

*We depend on our words... Our task is to communicate experience and ideas to others. We must strive continually to extend the scope of our description, but in such a way that our messages do not thereby lose their objective or unambiguous character... We are suspended in language in such a way that we cannot say what is up and what is down. The word "reality" is also a word, a word which we must learn to use correctly.*

- Niels Bohr, *Philosophy of Science, Volume 37*

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Suspended in language, suspended in exchange.  
Exchange, exchange, exchange.

I was told of a story just last week. Picture this – imagine in your head a world. A cold hard world. The Cold Hard World. Out of which all possible things might be owned as something called property.

Property, property, property.

Honestly this world is not too hard to imagine, but lets not get carried away, as any good structuring process would denote we must build by an order of principles. Simple principles, not unlike the ones that structure the world people live in today.

The principles of relation in this world would be that of propriation. Expropriation, appropriation, depropriation, reappropriation, misappropriation inappropriation.

The principle structuring these relations, the principle of principles, would be a dizzying carousel of that which they all hold in common:, circulation, revolution, giving and taking, always revolving and returning; a regulated and measured circuit of goods moving like the sun as it goes up goes down.

Exchange, property, property, exchange.

I will expand on these principles in two parts:

(1) What is exchange?

(2) What is exchanged?

What, we would ask, is logically informed by these questions? How do these two principle requirements of The Cold Hard World themselves operate?

A.

The term ‘to exchange’, as an infinitive verb form, indicates an action of discursivity. In that in order to motivate a parting with one thing in return for an equivalence, one must be shrewd enough to discriminate between *this* and *that*, between you and me. Between what is parted with and what is returned. The return is equally important, *this* might be different from *that*, but in exchanging one for the other they become similar; this *becomes* that. This discursive separation provides the nodes between which a circulated item, and circulation itself, circulates. Along with the act of discursivity, the subsequent act of equivalency is also a key component. Discursiveness separates the world, equivalence stitches it back together.

I will have to expand on this a bit more, because understanding this two tailed act is of the upmost importance in the task we impart upon (The Cold Hard World). I will list them here, but this will not mean that the first comes sequentially before the second.

First: discursivity, upon the order of discourse, arbitrates between whichever topic it so pleases. A running to and fro through concepts, all of which need to be inherently individuated from one another; different.

Second: equivalence, upon the order of equation, coordinates the relation between the possible topics available to discourse. A holding of relation between two or more entities, in which they need to be intensively and minimally equatable; similar.

Both of these acts are expressions of a single faculty – that of judgement, upon the order of *ratio*. To make a judgement (in a philosophical sense) is to engage in a procedure that asserts a claim to truth. Not Truth in the big sense, but more in the sense that the claim can, by how it is composed, be said to have a logical success, or be at least logically true. It is by a critical vetting process that a judgement defends its claim to its *own* truth. Judgements must judge themselves.

Typically (in a philosophical sense), there are two types of defense: first being that the asserted claim is meaningful in and of itself, its logical integrity is conditioned by no other component outside of itself. A judgement like this is an analytic judgement. The accuracy of whatever claim it makes, if composed correctly, is its own condition. It derives meaning from purely the logic (see: words) used to make it up.

The other defense relies on outside components. This is a synthetic judgement. A synthetic judgement is true based upon the conditions that reinforce its logical integrity. It thus requires entities other than itself to preexist it so as to derive meaning by way of their comparative differences.

Analytic judgements are not conditioned by experience, and thus they are much harder to assert because we usually think of ourselves as beings that understand things based purely on our experiences. Some people don't think analytic judgements even exist. This obviously has to do with the ways that we, as humans or whatever, believe we are limited in our knowledge. Is knowledge, we ask, experiential?

So a synthetic judgement is limited by the experiences that condition it, and an analytic judgement is not. When exchange uses similarities and differences, when it makes comparisons, it does so by way of either synthetic or analytic *presumptions*. Whether discursive or equivalent, both propose that an entity, whether concrete or abstract, is either common to another type of entity or different. The assertion of the former relies on synthetic

judgement, the latter on analytic judgement. These two types of judgement (there are admittedly others but we will focus on just these two), introduce individuated entities and hold them in ratio to one another. This is to imply that, upon the basis of judgement, *en ratio*, on a *rate*, entities can be related to and exchanged in any sort of meaningful way where that meaning is based in the available truth procedures of logic. Lets call it an "exchange rate".

With this exchange rate every equivalency supposes difference, and every difference supposes equivalency. Synthetic and analytic judgements are intertwined.

Look: if I feel the need to make a claim, and if this need is based in a belief that there is a purposeful meaning within the claim, that, for example, platinum is a mineral, the purported *similarity* between platinums and minerals implies that there is the inherent difference between all minerals as such. That compared to one another all minerals are different, and it is then with these differences that I am able to compare their minimal similarities. The differences between minerals preexist that claim, and the claim relies on the differences of the mineral's preexistence to hold its logical water. Synthetic judgements rely on evidence to back up their claims.

Conversely: If I say that, for example, gold is not platinum, I am obligated to admit the assumption that there is a category within which gold and platinum are both common; that were it not for the need to discriminate between golds and platinums we could all continue on with the understanding that both gold and platinum belong unto the same general category as all other minerals, minerality as such, and it is only out of this general category that one pulls the items gold and platinum in their distinct sense. Minerality as such is purely conceptual, it relies on nothing other than the logically consistent construction of it as a category. Opposing minimal differences implies underlying sameness. Analytic judgements are their own evidence.

Equivalency and discursivity, analytic and synthetic judgement, are intertwined whenever an attempt to introduce dissimilar entities and relate them is made. As you can see equivalency and discursivity are two sides of a coin upon which the title exchange is inscribed along the edge. Depending on the scope of the judgement informs how broad my explanatory obligation to precisely how different, or how similar, things I am claiming can be (“the universe is made up of entirely the same indifferent matter” or “the world is split between ideal concepts and actual objects”).

When one follows the movement of exchange these actions seem to happen one after the other: question and answer, query and result, cause and effect, receptivity and proceptivity, gift and gratitude, cut and suture. But from within the exchange itself it is not a matter of continually subordinating these two concepts in a dialectic of logical inversions, neither is primary to the other, giving does not preclude taking, nor owning, nor being; within exchange they condition one another all at once. Their intracontradiction provides a dynamic and productive vector fueling the whole process. One always having been within the other, and their dynamism allows us to consider what they then condition in turn: (*property*, but more on this later).

B.

In order for The Cold Hard World to validate the entities which populate it, that which it calls similar and different, and enable them to hold relations between one another, it requires a way about which it composes these entities as valid. “How do my things hang together in my space?” it asks. In philosophy this is called a primary structuring principle. By treating the logic of exchange, what we could call the economic logic, as the primary structuring principle behind which all entities and their relations are composed, exchange; *exchangeability*, becomes the fundamental assumption that explains and defends the possibility of things. Thus the types

of entities we assume to exist, or can speculate on to have existant features, are formulated upon and through this logic of economy. The entities are *contingent* byproducts in maintaining a functioning economic system, which is *necessary*.

This is not unique of the Cold Hard World, as stated previously, all world building works on rules.

Example: within the psychoanalytic logic formulated by Freudian Theory the primary structuring principle is explained by the energy produced when libidinal desire is constrained within the Oedipal Complex. All subsequent psychoanalytic entities that populate the Freudian logical framework, and how they are explained to exist, are built out of the primary explanans made upon the instantiation of this principle. The subject, the object, the abject; psychosis, neurosis, and hysteria; anxiety, narcissism, and mania, these concepts are defended as real, as meaningful and meaningful, only via the fundamental assumptions wrought from that which defines the entire psychoanalytic logic itself: death and desire. All existant items Freud uses to describe the world of psychoanalysis are contingent to the primary structuring principle he deploys. This implies the necessity of the principle: its *primacy*. These items then act as a genealogical map leading us back to the most fundamental and dearest held beliefs of psychoanalysis. So if we really do believe in the Freudian Neurotic, then we retroactively obligate ourselves in defending the validity of the Mommy-Daddy-Mistake.

When we talk about how the Cold Hard World’s primary structuring principle is the economic logic of exchange we admit that all possible things (properties, relations, entities, essences) are embedded in the explanatory capabilities of economic discourse and economic-talk; the world is composed of and in a global exchange and the horizons of that world are synonymous with the horizons of those which are exchangeable. Words like thinking function as exchange, words like judgement function as exchange, representational thought, schematized

conceptual experiences, and even, on this account, all attempts at articulating our opinions, discontents, thoughts and feelings. The world, be it stupid and stupefying matter, is a diminutive or defanged version of the functional potency generated by the interleaving of discursivity and equivalency. That which is presentable to this function, and thus representable through it, is secondary and derivative. An arbitrary collection of things that are ultimately represented and defined by whatever configuration we exchange them through.

(Exchange in the discrete sense does not need to continue forever, only the guarantee that the possibility of exchange is always available. It is by this possibility that we can depend on a predictable and consistent word like reality. And because the word reality is sustained by the possibility of exchange, it is then revisible upon the possibility of exchange as well. The purpose is not necessarily constant exchanges, not an accelerating series of exchanges forever without end, the Cold Hard World could certainly find itself organized instead through a limited and prescribed set of individual exchanges; a reappropriation and redistribution of items that arrives at a place for everything and every-thing in its place. The emergency brake is right there at our fingertips and its reach extend ours as far as The Cold Hard World does, all the way into the depths of intergalactic space, organized with justice and freedom.

Eden, Eden, Eden.)

Sure, one could call this an inevitable universal ruin or an inevitable universal progress, but that's missing the point, any position taken to characterize this global warehouse management satisfies itself with a morality whose representability is inevitably and simply derivative to the positioning process it attempts to characterize as ruin or progress in the first place. Believing there is a critical (see: transcendent, autonomous) between these choices is a misapprehension of how choices are made; how they are produced as possible and available. Pepsi or Coke, Top or Bottom, Left or

Right, polyamorous or monogamous, *all* immanently aligned within the order of that which is offered and received as representable with giving and taking.

Whatever can be said in the right way, which is to say thought in the right way, is real in exchange. Immediately subject to, and validated by, the rate of exchange itself. The easier it is for one to explain precisely what is being offered the more preferential that offering becomes to the structuring principle employed. And the example provided above is not unique, a structuring principle is present in any belief that there is a sufficiently totalizing explanatory system for the world: class antagonism, the will to power, an image regime, positivist grammatology, negative grammatology, aggrocity, biopolitics, master narratives, the Final Machine, The Human Centipede, god, literally any conspiracy theory ever, need I go on? The effectiveness of any critique upon these is afforded by them.

To position Freud again – according to the (retrospective) energetic model of psychoanalysis, the complete fixation that an organic system has to the first source of excessive energy it encounters is a problematic that leads the system to mistake its own innate physical capacity for consuming energy with a psychological need to subject all energy to conservative programs. In other words, the energetic model that forms an organism's psychological relationship with the world is constituted by, and restricted through, a concept of affordability. "How can I afford the best way out?" It asks.

The constitution of the system stabilizes its potential evolution according to boundary conditions that remain uninvestigated. This enforces the calibration of a system's activities with the myth that

finitude = conservation = safety

Oddly enough, Freud was able to describe, at least on a scalar level, the self imposed

limitations that his own system was constituted by.

I cannot stress how important this is: simplicity at the level of explanation retroactively reinforces the primacy of the explanatory framework. Simplicity allows for a self-satisfaction at even the most difficult and agitated levels. because it insinuates a more cohesive binding between *all* levels. A binding so complete that there is never any doubt that the primary structuring principle is not only constructed as necessary but is itself inherently necessary; not only natural but, in fact, *neutral*.

To answer the question of (1) what exchange is to The Cold Hard World is to understand that the necessity of exchange must constantly be reinforced by *a priori* smoothing over any event that might interrupt the consistency of the universal nature given to exchangeability. It thus becomes equally necessary that anything explainable within universal exchange and the logic of economy is also consistently representable, because if it stays the same then it can be inferred that it has always been the same; that it is self-same. The consistently representable item of exchange is consistently traceable through all exchange. This is called a “property”.

To answer the question of (2) what is exchanged (property) we first must discuss a theory of representation.

C.

A theory of representation requires an understanding of the difference between the propositional dimension of a representational claim – the sense of *how* we might represent a thing in words – and the dimension that judges the success or failure based on *which* thing our proposed representation is referencing. One involves what is said, the other involves the thing about which we say.

For example: the phrase **Nandi Loaf is the Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** uses both the propositional and referential dimension of representation.

So upon the propositional dimension, how a thing is represented focuses solely on the precise act of representation. It judges the sense of the representation itself as the component by which we deem it either successful or not, an example of this would be the purely syntactical representation composed by the words “The Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”. This is a formally laden dimension.

On the other hand, upon the dimension that focuses solely on the thing that our chosen representation references, the component by which we deem success or failure is beholden to the specific entity we describe, rather than the words of the description alone. This is best exemplified by proper nouns like “Nandi Loaf”. This dimension is content laden.

In this latter sense what a successful representation relies on is a claim that believes in the comprehensibility of an identity. An identity that can be minimally understood in a representation. The identity operates as the referential ground towards which the representation actually *refers*. It exceeds the representation.

The take away is that if I were to describe someone as “The Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, one could derive meaning from the statement alone. The rigidity of that meaning, that among all the artists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century only one can truly be of the utmost importance, allows for my choice of words to be exactly correct in their descriptive import. But if I describe someone as “Nandi Loaf”, well, there may be many Nandi Loafs, at least by name, and knowing the precise Nandi Loaf, *the Demonstrative Nandi Loaf*, that I mean to represent in my statement would be necessary in deeming the success of the representation.

Thus in a full fledged representation how a thing is represented (The Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century), and which thing is represented (Nandi Loaf) meet at a cross point that demands we defend what it is exactly we are trying to reference by formulating any such representation: **Nandi Loaf is the Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**. The representation is only an attempted claim to truth, it must be defended because it is fallible and not true in and of itself. Whether there is, in fact, an artist named Nandi Loaf, and whether they are, in fact, the most important artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is simply what the representation proposes to reference. As we can see, along with the potential success of a representation comes the potential failure. *There are correct and incorrect representations.*

A theory of representation engages in both the dimension of choosing how to talk and describe; how to point, which is called a reference in the de dicto sense, with the dimension of the things pointed at; a reference in the de re sense.

De dicto references can only but succeed or fail, they have this higher potential for risk because they are rigidly dependent on the interrelated sensical-semantic nature of the specific words used. De re references can be successful and fail at the same time (unless altered by a demonstrative) because a de re reference is not itself a sufficiently determinate descriptive category. "The Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", this is a singular that expresses itself as an object that has no substitute. But "Nandi Loaf", here there is an amputation between the de re words we use and what the use of those words is meant to reference.

Representation holds in it a minimal responsibility for the consequences of its gestures. It must recognize it has the potential for failure in the individual sense; that of any single representation being incorrect (Nandi Loaf is the Second Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century), but also in the total sense; that representation as such inherently always fails to

accurately describe a thing because that thing is not itself of language, it is wholly and radically separate from all language. Outside and excessive of language. How, then, can things be said to exist?

The skeptical read of a theory of representation proposes that the distinction between de dicto references and de re references is irreconcilable, and that a representation can never grasp that which it claims to represent, Important Artists or otherwise. And while this level of almost caustic abjection for the uncertainty of words is attractive to some of the more vulgar and uncreative among us, in terms of representation's fealty to exchange in order to produce property, it will be argued that the opposite becomes equally true.

Remember that the success of a representative claim is what ushers that which it represents into the space developed in and for exchange. Successful representations imply an identity that is consistent with itself and that can persist through any number of exchanges. *Successful representations assume the formal legibility of their entity's content.* This is important.

Rather than accepting the inherent residual uncertainties that trace behind all potentially failable and fallible representations, instead The Cold Hard World presumes the constant and rabid success of representation at all times: guaranteed representational accuracy regardless of the checks and balances at work between sense and reference. Because failure in representation would, by the genealogical reduction that enforces exchange as the primary structuring principle, imply the failure of The Cold Hard World itself. Any failure, no matter how small, compromises the smooth integrity The Cold Hard World enjoys. And this would be cataclysmic. In order to prevent this cataclysm (and I take no joy in doing this) we must neglect, no, *suppress*, the possibility of failure entirely. In order to sustain the necessity and continue on producing exchangeable items, we make all de dicto references into species of de re references. The formal legibility of a representation *becomes*

the content of reference without question. *Any primary structuring principle that need guarantee its own necessity is fully committed to a hobbled and willingly neglectful theory of representation. A repressed form of representation that goes so deep it cannot see itself for what it really is: **hyper inflated anti-representation.***

This is the level of inflation, or luxury, we can operate at – total ontological access, total ontological liberation, total ontological validation, total ontological commitment. Everything will be made real and seen via form alone. References, whether towards real things or not, express an exchangeability, and thus a reality, solely at the their representative formal level. Things are given to us immediately simply by calling them what they are. **Nandi Loaf.**

In a nutshell, the theory of representation provided above, and the relationship between sense and reference it contained within it, implies that even the most seemingly small and quiet descriptions are actually thoroughly mediated, highly revisable, and almost composed entirely out of a dynamism of uncertainty. One might then argue that understanding the very meaning of “Nandi Loaf is the Most Important Artist of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” can only be achieved by perceiving the inherent modal incompatibilities it entails: it can not succeed and fail at the same time. Understanding the meaning of the Most Important Artist without knowing which artist is important is possible, but to understand that Nandi Loaf is that artist is not if Nandi Loaf does not exist. To be true Nandi Loaf must preempt the statement. The recognition of the incompatibility between the potential modal configurations of the statement itself mediates our understanding of its accuracy.

Heretofore we have been perhaps preoccupied, acceptably so, with a representation’s *deconstruction* on the basis that presuming its accuracy is not so easily achieved and not so readily deserved. This is not to ask the reader to go forth and treat all representations with a sense of eager hostility. While the award of

accuracy has certainly bloated over the decades, to believe that the act of deconstruction itself ushers in a post-structural paradise is to passively hand the potential of structuration *and* representation over to those who are unperturbed by constructedness in the first place.

This is not to say that if there were no artist named Nandi Loaf then the aforementioned examples would hold no meaning whatsoever, but that the modality of either its success or failure, and our uncertainty in that modality’s current state, provides the tension through which meaning can be produced and reproduced. This is how we can explain the difference between actual and non-actual entities. How we can change and be changed, how we even are locked in a state of *constant* change.

The Cold Hard World is able to ignore this by obviating that uncertainty at the level of potential statements maps onto an impossibility, or irrelevancy, at the level of their use value. “Use” being synonymous with “exchange”. It rejects to see the need to explain itself at either the referential or sensical level. The connection that would allow us to judge, on rational grounds, the success of a representation through our mediation of its internally logical non-contradictory propositions is severed in such a way that makes mere descriptive properties full fledged indications of the essential identity of all things. Things become bundles of given properties in such abound that the world is just one big ubiquitous property itself. A bunch of stuff!

The arbitrary place a thing has in relation to our chosen description of it, in the end, implies the entirely arbitrary place our choices have to description.

The opposition between form and content, outward appearances and internal essences, body and soul, is not simply the afterbirth left from understanding the tensions of a representative procedure; it is dependent upon it, and, as

always, has been the bottom of all philosophical or theoretical systems. Linguistic acts fuel this tension, and so then fuel philosophy. So why is this of our concern? Why bring this up now? What happens in linguistic acts, in communication and description, and how is this militated by The Cold Hard World? What, in effect, happens? Well, linguistic acts are, unfortunately, material acts, and thus they as

*[s]ensible phenomena (audible or visible, etc.) are [themselves] animated through the sense-giving acts of a subject. But the "animation" cannot be pure and complete, for it must traverse, and to some degree lose itself in, the opaqueness of a body.*

- Jacques Derrida, et al. "Meaning as Soliloquy." *Speech and Phenomena: And Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs.*

All spoken intentions directed towards an interlocutor, a partner in exchange, must move from the internal state of mind to the external state of appearance; this simple and singular mediation must situate itself between every representation and referent. Here it acts as the soft underbelly of any representation: whenever an essential content of experience is subject to communication a necessary and irreducible formal structuration supplants the remainder lost in the inevitable enunciative act. Let us briefly clarify this point, it could be inferred that what is lost actually remains, call it a residue; that there is left behind in the journey of talking a remainder within the body that we must reclaim. But an inference is not the same as knowledge, and positioning ourselves on how to consider this idea, *this remainder*, is the purpose of the writing going forward. Either it is left where it is or it is dragged out into the open: this choice will determine whether such a concept of the remainder is an enabling or disabling constraint.

Formal structuration is what takes place with any logical process – it is how we explicitly say what we mean based upon the sincerity of what

we meant to say. There is an error tolerant epistemic self consciousness at play because in order to refine the linguistic processes intended on communicating anything with accuracy we must first forgive, and ultimately embrace, the formal life that begets them; form is the technique that *clarifies* content. Because content is, apparently, eternally inaccessible, always encrypted, absolutely indecipherable, there is no sense in expecting to one day know it in its essence. There is no realm of un-alienated intimacy and commune to achieve or return to by this measure.

But as anti-representational The Cold Hard World inverts the expressive clarity of form and subordinates it to the content it gives flesh to. The intimate realm is a scam peddled under the banner of "authenticity", *Dasien*. Content, cloaked in flesh, always receding, never itself explicit without ceasing to be contentful. It is a big secret kept secret. In the end there is no content without an enunciation that stands in its place. Suppressing this inversion in The Cold Hard World is property: that which represents via a formal appearance the validity of an essential core without acknowledging that in order to conceive of content and essence at all we rely on the rearticulation of it through purely formal means.

The secret remains operative, and for some, then, it is an opportunity. Any invention invites its own accident, the misuse, abuse, of that invention as an instrument. A theory of representation invites a theory of misrepresentation, malrepresentation: *deceit*.

Instead of a subject that constitutes itself as keepable and nameable, identical and identifiable as the subject themselves, the formal arbitration fueling a free system of reference cannot account for the form of an impostor, the counterfeit, the forgery, faking the consistency between the secret referenced beneath the representation and the linguistic act of referential speech. The Cold Hard World is a system that is entirely credulous of form's behavior and so allows the formal



dimension the privileged place of totality (and it is clear that this is not just our system, but all systems). Counterfeit, as the inverted secret, scales seamlessly to any magnitude. It need only parrot the correct language to do so; from the minimally physical to the ultimately metaphysical.

The Cold Hard World is super gullible.

Discursivity and equivalency, the parting of one thing for an item in return, discriminating between *this* and *that*, between you and me, counterfeit intervenes right there: this becomes that *without being exchanged at all. It changes on its own, The Thing, The Horror.*

As these formal actions, these actions of property, have no depth beyond their phenomenality, how can we really expect to explain the difference between something authentic and its counterfeit when that explanation uses mere forms to define authenticity in the first place? *It is all counterfeit.* As long as a formality passes as a real object, one with essence or identity, it is simply no different from the object that, perhaps, it forges. The world is counterfeit and we are all part of the world. If this makes you uncomfortable then you are part of the problem.

What do we now understand property to be?

Counterfeit, counterfeit, counterfeit.

D.

Property, pure property, is obviously some-thing (but not always a thing) that you have. The prerequisite supposition here is one of ownership, e.g. control. You have a body, you have an opinion, you have rights, you have trauma, you have kinks, you have an identity and intentions, you have liberty, you have debt. You have taste and sensibilities and with them comes your hard won critical positions that inform those sensibilities. Is it any wonder why you are so miserable? It is appropriate that it

should be so; this is an ordered world of ordered things. Were we to be good thinkers it would be necessary to brush up on the etymology at hand, the root of the term [property, *proprius* – one's own] gives us the sense of the connection between a property and what possesses it properly. Property and propriety seem to have been bedfellows from the start. Everything in its place and a place for everything. It is your body and your choice.

This etymological rationalization of property as a naturalized given order couches human recognition as only operative within a process of property identification. This is ok, because in the world we are dreaming up overlapping the actual means by which recognition is understood with a simple, and convenient, concept of administration just makes the movement of exchange all the easier. Simple, because in this world identification is impossible without anything, or anyone, having presumed and firm properties of reference. Tallness and smartness, thisness and thatness, badness and goodness. Nandi Loafness.

Convenient because in the most fundamental way property no longer has justification, nor does it ever *need* justification, because it is itself how we justify all other relations.

What would be the conditions of a situation in which what is experienced does not reveal itself as immediately and given property. We cannot even say, without properties how could it be thus described? In order to legitimate their own initial claim that one's individuated sense of being is, in fact, individually their own a sense of self ownership insists upon and reciprocates individuality. The possibility of a self insinuates an imperative that endlessly chatters "*within being, before it was recognized and so instilled with a concept of self-sense, there was only the concept of nothingness; a nullity to be dominated. A form of being without discernible ownership that, up until the moment it was apprehended or seized, was either indifferent, or at least incapable of protesting, that appropriation.*"

If anything else were the case it would not have been available for this recognition in the first place. Until the self can be properly attributed to its place, just like the assumptive gesture in assuming land is part of a *terra nullius*, it is already always related to as a being-without-ownership, and thus can be understood only when taken into the realm of “properly owned”.

Property is a hypocrisy, easily said, (theft, theft, theft) a type of murder or theft that doubles back on its own steps and strips away not just life, but the convictions of the victim thus murdered. Property bleaches out the stain of what it turns into a dead body by demonstrating the necessity in positioning a world as one that is as good as dead unless it is owned. In order to sustain itself this act is treated as yet another condition for experience, assumed to be as simple as the relationship swallowing has to a mouthful of water or filth.

All art is guilty of this assumption.

The Cold Hard World is an empire that upholds the celebration and inclusion of difference as one of its founding ideals. And obviously this celebration is a means to an end, else-wise it wouldn't be part of an empire. The ends being that the only requirement of including these innumerable differences is that they are describable. Thus to actively attempt, for critical purposes or not, further or more refined description, and the communication of these descriptions is to engage in this ongoing celebration, or at least be an unwitting party-goer. Call it conceptual promiscuity in the name of creativity, or imagination in the name of proliferation of creation, it doesn't matter, all of it bloats a system designed to contain it. And so our question would stand as *‘how do we lodge critique that moves beyond making new possibilities available to the status quo, and thus galvanizing it?’*

The Cold Hard World.

Remember the moment you label yourself is the moment you volunteer your use.

I wish I could tell you there was a possibility of an existence free from this, but the more one believes there is a place set aside for love, expression, history, friendship or art as exceptions from this descriptive gutting the more one relinquishes those to it. These things have no transgressive vector unless they speak the correct language. Subtracting them only adds to the count.

Property, property, property.  
Exchange, exchange, exchange.

E.

There is one artist who does not exist: Nandi Loaf. An N and an A and an N and a D and an I. **Nandi Loaf is the Most Important Artist of the 21st century.**

The goal is plain. Underlying this argument is the imperative that whoever or whatever articulates these concepts – that the very possibility of thought and talk comes to us upon the basic condition of exchange – is better posed, for better or worse, to bring effect to those conditioned by exchange. And whoever or whatever comes to think and speak thusly comes to wield counterfeit in this effect. Counterfeit is the fulcrum upon which leverage can extort The Cold Hard World.

Those who continue to let the myth of being hold any sway over us continue to believe in the sacrosanct, in the hands-off, in the body and its labor, and they are only to continue obeying the norms used to blindly conserve what is possible and exclude what is not. And those who obey these norms recoil and deny; deem dangerous, any demonstration of counterfeit. It is a process of self determination, collective or otherwise, that is achieved not by immunizing itself from outside influence, systemic analysis, or market forces, but instead by bringing itself under the ‘thoroughgoing process of desanctification’ (Negarestani). Form slithers forward, exchange along with it, content can rot.

The effects of counterfeit seem easily dismissed by those who willingly resign themselves in the myth of being, those who uphold a fidelity with the purported sanctity of a world they will never come to occupy. But I honestly could not care less.

Without warning the unavoidable answer is provided:

Control your property or it will be controlled for you. Control how you are understood or it will be controlled for you. Anything bought once can be sold twice, anything given can be taken, anything you own can be better owned by another. Me and mine, you and yours, indistinguishably ours.

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- Parker von Sternberg, *St. Paul*  
Ellis von Sternberg, *New York*  
2022

*Shall I tell you the secret of the whole world?  
It is that we have only known the back of the  
world. We see everything from behind, and it  
looks brutal. That is not a tree, but the back  
of a tree. That is not a cloud, but the back of  
a cloud. Cannot you see that everything is  
stooping and hiding a face? If we could only  
get round in front [...]*

- G. K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday: A  
Nightmare.*