Social Sectors

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There is not one language. Doubled from the start, there is not (a single) language and there are many languages. The condition of a plurality of languages is that they neither form a complete totality nor allow the unicity or universality of a single one. Less than a language, and therefore more than one, exposed, folded out onto other languages: the multiplicity of idioms engenders a structural or architectural incompleteness.[1] In this incompleteness, the self-same differs from itself, in relation to others. Hollowed out from within, the contours of languages and cultures can only be made out in their exposure to a proximate other at the edge, on the line. A question, then, of the composition of space, the limits and borders of intelligibility, rhetoric, and silence. Through this opening of representational inadequacy at the ends of coherent, bounded identity—a gap of error and invention—emerges a topography of value and difference, a geography of crossing and exchange.

As the current geography of economic and cultural flows is increasingly divorced from the control of the nation, and non-state actors gain in political and legal influence, the displacement, uprooting, and virtualization of traditional forms of political and cultural identification spreads. One response to the increasingly transnational character of labor, finance, and cultural markets has been the fantasy of the end of history in the universal language of neoliberal markets, liberal representative democracy, and 'western values,' if not the total virtualization, or even destruction, of place by technology. Another response has been the resurgence of nationalisms, ethnicisms, and fundamentalisms that seek to ground and fortify a chosen language and identity inside an essential border, untouched by the transformative crossing of other languages and cultures. Against both, translation, as the negotiation of asynchronous times and non-convergent places, would trace the limits of the self-same as it opens onto the other.

There is, however, a dominant cultural rhetoric that claims to value multiplicity and plurality while systematically subsuming them under the uniformity required for the efficient exchange of information as 'data.' The dream of total translatability, while imagining the elimination of xenophobic particularism in mutual recognition, may actually promote a coercive monolingualism and market-driven profitability that hastens the marginalization of some groups.[2] Not outright homogenization, this regulation of cultural and political difference appears to offer the recognition and valuation of cultural difference through niche markets, customizability of consumer goods, etc. This practical, instrumentalized translation amounts to little more than the reduction of the other to the same, which in the transparency of recognizable difference simply reaffirms the current state of things.

Instead of simply recoding difference according to the dominant language (which is also the dominant market), truly engaging in the work of translation would mean taking the time to refuse the availability and instantaneity of globalism as a spectacle of difference. Here, cultural translation as an aesthetic endeavor and ethico-political project would mean tracing the limits of the subject as she is fashioned by a foreign language (from media to visuality to her 'native' tongue). Rather than cognitive mastery, it would be attention to the difficulty, error, and nonsense of texts and cultures that challenge, not confirm, our place in the world. Amidst the projective workings of a global political imaginary, the intimacy of affect and the publicity of culture would be redrawn according to new spaces of solidarity and affiliation. In translation, the situational taking-place of culture may invent other geographies of community and difference.

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[1] Addressing the Biblical myth of the Tower of Babel, Jacques Derrida writes that "the 'Tower of Babel' does not figure merely the irreducible multiplicity of tongues; it exhibits an incompletion, the impossibility of finishing, of totalizing, of saturating, of completing something on the order of edification, architectural construction, system and architectonics. What the multiplicity of idioms actually limits is not only a 'true' translation, a transparent and adequate interexpression; it is also a structural order, a coherence of construct. There is then (let us translate) something like an internal limit to formalization, an incompleteness of the constructure" ("Des Tours de Babel," Difference in Translation [Ithaca: Cornell U. Press, 1979], 244). Let us also note that the opening sentence here echoes Derrida's 'password' definition of deconstruction as "*Plus d'une Langue*—more than one language, no more of one language" (Mémoires for Paul de Man [New York: Columbia U. Press, 1986], 15). We could translate: that there are many languages, each one is not one, or not (only) itself.

[2] Emily Apter warns that in the realm of artistic practice " 'global' signifies not so much the conglomeration of world cultures arrayed side by side in their difference, but, rather, a problem-based monocultural aesthetic agenda that elicits transnational engagement" ("On Translation in a Global Market" Public Culture [Vol. 13, No. 1, Winter 2001], 3). On a different scale, Judith Butler argues that "translation by itself can also work in full complicity with the logic of colonial expansion, when translation becomes the instrument through which dominant values are transposed into the language of the subordinated, and the subordinated run the risk of coming to know and understand them as tokens of their 'liberation'...translation always runs the risk of appropriation ("Restaging the Universal," Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Zizek, Contingency, Hegemony, Universality [London: Verso, 2000], 35-36).

Kahve & Kulüp, an installation by Katya Sander, locates the global political imaginary in both the regulation of language and the social dimensions of lived, physical space. Here, changes in population, ethnicity and language are being traced out in the psychogeography of the city while East and West intersect in the pages of the dictionary. At issue is the (in)visibility of minority community spaces in the topography of the western city, specifically the status of economic migrants from the 'second' and 'third' worlds in western Europe.

The broad aim of the work might be defined as the transformation of negative speculation about the Turkish social groups in Denmark into a positive definition, accessible in the nearest dictionary. In opposition to the suspicion and alleged illegality of the spaces, Sander seems to value the *kahve* for its refusal of consumerism and more open, convivial atmosphere than its Danish counterpart. Not only is the project advancing a minority's right to the city, or even rightful place in the Danish language, it also offers a kind of counter public sphere that would contest the dominant language and its definition of the 'public'.

The recognition of this marginal social space, in both the official language of the nation and the signage on the street, carries with it both a legitimation of the Turkish presence there and a potential contest over symbolic, public space. But this visibility seems to pivot on a risk, that of the simple repetition of accepted definitions of what 'Danish' and 'Turkish' mean, rather than a challenge to our habits of speaking and walking, and gathering. While the exclusion of marginal or minority discourses from the dominant symbolic order is no doubt violent, the production of knowledge about others, with the goal of understanding, can bear its own subtle form of violence. What are the conditions under which these words are recognized, accepted or made visible—specifically, does it risk homogenizing or essentializing the Turkish community? [3] What does it mean to publicize this semi-private social formation? What if Danes who were not of Turkish descent started going there? Would they, or should they be welcomed? How would the *kahve* change? What is the price of legitimation?

Let us recall that the inclusion of *kahve* and *kulüp* in the Danish dictionary is not the work of translation in the strict sense: rather, translation is short-circuited by authenticating the unaltered Turkish words as official Danish, their double status then displayed on the street. On the one hand, this doubled condition could be read as the mutual interpenetration of two linguistic and cultural orders, each more and less than a word, a hybridity that brings both spaces into question. 'Turkish' is not a distant, other language outside the borders of 'Danish' that is first interpreted and then imported; the other is already here, inside the 'native'. In this case, the acceptance of *kahve* and *kulüp* forces the institutional recognition of untranslatability, that the 'original' language is always marked by another term it cannot fully claim as its own. On the other hand, the function of the dictionary suggests that the average Dane can readily find out what these words really mean. Foregoing the work of translation for simple assimilation, the dictionary would offer a transparent intelligibility of the social. If the project is no more than a definition, then knowledge production performs a reduction of the other to the comprehensibility of the same, giving up on the work of translation in the serious sense. However, to the extent that pedestrians are hailed in the street by an unfamiliar word, *Kahve & Kulüp* retains the force of a provocation: a call to an encounter with the unknown, in the re-discovery of hybridity. Here, the articulation of community only occurs in a differential relation that is constantly reinvented, where the projective cultural identifications that govern contemporary politics penetrate our everyday vocabularies and itineraries through the city, somewhere between public and private.

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[3] Gayatri Spivak has warned, citing Tim Mitchell, that the new orientalism may view 'the world as immigrant,' which is to say that the other only becomes visible on Europe's doorstep (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Outside in the Teaching Machine [New York: Routledge, 1993], 64: her analysis of the economy of marginality and its role in capitalist crisis management is very relevant here). Admittedly, the work in *Social Sectors*, when linking to the global South, often only does so through middle class cosmopolitans or students. Only Hunt's piece, by injecting footage of farm seizures in Zimbabwe into the spectacle of US tourism, begins to address the place of the rural subaltern in a transformed global political imaginary (see below).

If *Kahve & Kulüp* maintains comprehensibility and understanding as its ethico-political horizons, Lana Lin's *No Power to Push Up the Sky*, Andrea Geyer and Sharon Hayes' *Cambio de Lugar*, and Emily Jacir' s *From Paris to Riyadh* all take seriously the difficulty, even impossibility, of translation. Rather than the optimism of symbolic integration or recognition, these projects focus on reading, rhetoric and silence as troubling and indispensable elements in the work of translation.

Like Sander's installation, *No Power to Push Up the Sky* engages the East/West political imaginary as well as translation between languages on either side of this divide. Unlike *Kahve & Kulüp* however, *No Power* foregoes the attempt to directly treat a coherent political and cultural community. Rather than risking an identitarian account of culture and difference, this installation takes up a discourse as the object of its investigation, asking how agents and objects are reconfigured through it. By focusing on the emancipatory discourse of democratic revolution and reform espoused by the Chinese students who demonstrated in Tiananmen Square in 1989, *No Power to Push Up the Sky* refracts projected East/West cultural and political differences through a historical lens. Returning to history to re-think, re-narrate and re-translate from the present, the refusal to take for granted the meaning of the Tiananmen protests unsettles accepted accounts of democracy, cultural difference, journalism, and historiography itself.

Part of this refusal occurs through the elimination of dramatic action and historical photo documentation. Instead, the viewer is confronted with the direct, even ascetic, series of contemporary translators reading from a text, supplemented with uniform newspaper headlines. This anti-monumentality opposes the clichéd conventions of classic photojournalism. While such photojournalism pays homage to the irreducible historicity of the moment, it only betrays it with the sufficiency of the image. Reduced to a progression of 'memorable' snapshots, history is distanced through sentimentality. The present masters the past by capturing it in an icon, framing the revolutionary image in order to make it intelligible today.[4]

Paradoxically, only through the work of translation, and the mediation of reading, rhetoric, and text, do we truly reactivate the historical force of the past in the present, and return to history to think it as event. Rather than looking back from the present, and taking the meaning of the past for granted, *No Power to Push Up the Sky* re-reads the literality of the historical text in the present. The translators are not afforded the time and reflexivity needed to domesticate the Chinese text into easily understandable English conventions, instead forcing the viewer to confront the specificity of the grammatical and rhetorical structures of the original, including whatever fractious infelicities it may generate. Only in the difficulty, silence, and non-sense of translation does the urgency and possibility of the historical demand for democracy emerge.

No Power to Push Up the Sky directly cites the camera and presentation style of the news anchor only to pluralize his/her monolithic voice and undermine the certainty and transparency of her speech. In the newspapers, the anonymous univocality of the headlines from U.S. newspapers emerge in direct contrast to the diverse attempts to understand and translate the difficult and paradoxical elements of the Chinese text. The headlines increasingly become of a symptom of the media's inability to understand the collapse of communism in any other light than the triumph of neoliberal markets, liberal representative democracy, and 'American values'. Here, the radically uncertain demand for

[4] For an example of documentary anti-photojournalism in the context of recent protest movements and police violence, see Allan Sekula's contributions to 5 Days That Shook the World: Seattle and Beyond (London: Verso, 2000).

[5] The headlines assume the 'lady liberty' statue is a copy of the U.S. Statue of Liberty; this is only half true. In its original guise, the statue was based on a sculpture by a Soviet social realist sculptor much admired in China at the time. How or why certain elements of socialism may have been living on in the students' discourse was unreadable, let alone untranslatable, for the U.S. news media. The inability of the media to grasp the significance of the events from any perspective other than American interests is carried to an absurd extreme in the headline "Massacre in China, Kentucky Fried Chicken Closes Its Outlets in Beijing."

'democracy' or 'freedom' is reduced to an imagined yearning for the current state of Western politics: the U.S. is continually assumed to be the model and goal toward which the demonstrations are aiming.[5]

The first-person narration of Chai Ling's text adds an important affective dimension to the work of the translators; clearly, the relation between testimony, history, and traumatic violence is too complex to treat here. Nonetheless, one detects a contrast between the coded subject position of each translator (student, intellectual, businesswoman, etc.) and the enunciative singularity of his/her face on the screen.[6] Through the editing, a comparative interweaving of voices sketches out the diverse positions that can be taken up in relation to this event. However, any final or permanent subjective ground is denied by the overlapping attempts to come to terms with the text; the untranslatable hesitations remain, leaving us puzzling over one difficult phrase. Does "cannot support the sky" mean that the small effort of the protestors is dwarfed by the enormity of their demands? Does "can't go back to heaven" mean that all we have is the long struggle of political contestation, having abandoned any metaphysical resolution? Or does "no power to push up the sky" simply signal helplessness in the face of authoritarian repression? Who is accountable for the violence of the state? What is the relation between anticipation and desire? Where is democratic struggle today, in China, in the U.S.?

Pause, listen, write, stop, catch up, circle back, retranslate more clearly, "Wait, you'll have to do that again, I lost you." If the translator's direct address to the camera foregrounds the difficulty of any direct, one-to-one transparent message in *No Power to Push Up the Sky*, the back-and-forth, conversational exchange of *Cambio de Lugar* emphasizes the multiple rhythms and levels on which communication operates. For the careful viewer it becomes apparent that we are never simply monolingual: in addition to our adoption of foreign words and use of proper names, language is contaminated with and constituted by heterogeneous sign systems (onomatopoeia and index, gesture, 'body language', inflection, tone, spacing, pause, punctuation, etc.). Whether or not the viewer speaks one or both of the languages being used in the interviews, the process of translation is here laid bare, and the viewer must decide to give herself over to the care of the translator, or actively seek out the mistakes, revisions, and omissions as they occur.

Also taking a specific discourse as its locus, *Cambio de Lugar_Change of Place_Ortswechsel* highlights the quotidian efforts and extensive cultural labor that goes into building translational political affiliations. The project is clearly informed by the damage to 'second' and 'third' world cultural practices and beliefs caused by previous first world feminisms seeking to enforce a Western-based model of subjectivity and emancipation as universal goal. Instead, the artists return to translation to work out the different cultural and linguistic grammars of gendered agency through which an expanded feminism may spread.[7] Positioning the subject in time (age, generational identification) and space (physical; "What city do you live in?" and discursively: "What do you read?"), *Cambio de Lugar* asks what demands can be made, and what differences need to be respected, through the terms of feminism as a transnational social movement.

While not aspiring to sociological breadth, the project raises the question of the ethnographic dimension of current art practices. Firstly, the camera's tightly cropped concentration on the translator prohibits any simple access between an artist and her 'subject,' implicitly opposing the genre of community-based art that sees the artist as the simple 'reflective' or 'representative' medium for a larger social group. (Nonetheless, the project does index the artist/ethnographer's passage through a series of social connections and networks). Secondly, the question of the power relations between

[6] Writing on the Tiananmen massacre, Giorgio Agamben connects the open, inexhaustible character of the students' demands (democracy and freedom) to the manifestation of a community without commonality, a being-together based on neither essence, identity, nor a shared existence. For him, this dissolution of social bonds in belonging itself is the antithesis of the state (Communist or otherwise) and is sure to be met with violent repression. The taking-place of whatever singularity is "purely linguistic being…not defined by any property, except by being called" (The Coming Community [Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 1993], 10, 85-87).

[7] Judith Butler has recently argued that any formal rights claim, model of the subject, or project of emancipatory universalization necessarily bears the marks of the cultural values and assumptions through which it was formulated. She cites the failures of first world feminism as she argues that the construction of universal claims on behalf of democratic social movements can only occur through cultural translation ("Restaging the Universal," Contingency). For criticism of first world feminism and its failure to translate, see the work of Gayatri Spivak. Rather than "bludgeoning someone else by insisting on your version of solidarity" she recommends learning another language. She writes: "How will women's solidarity be measured here? How will their common experience be reckoned if one cannot imagine the traffic in accessibility going both ways? I think that idea should be given a decent burial as ground of knowledge, together with the idea of humanist universality. It is good to think that women have something in common, when one is approaching women with whom a relationship would not otherwise be possible. It is a great first step. But, if your interest is in learning if there is women's solidarity, how about stepping forth from this assumption, appropriate as a means to an end like local or global social work, and trying a second step? Rather than imagining women have something in common, why not say, humbly and practically, my first obligation in understanding solidarity is to learn her mother tongue. You will see immediately what the differences are…This is preparation for the intimacy of cultural translation" ("The Politics of Translation," Outside, 191-192).

artist and her subject is central to any critical use of the ethnographic model. *Cambio de Lugar* clearly presents itself as a dialogue and not as an ethnographic study; indeed, the interviewees are encouraged to pursue other issues they find relevant, and occasionally pose questions to the interviewers. Nonetheless, the comparison between Mexico City and New York City remains overdetermined by the unequal political, economic and cultural flows between the global north and south. Are the interviewer and interviewee on equal footing, and is the translator something other than the 'middle ground'? What cultural assumptions govern the formulations of the questions? What does it mean that the questions are first posed in English?

Although these questions are not expressly foregrounded, the relation between force and knowledge is subtly played out at the edges of the frame. Again, the formal arrangement of the camera space plays a role: the interviewer and interviewee are both excluded from the shot, while at the same time located at the edge of the frame as the translator looks to each one as she speaks. Here, the artists refuse to present any specular symmetry between the two. Instead, the disjunction between hearing the interviewee's voice and not seeing her face points out the asymmetrical nature of the encounter. The videos both prohibit the visual appropriation of the place from which the subject speaks and present this absence at the edge of the frame. The fact that the translator must repeat the statement, even if either party already understands what has been said (the artists and many of the interviewees are bilingual), establishes a structural third place through which the dialogue must pass.[8] This third place—that of the translator and viewer, possibly a man, woman, or someone else—prevents direct access to our interlocutor and disseminates our statements into the words of others.

This third place should also undermine the anthropological mistake of taking the individual as a representative of a community, nation, or ethnicity. Indeed, this absent space might suggest that there may be less of a difference in the translatability of feminism between transnational cosmopolitans than between city dwellers and rurals in the same nation; the question of the universalizability of this discourse should be accompanied by the observation that the artists are working through a specific, historical social formation. To begin to listen for what is left out would mean paying attention to what is untranslatable here.

From *Paris to Riyadh (Drawings for My Mother, 1976-1996)* probes cultural differences in women's struggles against exploitation and oppression. However, unlike the previous work, *From Paris to Riyadh* is not concerned with translation in the restricted linguistic sense. Instead, in repeating her mother's practice of blacking out the exposed bodies of models in Vogue to bring the magazine into Saudi Arabia, Jacir addresses the different cultural regimes of visuality that structure how women are looked at, and how their bodies are socially marked, in Europe and the Middle East. Not only an investigation into the differential coding of women's bodies, the project is also a model for how to think cultural translation and hybridity in terms other than written or spoken language.

At first glance, the drawings appear to contrast the repression and systematic invisibility of women under 'traditional' Islamic regimes with the 'freedom' and visibility of women in the West. Such an interpretation, in addition to trafficking in monolithic categories like 'Islam' and the 'West,' would participate in the western, liberal mistake of reading the veil as an unequivocal sign of Muslim women's oppression, from which they need to be liberated. An unqualified opposition between the en-lightened visibility of the West and the repressive invisibility of Islam quickly drifts into the retrograde, racist narrative of civilization and barbarism through which the political and historical specificity of postmodern Islamic fundamentalism is effaced.

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[8] A large portion of the work of psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan could be described as an analysis of the structural third place in intersubjectivity. At times referred to as the Other, or the symbolic order, this third place plays a role in castration, the triangulation of desire, and the Gaze, among other concepts.

A closer look at the source material (Vogue) and the formal operation performed on it shows that *From Paris to Riyadh* does not simply contrast freedom and repression, but superimposes two different systems of enforced visibility. The paper becomes an interstitial zone where the composition of alternating black and white voids marks the crossing of two different regimes of visuality. Jacir has described the drawings as "the space between a place where the image of woman is banned and a place where the image of woman is objectified and commodified." This third space is not only that of a feminism geared toward cultural translation: it is also the hybrid space of diaspora, as the continual movement of Jacir's family between Paris and Riyadh indexes their exile from Palestine.[9] Indeed, much of Jacir's oeuvre is a steady engagement with the enforced (in)visibility of the Palestinian population and we may note that, like *Cambio de Lugar*, feminism is not thinkable outside the politics of geography, ethnicity, and class.

Not so much outlining the commonality of the two kinds of visual coding as probing their qualitative difference, *From Paris to Riyadh* asks how the covering of women's bodies, in the marked invisibility of privacy, separation, and homeliness, informs their hypervisibility in the sale and consumption of sexuality. Rather than a simple meditation on censorship in Islam, Jacir draws out the darkness woven into the glaring, shiny surface of desirable femininity, the absence in the vacuous conformity to a certain feminine ideal in the Western spectacle.

While both emerge from a patriarchal economy of looking and visibility, both cultural moments retain a political ambivalence. Just as the covering the body in Islam can represent both the legal and social repression of women and a woman's willful affirmation of her religious and cultural identifications, so too the traffic in racy advertising images can be seen as either a woman's right to display her body as she wishes, and get paid for it, or her degradation and objectification under capitalism. Rather than in the calculated response of dogma, politics only truly begins on this unsure representational footing, in the undecidability of looking that does not reveal a seamless whole, but only the potential articulation of parts.

From Paris to Riyadh stages the spectral fragmentation of the body, a ghosting that indexes how visuality and exchange carve up the social flesh. This negative relief of exposed, interconnected bodies that never fully materialize conditions any future democratic politics and the translations it might make. Globalization appears here not as a transparent, unbridled flow of information; instead, we are reminded of the cost required to circulate across borders. Here, bodily identity becomes intelligible in an economy of desire (or its prohibition) and looking, where disappearance is a condition of visibility. The questions that follow include: what would be a visible, non-objectified image of a woman be? What does 'commodification' entail and is it essentially misogynist? Is covering a feminist response? Do women consume women as objects? Why did Jacir's mother read Vogue in the first place? [10]

What remains, at least, is a tactical aesthetic intervention in the everyday traffic of mass media images, practiced in transit. Designed to bypass the patriarchal regulation of images of women, the re-coding was originally deployed to further a kind of transnational black market of women's knowledge (Jacir has noted that Palestinian and

[9] Rebecca Faulkner, discussing Jacir's work in relation to the bodily meditations of Cindy Sherman, Francesca Woodman, and Ana Mendiata among others, sketches an "aesthetics of disappearance" and speaks of a "responsibility of feminist artists to mark this erasure [in gender bias] in order to illustrate the loss as present, continuous" ("Traveling Toward [Dis]appearance: Erasure, Identity and the Female Body in the Drawings of Emily Jacir," paper delivered at the Barnard Feminist Art and Art History Conference, October 2000). I also draw on Faulkner's observations on ethnicity in Jacir's work and the polyvalent signification of the veil inside and outside Muslim societies.

[10] To return to a remark by Judith Butler quoted earlier, how do we begin to perceive, in translation, when the dominated misrecognizes the terms of the dominant as their discourse of liberation (either in the European semi-nudity of the model or in the Middle Eastern woman's decision to wear the veil)? But is not the goal of cultural translation the attempt to hear what the other has to say about her own self-determination, how she defines liberation? The answer has everything to do with the discursive construction of social antagonism rather than pre-existing political interests and identities.

Saudi women often kept up on European fashions, making and wearing their own hybrid, flashy outfits in a women-only public sphere). Repeated by her daughter, the drawings grapple with the translation of desire and identity between departure and arrival.

Combining the reality of political and economic migration with its flip side—tourism—Ashley Hunt's *On the Imperative of Movement: Land Is the Only Thing That Lasts* also concerns flight and arrival, this time in the airport of Atlanta, Georgia. Confronted with an exhibition of stone carving from Zimbabwe inside, the traveler soon encounters a monument to the American South carved into Stone Mountain outside. The viewer is pressed to account for the relation between the heroicization of the slave-holding South and the primitivist representation of the 'traditional' arts of Zimbabwe (that supposedly exist outside the history and politics of the present).

At issue is the global circulation of images of other cultures, specifically the relation between the narration of slavery in the history of the U.S. and current representations of Africa. At the same time, however, these images are inscribed in a certain global economy that links them in other ways. A symbol of the changes in the world's economy, a plantation once at the heart of America's agricultural and industrial might in the nineteenth century is re-purposed to meet the needs of the new service and information industries by becoming a tourist site. In Zimbabwe, poor agricultural workers begin to illegally seize the farms of white families who gained them under colonialism, as the government decides what to do about the de facto redistribution of land. One of the few other employment options for citizens of Zimbabwe is to mass produce hand-crafted 'traditional' wood and stone carvings for sale to tourists and export to the West. The images, then, are connected not only by their proximity, but by the part they play in the uneven development of the world economy.

Scenes from the nostalgic depiction of the American South in *Gone With the Wind* provide the connective tissue: How does the narration of history, through tourism, film, and art, legitimize current inequalities both in the U.S. and world economies? Although rhetorics of globalization trumpet the destruction of spatial borders by technology, what are the politics of land redistribution in the 'third world?' How does the fact that the majority of the world still makes its living through agriculture affect narratives of globalization? What does the consumption of a place's history by tourists have to do with the international division of labor, where agricultural production outside the west is increasingly invisible? Does the ownership of land matter as much as the representation of that land? How to translate between the poverty endemic to a national economy and that of the global South? Here, cultural translation requires attention to the exploitation and inequality that determine what is seen and unseen in the circulation of historical and ethnographic images.

In the artistic practice of Cristóbal Leyht, the thinking of translation occurs at the level of a rigorous formal operation. Not unlike the drawings in *From Paris to Riyadh*, Leyht confronts the literality of visual rhetoric through an analogical transfer, by pressing surface to surface and tracing the outline that emerges. (We do not have space here to pursue what links the 'across' of trans- to super-[impose], uber-[tragung], and sur-[face]). In the slide work Arrest, paper has been laid over television screen, the successive frames of a police operation (a paramilitary drug bust) drawn, and the series reprojected onto the wall. As the title indicates, the process is a temporal slowing that allows the viewer to glimpse the empty outline of the television sequence as it is continuously replayed.

Previously, Leyht had focused on reinscribing news images from Chile's troubled political history. After moving to the U.S., he only draws from images broadcast here; often replaying scenes of violence and intolerance, the practice asks how an individual can respond to images that exceed our cultural or ethical bounds and expectations. Choosing mass media images of considerable political and ethical weight and pushing them to the edge of unreadability, Leyht's practice asks about the legibility and interrelation of form and content in mass media as it pursues the decomposition of each.

The line drawings emerge from an emptying, leveling process that reduces the color and three-dimensional illusionism of television to its two-dimensional plane. This flattening of depth and hollowing out of content refuses the fantastic, magical autonomy of the video image and its illusion of unbroken continuity. The drawings add an extended temporality to the image, inserting a delay that prohibits the immediate sufficiency of the news image, distorting the intoxicating mixture of [media] and speed. Television news is predicated on the instantaneity and disposability of events, all assembled under one authoritative, explanatory framework. By temporizing the numbing acceleration required to hold the viewer's attention and sell advertising, the drawings introduce a delay and spacing into the image. The expanse of white space takes over the wall, and the viewer must confront the absence that saturates the outline.

This is, then, a critical model of media that asks the viewer to confront the loss entailed in any framing of an image, the gaps and elisions that makes the news and its transmission possible. Rather than the simulation of presence, immediacy and simultaneity of reception, we are reminded that television is, after all, a process of drawing lines: mechanically, the pixels on the screen are lit up one-by-one when hit with a ray of electrons that scans across them, re-drawing the lines twenty-five times per second.[11] By superimposing the two different mediums, Leyht show how drawing is never the original, primary expression of subjectivity it is sometimes conceived as. Instead, it appears as the quasi-mechanical tracing of the impressions or images that precede and construct the kinds of connections it can make, even as it transforms and alters those precedents. At the same time, television does not appear as the purely digitized, transgeographic speed of instant perception and comprehension, but a coded transmission or transfer between two screens that involves its own kind of spacing.

When faced with the incompleteness of such an image, the viewer must work to recreate it: the experience of political events through journalism requires the reconstruction of the history of the present. In this translation, the viewer confronts the singular beauty and absence of the line drawings as they are put into play through the serialization that brings them alive. The work done here is not the masterly registration of the subject on the page, or the triumphant, knowing look of the spectator who sees all. Instead, these lines trace out the contours of the subject as she is formed by the flicker-glow that transports others into her house, registering a primary impressionability, an imprimature by the shifting outlines of data flow across the screen of history, violence, trauma. The open spaces on the page leave room for a kind of pressing back, reworking the shape of the world through the critical articulation of memory and history. Projecting these images onto the wall, the architectural component of spacing returns: how to build, through translation, an equitable and just habitation? Attention to the force of writing, metaphoricity, and rhetoric in producing the social yields the difficulty, openness and alterity in the images of culture. Here, the impossibility and necessity of translation is not a fatalism, but the condition of affirming a belonging without precedent or condition.

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[11] "What is transmitted, at the simplest level, is simply a stream of pulses that scan a field at a certain speed…scanning, which mediates at both ends between visible screens and electrical currents…is above all a way of translating and framing light as information. The transmitter scans a field with an electron beam, traversing it back and forth, top to bottom and back again, cutting it into a number of impulse tracks or lines that are recomposed later. These 'lines of resolution' have been standardized: contemporary televisions are either 525 lines (United States and Canada) or 625 lines (everywhere else), with each frame being scanned twenty-five times a second" (Richard Deinst, Still Life in Real Time [Durham: Duke U. Press, 1994], 17-19).