

Precarias a la Deriva

A Very Careful Strike - Four hypotheses.

Translators' introduction

We are happy to present here a translation of an article by the Precarias a la Deriva, a militant research collective based in Madrid, Spain. We have translated the title of the piece as "A Very Careful Strike." The title of the piece, "*Una huelga de mucho cuidado*" is a pun in Spanish, and as such is difficult to render into English. It means, at the same time, something very carefully done, something dangerous (something around which one should take care), as well as referring to the proposal of a strike by those who carry out both paid and unpaid caring labor.

The word "*precarias*" means "precarious women workers," referring to women who work in conditions of relative instability. While in many ways this is the condition of women under patriarchy and of workers under capitalism as such, the Precarias seek to analyze the present relationships of waged and unwaged work and the conditions of the women do much of this work. The phrase "*a la deriva*" in the name Precarias a la deriva means "adrift." The verb "derivar" has many meanings in Spanish that do not translate clearly into English. For example, the phrase "*derivar a otro lugar*," literally translated "drift to another place," refers to when a teleoperator connects a client with someone else (a technician, etc). In instances such as this, we have translated these phrases with other less literal terms and indicated in brackets that the Spanish term was *derivar*. We do so to try and give some sense of the wordplay in the piece, which resonates with the groups' name and the conditions of being adrift that they diagnose as characteristic of many people today.

The term "*las derivas*," literally "drifts," refers to the practice of militant research undertaken by Precarias a la Deriva. We have translated the term here as "derives" in order to preserve a common heritage with and reference to the theory

and practice of the derive used by the Situationist International. Precarias a la Deriva take up the practice of the derive in a transformed fashion, as noted in “First Stutterings of Precarias a la Deriva,” where the Precarias write:

“[i]n the Situationist version of the drift, the investigators wander without any particular destination through the city, permitting that conversations, interactions and urban micro-events guide them. This permits them to establish a psychocartography based on the coincidences and correspondences of physical and subjective flows: exposing themselves to the gravitation and repulsion of certain spaces, to the conversations that come up along the way, and, in general, to the way in which the urban and social environments influence exchanges and attitudes. This means wandering attentive to the billboard that assaults you, the bench that attracts, the building that suffocates, the people who come and go. In our particular version, we opt to exchange the arbitrary wandering of the flaneur, so particular to the bourgeois male subject with nothing pressing to do, for a situated drift which would move through the daily spaces of each one of us, while maintaining the tactic's multisensorial and open character. Thus the drift is converted into a moving interview, crossed through by the collective perception of the environment.”

For more information on the Situationist International and their version of the derive see Debord's “Theory of the Derive,” available online at <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/314>.

For more in English by the Precarias a la Deriva see the following site: <http://www.sindominio.net/karakola/precarias>

* * *

1. Sex, care, and attention are not pre-existent objects, but rather historically determined social stratifications of affect, traditionally assigned to women.

The history of sex and care as strata is ancient. Almost from the beginning of Christianity, both were associated with a bipolar feminine model, which located on one (positive) side the Virgin Mary, virtuous woman, mother of god, and on the other, (negative) side Eve, the great sinner of the Apocalypse, the transgressor, the whore. Soon, the first of these poles would unfold into two options, maternity and virginity, both associated with the Virgin Mary and with care, while the image of Eve and her followers (Mary Magdalene, Pelagia, Tais...) became the stereotype of the sexual active woman, devalued and stigmatized as such.¹ Evidently, this bipolarity, to endure in time and expand in space would present important variations

and would appear declined in different ways in function to social classes, geographic areas, concrete cultural contexts, etc, but what is certain is that it would enter into perfect symbiosis with the bourgeois nuclear family that capitalism converted into the dominant reproductive ideal and would contribute to producing what Betty Friedan called the “feminine mystique”: the whore would be the negative reflection in which the good woman (mother and wife or single virgin in submission to others) would see herself, in order to know in every moment whether or not she was following the good path.

The Enlightenment, as well as the processes of industrialization and urbanization (linked to a growing preoccupation with the “hygiene” of populations) produced a gradual transition in the control of feminine sexuality, from religious sanctions to legal sanctions, which in many areas (US, Great Britain, Australia...) included the regulation of the exchange of sexual services for money. It was in this manner that prostitution appeared in the way we know it today, that is to say, as a specialized occupation or profession within the division of labor of patriarchal capitalism, and how it was restricted to determinate spaces and subjects (ceasing to be an occasional resources for working and peasant women).² The border between the whore and the good woman would thus remain constructed in a more rigid manner than ever. As such, if a woman was lost³ (or of a strange sexuality, or a single mother or someone who liked fucking) she was called a whore and thus there was established a clear barrier that excluded her from other options (clearly, from the functions of the dignified spouse and mother). Even though if at first she did not have this profession, she could very easily end up having it. She was kept out of the matrimonial market (with its “normal” relations - monogamous, reproductive, and subordinated) and ended up either in some institution (prison, set up for lost young women...) or in the street, or more precisely, “doing the street.”⁴

For its part, attention⁵ as a differentiated activity constitutes a new element. This capacity of listening and empathy, just as associated with models of femininity but also with the concrete activities historically reserved for women (in the areas of care as much as in sex), is isolated as a specific function and put to work for the nascent attention industry, in its different variants: telemarketing, telesales, teleassistance, customer service... In this manner, attention, exchanged for money in function of a temporal pattern of measure, is separated from incarnated communication, that which produces lasting relations, trust, and cooperation, and turns to a functionalized and uninvested exchange of codes (words and gestures). In this sense, the stories that teleoperators themselves tell are sufficiently expressive: it is a matter above all of listening, of smiling (smiling through the telephone, even though they can not see you, so that the voice sounds agreeable) and later, to pass them on (*derivar*) to someone else... or, simply, to give excuses. As a compañera told us in one of our derives: “You try to do things the best you can, but you can’t do it

right if it's not your job. Then it's just putting up with things. That's very hard, because someone is telling you something that really gives you grief. Their telephone line will be down for two days and you can't tell them: "look, the best thing you can do is to cancel your service because this company won't solve your problem." Then all you can do is give excuses, say that you will do everything you can to solve the problem."⁶ Empathy becomes reduced to a pure telephonic smile.

2. Our journeys across the city, questioning for ourselves our precaritized everyday lives, and asking others, have led us to abandon the modes of enunciation that speak of each of these functions as separate and to think more from the point of view of a communicative continuum sex-attention-care.

We say communicative because these three elements (sex, attention, and care) create relationships, they are modes of corporeal communication. But why call it a continuum? On one hand, in order to emphasize precisely the elements of continuity that exist under the stratification, outside of frozen images, in concrete and everyday practices, which are always more complex and fluid than any icon. In the way, we seek to challenge the supposed naturalness of those strata and to open transversal possibilities of alliance and conflict. As we said in another place: "capital fragments the social in order to extract value, we join together in order to elevate it and displace it toward other places."⁷

On the other hand, we speak of a continuum because we notice that the traditional fixed positions of women (and of genders in general) are becoming more mobile, and at the same time new positions are created. The whore is no longer just and only a whore and the sainted mother is no longer such a saint nor only a mother. At the same time, telemarketing firms and unions in that sector press for attention to be a differentiated profession, with its specific educational process: thus was born the *atenta*⁸, that professional of listening and moving on [*derivar*] (to another telephone, another service, to an earlier caller or visitor), even, in a moment in which the job is increasingly less an element that organizes (individual and collective) identity, it remains to be seen if this position can come to coagulate as such.

But let's be a little strict and take piece by the piece the reconfiguration of the nexus between sex, sexuality, and care (or, more generally, reproduction), the reorganization of care, the explosion of sex as a mercantile exchange beyond the borders which were marked out and their relations with the attention industry. Is there a higher bidder?⁹

Effectively, we note a diversification in the variants of that peculiar type of contract which is the "sexual contract."¹⁰ To the traditional contracts of matrimony

and prostitution (cut from the patriarchal heterosexual pattern), in an increasingly generalized manner there are being added other modalities, like the renting of mothers (on the part of couples that can not have children) or new types of matrimonial contract (that of the spouse for hire - frequently from the countries of the South, homosexual matrimony, weddings as a form of solidarity among citizens and those without papers...), that break with the classic regulation between sex, sexuality, and reproduction. As was to be expected, this transformation of the types of contracts has a material correlate: the crisis of the model of the Fordist nuclear family and the proliferation of other modalities of unity and cohabitation: monoparental or plurinuclear homes, transnational families, groups constituted by non-blood bonds...

In the same way, the organization of care experiences strong changes that, together with other compañeras, we understand in terms of crisis¹¹ but also of occasion (for a social transformation that would ally care with desire in a more just manner for each and all). On the other hand, we have spoken extensively about the characteristics of this crisis of care¹²; here we will limit ourselves, for reasons of space, to the enumeration of four crucial elements of its physiognomy. In first place, the passage from the Welfare State (which for good and for bad guaranteed the access of all who were considered citizens to a series of rights) to “risk management” (or, to say it better, to the containment of the subjects of risk) in the hands of an expanding “third sector” where the concrete labor done by women (and sometimes men) “volunteers” and/or with limited and precarious contracts, is subjected to high levels of tension and responsibility.

In second place, the externalization of the home: many of the tasks that were previously conducted in the home now are resolved in the market and many of the qualities of labor in the home today impregnate, in functionalized fashion, the city-firm. The establishment of fast food and pre-cooked meals replaces the hands of the mother that, with the help of the children, managed to have the food ready for when the men of the house returned after their workday; the contracting of other women (frequently women from the countries of the East or the South of the world and, in general, with interminable work days and very low salaries¹³) become a generalized resource that contributes to alleviating the burden of domestic work and to making women compatible with other employees outside the home, at the same time that they maintain an affective South-North passage spurred on by the crisis of the sustainability of life in many countries of the South; the extreme cheapening of clothing thanks to the delocalization of the textile industries to countries where the costs of production are much lower (and levels of exploitation much higher) eliminates the need for weaving, sewing, and darning at home; the golden telephone gives conversation and consultation against loneliness to grandmothers whose children are not able to cope with the many tasks and the multiple places they have

to be; the traditional capacities of the housewife (harmonizing counterposed interests, intuiting desires, attending to distinct necessities, resolving others' problems...) are transferred to the firm and unfold their virtuosity in order to make an environment seem natural and fluid, an increasingly networked environment, that in another fashion would breakdown or explode... the examples can be extended ad nauseum, the case is all of that configurates what Donna Haraway has called the household economy outside of the home.¹⁴ But make no mistake, this externalization of the home does not presuppose that the labor of care has been completely absorbed by the market. Its coordination to assure the sustainability of life and a good part of the concrete tasks continual falling primarily in a gratuitous fashion on the minds and hearts of women and on the networks that they are capable of creating, even if not in the seclusion of the private, but within an intricate network that traverses homes, spheres and countries, and, on occasion, has the telephone line and modem as its principle supports.

We continue with our physiognomy of the crisis of care: the third element is the lack of time, resources, recognition, and desire for taking charge of nonremunerated care - the laboral deregulation becomes impossible to conciliate with attention to those who most require intensive care (children, the sick, the disabled, the old...) and women increasingly are less willing to take on this invisible "charge" along, without recognition or resources for it. The result is a strong uncertainty for periods of illness and old age, above all for those who do not have the money to buy care at the market prices.

In last place, we have urban questions: the crisis (and destruction) of worker neighborhood and their strong sense of community has given place to a process of privatization of public spaces, which finds its maximum expression in closed urbanizations, large commercial centers and the hegemony of the car. How to construct bonds, and beginning from there, relationships of solidarity and care, if we are not able to spatially prefigure a "we," if our everyday contact is reduced to seeing each other at the counter, through the glass of the windows or at the verge of the interior garden, under the blinding lights of the billboards or immersed in the vertiginous rhythm of shop windows. Maybe the neighborhood gangs are to as like Cheshire's smile was to Alice: a sign for possible affective (and caring) territorializations in the privatized city.

Displacements are also perceivable from the point of view of the consumer of goods and services of a sexual character. The sex industry grows, internationalizes, diversifies, sophisticates, mixes with others (for example, with that of attention, in phone sex and the party-line)... Women do not cease to be the principle work force, but they begin to appear also as consumers... of course, if they have the cash to pay for it! Sex as mercantile exchange impregnates other spaces (sex-fashion, sex-spectacle, sex-domestic work, sex-care services, sex-businesswomen) and, inserted

into the chain pleasure-consumption, it used ever more as a commercial attraction, which can already be seen in the most hardcore or the most sweetened versions. Thus, its place becomes more uncertain, more generalized, and the woman who behaves badly is not immediately heading for the other side of the barrier, to the other profession, to a specific mode of life... This paradoxical hypersexualization (better dead than simple!¹⁵) what makes sexuality more present and visible than ever without mitigating the stigma of direct sexual service (prostitution) and creating, in fact, new internal border to the sexual industry itself (sex-porno, sex-street, sex-telephone), comes to the saturation of a fixed and exclusively heteronormative plain. One thing is certain: capitalism has also learned to tolerate and to take advantage of other sexualities, but always and when it can limit them and assure their intelligibility in some fashion. In the end, in addition to a determinate mode of production, capitalism is an axiomatic, that is to say, a specific mode of regulation of flows (of persons, objects, ideas, imaginaries, affects...) and it has been able to swallow differences every time that it can subject them to its system of convertibility.¹⁶

The displacement of borders and the fluidification of feminine positions, like the growth of new positions and stratifications, are real. In every case, beneath any stratum, affect flows precariously: able to porno/eroticize care, to make sexuality (and its imaginaries) into care and to reconnect attention to incarnated communication, caring and erotic between fragile thinking bodies.

3. Care, with its ecological logic, opposes the securitary logic reigning in the precaritized world

The present context is marked by the conjunction of macropolitics of security and their everyday correlate, the micropolitics of fear. At the grand scale we observe how the western governments justify the application of these securitary policies as a response to the present geopolitical configuration, strongly marked by the "terrorist threat." These macropolitics articulate themselves day to day with the micropolitics of fear, directly related to the deregularization of the labor market and the instability that this generates. Simultaneously, consumption tries to impose itself as the sole remnant of public activity and public spaces organized around other axes disappear. The securitary triumphs as a way of taking charge of bodies and filtering them into the distinct strata of our societies. In this context of uncertainty and deterritorialization, precarity is not only a characteristic of the poorest workers. Today we can speak of a precarization of existence in order to refer to a tendency that traverses all of society, which feeds and feeds upon the climate of instability and fear. Precarity functions as a blackmail, because we are susceptible to losing our jobs tomorrow even though we have indefinite contracts, because hiring, mortgages, and prices in general go up but our wages don't, because social networks are very

deteriorated and the construction of community today is a complicated task, because we don't know who will care for us tomorrow... The logic of security finds itself in fear, concretizes itself in practices of containment, and generates isolation that persists in present social problems as individual ones. Practices of containment cast the subjects that need care and rights either into poor victims or into subjects dangerous for the rest of "normalized" society, which has been subjected and controlled in well-established niches. In the present situation of cutting back rights, social measures diminish, the focus is fundamentally assistance-ist and controlling, and its object is trying to maintain an order that perpetuates the confusion between being in a situation of risk or vulnerability and being dangerous. To carry out this task of containment, new social agents proliferate, like private security companies and NGOs, which live alongside the old dispositifs - the State security bodies and the disciplinary institutions continue playing their role.

In the face of this prevailing logic, our wager consists in recuperating and reformulating the feminist proposal for a logic of care.¹⁷ A care that appears here as a mode of taking charge of bodies opposed to the securitary logic, because, in place of containment, it seeks the sustainability of life and, in place of fear, it bases itself on cooperation, interdependence, the gift, and social ecology. Seeking a definition of care, we identify four key elements:

* affective virtuosity: this is a matter of a criterion of social ecology, which breaks with the idea that care happen because someone loves you and presents it more as an ethical element that mediates every relation. This affective virtuosity has to do with empathy, with intersubjectivity, and contains an essential creative character, constitutive of life and the part of labor (nonremunerated as much as remunerated) that cannot be codified. What escapes the code situates us in that which is not yet said, opens the terrain of the thinkable and livable, it is that which creates relationships. We have to necessarily take into account this affective component in order to unravel the politically radical character of care, because we know - this time without a doubt - that the affective is the effective.

* Interdependence: we take as our point of departure the recognition of the multiple dependence that is given among the inhabitants of this planet and we count social cooperation as an indispensable tool for enjoying it. The task of politicizing care leads to opening the concept and analyze the concepts that compose it: economically remunerated care, nonremunerated care, self-care and those activities that assure the sustainability of life. People depend on each other, these positions are not static and it is not only "the others" that need care. The proposal consists in destabilizing these positions, which when they are mediated by a labor relation remain even more fixed, because we want to think relations beyond those of the commodity mediations, following the logic of the gift, where one gives without knowing what, how, and when one will receive something in exchange.

* *Transversality*: when we speak of care we refer to a notion with multiple dimensions. As we have already seen, there are remunerated and nonremunerated labor of care, blurring the false line that is persistently drawn between those who think themselves independent and crosses in an indissoluble form the material and the immaterial (relational, emotive, subjective, and sexual aspects) of our life, needs, and desires. Care takes place in commodity spheres and in those at the margins of the market, in the home and outside the home, combing a multitude of tasks and requirements for different specific knowledges. Care makes newly manifest that we cannot clearly delimit lifetime from work time, because the labor of care is precisely to manufacture life.¹⁸

**Everydayness*: care is that continuous line that is always present, because if it were not we could not continue living, it only varies its intensity, its qualities, and its form of organization (more or less unfair, more or less ecological). We are speaking of the sustainability of life, that is to say, of everyday tasks of affective engineering that we propose to make visible and to revalorize as raw material for the political, because we do not want to think social justice without taking into account how to construct it in day-to-day situations.

Affective virtuosity, interdependence, transversality and everydayness constitute the key ingredients of a careful know-how, fruit of collective and corporeal knowledge¹⁹, that breaks with the securitary logic and thus opens cracks in the walls of fear and precarization. But this is not a prescription for sacrificed women, but rather a line upon which to insist in order for radical transformation.

4. In the present, one of the fundamental biopolitical challenges consists in inventing a critique of the current organization of sex, attention, and care and a practice that, starting from those as elements inside a continuum, recombines them in order to produce new more liberatory and cooperative forms of affect, that places care in the center but without separating it from sex nor from communication.

And what does it mean to “place” care in the center, and in what sense is this proposal able to become a biopolitical challenge?

When we speak of “placing” we refer, more exactly, to re-placing. Because care, as we understand it, already is, in fact, in the center. Even more: it always has been and will continue to be, today more than ever, the center. The center in the sense of principle and principal, as an arche of human existence and of social relations. Because care is what makes life possible (care generates life, nourishes it, makes it grow, heals it), care can make life happier (creating relations of interdependence among bodies) and more interesting (generating exchanges of all types of flows, knowledges, contagions), care can give like, definitively, some meaning.²⁰ But this reality, which has been silenced in the maligned area of

reproduction and time and again recovered from patriarchal mystifications by feminist critiques of political economy, today comes to be blurred even in those indispensable Italian postoperaismo analyses of immaterial labor, the forms of exploitation and subversive possibilities of the new forms of labor. One of the gravest errors of this analysis resides, following Negri, in “the tendency (...) to treat the new laboring practices in biopolitical society *only* in their intellectual and incorporeal aspects. The productivity of bodies and the value of affect, however, are absolutely central in this context.”²¹ As such, our proposal for placing care in the center would consist, among other things, in recovering the affective component of immaterial labor from the periphery or the silence to which it is customarily relegated in analyses of reality, and in recognizing the impossibility of separating the materiality of bodies - despite the determination of late capitalism to do just that. In returning to situate this in the place to which it corresponds and which, in fact - we insist - it occupies.

Returning to the continuum: only if the maids, the whores, the phone sex operators, grant-holding students or researchers, telephone operators, social workers, nurses, friends, mothers, daughters, compañeras, lovers... only if the caregivers, which all women are and everyone should be (*que somos todas y que habríamos de ser todos*) rediscover the fundamental role of the labor (remunerated or not) of care and of the social wealth it produces and we withdraw from the invisibilization, hyperexploitation, infravalorization or social stigma of which care is the object, only then will we be prepared to extract from care its transformative force.

Once brought into the light, the revolutionary potential of care could become the logic that governs our lives, replacing not only the securitary logic but also that other logic which underlies it: that of the imperatives of profit. Now the interests of capital determine production (what, how, and when one produces), spaces (the houses we inhabit, the design of our cities and towns, the very global geography and its borders) and times (labor and leisure, haste, the intensification of time). But, why not begin to imagine and construct an organization of the social that prioritizes persons, that attends to our sustainability - from access to health care to the right to affect - which orients toward our enrichment as human beings - from the access to knowledge, education, and information to the freedom to move around the world - that listens to our desires? This is the biopolitical challenge.

And we need tools to bring it about. One of these is the caring strike. It seems a paradox, if, because the strike is always interruption and visibilization and care is the continuous and invisible line whose interruption would be devastating. But all that is lacking is a change of perspective to see that that there is no paradox: the caring strike would be nothing other than the interruption of the order that is ineluctably produced in the moment in which we place the truth of care in the center and politicize it.

Thus the strike appears to us in the first place as interpellation: “what is your caring strike?” Interpellation launched to all: to those of us that act as maids, as housewives, as whores, as nurses, as telephone operators... launched also to those of us that think the cities, in order to facilitate encounters, to those of us that invent bridges, so affects can come through, to those of us that imagine worlds, in order that the profit economy could be replaced by the ecology of care... and, of course, to the men - is are we going to end with the mystique that obliges women to care for others even at the cost of themselves and obliges men to be incapable of caring even for themselves? , Or are we never going to cease to be sad men and women and begin to degenerate the imposed attributions of gender?

In second place, the strike appears to us as an everyday and multiple practice: there will be those who propose transforming public space, converting spaces of consumption into places of encounter and play preparing a “reclaim the streets,” those who suggest organizing a work stoppage in the hospital when the work conditions don't allow the nurses to take care of themselves as they deserve, those who decide to turn off their alarm clocks, call in sick and give herself a day off as a present, and those who prefer to join others in order to say “that's enough” to the clients that refuse to wear condoms... there will be those who oppose the deportation of miners from the “refuge” centers where they work, those who dare - like the March 11th Victims' Association (*la asociación de afectados 11M*) - to bring care to political debate proposing measures and refusing utilizations of the situation by political parties, those who throw the apron out the window and ask why so much cleaning? And those who join forces in order to demand that they be cared for as quadriplegics and not as “poor things” to be pitied, as people without economic resources and not as stupid people, as immigrants without papers and not as potential delinquents, as autonomous persons and not as institutionalized dependents. There will be those who...

Because care is not a domestic question but rather a public matter and generator of conflict.

Madrid, February 2005

Translated by Franco Ingrassia and Nate Holdren.²²

¹ See Dolores Juliano, *La prostitución: el espejo oscuro*, Icaria, Barcelona, 2002, pp. 37-43.

² Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988.

³ The phrase “una perdidilla,” a “lost woman,” is a colloquial expression used to imply that a woman enjoys having sex. [Tr.]

⁴ The expression “haciendo la calle” is a colloquial metaphor for working as a prostitute. [Tr.]

⁵ The term “attention” here, “atención,” also connotes assistance. [Tr.]

⁶ Complete transcription of the derive with rebel telephone operators at Qualytel, Sunday December 1st, 2002. See “Sin el mute. Relato de una deriva con teleoperadoras rebeldes,” in *Precarias a la deriva, A la deriva (por los circuitos de la precariedad femenina)*, Traficantes de sueños, Madrid, 2004, p. 111-117.

⁷ “Encuentros en la segunda fase. El continuo comunicativo: sexo, cuidado y atención,” en *Precarias a la deriva, A la deriva*, cit., p. 64. [This essay is available online in English as “Close encounters in the second phase - the communication continuum: care-sex-attention,” at http://www.sindominio.net/karakola/precarias/close_encounters.htm - Tr.]

⁸ “Atenta”/“atento” means someone who pays attention, but also someone who has good manners (“fue muy atento conmigo” = “he was very gentle with me”). [Tr.]

⁹ Those are only some of the aspects of the social machine and technology of genders that are opening and reorganizing, concretely, those which have seemed more pertinent to us in relation with the sex-attention-care continuum and with its relation to processes of precarization. Elsewhere we would like to develop other aspects of the reconfiguration of this machine inside a terrain of crisis of the traditional meanings of femininity and masculinity and also, since it could not be otherwise, of battle.

¹⁰ On the sexual contract, see Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*.

¹¹ See Amaia Pérez Orozco and Sira del Río, “La economía desde el feminismo: trabajos y cuidados,” in *Rescaldos: Revista de diálogo social*, num. 7, winter 2002.

¹² See “Cuidados globalizados,” in *Precarias a la deriva, A la deriva*, cit., pp. 217-248.

¹³ It seems important to us to make this ethnic component of contracted domestic labor stand out, a component which introduces the international division of labor and its tension into homes and which creates authentic global chains of affect (see Arlie Russel Hochschild), but without forgetting that there is still a high percentage of this work (above all domestic employees who are not live-in employees) that is frequently carried out by women citizens or interior migrants who frequently work without being legally recognized within the weak social security system that is supposed to regulate this activity. In these cases, the division between the contracting and contracted woman is not so much ethnic as class.

¹⁴ See Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century,” in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York; Routledge, 1991), pp.149-181.

¹⁵ “Better dead than simple,” “Antes muerta que sencilla” is the name of a song by a spanish “eurojunior” singer: María Isabel. “sencilla,” in this context, means “unsophisticated.” [Tr.]

¹⁶ An axiom is an operator that equalizes quantities and functions, of a nonspecified nature: thus the levels of public spending, the regulation of migratory flows, the self-regulation of financial markets and a long etc. (...)The flexibility of capital consists precisely in its capacity to add and subtract axioms and at the same time to subject every material, social, cultural flow or current to an axiomatic by means of its conversion into numerable and at times discrete quantities (commodities, symbolic-capital, relational-capital),” in Emmanuel Rodríguez, “Ecología de la metrópolis,” *Archipiélago* n° 62.

¹⁷ Our concept of the logic of care differs radically from the ethic of care that some feminists (among them Carol Gilligan) proposed in the 1980s. While that notion of the ethic of care places emphasis on the individual attitudes of those who care and think care as a transcendent value (that is to say, more as a moral than a true ethic), for us the logic of care is transindividual and immanent, it does not depend on one but rather on many and is thus inseparable from the social, material, and concrete forms of organization of the tasks related to care.

¹⁸ On the transversality of care, see *Precarias a la deriva*, *A la deriva*, cit., p. 224.

¹⁹ The phrase here refers to the Marxian “general intellect” as presented in the work of Paolo Virno, Antonio Negri, and others. [Tr.]

²⁰ Why do we speak of possibilities? Because the fact that care could be the motor for happier and more interesting lives depends precisely on its continuous questioning and redefinition, that is, on its politicization: care yet, but organized and distributed in a more just manner and with qualities that tend to empower (potenciar) the parts that are placed in relation. We do not value, for example, paternalist, possessive, or dominant care.

²¹ Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000. Pages 29-30.

²² The translators are involved in an informal collective project to encourage, support, and conduct translations of social movement and radical theory related material. Anyone interested in being involved is encouraged to contact them at notasrojas@lists.riseup.net.