01 2011

Politics of Affects. Transversal Conviviality

Transversal Conviviality

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In Félix Guattari's writing, the term "transversality" arises from his reflections on his therapeutic practice in the psychiatry department of the French clinic *La Borde*.[1] He introduces the term in this context to question the hierarchical organization of labor in the clinic, but also the therapeutic concept based on Freud's idea of *transference*. In Freud's transference model, a powerful position is attributed to the therapist, who is authorized to heal. Through the transference of feelings from the patient to the therapist, a process is set in motion that enables, according to Freud, bringing the unconscious into the conscious mind. Guattari doubts the model, because it purports that the unconscious can be controlled to enable living in a "rational" world. In his view, the unconscious is a social constant of our existence. Our actions, our relationships are marked by a social unconscious. Accordingly, we cannot consider the unconscious as a force to be domesticated, but rather it permeates our knowing and our consciousness as energy, sensation and intensity.

Affects consequently play a tremendous role in this view, because they are stimulations, physical reactions that allow the conscious to

melt into the unconscious. Transversality enables resisting a synthesizing strategy of rationalization and categorization, as the heterogeneous and its lines of connection are detected without seeking to press them into an identitary grid. Transversality thus works with the notion of multiplicity and the possibility of lines of connection – communication between different manifestations and formations.

The concept of "transversality" has also been discussed in feminist literature as a binding political strategy.[2] According to Nira Yuval-Davis, a transversal feminist strategy is a strategy for producing a common point of reference for political strategies across differences and beyond. My reference to transversality is rooted in these different contexts: (a) the search for connections in multiplicity; (b) the perception of experiences, articulations and excitements that are not inscribed in a logically hermeneutic script; (c) the political potential for social change. Here I think it is important not to presuppose a domination-neutral concept of transversality, but rather to consider transversality in the context of domination relations. In this sense, I address here the transversal moment of affects in the housework of undocumented migrant women in private households. The social coordinates for thinking about transversality are the feminization and coloniality of labor.

Housework and Affective Labor

Set within the context of migration regimes domestic work becomes a neuralgic point in order to understand how the logic of capital accumulation operates on the basis of feminization and the coloniality of labor. The devaluation of domestic work as racialized feminized labour emerges within a logic, in which this labor is socially and culturally codified as "nonproductive" labor. Thus, the

attribution of low wages to domestic work is not accidental. The classification of this labor as "less valued" is tied to a social process of meaning production. The social value attached to domestic work is thus an outcome of hegemonic struggle. As Judith Rollins argues in the case of the United States, domestic work holds the historical traces of colonization and enslavement.[3] Thus, it represents the continuum but also transformation of, the "slave" – indentured servant- servant – domestic system, encrypted in the racialized and feminized bodies of its labor force. The societal devaluation of domestic work has less to do with its concrete reproductive character than with its cultural codification. The value assigned to this labor is compounded by gendered colonial legacies, expressed in a hierarchical epistemological system that favours rationality and discredits corporeal, emotional and sustainable qualities. The value of domestic work is pre-set by a cultural system of meaning production based on historical and socio-political systems of gender differences and racialized hierarchies. This correlates with its feminized labor force, particularly that of the racialized, feminized subaltern.

Consequently, the *living labor* extracted from an "undocumented migrant worker," is culturally prescribed through the perceptions produced by migration regimes and their interplay with the feminization of labor. Two temporalities, modernity and coloniality, are conflated here, articulating the inherent paradox of the modern/colonial world system expressed through the local face of "undocumented migration" and its feminization in advanced capitalism. As Quijano and Mignolo argue, the coloniality of labor is inherent to the logic of capital accumulation.[4] Modern forms of capital production have not replaced colonial forms of production rather they conflate, articulating current forms of capital production.

The value attached to domestic work is thus inextricably attached to historical genealogies and social processes of hegemonic struggle. Serving as inscription and indicator of a specific historical social order, value has a twofold character as, on the one hand it relates to material conditions of production and on the other, to a cultural script of production. It is from this onto-phenomenological perspective that domestic work simultaneously operates as inscription and corporeality, manifested in its affective qualities, but also in the gendered and racialized inscription of its labor force. In domestic work the labor force is characterized by feminized faculties, correlating with the coloniality of labor.

The productivity acquired from the *living labor* in domestic work attends a hidden script of disciplinary capitalism, in which feminized and racialized subjects are targeted as "raw material" as their labor is codified as "natural," not in need of capital investment or pursuing a strategy of capital accumulation. In fact, capital invests in this labor in so far as it is artificially maintained outside of the circuits of capital accumulation by ignoring and negating its constitutive contribution to it. Domestic work in general, and "undocumented domestic workers," in particular, thus, engender the place of "exteriority"[5] or "colonial difference."[6] Their presence remains dictated to by temporalities and conditions absent from a script of modern progress and prosperity. Symptomatically, this is exposed in the working conditions of domestic workers characterized by oral contracts, unregulated working times, unsafe and vulnerable working conditions and high dependency on the employer. Yet through domestic work capital absorbs the imprints of life, the biopolitical power of human social relations. Thereby, capital is not only interested in the cooperative and emotional capabilities of this labor-force, but particularly in its affective character.

From Emotional Labor to Affective Labor

The analysis of "emotional labor" in domestic work has uncovered the role of personal care and the investment of subjective faculties by stressing the significance of love in women's labor.[7] Frequently, the assumption is made that when we speak of emotions we mean affects. But the perspective on affects, while it might embrace an analysis of the dynamics of emotions, goes beyond the cognitive framework of emotions. Affects in regard to emotions, as Massumi notes, do not require a subject as their addressee, they are unstructured and dispersed, they fluctuate in space, connecting different elements together, the human and the non-human or the post-human.[8] Affects, for Massumi cannot be captured in "meaningful sequencing" or "narration,"[9] in contrast to emotions, which have a subjective content and can be socio-linguistically fixed as a quality of experience. Emotions require a subject as they are composed by meaning and transferred value.[10]

Affects are not 'automatically' oriented to a person, nor are they intentionally interwoven into a matrix of meaning. Yet they do carry meaning as they work through emotions and feelings, they are diffuse and unstructured immediate bodily (re-)actions to energies, sensations and intensities that are not always clearly located in a person, but dispersed in space. Affects are energies that derive from encounters, not always conceivable in language, but sensed bodily. While emotions address the cognitive level of personal feelings, affects engage with often "unspecified" energies, linked to our relational and social character as human beings. It is this dimension of affective labor, which should not be conflated with the more cognitive approach to emotional labor in private households. As previously discussed, feminist work on emotional

labor has highlighted care work. Emotions are perceived here in regard to the intention of the subject to be empathetic and attentive to others. Faculties are deployed in orientation to the well-being of somebody else. However, affects have a less rational and cognitive side. They emerge in the coming together of bodily reactions and transmission of feelings, leaving an imprint on a subject's body or environment and at the same time reflecting these sensations to other bodies. Though affects shape our thinking and drive us to act, their expression is not always intentional and clearly goal driven. Rather, they are spontaneous corporeal reactions to our environment and encounters. As Massumi notes, affect is a pre-personal intensity and affection a relational moment, through which the capacity to act is decreased or increased through the encounters between bodies, affected or/and affecting each other.

Nonetheless, the space were these reactions, sensations and intensities occur is historically circumscribed and embedded within a societal script. Though affects go beyond a rational script of meaning production, they occur within and are channelled by such as script. Consequently, though affects do not bear meaning as such, they are impressed with meaning and leave traces of meaning. Set within the context of domestic work, affects flow through a space circumscribed by feminized and racialized social relations. For example, an employer can cry in the kitchen, the act of crying, an expression of the affect of sadness, is not immediately inscribed within gendered and racialized social relations. However, in the moment the domestic worker enters the kitchen and sees her crying, although she might react to it by crying herself or by comforting the employer, the way she will react is not insignificant to the way she might be perceived by her employer or by other household members. This intimate moment might indicate towards the potential of transversal bonds by sharing the event, the

moment of sadness, but still the domestic worker is employed to serve the household members. So, her affective reaction would not be perceived by the household members as detached from her social and employment status. The moment of transcending hierarchies and differences emulated by the affect, might be expressed, but on the level of impression social hierarchies and differences represent the invisible fabric regulating the transmission and circulation of affects, its affection.

The role of affects in racialized feminized labor urges us to understand the relational and transversal character of domestic work. Thus, domestic work does not only contribute to the creation of 'surplus value' through its physical and emotional work, but in particular through the absorption of its affective character. It is not only vitality that is infused into social reproduction through affection, but also a heteronormative and racialized social order. Affects as already mentioned are not free-floating energies. They emerge in a space delimited by a concrete historical and geo-political context, structured by inequalities. Our affects act and react in this context, bearing traces of the materiality that they transcend through their energy, but in which they remain embedded through their context of emergence. The expression and transmission of affects, thus, occur in a space marked by historically produced, socially configured and culturally located power relations. Happiness and disgust, for example, can be differently addressed and received in regard to the social status of their agents. Further, as Ngai notes, these feelings stand in a certain asymmetry to each other. [11] While "happiness" has an animating effect, "disgust" is for Ngai "the ugliest of the 'ugly feelings'",[12] its effect attempts to de-animate its object of projection, to de-humanize it. Referring to Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* and his distinction between the "happy and self-secure 'noble man'" and

the morality of the slave, marked by contempt coupled with a simulated tolerance for the abhorrent or dislikeable, Ngai stresses the historical legacies embedded in the consistency and effectiveness of affects.[13]

In the private household this relationship is less configured by "the noble man" and "the slave", than by the asymmetry between officially recognized citizens and disregarded or negated 'other citizens' ("undocumented migrants"). However, this is only one part of the story because as feminized subjects, the employer and the domestic worker are objects of the social revulsion projected onto domestic work. Both women need to deal with the repugnance socially attributed to this labor. Nonetheless, the employment of another woman to do the work releases the female employers temporarily from the negative affects attached to this labor. Positions of subjective and social 'superiority' and 'inferiority' are thus silently recreated through the exchange and circulation of glimpses of affection, reactions of disgust, sensations of repulsion or intensities of joy or sadness.

Domestic work, thus, signals affective labor. It engages with the immediate pulses of life and as such it has a biopolitical quality. What affective labor produces is thus not tangible and not always material, as its products are attached to feelings, emotions and energies. The perspective on affective labor, hence, focuses on the "uncensored," intuitive expression of our vital impulses in relation to others and our environment. Immersed in the energies of private households, domestic work is not only a receptor of affects, but also its mediator and organizer. Not solely resulting from the energies of the household members, but from their relationship to their household and to society, the affects produced have internal and external origins.

Due to their contextual and situational embeddedness affects are circumscribed by their social context of emergence. While they are not directly conceived in language, they transmit the symbolic power embedded in their matrix of enunciation. For example, the expression of disgust for the "undocumented migrant" domestic workers represents more than just revulsion, it is what Ngai defines as an "agonistic emotion (the social relation of inequality) (...) constituted by the vehement rejection or exclusion of its object."[14] While the sensation of disgust is an expression of a diffused bodily reaction, it is embedded in a web of symbolic power, culturally predicated and manifested in the societal de-valorization of domestic work. Thus, affective labor raises the question of the onto-phenomenological dimension of value.[15] This is so, as the correlation between the societal recognition of domestic work and its labor force, commonly racialized and feminized, reveals how labor is not only constituted by its quality, but by its quantifiable character in terms of who does the work. Domestic work is not badly paid because it is signified as non-productive, but because those doing this work are feminized and racialized subjects considered as "inferior" to the hegemonic normative subject. Again, the devaluation of domestic work is culturally predicated and reflects hegemonic perceptions. Accordingly, the value attributed to domestic work cannot be measured in Marxist terms of use-value or exchange-value as this categorization does not conceive the specific biopolitical quality of this labor as reproductive, emotional, and affective labour. In order to decipher the intrinsic value produced and extracted in this labour we need to consider affective value.

Affective Value

Affective value in regard to use-value and exchange-value represents a "third category," one that denotes the relational and societal character of human interactions. It focuses on the value produced through the energies, sensations and intensities of human encounters within a hierarchical system of colonial classification, entrenched in the logic and dynamics of the modern/colonial world system. Affective value, thus, foregrounds the cultural predication of and corporeal dimension in, the production of value. In regard to domestic work within the context of "undocumented" migration in Europe, the corporeality of affective value is signified by the racialized and feminized labor-force of postcolonial migrants. Further, domestic work is infused with the expression and circulation of affects in the households. Domestic work holds the emotions and feelings of its labor force, connecting them to other energies and sensations in the household. It, thus, reveals the affective dimension of labor by connecting its value production to the circulation of feelings and emotions. Through affects notions of value, translated into gestures of "superiority" and "inferiority" in the households, are expressed by women's bodies and impressed on other women's bodies, leaving a sense of what is meant by devaluation or estimation on bodies themselves. Consequently, what makes the social misrecognition of domestic work effective and normative is not the character of its labor power per se, but the cultural predication, the 'materialist predication of the subject,' of its labor force.

Drawing from this perspective, domestic work is understood as a site of social reproduction, where the expression, impression and circulation of affects and their transmission, affection, reveal the corporeal and sensual dimensions of apparently "emaciated and emotionally spare categories" like labor and value. In the interpersonal relations between domestic workers and their

employers these categories become “animated and animating,” releasing the workers and employers “performative and interpellating potential.”[16] Thus, the value produced, exchanged and accumulated in domestic work is not just an articulation of the “bodily intensity of performing surplus labor,” but it is the expression of “the affective intensity associated with exploitation.”[17]

Employing a domestic worker or a cleaner could indicate more than just the need for support to arrange the household. Nor is it just an attempt to mark social distinction. Maybe it is the activity of infusing the household with vitality that is in demand here. Although largely ignored by the employer, the domestic worker’s presence contributes to the re-creation of the apartment as a space of potential conviviality. Interestingly, this is not perceived as such by the employer. Instead the employer objectifies and reduces domestic work to the mere realization of physical tasks. However, when a domestic worker enters a household, she immediately becomes part of a network of energetic and affective relations. Her presence bears social suffering as well as individual yearnings, hopes and joy. She enters the space of the private household and encounters the affective traces of the people inhabiting it. She works through these energies, expressed sometimes in emotions, when she sees for example her employer crying silently in the kitchen, or when she encounters feelings of insecurity or ignorance.

Thus the question of value surfaces here in a new light by making us aware of the senses and sensations, “the optic nerves” as Marx notes,[18] which conceal the productive character of domestic work as affective labor. As the products surfacing from affective labor are immaterial because a smile or sweeping the floor, for example, cannot be quantified, affects remain unseen by the naked

eye.
But affects constitute the social and cultural fabric from which *living labor* and its productive power stems. The capital accumulated here does not draw on the equivalent value-form, money, as the codification of this value-form relates to a social text in which this labor is devalued. Rather, productivity relies on the fact that the value of this labor power is masked. As Negri asserts, "the more the value of labour-power is extended and intervenes in a global terrain, a biopolitical terrain," the more "labour finds its value in affect."[19]

Affect involves more than caring emotionally for others. It is also about the way we react to the feelings and energies of others. Consequently, the value extracted from affective labor is not straight-forwardly translatable into categories of use-value or exchange-value. It overcomes this dichotomy through the specific texture of its expression ("to affect") and dynamics of impression ("affecting"). Hence, the affective quality of labor refers to a new understanding of value production under conditions of flexible capital accumulation in which the extraction of surplus labor does not solely rely on the exploitation of physical labor but its societal, relational character expressed in affect. The societal perception of value in domestic work, for example, is expressed through its equivalent value-form, money. The value attributed to it represents a "code"[20] of a more complex process of valuation, historically produced and geo-politically contextualized. In this code the concrete labor expended, its emotional, physical, social and affective power remains unseen. Instead, in the translation of domestic work into an equivalent value-form, concrete value is translated into an abstract idea of value, reflecting the value and norms of a particular society. As Marx argues products become

commodities because they are social things, “whose qualities are at the same time perceptible and imperceptible by the senses.”[21]

Consequently, what we perceive as the social value of domestic work is not necessarily its value. It is rather, an expression of the hegemonic cultural coding of this labor. This results in a chain of value coding which relates to the societal value attributed to its labour-force. The value attached to a product, but also to its labor and labor-force, is thus less a result of its qualities than of its social and historical codification. Concretely, the domestic worker expends all her labor power cleaning the household, taking care of her employers and involuntarily or voluntarily engaging with the circuits of affective social (re-)production. However, while she will produce through this labor a remarkable amount of value, this value will not fully revert to her. It is this value that flows not only into the individual reproduction of the household but society as a whole, which is not reflected in the social and cultural codification of this labor reduced to physical reproductive tasks. The affective character and biopolitical quality of domestic work as affective labour is not reflected in this equation.

Nonetheless, while affective value stresses the relational character of *living labor* and the dispersed circuits of value production, its expression and transmission is bound to a concrete labor-force and historical and geo-political production context. It is informed by what Spivak calls, “the materialist predication” of capital. Thus, it is not insignificant where domestic work is geo-politically located and who does it. The feminized and racialized codification of the corporeality of labor and its geo-political location still pre-determines the social assertion of its value. While affect invites us to rethink the fluid and evasive character of capital accumulation, the phenomenological character of value-coding in the logic of capital, the inclusion of the materialist predication of the subject,

alerts us to its ontological dimension. This creates the need to conceive the private household and the negotiations on domestic work as a site, in which the parameter for a decolonial ethic of conviviality are set and potentially explored through the tranversal character of affective labor.

Transversal Conviviality

In private households feminized subjects share the effects of structural violence against women, the exploitative effects of the logic of capital accumulation and heteronormativity, these moments are crossed by the logic of the coloniality of power. Thus, while these women might, for example, share the same nasty feeling of "disgust" attached to the social devaluation of domestic work, this feeling is connoted by different moments of domination. While the employer is able to divert the social imposition of devalued feminized labor to an "undocumented migrant" woman, the latter is doomed to do this work as she lives in a legal limbo, stripped of any citizen's, worker's or human rights. Domestic work is fatally linked to the coloniality of labor, reflected in the position of the "undocumented migrant" woman. Political organization, thus, calls not only for a decentering of an androcentric view on the question of labor and labor organizing, but also for a decolonial one.

It is in this regard that political organizing between the employer and the domestic worker needs to operate on the basis of transversal translation. A translation acknowledging the imbalance of power that preformed transcultural encounters. This attempt of translation is based on the assumption of the parallel existence of (un)translatability in translation. How far can we translate universal claims, which are rooted and situated in one part of the world to

other parts of the world? What makes a claim universal and translatable? Of course, related to domestic work the claim to collectivized domestic work, to socially recognize the societal value generated through this labor, represents a universal claim. Nonetheless, this claim is only partly addressed if we depart from an analysis of the feminization of labor disregarding the enduring effects of coloniality. Translating these views into the field of domestic workers' rights require that we acknowledge the conditions underlying the translation.

Translation here is marked by "lived existence."[22] Maldonado-Torres discusses the concept of "lived existence" in Frantz Fanon's critique of Hegelian ontology. Reversing Hegel's dialectic of master/slave, Fanon insists on the "lived experience" resulting from the relationship between the presupposed "authentic Being" (the master) and the abjected Other, the "non-Being" (the enslaved subject). As Maldonado-Torres notes, it "is for this reason that, for Fanon, beyond a "science of being" we must engage in a science of the relations between being and non-being, describing how the exclusion from being is performed and how non-beingness is lived or experienced."[23] It is in this dynamics of the "institutional authorization of Being" and its negation, that a translation of affective labor as an expression of *living labor*, enables us to approach a decolonial ethical framework of Human Rights in regard to domestic work.

Stating that the official discourse on Human Rights is based on a Eurocentric normative framework which disregards the intrinsic connection of European Enlightenment to European colonialism, [24] Boaventura de Sousa Santos suggests developing a decolonial perspective. This perspective acknowledges the historical ambivalence in which Human Rights were proclaimed. When Human Rights were announced in France in 1879, colonialism and

the slave trade were flourishing. While the European White male bourgeoisie was celebrating its autonomy as sovereign subjects, women, the peasantry, the emerging working class and the colonized and enslaved population were excluded from this right. Today we still find different degrees of exclusion from Human Rights articulated by the gradual recognition or negation of citizenship rights within European nation-states in regard, for example, to migrants, refugees and *Sans Papiers*. A colonial logic is still in place in terms of who is considered a full citizen and who stands at the margins or is completely excluded from citizenship. On a global scale the inherent fallacy in the European proclamation of Human Rights resonates with an International Human Rights discourse, which solely allocates perpetrations of Human Rights abuses outside their own territorial borders.

Since 9/11 the liberal Human Rights discourse has served to legitimize imperial and bellicose ambitions, manifested in the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan by Western allied forces.[25] It is a difficult task to decenter the imperial political implications of this discourse. Nonetheless, this should not stop us in our attempt to unfold the counter-hegemonic potential inherent in the universal proclamation of Human Rights. Instead of giving up a universal conviction that departs from the principles of Human dignity and structural equality, following Santos we need to infuse them with a radical democratic content. Normative predications need to be accompanied by structural material changes, setting the grounds for a dignified life and equal economic distribution, accompanied by the decolonization of the epistemological premises sustaining the Western discourse on Human Rights, ultimately linked to a project of liberation.[26] This project pursues interconnected, but different struggles of decolonization addressing

on the one hand economic decolonization and on the other, epistemological decolonization.[27]

It is along these lines that anti-colonial, decolonial, feminist, LGBTIQ and post-Marxist movements have developed counter-discourses, emphasizing workers', civil and social rights. Further, these movements have introduced new conceptualizations of personhood, departing from critical border epistemology and decolonial queer theory, in which subjecthood is no longer defined by national boundaries or heterosexual gender frontiers, but as transborder, transgender and transexual ontologies. An emancipatory Human Rights project needs to combine these claims with questions of wealth distribution, the entitlement of human beings to a dignified life, access to health, housing, education and knowledge production as well as the right to active democratic representation and participation.[28] Seen from a decolonial perspective, the Human Rights discourse represents a counter-hegemonic project in which radical concepts of democracy and economic distribution are related to a constituency which embraces creolization.

The French Caribbean debate on creolization, offers us an epistemological framework to reverse the Eurocentric heteronormative racialized foundation of Human Rights. Focusing on the relational character of conviviality brought about under conditions of coloniality, for example, Edouard Glissant departs from the observation that the whole world is becoming creolized.[29] This is an observation also shared by the three Martiniquan intellectuals, Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau, and Raphaël Confiant. In their *Éloge de la Créolité* (translated in 1990 as *In Praise of Creoleness*) a founding text of creoleness, they introduce *creolité* as an ethical framework.[30] Drawing from the works of Aimé Césaire and Glissant, Bernabé, Confiant, and Chamoiseau

sought to elaborate an ethics of vigilance, "a sort of mental envelope in the middle of which our world will be built in full consciousness of the outer world."[31] Further, they conceived the principles of interconnectedness and interdependency as the basis for the conviviality of *creolité*. While *creolité* defined a Caribbean specificity, which they described in their declaration as "Neither Europeans, nor Africans, nor Asians, we proclaim ourselves Creoles,"[32] it proposes a vision of diversity based on the Negritude movement. However, it goes beyond it by creating a space for what they described as "kaleidoscopic totality," the "nontotalitarian consciousness of a preserved diversity."[33] To the cultural critics of the French Antilles, *créolité* and creolization are two distinct notions.

Glissant favors creolization over *créolité* because, he argues, creolization refers to an ongoing process. Drawing on the genealogy of Black anti-slavery and anti-colonial resistance in the French Caribbean, creolization indicates a Being and Becoming in the World characterized by Du Boisian "double consciousness."[34] Thus, creolization encompasses what Jane Anna Gordon and Neil Roberts define as a "New World View, a political epistemological and ontological global realignment of the normative subject and the heretical condemned of the earth – Fanon's *Damnés*."[35] Emphasizing the rhizomatic mobile character of a process of identification, which trespasses fixed lines of identity formation, for Glissant creolization is characterized by its relational nature. As Gordon and Roberts argue, for Glissant identification is linked to "multiple, rather than singular, roots and foundations that, when taken as a whole, aim at the dual objectives of liberation and of setting foundations for freedom beyond the trappings of dialectics of asymmetrical recognition."[36] This perspective introduces us

methodologically to what Glissant calls an ethnographic "poetics of relation" and an analytics of "transversality."[37]

Considering the historical semantics and regional differences embedded in the concept of creolization, caution is required when we translate localized and historically situated notions of *creolization* into a framework of universal Human Rights. So, how do we translate this to the European context of migrant workers and domestic workers' rights? In the European context *creolization* does not only signal "the underside of European modernity,"[38] but it also brings to mind the transformation of European societies through the impact of movements of postcolonial migration and diaspora. It frames a space in which national rhetorics about identity and community are contested and challenged. In this sense, Glissant describes Europe as inevitably inscribed in the project of creolization. Creolization, thus, might delineate a different understanding of Human Rights which focuses on the relational dimension of convivial transversality, embracing the principles of interconnectedness and interdependence. Creolizing Human Rights, hence, evokes a cosmological perception of rights, one that attaches rights not to a single individual or subject, but to the relationship of this individual or subject to others and his/her environment. From this angle, Human Rights cannot depart from the separation between the Self and the Other or the Human and the Environment. Rather, it engages with an ethics of relationality and transversality. An example of this can be found in the Quechua Inca concept of "pacha mama" that Enrique Dussel discusses in regard to his eco-political postulate of "perpetual life."[39] The term "pacha mama" or what Dussel names *terra mater* stands for the interconnectedness between environment and human beings. It makes us aware that we cannot exploit the world's resources endlessly as what we are dealing with is our "perpetual life" in the

generations that will follow. In Dussel's words, "We must behave such that our actions and institutions allow for the existence of human life on planet Earth forever, perpetually!"[40]

Thus, framing domestic workers' rights from the perspective of *Creolizing* Human Rights entails not only that we should fight for fair working conditions or professionalization of domestic work. Rather, it interconnects domestic work as affective labor to a cosmological perspective, uncovering it as the main source for the production and maintenance of human vitality, the sustenance of "perpetual life." Further, it urges us to locate this labor within a collective framework of sustainability and transversal conviviality, focusing on the potential of domestic work for a politics of affect. Domestic work set within the context of "undocumented" migration reveals more than just the reproductive and emotional reproduction of society it leads us to the neuralgic point of our lives, our affects. This brings us to consider what Eve Sedgwick defines as the politics of affects, a visionary political project emphasizing caring for ourselves as communal beings, embracing solidarity, responsibility, generosity and reciprocity.[41] Relating domestic workers' rights to what Gibson-Graham calls an "ethical subject of a post-capitalist order," claims for dignified working conditions, portable workers' rights and social recognition need to be re-addressed in regard to a subject that stands for a new cosmological vision of transversal conviviality, based on the acknowledgment of interconnectedness and interdependency, in short: transversality.

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[1] Cf. Guattari, Félix: “La transversalité”, in: *Revue de psychothérapie institutionnelle*, 1965, No. 1, 91–106.

[2] Cf. Yuval-Davis, Nira: *Gender and Nation*, London 1997.

[3] Rollins, *Between Women*.

[4] See for further discussion, Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Social Classification” and Mignolo, “De-linking.”

[5] Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas*.

[6] Mignolo, *Local Histories, Global Designs*.

[7] See Hochschildt, *The Commercialization of Intimate Life*.

[8] Massumi, Parables for the Virtual, 260.

[9] Ibid, 28.

[10] See discussion in Grossberg, *We gotta get out of this place*.

[11] Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*.

[12] Ibid, 335.

[13] Ibid, 336.

[14] Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 22.

[15] Spivak, “Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value”, 74.

[16] Gibson-Graham et al, *Class and Its ‘Others’*, 7.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Marx, Capital, A Critique of Political Economy, Vl. I, Part, I, 83.

[19] Negri, Antonio, “Value and Affect”, in: *boundary 2,* Vol. 26, No. 2, 1999, 77-88.

[20] Mezzadra, op. cit.

[21] Marx, *Capital*, 45.

[22] Maldonado-Torres, Nelson, *Against War. Views form the Underside of Modernity*, Durham 2008, 105.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Santos and Rodríguez Garavito, *El derecho y la globalización desde abajo*.

[25] I have discussed this in regard to the incorporation of women’s rights in an imperial discourse on Human Rights in “Jenseits einer binären Anerkennungslogik.”

[26] See for further discussion, Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*.

[27] For further discussion see Mignolo, “De-linking,” 454ff.

[28] Santos, “Beyond Abyssal Thinking.”

[29] Glissant, *Introduction à une poétique du divers*.

[30] Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant, *Éloge de la Créolité*.

[31] Ibid, 10 (Translation EGR).

[32] Ibid. (Translation EGR).

[33] Ibid, 28 (Translation EGR).

[34] Du Bois, *The Soul of Black Folk*.

[35] Gordon and Roberts, *Introduction: The Project of Creolizing Rousseau*, 6.

[36] Ibid.

[37] See further discussion in Glissant, *Introduction à une poétique du divers and Poetique of Relation*.

[38] Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas*.

[39] Dussel, *Twenty Theses on Politics*, 114/115.

[40] Ibid., 114.

[41] Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling*.