body of knowledge, we need disciplines devoted to knowledgeable practices of subjective transformation.

By way of conclusion to this section, let me quote a passage from a fascinating work on the capitalist mobilization of affect by a member of the French Regulation School, Frédéric Lordon: “[I]t is once again Spinoza who gives us perhaps the definition of true communism: exploitation of affect will come to an end when men know to direct their common desires—and form an enterprise, yet a communist one—towards objects that are no longer material for unilateral capture, or, in other words, when they understand that the true good is that which wishes that others possess it at the same time as I” (Lordon 2010, 195–196). Lordon is expressing nothing less than an ontological revolution away from possessive individualism. For Lordon, this means going beyond the notion of objects as “material for unilateral capture.” Yet, based on my experience engaging in and reading through a critique of the apparatus of area, Lordon’s

formula still leaves too much room for the subjective investment in objects that is known as disavowal. No longer taking the individual as the legitimate unit of analysis means precisely rethinking the nature and status of objects. Ultimately, the constative part of the intellectual sphere rejoins the performative part. Social relations enjoy the singular position of being the nonrepresentable, practical fulcrum between those two moments: they are both the originary point of departure and the element of determination-in-the-last instance. Armed with this sort of awareness, our interest in objects, be they disciplinary or transdisciplinary, pales in comparison to our eagerness to embrace the realm of *cooriented ontology*, “neither a return to the substantial object nor a so-called necessary anthropocentrism [but] an existentialism resolutely opposed to all homogeneity, to all ontological flattening as to all foreclosure of the common—an existentialism without reserve” (Neyrat 2013, 25). The critique of area studies shows that what is crucial to the transition to a world that has nothing to do with colonialism, and perhaps capitalism, is neither the accumulation of critically powerful troves of knowledge about specific objects nor so-called maturation and growth in the sphere of the subject, but rather the simplicity of thinking relation before the emergence of the two terms of which it is supposedly the expression—something like what the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy calls *Mitdasein*.⁷

Once we focus firmly on relations, all those “bridging technologies” can no longer operate their ideological functions. Just as the citation above is a passage from Spinoza to Lordon, now it becomes here a passage of mine and yours. *The wish to be as numerous as possible in the sharing of indeterminate relations* is a vow that befits the practice of the translator–subaltern, and the multitude(s).

Areas in the Age of the Logistical Population

The postimperial etiquette’s function is to leave the apparatus of area intact. This is what “being tactful” in the era of postcolonial/postimperial globalization means: *it is an affective*

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⁷ Unfortunately, it is precisely in the relation between the constative and the performative elements that Nancy’s philosophical writings sometimes most grievously betray his ontological discovery of the importance of being-in-common. See Solomon 2013.

economy that obviates the need to link a radical reorganization in the mechanisms of accumulation to subjective transformation. This understanding of the postimperial etiquette is corroborated by Gayatri Spivak's observation that "a hyperreal class of consolidated so-called international civil society is now being produced to secure the post-statist conjuncture" (Spivak 1999, 399). Although the postimperial etiquette promises to mitigate the possibility that historical resentment will break out into open struggle, it does so at the cost of instituting a highly normative regime. Clothed in an ostensibly ethical discourse of respect for "cultural difference," the postimperial etiquette prolongs racism, in the broadest sense of the term, by naturalizing the apparatus of area.

Transnational complicity is acquiring a new face in the age of global semicapitalism and biocapitalism, while the institutions and practices that constitute areas are changing rapidly. As we move from the age of the nation-state to the corporate-state, fueled by unprecedented privatizations of state functions, one has to be concerned that the postimperial etiquette today may well be operating as an ideological "justification" for the political legitimacy of the neoliberal corporate-state. Given the increasing integration of biotechnology, information technology, and nanotechnology within the context of capitalist accumulation, the meaning and role of population is undergoing vast change. The shift from "statistical populations" to "logistical populations" (Harney 2010) takes on its greatest significance, to my mind, in the apprehension of population in terms of a "pool." As biocapitalism identifies life with code and code with value, populations themselves essentially become warehouses of value-code available for the development of virtually unlimited new products to be advanced by biocapitalism. Genetic code, as seen in the expression "DNA pool," is thus the first level of meaning that I would ascribe to the "pooling" effect of logistical populations. The second and third levels occur in the moments of production and consumption. As the products of biocapitalism will be marketed directly back to the populations from which the value-code was originally sourced, logistical populations are also composed of a "consumer pool" and a "labor pool," both of which are essentially held captive to, or made targets for, the extraction of surplus value out of the bioeconomy. Needless to say, the maintenance of discipline and control within each of these pools requires

an elaborate security apparatus capable of monitoring in real time the movements and borders that constitute pooling as such. The utopian vision behind logistical populations considers the possibility of aligning in perfect synchronicity the global supply chain with the food chain of the global biosphere, thereby realizing the transhumanist dream of overcoming the limits of the individual body to create the perfect species-being. Yet within the context of social action motivated by the pursuit of surplus value, this utopian vision functions in the mode of ideological alienation, covering up the separation between a present and a future whose real function is to be found not in the promised alignment of cosmic supply and demand, but in the temporal circulation of the capitalist circuit that transforms money into commodities and then back into money.

In order to see the ways in which logistical populations function as transactionable pools for the corporate surveillance state, we will unquestionably need to develop ways of looking beyond the ideology of cultural difference and identity that naturalizes the pooling effect. Even as the state moves away from a classic national form of organization, the ideology of the nation-state continues to play an enormously influential role in the mobilization of affect and the short-circuiting of collective transnational resistance to the corporate surveillance machine. In view of this situation, I expect that translation and the heterolingual form of address will play an increasingly important role in the insurrections-to-come for a coinhabitable planet.

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