

# The Postcolonial Museum

## The Arts of Memory and the Pressures of History

Edited by Iain Chambers, Alessandra De Angelis, Celeste Ianniciello, Mariangela Orabona and Michaela Quadraro, Università degli Studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale', Italy

This book examines how we can conceive of a 'postcolonial museum' in the contemporary epoch of mass migrations, the internet and digital technologies. The authors consider the museum space, practices and institutions in the light of repressed histories, sounds, voices, images, memories, bodies, expression and cultures. Focusing on the transformation of museums as cultural spaces, rather than physical places, is to propose a living archive formed through creation, participation, production and innovation. The aim is to propose a critical assessment of the museum in the light of those transcultural and global migratory movements that challenge the historical and traditional frames of Occidental thought. This involves a search for new strategies and critical approaches in the fields of museum and heritage studies which will renew and extend understandings of European citizenship and result in an inevitable re-evaluation of the concept of 'modernity' in a so-called globalised and multicultural world.

*Long overdue, here is a volume that updates and reconfigures the intersection of postcolonial critique with multiple interpretations of the museum and social praxis in globalisation. The Postcolonial Museum charts gaps, achievements and prospects in 20 chapters that re-interpret the connection of past and current imperialisms. Introducing a wealth of new voices, this is essential reading for anyone interested in curatorial practice and theory, modern and contemporary art, ethnography, museology and the interventionist potential of research in the humanities overall.*

Angela Dimitrakaki, University of Edinburgh, UK

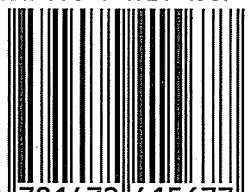
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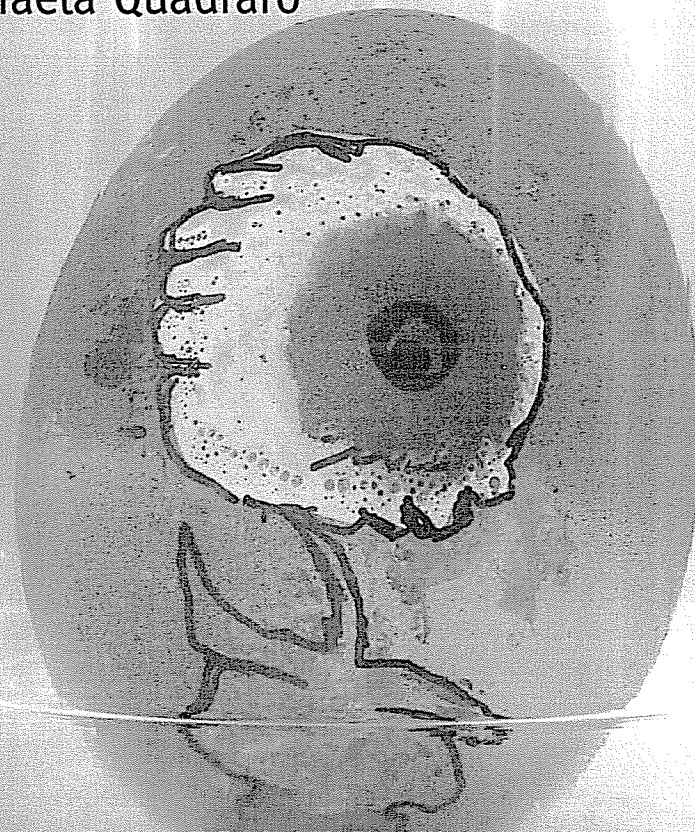
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MeLa – *European Museums in an age of migrations* is a four year long Research Project (March 2011–February 2015) funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme within the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Sector (SSH-2010-5.2.2, Grant Agreement n° 266757). MeLa is an interdisciplinary programme aimed at analysing the role of museums in the contemporary multi-cultural context, characterized by an augmented migration of people and ideas, and at identifying innovative practices and strategies in order to foster their evolution.

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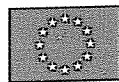
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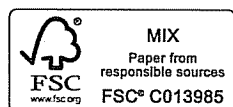
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# Introduction: Disruptive Encounters – Museums, Arts and Postcoloniality

Alessandra De Angelis, Celeste Ianniciello, Mariangela Orabona  
and Michaela Quadraro

Postcolonial art is intimately linked to globalisation – that is, to a critical reflection on the planetary conditions of artistic production, circulation and reception. This implies focusing on the interweaving of the geographical, cultural, historical and economic contexts in which art takes place. The relationship between globalisation and art, as Okwi Enwezor observes, conceived and institutionalised by the European history of modern art in terms of separation or simply negation, here acquires fundamental importance (Enwezor 2003). It represents both the premise through which the relationship between art and the postcolonial can be conceptualised, and the matrix that helps to convey the cultural and political value of this relationship, together with its significance as a *disruptive encounter*. Far from being lost in the sterile and abstract, yet provincial, mirror of self-referentiality masked as universalism – with the implicit claim of the autonomy and independence of art from other cultural forms and activities – postcolonial art is deeply and consciously embedded in historicity, globalisation and social discourse. On one hand, it reminds us of how power is organic to the constitution of the diverse relations and asymmetries that shape our postcolonial world, and hence of how ‘bringing contemporary art into the geopolitical framework that defines global relations offers a perspicacious view of the postcolonial constellation’ (Enwezor 2003, 58). On the other hand, postcolonial art also shows how aesthetics today presents itself as an incisive critical instance. Postcolonial art proposes new paradigms of both signification and subjectivation, offering alternative interpretative tools that promote a reconfiguration of a planetary reality.

Analysing the link between modernity and this global reality, we can say that globalisation can be understood as the planetary ‘expansion of trade and its grip on the totality of natural resources, of human production, in a word of living in its entirety’ (Mbembe 2003). It was inaugurated by the Occident through a violent process of expropriation, appropriation and an exasperated defence of property, spread globally through capitalism and its imperialist extension. This is a political economy that is deeply rooted in, and sustained by, the humanist, rationalist, colonialist and nationalist culture of the West. The central phenomenon of modernity, born in a historical exercise of power, was fed by the religion of ‘progress’ and the racist ideology of ‘white supremacy’ imposing itself for centuries as a universal ontological category through the institutions of laws,

Chapter 6  
The Artist as Interlocutor and the  
Labour of Memory

Mihaela Brebenel, Christopher Collier and Joanna Figiel

In conceiving this chapter, we come from a particular position, not only as researchers, but as cultural practitioners and activists involved in a number of collectives struggling in relation to precarity, education and communicative and cognitive forms of labour. We originally considered discussing a number of specific examples from our collective practices. However, the ethics codes of these various groups specifically guard against the representation, or interlocution, of collective activities by individual members in such contexts, in an attempt to prevent an enclosure and valorisation of collective endeavour for individual gain. We therefore set out to tentatively explore this seeming paradox – how the conveyance of our testimony and memories as variously recombinant cultural, educational and migrant workers might contradict the conditions of collectivity to which we seek to give voice. It was important to us that these considerations should themselves be conducted collectively, although we represent only ourselves.

**Articulating Collective Memories**

We develop our considerations from the founding assumption that the artistic articulation of collective memory necessarily entails the construction of subjectivities on a variety of scales. That is to say, for memory to be understood as collective, for its expressions or annunciations to be comprehensible as such, it to some degree necessitates a shared space of subjectivity – something this memory also produces in the act of its articulation. By considering the artist as an interlocutor of collective memory, we therefore understand this interlocution to mean both the articulation and production of collective subjectivity, and through this, potentially also political struggle.

The practical deconstruction of traditional conceptions of sovereignty by social movements across the globe suggests that subjection/subjectivation itself presents a key point of political purchase in negotiating a radical politics of cultural resistance. As Edward Said has noted: ‘stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world; they also become the method colonised people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history’ (Said 1994, xiii).

Yet the decline in notions of the self-contained, self-transparent liberal subject in so-called 'advanced' capitalist economies parallels the inauguration of a mode of production founded in a necessarily *continual* process of subjectivation – understood by Foucault through the notion of 'human capital' and articulated in much post-workerist theory.<sup>1</sup> Certainly in the post-Fordist context in which we speak, the artistic interlocution of collective memory involving a certain storytelling also mirrors one of the primary orientations of production – precisely in this production of subjectivities.

Although all forms of production doubtless produce configurations of subjectivity, we refer to what has been characterised as the ongoing, fluid nature of this production within post-Fordism, occurring through what Franco 'Bifo' Berardi defines as the precarious and continually recombinant fragmentations, or fractalisations of a worker's life (Berardi 2012, 91). In this production of subjectivities via the assemblage of fragments, is this interlocution – between part and whole, individual and collective – functioning as a form of recombination? Can it thus be considered a subsumption and valorisation of memory?

To address this question, we consider the conception of the artist suggested in the work of György Lukács via our definition of interlocutor, comparing it to an understanding of interlocutor to be gleaned within a different context, that of *testimonio* literature. We aim to explore how this conception might begin to be transposed onto a mode of production founded in continuing subject construction.

We go on to consider how Guy Debord's development of Lukács's relation of subjective and objective relates to an understanding of collective memory. We further develop this through the technological ontology of Bernard Stiegler, speculatively exploring how Stiegler's thoughts on mnemotechnics might parallel Karl Marx's notion of the 'general intellect' and how the post-workerist rethinking of this concept brings labour back into focus for us, allowing potentially a deeper understanding of the artist's place as interlocutor, along with her function within contemporary capitalism's processes of valorisation.

### The Authors of History

Addressing the idea of artist as interlocutor demands an attention to relations between an articulation of subjectivity and the subjectivation produced. In light of our central question around valorisation, we begin from a tradition in Marxist aesthetics, based on Lukács's defence of novelistic 'realism', suggesting that artists function as the articulators of collective subjectivity. Often taken polemically, as a position against which post-modernist proponents of multiplicity might set their face, Lukács is held to interpret the realist novelist

<sup>1</sup> We are referring here mainly, but not only, to authors such as; Franco 'Bifo' Berardi, Paolo Virno, Maurizio Lazzarato and Antonio Negri.

as articulating the objective conditions of a people, class or historical moment, 'bring[ing] to life those objective poetic principles which really underlie the poetry of popular life and history' (Lukács 1983, 56). In this position, the artist transparently reflects the social conditions of their emergence. Successful art has a social function, if not agency: to transcend fragmentation, reflecting the 'self-consciousness' of a given historical moment, and to endure as collective memory (Maslow 1967, 547).

Turning to a practice that might appear in some ways congruent with Lukács's principles, yet with a varying approach to subject construction, we jump forward to a form of praxis emergent from Latin America in the 1960s: the genre of *testimonio* writing. Containing elements of autobiography, confession, memoir and oral history, *testimonio* usually entails a first-person protagonist, recalling life-historical events in a way that often appears in conflict with the representational hegemony of a European and North American bourgeois literature that persists as a legacy of colonialism, and continues under the conditions of capitalist globalisation (Beverly 1989, 11–28).

Fredric Jameson sees *testimonio* in contrast to an overt subjectivism, and individualising subjectivation, found in the European novel, downplaying the individual subject in favour of their speaking for a wider collective (Jameson 1993). This collective, denied the opportunity to speak by the hegemony of 'Western' articulations, is given voice by producers of *testimonio*, whose own subjectivities, in our terms, become interlocutors for collective experience, enacting a *collective* subjectivation. When read alongside Jameson's wider commentary on what he calls 'third-world literature', especially in relation to what he somewhat sweepingly identifies as the erasure in such works of a 'radical split between public and private ... poetic and political' (Jameson 1986, 69), his observations are somewhat complicated. He makes the over-general claim that 'the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society' (Jameson 1986, 69).

Although he certainly over-generalises and flattens what he labels 'third-world culture', we might perhaps approach such apparently crude observations in light of his wider corpus relating to strategies of abstraction and totality in understanding postmodern, global capitalism. However, his identification of *testimonio* as offering an example of the 'artistic' interlocution of memory, one with specific dimensions of collective subjectivation, certainly appears relevant to our concerns here.

In terms of a subjective interlocutor articulating the collective memory of a situation, we might be tempted to see *testimonio* as somewhat congruent with the articulation of Lukács's 'objective poetic principles'.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, we could be lured

<sup>2</sup> The term 'interlocutor' is somewhat complicated with relation to *testimonio*, given that it is usually used differently in this context. For example, celebrated *testimonio* producer Rigoberta Menchú had Elizabeth Burgos, a Venezuelan anthropologist, act as interlocutor for her testimony. However, we use the word in line with our already established criteria, therefore in this instance we would identify Menchú as the interlocutor for her community.

into seeing a unity of subjective and objective here that could loosely be equated with a notion akin to class consciousness. However, to do so would be to gloss over the important dilemma of dialectical criticism evident in Lukács, central to the interlocutory relation between the aesthetic and social conditions, attached, as Jameson observes, to a crisis of historicity and its place within 'two mutually exclusive registers: the absolute ... and the relative' (Jameson 2007, 198).

The particularity of *testimonio*'s narrative appears to avoid the drive for absolute truth, suggesting an openness in its practical subject construction. Not contained in the monolithic figure of the proletariat, its collectivities pertain to multiple recomposition and interpenetrating of social, religious, territorial and kinship groupings. *Testimonio* then offers an individual experience of collective struggle embodied in the figure of the testifier as a figure of solidarity. It is the work of a more active collective subject construction, rather than attempting to transparently represent objective conditions subjectively and vice versa. George Yúdice suggests such a perspective rejects the postmodern injunction on the possibility of representing alterity, the speakability of 'otherness' in hegemonic discourse, simultaneously presenting a mode of representation divorced from totalising truth claims and what, in reference to Lukács, he labels the 'aesthetic reflective mimesis of nineteenth-century European fiction' (Yúdice 1991, 27). Yet in remaining in the register of the relative and particular, could this model ever represent a politically effective collective subjectivation?

In Jameson's reading, Lukács's totalising 'realism' is a hermeneutic necessity, standing in dialectical relation to the 'free-play' of signifiers offered in later modernist and post-modernist literature. For Jameson: 'when modernism and its accompanying techniques of 'estrangement' have become the dominant style whereby the consumer is reconciled with capitalism, the habit of fragmentation itself needs to be 'estranged' and corrected by a more totalizing way of viewing phenomena' (Jameson 2007, 211).

Recognising that Lukács was quite wrong in the 1930s, Jameson holds that a Lukács-informed 'realism' holds promise for a perspective on postmodern or 'cultural' capitalism. Arguably for him, its totality can operate as a negative concept, revealing the fragmentation of collective experience by capitalism. Therefore it might be positioned to 'resist the power of reification in consumer society and to reinvent the category of totality' (Jameson 2007, 211).

How then might we understand the artist-interlocutor's role in articulating collective memory – and thus constructing collective subjectivity – in such a way that it combats the fragmenting relativity and alienating operations of contemporary capitalism whilst also learning from *testimonio* in avoiding the problematically idealistic totalising arising in the transparent identity of subjective and objective in Lukács's conception? If this is possible, are these efforts necessarily recuperated into the valorising circuits of capital, ultimately working against their intentions?

## Objects and Fragments

To reclaim this function of collective subjectivation against fragmentation, we must contend with the problem of whether the notion of collective memory itself, and its artistic articulation, is in some way fundamentally tied to a problematic, transparent unity of subjective and objective. The artist-interlocutor as derived from Lukács may depend on a subject transparently able to identify with their 'objective' situation. This is approached by Debord, whose thinking serves to illuminate Lukács's most 'crude error'.<sup>3</sup> Debord shows us how Lukács's conception of the artistic interlocution between aesthetic and social, part and whole, is arguably founded on a problematic reading of Hegel and thus the union of subject and object.

For Debord, following Marx, objectification is not identical with the estrangement and alienation of capitalism: the subject must *necessarily* and repeatedly lose itself in the object in order to reform anew, to subjectivate. Lukács, however, in confusing the relation between alienation and objectification, upheld the overcoming of capitalist alienation as identical with an end of objectification. The Hegelian unity of subject and object, universal and particular, became itself a static, universal goal. For Debord's open-ended dialectics, objectification is rather the necessary basis of subjectification:

As Hegel showed, time is the necessary alienation, the terrain where the subject realizes himself by losing himself. In total contrast, the current form of alienation is ... spatial alienation, the society that radically separates the subject from the activity it steals from him is in reality separating him from his own time. (Debord 2009, 110)

Essentially, Debord is distinguishing the qualitative, temporal objectification of useful labour from the quantitative, separated and fragmented (spatial) objectification of abstract labour, constituted by the act of exchange. This is something specific to capitalist production, accelerated by its increasingly 'spectacular' nature, in which '*Separation* is the alpha and omega' (Debord 2009, 30). Where the general equivalent, money, had constituted one level of abstraction, the image is an abstraction that further occludes the qualitative – guaranteeing equivalence, precisely through fragmentation.

Debord's distinction between spatial and temporal objectification illustrates that qualitative objectification is a temporal phenomenon, involving subjectification over time. The spectacle therefore effaces temporality, and with it collective memory, by rendering it into equivalent fragments through the image-commodity form. As art becomes just one more specialism within the fragmentation engendered by the spectacle, this would make the artistic interlocution of collective memory impossible as a form of collective subjectivation. Instead the artist as specialist labourer would in

<sup>3</sup> As he himself would later concede.



this instance only serve to further fragment subjectivation, enclosing and valorising memory, rendering it in separate, imagistic and equivalent forms.

Does this enable us to think through the earlier suggestion that the subjectivation enacted by artistic remembering might serve as an important form of valorisation within a post-Fordist capitalist context? Debord's theory certainly tallies with the observation that museums, as repositories of collective memory, have changed from elitist and diachronic historicism towards a spectacular, synchronic space. Andreas Huyssen ventures that in recent decades, museums (and we might include art galleries) have increasingly shifted their emphasis from high cultural conservation towards mass entertainment and blockbusting shows (Huyssen 1995, 13–36). If we concur with this assessment, it might be explicable as a shift in function from historical consciousness of the ruling classes towards an equally ideological control function, mirroring the apparent flatness and timelessness of the image-commodity back at captive audiences in a spectacular fashion.

Rather than lament this 'culture of amnesia', we can view it as symptomatic of a changing mode of production. The seeming paradox of ever-increasing number of museum visitors and diminishing historical consciousness begins to make sense when seen alongside concomitant developments in capitalist technology and mass culture. Understanding the reorganisation of post-Fordist capitalist society through the increasing subsumption of communicative relations – whether formal (operating as control) or real (accelerated as an engine for the production and reproduction of value in itself) – may be key to understanding the valorisation of memory within contemporary artistic practice. Must we then understand the artistic interlocutor of memory as necessarily fragmenting memory (formerly a collective resource) and enclosing it within capitalist relations?

Perhaps Debord remains unable to conceive fully the co-constitution of, and slippage between, 'subjective' and 'objective', along with the more fundamental fragmented form this takes. Arguably, Debord misunderstands this alleged erasure of collective memory in fragmentation by reversing Lukács's error one stage on. In equating fragmentation with capitalist alienation, rather than with objectification as such, he actually arrives at an undifferentiated understanding of fragmentation, through the abstract and totalising notion of spectacle. A more nuanced interpretation is perhaps to be found in Bernard Stiegler's technological ontology.<sup>4</sup>

### Mnemotechnics

Stiegler argues that temporal experience is founded on originary technicity. Put simply, there would be no possibility of a collective memory, or indeed temporal experience, without this founding co-constitution of the human and the technical.

4 Though we note Stiegler is himself involved in various practical initiatives in rethinking the way museums and artists might serve as interlocutors for collective memory, we limit our considerations here to his theoretical re-understanding of memory.

Extending Edmund Husserl's schema of primary and secondary retention, Stiegler holds that a technical prosthesis, what he terms 'tertiary' memory, whilst it might confront us as externalised in the technical object, is not only the basis of culture, but of the experience of temporality itself (Stiegler 1998, 246). It also therefore opens up the possibility of not only subjectivation, but collective subjectivation through time.

Tertiary memory, in the form of 'mnemotechnics', is transindividual and exceeds the subject, and therefore both a Lukácsian and Debordian fragmentation, in the sense of separation of subjects from each other and the objective conditions of their existence. However, this is based on another more fundamental fragmentation. Memories are exteriorised, objectified, in mnemotechnics through 'grammatisation'. This process involves the discretising of qualitative gestures, through repetitive and abstracted traces, such as writing (or indeed speech) and audio-visual recordings; even the repetitive gestures that make up labour – communicative or manual – are variously grammatised. Therefore, through grammatisation, fragmentation is the very condition of culture, memory and the subject.

Different modes of technology grammatise in different ways, whilst the given form of a technical milieu produces a certain temporality. Stiegler concurs with Bertrand Gille's proposition that Western industrial society has functioned through permanent and acceleratory innovation (Stiegler 1998, 15), something Marx would place within capitalism's inherent logic of space-time compression (Marx 1973, 539). This leads to a disjuncture between technics and culture.

This division might be compared to Theodor W. Adorno's identification of the critical potential of an 'autonomous' art, in that arguably, such art achieves its apparent autonomy, a loss of use-value, by being out of synch with current technical production, reflecting instead anachronistic modes. Conversely, however, the avant-garde also functioned as a condition and contestation of this supposed separation of art and life, and hence from labour as properly constituted.

Against Stiegler's identification of this separation, perhaps we can propose, appropriating Peter Bürger, that when the avant-garde failed to destroy the instrumentalised (capitalist) culture it had attacked, capitalism's own advancing mode of production sought to recuperate its former critical power (Bürger 1984). Art's formal subsumption became real subsumption with its dissolution into mass culture at the end of modernism proper, the avant-garde disappeared and art became understood as 'contemporary' – part of the communication economy. Therefore, realigning with the current mode of production would actually realign art *more strongly* with technics, opening up its potential as what Stiegler (after Derrida) labels *pharmakon* – both poison and remedy.

For Stiegler, technics is *pharmakon* – both a threat to, and the condition of, individuation. Its realignment with what might formerly have been viewed as 'autonomous' art can therefore be seen, not as a simple subsumption of art, but as opening up new possibilities. In becoming integrated with the mnemotechnical apparatus and appearing more plainly as a commodity, art attains a new concreteness, making its labour appear more clearly *as* labour and throwing new light on the peculiar temporality of production itself.

## The General Intellect

This relation between culture and technics is located, for Marx, in the relation between the superstructural and the means of production (what for Stiegler would encompass the mnemotechnical horizon). For Marx, the praxis of life – the production of the world – simultaneously produces the producer; this praxis can be understood as labour, or objectification, and the technical milieu seen as the condition of its possibility. This allows us to place Stiegler within a certain unorthodox anti-humanist reading of Marx, whereby subjectivity is externalised within a techno-historical social milieu, this subjectivity reflecting and creating the form of production. This milieu is something he arguably identifies with the ‘general intellect’ – an objectified store of knowledge, but also previous labour held within the fixed capital constituting the means of production themselves.

Engagements with Marx’s notion of general intellect have proliferated in post-workerist discussions around the informational and communicative character of post-Fordist capitalism. It is argued that contemporary capitalism subsumes social life, enlarging the sphere we might equate with the ‘productive power of society’s intelligence’ (Marx 1973, 156–7) by inaugurating a system of communication technologies in which the generation of value rests in communicative activity both within and outside the traditional workplace.<sup>5</sup> Whilst such theories of immaterial labour are perhaps inadequate to deal with the complexities of global production as a whole, they are certainly useful in representing the particular field of cultural production in the context we are addressing.

Though capital subsumes the non-work sphere of the ‘social factory’, it simultaneously extends possibilities for communication against and beyond capitalism, the mnemotechnical milieu containing the pharmacological potential for alternative possibilities. If the communicative, social nature of the individual founds valorising activity, this social communicative dimension also equips workers with opportunities for autonomously deploying such resources (Negri 1989).

For Marx, fixed capital bound up in the means of production, as a store of past labour, is reawakened through productive activity. The value created by the past labour is therefore realised/preserved and transferred into the product of current labour: ‘by virtue of the particular useful character of that labour ... it raises the means of production from the dead’ (Marx 1990, 308). What is notable in the temporality of capitalist production is that labour extinguishes and realises the use-value of previous labour precisely in the *useful* character of that labour.

Therefore, if we speculatively extend the parallel between fixed capital and Stiegler’s mnemotechnical milieu, we can propose that it is in this way that capital succeeds in valorising memory, the act of ‘remembering’ fulfilling the role of useful living labour in awakening the slumbering value of the mnemotechnical

<sup>5</sup> This formulation is apparent in, for example, the works of Paulo Virno, Maurizio Lazzarato, Antonio Negri and others.

apparatus. The labour of remembering valorises the memory of labour. In addition, given the realignment of art’s mode of production with capitalist technics that occurred with modernism’s subsumption, as suggested above, contemporary art can no longer claim the critical autonomy of an absence of use-value. In becoming useful labour, its function can be understood as valorising in these terms. Furthermore, for Negri, the opposition between living and dead labour can be recast in terms of communication and information (Negri 1989, 119). Thus we can also propose that it is precisely the artist’s status as communicator, as interlocutor, that both valorises, but also potentially exceeds, fixed capital. This allows us in turn to conceive the act of remembering, and particularly its artistic articulation, as living labour, something which begins to point towards a politics of memory.

## A Precarious Class Consciousness?

Understanding artistic remembering as labour enables us to see that not only does this entail the valorisation of collective memory, but that it also, somewhat pharmacologically, offers a locus of political struggle. What would it mean to attempt to withdraw, or reappropriate this labour? If the immaterial or cognitive labour of remembering is what valorises mnemotechnologies, it does so, as Bifo suggests, through the recombination of fragmented, precarious subjectivities. Its inverse is recomposition, orientating the construction of subjectivities through more socialised forms of subjectivation.

Even if, contrary to Negri’s propositions, this socialised, communicative worker cannot really be generalised, it might be held to describe the position of the artist, and also be useful in understanding a growing class of so-called ‘precarious’ workers for whom the artist’s often indistinct choice between an entrepreneurship of the self and auto-valorisation appears paradigmatic. This is not to argue an artistic exceptionalism, but rather to say that social conditions brought about by post-Fordist production now place the artist in the position of interlocutor for a wider social situation.

In speaking and remembering for themselves, artists, as labourers, enact a recomposition, a qualitative subjectification: by giving testament to their own labour, they can perhaps simultaneously articulate a ‘historical consciousness’ for the situation in which their ‘artistic’ form of labour is increasingly forced upon a wider class (Virno 2004). Collective memory might be given testimony, not quite through a Lukácsian realism, but in a way that both accounts, and accepts responsibility, for its role, as labour, in subject construction.

If, as for Yúdice, *testimonio* relates community experience through a given interlocutor – not as a representative as such, but as an embodiment of a collective remembering, involving an act of both individual and collective identity construction and subjectivation (Yúdice 1991, 15–31) – perhaps we might appropriate something similar into our own context. In uniting the individual and collective, the precarious interlocutor can purport, if not to reveal the objective

conditions of a given historical situation, then to recompose precarious subjectivity, and collective subjectivity in a given group, in more socialised orientations.

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