

Performing Resistance in Post-Fordism: A Tactical Juxtaposition of Languages in an Academic Paper/Performance

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Note to the Reader

The following paper is a personal account of a presentation held at a conference organized by LTS, at the University of Nottingham under the theme of “resilience” in June 2018.¹ Next to my authorship, and the usually invisible but excellent work of the peer reviewer, I would like to point out that German Philologist Viktor Klemperer, I *almost* consider a co-author. Viktor Klemperer, who after this note I will only refer to in the footnotes, died in 1960 and I was born in 1987, hence I put the emphasis on *almost*. My intention is to stress his influence on my thinking and writing, particularly through the diary that he composed during the Nazi Regime in Germany, titled *LTI, Lingua Tertii Imperii – Notebook of a*

¹ The title of the journal in which this paper is published is the *Journal of Language, Texts, and Society*.

Philologist, first published in 1947.² Klemperer, who lived in Dresden, was a professor of Literature and was forced to give up his academic title in 1935 due to his Jewish descent. In the diary, he provides a personal account of how during the Third Reich, propaganda was executed through the use of specific language.

Thursday 14th June 2018 – 2 pm

I am about to start my conference presentation and I feel excited and slightly nervous as I am about to present to the entire conference participants. But it is actually not the full potential of attention that makes me nervous, it is rather the performance / presentation that I am about to give. In fact, I am not entirely sure how much of the presented material is going to be ‘authentic’ and how much of it is part of a performance.³ In my application to the CFP I wrote:

2 Klemperer writes at the beginning of *LTI, Lingua Tertii Imperii – Notebook of a Philologist* (2000) in 1947:

The label LTI first appears in my diary as a playful little piece of parody, almost immediately afterwards as a laconic aide-memoire, like a knot in a handkerchief, and then very soon, and for the duration of this terrible years, as an act of self-defence, an SOS sent to myself. A tag with a nice erudite ring - the Third Reich after all delighted from time to time in the rich sonority of a foreign expression: *Garant* {guarantor} sounds much more persuasive than *Bürge* {supporter}, and *diffamieren* {defame} more impressive than *schlechtmachen* {run down}. (Perhaps some people won't understand such words; they are precisely the ones who are the most vulnerable) LTI: Lingua Tertii Imperii, the language of the Third Reich. (9).

On 24th January 2019, the BBC launched a news item titled ‘*Brexit: Jargon-Busting Guide to the Key Terms*’ which can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-43470987>. Tout se tiens.

3 On the subject of what is sometimes referred to as sneer quotes, Klemperer (2000) writes in 1947 in his chapter 12 “Punctuation” that:

From time to time it is possible to detect, both amongst individuals and groups, a characteristic preference for one particular punctuation mark. Academics love the semicolon; their hankering after logic demands a division which is more emphatic than a comma, but not quite as absolute a demarcation as a full stop. ... Instead the LTI makes exhaustive use of what I would call ironic inverted commas. The simple, primary inverted comma merely denotes the exact words spoken or written by someone else. The ironic inverted comma is not restricted to this neutral form of quotation, instead it questions the truth of what is being quoted, declares that the reported remark is untrue. In rendering that which in spoken language would be expressed by the mere adoption

For the conference, I would like to present/perform a paper investigating how the exaggerated adaptation of production modes and constant contradiction can create an agonistic space through performance. ... Part of my intention here is to use the conference as the site of investigation on how to re-politicize spheres that have been subject to post-Fordist production modes such as academic research. ... In the performative talk, I present an analysis of my previous performance pieces in relation to the category of research impact.⁴

In the context of this paper and the presentation, I am referring to a specific strand of production within post-Fordism: the knowledge economy which is often also referred to as cognitive capitalism. Austrian theorist Gerald Raunig writes in *Factories of Knowledge Industries of Creativity* (2013), that knowledge has become a commodity “which is manufactured, fabricated and traded like material commodities” (18). This new mode of production, that is to a great extent based on immaterial flows, Raunig states, is “*not* necessarily coupled with an improvement of working conditions or a substantialization of cognitive labour” (18). Italian theorists Cristina Fumagalli and Andrea Morini wrote in ‘Life Put to Work: Towards a Life Theory of Value’ (2010) that this type of production, where the circulation of affect creates value, is causing instability in everyday life (240). According to them, the decreasing distinction between working- and free-time and the unstable

of a sarcastic tone, the ironic inverted comma is closely allied to the rhetorical character of the LTI (73).

4 Within the LTI the use of abbreviations and repeated use of specific buzzwords played a crucial role in the implementation of fascism in people’s minds. Abbreviations, next to the function of introducing efficiency into the language, also create a conspiracy between users. Klemperer (2000) writes in 1947:

No linguistic style prior to Hitler’s German had made such an exorbitant use of this form. The modern contraction always appears with new technology and new organization. And in line with its claim to totality Nazism brings new technology and new organizations into everything. Hence the immense number of abbreviations. However, since this claim to totality also involves an attempt to control people’s inner lives, because it aspires to be religion, planting the swastika everywhere, each of its contractions is also related to the old Christian ‘fish’: Kradschuetze (motorised infantry) or teams of MGs (machine-gunners), members of the HJ or the DAF- everyone is ‘sworn into the community (92).

frameworks of work relations, simultaneously recall the dualism between (wo)man and machine. This instability and the consequential growing nationalist tendencies that thrive on insecurities, are the subject of my resistance. Gerald Raunig further writes that:

If we ourselves and our forms of subjectivation are the source of machinic subservience, if we ourselves contribute to the modulating university through self-discipline and self-government, then lines of flight can be also drawn on the same field of consistency, which do not necessarily have to serve the machines of the knowledge factory *like that*, not in *that way* (27, original emphasis).

Raunig suggests that the university as the site of subjectivity could be equally the site of its resistance. I chose the conference and this paper as a site within this site. To enable this resistance, I use Chantal Mouffe's *Agonistics: Thinking the World Politically* (2013) and her concept of the agonistic space, which in contrast to an antagonistic space, sits outside a hegemony. The agonistic space should allow a pluralism of positions which are contested in a common space by adversaries and not enemies as in the antagonistic model (7). Compared to the antagonistic model where the reaching of consensus through ratio is at the centre, in the agonistic model, no consensus can be reached because of the counterhegemonic character of the positions (10). Mouffe writes that in this context, art practices have the function to reveal what is suppressed by the current consensus within the hegemony of Post-Fordism which is at the centre of my research (93).

And here in Nottingham, I was about to do this with the help of a PowerPoint presentation, which is the format I have chosen to embrace as a performance artist. I am using it as a power to point, investigate, and juxtapose. In fact, I have been working with the PowerPoint Presentation for over a decade, first in marketing seminars during my business administration degree, then within my fine art degree, which I studied in parallel. The PowerPoint presentation offered a shortcut by combining those two disciplines during my studies in Vienna, making them more efficient and effective. Within the context of the academic presentation, the PowerPoint presentation occupies a certain authority enhanced by the setting of a conference where those presenting are

selected by an academic community. Once information, data, and statistics become projected onto a wall as part of a talk, they seem to become constative facts.

Recently the so-called PechaKucha, the most virtuosic form of a PowerPoint presentation, is gaining popularity in academic gatherings. Compared to the traditional twenty minutes paper-presentation, in the PechaKucha the presenters have exactly six minutes and forty seconds to present twenty slides with each slide being twenty seconds long, moving along automatically during the presentation. In different tutorials such as on globalcitizen.org, it is recommended to use as little text as possible and mainly refer to visuals instead.⁵ The growing popularity of the PechaKucha is based on its dynamic, where emphasis is put on a *zackig* style of presentation.⁶ Teresa Brennan writes in *The Transmission of Affect* (2003), “Rhythm is a tool in the expression of agency ... while dissonant sound also separates” (70). Although for this talk I won’t be doing a PechaKucha, my style of presentation is *zackig* while trying to create dissonance at the same time.

Today I am wearing my mustard-yellow blazer, a beige top, my smart dark-blue trousers and my Oxford shoes. At the moment, this is my favourite presentation outfit. In a 2017 article in the *Hamburger Abendblatt* focusing on the wardrobe of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the author Vera Fengler writes:

Angela Merkel is becoming more daring, wearing powerful colours like red or mustard-yellow. For her visit with Donald Trump in Washington, she showed attitude wearing an ice-blue Schoenbach jacket. It seems as though the chancellor was nailing her colours to the mast in election year. Maybe to avoid hiding behind her function, as Der Spiegel recently wrote.

5 <https://globaldigitalcitizen.org/how-to-make-great-presentations-with-pecha-kucha>. Last accessed 8th February 2019.

6 In “Blurring Boundaries” written by Klemperer in 1947 (2000) the *zackig* was an expression primarily used by soldiers in the First World War where everything had to be delivered *zackig* like a salute. He writes that ‘anything that conveys a taut and disciplined expenditure of energy is *zackig*’ (68). ‘*Zackig* literally means jagged, pointed or angular (Zickzack, being the German for ZigZag). Figuratively it can mean smart, brisk, dynamic or zippy (68, footnote by the translator).’ Klemperer later refers to how within the LTI the special jagged form of the letters SS represents for him the link between the visual language of the poster and language in narrower sense (69).

“Angela Merkel developed her style by herself. She is the most influential politician in the world. Of course she wants to be recognised” explained Bettina Schoenbach regarding the new fashion awareness of her client.⁷

Before I start my talk, I get introduced by the panel chair, whose professional approach accelerated my excitement and confusion of what I was about to present. Not only did he consult me beforehand on how to say my last name correctly, but he also read my original proposal. In his introduction to the talk, he himself was not sure if the following was going to be a performance or a talk or both? I met this doubt by stating “I consider everything I do within my research a ‘performance’”.

My research and that of everyone else in the United Kingdom including the audience of my talk, is subject to performance-based higher education funding.⁸ Dr Alis Oancea in ‘Buzzwords and Values: The Prominence of “Impact” in UK Research Policy and Governance’ (2013) asserts that this is rooted in the strategic framework titled *Excellence with Impact*, established by UK Research Councils.⁹ Here the so-called

7 The above passage is translated from German into English by the author and amended according to suggestions by the peer reviewer:

Angela Merkel traut sich mehr, trägt kräftige Farben wie Rot oder Senfgelb. Zum Besuch bei Donald Trump in Washington zeigte sie in einer eisblauen Schoenbach-Jacke Haltung. Es scheint, als würde die Kanzlerin im Wahljahr Farbe bekennen. Vielleicht, um nicht hinter ihrem Amt zu verschwinden, wie jüngst „Der Spiegel“ schrieb. „Angela Merkel hat ihren Stil selbst entwickelt. Sie ist die einflussreichste Politikerin der Welt. Natürlich muss sie wahrgenommen werden“, erklärt Bettina Schoenbach das neue modische Selbstbewusstsein ihrer Kundin (Fengler, 2017).

8 In the context of research and the REF, we can recognise a strong focus on ‘performance’ in various combinations, functioning as the basis for the standards set-out by the REF. Klemperer writes that one decisive characteristic of the *LTI* was that in its entire vocabulary it was dominated by the will to movement and action (226). To this he adds that ‘Charlie Chaplin achieved his most comic effect by suddenly abandoning a headlong dash and freezing like a sculpture cast or carved for some vestibul’ (227).

9 In chapter 30 “The curse of the superlative” Klemperer (2000) writes in 1947:

The numerical superlative can also be arrived from another angle: ‘unique’ is just as much a superlative as a thousand. A synonym for extraordinary, and stripped of its numerical significance, the word became, in Neo-Romantic philosophy and literature at the end of the First World War, a fashionable expression with a whiff of the aesthete about it; it is used by people who set great store by exclusive elegance and stylistic originality, such as Stefan Zweig and Rathenau. (219)

REF offers the central guiding principles through which all academics have to show how their research creates ‘impact’ which is defined as ‘an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia’ (REF 2011). In performance art, the measurement of impact is often reduced to audience-numbers but performance-based research measurement is significantly more complex. In my practice, ‘impact’ in regards of my intentions and standards of the REF could collide. It is the origin of this category that I am trying to contest in my research but not the category as such. Oancea writes that:

The current focus on the impact of research beyond academia – while clearly the buzzword of the moment in UK research policy – has complex roots in policy discourses around wealth creation, user relevance, public accountability, and evidence-based decision-making ... Given this complexity, a grudging consensus is currently being forged around the importance of strengthening the connections between academic and non-academic contexts, while controversy continues around performance-based higher education funding and the extent to which universities ought to be held accountable by the government (on behalf of the taxpayer) for the non-academic implications and outcomes of their research (Oancea).

Oancea further explains that “research funding is no longer defined in policy circles as a long-term investment in intrinsically worthwhile activities. Rather, in what is described as a knowledge and innovation economy, research is expected to make a case for funding in terms of external value”.

In the twenty minutes presentation that I am about to start, I will present examples of my performances produced during my practice-based research. In my presentation I will acknowledge their partly-failed compliance with:

- the standards of knowledge and innovation economy in terms of external value and
- my intentions of creating an agonistic space that sits outside the hegemony of post-Fordist production.

Slide 1: Strategies of resistance in the digital space: a feminist performance perspective in a post-Fordist economy

Slide 2: Overview

- Introduction of Key Concepts
- Aims
- Practice
- Conclusion

Slide 3: What is this resistance against?

Depoliticisation of the on and offline space → *communicative capitalism* (Dean 2005)

Here I am specifically referring to Jodi Dean and her 2005 paper titled ‘Communicative Capitalism: Circulation and the Foreclosure of Politics’. As early as 2005, Dean argues that online political activity has replaced real political action as it acts on our behalf; we end up in a state of “interpassivity”; we think we are active while we are not (60). Tweeting against Donald Trump is an example, where everyone is very actively tweeting against him, re-affirming his influence while simultaneously generating value in a post-Fordist economy through the circulation of affects.

Growing nationalist tendencies

Dean also states that we are experiencing a shift away from the focus on content towards circulation as the main indicator of value and relevance in communicative capitalism. The most outrageous, even though potentially untrue ‘facts’, generate more value on social media. As Dean writes in a later paper in 2010, called ‘Affective Networks’, this particularly benefits right wing movements, as they thrive on montage and insecurity (Dean 29).

Precarisation of female workforce → *feminization of labor* (Morini 2007)

Part of the insecurity that right wing movements thrive on is the increased precarisation of work relations, which Cristina Morini

discussed in 'The Feminization of Labor in Cognitive Capitalism' in 2007. Unstable work relations shift responsibilities from employers to individuals and increase competitiveness. In the case of knowledge workers, new forms of impact metricisation, such as twitter follower numbers, are contributing to a highly competitive and individualised form of competition.¹⁰ These new measurement tools reward immediate response, require flexibility and constant availability, which is not available to everyone, for example those with caring responsibilities.

The question remains, how do I intend to create this resistance?

In my research I investigate two specific strategies; over-identification and opacity through which, in their combination, I hope to create an agonistic space as the location for the resistance.

Slide 4: Over-identification

Over-identification was first coined by Slavoj Žižek, in his book *The Universal Exception: Selected Writings, Volume Two* from 1993, to describe the work of the Slovenian Avant Garde music group Laibach. Since their beginnings in the 1980s, Laibach have adopted an overtly totalitarian aesthetic to formulate a critique of totalitarianism. It is based on the intention that to create critique you become the subject of critique by fully immersing oneself in it. The Dutch research collective BAVO, in their essay 'Always Choose the Worst Option - Artistic Resistance and the Strategy of Over-Identification' (2007) base it on a notion that was marked by the Austrian satirist Karl Krauss. In the context of uprising of fascism in the 1930s, he supposedly said that "between two evils, I refuse to choose the lesser" (BAVO, 28).¹¹ I engage with this strategy by fully adopting the aesthetics as well as modes of operandi of my subjects of critique, while juxtaposing them with different positions and languages to reveal what is suppressed by the consensus created through their usage. Over-identification is most successful as a

¹⁰ This was pointed out during a talk by Dr Jamie Woodcock at Westminster University (London, UK) on 31st January 2017, in the workshop *Academic Labour, Digital Media and Capitalism*.

¹¹ On December 19th 2019, during a parliamentary debate on the Brexit deal suggested by British Prime Minister Theresa May, Jeremy Corbyn states: "The Prime Minister is making us choose the lesser between two evils."

strategy when critique and subject of critique are very close, so it becomes believable.

(Seven minutes = one PechaKucha)

Slide 5

The most famous and well-known example for applying a variation of this strategy, is Charlie Chaplin in *The Great Dictator* (1940).¹² In short, Chaplin and his subject of critique shared the same moustache, were born in the same week in the same year and both were small men who rose from poverty to world fame.

Slide 6: Opacity

I use opacity as a tool to blur a clear position in the presentations. It was first introduced by the Martiniquais philosopher Édouard Glissant in his *Poetics of Relations* (1997) wherein he conceptualized a theory of racism and how it can be avoided.¹³

My intention in combining these two strategies in my work is to create a constant moment of paradoxical productivity in which not everything is true but real. The intention behind taking this approach is to not allow the work to be categorised as a mere critique of something, as this would make it fit perfectly into a post-Fordist circle of value production. But rather it is as an act of avoiding categorisation and eventual concretion.

Slide 7: Aims

My aim is to offer a critical artistic position within the practice by:

¹² In the final speech at the end of *The Great Dictator* (1940), Chaplin states:

Don't give yourselves to these unnatural men - machine men with machine minds and machine hearts! You are not machines! You are not cattle! You are men! You have the love of humanity in your hearts! You don't hate! Only the unloved hate - the unloved and the unnatural! Soldiers! Don't fight for slavery! Fight for liberty!

¹³ Glissant (1987) writes

As far as I'm concerned, a person has the right to be opaque. That doesn't stop me from liking that person, it doesn't stop me from working with him, hanging out with him, etc. A racist is someone who refuses what he doesn't understand. I can accept what I don't understand (185).

1. creating affect towards the audience in the moment of their encounter with the performance,
2. withdrawing from modes of coercion within post-Fordist production.

Disclaimer: Please note, I do not aim to convert anyone but to create constant contradiction as the aim of my artistic efficacy (Bishop 2010).

Slide 8: PRACTICE

Slide 9: VIVA 2023

Like my presentation today, which is towards the end of my practice-based research, the subject of critique of my first performance within my practice-based PhD was the circumstances in which it was embedded in. It was part of my first-year PhD student exhibition at Chelsea College of Art in March 2016. As part of the show, I ‘staged’ the end of my PhD, my Viva. At that point in time, I expected it to take place at the very last opportunity of my part-time studies in the year 2023, hence the title *VIVA 2023*. With no funding in place, a referendum on the question if the UK should stay or leave the EU ahead, in the performance, I first presented a fictional but to this date accurate future scenario of political and economic circumstances influencing the almost failed completion of my research degree in the year 2023. These circumstances included:

- Brexit,¹⁴

¹⁴ According to a BBC article (Moseley, 2016) and the OED, ‘Brexit’ was first coined by Peter Wilding who is the founder and director of the “British Influence” think tank - which campaigned for the UK to Remain in the EU in the June 2016 referendum. He used it as early as 2012 before David Cameron even announced that there was going to be a referendum. Next to its continuing use in media coverage up until today, Brexit was also frequently used by Donald Trump during his successful US presidential campaign. In chapter 26 “The Jewish war” Klemperer (2000) writes in 1947:

The Jewish war! The Führer didn’t come up with this idea, he had certainly never heard of Flavius Josephus, he simply noticed one day in the newspaper or in shop window that the Jew Feuchtwanger had written a novel called *Der jüdische Krieg* (The Jewish war). (Published in England in 1932 under the title Josephus). It is probably like this with all the words and expressions of the LTI: England is no longer an island, *Vermassung* {de-individualisation}, *Versteppung* {to turn into steppes}, *Einmaligkeit* {uniqueness}, *Untermenschentum* {subhumanity} etc. - they have all been appropriated from

- the failure of the Tory government in the negotiations,¹⁵
- the demand for a second referendum, and
- the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Prime Minister.

I stage *VIVA 2023* via a Skype conference call with two examiners who were also enacted by myself in a pre-recorded video. To the audience I declare that in 2023 examiners won't be flown in anymore while at the same time, shared office space will be replaced by working from home. In a triangle conversation during *VIVA 2023*, sometimes interrupted by the noise of the washing machine in the background of one of the examiners, we discuss the intention of my research project and how it almost failed.

Slide 10¹⁶

The performance was a success in terms of applause at the end; the research student community and staff applauded the Brexit critique and my intention to defy it in my 'fictional' future scenario. From an over-identification perspective, my full immersion with the hyper-networked precarious female young academic was very believable. Looking at it from the perspective of opacity, it is less clear. In fact, very little was left opaque in this performance to the audience; except for the result of my Viva. It was clear that it was a performance and it was clear that I

secluded corners of intimate, technical or group-specific usage and were contaminated through and through with Nazi ideology. (173)

15 In "From the Great Movement Forward" Klemperer (2000) describes the increased usage of cover-up words used within the LTI as the war progressed and a defeat of Germany was becoming more likely. He writes in 1947:

This multitude of cover-up words is all the more extra ordinary given that it is in stark contrast to the general, innate and essential poverty of the LTI. (...) This circumspect way of describing this crisis was adequate for a very long time because, in complete contrast to the customary German *Blitzkrieg*, the enemy only engaged in 'snail like offensives', and only made headway at a 'snail's pace'. Only during the last year of the war, when the catastrophe could no longer be concealed, was it given a more complicit name, albeit one that still amounted to a cover-up: defeats were now termed 'crises', but the word never appeared on its own. Attention was always either directed away from Germany to the 'global crises' or the 'crisis facing western civilization', or alternatively a phrase was used which very quickly became stereotypical - 'a crisis under control'. (229)

16 I am trying to show to the audience the documentation of this performance. Unfortunately, I cannot do so online as my laptop is not connected to a WiFi network.

thought Brexit was going to have severe consequences for the UK and my research degree, further decreasing my own prospects to ever receive any funding for it. Taking into account the category of ‘impact’, this performance eventually failed on multiple layers but mainly because the recipients of the critique were one-hundred percent academic.¹⁷

(Fifteen minutes = two PechaKucha)

Slide 11: Vacanzeromane2016.tumblr.com

The second example of my practice that I present, was produced only a few months after *VIVA 2023*, in July 2016 during a research residency at the British School in Rome, Italy. This four-week residency was an award I received from my university. In the three months between the residency and the staging of *VIVA 2023*, Brexit actually happened and was accompanied by a row of resignations including then Prime Minister David Cameron. During the residency I produced a series of seven video speeches, starting with a Declaration of Independence, followed by six resignations from different positions:

1. artist
2. feminist
3. art critic
4. culture and
5. the head of the English Football team.

The sixth resignation was the resignation from all resignations. Over the timeframe of two weeks I regularly posted a video within a two day interval, all of which can be still watched on the blog called vacanzeromane2016.tumblr.com.

¹⁷ In ‘The curse of the superlative’ Klemperer (2000) writes in 1947: *Tout se tient* as the French say, everything hangs together. The expression ‘*hundertprozentig* {100 per cent}’ comes directly from America and goes back to the title of a novel by Upton Sinclair which was widely read in German translation; throughout the twelve years it was on everybody’s lips and I often heard the adjunct ‘Stay clear of that chap, he’s a 150-per-center!’ And yet, it is precisely this most indisputable of Americanisms that has to be set against most basic demand and keyword of Nazism – ‘*total*’ (218).

Slide 12

The title of the work is derived from the Italian version of the famous Hollywood classic *Roman Holiday* (1954), for which Audrey Hepburn received the Oscar for best performance.

Slide 13

In this work, despite the overt staging of adapted resignation speeches by men, I actually over-identify with Samantha Cameron rather than David Cameron. I empathized with her on the day of her husband's resignation, because she was the silent witness in the background wearing a stylish summer dress.

Slide 14

In each video work produced during the residency, I am present in the front and the background of the video. I witness my own resignation as a tourist in Rome, taking selfies in the background. I performed a decoy speaking in the front, being a form of distraction as well as an act of feminist appropriation. While speaking in the front, I am wearing a red blazer and a white shirt; in the background, I am wearing a variety of my favourite summer dresses. The red blazer functions, as pointed out by the aforementioned article in the *Hamburger Abendblatt*, to signify assertiveness among female politicians.¹⁸

Slide 15

The speeches can be followed up on the blog, including Wikipedia links to the buildings in the background. They are all adapted versions of already existing texts; for example the resignation speech of Pope Benedict in Latin (2008), where I replaced *freres* (brothers) with *sorores* (sisters). The adaptation always includes the insertion of women in the texts in which they were completely absent before like in several countries' Declaration of Independence. The work mainly circulated

¹⁸ In the course of Brexit negotiations, Theresa May was wearing a red blazer when meeting with EU leaders at the Salzburg Summit in September 2018 (See *The Times*, 2018).

online within my own network, potentially limiting its own impact beyond academia.

Slide 16: October 2017.

The turning point in my research.

From October 2017, after two years of self-funded part-time studies, I received a doctoral research award. Suddenly I got overwhelmed by the responsibility of being accountable to the taxpayer. How to justify the taxpayer financing a research project that intends to create a critique of the very same system? Where was the impact that I was promising to create in my application for the funding? Where was the evidence? And what is going to happen once the funding runs out? As pointed out at the beginning, this is an issue that concerns many researchers. I decided to address it, by immersing myself in impact enhancing measures and strengthening my research profile. I invite everyone in the audience (and the reader) in case they (you) liked my presentation/paper and want to stay in touch to follow me on any of these channels:

Twitter (5676 followers),¹⁹

Vimeo (3467 followers),

Instagram (5433²⁰ followers),

Other sharing platforms:

Mendeley,

YouTube,

Aademia.eu,

Periscope.

(Twenty minutes = three PechaKucha)

19 In Chapter 28 “The language of the victor”, Klemperer (2000) writes in 1947:

Right at the outset, when a few Jewish periodicals were still being published, I once read the following title of a funeral oration: ‘In memory of our leader {Führer} Levinstein’. The Führer in this case was the chairman of a community. (196)

20 According to Samuel W. Mitcham in *Why Hitler?: The Genesis of the Nazi Reich* from 1996, Hitler’s membership number as part of German Workers party (DAP) was 555 even though in reality he had been the 55th Member. Their trick was to start the counting at the number 501 in order to make the party appear larger (67). Thanks to the peer reviewer for pointing that out.

Q&A

My twenty minutes for presenting are over and now the ten minutes of Q&A where the conference audience can question the presented materials are about to start. At this point I have to thank the organizers of the conference and the panel chair, for doing such a great job in organizing the panels and the conference altogether. After attending several conferences throughout my PhD, I experienced a lot of issues with time keeping and not enough time for Q&A or unevenly distributed time among presenters, and in this case, it was flawless. Please note that the following account of the Q&A is based on notes taken afterwards and no other recordings have been made during the Q&A.

Question 1: So the point of the strategy is to create a critique of social media by fully immersing yourself in it by using it?

Answer: It is the very exaggeration that makes the critique visible.

Follow up question: Why recruiting so many followers? And what happens with the network afterwards? Once the research project is over?

A: In order to disrupt a network, one needs a network. But I also have the hope that once followers realize that what they have been following is fake that they might withdraw from these networks or at least change the attitude towards it.

Comment: Academic Twitter is used by many female academics as it allows them to jump hierarchy ladders that are in place in academia otherwise. So what about the advantages of academic twitter?

A: It is still exclusive to a certain age group of academics and we also have to take into consideration the price we pay for this when considering who gets really heard on these platforms; those already in power like the POTUS. Like I said in my presentation, my intentions are not to create conversion in anyone in the audience but rather to reveal through contradiction as well as raising the question of what can we really perceive as truth when it is right in front of us and how are we complicit in an economy where hyper-self-promotion feeds into post-Fordist modes of value creation based to great extent on free labour. In the end this is not a black and white case but it is important to look at the grey areas and how we are part of it.

Q: Why only performing in front of academics? How about schools?

A: A valid question, especially in regards of the very category of impact which eventually would solve my sustaining issue of evidencing it. I actually already worked as a speaker in High schools talking about banking and finances. This was a very eye-opening experience to me but also showed me how challenging this environment is. For now, I choose consciously academia as my audience, as this is my current circle of peers that I want to address even if it does not tick the impact box.

Q (*final question*): What is the difference between parody and self-parody?

A: I guess parody is when everyone knows that it is staged, the difference between the parody and the subject of the parody is clear. Here it is ridiculed to an extreme. Self-parody, well is it a parody of the self?²¹ Actually, I am not entirely sure how to answer that.

End of Q&A.

I enjoyed the questions and the discussion that came up. The entire session is over now, and the next coffee break is up before the next session of panels which are scheduled in parallel. When I made the strategic decision to use conferences as the sites of investigation for my research,

21 In chapter 28 "The language of the victor", Klemperer (2000) describes what happened to Dr P, a colleague of his Jewish doctor. He writes:

Prior to 1933, Dr. P. had felt himself to be a German and a doctor, nothing more and nothing less, and wasted no time thinking about the problems of religion or race, he had held Nazism to be a delusion or an illness which would pass without a dire catastrophe. Now he had been thrown out of his job entirely, worked as a forced labourer in a factory, and was the foreman of a group to which I belonged for a long time. Here his bitterness expressed itself in a strange way. He appropriated all of the Nazi's anti-Jewish expressions, and especially those of Hitler, and uttered them so incessantly that he himself could probably no longer judge to what extent he was ridiculing either the Führer himself, or whether this self-deprecating way of speaking had simply become second nature. (...) We put up with his quirks, or rather obsessions, of our foreman sometimes with a sense of humour, sometimes with resignation. To me it seemed symbolic to the whole subjugation of the Jews. (...) Had this enslavement only surfaced in everyday speech it would at least have been understandable; one is less careful about what one says there, is more dependent on what is constantly in front of one's very eyes and ringing in ones ears (194-95).

I also had to make a decision if I use the conference only as a form of rhetoric through the PowerPoint presentation or as an entire structure of power and display that I use for creating a productive paradox. In this case the answer was determined by the time limit of the coffee break and the fact that I had to catch a pre-booked very expensive privatized train from Nottingham back to London, leaving before the conference ends.

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