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在此地，就现在：对于介绍的再介绍

Be Here, Now An Introduction to an Introduction

白慧怡
Stephanie Bailey

“有一片田野，它位于是非对错的界域之外。我在那里等你。”

——莫拉维·贾拉鲁丁·鲁米

2000年秋天，《新文学史》出版的期刊提出了一个疑问：是否存在身份“政治之后的生活”？马龙·罗斯对此提出：“哪种‘身份’？什么‘政治’？在何时何地的‘之后’？”他的观点是：在“身份政治”之前就已经有一种有关身份的政治了——而且“只要有身份的地方就会有权力斗争。”¹ 而在同一期刊物中，埃里克·洛特将这种斗争定位于“参与性的差异政治”之内，在它的诞生之时，突发的社会运动发生碰撞、相互串联而形成一种不和谐的、群体之间磨合而成的社会结构²。也正是在这一结构中，洛特定位了一种潜在的、反体制的政治，在其中，没有哪个人能被一场运动代表，也没有人认为哪场运动足以被赋予这种期待³。

在高度全球化、高度互联又高度动荡的时期，围绕身份的讨论容易导向问题很大但也颇具潜在能量的本质主义，基于差异的政治提供了用以思考当下的重要框架。想想阿君·阿帕度莱的观点，颇为正确。他面对上世纪90年代全球化、迁徙的景象，就提出了很有先见之明的看法，他认为“反思民族国家意识之后而产生的一种想象，可以成为我们的材料”，而且就“已经在我们的身边”了⁴。就像我以前说过的，如果我们真的能跨越过去思维带来的条条框框，很多“材料”就可以成为散布在我们周围的档案历史——它们通常都散落在各种因转译和交流而产生的裂缝之中⁵。今天，我们都陷入在不同的主体和客体世界之中。

2014年，由安德斯·克鲁格和纳芙·哈克在安特卫普当代艺术博物馆策划的展览“你不知道我是谁吗？身份政治之后的艺术”。展览呈现了从阿姆斯特丹到孟买再到立陶宛的维尔纽斯的27位来自全球的艺术家的，试图超越“身份政治”这一已经被知晓（和诽谤诋毁）的概念，以聚焦于“将（复数的）身份作为理解复杂总体的一部分”——这一点“艺术系统往往并不能或是不愿意做出迁就。”⁶——想想那些根据地域或国家来作为展览结构单元的主流趋势，你就会觉得这个展览这方面的诉求十分正确——这次展览考虑到了将身份以及历史脉络作为概念，但既不是固化的也不是线性的：它诞生于全球化的熔炉，是一个与资本主义现代性密切相关的进程。

关小的作品《认知的形状》（2013年），能够完美地图解这层意义。在三频录像中，艺术家的阐释通过大约30幅从YouTube、Vimeo、卫星电视以及DVD收集而来的图像和视频片段建构起了世界观，而所有素材都经过剪辑，与艺术家自己拍摄的场景并置在一起。这件视频作品由不同的章节组成，各个标题都如中文的造字一般，根据当代文化标志中的部分符号而来，像是Xbox、谷歌和耐克——一种后消费主义符号体系的阐释——这也是艺术家奥斯卡·穆里略的作品《一个私生子的阶层》（2014年）创作的基础，而他的这种装置/产品，灵感来源于哥伦比亚和墨西哥专门做陶瓷椰子的工厂，包括那些粘到墙上的包装材料，从“哈利姆（印度速食羹品牌）”的包装盒到“爱德华爵士威士忌”的酒标，包括一张中国的冥币，这些都突出了通过全球资本的机制，而产生的去本土化而又带有本土化的生产模式。

在《认知的形状》中，视频的一部分呈现了通过图像组织起来的文化分类学，它们组成了不断扩展的树形谱系：从新石器时代的箭

¹ 马龙·罗斯，《愉悦的身份，或是美味的归属政治》，2000年，《新文学史》，总第31期，年度第4期专题“身份政治之后是否还有生活？”，第832页

² 埃里克·洛特，《身份之后，政治：普遍主义的回归》，2000年，《新文学史》，总第31期，年度第4期专题“身份政治之后是否还有生活？”，第667页

³ 同上，第667页

⁴ 阿君·阿帕度莱，《消失的现代性——全球化的文化向度》，1996年，明尼苏达大学出版社，第21页

⁵ 白慧怡，《过渡时期：在第56届威尼斯双年展上表演亚美尼亚性》，2015年，http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/128

⁶ “你不知道我是谁吗？身份政治之后的艺术”展览，2014年，在线画册http://afteridentity.muhka.be/about

头到潜水和旱冰鞋。这些产品——事物，或者说我们用以弥补自身存在而造出来的产品——被描述成来自过去和未来的“石头”，它们“在无止境的平面上滚动”，它们的交汇构成了“现在”。在一次猛冲中，事关我们是谁以及我们由何而来，这些抽象的本质和无穷的时间密切相联：历史就像是可扩展的、根茎般的长期线索。于其中，过去则成为了一种持续的、纷乱纠缠的状态。在这个超复杂的体系中，我们迅速地被资本主义塑造成所有人似乎在一起，但又被这种连接（或者说同质化）的力量所分割。

在展览“你不知道我是谁吗？”中，艺术家劳伦斯·阿布·哈姆丹的声音作品和单频投影《双重阐释：叙利亚革命领导人的冲锋》（2014年）涉及两张照片：一张是籍里柯的名画《轻骑兵军官的冲锋》（1812年），第二张则是一位叙利亚商人的委托作品，画面中原本为籍里柯所绘的拿破仑时期的军官被换成了1925年至1927年间反抗法国殖民统治的“叙利亚大起义”中的领袖人物苏丹·帕沙·阿特拉沙。把阿拉伯人换到殖民征服者的位置上，阿布·哈姆丹说：“200年……被浓缩到一个可供双重阐释的瞬间之中，殖民进程的全部历史都能在其中被读到。”这样一种双重反应也发生在卡洛斯·蒙罗伊的《伦巴达博物馆》，作品在2015年第19届巴西当代录像艺术节上播放：这件作品通过一首歌曲《伦巴达》联系到发生在上世纪80年代晚期圣保罗的移民劳工现象，从而追溯到这首歌的发源地玻利维亚。这首歌由玻利维亚一支专门唱安第斯音乐的“力量”乐队在1981年写成，之后很快经过奇科·奥利维拉的混编，1989年通过巴西的卡欧玛乐队的演唱，引发了全球性的轰动现象。艺术家蒙罗伊在作品中揭示了《伦巴达》真正的气质：一种混合的、全球化的产物——巴西也是如此的模棱两可，既是一个曾经被葡萄牙殖民的殖民地，而现在又表现出某种对外输出的力量。

突然之间，《伦巴达》就像巴西那样，其所在既非北方也非南方，也并非两者之间，而是在一种进程之中：这种情形，凯莉·萨菲亚·马克苏德在她为第19届巴西当代录像艺术节委任创作的作品《打包成捆的衣物》（2015年）中，也得到了视觉化。作品中由非洲蜡染织物打包成的巨大立方体悬挂在池塘之上，展览期间漂白剂溶液会持续地滴在上面。对马克苏德而言，这件作品象征着一种去殖民化的清洗行为，并且让人们知道了要删除过去是不可能的。织物——象征着对于非洲身份的历史性抗争——永远不可能恢复到其初始的形态，而只能一起变成其他事物。这种转变也同样体现在本届艺术节最终获得大奖的陶辉的作品《谈身体》当中，在这件创作于2013年的视频中，陶辉像看待一幅历史地图那样阅读自己的身体，每一处体征都对应着不同种族的来源以及与之相混杂关联的历史。到了作品的最后，这种复杂性显得如此庞大，以至于陶辉总结说，他的身体是属于大地的。

这也是专题题目“帝国子民”的来由，意在指出，无论500年前我们是否居住在帝国内，无论我们是否愿意，个体的、政治的以及文化的身份，都和“遗传”特征混杂在了一起，是痛苦、暴力、异质的。在这里，还可以参考一下由玛瑞安·贾菲利收集整理的60张档案照片，描绘了1934年到1975年之间，从布隆迪到叙利亚等亚非国家的首个独立日庆典。将这些照片连接起来的是一种重复的美学——从殖民者那里继承和模仿而来的、独立伊始（进入“后殖民”时期）所展现的壮观景象。这种可怕的关系中暗藏着残忍。当然，其中也有着解放性的东西，就如展览“你不知道我是谁吗？”里伊曼·伊萨作品《材料》（2009年至2012年）所展现的那样：为诸如“以民族抵抗为名破坏公共纪念碑”、或是“奢华和颓废的旧时代”此类事件而创作的纪念碑方案——于其中，历史成为了有普适

性的模板。每座纪念碑都可以与任何民族相关联，因为我们都在以某种方式，在某个时刻和地点，进行着毁灭和被毁灭。

回到参与性的差异政治，如果我们的世界确实同时既是普遍的和又有独特性，那我们便是随时处在“后XXXX”与“新XXXX”的状态之中。厄尼斯特·拉克劳的说法更是指出，新的社会运动要以“普遍主义在政治上的强势已去掉了本质主义的基座”作为现实考量的前提。⁷假若如此，这种政治，又如何能够不仅仅只是把普遍主义转换成了“同一个世界，同一个梦想”？展览还展出了曾吴2009年的视频作品《一篇权利宣言的形状》。作品展示了由自闭症者阿曼达·贝克斯在2007年制作的短片《以我的语言》的第二部分——如同“一份强有力的声明”，它为之辩护的是“在一个一旦脱离正常生活轨迹就被认为是非人的世界中，不同类型的思考和互动方式有着多大的价值”。曾吴创作的核心——也正是本期的总体核心——不要抹去使我们形成差异的那些不同，承认存在于我们之间的、完全可以共享的他者性。

必须说明的是，在这期专题中，存在着两个“题魂”。首先是去除了海湾在地性的“海湾未来主义”——这个概念是由艺术家索菲亚·阿尔·玛丽亚命名的后殖民状况，用来描述海湾石油富国在上世纪下半叶快速现代化过程中，受到的影响——海湾地区与东亚都市之间，存在某种显而易见的联系。然而，随着围绕专题的对话展开，很明显，只有植根于个人以及历史的经验，这种比对的实践才有可能达成；这让我们看到了第二个“题魂”，沃尔特·米格诺罗的文章《去殖诗篇》，从一个关键时刻着笔——1955年的万隆会议，当年29个国家齐聚一堂探寻超越西方霸权的希望——但该文章最后以悲叹和新的挑战来结尾：在今天的世界中，当对“后殖民主义”的批判已经失去了意义（“去殖民化”已经失败），人性似已丧失之时，艺术界还可以有怎么样的立场和作为？

这个问题事关本期专题的使命：我们，作为“帝国的子民”，可能就正是在我们之间，去找到一种未来的政治，在这种政治中，我们的复杂性会成为我们的驱动力。当然，这期杂志提供不了唯一的答案，也提供不了能让我们走出当下泥沼的线路图。相反，它是一次对于介绍进行的再介绍——是穿越时空聚集起来的、通过艺术界全球网络的不同声音，旨在探索和让那些对我们进行塑造的那些遗物显现。（由顾虔凡翻译）

⁷ 同上，第670页

*“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field.
I’ll meet you there.”*

—Rumi

In autumn, 2000, *New Literary History* published an issue asking if there was life after identity politics, to which Marlon B. Ross responded: “Which ‘identity?’ What ‘politics?’ ‘After’ when and where?” Ross’s point was this: Before “identity politics” there was already a politics of identity—and “wherever there is identity, there is a struggle for power.”¹ In the same issue, Eric Lott located this struggle within a “politics of participatory discrepancy,” created when emergent social movements collide and collude to form a dissonant social fabric composed of rampant intersections and interactions between groups.² It is in this fabric that Lott located a potential for a unified, anti-normative politics, in which no one is represented by one movement, and no movement is expected to represent the entirety of a human being.³

In these hyper-global, hyper-connected, and hyper-volatile times, in which we have seen a new wave of neo-nationalism, regional power grabs, and the emergence of a networked movement in the nightmare image of ISIS, conversations around identity have become dangerously essentialist yet loaded with potential agency. Today, a politics based on difference offers a useful frame to think through the globalized present. This is especially true when considering Arjun Appadurai’s prescient vision in the 1990s of a trans-global, diasporic landscape in which the “materials for a post-national imaginary” are “around us already.”⁴ As proposed elsewhere, these “materials” are the histories that walk among us—people that transcend the frameworks laid down by the past precisely because their existence is based on being “caught in the discontinuous time of translation and negotiation.”⁵ As we move between different subjective and objective worlds, we are all such people.

This condition was explored in a 2014 exhibition curated by Anders Kreuger and Nav Haq at Antwerp’s Museum of Contemporary Art (M HKA): “Don’t You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity Politics.” Presenting 27 contemporary artists from all over the world, from Amsterdam to Vilnius, “Don’t You Know Who I Am?” sought to transcend identity politics as it has been understood (and maligned) so as to focus on “identities (in the plural) as part of an overall understanding of complexity”—something “the art system has not always been able or willing to accommodate.”⁶ (This is certainly true when thinking about the trend of framing exhibitions according to region or nation.) The exhibition considered identities—and thus, histories—as concepts that are neither fixed nor linear: produced within the industrial furnace of globalization, a process tied to capitalist modernity.

Guan Xiao’s *Cognitive Shape* (2013) diagrammed this perfectly. In the three-channel video, the artist articulates a worldview constructed from some 30 found images and video clips collected from YouTube, Vimeo, satellite TV, and DVDs, all edited alongside scenes the artist filmed. The video is composed of chapters titled according to symbols constructed like Chinese

characters from parts of contemporary logos, like Xbox, Google, and Nike. This articulation of a post-consumer symbolism was grounded in Oscar Murillo’s *A Bastard Class* (2014). The installation-cum-production site is inspired by factories specializing in ceramic coconuts found in Colombia and Mexico, and includes packaging materials stuck to the walls, from Easy Cook Haleem to Sir Edward’s Finest Scotch, and a Chinese Heaven Bank Note. The result highlights the de-localization of localized production—and thus local culture—through the mechanisms of global capital.

In *Cognitive Shape*, one part of the video presents a taxonomy of culture organized through images that make up an ever-expanding genealogical tree: from Neolithic arrowheads to a diving suit and rollerblades. These products—the things we fashion to supplement our existence—are described as “stones” of the past and future “rolling on the endless surface” whose meeting constitutes now. In one swoop, the abstract nature of who we are and where we come from is tied to infinite time: history as an expansive and rhizomatic trail of *longue durees*, in which the past becomes an ongoing tangle of knots, chains, extensions, compressions, constructions, and projections. In this hyper-complex frame, we are at once united by capitalism’s hand in forming us all, and divided by the historical impact this unifying—or homogenizing—force has had.

1
Marlon B. Ross, “Pleasuring Identity, or the Delicious Politics of Belonging,” *New Literary History*, Vol. 31, No. 4, *Is There Life After Identity Politics?* (Autumn 2000), p. 832.

2
Eric Lott, “After Identity, Politics: The Return of Universalism,” *New Literary History*, Vol. 31, No. 4, *Is There Life After Identity Politics?* (Autumn 2000), p. 667.

3
Ibid., p. 666.

4
Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 21.

5
Stephanie Bailey, “Transition Times: Performing Armenity at the 56th Venice Biennale,” *Ibraaz*, May 28, 2015, in which I am partially quoting Homi K. Bhabha in a discussion on the body as a historical cartography.

6
Don’t You Know Who I Am? Art After Identity Politics, online catalogue.



(从上到下)	(From top to bottom)
玛瑞安·贾菲利	Maryam Jafri
《斯里兰卡-刚果-博茨瓦纳 1948年至1966年》	<i>Sri Lanka – Ghana - Botswana, 1948-1966</i>
《布隆迪-叙利亚-布基纳法索 1946年至1962年》	<i>Burundi - Syria - Burkina Faso, 1946-1962</i>
《印度-菲律宾-坦桑尼亚 1947年至1961年》	<i>India - Philippines - Tanzania, 1947-1961</i>
“独立日1934年至1975年”系列 2009年至今	<i>"Independence Day 1934-1975" 2009-present</i>
黑白照片 14.8 × 21 厘米	Black-and-white photographs 14.8 x 21 cm

In “Don’t You Know Who I Am?” this impact was articulated in Lawrence Abu Hamdan’s sound piece and single-channel projection *Double-Take: Leader of the Syrian Revolution Commanding a Charge* (2014). The installation includes two photographs. The first is an image of Théodore Géricault’s painting *Officer of the Chasseurs Commanding a Charge* (1812). The second is a Syrian businessman’s commission in which the French imperial officer in Géricault’s painting is replaced by the leader of the Syrian uprising against the French between 1925 and 1927, Sultan Basha Al-Atrash. By placing an Arab in the position of colonial conqueror, Abu Hamdan notes, “200 years ... are condensed in one moment of a double take, into which a whole history of the colonial project can be read.” Such a double reflection occurred, too, in Carlos Monroy’s *Lambada’s Museum*, presented at the 19th Videobrasil in 2015: an installation that traced the Lambada’s origins to Bolivia via labor immigration to São Paulo in the late-1980s through the song *Llorando se fue*. Written by the Bolivian group Los Kjarkas in 1981, it was remixed by Chico de Oliveira shortly after, and released in Brazil by the band Kaoma in 1989, which then sparked a global phenomenon. Monroy’s cartography reveals the Lambada’s true nature: a hybrid global production. And Brazil does not escape this formal blurring. A postcolonial space once colonized by the Portuguese, it is shown to be a colonizing force in its own right.

Suddenly, the Lambda, like Brazil, is located neither north nor south, nor in-between, but in process: a condition Keli-Safia Maksud visualized through her 19th Videobrasil commission, *Mitumba* (2015). Composed of a large cube made of Dutch African wax fabrics hanging over a small pond, a solution of bleach dripped over the materials for the duration of the exhibition. For Maksud, the work represents a cleansing act of decolonization that acknowledges the impossibility of erasing the past. The fabrics—which symbolize a historical struggle within and for African identity—will never return to an original state but become something else altogether. This transformation was embodied in Tao Hui’s grand prize-winning work at the same 19th Videobrasil, *Talk About Body*. In this 2013 video, the artist reads his body like a map, with every feature corresponding to different ethnic sources and the histories associated with such mixing. In the end, the complexity is so great Tao Hui concludes that his body belongs to the soil.

This is where the title of this issue, “Children of Empire,” comes in. The proposal is that we are all children of empire, regardless of whether we belong to the dominant imperialist forces of the past 500 years or not. Whether we like it or not, our personal, political, and cultural identities are intertwined with inheritances that are painful, violent, and foreign. Consider here 60 archival photos collated by Maryam Jafri that depict inaugural Independence Day ceremonies of Asian, Middle Eastern, and African nations from 1934 to 1975, from Burundi to Syria. Repetitive aesthetics unite each photograph—a pagantry inherited from the colonizers and mimicked in inaugural expressions of postcolonial autonomy. There is a cruelty to these macabre connections. But there is something liberating, too, as illuminated in “Don’t You Know Who I Am?” by Iman Issa’s *Material* (2009–2012): a series of ten displays offering proposals for monuments commemorating things like “the destruction of a prominent public monument in the name of national resistance,”

or “a bygone era of luxury and decadence.” In the work, history becomes a universal template. Each monument could relate to any nation, since we have all been the destroyer and the destroyed, in some way, at some point, somewhere.

This brings us back to the politics of participatory discrepancy. If our world is indeed both universal and particular, and we are at once post- and neo- everything, then to recognize this would be a step towards what Ernesto Laclau called “a serious theoretical rationale for new social movements” predicated on “a politically forceful universalism shorn of the deadweight of essentialism.”⁷ But how might such a politics translate beyond the notion of “One World, One Dream”? In the case of “Don’t You Know Who I Am?” the suggestion was made in *Shape of a Right Statement*, a 2009 video in which Wu Tsang re-enacts a 2007 YouTube video made by autism activist Amanda Baggs, *In My Own Language*. The work is literally “a strong statement.” It argues for “the existence and value of many different kinds of thinking and interaction in a world in which those who deviate from the norm are considered non-persons.” The point of Wu Tsang’s performance—and this issue in general—is to recognize a shared otherness amongst ourselves without erasing the differences that make us unique.

It has to be said that there are two specters in this issue. The first is Gulf Futurism without the Gulf specificity—the postcolonial condition identified by artist Sophia Al-Maria to describe the effects of rapid modernization in the oil-rich nations of the Arabian Gulf in the second half of the twentieth century. (The connections between the Gulf’s metropolises and Asia’s are all too apparent, after all.) Yet, it became increasingly apparent, as conversations began to develop, that such a comparative exercise is only possible if rooted in personal—and historical—experience. This brings us to the second ghost, which was raised in Walter D. Mignolo’s contribution, “Verses on Decolonization”—the 1955 Bandung Conference, in which 29 states came together in the hopes of transcending western hegemony.

Mignolo's text ends with both a lament and a challenge: What position might the art world take in the world today, when postcolonialism is meaningless, decolonization has failed, and humanity appears lost? The question relates to the proposition the theme of this issue makes: that we, as children of empire, might locate a future politics between us, in which our complexity becomes our agency. But this issue offers no answers, nor does it offer a road map out of our current quagmires. This is, rather, a proposal for a future study. An introduction to an introduction—a gathering across time and space narrated by voices brought together through the art world's trans-global networks in order to explore the complex inheritances that have shaped us all.

关小	Guan Xiao
《认知的形状》	<i>Cognitive Shape</i>
2013年	2013
视频	Three-channel video
8分12秒	8 min 12 sec

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Lott, p. 670.

