



★ Hi, I am Warren Neidich and I am an artist, composer and theorist. My theoretical interest over the past 10 years centres upon Cognitive Capitalism as it emerges out of Operaismo, Post-operaismo or Workerism and post-Workerism. I am interested in making it the central node in both my artistic and theoretical practice. I am currently exhibiting my *Pizzagate Neon* at Zuecca Project Space. There I link fake news and the post-truth society to this theoretical context. I've recently published three books entitled, *The Psychopathologies of Cognitive Capitalism* published by Archive Books. I have worked closely with Franco Berardi amongst many other people, and he was included in each one of those books. And I just finished a book called *The Glossary of Cognitive Activism* again with Archive, which is being released at the Printed Matter Book Fair in New York coming up in September. It is the glossary meant to accompany the first three volumes.

○ Hi, I'm Clio Nicastro and I have a background in Philosophy, Aesthetics and Film Studies. I'm currently affiliated with ICI Berlin where I was a stipendiary fellow from 2016 to 2018 within the core programme *Errans in Time*. Within the two years we worked on topics related to temporality such as memory, amnesia, repetition, and nostalgia. I wrote my phd on Aby Warburg and as post doc DAAD fellow I then started investigating the notion of Empathy in film which today I will try to put in connection with amnesia and yeah... My interest in the concept of empathy comes first from the work of Harun Farocki and then I also worked on in Philip Scheffner and Merle Kroeger's cinema as well in the work of Adelina Pintilie and yeah, I also find the notion of 'amnesia' particularly interesting as it is connected to the series of reading groups and screenings 'Spellbound' I've been co-curating together with Hannah Proctor and Nadine Hartmann from November 2018 at 'Diffrakt center for theoretical periphery' in Berlin. The series aims to explore experiences of collective mental contagion such as fainting fits, possession, the mimetic aspects of both hysteria and eating disorders, the regimentation of gesture and trances.

/ My name is Gaia Giuliani. I'm a researcher with the Centre for Social Studies at the University of Coimbra and Professor of Political Philosophy in Italy. I've been crossing different disciplinary fields since I began researching the topic of colonialism and constructions of race, especially intersectional constructions of race across Imperial and national borders. So in terms of fieldwork and my disciplinary belonging, I started from philosophy and then crossed into culture studies, postcolonial studies, critical race and whiteness studies. I'm a feminist scholar, and I've written several books on the genealogy of race in Italy, or better, the genealogy of race and racism in Italy from Unification to the present day. I'm currently working on constructions of monstrosity across the West, with a focus on Europe and in the context of the war on terror, the environmental crisis and the refugee and migrant crisis.

I took part in Amnistia, the project set up by Lucrezia Cippitelli and other colleagues and friends in Milan to address genealogies and iconographies of race in colonial and postcolonial Italy. I'm presently principal investigator on the (De) Othering research project, which focuses on media representations of migrants and refugees in five European countries.

Lucrezia Cippitelli □
Gaia Giuliani /
Warren Neidich ★
Clio Nicastro ○

□ Hello all. I see we have many different positions and this is also something very interesting. Just before entering the bunker we noticed that the pictures that Lara (Favaretto) sent us to give us a glimpse of her visual interpretation of the keyword “Amnesia”, covering a huge and wide spectrum of concepts and positions. On the contrary, after I've listened to you, I think we go over very specific areas, very different from each other. So I'm very curious to see how we can merge at the end of this roundtable, or how we can find a way to cooperate or say something which may bring us onto a common path or a joined perspective. In this sense I think it would be interesting if we also follow up a discussion about how we position ourselves, in relation to the topic of our meeting, “Amnesia”, or from our positions as researchers or practitioners or activists or artists. Because I find – or at least this is maybe my issue - I always find it problematic to be the white dude coming from Europe who discusses issues related with race, but then also with class, with gender. Being here right now I feel I'm in a very easy position. I'm in a, in a kind of ivory tower.

★ I think it's always a question of being, whether your analysis is first person or third person. I think if your analysis is based on your own experience and something that you actually went through in your life, then I think it's problematic. But if it's third person and it's based on objective methodologies, I don't want to say scientific because I have problems with science a little bit as well, but let's say kind of a systematic knowledge based approach then I think it's not as much a problem.

□ It is very interesting to speak about methodologies: my own experience with methodologies and the path I followed during my life helped me to discover how methodology is a political construction and how disciplines are also political constructions: they are narrations. I am educated as an Art Historian, from my BA to the MA and the PhD: a full academic education as an Art Historian. Life brought me to focus on Latin American modernism at first, and then, through postcolonial and decolonial literature, to follow the case study of art in Africa – which was the topic I recently researched, as an historian going through a PhD and as a practitioner with several projects curated in the continent. This very path helped me to problematise my own discipline; and that would never had happened if I didn't face the necessity to rethink the very content of the discipline of Art History, confronted with the issue that until the Nineties, the very idea of Modernism in Africa was not even conceived by most of the art history curricula and literature: Africa was the continent of exoticism, traditional African objects etc. When I discovered that the XX Century didn't exist in a whole continent, according to Western art Historians and according to the Art History we teach and publish and export to the whole planet, I had an epiphany about the way I was educated and the way I was led to see the world. A provincial universalism which is totally blind and evasive towards many experiences.

/ As a feminist scholar, I really believe in the need to position myself in my work, whether I'm writing or studying. Because anytime you're making connections, that's very subjective. I don't want to get to any sort of “truth.” I don't believe in truth. I believe in political positioning, so my position is always very clear, crystal clear. It's an accountable position, not a universal or impersonal one.

Which doesn't mean that it's not accurate or rigorous. As Donna Haraway said, knowledge production is a battlefield. First of all, we need to understand the tension between the way we are, the way we are perceived, what we produce, the knowledge we produce, and the knowledge we are immersed in.

○ Yeah. And actually, my interest in the concept of empathy comes precisely from this entanglement of problem because the process of researching itself questions the issue of the “right” distance. When we empathise with our object of research the difficulty is to avoid, or better to be aware of anaesthesia, mere projections and/or expectations. Empathy in this sense is a very fragile concept that needs to be questioned otherwise the risk is to support a hidden hierarchy. But I do agree with you because I definitely think that we need to place ourselves - “in first-person” - within our research otherwise it would be impossible to be for example at the same time activists and as researchers.

* That was, that was my point. I was agreeing with you. Let me tell you a little bit more about myself as a background to the points I will make. I started as an artist studying photography, but then I studied neuroscience at California Institute of Technology as a research fellow before switching to studying medicine and becoming a medical doctor. In 2004 I went back and studied architectural theory until 2008. So I'm coming from both a science and humanities background. Whether its taking a post-structuralist approach or referring to post-colonialism or feminism I understand the significant roles these diverse practices play in the production of truth as a labile and shifting condition. But I would also like to say that when you're doing an eye operation, of which i have in my life time done over a thousand, and you're going into someone's eye to remove a cataract or repair a retina you have to believe in another type of truth that is more stable and the product of an historical narrative of experiments which has produced a methodology. There is a right way to prepare the patient and his or her eye for surgery which includes local anaesthesia injected retro orbitally. There is a proper way to make incisions, and correct way to enter it so that an assortment of specialised tools such as phacoemulsification device can aid in removing a cataract. Finally there is the correct way to implant an artificial lens into the eye. All these things have to do with the percentage of success for a proper outcome.

So you better know your science. If you don't, it's just not possible to do it correctly. The fluidity of the truth and its cultural context is fine within the humanities and in fact are important in the contested terrain of truth and the market place of ideas. However, if you're somebody who like myself has actually operated on a person and have moved through such programs and acts requiring these kinds of steps in order to perform a perfect operation with the patient seeing afterwards...You have to believe in the truth in science and its method.

/ Well, I really believe in science, but so did Cesare Lombroso...

★ Atonia Alampi and I did a two day conference here in Venice at Ca' Foscari University concerning the racial imaginary in the Italian context and the way that fascism used false scientific biases to make a case against racial marriage and of course Cesare Lombroso was a key element in that discussion. Today positivistic neuroscience plays a key role in Neural totalitarianism.

/ Mm-hmm, no, since I do believe in science and I do believe that what I'm doing is rigorous, and to retrace history I need to read reports, archives and data. I do believe that science is rigorous and necessary, but we're very well aware that science is an object. We know that whatever knowledge production we are dealing with is a matter of interpretation, which can be dependent on particular power relations. I'm a social scientist and a humanities kind of person. What I need to understand is not the act of putting a knife into an eye per se, but rather what surrounds that process, right? We are not taking apart each other's approach; we're trying to reach a middle ground, seeing as we all have different positions. So when I say that, I mean that I need to balance being an activist and being a scientist, since of course you need to distance yourself to see things more clearly.

Otherwise you won't see anything. But at the same time, you need to question yourself through that critical approach to your own positionality that Lucrezia was talking about, because delving into a matter means bringing back something that challenged you. In fact, to be accountable for the knowledge you produce, you need to understand how your positionality affects knowledge production and the relation you established with that particular knowledge.

□ My approach to the concept of "Amnesia" (later we'll see how it's something which I developed with other people), the way I face it in relation to the specific history of Fascist Italy, its Colonial history and its legacy, is also a process of deconstruction of a discipline, which is meaningful because it helps us (in Italy) to understand our complex and dangerous present. I'm participating in this talk as a scholar and I have at the same time my life of activism (over the years, with Gaia Giuliani at some points, when we were in our twenties and we were involved in different projects in squats in Italy). From my experience there is a moment when you grow up, you're done with studying, you've done your things well, you went through your MA, done the PhD, you traveled, you learned other languages, you read all the relevant books and then all this knowledge you have as a legacy of many studies and many people you've met, you start to apply it to your own life, to the present, as you read it according to your past studies.

As Art Historians we are educated to have a methodology and a kind of mind-set which walks with you throughout your academic and post-academic life. It is a gaze that is installed in your brain (or at least I've the feeling that it got installed at the Art History department of my University, in Rome): you start studying Middle Eastern archeology and then Greek archeology and then Roman archeology. And then there is this huge highway which goes straight through the centuries to Modernism, crossing Middle Age, Renaissance and so on.

As a student you have the feeling that this timeline is developing towards a never ending growth. Everything happens in Europe. Art history studies specific objects coming from specific cultures and not others. And there is never a question about geographical location, about the objects this discipline evaluates and about the way this discipline was invented. For me, this process of asking myself and questioning, was the legacy of my postcolonial and de-colonial studies and also of my activist life and my practice outside Europe. This questioning led me to see how, when Pope Sixtus IV donated some roman sculptures belonging to his family and initiated the foundation of the Musei Capitolini in Rome (end of the XV Century), he in fact he gave the direction to what is a museum today, what is art and what is not, with a *forma mentis* which is Eurocentric and ideological, and we still accept it as universal and as *THE Methodology*.

From that moment on, he stated what was art, as a legacy of Greek and Roman antiquities, and what was not art (objects coming from Africa and Latin America and in general from non-Mediterranean, non-Western world: for instance what the Combonian priests brought from Angola and Congo, what the Jesuits brought from Latin America). So let's say I am at a point where I see I have a methodology which was installed in my brain when I started studying, Art History. Postcolonial discourse was a way to understand how this path, how this methodology is a narration itself because it implies a vision of the world which comes from a specific *forma mentis*, embedded in an historically and ethically located gaze of a specific time.

Had I not understood certain readings, I wouldn't have refocused my gaze. Positioning myself is to understand that I'm a white, heterosexual scholar, middle-class and with good education. I am lucky enough to have a passport from the Schengen area so I can move around the world. I have to use these tools to understand and show how my people built themselves up and narrate their story along the stream of history, and how they invented their superiority. Otherwise I would do something which is very professional, very scholarly, well done, but from an ethical and activist point of view it would be totally un-useful, because it doesn't help in the reading and challenging of our present reality.

And our reality, as Gaia said, is the reality of politicians talking about boats, politicians talking about race, politician using racist, sexist and a classist words to describe the otherness. This for me is the crucial point of any practice. My excuse to talk about these issues is the production of visual art beyond Europe and the West. By refocusing my gaze I've been able to look at myself and to see how my people have become used to talking about themselves.

/ Well.

* Should we start reading? You said before we might give a 10 minute presentation of each of our topics. Is that we could do now?

□ Please start.

○ I would like to share with you some reflections about a constellation of concepts which I relate to amnesia. The first one I have already introduced is empathy...together with witnessing, forgetting numbness, reliability in recent history, and oral history. These terms for me stem from my recent collaboration in a documentary film by Nene Grignaffini and Francesco Conversano on the Berlin wall. So I am going to deal with different topic, but I think it could be interesting to discuss it together with you today. Also because This year, on November the 9th, is the 30th anniversary of the fall of the wall and the film project is meant as a collection of interviews, fragments, memories, personal experiences of life during the GDR(that means daily life as well as stories of political resistance, work life, particularly women's work life, stories of people who escaped to west Germany or helped others to cross the border, and black people who were victims of racism).

Furthermore, the film focusses on the changes after the reunification and the current recrudescence of extreme right-wing parties (AFD, NPD, Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands, Pegida) in the former east Germany (especially in Sachsen, Thuringian and Brandenburg) – as we saw in the latest European election. As you can tell from my brief introduction of myself, I am neither a historian nor an expert on this subject. By working on this documentary project as both a researcher and a translator, instead, I had the chance to directly face (in the process of their making) some of the empathic mechanisms I am interested in my research and which I was able to observe on at least three different levels:

1) the relation between the witness and her or his past (which of course changes dramatically when encountering a former prisoner, or an artist who use to work for the state, or someone who was considered a political dissidents, or someone who was just a child at that time but is now trying to investigate that experience in her research and so on); we must consider that the concept of dissident in the GDR is very broad because also those people who were not political opponents were considered dissidents. Another example are those persons who were children during the GDR and who are now trying to recount their experiences by avoiding the narrative of the winners (West Germany/Capitalism). In doing so they actually need to find somehow distance from their autobiographical account. 2) the relation between the interviewers and the persons being interviewed. 3) The third level is something I can so far only speculate on – as the film hasn't come out yet-: the relation between spectators and interviewees.

The idea for the documentary was to select and interview people whose different biographies could offer diverse cross sections of this crucial moment in the history of Germany (and of course also of the other countries involved in the Cold War) that historians, sociologists, writers and artists still try to unpack and narrate. This is of course a challenge which applies not only to the history of the Berlin wall but yet I think that this history offers a series of compelling issues, partly because it's an event which happened in the recent past so actually we do have witness: ppl who used to live in the former east and ppl who used to live in the former west, people of different ages who at least experienced the moment of the reunification, buildings/ruins of the former factories which were dismantled.

Furthermore, although there has been a large debate about it in Germany especially, there is still the need to find new ways to account for those stories that don't fit either the narrative of the winners or that of the "losers". The need to overcome this dichotomy was lately discussed in one of the many cultural events (exhibitions and screenings) about the end of the GDR that have been taking place in Berlin in the past months, namely the public discussion "DDR neu erzählen" (re-tell the GDR or narrate the GDR in a new way) at HAU Hebbel am Ufer theatre in Berlin where the participants confronted, I quote, "the official politics of memory that largely reduces life in this vanished land to perpetrators and victims of the Stasi". Part of the problem is that "to give voice" is not a sufficient way to hear what witnesses and traces of the past want and need to say...

And I sometimes have the feeling, maybe I'm wrong... this is actually a question for you all... I have the feeling that the verb "give" implies an act of permission rather than a way to open a space of dialogue and confrontation. And of course it's a word... I'm not saying... I don't want to just speculate on words for the sake of pure speculation, but I do think that the act of "giving voice" is not neutral.

/ There is a hierarchy implied.

□ It is vertical.

○ It was meant to be a way to break this hierarchy but I think that the risk is to crystallise its revolutionary meaning... I can see that the hierarchy is still there, it's hidden.

And so the lack of archival material, traces, voices constitutes both a political and a historical struggle as also Lucrezia was saying before. And as for instance Saidiya Hartman pointed out in her great attempt to invent a new writing practice, trying to cope with the gaps and silences in the archive of trans-Atlantic slavery that absent the voices of enslaved women. A method that she called "critical fabulation". When confronting, on the other hand, traceable historical events there is the risk of facing different kind of gaps which I think have to do mostly with repetition, re-staging and re-enactment. When the process of remembering instead of re-activating the past becomes a crystallisation of the past or of the narratives of the past, this has consequences in the way one then perceives the present as well as re-invents the future.

I would like to quote Alessandro Portelli, an historian specialised in oral history. "Just like memory, the narrative itself is not a fixed text and depository of information, but rather a process and a performance. Orality does not generate texts, but performances: in orality, we are not dealing with finished discourse but with discourse in the making (dialogic discourse in the making). Thus, when we talk of oral history we ought to think in terms of verbs rather than nouns – remembering rather than memory; telling rather than tale. In this way, we can think of oral sources as something happening in the present, rather than just as a testimony of the past."

I have selected some of the people we have interviewed for the film that I believe can offer some poignant examples that shed light on the inextricable twines between memory and narrative, repetition and crystallisation. But I'm not going to give details of the characters because the film is not ready yet. We interviewed the current director of one of the most important prisons in the former east Germany which is still active today. He started working in this prison already during the GDR and he witnessed the detention of the citizens who participated in the so called Friedliche Revolution (the peaceful revolution) - the several mass protests that started at the beginning of 1989 and that carried on until the fall of the wall. It was interesting to notice how the director of the prison built a kind of double narrative of his past. He only placed himself as actor, as "I", from the moment when the protesters were arrested - these protests then spread out among the inmates as well. He also meticulously told the history of the jail under social nationalism as well as under the gdr but as if he wasn't there in both moments.

We have also interviewed some former prisoners. I was particularly struck by one of them with whom I totally failed to empathize with. He was a victim of political repression (even though not a political opponent) and he was in jail for about one year. His account was very detailed, clear and objective to the point that words became numb. I am aware that this is not only a largely discussed topic (the value of witnessing, the "normalisation" of commemoration) but also quite subjective but yet it remains an issue that affects politics and history in the first place as well as artistic and artistic practice.

I have then started to think about a paradox: when we have a lot of both archival material and witnesses but we can't somehow really access these stories... which is the opposite case of the lack of archives. But I do think that sometimes it's also... the consequence can be also a sort of amnesia. Therefore, I wanted to also bring in this concept and I know it's a huge topic, but I think it's also worth to discuss it together. Yeah, maybe this is enough to start with.

/ There are many overlaps. Not direct overlaps, of course, more like reflections on a number of things and epistemologies. Let's think about extreme-right movements today. I'm working on Italian extreme-right groups at present, and I'll go on Facebook and see that all their posts and comments revolve around two main topics. Or better, one main topic and then two different angles of that same topic. The main topic is sex crimes committed by refugees and migrants against white women. So one of the arguments, or its closely related discourse, is the colour of the nation. What is the nation's colour? Why are women being mobilised in that semantic field, which is not about their bodies but about the nation?

And the second topic is a construction by contrast of the emerging community of the nation through deprecating references to the barbarity of the Other. I'm working on that going through journal articles, newspapers, pictures and trying to do the same work as with the hegemonic visual representations of the migrant boat crossing the Mediterranean, figuring out what kind of memories surface from the colonial past.

There is another convergence going on. Just as you were talking about amnesia, I can talk about memory of the future. Memory of the future is pretty much related to an apocalyptic scenario, which is not even a distant future now; it's our present. This apocalyptic scenario is filled with images of migrant landings and the idea of a barbarian ship sailing to our land, penetrating our body. All these images were already circulating during colonial times and lay at the root of the very idea of civilising mission.

So we need to go there and stop them, contain them, and prevent them from coming here. That was the main narrative in the missionaries' endorsement of colonialism. I see the same going on here. I see it in a number of similar iconographies circulating, and I see it in terms of discussions about bringing out the voices or giving room to the voices or allowing someone to have a voice. This poses a number of problems in terms of my positioning, because I work on these topics as a white woman, and that's why I dissented earlier. My focus is not on giving voice to anyone in particular. I try to deconstruct as much as I can the imaginary that shapes my way of thinking. So I need to go back to myself. That's why I do critical whiteness studies. I try to understand what I actually see when I see things, what kind of lenses are common in that narrative that we call "the colour of the nation."

That narrative, which is hegemonic, can give us the instruments, the tools we need to understand current phenomena. That's why I try to avoid the issue of witnessing, because it's too problematic, and I choose to focus on past and present iconographies, pictures, and films, trying to understand how, for instance, the boat is seen as carrying either the alleged terrorist/criminal or the refugee who flees a war. We need to deal with this dichotomy. It's still there and it's been there since colonial times. And what that entails is that if you are a full subject, if you have subjectivity, you are seen as some sort of criminal because, "you're not fleeing a disaster, no, you chose to leave." Either that, or you must be a victim of disaster. A victim, yes.

And there is, again and again, a kind of hierarchical, vertical relationship, where I'm supposed to take care of you. But we know that the whole notion of "taking care" is very problematic, because it's fraught with power relations and different positionalities racialised positionalities. In this sense, I need to understand how that dichotomy plays out in discourse, how it is always there, whether I'm talking to you or with friends at a bar, when I try to teach this to my students or when I do activist work with fellow activists. Somehow, we always seem to retreat to that kind of dichotomous thinking so, again, what... how... until new testimony emerges that can make a difference if we are stuck in that dichotomy.

I need to go back to the colonial archive to understand what kind of images we are still using to deprecate people's emotions, or "some people's" emotions in particular, and why. Because our attitude as a group is that we are lucky to be white, European or American. We can move freely and we are not immediately racialised, though that is not always true. Still, there is a big difference. When you move across boundaries and borders, is it the border line itself that constructs you in a particular way?

That line carries meaning. It's like a semiotic line, and it tells you what you are. It tells you whether you're black, or a woman, or queer, or if you look like a Muslim or whatever it is that you are. That's why I need to go back to that iconography and understand what is at stake now.

What I mean is that in mainstream hegemonic discourse, the boat must be either full of criminals or full of victims. Then there's this far-flung idea that they're all victims, and that we need to separate or discriminate among them, in case there is actually a criminal in the midst. But mostly, they're considered the new slaves. Yet they aren't; they are not enslaved. They are people who chose to leave. And they have a subjective trajectory, which is a linear trajectory from point A to point B that we are obstructing by constantly bouncing them around the Mediterranean. Yet they like to follow the same trajectory. We don't know why, but the reasons are many: maybe they want to buy something, or get an education, or avoid getting married, or just do whatever it is that we all do every single day of our lives.

So why do they need to be victims? And in this kind of context, I always associate the two pictures because it's too easy for us to chase them back into a cage, a colonial cage, and see them as devoid of subjectivity, devoid of individuality or individuation, unable to make any choice and all that. And all the pictures and films that I've been analysing are stuck in that dichotomy. Either they are all criminals or they are all good. In fact, they are not all good, and they are not all bad either. I guess what we are talking about here is what it means to have subjectivity in our times.

* Okay. Well, one question I would like to ask you before I go on is this okay. There was a lot of implicit amnesia in what you were saying, but maybe you could make a statement more explicitly.

/ Yes, amnesia. I can go back to the historiographical debate on the so-called colonial amnesia, which is a very hot topic, although it is not often discussed outside academia, I would say. For years, the historical debate on colonialism, especially Italian colonialism, has addressed amnesia saying that "We don't remember." In fact, we do remember, but then there are three different levels implied here. First, there is the institutional level, so there is a political responsibility for what we do or do not remember and what has been left out of school textbooks and the political debate, for instance. The second level concerns what kind of colonial objects, even emotional or not related to affect, have been circulating in the public sphere. No one says that so many of the video artists and documentary and film makers we know have started scratching the surface and going to personal archives. They've had to go to family archives – like photo albums and letters from the colonies – to make our private memory public.

And then, of course, there is the individual level, which is interrelated to the other two. So it's not really a case of amnesia.

Some scholars have called it selective memory, since we do remember that we have built roads and bridges. What we don't remember is the use of poison gas, the air raids, the massacres, mass violence and rape. We remember being there to help those peoples and being just as miserable as them. That's a nice and easy narrative. Others talk about a sort of elliptic movement, in that the memory never disappears, but it's distant.

At times it resurfaces, then it fades away into oblivion, an eclipse, they say. There seems to be something interposed between the object or deep memory and what we see. The issue of the unveiling of Muslim women probably offers the clearest example of this "eclipse." Basically, in colonial times we went "there" to save them from themselves and from this kind of thing, and we kept doing the same during the war on terror, avoiding seeing that military intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan was still colonial. The link between amnesia, or let's say a critical approach to amnesia, and the topic of the boat seen as bringing here the barbarians, is related to this kind of colonial construction of Otherness.

We are raised thinking that what we see, or the way we see it now, is new. It's not. Our views, our gaze, are enmeshed in that kind of imaginary iconography and to better understand the way we think, we should deal with genealogies, which would be very interesting in terms of increasing our awareness of who we are today and why with respect to our past, present and future. It's not going to automatically foster inclusion, and it's clear just by looking at the history of Italian emigration that better knowledge or higher awareness don't necessarily lead to inclusion. We have been migrants ourselves, but we don't see similarities between us and today's migrants.

It's not that better knowledge or a deeper understanding of our past are the only solution, but it's a first step. At the very least, it would open up a space for discussion and somehow crack open our very exclusive privilege of writing history and interpreting the present, in terms of the possibility for different voices to intervene. That's it. I hope I have answered your question.

* So my topic is a lot different than the rest of yours and I hope you find it interesting. But I want to start with a quote if you don't mind, and it's by Marco Scottini and it's from an essay he wrote called *The Government Of Time and The Interactions Of Memories*. Maybe some of you know this essay. But I think it's a good beginning in terms of the kinds of things that I'm thinking about now and how to coordinate my own theoretical approach with the idea of cultural amnesia.

So he says, "Citing the past does not mean re-memorising dead languages, but de-archiving the rebellious signs of official cataloging, not so much bringing to light the object of remembrance as that which it with its reappearance renders visible and removes. Or the action of re-filming archive material for the couple Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi does not mean looking for something in the drawers of the past but re-actualising the virtual in the celluloid that an anonymous eye had already captured."

And framing that which happens on the margins of the frame means rendering visible for the first time that which was there without being there, something in the state of invisibility. Repetition is always the sign of having been and being for the first time.”

And what's interesting about this quote is that whether you're looking at a history or whether you're looking at an image, there is a multiplicity of histories that are contained therein, and that these histories, for whatever reasons, are subsumed by or denigrated to a minor role, in a Deleuzian sense, rather than constituting the major role they might have assumed given different set of explicit determining factors. And the kinds of relations that we're talking about, whether cultural positions, positions on race, positions on gender, are contorting or making invisible certain images, certain parts of the image, certain parts of the language, certain authors, which had their been different a sociopolitical, economic or historical context would have been allowed to emerge and become predominant. So amnesia as I will show is related to this process of elaboration, cultural memory and cultural attention which has significant repercussions of subjectivity.

That's what I think he's saying? But I want to use the above quote as a beginning for an understanding of amnesia as a form of memory dysfunction, not simply occurring in the material intracranial brain, as many reductionists and positivist accounts would have us believe, but rather in a brain defined by both its intracranial and extra-cranial capacities. So, in this sense, this actually refers back to the ideas I was trying to explain earlier in reference to positivist science and the racial imaginary. Positivist neuroscience is restricted to only the intracranial component of the intracranial/extra-cranial continuum and therefore is apt to be utilised and understood inappropriately. Whether it was the Italian fascism or the German fascism contorting science in its restricted positivist sense to generate social programs that today as absurd as they were then are coming back to haunt us. Biometry or craniometry or phrenology are theories generated by restricted methodologies in a restrictive context and therefore are not factual. The brain is not just inside this skull of mine, contained the bony carapace, but rather exists, as well, beyond in its expanded and transcendent extra cranial capacities. It is not a crystallised structure formed of essences but is a becoming fluid structure. I call this relation between the intracranial and extra cranial brain the intracranial/extra-cranial continuum which when combined with the lived body forms the intracranial/ extra-cranial complex.

Memory and amnesia are part of an extended embodied and enacted mental condition. Embodiment or embodied cognition describes the condition of the brain that cannot be uncoupled from its environment and cannot be reduced to only neural activation. Extended models of cognition mean that the brain and the world are constitutively intertwined and that technologies like laptops function as externalised cognitive organs. For instance, the phenomena of the Google effect is the result of transactional memory, in which the computer becomes the expert with which we outsource our memories to, leading to our own memory deficits. Or the same might be true of the annihilation of our memories, of space and direction resulting from the GPS and resulting atrophy of the posterior hippocampus.

Why is this significant? This becoming brain takes into account the changing contingencies existing in the socio-political cultural milieu. When we think about post-humanism, the post-Anthropocene, or we think about post-colonialism or feminism we need to understand that they are conditions that mutate or estrange or defamiliarise the market place of ideas and that these ideas have material consequences. We have to understand that they form the contested and irregular emerging field of the external brain. The feminist work of Mary Kelly, Mary Miss, Alice Alcock, Carol Lee Schneemann, just to name a few, are products of the unique social and cultural relations and the new freedoms that emerged in the late sixties and seventies. Especially significant is Mary Kelly's work the Post-Partum Document 1973-1979, in which she talks about Lacanian psychoanalysis. She injects a feminist perspective and thereby mutates the conditions of a patriarchal cultural milieu incorporating her own active analysis and feminist position. The combined effects of this original feminist perspective begins a process of rupture and schisis which on one hand alters the cultural milieu allowing for new relations to emerge as in the quote of Scotini I mentioned before attests to. It also has a secondary effect on the intracranial brain to which it is epigenetically entwined with. The mutation of the cultural milieu and its political consequences concerns the restructuring of networks of sensibility and motricity which engages with the human mind and brain. Powerful Feminist art inhabits the cultural milieu with different forms, meanings, syntactic and logics that create new forms of repetition, synchronicity and attention that sculpts the plasticity of the sensitised brain in different ways. The intracranial brain coevolves with this extra cranial brain of which, for instance, the socio cultural milieu is an instantiation. So there's the intracranial brain and the extra-cranial brain, and the situated body in between which as I mentioned above forms a complex.

In order to understand the above in relation to cognitive capitalism I would like to give you a little background. There's an early cognitive capitalism, which as we all know, starts in 1975 according to Yann Moulier Boutang and deals with things like 24/7 work, precarious labor, financialization of capital, communicated capitalism, valorisation economies, precarity. These are the kinds of things that we normally associate with the early phase.

But in this late phase, which I call the cognitive turn over the neural turn in cognitive capitalism, there's an explicit desire to sculpt the neuroplasticity of the brain through the manipulation of institutional regimes, actions on built space, on theory, which together form a contested, irregular and non-uniformly sculpted distributed regime of truth. This is exactly what artistic production as well as theories of gender and race have the capacity to destabilise.

In cognitive capitalism, where the brain and the mind are the new factories of the 21st century, a new kind of memory asserts itself and has become more important than ever. It is called working memory and as the name implies it is the system of labouring that capitalises and commodifies the memory work of the cognitariat.

Just as the art fair is the perfect marketplace for the sale of artworks in the global economy and platforms have become the perfect business model in our digital world, working memory is the perfect metaphor through which to understand new forms of power and sovereignty. In this case the site of the rehearsal of future performances important in the world in which immaterial labor has subsumed all others. So inside working memory the cognitariat labours with live memories to construct scenario visualisations in the mind's eye for future actions. We activate the archive of long term memories in order to construct singular and collective narratives. In cognitive capitalism the archive as a site of power through what is included or excluded. It is no longer restricted to the library, or museum or even computer memory as it was in Gordism and post-Gordism but rather the archive is centered in the minds eye and working memory which has now become the site of power and normalisation and governmentalization. Mentalite takes on increased importance in cognitive capitalism. Mentalite is an attribute of the becoming intracranial/extra-cranial continuum and comply.

To clarify then the mind's eye is the place where working memories, the temporary activation, maintenance, and manipulation of neural data streaming through the connectome is called upon in acts of imagination, creativity and innovations. Data arriving from the senses in the sensory cortices of the brain from there thalamocortical connections is acted visualisations visualisation upon by top-down effects originating in such places as the frontal cortex which deem it salient or important or not. That data that is deemed important is laid down as long term memories. In scenario visualisations these long term memories are activated from the longterm memory stores to be elaborated consciously or unconsciously in the mind's eye in the performance of a particular task called scenario visualisation.

Scenario visualisation is an important part of planning future activities and performances. It's more than just thinking about your bedroom at home. You can all imagine what your bedroom at home looks like, or your living room, or your kitchen. We can do that from here. But it's more about a marathon racer pre-envisioning a race yet to come, an actor rehearsing his or her lines and actions in his or her head before going on stage. It actuality helps their performances and it improves their execution. I sometimes make my own artwork in my mind's eye before I actually make it.

Working memory is situated predominantly in the prefrontal and parietal cortex. Although, we understand that it's situated there, it's consensually activated along with its counterpart occurring in the extra-cranial brain. As the name suggests, working memory works with those memories formed through its interaction with world of objects, things, their relations, as well as social relationships that create their context and form the archive of mental images, which have the potential to be activated to partake in the particular creative mental tasks.

I am stating that the archive in cognitive capitalism, is no longer only situated in the museum or library or on the computer chip, but also in the millions of plastic neuro-synaptic junctions that make up the material brain and have the capacity to be sculpted and modulated. The archive is alive and gathers as well as selects.

These synapses have been sculpted by engagement with the distribution of sensibility and reflects the system of what is sayable or who can say it. That not only polices built space, or the virtual container of the internet, but in the process activates a populations neuro synaptic junctions, and also shuts them down as a result of lack of stimulation by those stimuli deemed unimportant. Attention is important to this process. In cognitive capitalism salience subsumes attention. Attention is an attribute of the extra cranial brain and orients the sensorial-cognitive system in designed and built space. Salience is an attribute of the intracranial brain and stems from abstract registers resulting from a subjects relationship over time with the world creating specific dispositions, values and attitudes. In the minds eye the distribution of sensibility become the distributions of salience. So it is through the rules and regulations occurring in this becoming intracranial-extra-cranial complex that constitutes the new biopolitics of cognitive capitalism which is referred to as neuropolitics upon which the procedures of governmentalization and cognitive capitalism operate. Governmentalization transforms and redirects its focus from the body, as in bio politics, to include the brain and mind and its power is now directed to the normalisation of the events in the mind's eye. Working memory constitutes the essential component of self-governing and the endo-colonisation of thought.

As such, amnesia is not simply a form of memory loss related to neural dysfunction in the intracranial brain. For instance, in retrograde amnesia, you lose previously existing recent memories as a result of head trauma, or anterograde amnesia, when the process of transforming short-term memories into long-term memories is defective, resulting from damage to, for instance, the medial temporal lobe of the brain or the hippocampus. Recently a new technique called optogenetics can induce amnesia or loss of memory in rats by focusing a laser beam directly on specially primed neural synaptic junctions. No one can dispute that memory loss does occur due to trauma, stroke or biomedical intervention as the above examples suggest. But the damage to the tissue of the brain is the result of damage to the intracranial brain. The amnesia I am speaking of here is resulting from a breakdown in the intracranial/extra-cranial complex the assemblage of material components that entangle the external world with their intracranial counterparts in the situated and active body to produce archival memory.

The brain we are referring is based an extended and embodied model as already mentioned. It connotes both its intracranial matter consisting of neurons, neural networks, and the extra-cranial composition composed of objects, things, their relationship and social communicated relations that form the milieu. The extra-cranial milieu is shaped in time and space by competing, uneven, etiological, and discursive fields of unequal and shifting ideologic formations. Important is to understand that the extra cranial brain is expanding and can be thought of as transcendental. Ideology is one such component that affects typology of these fields. It invests itself in objects and relations and is there as the key to their ability to create relations that form attention externally and salience internally, which are important for memory function.

Ideology is at the same time creating strategies of memory, attention, and obscuration and sometimes ablation. It is these memories that form the raw material of working memory, and allow for the optimised function of the cognitariat and his or her valorised, and financialized economy. And then I have another thing for later, if we get to that.

/ Yeah. Can I...

□ I think we should get to that.

Yeah.

/ What you said at the beginning was very interesting. We were discussing our positioning with respect to the object of knowledge. Well, if we reread the idea of being either in proximity or at a distance in light of the post-human idea of inter-activity, such as Karen Barad's intra-action...

* Yeah.

/ ...then we would understand that we cannot be at a distance, because we are already fully immersed in it. So the cognitive idea of an intra- and an extra-cranial memory, or working memory, is already somehow connected to the point I was making. In fact, if we see memory as functioning semiotically – that is, connecting the bodily experience to what is placed outside the individual body, be it symbolic or material, in a mutually productive relation – we'll understand how the way it selects information serves the purposes of a particular order of discourse, which is above and beyond the individual. What I want to say is, if memory links the organic and symbolic content placed within and outside the individual's body, memory builds discourses that are not only individual, but contextual and collective. Thus it constitutes the bodily and extra-bodily basis for societal organisation, laws and borders.

It follows that when trying to detach the effect from the sign in this case, memory of the past and individual and social 'reactions' to the present we are basically, you see it time and again, in a sort of alienated state, which is pretty much what you were talking about in terms of cognitive capitalism. Let's go ahead, there's a lot of material here.

* I totally agree with you. And that's what I meant. I was thinking the whole time, and I didn't want to interject until my chance to talk again. I didn't want to say that there were definite connections and I felt that same way as you but defining it with a different lexicon. Of course Karen Barad is a very important inspiration for me. The thing that really links me and Karen Barad, I would say would be the situated body, which is an intervening between the extra-cranial, and inter-cranial brain. That is what I meant by the term complex instead of just continuum. So what is the situated body? So for instance, the fact that your eyes are four degrees apart allow you to see depth perception, right?

Because the two visual fields of each eye overlap, and it's that overlap what's called anomalous retinal correspondence, that slight anomalous retinal correspondence that allows for the visual depth perception that you experience. It also includes the microbiome of the gut which has recently been recognised as an important factor in one's mood. The situated body also moves us through our perceptual fields activating stimuli and binding together experience.

Whatever it is, allows us to sense the world, and experience the world in a certain way. So that situated body is extremely important, and that's extremely important for her as well. In the next section I wanted to talk about historical materialism because basically I do believe that Marxism today is not about political economy, but about neuroscience, which is a radical thing to say, but that's what I believe. So many pundits have expressed that the fall of the USSR or the fall of Berlin Wall was the end of the importance of Marxism as a driver of political economy and that we entered what Marc Fischer called Capitalist Realism. I believe that Marxism is more important than ever as a philosophical base with which to understand the coming neural economy. You know it's just a matter of time that the whole economy will be brain-based and neural based. We are moving away from the information and knowledge economy into one which is brain-based, brain computer interfaces. The knowledge and information economy went away they will be subsumed as today secondary and primary economies are. By 2022, investment in AI we'll generate \$1.2 trillion. AI, is based on the structure of the nervous system, whether you're talking about the retina or the more complex things cortical arrangements and pattern recognition is based on theories such as Gerald Edelman's theory of Neuronal Group Selection. By 2024 investment in Brain-computer Interfaces will read 2.4 trillion. We have things like optogenetics, cortical implants and neural dust/ smart dust systems and neural lace. Elon Musk, he has established a new company called Neuralink because he wants to link the brain waves exercised by brain computer interfaces, to the internet or virtual reality. Many technologies are already here but neural subsumption and authoritarian neural capitalism is really about 20-25 years away. I hope that it comes into being much further in the future because quite frankly it scares me to death. I do believe Mark Fisher when he critiques right accelerationism and instead calls for left accelerationism in which these new inventions will be for the people and not for the profit of a few data and tech barons. I don't think people are careful enough and it is part of my practice to make people aware of what is on the horizon.

□ Oh, It's up to me now. Well, it's very interesting to get to speak after you framed a space for reflection, which is less focused on materiality, and more focused on mechanisms. I think there are many kind of amnesia, or memory loss, or selective memory, or ways of building up a memory, or erasing memory. My part of this contribution is focused on a research project, which we began at Brera Art Academy two years ago. It's a collective project and I want to mention the collective dimension of it because it ended up being a door we opened up, and, which led us to sink into a space of thoughts and images produced both in Italy and abroad... over let's say 30 to 40 years: a collective history selected collectively.

We can say that Italian Colonialism and the visuality it produced during and after the fall of Fascism is a story of selective memory, which is collective and at the same time researched afterwards by collective of people who nowadays work on this topic from different perspectives. For us it was interesting to understand why the topic has been approached in recent years. I say “us” because this research and production project was shared with my partners in crime, allies, friends Barbara Casavecchia and Simone Frangi. In 2017-2018 we were colleagues in Brera and we met each other, coming from different backgrounds.

Barbara is a writer. Simone is a scholar who did a show about colonial visions of Africa from Pasolini onwards using the works of recent Italian artists and as I already told you, I'm an art historian. When we met I was just back in Italy after long time abroad, and especially three years spent in Addis Ababa teaching Art History and Theory in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts of Addis Ababa University, where I set up a postgraduate programme. How did I get there? This question is crucial for me and it is crucial to position myself, being a white heterosexual woman from an imperialist country with a power position in a former colony. Whilst studying for a PhD I slowly focused on the production of visual culture, and visual arts in Africa. I got there through links, networks and connections, and began this research in Havana, where I approached global history of Modernism in art from a Third World perspective, a path which lead me to deconstruct the universalism and dogmatism of Western modernism – and Western art history at large.

My interest in teaching art in Ethiopia was about redefining the borders of the discipline itself. For instance discussing with the students conceptual art by showing the work of Hélio Oiticica from Brazil instead of work by Joseph Kosuth, redefining the very meaning of conceptual art and as a global strategy more than a language: socially engaged, political, warm production of art versus the meta-linguistic conceptualism of the West.

When we met in Brera we thought about doing something together in the frame of the Academy and in order to connect the reality of our institution – the biggest public art academy in Italy, with almost six-thousand students, a thousand of them being foreigners – in the city of Milan. To redefine, what is a Western city and its communities, beginning with Milan, which is apparently a very posh, very rich city with fashion, design and branding and which in fact is a city – because of its own capitalist economy – inhabited by communities from all over the country and the world since the very beginning of Modernism. Milan was the city of Italian migrants at first, and then the city of many other migrants coming from all over the world. Imagine a picture of a very white city because you can't see the huge communities of people from Maghreb, Latin America, sub Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia who live together. For us, this was of metaphor also of what is Europe: a space, which narrates itself as white and Christian, the result of Greek classicism, Enlightenment, Industrial Revolution, which is in fact a space of negotiation of communities, overlapping cultures, appropriation, conflicts etc. We were interested in the clash between the whiteness, the Westernness, and what is really inside the West, and this construction of whiteness.

So we decided to go through a process of research without a clear initial idea, knowing we wanted to know more about our relationship with our colonial history. We focused on the persistence of colonial images, and colonial imageries in Italy after the fall of Fascism, after a long period which we defined “amnesic”, where we lost the memory of what happened or what our relationship was with this part of history.

We used critical theory and images (visual culture) and we discovered that there is a specific generation of historians, critical thinkers, sociologists and scholars at large who are studying this topic from an Italian perspective, but from abroad. We discovered a generational matter: scholars working in this field live abroad, they mostly don't work in Italy, or they mostly didn't study in Italy (as I didn't for a long part of my postgraduate education). The same condition belongs to the artists who are nowadays approaching the same topics. Artists and thinkers who are part of the same generation and of the same condition of cultural emigrants who approach this history with a gaze which has been shaped outside Italy.

Previously we had the very important historical and groundbreaking work of Angelo Del Boca and Matteo Dominioni, but then there is the most recent generation of researchers, which we also invited to give talks, such as Gaia Giuliani, Cristina Lombardi-Diop, Angelica Pesarini, Gianmarco Mancosu, to name just a few. We read the work of a Spanish archeologist, Alfredo Gonzalez Ruibal, who used archeology as a tool to reconstruct fascist history in Ethiopia with an archeological methodology. Its history on the caves of Zeret, a small village in the Northern area of Ethiopia, and the use of forbidden chemical weapons by Italians is a story which, besides Dominioni, nobody ever approached in our country. Its a story of partisan resistance to the occupation and the violent reaction of fascist troupes, who killed almost the entire population of the village, which moved underground (together with animals, women, kids, elders), while men were attacking fascist troupes. It worked until the moment Italian troops found this space where these partisans were...

★ Living.

□ Yeah, living, and escaping, let's say hiding. Matteo Dominioni wrote about it, but Alfredo Gonzalez Ruibal went there, and through the pages of this text, which is called *Fascist Colonialism: The Archaeology of Italian Outposts in Western Ethiopia (1936-41)* he basically gave us the know-how. How to get there, how to read what you find there etc. I did the trip with Italian artist, the Rosella Biscotti, who found this text and produced a work about Zeret.

If you go to the cave today you find pieces of skin, bones, of humans, and animals, and objects. Objects from daily life, which are still there, and they tell us this story. It was shocking for me to go through this history because the moment we were there and the moment Rosella was taking pictures, we were asked ourselves how these pictures could be interesting. How can you give the right space to such a strong experience.

That's my point when I say that it is always a collective process to regenerate memory, and it is interesting how these collective processes starts from a very single, individual experience. Reading this text and discussing the work of Rosella was one of our topics. We also saw the work of other artists: Leone Contini, Patrizio Di Massimo, Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi (they were mentioned in text by Scotini which you just read Warren), Invernomuto, Vincenzo Latronico with Armine Linke, Martina Melilli, Muna Mussie. Film directors Fred Kuwornu, Valerio Ciriaci, Alan Maglio and Medhin Paolos. They are just a few of the artists of this latest generation who have approached Italian colonial history. One of them, Alessandra Ferrini was crucial for us: for her generosity in sharing resources and contact but mainly because her work was the starting point for us to use the word "amnesia", she made a very important documentary, *Negotiating Amnesia*. She uses the word amnesia, but by using it, she also negotiates it. Amnesia looks like an involuntary process, a neurological or a physical dysfunction, and not a will.

○ A lack of knowledge too, to see what it shows you, what you...

□ This is true. That it's kind of automatic, the lack of knowledge. But when Alessandra discusses this term, and I think this is also what you said, Gaia: it's maybe more useful to use the term selective memory, which means that forgetting is not totally involuntary.

/ Yes, because otherwise you should raise the issue of responsibility, of accountability for that memory loss. I mean, you're not talking about trauma in this case, or perhaps it could be trauma but more of a social kind...

□ It is a social trauma, amnesia has an individual component, but as a community, as a society, we are not sure that not to remember is a fact with no will. And maybe this is the point that all of you critical theorists, sociologists, artists and historians are trying to make.

/ I think that Michael Haneke explained it very well [*Caché*, France, 2005]. That movie is amazing. We're talking about someone who has no direct implication whatsoever in the colonial past but acted as a person who could benefit from colonial power relations. And that's why at some point in the film, someone revolts against him, but he has no direct implication. And that's...

□ And that's, and that's the experience we all live. So getting back...

Also I'd like to underline the personal experience versus something that is collective. Most of the artists, starting with Alessandra, worked on family memories, pictures, pictures of their life in Ethiopia or the life of their father or grandfather in Ethiopia.

* Yeah.

□ These old boxes with images inside, which everybody has at home, what is hidden in a drawer and, and it's like there was no collective discussion about it. And from our point of view, the collective discussion doesn't only have to do with, with the colonialist history itself, but with how fascism evolved after the end of the regime in Italy from the mid forties onward.

* Well also, I think that the key to what you're talking about is not, is not only the basis of how this fascism in its original form manifested itself, but how right wing populous governments in Italy are using the same but different methodologies or this same fascist imaginary...

□ But that's exactly the point.

* Yeah, that's the point..

□ The point is that their regime and that fascist mentality and politics and approach transformed itself into something else, but persists in our political experience.

* But that transformation is crucial if we are to understand the roots of populism and its reappearance today. I'm arguing that in terms of what we know of the social, political, and technological complex that helped to bring about the fascist mentality back then and what you're describing so beautifully, has transformed itself and mutated into a new kind of propaganda machine. We thought that problems of racism and sexism and homophobia were concerns of the past. That we had somehow healed them. The kind of propaganda that was used by the Italian government at that time to perpetrate a certain kind of position that they were engaged with. Italian fascism of the 1930's and 1940's Mussolini fascism was top down fascism that was generated by the government to generate certain public dispositions and hatred. Today we are faced with new forms of racism, sexism and homophobia that form the populist imaginary stocked by bottom-up news feeds characterised by fake news and post-truth society, Facebook, reddit, instagram, you-tube lead us down rabbit holes and create google bubbles. Right wing governments like the Trump administration understand the power of new technology to revivify their positions in new ways and they have been very successful.

There's a whole set of sociologic and technologic circumstances that are allowing these once dormant ideologies, to once again express themselves. We had enacted laws against racist crimes and speech that worked well in the previous regime of Fordist and post-Fordist times that do not work in our new global information society and cognitive capitalism. What was deemed inappropriate to say in public has now become sayable.

□ Interesting point.

* I'm trying to say something, what do you think about that?...

□ Yes..

* How do you interpret...

□ I think that scholars are studying this issue, and as you said fascist constructions on one side and sixty years after we have Facebook. Those are the two poles. But in between we had the construction of a modern nation, and its modernisation passed also through the way Fascism's was digested and became part of our imagery without being explicit. And this is also what Gaia is researching now. For us it was implicitly recalling that we are a so-called white city hosting huge communities of non-white, economical migrants, in a country where one of its Ministers does politics through Facebook, re-shaping keywords used by fascist regime during the colony. But between those two poles, there are 50 years of history And this is maybe what is interesting? The fact that we didn't touch this because fascism transformed itself from mainstream politics to something underneath and was leading our political choices and also cultural production. That's why in our research project we spoke about the persistence of colonial radicalisation and sexism and also classism in Italian culture, because we accepted some elements without discussion; as we didn't have the frame of mind of reading through and noticing them. Invernomuto, the audiovisual collective from Italy, produced a *MALÙ – Lo Stereotipo della Venere Nera in Italia* [censored] (2015), a video essay which underlines how certain Afro descendant Italian actresses which acted in some movies of the 70's and 80's, had to perform a sexualised wilderness, which implies their black body and all the weight of the colonial gaze: by then, it was obvious and not negotiable to accept such a misogynist, racist imageries in popular culture. Okay, so for us, this process...

* Excuse me, maybe riffing off what you're saying. Maybe that is, that's the connecting fibre between these two poles that we are expressing, like you just said, popular culture, that these things were there, but they weren't, they weren't being pronounced, they were sublime.

□ Or maybe they were just part of us. When Italians arrived in Ethiopia for the first time at the end of 19th century (the attempt to occupy Addis Ababa and the Ethiopian Empire dates back to then, but Italian army occupied Ethiopian territory between the 30s and 40s, let's say). Ethiopian Emperors forbid photography. We know now that photography was also a tool of the occupying armies of European empires, Ethiopia and in the whole Africa: this is why African photography is a topic for African scholars and African visual producers nowadays, having a camera and taking picture of themselves meant the deconstruction of the white colonial vision of Africa. Right. When Italians got to Ethiopia, the Emperor forbid the use of photography because it was a colonial gaze over Ethiopians. And this colonial gaze was always via a sexualised, racist vision of Ethiopian women. Italians used to take pictures of naked women and here Gaia, I think you know.

/ Yeah.

□ Not knowing or mostly completely avoiding the fact that Ethiopian's are Orthodox and showing the naked body of a woman is very Unorthodox in Orthodox culture, it's forbidden. So it was an act of violence and we did it during the Fascist occupation of Ethiopia and we keep doing it now in post-fascist popular visual culture. So for our research it was interesting to ask: what changed in 2018, if something what was different? Did we really change or not? And maybe the point is that we didn't change at all.

/ I have so much to say about this.

□ Go ahead.

/ It's about the issue of propaganda, and about what I will call fetishism. So, is that propaganda? Yes, but it's also true that during Fascism, at the time of colonial invasion, the symbolic elements of propaganda were so randomly scattered and sometimes even conflicting. What comes to mind is Mussolini in Piazza Venezia, saying "Hey, we have an Empire," but it never was that linear. Going back to what you were saying, what is left, or better revitalised, today of Fascism is not its historical specificity (with its own State apparatus, laws, political culture and societal organisation) but its fetishised lexicon interpreted as echoing a sort of lost grandeur.

□ Mm-hmm (affirmative).

/ That's my opinion, of course. I really believe that what is going on now is appropriation of some fascist lexicon, and more than the lexicon itself, it's the tone, the way a discourse is built, that is very effective.

So what Salvini is doing when he says "Italians first," which is a fascist statement, is not really about putting Italians first. It's about the way that discourse is built, the tones he uses or the kind of alliances he builds through using that particular lexicon. Do you understand what I mean?

□ Mm-hmm (affirmative).

/ It overflows from the very narrow space of the Lega Nord to the neo-fascist extreme-right movements and parties, and he gets a lot of votes. I think that we need to understand the difference between strategy and an ongoing transformation of Fascism. I don't think there is an ongoing transformation of Fascism. I think that Fascism will not come back. What we have here is another kind of totalitarian idea of society, which, well we can keep talking about this; it's a very open field. Then there is the issue of women's participation to this neo-fascist rhetoric, and how there is some sort of fetish for colonialism going on, and the reasons for nostalgia at a time of crisis. There is so much nostalgia about the past, actually.

* Mm.

□ Yeah.

/ And I really believe that at a time of crisis, there is a thirst for a shared national identity. In this context, Fascism is somehow recalled as a good example of national pride. Lots of artists and intellectuals are exploring the revitalisation of Fascist lexicon in a brilliant way, but when we ask ourselves why this lexicon is so powerful today, we need to understand if it is only because of fear of the so-called postcolonial Other. In my opinion, it's related to a much broader crisis.

The symbolic pool we are swimming in is huge, and Salvini picks here and there a number of different symbolic clues in order to re-shape the scenario and give it some kind of frame. I don't know, reassurance for instance: reassurance against what is unruly and threatening Italians' imagined national community and identity as white. I would be very interested in bridging our discussion. The last book I wrote in Italian [*Zombi, alieni e mutanti. Le paure dall'11 settembre ad oggi*, 2016] was precisely about the unruly movement of things, about trying to connect, for instance, human enhancement technology and fear of human contamination. On the one end, we allow technologies to accelerate our life. On the other hand, we are absolutely obsessed with cancer. There are cells that degenerate at some point, and produce different effects. But when those effects are unruly and somehow unwanted, we start picturing a number of apocalyptic scenarios. I see these apocalyptic scenarios of loss of bodily identity as somehow connected to fears of losing national identity and white privilege or, in a word, to "white anxiety."

To exemplify this connection, we can draw a parallel between the picture of refugees climbing over the Melilla fence (Reuters: José Palazón, 22 October 2014) that I'm showing here, and a scene from the movie *World War Z* that I've analysed in my last book. The movie is the first zombie blockbuster, starring Brad Pitt and directed by Marc Forster, and it's based on a book that I absolutely love. There is this scene in it, where zombies pile up on the wall surrounding Jerusalem and try to enter the safe space of the privileged. They also start eating people, which brings to mind those pictures and images we are all too familiar with, about the most horrific diseases attacking the human body, from Ebola to whatever unknown virus. So that's how mobility overflows boundaries, which are of course bio-political in nature and have to do with governmentality and border control. The stress involved in trespassing those spaces creates chaos, and what is very interesting about the fears of our times is that they have to do with mobility and rapidity, and with something that is out of control and that penetrates the (white and Western) body of the nation. More importantly, it's about who has the right to cross a border and who doesn't, according to global hierarchies of race, gender and class. I see that in the fears of our times and in the fears related to a resurgent past. I read migration across the Mediterranean as a sort of resurgent past, that is, the return of a history of violence that occurred in colonial modernity. Similarly, I see the return of the zombies as the return of a violent past, as many filmmakers attest.

You can see it the return of violence and the unknown, although it's no longer unknown in the pictures showing boats filled with black people, or Syrian men in Lesbos and Turkey, portrayed as barbarians and often compared to cancer.

That's what this is about. And it's fascinating when you shift from bodily boundaries to urban borders, and to the relation between past, present and future, and realise that there is a connection between all our discourses. Sorry that was long.

○ Well that's quite interesting. There is one more thing I've noticed, mostly in Italy, among men, concerning the mass fear we have been talking about as well as the need to build boundaries and the fear of the unknown. I'm pretty struck by the fact that many intellectuals in Italy – including leftist people – have an ambiguous attitude toward both post-colonial theory and misogyny – especially after “me too”... there is a sort of irritation towards these topics. You are right when you say that the generation of researchers who deal with post-colonial studies are people who either studied abroad or left Italy after completing their degrees.

Because I think that unfortunately in Italy there is still a kind of delay of course it depends on the environment. I do think that this is actually something very important because there is a kind of double amnesia in this sense... there is a form of resistance to change which is really hard to fight at least in my experience. I don't know whether it happened to you that, even people you know well, again mostly men, unexpectedly they show a kind of irritation against “me too” or new feminist movements. And I don't know whether it's deep rooted cultural problem or if they “simply” feel threatened...

□ Can I just add something to what you just said? The fact that ISIAO, the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, which was a Fascist construction, it was the archive basically of Italians abroad, closed due to lack of funds a few years ago and now moved to the newly reopened Museo Pigorini, the ethnographic museum of Rome which holds vast collections of everything which Italians did abroad, not only during the fascist regime, but even during the Combonian missions in Angola and Congo for instance. Due to lack of funds it is no longer accessible. So in fact, there are no public archives for a researcher to study. And when I was in Ethiopia, somebody from the minister of culture explained that when Italians left, they moved to Italy all the archive of images, laws or numbers they produced during the occupation. So almost nothing is left in Ethiopia. What is left, is in Italy, but it's not accessible.

/ Yes.

In that sense, the issue of memory is an institutional problem or responsibility. I have been working a lot on films even Italian B-movies in which colonial attitudes experienced a resurgence in the 60s, 70s, and 80s, and Italian-style comedies to understand how bodies are mobilised within an idea of the nation or community, and what relationship there is with colonial memory. It's interesting to see how that memory was re-articulated through mass cultural products that were very accessible and not aimed at intellectuals but rather designed for the general public. The image of the Italian white woman, for instance, was constructed through contrapuntal dynamics.

It was often contrasted with the image of a black woman portrayed as less intelligent, an object of sexual desire. All the negative traits that are attached today to that figure can be traced back to colonial times. But of course, when you have different models of femininity, you try to understand how they are forged or where they come from. And that's why Lucrezia is now trying to go back to that kind of discussion. Because as I said at the beginning, it helps us to understand where we are or what kind of symbolic material we are dealing with. In this context, I would like to link our discussion to Warren's presentation: I know that the extra-cranial brain is not a collective brain; it has to do with logical functioning. But my question is, "Can we use it as a metaphor?" Let's talk about that kind of interactivity I was referring to earlier, about something that is not just related to individuals but also to that which surrounds their bodies. It could help us understand why and how we are not isolated spatially and historically.

* Um.

/ I'd like to use it as a metaphor, because it helps a lot in terms of a critique of Anthropocentrism and Euro-centrism, that is, a critique of the idea of (white and Western) individuals as isolated beings with no relation to what surrounds them (including the environment) and no historical responsibility for what happened in the past, what we are experiencing in the present and our fears for the future.

* I don't know if anybody's hearing me cause I don't even know if the mike is on? Is it working still? Okay. It's just it feels so uncomfortable now after so many hours, I don't even know what's going on. Anyway... Yeah, I think it's very important to think about this idea of extra-cranial brains, not just an extra-cranial brain. So it's something else. And that's how it's related to Foucault in the bio-power, and I have used the term of neuro-power, which is not about populations of bodies but populations of brains, and how contemporary cultures are very aware that... it's not that the body doesn't exist anymore. Of course the body is still extremely important, especially when you're taking the situatedness of the body.

It's just that in terms of where we're evolving to technologically and socially. Technologies are affecting every aspect of our community whether it's the way that we are communicating or making. I mean this is obvious, and I'm sorry, even saying in a sense stupid, but it's affecting the way that we're socially communicating. It's about how we have friends. It's even active politically, we have fake news sites, we have fake news sites that are inciting all of these kind of racist imaginaries.

I mean there are a lot of the websites that were, during the Clinton and Trump election... There were hundreds of websites that were false. They were just there... whether they were created by Russians or whether created by someone else, they were there, and they were very powerful because at that time I think that people weren't really aware of their power. They didn't even know that they were fake websites, and they didn't understand how they could motivate people emotionally.

I mean these social networking sites are basically affect sites. Emoji's are used to register emotional data by inciting clicks. So there's a kind of a middle stage of cognitive capitalism situated between the early and late stage. It is emerging out of postmodernism. It is the commoditisation of affect and emotionality and creation of the experience economy.

We commoditise emotions and women's work. It's a whole other instance about affect, and the dynamic between Michael Hart and her discussion about his ideas of affective labor in *Empire*. It was very much attuned to that. He felt that affective labor was an important part of immaterial labor and is understood as a kind of reproductive labor producing collective subjectivities. He meant reproductive in a kind of Benjaminian sense. For Federici immaterial labor is a just a small part of reproductive labor. She sees reproductive labor as a means for the subjugation of women.

I think that the video I have made and which is currently on view here in Venice is relevant to this discussion. It's called Pizzagate: From Rumor to Delusion. The central idea of the video is the way rumourRumour operates and creates a national delusion. Rumour is a form of immaterial labor. Its performative and operates today with the help of affectively charged social media. On chat rooms with the help of google bubbles and google effects. It is the sound track for another piece exhibited there called The Pizzagate Neon, which is this huge hanging neon sculpture in the form of a network. As you circle the sculpture, different stories of the conspiracy theory emerge and come to life. So you have this big network. And the thing about networks is that they're not stable. They're intensive, and their intensities are changing. So when enter an internet site, sometimes many people are engaged on the internet site and at other times very few. The distributions of the Internet are constantly evolving.

I just returned from Korea and was the Democratic Primary debates and at the end of the debate there was a one minute session where each candidate could say what they felt was the most important issue that needed to be dealt with. And one said obviously the environment probably is the most important. Only two people mentioned it.

Only two mentioned what?

* The environment.

Ah only two?

* That the environment... The economy was another, the usual. Not one mentioned dysfunctional technology. Not one mentioned new kinds of automated soldiers that really should concern us.

There's an amazing book called surveillance capitalism. Has anybody looked at that book or reading that book? No. Anyway, it's something to know about... Whatever. But... Should we take a break for a minute?

/ I don't know if we can-

* Already, we are in almost two and a half hours!

/ Yes, it's almost two and a half hours.

* Yeah!

○ Yeah!

/ Yes, because it's a stimulating discussion. For instance, I watch many post-apocalyptic movies and TV series, because I feel that sometimes I've provided a description of fears that is too linear while, on the contrary, it is not linear at all, in the sense that I need to expand my knowledge to better understand how those fears constantly combine and recombine. And there are great books about drones and the relationship between water control, human enhancement technologies, and the military, and topics that are not often discussed in Europe. I don't know about the United States as if they weren't important, but we know that it's about trying to reproduce that amnesia.

* Yes, selective attention. There's so much money to be made in these industries that they do not want people to know the real truth. I mean, to me the most important, probably one of the most important issues is driverless cars. How that's going to change people's lives who have got very good jobs. We have truck drivers. They make money. I mean, they have families, they have kids, they have wives, they have houses, they have mortgages, and all of a sudden we're going to have driverless cars. That also means driverless buses. That means driverless trucks. That means driverless taxi cab drivers. And it's a lot of people. I mean, it's not only that, it's all of these different industries that no one's thinking will be affected like law and medicine. The Democrats are supposed to be the labor party, but they're not talking about it, they have no idea. Either, they just not aware or don't have an idea or they consider it not a labor problem. I don't know. I don't get it, but it's crazy.

I think that's a kind of selective amnesia.

/ Oh yes. Or, for instance, the fact that save for a couple of massacres, we've been talking about Europe and the West, as if the rest of the world didn't exist.

* Right. That's another thing.

/ That's a huge amnesia, since all the parameters that we have been sketching out are pretty much Western-based. And it's something that actually struck me recently, because most of my students are not from the so-called West. Some of them live in a state of tension between forms of production and control that are applied worldwide and other models that are more context-specific.

We will have to stop leaving these inconsistencies behind lest we keep being affected by a sort of colonial amnesia when we talk about processes, because it's true that we have something going on here that is possibly going to overflow and be applicable to other contexts.

It's also true that we live at a strange time in history, in which things can change as we speak, since the biopolitical technology implemented in the West may have changed already when applied to specific contexts and needs.

So there are many factors to consider. What I'm trying to say is that I think it would be interesting to expand on this notion of amnesia in a broader way.

* It came to a nice end.

/ Yeah, I guess so.

* I mean, we can also take the... Well, there's either one thing as far as I can see, either we both present, all of us do another 10 more minute presentation of another subject that we'd do it around again, or I think ... What do you think?

□ Well, the good point is that we opened up many issues but I feel that if I keep on talking about myself and what I've done, it is kind of boring because life is much more interesting than us or me and myself.

* Yeah. That's right.

/ It's the same. Since that-

* I said I wrote off two things, it doesn't make sense now to bring it up. It just doesn't.

○ That seem to... Yeah.

* You know, if was related to the first part, maybe I should have read both simultaneously or whatever, but we've gone beyond it.

/ Yes. Me too, in the sense that I would add things that might appear to go in a direction that doesn't take into account the discussion we've just had.

○ Yeah.

□ It's okay.

* I think it has been a great discussion, and... but also not drag it out too much. You know what I mean?

○ Yeah.

/ Thank you. Thank you.

And somehow we also merged... which is wonderful.

* Well, I'd like to keep in contact with you all.

Yes.

Yeah.

* And see papers from you, maybe, I could get some of your, if you have anything in English like] and-

Yep.

Yeah.

We should definitely stay in touch!

Oh yeah.

* Let me ask you a question though. If I say to you, image science, and I say to you that I'm interested right now in re-negotiating image theory from the 80s and 90s. I want to redefine what image science is. What does that mean to you? I mean, in other words, I'll give you some examples of maybe what you were talking about. You could take it further, okay?

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

* So an example would be the fact that in cryptocurrencies and Bitcoin, images would now be identified, and that there is the chance that if you make an image, whatever it is on the internet, you can find it. And if anybody uses it, you could commodify it. Another example of this would be the image on the screen is very different. Even a still image on a screen, it's a very different thing than an image that exists, like a photocopy, right?

And that there's two aspects of it that make you very, very difficult. First, is that in the attention economy, certain parts of the image have more value than other parts. So if an image now is a complex image of pixels or little boxes... depending on how you want to look at it, it doesn't matter... and that each one of those little pixels now it can be commodified, and then all of a sudden you can start charging by the pixel. And also the fact that it is that the image is no longer stationary. It's going through modifications. It's a typology.

What do you mean that you can charge by pixel?

* In the future you will charge by pixels. In other words, if your image, if you have different sections of the image that'll have more value than other parts of the image. So these are the kinds of things I'm talking about.

Any other ideas about image science? Other interpretations of what image science would mean? Because I think this is some of the things you were talking about. I'm the one asking because you guys are experts in the field and I'm not, which is, how does image science and the analysis... You're doing kind of analysis of images, it seems to me based on different kinds of radicalisation. For instance, the image as a place where different kinds of racial imaginaries play themselves out. So there's an image science in the analysis of that, right? And is that different than like you would say the same thing that happened in the 70s and 80s, or is it similar to those kinds of topics or haven't really changed much? Yeah.

/ What I'm saying is that I'm also researching how data and images of our body measurements are produced and stored and then sold. It's fascinating and scary at the same time, since these data can travel very fast and have to do with something that is very private and personal, like a picture of your skull, or an X-Ray scan.

* Doctors are doing it all the time.

□ Exactly.

/ It's different with doctors, their knowledge and professional code of conduct allow them to keep themselves at a distance. But when data become a commodity, stored data can be easily shared and sold everywhere.

* We can store everything. Before they used to try to contain information and tried to reduce it, but now the concept is to keep all the data of everything.

/ Then again, is it really about borders and boundaries and physical, geographical, or political systems of containment, or is it just about data extraction? I really believe it's the latter.

* For instance two things that happened on Google, not Google, Facebook recently, there was this one special path that you could get where you could find your image in a painting. Did you hear about all of this?

In every museum they were taking pictures. That's really interesting because they were taking photographs of portraits in museums, and then the game was for you to find a picture that looked like yourself and then you would upload it, and then you could compare it and you could put it on this site, right? But first of all, there's two interesting things about this one. The first is that they were using the most high-tech cameras. If you want to do an app on an iPhone, you don't need 1000 megabyte images, right?

/ Nope.

* But now they own those images. You're going to have these 1000 megabyte images, okay? That's the first thing.

Second of all, they were feeding me algorithms for facial recognition algorithms. That's what they're doing. They're enticing people to become part of their-

/ Profiling... Profiling. Basically. "Hey, have fun!"

* I'm thinking about right now, because in my next school, the Saas-Fee... I run this school called the Saas-Fee Summer Institute of Art. And please look at it, because I think it's a really fantastic project that I'm doing, I'm very proud of it. And I kind of found myself in a way because even though... I mean, it's been a great experience. So if you put Saas-Fee like Saas-Fee. It started in the European Graduate school, but then it developed it's own identity... But it started in Saas-Fee. So we use the word... we use Saas-Fee because it started there as part of the European... Anyway, we're in Berlin now and New York.

But the next year I want to do a whole school based on the kind of new ideas about picture theory in relationship to the digital age. WT Mitchell was a little of... I mean, those people maybe use them as a foundation because they're very important, obviously. But I'm kind of looking for new ideas.

/ Yes, I am. Very much so. And I'm thinking about going back to amnesia. The fact that someone may allow a high-tech picture of their face to be taken, and hence contribute to their own profiling, has to do with amnesia, what it means to be profiled, and-

* Right. Or a lack of it, we didn't all have the German experience.

/ But it's not just the Germans... Half the US population experienced this, and the Romani people in many Eastern European countries. And migrants, with their faces and fingerprints. We are not talking about something new or distant.

* Oh yeah, the fingerprints are incredible.

/ In that sense, it's not about the Nazi past. It's about another very close set of practices that may not be affecting us but are affecting the people we live with. In that sense, our position is very important, because we may not see or feel it, or it may not affect our lives because of the privileges we enjoy. But these practices are used. So you have a white person who's happy to share his own image, while a migrant...

* One of the things they found in the analysis of these Facebook is that they did a very, very bad job with African Americans and with people of colour in terms of their facial recognition. The algorithm was very, very bad.

/ Yeah, there's a great book on that.

* They're already trying to get to... It's just so crazy I can't even get into it. Anyway,

/ There is a great book on that, Joseph Pugliese's *Biometrics: Bodies, Technologies, Biopolitics* (Routledge, 2010). It's an analysis of the parameters behind facial recognition. There is a whole collection on which profiling is based, but what are the standards? What's non-standard in this particular year is all that is related to non-normative bodies.

Again, we can connect that with a lack of awareness about what is going on that is different from past models. It's a kind of selective memory of what is going on in the present.

□ Put like that it is interesting, because image science, appears to me to be similar to media studies from the 90s. But I think that you both agreed that it is interesting to understand because it tells us about our society. And so in a way, if you consider image science like that, it is more like anthropology of images or visual culture, as a tool which tell us how we use pictures, how we produce them, and to what end.

* Yeah, I think you're right, photographic anthropology, or photo, whatever, there was that whole movement.

○ Well, I mean, when you analyse how images would produce...

* Forensics. That's a very big part of it.

/ Okay. Thank you very much.