

A la derecha: Dibujo n.º 152 del libro de Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala (también denominado Waman Puma [Águila Puma]), *Primer nueva coronica y Buen Gobierno* (“Corónica” [sic] por “Crónica”). Es la única obra conocida de este cronista del Perú, que recopila 398 dibujos en 1.180 páginas, donde registró hasta 1615 la penosa situación de los pueblos originarios en el área durante la larga colonización, mediante un punto de vista que respetaba y adoptaba la lengua de éstos —el quechua— y su visión del mundo. El libro fue enviado a España a nombre del rey Felipe III en 1664, pero se extravió. Reapareció 300 años más tarde. Actualmente se conserva en Europa, en la Biblioteca Real de Copenhague, y se puede consultar on-line.

A la izquierda: Primera imagen descargada de Facebook por Daniela Ortiz, cuando comenzó a explorar en la red social virtual indicios de cómo se autorrepresentan los grupos sociales adinerados de Perú en su vida cotidiana. Esta fotografía es la imagen originaria de la serie *97 empleadas domésticas*, sin formar parte de ella. El sistema de representación compartido por el conjunto de las 77 fotografías de este libro queda revertido en esta imagen generatriz: los cuerpos narcisistas de los adolescentes parecen desplazados a los márgenes de la representación, mientras que la figura de la empleada doméstica uniformada representa en el centro a quien parece ser el único sujeto encuadrado consciente de la presencia de la cámara, sosteniendo —se diría que desafiante— la mirada simultáneamente al fotógrafo y al espectador, y desequilibrando el régimen visual que habitualmente instala una relación de dominio.

Reproducimos ambas imágenes yuxtapuestas al final de este texto por sugerencia de la joven artista peruana Daniela Ortiz de Zevallos, que en el año 2006 solicitó ayuda a la rama adinerada de su familia para poder trasladarse a vivir a Europa, siéndole facilitado un trabajo que le proporcionaría la renta necesaria para pagar el coste de un vuelo que le permitió viajar desde Lima a Barcelona.

{ENG}

*D-O 1-5. In 2006, the young Peruvian artist Daniela Ortiz de Zevallos approached the wealthy branch of her family for help in order to be able to move to Europe.*

— MARCELO EXPÓSITO

I

In 2006, the young Peruvian artist Daniela Ortiz de Zevallos (b. 1985) approached the wealthy branch of her family for help in order to be able to move to Europe. This statement, stripped of rhetoric, could be the title of a text that traces a part of Daniela Ortiz’s professional journey that has ended up becoming the book that the reader now holds in his or her hands: *97 House Maids*.

Her appeal for help produced the following response: the artist would not be handed a blank cheque with no strings attached, but she would be assisted in finding employment in keeping with her artistic skills within the circle of family friends, which would allow her to earn sufficient income to travel to Barcelona.

In January and February 2007, Daniela Ortiz was employed to film the holidays and leisure time of wealthy Peruvian families on Playa de Asia, south of Lima. More specifically, her work consisted in making home videos that would document the leisure activities of their young offspring. In April and May 2010, when Daniela Ortiz supplied me with the information required to write this text, she included a YouTube link ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=woI71fZMOok&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woI71fZMOok&feature=related)) showing a report on Peru that was broadcast on Spanish television. The fragment accurately captures the ambience at Playa Asia and the holiday homes of a wealthy sector of society. A teenager describes the beach as «perhaps not the most beautiful in Peru, but it is a very social beach.» She then tells the camera about a conflict that has recently taken place in this microcosm: a debate around whether house maids («each family usually has two») should always be seen in their uniforms, or whether they should be allowed to wander around public areas in casual clothes. The controversy basically reveals a conflict between different criteria in regards to signalling social status and the visibility of class difference in this social context. The Peruvian teenager in the report gives her opinion: a single criteria should not be applied across the board; the final decision must be in the hands of the lady of each house.

Daniela Ortiz enjoyed a great deal of freedom when carrying out this work, but she was given one particular instruction: when she filmed the children playing, she should take care to ensure house maids did not appear in the footage.

Historically, there has always been an element of tension at the core of the representation of family life through photography and home movies: the symbolic representation of the family as a compact group suspended in an idyllic state

of constant happiness seeks to transform fragments of everyday life in the family institution into a totality, and to strip them of contradictions and tensions in this process. This rule cuts across different systems of self-representation of daily life – from the few home movies that upper class and petite-bourgeoisie families could make in the early twentieth century right through to the current popular boom of Facebook. The Hungarian filmmaker Péter Forgács skilfully leads us to the origins of this archetype in his video series *Private Hungary* in which, apparently laconically, he shows original footage self-filmed by Hungarian bourgeoisie families from the beginning of the century until the end of World War II, with subtle editing and narrativisation processes that allow the optical unconscious of the images to emerge. The work of Forgács reveals how sexual difference is organized by means of the point of view of the camera, and also the tensions that surface when the self-representations of the bourgeoisie compulsively try to naturalize their class status. In one sequence from *The Bartos Family* (1988), the family's first-born, who has almost exclusive control of the camera, films several aspects of daily life, ending with images of one of the factories owned by the family. The young female workers and employees are initially invited and then, with tense friendliness, forced to pose trapped between the camera lens in front of them and the façade of the building behind them. This sequence perfectly illustrates how the possessive action of the camera establishes the hierarchised gender and class relationships imposed by the image, situating them inside the representation and at the same time seeking to diminish evidence of their existence. In this example, the tensions inherent in these relationships of control surface as a result of a simple anecdotal situation that raises questions about when and how images should show individuals around whom, in real life, sexual difference (women), private property (workers), and cultural and racial control (the representation of subaltern classes is linked to a pre-conception of them as culturally inferior groups, often due to their ethnic origins) is organized.

This aside, Forgács' systematic exploration of early family movies shows how these early images actually laid down a whole iconographic repertoire periods of non-work as a condition linked to social status and individual, family and social happiness: private celebrations (birthdays, special feast days, private parties) and holidays (journeys, tours to cities and other significant sites, etc.). Pierre Bourdieu and his research group analysed the same type of repertoire in the lead-up to their book *Un art moyen. Essais sur les usages sociaux de la photographie* (1965). It would seem that the self-representation of the subject as worker is incompatible with the individual's own self-conception of a good life.

97 *House Maids* is the latest expression – in book form – of the exploration of Peruvian families on the social network Facebook that Daniela Ortiz has been undertaking since she settled in Barcelona. Her digital archive of photographs

found on Facebook all meet the stereotypes of the representation of family happiness that I mentioned above. The photographs published in this book, based on apparently neutral criteria and organised in a way that is linear, inexpressive and disaffected, nonetheless use an intelligent and subtle narrative and editing technique. Only after looking through the 77 photographs presented here does the reader come upon the title, which is located *at the end* of the book. And even though the title is descriptive, it retrospectively resignifies the content of the images. Ultimately, this project reveals the optical unconscious: things that are there, in the image, without being strictly visible. If we go back and read the book from finish to start after reaching the title, we will interpret the images in a radically different way: on this second reading, we notice the hand or the arm – cropped by the frame – of one or more house maids – who must have been photographed accidentally and unnoticed in the background of the scene, close to the main figures in the centre, who are mostly boys and girls, teenagers and young people of Caucasian origin – all of them with features that reveal their 'indigenous' origins, 97 in total.

The 'inexpressive' use of photography was one of the procedures employed by conceptualist art practices in the sixties in their attempt to radically shift away from the myth of artistic expressivity that was epitomized by abstract expressionism, and also from the re-channelling of mass culture towards the authorial fetishism of the pictorial artwork brought about by the dominant current of pop art. In his 1989 text *From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions. Conceptual Art: 1962–1969*, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh identified the foundational nature, in this sense, of minor works like the photography books by Edward Ruscha – which were not 'artist's' books but simple publications of varying print runs, containing series of photographs printed without any particular emphasis or noteworthy connotations, and without an original. These books, including *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations* (1962), *Some Los Angeles Apartments* (1965), *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966) and *Nine Swimming Pools* (1968), are undeniable precedents of this book by Daniela Ortiz. According to Buchloh's reflections, each of these self-published books by Ruscha – consisting of the concise ordering of series of photographs of the subject matter stated in their titles, taken with an apparent lack of interest – suggest a conceptualist, non-conservative recovery of the ready-made procedure, one of the principal inventions of the historical avant-garde. Paradoxically, the dominant interpretation of the ready-made that has been forged throughout the twentieth century up until the present ends up reinstating the centrality of the authority of the artist, through the questioning of the auratic work – «such and such is art because I, the artist, point to it.» However, Duchamp's original procedure holds the potential for an ongoing deepening of this technique that shifts the centrality of the author towards the spectator's function as a decoder of signs, and at the same time makes it possible to deflect the attention that is usually paid to an artwork – objectual or not – towards an analysis of the institutional framework in which artistic procedures – which form part of the social production of meanings – take place.

Throughout 1965, Dan Graham took photos of houses built during the post-war period in outlying suburban areas of cities in the United States. He then decided to regroup some of those images in *Homes for America* (1966-1967), a work that consisted of publishing a double page illustrated article in *Arts Magazine*. Taking inspiration from the descriptive, laconic tone of the photographic series published in Edward Ruscha's books, in *Homes for America* Graham analyses the permutations of the basic structures of these constructions, with an ironic reference to the repetitive formal geometric organisation of minimalist sculpture, so that readers could grasp, almost without noticing, how this strictly formalized conception of a certain type of residential architecture rigorously shapes the subjectivity of the middle class in the United States. Like many of Graham's works of the same period, this one also collapses the classic differentiation between the artwork, its cataloguing or documentation, and its publication or circulation, with each of these specific moments or statutes of the artistic work becoming one and the same.

In 2009, Daniela Ortiz began working as a salesgirl at a luxury chocolate store in Barcelona's Born neighbourhood. A virtual tetralogy emerged out of her employment – even though the artist does not classify it as such in her own catalogisation of her artistic work – consisting of the following pieces: (1) in *The Vein* (2009), an irregular line of gold crosses one side of a small, thin (11 x 11 cm.) block of chocolate: it is the transcription of a chart showing the rise and fall in the price of gold during the period spanning from 1492 (the year when Columbus first reached America) to the present; (2) in *N-T* (2009), in a text accompanying a single photograph, the artist states: «I work 40 hours a week in an Spanish high class chocolate boutique. While working on October the 12th I steel 3 sheets of 24 Karat gold and a Guanaja chocolate bonbon. I cover the chocolate with gold and eat it for celebrating the National day of Spain.» (It should be noted that the store where Daniela Ortiz worked had started to sprinkle specks of 24 carat gold on selected chocolates as a luxury symbol;) (3) in *I-M* (2010), the artist, having been forced to work overtime on May 1 (Labour day or Mayday), compiled information on a CD designed to be distributed free of charge to her work colleagues. (Among other materials, the CD included: the history of May 1st, texts analysing labour and social precarity, videos by artists that include an analysis of contemporary forms of work, pop songs – from folk to punk rock – that express a critique of waged labour, etc;) (4) in *P1-P2* (2010), the artist drew an accurate architectural plan of the main floor and basement of the store in which she worked, showing details like the location of the tills, the alarm panel, the fridges where food is kept and where the gold sheets are kept under lock and key – see *The Vein* and *N-T* –, the warehouses and rubbish bins... These accurate plans also show the disproportionate relationship between the space set aside for customer service and the space available for the staff to carry out activities that are not visible to customers.

The work of Daniela Ortiz can be linked to the ambivalent recovery of the conceptualist practices of 'the South' – including, but unfortunately not limited to, an attempt at a critical reactivation – that has been taking place in recent years (as one can observe by the very strong presence and visibility of these practices in the global art system in the period spanning the release of two relevant books: *Del Di Tella a Tucumán Arde* [2000] by Ana Longoni and Mariano Mestman, and *Didáctica de la liberación. Arte conceptualista latinoamericano* [2008] by Luis Camnitzer). But it is worth noting that works like the one we are discussing here consist of an update, rather than a repetition or an imitation, of historical conceptualist practices.

Juan Carlos Romero formalized one of the pieces in his series *La línea recta* (Straight Line), which he called *Segmento de línea recta* (Segment of a Straight Line) in Buenos Aires in September 1972. It shows four points (A-B-C-D) marked on an a square cut-out of the map of the Argentinian Federal Capital and connected by a straight line. Four photographs accompanying the fragment 'inexpressively' show the places marked on the map. A text printed on a white panel lists these four places, which are described according to the relationship that the artist has with them: «(A) The place where I carry out my day-to-day activities as an expert in electronic communications and obtain part of what I need to survive. (B) Place where I exhibit part of my artistic output. (C) Place where I exhibit the other part of my artistic output. (D) Place where detainees accused of serious offences by police authorities reside, until justice decides their fate. Conclusion of the emitter: The possibility of linking, by means of the shortest route, places that are part of our reality and that we should recognise as belonging to a structure that engages us on a continuous basis. Conclusion of the receiver: [blank space]».

In 1973, the collective Grup de Treball produced a piece in Barcelona entitled *Treball col·lectiu que consisteix a veridical la distribució de 44 professions entre 113 persones segons una nota apareguda últimament a la premsa* (A collective work that consists of verifying the distribution of 44 occupations across 113 individuals, based on an article recently published in the press), composed of barely seven typewritten A4 sheets. The work proceeds as indicated in the title, with a vertical list that runs along page number 7, starting with «14 office workers» and ending with «1 musician», and enumerating, between the two: «12 students», «5 engineers», «3 quantity surveyors», «2 librarians», «2 mechanics», «2 economists», «1 chemist», «1 doctor», «1 financial advisor», «1 cabinetmaker», «1 pediatrician», «1 film director», etc.

Both of these pieces use a strictly descriptive enunciation that seems to be simply seeking to display certain declared content. Nonetheless, they both

practice what we could call a kind of 'enunciative suspense,' given that they interpellate the spectator or reader by means of an ellipsis through which he or she can only evaluate the importance of the original information of each piece to the extent that he or she has background or 'out of frame' information on both of these deceptively descriptive representations. In the case of Juan Carlos Romero, the first three sites marked on the map and photographed by means of an 'objective' point of view are: the communications company that employed the artist as a professional technician at the time, the Museo de Arte Moderno and the CAYC (Centro de Arte y Comunicación). It thus showed the three main sites in which the artist negotiated the work-income relationship in his own life: his workplace and the places (the first, a central enclave in the local art institution; the second, a place on the fringes of the institution that exhibited experimental or critical work at the time) in which his work as an artist was financed by the income he obtained in the form of a wage in return for his non-artistic activities, the nature of which were revealed in the work itself. The fourth site was the Buque de Granaderos, a vessel anchored in the port, which was used as a detention centre for political prisoners during the dictatorship of General Lanusse. In the case of Grup de Treball, the «article recently published in the press» mentioned in the title – which became the basis for the exercise of enumerating the 113 professionals – was not included in the piece, even though it was its generative matrix. The article in question was a news item published in the newspaper *La Vanguardia* about the 113 members of the Assembla de Catalunya (the umbrella platform of Catalan social and political organisations against the dictatorship of General Franco) who had been arrested by the police on October 28, 1973 during a meeting held at the Parish Church of Santa Maria Mitjancera in Barcelona.

It is worth noting that both of these pieces from the seventies set up a relationship between three aspects of labour: waged or professional work, art-related work, and militant or political work. It is not difficult to see what both artworks proposed: the need to politically organise each and every one of these aspects of work that were experienced separately – as demanded by the dominant ideology – in everyday life. While the piece by Juan Carlos Romero revealed the source of funding for his art-related work that in itself generated no or little income – contradicting the idealistic vision by which the artist produces his or her work untouched by material or historical conditions –, it also seemed to offer a hypothesis on the apparently inevitable result of the analysis and critique of the material conditions of his waged and art-related activities: an excess towards some type of militant activity that was seriously persecuted by the military dictatorship at the time. The way in which Grup de Treball gradually broke down a generic number, «113,» analysing it so that it became a long systematic list of anti-Francoist militants based on their professional activities rather than their names, undoubtedly sought to carry out an effect of meaning which would make it possible to reveal the extent of the struggle against the dictatorship in Catalonia, showing that it crossed through a very broad range of the country's social and professional fab-

ric. The two last professionals listed, «1 filmmaker» and «1 musician,» were both members of the Assembla de Catalunya as well as Grup de Treball.

But in both of these examples, this desire to articulate separate forms of the social experience of labour also implied accepting its heterogeneity. The different nature of waged, intellectual or artistic, and militant or political work, which these two projects seem to accept unquestioned, derives from a common sense notion that is deeply installed in modern culture: the ontological diversity between the spheres of labour, thought, and political action. As Paolo Virno discussed in *Virtuosity and Revolution* and in a key chapter of his book *A Grammar of the Multitude* called "Action, Labour, Intellect," this three-way division – inherited as a common sense notion even by the generation of 1968, which criticised the split between different spheres of social life – has broken down in contemporary life. In artistic practices like those of Daniela Ortiz, there is an attempt to articulate waged work, art-related work and political work *within the same activity*, and not as separate moments in everyday life.

By using the Foucaultian image of the 'total institution' to describe the relational regime that is imposed in a certain archetype of the post-Fordist enterprise, Rentao Curcio (*La empresa total* [The total enterprise], 2002) recognises the way in which the disciplining of the workforce under conditions of precarity, instability and insecurity is directly aimed at provoking a subjective interiorisation of written and unwritten rules, in order to induce certain forms of performativity within a labour regime that tends to be totalizing and all-encompassing of the overall time and spaces of the life of the individual. But his research with self-analysis groups of precarious workers also reveals that no matter how enormous its power is nowadays, in its mix of techniques of violence and suggestion, no totalizing dispositif of power is ever omnipotent. The experience of work today disciplines the individual, but it also produces a subjective rejection that is expressed in the form of pathologies of the body (Franco Berardi Bifo: *La fábrica de la infelicidad* [The Factory of Unhappiness], 2002) and also by means of the necessary reinvention of the practices and techniques of interference, defection and exodus.

Now we turn back to the virtual tetralogy that I suggested could be identified in the recent work of Daniela Ortiz, as a way of making legible the way in which she progresses in an increasingly complex – and perhaps, why not?, also increasingly problematic – way of thinking about what I have suggested calling an articulation between forms of waged, art-related and political work within the same activity. While *The Vein* and *N-T* seem to fit into the category of self-affirming gestures of rejection that mitigate the hurtful effects on subjectivity that arise from the disciplining of the workforce, in *r-M* the suggestion of a type of proto-trade unionist activity offers a hypothesis of intervention in which the modulation of artistic material could bring about the production of a relational policy of opposition within the totalizing relational regime: political work and art-related work should coincide, and an alternative relationality should not be produced in the separate – supposedly isolated or protected – spaces of art, but precisely in the places where subjectivity is produced in its subjugated social forms. When Dan-

ielia Ortiz's art work shifts from inside the totalising dispositives of waged work towards art-related spaces, it does not materialise within these in a representational way. The work does not simply represent the way social subjugation takes place *outside* of the places in which art supposedly allows the abstract practice of freedom. On the contrary, Daniela Ortiz uses these types of shifts to reveal – by means of adjacency, juxtaposition, overlapping, or a direct analysis of material realities – the continuity, *inside and outside the art institution*, of the tensions that arise from the conflict around the social forms of subjectivation in terms of class, gender and ethnic origins.

In May 2010, Daniela Ortiz presented her piece *P1-P2* in an alternative space in Madrid, as part of a singular exhibition resulting from a call for works dealing with the theme of precarity in art work. A former colleague, who had been promoted to a middle management position in the company where they both worked, discovered the work in the artist's web, reprimanded her, and let her bosses know. The inclusion of this work containing sensitive information relating to the logistics of the store unleashed an aggressive response against the artist-employee, who was summoned to a meeting without witnesses and threatened with legal action if she did not proceed to self-dismissal. When she contacted the legal advisory service of a trade union in order to face this harassment, Daniela Ortiz was informed that a dismissal without compensation was inevitable, and that her unstable situation as a non-EU resident in Europe also complicates the defence of her rights as a waged employee. The artistic community around the exhibition where the piece was exhibited showed its solidarity and expressed its desire to support the artist. But what argument could an artists' community make in defence of the public diffusion of a work that actively promotes disobedience in the sphere of precarious waged labour ('freedom of expression,' maybe)? Would the idealistic or liberal arguments that are commonly used as an alibi for artistic activities in protected spaces also serve to support a fight for the right of reply within the current precarised forms of waged labour? It seems unlikely, given that the contemporary art system continues to harbour a taboo against both the material conditions of art-related labour and against identifying the non-artistic financing sources for art-related work, which, at base level, is largely exercised as an elite of the precariat. It could be said that an artist's self-representation as a worker *within his/her own artistic practice* is felt to be incompatible with his/her own idea of a transcendent creative activity.

The experience of this labour and artistic conflict, precisely during the process of producing this book, probably situates Daniela Ortiz's work at a crossroads, which arises from the dilemma that affects all practices that currently seek to set up, within a single activity, organised forms of today's potentially many-sided condition of work: simultaneously waged, artistic and political. How can we produce a politics of autonomous and oppositional relationality in the heart of processes of social subjugation and labour exploitation, by means of a modulation of artistic materials? How can we produce a kind of art labour that can also oscillate with virtuosity – not necessarily according to an opportunistic calculation – be-

tween different spaces of valorisation, on either side of the ambiguously flexible boundaries of the contemporary art system? I think that these are the kinds of questions that arise from reading this book and from the experience lived by the artist – “out of frame” – during its production.



*Captain Rumi Ñauai, an envoy of Atagualpa Ynga, shows two maidens to Don Francisco Pizarro and Don Diego de Almagro to convince the two Spaniards to return to their own land. «Esta donzella me embia atagualpa» [Atagualpa sends me this Maiden]. «Caimi, apo» [Here you have them, sir].*

On the right: Drawing no. 152 in the book by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (also known as Waman Puma [Eagle Puma]), *Primer nueva coronica y Buen Gobierno* [“Coronica” [sic] for “Chronicle”]. This is the only known work by this chronicler from Perú, who compiled 398 drawings in 1,180 pages, in which, until 1615, he recorded the terrible situation of the original inhabitants during the long process of colonisation, by means of a point of view that respected and adopted their language – Quechua – and their vision of the world. The book was sent to Spain addressed to King Philip III in 1664, but it went missing. It reappeared 300 years later. It is currently kept in Europe, at the Royal Library of Copenhagen, and it can be consulted online.

On the left: The first image downloaded from Facebook by Daniela Ortiz, when she started to explore signs of how wealthy social groups in Perú self-represented their daily life on this online social network. This photograph is the image that originated the series *97 House Maids*, although it does not form part of it. The mode of representation shared by the 77 photographs in this book is inverted in this first image: the narcissistic bodies of the teenagers seem to have shifted to the edges of the representation, while the figure of the uniformed domestic employee in the centre seems to be the only subject in the frame who is aware of the presence of the camera. She simultaneously – and we could say defiantly – holds

the gaze of the photographer and the spectator, throwing the visual regime that usually applies a relationship of control off-balance.

We juxtapose these two images at the end of this text at the suggestion of the young Peruvian artist Daniela Ortiz de Zevallos, who in 2006 turned to the wealthy branch of her family for help in order to be able to move to Europe, receiving in response a job that would provide her with the necessary income to pay the cost of a flight that allowed her to travel from Lima to Barcelona.