

PASSIONATE WORK ETHICS: AFFECTIVE ECONOMY OF PRECARITY AND
FLEXIBILITY

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AND FLEXIBILITY**

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ABSTRACT

PASSIONATE WORK ETHICS: AFFECTIVE ECONOMY OF PRECARITY AND FLEXIBILITY

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In this study, I examine the Passionate Work Ethics within the conceptual framework of “affective economy”, which I argue establishes the work ideology of today’s flexible and precarious post-Fordist work regime. More specifically, I focus on “immaterial labor” as a specific form of labor in today’s post-Fordist capitalism and flexible and precarious freelancing as its epitome. Based on interviews with students/recent graduates who have not yet entered the working life and independent professionals who are currently working as freelancer, this study seeks to understand how today’s prevalent flexible and precarious post-Fordist work regime makes itself desirable, through what kind of structures of affects and affective mechanisms. The main claim of the study is that the Passionate Work Ethics, with its affective investment in our desires, hopes and fears, with its “illusion of freedom” that covers up precarity creates a work ethics that makes desirable widespread precarity and flexibility through “passive joyful affects”. In this context, it has been revealed that the Passionate Work Ethics operates by arousing motivation, impulse and desire with the promises of “freedom-autonomy”, “spatio-temporal flexibility”, “self-realization and self-development” and “affective satisfaction”.

Keywords: Passionate Work Ethics, Affective Economy, Immaterial Labor, Precarity, Flexibility



ÖZ

TUTKULU ÇALIŞMA ETİĞİ: GÜVENCESİZLİĞİN VE ESNEKLİĞİN DUYGULANIMSAL EKONOMİSİ

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Bu çalışmada, günümüz esnek ve güvencesiz post-Fordist çalışma düzeninin çalışma ideolojisini tesis ettiğini iddia ettiğim Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’ni, “duygulanımsal ekonomi” kavramsal çerçevesi içinde inceliyorum. Daha spesifik olarak, günümüz post-Fordist kapitalizmin spesifik emek biçimi olarak “gayri maddi emek” biçimine ve bu emek biçiminin epitomu olarak esnek ve güvencesiz freelance çalışma tarzına odaklanıyorum. Henüz çalışma hayatına dahil olmamış öğrenciler/yeni mezunlar ve halihazırda freelance çalışan bağımsız profesyonellerle gerçekleştirilmiş mülakatlara dayanan bu çalışma, günümüz yaygın esnek ve güvencesiz post-Fordist çalışma rejiminin kendisini nasıl arzulanır kıldığını; bunu ne tür duygu yapıları ve duygulanımsal mekanizmalar üzerinden yaptığını anlamaya çalışıyor. Çalışmanın temel iddiası, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin arzularımıza, umutlarımıza, korkularımıza yaptığı “duygulanımsal yatırımla”, güvencesizliğin üstünü örten “özgürlük illüzyonuyla”, Spinoza’nın tabiriyle “edilgen neşeli duygular” yaratarak yaygın güvencesizliğin ve esnekliğin üstünü örten ve arzulanır kılan bir çalışma etiği yarattığıdır. Bu bağlamda, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin “özgürlük”, “zaman-mekansal esneklik”, “kendini gerçekleştirme” ve “duygulanımsal tatmin” vaatleriyle motivasyon, itki, arzu uyandırarak işlediği ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği, Duygulanımsal Ekonomi, Gayri Maddi Emek, Güvencesizlik, Esneklik



*For all the precarious who are thrown away from their own path in the uncertainty
of life but who manage to keep their joy...*



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
DEDICATION.....	viii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiv
CHAPTERS	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Methodology	15
1.1.1. Overview of the Motivation of Research	15
1.1.2. Sample	18
1.1.3. Research Method.....	23
1.1.4. Data Collection, Analysis, and Interview Phase	26
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE PROBLEMATIC OF THE STUDY.....	28
2.1. Affective Economy	28
2.1.1. Spinoza's Theory of Affects: Affective Relationship to the World.....	30
2.1.1.1. Affects, Desire and Conatus.....	32
2.1.1.2. Political Dimension of the Affects: Fluctuatio Animi and the Sovereignty of Hope and Fear.....	37
2.1.2. Political Economy of Affects	44
2.1.2.1. Marx with Spinoza	44
2.1.2.2. Formal and Real Subsumption of Labor under Capital.....	48

2.1.2.3. Wage Relationship and the Affective Composition of Labor	54
2.1.2.4. Affective Economy of Joy and Sadness: A Reading of Lordon's Periodization of Affective Composition of Labor	63
2.1.2.5. Affective Governmentality: Integrating Governmentality with Affectivity	71
2.1.3. Conclusion.....	81
2.2. Time and Organization of Work	83
2.2.1. Time and The Organization of Work in Capitalism: Between the Realm of Necessity and the Realm of Freedom.....	84
2.2.2. The Evolution of the Organization of Work from Fordism to Post- Fordism	98
2.2.2.1. Fordist-Taylorist "Scientific" Management of Work and Time ...	98
2.2.2.1.1. The Temporal Regime of Fordism: Emergence of the Standard Working Time	104
2.2.2.2. Citius, Altius, Fortius: Post-Fordist Work Arrangement and the Corrosion of the Standard Working Time.....	110
2.2.2.2.1. Toyotism and Lean Production	110
2.2.2.2.2. Post-Fordist Work Ethics and the Mobilization of Individuating Mechanisms	112
2.2.2.2.3. Non-Standard Employment Regime and Working Time Flexibilization	121
2.2.2.2.4. Precarization of Labor and Life	128
2.2.2.2.4.1. Different Definitions and Conceptualizations of Precarity: An Exception or a Norm; a New Class Position or Not?.....	128
2.2.2.2.4.2. Precarity as an Affective Experience: Precarious Subjectivity and Flexible Temporality.....	138
2.2.3. Changing Affective and Temporal Regime of Capitalism from Formal Subsumption to Real Subsumption.....	151
2.2.3.1. Rearrangement of Labor in Platform Capitalism and its Impact on Work-Life Articulation	165
2.2.4. Conclusion.....	180
2.3. Post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics	183

2.3.1. Introduction	183
2.3.2. Passionate Work Ethics	192
2.3.3. Certain Main Premises of Post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics	207
2.3.3.1. Narration of Freedom and Autonomy	207
2.3.3.2. Spatiotemporal Flexibility and Ability to Adjust Work-Life Balance	208
2.3.3.3. Self-Realization and Self-Improvement.....	209
2.3.3.4. Affectional Satisfaction.....	209
3. THE CASE STUDY	212
3.1. Worker-to-Be	212
3.1.1. Fordist vs. Post-Fordist Work Arrangement and the Passionate Attachment to Work	212
3.1.2. Cruel Optimism: Hope Labor.....	223
3.1.3. Conclusion.....	234
3.2. Working as an Independent Professional.....	236
3.2.1. Affective Orientation of Independent Professionals towards Freelance Work and the Passionate Work Ethics.....	236
3.2.1.1. Narration of Freedom and Autonomy	241
3.2.1.2. Spatiotemporal Flexibility and Ability to Adjust Work-Life Balance	251
3.2.1.3. Self-Realization and Self-Improvement.....	255
3.2.1.4. Affectional Satisfaction.....	257
3.2.2. Real Subsumption and Putting Subjectivity to Work: Working as an Independent Professional and its Impacts on Work-Life Balance	261
3.2.2.1. Financialization of Everyday Life.....	262
3.2.2.2. Obligation to Self-Promotion: Turning Oneself into a Personal Brand	264
3.2.2.3. Encroachment of Working Time on Leisure Time: Doing Job- Related Activities in Leisure Time.....	268
3.2.3. Individualized Work Ethics and the Precarious Freedom.....	271

3.3. Three Attributes of the Passionate Work Ethics and Three Different Responses.....	276
3.3.1. The Passionate Work Ethics and its Three Attributes.....	276
3.3.2. Three Forms of Responses to Passionate Work Ethics.....	279
4. CONCLUSION	287
REFERENCES.....	297
A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE...	331
B. CURRICULUM VITAE.....	332
C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET.....	335
D. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU	355

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Participant Profile.....	21
Table 2 Three Forms of Responses to Passionate Work Ethics' Call.....	280



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Scholars who have studied labor relations for the past few decades have emphasized the emergence of a new post-Fordist economy whose characteristic features are precarity and flexibility. This is an economy in which workers are exposed to more precarious and flexible working conditions and a more uncertain and risky life compared to the relatively stable, standard conditions of the Fordist period. Many researchers have discussed the causes and consequences of this phenomenon. Some analyzed this change in labor relations by focusing on the change in the capital accumulation process, from a macro-economic position; some of them, starting from a more cultural-political economic point of view, focused on the ideological-cultural basis of the sociological changes and new working relations. Even if it has been accepted as a general fact that the neoliberal logic and new post-Fordist work ethics has become the dominant discourse and even if its structural conditions have been revealed, how this new neoliberal ideology establishes and reproduces itself on the daily level, how it permeates working relations on the level of subjectivity is an issue that has not been given much thought.

Here a question may come to mind: Why do we deal with work and employment relations? I think that I have given satisfactory answers to this question and discussed it in detail in the remainder of the study. But at this point, I can say that work is essential to our survival in the capitalist society we live in. Beyond the existential-bodily necessity of survival, a decent job is also essential for the social necessities and benefits of being human. There is a direct link between individual and social self-worth and one's status in the society. Thus, it is obvious that we live in a "work society" (Weeks, 2011). All kinds of inequality and injustice in working relations go beyond the individual level and appear as a "social question" (Castel, 2003). In my opinion, the "necessity to work", which is accepted as a universal, given, natural phenomenon

in both mainstream political theory and mainstream economics, and which is not questioned, is a subject that should be approached from a political point of view. What is the meaning of work today? Can we consider the activity of work itself to be good or bad, beyond whether a work is good or bad? What does the imagination of a life outside of necessary working relations correspond to? How does the work present itself to us as a universal, given, natural fact? And, what kind of domination and power relations, coercion and consent mechanisms lie behind this universality? To quote Fredrick Jameson, “capital is a book about unemployment” (2011, p. 2). Underlying all the economic analysis of Marx in *Capital* in fact lies this bare truth: we have to sell our labor power in order to survive, that is, to have a job. In my opinion, the inevitable necessity imposed by this bare truth forces us to place the work and employment relations at the center of our thinking on politics and on capitalism. Within this context, it is this cold fact that has led me to choose people’s problematic experience of work as the research topic of this study.

In this study, I propose to shed light on this issue with the help of the concept of “affective economy”. Therefore, if one of the focuses of this thesis is work and employment relations, the other is affect and desire. Why? Because, with reference to Spinoza, I assert that man is an affective being. I think that this assertion, which is based on a Spinozist ontology and epistemology and has social and political implications, provides us with a useful basis for explaining the mechanisms that run social and political life and the relationship between structure and actor.

“Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it”. This is Marx’s famous eleventh thesis. We can find a thesis similar to that of Marx, with same critical tone, also in Spinoza: “Philosophers look upon the passions by which we are assailed as vices, into which men fall through their own fault. So, it is their custom to deride, bewail, berate them, or, if their purpose is to appear more zealous than others, to execrate them”; however, it is necessary to take care “not to deride, bewail, or execrate human actions, but to understand them” (2002, pp. 680-681). These are, I think, two strong theses with significant ethical-political implications. We can say that, according to Spinoza’s thesis, philosophers have hitherto studied the forms of domination and political regimes but, unlike “statesman who have written about political matters much more effectively than philosophers”

(2002, p. 680), their thoughts were utopian, not ethico-political; they underestimated, humiliated, laughed, denied and did not understand the affective mechanisms underlying political regimes. I think that Spinoza's thesis is as politically important as Marx's eleventh thesis. If we accept what Marx says about "changing the world", we must also take into account what Spinoza says about affections. In this regard, I argue that it would be fruitful to think Marx's political economy and Spinoza's theory of affect together in analyzing the mechanisms of domination and exploitation in today's capitalist system (Section 2.1.).

Affections, according to Spinoza, are political from top to bottom. In fact, Spinoza is not the only philosopher who emphasizes the relation between affects and politics. Machiavelli and Hobbes, for example, can also be regarded as philosophers who emphasize this relation. In the conceptions of these philosophers on the political, the role of emotions such as hope, fear, anger, insecurity etc. is obvious. On the other hand, it is possible to argue that there is a "blindness" regarding the role of affections and emotions in the mainstream political science literature. It can be said that this blindness itself has some political and social causes. According to Demertzis, the causes for this blindness are:

(a) The stripping of the dimension of passion from the political because it was associated with romantic and utopian conceptions unrelated to the modern public sphere as well as because of the more or less instrumental and neutral-procedural conception of politics, a popular view at the end of the 1960s as well as today; (b) the supremacy of 'interest' as opposed to 'passion' as an explaining factor of political action, already in effect from the middle of the 18th century; (c) the dominance for many years of the rational choice paradigm across a very large number of political science departments in the United States and Europe, in the context of which are either conceived as irrational elements or are taken as objective traits which do not affect the actor's, by definition, 'rational' thinking (2013, pp. 1-2).

It is possible to say that the importance attributed to emotions and affections in the founding texts of political theory has been ignored in the modern political theory literature. But it is also possible to say that the relationship between emotions and politics has been "remembered"¹ again especially in the second half of the twentieth century with contributions of "psychoanalytically informed theories of subjectivity

¹ Some identified this as "cultural turn" or "affective turn" (e.g., Clough & Halley, 2007).

and subjection, theories of the body and embodiment, poststructuralist feminist theory, conversation of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory with political theory and critical analysis” (Athanasiou, Hantzaroula, & Yannakopoulos, 2008, p. 5).

At this point, for example, Foucault’s analysis of micro-physics of power and bio-politics, and the contributions of Agamben, Esposito and Hardt and Negri etc. who follow this bio-political line, Deleuze and Guattari, on the other hand, who focus on the relation between capitalism, power, psychoanalysis and desire-affect and who place Spinoza at the center of political thought again can be counted as the examples of theories focusing on affective, cognitive and biological-bodily processes in the relations of power and domination. In this respect, it seems that there is a Spinozian heritage in all these theories that relates affects to politics. And two postulates of Spinoza, I think, lie at the heart of the functioning of power, ideology, and domination in today’s societies: “Nobody as yet has learned from experience what the body can and cannot do” (2002, p. 280), and “They will fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance” (2002, pp. 389-390). It can be argued that this “dual ignorance” is at the heart of modern politics. Following Foucault, it is possible to argue that almost all scientific domains (sociology, statistics, biology, geography, etc.) was developed to minimize the risks, to control the uncertainties in nature and social relations. History of the political struggles and social movements shows us this uncertainty as well. This uncertainty is of course a risk factor for political powers. For example, the mobs can get out of control at any time; therefore, it is necessary for political powers to code them as “population”, “citizen” etc. In other words, it is necessary to govern their affective capacities through various mechanisms to secure the life of populations, as Foucault showed us. This effort to control the contingencies, uncertainties and risk factors raises naturally this “bio-political” question for political powers: How can we manage the mobs, intimidate, and incapacitate them? In this regard, Read argues that:

Spinoza’s question of political thought, “why do the masses fight for their servitude as if it was salvation” has taken on an unanticipated economic and social relevance since the post-2008 economic recession. Displaced from its seventeenth century context, of taxes and bread, wars of glory, and despots, it is possible to see a struggle for servitude in the way in which the masses clamour for more jobs, more austerity, and more persecution of the disadvantaged in the name of fiscal discipline (2019).

According to him, Spinoza's question is still up to date. Following thinkers such as Althusser and Deleuze who put Spinoza at the center of their theories, studies dealing with these postulates and articulating a Spinozist critique of political economy of contemporary neoliberal capitalism through affective mechanisms are becoming widespread. Read also argues that in these studies we can discern a general turn "towards understanding subjectivity to be not only directly produced by the economy, without passing through the mediations of the superstructure, but reproductive of it as well, to be a necessary condition of the reproduction of society" (2019).

Therefore, I emphasize the connection between work and employment relations and affect in this sense, arguing that work and employment relations construct an affective regime. I claim that the establishment and reproduction of capitalist work and employment relations in everyday life cannot be understood without taking into account the affective experience of the subjectivities who feel, experience, affect and are affected by these relations. Collective and social affects and affective regimes are part of how capitalism's work and employment arrangements emerge, are formed and institutionalized in society. In other words, capitalist relations of production have also an "affective life" (Anderson, 2016). So much so that what determines what is possible and what is not possible in a certain time and space is this affective regime, in Williams' words, the "structure of feelings" that "exert palpable pressures and set effective limits on experience and on action" (1977, p. 132).

Structures of feeling is different from "world-view" or "ideology", in that it allows us to "concern with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt" (1977, p. 132). When we appeal to the concept of structures of feeling, "we are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity" (1977, p. 132). Structures of feeling, as Anderson stated:

[I]s best thought of as a set of distributed 'forming and formative processes' constitutive of a 'specific present'. What is forming is a 'particular quality' of experience that gives a 'sense' of what Williams describes as a 'generation or a period'. The 'particular quality' and 'sense' constitute an experience of the present that both extends beyond particular sites/occasions and is shared across otherwise separate sites/occasions" (2006, p. 746).

In this regard, I treat affect not as frozen, petrified, “formed wholes”, as Williams puts it, in which “living presence is always receding”, but as “forming and formative process”; that is, as the mechanisms that gives social structure its dynamism. In this sense, affective economy is for me the concept to understand “the specificity of present being, the inalienable physical, within which we may indeed discern and acknowledge institutions, formations, positions, but not always as fixed products, defining products” (1977, p. 128). By transcending the dualities such as “the subjective as distinct from the objective, experience from belief, feeling from thought, the immediate from the general, the personal from the social” (1977, p. 129), it allows to think relationally and bilaterally the link between the objective conditions and the subjective experience.

As it turns out, affect is different from emotion. Spinoza completely opposes the understanding that pushes affect into the realm of individual, personal, emotional inner world. Affect is rather the “feeling of existence”. We will see this in more detail later when we discuss Spinoza’s theory of affect (Section 2.1.). But for now, we can say that “affects are not simply property of the individual body and are not somehow asubjective and preindividual, or non-representational” (Anderson, 2006, p. 735). Affect as “feeling of existence” and “capacity to affect and be affected”, roughly speaking, refers to the way things and relations are experienced, lived and acted on. That is, rather than simply an emotion that awakens in us personally in the face of something that we are simply exposed to, it is the degree of power that enables us to act.

When we analyze the production of subjectivity and its affective aspect within the framework of contemporary capitalist relations of production, we must explore the fundamental mechanisms through which these relations perpetuate themselves on a daily basis. We need to understand the role of affective subjectivity production in this process, drawing insights from Marx and Spinoza. Building upon Spinoza’s observation that individuals “fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance”, we can inquire about the driving forces behind our compulsion to work, to sell our labor power, and to participate in capitalist relations of production. How does this compulsion become normalized? How do we learn to accept and embrace the conditions created by capitalism, which we are compelled to live within? How do we develop a passionate desire for what we are forced to choose? What kinds

of affective mechanisms are at play here? In response to these questions, I propose the concept of an “affective economy” that specifically focuses on employment relationships and wage labor.

In order to provide the reader with conceptual coherence and clarity, it would be good to mention here the sources, thinkers and theoretical tools that I have drawn upon in constructing the conceptualization of the “affective economy”. We will elaborate and discuss it later in the relevant sections of the study. However, I would like here to underline and clarify some points in order to facilitate understanding of the theoretical aspects of the study. Affective economy implies two things: first, relations of production produce affects and desires, that is, affective subjectivity, as much as goods and services; second, affects and desires, that is, affective subjectivity, are necessary components of the production and reproduction of any mode of economic production. Here I primarily follow the theoretical (even anthropological) approach of Frederic Lordon, who examines the affective aspects of labor relations and tries to understand why people actively desire to be exploited and dominated in their everyday lives. In this context, Lordon begins with a simple but fundamental question: How can one affectionally mobilize others to serve one’s own desires? This question can also be phrased as follows: How do workers consent to submit their labor power to their employers? In this context, he proposes to understand capitalist exploitation as the harnessing and management of affects and desire, that is, the production of affective subjectivities.

To grasp this approach, we must acknowledge, following Spinoza’s philosophy (Section 2.1.1.), that even in situations that seem “free”, there exist necessities. As Marx argued, “the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition, and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws” (1982, p. 899). We are born with an awareness of our desires but lack understanding of our desires’ causes. Consequently, we often believe that our desires are free and innate, rather than products of socio-economic relations. We all feel compelled to work and sell our labor to ensure our survival, but we tend to view this as a natural state. However, according to Spinoza and Marx, this is an illusion. In the context of the wage-labor relations, a key element is that it compels us to affectively accept and adopt the circumstances that confine us structurally. Lordon’s

concept of “passionate servitude” emphasizes precisely that individuals actively desire to wage-labor relationship in which they are forced into by their economic conditions. Here Lordon uses the concept of *epithumé* to refer to the objective structure that determines what is desirable and what is not desirable in a given social world. That is, our desires are not limitless; they are shaped in relation to the limits set by the capitalist *epithumé*. To paraphrase Marx, “by education, tradition and habit” we learn what is desirable and what is undesirable, and in fact our desires are tamed within the limits of the capitalist *epithumé*. And this obedience is not achieved by brute force, but precisely by desire.

This study aims to follow Lordon’s approach (Section 2.1.2.4.) and continue the discussion where he left off. Roughly summarized here, Lordon historically periodizes the capitalist *epithumé* in his book *Willing Slaves of Capitalism: Spinoza and Marx on Desire*. He historically shows the affective structure of the various stages of capitalism (primitive accumulation, Welfare State, neoliberalism, etc.) and discusses the affects leading workers to engage in wage labor for each stage. To put it briefly (we will discuss this in more detail later in 2.1.2.4), while in the primitive accumulation period (i.e. the formal subsumption stage) it was the drive for survival, the necessity to sell one’s labor power and the resulting fear of starvation that determined the affective structure of the wage-labor relation, in the Fordist consumer society the drive for survival shifts to the drive for consumption, in other words, from the fear of starvation to the pleasure of consumption, from sorrowful affects to joyful affects. It should be noted that what determines this affective structure is the material position and orientation of the conatus, the life impulse of the labor force within the wage labor relation. That is to say, during the period of primitive accumulation, a period of absolute precarity and insecurity, survival was the primary priority for those who had to sell their labor power, and the fear of starvation prevailed here. In the Fordist period of relative prosperity and security, on the other hand, the fear of starvation had been overcome to a certain extent, and the dominant affective structure of those who had to sell their labor power in this secure environment was no longer the sorrowful fear of starvation but the joyful impulse to consume. The current neoliberal post-Fordist period, in which flexible and precarious work is widespread, Lordon argues, has a different affective structure: those who have to sell their labor power in this period

(specifically the forms of immaterial and cognitive labor and knowledge economy workers that have developed in this period) enter into the wage-labor relationship not with fear as in primitive accumulation, but with joy. The distinctive feature of this period is that work is neither done out of fear for survival nor out of joy for consumption. We can say that work, the very act of engaging in the wage-labor relation, is itself an active, direct source of joy, self-actualization, affectional satisfaction in the neoliberal period.

Within this context, I examine *Passionate Work Ethics* (Section 2.3.), which I argue establishes the work ethics of today's flexible and precarious post-Fordist work regime and immaterial labor, within the affective economy conceptual framework. The central question guiding this study was one that Spinoza asked centuries ago: how is it that people strive for, even desire, their own enslavement as if it were their own interest? I re-thought this question, updating it in the context of today's labor relations. Because on social media, in my circle of friends, in the literature review, I saw that many people (if not everyone) "love" and "desire" their work. I saw that people think that work benefits their "own personal development"; that work is a sphere of "self-realization". This seemed problematic to me, because the obligation to work is perhaps the biggest, most fundamental, inevitable necessity that we are exposed to. We all have to work to survive, to pay our bills the next day etc. Therefore, the first step of this study was to determine that today, apart from this dimension of necessity, work has also a dimension of desire and love. Then, the question is how is this necessity experienced as something desirable? In this regard, the central hypothesis of this study is that *Passionate Work Ethics* affectively "romanticizes" the prevalent flexible and precarious work conditions by stimulating "passive joyful affects". It ensures this by its affective investment to our desires, aspirations, and fears, coupled with the illusion of freedom. Consequently, this study examines the components, tactics, and affective aspects of *Passionate Work Ethics*.

At this point, we can argue that Lordon's (and especially the Francophone Spinoza studies that developed in the second half of the 20th century) main contribution is to bring a fresh air to the stagnation in the ideology and governmentality studies, by including affect and desire to the discussion. This approach provides an answer to the question of affect, that is, how capitalist relations of production are experienced in

everyday life affectively, through affects and desires, which has been neglected in the literature on ideology and governmentality. Therefore, the “affective economy” approach, which I follow in this study mainly through Lordon, aims to contribute to the literature on ideology and governmentality by providing an answer to the question of how capitalism produces its own self-evident laws “by education, tradition, and habit” and how it reproduces itself at the everyday level through affect and desire. Thus, this study and the Passionate Work Ethics developed here do not directly confront either the literature on ideology or the literature on governmentality but aim to overcome the limitations of this literature’s approach to post-Fordist labor relations by incorporating affect and desire and to enrich this literature from a Spinozian perspective.

When I say affect in this dissertation I am not talking simply about feelings or emotions. Affect includes the feelings and emotions but is not limited to them. To quote Deleuze and Guattari, “affect is the active discharge of emotion, the counterattack, whereas feeling is an always displaced, retarded, resisting emotion. Affects are projectiles just like weapons; feelings are interoceptive like tools” (1987, p. 400). Accordingly, we can say that affect is intentional.² Rather than an exposed feeling, it is a subjective impulse driven by these feelings. Intentionality therefore gives its temporal nature. As we will see in more detail in the rest of the study, affects such as fear, hope, security, and insecurity operate precisely on a temporal plane (Section 2.1.). Therefore, we can say that temporality, that is, how subjects relate to the past-present-future and how they experience it is defined by affects and, in turn, affects are shaped by this temporal experience (Pernau, 2021). With reference to affect theory, I argue that the temporality that capitalist relations of production has established through employment and work arrangement, through the distribution of

² At this point, I would also like to explain the meaning of affect-temporality-work triangle for this study. Work historically distributes the sphere of freedom and sphere of necessity in social plane through the distribution of working time and leisure time (we will see this in detail in Section 2.2). Therefore, I think that affection must be explained by grounding it on the articulation of freedom and necessity, of leisure time and working time, by the wage-labor relation in capitalism. In this sense, Marx’s analysis of formal subsumption and real subsumption is important to understand how the relationship between working time (necessity) and leisure time (freedom) creates a social life through wage-labor relation (as we will see in detail in Section 2.1.). The time-affect-work triangle, I argue, helps us to understand how individuals act between these spheres of necessity and freedom, that is, what kind of affectivity develops, through Marx’s analysis of formal and real subsumption (that is, how the capitalist wage labor relation distributes and regulates the spheres of freedom and necessity in social plane).

the sphere of necessity and the sphere of leisure, working time and leisure time regulates the affective experience of the working subjects at the intersection of individual and social planes.

We will discuss this in more detail in the Section 2.1. on “Affective Economy” and Section 2.2. on “Time and Organization of Work”. In this context, I examine the way the spheres of freedom and necessity (i.e., leisure time and working time) have been distributed and organized in particular historical work and employment regimes of capitalism (i.e., Fordist-Taylorist period and post-Fordist period) and what kind of social structures of affects have been derived in these periods in Section 2.2. Therefore, in Section 2.2., rather than simply narrating the history of wage-labor in capitalism through the transition from Fordist to post-Fordist period, I examine (through Marx’s analysis of formal subsumption and real subsumption which I discussed in Section 2.1.) how the spheres of freedom and necessity, working time and leisure time have been distributed in these periods; how the articulation of working time and leisure time has changed to the detriment of leisure time; how working time has increasingly occupied leisure time; how the work-life balance has been dispersed; how flexible and precarious forms of freelance work, immaterial forms of labor have developed and became widespread; and what kind of social structures of affect and social time regimes have developed over the distribution of the spheres of freedom and necessity, leisure time and working time in these different periods.

Work, with the social time regime it creates through its power to divide time into the sphere of necessity and of freedom, into working time and leisure time, establishes a mechanism on life by which the possibilities and limitations in life are distributed and the subjectivity is settled. In other words, the history of the wage labor and the history of the commodification and domination of time in capitalism, that is, the history of the composition of labor and time in the form of commodity form and their subsumption under the capital are one and the same process. And I owe this idea to Marx: life is the economy, distribution, arrangement of the temporal. But on the condition that we take time as the sphere of action, change and the horizon of life, and economy as *oikonomia* in the Ancient Greek sense:

On the basis of communal production, the determination of time remains, of course, essential. The less time the society requires to produce wheat, cattle etc., the more time it wins for the other production, material or mental. Just as in the case of an individual, the multiplicity of its development, its enjoyment and its activity depends on economization of time. Economy of time, to this, all economy reduces itself. Society likewise has to distribute its time in a purposeful way, in order to achieve a production adequate to its overall needs; just as the individual has to distribute his time correctly in order to satisfy the various demands on his activity. Thus, economy of time, along with the planned distribution of labor time among the various branches of production, remains the first economic law on the basis of communal production. It becomes law, there, to an even higher degree (Marx, 1993, pp. 172-173).

In this context, this study proposes to put the work and employment relations back on our agenda. As I mentioned at the beginning, “structuralist” approaches that examines this process from a macro-economic position reduce the role of individuals and cultural process; according to this, individuals are understood only as the bearers of these structures. But in order to understand the “work society” and its political and social implications, it is necessary to understand the individual’s relationship with work by “bringing the worker back in” (Kalleberg, 2009, p. 14). This does not mean an “individualistic sociology/politics” but a “sociology/politics of individualism” (Ehrenberg, 2010), because the individualism manufactured by the neoliberal ideology, I think, pushes us to understand how individuals experience this post-Fordist work regime, how they make sense of it, how they are affected by it and how they affect it. In other words, the reason for considering the individual is not that the way to understand the structure passes through the individual, as methodological individualism claims, but to understand individualism as a social phenomenon. I think that this way we can understand how individuals become the bearers of this structure, how this macro structure and relations become dominant on everyday life, and what the ways of coping with it can be. This led me to ask the following questions: What is the dominant employment regime today? Have new, different forms of work and employment emerged, and if so, what are they? How do the new forms of work and employment characterize individual life and social relations? Can we distinguish dominant affective moods produced by the employment regime today? How does the dominant employment regime characterize the affective composition of labor today? What kind of temporality do these forms establish, and how do they organize the relationship between working time and leisure time, necessity and freedom?

Taking all this into account, I will examine the “affective economy of precarity and flexibility”. This study will focus on flexibility and precarity as today’s dominant working and employment arrangement and will examine what affects and moods, what kinds of individualities and subjectivities, what kinds of sociality and politics this produces. As shown in the section 2.2. on “Time and Organization of Work”, both flexibility and precarity are now becoming the dominant form that characterize employment relations, while the distinction between working time and leisure time is blurring and working time is starting to occupy more and more leisure time. In section 2.2. I schematize the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism historically and show the development of immaterial labor as the specific labor form of the post-Fordist period. And within this historical schema, I specifically focus on the immaterial labor, which we regard as one of the specific consequences of post-Fordism, the form of labor in which precarity and flexibility crystallize. Therefore, the phenomenon that I consider worthy of empirical examination is this current situation in which the precarity and flexibility paradigm is affectively embraced. In this way, we can grasp the affective presence of economic labor relations, understand the tensions it creates between social reality and our subjectivity, and realize its impact on our desires, fears, and hopes, that is, our subjectivity: What might lie behind the acceptance of precarious and flexible conditions, when it is accepted? What could be the affective conditions and individual-societal implications of this acceptance? Why is it accepted, if not, how is it opposed and resisted? What are the organized and individual ways of opposing precarity and flexibility in social and daily life?

In this thesis, I will examine the post-Fordist working society, which is afflicted with precarity and flexibility, covered with the Passionate Work Ethics, with mottos of “do what you love, love what you do” and “become your own boss”; I will identify its subtle and tricky strategies that appeal to passions and desires, and its affective schemes. My argument is that Passionate Work Ethics (as we will see in more detail in Section 2.3.) represents the prevailing affective scheme in today’s flexible and precarious working environment, characterized by the hegemony of immaterial labor. In this thesis, we focus on the forms of work in which the immaterial labor has become hegemonic and which has post-Fordist characteristics in terms of precarity and flexibility. In this regard, the freelancing, in which the distinction between working

time and free time is blurred and working time is gradually taking over leisure time, is a case that will help us understand the current situation in which immaterial labour has become hegemonic within the contemporary capitalist system. Focusing on freelance work as a case that where the widespread flexible and precarious working style and immaterial labor crystallize, we try to explain how precarious and flexible working conditions are made “desirable” today.

However, it should be noted that our hypothesis here does not claim to be explanatory about the entire capitalist system. The conditions on which the classical-Marxist analysis of capitalism is based, namely the distinction between labor time and free time, the categories of quantified abstract labor and surplus labor etc. are still valid. In this context, it should be noted that this approach, which I developed within the “affective economy” theoretical framework, can be adapted to other forms of labor, other employment regimes, and other modes of production. However, what I call Passionate Work Ethics in this thesis is unique to the immaterial labor that characterizes the labor regime of the post-Fordist period and the freelance work as a case that crystallizes it. Put it differently, in other cases, in other forms of labor, there may be different affective structures than those established by Passionate Work Ethics. However, there is something unique about the affective dimension of today’s flexible and precarious post-Fordist working conditions (Passionate Work Ethics), and this study attempts to explain the functioning of this new form of labor (immaterial labor) in capitalist relations of exploitation and the role of desire and affections in its functioning. Therefore, the contribution of this study, which focuses on immaterial labor and freelance work within this autonomist theoretical background, lies in its effort to explain the operation of Passionate Work Ethics, which is specific to the immaterial labor.

One could argue that this work ethics has become the norm in the realm of employment, particularly among white-collar workers, “new professionals”, and young university graduates, particularly since the 1990s. Nowadays, there is an expectation for a job to be a passionate pursuit, something that is genuinely enjoyed. Work is now perceived and felt by many as the source of life’s purpose. I contend that Passionate Work Ethics serves as the “social lubricant” for the smooth operation of the prevailing precarious and flexible employment regime under neoliberalism. It can be

argued that this work ethics is intrinsic to the post-Fordist work environment and is cultivated through various channels (such as personal development publications, management literature, etc.). If we refer back to the earlier quote from Spinoza (“they will fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance”), we can understand that the concept of Passionate Work Ethics entails employees passionately desiring their own subjugation.

The impact of the post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics lies in its ability to touch upon something inherently “human”: the desire to work in a job that one truly wants and loves. This inherent desire to do what we love seems quite “innocent”. As we will see in Section 2.3., many socialist, anarchist, and utopian thinkers in fact argue that pursuing one’s passions is more liberating and beneficial in terms of our relationship with work (Hope & Richards, 2015). The problem here is rather that we love and desire what we have to do, namely wage labor as an obligation to sell our labor. The issue here is not that pleasure and joy are inherently negative emotions; rather, they are co-opted by the profit-driven, productivity-focused, and efficiency-oriented nature of capitalist working conditions. In other words, beyond this “innocence” lies a work ethics that seeks to make the conditions of precarity and flexibility appealing and adaptable by evoking, in Spinozist terms, “passive joyful affects” between hope and fear.

1.1. Methodology

1.1.1. Overview of the Motivation of Research

This study is a qualitative one examining the new neoliberal work ethics and its affective scheme. The fundamental question that this study tries to answer is “what is the motivation that drives us to neoliberal conditions of work?” I am trying to answer to this question with the theory of “affective economy”. This theory tells us that affects and feelings are essential for any form of economic production, and that collective feelings, emotions, affects and affective structures are effective in shaping social-individual life and in the production of subjectivity. Within this context, I take one step further from the question of “what is the motivation that drives us to work?” and make the question a little more specific: what is the motivation that drive us to work in today’s precarious and flexible post-Fordist working conditions? For this reason, in

Section 2.2., I showed how work and employment relations have been transformed; how the affective and temporal dimensions of social life, leisure-working time balance and job security have been shaped while transitioning from the Fordist-Taylorist organization of work to the post-Fordist flexible work organization. Today, flexibility and precarity have become the norm; regular, secure jobs in terms of work and employment are now exception.

Identifying this bare reality was the first step of my study. But it was not possible to explain the question “why do we work?” simply by saying “because of the mute economic compulsion” of capitalism. The neoliberal transformation has made work and employment relations precarious and flexible in favor of capital, it is true. But did this transformation become an everyday reality, entered into our lives and adopted with these decisions taken in favor of capital? In other words, it had a “demand” side on the part of wage laborers, in my opinion. To recall Spinoza again, people could desire their own slavery as if it were for their own salvation. Spinoza’s assertion (and the texts on desire, precarity, affective economy, libidinal economy by Negri, Deleuze, London, and Read, who wrote based on Spinoza’s theory of politics and affect) enabled me to take the second step.

In this thesis, which focuses on today’s flexible and precarious post-Fordist work relations and immaterial labor, I look at how the collective affective structure addressed, invoked, and activated by the new post-Fordist work ethics plays a role in the continuation of this employment and working relationship. What could be the affective dynamics that enable the adoption and reproduction of precarity and flexibility by rooting in social relations? I hope that the case study of the dissertation will answer to this question.

My case study on university students and freelancers tries to answer the conundrum of precarity and flexibility acquiescence with a double-sided questioning: on the one hand, how those who have not entered the wage labor relationship before but are in the process of entering it, perceive and experience the reality awaiting them; on the other hand, how is the experience and affective conditions of those who are in a precarious and flexible working regime? My claim is that, although precarity and flexibility are negative-sounding concepts, they have a very strong potential to take

root in everyday life, as they resonate with the “affective structure of our age” characterized by uncertainty and risk. In other words, as precarity and flexibility can be accepted in accordance with the affective structure of social life, they have been given some degree of everyday legitimacy. In this respect, this dissertation tries to explain precarity and flexibility acquiescence empirically by examining how the precarious and flexible working organization is compatible with the affective structure of our age, which is characterized by uncertainty, and how it is rooted in everyday life, adopted and what kind of subjectivity it produces.

As an “affective structure”, a “collective mood”, I understand uncertainty as an enveloping atmosphere, an environment in which people dwell. In this respect, the feeling of uncertainty, which we can think of as an individual feeling in most cases, is actually a shared affective orientation towards social life, the economy, and the future. As we will see in my case study, uncertainty is accepted as a reality, beyond experiencing it in good or bad ways, positive or negative emotions. But the main thing that characterizes uncertainty is its ambiguity. In other words, it contains many positive and negative emotions together (stress experienced in the present, anxiety about the future, fear or hope that everything could be different...). In this sense, I argue that the “affective fluctuation”, which Spinoza refers to as *fluctuatio animi* on the ontological plane, is the affect that characterizes our individual and social life today. I claim that the precarity and flexibility acquiescence has an affective response precisely because it is a form of employment and work that overlap with it.

And, as a final step, I develop an answer to the question “what kind of affective structure enables people to desire, adopt and accept today’s precarious and flexible working organization and immaterial labor?” In the form of a tentative hypotheses, my substantive point is that the infusion of post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics which invests in desires, arouses enjoyment, seduction, motivation, and autonomy ensures its legitimacy and make people desire to work by producing “passive joyful affects” in Spinozist sense. Therefore, in the case study, we will trace the elements, strategies, and affective themes of this work ethics and its affective regime. We will examine the conditions for reception, experience, affective inclusion and resistance by the worker-to-be and independent professionals. By examining the affirmation processes and dynamics, questions that I expect to find answers at the end are as follows: How is the

Passionate Work Ethics produced and promoted? How is it that employees approve of working under flexible and precarious conditions? How do they internalize this ethics? Within this context, this will be an ethnographic study examining the ways and degrees in which the subjects adopt in a self-persuasive way neoliberal conditions of work or negotiate and question it in a critical way.

1.1.2. Sample

For this purpose, I established the target population of the study on two legs: (1) senior university students at the graduation stage and/or graduates who have not yet entered a wage labor relationship; (2) independent professionals who have entered a wage labor relationship and currently have freelance-gig work experience.

Since I think that the Passionate Work Ethics' promises are more suitable for "white collar", creative jobs, I focused on examples of immaterial labor in this study (as we will discuss later in the relevant section of the study). Because, in the context of the subject of this study, immaterial labor describes more "lovable", "desirable", "cool", autonomous, creative and intellectual works. Therefore, first of all, this concept is meaningful in terms of showing the inclusion of emotions and cognitive abilities, and leisure time that did not belong to the sphere of work before, and that is why I chose independent professionals working as freelancers as examples of immaterial labor because it is a case that fits my discussion on real subsumption. And secondly, immaterial labor is also a more fruitful case for my discussion on the Passionate Work Ethics, as they include works that are more open to the Passionate Work Ethics' promises both for the worker-to-be and for freelancers. In this respect, I think that immaterial labor is the epitome of current precarious and flexible employment relationships and I suggest that it is a tool for understanding fundamental transformations occurring both in working relationships and at the level of subjectivity.

I think I should explain why I established my sample on two legs. This study could have been done by looking at only graduates or only freelancers. But I think my decision to choose both recent graduates as worker-to-be and independent professionals better illustrates the Passionate Work Ethics' appeal, which works differently on employees and those on the threshold of employment. Choosing only

one of these cases would be a one-sided descriptive study (perhaps the best would be to do long-term research and to follow the affective structure of a certain group from being a student to being an employee, but unfortunately this was not possible for me in the limited period of this dissertation). But, as I am trying to do here, I think that a comparative study shows better how the Passionate Work Ethics works temporally and what kind of subjectivity production process it is. That is, (1) how do graduates as worker-to-be view work in general, and freelance-gig work and its promises in particular? How does the Passionate Work Ethics on them in that liminal period? (2) And when one joins the wage labor relationship, how does the Passionate Work Ethics begin to function? Which promises are fulfilled and which are not fulfilled?

While doing this, as I mentioned, I first established my sample on young people. Why? First, because young people are the primary target of this ethics that appeals to the passions and desires. In addition to this, there is also a new generation that has been born into new, alternative employment and work arrangements that I mentioned, especially in the last two or three decades.³ The transition from university to work life, from youth to adulthood, that is, the process of “starting to earn his/her own bread and butter”, is a threshold period in which decisions about life are taken, and a critical period in terms of adopting or averting this post-Fordist work ethics and of the establishment of subjectivity. That is why I found it appropriate to choose the senior and graduate students studying at the universities such as METU, Boğaziçi, Bilkent, Koç, Sabancı for my case study, because the affective appeal of the corporations that are the bearers of the neoliberal passion paradigm is mainly aimed at these students, and we can assume that the students studying at these universities are also inclined towards this paradigm. In this context, as one of two pillars of my case study, I will conduct interviews with senior and graduate engineering and social sciences students at the universities that I mentioned to understand what kind of affective structure the

³ For example, Nunes and Livanos (2015), in their study on the experience of precarity among young people across the EU, show that young people voluntarily consent to precarious jobs, while those over the age of 30 prefer precarious jobs out of necessity. Of course, it would be wrong to make such a simplistic distinction between consent and necessity, and to argue that young people easily settle for precarity. Various variables such as class and gender come into play here. However, it is a fact that, especially in the last two or three decades, a different relationship with work, time, necessity and freedom has developed.

Passionate Work Ethics' promises and freelance-gig work creates on them as yet unexperienced.

On the other hand, the other focus of my case study is “independent professionals” working in freelance-gig jobs, the way they experience precarity and flexibility in their working conditions and in everyday life. I choose precarious freelancers because this increasingly common form of work makes sense for both the leisure-work time debate and the precarity and flexibility debate. Therefore, in this study, which focuses on precarious and flexible working relationship, the most important reason for me to choose independent professionals working in freelance-gig jobs is that this working form is the one in which the post-Fordist work society and its ethics is crystallized, thus it is information-rich enough to be the “ideal type” of precarity and flexibility.

Freelance work does not actually refer to a single type of work. In other words, its main features are precarious employment and flexible working arrangement, but there are several different types of it, and it can be said that their precarity-flexibility degrees are also different. For example, “independent contractors” as traditional freelancers, “moonlighters” who do freelance work in their spare time as a side job, “diversified workers” that combine regular work and freelance work, “temporary workers” who work temporarily, and “freelance business owners” as self-employed entrepreneurs who can also employ employees. On the other hand, a distinction can be made here between high-skilled and low-skilled freelance jobs. For example, microworks like Amazon MechanicalTurk can be considered as low-skilled simple jobs, as opposed to high-skilled jobs such as software development and designing. We can say that those who do low-skilled freelance jobs generally prefer it out of necessity, or that their motivation to work is not usually with desire and passion. “Independent professionals”, on the other hand, is the category of freelance worker who do such high-skilled, creative jobs and are referred to as “autonomous economic subject”, “IBOs” (Independent Business Owner), or “self-disciplining subject” in the literature. And, in this sense, a category that is directly the bearer and the subject of the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics and “entrepreneurial subjectivity” discourse. For those in this category who are engaged in more creative, immaterial works, we can say that freedom at work, independence, autonomy, and self-realization are much more important. In this sense, we can also say that those in this category act as an individual corporation,

as “Me. Inc.”. While creating my sample on freelancers, I tried to focus on the “independent professionals”. Because, according to both my observations and the literature, we can say that this group is more inclined to respond to the Passionate Work Ethics with the demand of higher autonomy, freedom, and self-realization. However, I also tried not to include only this category in my sample. I wanted my freelance sample to be as diverse as possible. I wanted to include in my sample not only those who have chosen freelance work with their “free will” but also those who have turned to freelance work due to “necessity”, because I think that this creates a significant difference in terms of the functioning of the Passionate Work Ethics.

Table 1. Participant Profile

Code Name	University	Faculty	Educational Status	Regular Work Experience	Freelance Work Experience
WtB-1	Bilkent University	Faculty of Architecture	New Graduate (Master Student)	X	-
WtB-2	Bilgi University	Faculty of Social Sciences	New Graduate	-	X
WtB-3	Bilgi University	Faculty of Engineering	Senior Student	-	-
WtB-4	Bilkent University	Faculty of Architecture	Senior Student	-	-
WtB-5	Boğaziçi University	Faculty of Social Sciences	New Graduate (Master Student)	X	X
WtB-6	Middle East Technical University (METU)	Faculty of Social Sciences	Senior Student	-	X
WtB-7	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	New Graduate (Master Student)	-	-
WtB-8	Boğaziçi University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Senior Student	-	X
WtB-9	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	New Graduate (Master Student)	-	-
WtB-10	Bilkent University	Faculty of Engineering	Senior Student	-	-
WtB-11	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Senior Student	X	-
WtB-12	Boğaziçi University	Faculty of Social Sciences	New Graduate	-	-
WtB-13	METU	Faculty of Architecture	New Graduate (Master Student)	-	X
WtB-14	Boğaziçi University	Faculty of Social Sciences	New Graduate (Master Student)	-	-
WtB-15	METU	Faculty of Engineering	Senior Student	-	-
WtB-16	Koç University	Faculty of Engineering	Senior Student	-	X
WtB-17	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Senior Student	-	X
WtB-18	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Senior Student	-	-
IP-1	Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University	Faculty of Fine Arts	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-2	Hacettepe University	Faculty of Education	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-3	İstanbul University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer

Table 1. Continued

IP-4	METU	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Architect
IP-5	9 Eylül University	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer
IP-6	Marmara University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Video Editing-Photographer
IP-7	Yıldız Technical University	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	X	Freelance Marketing-Advertising
IP-8	İstanbul Technical University (İTÜ)	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer
IP-9	Bilgi University	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer
IP-10	Akdeniz University	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-11	Bilgi University	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-12	İTÜ	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-13	METU	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Tutoring
IP-14	Ankara University	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer
IP-15	METU	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Architect
IP-16	Haliç University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Architect
IP-17	Gazi University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Video Editing-Photographer
IP-18	Hacettepe University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-19	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	-	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-20	İstanbul Technical University	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer
IP-21	Marmara University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	-	Freelance Developer
IP-22	Akdeniz University	Faculty of Fine Arts	Graduate	X	Freelance Video Editing-Photographer
IP-23	Akdeniz University	Faculty of Communication	Graduate	X	Freelance Social Media Manager
IP-24	Marmara University	Faculty of Education	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-25	9 Eylül University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Developer
IP-26	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	-	Freelance Tutoring
IP-27	Çukurova University	Faculty of Communication	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-28	METU	Faculty of Education	Graduate	X	Freelance Video Editing-Photographer
IP-29	İstanbul University	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Social Media Manager

Table 1. Continued

IP-30	Anadolu University	Faculty of Architecture	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-31	Yıldız Technical University (YTU)	Faculty of Engineering	Graduate	-	Freelance Developer
IP-32	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Social Media Manager
IP-33	METU	Faculty of Social Sciences	Graduate	X	Freelance Designer-Graphic Designer
IP-34	Ankara University	Faculty of Communication	Graduate	X	Freelance Marketing-Advertising

1.1.3. Research Method

I think that qualitative approach is the most appropriate method for this study which focuses on the desires, fears, aspirations, expectations and regrets that shape the affective modes of the participants, and tries to understand how the participants experience and make sense of precarity and flexibility, how the Passionate Work Ethics functions and how it is resisted.

For this purpose, I used the grounded theory approach. This approach, through a data collection process that go between theory and practice, enables us to show the relationships between different categories, thus producing new theories in the light of data or enriching existing theories. We can say that the most important feature of grounded theory is that it allows the existing theory to be enriched with the data extracted from the empirical case, instead of applying an existing theory to the empirical case. I derived certain main promises and necessities of neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics by comparing the categories that emerged in my review of the “affective economy”, “affective labor”, and “passionate work” literature with the categories that emerged from my own field research, and analyzed them in my case study. Then, by analyzing how these promises and necessities are experienced and whether they are adopted or not, I deduced these three components of the Passionate Work Ethics that made people adopt precarious and flexible working conditions: “excitement and enthusiasm”, “substantial attachment”, “endurance”. In this way, it turns out that the Passionate Work Ethics does not operate in a single form, but in different ways at different levels of intensity, creating different modes of desiring.

Addressing affects as an interactive process embedded in the social context and interactions, as a collective activity, implies giving more importance to ethnographic methods. In this respect, I should also state that this study is an ethnographic one. In fact, as it is called in the literature, this study can be defined as “grounded theory ethnography” or “grounded ethnography”. Trying to integrate the grounded theory approach with the ethnographic methods of participant observation and interview, this hybrid approach enables to overcome the descriptive limitations of ethnography, “formalizes and extends the limited theoretical component of ethnography (...), combines unique attributes of grounded theory’s theory-methods package with traditional ethnographic procedures” (Babchuk & Hitchcock, 2013, pp. 30-31). Quoting Babchuk and Hitchcock (2013, p. 31) “grounded theory ethnography can extend the often more limited theoretical component of ethnography that has traditionally relied on description and analysis of a priori theory”. In this respect, this hybrid approach makes the descriptive nature of ethnographic work more explanatory, thus making ethnography more suitable for theory generation than a theory justification. In this regard, the “affective method” of this study can be summarized as “(1) asking research questions and formulating research agendas relating to affective processes, for (2) collecting or producing embodied data and for (3) making sense of this data in order to produce academic knowledge” (Knudsen & Stage, 2015, p. 1).

Not only did I choose ethnography because it was a suitable methodology for this study, but this study is inevitably ethnographic because my own experience of employment and unemployment, flexibility and precarity, doing the job I love and facing its handicaps is also a big part of this research. Thus, this work is almost even autoethnographic. I am studying a cultural environment that I am also involved in. In most cases, I have shared with the people I interviewed their experiences of precarity and flexibility, the problems they had, and how Passionate Work Ethics made them feel.

This study is not simply a “descriptive” study that reveals and presents the affects of the interviewees, but rather a study that tries to understand together how we experience the common ground that I share with them (the neoliberal work society). Rather than an ethnographic study that “exoticizes” its research object, this study is an almost autoethnographic study of a researcher who is, in a sense, a part of the field he studies.

Prolonged observation allows researcher to share affective experiences with the group and to use his/her own affects to some extent to understand what the interviewees may be going through. Ethnography thus makes it possible to feel directly on oneself the collective affective atmosphere. Therefore, this study is more than a survey; I have strived to conduct this research not as a mere interviewer but as a witness. At this point, we could remember Goffman's notice about fieldwork:

[Fieldwork] is one of getting data, it seems to me, by subjecting yourself, your own body and your own personality, and your own social situation, to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals, so that you can physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethic situation, or whatever. (...) I feel that the way this is done is not to, of course, just listen to what they talk about, but to pick up on their minor grunts and groans as they respond to their situation (Goffman, 1989, p. 125).

Ethnographic methods have the advantage of rejecting the figure of an observer totally detached from the subjective perspectives of social actors. Against this positivist vision, ethnographic immersion invites the researcher to share the social experiences, and thereby the affective reactions. As a result, the subjectivity of the researcher, as well as his/her ability to be affected during the research can be considered as powerful tools of analysis. But without forgetting to tread a fine line between engagement and distancing, between affective involvement in the field and the reaffirmation of the primacy of the heuristic aims of research, and to establish "emotional reflexivity in research" (Kahl, 2019, p. 11).

The sampling method of the thesis is non-random stratified purposeful sampling. This method seemed appropriate for this study as it allowed me to subdivide the phenomenon I am dealing with, to reveal their characteristics, to describe them strongly, and to make comparisons between them. I think that purposive sampling method is much more appropriate for such a qualitative study. Because I needed to have participants information-rich who could contribute to the development of the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics which I tried to theorize with the grounded theory approach. Because, according to what I learned from my observations during the pre-research period and from my literature review, I realized that some categories of individuals are important for the phenomenon I examined. For example, programmers and digital nomads. I realized both from social media, from the people around me and

from my related readings that those in these categories are the individuals most caught up in the promises of neoliberal work ethic. On the other hand, I tried to respect the engineering-social science distinction while determining my sample on students and graduates. Because in the current situation where the impacts of digitalization are increasing in working relations, I observed that students studying in departments such as computer and electrical engineering are more attracted to this neoliberal appeal. I also predicted that the experience of precarity and flexibility of engineering students who are more likely to find a job after graduation and social science students who are less likely to find a job after graduation would make a significant difference in their perspective and experiences regarding work and life. On the other hand, while choosing these students, I chose top-notch universities such as METU, Boğaziçi, Koç, Bilkent, and Bilgi, because it would not be wrong to say that the corporations that spread the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics mainly appeal to the students studying in these universities, and that these students are inclined to such corporations, and creative, cool, autonomous immaterial works.

Stratified purposeful sampling method can be criticized as it does not allow for generalization because it does not use random sampling. If this study is a quantitative study based on statistical methods aiming to produce generalizations, then random sampling would be useful, but the purposive sampling method makes this study, which tries to reveal the Passionate Work Ethics with the grounded theory method, more theoretically saturated and make its validity stronger. Generalizations of qualitative studies do not have to be based on statistics, numbers, random sampling. Qualitative studies, on the contrary, can produce stronger and more valid generalizations if they proceed with the help of a purposive sampling method and with the guidance of the literature, through examples that can contribute to theorizing and developing the phenomenon. In other words, quantity alone may not necessarily mean making scientific generalizations; on the other hand, an appropriate case and research process can provide valid generalizations deduced from a qualitative study.

1.1.4. Data Collection, Analysis, and Interview Phase

I collected data from various sources. I reviewed relevant documents, texts, books, social media accounts, and job advertisements to single out premises and necessities

of neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics. I also conducted semi-structured interviews. In addition to these structured interviews, I also extracted a lot of information from unstructured everyday conversations and observations.

No doubt, the interview process is one of the most important stages of the research, as it is important in terms of producing the knowledge of the field. Interviews were also very important for this study. I knew I had to ask the right questions and to conduct interviews with the right motivation in order to find significant answers to the questions I asked. In this respect, my main motivation in the interviews was to understand the contradictions, confusions, inconsistencies in interviewee's own narratives on the comparison of Fordist and post-Fordist work arrangements. In other words, the flexible and precarious post-Fordist work arrangement has its pros as well as its cons, its attractive as well as its unattractive sides. Based on both the interviews and my experience and observations, it seems that the Passionate Work Ethics resolves this ambiguity of the interviewees towards post-Fordist work arrangement, in favor of flexibility and precarity, thus the majority of the interviewees favored flexible and precarious freelance working arrangement. Understanding how these contradictions and confusions establish an affective scheme would be possible by revealing these inconsistencies and contradictions. In this regard, I asked questions about seven topics: (1) comparison of freelance and regular work organization, (2) dissatisfaction and/or satisfaction with current working conditions (for employees), (3) work-life balance, (4) transformation of working relations, (5) work ethics and the meaning of work, (6) experience of precarity, flexibility, and uncertainty, (7) future, expectations, and fears. I coded the interviews with the MAXQDA and analyzed them with the categories I created. I caught the similarities and affinities and distinctions between participants and various patterns emerged here. In this context, my questions were about the affective meaning and experience of work. I tried to understand how the participants affectively make sense of and experience flexible and precarious work, unpaid work, temporal flexibility, and occupation of their leisure time by work. I wonder if one has a job one desires, how does it affect him/her? Do people make more concessions from themselves if they work in a job they desire? If so, what promises of Passionate Work Ethics seem appealing and desirable? What would a desirable job mean?

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE PROBLEMATIC OF THE STUDY

2.1. Affective Economy

One of my aims in this chapter is to convert Spinoza's metaphysics of being into the principles applicable in the political theory. By borrowing the concepts such as "affects", "passion", "desire", and "conatus" from Spinoza, my purpose is to offer a new – and experimental – theory of action and subject. In other words, referencing Lordon's study, I will offer a theory for "structuralism of passions" (2013), for social structures of affects. Within this context, I will also elaborate on the concept of what I called "affective economy". This concept can be understood in two senses: first, the economy, the relations of production and distribution, produces affects and desires as much as goods and services; second, affects and desires are necessary elements of the production and reproduction of any economic mode of production.

To this end, I will first discuss Spinoza's theory of affect and the central role of the concepts of "conatus" and "affection" in this theory; then, I will try to use this theory and the concepts, in a creative and experimental way, from a Marxist-materialist position, by reducing Spinoza's concepts from their metaphysical position and considering them in the context of existing social and economic relations. By doing this, through the concept of affective economy, I aim to draw a kind of structural map of the affective mechanisms produced by existing social relations in the end of this study.

First of all, we can ask how a philosopher from 17th century help us in examining the contemporary political life. What might be Spinoza's novelty and his contribution for political theory today? We see that, especially in the contemporary French-speaking literature, an answer to this question is carefully sought and the social sciences based

on Spinozist epistemology and ontology is developing through works of, for example, Lordon (2013, 2014), Lordon and Citton (2010), Fischbach (2014), Matheron (2020), Balibar (2008), and Bove (1996). Their works can give us some insight into how a philosophical system enter into dialogue with the empirical issues of political theory.

Despite the temporal distance which separates us from Spinoza, I think that he is still fresh as a social thinker and his philosophical system can enlighten us on some of the issues that contemporary political theory deal with. In this respect, the discovery of the socio-political dimension of his philosophical system in the 1960's was remarkable, both academically and politically. What characterizes this discovery was, first of all, its articulation with the intellectual and political unrest which marked the turning point of the 1960's and 70's, within a broad spectrum ranging from anarchism to Althusserian Marxism. As Lordon and Citton said, what appealed to Marxist circles in Spinoza's system was its materialism, radical atheism and his vision of socio-political relations based on struggle and power relations which "shattering the contractualist fetishism that characterizes 'bourgeois' political thought" (2010, p. 15). Spinoza presents a conflictual model of social relations which refuses the "absolute break", proposed by Hobbes, between the political state and the state of nature; it is rather necessary to conceive a permanent interpenetration of these two spheres which makes political life a continuation of struggle. From the early 90's, a second Spinozist generation has come to continue this socio-political investigation. In this generation, we have seen a Spinozist inclination towards affective, cognitive and biological-bodily processes in the relations of power and domination, inspired both by works of Foucault (1978, 1979, 2015) on governmentality, micro-physics of power and bio-politics, and by works of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987) on the phenomenon of capturing of power and desires. Negri and Hardt (2000, 2004) can also be included in this generation.

But what exactly is Spinozism? Is there a canonical doctrine that defines what Spinozism is? The answer, I think, is no. There is no "official Spinozism". It can be said that it is a philosophical system that keeps itself open to creative re-readings and different philosophical contacts. Therefore, we are talking about a plurality of Spinozisms. However, if there is a plurality of Spinozisms, they nevertheless have a common base. Following Lordon and Citton (2010, pp. 3-8), we can specify five

principles defining the basic assumptions of this commonality: (1) Spinozism is an immanent naturalism, (2) Spinozism is an immanent causality, (3) Spinozism is a theoretical anti-humanism, (4) Spinozism is against methodological individualism, and (5) Spinozism offers a relational approach to social reality. To clarify these principles, I will now discuss briefly Spinoza's general philosophical system and affects' role in this system.

2.1.1. Spinoza's Theory of Affects: Affective Relationship to the World

Before the third part of *Ethics*, in which his theory of affects was developed, Spinoza presents the metaphysical foundations of his general project aiming to take humanity from servitude to freedom. The first part demonstrates the unity and uniqueness of "substance", that is to say, God or Nature, and defines "thought" and "extension" as no longer distinct substances but as attributes of the substance, in opposition to Cartesian dualism of mind and body. From this point on, man can no longer perceive himself as a mind and a body which would be mysteriously reunited with one another. Man is considered as a "mode", a way of being of substance perceived as body according to the attribute of extent and as mind according to the attribute of thought. Body and mind can no longer be perceived as the union of two instances in the same being, but as the expression of one and the same reality, of the same being perceived in two different ways. From these will result a totally innovative conception of "affects" in the third part. Starting from this theory of affects, Spinoza then will expose in the last two parts the ethical consequences of his project by explaining what constitutes the servitude of man in the fourth part and how he can achieve his freedom in the fifth part.

It is very clear for Spinoza that God is at the origin of everything, yet his conception of God departs from the anthropomorphism of religions. He equates God with Nature, indicating that it would not be an abstract and transcendental entity that would influence humans, rather an immanent power that would determine everything. Therefore, Nature is the order of causal production of the entire universe; its power is essential to everything. It is the first ring of the chain of cause-and-effect. Nothing in the universe can escape the chain of cause-and-effect.

As I have pointed out, according to Spinoza, Nature is a coherent network of cause-and-effect relationship. In Nature, everything is an effect of a cause, but also the cause of some effects. In other words, to be is to be both to affect and to be affected. Also, to the extent that man thinks, he is able to produce ideas of his “affections”. Therefore, the correlation between an affection and the idea of this affection constitutes an “affect”⁴. Given that for Spinoza the mind and the body are one and the same thing, the idea that one could act on the other no longer makes sense and we must therefore consider the affects which Spinoza presents us throughout the third part of *Ethics*. To do this Spinoza propose what we could call a “structure of affects”:

I shall, then, treat of the nature and strength of the affects, and the mind’s power over them, by the same method as I have used in treating of God and the mind, and I shall consider human actions and appetites just as if it were an investigation into lines, planes, bodies (2002, p. 278).

In this regard, Spinoza considers affects as phenomena which obey the common laws of nature, and which are produced according to the processes determined by these laws. He therefore searches their origins, tries to explain how the nature of man in relation to nature of other things generates these affects, to define their nature and to find out how it is possible to control them without resorting to the free will.

This point is important because Spinoza is completely against the illusion of free will and his system is theoretically anti-humanist. He refuses to see man as a “kingdom within a kingdom” (2002, p. 277). Rather, he offers to see man as a mode, a way of being of substance which is Nature. But Spinoza’s immanent causality should not be confused with fatalism. Reducing man only a mode of substance in no way abolishes the possibility of human action. Because, as a part of God-Nature, he participates in this infinite productivity. Like any part of nature, man can produce effects that are unique to him. Spinoza’s immanent causality does not deny human action; it denies only its unconditional character and free will.

⁴ The distinction between “affection” (*affectio*) and “affect” (*affectus*) could be made here. Affection refers to any modification to which a thing can be subjected, while affect refers mainly to the idea of this affection. For example, if I cut my finger with a knife, my body is affected by the effect of that object. My body therefore suffers an affection because of its encounter with this other body which hurts it. On the other hand, affect refers to the perception we may have of an affection, the feeling as well as the idea to which this affection is correlated.

In this regard, Spinoza's system is completely against the understanding of the social world as a field in which the sovereign human individual acts. For Spinoza, "men are deceived in thinking themselves free, a belief that consist only in this, that they are conscious of their actions and ignorant of the causes by which they are determined" (*Ethics*, II. Book, 35. Scholium). The way in which Spinoza treats the question of affects therefore carries the problematics that runs through all his system, that is to say, the question of knowing how to think about freedom not in the form of free will in opposition to causality, but within the chain of cause-and-effect relation itself. How to access freedom while knowing that one cannot escape natural causality?

2.1.1.1. Affects, Desire and Conatus

At this point, we touch upon the most crucial point of Spinoza's philosophical system for our discussion: "conatus", "affect" and "desire". First of all, for the sake of conceptual clarity, we need to highlight the difference between "affect" and "emotion". Spinoza completely opposes the understanding that pushes affects into the realm of individuality, of personal, emotional inner world (which characterizes the mainstream, psychological understanding of affects/emotions). When Spinoza speaks of affects, he speaks of something different from emotions as the product of inner realm. For Spinoza, affects are the general name given to the effect in exercising power. One thing exerts its power on another, then the latter is changed: affect is the name of this change. Affect is the central concept of Spinoza's general system of power as this proposition from *Ethics* shows: "Nothing exists from whose nature an effect does not follow" (*Ethics*, I. Book, 36. Proposition). Everything is, in essence, a degree of power, that is, power to produce affects and power to be affected. In this regard, in the common order of Nature which Spinoza tells us that man is not "a kingdom within a kingdom", affects are at the center of universal causality, of the chain of cause-and-effect.

As I showed, in Spinoza's system, substance means "that which is in itself and is conceived through itself" (*Ethics*, I. Book, 3. Definition). In this regard, man is not a substance; man does not have any identity in himself. For Spinoza, individual is to be conceived as a mode, that is to say, as "the affections of substance that which is in something else and is conceived through something else" (*Ethics*, I. Book, 5.

Definition). In this sense, we are not substances, but relations, and more precisely, relations of relations. On the one hand, our individuality is made up with the (internal) relationship of its components; on the other hand, we are what we are through the (external) relationships we have with all the other objects. In this sense, an individual is not a frozen substance; it is not an undivided thing. An individual always designates a composed being. If we take the body as an example, any body is composed of smaller parts and is itself a component of another body. In other words, an individual is a relational and variable degree of power in Spinoza's system. Thus, affects mean the increase or decrease, a transition in the power to act of an individual who is a threshold, a degree of power between these external and internal relations. Affects are the mechanism that establishes the relation of determination between external bonds (the causal order of Nature) and the internal bonds (internal elements that constitute individual) and manages the effects of this relation. Therefore, it is the mechanism that makes the causal order of Nature a dynamic relation of causality rather than a one-way relation, which enables to think the integrity of the structure not as rigid structure that determines the parts but as a structure in which the parts produce the structure that compose them.

Recalling the unity of body and mind in Spinoza's system, we see that affect as transition is simultaneously a variation of the body's power to act and mind's power to think. An affect necessarily produces ideas, starting with the idea of what is experienced in the body: "By affect I understand the affections of the body by which the body's power of activity is increased or diminished, or assisted or checked, together with the ideas of these affections" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 3. Definition). According to this, the idea of something that increases or diminishes the body's power to act also increases or diminishes the mind's power to think. Therefore, the relation between body and mind, affects and ideas is not contradictory. Rather, there is a parallelism between mind and body that rejects the superiority of one over the other (Deleuze, 1988, p. 18).

In Spinoza's world, affecting and being affected are subject to an unstable, ambiguous logic of transition, *fluctuatio animi* (spiritual fluctuation), takes place during random encounters in which "each transition is accompanied by variation in capacity; a change in which powers to affect and be affected are addressable by a next event" (Massumi,

2002, p. 15). Recalling Spinoza's assumption of "nobody as yet has learned from experience what the body can and cannot do" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 2. Scholium), this proposition is based on this unstable nature of affects based on random encounters. For Spinoza, all affections are the product of good or bad encounters. An encounter is good when my power of acting increases; an encounter is bad when my power of acting diminishes. Any encounter is therefore always "the encounter between different horizons of affectivity, that is, different states of transition in the power of bodies" (Marenko, 2010, p. 138). According to Spinoza, the affect that increases the capacity of acting and thinking is "joy" and the affect that diminishing this capacity is "sadness". Affects such as "hope", "anger", "hatred", "fear", "insecurity" etc. which are derived from the fundamental affects of joy and sadness are in fact results of encounters and interactions. And for Spinoza, an ethical life should include an active effort and attitude towards increasing these good encounters.

And the name Spinoza gave to this effort, this individual degree of power is "conatus". Conatus is generally defined as the effort by which a thing strives to preserve in its being. However, as Delassus warns us, this effort cannot be confused with "the force specific to a subject which would be the primary cause of his own determination to maintain himself" (2018, p. 18). This interpretation is clearly a misunderstanding since it is based on a conception of free will. Therefore, conatus can only be understood as an effect of the unique causal system which constitutes Nature. Recalling what individual means for Spinoza, what allows perseverance in the being for a singular thing is the convenience between all the parts that constitute it.

Spinoza first describes conatus in a negative way: "No thing can be destroyed except by an external cause" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 4. Proposition). This means that the essence of a thing cannot contain in itself anything negative. In this regard, there can be nothing inside an individual that is denying him. For this reason, since something can only be destroyed by an external cause, it is possible to formulate the concept of conatus in positive way in the following proposition: "Each thing, insofar as it is in itself, endeavours to persist in its own being" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 5. Proposition). And it is also possible to assert that this effort constitutes the essence of a thing: "The conatus with which each thing endeavours to persist in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 7. Proposition). The critical point is that

conatus, which depends on the complexion of an individual and how its parts fit together and suit each other, is present in everything, whether alive or not. But this conatus does not manifest itself in the same way. In human, for Spinoza, it manifests itself in the form of “appetite” which is the essence of man. Spinoza calls the appetite “desire” when this appetite is conscious of itself:

When this conatus is related to the mind alone, it is called will; when it is related to mind and body together, it is called appetite, which is therefore nothing else but man’s essence, from the nature of which there necessarily follow those things that tend to his preservation, and which man is thus determined to perform. Further, there is no difference between appetite and desire, except that desire is usually related to men insofar as they are conscious of their appetite. Therefore, it can be defined as follows: desire is appetite accompanied by the consciousness thereof (*Ethics*, III. Book, 9. Scholium).

To the extent that desire is the essence of man, we can propose that, as an ontological/existential principle, man is conatus. The conatus in itself is pure effort, therefore generic and intransitive, not knowing what to do or what to desire. Its orientation, its particular pursuit necessarily come to him from encounters with external things which exercising their power on him, affect him and therefore determine his desire to do this or that. “Desire is the very essence of each individual insofar as that is conceived as determined by some given state of its constitution to do something” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 56. Proposition/Proof). It is only under the influence of any affection by external thing that conatus as generic and intransitive impulse finds its determination as a desire to do something. Therefore, there is no action without a desire to act and there is no such desire if there is no previous affection which has determined the conatus. To say that man lives in the condition of passion has no other meaning than to say that man lives under the affective causality.

Desire, as manifestation of conatus in man, is not simple tendency to endure by remaining identical to oneself. Rather, it constitutes his power to act and therefore designates the force which pushes a conscious being to project itself outwards to increase its power to act. Desire is constitutive of the human being, and it is in this sense that it is the very essence of man for Spinoza. We can therefore consider that if desire as appetite accompanied by consciousness of itself is an affect, it is also the power by which man is led to project himself out of himself towards other bodies that affect it but also it can affect.

Therefore, we can say that desire is an unchanneled, undesignated flux. In this regard, what the desire pursues is what it perceives as contributing to the increase in its power to act. Because desire is completely positive for Spinoza. It is not an orientation that seeks a specific thing that it lacks, as some of the theories on psychoanalysis claim. When desire is experienced as lacking, it fails and gives rise to the affect of “sadness” which expresses a decrease in power. The concept of power here should not be understood as potentiality which Spinoza denounces in his *Ethics*. Spinozist power is always actual and designates the immanent force which allows an individual to persevere in his being and to act.

As we pointed out, desire is the power to be or the power to act which means the same thing for Spinoza. Then, the question of knowing what desire desires, we can answer that if desire is the power to act, then what desire desires is to endlessly maintain and increase its power. In this regard, Spinoza links two primitive affects, “joy” and “sadness”, to desire: “By joy, I shall understand the passive transition of the mind to a state of greater perfection and by sadness the passive transition of the mind to state of less perfection” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 11. Scholium). Spinoza begins the section in which affects are defined with the definitions of these three primitive affects of joy, sadness and desire and then all the other affects are presented as variations around these three affects. Any affect is therefore the expression of our degree of power as we perceive it; thus, joy expresses the feeling of an increase in power while sadness expresses the decrease in power:

- I. Desire is the very essence of man insofar as his essence is conceived as determined to any action from any given affection of itself.
- II. Joy is man’s transition from a state of less perfection to a state of greater perfection.
- III. Sadness is man’s transition from a state of greater perfection to a state of less perfection (*Ethics*, III. Book, Definition of the Affects).

Joy and sadness therefore express the degree of power of desire as an expression of conatus. This is why it is possible to consider that if there are three primitive affects, then desire is ultimately the most fundamental of them insofar as the others are derived from it.

2.1.1.2. Political Dimension of the Affects: *Fluctuatio Animi* and the Sovereignty of Hope and Fear

In this regard, for our project of social structures of affects, we can say that the first contribution of articulating Spinoza's theory of affect to political or social theory is to link affective causality to individual's behaviors and their relations with social structures and institutions (Lordon, 2013). The social structures of affects operate at two levels: determining structures and social institutions, and determined conatus. Classical social theory generally deals with social entities have an impact on society as a whole (state, school, family, religion etc.) This approach has an advantage of highlighting the domination at operating in social field, but it has disadvantage of freezing the social order. Combination of a structuralist thought and the theory of affects makes it possible to connect the macro level to the micro level. However, it is not a question of putting forward the individual as an autonomous subject, but of understanding the effects of social structures on individual actions. Spinoza's radical anti-subjectivism and his opposition to methodological individualism offers us a world of structures, not frozen but "populated by individuals conceived as desiring powers" (Lordon, 2013, p. 4).

From the Spinozist perspective, social structures are run by desire and affects. However, social sciences looking for the driving forces often did not take them into account. This is because social sciences had a problem with the concepts of desire and affects. The problem was that the social sciences were constructed as sciences of "social" facts and not of emotions. But, with Spinoza, we can say that social sciences rediscovered emotions. However, the important point here is that this "affective turn" brings the theoretical return to the individual, actor and subject, at the risk of excluding all that is properly social in social sciences, that is, "repsychologization of the social" (Lordon, 2013, p. 2) which carries the risk of abandoning structures. Against the sentimental subjectivist tendency of contemporary social sciences to consider affective life as inner, emotional life without any social determination, we should take into account Spinoza's radically anti-subjectivist approach as an antidote that puts affects at the very center of social and political life.

Contrary to general view that discusses affects in a sentimental subjectivist way,

Spinoza's philosophical system allows us to think affects "as constitutive rather than expressive and as social rather than individual" (Read, 2011). In this regard, politics is not about the individual's "rational choice"; Spinoza shows us that politics is precisely about the examination and transformation of the conditions of those choices. In other words, it is necessary to understand the "transindividual" (Read, 2016) conditions that produce the very conditions of the choices, possibilities and desires. It is a matter of recognizing subjectivity as produced, rather than taking it as given. The critical point is that this conceptualization of structuralism of affects cannot be "confused with a reduction of the individual to the mere effects of structural conditions in which individuals become simply bearers of economic and political functions, nor it is a reduction of politics and economics to individual experiences"; rather, it allows us "to think of the way in which political and economic structures can only exist, can only reproduce themselves if they do so at the level of affects and desire" (Read, 2011). In this regard, Spinoza allows us to think socio-political implications of individual affects such as fear, hope, insecurity etc. In other words, he shows how these affects function as constitutive mechanisms of the social world.

Affects of "hope" and "fear", for example, are indispensable for political power to govern its subjects. For common sense, affects of hope and fear seem to be separate, but according to Spinoza, any political power creates itself through these two affects by leaving its subjects unstable between these two affects. The important thing here is that both of these affects are in fact ambiguous, and so the power exists itself by affectively manipulating this ambiguity. In short, we can argue that the Spinozist theory of power describes affectively manipulative power based on governing the affects and their ambiguous and volatile nature.

Here we should remember that Spinoza defined two types of power: *potentia* which refers to persistent capacity to act and *potestas*, domination which separates things from their *potentia*, from their capacity to act. According to Negri (2008, p. xv), while *potestas* is institutionalized power, *potentia* is a constitutive and dynamic intensity. Similarly, Montag (2001, p. 199) points out that the distinction between *potestas* and *potentia* corresponds to the distinction between formal, legal authority and actual power of conatus. And Baker (2014, pp. 183-184) also points out that power (*potestas*) is in essence a mechanism that constrains people from their power to act (*potentia*

agendi). Accordingly, power (*potestas*) is our own lack of power to act (*potentia*). As Lordon said, “while the main question of political philosophy is how people remain loyal to a sovereign entity and to its norms, the critical question of Spinozist political philosophy is through what combinations of desires and affects they do so” (2014, pp. 41-42). It can be argued that Spinoza’s main contribution to political theory is that he discerned the affective mechanisms underlying the functioning of political powers as *potestas*.

Within this context, I will now present the affects on an ethical-political ground, focusing in particular on the central role of the affects of hope and fear for the Spinozist political theory. Spinoza speaks of “fear” and “timidity” as obstacles on the way that lead us to freedom and salvation. In describing affects, he makes a distinction between fear and timidity as follows: “Fear is inconstant sadness arising from the idea of a thing future or past, of whose outcome we are in some doubt” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 13. Definition); “Timidity the desire to avoid a greater evil, which we fear, by a lesser evil” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 39. Definition). In this regard, timidity is a certain form of fear that is directly linked to hope as it is related to desire. Because hope is “inconsistent joy arising from the idea of a thing future or past, of whose outcome we are in some doubt” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 12. Definition). That is, between hope and fear lies the difference that hope produces a joy and fear a sadness; on the other hand, what both have in common is that they arise from an inconsistency about the future.

In *Ethics*, hope as inconsistent joy is intertwined with sadness. And even according to Deleuze, “Spinoza’s analysis goes so far that even in hope and security, he is able to find that grain of sadness that suffices to make these the feelings of slaves” (1988, p. 26). Because Spinoza says:

The emotions of hope and fear cannot be good in themselves.

Scholium: We should add that these emotions indicate a lack of knowledge and a weakness of mind, and for this reason, too, confidence, despair, pleasure, and disappointment are also indications of our weakness. For although confidence and pleasure are emotions of joy, they imply a preceding sadness, namely, hope and fear. Therefore, the more we endeavour to live by the guidance of reason, the more we endeavour to be independent of hope, to free ourselves from fear, and to command fortune as far as we can, and to direct our actions by the sure counsel of reason (*Ethics*, IV. Book, 47. Proposition).

For Spinoza it is obvious that fear is a state of sadness, and no hope can be without fear. Spinoza approaches this issue in the context of the temporality of affection. Affection can be determined in a long-term by the imagination, depending on the memory bearing the traces of the past and the possibilities in the present. Therefore, “from the image of things past or future, man is affected by the same emotion of joy or sadness as from the image of a thing present” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 18. Proposition). Certain emotions (hope, fear, despair, confidence, disappointment) are shaped according to the past, present or future states of joy and grief (*Ethics*, III. Book, 18. Proposition, 2. Scholium). Hope and fear both stem from a common suspicion; one is an unstable joy and the other is an unstable sadness. In this case, if the suspicion is removed, “confidence” as the “joy arising from the idea of a thing future or past, concerning which reason for doubt has been removed” and “despair” as the “sadness arising from the idea of a thing future or past concerning which reason for doubt has been removed” arise (*Ethics*, III. Book, 14-15. Definitions). Hope feeds confidence and fear feeds despair; in both cases, when suspicion is gone, we will have consistent feelings.

We could say that the strength of Spinoza’s analyses lies in his explanation of the complexity of feelings in a temporal context. It is precisely this temporal intricacy that causes affective instability, *fluctuatio animi*. So much so that, one’s own feelings lead him “to refrain from what he wants to do or to choose to do” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 39. Proposition, Scholium). Spinoza calls the feeling that cause people to “refrain from what he wants to do” timidity. Hence, “timidity is merely fear insofar as a man is thereby disposed to avoid by a lesser evil what he judges to be a future evil” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 39. Proposition, Scholium).

In the 50. Proposition of the third book, Spinoza says:

Anything can be the indirect cause of hope and fear (...) Insofar as we hope or fear something, to that extent we love or hate it, and so everyone can easily apply to hope and fear what we have said concerning love and hatred.

In this regard, we tend to interpret things that are a source of hope or fear for us as good or bad omens that are themselves a source of joy and sadness. We use these omens to achieve what we hope for or to avoid what we fear. Spinoza, in *Theological-Political Treatise*, defines people’s belief in luck and omens as “superstition”,

ignorance and inability to understand the true nature of things:

If men were able to exercise complete control over all their circumstance, or if continuous good fortune were always their lot, they would never be prey to superstition. But since they are often reduced to such straits as to be without any resource, and their immoderate greed for fortune's fickle favours often makes them the wretched victims of alternating hopes and fears, the result is that, for most part, their credulity knows no bounds. In critical times they are swayed this way or that by the slightest impulse, especially so when they are wavering between hope and fear; yet at another times they are overconfident, boastful and arrogant (2002, p. 388).

Since "all men are by nature liable to superstition (...) when they, while possessed by fear, see something happen that calls to mind something good or bad in the past, they believe that this portends a happy or unhappy issue, and this they therefore call a lucky or unlucky omen, even though it may fail them a hundred times" (2002, pp. 388-389). The reason we rely on superstitions, then, is that we are constantly oscillating between hope and fear. These situations seem to arise not directly from past or future events but from a suspicion that has developed/is developing/may develop as a result of these events. Therefore, suspicion arises from the affective fluctuation, in the sense of suspending the reason. In his respect, the joy in hope cannot be stable as it depends on the sadness in the despair. In short, if we are inclined to hope, it is because we are surrounded and suppressed by fear.

The political implications of these assumptions that we draw from Spinoza are undoubtedly significant. Affects are the material of the social and the political in Spinoza's system. We can begin to examine the relation that Spinoza established between affects and politics with his following statement: "Philosophers look upon the passions by which we are assailed as vices, into which men fall through their own fault. So, it is their custom to deride, bewail, berate them, or, if their purpose is to appear more zealous than others, to execrate them"; however, it is necessary to take care "not to deride, bewail, or execrate human actions, but to understand them" (2002, pp. 680-681). We can say that, according to Spinoza's statement, philosophers have hitherto studied the forms of domination and political regimes but, unlike "statesman who have written about political matters much more effectively than philosophers" (2002, p. 680), their thoughts were utopian not ethico-political; they underestimated, humiliated, laughed, denied and did not understand the affective-emotional

mechanisms underlying domination. Therefore, Spinoza puts affects and desire at the center while examining social-political life and the forms of domination, the conditions of servitude and the possibilities of emancipation therein.

Spinoza, both in *Theological-Political Treatise* and *Political Treatise*, states clearly that the power of the sovereign is absolute to the extent that his own will is not under the control of another will and that he can manage the will and desires of the others. In this regard, remembering the distinction Spinoza made between *potestas* and *potentia*, servitude means giving up power on behalf of a sovereign. But what is important here is that the foundation of the society is not based on a “moment” of social contract but on the “continuity”, the uninterrupted production and reproduction of desire (Israel, 2001). For Spinoza, the source of sovereignty, sovereign’s desire to rule goes hand in hand with the uninterrupted reproduction of the subjection of desire; the “passionate servitude” of the multitude is the bearer of sovereign power and what makes his power absolute. The sovereign (*potestas*), in any case, tends to produce the “desire for servitude” which undermines the immanent power of the multitude (*potentia*). According to Spinoza, this situation is almost an unchangeable truth of the political life.

In this context, we can make the following inference regarding the socio-political role of affects: the effects of fear and hope are the fundamental affective mechanisms that provide the sovereign with the right to rule. This is true at both individual and social levels. This domination operates through the seizure of both the fears of the past and the hopes for the future. People’s obedience to the sovereign’s power is realized by the imagination of a future reward or punishment shaped by the traces of past experiences in the memory, that is, present actions are driven by an imaginary future shaped by memories of the past. In this respect, an uncertain imagination of safety and peace is sufficient to reproduce obedience. Thus, the order and maintenance of the state depends on the balance of power between different affections. In other words, the sovereign makes his subjects obey by mobilizing affects of fear and hope. Spinoza, in his works, tries to identify precisely this hypnotic-ideological effect of power in political life.

However, state and social cohesion cannot exist solely on the basis of affects of fear

and hope; it cannot base its legitimacy solely on these affects and the sadness they create. State must also establish the physical safety and welfare of its subjects. But what kind of safety can it establish? It is clear that for Spinoza, safety is the goal of a free society; political society is built naturally “either by reason of a common fear or through desire to avenge a common injury” (Spinoza, 2002, p. 693). Therefore, the purpose of the state is to turn shared common, social fears and hopes into a safe condition. Then, to what extent do affects of safety and fear make people to be united and acted upon as a single body? To what extent do these affects reproduce the “passionate servitude” to the sovereign? Answer: By means of the future reward for obeying the law, which is more advantageous than the possible good if the law is violated. The fear of returning to the “state of nature” with the violation of the law and the subsequent desire to be safe are enough to ignore the advantages of violating the “social contract”. At this point, from this Spinozist perspective, we can develop a definition on the nature of political power as follows: The sovereign is the one who can usurp the future imagination of the multitude; the sovereign power is the power that can dominate the uncertainty of the future through affects of hope and fear.

As we have showed, affects are the material of the social and the political in Spinoza’s system from the beginning. Therefore, all these issues – ignorance, fear, safety, superstition etc. – are collective, social phenomenon. Social, because “all men are by nature liable to superstition” and this “nature” allows the sovereign to build its affective domination that grows with the fear it creates: to make people manageable, to make them strive for their servitude as if it were their own freedom. However, fear is a double-edged knife, both for the sovereign and for its subjects. And this is why the sovereign needs fear to rule its subjects. It can be said that the reason why the sovereign needs fear to rule the people is that the people in fact frightens him, especially when they are not afraid of anything. Because “the mob is fearsome, if it does not fear” (*Ethics*, IV. Book, 54. Scholium). Therefore, the ethico-political meaning and significance of Spinoza’s works is to understand the affective conditions and mechanisms of this “empire of fear” that enslave us, and to find the way to escape from it.

2.1.2. Political Economy of Affects

2.1.2.1. Marx with Spinoza

At this point, what I would like to show, against the “affective turn” in social theory that generally disconnects the affects from corporeality and materiality and conflates with inner subjective states, the material and corporeal dimension of affects. My argument is that the affects should be considered within the existing social and economic conditions, through their materiality and corporeality. And in this regard, I will propose using Marx and Spinoza together, in a way that promotes each other, to show the materiality of affects and “affective subjectivity”. In other words, I will propose to situate the concepts of “desire” and “conatus”, which Spinoza puts forward as an ontological and existential assumption, in the material social relations. In this respect, I will consider them within capitalist relations of production, which is the main determinant of our current social relations and subjectivity.

What do I mean by the Marxist-materialist position I mentioned at the beginning? First of all, the position accepting the fact that the social existence determines the consciousness and considering all concepts in terms of material social relations without placing them in an ideal, metaphysical position. To be a materialist is to accept that life determines consciousness and to comprehend life as the material social relations and contradictions itself instead of comprehending it in an abstract way. In this regard, concepts such as “life”, “society”, “human being”, “time” etc. are not considered as ideal, abstract concept from the Marxist-materialist perspective, but as concepts determined and defined by material social relations itself.

In this dissertation, I will propose to discuss Spinoza’s existential-vital concepts of conatus and desire, which are the concepts that Spinoza put forward on the ontological level, in the context of material social relations. And, at this point, I will inevitably look at the political economy of affects. By doing this, I will attempt to read Marx and Spinoza together creatively, but in a way that remains faithful to their core principles. Rather than finding the similarities and differences, I will focus on their intersections. In other words, I will use Marx to extend Spinoza’s ontological-existential postulates to their socio-political implications in the context of our current material social relations, which is capitalist relations of production.

One might think that the attempt to find similarities between the materialism of Marx's political economy and Spinoza's ethical materialism, between these two thinkers who developed their theories in different historical context might be inefficient. However, this does not mean confining Spinoza entirely to the ethical/ontological sphere and Marx entirely to the economic sphere. Because, as Tosel pointed out, Spinoza's ethical materialism does not simply prescribe a personal pursuit of good living and enhancing joyful encounters; it is also about the mode of production of a particular individuality: "Each way of living is conceived from its production and corporeal practice which combines economic appropriation with ethico-political behavior" (1994, p. 28). In other words, the modes of subjectification cannot be considered without the social relations that produce and reproduce them. Therefore, we can argue that Marx's and Spinoza's different materialisms can overlap. In Spinoza's ethico-political materialism which based on material conditions of servitude and emancipation, we can discern the elements of the causal relations of economic conditions of production; and we can discern the elements of an ethico-political materialism in Marx's political economy. As Marx wrote:

Nor is it enough that they are compelled to sell themselves voluntarily. The advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws. The organization of the capitalist process of production, once it is fully developed, breaks down all resistance. The constant generation of a relative surplus population keeps the law of the supply and demand of labor, and therefore wages, within narrow limits which correspond to capital's valorization requirements. The silent compulsion of economic relations sets the seal on the domination of the capitalist over the worker. Direct extra-economic force is still of course used, but only in exceptional cases. In the ordinary run of things, the worker can be left to the "natural laws of production", i.e. it is possible to rely on his dependence on capital, which springs from the conditions of production themselves, and is guaranteed in perpetuity by them (1982, p. 899).

As this short passage shows, for Marx, the production of subjectivity ("by education, tradition and habit") is essential for an economic mode of production to produce and reproduce itself. I would therefore propose to consider Marx and Spinoza together in order to show the significance of the affective dimension in the production of subjectivity in analyzing the forms and mechanisms of reproduction of the capitalist mode of production. With reference to Fischbach, we can argue that "the fundamental

common point of these two philosophers is that they are both thinkers of production and at the same time of radical critics of subjectivity, aspects that are indissociable from each other” (2014, p. 143). It is precisely this affinity in their approach to the issue of production, subjectivity and social reproduction that makes it possible for me to think Marx and Spinoza together. On the other hand, another factor that allows us to think Marx and Spinoza together is their materialism. In this regard, the founding role of production in Marx and the founding role of desire and conatus in Spinoza coincide. Recalling that desire is the essence of men, then we can consider desire and conatus as power to act, as actions in themselves. In this sense, as de Acosta argued, “affects as actions correspond to Marx’s transformation of Feuerbach’s sensuous materialism into a materialism of the act, or of practice” (2002, p. 3):

The conception of affects as activity corresponds to Marx’s transformation of his own materialism of the act into the famous historical materialism that has production as its pivotal concept. What is at stake is the affects as the self-expression of a process of “production of productions, of actions and passion” (2002, p. 4).

If we accept that, as Fischbach argues, critique of subjectivity and centrality of production are common to Marx and Spinoza, then we can argue that both comprehend human individuality relationally. Their theories do not rely on an ideal, abstract definition of “human individual” isolated from social relations and determination, but on a definition of human individual who is understandable only in social relations. The human individual can conceive of himself relationally, according to his relations with others. This is a fundamental point for Spinoza as well as for Marx who wrote “the essence of man is the ensemble of the social relations” (1993, p. 573). It is indeed the conception of the human individual as part of nature that leads both Marx and Spinoza to assert that man is a naturally social animal. As Marx argued: “The human being is in the most literal sense a political animal, not merely a gregarious animal, but an animal which can individuate itself only in the midst of society” (1993, p. 84); “He appears originally as a species-being, clan being, herd animal – although in no way whatever as a political animal, city-dweller in the political sense” (1993, p. 496). But if man is an animal which can only become individual socially in society, this means that, as Fischbach argued:

The individuation of human individual is all the greater as the social relations are more numerous and more developed: it is therefore only in the historical periods of the greatest development of social relations (notably in the form of commercial exchanges) that men can conceive of themselves as self-sufficient individuals. It is the very development of social relations that leads men to conceive of themselves as independent individuals, as autonomous subjects: the entire history of the development of social relations is therefore necessary for this inversion takes place whereby men come to understand themselves as the exact opposite of what they are, namely as subjects substantially different from things, as subjects sovereignly reigning over nature and not as objective beings who are themselves part of nature (2014, p. 43).

Therefore, the reason why we make use of Marx and Spinoza while dealing with the social structures of affects in this dissertation is that they both consider human beings as a product of social relations; but rather than a strict structural determinism, it is the idea of immanence of production, that the producer also produces the conditions that produce the producer, and the uniformity of economic production and production of subjectivity. Within this context, I argue that the production of subjectivity and its affective dimension cannot be considered separate from the economic relations of production.

If we consider the production of subjectivity and its affective dimension in the context of contemporary capitalist relations of production with Marx and Spinoza, then the question is: What are the fundamental mechanisms by which the capitalist relations of production reproduce itself over and over again every day, and what is the role of affective production of subjectivity in this process? Revising Spinoza's observation that "they will fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance" (2002, pp. 389-390), we can ask what compels us to work, to sell our labor, to be involved in the capitalist relations of production in order to survive, or rather, to pursue our *conatus*? How does this compulsion normalize itself? How do we learn to embrace what we are compelled to live, the conditions produced by capitalism? How do we "passionately", in Spinozist sense, desire what we are forced to choose? And what kinds of affective mechanisms are at play here? My answer to these questions lies in the concept of "affective economy" that revolves around the issues of employment relations and wage-labor. But first, we should examine Marx's concepts of "formal" and "real subsumption" which is at the center of our discussion on the wage-labor, production of subjectivity and its affective-temporal dimension.

2.1.2.2. Formal and Real Subsumption of Labor under Capital

As we know, Marx begins *Capital* with the analysis of commodities, describes a world of “immense collection of commodities” (1982, p. 125) where human beings no longer consume the outcome of their labors directly, but they produce goods that serve as means of exchange for obtaining the outcome of the labors of others. Commodities have both “exchange-values” for their producers and “use-values” for those who obtain them. In this type of society, namely capitalist society, the concrete activity that creates use-value is subject to the principle of exchange whereby things are valuable only in so far as they can be sold in the market.

Production for the purpose of exchange is possible only through the subordination of the qualitative and particular purpose of each activity to the common criterion that all commodities share: quantitative measurement of the expenditure of human labor. Marx explains this quantification of labor through abstract, clock-time as follows:

If the mere quantity of labor functions as a measure of value regardless of quality, it presupposes that simple labor has become the pivot of industry. It presupposes that labor has been equalized by the subordination of man to the machine or by the extreme division of labor; that men are effaced by their labor; that the pendulum of the clock has become as accurate a measure of the relative activity of two workers as it is of the speed of two locomotives. Therefore, we should not say that one man’s hour is worth another man’s hour, but rather one man during an hour is worth just as much as another man during an hour. Time is everything, man is nothing; he is, at the most, time’s carcase. Quality no longer matters. Quantity alone decides everything; hour for hour, day for day (1976, p. 127).

Use-value becomes exchange-value only when the labor that constitutes use-value is converted into abstract labor emptied of its content and ceases to be the means of a substantial purpose. Capitalism is thus a social form that develops under the thrust of a process of abstraction that appropriates concrete human activity to transform it into labor. Commodities are distinguished from each other not by their intrinsic qualities, but by the amount of labor-time they include. The value of each commodity then depends on the length of the abstract labor exerted in their production and the ratio of this length to the average time required to create the commodities necessary for the reproduction of the labor power, which Marx calls the “socially necessary labor time”:

Socially necessary labor-time is the labor-time required to produce any use-

value under the conditions of production normal for a given society and with the average degree of skill and intensity of labor prevalent in that society. (...) What exclusively determines the magnitude of the value of any article is therefore the amount of labor socially necessary, or the labor-time socially necessary for its production. Commodities which contain equal quantities of labor, or which can be produced in the same time, have therefore the same value. The value of a commodity is related to the value of any other commodity as the labor-time necessary for the production of the one is related to the labor-time necessary for the production of the other. As exchanges-values, all commodities are merely definite quantities of a congealed labor-time (1982, pp. 130-131).

Then, what is the “labor-power” or the productive potential of labor? Labor-power is “the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in the physical form, the living personality, of a human being, capabilities which he sets in motion whenever he produces a use-value of any kind” (1982, p. 270). But we know that in capitalist mode of production, the productive forces do not have the means of production and the specificity of capitalism is here: The labor-power of the laborers has become a commodity as a part of the market relations. In capitalism, everyone has to “hire out” his labor-power to the capital owners to make a living.

Therefore, it is the “emancipation” of laborers from slavery which distinguishes capitalist mode of production from the previous mode of productions. In other words, capitalism has brought “freedom” to the laborers. However, this was not a real freedom; it is only a market freedom that comes from the fact that the laborers and the capital owners are both owners of commodity (one brings his capital and the other his labor power to the market). In this regard, surplus-value is not seized with physical coercion (as in feudalism and slavery) but pure economic coercion in capitalism. Therefore, this is a necessity, a “silent compulsion of economic relations” (Marx, 1982, p. 899) for the laborer who must hire his labor-power, not a free choice. Marx describes this dual form of freedom as follows:

For the transformation of money into capital, therefore, the owner of money must find the free worker available on the commodity-market; and this worker must be free in the double sense that as a free individual he can dispose of his labor-power as his own commodity, and that, on the other hand, he has no other commodity for sale, i.e. he is rid of them, he is free of all the objects needed for the realization of his labor-power (1982, pp. 272-273).

I think that freedom and subjection can only be understood correctly if their temporal

structure are taken into account. Marx always discusses these issues in the context of the working day, in the work-centered temporality of a day (Thompson, 1967; Booth, 1991). In this regard, Marx divides a working day into two parts. In addition to the “necessary labor-time”, there is also the “surplus labor-time”:

I call the portion of the working day during which this reproduction takes place necessary labor-time, and the labor expended during that time necessary labor; necessary for the worker, because independent of the particular social form of his labor; necessary for capital and the capitalist world, because the continued existence of the worker is the basis of that world. During the second period of the labor process, that in which his labor is no longer necessary labor, the worker does indeed expend labor-power, he does work, but his labor is no longer necessary labor, and he creates no value for himself. He creates surplus-value which, for the capitalist, has all the charms of something created out of nothing. This part of the working day I call surplus labor-time, and to the labor expended during that time I give the name of surplus labor. It is just as important for a correct understanding of surplus-value to conceive it as merely a congealed quantity of surplus labor-time, as nothing but objectified surplus labor, as it is for a proper comprehension of value in general to conceive it as merely a congealed quantity of so many hours of labor, as nothing but objectified labor. What distinguishes the various economic formations of society – the distinction between for example a society based on slave labor and a society based on wage-labor – is the form in which this surplus labor is in each case extorted from the immediate producer, the worker (1982, p. 325).

The most fundamental, most ordinary form of the class struggle between the capitalist and the worker takes place around these necessary and surplus labor-times. The “vampire-like” capitalist constantly tries to increase the rate of this surplus-time which is the source of surplus-value and thus of profit. In other words, this is a process of usurping the worker’s temporality and spatiality, that is, his/her life itself. Marx discusses the process of the subsumption of labor power, that is, the temporality and spatiality of the worker, in other words, these two existential dimensions under capital and the expansion of capitalist relations of production through the concepts of “formal” and “real subsumption”, and argues that these are, historically, two stages of the development of capitalist mode of production.

In the final section of *Capital*, Marx discusses the conditions of primitive accumulation, which represents the origin of the capitalist mode of production. The meaning he gives to this concept is clear: the conditions that gave birth to capitalism have been brought together at the end of the historical transformations which have

“divorced the worker from the ownership of the conditions of his own labor” (Marx, 1982, p. 874). First and foremost, this divorcement was achieved by separating the workers from their land to make them the product of others, that is, capital owners. Marx was particularly interested in the example of England where the first bases of capitalist production came to exist: conversion of arable lands into sheep-walks, demolition of houses and peasant cottages, spoliation of the church’s property, the usurpation of feudal and clan property, expropriation of the communal fields (enclosures) etc. These transformations prohibited free access to land and ended the pre-capitalist mode of land occupation which rested, according to Marx, two invariable principles: a relation of man to his conditions of production “as belonging to him, as his, as presupposed along with his own being” and a relation to these means of labor which is “mediated by the community, as its own, as communal landed property, at the same time individual possession for the individual or in such a way that only the fruits are divided but the land itself and the labor remain common” (Marx, 1993, p. 491). The private ownership of the land radically transformed these two conditions. It dissolved the immediate ownership of the means of production and made it something foreign to the worker. It substituted for the feudal custom and personal relations of domination that once bounded individuals to their community. It is indeed this context in which the figure of the worker appears who has to sell his labor and time for sustenance. Land ownership thus provides the basis for the formal subsumption of labor under capital based on the extraction of the absolute value which represents, in Marx, the initial form of capitalist exploitation.

At the stage of formal subsumption, capital appropriates productive social activity without modifying its content. Marx states that “it [capital] does not therefore directly change the mode of production. The production of surplus-value in the form of we have so far considered, by means of simple extension of the working day, appeared therefore independently of any change in the mode of production itself” (1982, p. 425). Here, capital feeds on social forces as they present themselves to it, that is, as they have been historically constituted in a pre-capitalist context. In the absence of any means of regulating the way in which productive activity is accomplished, the power of capital over worker lies in its ability to make their work compulsory and to fix its duration. At this stage, capital subordinates labor on the basis of the technical

conditions which does not directly change the mode of production. Surplus-value is produced through extension of the working day independently of any change in the mode of production itself. The challenge of formal subsumption was therefore the extension of the working day beyond the time socially required for the reproduction of the labor power. The absolute surplus value, characteristic of this first phase of capitalist development, results from the surplus labor realized during this surplus time when the laborer worked only for capital. But since there is a limit of the day, there is also limit of the surplus labor-time and this limit is an obstacle that capital must overcome; “capital’s drive towards a boundless and ruthless extension of the working day” (1982, p. 411) strives to transcend these temporal and spatial boundaries. Capital therefore must overcome the limitations of this formal subsumption.

At this point, capital had to make labor “really” subordinated. The fundamental distinction Marx indicates between formal subsumption and real subsumption is their temporal order. This second form of capitalist exploitation emerged in the impossibility of prolonging the working day indefinitely in order to extract more surplus labor. This problem has been gradually solved by reorganization of the labor to make it more productive, that is to say, capable of producing more commodities in the fixed time interval given by the working day. Introduction of new working techniques made it possible to lower the production time of commodities and, consequently, the socially necessary labor time required for the reproduction of the labor power, that is, the social norm of production which makes it possible to separate the time during which the worker works for him (to reproduce his labor) from the time he dedicates exclusively to the capitalist. In these conditions, a new type of surplus value is created, which takes shape in the growing share of working time that capital extricate from the laborers without changing the length of the day. Marx explains that this surplus value is no longer absolute, but “relative surplus-value”:

The prolongation of the working day beyond the point at which the worker would have produced an exact equivalent for the value of his labor-power, and the appropriation of that surplus labor by capital – this is the process which constitutes the production of absolute surplus value. It forms the general foundation of the capitalist system, and the starting point for the production of relative surplus value. The latter presupposes that the working day is already divided into two parts, necessary labor and surplus labor. In order to prolong the surplus labor, the necessary labor is shortened by methods for producing

the equivalent of the wage of labor in a shorter time. The production of absolute surplus value turns exclusively on the length of the working day, whereas the production of relative surplus value completely revolutionizes the technical processes of labor and the groupings into which society is divided. It therefore requires a specifically capitalist mode of production, a mode of production which, along with its methods, means and conditions, arises and develops spontaneously on the basis of the formal subsumption of labor under capital. This formal subsumption is then replaced by a real subsumption (1982, p. 645).

Whereas, in the first case, capital appropriates the productive activity as it presented itself, in the second case the surplus value results from a transformation and reconfiguration of the very content of the labor. Thus, the shift to the real subsumption entails the destruction of the traditional occupations and the conversion of workers into intrinsic products of capital, “estranged labor”, who are now merely cogwheel in the process of production entirely outside them. Capital imposes not only a duration at work but establishes itself as a “foreign and hostile” force (Marx, 1982, p. 1024). Capital-owners that cannot exceed the physical limits of a day can increase productivity by only exceeding the physical limits of the human body and increasing its potentials. Technological innovations and other mechanisms which aim to increase productivity have the purpose of shortening the necessary labor-time and increasing the surplus labor-time, that is, increasing the relative surplus-value. But capitalist mode of production does not confine itself to be “a mere means of producing relative surplus-value as soon as it has conquered an entire branch of production; this tendency is still more powerful when it has conquered all the important branches of production” (1982, p. 646). Then, how did this conquest occur?

Marx in *Capital* discussed this process with its consequences on the massification of labor, in chapters XIII, XIV and XV. He first focused on the co-operative relations that developed in this new context, before analyzing their particular evolution in manufacturing and large-scale industry. The manufacture differs from the simple cooperation, which is formed when individuals under the same roof engage in the same activity, introducing a technical and social division of work that makes it more productive. Industry, by imposing machinery as the main engine of production, took another step towards the real subsumption of labor under capital. It differs from the other massified modes of exploitation with its power of objectivation of the knowledge and the human skill passed in the form of machines, infrastructures and scientific

processes belonging exclusively to the capital. According to Marx, this objectivation, which is the greatest accomplishment of industrial production, lies in the advent of fixed-capital, which tends to replace living labor as the main organ of the production of commodities, and forces laborers to adjust themselves to its functioning:

The development of the means of labor into machinery is not an accidental moment of capital, but is rather the historical reshaping of the traditional, inherited means of labor into a form adequate to capital. The accumulation of knowledge and skill, of the general productive forces of the social brain, is thus absorbed into capital, as opposed to labor, and hence appears as an attribute of capital, and more specifically of fixed capital, in so far as it enters into the production process as a means of production proper. (...) [Machinery] in so far as the means of labor, as a physical thing, loses its direct form, becomes fixed capital, and confronts the worker physically as capital. In machinery, knowledge appears as alien, external him; and living labor as subsumed under self-activating objectified labor. The worker appears as superfluous to the extent that his action is not determined by capital's requirements (Marx, 1993, pp. 694-695).

In this sense, the large-scale fixed-capital industry is fundamentally reversing the labor process by which formerly independent subjects of production become objects of the process. The worker is then transformed into only a part of the system. It is in this relationship of complete dependence that now extends to the content of the activity of worker that capital finds the means of subjecting it to the requirement of increasing productivity. It is therefore in these conditions, under the protection of fixed-capital, that capitalist accumulation takes its, with Marx's own words, "most appropriate form" for "reproducing its own conditions".

2.1.2.3. Wage Relationship and the Affective Composition of Labor

If we recall Marx's statement that "...the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws...", we can then understand more clearly how important the production of a certain kind of subjectivity is for Marx in the reproduction of capitalism. And at this point I emphasize the importance of work (thus wage-labor as its actual form in capitalism) in the production of this subjectivity and therefore the reproduction of capitalism.

As Fredric Jameson put it succinctly "*Capital* is not a book about politics, and not even

a book about labor: it is a book about unemployment” (2011, p. 2). I think this statement, which seems a bit exaggerated at first, is indeed an accurate interpretation of *Capital*. Because it touches on a vital point that underlines all those economic analysis of commodity, surplus value, exchange relation etc., which Marx did not hide at all: The fact that, we all, as proletarians who do not have the means of production, must sell our labor power in order to live.

But if we are talking about work, we need to speak of it not as an abstract concept, but within the context of existing material social relations, that is, capitalist relations of production. Then, the question is: What does work mean in capitalism? First of all, in *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*, the central notion at the basis of the analyzes on alienation is the notion of labor as vital activity, as “life-engendering life” (Marx, 1978, p. 76). Marx adopts the way of thinking developed by Feuerbach who defends the idea according to which the specificity of a living being manifest itself in the type of activity by which this being maintains itself in its being, in other words, the specificity of its vital activity. By examining the objects specific to a living being and the modes of relation between this being and its objects, we can define the essence of this being. Adopting this way of thinking, Marx considers labor as privileged activity through which human beings respond to the demands of their specific being. And he points out this constitutive role of labor as follows: “Labor is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature” (Marx, 1982, p. 283).

But we know that, thanks to Marx, work as the process by which man produces both himself and nature through labor is characterized in the context of existing social relations, that is, through the class relation between those who have the means of production and those who do not. This unequal and hierarchical relationship between those who have the means of production and those who do not is no doubt a relationship of power and domination at the same time. In *Capital*, we can say that Marx distinguishes between three types of experience of domination at work (Renault, 2017). First of all, wage subordination takes the form of a social relation of domination in the sense that domination refers to the discipline of the factory and the devices of control, surveillance and punishment. It can be said that this form of domination is

rather limited to the work time and place. The experience of wage subordination is also an experience of domination in the sense that the obligation to sell one's labor power in order to survive. In this regard, wage subordination refers to the domination in the sense of the social relation of domination, of structural inequality between those who own the means of production and those who do not. And lastly, Marx suggests that the experience of wage subordination refers to domination in the sense of an impersonal domination of labor activity by working conditions and technological knowledge that is inscribed in them. This impersonal dependence does not act only in market interactions governed by the abstract norm of value; it is also in the work time and place where it takes a specific form of domination by foreign knowledge and technology which organize the labor activity. Marx argues in *Capital* that the machine is the true master of the worker and that his emancipation supposes the reappropriation of the knowledge which organizes the work. In short, we can argue that wage labor is subjected to inextricable tripartite relations of domination in capitalism: domination as a personal relation of obeying and to be obeyed; domination based on the structural inequality and economic compulsion; and domination by impersonal mechanisms which subject wage laborer to the devices of the organization of the labor activity itself.

Consequently, if we consider this tripartite structure of domination produced by wage-labor relationship together with our discussion on subsumption of labor under capital, then we can argue that wage-labor enables capitalism to expand and spread itself as social relation, as "total subsumption" (Negri, 1996, p. 159). It can be claimed that the real subsumption spreads today pervasively in all areas of life, "through the incorporation of knowledges, emotions, affects and linguistics qualities within the capitalist process of production and socialization" (Rossi, 2012, p. 359). According to this, subsumption is no longer only in the factory, in work time and place, but in the whole aspects of life. Under these conditions in which capital as a relationship has begun to dominate and conquer whole society beyond the factory walls, "the entire time of life has become the time of production" (Negri, 2003, p. 28).

Then, we might ask why is work so important in the reproduction of capitalism as social relation, imposing itself on society as an inextricable total system? It can be argued that work sets out the basic parameters of our whole life, not limited to work

time and place. Work determines where, with whom and for what purpose we spend most of our time; therefore, it has a great impact on our social life and individuality. Work makes us a part of social cohesion, integrates us into the “work society”:

Work is the primary means by which individuals are integrated not only into the economic system, but also into social, political, and familial modes of cooperation. That individuals should work is fundamental to the basic social contract; indeed, working is part of what is supposed to transform subjects into the independent individuals of the liberal imaginary, and for that reason, is treated as a basic obligation of citizenship. Dreams of individual accomplishment and desires to contribute to the common good become firmly attached to waged work, where they can be hijacked to rather different ends: to produce neither individual riches nor social wealth, but privately appropriated surplus value. The category of the work society is meant to signify not only the centrality of work, but also its broad field of social relevance (Weeks, 2011, p. 8).

Besides, work has a direct impact on our subjectivity, as it determines the way we earn our lives, if we consider the conatus from the Spinozist viewpoint. In other words, wage is at the center of the evolvment of the conatus, the life impulse and the desire, because we earn our living through work and wage.

Wage ensures both the reproduction of labor power (i.e. the conatus) and the satisfaction of desires. Work concretely determines our life, the conditions and possibilities of surviving and pursuing the conatus. We can say that the compulsion to sell our labor, as the only way to survive in capitalism, to pursue our conatus in capitalist relations of production, is the fundamental determination that limits the contingency of life. Within this context, conatus as the ontological principle of perseverance in existence in the Spinozist sense intersects with the economy, with work/wage as the determinant of our life, that is, the pursuing of the conatus and allows us to consider the economy on an affective dimension.

I am proposing the concept of “affective subjectivity” precisely in this context, arguing that the production of subjectivity is not separated from the economic production and is related to “the affective composition of labor”⁵. From Spinozist perspective, as I

⁵ Here, for now, I should state that I make a distinction between “affective labor” and “affective composition of labor” and consider these two as different notions. I will address this in more detail when discussing “immaterial labor” and its subset notion “affective labor” in subsections 2.2.2.2.4. and 2.2.3.

said above, we can define subjectivity as desire, which is the essence of men, as manifestation of conatus, the effort by which each thing strives to preserve in its being. According to Spinoza, “we do not endeavor, will, seek after or desire because we judge a thing to be good; on the contrary, we judge a thing to be good because we endeavor, will, seek after and desire it” (*Ethics*, III. Book, 9. Scholium). Therefore, desire is constitutive, that is, it has not any telos or purpose and its sole purpose is preserving itself. But it should be remembered that desire and conatus constituted relationally in the order of affective causality; they are not the attributes of autonomous, rational subject endowed with free will. Then, desire and conatus are relational, and our subjectivity is constituted through the affects arising from encounters with others; the conatus principle that Spinoza put forward as an ontological and existential principle has to be considered in the context of material social relations, and thus capitalist mode of production.

As we have discussed in the subsection “Political Dimension of the Affects”, *potestas* affectively dominates *potentia*, through the affects of hope and fear. We can say that there are two axes that constitute this structure of domination based on affective power (Read, 2016, p. 149): the first axis is the individual and collective objects of desire; the second is the affects of hope and fear and the temporal uncertainty they produce. From the Spinozist perspective, we can say that *potestas* operates along these two axes. In other words, affective power structures are formed according to different types of compositions of individual-collective objects of desire and the affects of hope-fear.

In terms of the first axis, the individual and collective objects of desire, Spinoza points out money but does not discuss its length. There is a proposition in *Ethics* on the role of money in acquiring all objects of desire:

However, money has supplied a token for all things, with the result that its image is wont to obsess the minds of the populace, because they can scarcely think of any kind of pleasure that is not accompanied by the idea of money as its cause (*Ethics*, IV. Book, Appendix).

Although the role of money is important in acquiring objects of desire, for Spinoza, it stands alongside glory and fame. That is, in Spinoza, money has a meaning in the context of the feudal regime of desire, but it does not exactly correspond to the role it takes in today’s capitalist relations of production (Read, 2016, p. 151). In this respect,

we can turn to Marx, who said something similar about money, to make up for these shortcomings in Spinoza. In *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx says regarding the role of money in bourgeois society as follows:

By possessing the property of buying everything, by possessing the property of appropriating all objects, money is thus the object of eminent possession. The universality of its property is the omnipotence of its being. It therefore functions as the almighty being. Money is the pimp between man's need and the object, between his life and his means of life. (...) That which is for me through the medium of money – that for which I can pay (i.e., which money can buy) – that am I, the possessor of the money. The extent of the power of money is the extent of my power. Money's properties are my properties and essential powers – the properties and powers of its possessor. Thus, what I am and am capable of is by no means determined by my individuality. (...) If money is the bond binding me to human life, binding society to me, binding me and nature and man, is not money the bond of all bonds? (1978, pp. 102-104)

In terms of the second axis, Spinoza discusses the affective power which is based on the temporal uncertainty of the affects of fear and hope through religions and their superstitious systems. Although it would be deficient to claim in an exaggerated way that capitalism is a religion, we can argue that the temporal uncertainty of the affects of hope and fear establishes the affective power of capital over labor, similar to that created by the superstitious system of religion based on the cult of reward and punishment. Walter Benjamins said that capitalism can be compared to religion, that capitalism tries to surpass or satisfy the similar problems, anxieties, crises that religions deal with (1996). However, it is a religion shaped by a permanent “first sin” rather than the cult of “redemption and salvation”: a religion that feeds on an immemorial sentiment of indebtedness and guilt (Nietzsche, 1967). What I am trying to say is that this state of temporal uncertainty (in Spinoza's term, *fluctuatio animi*, spiritual fluctuation), the uncertainty and contingency of the future constitutes the domain of establishment of power, that the affects of hope and fear arising in this uncertainty become an apparatus of domination, both for religious domination and capitalist domination. But we cannot claim that religious domination and capitalist exploitation work exactly the same way. It can be argued that while the religious domination is based on discourse, belief and judgement, the capitalist exploitation is essentially shaped by the immediate compulsion of economic relations, although it has an ideological dimension. In other words, the compulsion to sell labor power as the

condition of surviving leaves the conatus between fear (of being unemployed, that is, losing the means to persevere in existence) and hope (to get a job, that is, getting the means to persevere in existence), and makes it manageable through uncertainty.

But if this “immediate compulsion of economic relations” explained everything about the reproduction of capitalist relations, then there would be no problem and no need for the concept of “affective economy”. For, as Marx shows, capitalist relations of production are not simply reproduced by economic compulsion; it is not the case that “they are compelled to sell themselves voluntarily”, but “the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws” (1982, p. 899). That is, parallel to the production of this economic relations of compulsion, one must also consider the production of subjectivity.

We should include here Foucault as a thinker who complements Marx on the production of subjectivity in our discussion. In this respect, Foucault’s periodization of transition from disciplinary society to bio-power seems to coincide with Marx’s periodization of transition from formal subsumption to real subsumption.⁶ Recalling Marx’s analysis that a certain type of worker is also produced in accordance with the economic mode of production, Foucault’s work focuses precisely on this point; his analyses reveal the mechanisms of power that establish a newly-emerging relationship of domination (that is, formal and real subsumption of labor under capital). As the following passage from *Discipline and Punish* shows:

This was the problem of the great workshops and factories, in which, a new type of surveillance was organized. It was different from the one practiced in the regimes of the manufactories, which had been carried out from the outside by inspectors, entrusted with the task of applying the regulations; what was now needed was an intense, continuous supervision; it ran right through the labor process; it did not bear – or not only – on production (the nature and quantity of raw materials, the type of instruments used, the dimension and quality of the product); it also took into account the activity of the men, their skill, the way they set about their tasks, their promptness, their zeal, their behavior. (...) As the machinery of production became larger and more complex, as the number of workers and the division of labor increased, supervision became ever more necessary and more difficult. It became a special

⁶ We will expand on this point further in Section 2.2. when we discuss the transition from Fordist organization of work and time to post-Fordist organization of work and time.

function, which had nevertheless to form an integral part of the production process, to run parallel to it throughout its entire length. (...) Surveillance thus becomes a decisive economic operator both as an internal part of the production machinery and as a specific mechanism in the disciplinary power. (1979, p. 174)

As he said in his lectures at the College de France in the 1972-1973 period, what was at stake in the emergence of a disciplinary society was “ethical and political coercion that is necessary for the body, time, life, and men to be integrated, in the form of labor, in the interplay of productive forces” (Foucault, 2015, p. 196). Foucault’s analyses reveal the capitalist effort in making labor power more docile, more efficient, and more adaptable to the capitalist relations of production, and what kind of subjectivity the techniques, regulations, and apparatuses employed for this purpose produce. In addition to disciplinary practices which is based on force, in his analysis of biopower, which corresponds, I think, to Marx’s analysis of real subsumption, Foucault also examine the control mechanisms aimed subtly at the body, the “soul”, temporality of labor power, that is, life itself:

People’s time had to be offered to the production apparatus; the production apparatus had to be able to use people’s living time, their time of existence. The control was exerted for that reason and in that form. Two things were necessary for industrial society to take shape. First, individuals’ time must be put on the market, offered to those wishing to buy it, and buy it in exchange for a wage; and, second, their time must be transformed into labor time. (...) But if one closely analyzes the reasons for which individuals’ entire existence was controlled, one sees that, at bottom, it was not just a matter of appropriating, extracting the maximum quantity of time but also of controlling, shaping, valorizing the individual’s body according to a particular system. If one were to do a history of the social control of the body, one could show that, up through the eighteenth century, the individual body was essentially the inscription surface for tortures and punishments; the body was made to be tortured and punished. From the nineteenth century onward, the body acquired a completely different signification; it was no longer something to be tortured but something to be molded, reformed, corrected, something that must acquire aptitudes, receive a certain number of qualities, become qualified as a body capable of working. In this way, we see the second function of subjugation clearly emerging. The first function is to extract time, by transforming people’s time, their living time, into labor time. Its second function consists in converting people’s bodies into labor power. The function of transforming the body into labor power corresponds to the function of transforming time into labor time (Foucault, 2001, pp. 80-82).

In another text, he says:

This bio-power was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism; the latter would not have been possible without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes. But this was not all it required; it also needed the growth of both these factors, their reinforcement as well as their availability and docility; it had to have methods of power capable of optimizing forces, aptitudes, and life in general without at the same time making them more difficult to control. If the development of the great instruments of the state, as institutions of power, ensured the maintenance of production relations, the rudiments of anatomo- and bio-politics, created in the eighteenth century as techniques of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies), operated in the sphere of economic processes, their development, and the forces working to sustain them. They also acted as factors of segregation and social hierarchization, exerting their influence on the respective forces of both these movements, guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony. The adjustment of the accumulation of men to that of capital, the joining of the growth of human groups to the expansion of productive forces and the differential allocation of profit, were made possible in part by the exercise of biopower in its many forms and modes of application. The investment of the body, its valorization, and the distributive management of its forces were at the time indispensable (Foucault, 1978, pp. 140-141).

All these excerpts from Foucault shows us that he takes into account the subjectivity-producing dimension of the power and control mechanisms that derive from the relations of work and economic production. We can say that the concept of “economy”,⁷ which Foucault uses frequently, points precisely to the relationship between economic production and the productive (that is, subjectivity-producing) dimension of power. Put it differently, in Macherey’s words:

This economy, it can be said, is not an economy of things or goods but an economy of “forces”, and as such, inextricably an economy of persons; an economy which in reality is closely integrated with procedures for the subjection of persons and, more precisely, bodies. To put in in Foucault’s terms, we must ask ourselves how capitalism, by utilizing the exploitation of labor-power, developed “methods of power capable of optimizing forces,

⁷ I use “economy” here with its meaning in ancient Greece: *oikonomia* (*oikos*: household and *nomos*: norm), which does not mean only monetary affairs, but also refers to governmental issues. By this way, I think, the relation between economic and governmental aspects of any economic mode of production become clearer. In this dissertation, I use the term “affective economy” in this sense, referring to the production of affective subjectivities produced in parallel with the economic production. In other words, it refers, first, to the fact that the economy produces affects and desires as much as goods and services, and second, affects and desires are necessary elements of the reproduction of any economic mode of production.

aptitudes, and life in general without at the same time making them more difficult to govern” (2015).

Therefore, it is necessary to ask, remembering Spinoza’s observation that “they will fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance”, the following questions here: What compels us to work, to sell our labor, to be involved in the capitalist relations of production in order to survive, or rather, to pursue our *conatus*? How does this compulsion normalize itself? How do we learn to embrace what we are compelled to live, the conditions produced by capitalism? How do we passionately desire what we are forced to choose? How does the process of subsumption of labor under capital, that is, the transformation of labor-power from “a power that produces” into “productive power” (Macherey, 2015), into “estranged labor” (Marx, 1978), take place? The concept of “affective economy” answers these questions, drawing our attention to the role of affective mechanism in the reproduction of capitalist relations.

2.1.2.4. Affective Economy of Joy and Sadness: A Reading of Lordon’s Periodization of Affective Composition of Labor

At this point, I will focus on French economist Frederic Lordon and particularly his book *Willing Slaves of Capitalism: Spinoza and Marx on Desire*. I think that his effort to connect Spinoza’s theory of affects and desire with the problematic of subjection in Marx is significant for this study to theorize the affective economy. He states that he intends to combine a structuralism based on relationality and an anthropology based on affections. This in fact means to re-read and interpret Marx’s analysis of capitalism by including anthropological premises of Spinoza. This can be understood as an attempt to incorporate Spinoza’s philosophical concepts along with Marx’s theoretical framework into the economic analysis of capitalism.

Lordon’s works have in recent years, by placing affects to central position, shed new light on the mechanisms of exploitation and domination of capitalism under the neoliberal regime. His works focus on the affective composition of labor in neoliberalism and tries to understand, following Spinoza, how it is that people actively desire exploitation and domination in their everyday life. In this context, Lordon’s starting point is a very simple but fundamental question: How can you mobilize others

in the service of your own desires? When we think of it in the context of capitalism, we can formulate the question as follows: How can workers agree to put their labor at the service of the employers? The aim of his “Spinozist anthropology” is revealing the fundamental role of affects and desires in the employment relationship, reconceptualizing capitalist exploitation as the capture and the government of affects and desires. We can say that Lordon’s “anthropology”, which is based on Spinoza’s philosophy of affect, proposes the renewal of the critique of political economy, as initiated by Marx, and the construction of a new model for the forms of social domination that focuses on affect.

As I stated before, desire is *conatus*, the effort by which each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to preserve in its being. But desire is subject to history of the society; in other words, “history of each society both give rises and set limits to the range of undertakings that are possible within it, that is, to the range of objects of desire that a society consider legitimate” (Lordon, 2014, p. 5). Lordon calls this societal barrier on desire *epithumé*. *Epithumé* is the general form, objective structure that shapes the affective orientation of society, by determining its limits:

The task of enlisting powers of acting is a matter of colinearisation, namely, of the production of suitable desires (suitable to the master-desire). Capitalism must therefore be grasped not only in its structures but also as a certain regime of desire; for the pleasure of a Foucauldian derivation, we could call it an *epithumè*. To speak of *epithumè* is another way of recalling that objective structures, as Bourdieu already noted, but also Marx, extend necessarily into subjective structures, and that in addition to being external, social things, they must also exist as inscriptions inside individual psyches. In other terms, social structures find expression as configurations of desires and affects, and thus have their own specific imaginary. To speak of capitalism as *epithumè* is however also to say that, among the multiplicity of social structures, those linked with capitalist relations have acquired a consistency and a centrality that make them the organising principle of the greater part of social life (2014, p. 35).

Therefore, our desires cannot be unlimited; they are determined and limited by the capitalist *epithumé*. For example, in capitalist society, in order to maintain our lives, to pursuing our *conatus*, we may desire to invest in something or to play the stock market if we are capital-owner, and if we have nothing but our labor power then we desire to work as wage-earner. There is no hierarchical relationship between the capital-owner and wage-earner in terms of their *conatus* which allows them to pursue

the object of desire, but it is obvious that their objects of desire are not identical and subject to hierarchical relationship. First of all, the capital-owner needs others to pursue his/her own desire. In other words, in order for the capital-owner to pursue his/her conatus as a capital-owner, he/she must subordinate the desire of others to his/her own desire, and Lordon calls the desire of capital-owner as “master-desire”. According to him, wage-labor relationship emerges precisely as a result of this hierarchical relationship. Then, how does this happen? According to Lordon, money plays a very important role here. In the capitalist *epithumé*, the only way to make a living is to have money and everyone desires more or less money to survive. The compulsory desire for money gives rise to the desire to join the wage-labor relationship for those who have nothing but labor power, and the wage-labor relationship leads to the domination of the master-desire:

It is the social structures, in the case of employment, those of the capitalist relations of production, that configure desires and predetermine the strategies for attaining them. Within the structures of radical material heteronomy, the desire for persevering biologically-materially is narrowed down to the desire for money, which is in turn narrowed down to the desire to be employed (Lordon, 2014, p. 12).

This is the “willing” aspect of the wage-labor relationship. Money here functions both as a means of enslavement and as a means of emancipation: It is enslaving, because the way to reach objects of desire passes through it and binds us to employment relation; it is emancipatory, because it has the unlimited power to offer freedom to reach objects of desire. But the freedom money provides is illusory, since, in the last instance, it has already been limited by the capitalist *epithumé*.

To understand this, we should accept that, following Spinoza, there is necessity even in situations that are considered to be “free”. As Marx argued in *Capital*, “the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition, and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws” (1982, p. 899). In this regard, Spinoza thinks similar to Marx. We are born conscious of our desires but ignorant of their causes. For this reason, we think that we freely and naturally desire what we desire rather than consider them as the product of socio-economic relations. In a similar way, we all are compelled to work, to sell our labor in order to survive but think that it is natural. However, according to Spinoza,

this is an illusion. In this regard, the crucial point in the wage-labor relationship is that it pushes us to embrace, to desire the conditions in which we are structurally confined. The concept of “passionate servitude” that Lordon derives from Spinoza to explain the labor regime of neoliberal capitalism precisely refers to the fact that people actively desire servitude (that is, wage-labor relationship) and exploitation which he/she is forced to choose by force of his/her material conditions. In other words, “the real chains are those of our affects and desires. There is no such thing as voluntary servitude, there is only passionate servitude” (Lordon, 2014, p. 14).

For someone who has subjected to this system, being unemployed is the biggest threat. Because being unemployed, that is to say, being left without money means moving away from the objects of desire that conatus is already directed. In this regard, it is possible to consider money in capitalist system as the “universal equivalent of desire” because we live in a market society in which money is the condition of every possible joy and desire. However, work commitment does not only occur with affects of anxiety and fear. It is not possible for this domination to reproduce itself without creating affects of joy, pleasure and hope. Lordon, following Spinoza, argues that the domination stems only from oppression and fear creates the affect of sadness which diminishes the power to act. Therefore, it is equally necessary to produce affects of joy and hope to increase the power of people to act, to make them love their conditions, to make them more docile. In other words, for society to function we must desire to do so, and we do this because we must believe that it is necessary condition of our desires.

Lordon periodizes the ways of articulating desires to the social structure and adapting to the master-desire, that is, colinearisation, with a historical perspective. We can say that the affective composition changes historically, depending on the general transformation of social relations, of the mode of production. As Read stated:

An individual or society that is living hand to mouth, in a basic relation of sustenance, will be dominated by fear more than hope. This relation changes with the increase in security and stability; hope will always be shadowed by fear but the relative dominance of each shifts with a transformation of the basic social relations. An increase in security, in the possibility of survival, shifts the predominant affect from fear to hope. (...) It is equally possible to argue for a determination from the side of superstition and its imaginary constitution, as images of possible fears overwhelm the present. Hope and fear are grounded not just on the perception of the present as an apprehension of the future; they

are also based on an interpretation of the past. Interpretation can override material relations producing a fear or hope that is based not on the immediate present, but on its interpretation, an interpretation grounded on the past and on scripture. As much as the transformation of material relations, the scarcity and availability of objects of desire, determines and effects hope and fear, the transformations of hope and fear, the general sense of security and insecurity drive and determine the desire for objects. This is especially true of money in its various forms, which is often hoarded in moments of doubt and fear. Hope and fear are not just the conjunction of the relations of security and insecurity in the present, but they encompass the real and the imaginary relation to those relations as they extend over time, to borrow Althusser's formulation of ideology. The affective relation to the object, to the entirety of one's material conditions, and the affective relation to the future, to temporality, continually intersect and short-circuit each other (2016, pp. 153-154).

In this sense, it can be said that affective composition corresponds to a prevailing social feeling in society, similar to Raymond Williams's concept of "structures of feeling" (1977). Williams uses this concept to describe the set of experiences that occurs in historical-social relations in a particular time and place. Affective composition can also be compared to the concept of "emotional tonality/situation" used by Paul Virno to refer to the "ways of being and feeling so pervasive that they end up being common to the most diverse contexts of experience (work, leisure, feelings, politics, etc.)" (2004, p. 84). These concepts draw attention to the social construction of emotions and its connection to material relations of productions. According to this, certain kinds of emotions and moods become historically-socially dominant in certain periods by the dynamics of class relations. In this regard, Lordon periodizes the affective composition of labor specifically within capitalism's own history.

The first phase is the initial formation of capitalism which corresponds to, as I discussed above, formal subsumption of labor under capital. This phase can be described with one simple principle, one simple impetus that drives conatus, in terms of the affective composition of labor: one must sell his labor power to survive. The only thing to do was to get involved in wage labor to make a living and to survive. The main impulse of the workers, who were removed from their land by the process of primitive accumulation, whose means of production were taken away and who had no other options than to work in the workshops and factories, was a sad affect, the fear of survival and starving. Thus, the main drive that determined the affective composition of primitive accumulation, of formal subsumption, the main thrust of conatus was fear.

In this sense, as Read argued, “primitive accumulation is not just the destruction of any commons and the accumulation of wealth; it is also a primitive accumulation of conatus, of striving, as it precludes other means of self-preservation” (2016, p. 158).

Thus, the primary source of employment relations is wage dependency. If the workers are ready to sell their labor power to the capitalist, it is because it is the only legitimate way to ensure their subsistence, and thus to remove the sad affect stemming from the anxiety of starving. However, the capitalist *epithumé* went beyond simply taming the wage-worker with fear of starvation. Therefore, the second phase is Fordism and the rise of consumer society. In this phase, according to Lordon, capitalist *epithumé* shifted the drive to work from survival to consumption. As a way of mobilizing the wage-worker, the joyful affects produced by owning and consuming commodities also came into play. In this sense, the fear of starving, “the sadness of work is compensated for with the joys of consumption” (Read, 2016, p. 160). In this welfare condition where labor was – relatively – secure, it was hope and passive joy, in the Spinozist sense, that characterized the affective composition of labor. According to Lordon, the Fordist configuration of capitalist *epithumé* “consisted in supplementing the sad affects of the spur of hunger with the joyful affects of the expanded access to consumable commodities, augmenting the desire to avoid an evil (material destitution) with the desire to pursue goods” (Lordon, 2014, p. 36).

And the third phase is neoliberalism. At this phase, according to Lordon, the capitalist *epithumé* solved two affective problems in the previous stages: the fear of survival intrinsic to employment in the period of formal subsumption was a thrust for conatus, but it was a sad affect; joy in the Fordist welfare period indeed a joy but it was an extrinsic joy.⁸ These two problems are solved in the neoliberal *epithumé* by the fact that work itself, that is, wage labor itself becomes the source of active, intransitive joy. Today, the capitalist *epithumé*, in the context of neoliberalism and its work ethics, creates an intrinsic motivation to the work itself and demands from the employees the ambition of seeking satisfaction from the work itself:

⁸ In the Spinozist sense, it is a “passive joy” that has no cause in itself. The source of this joy is extrinsic and makes the affected person passive. On the other hand, there is an “active joy” whose source is in itself and not dependent on the external object.

The neoliberal *epithumogenesis* undertakes to produce intrinsic joyful affects, that is, affects that are intransitive rather than ceded to objects outside the activity of wage labor itself (as consumption goods are). Hence it is the activity itself that must be reconstructed, both objectively and in the imagination, as a source of immediate joy. The desire to find employment should no longer be merely a mediated desire for the goods that wages circuitously permit buying, but an intrinsic desire for the activity for its own sake. Neoliberal *epithumogenesis* thus assumes the specific task of producing on a large-scale desires that did not previously exist, or that existed only in a minority of capitalist enclaves: desires for happy labor, or, to borrow directly from its own vocabulary, desires for “fulfilment” and “self-realisation” in and through work (Lordon, 2014, p. 37).

According to this, in the neoliberal *epithumé* in which the modern individual “increasingly become an entrepreneur of the self” (Read, 2016, p. 236), work has become the immediate condition of self-realization:

The strength of the neoliberal form of the employment relation lies precisely in the re-internalization of the objects of desire, not merely as desire for money but as desire for other things, for new, intransitive satisfactions, satisfactions inherent in the work activities themselves. Put otherwise, neoliberal employment aims at enchantment and rejoicing: it sets out to enrich the relation with joyful affects (Lordon, 2014, p. 41).

If employers today want employees to align their interests with those of the company, if they say constantly “we are a family”, it is because it is the best way to fully capture their power to act, to subordinate their *conatus*, so as to make all of their dispositions, desires and affects harmonize with the “master desire”. According to Lordon, in “the service sector where the productive performance is primarily a ‘human’ performance, namely, affective and behavioral” (Lordon, 2014, p. 54), and in ultra-competitive work environment, employees are increasingly assessed on the basis of their interpersonal skills. Companies are looking for workers with both technical and interpersonal skills, thus autonomy and versatility, allowing them to face a multitude of tasks and situations. On the other hand, this work ethics completely fits into the context of neoliberalism in which the power balance between capital and labor has become favorable to the capital that it can demand more from labor.

Although this periodization seems useful in theory, I think that it has some flaws. In my opinion, the main flaw of this periodization is that it draws clear boundaries between the affective composition of these three phases, saying that the affective composition in all these three phases changes qualitatively. It would be an erroneous

interpretation to claim that the affective composition or orientation of each phase disappears or changes completely in other phase, for example, that the fear of surviving has completely disappeared in Fordist consumer society. As Read stated:

These different organizations of desire coexist not just in the same world distributed across a global economy that combines sweatshops, modern factories, and technology entrepreneurs often with the same company or producing the same commodity but the same city, and, if we consider them in terms of their primarily affective dimension, in the same individual (2011).

Moreover, the affective orientation of an individual can change even in his/her personal life. For example, we do not sell our labor just for fear of survival always; sometimes we work with fear of survival, sometimes with passive joy of consumption, and sometimes with active joy. Then, there are mixtures rather than clear distinctions. As Spinoza said, there is fear in every hope and hope in every fear. Therefore, “these different affective orientations define less three separate epochs in the history of capital than different affective orientations distributed not only across the same globe, nation, or city, but across the same individual over the course of the working day” (Read, 2011). For this reason, the affective motivation and orientation of labor in post-Fordist or neoliberal *epithumé* cannot be described only as “pleasure of employment itself” or “passion in the activity of work itself”. In addition to this, we must also take into account how the fear of survival stems from the dismantling of the security and stability of work. In many jobs, work is undoubtedly seen more as a place of suffering rather than a place of joy and fulfillment. The whole point of Lordon’s approach, however, is that it allows us to think of these two tendencies not as opposed to each other, but as two sides of the neoliberal work regime.

Another point to be emphasized that is missing in Lordon’s work is that it is taken for granted that workers adopt this post-Fordist work ethics, that the neoliberal working regime has established itself without counterreaction. This is an approach that tends to view employees as a kind of puppets or affective slaves. According to this, workers are nothing but the bearers of this discourse and ethics. However, whether the employees adopt this ethics or not; how and to what extent workers resist; to what extent they make concessions to it; to understand why it cannot be resisted if it cannot be resisted; what kinds of affective patterns and forms of politics are formed etc. are issues that deserve to be examined.

We know that people do not work happily just for the satisfaction inherent in work, nor do they endure it simply because of the mute compulsion of the economic power of capital. In short, working life is an affective field in which multidimensional dynamics are active. But it is a fact that all affective mechanisms and power techniques operating here produce a subjectivity. And the affect theory shows us that the reason why people do not object to wage labor, the fact that they must sell their labor in order to live, is not simply because of the mute compulsion of the economic power of capital, nor alienation. The point is the affective nature of this subjectivity which takes this compulsion as natural and thinks it ultimately benefits itself. In other words, it is not only the economic compulsion of capitalism that is at work, because as we will see in the fieldwork, even though people are aware of this compulsory relation, they can accept working as a “free choice”. Therefore, they do not think that they work only “to survive”. On the other hand, I think we cannot simply call this perception of necessity as freedom as alienation, because it is not that people do not recognize this necessity, we see that they are aware that working constitutes an obstacle to freedom. But I am saying that there is an “affective governmentality” at work here, which imposes this necessity as freedom and makes employees desire it through the “passive joyful affect” it produces.

2.1.2.5. Affective Governmentality: Integrating Governmentality with Affectivity

At this point, it would be good to make a theoretical explanation to provide conceptual clarity when theorizing the concept of affective economy. This explanation is about whether the Deleuzian/Spinozist affectivity framework can be reconciled with the Foucauldian governmentality framework. Although this study is macro-theoretically tied to the Spinozist/Deleuzian affectivity framework, at first glance it may seem to fit within a rather Foucauldian framework. Therefore, I think it would be good both theoretically and methodologically to reveal more clearly how I dealt with the relationship between these two conceptualizations in this study.⁹

As will be seen later, the narrative I put forth in the part of my study where I discuss especially Passionate Work Ethics and the data I obtained from the case study is

⁹ It was the meticulous reading of my advisor, Kürşad Ertuğrul, that drew my attention to this point which is critical for the theoretical discussion of the study.

largely embedded in the theory of neoliberal governmentality. In that part, while trying to theorize Passionate Work Ethics and its elements, attributes and premises, the entrepreneurial subjectivity that emerges in this context; while examining how this situation transforms every aspect of life into capital form, in short, how neoliberal logic “govern” life in the context of my own case study, I have undoubtedly benefited a lot from the Foucauldian framework of neoliberal governmentality and the concept of “the conduct of conduct”. On the other hand, from the first chapter to the last chapter of the study, the Spinozist/Deleuzian affectivity framework and the implications of the concept of “affective economy” elaborated throughout is also obvious, which constitutes the backbone of the theoretical path of the thesis. Therefore, the theoretical approach of the study sits at the intersection of Foucauldian governmentality and Spinozist/Deleuzian affectivity frameworks.

In the literature, there are authors who say that these two theoretical frameworks are incompatible, as well as those who say they are compatible. In this study, I defend the compatibility of these two frameworks. It is possible to reconcile these two frameworks, and even more useful because, in my opinion, this is a theoretical intervention that will fill some gaps in the Foucauldian governmentality framework.

In fact, Foucault touches on affective elements in his texts on governmental regimes, but governmentality studies that follow Foucault often ignore this dimension (Kantola, Seck, & Mannevu, 2019). The rationality rather than affectivity is highlighted in most cases. Recalling Spinoza’s thought which grasps the soul and body, feelings and mind in parallel with each other as opposed to Cartesian thought, we can say that approaches that pushes Foucault’s governmentality approach to the sphere of rationality have a similar limitation as they do not take into account the affective dimension. Subjects are governed not only by a rational but also by an affective power, and the Foucauldian governmentality framework’s emphasis on rationality risks ignoring the affective mechanisms at work here. In this sense, *homo economicus* as “an entrepreneur of himself” (Foucault, 2008, p. 226), which the Foucauldian governmentality approach presents as the subject of neoliberalism, as Jones and Spicer (2005) reminds us, seems insufficient to explain why it is accepted as a mode of subjectivity by individuals. In this respect, it would be fruitful to focus on the role of desire and affects in order to overcome the limitations of approaches that reflect the neoliberal subject with pure

rationality and mental capacity. We must accept that the neoliberal entrepreneur *homo economicus*, which is reflected in his characteristic of self-interest and rationality, has also an affective capacity in addition to this mental capacity. As Campbell (2010) pointed out, an approach to the neoliberal subject that deals only with its mental capacity risks over-reducing the role of affects in the production of subjectivity. We can find the theoretical material to eliminate this risk in the theory of affect and desire derived from Spinoza and Deleuze. We can claim that the affective economy approach, which provides the theoretical basis of this study and derives from Spinoza's affect theory, is a support, if not an alternative, to the Foucauldian governmentality approach in this respect.

We noted earlier that one of Spinoza's most important interventions in political philosophy was his questioning of how people desire their own enslavement, not through physical force and coercion but of their own accord. As we discussed in Section 2.1., Spinoza points to the impact of imagination and superstition on the masses in this context. He discusses at length in this book how a transcendent power (in the context of Spinoza's discussion in the *Theologico-Political Treatise*, this transcendent power is the God of Judaism) makes the masses manageable between the affects of fear and hope. The affects of the masses are manipulated, captured and made manageable through imagination and superstition. Whether it is the power of the church, the power of the state or the power of the penal or medical gaze etc., the power always needs its subjects to internalize the power practices it exercises. As Bottici and de Beustegi pointed out, this need poses not only a problem of sovereignty and legality to the powers, but also the problem of "governmentality" and "the art of conducting conducts", referring to Foucault (Bottici & de Beistegui, 2018, p. 170). In this context, we can argue that the Foucauldian governmentality framework, whose purpose is to produce docile and productive bodies, overlaps with the Spinozist framework of affective economy. Conducting conduct means manipulating, directing and shaping the actions of individuals, as well as increasing their power to act.

In this respect, we can argue that the neoliberal power's project of creating docile and obedient bodies, and relatedly, the project of creating productive bodies is also a project of creating happy-joyful subjects. For, as Binkley has shown, "the problem of happiness is not foreign to governmentality theory, even as Foucault initially described

it” (Binkley, 2011, p. 382). As Foucault argues:

From the very beginnings of political philosophy in Western countries everybody knew and said that the happiness of people had to be the permanent goal of governments, but then happiness was conceived as the result or the effect of a really good government. Now happiness is not only a simple effect. Happiness of individuals is a requirement for the survival and development of the state. It is a condition, it is an instrument, and not simply a consequence (Foucault, 1988, p. 158).

We can even realize that this is directly related to our discussion when we remove the word “government” in this quote from Foucault and replace it with “neoliberal labor relations”. In the context of the discussion on labor relations, we can say that the happiness of individuals is now a necessary condition to make them more productive, efficient and more obedient, to enable them to love their jobs, to enable them to adapt to precarious and flexible working conditions more easily, and to attract them to the wage labor system more easily. It is also a means of persuading individuals to the dispositions of autonomy, entrepreneurial subjectivity imposed by economic rationality (Binkley, 2011, p. 382).

To the extent that “governmentality” and “the conduct of conduct” are concepts that depend directly on the “consenting subject” rather than coercion or subjugation, considering these concepts together with the concept of “affectivity” becomes a necessity rather than a choice. Because governmental power need not only the rational, conscious choices of the subjects, but also their beliefs, trusts, fears, in short, their affective commitment (we discussed this in the Section 2.1. in terms of the political application of the affects of fear and hope in Spinoza). For example, the power of medical gaze does not force its subjects to live healthy by coercion (of course, here we are not ignoring the laws), but rather it wants them to believe and trust the health norm it has enacted; it does not force healthy eating habits, it wants people to be afraid of living unhealthy, to desire a healthy body. Therefore, all forms of power operating at the micro level appeal to the inner life, feelings, desires, hopes and fears of the subjects.

As Carnera notes, “the idea of constraint as power *over* was replaced by the concept of ‘strategic power’ as being power *to*, a power to form human beings” (Carnera, 2012, p. 72). We can say that the difference between these two corresponds to *potestas* and

potentia in Spinoza's theory, as we have mentioned before. That is, roughly speaking, legal sovereign power is based on restriction, on coercion, that is, *potestas* that limits the actions of subjects, while governmental regimes rely on the subject's own *potentia*, power to act, potential; instead of restricting their subjects, governmental powers bring their subjects into action and increase their power to act. To put it in Spinozist jargon, it evokes in its subjects joy, not sorrow. Sad affects that reduce the power to act may be the feelings that sovereign power prefers more, but governmental regimes are rather based on joyful affects that increase the power to act. Hope rather than fear, joy rather than sorrow is more useful for power to penetrate more into life as an immanent rather than a transcendent force. In other words, "power over life and life as power often overlap each other" (Carnera, 2012, p. 74).

Here we can recall the distinction Deleuze made between ethics and morality in his interpretation of Spinoza:

[I]t's what Foucault called ethics, as opposed to morality. The difference is that morality presents us with a set of constraining rules of a special sort, ones that judge actions and intentions by considering them in relation to *transcendent values* (this is good, that's bad...); ethics is a set of optional rules that assess what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved (Deleuze, 1995, p. 100).

Accordingly, ethics establishes an immanent system of values, unlike morality, in the sense of laws imposed by a transcendent being (God, state, etc.). That is, in an ethical relationship, the relationship between two things is not judged by the measure of a transcendent being external to those two things and the relationship between them; it is realized and evaluated by the internal dynamic of the relationship between those two things. This is what the ethics of immanence is, roughly speaking. In this respect, we can say that the distinction between morality and ethics corresponds to the distinction between *potestas* and *potentia*.

I use the concept of Passionate Work Ethics based on this distinction. Because, as I have tried to show through this concept throughout this study, the strength of the post-Fordist working society, in my opinion, comes precisely from its immanence, its ability to establish such a work "ethics" that appeals to desires and to create "passive joyful affects". It is not based on a morality that imposes prohibitions and rules, but on an ethics, norms that increase the subjects' power to act and are easier to penetrate

into the capillaries of social life to the extent that they are immanent. As Deleuze points out in the last sentence of the passage above, ethics precisely corresponds to engaging in activities that increase our power to act and having joyful encounters. Passionate Work Ethics' influence is based on this and precisely in this respect it overlaps with the governmentality framework. In other words, this work ethics of neoliberalism, as an immanent not transcendent strategy of power, infiltrates working life in a much more dangerous and cunning way; it penetrates into the inner life of employees; it makes them obedient and productive precisely by increasing their power to act, supporting their *potentia*, promising joyful encounters.

Therefore, if we understand false consciousness by ideology, if we think that ideology opposes affect to thought, if we think that ideology is just a matter of belief and consciousness, then the Passionate Work Ethics is not just an ideology in this negative sense.¹⁰ I argue that the Passionate Work Ethics should be considered a part of the

¹⁰ We have known since Althusser that ideology is not simply a matter of belief and false consciousness, mystification and deception. Ideology is a relation based on material practices and “the unconscious, affective structure that mediates the appearance, or imagination of our lived world” (Sharp, 2007, p. 735); therefore, it is also affective. In this sense, according to Spinoza's *Ethics* (especially the Appendix to Book One), which Althusser says, “the matrix of every possible theory of ideology” (Althusser, 1997, p. 7), we can say that ideology mobilizes affects in a particular way. But here, affectivity should be considered (1) as a collective phenomenon, an affective structure, not as a phenomenon related to individual feelings belonging to one's private sphere, and (2) affectivity is not feeling as the opposite of thought, it is an association between idea and feeling.

Here, as a contribution to Althusserian vocabulary, Cunningham proposes the notion “ideological cultivation” (2023) instead of “interpellation”. Cunningham, who tries to show the importance of the link between ideology and political affects, especially in the context of today's authoritarian governments, propose to focuses on the process of “ideological cultivation of political subjectivity, which occurs substantially through strategies of affective appeal and manipulation”, producing “subjects with beliefs, values, habits, fears, and desires convenient for the class or class constellation whose struggle generates that ideology”. (Cunningham, 2023, pp. 2-5). The phenomenon that Lordon calls “colinearisation with master-desire” (2014, p. 35), just like “ideological cultivation”, points to the alignment and subordination of the desires of the dominated to the desires of the dominant class/group in capitalism. In this respect, desires are also open to manipulation and strategies of power, but not like a false consciousness. The issue here is not what is right or wrong, false or true, but rather the struggle for power that revolves around desires.

In this sense, people are aware of their desires, but to the extent that they are ignorant of their causes, they think their desires, choices, and volitions are free and “see themselves as a kingdom within a kingdom”. It is this idea in *Ethics* that Althusser considers “the matrix of every possible theory of ideology”. But neither Spinoza, nor Althusser, as well as Deleuze and Guattari did not leave this issue on the level of “ignorance” and the imaginary, because this analysis of ignorance and false consciousness alone does not explain domination and enslavement. Deleuze and Guattari here, through Spinoza, turn the focus to desires and affect. Therefore, I suggest that the Passionate Work Ethics is not only an ideology in the sense that the Passionate Work Ethics is not a mystification and false consciousness since such a definition ignores the affective mechanisms and the investments in desires. This work ethics,

neoliberal *epithumé*, as Lordon puts it, that embedded in the commonsense and the everyday. Within this context, referencing Spinoza's words, it can be said that the reason why the masses act for their own servitude as if it was their own deliverance is not only an illusion but rather also an investment in their desires and the passive joyful affects derived from this investment;¹¹ it is the capture and harnessing of one's affects, desires, and *potentia* by an apparatus of power. We can even say, "every apparatus of power is an apparatus capable of capturing desire; every form of governmentality corresponds to an investment of desire" (Bottici & de Beistegui, 2018, p. 186). Individuals' affective subjectivities which are constituted within affective patterns of power – that is, affective hegemony – is an integral part for the exercise of governmental power and "to the notion of governing through freedom" (Campbell, 2010, p. 53). In the context I have presented here, I will examine how post-Fordist working relations exercise the Passionate Work Ethics as a governance strategy.

There are authors who attempt to link Foucault-Spinoza/Deleuze and governmentality-affectivity. For example, Massumi's concept of "priming", which is a "form of conditioning, which modulates behavior by implanting presuppositions and activating

Takes aim not just at consciousness but also the energies and capacities of the body, and the objects and aims of its desires (...) This involves the cultivation of habits, the internalization of routines, the incitement of desires, and the adjustment of hopes, all to guarantee a subject's adequacy to the lifetime demands of work". (Weeks, 2011, p. 54)

But, as I have shown, this is not to reject ideology or to argue that ideology and affect cannot be considered together (as Lordon's concepts of "*epithumé*" and "colinearisation" and Cunningham's notions of "ideological cultivation" show they are correlated). In this study, I use the Passionate Work Ethics as the affective dimension of neoliberal (productivist, individualist, entrepreneurial, flexible) work ideology. Passionate Work Ethics points to an affective domination that conducts the employees through passive joyful affects.

¹¹ Lordon states that this is not "voluntary servitude" (with reference to Etienne de la Boétie) but "passionate servitude". According to Lordon, to say that servitude is voluntary makes us fall into the error of thinking servitude at the level of free will-consciousness. Therefore, it is the chains of causality, the structural relations that determine our desires and affects (that is, *epithumé*), rather than the free will and choices that need to be looked at. What is at issue here is thus more of a passionate servitude:

Subjectivist-individualist thought, built around the idea of free will as sovereign self-control, predictably rejects this verdict of radical heteronomy in toto and to its last breath. It is indeed this rejection that is expressed – prospectively in La Boétie, almost in embodied form today – in the idea of 'voluntary servitude', since, without the outright duress of physical restraint, one would not have submitted to being chained unless one more or less wanted it, however mysterious that 'wanting' is bound to remain. Against this insoluble aporia, Spinoza proposes an altogether different mechanism of alienation: the real chains are those of our affects and desires. There is no such thing as voluntary servitude. There is only passionate servitude. That, however, is universal. (2014, p. 28)

tendencies in an open situation of encounter” (Massumi, 2015, p. 29) is the product of this attempt. Or the concept of “immersion” as a governance principle put forward by Mühlhoff and Slaby:

We use “immersion” as a term for capturing the intensive involvement or embeddedness of individuals within affective arrangements. More precisely, immersion is a specific mode of affective involvement, which is characterized by a spectrum of subjective experiential qualities ranging from uneasiness, to absorption, up to the complete amalgamation of one’s temporary “being” within an intensive meshwork of augmenting or diminishing, positive or negative affective relations (Mühlhoff & Slaby, 2018, p. 160).

According to the authors, “immersive power” is not based on power-over relationships. This kind of power is rather “relies on the relational modulation of individual behavior by selective stimulation and intensification of the affective potentials and the character traits of each individual” (Mühlhoff & Slaby, 2018, p. 169). Mühlhoff and Slaby also claim that immersive power is “a modality of post-disciplinary power dominant in the micro-dispositifs of post-Fordist work cultures in the 21st century” (Mühlhoff & Slaby, 2018, p. 171).

Similarly, Bottici and de Beistegui call the “set of rules, habits and codes, the aim of which is to discipline the mind and the body, as a ‘regime of desire’ and, more specifically, as a technology of the heart” (Bottici & de Beistegui, 2018, p. 173). According to this, power does not govern its subjects *in contrast to* their desires, but *through* their desires. In this context, as the authors point out, joyful affects are more functional than sad ones. Or in other words, a power that “conquers hearts” is stronger than a power that arouses fear in its subjects. As Spinoza said:

Therefore, he who wholeheartedly resolves to obey another in all his commands is fully under another’s dominion, and consequently he who reigns over his subjects’s minds holds the most powerful dominion.... [M]inds are to some degree under the control of the sovereign power, who has many means of inducing the great majority to believe, love, hate etc. whatever he wills (2002, p. 537).

Recalling our discussion on *potestas* and *potential* above, I think Mühlhoff (2020), one of the authors who most successfully brought together the Foucauldian governmentality and the Spinozist/Deleuzean affectivity conceptualization, claims that *potentia* should be understood as “affective disposition” in the Foucauldian sense.

The author claims that “affect is inherently a power-theoretical concept that must be read through the lens of a relational and productive notion of power” (2020, p. 1). Recalling Lordon’s concept of *epithumé*, which we discussed in Section 2.1., Mühlhoff too states that individuation is not something universal and eternal, but a “subjectivity” that appears in the context of Foucault’s historically specific episteme. That is, the episteme in the Foucauldian sense that determines what is thinkable and sayable, and the *epithumé* that historically determines what is desirable (“[h]istorically determined product of desire” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983, p. 183)) or “affective disposition”; discourse and affective patterns of power are two indispensable elements of the functioning of a governmental power.

As Mühlhoff underlines, studies that take into account the affective dimension of subjectivity have become widespread in the subjectivity literature recently. The common point of these studies is that they are inclined to conceive of affect as “the part of what disposes individuals and groups to enact a certain subjectivity” (2020, p. 2). In other words, the affective dimension is very important in the creation of certain kinds of subjectivity by dispositifs that function in the establishment and maintenance of existing micro and mezzo power relations. According to Mühlhoff, affective dispositifs operating through *potentia* as individuality establish an “affective hegemony”. According to this, governmental regimes also establish an affective hegemony as an affective context of relations that supports or diminishes the power of their subjects to act. Governmental regimes with corresponding affective hegemonies capture and harness their affective potentials. These hegemonic affective patterns “spread through social interactions from the family to education, the workplace, and everyday encounters at the street” (2020, p. 7).

In this context, the works of Massumi, Mühlhoff, Mühlhoff and Slaby, as well as Bottici and de Beistegui point to the affective dimension inherent in “the conduct of conduct”. Thinking of the issue in the context of work culture, employees can be drawn into the wage labor relationship with the fear of being fired and competitive pressure (sad affects) or, more insidiously, with various rewards and motivation-enhancing practices (joyful affects); they can be pushed to engage in certain behaviors. What drives them to engage in certain behaviors here is rationality and calculation, as well as affects of fear and hope. But that drive does not always have to be by force. Fear is

a powerful tool; fear of being fired or being unemployed can push an employee to do a job they do not like, even if they do not want to. The “mute compulsion” of capitalism provides this. But more dangerous than that, it is a more insidious apparatus of power and exploitation that makes the employee love the “slavery” relationship, makes one see one’s own interests in common with the interests of the employer, and gets one’s consent by arousing joyful affects. A “friendly boss” is more dangerous than an angry boss. Because sad affects discourage individuals, but joyful affects encourage individuals to engage in certain behaviors and function by supporting their power to do. To put it another way, an employee who is set to work with joyful affects also becomes his/her own employer; he/she does not need an employer to watch and manage him/her: he/she is ready to exploit, manage and motivate him/herself. To paraphrase Foucault’s analogy of the panopticon, there is no longer even a need for a manager to watch over everyone in the middle of the prison. Employees do not act with the awareness that there is a manager watching over them: they are their own manager now.

This study asks the question Spinoza asked in the 17th century – “how do people strive for their own servitude as if it were for their own deliverance” – in the context of contemporary post-Fordist work regime: How is it that people continue to be involved in the wage labor relationship today, and how do they do so by consenting to the conditions of flexibility and precarity that are prevalent? I argue that capital’s investment in our desires and affections is also effective here, beyond the “mute compulsion of capitalism” forcing all of us to work, to sell our labor power to survive every day. In short, we do not work just because we have to; at the same time, we live in a post-Fordist work ethics that makes these working conditions “desirable”, albeit flexible and precarious. This is where the Passionate Work Ethics come into play, as part of the neoliberal (productivist, individualist, entrepreneurial, and flexible) ideology of work, perpetuating at an affective plane the necessity to work in today’s precarious and flexible working conditions. People are aware of this necessity in their everyday lives, but the Passionate Work Ethics makes the contradictions and all the sufferings that this necessity creates in people’s everyday lives “desirable” and sustainable in the passionate servitude relationship. In this context, this study asks the question of what are the affective and passionate mechanisms that enable this relationship of exploitation to continue as a governance strategy in the context of

contemporary flexible and precarious post-Fordist work regime and “the new postindustrial work ethic” which characterizes work “as a path to individual self-expression, self-development, and creativity” (Weeks, 2011, p. 46)?

2.1.3. Conclusion

I have thus far tried to show that affects, feelings, and moods are significant phenomena for understanding our contemporary social-political life, the underlying mechanisms of power and domination, and the production of subjectivity. In claiming this, I proposed to treat affects as social-political phenomena deriving from social relations, not as individual emotions. To that end, I benefited from the concept of “affective economy”. My use of the concept of affective economy in this dissertation focuses on labor relations, that is, the way of selling our labor, as the defining factor that shape the orientation of the conatus. My engagement with the concept of affective economy helps me to understand how economic relations of production are understood, lived, experienced, and felt and what kind of individual and social implications it produces. In short, it allows me to understand the role of economic relations of production in production of subjectivity. Because, by affects and desire, I do not mean simply the moods and temporary emotional feelings that arise in daily life, but the fundamental existential mechanism that manages life, the vital impulse that increases and decreases the power to act, and therefore sits at the very center of the human existence.

To better explain what I mean by the concept of affective economy, it might be good to look at what it is not. What does not affective economy mean? Affective economy, first of all, is not about the role of emotions in economic behavior. The role of emotions in economic behavior might be within the scope of affective economy but it can never just be reduced to that. Affective economy also does not mean simply emotional reactions to the economic process, crises etc. It is partly so, but to the extent that we are not talking about simply individual emotions, affective economy implies much more. Behavioral economics demonstrates that individuals do not always act rationally and consider their own benefit, that social, mental, and emotional biases come into play when make an economic decision. But affective economy means more than that. Because, by “economy” I do not simply mean monetary, financial affairs; rather, I use

it in its meaning in ancient Greece, *oikonomia*, which refers to governmental affairs. In this sense, affective economy does not deal with the individual's "rational choice", rather it deals with the examination of the "transindividual" (Read, 2016) conditions that produce the very conditions of the choices, possibilities, and desires. Therefore, it does not take subjectivity as given, but recognize it as produced. What is significant here is that this affective structuralism should not be "confused with a reduction of the individual to the mere effects of structural conditions in which individuals become simply bearers of economic and political functions, nor it is a reduction of politics and economics to individual experiences". Contrary to this, it allows us to consider "the way in which political and economic structures can only exist, can only reproduce themselves if they do so at the level of affects and desire" (Read, 2011). By this way, the concept refers to two points: First, economic relations of production produces affects and desires as much as goods and services; and second, affects and desires are necessary elements of the reproduction of any economic mode of production.

As Marx said, every economy, every mode of production is no doubt an organization, an economy of time.¹² I also argue that the organization of time also means the organization of life and the conatus. In this regard, social struggles revolving around the working hour have a political meaning from beginning to end, as Marx discussed in *Capital* at great length. For this reason, working time, leisure time and their organization are discussed as an important political issue in post-capitalism and post-work literature today. This is not only because the economy of time determines the production of surplus-value, but because time and its organization directly determine life itself through labor relations, through working time-leisure time articulation. I use the affect theory precisely at this point to understand what kind of structure of affects and what kind of social time regime the capitalist temporality has organized around

¹² As Marx explained in this passage from *Grundrisse*:

On the basis of communal production, the determination of time remains, of course, essential. The less time the society requires to produce wheat, cattle etc., the more time it wins for the other production, material or mental. Just as in the case of an individual, the multiplicity of its development, its enjoyment and its activity depends on economization of time. Economy of time, to this, all economy reduces itself. Society likewise has to distribute its time in a purposeful way, in order to achieve a production adequate to its overall needs; just as the individual has to distribute his time correctly in order to satisfy the various demands on his activity. Thus, economy of time, along with the planned distribution of labor time among the various branches of production, remains the first economic law on the basis of communal production. It becomes law, there, to an even higher degree. (1993, pp. 172-173)

the articulation of working time and leisure time, that is, the spheres of necessity and freedom. Within this context, I intend to discuss, through the relation between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, the temporality that capitalist relations of production establish in everyday life and in production of subjectivity (with reference to Marx's analysis of formal and real subsumption). In the next section, we will examine this tense relationship between work and time, between necessity and freedom, between working time and leisure time, through the historical periods of capitalist arrangement of wage-labor.

2.2. Time and Organization of Work

As we saw in the previous section, Lordon and some other authors made critical points on the affective composition of labor in Fordist and post-Fordist periods. And I will pick up the issue where they left off, by focusing specifically on the new arrangement of labor and employment relations emerging in the process we are going through. But before that, in this section, we need to examine in more detail the relationship between work and time, how leisure time has historically transformed, what the relationship between working time and leisure time, necessity and freedom have become today.

This section therefore proposes to focus on the main transformations in employment and work regime over the past decades. My aim is to highlight its most salient features in terms of the relation between working time and leisure time, between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. I would like to offer some perspectives for reflection on the question of what a life is like regarding the way the relationship between these two spheres in capitalism is arranged.

I intend to show that time is a social construct produced in the economic relations of production, in opposition to those who take time as a self-evident phenomenon, an ontological reality on the one hand, and those who miss the temporal dimension of exploitation and domination on the other. If we want to make time the subject of politics of time (as I will try to do in this study), if we accept that labor is "living time", "form-giving fire" forming the temporality of things (Marx, 1993, p. 61) and all economy ultimately reduces itself to "economy of time" (Marx, 1993, p. 173), then I think that we should treat time in this way, by examining in what kind of temporal organization labor, thus *conatus*, realizes itself.

At this point, I am advancing by asking the following questions: What is the dominant employment regime today? Have new, different forms of work and employment emerged, and if so, what are they? How do the new forms of work and employment characterize social relations? Can we distinguish a dominant affective mood produced by the employment regime today? How does the dominant employment regime characterize the affective composition of labor today? What kind of temporality do these forms establish, and how do they organize the relationship between working time and leisure time, necessity and freedom?

2.2.1. Time and The Organization of Work in Capitalism: Between the Realm of Necessity and the Realm of Freedom

In this section, we will discuss the historical relationship that capitalism has established between work and time and try to reveal the connection of this relationship with necessity and freedom. If we want to grasp the concepts of freedom and necessity concretely and not as abstract categories, this leads us directly to consider the relation of these concepts to work, thus the relationship between working time and leisure time. Because leisure time is not simply a personal sphere, but a socio-economic sphere where different institutional devices penetrate. Therefore, we cannot think of leisure time and the concept of freedom separately from working relations and the necessity created by it. The central role of work in human life and its organic connection with non-working spheres make it necessary to consider leisure time in relation to work. In this context, I will discuss the relationship between capitalism and leisure time, the transformation of leisure time in the capitalist system, new meanings and functions it gains in capitalism, and their relation to working time and forms of employment in this section.

The fact that work is at the center of social life is actually based on a fundamental necessity: for most of us, our living conditions depend on a job, that is, paid employment in a capitalist society. This shows how important the problem of work is, both economically and politically. When we consider that not only our basic needs but also our social recognition depends on a decent job, the personal and social dimensions of work and its associated societal symptoms become all the more apparent. It can be argued that today work is wedged between the human aspirations and necessities to

which it responds more and more poorly, and an economy that has gone mad which restrains it to ends which seem more and more foreign to us. To better make visible the logic that governs this persistent paradox, it would be illuminating to briefly go back in history and examine what the meaning of work has turned into, and what work means in capitalist relations of productions.

When we look at the origin of the word in Latin, we see that the word “labor/work” (fr. *travail*) comes from “*tripalium*”, an instrument of torture used on animals in order to care for them, or to punish criminals or slaves. Similarly, “*negotium*” for Romans, which means “business, negotiate” (fr. *négoce*), gives us an idea about what work is – or at least, was –, as the negation (*neg-otium*) of “*otium*”, that is “leisure time” (Komlosy, 2018; especially chapter three, “Work and Language”). Of course, its content has changed, and work has today become a norm in our capitalist society. But the fact is that since time immemorial work has been associated with the idea of suffering, drudgery, even slavery. However, I think that this pejorative meaning the word possess today is not specific to its nature, but to the way it is operating in society, that is, its role and position within the social relations of production.

It can be said that the negative meaning of work in capitalism stems from the fact that it is characterized by exploitative relations and necessity. With the emergence of the society of exploitation, that is capitalism, work has become, for most people, a drudgery. In capitalist society, labor has become a commodity like any other commodity, sold for wages by those who have their labor power as their only property. For two centuries, wage labor, as a particular form of exploitation of human labor in capitalism, has spread all around the world.¹³

But the exploitation of man by man is not as old as humanity. The first humans were

¹³ I am not arguing that wage labor is the only viable form of labor, putting an end to all other forms of labor. For example, forms of labor that are outside the wage-labor relationship such as unpaid domestic labor, slave labor, and child labor in sweatshops continue to exist in different parts of the world today, just as they did in the years when capitalism emerged. Within the context of capitalist relations of production, these forms of labor have also been used in favor of capital. Thus, in focusing on the wage-labor relation, I am not ignoring other forms of labor; I am not saying that capitalism is based only on the wage-labor relation. As we have seen in our discussion of formal and real subsumption (and we will see as we deepen this discussion in later sections), the two are not sharply separated from each other, and practices of formal subsumption (increasing absolute surplus-value) can be seen even at the real phase of subsumption as a result of uneven and combined development.

distinguished from other animals by their ability to create tools to benefit from natural resources. They practiced hunting and gathering to feed themselves, which was greatly facilitated as soon as they knew how to shape sharp flints. In this regard, developing tools was in a way the first form of work activity specific to the human species. Engels had a sense of the importance of the labor in the evolution of man when he wrote a short text entitled “The Part Played by Labor in the Transition from Ape to Man” (Engels, 1987). After working with tools, another step was taken with the invention of agriculture. Man ceased to be a hunter and became a producer, which allowed him to ensure the survival of larger human groups. As men produced more food than they consumed (that is, surplus), another change immediately appeared: the division of labor, and with it, the division of society into classes. The appropriation of the surplus was the origin of private property, and this transformed the human relations. On the one hand, a privileged minority freed from the concern of meeting their own needs, on the other hand, producers who must work to feed both themselves and others. And it can be said that from this moment in history, work emerges as the element that determines those who have free, leisure time and those who are trapped in the realm of necessity. Thus, the history of class relations is also the history of this relation between leisure and necessity.

Its traces can be followed up to the slavery in ancient civilizations. In ancient era where slavery prevailed, free citizens had the freedom to participate in noble activities or political life, while slaves who did not have free time had to work. As Shippen stated, “it is the division of labor in the context of Greek city-state, which makes it possible to address the material necessities that allows for the citizenry to be free for active and sustained participation in politics and leisure” (Shippen, 2014, p. 24). So, who were these people not eligible to participate in politics of the *polis*? These people were slaves, women and children who did not have a free, leisure time of their own; people whose time were usurped and who were locked into the sphere necessity.

Aristotle, as Shippen argued, can be considered as a central figure, “since he anticipates two of the defining elements of the modern fight for time, namely the recognition that leisure is a central aspect of the good life, and the structural, or political-economic conditions that make leisure possible by preventing human existences from being overdetermined by necessity” (Shippen, 2014, p. 17). In fact,

we can say that there is a distinction between “leisure” and “free time” for Aristotle. While free time refers to time left from work, leisure is a condition different from residual time; it is “the state of being free from the necessity to labor” (de Grazia, 1962, p. 11). Leisure is free time, freed from necessity, rather than the free part of time. In this sense it is a matter of selfhood and autonomy, “related to freedom as time not overly burdened by necessity, and is made possible through the social division of labor” (Shippen, 2014, p. 34). Therefore, it is actually leisure that refers to a class position rather than the free time advocated by Aristotle. Because those who are in the realm of necessity cannot have anything to do with politics. Politics was a deed that could be acted by those who had their own free time: “Leisure, theoretical learning, and political leadership are thus reserved for the best, while the rest – slaves and workers – support their ‘betters’” (Sylvester, 1999, p. 9). As Shippen stated, “from the Greek standpoint, the freedom of some could not be imagined without the servitude of others and the two extremes were not thought of as contradictory, but as complementary and interdependent” (Shippen, 2014, p. 24).

In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle examines the relationship between time-freedom, necessity-leisure through the concepts of actual and potential (Aristotle, 2004). Accordingly, this potential can be actualized in appropriate social conditions that will liberate man from necessity, and thus the good life is the life that enables these human potentials to be actualized. But of course, for Aristotle, it is not possible for everyone to reach the good life, to realize their potential (Shippen, 2014). For example, Aristotle argues that “the citizens should not live the life of a vulgar craftsman or tradesmen, for lives of these sorts are ignorable and inimical to virtue” (Aristotle, 1998, p. 205):

The best city-state will not confer citizenship on vulgar craftsmen, however; but if they too are citizens, then what we have characterized as a citizen’s virtue cannot be ascribed to everyone, or even to all free people, but only to those who are freed from necessary tasks. Those who perform necessary tasks for an individual are slaves; those who perform them for the community are vulgar craftsmen and hired laborers (Aristotle, 1998, p. 74).

In short, unlike those who had to meet the necessary needs of themselves and others, there were people who were not bound by the necessity. Marx as well explicitly points to this relationship between realm of freedom and realm of necessity:

If the worker needs to use all his time to produce the necessary means of

subsistence for himself and his family, he has no time left in which to perform unpaid labor for other people. Unless labor has attained a certain level of productivity, the worker will have no such free time at his disposal, and without superfluous time there can be no surplus labor, hence no capitalists, as also no slave-owners, no feudal barons, in a word no class of large-scale landed proprietors (Marx, 1982, pp. 646-647).

In ancient Greece there was a distinction between necessity and leisure, but we can say that the distinction between the realm of working and non-working is a much more modern phenomenon, “indicated most clearly by the separation between households and work places” (Haller, Hadler, & Kaub, 2013, p. 405). The separation of necessity and leisure in traditional societies, in which the distinction between work and non-work was not sharp, was a division within the social division of labor, and therefore it was manifested in the social plane rather than in the concrete spatiality of the work. But in the temporality established by industrial capitalism, the working day and place will separate itself from the non-working day and place, and thus the realm of necessity from leisure. Thus, the meaning of leisure as “a state, a condition of freedom and autonomy” will gradually become closer to “residual, free time” left from work, or to be seen as idleness, laziness. In short, leisure as an authentic realm of freedom has completely disappeared (which was indeed a class privilege in Ancient Greece) gained its meaning in capitalist society merely as the sphere of consumption and reproduction left from work (Cross, 1993; Supiot, 1999).

As a general claim, we can argue that in parallel with the evolution of social relations of production with capitalism, leisure time gained new meanings and forms. Capitalism took the division of life into two different spheres as given, but while capitalism divided life into compartments, it actually included the non-working sphere in its own functioning. Although this situation is contrary to the meaning that leisure has in its origin, leisure time was devised as devoted to the reproduction of the working sphere in this process.

If we give a brief introduction here to the functioning of capitalism and its impact on work, with the Industrial Revolution which began in Great Britain and quickly spread to other countries, the development of machinery profoundly transformed work, but also the condition of the worker. Alongside the free peasant or artisan, there emerged the figure of the proletarian, deprived of any means of subsistence other than renting

himself. What was the origin of this new condition of the worker under the capitalist regime? How did labor become alienated, in Marx's words? First of all, in the factory, the fragmentation of tasks reduces worker to being a mere appendage of the machine. With machinery, manual work is separated from intellectual work, and this prevents the full development of the human being. On the other hand, the work itself is no longer the satisfaction of a need in itself, such as the satisfaction of making a quality object for one's personal use or to sell it. On the contrary, work has become the only way to meet needs outside of work, because it provides the wage essential to live. Finally, in the capitalist mode of production, the means of production, factories and capital are the private property of a few – the capitalist. And the majority, all those who must work to live, are dispossessed, in the sense of stripped of the product of their labor, of the wealth they have produced.

Marx's research precisely began where the political economy of his time left off. Since the 18th century, political economy has explained that labor, at the source of wealth, allows the measurement of all the values created. It is by the labor required to produce a commodity that one can measure its value. This conception, inherited from Smith and Ricardo, reflected the general development of commodity production. But with the mass industrial production, production had taken on another dimension. For although the capitalist buys and resells commodities at their market value, he derives profit from them, in other words, he derives more value from them than he has put into their manufacture. How does this happen? Marx took the analysis of the value of commodities further than his predecessors to understand this apparent contradiction.

First of all, the value of commodities depends on the amount of labor spent on their production. It is not the individual labor actually spent by a man to manufacture a commodity, otherwise a worker who works twice as slowly would produce twice as much value. It is therefore the quantity of labor required on average, that is, the socially necessary labor time to produce this commodity. Then, it is not labor as such that is bought and sold as a commodity, but labor power. This labor power has a value, reflected in the wages paid by the capitalist. And like any commodity, its value is determined according to the socially necessary labor to produce it, in this case the means of subsistence necessary for food, shelter etc. It is the use of this labor power that creates more value than it costs. Because, the worker works part of the day to

produce what corresponds to his wage and the rest of the day he continues to work without being paid. This unpaid labor, which Marx calls surplus labor, is the source of surplus value, that is the capitalist's profit:

But what is a working day? At all events, it is less than a natural day. How much less? The capitalist has his own views of this point of no returns, the necessary limit of the working day. As a capitalist, he is only capital personified. His soul is the soul of capital. But capital has one sole driving force, the drive to valorize itself, to create surplus-value, to make its constant part, the means of production, absorb the greatest possible amount of surplus labor. Capital is dead labor which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks. The time during which the worker works is the time during which the capitalist consumes the labor-power he has bought from him. If the worker consumes his disposable time for himself, he robs the capitalist (Marx, 1982, p. 342).

And in this regard, we can say that the distinction between necessity and freedom is precisely the focal point of economy of time. Marx, like Aristotle, says that the constraint of necessity on our temporality prevents us from freedom, but unlike Aristotle, freedom from necessity for Marx is not for the benefit of a privileged group but of all humanity (Shippen, 2014). If we accept that, as Alheit says with reference to Oskar Negt, "battle for time is central to the class struggle in capitalist societies" (Alheit, 1994, p. 315), then it is in this sense that the source of surplus value is time, the disposable time of the worker. In other words, "wealth is disposable time, and nothing more" (Marx, 1993, p. 397). As Marx pointed out, capital always opposes free, disposable time to surplus labor time:

Hence, it is self-evident that the worker is nothing other than labor-power for the duration of his whole life, and that therefore all his disposable time is by nature and right labor-time, to be devoted to the self-valorization of capital (Marx, 1982, p. 375).

Work is precisely the arena of this temporal struggle. Working time is the point of bearing of the balance between necessity and freedom. This is why Marx says that the struggle for shortening of the working day is the basic prerequisite of freedom:

The realm of freedom really begins only where labor determined by necessity and external expediency ends; it lies by its very nature beyond the sphere of material production proper (...) Freedom, in this sphere, can consist only in this, that socialized man, the associated producers, govern the human metabolism with nature in a rational way, bringing it under their collective control instead of being dominated by it as blind power; accomplishing it with

the least expenditure of energy and in conditions most worthy and appropriate for their human nature. But this always remains a realm of necessity. The true realm of freedom, the development of human powers as an end in itself, begins beyond it, though it can only flourish with this realm of necessity as its basis. The reduction of the working day is its basic prerequisite (Marx, 1991, pp. 958-959).

In this regard, freedom means being out of necessity; it means that the work is not done to satisfy an obligation. But we must consider that Marx is pointing here to two kinds of necessity, namely transhistorical (or “an eternal natural necessity” (Marx, 1982, p. 999)) and historical necessity (Postone, 1978, p. 768). Accordingly, while the needs that we realize for survival and that will continue in every society are in the realm of transhistorical, natural necessity, the needs for the self-reproduction of a certain kind of social life are in the realm of historical necessity. Although the contents of the transhistorical necessity change, its form does not. Historical necessity, on the other hand, refers to things that appear in certain social conditions, so it is also against freedom. Accordingly, people will always work and spend labor to meet certain social needs. In this respect, the realm of necessity will also exist in a communist society “simply in virtue of the fact that human beings must continue to labor to satisfy such needs” (James, 2017, p. 271). But this necessity will not be, in Marx’s terms, an alienating necessity. According to Marx, the meaning of work in the realm of historical necessity of capitalism is “not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it” (Marx, 1978, p. 74). It is also alienating “precisely because it is incompatible with the conscious, free activity that defines the human species” (James, 2017, p. 282). But, as he stated, labor will become not a means of survival but an end in itself, “not only a means of life but life’s prime need” (Marx, 1978, p. 531):

It is self-evident that if time of labor is reduced to a normal length and, furthermore, labor is no longer performed for someone else, but for myself, and, at the same time, the social contradictions between master and men, etc., being abolished, it acquires a quite different, a free character, it becomes real social labor, and finally the basis of disposable time - the time of labor of a man who has also disposable time, must be of a much higher quality than that of the beast of burden (Marx, 1989, p. 391).

And it is the capital’s need to produce surplus-value that causes alienation, to which the work is subject outside of itself. In other words, “the act of working is ‘external’ to the worker, even though it is worker’s own act, in the sense that he/she works simply

to survive” (James, 2017, p. 276), so that “as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labor is shunned like the plague” (Marx, 1978, p. 74). If we interpret it through the relationship between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom, surplus-value is produced in the realm of necessity and constantly tries to encroach on the realm of freedom. Capital tries to dominate not only in the sphere of production (working time and place) but also in the sphere of reproduction. It tries both to steal time from non-working sphere and to transform non-working sphere itself into production time:

But in its blind and measureless drive, its insatiable appetite for surplus labor, capital oversteps not only the moral but even the merely physical limits bounds of the working day. It usurps the time for growth, development, and healthy maintenance of the body (Marx, 1982, p. 375).

The reason for the thrust of capital to leisure time is, of course, the extortion of surplus value. To extort more surplus value, the capitalist has several options. First, it can extend the working day, thereby lengthening the duration of unpaid work. It can also increase intensity during working time. By these two methods, it is a question of increasing the absolute magnitude of surplus value. With the development of machinery, labor productivity increases, thanks to the use of more efficient production methods and technology. This time, even if the surplus labor does not increase in absolute value, even if the duration of labor is fixed, it is the time necessary for the reproduction of labor power which is shorter in relation to the surplus labor. Marx summed it up simply as follows: “The production of absolute surplus value turns exclusively on the length of the working day, whereas the production of relative surplus value completely revolutionizes the technical processes of labor and the groupings into which society is divided. It therefore requires a specifically capitalist mode of production” (Marx, 1982, p. 645). In this sense, it can be argued that:

Capital’s incorporation of the workers into the time of capitalism thereby entails a temporal antagonism. It tends towards the establishment of a single, dominant time subordinating or eliminating any other; but as a result, the worker’s requirements for recuperation, subject to encroachment, serve as sites of resistance for the working class in its struggle against capital’s predations. That resistance has manifested itself, Marx notes, as a battle between workers and bourgeoisie over the length of the workday in which workers aimed at curbing the incursions of labor-time into their times (Schulz, 2014, p. 68).

Wage labor, which is the specific form of work in capitalism, has put a different

complexion on the time-freedom-necessity relationship, “so that ‘time becomes necessity’, that is, necessity overburdens time to such an extent that its connection to freedom is severely limited” (Shippen, 2014, p. 9). It is possible to say that the main necessity here is that people have to sell their labor power in order to live, so much so that this is an existential, ontological necessity that an individual cannot overcome in a capitalist society without changing it. This is an ontological necessity, because, as Tomlinson points out through Marx, labor – and the temporality produced by labor – is the ontology itself. Labor, as the social production of the means of life, ontologically establishes the relations between the realms of freedom and the necessity (Tomlinson, 2014). Labor, and work as the form of self-realization, self-reproduction of labor creates a certain temporality and this temporality, we can say, is precisely the ontological ground of life. Since “capitalism, like any other economy, is a specific organization of time obeying its own immanent criteria” (Tombazos, 2013, p. 3), this is why we must take seriously the relationship between capitalism and temporality.

As many thinkers agree, capitalism produces and imposes a homogeneous, abstract, quantified, linear time. Some writers, such as Tombazos, argue that capitalism does not have a single time, but different kinds of times that dominate the spheres of production and circulation of the capital (Tombazos, 2013). According to this, while the sphere of production, “the time of production” is a linear, abstract, homogenous temporality, “the time of circulation” of capital fits into cyclical temporality. On the other hand, “organic time” of capital represent “the unity of the time of production and the time of circulation” (Tombazos, 2013, p. 3). Postone also makes a distinction between the “historical”, concrete time of capitalism (refers to “the movement of time as opposed to the movement in time”) and “abstract time” (refers to time as “an abstract continuum within which events take place and whose flow is independent of human activity” (Postone, 1993, p. 294). Similar to Postone, Khatib also argues to distinguish between two times of capitalism, namely, “an intrinsic ‘time of capital’ and an extrinsic measurement of time that is the chronometric time of concrete labor as measured by clocks” (Khatib, 2012, p. 54). According to these approaches, we can say that the temporality of capitalism, on the one hand, establishes itself as an eternal, infinite, ubiquitous present, on the other hand, it transforms temporality itself into a linear, homogeneous, abstract, progressive and accumulative, capitalized externality.

In other words, as Firth and Robinson argued, “homogenous empty time is rooted in capitalism, and closely connected to the exchangeability and equivalence of commodities and the repetitive cycles of consumerist fashion through which the system varies its contents but remains formally the same” (Firth & Robinson, 2013, p. 4). We can find a similar distinction in Negri. He also states that the dominant time of capitalism consists of quantitative labor-time, which is divisible and measurable, “annihilating the living temporal being” (Negri, 2003, p. 123). In this homogeneity or synchronicity, capitalism also ensures equivalence (of temporal moments, of value of commodities): “Time does not only measure labor, but reduces it to homogenous substance” (Negri, 2003, p. 23). So much so that this homogeneity, equivalence, and synchronicity render capitalism timeless, atemporal which is, as Negri puts it, capital’s utopia – that is, “circulation without *faux frais*, without time” (Negri, 2003, p. 50). If we use Hegel’s terms, we can describe the phenomenon that Negri calls “circulation without time” as “spurious infinity” (Khatib, 2012, p. 56) - which is how Guy Debord describes it. According to him, this is “pseudo-cyclical time”:

The time of production, time-as-commodity, is an infinite accumulation of equivalent intervals. (...) The general time of human non-development also has a complementary aspect, that of a consumable time which, on the basis of a determinate form of production, presents itself in the everyday life of society as a pseudo-cyclical time. (...) Pseudo-cyclical time is in fact merely the consumable disguise of the time-as-commodity of the production system. (...) Pseudo-cyclical time typifies the consumption of modern economic survival – of that augmented survival in which daily lived experience embodies no free choices and is subject, no longer to the natural order, but to a pseudo-nature constructed by means of alienated labor. (...) Pseudo-cyclical time is a time transformed by industry (Debord, 1990, pp. 110-111).

Apart from the theoretical nuances, in any case all authors agree on the fact that time transforms into money under capitalism (let’s remember Benjamin Franklin’s phrase “time is money”), becomes an object of quantitative accumulation, since time, or rather the clock-time of capitalism, is the source of the production of surplus value. The linear, homogeneous, abstract time of capitalism becomes money designated to measure wage labor. As we mentioned earlier, capital is disposable time; it is “living labor that has been reified, become congealed in its object, and thus that which can be exchanged” (McManus, 2006, p. 11). Thus, this means that the temporality of labor, its productive, living temporality, is frozen and accumulated in commodities;

exploitation is in this sense thoroughly temporal. The abstract, living time of life is subsumed by the abstract time of capital (Osborne, 2008); “reduced the abstraction of labor time, the worker is subjected to the self-organization of capital’s vital rhythms, the chronometers of production and the arrhythmias of crisis” (Tombazos, 2013, p. 6). It is I think important to grasp this temporal dimension of exploitation, because the ontological position of time, which we say it acquires through labor, has political implications that determine our perception and relationship with life (McManus, 2006).

Then it would not be surprising to see that the first struggles against capitalism took place around the duration of the working day. The Industrial Revolution had resulted in a disproportionate lengthening of the working day, first in Great Britain, then in other countries, because it was the first way of increasing surplus value. For example, as Schor showed, according to records from the 13th and 14th centuries, an English peasant family worked 150-170 days a year maximum, but by the 19th century they were working 65-70 hours per week without even 2-day weekend holiday (Harper, 2019). In this period, we also witnessed the establishment and spreading of a universal, common, overarching time that regulates socio-economic life, that is, “capitalist time consciousness” (Thrift, 1990). The idea of time, its role in regulating social life, of course, did not emerge with capitalism. Pre-capitalist, traditional societies also had an idea of time based on the regulation of socio-economic life, and this idea was rather indexed to “natural cycles and the specific requirements of particular work” (Dörre, 2011, p. 70). We can say that the concept of time has in any case developed around, in Zerubavel’s terms, “an economic philosophy of time” (1981, p. 54). But this cyclical time, or concrete time dependent on the requirements of specific work (harvesting, for example), has been transformed by the transition to capitalism and by its need for a universally applicable measure of time (Martineau, 2015). And at this point clock-time came to the help of capitalism. Even if it is not true to say that the clock was the invention of capitalism (we know that there were clocks in the 13th century¹⁴), clock-time differed from other time-measuring instruments (such as the calendar used before the clock) in that it made the measurement of time much more precise. Clock-time, as

¹⁴ For the detailed socio-historical analysis of the clock and time perspective, see: Landes (1983), le Goff (1980), Martineau (2015), Mumford (1934), Zerubavel (1981, 2003)

an independent variable that regulates social life, provided the abstractness, linearity, and possibility for evaluation and equalization needed by capital. As E.P. Thompson said, “time is now currency: it is not passed but spent” (1967, p. 61).

Of course, this process did not happen spontaneously and smoothly. There were also reactions to the emergence of the clock as a regulatory principle external to daily life. For example, Benjamin’s anecdote that during the July Revolution a clock tower in Paris was fired simultaneously from different places is very symbolic to give us an idea about the power of the clock (2003). Along with these attacks on the clock itself, the “factory movement”, which opposed the capitalists’ effort to extend the length of working day, developed especially between 1820-1850 (Nyland, 1986). These were the first struggles of the working class tried to limit legally the working day. It was also a political demand; the working class was not only fighting to survive, but also to organize itself in order to prepare for the social emancipation. Besides, since the production of surplus value took place at the time usurped from workers, this struggle for shortening for working hours meant not only more free time but also diminishing profits and the ultimate crisis of capitalism (Gershuny, 2002). Almost 150 years ago, the First International proclaimed that:

A preliminary condition, without which all further attempts at improvement and emancipation must prove abortive, is the limitation of the working day. It is needed to restore the health and physical energies of the working class, that is, the great body of every nation, as well as to secure them the possibility of intellectual development, sociable intercourse, social and political action. We propose 8 hours work as the legal limit of the working day (Musto, 2014, p. 44).

On the other hand, figures like Lafargue who defended the right to be lazy against the capitalism’s work ethics that blessings efficient use of time and work, in fact reflected a widespread social unrest. Lafargue, in his work “The Right to be Lazy” (1907), opposes the dignification of work and argues that working hours should be reduced to a maximum of 3 hours a day. The remaining time from work should be liberated for people to engage in creative activities. He criticizes the right to work according to which only those who work and use their time efficiently have the right to live and defends the right to leisure.

Workers resisted in various ways against the machines that, according to E.P.

Thompson, established temporal discipline (1967). After the struggles, factory laws succeeded throughout the 19th century to regulate the duration of working day. With the establishment of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in 1919, working 8-hour a day with 48-hour weekly limit on working time gradually became the norm (Messenger, 2018).

The working hour is only one element of the exploitation. Or, in other words, the shortening of the working day alone neither eliminates exploitation nor prevents capital from increasing the amount of surplus value. Capital always tries to overcome the obstacles it encounters and find new ways to increase profitability. With the development of society, the capitalists have many other means to extort surplus value, in particular to increase the productivity of labor, to produce more and more in less time. At the beginning of the 20th century, even as workers' struggles won the 8-hour a day and the weekly rest day, capitalist exploitation would intensify with its infernal rhythms. A system of work regime, that is Taylorism in which each action is timed to the nearest second set up. In 1911, Frederick Winslow Taylor published a work, *Principles of Scientific Management*, in which he exposed a new system of work organization, the aim of which was to improve the speed of movement of the workers. He had the idea of breaking down the successive phases of a production process. After having separated the tasks to be performed, they had to be timed. The workers had to limit themselves to the endless execution of these rationalized actions, while engineering offices tried to improve ever more the performance and speed of productive work.

In the same period, another working method was essential in the American factories: the assembly line. This innovation, the assembly line, allowed Henry Ford to reduce considerably the production time of the model of car called *Ford T*, which decreased from 6 hours to 1 and 30 hours per car. Factory's productivity was quadrupled, while wages only doubled to 5 dollars a day, which put them above the average, however. But the working conditions were very harsh. Despite the wage increasing, workers were fleeing the company, and by 1914 Ford himself admitted that in order to maintain a permanent workforce of 14,000 workers he had to hire 52,000 a year (Worstall, 2012).

From the 1960s, the automotive industry developed a new work organization, but this time from Japan. Toyotism, designed by a Japanese engineer from the Toyota factory, aims to reduce production costs by any means possible. On the one hand, it develops just-in-time principle, that is to say, production without stock, on the other hand, it is based on new personnel management rules, which are supposed to provide employees with more autonomy, as opposed to Taylorism, which assigns a specific task to each position. This method became widespread at the end of the 1980s. We find it today under the name of lean production. For the workers, however, it means the intensification of work. Behind a rich and varied vocabulary, such as participatory management, multidisciplinary, optimization, accountability, quality always hides the same reality: improving workers performance by making them more flexible.

2.2.2. The Evolution of the Organization of Work from Fordism to Post-Fordism

2.2.2.1. Fordist-Taylorist “Scientific” Management of Work and Time

Fordism, initiated and implemented by Henry Ford, is a mode of the work organization which was of great success in the 20th century. Its dissemination and application in developed countries contributed to the significant economic growth between 1945-1975 which is called *trente glorieuses*. Despite the crisis of Fordism and its collapse in the 1970s, social scientists did not stop using it by adding prefixes such as “post-” or “neo-” to describe new economic situation, for example Toyotism, a method of work organization characterized by flexibility in production. It is called post-Fordism and considered a substitute for Fordism. From a chronological point of view, the industrial evolution from the second half of the 19th century to the 20th century can be divided into two periods in terms of organization of work and employment regime: the Fordist era and the post-Fordist (Toyotist) era.

In order to increase productivity, Fordism’s principles are based on the extensive rationalization of work, that is, “scientific organization of work”, with a division of tasks and a separation of the work of design and execution (Lipietz, 1987, p. 35). However, Henry Ford is not the designer, but the continuator of this method developed over time. The idea of scientific organization of work is initially based on “The Division of Labor” formed by Adam Smith and presented in his work *Wealth of Nations* in which Smith said that:

This great increase of the quantity of work which, in consequence of the division of labor, the same number of people are capable of performing, is owing to three different circumstances; first, to the increase of dexterity in every particular workman; secondly, to the saving of the time which is commonly lost in passing from one species of work to another; and lastly, to the invention of a great number of machines which facilitate and abridge labor, and enable one man to do the work of many. The improvement of the dexterity of the workman necessarily increases the quantity of the work he can perform; and the division of labor, by reducing every man's business to some one simple operation, and by making this operation the sole employment of his life, necessarily increased very much dexterity of the workman (2007, p. 5).

Quickly disseminated in the industrial sector, this theory was applied by many entrepreneurs in their own production systems in different countries (Tolliday & Zeitlin, 1991). Among them, Frederic Winslow Taylor actualized this theory by describing it systematically in his book *Principles of Scientific Management*. Since then, the idea of scientific organization of work has been commemorated with his name, that is, Taylorism.

Frederick Winslow Taylor, an American engineer who ran a workshop in a metallurgical factory at that time, found himself confronted with the problem of the systematic idleness of the workers which consists in working slowly in a "normal" working day. According to Taylor, this idleness was not an individual issue. It was caused by the inefficiency of the work organization allowing workers to choose their own pace of work. In order to overcome this problem of systematic idleness, Taylor proposed four basic elements which constitute the essence of scientific management:

First. The development (by the management, not the workman) of the science of bricklaying, with rigid rules for each motion of every man, and the perfection and standardization of all implements and working conditions. Second. The careful selection and subsequent training of the bricklayers into first-class men, and the elimination of all men who refuse to or are unable to adopt the best methods. Third. Bringing the first-class bricklayer and the science of bricklaying together, through the constant help and watchfulness of the management, and through paying each man a large daily bonus for working fast and doing what he is told to do. Fourth. An almost equal division of the work and responsibility between the workman and the management. All day long the management work almost side by side with the men, helping, encouraging, and smoothing the way for them (1972, p. 85).

According to this, it can be said that Taylor brings forward a double division of labor. Vertical division is based on a complete separation of design from work activity. On

the one hand, there was an office of organization and methods corresponding to the intellectual skills to optimize the work in a rational logic, and on the other hand, the workers. Workers disqualified from this process did nothing but do the work assigned to them on a limited basis. And horizontal division, that is to say the subdivision of tasks. In the workshop, the production process is divided into several simple and repetitive tasks, each assigned to a specialized worker. By timing the workers, almost like a cuckoo clock, Taylor tried to cut down on wasted time and set the minimum time to finish a task. In addition, in an effort to motivate workers to commit to do their work, Taylor gave them an individualized salary linked to his performance.

According to Taylor, the achievement of mass production depends on minimum organization and discipline in the production workshop. Inspired by the principles of scientific organization of work, combining his own professional experience, Taylor found the best way to organize work in order to increase productivity. In addition, workers' wages have grown due to the growth in productivity, while the volume of labor has been reduced as a result of a rise in individual output. The technological transformations occurring within the Fordist period of capitalism have established an unlimited productive capacity, inversely proportional to the self-determination of workers in their work experience. Control over workers intensified as work intensified and production increased. All that is expected of workers is submission and obedience. In addition, the design and execution processes are radically separated (division of tasks, mechanization of production processes) (Tomaney, 1994, p. 158). It is the completion of workers' power over production.

The fragmentation of tasks initiated by Taylor is the origin of the assembly line following the principles of Fordism. The introduction of productivity bonuses inspired Ford to increase the wages considerably ("5 dollars a day") in order to strengthen workers' loyalty. From a general point of view, it can be said that the Taylorist methods, contributing to the rise of productivity, offer Ford a solid framework for achieving mass production.

Fordism could not have enjoyed such success without the contribution of Taylorism. The characteristic mode of organization of work at this period is then Taylorism. This term deserves to be situated in relation to Fordism. The latter, developing the theory

of scientific organization of work, indeed formed a practicable model to Henry Ford who then implemented it in his car factory. Fordism refers to the institutionalized union-management compromise, while Taylorism refers directly to work and management processes. Thus, the Fordist compromise supported the generalization of Taylorist work organization.

At the beginning of the 20th century, as a founder of the automobile company, Henry Ford was confronted with the problem of high rate of absenteeism and turnover within his factory, which considerably hampered the growth of the productivity. As a result, Ford invented his own methods of organization of work based on the principles of Taylorism. First, inspired by the division of tasks recommended by Taylor, Ford installed the assembly lines. The latter is achieved by the introduction of the mechanical conveyor allowing workers, by tirelessly repeating the same action, to avoid time-consuming actions (Supiot, 1999, p. 25). The division and specialization of tasks have the effect of simplifying procedures and avoiding defects during production (Clarke, 1992, pp. 16-17). Ford's second initiative lies in the standardization of production which leads to mass production. As Henry Ford said: "the customer could choose any color so long as it was black" (Meyer, 1981, p. 18). Standardization, both at the end of product segment and production task, has greatly reduced production costs and has the consequence of lowering the selling price. Another measure applied by Ford consists in raising the wages of the workers considerably, from 2-3 to 5 dollars a day whereas at that time (in 1914) other companies pay half as much (Tolliday & Zeitlin, 1987, pp. 1-2). In order to calm its workers and union pressure at the same time to recruit more workers, Ford has implemented the "5 dollars a day" policy which has initially quickly reduced the resignation of the workers (Meyer, 1981). Earning twice as much as their counterparts, the workers were now keen to keep their jobs. Despite an increase in pay raising the cost of production, the growth in productivity has generated a considerable surplus due to the stability of the workforce as well as the extension of production lines. "The payment of 5 dollars a day for an 8-hour day was one of the finest cost-cutting moves we ever made, and the 6-dollar day wage is cheaper than the 5" (Ford, 1922, p. 147) Ford wrote in his autobiography. Inspired by the principles of Taylorism, Ford invented his own system of work organization and implemented it in his

manufacturing plant. However, its impact was not limited to there. Fordism is not only a term for the methods of production, but also “the virtuous circle of accumulation between mass production and mass consumption” (Boyer & Durand, 1997, p. 72). From this perspective, the meaning of Fordism extended to the significant growth, mass production and mass consumption experienced by developed countries during the post-war boom.

Ford’s contributions are mainly based on two aspects. In the first place, the introduction of assembly line, as well as the standardization of products make it possible to increase productivity enormously and thus to achieve mass production characterized by producing a large quantity of identical products (Lipietz, 1987; Boyer & Durand 1997). The gains generated through increased productivity accompanied by lower production costs make the factory possible to expand its production plan. The birth of the *Ford T* in 1908 marked the beginning of the mass production era of the industrial world (Meyer, 1981, p. 1). The assembly on the line with the parts completely interchangeable, allowed the factory to produce a car in 93 minutes in 1914. The *Ford T* was therefore the symbol of standardized products resulting from mass production. However, productivity gains would not have been realized without opportunities for mass consumption. From this perspective, the creation of mass consumption is important for the sustainability of production. In Ford’s economic plan, it has already been given an important place for the achievement of mass consumption. On the one hand, the fall in the cost of production had the effect of lowering the selling price, which was affordable to the public. Thanks to Ford, the automobile was no longer a luxury consumer goods, but became a common form of transportation. Another contribution to mass consumption comes from the increased purchasing power of consumers. Ford’s “generosity” has the effect of providing workers with sufficient income to consume the products they themselves have made. The increase in productivity is ensured by the increase in consumption. Fordism, quickly spread in all industrial sectors after the War, profoundly transformed the lifestyles of citizens. From this perspective, Fordism should not simply be seen as a system of mass production, but a new mass way of life (Gramsci, 1971; Lipietz 1987; Elam, 1994).

Fordism was so successful between the end of Second World War and the first oil shock (1973-1974), which is the period of tremendous economic growth for all

industrialized countries and for certain developing countries. This growth is ensured by two external factors: the political-economic stability during this period in the industrialized countries focusing on the revitalization of the national economy; state intervention in the economy with the various social programs including education, health, unemployment, as well as the pension system (that is, the Welfare State), with the aim of appeasing the social conflicts caused by workers' protests against the arduousness of assembly-line work (Jessop, 1994; Lipietz, 1994).

The sustainability of the Fordist system was, however, thwarted by the causes that initially gave rise to its notable prosperity (Lipietz, 1994; Clarke, 1992; Fritz & Koch, 2013). The crisis of Fordism can, in the first place, be explained by the crisis of work and productivity. Despite the increase in wages allowing an increase in living conditions, the new generation of workers constantly contests the arduous working conditions characterized by repetitive and low-reward tasks; social demands, which until then concerned wage increases and job security, now target harsh working conditions and challenge Taylorism. Their discontent is reflected in various forms of labor resistance such as absenteeism, sabotage on the production line, strike movements organized by unions (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2007; Durand, 2007). Then, at the end of the 1960s, a series of social conflicts appeared. Then we saw a sharp drop in productivity gains, an increase in social movements and conflicts (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2007). As a result, it was difficult for the Fordist compromise to continue. Added to this crisis is the rigidity of the organization of work (Koch, 2013). The strong hierarchy imposed by Taylorism and the system of standardization makes production rigid, while the market becomes more and more flexible both in terms of quality and variety (Boyer & Durand, 1997, p. 16). The Fordist system, based on the mass production of standardized products, turns out to conflict with the changing trend, that is flexibility of the market. Coming into play of new competitors (for example, Japan) capable of producing more flexible productions with lower costs has the effect of accelerating the decline of Fordism. Led by the new model of work organization known as "Toyotism", Asian companies have more flexibility in production, and are able to meet the diverse needs of consumers. The result will be a profound transformation of the economy and of the modes of social regulation.

2.2.2.1.1. The Temporal Regime of Fordism: Emergence of the Standard Working Time

We saw that the production process and the working day were all systematically regulated in the Fordist-Taylorist period. These regulations were of course not implemented only on the interests of capital; as a result of the workers' struggles, a kind of "balance" was achieved, by reducing the working hours, gaining some social rights etc. Therefore, it is wrong to think that in the past working time has always been extremely structured and that it has only recently become more flexible. Working time as we know it is in fact a modern "invention" of the Western world, the roots of which go back no more than 150 years. It was formed during the Industrial Revolution and took its current forms during the 20th century. At the base of the fundamental change, it is the clock invented in Europe and which has been its monopoly for almost five centuries, which has fundamentally changed our perception of time, giving shape to work and employment regime (Landes, 1983; Martineau, 2015).

However, it is not the clock that is at the origin of our conception of time, and more particularly of working time. If these technological inventions appeared at a certain time and in a certain place, it is because the society needed them in their temporal coordination and management. Time is in fact a regulatory tool which makes it possible to situate one event in relation to another, to order the sequences of natural events and human actions and to coordinate them with each other (Elias, 2007). The more a society gains in complexity and integration, the greater the need for precision in the calculation and positioning of events. In addition, according to Elias, the construction of time, which is a concept of a high level of abstraction, requires a capacity of human beings which must be built slowly, because it results from an accumulated social knowledge (methods of measurement and knowledge of the regularity of temporal sequences, etc.). It is the conjunction between the accumulation of certain knowledge and the appearance of the problems of coordination and integration that can explain the construction of metric time – or rather, clock-time of capitalism. In our society, it was necessary to invent a unitary, standardized mechanism that does not change in time and space for many spheres but especially the sphere of economy.

Before industrialization, working time was quite irregular throughout the day and year. For farmers and merchants, for example, working time was primarily punctuated by the seasons, weather conditions and the growth rate etc. (le Goff, 1980; Zerubavel, 1981). But the craftsmen had to consider also inconstant and variable rhythms: they were determined by fluctuations in demand, by the number of merchants, by the nature of the task, by personal needs and the habits of the worker etc. In all pre-industrial societies, the “measurement” of time was related to tasks; work, in a way, was shaping time (Thompson, 1967). Even concerning the internal structure, this time was not the one we know today, it was not homogeneous: the intensity of work could fluctuate enormously and the productive activity could easily be interrupted or alternated by other activities. In addition, the clear separation between the sphere of work and the sphere of leisure as we know today did not exist; it is therefore difficult to determine exactly when the work started and ended (Martineau, 2015, p. 157). In this regard, it would not be appropriate to talk about “working time”. This time was further characterized by its cyclical aspect. The passage of time was not perceived so much as a moment in a linear scale that does not repeat itself. Rather, it was seen as cyclical, with the moments repeating regularly seasonally, and as completely outward-looking, with humans having no control over it. The idea of “using your time well” was therefore inconceivable. In the eyes of men accustomed to clock time, this attitude to work seems to be characterized by waste.¹⁵

Le Goff places the beginning of time control and management already in the Middle Ages. It is first of all the Church which establishes a rhythm by introducing the calendars, the week and the Sunday rest and by installing the first bells, a sign of their power. It is also in the monasteries that the first well-timed daily schedules are forged, which clearly distinguish between working time and other times (Mumford, 1934). With the rise of cities and the development of organized professions, the measurement of time and more particularly of working time is freed from ecclesiastical reference. With the spread of industrialization, the relationship between time and work has to

¹⁵ While matching premodern societies with cyclical time and modern-capitalist societies with linear time might function as an analytical distinction, it is not entirely correct. As Zerubavel (1981, p. 113) emphasizes, these two times often coexist within one and the same society or culture; the presence of one does not necessarily mean the absence of the other. We have already seen that the temporality established by capitalism has both linear and cyclical time characteristics.

some extent reversed: it is no longer work (daily tasks) that shapes time, but time that determines work. With the development of technology and measuring instruments, time has become a means of measuring the process of work. In the new attitude to time and work that will develop with industrialization, time has become “currency” (Thompson, 1967, p. 61).

The linearization and objectification of time and its uniform and detailed measurement is fundamental for the industrial production (Zerubavel, 1990). This is in fact based on several elements which require sensitive coordination of the actions of each worker. Factories, unlike workshops, first bring together a large number of people. This configuration (a large number of low-skilled people performing fragmented movements on machines) makes synchronization necessary. It is first necessary to bring together people in a place, people who were not used to leaving their place of residence for work and who were not used to constant effort work. Capitalism, in subjugating a large workforce to create surplus-value, also needed a precise tool to determine the value of this labor. By measuring work through time, capitalism found a simple and unambiguous way to monetize the value of work. It was therefore only when the Industrial Revolution demanded greater synchronization of work that the use of clocks became widespread. Capitalists began to subject workers to a rigorous time discipline, enforcing punctuality and regularity. All possible means were used to form new working habits and impose a new temporal discipline which also included the elimination of all non-productive activity during working time.

The pressure of the workers for the reduction of working hours did not materialize until the new temporal organization and discipline began to be internalized. The workers then ceased to struggle *against time* but *for time*, in Thompson’s words (1967, p. 85). Institutional regulations of working conditions were increasingly becoming a necessary condition for the proper functioning of production. Capitalists began to avoid the overabundant exploitation of labor, the reproduction of which could not otherwise have been ensured in the long term. The limitation of daily working time to 8 hours therefore ensures in a certain way the reproduction of labor power.

The historical overview of the appearance of standard working time has already shown that the organization of work and production are intimately linked to the organization

of working time. It was only thanks to the increasingly detailed measurement of physical time and the submission of workers to this linear time that the industrial system could be established. The scientific organization of work as conceptualized by Taylor towards the end of the 19th century is totally dependent on this linear, homogeneous time (Supiot, 1999, p. 25). The advanced division of labor leads to a total standardization of internal work time. The assembly line principle applied by Ford will make the internal structure of working time completely uniform. Therefore, the Taylorist work organization has a large share in the spread and acceptance of the standard working time and industrial temporal arrangement, or, as some researchers call it, “Fordist compromise”. The term “arrangement” and “compromise” should not be misleading. It does not mean that it suits everyone or that it was drawn up easily. This compromise was obtained by means of long struggles; it is the result of a certain balance of power between the social classes. It is a compromise where workers agree to submit in exchange for limited working time and clearly scheduled leisure time (Supiot, 1999, p. 27). Working time falls under the total control of the company, which operates it according to its purely productive logic. The clear separation between working time and non-working time also has the effect that the opposition between the time dedicated to the company and the free time is carried by the employee not by the employer.

In the course of the struggles between the social classes, therefore, the standard working day was first created. Thus, the length of working time became determinable by capitalists, collective bargaining agreements and laws (Supiot, 1999). Once instituted, the standard working day developed into a normal week, year and working life. It was achieved first by limiting the working day, then by establishing the two-day weekend, and then by introducing and increasing vacations. The significance of the standardization of working time goes beyond the fact that it has made survival through wage labor possible and improved working and living conditions; it linked the new temporal structure of the industrial capitalism to the entire life of the workers, thus institutionalizing a life corresponding to it. The wage relationship and the corresponding type of employment therefore organize a rhythm and way of life.

Standard working time is therefore the culmination of a century of struggles between social classes over time. This process of standardization, which began with

industrialization, reached its peak in the 1950s and 1960s, during the *trente glorieuses*. We cannot therefore speak of “normality”; we should rather speak of a historical exception. However, it is possible to speak of “standard working time” in the sense that increasingly convergent practices have become standards. Standard working time is a real standard, in the sense that it is not only the lived reality of a large part of the workforce, but also and above all has become a desirable condition for all. The objective and subjective marginalization experienced by the unemployed and workers in “atypical” jobs is a clear sign of the normative force of working time. Although this standard is no longer applied as widely as it was, standard working time continues to act as the standard and should therefore be regarded as still relevant. Some forms of flexible working time are sometimes called atypical forms of employment and working hours, thus underlining the “extraordinary” character. It concerns not only the workers but the whole of society, because it also structures the time outside of work.

In reality, working time in industrialized countries was not so uniform, not even in the middle of the 20th century. If towards the end of the 1960s there was a dominant model of working time, disparities between the different countries, between the different categories of workers have always existed (Supiot, 1999). The differences in practices have not, however, prevented a standard. It is important because it is the starting point for understanding the flexibilization of working hours.

According to Vosko (2010), the standard employment relationship has four components. The first of these is the bilateral employment relationship. Employment is a prerequisite for access to social guarantees such as status, maximum working hours, minimum wage, statutory vacation leave, parental leave, unemployment insurance, pension right. Therefore, “employee status played a pivotal role in the standardizing contracts for the performance of work under Fordism, as well as in shaping social insurance provision in the world of welfare capitalism” (2010, p. 53). The second component of the standard employment relationship is standardized working time. Standardized working time has defined a regular and synchronized working day (usually eight hours), working week (approximately 40 hours), and working year (statutory vacation and paid vacation), allowing workers’ life-course to be divided into education, work, and retirement spheres (2010, p. 55). Therefore, the third component of the standard employment relationship is continuous employment.

Finally, the supporting component of these third components of the standard employment relationship is freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining.

In this regard, we can characterize the standard working and employment relationship as a form that is guaranteed by bilateral-continuous employment contracts, standardized through full-time and regular working hours and wages, and in which union rights are valid. Within this context, the standard working time is defined with uniformity of working time, punctuality, linearity, stability, regularity, certainty and temporal discipline. This temporal model is in relation with the permanent full-time job without interruptions throughout working life, with a regular and fixed daytime schedule from Monday to Friday about daily 8 hours (Westenholz, 2006, p. 36). It can be said that these qualities, which constitute the general framework of the Fordist work and employment regime, have provided significant gains to the employees and have contributed to the formation of stable and secured spheres in both working and non-working life.

The Fordist production system began to go into crisis around the 1970s. This crisis is in part produced by the Fordist system itself. The methods advocated by Taylor and Ford no longer significantly improved productivity, and markets began to saturate. Japan has developed a type of work organization that allows it not to be confronted with unsaleable stocks and better adapted to the uncertain conditions: just-in-time, Toyotism or Total Quality Control. When the crisis of Fordism made itself felt in Western countries, the Japanese model aroused a lot of interest, and the just-in-time principle was quickly imported and developed. The main idea is to produce on demand, practically eliminating storage costs. The rapid flow of information in both directions of the production process and a certain versatility of workers who can act where the need is most pressing fundamental elements of this model's success (Jessop, 1994, pp. 257-258). The emergence of new information and communication technologies has also made it possible to diversify the offer while maintaining certain elements of mass production such as, for example, the advanced division of labor, standardization and the chain. These significant reorganizations have significant consequences in terms of the organization of working time. If the discipline of time, the synchronization of schedules and workers, the intensification of the rhythm framed

by the establishment of the standard working time played a central role in the Taylorist-Fordist model of production until half of the 20th century, since the 1960s we have seen the appearance of a new temporal phenomenon, that of the flexibilization of working hours (we will return to this point in detail in the following pages when discussing post-Fordist work and employment regime).

2.2.2.2. *Citius, Altius, Fortius*: Post-Fordist Work Arrangement and the Corrosion of the Standard Working Time

2.2.2.2.1. Toyotism and Lean Production

With the crisis of Fordism at the end of the 1960s, the glorious period of Fordism comes to an end with the succession of a new model allowing companies to react better to the changing conditions of economy. “The new spirit of capitalism” (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2007) has just taken hold and has changed the old realities. This spirit is dominated by a new “religion”, that is, flexibility.

Companies was redesigned in the 1980s using a method borrowed from the experience of Japanese companies. This new production model born in Japan in Toyota factories (hence the term “Toyotism” often used to define flexible, lean production), then gradually spread from Japan to Western countries.¹⁶ The principles of Toyotism, unlike those of Fordism, considered not only as a method of organizing work in factories, but also as a model of macroeconomic growth as well as a social method of economic regulation (Jessop, 1992).

Total Quality Management is a method aimed at increasing the quality of products and services, but at the same time reducing production costs and eliminating workers (Rinehart, 2001). Work is organized by teams and by projects, in order to reduce labor time and force workers to use their knowledge collectively to eliminate defects in production. The system has been designed in such a way that workers are compelled, by production flow and team spirit, to control and eliminate failures. This management has increased productivity at work and, at the same time, reduced the cost of

¹⁶ Boyer and Durand (1997) argue against the idea that this process is Japan-centered; they claim it can be traced in other national cases as well. But in order to establish an analytical distinction, I think we may prefer to call the lean and flexible conditions of production of neo/post-Fordist period “Toyotist”, just as we named the Fordist period’s work and employment logic as “Taylorist”.

production.

The functioning of Toyotism is based mainly on two principles. First, *Kaizen*, which is commonly translated as “continuous improvement”, is a method of organizing work based on the performance of teams working along a production line (Boyer & Durand, 1997; Durand, 2007). Unlike Fordism, whose achievement of productivity is conditioned by an efficient assembly line made up of workers each having a fixed position by exercising repetitive actions, in Toyotism, a production position is occupied by a multidisciplinary team bringing together workers, engineers, technicians, designers, as well as people from marketing and distribution, which makes it possible to form a versatile team. *Kaizen* grants a certain autonomy to each group, which therefore assumes responsibility for its own position. The increase in productivity is therefore ensured by a strong involvement of workers. In the production system of Toyotism, each team is able to maintain and repair the machines by itself, while in Fordist factories, it is necessary to call on technicians. Based on small and continuous improvements, the main goal of *Kaizen* is on the one hand to eliminate tasks that do not generate added value, on the other hand to create a system where supply and production take place in small quantities and on an ongoing basis.

Another important contribution of Toyotism is the “just-in-time” principle (Durand, 2007, p. 27). This no longer requires, unlike Fordism, redundant storage of materials for future demands. Just-in-time production facilitates time organization by establishing the link between the phases of production and marketing of products and services. The immediate communication between the producer and the consumer in the market means that any production activity must be readjusted immediately to fluctuations in the market. This direct relationship is maintained by a series of intense activities carried out by multidisciplinary teams. The slightest delay caused by a malfunction at one link in the chain results in a major disruption of production which causes considerable loss for the company. The intense pace brought about by instant communication within the company, and between the company and the marketplace, puts relentless “time pressure” on workers, but also on contractors, distributors and suppliers, and in this context, workers are forced to increase the intensity of their work because of the risk of losing contract renewals. Based on these two principles, that is *Kaizen* and “just-in-time”, the Toyotist production system was able to meet the needs

of a flexible market, while minimizing both the risks of a drop in productivity and of overproduction. In addition, we can also notice an importance given to the innovation of technologies, such as the robotization of workshops allowing flexible production with less labor, the introduction of computers constituting a faster communication network. According to United Nations Economic Commissions for Europe's report, "the total stock of operational industrial robots is estimated at 650.000 units" and "Japan accounted for almost 60% of the stocks while USA made up 10% and Germany, Italy, France and the United Kingdom for 15%" (UNECE, 1996). It can be argued that the functioning of the production system of Toyotism is therefore also based on technological mastery.

The principles of Toyotism, interpreted by flexibility both in organization and in production, explain the causes of the Fordist crisis which led to the saturation of production and the diversification of consumption demands. Then this offered a way forward for industrial capitalism, which was in a recession after the oil crisis of the 1970s. From this perspective, Toyotism, both an economic and social system, has also been called as "post-Fordism" to serve as a chronological marker of a shift from rigid mass production to specialized and flexible lean production (Neilson & Rossiter, 2008, p. 55). Generally speaking, the terms "post-Fordist" or "post-industrial" are now used to describe all economic and political phenomena experienced after Fordism.

2.2.2.2.2. Post-Fordist Work Ethics and the Mobilization of Individuating Mechanisms

All these transformations have inevitably influenced the work and employment regime. There is a broad consensus in the sociology of work literature that work in the post-Fordist period is no longer the same. In the sociology of work literature, a great deal of emphasis has been placed on examining the transformation of work and employment regime after the Fordist compromise. By this transformation, I also mean the current radicalization and condensation of the neoliberal ideology (precariousness of work experience, flexibility, individuality, entrepreneurialism, etc.) on the sphere of work but also sphere of non-work.

Post-Fordism is in fact a profound metamorphosis of Fordism, that is, the flexibilization of production (just-in-time), flexibilization also of the work activity

itself (precarization, atypical, temporary jobs), extension and reconfiguration of the relation between working time and leisure time, individualization of the wage relationship and of work experience, conception of the individual as human capital, intensive subjective involvement and self-realization, more room for individual autonomy, and maximum responsiveness to the changings in the market structure. The post-Fordist period consists of a mixture of ruptures and intensification of the elements present in Fordism. What is known as the break-up of the “Fordist compromise” in the 1970s led to the plurality of modes of organization of work and gave rise to new social realities. This new discourse (neoliberalism, post-Fordism) is the consequence and the cause of these societal transformations. The world of work has changed. New management practices, strategies and theories appeared, and according to these new strategies and theories, subjective involvement is the key and unavoidable element of economic performance.

In this period, economy tends to become more fluid and flexible. Technological development also inevitably participates in these social transformations as a technical means of transforming work experience (robotization, automatization). From this arises a work experience subject to the individuating mechanisms of neoliberal work regime. These mechanisms, I think, operate precisely on the tension between experience of work as a subjective experience of liberation and an experience of unlimited and indefinite subordination (I will come back to this point latter). This discourse became increasingly effective from the mid-1970s in the wider context of a society in transition to the post-industrial period, carried by the neoliberal ideology.

The emergence of post-Fordism therefore took place in the context of neoliberalism, a context in which the market is the dominant regulator and individualism is central. All the transformations in the world of work can also be explained in the context of globalization and deregulation (or rather, new regulations) which have had the effect of intensifying competition in the markets, as well as by the singularization and the differentiation of consumption carried by a new individualism which poses the obligation of the self-realization as an intrinsic, existential value. However, although these changes in the sphere of work are of course structural and profound, they are not a change in its nature - they always remain rooted in capitalist relations of production.

Changing corporate structures and the competitive environment leads to changes in the organization of work. It can be argued that some major developments can be distinguished in this process. First of all, there is an intensification of the pace of work as well as a strengthening of quality standards (Tolliday, 1991; Leman, 1992; Elam, 1994). These new time and quality constraints cause new sufferings. Empowering so called “autonomy” allows companies to promote workers’ involvement and encourage initiative-taking, innovation and self-control. However, it also means that workers are alone when it comes to solving problems and that a defect on their part can have more serious consequences. The companies’ search for autonomy creates harmful effects on workers who are left alone in the face of intense demands from companies (Méda & Vendramin, 2017, pp. 108-109). In addition, the focus on individual performance leads to a decrease in collective demands, which decreases collective social protective measures at the same time as increasing the arduousness of the work. Finally, workers are faced with paradoxical situations: they must demonstrate their individual worth, while working in a team spirit; be a part of the process for proposal and innovation, while responding to a high level of constraint; prepare for the future, while adapting to short-term changes; combine their interests and those of the company. All of this creates an uncertain work environment, thus an uncertain life.

Post-Fordism is in fact characterized by a mode of organization in which work is valued in itself, and where there is a strong requirement to adhere to the company’s flexibility (that is, personal investment, subjective involvement in the work). This model considers workers through his/her individual skills and qualifications. Work is becoming more and more individual (Durand 2007, 2019; Paugam & Gallie 2003; Castel, 2003; Standing, 2011; Barchiesi, 2015). Individuals at work are held responsible for their employability. The individualization of the work experience (through the individualization of the wage relation) also results in the fading out of the social. The fact that employability becomes, so to speak, a burden to be carried individually leads to overlook the social relations that underlie it. There is individual absorption, or rather, psychologization of the social conflicts (Ehrenberg, 2010; Lordon, 2013; Castel, Castel & Lovell, 1982). The emergence of the new individualism is radicalized in this context. The trend towards individualization is generalized in relation to employment. First of all, the individualization of tasks leads

to an individualization of remuneration indexed to individual performance (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2007). It is then the responsibility of the worker to negotiate his/her employment contracts and, in general, to manage his/her career. We then observe the individualization of professional trajectories. As the concepts of contract and project have infiltrated the field of social benefits, the individual is also made responsible in his/her recourse to them. These social benefits are no longer considered as rights but as services which are deserved. The individual is thus empowered at different levels (inside and outside the company) at the same time as he/she sees his/her possibility of having recourse to collective social supports diminished since there is a weakening of union struggles as well as a limitation of social benefits (Standing, 2011; della Porta, Hänninen, Siisiäinen & Silvasti, 2015). In other words, with Castel's own words, "triumphant liberty and individualism have a darker face, the *negative individuality* of all those who find themselves without belongings and without support, deprived of any protections or recognition" (Castel, 2003, p. 6).

Post-Fordism is characterized by an enlargement of the sphere of control of the company over its workers. This is also defined by a tendency to blur the distinction between spaces and times "for oneself" and "for work", by short-term projects, autonomy, individual responsibility and initiative, mobility, flexibility etc. Discourses of this sort are part of what could be called, with reference to Castel, the "new individualism" (Castel, 2003, pp. 445-458). In a sense, it is the question of the revolution of personal life itself. Personal life becomes politicized. However, it becomes political not in the sense that the private becomes political, but in the sense that the private and the personal become the subject of, so to speak, a biopolitical power. Castel describes this new individualism as follows:

(...) Negative individualism, which is obtained by subtraction with respect to belonging in a community. This expression, like that of "collective individualism," may be somewhat shocking insofar as we generally understand by individualism the valorization of the individual subject and his independence with respect to collective belongings. Modern individualism, says Louis Dumont, "postulates the individual as a moral being, independent and autonomous, and thus (essentially) nonsocial." Indeed, what Alan Fox calls "market individualism" began employing this image of an individual as master of his business, pursuing with ferocity his own interest, and defiant toward all collective forms of belonging. (...) This is a pure individual, and as a result of this fact, one who is completely abject. It is through this individualized point

that he is fully exposed: he is detached from the social fabric of those relationships of dependency and interdependencies that structured the society of the time. (...) This may be understood as a “negative” individualism because it is largely defined negatively in terms of a “lack” or “absence”—the lack of respect, lack of security, lack of protected goods and stable bonds (Castel, 2003, pp. 447-449).

The context of new individualism places on individuals both the requirement for personal development, individual responsibility for their condition and the necessity of having fun and being happy in their life in general, but also in their professional life.

This form of organization of work promotes sustained psychological/affective engagement and sets up new methods of control and evaluation based on interpersonal skills (Hochschild, 1979; Lordon, 2014; The Institute for Precarious Consciousness, 2014; Jeong, 2016; Farrugia, Threadgold & Coffey, 2017; Młóźniak, 2017; Pultz, 2018; Casalini, 2019). The dominant neoliberal work ideology immediately posits work as central for individuals and as the central sphere in the construction of identity. It is possible to say that the ultimate goal of work experience is nothing but self-realization (Lordon, 2014). Workers are portrayed as morally committed to the employer and its goals. Also, workers are assumed to be voluntary: they invest themselves in the company and accept the “sacrifices” required by the competition. Ultimately, neoliberal work ideology asserts that workers take responsibility for their employability.

The management of flexibility generates reactivity and adaptability to changes, to permanent crises and uncertainties (Supiot, 1999; Chun, 2001; Castel, 2003; Durand, 2019). In this regard, crisis management become the ethos of the worker. This is both the crisis at work and the crisis he/she constantly faces in his/her own life (Beck, 1992; especially chapter six, “Destandardization of Labor”). They have no other choice but to continually invest in their human capital in order to remain competitive in a constantly changing market structure; they are reduced to the economic agents individually responsible for their employability (Méda & Vendramin, 2017). There is a radical subjectivation of economic processes here. Individual responsibility (as “human capital” (Becker, 1993) for employability, for continuous education etc.) consists for the individual in total self-mobilization.

The notion of competence empowers the worker individually; “it involves the judgement of individuals, based not on their *doing*, but on their *being*, opening the doors to arbitrariness” (Durand, 2007, p. 63). Management by competence implies active participation, constant self-improvement. There is a transfer of responsibility here. The individual can only react and adjust to the neutral response of the market (just-in-time). Competence therefore has a broader meaning, including modalities which extend to all aspects of social life beyond work. This implies the subjectification of the means of mobilization (the bringing into play of interpersonal skills, the valorization of skills, affective and cognitive skills etc.), but also an expansion of the areas of control. It therefore dominates non-working time.

Another source of mobilization of the labor force specific to post-Fordism consists of financial activation: indebtedness, an essential element of financialized capitalism. The financialization of advanced capitalism refers to a set of structural changes in the economy and society through which the dynamics of financial accumulation are imposed as hegemonic capitalist regulation. During this period, financial relations have become widespread within the wage-earning sector through the extension of mechanisms such as consumer credits, investment funds etc. (Lapavistas, 2009; Akçay, 2015; Karaçimen, 2015; Ayhan, 2019). Consumption no longer depends only on the real monetary capacity of individuals as in the Fordist model which implied an increase in wages; it is now based on the virtual capacity of individuals for indebtedness. This capacity, or rather “calculative imperatives of finance” (Bryan, Rafferty, & Jefferis, 2015), leads to the progressive “subsumption” of labor to the logos of the finance, that is, financialization of education, medical care, retirement etc. (LiPuma, 2017, p. 8). As Lazzarato stated:

It is debt and the creditor-debtor relationship that make up the subjective paradigm of modern-day capitalism, in which “labor” is coupled with “work on the self,” in which economic activity and the ethico-political activity of producing the subject go hand in hand (Lazzarato, 2012, p. 38).

As Lorey stated, Marx too draws attention to the aspect of the debt relationship that insulates the individual, destroys (positive and productive) inter-individual relations, and hinders common political action (Lorey, 2018, p. 131). The debt economy that “appropriates and exploits both chronological labor time and action, non-

chronological time, time as choice, decision, a wager on what will happen and on the forces (trust, desire, courage, etc.) that make choice, decision, and action possible” (Lazzarato, 2012, p. 55) producing a subject “capable of accounting for himself as a future subject, a subject capable of promising and keeping a promise, a subject that works on the self” (Lazzarato, 2012, p. 88). Debt indeed “has a disciplinary effect. (...) Credit can therefore be seen also as a form of governmentality and domination” (Beckert, 2016, p. 118). Debt and credit – that is, the liquid financial capital – therefore work as a tool of connecting people to the system economically and socially, with greatly impact on the perception of time (Esposito, 2011; McClanahan, 2011; Deville, 2015; Garica-Lamarca & Kaika, 2016; LiPuma, 2017; Adkins, 2018). The present time of the indebtedness is mortgaged by an unknown future (Lazzarato 2012, 2015; Jeong, 2016; Lorey, 2018; Bowsher, 2019). Instead of transforming the present on the basis of hope and belief in the future, the indebted subject is trapped in the present that is confiscated by concern for the future created by the debt relationship. As Beckert argues, “capitalism is an economic system in which present is assessed principally through the lens of future, which is itself considered using imaginaries of future states in order to anticipate as yet unrealized profit and loss” (Beckert, 2016, p. 22). The indebted subject lives in the future; but this is in fact a calendarized, knowable, determined and confined future: the future that seizes and usurps all potentials in the present. In this sense, the individual always already has a debt. Work is the eternal reparation of an original social debt.

Within this context, it is possible to argue that flexibility characterizes the contemporary work and employment regime very well. The effects of the flexibility of working place and time on quality of work and life have increasingly become a focus of academic and political attention. Although we cannot say that temporally and spatially flexible and non-standard employment regime is the norm¹⁷ yet, we can say that its shares in total employment is increasing, becoming to replace the “standard working time” we discussed earlier (ILO, 2016; Eurofound, 2020). In this regard, this

¹⁷ Whether flexibility and precarity are the norm of the capitalist mode of production and its employment regime or an exception specific to neoliberal capitalism is a controversial issue. The approaches which accept flexibility and precarity as an exception, and the standard employment regime of the Keynesian welfare state as a norm, is subject to criticism both from the gender (men-women) and geography (Global South-North) perspective. Touching on this for the moment, we leave this discussion for later.

flexible working regime can be described as follows: “deregulation of collective norms, diversification of the length (short and long hours) and pattern of working time (unsocial hours), increasing work intensity and time squeeze, and blurring of the limits of working and leisure time” (Antilla, Oinas, Tammelin, & Natti, 2015, p. 713).

It can be argued that flexibility mainly consists in two innovations: new ways of thinking about performance and new ways of organizing work and production. The production process has become more flexible under the influence of new types of management, such as just-in-time, five-zeros, lean production, quality circles or Total Quality Management, which presupposes a revitalization of the organization for a rapid and adequate adaptation to the needs of the customer. Workers’ skills have also become more flexible, the emphasis on continuous education/evaluation is replacing the emphasis on initial training, and salaries are becoming more flexible, either through the individualization of remuneration or through a multitude of forms of atypical contract.

Under the pressure of flexibility, companies have greatly diversified the forms of work. Atypical, non-standard or contingent works such as “temporary work, on-call work, working with zero-hour contracts, seasonal labor, casual labor, day labor recruited informally in the open air, intermittent labor, independent contracting, freelance work, internships” (van der Linden, 2014), even if it is not yet dominant, is becoming more and more important and prevalent. The creation of atypical jobs is part of the logic of flexible work. Full-time permanent contracts, considered too rigid and expensive, are presented as a barrier to employment. However, from the mid-1970s onwards, the rise in unemployment was a serious concern for governments, which focused their employment policies on struggling it. The reforms undertaken to facilitate hiring are then carried out against the social protections attached to stable employment, which results in a relaxation of the legal conditions for dismissal and the creation of new forms of employment (Standing, 2011). The proliferation of all these forms of atypical work has changed the workers’ statuses.

The main effect of the proliferation of atypical forms of work is seen in terms of identity. For workers working in temporary and flexible statuses, it is almost impossible to build an authentic identity at work and constructing a rational life plan,

causing to what Sennett called “corrosion of character” (Sennett, 1998). It is in this sense that P rilleux speaks of the subjectification of work, that is to say: “of intensification of the subjective commitment in the activity and the putting to work of affects, values and relational dispositions of the workers who have become necessary for the production to be carried out” (P rilleux, 2003, p. 243). All work is a subjective experience (experiencing oneself), but what we encounter here is how subjectivity leads to the instrumentalization of individuals at work. Numerous affective, cognitive and bodily arrangements (outside of work, relating to non-work and leisure sphere) are used to that end:

New modes of domination are putting in place (...) autonomy, relationship, competence and personal development [which] are becoming key words [of the discourse of neoliberal ideology]. The result is new strategies of domination by non-coercive means under the guise of a moral emancipation. This strategy constitutes a new ruse of capital which promotes the relational but makes the ‘social’ disappear (Ehrenberg, 2010, p. 211).

An important thing to grasp here, I think, is that “the new means of control are associated with the dynamic-motivational modalities of individual empowerment, in the sense that it involves internalized attitudes such as ‘initiative, creativity and concern for the organization’” (Ehrenberg, 2010, p. 251). The notion of empowerment is a key, which corresponds to an individual way of being whose outlines are blurred. That is, individual empowerment is a process that is never completed. Psychologization focuses on the individual, but “empowers” him individually. Regarding to this point, flexibility also leads to a blurring of the distinction between private and professional spheres.

This instability and uncertainty are fundamental, also in that it reinforces the control exerted on everyone within the contemporary work-experience. Servitude and behavioral conformism cannot be thought without the fear of dismissal and precariousness. On this fear is erected the crumbling of solidarities, since the companies’ strategies consists in putting everyone in competition. It is therefore in a context of fierce competition and a state of permanent crisis that individuals must flourish. What is expected of the worker is commitment, motivation, adaptability, versatility and flexibility. Full investment in work is required, resulting in a gradual subordination of thought and affectivity to corporate ends.

Flexibility has therefore radically changed the nature of work. Some argues that work has become more interesting and attractive due to the independence/autonomy obtained by the worker, but several indicators suggest the opposite. Time pressure, the increase in quality, the intensification of work, the risk of unemployment, individualism, the burden of skills always to be renewed, etc. are all factors of flexibility which influence in a negative way on the well-being of individuals (Boyer & Durand, 1997).

Within this context, work becomes the meaning of life. That is why it has a solid existential power and as such, it must be activated and motivated on this basis, so much so that we no longer work for a living, but we live to work. This also means that work, as that gives meaning to life, is a total institution, and therefore very dangerous. In this sense, the discourse of neoliberal work regime is also a promise of freedom and autonomy. However, the neoliberal discourse on autonomy is only the source for new forms of domination and exploitation. The individual is inevitably subject to control under the guise of freedom and autonomy.

2.2.2.2.3. Non-Standard Employment Regime and Working Time Flexibilization

According to the OECD report, the non-standard employment relationship has increased in most OECD countries since 1985 (2018). And this is not limited to OECD countries. Over the last 30-40 years, non-standard working forms have entered into the trend of a rapid increase all over the world. In fact, this has been the case for much longer for developing and underdeveloped countries. Temporary contracts have become an essential element of working life in most countries, so much so that, according to OECD report, “the economic recovery experienced by many regions in OECD countries in recent years is driven by the rise of temporary work” (2018, p. 68). It seems that today, the share of full-time, permanent forms of work in employment is gradually decreasing. Of total employment, the share of full-time wage workers has decreased from 83 percent to 71 percent in Australia, from 78 percent to 72 percent in Canada, from 86 percent to 82 in the US and from 88 percent to 82 percent in the EU between 1983 and 2006 (Vosko, 2010, p. 75). On the other hand, the proportion of non-standard workers is also increasing. According to the report published by the ILO, only about 30 percent of workers are employed in a stable and formal job worldwide;

nearly 70 percent of the employees work with temporary or short-term contracts, in informal jobs without contract (2020).

However, the definition of non-standard working regime, which we can place against the standard working regime, is not clear. ILO emphasizes that there is no official definition of the non-standard employment relationship, and it covers the forms of work outside the standard working arrangements. According to the ILO report, non-standard employment can be defined through temporary employment, part-time work, temporary agency work, disguised employment relationships and dependent self-employment (2016). Therefore, I would like to call this new, non-standardized working regime, which emerged after the crisis of the Fordist accumulation regime and transformed its regular, standard working and employment regime, as the flexible working and employment regime, and I think that flexibility is the general characteristic of all these employment forms that can be included in non-standard employment regime.

The term flexibility, in general sense, can be understood as the capacity for adaptation. Something flexible is that which knows how to bend itself to its environment, that which knows how to react to external changes, to adapt to changing circumstances. In this regard, to understand flexibility and to properly place it in its socio-economic context, it seems that we need to ask these three questions: who needs to adapt? (the market, the company, a group of workers, the individual worker etc.); what to adapt to? (at the request of customers, technical breakdowns in the company, management decisions, the desires and needs of the worker, the contingency of life etc.); what to adapt, that is to say, on what elements the adaptation relates? (production equipment, products and services, employment, tasks, working hours etc.)

The literature often addresses three main areas, namely organization flexibility, labor market flexibility and employee flexibility. In connection with the organization flexibility, management literature has focused since the 1930s on the idea that an economic organization derives its efficiency from its capacity to adapt to its environment. On the other hand, research on labor market flexibility discusses the impact of adaptability of production volume, wages, functional mobility of workers, in short, markets with strong flexibility, on growth and unemployment. If we restrict

flexibility to the dimension directly affecting workers, it relates to four elements: salary (salary flexibility), space (geographical mobility of workers), function (versatility and continuous education) and the time. To give a definition of the different modalities of working time flexibility, it is also necessary to consider the multidimensionality of time. Thus, the adaptation of working time must be considered by acting on a combination of the different dimensions of time such as hours, day, week, year, working life, whole life.

Beyond these conceptual definitions, I think it is more useful to approach the description of flexible working time by a historical definition which consists in opposing it to a historically situated model of fixed and standard working time. Talking about the flexibility of working time may make us think that there is in fact an inflexible – standard, normal, rigid, structured – form of working time, even that this form is the norm and flexible working time is the exception. However, as I argued before, the “standard working time” to which flexibility is opposed is in fact a historical exception. This is predominantly a model of standard, permanent employment from graduation to retirement, full-time, with a regular, fixed daytime schedule from Monday to Friday of around 8 hours a day. According to van der Linden, standard employment regime:

[U]sually understood to involve a form of wage labor defined by (1) continuity and stability of employment, (2) a full-time position with one employer, only at the employer’s place of business, (3) an income that enables an employee to support at least a small family, without falling below a basic standard of living, legally stipulated rights to protection and participation or codetermination at work, and (4) social insurance benefits (2014, pp. 10-11).

It is however necessary to indicate that this periodization does not mean that the attitudes of the organizations described for the first phase (Fordism) disappeared during the second (post-Fordism). The distinctive features of the standard working time, which are fixity, regularity and collective scheduling, are not necessarily challenged by flexible, atypical, non-standard models. Certain forms of flexible working time maintain the characteristic of collectivity at company level while abandoning regularity, others for example maintain regularity in terms of hours but not necessarily in terms of duration of contract. It is indeed possible to observe quite different behaviors in the organization of work according to, for example, the payroll

and the composition of the staff. In branches requiring a lot of low-skilled and cheap labor and facing strong price competition we rather see a revival of the Taylorist organization. It is in these companies that flexibility is compatible with the precariousness of the wage relationship and the development of atypical and restrictive working hours. In companies that rely on knowledge, whether in service sector or in industry, we can observe a tendency to move away from the Taylorist-Fordist model. It is then the flattening of the hierarchy, individual responsibility and the stabilization of employment that are targeted. Flexibility in production is achieved through individualized management of working time, at the same time considering the interests of workers when it is possible. However, beyond the institutional, economic and cultural determinants, it is above all, I think, the changing balance of power between labor and capital which directing the forms and rhythms of working time. Thus, just as “standard working time” was the result of a certain form of class struggle, the limits of “flexible working time” are likewise determined by the gains and losses of the class struggle between capital and the working class. In this regard, it is more accurate to say that there is continuity rather than a rupture between the Fordist and the post-Fordist period, between standard working regime and flexible working regime. Put it differently, this process does not progress in a linear way; it is shaped according to the composition of the labor-capital relationship, that is, the needs of the capital and the demands of the labor (we will return to this point again when we discuss Marx’s concept of “subsumption” through the periods of Fordism and post-Fordism).

As I said before, the Fordist production system began to go into crisis around the 1970s, and this leads to changes in the production and employment regime as well as in the working hours. Since the 1980s, early experiences moving away from Taylorist and Fordist organization have become increasingly embedded in business management theories. New management concepts then emerged advocating greater business efficiency by flattening hierarchies, empowering workers, and granting greater autonomy. In these new work organizations, control, and sometimes also the design of work, as well as the responsibility for the achievement of objectives are shifted to the workers. This system of accountability, supported by remuneration linked to products, is supposed to lead workers to organize their own work in order to make better use of working time. Improved productivity is expected from reduced

downtime and increased presence during intense activity. The reduction in overtime paid contributes to lower labor costs. As Holst has empirically demonstrated through the development of the German automobile industry, the flexibility of work and employment emerges as a means of struggling temporal uncertainty, that is, as a result of a change in the perception of time:

Two shifts in the way large actors have re-constructed the future are empirically identified, each associated with a specific flexibilization dynamic. The first re-construction of the future took place in the aftermath of the crises of the 1970s. The unexpected economic turbulences did not only end the post-war growth path; they resulted as well in an epistemological rupture in the thinking about the future in large capitalist organizations. The vision of the future as a predictable linear continuation of the past, which had dominated corporate headquarters not only in the auto industry in the post-war period, abruptly lost its plausibility and was swiftly replaced by the construction of the risky future. (...) The second re-construction of the relationship between past, present and future was linked to the triumph of the lean paradigm and the effects of financialization in the 1990s and 2000s. Particularly in large corporations, the construction of the uncertain future became dominant. It shares with the notion of the risky future the idea of multiple futures. However, while the risky future was based on the conviction that all possible futures could be reliably anticipated, the construction of the future as uncertain assumes that unforeseeable events could potentially always occur (in addition to preparing for the range of futures deemed as relevant by foresight, organizations now utilize flexibility to safeguard their capitalist bets against unforeseeable events) (2018, pp. 202-203).

These new managerial and organizational strategies presuppose an internalization of the mechanisms for controlling and regulating working time by workers. The risky future perception that Holst points out in the mindset of corporates also affects the time perception of individuals; creates a social life woven with uncertainty and risk (Bell, 1973; Lash & Urry, 1987; Beck 1992, 2009; Baumann 2000, 2005). Just as the demand for a reduction in working time was only possible when disciplinary time regime was accepted as part of work and life, some forms of flexible working time could only be considered when time discipline has become, so to speak, a “second nature” to workers. In the Fordist model, the mechanisms for controlling and regulating working time were represented by the hierarchy, fixed rules and sometimes the clock-time. With the new model, it is mostly the workers themselves who control their own working time and manage it in order to achieve the goals that the company has set. The boundaries between employer and employee, between work and non-

work, between salary and non-monetary gratuity are becoming more blurred. The aim of these new organizations of work and working time is ultimately the optimal use not only of professional qualifications and skills, but also of subjective commitment, cognitive and affective resources to ensure that workers regulate their work directly.

It is possible to say that the change in working time is closely related to the change in working organization and employment regime. However, some authors say that this is not the only reason for flexibility. Many authors insist on the importance of the change in values and lifestyles to explain the rise of new working time. Already in the 1970s, Inglehart had observed the emergence of post-materialist values, such as “autonomy, self-expression and the quality of life”, and he reaffirmed it in a study covering two decades of evolution of values (Inglehart 1977, 1990). For the new generations, who have grown up in a certain material well-being, the aesthetic and intellectual aspects would take on more importance than material success and security. These new values place more emphasis on themes such as personal development and self-realization. This does not mean however that work is losing its importance, but quite the contrary. Work may remain to be of important value, but expectations of work and its precise content have changed. Thus, qualitative aspirations (interest in the work, possibilities for personal development, autonomy, etc.) increase more rapidly than material concerns (Méda & Vendramin, 2017).

In addition, the consolidation of spheres other than work for the subjective investment with a series of developments in the sphere of work such as the reduction of working time, flexibility, the precariousness of jobs, unemployment, etc. has caused some authors to argue that work will no longer be a central position in our societies to arrange lifetime, at least not in the form that has developed with industrialization (e.g., Rifkin, 1995). But this is strongly contested with some other authors. Even though the expectations of work, its nature and the wage relationship have more or less changed, I think that work in its new forms remains unquestionably central to the functioning of our societies and to the survival, social integration and well-being of individuals.

In this regard, some authors, managers and academicians claim that flexible working time is better than standard working time, to provide more comfort and autonomy to employees. The experiences of some employees really support this argument; some

employees say that flexible working can be beneficial. But it should be noted that the main goal, however, is not worker autonomy but productivity. Even if it is true that workers are granted autonomy, it happens as a derivative or a means of the drive for productivity and profitability. This creates a different kind of pressure, both internal and external, to the workers; a constraint that is imposed and that they impose themselves at the same time (Costa, Sartori & Akerstedt, 2006; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008; Curzi, Fabbri & Pistoiresi, 2020). It no longer becomes synonymous with freedom but rather with a new form of oppression and exploitation. In this regard, Maggi makes a distinction between “autonomy” and “discretion”, where the second concept refers to the possibility, or even to the injunction, to make a choice among the alternatives offered or to act without exact prescription but in a well-regulated process, rather than the possibility of producing one’s own rules (Maggi, De La Garza, & Weill-Fassina, 2011). In the context of post-Fordism, according to him, it is most often the discretion rather than the autonomy of workers that companies seek. In the flexible system of post-Fordism, discretion is explicitly requested especially since it is necessary to face uncertainty. In reality, it is the responsibility to individual workers to find solutions suitable for the company without hindering their private activities, and when such solutions are not found, individual workers are naturally held responsible.

It is at this point, I think, important to see that the autonomy which is claimed today by the workers, contrary to what was claimed at the beginning of industrialization, is more a control of their private life than the professional autonomy within the work itself. After the professional autonomy of workers has been shattered by the rationalization of working time and the fragmentation of work, workers today do not really seek to regain this autonomy by demanding greater control of their working time. What they are looking for, I think, is in fact to regain more control over their lifetime, insofar as working time encroaches on the organization of time outside of work, that is, of life itself. In the age of flexibility, where it is very difficult to predict when work begins and ends, uncertainty, thus precarity which it produces, seems to be the main parameter that characterizes this age. Therefore, by defining flexibility from the viewpoint of workers, that is, those who have to sell their labor power, I argue that flexibility above all produces risk, uncertainty and precarity in our life, in our relationship with the temporality of life, and in our subjectivity, and that creates an

affective economy whose basic components are risk, uncertainty and precarity.

2.2.2.2.4. Precarization of Labor and Life

2.2.2.2.4.1. Different Definitions and Conceptualizations of Precarity: An Exception or a Norm; a New Class Position or Not?

As we have seen, the socio-economic transformation accomplished by neoliberal policies in the last 30-40 years has change the work and employment regime by bringing non-standard/flexible working arrangement instead of standard working arrangement. While the standard working arrangement refers to a guaranteed, stable and secure working relationship with predetermined boundaries, non-standard working arrangement generally refer to flexible and precarious employment relationship. We can say that precarity is the characteristic of today's flexible working relations. Precarity erodes the worker's control over the labor process; it forces them to work under temporary and uncertain conditions. This uncertainty covers both wages and working time. Therefore, we can say that precarity is not limited to work, it also spreads to other spheres of life. In this regard, many authors argue that with the flexible working regime, precarity has become the norm of working life and that it has negative impacts on the individual and social life by spreading to both working and non-working spheres.

The notion of precarity is in fact highly contextual. The meaning of the term has evolved over time in popular discourse and differs according to socio-political context. The Latin "*precarius*" which means "uncertain" or "obtained by entreaty" directly leads us to understand precarity as a situation in which those living in precarious conditions have no control over their destiny and depend on the goodwill of others; they have no security and are dependent on chance circumstances" (van der Linden, 2014, p. 11). Today, in Italian, for example, the meaning of "*precariato*" is not limited to low-paid precarious employment but refers to a precarious existence as a way of life; in German, the term refers to temporary workers and the unemployed who no longer hope for social integration, while in Japanese it is synonymous with the "working poor" (Standing, 2011, p. 9). In English, it is more sensitive to wage amounts and poor working conditions, and in France, the country where the concept originated, the term appeared following the 1980s to designate the new situations of alternation

between jobs and unemployment (Barbier, 2011; Choonara, 2020).

The growth of precarious jobs was so rapid that it became a matter of concern as early as the 1980s (Paugam & Gallie, 2003). Boltanski and Chiapello (2007, p. xxxix) note that the “atypical jobs (fixed-term contracts, apprentices, paid trainees, beneficiaries of state-aided contracts and government-sponsored contracts in the civil service) has doubled between 1985 and 1995”. The increase in the rate of such jobs among the working population lead to a profound transformation of the wage relation in the sense of making it more precarious (Castel, 2016). Precarious work can be defined as “work that is uncertain, unstable, and insecure and in which employees bear the risks of work (as opposed to business or the government) and receive limited social benefits and statutory protections” (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018, p. 1). The large majority of hires are now made through these types of jobs, which means that employment insecurity is replacing employment security as the dominant regime of the organization of work. For example, according to the joint ILO-Eurofound report covering 41 countries and 1.2 billion workers, at least 30 percent of these workers suffer from job insecurity (Eurofound & ILO, 2019). Going through precarious employment during various career transitions has already become the norm. For some, it is only a step in the career process, but for others it is doomed to last over time. In this sense, it can be argued that precariousness has become a specific epitome of the flexible organization of work today. It seems that achieving greater flexibility is the reason why companies now prefer precarious employment more. These jobs make better use of working time under fluctuating conditions. Temporary jobs make it possible to adjust the workforce to the intensity of daily or weekly activities.

According to Standing (2011), the precariat refers to a “new social class” that has emerged following the flexibilization of work after Fordism. He describes a social hierarchy fragmented into five social classes with the precariat at the bottom, an expanding social class that designates the excluded, the unemployed and precarious workers (Standing, 2011, pp. 7-8). This is a very heterogeneous class. Their common point is their instrumental and opportunistic relationship to work. The jobs they occupy are precarious and they do not benefit from community support, guarantees and private income to supplement their wages. The peculiarity of this social class is the lack of a sense of belonging to a class. It is not based on a common history; the needs are diverse

and the people composing it are put in competition on the job market. Standing's definition is indeed not the only accepted definition of the precariat. Since the definition itself has political implications for the use of the concept of precariat¹⁸, we can find many different definitions of the concept.

First, there is a debate in the literature as to whether the concept refers to a new class position. As we have seen, Standing claims that the concept refers to a new social class, that is, a "class-in-the-making characterized by labor insecurity, the lack of any stable occupation identity, and thus the lack of a collective voice" (Han, 2018, p. 336). The concept, as presented by Standing in the subtitle of the book ("new dangerous class"), is closer to Marx's lumpenproletariat. But we know that lumpenproletariat is not a class for Marx, rather "the remnants of classes that failed to adapt to capitalism"; therefore, "extending this category to encompass groups who are clearly engaged in wage labor is quite alien to Marx's usage" (Choonara, 2020, p. 432). We also find another critique of Standing in Erik Olin Wright. He too opposes the meaning that Standing attributes to the concept of the precariat, that is, the idea that the precariat refers to a new class. According to him, the precariat is not a new class position, both because its interests do not differ from those of the working class and because it does not have a common interest among its own segments (Wright, 2016).

The debate as to whether the concept refers to a new class position is important because it also allows us to decide whether precarity is a phenomenon unique to the neoliberal capitalism or a norm, an inherent dynamic of capitalist relations of production. It seems to me that Standing and his followers regard the concept as specific to neoliberalism and thus overlook its genealogy. We can say that this is the biggest criticism brought against him; that is, his grasping the concept in, so to speak, isolation from history and geography.

At this point, the first criticism is that the concept is blind to the division of global North-South and thus Eurocentric. According to this criticism, roughly speaking,

¹⁸ For a discussion pointing out the differences between the approaches that "sociologize" or "politicize" the concept of precariat, see: Neilson & Rossiter (2008), Papadopoulos, Stephenson & Tsianos (2008, especially Section V: "Labor and Precarity"), Shukaitis (2013), Choonara (2020). We can say that the main point here is the tension between fixing the concept as an empirical research object and developing a new politics around it, as Neilson and Rossiter have pointed out.

precarious work which we tend to accept as a new, “exceptional” phenomenon for the developed countries of Europe, seems to be almost the definition of “normal” work for the global South (Mosoetsa, Stillerman, & Tilly, 2016, p. 8). As Munck puts it:

What is most noticeable in the broader literature around precarity and the precariat is that it is almost totally Northern-centric in its theoretical frames and its empirical reference points. There is a totally Northern sensibility at play here, it seems. In Standing’s case it is really just Britain that is the model of economic and political development which he has in mind. There is hardly a reference to any part of the world outside the North Atlantic. It is simply assumed as the centre and the norm which will apply everywhere. There is little cognisance that the type of work described by the term ‘precarity’ has always been the norm in the global South (Munck, 2013, p. 752).

Statistics also seem to support this: “In Africa, 85.8 per cent of employment is informal. The proportion is 68.2 per cent in Asia and the Pacific, 68.6 per cent in the Arab States, 40.0 per cent in the Americas and 25.1 per cent in Europe” (ILO, 2018). In addition, it can be argued that the concept of precariat is genderblind, focusing on white male and ignoring women’s labor which has not been included in wage labor throughout history (Federici, 2008; van der Linden, 2014; Lorey, 2015; Betti, 2016). Because, in this respect, what is considered precarity today was the way women, immigrants, non-White and other minorities were employed in countries outside of Europe for many years.

This brings us to consider the relation of precarity to the capitalist mode of production. The fundamental distinction here is between those who tend to see precarity as a neoliberal exception (Ong, 2006; Standing, 2011), and those who see precarity as an inherent norm in capitalism and the welfare state as the exception (Mitropoulos, 2005; Neilson & Rossiter, 2008; Munck, 2013; Mahmud, 2015; Jonna & Foster, 2016; Mosoetsa, Stillerman & Tilly, 2016; Choonara 2019, 2020; Wilson, 2019). According to the latter, precarity which is mostly understood as specific condition of neoliberalism has been actually natural consequence of capitalism since the very beginning¹⁹. In Rancière’s word, “the condition described today as that of the precarious worker is perhaps the fundamental reality of the proletariat. And the modes of existence of workers in 1830 are quite close to those of our temporary workers”

¹⁹ For a study that traces insecurity back to Ancient Greece and Christianity, see: Marcel van der Linden (2014)

(Rancière, 1989, p. xxxiii). It is sufficient to read Engel's *The Conditions of the Working Class in England* and Marx's writings on the "reserve army of labor" and "lumpenproletariat" to understand this. From this perspective, precarity is not a "state of exception" in the history of capitalism, but norms immanent to capitalist relations of production. Accordingly, as Mitropoulos points out, what we call precarity today is nothing more than the present situation of those who lost their (relatively) privileged position in the past (Western, white, male wage laborer) (Mitropoulos, 2005). Because the Fordist-Keynesian period, which was close to being seen as the "golden", "welfare" period of capitalism, was never a fully inclusive period either. There has always been a distinction between standard and non-standard work and employment between male and female workers in the center and the periphery, between immigrants and citizens; so, this is not new, at most it may be new for citizens of developed countries. Even in developed Western countries, as Rancière showed for France and Marx and Engels for England, precarious labor functioned as a norm of capitalism. So, what is happening today is the return of precarious labor, or "democratization of insecurity" (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018, p. 17), after the end of "Fordist compromise", "standard employment regime" or "welfare state".

In addition to the debate on whether precarity is a new class position and whether it is the exception, there are also some differences in the conceptualization of precarity. According to Kalleberg and Vallas, for example, there are two approaches to precarious work. The first includes authors who tend to bring precarity to the discussion of modernity through the concepts of "uncertainty" and "risk"; the second approach, on the other hand, "evident in the work of economic sociologists, has empirically explored the forces that account for the proliferation of precarious work during the past three decades" (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018, p. 3). The works of authors such as Giddens, Beck, and Baumann pointing to risk and uncertainty as the defining feature of contemporary social life through concepts such as "ontological insecurity" (Giddens, 1991), "risk society" (Beck, 1992) and "liquidity" (Bauman, 2000) can be counted as the most famous examples of this approach. On the other hand, economic sociologists focus on the structural economic conditions that bring about precarity, which Kalleberg and Vallas summarizes as de-unionization and undermining of organizational protections of workers, globalization and sharpened competitive

conditions and digital revolution and automatization (Kalleberg & Vallas, 2018, p. 5). Bourdieu's approach seems to be at the intersection of economic and sociological approaches. As a result of the widespread insecurity of the labor market, a mode of existence that we can call "precarious habitus" emerges, and what characterizes this mode of existence is its temporal-existential uncertainty:

Casualization profoundly affects the person who suffers it: by making the whole future uncertain, it prevents all rational anticipation and, in particular, the basic belief and hope in the future that one needs in order to rebel, especially collectively, against present conditions, even the most tolerable. (...) The unemployed and the casualized workers, having suffered a blow to their capacity to project themselves into the future, which is the precondition for all so-called rational conducts, starting with economic calculation, or, in a quite different realm, political organization, are scarcely capable of being mobilized (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 82-83).

Another kind of classification can be made, according to Millar, between precarity as a labor condition, precarity as a class category, and precarity as an ontological experience (Millar, 2017). The studies consider precarity as a labor condition (as we saw in Bourdieu's approach), which link precarity to post-Fordism, to the "flexible accumulation", to the systematic dismantling of full employment, tend to see precarity as a symptom of the current condition. On the other hand, the approach that sees precarity as a class category (as we saw in Standing's work) tends to view the precarious as class-in-the-making, if not class-in-itself, a "dangerous class characterized by deep anger, anomie, anxiety and alienation" (Millar, 2017, p. 3). We can also mention here Butler, who grasps precariousness on the ontological basis, in other words, as an ontological aspect of being human. Here Butler in fact draws a distinction between the precariousness that derives from the flexibility and uncertainty that economic conditions create in the labor market, the precariousness in the sense of fragility as an ontological experience and as a structure of affect (Butler, 2011). In this regard, Butler does not use "precarity" and "precariousness" in the same sense; while the former refers to insecurity in the labor market, the latter refers to "an ontological and existential category that describes the common, but unevenly distributed, fragility of human corporeal existence" (Neilson & Rossiter, 2006, p. 11).

Another sociological categorization of precarity applied to work is suggested by Mosoetsa, Stillerman and Tilly (2016, p. 7). According to this, Standing's approach

which is the most well-known approach, characterizes precarity as a social category of lacking in the labor process. On the other hand, Cranford, Vosko, and Zukewich's definition of precarity is characterized by "continuum", not by a lacking. According to this approach, precarity is a continuous situation in terms of certainty of permanent employment, control over the labor process, social protection measures and income level. And finally, there are approaches that describe precarity by narrowing its focus as the risky, uncertain and insecure work experience of employees.

Against these "sociological" approaches, we can put the approach that "politicizes" the concept of precarity, and the most important example of this is, I think, the autonomist Marxism, also known as Italian *operaismo* (workerism). Autonomist thinking and practice are rooted in the Italian factory movements of the 1950s-60s (Wright, 2002). In terms of our subject, it can be said that what characterizes the autonomists is that they attribute a positive meaning to precariousness for political struggles. In other words, precarious conditions can create a possibility of subjectivation to the extent that it means liberation from the logic of capital, liberation from workerization, having free time. We can find traces of these ideas, which autonomist thought inherited from *operaismo*, in the writings of Negri who is accepted as one of the important authors of the autonomous movement today:

[A]nother tendency for immaterial labor to function without stable long-term contracts and thus adopt the precarious position of becoming flexible and mobile. Some characteristics of immaterial labor, which are tending to transform others form of labor, hold enormous potential for positive social transformation. (These positive characteristics are paradoxically the flip side of the negative developments.) First, immaterial labor tends to move out of the limited realm of the strictly economic domain and engage in the general production and reproduction of society as a whole (Negri & Hardt, 2004, p. 66).

As Choonara rightly observes, it is precisely the autonomous idea of emancipation from traditional work and breaking down of the particular close-knit social life of the traditional Fordist era that allows precarity to be thought of as a possibility for liberation as well as a matter of inequality and injustice (Choonara, 2020). This approach, which sees precarity not as "a problem to be solved but a state to be embraced and radicalized" (Choonara, 2020, p. 431), may otherwise fall into the clutches of a conservative policy that seeks to return to Fordism, seen as the "golden

age” of capitalism (Mitropoulos, 2011); therefore precarity should be considered “simultaneously a new system of exploitation and a practice of liberation from the previous system of exploitation” (Papadopoulos, 2017, p. 138).

We can say that Tronti’s – one of the main theorists of *operaismo* – concepts of social factory, social worker and social capital lie at the root of these autonomist ideas (Tronti 1973, 2019). The following sentence seems to sum up his thesis: “The social character of production has extended to such a point that the entire society now functions as a moment of production. The sociality of capitalist production can now entail a particular form of the socialisation of capital – the social organisation of capitalist production” (Tronti, 2019). According to this, post-Fordism replaces Fordism’s “mass worker” with the “socialized worker” (which will later become the “immaterial laborer” in Negri (Polhill, 2009)); in other words, society has become a “social factory” or “factory without walls”. The whole society came under the sway of the logic of capital. Or rather, with Negri’s own words, it “occupies the whole of society and permeates all of its pores” (Negri, 1989, p. 59). Romano Alquati, another important thinker like Tronti, emphasizes this as follows: “And it is even true that there is not one aspect of the ‘social life’ of the city that is not a moment of the ‘factory’, understood in the Leninist sense of a ‘social relation of production’” (Alquati, 1975, p. 230; as cited in, Wright, 2002, p. 80). Therefore, precarity can be a moment of emancipation precisely in the sense of getting rid of the workerization, work and wage labor, where the capitalist virus begin to spread and transmit to the whole life beyond work.

In this respect, the political struggle to be waged around work for the autonomists is not for more work and employment, the promotion of union rights (wages and working hours), on the contrary, it is for the refusal of work; “they call not a liberation of work, but for a liberation from work” (Weeks, 2005, p. 120). But this refusal is understood as a blow to the heart of the capitalist mode of production rather than a cynical, passive act, so to speak; it is not an act that takes place only in one sphere of capitalism; it targets the entire capitalist society (Negri, 1979). This practice of refusing, which Weeks call “hedonist Marxism” with reference to Kolakowski’s use in a pejorative sense for LaFargue, refers to “our propensity to want more – more time, freedom, and pleasure” and “a vision of life no longer organized primarily around work. (...) [I]t

challenges us to consider the rich possibilities of living in the times and spaces of nonwork” (Weeks, 2005, p. 133). In this regard, work (social factory and social worker) for autonomists signifies the subsumption “by which previously autonomous labor becomes integrated into the cycle of capitalist production as a social relation. Once complete, it signifies a process of ‘internal colonisation’” (Helms, 2011, p. 39), so much so that this leads to the colonization of life. It is precisely in the sense of getting rid of wage labor that colonizes life as a totalitarian way that the autonomists’ eulogy of precariousness takes on a political meaning.

Another concept that autonomists put forward in parallel with these claims is the concept of immaterial labor. For the autonomists, the colonization of life by work, the disappearance of the distinction between work and leisure cannot be understood without this transformation in labor categories. Roughly speaking, with the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, a qualitative transformation has taken place in the form of labor, and with this transformation, the immaterial linguistic, affective, communicative, cognitive dimensions of labor have become hegemonic in the production process. Negri and Hardt define immaterial labor as labor “produces immaterial products, such as information, knowledge, ideas, images, relationships, and affects” (2004, p. 65) and claim that its “contractual and material conditions that tend to spread to the entire labor market are making the position of labor in general more precarious” (2004, p. 66). Lazzarato (1996) refers to two dimensions of the concept. While the “informational content” of the concept refers to the new abilities of the worker that are valued and come to the fore due to computerization in the production process, “cultural content” refers to activities that do not correspond to standard work as we know it, in other words, activities that could be defined as “unproductive labor” in the past now belong to the production sphere. Adapting these unproductive activities to the production sphere naturally blurs the distinction between work and leisure, “extends the working day indefinitely to fill all of life” (Negri & Hardt, 2004, p. 66). Within this context, concepts such as the social factory and social worker developed by the autonomists point to the new social relations shaped by this new form of labor that transform society as a whole. In fact, the conceptualization of immaterial labor is highly disputable. There are many criticisms within Marxism regarding the functionality of the concept. However, it should be noted that the hegemony of the

immaterial labor does not mean that, as Negri and Hardt clearly stated:

[T]here is no more industrial working class whose calloused hands toil with machines or that there are no more agricultural workers who till the soil. It does not even mean that the numbers of such workers have decreased globally. In fact, workers involved primarily in immaterial production are a small minority of the global whole. What it means, rather, is that the qualities and characteristics of immaterial production are tending to transform the other forms of labor and indeed society as a whole (2004, p. 65).

It would therefore be wrong, both theoretically and empirically, to say that immaterial labor replaces material labor. In this regard, I think it would be more fruitful to consider immaterial labor as biopolitical rather than dismissing it as a category of labor that proclaims the end of material labor. As Negri said:

Immaterial labor is biopolitical in that it is oriented toward the creation of forms of social life; such labor, then, tends no longer to be limited to the economic but also becomes immediately a social, cultural, and political force. Ultimately, in philosophical terms, the production involved here is the production of subjectivity, the creation and reproduction of new subjectivities in society. Who we are, how we view the world, how we interact with each other are all created through this social, biopolitical production (Negri & Hardt, 2004, p. 66).

We should rather say that immaterial labor is a contemporary concept (as we will see in more detail later when we discuss the real subsumption), which facilitates the exploitation of material labor and the production of surplus value, enabling us to take into account the production of subjectivity as well as economic production in these processes. In this regard, as Berardi said, contemporary capitalism which he names it as semiocapitalism “takes the mind, language and creativity as its primary tools for the production of value” (2009, p. 21), that is, it puts “the soul at work”. What is significant here is that this semio-, bio-, cognitive or affective capitalism makes the social subjugation, the production of subjectivity “appropriated by the capital, at the very moment in which the subject worker is freely involved in the valorization process” (Fumagalli, 2015, p. 237) an integral part of the production of surplus value.

While some of the definitions given here tend to see precarity/precariousness and uncertainty only as an economic phenomenon related to work and employment, others tend to see it as a human condition inherent in life on the ontological plane or as a condition of modernity. In this thesis, on the other hand, I propose to think of precarity

rather as a mode of subjectivity that develops at the intersection of an ontological-existential experience of life and economic conditions created by the capitalist relations of production. Therefore, it is a way of life, a mode of existence created by the capitalist relations of production. It also possesses a temporality, and we can argue that it is this temporal uncertainty and insecurity in life that gives precariousness its color.

2.2.2.2.4.2. Precarity as an Affective Experience: Precarious Subjectivity and Flexible Temporality

The configuration of work at the beginning of the 20th century, as we saw, produced a specific form of subjectivity, the set of linguistic, affective, cognitive faculties, attitudes and potentials that characterizes individual and collective life. The institutional and political compromise between labor and capital, embodied in the standard working day, was based on the scientific, systematic regulation of work and the working day, as well as the time left from work, wages and consumption practices, as we saw before; hence the subjectivity that took the form of a docile and functional subject under the regime of Taylorist work organization and Fordist society.

With the post-Fordist break, what is worthwhile is now the capacity to incorporate social and subjective values into production – affects, creativity, relationships, language (Virno, 2002). But the overcoming of the hegemony of Taylorist work regime by contemporary work leads to personal overexposure and the transfer of responsibility to the individual. It can be said that when capital cannot transform itself into a human being, it transforms humans into capital (e.g., Becker, 1993). Subjectivity is then recomposed in the Foucauldian figure of the “entrepreneur of himself” (Foucault, 2008, p. 226). This subject no longer only sells his labor power but invests his own human capitals (attitudes, faculties, affect, experiences, knowledge, affiliations) in order to derive an income from them, thus putting his own social existence into play. Such subjectivity, ideal-typical subjective form of neoliberalism, governs his/her own life as he/she would govern a business with its risks and responsibilities. He/she watches over her employability, instead of relying on the guarantee of stable employment. In this way, “human capital crystallizes the neoliberal strategy both by shaping individuals into the form of an enterprise and, in doing so,

radically expanding economic rationality across all areas of social existence” (Bowsher, 2019, p. 4).

The biopolitical dimension of this transformation does not abolish the classical devices of discipline but increases the intensity and persistence of these classical devices on the subjectivities of the worker. In other words, application of the biopolitical devices, which are capable of governing and surveilling ever more effectively the lives of individuals, in the sphere of work leads to an obscure invasion in every moment of life in order to extract surplus value. This situation forces the employees with all their affects, hopes and fears, cognitive abilities, and autonomy, in short, with all their subjectivities to adapt to the imperative of flexibility.

This subjective figure is exposed to very dangerous, insidious managerial codes and mottos. For example, the mottos “love what you do, do what you love” or “if you do what you love, you will never work a day in your life” that touch the feelings of many people today, function as an affective motto. This affective operation not only defines the subjectivity at work as the realization of individual pleasure and autonomy, but also makes it easier to endure the deteriorating working conditions. This paradigm equates life with work by celebrating work itself, preaching that work itself is a virtue, a source of fulfillment (Jaffe, 2021).

This discourse hides the mechanisms of flexibility and precarity which can be seen as paradigmatic instruments of capitalism. Their main function consists in the expropriation of personal plasticity, that is to say, of subjectivity. This discourse promotes flexibility as autonomy and liberation from the routine and from a predictable, planned life course. However, establishing an equality between flexibility and subjective freedom is a controversial issue. The new organization of work in reality implies a subjectivity bound to comply with changes in the market.

Today, work is becoming more and more precarious because of the organizational transformations and its subsequent psychological/affective impacts on individuals and their subjectivity. Precarity and uncertainty is indeed an instrument of domination and management: flexibility, risk, stress, time pressure, intensification of work, uncertainty, continuous surveilling, the requirement for adaptability, etc. are all factors that cause the working conditions to deteriorate and almost completely encompass the

process of subjectivation. Aspects previously confined to private life, such as affects, attention, health, tastes, attitudes, etc., are increasingly mobilized in the sphere of work. We talk more and more often about the important consequences of precariousness associated with new working conditions on the general well-being of individuals. Therefore, it can be easily argued that work, in its current flexible and precarious form, makes life uncertain and unpredictable for millions of people.

However, it is necessary to point out the difference between “precarious subjectivity” and the “subjective experience of precariousness”. Precarity is, of course, a matter of subjective experience. Its effects may vary from person to person; it can produce different effects for everyone. This is related to the subjective experience of precarity. Precarity and uncertainty have of course different effects in terms of class, gender, age, etc. As various empirical studies in the literature have shown us, precarity may not be bad in every situation; some individuals can embrace uncertainty and flexible working times. But what I mean by precarious subjectivity is an individual and social mode of life created by the economic relations of production and, in turn, by the work and employment regime; the affective tone that gives color to *zeitgeist*; the fundamental form that the temporality of life takes; the general way in which the social relationship with the past-present-future is comprehended and experienced. In this respect, by precarious subjectivity, I mean an experience that goes beyond work time and space; I mean a life experience. I am using the concept of “subjectivity” in the sense of the mode that life and its temporality take within the form of the current contemporary capitalist relationship, the basic mode of existence that it creates. Thus, investigating the subjective experience of precarity should also be considered as the first step towards understanding what I call precarious subjectivity.

Regarding this, another problem is deciding what precarity is. In other words, whether one should look at the subjective experience, official/legal definitions, social protection, wages or working hours in understanding precarity. How can we decide whether a person is precarious? According to Barbier (2011), occupying a job qualified officially as “precarious”, “atypical”, “non-standard” is not sufficient to qualify someone as “precarious”. Occupying of this sort of job must be analyzed regarding the life trajectory of individuals. The official definition of jobs does not allow us to distinguish those who would be precarious because they hold so-called precarious jobs

or those who would be secured because they occupy stable, standard jobs. This point was taken up by Paugam (2007). In order to better understand the diversity of situations covered by the notion of precariousness, he advocates the distinction between “work insecurity” and “employment insecurity”. Indeed, we cannot say that all people with precarious employment status consider themselves dissatisfied with their work or that all people in stable employment are satisfied with it. Paugam (2008) therefore defines four types of integration which intersect the dimension of work insecurity and employment insecurity: “ensured integration” is fulfilled when a worker experiences satisfaction at work as well as the stability of employment; “uncertain integration” is characterized by satisfaction at work but instability at employment; “laborious integration” is characterized by dissatisfaction at work and stability of employment; and, “disqualifying integration” is defined by dissatisfaction at work and employment instability.

Like Paugam, Vosko (2010) describes two different meanings of precarious employment. According to the first, precarious employment describes non-standard, contingent, atypical employment forms based on the distinction between standard and non-standard jobs that we mentioned before. In this approach, precarity is defined through some deficiencies in employment relations. In the second approach, precarity is defined not only as one-dimensionally, through the deficiencies in employment processes, but also in a way that includes many different forms and situations of precarity in employment relations shaped by:

[T]he relationship between employment status (i.e., self- or paid employment), form of employment (e.g. temporary or permanent, part-time or full-time), and dimensions of labor market insecurity, as well as social context (e.g. occupation, industry, and geography) and social location (or the interaction between social relations, such as gender, and legal and political categories, such as citizenship) (Vosko, 2010, p. 2).

These distinctions, I think, allows us to distinguish between precarity *in* employment and precarity *of* employment. Roughly speaking, even if precarity in employment is limited to working time and place, precarity of employment removes the distinction between working and free time and spreads uncertainty and insecurity non-working areas as well. In order to bring to light the problems that the approaches of precarity, which perceive it as one-sided, ignore or find difficult to detect, we should note that

the employment insecurity and instability is not limited to the working sphere alone. Although precarity stems from flexible and unsecure work and employment regime, it is not limited to working sphere and spreads to the non-working spheres as well. The private sphere can provide a protection against professional insecurity, just as it can, on the contrary, turn into a source of problems as a result of insecurity and uncertainty in professional sphere. First of all, job insecurity, through the irregularity and/or low income, requires rigorous financial and psychological/affective management at the risk of falling into poverty. The time and energy involved in this management – not to mention the worry that results from uncomfortable financial situations – are taken from free time which is then not devoted to rest or leisure. Job insecurity also necessitates self-development and taking steps in the non-working sphere in order to find a new/more secure job, to be promoted or not to be dismissed. These steps, which are costly in terms of time and energy, take place outside of paid working time but still constitute what can be called “work”. Job insecurity therefore also disrupts life outside of work if work is a source of concern, if the physical and/or moral fatigue that it causes prevents other activities, or if the suffering it generates leads to health problems linked to the anxiety of having to return to work. The private sphere can then become a sphere for the regulation and management of professional problems.

In this context, precarity is an affective phenomenon that is experienced subjectively, produces certain kinds of affects, and affects the ways of relating to life, beyond simply being a form of employment that is expressed in economic/legal categories. As we have shown, although it is an economic phenomenon that emerged as a result of flexibility in line with the neoliberal logic of accumulation, it does not remain limited to this, but produces certain kinds of politics, ethical attitudes, feelings, hopes and fears, dispositions and life strategies. In this sense, it can also be said that it is an “instrument of governing” (Lorey, 2015, p. 1), “a mode of domination of a new kind, based on the creation of a generalized and permanent state of insecurity aimed at forcing workers into submission, into the acceptance of exploitation” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 85), “significantly more than economic; it is structural in many senses and permeates the affective environment” (Berlant, 2011, p. 192).

As we have stated before, Bourdieu attributes this ethico-political state of incapability and fragility to the temporality created by precariousness to what we might call the

flexible or precarious temporality in which future and present times are paralyzed or halted by the fear stemming from uncertainty and insecurity. Similarly, according to also Papadopoulos, Stephenson and Tsianos, precarity is in fact “a form of exploitation which operates primarily on the level of time” (2008, p. 232), which is designated by some authors as “flexploitation” (Bourdieu, 1998; Gray, 2004; Ross, 2009). These authors’ conceptions draw our attention to the temporal dimension of precariousness both on the more or less chaotic and unstable progress of the professional career, on the uncertainty of the future, and on the unbalanced relationship between working and leisure times.

Firth and Robinson too emphasize the uncertain temporality arguing that “precarity inhibits ability to plan one’s time because of being on call, on a timeframe determined by external forces” (2013, p. 5). Here the temporal dimension describes the relationship that people in a precarious situation maintain over time, and more particularly to the future, being marked by a strong uncertainty. We find this characteristic of precariousness in many authors such as Bourdieu (1998) who argues that precariousness prevents any rational anticipation, Lorey (2018, p. 133) who argues that “precarization means dealing with the unforeseeable, with contingency, of acting without being able to predict what the near or distant future will bring”, Klenner who defined “precarity of life arrangement as an insecure and higher-risk condition, which encompasses not only destabilized the individual and family life, but also the loss of agency and the ability to make future plans” (2012, p. 218; as cited in, Motakef, 2019, p. 160), or Smith and McBride who argue that flexibility and uncertainty “diminish personal time sovereignty, which has deleterious temporal repercussion for work-life articulation” (2020, p. 273).

We see in these definitions that precarity, uncertainty and instability are accompanied by the idea of liminality. In this respect, precarious subjectivity indicates a liminal experience, a liminal period in which anything can happen any moment. This liminality, I think, arises first of all from “the melting down of the distinction between working- and life-time” which leads to “a process of assimilation between labor and life which generates a potential contradiction within the working subjectivity itself, creating idiosyncrasy and instability in the basic organization of individual lives” (Fumagalli & Morini, 2010, p. 239). As we discussed before, just as the notion of

standard working day has historically emerged with capitalism and took its shape as a result of social struggles, it seems that work-life balance also is a historical phenomenon derived from the standard working day. It is a fictitious balance which is once a standard but today disappearing. Therefore, it can be misleading to consider this as a balance. As Crompton stated, while “balance” refers to a kind of harmony, a norm between working- and life-time, the notion of “work-life articulation” refers to individual’s own practices and experiences in managing the relationship between working and non-working spheres of life (2006, p. 78).

In the establishment of the work-life articulation, the duration of the working hour is of course the main determinant. As many authors have pointed out, this relationship, which has a definite proportion in the standard working day, has now started to become unpredictable, uncertain, and flexible, mostly in favor of the employer, in today’s neoliberal working regime in which flexible working time has become the norm. This regime, in which the employer demands flexibility from the employee due to the volatility of the market, in which it is considered normal to work overtime, on holidays, and in some cases even at home after working, makes it impossible to talk about work-life balance. This relationship, which is clearly an unbalance, means the expansion of work to include non-working spheres. This unbalance between working- and life-time, “the shadow of work on free time” (1999, p. 34) as Supiot named it, makes it “increasingly difficult to distinguish leisure time from work time” so that “life becomes inseparable from work” (Lazzarato, 1996, p. 137).

According to Fumagalli and Morini, it is precisely the emergence of the form of labor they call “biolabor” (2010) in contemporary neoliberal, post-Fordist, flexible and lean mode of production and working regime that blurs the distinction between working-time and life-time. Biocapitalism, in which labor is “the ensemble of the vital-cerebral-physical faculties of human being” (2010, pp. 240-241), is characterized by the overcoming of the separations between working-time and life-time, between working-place and life-place, between production and reproduction, and among production, reproduction, circulation and consumption. According to this autonomist thesis too, it is not possible to talk about a liberal notion of work-life balance; rather, we can speak of life as a “social factory” whose temporality is governed by work, as we have stated before. However, it should also be noted that life-time did not come under the control

of working-time only in the neoliberal, post-Fordist era called biocapitalism (Fumagalli & Morini, 2010), cognitive capitalism (Vercellone, 2007), or semiocapitalism (Berardi, 2009). In other words, in the Fordist period too, in which the distinction between the two was based on a proportional standard, leisure time functioned as an extension of working time. As we discussed at the very beginning, capitalism has created its own social temporality by resolving the “immemorial” separation between necessity and freedom in favor of necessity, and by establishing the leisure time as the time left over from working time. But what characterizes the specificity of today is that, as this autonomist thesis claims, non-working life, the sphere of reproduction itself begins to become the sphere of production.

Since precariousness is a multidimensional and dynamic concept which can be experienced in various ways depending on the characteristics of a person’s situation and the personal and social resources, it then affects each person in a unique way, which lead us to take into consideration the subjective aspects of precariousness, the affective structure of precariousness, the perception that people have of their situation, the meaning they ascribe it. The subjective approaches to precariousness are concerned with the perception that people have of their situation and the meaning they ascribe to it. It seems important, I think, to specify in this regard that focusing on the subjective experience of precariousness does not mean accepting it as a singular, individual phenomenon, or making a judgment that “people prefer precariousness” based on a few individual cases. Considering this subjective dimension, we can question the objective indicators of precariousness and the relationship between objective conditions and needs, aspirations, expectations and/or other parameters of subjectivity. The subjective approach to precariousness also allows us to consider that the person in a precarious situation is not simply a passive victim of the conditions; he/she can mobilize resources in order to extricate himself/herself or to improve his/her situation.

It can be said that the underlying reason for different subjective experiences is having or lacking different resources. In other words, having or lacking some resources is the factor that determines the pattern of the experience of precarity and its subsequent symptoms. Approaches that ignore the fact that precarity is about having or lacking some (pecuniary and/or non-pecuniary) resources may fall into the error of generalizing or even “praising” precarity and the associated symptoms such as risk and

uncertainty (e.g., Chödrön, 2012; Dufourmantelle, 2019). However, as many authors have stated, the experience of precarity refers to a class experience in terms of having or lacking some resources. First of all, we often find that precariousness is characterized by a lack of material resources, such as social rights, benefits, and protections. According to Castel, the present-day insecurity, related to wage society and its crisis in the mid-1970's, arises from "the growing fragility of protective regulations which were implemented from the nineteenth century onwards in order to create a stable situation for workers: the right to work, extended social protection, coverage of social risks set up by the welfare state" (2000, p. 533). According to him, precariousness is characterized by lack of this sort of institutional protections. In this regard, it is above all the lack of security that characterizes precariousness. Standing (2011, p. 10) too defines seven forms of security related to work: "labor market security" concerns full employment policies; "employment security" refers to company regulations on hiring and dismissals (protections against unfair dismissals, for example); "job security" consists of promoting opportunities for development in terms of status and salary; "work security" is covered by protections concerning accidents and diseases. "Skills reproduction security" refers on the one hand to the possibility of gaining skills (internships, vocational training, etc.) and on the other hand to being able to use one's skills (risk of deskilling, particularly in precarious jobs); "income security" concerns the assurance of a stable income, the existence of a minimum wage, social security, the implementation of progressive taxes to reduce inequalities and increase the lowest wages; "representation security" refers to being able to be represented, to benefit from a common voice (independent unions, right to strike, etc.). According to him, precariousness is characterized by a lack or defect in one or more of these forms of security. It is important to consider precarity together with institutional protection measures because, as Shukaitis said, it is different to affirm precarity in a situation where there are social support mechanisms provided by the strong welfare state and to affirm it in the absence of these mechanisms (2012, p. 233).

In addition to social resources, the lack of personal resources and factors are also taken up by some authors such as Young (2010) who emphasizes the role of human capital investment and the gendered pattern of precarious employment, Nöbauer (2012) who

point out the role of “emotional capital” in coping with uncertainty and vulnerability, Macmillan and Shanahan (2021), Gray, et al., (2020) and Benach, et al., (2014) who emphasize the health problems (physical and psychological) associated with precarious situations, Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) who emphasize professional and personal skills, and Standing (2011) who explains that people in precarious situations lack the time and energy to deal with their situation. The experience of precarity that varies in severity and intensity depending on the availability of the social and personal resources, leads to great poverty and misery when it effects several areas of life and becomes permanent. But of course, this experience of poverty and misery is not the only experience of precarity; there are also those who have experienced it positively.

According to Méda and Vendramin (2017), the positive or negative effects of employment insecurity, the meaning attached to it depend on whether it is a preference or not. It is not when precarious employment constitutes the only way to sell labor power. According to this, it can be said that the inequalities created by job insecurity can be bearable if this situation is not perceived as an unchanging reality. The relationship with employment deteriorates when people cannot imagine a possible improvement in their situation over time. The fact of not being able to realize one’s professional aspirations can then be a source of devaluing oneself. Lack of economic independence can also increase the feeling of worthlessness and lead to internalize the negative judgments of society. When this becomes permanent (or is convinced that it is) it can undermine self-confidence and the sense of social utility. Or it can lead to frustration and anger: either by searching for the problem in oneself and getting angry with oneself individually, or in the form of anger directed at the social sphere. Anger can also arise from the inequalities and injustices created by neoliberal restructuring in the world of work. Far from improving the conditions of employability, the succession of precarious jobs forms chaotic paths on the job market, and also in the course of life, especially when people find themselves in an emergency to work which pushes them to accept any job. According to Standing (2011), this sense of humiliation people may feel in doing unrewarding work can disrupt self-image. Therefore, when we look at studies that deal with experiences of job insecurity from an affective perspective, we can notice a strong presence of, in a Spinozist sense, sad affects such as anxiety, fear, hopefulness etc. (Standing, 2011; The Institute for Precarious

Consciousness, 2014).

It is obvious that the negative effects of the employment insecurity lead to different consequences from one person to another. While for many it creates suffering, for others it is not perceived negatively and can be a source of fulfillment, especially for young people. Some authors (Furlong & Cartmel, 2007; Bertolini, Moiso & Unt, 2019; Domaneschi, 2019) show that flexible and temporary jobs are experienced as a positive process for young people who want to delay their transition to adulthood and to take advantage of their youth against uncertain future and risks. These youths do not pay much attention to uncertainty and insecurity, and focus on the positive aspects of precarious employment such as freedom or the possibility of having various experiences in different kind of jobs. These different experiences are lived in a positive way as they are perceived as constituting a transitional period before settling in a stable job, thus a stable life. Employment insecurity can also allow them to reconcile work with other personal activities. Discontinuity and flexibility can then become an element of self-construction which is affirmed by the rejection of the social normativity of work. On the other hand, precarious jobs also constitute a barrier against an even more worrisome future, that is, unemployment. As a means of integration, precarious jobs are used to escape from unemployment which is considered more dangerous. Considering what Graber (2018) said about “bullshit jobs”, it can be said that the negative disposition towards work in general, even a regular-permanent one, is precisely the consequence of the belief that these jobs are useless and unnecessary that leave no energy for the other spheres of life. However, there are authors who argue that these unnecessary jobs, even if they are “bullshit jobs”, are meaningful because they add purpose in people’s lives. Magdalena, Wood and Burchell (2021), for example, have shown that the positive relationship to work can also arise from the fact that the work, whatever its content or purpose, may allow to escape from idleness and from its deleterious psychological consequences and provides opportunities for socialization. It also makes it possible to give a rhythm to the days and the objectives to be reached. To the extent that the situation is not fixed, people can hope for an improvement in their condition over time, thus making their daily life more bearable.

These various elements allow us to approach the precariousness from a psycho-social/affective angle. Precariousness cannot be defined by a single criterion which

would be valid for everyone, at all times and in all places. We cannot say that one person with more resources than another would be in a less precarious situation if we do not take into account the environment in which this people live. It would be reductive to limit the definition of individuals in a precarious situation to their employment status. In addition, we have seen that the occupation of a job qualified as “precarious” does not necessarily lead to situations which one could be qualified as “precarious” to the extent that he/she can benefit from this new organization. This raises the question of measuring the feeling of precariousness as an indicator of precariousness. Here again, this variable is not simply individual, it must be contextualized, that is to say, inscribed in historical and social contexts which have participated in the development of new needs and new expectations regarding employment and work. The measurement of the feeling of precariousness would not therefore be sufficient on its own to define precarious individuals since there is, especially among young people, a tendency to trivialize precariousness even though it has no less significant consequences in their lives.

For this research, we can draw tentatively two conclusions that seem to characterize flexibility and precarious work: First, precarious work, characterized by temporal discontinuity, uncertainty, ruptures in lifetime, and constant adjustment tends to make professional and private life chaotic. It should be noted that the fact that work no longer fulfills the role it once had as the reference point in life also makes the distinction between working time and leisure time more and more ambiguous. Second, flexible precarious work makes the future uncertain since, on the one hand, the temporary term of the employment determined by the employment contract does not constitute a temporal reference point on which temporary workers can rely and, on the other hand, they have no guarantee of what will happen at the end of the employment process. Therefore, in this situation people tend to no longer follow socially structured life trajectories; they now have the responsibility of their careers individually by relying on the skills they have developed. Therefore, this temporality (we can call it flexible temporality) created by precariousness, the way people perceive the past, future and present, and the affects derived from these perceptions has a direct impact on life, subjectivity and the understanding of socio-political atmosphere of today. Jumping from the dimension of subjective experience of precariousness to the dimension of

precarious subjectivity, we can put forward a few hypothetical propositions and draw the contours of precarious subjectivity. We can begin with the criteria that Tsianos and Papadopoulos have put forward to describe the embodied experience of precarity:

(a) vulnerability: the steadily experience of flexibility without any form of protection; (b) hyperactivity: the imperative to accommodate constant availability; (c) simultaneity: the ability to handle at the same the different tempi and velocities of multiple activities; (d) recombination: the crossings between various networks, social spaces, and available resources; (e) post-sexuality: the other as dildo; (f) fluid intimacies: the bodily production of indeterminate gender relations; (g) restlessness: being exposed to and trying to cope with the overabundance of communication, cooperation and interactivity; (h) unsettledness: the continuous experience of mobility across different spaces and time lines; (i) affective exhaustion: emotional exploitation, or, emotion as an important element for the control of employability and multiple dependencies; (j) cunning: able to be deceitful, persistent, opportunistic, a trickster (2006).

Accordingly, precarious subjectivity is characterized, first of all, by asynchronicity. What describes precarity as an affective experience, is the failure in orientation from the present to the future, and the inability to act in the present. In this sense, the precarious subject lives in a liminal-time afflicted with uncertainty and insecurity. Thus, we can describe a precarious subject the one who is aware of the instability of his/her present and future but lacks the tools or vision to surpass and transform it. On the other hand, it can be said that the social basis of this inability is unorganization, individuality and the subsequent symptoms. This is due to the fact that unions and organizations do not know how to organize the new flexible and precarious forms of employment, as well as the negative view of the new generations towards union organization and their inclination towards solutions that individualize and psychologicalize the social. Of course, individuality and political impotence is not an individual flaw. In my opinion, it is rather an imposition of structural factors. The threat of unemployment and the competition between workers in precarious jobs to obtain a permanent position enables companies to employ more precarious workers. The intensification of work for people in precarious jobs leads also to the intensification of the work for people in permanent jobs. The coexistence of several statuses within the same workplace makes collective demands more complicated, on the one hand, because it diversifies the types of problems and, on the other hand, because temporary employees are very little unionized and can hardly participate in

strikes. Therefore, precarity, as we mentioned before, as an instrument of governing, a mode of domination, not only makes political cooperation difficult, but also supports individual solutions. With reference to Bourdieu, we can say that:

The existence of a large reserve army (...) helps to give all those in work the sense that they are in no way irreplaceable and that their work, their jobs are in some way a privilege, a fragile, threatened privilege. (...) Objective insecurity gives rise to a generalized subjective insecurity which is now affecting all workers (1998, pp. 82-82).

We can say that the precarious subject is, in the full sense of the word, an individual trying to solve his/her social problems in his/her personal space. Therefore, this brings us to the problem of the relationship between working time and leisure time. It seems that the most fundamental factor leading to precariousness as life experience today is that the work has lost its feature of being the reference point that it used to have, thus the feature of separating the sphere of necessity from sphere of leisure, so that the whole of life has become the sphere of working characterized by necessity. We have said that it would be more accurate to think that precarity is not unique to post-Fordism and neoliberalism, but an inherent logic of capitalism. Therefore, it may seem wrong to describe a precarious subjectivity peculiar to the contemporary period through the changing features of capitalism. But here I am arguing that even if precarity as a legal status is specific to post-Fordist period, it was inherent in capitalism from the very beginning as an experience of time, a way of relating with life, an affective subjectivity of those who have to sell their labor. Thus, what is unique to the present may be the emerging new components of this form of subjectivity in the process of real subsumption that dominates the present. And I think that these new components are due to the blurring of the boundary between working and free time, as a result of the production and circulation logic of capital.

2.2.3. Changing Affective and Temporal Regime of Capitalism from Formal Subsumption to Real Subsumption

In this section, we have tried to show the management and control techniques developed at the beginning and end of the 20th century, and the transformation that has taken place in labor relations and employment regime. We will now discuss this transition from Fordism-Taylorism to post-Fordism in the light of Marx's analysis of

formal and real subsumption that we discussed in the previous section.

It can be said that this transformation from Fordism to post-Fordism has emerged as the result of the attack of capital against the working class since the 1970s to divide and weaken the working class and thereby enabling capital to extract a greater amount of surplus-value. In this context, my main claim and observation regarding the labor relations and employment regime is that this transformation tends to include the whole of life into the logic of capital, by blurring the distinction between work life and leisure time, by disrupting the work-life balance in favor of capital and by including the sphere of reproduction into the sphere of production of surplus value.

As we saw it, Marx refers to the stage that capital uses the labor process as it is and has not yet shaped it according to its own needs as the formal subsumption of labor under capital. The term “formal” indicates that the dominance of capital has historically been limited to the level of social relations specific to this society. As soon as capital shapes the labor process in its own way, the stage of real subsumption begins. The term “real” means that capital goes beyond historically specific social relations and subsume labor in its relations to nature (Savran, 2014, pp. 126-127). As I showed before, Marx uses the concepts of formal and real subsumption to describe the different periods and mechanisms of the subordination of labor to capital in their historical succession. From a historical perspective, the formal subsumption corresponds to the period of pre-industrial capitalism, in which the exploitation of labor and its subsumption to capital developed on the basis of a pre-existing labor process:

Since handicraft skills is the foundation of manufacture, and since the mechanism of manufacture as a whole possesses no objective framework which would be independent of the workers themselves, capital is constantly compelled to wrestle with the insubordination of the workers (Marx, 1982, pp. 489-490).

Here we see that formal subsumption creates a structural transformation transforming the artisan-craftsman into the wage worker. In the process of real subsumption that started with the industrial revolution, knowledge and labor power are completely dispossessed by capital and integrated into constant capital. In this way, labor power is progressively reduced to the status of a living appendage of the machine, the status in which if it is “remains unsold, this is of no advantage to the worker” (1982, p. 277).

The process of the real subsumption takes place through various stages. Of course, these stages are not experienced in the same way in all countries, and it may not even be possible to distinguish these stages from each other in some of the countries that transitioned to capitalism late.²⁰ However, it is possible to distinguish these stages from each other in the historical development in Western Europe, where capitalism first appeared. The logical continuity between these two forms of subsumption is ensured by the centrality of the wage relationship. As Marx said:

Material wealth transforms itself into capital simply and solely because the worker sells his labor-power in order to live. The articles which are the material conditions of labor, i.e., the means of production, and the articles which are precondition of the survival of the worker himself, i.e., the means of subsistence, both become capital only because of the phenomenon of wage-labor. (...) Thus wage-labor, the wages system, is a social form of work indispensable to capitalist production, just as capital, i.e., potentiated value, is an indispensable social form which must be assumed by the material conditions of labor in order for the latter to be wage-labor (1982, p. 1006).

Of course, the logical continuity between the two forms of subsumption does not negate the fact that they were realized as a result of historical transformations. In this regard, we can periodize the stages of capitalism (pre-industrial, Fordism/Taylorism, post-Fordism/Toyotism), determined by the discontinuity in the forms of division of labor and the role of technology, although there is a continuity arising from the mode of production of capitalism. The first is characterized by a manufacturing-type division of labor and therefore by the preeminence of artisanal knowledge. It is in this context that capital formally subsume the entities that have developed outside of its inner dynamics. The second stage is the Fordist stage of industrial capitalism, in which the division of labor is of the Taylorist type and constitutes the real subsumption stage. At

²⁰ There are some authors who claim that it is wrong to think subsumption chronologically, that real subsumption and formal subsumption cannot coexist. Wilson, for example, argued that surplus value is often still produced through absolute surplus value within the form of formal subsumption, especially in developing or least developed countries (Wilson, 2019). For this reason, Tomba argues that:

Formal subsumption does not constitute a historical stage that precedes real subsumption, but denotes how to capitalist mode of production encounters and subsumes existing forms without creating a homogenous world. (...) The distinction between center and periphery, between the production of relative and absolute surplus value vanishes to the extent that periphery temporally and spatially coexists with the center, and vice versa. Similarly, as argued elsewhere (Tomba 2013a), the production of absolute surplus value is intertwined with that of relative surplus value. This coexistence of different times requires a new comprehension of the concept of formal subsumption. (Tomba, 2015, pp. 287-288)

this stage, the subsumption of labor under capital takes place through the subordination of the worker's living labor to dead labor objectified in machines (Savran, 2014, pp. 128-131).

Once capital brings together a certain number of wage workers under a roof due to the needs of production of surplus value, it has to bring some changes to the labor process it has inherited from the past. Working hours are systematized and lengthened; the breaks during working hours are limited and thus the continuity of the production process is ensured; productive activity begins to be observed and controlled. That is, from the very beginning the worker loses his independence in the working process, unlike before in crafting or agriculture. But the control of capital is always over the framework of productive activity. The act of production itself proceeds under the knowledge, planning and control of the worker. In this first phase, the benefits of having many workers collectively producing come into play, increasing the productivity of the production process.

However, capital establishes the division of labor. Unlike the social division of labor, the technical division of labor created by capitalism in the labor process is based on the fact that each worker undertakes only a very small section of an overall production process. Therefore, it breaks the unity of the design and implementation phases of the production activity. The decomposition of each of the production activities down to the smallest detail and then making each of them a task of a different worker is what defines the technical division of labor. Since this situation will push the worker to deal with the sub-activity assigned to him/her, it is not possible for the worker to participate in the planning of the whole process.

Savran argues that the peak of real subsumption is constituted by Taylorist labor process (Savran, 2014). Taylorism, which emerged at this stage and spread rapidly, can be thought of as the systematization of the real subsumption of labor under capital. "Time and motion studies" developed for the application of the principles of Taylorism that we mentioned in the previous sections enable the employer to analyze the processes applied by the worker while performing a job, by breaking them down into the smallest units. This ensures that each unit is given a period of time during which the normal worker is expected to make this job. And by recombining them, it allows

employer to determine the total time in which the job can be done. Once “job design” becomes the prerogative of the management, the planning and thus control of the job is completely detached from the worker and transferred to employer.

The role of machines in this process is essential, as Marx observed. Labor productivity increases rapidly in mechanized production. It is significant that the machine also determines working tempo of the worker and increases its speed, that is, it increases the labor intensity as well as the labor productivity. The worker must act in accordance with the tempo and rhythm of the machine whose working speed is determined outside of himself/herself, instead of performing operations in line with his/her own knowledge and preference during production. The worker has become an appendage of the machine and the capital. Thus, capital has taken over the labor process and has placed its real subsumption over labor. After this stage, the real subsumption is constantly intensified and consolidated. Taylorism is then the systematization and scientificization of all these steps brought by capital to the labor process. Taylorism is not a management technique applied by capital only to the industrial production. During the 20th century, the principles and methods of Taylorism gradually spread to all sectors. In this sense, Taylorism is important not only for the factory, but for all kinds of workplaces; not only for factory workers but also for all kinds of wage workers. In other words, Taylorism, which emerged as a labor process, also produced a corresponding form of social life and work-life balance (that is, “normal working day”).

The history of the labor process and of the relation between capital and worker within this process is thoroughly the history of the establishment of real subsumption. Of course, this is not a one-sided and non-contradictory relation in which capital pursue its interest without any hindrance. All this takes place within the class struggle. The worker, individually and/or collectively, always tries to impose limits on the control of capital and to find lines of flight. The struggles around the working hour, which Marx describes at length in *Capital*, point to this reality. The struggles around the demand of shorter working day are precisely the struggles against the real subsumption of labor under capital. Because, as Booth said by recasting Marx’s claim, “time was taken from one class in order to provide it to another; that is, the leisure of the latter rested on the bound time of the former” (1991, p. 10).

In this respect, the struggle over time (the relationship between leisure-working time, work-life articulation) is always a subject of the class struggle. Relative surplus value, which is the mode of producing surplus value specific to real subsumption,²¹ is the result of this temporal management and discipline of capitalism. Taylorism, which corresponds to Fordism's work regime, is the stage of capitalism that take the real subsumption of labor under capital one step further with its "scientific methods" aimed at disciplining time and space.

As we stated before, Fordism was not simply a system of mass production, but also a new mass way of life, a mode of living, as Gramsci stated, based on "psycho-physical equilibrium" which includes managing people's affects, desires, perceptions of time, future expectations and hopes etc. In this regard, "the new modes of work are inseparable from a specific mode of living and of thinking and feeling life" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 302). In this sense, according to Gramsci, Fordism was a collective effort to produce a new model of man and worker, at an unprecedented scale and speed in history. In fact, this Fordist effort, which intervenes in the private life of the workers, appoints inspectors who can be involved in every aspect of the daily life of the workers from alcohol consumption to sexual life, to consumption habits, monitors where the workers spend their wages, was a part of the "totalitarian" affective mechanism. As the head of the Ford factory's employee relations office put it exaggeratingly, Ford's main business was not producing cars, the main business was the making of men (Muehlebach & Shoshan, 2012). In this respect, Fordism tried to establish an affective regime, a normatively "good life" by colonizing both working time and leisure time.

The works of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer also emphasized this point. As we mentioned at the very beginning when we were discussing time and the organization of work in capitalism, "leisure" as a genuine space and time of freedom in ancient Greece has been replaced by "free" or "spare time" with capitalist modernity. This free or spare time, unlike leisure, is not a genuine space and time of freedom, but simply time left from working time. Free time, which is perceived by people as outside of the working time and of the realm of necessity, as Adorno stated,

²¹ It may not be correct to separate relative surplus value from absolute surplus value in this way; both can be functional at the same time. See. Previous footnote.

is in fact:

[S]haped by the very same forces which people are seeking to escape in their hours without work. (...) '[F]ree time' is tending toward its own opposite, and is becoming a parody of itself. Thus unfreedom is gradually annexing 'free time', and the majority of unfree people are as unaware of this process as they are of the unfreedom itself (2001, p. 188).

This colonization of leisure time was realized by leisure and consumption activities: the entire cultural industry is now subject to the rhythm of the standardizing order of Fordism. Therefore, according to Horkheimer and Adorno, this "annexation" creates a cage-like mass culture, transforming both the sphere of necessity through working relations and the sphere of leisure through the culture industry into the sphere of unfreedom. But the point is that this Fordist imposition happens without any resistance, and "derived from the needs of consumers" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 95). Therefore, it can be argued that "Fordism was an affect factory organizing women, men, and children into a new 'econometrics of feelings'" (Muehlebach & Shoshan, 2012, p. 322).

On the other hand, the Fordist project was temporal as well as affective. In other words, the Fordist project not only aroused a common pathos, but also created a common perception of temporality. If we compare it with our flexible and precarious conditions, we can say that this temporality was more stable and more structured. As Castel stated, "in salaried [Fordist] society, the anticipation of a better future is written into the very structure of the present" (Castel, 1996, p. 343-344; as cited in Muehlebach & Shoshan, 2012, p. 333). In other words, this Fordist temporality and anticipation, due to having both relatively stable and standardized work and employment relations, and a predictable career and a life cycle, corresponded to a social life different from today's non-linear temporality.

Thus, we can say that the affective regime of Fordism was based on a certain kind of temporal and affective configuration of the relationship between working time and leisure time, between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom. "The consummation of desire in commodified pleasure" (Muehlebach & Shoshan, 2012, p. 334) determined the affective character of the social temporality produced by the Fordist relation of labor.

The phenomenon that started to spread all over the world after the crisis of Fordism, called Toyotism, flexible manufacturing system, lean production or, to cover all of them, neoliberalism, likewise means removing some of the obstacles to production of surplus value, strengthening capital's control over labor, increasing labor productivity and intensity, thereby reducing costs and wages, increasing the amount of surplus labor and thus consolidating the real subsumption of the labor under capital a little more.

Flexible production as we discussed earlier, consisted of some principles put in place to further adapt the labor process to the requirements of surplus value production. In this regard, flexible production can be described as the search for a solution to the obstacles and contradictions (such as the wasted time, slowdown etc.) of the labor process applied in the Fordist period in front of the production of a larger amount of surplus value. As Savran pointed out, a report written for the US Department of Transportation to explain the lean and flexible production system, that is Toyotism, implemented in Japan shows that the main purpose of this system is to provide temporal-spatial discipline and control over the worker and to increase the relative-absolute surplus value: "One of the main goals of quality circles in Japan is to achieve the goal of each worker working a full 60 minutes per hour" (as cited in, Savran, 2014, p. 139). We see a similar statement in Taiichi Ohno's writings, the inventor of Toyotism:

If we consider real work as just the work that needs to be done and the rest as a waste, we obtain an equation applicable to either a single worker or the entire production line: Available capacity = work + waste. A real increase in efficiency happens when we reduce wastes to zero and increase work to 100% (as cited in, Savran, 2014, p. 139).

Also, the just-in-time principle of flexible and lean production, which we have mentioned above, seems to be the principle of increasing the relative surplus value as much as possible, as if capitalism establishes its own time as a huge, eternal present without a past and a future. If it is true that capitalism produces its own temporality, this temporally indeed requires that the duration of capital's valorization process (M-C-M') be as short as possible. "The impossible dream of capital", as Casarino said, "has been always to have production and circulation in no time and without time, that is, to disengage production from time" (2008, p. 226). And in this respect, the just-in-time principle of flexible and lean production appears as the last stage of this temporal

thrust of the capital.

We can consider the principle of “continuous improvement” which the Japanese call *Kaizen*, as the form of pressure created by this temporal thrust of capital, time-space compression in working life. *Kaizen* precisely means that the pressure to generate surplus value will be constantly increased to achieve a higher labor intensity at every moment. This concept, which is frequently used by the discourse of “personal development/self-improvement” (e.g. Maurer, 2013) today, is also a sign that the labor discipline has gone beyond the working place and time. Thus, capital not only eliminates dead time, but also creates new “living time” that harnessed to the production of surplus value - which means that the boundary between leisure and working time is blurred. As Savran pointed out:

The fact that the worker, unlike the petty bourgeois, is limited to the working time is fully consistent with the fact that labor power is a commodity sold temporarily, and this time is limited by the employment contract. The capitalist can use the physical and mental capacity of the worker only during the working period. Or he could! Lean production brings a change in the traditional relationship with the system of quality circles at this point. To the extent that this system causes the worker to think about in his spare time how productive activity can be carried out in the workplace, makes the working time of at least the mental capacity of the worker unlimited, transforming the leisure time into time spent for the capitalist. By identifying his/her own interest and need with that of the capitalist, the worker voluntarily devotes his spare time to thinking about methods of increasing the productivity and intensity of labor. This is the most dangerous aspect of quality circles: they are the means of conquering the soul of the worker! (2014, p. 147)

In this respect, it is obvious that the just-in-time and *Kaizen* principles are not only a way of reducing cost and increasing productivity, but also a method by which capital manages and discipline the worker and extracts more surplus value from him/her.

It is an obvious fact that lean and flexible production brings flexibility, that is precarity, in employment regime through distinctions such as peripheral/core workers, permanent/insecure/subcontracted employment etc. It can be said that the flexible production we discussed before and its precarious labor process as an employment regime is the fundamental parameters of life characterizing the post-Fordism and giving its color. Within this context, many authors discuss how the process of flexibility in work relations and the process of precarization, which goes hand in hand

with it, has become the standard of working life in contemporary society, and what kind of social effects precarity produces in both working and non-working spheres of life.

In this regard, I think Deleuze's contribution to Foucault's analysis of "disciplinary society" may help us to understand the "new" society created by the new relations of production. In a very short but subtle text, Deleuze (1992) put forward the idea that the contemporary societies are no longer "disciplinary societies", like the societies of the 19th and 20th centuries analyzed by Foucault, but "societies of control" which function no longer by confinement but by continuous control and instantaneous communication. The society characterized by Fordist employment regime which, I think, corresponds to disciplinary society in Deleuze's analysis, are distinguished by their organization of spaces of enclosure. According to Deleuze, in these societies:

The individual never ceases passing from one closed environment to another, each having its own laws: first, the family; then the school ("you are no longer in your family"); then the barracks ("you are no longer at school"); then the factory; from time to time the hospital; possibly the prison (1992: 3).

But Deleuze argues that these institutions of enclosure are in a crisis today and this crisis leads to replacement of the "disciplinary society" with "society of control". In society of control, the individual is now the subject of continuous, flexible control mechanisms penetrating like a web. In other words, the discipline which is limited to the space of education (school), health (hospital), production (factory) etc. is now extended beyond these institutions. For example, we may think that the medical attitude, the medical discourse is now spreading to the whole life, that the motto of "being healthy" works in all areas of life, or that we now have many ways of educating ourselves instead of just being educated at school. It is like, so to speak, the "little" doctors and teachers speaking in our minds are constantly telling us to "be healthy", "improve yourself".

Deleuze was pointing to a crucial phenomenon for understanding the new world. According to him, something has changed obviously over the past thirty years in the way of exercising power. In the new social structure, the discipline is no longer decisive. All the institutions analyzed by Foucault (the school, the hospital, the barracks, the factory – perhaps the only exception is prison) have been profoundly

transformed, by abandoning the disciplinary practices of traditional subjugation and by constituting themselves into decentralized “rhizomatic” domains of power. It is also true that surveillance is still an important part of the reality of neoliberal, post-Fordist capitalism. For example, increased flexibility in companies, as we seen, has often been accompanied by tighter labor controls. At the same time, this Deleuzian diagnosis remains very vague. On the one hand, it oversimplifies the complexity of the disciplinary world, as if the society of control had succeeded completely the disciplinary society. On the other hand, it can be argued that “control” in the form of “panoptic” surveillance, already existed in the 19th century. Therefore, it would be much more accurate to argue that discipline and control, far from being in opposition, have always gone hand in hand. Moreover, although this analysis of Deleuze sheds light on the functioning of power techniques in today’s power relations, it does not say much about the production of individuality and subjectivity. The idea that contemporary individuals are no longer disciplined but only controlled does not explain the ways in which these individuals are produced. Deleuze is certainly right to point to the disappearance of disciplinary techniques (perhaps at least in the most developed countries, because, on a global scale, they are obviously rather developing); he is also right to stress the maintenance, even the increase, of surveillance in rhizomatic forms. But all this does not imply that our societies are simply reducible to “societies of control”. His analysis of the contemporary world is limited and dispenses with an analysis of modes of individuation. It is therefore much more appropriate for us to go beyond his point, by restating the question that Foucault posed for our society: How and through which techniques are individuals – individually and collectively – produced? What does this tell us about the new ways in which power and domination operate in the transition from Fordist “disciplinary” capitalism to post-Fordist flexible “control” capitalism?

It seems that this transition implies the development of more flexible forms that make the productive forces – the labor-power – subject to the logic of capital. If we accept that “flexibility”, which is praised by some authors and considered as worker-friendly, is actually capitalists’ freedom and flexibility to intervene in working and employment conditions of workers as they wish, then we understand that what Deleuze refers to as “control” means that the worker is now subject to physically, affectively and mentally

capital's control mechanisms outside of working time and place.

On the other hand, also according to Beck who describes this period characterized by uncertainty and insecurity with the concept of “risk society” (1992), the boundaries between working and non-working spheres become blurred. While the institutions of the social welfare state are disintegrating, wage labor is placed in a precarious and uncertain, risky position in life. In this regard, it can be said that those who are dependent on wages for their survival are exposed to more instability with the abolition of regular working life. This situation leads to an increase in insecurity and therefore risk perception in terms of employees. This is a situation that increases the insecurity, thus the risk perception for the employees in their life. This means that with the change in the standard structure of work, workers are deprived of their ability to have control over their temporality and spatiality. We can say that individualization is both the cause and the result of this deprivation. Because one of the most important factors that characterizes the risk society is the “individualization of social risks” and the ways of dealing with them:

The result is that social problems are increasingly perceived in terms of psychological dispositions: as persona inadequacies, guilt feelings, anxieties, conflicts, and neuroses. There emerges, paradoxically, a new immediacy of individual and society, a direct relation between crisis and sickness. Social crises appear as individual crises, which are no longer (or are only very indirectly) perceived in terms of their rootedness in the social realm. This is one of the explanations for the current revival of interest in psychology (Beck, 1992, p. 100).

Beck also states that the individualism that emerged in late modernity is different from the bourgeois individualism of the 18th and 19th centuries (1992, p. 93). While the bourgeois individualism was a product of capital accumulation and private property, and the struggle against feudal domination, individualism in late modernity is a product of the precarious and flexible form of the labor market. Therefore, we can say that, rather than a political individualism, it is an apolitical individualism created by capitalist relations of production, which isolated individuals are exposed to and cannot be overcome to the extent that they remain isolated. In other words, this is a “negative individuality” (2003, p. 6), as Castel calls it, and it creates a society characterized by a negative solidarity. Negative solidarity, which means internalization of the conditions of flexibility, precarity, and isolated neoliberal individualism can be

described as follows:

[M]ore than mere indifference to worker agitations – it is the fostering of an aggressively enraged sense of injustice, committed to the idea that, because I must endure increasingly austere working conditions (wage freezes, loss of benefits, a declining pension pot), then everyone else must as well (Srnicek & Williams, 2015, p. 20).

Considering together with Beck's analysis of the "risk society", negative solidarity and individuality point to the very condition of the individual living in the grip of risks, dangers, and uncertainty in the contemporary society. According to Sennett (1998), what we call here "negative solidarity" and "individuality" advanced in the flexible society created by flexible capitalism. Sennett narrates a life story which is worth summarizing here insofar as it sheds light on our discussion of flexible temporality and precarious subjectivity. For Rico, a son of Italian immigrants, life started well. Unlike his parents, who arrived in the US without qualifications and who have always remained locked in their social environment, Rico studied and then married a young Protestant girl from a higher class. However, after a promising start in a large company, he found himself laid off following a reduction in staff. First, Rico embraced this with joy and confidence. He considered it as a chance and opportunity that would allow him to climb the career ladder even more quickly than if he had remained in a company. But soon, he was disappointed. Without integration into a constituted society, the management of his working time quickly became a serious problem. His daily and weekly rhythms, which he thought he could finally determine independently by himself, was in fact getting out of his control. He quickly realized that the management of his career was also going to be more complicated than he had thought. These difficulties then provoked anxiety in his life. At the end of the story, we understand that Rico and his wife are faced with a different image of life than the previous generation. In this image of life, they rejected the idea of taking a limited but determined path that was guaranteed to their parents, but they were also compelled to reluctantly accept that this refusal would turn the course of their lives into confrontation with gloomy and risky events.

According to this, the individual created by flexible capitalism is constantly under pressure to renovate himself/herself, to take risks and to increase his/her capacity to compete. Flexible capitalism, by undermining the prospect of a linear career and life-

course, establishes a life in which people are constantly swaying from one job to another and having to deal with the anxiety of that decision. The temporally myopic society of flexible capitalism, which does not allow long-term plans and goals, changes completely the character of work and employment regime. The temporal dimension of the new capitalist culture makes working relations temporary and precarious. Temporariness, motivation for constant change, avoidance of long-term relationships and goals are the facts that characterize social and individual life in the new capitalism. Therefore, this situation prevents establishing emotional intimacy with other people, taking a collective stand in the face of social problems, being in solidarity with colleagues etc.

But what is important here is that flexibility is no longer seen as a trouble to be avoided or dealt with, but as a virtue, because it is thought to provide freedom. And it can be argued that this “illusion of freedom” is one of the most important reasons for the success of the neoliberal discourse, whose motto in life and working relations is “become your own boss”, to establish its social hegemony. The key point here seems to be that flexibility has made the individual a “subject” in his/her life. In other words, it created a pseudo-autonomous subject that makes his/her own decisions and draws his/her way through his/her individual choices in the contingency of life. Indeed, as analyzes such as the risk society have shown, this has even made autonomy an obligation for the modern subject: the obligation to deal with the emerging risk and uncertainty in a life where all the previous certainties have dissolved. Flexibility precisely in this sense can also be understood as the individual’s liberation from all previous ties that bind his/her hands. In this sense we can say that being flexible in an uncertain life has become a virtue. However, flexibility is not a choice, not a free act, but rather an obligation imposed on us in the society created by the new relations of production and working regime. If we recall Foucault’s emphasis on the dual meaning of “subject”, we can say that flexibility is in fact nothing but the illusion (or, as Spinoza said, ignorance) – or, as Lafargue said, “a strange delusion, (...) the love of work, the furious passion for work, pushed even to the exhaustion of the vital force of the individual and his progeny” (1907, p. 9) – that we do what we are forced to do “freely”, “autonomously” in the society of precarity and uncertainty, and not seeing the underlying affective mechanisms.

2.2.3.1. Rearrangement of Labor in Platform Capitalism and its Impact on Work-Life Articulation

It can be argued that this discourse of autonomy, freedom, “be your own boss” has come to the fore much more in the current condition of work and employment arrangements with the technological development and digitalization. In this context, it would not be wrong to claim that the most significant factors affecting work and employment relations today are automation, computer, and robotic technology.²² In the last twenty years, there have been many important changes in work and employment relations, depending on the opportunities offered by technological developments: zero-hour contracts, gig economy, self-employment, remote work, platform work, sharing economy, “Uberization”, telecommuting, freelance contract etc. It seems that the gig economy and platform capitalism are developing trends. For example, the number of online platforms, which was 142 in 2010, increased to 777 in 2020 (ILO, 2021). Freelancers now make up 35 percent of the total workforce in the US, for example (FreelancersUnion, 2021). It is predicted by many that this type of form of work and employment will become more prevalent in the future decades (e.g. Deloitte, 2018).

As we saw, the wage society, thanks to social struggles which developed since the beginning of the 20th century, made wage employment a stable and protected status after the Second World War. However, this status is gradually being called into question following the development of the process of, what has been called by some authors, the “Uberisation” (Pennel, 2015; Scholz, 2017), “platform capitalism” (Srnicek, 2017; Jones, 2021; Woodcock, 2021) or “gig economy” (Prassl, 2018;

²² But under only one condition: not to take technology as an independent variable. It is true that technology changes and transforms life; in some cases, it can even be said that it makes our works easier. But we can argue that the reason behind all these technological and scientific developments (just like steam engine, or Taylor’s and Ohno’s “scientific” methods) is to remove the obstacles to the production of surplus value and to shorten the duration of capital’s valorization process as much as possible. First of all, technological developments (and its contemporary repercussions, digitalization and automation) are the result of capitalism’s thrust to maximize surplus value and ensure capital accumulation. As we showed before, this was achieved in two ways. To put it briefly again: (a) by increasing working hours and/or reducing wages (absolute surplus value), (b) reducing socially necessary labor time (relative surplus value). But, again, as we have seen, there was a limit to increasing working hours, because workers could not work until they died. Therefore, technology came into play right here: that is, to increase productivity, thus surplus value through scientific and technological developments and inventions, when it is not possible to exceed the absolute limits of the working day and workers body.

Ravenelle, 2019; Carby-Hall & Mendez, 2020; Woodcock & Graham, 2020; Schor, 2020; Duggan, McDonnell, Sherman & Carbery, 2022). What is unique about the functioning of platform capitalism is that workers not only sell their labor power, but also provide (at least part of) the means of production themselves. These means of production can sometimes be a computer, sometimes a bicycle and sometimes a car, depending on the platform's working area.

It is significant that this process, like the forms of work organization before it (Fordism/Taylorism and Toyotism), takes the name of a company: Uber. In fact, it is remarkable that Denis Pennel, managing director of World Employment Confederation predicted as early as 2015 that what he called "uberisation" will change working relations (Pennel, 2015). On the other hand, some call this process the "Amazonian era" (Gilbert & Thomas, 2021), pointing to the shortcomings of the concept of "Uberization". Others call it "cyber-Taylorism" (Conway, 2021), "digital Taylorism" (Parenti, 2001; Nyckel, 2020) or "Taylorism 4.0" (Spath, 2018) to point out that digitalization has brought a specific arrangement to work and employment relations, but that this is not a qualitative but a quantitative transformation, so they claim that labor relations in this period are just a digital version of the Taylorist work relations.

The gig economy can be defined by the hegemony of temporary and short-term employment, and also forms of self-employment platforms usually used by owners of the platform to keep themselves away from employees (Hughes & Southern, 2019). As Hughes and Southern stated, "it is here where advances in technology brought forward through the development of software programs have become allied with deregulated labor market structures and declining trade union right" (2019, p. 64). These platforms and software programs further reduces the power of workers over the work process and employment relations by promising "liberation" from work. This type of work which may seem positive at first glance as an additional income generating activity for independent contractors, carries the danger of making precarious, flexible and low-wage work mainstream. Owners of the platform do not employ employees, but "independent contractors" are themselves self-employed. The relationship between "employer" and "employee" is transformed, as it is replaced by a contract between two supposedly equal parties, in the absence of any relationship on

the institutional level. This status of independent contractor is often part of the official agreement signed by the workers. This is the case of, for example, Amazon Mechanical Turk:

Workers perform Task for Requesters in their personal capacity as an independent contractor and not as an employee of a Requester or Amazon Mechanical Turk or our affiliates. As a Worker, you agree that: (i) you are responsible for and will comply with all applicable laws and registration requirements, including those applicable to independent contractors and maximum working hours regulations; (ii) this Agreement does not create an association, joint venture, partnership, franchise, or employer/employee relationship between you and Requesters, or you and Amazon Mechanical Turk or our affiliates; (iii) you will not represent yourself as an employee or agent of a Requester or Amazon Mechanical Turk or our affiliates; (iv) you will not be entitled to any of the benefits that a Requester or Amazon Mechanical Turk or affiliates may make available to its employees, such as vacation pay, sick leave, and insurance programs, including group health insurance or retirement benefits; and (v) you are not eligible to recover worker's compensation benefits in the event of injury (Amazon Mechanical Turk, 2020).

The disappearance of the relationship of subordination, which could be synonymous with freedom, however, is experienced in many cases as strong precariousness of the independent contractors. By promoting the “digital work”, “microwork”, “crowdwork”, or “clickwork” (Graham, 2015; Webster, 2016; Berg, 2016), this transformation also leads to a shift in the boundaries of work which are becoming increasingly blurred. It might be the sign of a new transformation of capitalism, even of a fourth industrial revolution (Rainnie & Dean, 2019). Even if today platform work represents less than 1 percent of employment (OECD, 2018, p. 262), its strong acceleration certainly draws a strong trend in the evolution of employment for decades to come. This is partly a result of companies' need to adapt to uncertain economic conditions, that is, getting rid of redundancies such as fixed capital and wages in order to increase their profits and to be able to compete. Therefore, both employing flexible and precarious workers and enabling these workers to use their own means of production creates tremendous profitability for these companies.

So, what are the features of this new form of capitalism and its impacts on the work and employment relationships? While discussing platform capitalism, Srnicek first explains how capitalism got to this stage. He analyzes the strong post-war growth

period as an exceptional period in the history of capitalism. This exceptional period ended in the 1970s. Companies then began to search for a solution: “Capitalism, when a crisis hits, tends to be restructured. New technologies, new organizational forms, new modes of exploitation, new types of jobs, and new markets all emerge to create a new way of accumulating capital” (Srnicek, 2017, p. 18). The progress made in digital technologies helped to create new investment opportunities, both to modernize existing facilities and to develop new activities. Capitalism in the early 21st century refocused on extracting a new source of raw materials, that is, data. This led to the emergence of the platform which is a digital infrastructure allowing two or more groups to interact. Srnicek qualifies platforms like Uber and Airbnb as lean platforms. They are lean platforms because they have no assets. Uber owns no vehicles and Airbnb has no apartments. These lean platforms function as a “hyper-outsourced model, whereby workers are outsourced, fixed capital is outsourced, maintenance costs are outsourced, and training is outsourced. All that remains is a bare extractive minimum – control over the platform that enables a monopoly rent to be gained” (Srnicek, 2017, p. 35). These workers no longer enjoy the status of employees, but of entrepreneur or self-employed, freelance workers. What allows considerable savings for companies in terms of employment, in addition to wages, are also all the social costs linked to employment, such as holidays, sick leave or unemployment benefit.

It can be argued that the business model of Uberized platform companies puts pressure on the traditional economy by relinquishing many obligations incumbent on employers. The fact that companies free themselves from responsibilities means that some union rights are eroded. As studies for the US have shown, a taxi driver working for Uber earns less than a regular taxi driver when the vehicle and other expenses are subtracted (because those expenses are also their responsibility) – it should also be noted that assurances such as health and accident insurance are not provided by the employer (Molla, 2018). The activities of these platforms are fragmented by task, whether it is a car commute for Uber, rental accommodation for Airbnb or digital microworking for Amazon Mechanical Turk. The business model of many digital platforms is based on a system of subcontracting paid by the task in which companies taking no responsibility for the working conditions associated with these tasks. In this type of work, also known as crowdsourcing or crowdwork, a job that would normally

be performed by one or a few people is divided into many more parts and shared among a large number of freelancers. In this context, uberized platforms have very low marginal costs. The fact that platform companies recruit those who have to sell their labor as freelancers or independent contractors, not as employees anymore, and assigning the responsibility of the means of production to them, increases the surplus value production rate of the companies, and moreover, creates a monopoly in the market and the necessity for other companies to take a similar path. In this way, for example, Uber which was founded in 2009 became a company with a market cap of 76 billion dollars in 2021.

Platform companies, in general, either outsource the costs that companies used to provide, or delegate entirely to independent contractors. This is particularly the case with various operating and insurance costs. Self-employed status may give access to social insurance, but generally not to work-related accident insurance or unemployment insurance and sick leaves. Then, the question is, who bears the risk inherent in the work? Work accidents are not covered by the platforms due to the nature of the contracts, since, from a legal point of view, the platforms are confined to an intermediary status. Therefore, contrary to the so-called “freedom” narrative advocated by many, we should discuss the symptoms such as insecurity and low wages created by these forms of work and employment. Moreover, the promised qualities of these new developments such as reducing working hours, saving work from being drudgery, freeing people from the sphere of necessity and increasing leisure time are also controversial.

There has been published a great deal of work on the economic and social consequences of these developments in the last years. However, it gives rise to contrasting approaches. On the one hand there are authors who are more hopeful and consider it as an opportunity for freedom for both workers and consumers, arguing that digital economy promotes progress and collaborative sharing (e.g., Rifkin, 2014),²³ innovation and freedom (e.g., Benkler, 2006), and on the other hand, those who argue that it creates precarity (e.g., Fuchs, 2014; Scholz, 2017) for most of the workers, that some call them “cybertariat” (Huws, 2014), “digital worker” (Graham, 2015) or

²³ Rifkin even goes a step further, claiming that the “Internet of Things” and the “collaborative commons” are declaring the “eclipse of capitalism”.

“Foxconned labor” (Sandoval, 2015), with reference to Foxconn which is notorious for its awful working conditions (so much so that they had to install “suicide-prevention nets” so that the employees would not commit suicide in the factory building). Because these independent contractors in most cases have no social guaranty. In the context specific to the digital economy, the ILO underlines the importance of the issues linked to the transformation of labor relations and the degradation of social protections such as the minimum wage, retirement savings and health insurance.

In fact, when we look at the attitudes of organizations such as the World Bank and the ILO, we see that they generally approach the rise of automation, expansion of gig platforms positively, although they have some reservations.²⁴ They accept that new possibilities arise with the changing nature of work. But the most critical point they underline is that people have to adapt to it. “Through combinations of scaled up social protection, cognitive re-skilling and flexible labor regulation”, as Mallett stated, “a path forward is charted” (2020, p. 271).

Investing in human capital is the priority to make the most of this evolving economic opportunity. Three types of skills are increasingly important in labor markets: advanced cognitive skills such as complex problem-solving, sociobehavioral skills such as teamwork, and skill combinations that are predictive of adaptability such as reasoning and self-efficacy. Building these skills requires strong human capital foundations and lifelong learning. The foundations of human capital, created in early childhood, have thus become more important (World Bank, 2019, p. 3).

It is seen that the obligation to adapt to change is again placed on the “entrepreneurial individual”; it is expected from him/her to continuously increase his/her human capital. For example, the computer software industry, which has been widespread all over the world for a while, is a sign of this, I think. Being a software developer now makes it possible to find a job almost anywhere. In parallel with the development of the digital economy, adapting to this kind of digital works has become almost a necessity, especially for the younger generations. In fact, in Turkey, the Ministry of

²⁴ It should be noted that both organizations draw attention to the problems of low wages, poor working conditions, and insecurity. In fact, the ILO warns the World Bank to focus more on these issues and criticizes their reports *World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work* (ILO, 2018). However, we can say that both organizations are tendentially in a position to “embrace” new developments. But the ILO appears to be focusing more on social justice.

Treasury and Finance and the Ministry of National Education developed a joint project called “One Million Software Developers”. While the ILO and the World Bank are aware of the danger of flexibility and insecurity, they still claim that all these platforms, gig economy, remote work, crowdsourcing applications we mentioned will actually enable people who could not enter the labor market – especially in underdeveloped countries – to enter the labor market:

The rise of platform marketplaces allows the effects of technology to reach more people quickly than ever before. Individuals and firms need only a broadband connection to trade goods and services on online platforms. This “scale without mass” brings economic opportunity to millions of people who do not live in industrialized countries or even industrial areas (World Bank, 2019, p. 3).

But the main point to emphasize here, I think, is that these forms of work and employment bring along a life characterized mostly by precarity, uncertainty and flexibility for these people (Rani & Furrer, 2019; Anwar & Graham, 2020). In other words, “in this neoliberal take on job creation and economic development, ‘insecurity becomes recast as freedom, self-exploitation reframed as ‘being your own boss’” (Mallett, 2020, p. 275). On the other hand, even if it enables those who cannot enter the labor market to enter the labor market (in precarious and flexible conditions), it tends to reduce the working conditions in general, causing high-skilled workers to work in low-skilled jobs for low wages and in insecure positions (Berg, Furrer, Harmon, Rani, & Silberman, 2018). When we look at the software industry in Turkey, for example, we see that it in fact has a significant place in the global labor supply-demand relationship. In other words, we see that the developers working from Turkey (or another developing country) remotely for companies abroad, in fact, work for lower wages than they would have earned if they had worked there. Therefore, it can be argued that, behind the call for “everyone should learn to code” lies the project of lowering wages globally and creating a cheap workforce that can do these digital jobs much cheaper.

By denying their status as an employee, platforms manage to distance themselves from the risks stems from market fluctuation, and this exposes employees to tremendous uncertainty and flexibility. Employees have to constantly adjust themselves to the hours and days when these services are most preferred, adapt to the tempo of

customers' demands, and adjust their lives accordingly. Trying to keep up with this tempo includes long waiting periods, "dead times" in addition to working time (Moore & Newsome, 2018, p. 487). For example, there is an average of at least 20 minutes of waiting and searching for new tasks on major platforms; in other words, because of these intervals, workers are not paid within a period of working time, spending their time at work without income (Rani & Furrer, 2018). According to an ILO report, "on average, in a typical week workers spent 24.5 hours doing crowdwork, of which 18.6 hours were paid work and 6.2 hours unpaid (e.g. looking for tasks, completing qualification tests)" (Berg, Furrer, Harmon, Rani, & Silberman, 2018, p. 67). In other words, the supposed flexibility of the schedules of these platforms does not mean increased freedom. In addition, the distribution of tasks at Deliveroo, for example, is based on statistics on the work history of couriers, prioritizing those who have worked during busy hours. By accepting the weekend job, these employees gain an advantage. Conversely, they will be penalized if they take leave for sickness or other reasons. According to an ILO report:

The need to constantly look for work, the idiosyncrasies of task posting, and differences in time zones meant that many workers worked long hours and atypical hours. Fifty-two per cent of respondents to the 2017 survey reported that they regularly worked at least six days per week (with 16 per cent regularly working six days and 36 per cent regularly working seven days per week). A large proportion of workers worked during the night (10 p.m. to 5 a.m.; 43 per cent) and during the evening (6 p.m. to 10 p.m.; 68 per cent), either in response to task availability or because of other commitments. About 18 per cent of workers reported working over two hours in the night for more than 15 days per month. Furthermore, about 44 per cent of workers worked for more than 10 hours a day for up to one-third of the month (1–10 days), and 23 per cent of them worked such long hours for 11–30 days in a month. (Berg, Furrer, Harmon, Rani, & Silberman, 2018, p. 67)

Arbitrary layoffs are also prevalent among major platforms. Sometimes this happens with the decision of the company, sometimes with the evaluations of the customers. Uber provides an example of this practice. After a trip, Uber customers should rate the service from 0 to 5. According to company policy, employees who do not get the expected score can be fired. In such an evaluation system, employees become vulnerable to the arbitrariness of customers or the company that almost alone determines the reason for layoff. On the one hand, companies delegate risks to workers, while delegating job evaluation to consumers. On the other hand, they

withdraw from all responsibilities associated with the employer's duty.

The changes induced by platform capitalism thus lead to rethinking the work and employment regime today. First of all, we can argue that this type of work which arises due to technological development, increases the intensity and duration of the work instead of reducing it. Many studies reveal that technology not only increases work but also increases employer's pressure and control over workers during the work process (Wood, Graham, Lehdonvirta & Hjörth, 2019; Phoebe & Woodcock, 2021). On the other hand, contrary to the arguments of the techno-utopians, technology creates new jobs instead of reducing. For example, although Amazon increased the number of robots from 15.000 in 2014 to more than 200.000 in 2020 (O'Brien, 2019), the number of workers also increased from 154.100 in 2014 to 1.298.000 in 2020 (Coppola, 2021). However these jobs are mostly low-skilled, low-paid and in precarious conditions. According to this:

The search for means to squeeze costs leads to automation of functions and the displacement of labor, but it also creates new work in its wake partly by increasing the incentive to hire labor. To the extent that technology widens the pool of available labor by creating more undifferentiated forms of work, it places downward pressure on wages in ways to make it more attractive for capitalist employers to keep hiring labor. Indeed, the reduction of wages may thwart investment in technology where it is deemed non-economical to do so. If workers' bargaining power is already low due to the decline in unions and a more hostile, "business-friendly" policy environment, then their power is likely to fall even further with the process of automation. Yet here workers will face not unemployment but rather more and worse quality of work. One could imagine a future where low wage and low productivity work – from cleaning and cooking to babysitting and dog-walking – proliferates. In this case, workers will keep being hired but in jobs that have scarcely any intrinsic value. (...) The fear, in this case, is less about robots replacing work and more about work being turned into a robot-like experience with ever more burdensome qualities (Spencer, 2018, pp. 7-8).

As Moore, Upchurch and Whittaker (2018) has shown, technological developments that are supposed to make jobs easier in fact function as tools of control, surveillance, and monitoring, further increasing the burden on workers and work-related stress and problems. If we look at the issue from the perspective of the relationship between time-necessity-freedom and the relationship between leisure time and working time, which is the focus of this thesis, it seems that technological developments have increased the intensity of working time, as well as expanding it towards free time. What is significant

here for our subject is that working practices such as remote working and freelancing, which have been increasing in recent years, increasingly invalidate the distinction between working space/time and home/free time. Technological “improvements”, which are theoretically supposed to reduce working time and increase disposable time, and to be help of workers in fact produce the opposite effects under the capitalist mode of production. As Hughes and Southern stated, “these conditions of work would have been impossible just a couple of decades ago, yet they coincide with a more deregulated labor market and constraints on the ability of labor to organize” (2019, pp. 65-66).

Normally, this temporal and spatial flexibility can be hoped to be for the benefit of the employees. In this way, it can be hoped that those who work remotely from home will also find much more free time to fulfill their other non-working responsibilities. Even if there are cases in which this is true, we can say that the general trend is just the opposite. Flexibility in fact does not reduce the working time, but distributes it over the whole week and day. Thus, when there is no collective working time and no collective free time, time acquires a porous character. And this porous character created by flexibility is, it can be said, “a backdoor for employers to extract more effort from employees with an expectation that they always be accessible” (Mokyr, Vickers, & Ziebarth, 2015, p. 46). Because creating these pores (determining how many hours to work and when to start work) is under the control of the employer, not the employee, in most cases.²⁵ In fact, the contribution or harm that flexible working arrangements can bring to employees’ lives depends on many factor: for example, even if he/she works from home, are the working hours fixed; are the working hours collective or porous; does he/she work at a second job in his/her spare time? (Kelliher, Richardson, & Boiarintseva, 2019) On the other hand, for those who work remotely, for example, getting rid of time in traffic may be good, but this time can again be usurped by the employer. In short, for flexibility to mean freedom for employees, it must be controlled by the employee, not the employer. Otherwise, a workload and stress beyond the

²⁵ “*Ya miao*” (squeezing the second), which has become a common phenomenon in working life in Taiwan, is a very interesting example of how time pressure affects employees’ lives. According to this practice, which is unknown by whom and how it was started, employees in Taiwan, where working for long hours and unpaid overtime is very common, are accustomed to arriving exactly on time at offices. Thus, they developed a way of “resistance” against presenteeism at the level of everyday life. (Ngo, 2021)

standard working day may arise. Within this context, we can argue that the traditional distinction between home and workplace is gradually disappearing. These spheres are becoming more and more integrated. With the opportunities created by communication technologies, the physical boundaries of the workplace are now easily stretched. Today, for example, in order for any place to turn into a workplace, it is enough to have an internet connection. This is true both for freelance-style jobs that we can define as flexible, and for standard jobs. Today, standard jobs are also spread throughout the day, eliminating the need for a homogeneous working space-time and the distinction between working time and leisure time.

We can say that the spreading of freelance-gig and remote work, and the blurring of the distinction between working time and leisure time have been long-term developments, rather than issues that concern the last few years. For example, some studies conducted as early as 2002 predicted that the number of remote workers and e-workers would increase in the coming years: some of these studies predicted that there would be 137 million remote workers worldwide by 2003, while another study predicted that the number of remote workers would reach 27 million in Europe in 2010 (Kaufman-Scarborough, 2006, p. 58). According to ILO research covering 118 countries and 86 percent of the global workforce, the proportion of remote workers was 7.9 percent even before the pandemic and this proportion has been on the rise since 1980 (in fact, ILO thinks it is even higher than that) (ILO, 2020). In short, the gradual increase in working hours through remote working and the infiltration of working time into free time with the opportunities provided by communication technology has been an inherent tendency of capitalism's logic of capital accumulation.

So, what is behind all this? David Harvey says that one of the biggest crises of capitalism is that it has come to the end of the process of workerisation. According to this, he says, "it does seem as if we exist at a 'last frontier' for labor absorption throughout global capitalism" and "there are few areas left (mainly in Africa and South and Inner Asia) where massive reserves of labor power are to be found", thus "nothing on the scale of the recent huge expansion of the global labor force will ever be possible again" (Harvey, 2014, p. 118). The "dangerous contradiction" this situation created was that:

For all capitalists to realise a positive profit requires the existence of more value at the end of the day than there was at the beginning. That means an expansion of the total output of social labor. Without that expansion there can be no capital. A zero-growth capitalist economy is a logical and exclusionary contradiction. It simply cannot exist. This is why zero growth defines a condition of crisis for capital. If prolonged, zero growth of the sort that prevailed in much of the world in the 1930s spell the death knell of capitalism. How, then, can capitalism continue to accumulate and expand in perpetuity at a compound rate? (Harvey, 2014, p. 232)

It is not surprising then that Harvey referred to the increasing momentum of automation and the application of artificial intelligence to routine jobs in service industry. What is important here, according to Harvey, is that capitalism has approached the end of its ability to labor absorption, and as it approaches its natural limit, the sustainability of production of surplus value is interrupted.

Postone also, as we mentioned before, pointed to a similar temporal contradiction as the fundamental contradiction of capitalism (1993). The fact that capitalists must increase labor productivity and thus profitability through technological developments (because capital cannot grow by remaining constant) contradicts the socially necessary labor time of any commodity, which determines value. That is, the necessity of minimizing the duration of valorization process of capital, which Marx calls the “annihilation of time by space” (1993, p. 524) and Harvey “time-space compression” (1990), tends to reduce labor time and surplus value – to the extent that the value of any commodity is its socially necessary labor time. Thus, the tendency of productivity-enhancing technological developments to reduce socially necessary labor time constitutes the inherent crisis of capitalism.

Ferda Koç (Koç, 2019b), in his article series, discusses the possible effects of this crisis-prone nature of capitalism which has become more evident today on social life, working relations and class struggle and touches upon important points. According to him, this process will inevitably affect the wage-labor relationship as well. According to this, it can be argued that when the limit of the human population that can be included in the wage labor relationship is reached, to the extent that the current total labor time remains constant, the capacity of production of surplus value will slow down and enter into a crisis. As we have seen, there are two main ways to increase surplus value: first, by extending working hours, and secondly, by lowering real

wages. But, to the extent that these two forms of increasing absolute surplus value have concrete, physical limits, then the only option is to increase relative surplus value, “to create new forms of labor other than labor-power that produce value”.

This option implies the introduction, on a large scale, of new forms of labor which are bought/appropriated under new forms apart from the commodity form which is measured by “working day” or “working time” and purchased through wages. This means a tremendous change in the structure of the process of socialization of all concrete labor directly or indirectly expended for commodity production in order to be transformed into “abstract labor” (Koç, 2019b).

According to Koç, this is achieved through the colonization of leisure time and the transformation of unproductive labor into productive labor. What is meant here is to make the labor, spent in the leisure time in which the activities of the reproduction of labor power is performed, productive in terms of capital:

For example, in a part of human activities that enable the production of Big Data, which makes the capital dream of “Industry 4.0”, we see labor processes that are not yet possible to be formulated in the form of labor power but that have gained the form of commodity. Let’s assume that you are playing a free game on the internet with your personal computer or phone, and the program that connects the game to the network also monitors your consumption tendencies on a daily basis through some information it receives from you. As long as you play the game, you will also be part of a production process based on the data it receives from you. You will consciously “produce” information that no pollster can access while you are “playing”, that is, “using your spare time” for the capital owner who offers you the opportunity to play the game (Koç, 2019a).

All of these indicate that the process of reproduction of labor power is itself becoming the process of production of surplus value. In our “free time”, we continue to create value while we reproduce ourselves and our working capacity. It is now difficult to think of working time, where labor power is sold for wages, as the sphere of necessity, and non-working time as the sphere of freedom for reproduction. As we have seen before, the proliferation of the immaterial forms of labor was accelerated by the post-Fordist mode of production. New forms of immaterial labor, operating through language, emotional and cognitive capacities, and semiotic relations, have circulated in sectors such as education, health, media, and the service. Thus,

Its [neoliberalism] apparatuses go well beyond the factory, which is but one site of their initial actualization. New social and technical machines have taken

hold over behavior and attitudes not only in the workplace and in labor generally, but also in daily life (Lazzarato, 2014, p. 33).

Lazzarato points out that with the change in technology, a growing number of activities that are not considered as working activity have begun to be considered as working activity, and this situation plays an important role in the change of labor forms. One of the significant consequences of this change is the gradual disappearance of the leisure sphere, the inclusion of activities considered as leisure activity in the working sphere by being included in the forms of immaterial labor. More sociological studies have produced concepts, such as “affective labor”, “digital labor” (Scholz, 2013; Fuchs, 2015), “emotional labor” (Hochschild, 1983; Guy, Newman & Mastracci, 2008), “audience labor” (Fisher, 2015), “free labor” (Terranova, 2000), “playbour” (play+labor) (Goggin, 2011; Lund, 2015), “weisure” (work+leisure) (Bartlett, 2014), “presumption” (production+consumption) (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010) which refer to the production of surplus value through non-working activities carried out in leisure time or reproduction and consumption sphere, to support this autonomous thesis empirically.

But what we mean by the concept of “affective labor”, which is one of the key concepts of this thesis, needs to be clarified a little more. In this study, I use “affective labor”, which is included in the category of immaterial labor by Negri and Hardt, in a broader sense than they used it for the first time. Affective labor, in this sense which I do not prefer, rather seems synonymous with emotional labor which corresponds to, for example, the insertion of the emotions of a secretary, a nurse, a taxi driver, a stewardess, a cashier etc. working in the service sector into the working relations. However, the use of “affective labor” in this study is quite different from “emotional labor”. At this point, I follow Read who distinguishes “affective labor” from “affective composition of labor”:

The affective composition of labor is distinct from “affective labor”. The term “affective labor” is used by Hardt and Negri to describe a particular subset of the larger field of “immaterial labor”, it describes labor that produces emotional states, care, wellness, desire etc.: it is labor that produces subjectivity in terms of its most basic conditions of existence through the work of care and in terms of the feeling and sense of self. (...) Affective labor plunges us into the unstable border between reproduction and production, subjectivity and the conditions that produce it. However, by the affective composition of labor I mean

something broader than “affective labor”, something that can be analyzed in any labor process, no matter what it produced. The affective composition of labor refers to the way in which all labor is situated within the production and reproduction of affects and desires (Read, 2011).

In this regard, “affective labor” corresponds to a certain type of labor, while “affective composition of labor” refers to the general affective dimension of all kinds of labor activity. Therefore, this affective composition manifests itself in historically and socially different configurations of desire and affect. That is, by “the affective composition of labor” we mean the affective form that any labor activity takes within the existing dynamics of the relations of production, not a different category of labor. These different categories of labor, such as “immaterial labor”, “material labor”, “emotional labor”, “digital labor”, “playbour” etc. can be of use as conceptual tools, and they are not necessarily mutually exclusive. But, the affective dimension of labor, encompassing all, leads us to consider the social organization of labor, the affective structure in which human actions are situated, a certain regime of desire – an *epithumé*, as Lordon calls it – corresponding to the different historical phase of the capitalist mode of production.²⁶

It seems that all these new forms of labor and work demonstrate that the digitization of the economy, production and everyday life has transformed the division of labor between humans and machines, leading some people to disguised, low-paying jobs, that is, a marginal position. We are, voluntarily or not, involved in the digital practices that provide profit to others, not to us, through games, clicks, likes, by producing content and personal data for social medias such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter etc., so much so that “Facebook’s 1 billion participants (...) have become the largest unpaid workforce in history” (Ekbia & Nardi, 2019, p. 662). In terms of our discussion on subsumption of labor under capital, what does this new situation mean? It is obvious that it corresponds to a new situation. Ekbia and Nardi (2017, 2019) call this phase “heteromation”. “Heteromation” corresponds to two things: “First, it is a labor relation that extracts value from uncompensated human labor for the benefit of others; second, it puts humans at the margins of the machine, so that they do what machines cannot do” (Ekbia & Nardi, 2019, p. 658). In automation, machines either make people’s jobs

²⁶ As we saw in the subsection 2.1.2.4. discussing Lordon’s periodization of the affective composition of labor.

easier or they do those jobs alone. In heteromation, on the other hand, humans help machines. For example, tasks that require human skills that artificial intelligence cannot solve (for example, Amazon Mechanical Turk) can be made by humans for very low wages. As another example given by the authors, we can consider “kiwibots” carrying fast food on the University of California Berkeley campus. Instead of determining their routes with their own artificial intelligence, route info is sent to these kiwibots every five to ten seconds by workers from Colombia. In short, “a ghost in the shell” gives life to the machine, so to speak.

Ekbja and Nardi state that heteromation has three basic attributions. First, heteromation “works on a logic of inclusiveness in the sense of universal participation regardless of status” (Ekbja & Nardi, 2019, p. 659). According to this inclusionary logic, the more people get involved, the more they will get. Therefore, it creates and builds on a strong sense of belonging. On the other hand, heteromation is based on pseudo-voluntarism which functions like, so to speak, a trap. It has a logic that cunningly seeps into everyday life and leisure time. And finally, in conjunction with the previous attribution, heteromation subtracts surplus value invisibly and covertly. It can cheer people up, make them happy, relieve their troubles, in short, make them not see the activity as a drudgery. But most of the surplus value generated by the activity goes to a small minority.

2.2.4. Conclusion

As we have seen, work and employment arrangements have been transformed in parallel with the structural transformation of capitalism from Fordism to post-Fordism. There are new phenomena as well as some ongoing phenomena in this transformation. In the theoretical part of this study, I try to examine the transformation in work and employment relations through Marx’s theory of subsumption. In this context, the most remarkable ongoing phenomena is that capitalism always establishes a temporal power imposing capital’s temporality on life’s temporality. This was achieved on the standard working day after the savage conditions in which capitalism first emerged. While the distinction between working time and leisure time was clearer, and most of the people enjoyed a predictable and secure life through stable and permanent employment during this period, as we have seen, this was in fact an exception, not a norm. Therefore, the

traces of phenomena such as flexibility and precarity that emerged in the post-Fordist period, which developed after the crisis of Fordism and dominated by the lean production and flexible form of work and employment arrangement, can be traced even further back. Therefore, it must be said that capitalism is essentially a mode of production that creates insecurity and uncertainty in the lives of those who have to sell their labor power.

“Under capitalism” said Michael Denning, “the only thing worse than being exploited is not being exploited” (2010, p. 79). This statement, I think, very clearly demonstrates the essential role of work in our lives. On the one hand, not being able to work, that is, not being able to sell one’s labor power means not being able to live in the work society. But on the other hand, being able to work, that is, being able to sell one’s labor power, as we can see, has completely different problems and difficulties. But it can be easily said that the working relationship is, in the end, embodied itself as a relationship of necessity in the capitalist mode of production. However, this does not reproduce itself simply as a necessity. It would be an oversimplification to say that we choose to work just to survive. Rather, affective, cognitive, and ideological, whatever you say, mechanisms come into play through many channels that make us “believe” we want to choose to work. As Marx said:

Nor is it enough that they are compelled to sell themselves voluntarily. The advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self-evident natural laws (1982, p. 899).

As this short passage shows, for Marx, the production of subjectivity (“by education, tradition and habit”) is essential for an economic mode of production to produce and reproduce itself. I therefore proposed to consider Marx and Spinoza together in order to show the significance of the affective dimension in the production of subjectivity.

With reference to Bernard Stiegler (2010), we can say that work has a pharmacological effect: it is both a poison and a medicine for that poison. It is obvious that technology also has such a pharmacological effect. Technology, which has been approached, not just recently but since 18th and 19th centuries, with the hope that it will free people from the drudgery as well as with the fear that will put people out of work, is both a medicine and a poison in this sense. But the thing is, whether technology will affect

us like a medicine or like a poison is not a self-evident fact waiting to be realized. It is necessary to avoid falling into technological determinism, because technological determinism means accepting one of the possible futures while it is not yet actualized. In other words, what technological innovations, such as automation, digitalization, and robotization, will lead to in terms of employment and work relations in the future will be determined by social struggles in the present. The most important development of the “medicine effect” of technology would be to realize its potential to free people from the drudgery of work. But, as we saw in this section, it seems much more likely that contrary developments will become widespread. The opportunity to save time and effort provided by technological innovations seems to have produced results not in favor of but against the employees in most cases. The increasing flexibility, precarity, and intensity in the working conditions that we have explained in this section seem to continue to be decisive in the future. Because, due to the economic crisis created by the pandemic, but also in accordance with the principal of capital’s valorization, the increasing competition between companies on a global scale will force companies to further reduce their labor costs.²⁷ Therefore, technology can offer us two ways at this point: Either automation technologies will be put at the service of capital, and the worker will simply become an extension of the machine and be forced to adapt to this system (robotized humans rather than humanized robots); or the welfare provided by the automation technologies is shared socially and working conditions are improved (even if the drudgery is not replaced). To sum up, in the contemporary situation where the employee-employer relationship is gradually disappearing, where the number of freelancers and self-employed independent professionals is increasing day by day,

²⁷ We are already seeing its signs. At the “TUSIAD Digital Turkey Conference” (with the subheading “The game itself has changed, not the rules”) that is taking place just as I am writing these lines, the capital owners are clearly showing its signs. For example, the moderator, just as in the World Economic Forum Report which emphasizes that “personal data is the oil of the new digital world”, states that “companies that do not produce digital data and do not invest in creating digital value have no place in the new world order.” On the other hand, for example, IFS’s CEO Ergin Öztürk says: “The main reason for the acceleration in digitalization is not technological developments. Current technologies have been around for the last 10 years, but the conditions were not ready. The pandemic provided this; it ended the traditional business model.” Uğur Sennaroğlu from Vodafone also states that “the pandemic has moved digitalization to an earlier time”. KOÇ’s CEO Ömer Koç states that “there is a shortage of qualified personnel” and draws attention to the need for digitalization to become widespread. Interestingly, SabancıDX’s CEO Doğu Kuran states that “the number of resignations may increase in the future.” This is interesting because this is a statement that admits that the negative effects of work and employment relations on people can create labor shortage. *Financial Times* also drew attention to a similar danger, stating that millions of workers in America could quit their jobs and that America was seriously threatened with labor shortage. (Rogers, 2022)

individuals increasingly tend to think that they are the sole rulers of their own lives. In such a situation, the new subjective condition is essentially based on a paradox: social control through the production of individual freedom, in which the norms that regulate the extraction of surplus value are now produced by subjectivities themselves – that is, a passionate servitude. Therefore, the main point is, I think, to question the affective dynamics and mechanisms that compel us to work.

2.3. Post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics

2.3.1. Introduction

As we saw in previous sections, in advanced economies, work has undergone significant transformations since the decline of Fordism in the 1970s. These transformations include a reduction in standard employment contracts, an increase in self-employment and entrepreneurship, job insecurity, and outsourcing. These transformations are referred to as neoliberalism and/or post-Fordism, which includes both practical changes in work practices and the ideology behind them. Within this context, the impact of these transformations on employees' relationship to work has been widely discussed.

Some argues that personal attachment to work has weakened. According to Beck (2000), Bauman (2004), and Sennett (2007), for example, transformations in the neoliberal economy have made it harder for employees to develop a personal attachment to work, as traditional sources of attachment was eroding. On the other hand, some people hold the opposite view, arguing that work still plays a significant role in shaping people's identities, and the logic of work is even more deeply penetrated in our lives than before. According to this, as traditional sources of attachment disappear, new forms of personal attachment to work emerge.

The main aim of this section is to discuss how people develop personal and affective attachment to work in the new conditions that we have discussed before. The ways in which people form attachments to work, whether new forms of attachment emerge, or existing forms change have been a subject of discussion in relevant literature for a while (e.g., Cech, 2021; Cockayne, 2015; DePalma, 2021; Donzelot, 1991; Duffy, 2016; Weeks, 2011). In this context, it is possible to say that in addition to old forms

of institutional attachment, a new individual, inward-looking, and authentic way of attachment to work has emerged. We can say that there is a shift in the way people's attachment to work in the current neoliberal conditions, which is characterized by individualization, rather than a complete decline in personal attachment to work. This discourse around the self-employment and entrepreneurship is supported by the neoliberal notion that individuals are responsible for their own success. Within this context, this section focuses on what I call Passionate Work Ethics as the form of personal attachment to work in the current post-Fordist working regime. I am not claiming that this is the only valid form of attachment, or that it affects everyone equally. My claim is that the Passionate Work Ethics is the dominant affective scheme of today's post-Fordist flexible and precarious working regime in which immaterial labor is the prevailing, if not the only valid, dominant form. In other words, "affective economy" theoretical framework can also be applied to different work and labor forms. However, Passionate Work Ethics, as explored in this thesis, is distinct to the immaterial labor characterizing the post-Fordist period. In different scenarios, diverse affective structures might exist compared to the Passionate Work Ethics. However, this studies uniqueness lies in elucidating the operations of Passionate Work Ethics intrinsic to immaterial labor and freelance work as an epitome of precarious and flexible post-Fordist working conditions.

Let me start with an anecdote. One day, I went to the office of the electricity distribution company to apply for my subscription. A young, white-collar office worker immediately took care of me. I should mention that while doing her job she did it in a "cheerful" and "caring" mood. After the procedure was done, she told me that I would receive a message or an email from the company and that I would be asked to rate his work performance and attitude, and she added that "I would appreciate if you gave me a good score". Then, I said it is bad and troubling for employees to be rated by customers. Because, in my opinion, this practice exposes employees to a performance anxiety. Even if we accept that employees should have good work performance, we should at least admit that it is not necessary for an office worker who does paperwork to do his/her job with a "smiling" face. I think it is healthier for him/her to get the paperwork done properly and not feel pressured to look "caring", "cheerful" at the same time. Because I know how exhausting this kind of "emotional

labor” can be. After I told her these ideas that look out for his working conditions and rights, I got an unexpected response. First, she misunderstood me terribly and thought I was not happy with her performance. Then, I explained my idea more clearly, and she found it very strange. “We are doing our job well here, what is wrong with that?” she said. She even included her friend in the conversation and conveyed my idea to her as if I was speaking in a foreign language. Then I realized that her “positive” attitude towards me while doing her job was in fact a kind of “sham”. Apparently, she was acting like this because of the imposition of “being smile”, “looking interested” and performance evaluation. Moreover, the pernicious thing here is that she was already convinced that this was normal.

I argue that this anecdote points to a very common work experience today, not limited to the woman in this example, and that it is the epitome of the new work ethics of neoliberalism that has functions subtly and insidiously. This neoliberal ethics of work is “do what you love, love what you do”. It can be said that this ethics has become a norm of working life, especially among white-collar workers, “new professionals” and university graduate youth, especially after the 90s. Getting a job is no longer just about getting a decent wage, financial security, and a steady career. It is expected from a job to be an activity that is done with enthusiasm, that is loved. In other words, work is now grasped and experienced by many as what gives life its meaning. For example, the Japanese call it *ikigai* (“iki” life, “gai” worth), that is, a kind of life purpose, *raison d’être*. And this concept, *ikigai*, is used in the West in the sense of personal and professional development to be able to design one’s life and to be motivated to act. In other words, *ikigai* means, so to speak, the motivation of being able to wake up every morning and participate in life. We can say that having *ikigai*, finding one’s *ikigai* is almost a necessary condition for being successful in life today.

When I say that the understanding and experiencing of work as what gives meaning to life by today’s new white-collar professionals has almost become a social norm, I am not saying that it functions like a “law of nature” and is valid everywhere and under all conditions. Rather, I would argue that the Passionate Work Ethics is the “social lubricant” for the functioning of the precarious and flexible form of employment that has become mainstream in neoliberalism. It is possible to say that this work ethics, which function as a social lubricant, is inherent in neoliberal work life and produced

in some mediums (especially in personal development publications, management literature etc.) even though it seems natural.

Although the history of the motto “love what you do, do what you love” goes back in time, we can take Steve Jobs’ speech at the graduation ceremony of Stanford University in 2005 (which attracted a lot of attention on social media and is very meaningful in terms of its location) as an example where the cunning and insidious neoliberal work ethics has crystallized. Steve Jobs says in part of his speech that contains a lot of “motivation” for young graduates who are about to enter the job marker, that is, wage labor relationship:

I’m convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You’ve got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle. As with all matters of the heart, you’ll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So, keep looking until you find it. Don’t settle.

But from the “advice” he repeated several times at the end of his speech, we understand what he said in this passage actually means and what he promised to the graduates: “Stay Hunger. Stay Foolish”. In fact, Jobs is saying something to teach today’s “entrepreneurial subject”: stay hunger, that is, do not get used to a comfortable, stable, orderly, secure life; stay foolish and ignorant, that is, do not content with the knowledge you have, do not stay in a lifetime job, improve yourself and seek new adventures, so that you can be much more active, effective, willing and passionate to survive in this life. In fact, it is a kind of advice on survival. In other words, we can say that Jobs gives clues to the survival of the newly graduated young people in this neoliberal working life, because in most cases the way to survive in such a working life is really having these qualities that Jobs promotes. Jobs is of course not the only responsible for this ethics, but his mentality supports it and contributes to its dissemination. Indeed, in the new world of work, where the need for continuous personal and professional development to advance in working life is necessary, where it is considered normal for an average employee to change jobs at least 2-3 times throughout his/her career, where there is less opportunity for a secure, stable career and life, Jobs’ advice really seems to be the key to “success”.

If we consider Jobs as a “father” who gives advice, then what kind of father is he? Žizek refers to two types of attitudes that a father can take in his relationship with his child, which correspond to the distinction I made in this dissertation between Fordist and post-Fordist neoliberal working life. Considering a boy who need to visit his grandmother for the weekend, the old-fashioned domineering father forces the boy to go to his grandmother if he does not want to go, getting angry and beating him if necessary. The tolerant, gentle “postmodern” father, on the other hand, has more cunning tactics. He persuades the boy with the illusion of free choice, rather than getting angry or beating him. He says: “You know how much your grandmother wants to see you. But still, you should visit only if you really want to”. The postmodern, cunning father’s option of free choice seems to have a more powerful imperative than coercion. He orders the boy not only to visit his grandmother, but also to enjoy it, to want it, to desire it, and he does so in a covert, cunning way.

If we use this analogy, Steve Jobs is a boss who looks exactly like the postmodern father of post-Fordist neoliberal working life. The postmodern boss is not an authoritarian, oppressive boss, like Henry Ford who follows the private life, consumption practices, leisure time of his employees. Of course, the oppressive boss also aims to increase the working motivation and performance of his employees, but if they do their job, it does not matter whether the employees are motivated or not, whether they like their job or not. Henry Ford provided this motivation by increasing wages, but he also kept track of how that wage was spent. But the postmodern father-boss seems to have noticed something the old-fashioned authoritarian father did not. That is, domination based on the illusion of free choice functions more smoothly than domination based on coercion. Just as the boy must enjoy visiting his grandmother, so in labor relations, the postmodern boss no longer builds his dominance by relying on the economic compulsion of capitalism, the necessity of selling labor for living. A more cunning, more insidious, and more disguised tactics that appeals to free will, autonomy, the illusion of free choice, affects and desires is in action in the domination of the postmodern father-boss.

If we recall Spinoza’s remark I quoted earlier (“they will fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance”), we can say that the Passionate Work Ethics means precisely in this sense that employees “cheerfully”, “joyfully” desire

their own slavery. But I have before said that it is wrong to claim that this ethics functions like a law of nature. In other words, this claim does not mean that everyone is satisfied with their job, likes and desires to work. In fact, it is possible to say that a negative attitude towards work (especially in the generation Z) is quite common. Especially in the period following the pandemic, a wave of resignations took place, which largely affected the United States but could also be observed in Europe. This is added to the literature under the name of “Great Resignation” in the United States. According to the data of the US Department of Labor 4.5 million employees left their jobs only in November, total 48 million employees in 2021. Even if the rates are not as high as the United States, a similar situation can be observed in European countries, China, and India. According to the study conducted by Microsoft, more than half of the employees between the ages of 18 and 41; 35 percent of those between 42 and 75 are considering changing their jobs (Microsoft, 2022). According to the same study, 41 percent of workers around the world are considering changing jobs, and 46 per cent are considering major career changing. It also turns out that half of generation Z and Millennials are considering changing jobs, and they also attach more importance to health and wellbeing than money and work.

It shows that especially generation Z who are dissatisfied with the working conditions quit at a high rate. For exactly these reasons, it is said that companies that do not want to be affected by this wave of resignations should consider the expectations and demands of their employees. Many studies are warning companies that the new cohort of employees has different demands than previous generations and attaches a different meaning and importance to work. Companies develop different solutions in order for employees to feel that they belong to the company, to see their work as meaningful, and to meet their expectations of individual satisfaction. Therefore, companies need to offer their employees a more productive, enjoyable, and satisfying work experience and working condition to attract them. Companies are also advised to offer completely remote or hybrid working models by flexing the obligation to come to the office. In addition to these, the solutions such as turning the office into an “amusement park”, presenting the employee-boss relationship as a pleasant “friendship” relationship, organizing pleasant activity hours in the workplace (drinking beer together, organizing a party etc.), allocating extra budget to the employees to have fun outside of work time,

providing relaxation activities such as breathing exercises or yoga at work are still used to motivate the employees to work.

This wave of resignation, which we can accept as a part of anti-work politics, as a reaction against the destruction caused by “hustle” culture (i.e., the culture of working at a high tempo, day and night, with long hours) in people’s individual lives, could be a moment of emancipation. However, the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics, which also feeds and supports the hustle culture, develops precisely within this reactivity, and absorbs this reactivity without causing a radical break. In other words, while the Passionate Work Ethics, on the one hand, enables to embrace, endure, romanticize, and internalize existing inequalities, negative conditions, and self-exploitation, on the other hand, it also evolves the anti-work attitude developed against work as drudgery back into the system with the promise of “there are other jobs you can love”, “follow your desire”. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss the causes of the Great Resignation. Of course, there could be many different reasons for this phenomenon. However, the important point for our discussion is that this situation shows that the Passionate Work Ethics has different mechanism of appeal oscillating at two extremes, which can both bring people into the hustle culture and reabsorb those who oppose this hustle culture.

This Passionate Work Ethics, which is operates as a social lubricant, actually has developed in the midst of this negative attitude. In other words, it functions to curb this negative attitude. The autonomy, leisure, authenticity and freedom that the new forms of work promise remove working from being seen as drudgery and make working as a sphere where one realizes and creates oneself. This ethics offers employees the means to affirm the conditions of flexibility and insecurity that have become almost the norm in the current work and employment regime: insecurity and flexibility can be experienced as freedom, liberation from the strict limits of life. Therefore, there are not completely happy, calm, peaceful subjects here. They are riddled with contradictions, inconsistencies and tensions, and therefore also bearers of these contradictions and tensions.

For conceptual clarity, it might be good to make a distinction between “passion economy” and “passionate work”. In literature, passion economy means that people

make money by doing the things they love. In other words, it is used to describe jobs where micro-entrepreneurs can make money using their talents, hobbies, and creativity (Amitabh, 2022). With the opportunities provided by technology, this kind of “jobs” eliminates the distinction between leisure and working times, creating opportunity to earn money from all kinds of activities at any time. Some studies show that generation Z is more inclined to these activities than to have a professional career. The concepts of “passionate work”, “work passion”, or “passionate labor”, on the other hand, emphasize the new work ethics established by neoliberalism that covers jobs like the office worker in the anecdote I told at the beginning and including the passion economy. As DePalma (2021) states, this concept, which has become widespread in the sociology of work literature in the last two decades, tells us that work has now become a field of self-expression and self-realization, and that the wage labor relationship is knitted with affective attachments and passionate bindings. For example, let us consider the rhetoric of “we are a family” that corporations use very often. As Deleuze puts it, “we are taught that corporations have a soul, which is the most terrifying news in the world” (1992, p. 6). This discourse, which transforms the corporate working relationships into a family relationship, a love relationship, makes the employee very vulnerable against the employer. This discourse gives the employer both the right to encroach on the free time of the employees and the right to demand the bodies, minds, emotions and everything of the employees during the working hour. On one hand, the employer demands this right, on the other hand, and more importantly, the employees have to adopt and internalize these demands and discourse. This is where the Passionate Work Ethics comes into play. It is this work ethics that makes pervasive conditions of insecurity and flexibility, low wages, unpaid overtime, and the transformation of leisure time into working time bearable and even desirable to employees.

The strength of this affective vocation of the neoliberal work ethics lies in the fact that what it promises is something very “human”: Who does not want to work in a job they desire, to do a job they love? Who does not want to have the choice of working time and place? Personally speaking, I prefer choosing my time and place to work, rather than to be under temporal and spatial control of someone else. I would like to earn money by doing the job I want, rather than a job I took just because to earn my living.

It seems to me that this affective vocation itself seems quite “innocent” and is quite understandable. So much so that many socialist, anarchist and utopian thinkers claim that doing what you love is more beneficial and liberating in terms of one’s relationship with work – as opposed to loving what you do (Hope & Richards, 2015). The problem here is not that pleasure and joy are in themselves harmful emotions; rather, these feelings are captured by the thrust of profit, productivity, efficiency of capitalist working conditions. But under this apparent “innocence” lies a working ethics that strives to make the conditions of insecurity and flexibility desirable and adaptable by arousing “passive joyful affects” in employees, oscillating them between hope and fear. Bernard Stiegler (2010) had said that work has a pharmacological effect: it is both a poison and an antidote; it offers the solutions to the problems it has created. For example, a friend of mine, who earns a good salary but works for a long time, said to me that she spends most of her salary to solve the problems created by the job itself (going to a psychologist, taking up various hobbies, alcohol, etc.). Roughly speaking, we work for a living, then we earn money from our work, then we spend the money we earn on self-healing activities to be able to go back to work, and such a vicious circle continuous. In this situation, do we work to live, or do we live to work? The distinction between living and working is becoming more and more blurred. Life is starting to look like work, and work is starting to look like life. The rhetoric “we are a family here”, Jobs’ advice for university graduates to “love what you do” etc. points to this fact. As Jaffe (2021) points out, the fact that the word “partner” which seems to mean business partnership is now also used for romantic relationships is very significant in this respect. Therefore, in short, the call for neoliberal “passionate work” establishes the affective mechanism that prevents these problems from turning into a radical break and makes people feel that they are out of this vicious circle.

The result of a survey of 124 anonymous people on Twitter, which I did just to roughly measure the trend, showed this fact too. I simply asked people “what kind of job should a person choose?” and gave them the choices of “the job you love and desire”, “the job that makes you feel peaceful and comfortable while doing it”, “the job that matches your abilities”, “the job with high salary”. 46 percent of the respondents chose “love and desire”. The second popular answer was “peaceful and comfortable” (26.6

percent). Of course, the scientific validity of these results is problematic. Therefore, I do not directly use this result as data (but I asked the same question to my interviewees, and I will talk about it in the case study). However, the important point here was that this survey showed what kind of inclination people have, that a desirable and stress-free work might be more desirable than highly-paid work. Here are the questions we need to ask at this point: What is compromised in trying to achieve desirable job? What are the material and moral costs of it? Who is more inclined to respond to this affective vocation? For whom is it easier to find desirable work? I will try to find answers to these questions in the case study. But before that, I will review the relevant literature on the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics to distinguish the components of its affective appeal.

2.3.2. Passionate Work Ethics

Steve Jobs' above-mentioned speech at the graduation ceremony of Stanford University was probably more influential than any other things in promoting the "do what you love" ideology. That is why what he and others like him say and do is noteworthy for us. Leaving Steve Jobs and other "marketing gurus" of capitalism aside, this issue has been drawing attention also in the academic field especially for the last two decades.

In the previous parts of the study, I explained how the work and labor relations changed in the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism. This change was experienced not only in the material conditions of the structure of work and employment, but also in the context of the subjectivity of the employees and their relationship with work. I have discussed how this affects the temporal regime of life and thus the affective regime of labor. I will not go into this discussion in depth again (maybe when needed). Here, rather, I will discuss the Passionate Work Ethics within the framework of the relevant literature, which emerged in this post-Fordist context and based on affects such as desire, joy, and fun - and makes the conditions of precarity and flexibility bearable.

The concept of "passion", together with other concepts that follow it, seems to have entered our life not only in the context of working relations, but in many areas of our social life. We could even argue that "positive psychology" (Binkley, 2011) and "happiness industry" (Davies, 2015; Illouz & Cabanas, 2019) has been built around it.

Illouz and Cabanas (2019), for example, claim that the happiness industry has penetrated our lives, in particular, the sphere of work. Examining the origins of positive psychology, they observe how the desire to be an employee gave way to another dream: that of a dream job for which one would have to be ready for doing anything. Thanks to personal life and development coaching, through the valorization of merits of individual success, self-realization, and authenticity, neoliberalism has integrated the idea that:

Individuals ‘learn to learn’, that is, be flexible, autonomous and creative – demands that apply to both individuals and corporations alike – so they can decide for themselves which skills, means and choices are the best for allowing them to adapt to a highly uncertain market, perform efficiently, grow as workers, and increase the odds of enrolling in more promising and challenging projects (Illouz & Cabanas, 2019, pp. Positivity at Work section, para. 14).

According to Illouz and Cabanas, the employment contract between the employee and the employer is now established as “a moral bond of mutual trust and commitment” (2019, p. Positivity at Work section para. 24). This creates a situation where the employee identifies himself/herself with the company, so to speak, internalizes the employer’s control and pressure on him/her.

Illouz and Cabanas claim that behind this is the happiness industry, which teaches us that “wealth and poverty, success and failure, health and illness are our own making” (2019, pp. Introduction section, para. 17). This industry, which reduces the structural problems of capitalism to psychological and individual defects, produces “happy citizens” who see happiness above all else, always try to be happy but do this as a part of an individualistic culture. This culture of individualism is actually an ideology with its own ideologists, scientists and politicians, and what this ideology advocates is “triumph of personal society (therapeutic, individualist, atomized) over the collectivist one” (2019, pp. Introduction section, para. 17).

In this regard, it can be argued that the happiness industry and positive psychology are the component of “the affective life and atmosphere of neoliberalism” (Ehrstein, Gill, & Littler, 2020). Examining the role of emotions and feelings in neoliberalism’s production and government of subjectivities, Ehrstein, Gill and Littler claim that neoliberal discourse constructs itself through an affective atmosphere in the everyday life “to become a hegemonic, quotidian sensibility: the ‘new normal’” (2020, p. 196).

According to the authors, entrepreneurial subjectivity is the epitome of this affective structure that determines the ways of thinking, feeling, acting, in short, the limits of subjectivity. In the production of the entrepreneurial subjectivity, whose characteristic features are “referring to the self as a business to be worked on and optimized; being constantly active in the pursuit of their goals; embracing risks; repudiating or minimizing injuries or difficulties; and a belief that they had to ‘stay positive’” (Ehrstein, Gill, & Littler, 2020, p. 196), the psychological dimension is also active. In other words, the affective life of neoliberalism creates an affective therapeutic culture as well as a rational entrepreneurial culture. We can say that the positive psychology and happiness industry which recommends seeking happiness in individual life as a solution to the crises and problems created by capitalist relations of production in working and other spheres of life, imposes “being happy” as a necessity just as it imposes entrepreneurship as a necessity in capitalist working life.

In this regard, it can be argued that feelings are essential components of labor processes. However, as Freeman points out, most of the studies that examines the role of feelings in capitalism “has focused squarely upon the extractive and exhausting quality of contemporary affective life” (2020, p. 71). In other words, these studies mainly focus on negative feelings as “an expression of alienation, a by-product of oppressive extractive relations between owners and producers” (2020, p. 75). But, on the other hand, feelings are manipulated, produced, regulated in labor processes, and take positive and negative forms as part of subjectivity. In this respect, it is not only negative feelings such as “rage, disgust, shame, despair, ennui” (2020, p. 75) that characterize neoliberalism and the precarious-flexible life it creates. The subtle and cunning logic of neoliberal governmentality has also gained the ability of affective manipulation with positive feelings such as “joy”, “intimacy”, and “love”. As examples Freeman gives us, Illouz’s “cold intimacies” (2007), Ahmed’s “happiness” (2010) and Berlant’s “cruel optimism” (2011) show us the “seductive but fundamentally illusory” nature of these feelings within the affective logic of neoliberalism.

For example, Berlant’s “cruel optimism” is a useful concept for this study to understand the affective life of neoliberalism. Berlant uses this concept to describe our commitment in dreams of the “good life” capitalism have offered us. But, of course,

there is nothing cruel about dreaming. What is cruel in dreaming is that these dreams and future projections in fact put us in a dilemma: “a binding to fantasies that block the satisfactions they offer, and a binding to the promise of optimism as such that the fantasies have come to represent” (Berlant, 2011, p. 51). In this sense, what makes optimism cruel is not simply that it is disappointing. Cruelty stems from the fact that

[T]he subjects who have x in their lives might not well endure the loss of their object/scene of desire, even though its presence threatens their well-being, because whatever the content of the attachment is, the continuity of its form provides something of the continuity of the subject’s sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world (2011, p. 24).

Cruel optimism can be at work in all spheres of life, from romantic relationships to working relations. With the concept, Berlant points out the danger that present objects, people, and relationships that we hope will bring happiness and welfare in the future may hinder the very happiness and welfare that is expected from them. Such relationships are actually – in today’s popular parlance – “toxic”. People may be aware that the relationship is a bad one and not good for them. However, something keeps them in this relationship and does not allow them to go out. What makes this relationship toxic is that this deadlock is not experienced by an external pressure and coercion, but by an internal impulse. Even if the relationships that we believe bring happiness turn out to be relationships that hinder the very conditions of happiness, ending of these relationships can be more frightening than being damaged by those relationships. Because the presence of these relationships also reflects the very possibility of happiness.

I have stated that Berlant traces cruel optimism in many areas of life, including working sphere. From this perspective, cruel optimism means embracing the insecurity and flexibility promoted and pumped by the new neoliberal work society, and willingly trying to exist within it. This framework brings Spinoza’s fundamental political question “why do people fight for their servitude as if they were fighting for their own deliverance?” to mind. With reference to Berlant and other authors, it seems possible to answer this question “because they desire and take pleasure in it”. As I stated with reference to Spinoza, the despot rules his subjects through uncertainty, leaving them “precarious” between hope and fear. In this respect, the thrust behind the capitalist work society’s investment in desire is to give wage workers the hope that they will be

able to solve the present problems within the work society, and that these present problems have solutions in the future.

To sum up, happiness industry and positive psychology may seem at first glance to offer a framework that “empowers” individuals. But the motivation behind this discourse is in fact to enable isolated individuals to shoulder the social problems alone. In this sense, “the psychological language of emotions, creativity, cognitive flexibility, self-control, etc. has progressively functioned as an effective way to palliate the structural deficits in recognition as well as the inherent paradoxes and contradictions that are characteristic of modern workplaces” (Illouz & Cabanas, 2019, p. Positivity at Work section para. 17). In other words, if all the problems of insecurity, flexibility, uncertainty, risk, boredom, burnout, etc. are imposed on individuals, it is of course necessary to equip them with tools to deal with these problems. Within this context, we can argue that this neoliberal discourse of precariousness-flexibility has indeed a strong affective appeal with the promise of freedom and autonomy as well as the promise of passionate work.

Now if we move from this general happiness industry and positive psychology to the Passionate Work Ethics, passion is today considered almost a necessity for both employees and employers. As Tokumitsu points out, “do what you love, love what you do” mantra is “the unofficial work mantra for our time” (2014), or, as McRobbie stated, “passion for work has become a normative requirement” (McRobbie, 2016, as cited in Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2021, p. 1844). This is clearly visible even in job adverts and shared posts I found on LinkedIn and other various mediums. Even if the examples here are not directly related to our discussion on freelance-gig jobs, I give these examples to show that we can follow the traces of Passionate Work Ethics even in corporate in-house office jobs:

“Strong interest and passion for gaming”, “Positive attitude, self-driven, able to work alone or as part of a team” – a game company looking for a game designer in Bursa

“We are looking for dedication, not experience”, “Fee-oriented applicants are not eligible” – a job advert for intern executive assistant in Ankara

“You should be autonomic, self-organized and self-disciplined”, “Do you want to get this Dream Job?” – a job advert for sales representative in Istanbul

“Those who have career goals, want to be their own boss, who are cheerful and bored with the boring working environment.” – a job advert for sales consultant in Ankara

“Those who are willing to take responsibility” – a job advert for assistant specialist for a project management office in Ankara

“You must be a motivated, self-driven, organized individual, and you should do well” – a job advert for remote online surveyor

“We are looking for enthusiastic, creative, well-organized, willing to learn...” – a job advert for remote representative for a travel company

“Those who have adopted merchandising sector as a lifestyle.” – a job advert for sales consultant in Ankara

“We value forward thinking individuals eager to contribute their creativity and passion to the success of Maison” – a job advert for sales representative of a fashion house in Istanbul

“Those who are enjoying teamwork and creative thinking”, “Those who are willing to learn” – a job advert for internship in a construction company in Ankara

“Those who want to improve themselves” – a job advert for salesperson in Sakarya

“Result-oriented, self-motivated, with a strong work ethic, attentive to details”, “Desire to grow quickly with a commitment to excellence”, “Desire to work as a team player while accepting substantial individual responsibility”, “Ownership and entrepreneurship, positive attitude, energy, openness to feedback, comfortable with a fast-changing environment” – a job advert for remote and part-time position in a data science company

“Willingness and ability to learn something new quickly”, “High tolerance for ambiguity” – a job advert for engineer in Istanbul

“Having ‘can do’ attitude” – a job advert for talent acquisition advisor in Istanbul

“Willingness and desire to engage with both Business Decision Makers and IT Decision Makers”, “Passion for making others successful”, “Willingness to travel”, “Learn it all mentality with desire to better understand both business and technology solutions” – a job advert for remote software development

In these job adverts, passion and other concepts that go hand in hand with it function reciprocally: on the one hand, for employees, it promises a job that they love, enjoy, in which they improve themselves and never get bored; on the other hand, for employers, it promises to find employees who will willingly give themselves to the

job, and who are motivated and devoted by themselves. We can say that this emphasis on psychological and emotional “merits”, such as “passion”, “desire”, “willingness”, “positive attitude”, “self-motivation”, “self-driven”, “enthusiasm” etc. is part of a new management style. At least, many academics do not hesitate to describe this phenomenon in this way (Fleming, 2009; Cederstrom & Fleming, 2012; Cederstrom & Spicer 2015). For example, as Linus Torvalds, an American computer scientist and software genius, puts it, companies now need to make their employees follow their passions instead of giving orders: “The best and most effective way to lead is by letting people do things because they want to do them, not because you want them do” (Torvalds & Diamond, 2001, p. 121). It is the cultivation of passion and pleasure at work that ensures the establishment of funny, informal and relaxed relationships, leading in turn to greater employee engagement and motivation (Hagel, Brown, Ranjan, & Byler, 2014).

There are also many empirical studies examining this phenomenon within the context of precarious and flexible freelance jobs, creative and intellectual immaterial labor in detail. For example, DePalma (2021) describes this phenomenon, which she calls “the passion paradigm”, “as the experience of attraction, enjoyment, motivation, and perseverance” (p. 134) at work. Rao and Neely, on the other hand, show that what they call a “passion schema” is at play, particularly in white-collar jobs, in hiring process and as a promotion criterion. According to this, companies generally favor people who love their job, who express their enthusiasm and passion, and these people can be promoted faster. We can say that passion functions here as an “emotional capital” (Rao & Neely, 2019, p. 131). Similar to this study, Rivera’s (2015) study on the recruitment processes of elite companies that recruit students from elite universities reveals that candidates have to show enthusiasm and desire in job interviews. Moreover, she also shows how class-laden the courage to “follow your passions” actually is.

On the other hand, we also see that the decision to “do what you love” or “go after the job you desire” can make many concessions, including unpaid work. This must be something companies are probably waiting for while rubbing their hands with glee. Mackenize and McKinlay (2021) argue that this concession is precisely what characterizes the cultural workers’ experience today. “Hope labor” that they describe as “unpaid or under-compensated labor undertaken in the present usually for exposure

or experience, with the hope that future work opportunities may follow” (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2021, p. 1842), transforms people who struggle in the ambivalent situation between hope and fear, desire and anxiety created by neoliberalism, into entrepreneurial subjects. This situation relegates social problems to the neoliberal individual as a risk bearer. And in such a situation, an unpaid, precarious, flexible work, no matter how bad, is easily accepted if it is thought to offer a way out of an uncertain future. This situation, as the trademark of the entrepreneurial subject, compels to act with the urge to constantly invest in the future. As we will see later in the case study, some of them wholeheartedly accept this situation as usual, but for others it is a worrying situation, and they say that they had to accept it (unpaid internships etc.) because they had no other choice. In short, for those who have the means to compensate for the negative aspects of precarity, hope labor can enable them to get the job they want in the long run, and it can keep them away from the jobs they do not want.²⁸ But for those who do not have these means, it means nothing more than a willingness to precarity, flexibility, selling their labor very cheaply, or in some case, even for free.

Cech’s (2021) research on university students and graduates also supports these arguments. Of the one hundred interviewees, three-quarters put the job they love and satisfies their desires before income and employment security. The reason why they find the “passion principle” attractive is that they hope to get rid of the boredom and drudgery of working life that awaits them after graduation by choosing a job they love and satisfies their desire. In fact, at least for the USA, Cech says that “the passion principle is a normative and even moral imperative, in that it weighs on other workers as a standard they know they are not able to live up to” (2021, p. 16). At this point, however, as Cech and other authors have shown, we need to question the class nature of the courage to pursue the job you love. Putting the fulfillment of desire, the pursuit of loved work above such things as income and employment security is possible, as Cech has shown, only for upper middle class and wealthy individuals who have some financial safety nets. People in this group have the economic means to wait for long

²⁸ Some call it “aspirational labor” (Duffy, 2016), “speculative labor” (Gregg, 2015) or “prospecting labor” (Fast, Ornebring, & Karlsson, 2016). In this study, I consider all of these as the state of being able to endure the present bad situation by relying on the hope of something good in the future. As such, the concept is close to Lauren Berlant’s concept of “cruel optimism”.

time if they want a regular job; they can have a gap year if they want; or they have the chance not to worry about some financial opportunities just to work in a job they love and can be happy with. On the other hand, it is not possible for the underprivileged to do job they love in decent and secure conditions, and moreover, passion-seeking pushes them into precarious, unstable, low-paid jobs with lots of debt (Cech, 2021, p. 25).

Another point Cech underlines is that the passion principle, which indicates “the belief that self-expression and fulfillment should be the central guiding principle in career decision-making” (2021, p. xii), as a cultural schema, creates an individualistic culture that pushes the individual to ignore the structural causes and attributing responsibility to individual choices. For many passion-seeker, this creates a situation where, if they do what they love, they can even tolerate long hours of low-paid precarious work. The passion principle, which is a very human impulse in its origin – that is, to get rid of the boredom and drudgery of working life – promises only to solve the work-related problems, which are actually social and political, on the level of individual desires. In this case, people who rightfully complain about their jobs, do not like their jobs, or who demand improvement in their working conditions are accused of not being able to find the job they love and not having the courage to search it. The “logic of hyper individualism”, pumped by the new neoliberal work ethic, “motivates workers to work hard and work well as a practice of self-care, shifting the locus of critique further away from institutions and more toward the self” (DePalma, 2021, p. 134). This is precisely the hallmark of neoliberal entrepreneurial subjectivity.

In this sense, we can say that the passion principle also has a “demand side” (Cech, 2021, p. 28). This means that the passion principle is more than simply a bait of “cunning”, “evil” bosses, it means rather that the employees voluntarily consent to work long hours, to the dysfunction of some social rights, to put their heart and soul in a job, to hustle culture and workaholism. On the other hand, if we recall Žižek’s metaphor of the postmodern father that I mentioned above, we can say that “the passion principle seems to offer solution to the tension between the ideal worker demands of the capitalist labor force and the cultural expectations for self-expression” (Cech, 2021, p. 23). In other words, capitalism’s need to produce obedient workers and individual’s need for authenticity, personal development, self-realization, and

fulfilling their desires are met in the working sphere. The passion principle is one of the affective mechanisms to resolve this tension smoothly at the individual level, but of course it solves this by connecting the workers to the capitalist work society “wholeheartedly”.

We have said that hope labor refers to the state of enduring bad conditions in the present with the hope of something better in the future. We have also stated that this may enable some people to get the job they love in the long run. But for many people, the situation is much worse. On the other hand, the situation is not perfect also for those who get the job they pursue. Morini, Carls, and Armanao (2014), in their study on freelance journalists’ experience of freelancing and precarity, show that hope and love for their job push them to embrace current conditions of insecurity and flexibility. Moreover, this situation can trap those who think they have the job they love – in the long or short run, it does not matter – in a “passion trap”. Passion trap is a kind of blindness that allows to tolerate and endure the bad conditions of the job, thanks to the euphoric state of working at a favorite job. The emotional, intellectual, conscientious, bodily etc. pleasures that the job provides can lead to ignoring all the negative aspects of work. Romanticizing the work by thinking that you are doing a valuable and meaningful job or believing that there is a “friendly” relationship with co-workers and the boss, that there is a “warm family atmosphere” at work... Such situations can enable to erase the negative dimensions of the work in one blow with the positive feelings they create. But, as the cautionary title of Jaffe’s (2021) book reminds us, no matter how much people love their work, “their work will not love them back”. The “do what you love, love what you do” ideology often creates a situation in which we must accept the self-exploitation, exhaustion, burnout, and loneliness.

Another important point to be noted here is that in a situation where individual working relationships are common in the freelance and self-employed style, being trapped in such a passion trap is the result of the imposition of being a competitive entrepreneur. In a situation where there is no socially organized opposition, where people have to act alone in their working relationships and there is no solidarity, and where people shoulder the risks and problems individually, in short, where people are “competitive entrepreneurs of his/her own labor capacities” (Morini, Carls, & Armano, 2014, p. 79), doing what you love or loving what you do is no more than an excuse to accept

conditions that you cannot afford the change. And it seems that this very strongly carries the risk of ending up being stuck in pleasure prison. Just like the witch in the *Hansel and Gretel*, whose purpose behind feeding the children with good meals and sweets is to fatten up and eat them, this kind of passionate working relations also can hide the boss with the aim of exploiting labor smoothly behind the pleasures it satisfies.

Similarly, Armano and Murgia (2017), in their study on highly educated precarious freelancers and project workers, reveal that passion trap and free work/hope labor lead to “self-exploitation... self-precarization... and the non-distinction between life and work” (p. 53). According to the authors, the experience of being freed from external control offered by the freelance, self-employed work experience creates an illusion of freedom. What seems like freedom at first glance later turns out to have dark sides: while avoiding external control, one can be caught in a more insidious internal control. Again, Murgia and Pulignano’s (2021) work, which is a study on highly educated self-employed workers, also reveals that promises such as freedom and autonomy, “enterprise discourse which, by promoting a management ideology, idealizes flexible employment and becomes part of workers’ identities” (p. 1356) attract these people affectively. At first glance, opportunities such as being able to do what you want whenever you want, chasing different extra jobs and not having a boss seem attractive, but ultimately this “freedom” seems to be a “freely insecure” (p. 1355) position that erases the distinction between work and leisure time.

It can be said that the appeal of this freely insecure position derives from “the trade-off between exploration and exploitation” which is “a dilemma expressed in the paradox of individualization” (Gherardi & Murgia, 2012, p. 82). As I mentioned before, certain promises of flexibility and precarity could be considered humanely and politically progressive liberatory to the extent that they mean liberation from strictly defined working relations, from determined working time and place. Such a way of working and living can be considered partially liberatory especially when compared to linearity, strict discipline, and rationalization of the Fordist way of working and living (Fleming, 2009). In this sense, the “exploration” dimension of precarity and flexibility is affectively attractive for many people. But on the other hand, as the authors have shown, there is always the danger of exploitation that the freedom of exploration obscures. This pseudo-autonomous position between exploration and

exploitation is, as Bonini and Gandini (2016) have said, in fact “coupled with a necessity to engage in forms of emotional labor and to recursively rely on personal networks of contacts to find employment” (p. 86). In other words, although they are freed from being “imprisoned” in a fixed working space and time, individuals still feel the necessity to find a job and solve the related problems on their own. Perhaps individuals are freed from having to sell their labor to a boss at a fixed time of a day, but this creates a situation where other necessities still persist and are experienced individually.

Another study that draws attention to the passion trap is Busso and Rivetti’s (2014) study on precarious researchers and academics. This work is noteworthy because academics and researchers may be the occupational group where hope labor and passion trap can be observed most seriously, considering the emotional and intellectual satisfaction of the job and its precariousness and flexible nature. The authors show that there are three types of enthusiasm and passion for academics: first, the cultural or creative passion that comes from doing the job (writing a paper, reading, lecturing, doing research etc.); secondly, social passion that romanticizes the job with the motivations such as being beneficial to humanity or society; and the third is the passion, which we call institutional passion, which establishes a commitment to the institution-university. Here again, it is revealed that in academia too, which is one of the professions where self-exploitation is prevalent, some affective-passionate mechanisms operate to romanticize the precarity and flexibility and make them bearable.

Cockayne’s (2015) study on digital media workers in San Francisco also focuses on the issue of the affective appeal of entrepreneurial subjectivity. In this study, Cockayne shows how the “entrepreneurial affect” turns work into a sphere of personal improvement, self-control, freedom, autonomy and satisfaction. So much so that, in Donzelot’s (1991) words, pleasure is not gained through work, rather work and pleasure become one and the same thing. Through the rewards it promises to deliver, this affective schema serves a “productivist” ideology and creates subjects who are insensitive to and even desirous of insecurity and flexibility, who romanticizes uncertainty and risk taking. Based on this convergence that Donzelot points out, also Sandoval claims that work functions “as a source of enjoyment and self-fulfillment”

(2017, p. 6) in modern managerialism. At this point, she identifies four approaches to the relationship between work and pleasure in social theory and management studies. The first one is the “do what you love” ideology presented as liberation from unfulfilling and exploited labor. This ideology promises “liberation from labor and to replace alienated toil with a fulfilling work life” (2017, p. 3). It may seem empowering and egalitarian, but as I mentioned above, it can also become a passionate trap. Second approach is that which says for a successful career desire must be renounced. According to the third approach, work is, as drudgery, the opposite of pleasure. Contrary to first approach, the theorists of this anti-work approach advocate “liberation from work”, not “liberation of work” (Weeks, 2005, p. 120). And finally, the approach emphasizing social change to overcome the contradiction between work and pleasure.

One of the most important things that all these studies show is that the promises of freedom and autonomy are the most attractive promises of the new neoliberal work society. This promises not only an experience of temporal and spatial freedom by overcoming the limitations of Fordist work arrangements and its corresponding linear life, but also promises that work is a sphere for self-realization and personal authenticity. For example, as Fleming (2009) pointed out, self-determination and personal authenticity have now become one of the core concepts of neoliberal managerial ideology. In other words, “those aspects of identity that were once relegated to non-work” (Fleming, 2009, p. viii), capabilities of “creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial ingenuity” (Fleming, 2009, p. 2) which were previously untouched are now activated at work. Instead of the “self-sabotaging work ethic” (Fleming, 2009, p. 2) in which fun and play are excluded, a cheerful neoliberal work ethic is now in circulation. In this sense, we can argue that the neoliberal managerial ideology as a “false positivity” (Fleming, 2009, p. 5) makes work almost the only area of existence with an emphasis on pseudo-authenticity and pseudo-individuality. Therefore, this delusion of individuality and free choice creates an illusion of freedom.

We can argue that this illusion arises from “the dilemma between labor’s autonomous self-arrangement and subordination to precarious work” (Wong & Au-Yeung, 2019, p. 245). As Wong and Au-Yeung’s study shows, especially single youth aged below thirty ambitiously embrace precarity as the pursuit of freedom. For these “freedom-seekers”, precarity, “with its allure of endless and better possibilities” (DePalma, 2021,

p. 154), means the removal of some binding obstacles to the realization of their dreams. They feel that a stable life – that is, a regular and “secure” job – contradicts their “innovative and venturesome” (Wong & Au-Yeung, 2019, p. 251) nature. The only motivation behind the interest in precarious jobs is of course not the pursuit of freedom. Others may incline to precarious jobs to make “fast money” in order to realize their dreams. On the other hands, some have to choose these jobs out of necessity. In this sense, the neoliberal work society characterized by insecurity, flexibility, and passionate work seems to be a response to the “routine, hierarchical, mind-deadening and mechanical” (Horgan, 2021, p. 51) jobs in the Fordist work society. In other words, precarity seems to be a response to people’s demands for greater freedom and autonomy at work. But while this gives more “control” over their career and lives, and strengths their autonomy, it also puts them at risk of income and job insecurity, which Horgan calls “the paradox of new work” (Horgan, 2021). However, as Wong and Au-Yeung have shown, despite this “price” some still choose what the authors named “precarious autonomy”. In other words, they prioritize a life full of risks and uncertainties but exciting and dynamic life over a secure and stable career.

Another noteworthy concept in this respect is self-exploitation. What is meant by self-exploitation is to work at the expense of self-exhaustion in a situation where the necessity of selling one’s labor is not perceived as a necessity, but rather desired. With excuses such as “I am doing what I love”, “I am having so much fun at this job”, “I like our workplace environment”, “we are like a family here”, “I am very close with my boss”, work can be experienced as an emotional affair rather than working relationship. In this case, it becomes normal to do unpaid work, to stay overtime, and to deal with work outside of working hours. Therefore, such emotionality and thus the self-exploitation carry the danger of turning life into a huge workplace. And the biggest threat here, I think, is that it is experienced under the name of freedom. The historically non-work areas of life are becoming part of the labor processes, with the quiet and affective encroachment of working time on leisure time. In this sense, with the commodification of “the playful elements of human personality”, work and leisure are starting to look more alike in the form of play and entertainment, which we can call “the gamification of work” (Horgan, 2021, p. 52). As I mentioned at the beginning

of this section, quitting and slacking practices such as Great Resignation, “quite quitting” etc. are becoming quite common, but on the individual level. In order to prevent this, solutions such as turning the workplace into a playfield, doing activities such as yoga and physical exercises in the workplace, providing training for “mindfulness” or any other personal development methods and wellbeing programs, creating a family atmosphere in the workplace, giving money to the employees for their entertainment expenses just like travel and food allowance etc. are being implemented.

It should be noted that the phenomenon of Passionate Work Ethics cannot be considered as an individual phenomenon of single employees, even if I say that it is an individual experience. In other words, the individuality is a form of subjectivity that is the hallmark of today’s “hyper individualistic” culture, society of “negative solidarity” and to that extent it is a social phenomenon that corresponds to the new neoliberal work society. This is why it needs to be taken seriously, since the Passionate Work Ethics constitutes a ground that offers the passionate commitment with the promise of freedom, autonomy, authenticity, and self-realization as a remedy to get rid of the drudgery of work, increase the motivation to work, and solve social problems derived from work on an individual level.

As I stated, the Passionate Work Ethics as a social phenomenon corresponds to the new neoliberal work society. In this sense, my claim is that we need to think of freelance-gig jobs which are becoming more and more widespread day by day, as I discussed in the previous section, directly within the context of the Passionate Work Ethics. The reason why I choose the freelance-gig jobs as a case study is my claim that the Passionate Work Ethics of the new neoliberal work society is behind the spread and preference of these jobs. As I shown throughout this section, one of the most important results of the passion paradigm is that it has opened the private sphere to the intervention with its affective appeal by disrupting the work-life balance in favor of work. This intervention responds both to employees’ aspiration for self-realization, autonomy, and freedom, and to employers’ demands for self-investment from their employees. But in most cases a paradox emerges to the detriment of employees: on the one hand, an autonomous and free subjectivity and on the other, disrupted and unsecured employment conditions. Therefore, to repeat once again, the Passionate

Work Ethics establishes a ground that makes this paradox bearable. In this sense, freelance-gig jobs also give the impression that they satisfy the employees' aspirations with promises of autonomy, freedom, spatio-temporal flexibility, self-realization, and fulfillment.

2.3.3. Certain Main Premises of Post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics

In this context, we can now distinguish the main features of the affective appeal of the contemporary neoliberal work society through the concepts that appear in the relevant literature, job adverts, and companies' websites and publications. What does the new neoliberal work ethic promise and promote most? Promised features of freelancing-gig work on many freelance job sites or companies' websites I have searched are high income and the opportunity to earn additional income; freedom; spatial mobility and temporal flexibility; opportunity to arrange the work-life balance in your own favor; opportunity for self-realization and personal development; suitable for the entrepreneurial spirit; opportunity to be your own boss as a solopreneur; job satisfaction; low stress; high efficiency... In addition to these promises, some personal shortcomings are also emphasized. For example, if you have not started to work in flexible freelance jobs yet, you may be timid and lacking in entrepreneurial spirit (we can call it YOLO (you only live once) ideology); or, if you are still working in a job you do not like, it may be because of your own wrong decisions... It is also stated that there are some requirements and some abilities to be possessed: to be passionate, to be accessible from anywhere at any time, to have a good time and cost management discipline, to be able to cope with financial anxiety and uncertainty, to create your own brand or to make yourself a brand... Within this context, I identified the following categories as the main features of the Passionate Work Ethics. In the research process, these general categories appeared repeatedly with different names. Moreover, as I will show later, these categories recurred in my case study as well. Therefore, I have gathered them in these general categories.

2.3.3.1. Narration of Freedom and Autonomy

The strongest promise of the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics is perhaps the call for freedom and autonomy. In fact, we can say that the promise of freedom is the aim of all the promises here. According to this, freelance jobs offer the possibility of a job

without boss, without any hierarchy, in which one can be one's own boss. In this context, employees have the freedom to choose the jobs they want, not to take on the responsibilities they do not want, and not to be attached to the relationships they do not want. It seems that the content of the promise of freedom of the freelance work organization is the freedom to choose where and when to work, the freedom to choose the job, the freedom to choose the customer and the freedom to adjust the workload.

The promise of freedom has a glimmer of freedom, especially for those who are tired of routine 9-to-5 working hours. It is claimed that the promise of freelance-gig jobs to work from wherever and whenever you want, against the temporal and spatial limitations of 9-to-5 regular jobs, liberates freelancers temporally and spatially. The belief that the opportunity to work wherever and whenever you want solves the rigidity and certainty of life makes freelance jobs attractive.

Another promise similar with the promise of freedom is the promise of autonomy. Freedom and autonomy seem to mean the same thing. However, autonomy rather refers to a way of working in which one is not responsible to anyone but himself. In this sense, we can perhaps say that autonomy is within the scope of freedom. The discourse “be your own boss” is the epitome of this. We have said that the discourse of “here we are a family”, which hides the hierarchy in the workplace and creates the impression of a friendly relationship with the boss, functions as a tactic of the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics. But what the freelance-gig working organization emphasizes is rather the possibility of working without a boss and without any corporate affiliation. Therefore, it is in fact a way out for those who think that corporate jobs hinder their freedom.

2.3.3.2. Spatiotemporal Flexibility and Ability to Adjust Work-Life Balance

The emphasis on freedom and autonomy takes us directly to the ability of adjusting spatiotemporal flexibility, and work-life balance. As I explained before, the post-Fordist neoliberal work organization has made precarity and flexibility in working life a norm. The promise of spatiotemporal flexibility of the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics is just the cover of this norm. This transformation from regular, secure jobs to flexible and insecure jobs is advocated with the claim that freelance jobs allow people to better organize their daily life, work-life balance, and create time for their hobbies.

On the other hand, it is also stated that the temporal flexibility is dangerous in terms of making working hours indefinite. Another important caveat is the risk of disruption in the income stream. But the point is that the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics puts all the responsibility back on the individual in the face of such risks. In other words, in the neoliberal work ethics, getting used to flexibility and being compatible with uncertainty and risk are emphasized as a virtue. It is claimed that this makes the person open-minded, increases problem-solving ability, help to get rid of strict patterns in life, and makes life more enjoyable. In this respect, one of the hallmarks of today's "entrepreneurial subjectivity" is precisely getting used to temporal flexibility and being brave in the face of risks and uncertainties.

2.3.3.3. Self-Realization and Self-Improvement

Another important promise is that freelance jobs provide the opportunity for self-realization, self-development and getting rid of meaningless, "bullshit" jobs. In this sense, work is seen as an activity that gives meaning to life, carries us forward in life, and contributes to our personal and inner development beyond simply being an activity that we earn our living.

As I stated while describing the promise of freedom, there is something here actually satisfying the desire for freedom. 9-to-5 regular jobs pushes people to stay where they work. It creates a lot of unnecessary, "bullshit jobs" just for employees to fill their shifts. But freelance jobs that one "freely" chooses are not like this: since people choose these jobs according to their interests and desires, they do not do a meaningless job. To the extent that they do a job they desire, they reach balance in life, realize themselves, establish their inner consistency, and reveal their potential as a result of the intellectual, bodily, and affective satisfaction. The belief that the work is unique to one's own desires and choices makes work a part of one's selfhood.

2.3.3.4. Affectional Satisfaction

Similar to the promise of self-realization and self-development, the promise that the nonpecuniary satisfaction is more valuable than pecuniary satisfaction should also be counted among the promises of the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics. According to this, working in a job that one does not like or desire does not satisfy him/her

affectively or mentally, not matter how high his/her salary is. It is recommended to love and desire one's job and to ignore all other material dimensions, so much so that one's affective and intellectual satisfaction becomes strong enough to overcome all material problems. Moreover, people's objection to financial problems related to their job are seen as their own fault for reasons such as lack of passion, not finding the job they desire yet, not having the courage to seek it etc.

As we see, in addition to the "promises" I have listed here, the Passionate Work Ethics also contains some "obligations" that shape the subjectivity of employees. These obligations are necessary to be able to develop in the freelance market, on the one hand, and to cope with the material (income fluctuation, irregular working hours, etc.) and moral problems (stress, pressure not to lose customers, loneliness, etc.) caused by the flexible and precarious work organization. Counting them again: being enthusiastic while working, being accustomed to uncertainty, considering risks as an opportunity and bringing flexibility in life... In fact, these obligations are precisely proof that freelance-gig work is not as positive as it seems.

The important thing here is that, as I mentioned above, the responsibility of coping with all these problems has been transferred to the employees, their personal financial means and psychological resilience. This undoubtedly creates an individual work and life ethics. As we will see in more detail later, it is essential for a freelance worker to "commercialize" himself/herself, turn himself/herself into an "advertisement" and become his/her own "brand" in order to survive in the freelance job market. CV's, previous works, portfolios, references... Everything becomes a capital in order to put oneself one step ahead of others. On the other hand, human relations also turn into a capital in the form of "network". Entering networks, having contacts with significant people is the key to survive. In fact, this shows us precisely the paradox of individuality. While the neoliberal work ethics praises individuality with an emphasis on autonomy, freedom, independence, it still establishes a relationship that is dependent on other individuals: dependency on customers, dependency on networks, etc. The promise of control over work-life balance is also not a guarantee. Adapting to the flexible and precarious working environment, and thus the obligation of constantly updating and improving oneself, obscures the distinction between leisure time and working time, as we will see in more detail later. Freelancers feel compelled to engage

in activities that contribute to work in their spare time, even if these activities are not directly generating income.

Within this context, while the neoliberal precarious and flexible work regime has attractive promises (that is, freelance, creative, autonomous, “cool” jobs, i.e., immaterial labor, are preferred to the extent that it puts an end to the drudgery dimension of work and makes it enjoyable and thus desirable), it also has its opposite, unattractive aspects. In other words, regular, Fordist labor regime is one in which working is seen and experienced as drudgery, but a flexible and precarious post-Fordist working regime is seen as an escape, a possibility of freedom and autonomy. However flexible and precarious freelance work also has its own unattractive aspects at the same time. In this sense, I argue that the Passionate Work Ethics functions precisely to maintain the tension created by this contradiction. Therefore, the case study of this thesis aims to precisely show this contradiction and how the Passionate Work Ethics works as the key with these promises to these contradictions.

CHAPTER 3

THE CASE STUDY

3.1. Worker-to-Be

3.1.1. Fordist vs. Post-Fordist Work Arrangement and the Passionate Attachment to Work

The neoliberal work society, in which precarity and flexibility have become the norm, corresponds to a new way of living. As I showed in Section 2.2., social relations shaped around Fordist and post-Fordist work and employment regimes were different from each other. Fordist work and employment relations constituted a society in which certainty and security were not as eroded as they are today. On the other hand, there is the neoliberal work society and way of living in which certainty and security have become the exception. We can trace these in many spheres, from emotional relationships to employment relationships, from individual experiences to collective experiences. In this subsection, I will descriptively present general affective orientation of the worker-to-be to work, in general, and freelance-gig work, in particular, and to the Passionate Work Ethics. Roughly speaking, their ambiguous attitude towards post-Fordist working regime (that is, the fact that flexibility and precarity are both attractive and unattractive), their negative attitudes towards work (that is, their unwillingness to work) come to the fore under this section. Thus, I will try to show how attractive the freelance-gig style of work is for the worker-to-be who are not yet involved in working life, and how the four elements of the Passionate Work Ethics that I deduced in the previous chapters are affectively received, how this ethics appeals to the interviewees, and how it works on them.

Firstly, when we examined the general affective orientation of the interviewees to work, the most salient themes that emerged in the answers to the question I asked about the meaning of work in the interviews are: work is perceived as a necessity; work is a

means rather than an end; and work is widely regarded as the opposite of freedom. There are of course those who have a positive approach to work. For example, there are those who positively accept that “work is an activity that keeps people busy”, “makes people feel useful”, and “establishes an order in life”:

It is something that “settle you down”, shapes you, ensures order. I have experienced what life is like when it is disorganized during the pandemic. That’s why order, work, having certain standards makes people a part of society. (WtB-3)

Otherwise, no matter how much money you have, you are looking for busyness, otherwise you will go crazy. You earn money for one year and do what you are passionate about for the other one year. (WtB-4)

On the other hand, there are also those who think that work is the “sphere of self-realization”. Some even think that “work is liberating”:

If you are doing the work you desire, it becomes your sphere of discovery, your sphere for self-realization. (WtB-6)

I think work is something that liberates you. I feel like work definitely doesn’t restrict your life. I think work definitely frees you up and increases what you can do, so I don’t think it restricts you at all. (WtB-3)

However, the negative attitude towards work is common among the interviewees. As I mentioned, there are various reasons for this. For example, thinking that “work is the opposite of freedom” is an important motivation behind not wanting to work:

I think work is completely against freedom. I wish we didn’t work. It doesn’t liberate you, but it can empower you, especially if you are a woman. But not liberating, I would say. For me, work and freedom are completely opposite. (WtB-5)

That’s why work is bad. People spend the best part of the day indoors. So, everyone is unhappy. You’re following the orders of a stupid person. (WtB-14)

Work is of course the opposite of freedom, it’s restrictive. You have a responsibility that you have to do all the time and you have to make time for it. (WtB-12)

As we have seen in these cases, work is thought of as the opposite of freedom, as something restrictive and limited, and this is what lies behind the motivation not to work. However, we can observe that the meaning attributed to work changes,

especially when the pressure of earning a living and having a job is felt more after the graduation. This process starts with the realization that “working is inevitable and necessary”. Anyone who thinks that work is the opposite of freedom is also aware that work is necessary and inevitable. For example, WtB-5, who thinks that work is opposite of freedom, also accepts that work is a necessity:

Because work is work at the end of the day. If you have to work, there is no peace there. (WtB-5)

Similarly, WtB-14 realized that she had to work in order to continue her life and meet some of her needs:

I just feel like, sometimes I think a lot that I need a certain amount of money to live, so I need to do these things, to meet some basic needs. (WtB-14)

WtB-12, who thinks that work is opposite of freedom and restrictive, realized at some point of her life that work and making a living are a necessity. She thinks that “work is a means, not something to put at the center of one’s life”. But she also admits that work, and therefore money, has a “liberating” dimension within the social relations we live in:

Yes, I didn’t want to, or I thought I wanted to, actually. Why, because you graduate and in the modern world you need money. That’s why you have to work. (...) On the one hand it is like that, but on the other hand the money you earn gives you freedom. So, work is something that both restricts and provides money to be free, it’s a cycle. (WtB-12)

WtB-12’s statement that work has a dual function that both restricts freedom and provides financial means for freedom is important. As I mentioned while discussing Fredric Lordon and his conceptualization of the affective economy in Section 2.1., money and work functions as the most fundamental object of desire in the capitalist *epithumé*, as it is the only way to survive in capitalism. To the extent that the way to satisfy all desires passes through the mediation of money, work as a means of making money becomes the most fundamental object of desire. Money and work can create the material opportunity to have access to endless choices, and this may seem liberating. On the other hand, as almost all interviewees are aware, working also has a dimension that restricts freedom and shapes subjectivity – in an undesirable way.

We can observe this situation clearly in WtB-6's case. Desiring to "establish an order of her own" and stating that she is "fond of her freedom", WtB-6 realized that the necessity for working made the independent life she wanted to live impossible. In this context, by accepting that her aspirations are "idealistic", she has come to the point of thinking that doing what she loves will make her happy at least. WtB-6 thinks that "work grinds people on its own cogwheels and shapes them". And, for her, this situation pushes people to "necessarily make some concessions". Like many peoples, WtB-6 accepts the inevitability of this necessary relationship too. According to her, the best thing to do under these conditions is to "find a pleasurable job that can meet the costs of the concessions". A satisfaction worthy of the concessions can at least make this necessary relationship bearable. A pleasurable job, in contrast with an unpleasant job, also increases the motivation to endure all its negativities. In fact, "seeking ways to satisfy our needs" in the face of the necessity of working and all the negativities brought by this necessity, according to WtB-6, is also a necessity to "survive in this system that will not change". She states that "only in this way can we survive and preserve our presence", evoking the concept of *conatus* in the very Spinozist sense.

In other words, work is perceived as an obligation that temporally and spatially binds on the one hand, but also as an opportunity that enables one to achieve his/her desires and thus become free. This paradox creates the affective limbo that the Passionate Work Ethics plays on. In this regard, the contradiction between "not wanting to work" and "having to work" also creates a distinction between the "plane of reality" and the "plane of desire". The interviewees themselves make a distinction between aspirations and reality. For example, without my intervention, many interviewees answered my question "What job should a new graduate in Turkey do?" by making a distinction between the plane of "desire" and "reality". It is very important for the interviewees to make such a distinction and to understand how this distinction is experienced, because it contains a lot of information on their desires, expectation, fears and hopes, and how they perceive the existing reality.

I asked the interviewees the question "What job should a new graduate in Turkey do?" and asked them to put in order these four options from their point of view: "the job you love and desire", "the job that makes you feel peaceful and comfortable while

doing it”, “the job that matches your abilities”, “the job with high salary”. The point that should be emphasized in the answers was that almost all of the interviewees distinguished between the plane of “desires” and the plane of “reality”. The most prominent answers at the plane of desires were “desired job” and “peaceful job”. On the other hand, the most prominent answers at the plane of reality were “high salary” and “peaceful job”.

What the interviewees meant by the plane of reality was the Turkey’s general living standards and the current employment regime. Since they thought that the working life, which they had an opinion on from their own experiences or the experiences of other people around them, was stressful and unpleasant, the most reasonable choice at this plane was that the work should be financially and morally satisfying. The desire for money and peace is more dominant at this plane because they think that it is difficult for a person to find a job that suits their desires or abilities, or even if there is such a job, they think that it is not suitable for living in prosperity in Turkey.

On the other hand, there is the plane of desires based on aspirations. At this plane, where the general living standards and the current employment and labor regime are not taken into account, “desires” and “aspirations” are placed in the first place, and it is followed by the “peaceful job”. Doing the desired job is ideally one step ahead of other choices, as it is thought that it provides motivation to work, provides happiness and peace in working life, and thus earns more money. Within this context, we can say that doing a desired job in fact provides both material and moral satisfaction for many people.

From this point of view, freelance-gig working seems more desirable, attractive and more satisfying for interviewees compared to regular, office-based working. Most of my interviewees affectively aspire and affirm the uncertain, risky and flexible way of living. It appears that the flexible and uncertain way of living is affectively “attractive”, “exciting” and “liberating”; a “regular” and “secure” life, on the other hand, is considered “boring” and “restrictive”. This distinction is important in understanding the motivations for flexible and precarious freelance working. In this regard, the most attractive feature of flexible and precarious freelance-gig jobs is the motivation for “freedom”, “autonomy”, “spatial and temporal flexibility”, “self-

realization”. As in the case of WtB-2, who is a social science student who learns software developing before graduation and introduces himself as a “software developer and entrepreneur”, freelancing is the only option, rather than any other option, for those who want to “take his life completely into his own hands”:

Because when I work at a corporation, my control is in the hands of the team I work with and the boss. I would do anything to avoid that, but at the same time I need to earn enough money to live on. But I don’t want to stay passive in my comfort zone, and I think freelancing is the only way to do that. (WtB-2)

In this respect, we can say that regular, office-based jobs are considered boring and restrictive, as if these kinds of jobs are an obstacle to freedom and being yourself:

My parents are civil servants, they always worked in places they didn’t want to. That’s why I feel like this is a demanding life, I didn’t want it so much, I want to be where I want when I want. That’s why I consider civil servant as restrictive. (WtB-7)

It seemed very boring to me: banks, audit firms, numbers, office life... Even when I talk about it now, something soulless comes to my mind. The 9-to-5 life makes me extremely nervous. It doesn’t feel realistic to have to tie certain hours of my day to a certain place. Such an order has been created and we are forced to do it. These ideas disturb me. (WtB-12)

WtB-7 and WtB-12 were not the only ones who stated that a “linear”, “regular” working life was restrictive. Most of the interviewees answered my question by comparing linear and non-linear life courses and stated that between these two, the non-linear life course was more “liberating” and “full of life”.

The flexibility is a great comfort, you can direct your life the way you want. (WtB-3)

In the past, people could not go out of certain limits. They couldn’t get out of the pressure of family or environment. It’s a simple life, there’s nothing different, it’s all the same. I see that those who are starting university or something like that are overcoming these limits a little bit more. (WtB-10)

Nowadays the concept of “normal” is more questionable. I think it’s a good thing that everyone is trying to make their own path. (WtB-12)

A regular, office-based working life is the complete opposite of the flexible, positively ambiguous lifestyle that these young people I interviewed aspire, in which there are too many options and the paths open to them are endless. On the other hand, the spatio-temporal flexibility and freedom-autonomy afforded by freelance work seem very

attractive because it fits the way of life and personhood they aspire. In this sense, instead of having a “regular”, “linear” personhood shaped by the regular, linear life course identified with regular jobs, the qualities of “being yourself”, “being able to do meaningful work”, “authenticity” which are thought to be offered by flexible freelance jobs, are more attractive – despite all its handicaps. Despite all its handicaps, WtB-7 too seems to prefer freelance work:

I know that freelancing has its problems: you can be called at any time etc. But it is more productive and environmentally beneficial than office life. From this point of view, freelancing can be configured to live more. Since the negativities of the office life comes from the work itself, freelancing makes more sense to me if we compare the two. You don’t have to be in a certain place at a certain time, you don’t see people you don’t want to see... Psychologically, freelancing seems more bearable because it is more abstract. (WtB-7)

Apart from those who affirm the freelance job and the flexibility as “lesser evil”, there are also those who “wholeheartedly” aspire it:

In freelancing, first and foremost, working according to your own desire is a plus. I think flexibility is a huge plus temporally and spatially. If I want to go to Antalya to work, a computer is enough. (WtB-10)

The flexibility of freelancing is such a good feature. Freelancing, being your own boss, being able to work whenever you want is an incredibly positive thing. (WtB-3)

In these cases, the temporal and spatial flexibility offered by freelancing is affirmed in terms of providing temporal and spatial freedom. In this sense, for young people who are indecisive about not knowing what to do after graduation, the linear life course and the corresponding regular work are considered as an obstacle in the sense that all possibilities come to an end. On the other hand, the freedom offered by freelance work becomes attractive in terms of being able to act in this uncertain atmosphere and to wander between different alternatives. As WtB-15 who is in such indecision, stated:

The linear one gives confidence that there is actually a route. But I don’t have such a route in my head. I don’t really know what I want to do myself, I haven’t thought about it, so I want to see new things. (WtB-15)

In this respect, he clearly admits that the uncertainty is exciting and states that he wants to “explore different limits” and “see different paths” apart from the route offered by the linear life course. We can say that freelance work precisely meets the demand for

“freedom” and “autonomy”, which are the preconditions of today’s non-linear life course. We can clearly see this also in the cases of WtB-4 and WtB-6:

I prefer it in terms of freedom. Actually, personally, I would rather work on my own than with someone else. (WtB-4)

Being autonomous is a very precious thing for me. I’m not used to someone coming into my life and organizing it without me. (...) In freelancing, I have the chance to set my own working hours. I have more control. I am less dependent on the employer. It seems relatively more sustainable for me. (WtB-6)

Within this context, we saw how the non-linear life course and post-Fordist work arrangement is affirmed. But there is also a different picture on the other side. In contrast to the praise of flexibility and precarity, and non-linearity, there is also the search for certainty and material well-being. The flexibility and non-linearity created by post-Fordist work arrangement is embraced as the road to freedom, self-realization, and autonomy but on the other hand, the economic insecurity it creates is a worrying situation. Many of my young graduate interviewees are aware that there is a distinction between linear life course, which is characterized by a regular work arrangement, and non-linear life course, which is characterized by flexible and precarious work arrangement. And this is not a one-dimensional experience. In other words, while this transformation has some advantages (more freedom, getting rid of drudgery, the opportunity to try different paths, etc.), it also has some disadvantages (an economically insecure life, many obstacles to achieving welfare in life, etc.).

The common point in all these cases is that, although uncertainty (in positive sense) and flexibility seem to promise positive things in terms of life course, almost everyone is afraid of economic uncertainty, that is, precarity. We see that flexibility and precarity are not fully embraced in all cases; there is also an awareness of its negative consequences. For example, WtB-7 conceptualizes “precarity” as a situation different from “uncertainty” and states that he “want to see social state policies come back” in the face of precarity.

Here, we see that the positive aspects of freelance-gig work, which we have mentioned above, are also an element of anxiety. In other words, attractive features can become unattractive features at the same time in some cases. For example, we have said that

freelancing is attractive because the opportunity for working in spatiotemporally flexible conditions makes you feel free. But this temporal and spatial flexibility is also seen as unsettling as it occupies leisure time and disrupts work-life balance:

I want my work to end at workplace. It makes me very uneasy. I also want my work time to be specific. You never know when you're going to get a task, when you're going to ask for something. It's a constant "in-case" situation. It's a job that shortens my attention span and keeps me on constant alert. (WtB-5)

I think flexibility is bad. The employer can exploit you very badly because of flexibility. It actually deceives the employee by imposing "work when you want, you are free". But under the guise of freedom, they exploit us much more. That's why I prefer 9-to-5. Otherwise, when private life and work life mixes, you lose your balance. (WtB-11)

The cons are actually too many. I know a friend of mine who doesn't sleep for 48 hours because he has a deadline. (WtB-17)

But in my own experience, and what I've seen in software sector, this time management can turn your whole life into a job. When you sit down to code, you can do it until 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning. That's the other dark side of it. (WtB-15)

On the other hand, the feeling of freedom and autonomy arising from flexibility is accompanied by the concern "whether my income will be regular" or "whether my life will be secure":

But there is nothing to praise about flexible work. Even though I've never been an office person, a person who can fit in 9-to-5 life, I still can't praise flexibility. You have no security etc. in your life. (WtB-18)

But the bad thing is that it's not regular, it's flexible. If there's no work, if you can't find a job, there's a problem, you don't get paid. (WtB-10)

Also, unlike a regular salary, a freelancer does not have a regular income. You can earn a lot one month and not earn a penny for three months. That's why self-financial discipline is a must to be a good freelancer. (WtB-2)

In this regard, at the opposite pole of the feeling of "freedom" and "autonomy", the most intense negative feeling created by flexibility and precarity is "anxiety". The liminal process,²⁹ in which the interviewees cannot see or predict their future and do

²⁹ It would not be wrong to argue that the transition from graduation to the labor market is experienced as a "liminal" experience. Anthropologist Arnold van Gennep coined the concept of "liminality" at the beginning of the 20th century, and then Victor Turner developed it. (Bamber, Allen-Collinson, & McCormack, 2017) In more modern times, the concept has been used to refer to rites of passage as well

not know what to do, makes the future anxious for them. Therefore, flexible and precarious freelance working and the corresponding unsecure and non-linear life arrangement seem worrisome in this situation:

It's like a stomachache, like a headache. It's a state of constant swaying, you want to stand still, but it's like swaying on the subway, you try to maintain your position but you can't resist. (WtB-5)

Despair... Because, not only in your working life, but in all spheres of life, you cannot set a concrete ideal, everything is very fluid. So, you don't have a hope or an ideal that you can say you will or will not reach. (WtB-18)

as political and cultural transformations. During liminal periods, traditions may lose their consistency, and previously assumed future events may be called into question. It is possible for new institutions and practices to emerge because the breakdown of order during liminal periods produces a flexible and mutable atmosphere. Additionally, the concept has been broadened to cover liminal, risky, and uncertain experiences in post-Fordist society.

Liminality marks the transition of individuals in a society from their old roles to new roles. What attributes liminality to this transitional process is the uncertain nature of the process. In other words, the outcome of this transition is not clear. In this sense, the concept refers to a state of "betweenness". There have also been many interventions on the concept in the literature. For example, we can accept that there is a difference between "liminality" as a temporary and positive uncertainty, and "limbo" as a process that may take a long time and cannot be predicted whether it will end. (Scott, Jakobsen, Rye, & Visser, 2022) On the other hand, apart from temporary and permanent liminality (Johsen & Sorensen, 2015), we can consider "occupational limbo" (Bamber, Allen-Collinson, & McCormack, 2017). According to this, while liminality in its original, anthropological sense refers to a temporary and transient process, permanent liminality (or limbo) refers to "a state of being neither-this-nor that or both-this-and-that" (Bamber, Allen-Collinson, & McCormack, 2017, p. 1514). Occupational limbo, on the other hand, according to the authors, is a state of being "always-this-and-never-that where this is less desirable than that". (Bamber, Allen-Collinson, & McCormack, 2017, p. 1514)

As I stated before, student life corresponds to such a liminality. We can think of student life as a time "in parentheses". The moment of transition out of the "parentheses" is a very important threshold, a moment of decision that determines what one's life will turn into. Perhaps this threshold was more easily crossed in Fordist society; the later stages were much more specific and stable. However, considering that we live in the non-linear life course of the flexible post-Fordist society, it is possible to say that this process is now much more chaotic. That is why I think it is important to understand how these youths experience this uncertainty and what ways they prefer to when the commonly known formal ways do not offer any way out.

The most obvious symptom of uncertainty in my interviewees was "temporal myopia", that is, they "did not know what to do" after graduation. This is true for almost all. With the concept of temporal myopia, I refer to the inability to see long-term consequences of the decisions. We can say that this "inability to see/predict the future" is a natural symptom of uncertainty. This was prevalent among my interviewees. In fact, there was hardly anyone who could make a long-term plan. With the question "How far ahead can you foresee?", I tried to understand this situation. The fact that no one can say more than 2-3 years reveals that temporal myopia is deeper and severe.

Within this context, there is no certainty, even for those who know more or less what to do. Some are more or less sure what to do, but whether it will come true is a mystery to them and they are also aware that they must create alternative options. In this context, they have to show the "courage", "entrepreneurial spirit", "progress" that neoliberal subjectivity expects from them, and to be "flexible" and "agile" in order to survive in the flexible and precarious labor market.

What is important here is that the distinction between positive and negative aspects of precarious and flexible freelance work arrangement did not divide the interviewees into two groups, but emerged at different moments in a single interviewee's narrative. Even if there is a distinction between those who are more prone to freelance working and those who are less prone to do it, I think the important thing here is that a single person's affective orientation towards freelance working is also ambiguous. In all these examples, precarious and flexible freelance work arrangement is described as a mixture of fear-excitement, anxiety-hope. Indeed, *fluctuatio animi*, which Spinoza defines as a "human condition", corresponds to the state of fluctuation and indecision of the soul. Flexible and precarious freelance working and the corresponding unsecure and non-linear life arrangement sometimes becomes exciting as a way to new possibilities, it raises the power to do (*conatus*, as Spinoza calls it); sometimes it becomes a factor of anxiety and fear, imprisoning people with an affect of insecurity. And I can easily say that this is a general trend in the interviewees. Sometimes, I understood this by catching the discursive inconsistencies and contradictions in the different answers to different questions in the flow of the interview, and sometimes, the interviewees express this confusion directly. However, despite the negative aspects of it, and despite this ambiguity, flexible and precarious freelance working arrangement can still mostly be experienced as exciting, pleasing, and hopeful, and is preferred. As I mentioned, the reason for this preference is that the flexible freelance work arrangement and the corresponding lifestyle complies much better with the "free", "flexible", "independent" lifestyle they aspire.

It should be noted here that my interviewees' affective orientation towards the Passionate Work Ethics' promises are intuitive and prospective, as they had not yet involved in job market. In other words, we have seen how they affectively perceive this flexible and precarious freelance working arrangement, to what extent they object to it, and to what extent they desire it. And we have seen that the Passionate Work Ethics' promises are largely receiving a positive response from them, creating positive feelings towards widespread flexible and precarious freelancing – although they still have some reservations. Therefore, we can say that Passionate Work Ethics' appeal is forward-looking for the worker-to-be who are not yet involved in the job market. So, I argue that in their liminal experience, the Passionate Work Ethics creates a "cruelly

optimistic” attachment, leading them to seek the work they love in a cruelly optimistic way.

3.1.2. Cruel Optimism: Hope Labor

As I mentioned before, one of the tricks of the Passionate Work Ethics is that it legitimizes selling one’s labor power by making concessions in the present in the hope for future benefits. In this study, the concept “hope labor” refers to the fact that people accept unpaid internships, precarious and flexible jobs with low wages occupying their spare time simply because these jobs pave the way for future access to the jobs they desire.

Two scenarios emerge for graduates in the transition from education to labor market who see that the current working and employment relations are insecure: either to start working under these conditions and gain experience as soon as possible, or to wait for their desired and preferred jobs. Of course, the second way is a decision that can be taken by the financially advantaged people, and precisely in this sense, it points to a class distinction. There are those who choose the second way, but for the majority, although the first way is actually a necessity, it can be internalized and adopted as if it were a choice made freely and voluntarily.

The first element of hope labor is the legitimization of the usurpation of spare time by work-related activities. For example, WtB-2, who decided to become a freelance software developer but did not acquire the necessary skills for this job in his undergraduate education, states that he dedicates all his free time to learning software development “with a superhuman effort”:

Since I am not a software developer, I worked constantly with superhuman effort, I worked hard. We took small jobs, we constantly improved ourselves.
(WtB-2)

WtB-2, who finds freelance software development “attractive” and wants to do this job after graduation, obviously wants this job “wholeheartedly”. He knows that there are skills that he needs to acquire in order to do this job, and he is aware that he needs to improve himself and update his skills. In contrast with WtB-2’s “desirous” attitude, WtB-5’s attitude is negative and pessimistic. WtB-5, who is disturbed by the working

conditions of the jobs in her field and complains about the low possibility of finding a job as she wants, thinks that her skills are unrequited in the job market, and she is aware that she needs to update herself. But unlike WtB-2, this is a negative necessity for WtB-5. While WtB-2 is not disturbed by and affirms the “superhuman effort” he undertakes to get the job he desires, this effort is an obligation imposed on her to survive in the job market for WtB-5. She is aware that in order to fulfill the “obligation” to survive in the job market, she needs to improve herself by updating her skills, doing internships and increasing her social capital. This brings us to the second element of hope labor, that is, the legitimizing the unpaid internships or low-paid precarious jobs. WtB-5, “reluctantly” did such internships but she clearly states that it “gets on her nerves”:

I also did two internships. Since networking is so important, I feel like if they throw me into the job market, it’s like throwing me into the water to teach me how to swim. I don’t know how much I can hold on. Sometimes I think, it was a big chore. But the fact that we were desiring this was getting on my nerves a lot. (WtB-5)

Similarly, WtB-4 states that he can do an unpaid internship, even if he admits that it is opposite of what he said previously about freedom and work:

I will do it. It goes against what I just said just before about freedom, but I would do it because the university education is not good. I will do it thinking how I will compensate for my university education. (WtB-4)

The contradiction here is noteworthy. Both WtB-4 and WtB-5 feel the economic pressure imposed on them by the wage labor relationship, and therefore they accept that unpaid internships are a necessity despite their ideas about freedom and work. To the extent that it seems impossible to get rid of this necessity, the most reasonable thing to do is to adapt it with the least possible damage. Because the way they can join in the job market in the future is to endure these negative conditions in the present.

The word “to endure” has a negative connotation of course. While some consider concessions made in the present as “enduring” for something positive in the future, for others like WtB-2, this is “desirable”. For example, WtB-1 thinks that he should do an internship in order to have a strong CV, so he does not hesitate to do an unpaid internship. But he affirms this as a process that develops and educates himself rather than considering it as an external obligation, a kind of drudgery. He considers the

unpaid work of the interns in the office positively (because they learn the job, the boss asks their opinions and appreciate them, offers a chance to be included in the team etc.). He even thinks it motivates the interns. His motivation stemming from the idea that what he learned in the internship will benefit him in the future, pushes him to think about working in the same place again even though the boss does not pay him:

It went very well for me. I participated in a competition, I took responsibility as a team member, I did a lot of work. That was the reason why I was thinking of working there again, although she didn't pay me any money, I got the food allowance by talking to him. (WtB-1)

On the other hand, WtB-6 is among those who willingly accept unpaid internships for her dream job. For her, such an internship is an activity that develops herself and that is why she should do it:

Actually, in both of these internships I did, my motivation was spontaneous. It was not a concern for CV for me. I wanted to learn how the academy works. Since this was my goal, it never felt like a chore. In fact, it provided me with an autonomous space, I was interacting with master's and PhD students and professors, so it was beneficial for me. At that time, I didn't worry about money because I had a scholarship. But now, a compulsory internship is not nice. (WtB-6)

As we can see, she accepts the unpaid internship as legitimate, thinking that this internship she did in the first years of her education will benefit her in the future, but unlike WtB-1, she admits that it is an unpleasant situation when she graduated. Like WtB-6, WtB-17 was not disturbed by the unpaid internship she did in her first years, both to enrich her CV and to "get a network". But later, when she could not get the reward of her efforts during the transition from education to labor market, she became distant with the idea of unpaid internship and started to find it damaging.

As we can see, hope labor is actually a kind of gamble. Concessions made in the present for something positive in the future are always risky. The risks and the concessions may not always produce the desired results. Therefore, the psychological burden of this process is very high. To the extent that there is such a gamble, some people are happy at the end, while for others this road may end in a dead end. WtB-6 and WtB-18 are examples who could not find what they hoped for in return for their hope labor and had to take a different path. On the other hand, WtB-11 is one of the lucky ones. But despite her luck, she admits how unsettling it is:

I experienced it myself. I said myself, “bear with it, bear with it, it will pay off,” and it did. But it was a very exhausting process. It was a process that made me physically and psychologically ill. I think we are forced to do this too. Because we can’t achieve anything in the short term. We’re always saying “hang in there, maybe you’ll get a promotion, maybe something will happen”, we’re always putting up with it. (WtB-11)

Unlike WtB-11, WtB-12 is an example who is lucky but still positively affirms this situation. She, too, worked free for a while to get a job. But she is still not disturbed by the time she worked for free. Because she thinks that the unpaid working period has advantages not only for the employer but also for the employee:

Actually, I’m okay with this. In fact, in the internship, not only the company is testing you, but you are also testing the company, and you have the right to refuse. If I start directly, maybe this will make me nervous, it may bind me, I don’t know them either. I learn something, I see myself, also network... (WtB-12)

WtB-12 is tempted to have the right to “reject” that employees have during the period of unpaid work or internship. In addition to the “opportunities” to learn the job and be included in networks, the point that needs to be underlined here is that this right of refusal gives a sense of freedom to people like WtB-12 in the face of the bindingness of the job. As I mentioned before, hope labor is a gamble, and those who have more financial means lose less and even have a better chance of winning in the future, as they have the opportunity to compensate for their losses in the gamble. WtB-12 is such an example. Even though the necessity of working is valid for her like everyone else, she still has the opportunity to wait for the job she likes and not accept the job she does not like. That is why she can do an unpaid internship while looking for a job she loves, and she can accept precarious and flexible work. While WtB-11 makes concessions and endures something to get the job she wants with all the opportunities at her disposal, WtB-12 has the opportunity to progress by trial-and-error in the search for the job she desires, without having to put up with anything. In such a situation, WtB-11’s searching for security and certainty may seem like an obstacle for WtB-12’s life course.

In this context, we can say that hope labor and its cruelly optimistic attachment creates an affective limbo between hope and fear. We can say that the affect gives its main color to this affective scheme is vacillation, or as Spinoza says, *fluctuatio animi*. We

can understand this from the prevalence of contradictory feelings in the discourse of a single person: on the one hand, the search for security and certainty, on the other hand, the desire to overcome certainty which is considered an obstacle to freedom; seeing uncertainty as something hopeful on the one hand, and as worrying on the other... In this regard, the affective vacillation is enabling the Passionate Work Ethics, which allows people to affirm the precarious and flexible working as if it were a possibility of freedom, to function efficiently and facilitating its operation. In other words, hope labor's affective strategy creates "passive joyful affects" in Spinozian terms in people who oscillate between fear and hope, making them manageable.

For Spinoza, as we saw, "hope" is from the very beginning a sad emotion: "inconsistent joy arising from the idea of a thing future or past, of whose outcome we are in some doubt" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 12. Definition). In this context, the affect of "hope" that emerged in the interviewees emerges in the state of being uncertain (uncertainty of finding a job, uncertainty of not being able to do the job that one loves, uncertainty of where to live, uncertainty of where life will go...). The affect of hope creates the joy that things can get better in the future and prevents getting stuck in a dead end. We can clearly see this in WtB-1's statement:

I have two scenarios. In one, I can more or less predict twenty years. In the other, one year at most. The first one is to find a job abroad. If I can find a job in one of the places I am currently applying for, I think I can do what I love there and I can hold on and learn the job, then I think I can go back and continue in Turkey. The other one... all options are equal, extremely uncertain. (WtB-1)

However, for our discussion, what is dangerous here is that this affect is passive and unstable. In other words, the affect of hope is a symptom of the dejected state of being and is tainted by that grief. For example, although the desire not to work is dominant, the dream of the interviewees is the hope of finding a job that is close to the job they love and desire, as they are left without a way out from the necessity of working. In fact, this "optimism" does not make life easier, but rather makes it possible to endure, tolerate the troubles. Moreover, it allows to see this toleration and endurance as a "debt" to be paid for the "heaven" to be achieved in the future:

Out of despair. Out of desperation you hope something will happen. Of course you're not a hundred percent sure. But at some point you approach it with the

idea that if you endure, you will get the result somehow. (WtB-11)

On the other hand, the future of the working relations is also uncertain for most interviewees. It carries both promising and worrying developments. However, what needs to be emphasized here is that the freelance and flexible working regime is positive and hopeful. We can also see that the flexible working regime is motivating to work:

The scheduling feature of freelancing is such a good thing. So freelancing, being your own boss, being able to work whenever you want is an incredibly positive thing. (WtB-3)

Another important point is that the individual attitude stems from the state of being hopeful. Within the affective state created by the Turkey's general living standards, working conditions, widespread precarity and uncertainty, it is thought by interviewees that it can be overcome by individual effort. But it is also obvious that the reduction of hope to individual effort is problematic. For example, WtB-12 affirms uncertainty as an opportunity for freedom, and although she sees the future of working relations as hopeful in this respect, she also states that she is annoyed with the fact that this situation reduces all responsibility to individual effort:

In the past, the more effort you put in, the better life you had, but now... Nowadays, if you are not agile, you live a stable life and you cannot rise, but there is a possibility. It depends on you. This seems a bit sad and dangerous to me. Because as an unambitious person, I just want a peaceful life, I just want to do enough and be at peace. I would never go down that road, I mean, I don't want to be very rich or anything like that. So it's definitely going somewhere good in terms of freedom, but I don't know, I'm not sure. (WtB-12)

For those who think that they lack the tools and abilities of "survival" in the current working regime, this "freedom" can turn into a burden that is hard to bear, a factor of anxiety and fear. And this leads us to fear and despair which is an affect that goes hand in hand with hope.

It is obvious that "fear" is a sad affect. According to Spinoza, "fear" is "inconstant sadness arising from the idea of a thing future or past, of whose outcome we are in some doubt" (*Ethics*, III. Book, 13. Definition). When doubt disappears, "hope" turns into "trust", which is joyful, and "fear" turns into "desperation". Fear is such a powerful affect that "it can make you want what you do not want, vice versa". As we

saw before, this power comes from its temporality. In other words, the anxiety of fending off an evil that is supposed to happen in the future with a more harmless evil in the present, causes the future to usurp the present.

We can say that the common fear, anxiety and pessimism that I identified in the interviewees have several reasons: fear of the uncertainty of the future, fear that reality would not match desires, fear of not having the qualities to distinguish oneself from others, fear of isolation, fear of worsening working conditions:

That's why I've always been inclined to set in my own way, but that's not always possible. One day when I'm more involved in the "real world", it might cause a mental breakdown. (WtB-6)

After that, of course, it's a bit uncertain. The highest I can reach is to open my own office, but for that I need to have millions of dollars, so I'm getting pessimistic at that point. (WtB-4)

I am very depressed about this because I think digitalization will turn everything upside down. I hear horrible things. As someone who is not very tech-savvy, I don't consider myself as very hopeful. The boundary between work and private life will become much more fluid, indistinguishable, and I am uncomfortable with that. (WtB-5)

I'm drifting, I don't know. I'm not someone who has goals in life or anything like that. Again, this is a situation inherent in the system. But I have no such hope. I can't foresee it. (WtB-11)

As we have seen, for Spinoza, "vacillation" is a state of being inherent in the affects of "hope" and "fear". It creates an unstable situation that makes these affects sad. But for Spinoza, vacillation, that is affective fluctuation, *fluctuatio animi*, is in fact a human condition. In everyday life, our power to do in the flow of life sometimes rises and falls as a result of the encounters we experience. As a result of the encounters and events that happen to us, our soul fluctuates between hope and fear, between love and hate, and is constantly swayed from side to side. In this sense, vacillation is the very "subjectivity" of the precarious subject suffering from uncertainty. In this regard, to the extent that interviewees experience uncertainty as both a pathway to new possibilities and a factor of anxiety, vacillation is an important part of their subjectivity too:

I'm still questioning this, actually, I haven't made up my mind yet. (WtB-7)

It is not easy to say that I will get to this point. Life conditions are also very uncertain. (WtB-15)

Work, of course, is the opposite of freedom, it's restrictive, you have a responsibility that you have to do all the time and you have to make time for it. On the one hand it is like that, but on the other hand the money you earn gives you freedom. So, work is something that both restricts and provides money to be free, it's a cycle. (WtB-12)

The last point that WtB-12 emphasizes is important in terms of work and employment relations, which is subject of this study. As the Passionate Work Ethics literature points out, in a state of being indecisive created by the uncertainty of future, where hope and fear are intertwined, work is considered both as an opportunity for freedom and as an obstacle in the way to the freedom. Passionate Work Ethics, precisely in this state of being indecisive, finds a limbo it can intervene in. In this context, the Passionate Work Ethics presents precarious and flexible freelance working as if it were an opportunity to get rid of the drudgery of the work.

Finally, we can say that this passive joyful state produces a kind of acceptance and adaptation. Acceptance and adaptation are not in fact affects, of course. Rather, they are affective states of being. Adaptation and acceptance are the general states of being of the interviewees, which emerge as a result of the affective atmosphere created by the above-mentioned affects of hope and fear.

During the interviews, all the interviewees thought something was wrong in their life and experienced the conflict between reality and dreams. However, being disappointed, realizing that something is wrong, and even knowing that the reasons for these setbacks are social and political problems external to one's life do not alone make it possible to develop a reactionary political subjectivity. Some of the interviewees also had the feeling of "indignation", which we can consider as one of the most important affect that make political agency and resistance possible in Spinoza's political philosophy. For example, WtB-5 said that "consenting with" the jobs she did not want and considers "bullshit" "gets on her nerves". Similarly, WtB-11 said that "the necessity to sell her labor" and "the expectation that she would do it wholeheartedly and willingly" made her angry. Also, WtB-7 who consider unpaid internship as "a new way of exploitation" and states that even if he has to do an unpaid internship one day he will do it consciously, while he defined the security as a "human

right” and gave it a very political meaning, he said that the insecurity he was exposed to made him feel both guilty and angry:

But it’s a basic human right, I know that very well. But I’m also aware that it’s something that was done to make you feel guilty so that you can get in the wheel. That’s why it makes me feel both guilty and angry. It makes me feel angry towards everyone who caused this. (WtB-7)

In fact, WtB-7 is aware that insecurity is a mechanism that makes people feel guilty and pushes them to enter the capitalist wage labor relationship. However, in these cases of “indignation”, there is no organized, political action against the wage labor system, the precarious and flexible working regime or unemployment. In fact, some interviewees said that the solution lies in the “organized/unionized struggle” and that the capitalist relations of production should be targeted.

Individually there are not many options, you have to go to a village or something and live on your own. Other than that, as long as you stay here, unionization is important, coming together is important. (WtB-7)

In all these cases, we can detect the affect that Spinoza calls “indignation”. Spinoza defines indignation as an anger felt towards someone or something who has done harm to someone or us. In this sense, indignation is a purely political affect that arises in the face of injustice. In fact, Spinoza says that the thing that creates the feeling of indignation in us in the face of injustice is our similarity with the victim, that is, affective imitation. Therefore, we can even say that indignation is almost the first step of political organization in this sense. According to Negri and Hardt, for example, “indignation, as Spinoza notes, is the ground zero, the basic material from which movements of revolt and rebellion develop” (Negri & Hardt, 2009, p. 235). Whether Spinoza consider indignation as joyful or sad feeling is debatable, that is, even if we accept that indignation is a political feeling, a joyful politics and sociality in the Spinozist sense may not emerge from this indignation. In fact, Spinoza places indignation in the category of sad feelings in the first place. Because this feeling is derived from an evil done by someone else, from a sad situation it awakens in us. In this context, it is the result of a grief that overtakes us, and therefore a sad feeling. But this affective imitation turns indignation into a very political and social feeling; it removes the injustice experienced by someone else from being stuck on an individual level, makes it socialized and becomes the subject of political struggle.

However, even if there is a latent or apparent indignation in these cases, this indignation does not turn into an active form of political struggle in most cases. At best, it turns into a cynical and partially nihilistic position, as WtB-5 puts it:

Because I have given up hope, there is no revolution anymore, there is no revolution. So let's accept it and try to work less. Or, let's take part in the system they have set up and make fun of it. That's how I look at it. (WtB-5)

Or, as WtB-18 points out, having lost faith in political action:

I think it is necessary to struggle somehow, even if it is good or bad, even if it is fake. I suggest to myself that we cannot accept this as it is, we will get up and somehow engage in a struggle, even if it is alternative one. I don't see the possibility much, actually. (WtB-18)

Therefore, we do not see any active opposition in this context. Rather, what we see is a common adaptation and acceptance. For some, this acceptance is necessary to “keep up with the order” and “living in prosperity”, and these people accept the necessity “ambitiously”. For example, WtB-3 is a good example:

Keeping up with the system... after all, I didn't create the capitalist system, I was born into it, so I need to earn as much money as I need to live my life in prosperity, in short, I need to be good at my job. (WtB-3)

Cases such as WtB-3, who ambitiously accept the necessity to work in the neoliberal working regime, fall into the category of “those who do their job with passion”. We cannot say that the interviewees in this category do not have any contradictions at all, but this is at the minimum compared to others. Promises of the Passionate Work Ethics are much more appealing to those in this category.³⁰ Of course, there are points they see as disadvantageous in the neoliberal working regime, but these do not harm their consistency. Moreover, their capacity “to endure”, “to adapt” to these disadvantages is much higher.

We can see this contradictory situation in all interviews. The Passionate Work Ethics appeals precisely through these affective contradictions and inconsistencies. Of course, certain cases reflect certain affects much better. But almost all cases have the affective contradiction that I have presented. For example, WtB-4 ambitiously says

³⁰ We will discuss in more detail the three different responses and levels of attachment to the Passionate Work Ethics in section 5.3.

that he should love his job, that he “wants to do what he likes”, that he does not want to do what he does not like. On the other hand, he also states that he can do “a job with a peaceful atmosphere and short working hours” even if he does not desire it, and that he can accept average material conditions for it. Similarly, WtB-7, on the one hand, says that he is in search of a job he desires that will satisfy him intellectually and affectively, but on the other hand, he also says that “no one should be looking for a job they love”, that it is “a kind of trap”, that he does not want to spend his life in this pursuit. As another example, WtB-14 who is “uncomfortable with even considering feelings and work together”, and who thinks that “incorporating feelings in working life is a way of gaining consent”, states that she is completely against the wage labor system but, on the other hand, she also says that she can do a work she loves even for free if her basic needs are met. In short, the contradiction between the inevitable pressure of the compulsion to work and the possibility of escaping - at least partially - from this obligation by doing autonomous, creative freelance jobs lays the ground for the functioning of the Passionate Work Ethics.

We can say that hope labor is a phenomenon in which the ideology of neoliberal individualism and entrepreneurship is crystallized. Because it imposes the task of solving all the problems created by the flexible and precarious neoliberal working and employment regime on the individual and his/her entrepreneurial virtues. As we can see, the anxiety of finding a job after graduation, the anxiety created by the uncertainty of the future is quite common among my interviewees. In this regard, hope labor places the burden of this uncertainty on the shoulders of the individual. In this sense, hope labor creates an optimistic attachment that the individual's future rewards lie in enduring the adverse conditions in the present: if the individual makes concessions, fulfills the obligations he/she must fulfill like an entrepreneur, improves himself/herself, increases his/her “human capital” and “marketability” (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2021, p. 1846), and if he/she endures the negative conditions he/she is exposed to in this process, he/she will be rewarded for this in the future. But as we said, this is “cruel” optimism, that is, what is actually aspired is itself an obstacle to achieving it. While one is bound by such an optimistic bond, one cannot easily realize that these negative conditions are actually the conditions created by the neoliberal labor market. When he/she is in an ambiguous state between hope and fear, what hope

labor promises in the future (that is, he/she will be able to reach the job he/she desires in the future if he/she does what it takes) turns all these negativities (insecurity, flexibility, low wages, unpaid internships, work time taking over free time, etc.) into just a concession made in the present in order to achieve the desired good in the future. So, here, self-responsibility and work passion become indispensable elements of agile, creative, and entrepreneurial subjectivity needed to survive in the neoliberal job market. In this respect, the worker-to-be's case provides a good perspective on how entrepreneurial subjectivity is formed through the phenomenon of hope labor in the context of desire, uncertainty, and risk.

3.1.3. Conclusion

The main focus of this section is how young people who are in the transition from education to labor market make sense of and experience the flexible-precarious freelance work arrangement and the Passionate Work Ethics' premises. As we can see from the narratives of the interviewees, the transition process from education to labor market now seems more uncertain, non-linear, unstable. The "liminal experience" created by the transition process, as we have seen, corresponds to a moment of temporal rupture in life. In this transition, it is decisive whether one is involved in the wage labor relationship, and if so, how. In other words, the nature of the relations between individuals and the "society of work" significantly affects their individuality and selfhood, their perspective on work and life.

We can say that today's widespread precarious and flexible work arrangement and the corresponding non-linear and uncertain life course are the contours that shape the conceptions of workers-to-be on life and work. The perception of the future, career plans, choice of profession, emotional relations, almost all of them are shaped by the limits and possibilities imposed by this structure. As Lordon points out, we live in an *epithumé* that informs individuals what is desirable and thinkable in the social structure. Today's neoliberal *epithumé*, which is quite adept at manipulating the direction of our desires, has built a neoliberal work society and ethics which "celebrates" the precarious and flexible working regime and uncertainty, affirming it as a freedom, an opportunity for self-realization.

What I am trying to do here is in fact inspired by Sennett's (1998) work on corrosion

of character in flexible capitalism. Sennet was also trying to show what kind of sociality and individuality the flexible and precarious form of employment created at a time when certainty and security were slowly disappearing through transition from regular, Fordist work society to post-Fordist work society, by examining two different generations. In this respect, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of Sennet's insights. But there is something in this study that is absent in Sennet's work. That is, the loss of security and certainty in Sennet's work was treated as a "melancholic" condition. Sennet claimed that this loss created a "character erosion" in the new generation of young employees. While I agree with much of what he say, I would argue that something else is happening today. Unlike Sennet's employees who grew up with a secure "good old days" narrative, my interviewees (many of whom might be named Generation Z) did not grow up with such narrative. Therefore, as I argue in this study, precarity and flexibility can have a positive connotation for most of the younger generation who are exposed to Passionate Work Ethics of neoliberal post-fordist capitalism; in their affective experience, aside from eroding the character, it can be thought of as strengthening the character. In short, my younger generation interviewees, who were directly exposed to the promises of Passionate Work Ethics such as "freedom", "autonomy", "self-realization" are in a different situation from Sennet's time.

So, what is the prevailing "structure of feelings", "emotional tonality" created by neoliberal work society and ethics? It can be argued that the contradiction between the inevitable pressure of the compulsion to work and the possibility of escaping – at least partially – from this obligation by doing autonomous, creative freelance jobs structures the general affective orientation of worker-to-be towards life and work. In this sense, this contradiction precisely lays the ground for the functioning of the Passionate Work Ethics, which allows people to positively affirm the precarious and flexible working arrangement as if it were a possibility of freedom, autonomy, and self-realization.

3.2. Working as an Independent Professional

3.2.1. Affective Orientation of Independent Professionals towards Freelance Work and the Passionate Work Ethics

As we saw in the previous chapter, the desire for freedom, autonomy and self-realization led to a positive orientation towards the promises of freelance work and the Passionate Work Ethics. After examining the worker-to-be's affective orientation towards work, who are in the transition phase from education to the labor market, in the previous section, we will examine in this section the affective orientation of independent professionals towards freelance work and the Passionate Work Ethics. In this way, I aim to show how the promises and obligations of the Passionate Work Ethics are experienced, and what kind of subjectivity is produced at the end.

First of all, when we look at the affective orientation of the interviewees towards working and the wage labor relationship in general, there is a prevailing opinion that work is a “necessity”, an “inevitable part of our lives”. However, the story is not that simple. This is precisely where the neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics comes into play: ensuring that work is accepted and internalized as a sphere of freedom, self-realization, self-development. In the narratives of many of the interviewees, we see that work means “to make one feel good and useful”, “to give meaning to life”, “to realize oneself and to reveal one's potentials”, “to provide an order in life”:

I think work keeps you dynamic, it keeps you alive psychologically. When I say “I wanted to have a purpose for 3 years”, this purpose is actually something related to work. So, work keeps you dynamic in terms of participating in life. (IP-5)

I'm working hard to make sure that what I enjoy, what I'm happy with, what I think I add value to, what I think I produce, is my job. So, I think what you call a job should be something like that. (IP-15)

Of course. It's important to have a purpose in life. You're retired and you're too old, your body doesn't allow activities... that would scare me a lot. That's why work has such a meaning. (IP-32)

It is very precious that what I call work is something that keeps me moving forward. That's why it keeps me. (IP-25)

We will get into its details later. But what is important here is to understand in what

context these promises of the Passionate Work Ethics seem appealing. Here it appears that for the interviewees there is a contrast between 9-to-5 regular in-house jobs and freelance-gig flexible jobs. And it seems that the promises of the Passionate Work Ethics functions precisely through this contrast.

The distinction that the interviewees make between regular in-house jobs and flexible freelance jobs is not in fact a Manichean dichotomy. The affective orientation towards these two types of working is not separated like black and white. In most cases, both have positive and negative aspects for the interviewees. However, in general, it is possible to say that the flexible freelance working regime is much more attractive.

Therefore, before examining the pros and cons of freelance work, I want to look at how the regular working regime is perceived by the interviewees. In the interviews, the pros of freelance work outweighed its cons, while the cons of regular work outweighed its pros. According to the interview data, interviewees consider regular work as negative because it is “restrictive” and “compelling”:

I decided to become a freelancer when I was forced to do jobs I didn’t like with people I didn’t like. (IP-34)

I feel stuck, forced to go to work every morning and unhappy in a vicious cycle. (IP-18)

I still think that 6 years of corporate life has contributed a lot to me. However, I felt it was time to move forward on my own and the biggest reason for this was my desire to be free. (IP-12)

Most of the time passed in the office is redundant. At most 3-4 hours were productive. I had the feeling that we stayed in the office just for the boss could control us. (IP-5)

I don’t think my mood is very suitable for office life, and when I experienced it, it was very difficult. (IP-24)

Because there are disadvantages such as: having to physically be somewhere, transportation, loss of time, extra expenses, extra costs etc. Since these are a waste of time and I want to create free time for myself, I continue in freelancing now. (IP-26)

As I mentioned before, the narrative of freedom and autonomy is one of the most attractive promises of the Passionate Work Ethics. As we can see in these statements, we can easily argue that the narrative of freedom lies behind the interviewees’

antipathy towards regular work. It also drains employees' motivation to work and causes stress and burn-out to the extent that it is restrictive and compelling. As we know, corporates are trying to develop various motivation-enhancing solutions in workplaces in order to increase the enthusiasm of their employees today. These include "mindfulness" seminars, yoga and meditation trainings. Moreover, we can say that some "tactics" are used to make the time spent at the workplace more "pleasant" and to make the employer-employee relationship "smoother". For example, organizing dinners and going for a drink together in order to make the relationship between employer and employee "companionate" can be counted among these tactics. We can say that these tactics, which were developed to strengthen the discourse of "we are a family", sometimes useful for employers. Among my interviewees, there were those who stated that such activities increase their motivation to work while working in regular in-house or freelance works. However, the discourse of "we are a family" also creates the motivation to escape from regular in-house jobs to freelancing. Some interviewees state that they are keeping freelancing in their mind because of such "friendly" and "genial" pressure at their former workplaces:

But everything has a limit, a distance for me. I have a personal life outside of work. For me, the separation of work and personal life is very clear, but in the office these boundaries were flexible, and I didn't like it. (IP-5)

There are things we call "perks" in the business life: have happy hours, goin drinking together at the weekend etc. These are just smoke and mirrors. That was a period when I fell for them. Whether the company is corporate or not, "perks" are very useful. One of our "perks" was that when we were very bored, our boss would take us to drink sangria. You can find thousands of people who would envy that. (IP-30)

On the other hand, this lack of motivation makes work meaningless and harms the desire to work. In this context, it is no surprise that many of the interviewees consider "dealing with meaningless work" as a negative aspect of regular work. As we saw above, many of the interviewees attribute a "meaning" and "significance" to work. In this sense, when regular work does not respond to the expected meaning of work, this becomes a reason to escape to freelance work:

The biggest reason that motivated me was that I was not being rewarded for my ability to create meaning in the institution where I had been working for 6 years. (IP-3)

For example, it was such an undesirable job that it always turned into something I could do simply with my eyes closed. (IP-28)

When we look at the positive features of regular work, the most important positive features are having a regular income and having a more organized life. What interviewees miss most in regular work is having a regular income. As we will see later, one of the most important negative features of freelance work is also having an irregular income:

Of course, I liked the comfort regular salary ensures too. (IP-12)

First of all, you have income security in a regular institutional place, your life can proceed in a more planned way. (IP-15)

I mean, if you are not a successful freelancer, you have to find work all the time. When you have a full-time job, maybe it's laziness, but I think you work less and live a more comfortable life. (IP-33)

Another important positive feature of regular work is that it offers the opportunity to achieve a more regular and stable work-life balance. As we will see later, irregular and flexible working hours and the encroachment of working time on free time is one of the things that freelancers complain about. In this regard, we can argue that regular work makes life, spatially and temporally, more definite and regular:

For people like me, sometimes it's good to have some order. (IP-19)

The other thing that I've observed in jobs that don't have a fixed shift schedule, it's difficult to separate work and personal life, it's easier in a fixed job. I think both should be separate. (IP-15)

So far, we have seen the attractive and unattractive aspects of regular working regime. Now we will look at the attractive and unattractive aspects of freelancing, that is, affective orientation of independent professionals to it. I will examine the affective orientation of independent professionals through the four premises of Passionate Work Ethics that I presented in Section 2.3.: (1) narration of freedom and autonomy, (2) spatiotemporal flexibility and ability to adjust work-life balance, (3) self-realization and self-improvement, and (4) affectional satisfaction. In other words, I will show how well these four premises corresponds to freelancing, how attractive and unattractive they are.

In discussing these four positive premises, we will also see that there is a negative side

to it, which is perfectly symmetrical. That is, the attractive premise also carries a negative and unattractive sides that precisely stems from its attractive feature: in contrast to the positive feature of freedom and autonomy, the negative feature of insecurity and dependence on the customer; in contrast to the positive feature of providing the initiative to choose the workplace and time, the negative feature of irregular working hours and the tendency of working time to occupy free time; in contrast to the positive feature of being a job that satisfies desires, it is a job that creates stress.

The important point here is that the attractive and unattractive aspects are symmetrical. In other words, the freedom, autonomy, spatiotemporal flexibility, and self-realization, which we can count as the attractive aspects of freelance work, also correspond to what the interviewees consider as the unattractive aspects of the freelance work: (1) in contrast to the positive feature of freedom and autonomy, the negative feature of insecurity and dependence on the customer; (2) in contrast to the positive feature of providing the initiative to choose the workplace and time, the negative feature of irregular working hours and the tendency of working time to occupy free time; (3) in contrast to the positive feature of the job being the field of self-realization, the negative feature of the job becoming what defines the person in a negative sense; (4) in contrast to the positive feature of being a job that satisfies desires, it is a job that creates stress. For example, temporal and spatial flexibility is attractive, but at the same time, this flexibility may require coping with irregular working hours and lead to the occupation of leisure time by working time. Or, for another example, it is thought that working without a boss and being your own boss provides freedom and autonomy, but on the other hand, all responsibility falls on the independent professionals, thus making them dependent on the client and creating pressure not to lose clients. In this context, despite the negative factors, many interviewees, as we will see, still say that they love their freelance job and that it satisfies their desires. Although the pros and cons are symmetrical to each other, the call of the Passionate Work Ethics provides the affective barriers that allow one to endure the problems created by the unattractive sides. And as we will see in the last section, Passionate Work Ethics with its three attributes intervenes precisely in this contradiction in the independent professionals, in favor of precarious and flexible conditions.

3.2.1.1. Narration of Freedom and Autonomy

The first feature of freelance work that appeals to interviewees is that it makes them feel “free” and “independent”. It can be said that the sense of freedom is in fact the purpose of all other attractive features. As we mentioned in the previous section, the reason why having the initiative to determine the place and time of work, thus the spatio-temporal flexibility is attractive is that employees feel temporally and spatially more independent:

I want to do what I want, when I want, where I want, so I aim to work on my own projects and/or as a freelancer. (IP-20)

The freedom to work when and where I want, the freedom to choose my employer, and most importantly, the opportunity to reach people who need my skills are the main reasons why I became a freelancer. (IP-29)

My fondness for freedom. The freedom to decide my own working hours and earnings, my own vacations, to do the things I like. (IP-8)

As we can see in these statements, the sense of freedom has several dimensions: the freedom to create and protect one’s own personal space, the spatio-temporal freedom, the freedom to choose the employer and the client, the freedom to choose the job one’s love... As we saw in the previous section when we discussed the affective orientation of the worker-to-be’s towards uncertainty, flexibility and precariousness, a nonlinear life pattern is much more appealing to many today. The reason why a nonlinear, ambiguous life pattern is attractive is precisely because this kind of life pattern makes one feels much more independent. In this respect, freelancing was appealing to the worker-to-be, because it was a way of working that was much better adapted to a nonlinear life pattern, unlike regular working regime. Similarly, one of the strongest motivations for independent professionals to choose to work as freelancers is that they want to be free from feeling of being trapped and pressure in the previous regular jobs:

The freedom to decide whether or not to do the work I like. Not having to deal with the client or not taking responsibility has a very relaxing effect on me. In freelancing, the person you represent and are responsible for is just you. (IP-11)

I loved the comfort regular salary ensures, of course, but I also loved the work I did and the people I worked with. I still think that 6 years of corporate life added a lot of experience to me. However, I felt it was time to move forward

on my own and the biggest reason for this was my desire to be free. In the end, I came to the conclusion that the right decision was to leave the regular job and fly on my own wings. (IP-12)

I am so happy, I feel “self-actualized”. Something was always missing on the work life, I would say, “I’m doing what I love, but” and the “but”... I am doing what I love again, I work in graphic design, but I holds all the aces. I determine my daily schedule and there is really nothing like this feeling of freedom. (IP-18)

As we have seen in IP-18’s case, sometimes even doing what one loves may not make one happy unless one has a sense of freedom. The feeling of being trapped and constraint created by regular work can be so overwhelming that it can undermine the passion for the job, even if one is doing the job one love and desire. As in IP-18’s case, if one does not feel free in this job even if one is doing what one loves, then freelancing can be seen as a way out from this situation. As we can see in IP-18’s case, she does what she loves in both cases, but she says that it is more enjoyable to do this job with the sense of freedom that freelance working brings into her life. On the other hand, there are instances where the sense of freedom that freelance working brings increases passion for work even in undesirable jobs. In this respect, the sense of freedom is a very powerful factor that fuels passion for work:

Partly the excitement of starting my own business, partly the anxiety of being able to do what I do in a more original and free way. I had an idea that I should do something that I feel good about, that I should have produced it myself, and that I should make a living with such works, and I still have that idea. In architecture, the market conditions and the people you deal with take you away from this dream. It takes you away from creativity. But I still preferred freelancing for this reason, I have a thought that I can catch something in the next jobs where I can adjust that pace myself. (IP-15)

As a freelancer, yes, you have all your time to yourself, so you work 24/7, but the mental burden is much more than the stress in an office life. The luxury to cut your relationship with a client who is bullying you makes me feel very powerful. (IP-11)

As we can see in the case of IP-11 and IP-15’s, both state that there are problems in their occupations. While IP-15 talks about the problems in the working and employment conditions of architectural firms, IP-11 says that freelancing is in fact mentally more stressful than regular work. But for both of them, the sense of freedom created by freelancing seems to provide them with the affective mechanism necessary to cope with the distressing situation they live in. IP-15 thinks that with the freedom

provided by freelancing, he can do architecture in a more authentic and creative way; for IP-11, on the other hand, even if freelance work carries the risk of being more stressful and tiring than regular work, the sense of freedom it provides allows her to overcome all this stress and exhaustion.

Another point connected with the idea of freedom is the idea of independence and “being your own boss”. In this sense, independence or autonomy can also be considered as an integral aspect of the sense of freedom. Because, although regular jobs can provide a certain degree of temporal or spatial freedom, the experience of working independently without being under the direct control of a boss or manager is unique to freelancing. One of the most important factors behind its attractiveness, which is referred to as “being your own boss” in the literature, is not taking responsibility, or rather, being responsible only for oneself. Being responsible neither for the workplace nor for the colleagues makes freelancing attractive in this respect:

I don't want to take too much responsibility. I realize what a good decision I have made to be freelancer. I earn money by having fun. (IP-5)

But when I work there, the feeling of working for someone else brings me down a bit - I like my job, but it brings me down. (IP-15)

I was sure that I would never go back to the industry and the chaos of working under others in the office world, so I started looking for ways to make a living on my own. (IP-11)

Because when you work in a company, it is more or less clear how much you will be paid, how long you will work, the scope of your work, what is expected of you, what you need to do to improve yourself. But when you are a freelancer, all these responsibilities are completely yours, and the possibilities and options are limitless. (IP-12)

As we have seen, the sense of freedom offered by freelancing is almost a sufficient motivation alone to leave regular work for many people. Although regular work establishes an order in the everyday life of employees, this order creates a negative rather than a positive situation for many people. What IP-12 points out in the last case is important in this respect. We can say that the neoliberal work society and the Passionate Work Ethics are crystallized in this statement. Because, although IP-12 thinks that regular working organization in which the salary, working time, scope of work, and what is expected from the employee are much more certain, and imposes

less responsibility on the employee, she still prefers to work as a freelancer in which more responsibilities are assigned to the employee. The flexibility and uncertainty on which the freelance working organization is based on means “limitless option” for her, which we have seen as an element of the neoliberal nonlinear life pattern.

As we will see in the section on spatiotemporal freedom, employees’ initiative to determine the place and time of work is in fact an illusion, and in many cases carries the risk of placing individual responsibility on the employee. In this respect, we can say that the sense of freedom and autonomy is also an illusion. Because, as we can see in IP-12’s statement, being free from all responsibilities actually means the transfer of all responsibilities to one person, and it is precisely in this sense that the Passionate Work Ethics’ call for freedom and autonomy provides a passionate acceptance of individual responsibility. For example, IP-11, in her abovementioned quote, thinks in the same way about individual responsibility. Although we admit that freelancing imposes a lot of responsibility on freelancers, we see that the freedom of “not being accountable for anyone” and “being in charge of everything” motivates IP-11 to become a freelancer.

In this context, we can say that the entrepreneurial subjectivity emerges as a necessity for survival in this job market. Neoliberal work ethics, in which both risks and responsibility are individualized, and a nonlinear life pattern is dominant, naturally put emphasis on the narratives of personal responsibility, personal choice, and entrepreneurship. For example, we can see this in IP-27’s case that she describes herself as a “solopreneur”. Similar to IP-12’s abovementioned quote, IP-11 also considers choosing freelance work as a “breakthrough” in her quote in which she states that “opportunities in freelancing never end”:

I know it’s not easy to take a step, but everyone has a “that’s all!” moment. If you are at that point, yes, this is the moment to step into a new and free world of work. Who hasn’t been haunted by the fear of uncertainty? One thing I know about freelancing is that the opportunities never end. You stumble but you don’t fall, and if you fall, you get up again stronger and more experienced. There is no wasted experience in this world. (IP-11)

From these excerpts, we see that the Passionate Work Ethics’ promises of freedom and autonomy match up with the entrepreneurial subjectivity promoted by neoliberal work ethics. In this context, as we will see in more detail later, we can say that this situation

creates an individual work ethics that reduces the solution of the problems created by flexibility and insecurity in working life to individual solutions such as “individual responsibility”, “will”, “courage”, “free choice”, “ability to adapt”.

Finally, the last attractive feature of working as an independent professional is that it is possible in some cases to make a lot of money. However, this is not the case for everyone. Among the interviewees, those who stated that they did freelance work because they could earn good money were mostly interviewees who had the opportunity to work abroad and thus had the chance to earn money in dollars or euros. This group consisted mostly of software developers. Developers and programmers who have the chance to work for employers abroad can actually earn much more money compared to other freelancers. This motivation, almost alone, motivates many to work as a freelancer.

Apart from earning money with dollars or euros, another factor is the ability to work with many different customers since a freelancer is not tied to a single firm, which increases their income sources. Being able to work with many different clients, rather than being a salaried employee for a single firm, can provide more opportunities for earning money:

When I work at the time and place I want, I am more productive and I earn more when I am not dependent on a single company. (IP-1)

I currently have freelance jobs that generate more income than full-time jobs. (IP-29)

We have seen that being free, autonomous, and self-realization are very important and attractive values for independent professionals. However, it seems that even when freelancers break free from employer dependency, they often enter into another dependency relationship: client dependency.

Independent professionals working without a guarantee of income also have to take on the responsibilities of finding their own jobs and being responsible for all parts of the working process. In such circumstances, finding a client or trying not to lose one, is vitally important for the freelancers' career development:

First of all, I fear to lose customers. (IP-28)

First jobs are often hard to get, no matter how experienced you are. Competition is extremely high. Knowing your job is as important as being able to show yourself to the customer. Also, getting the first jobs doesn't necessarily mean having a regular income. (IP-9)

As IP-9 and IP-28 stated, it is not easy to find clients and not to lose them in freelance work. Uncertainty, praised in the previous sections as “the road to freedom”, here turns into a negative situation in the sense of the absence of an income guarantee. It is possible to say that such an insecurity and uncertainty create the fear of losing clients. In this situation, many independent professionals, especially beginners, are forced to accept low wages, take on a lot of work due to their lack of experience and self-confidence:

Our only problem was that we had to say yes to any job that could bring us a regular income in the already scarce job market, even though we had no expertise. (...) I was also forced to accept people who were not my equals as my clients in order to pay off my debts. (IP-27)

First of all, it was not easy to maintain the continuity of work and manage this situation without getting stressed. There were many days when I was anxious when I didn't get a job and I thought I couldn't do it. (IP-10)

In this context, we see that the fear of losing clients goes hand in hand with the pressure not to lose clients. This pressure and fear often require independent professionals to have a lot of face-to-face contact with their clients, suffering their whims. In this context, making concessions in order not to lose a client or managing them well in order to please them becomes an inherent part of the working process:

Customer communication can be the most challenging issue, especially if you work in creative fields that are very subjective. (IP-12)

But since I didn't experience working life myself before, I didn't know how to establish a relationship with customer, how to manage people, so I learned these things in this process. Because even though I want to avoid such relationships, when you enter into a work relationship, you have to take on this attitude. (IP-26)

On the other hand, another negative feature closely related to the fear of losing a client and the pressure of not to lose a client is the responsibilities arising from being alone and that the work completely occupies one's life. We can even say that perhaps the most important reason for all the difficulties of freelancing is that freelancers have to deal with all parts of the working process (including client relations) alone. Being

alone and having to deal with all parts of the working process is actually a symptom of being autonomous. In other words, these are the price one should pay for freedom. But while these prices are bearable for some, they are unbearable for others. For example, interviewees like IP-9 accept all these difficulties but consider them as the price of “stepping out of the comfort zone”. On the other hand, interviewees like IP-24 and IP-30 admit that this situation makes their lives chaotic and difficult, comparing it with their previous regular work experience:

Being a freelancer means getting out of your comfort zone. You lose some of the comforts of a regular full-time job, at least in the first phase. Being a freelancer actually means being a small company with you in all positions. You will find a client, you will plan and agree on the salary, you will do the work and deliver it. (IP-9)

Because in the past, the work found me, I didn't have to find customers, I didn't have to communicate, I was told to do it and I did it. But now, I'm the marketer, I'm the manager, I'm the customer representative, I'm the one who does the work, I'm the one who has to make my own website and make its strategy to get more jobs, and I'm the one who has to think about how to generate more income and how to invest in the business. It was a bit chaotic to be thrown into all this at once. (IP-24)

I am the technician, the boss, the cleaner, the accountant, the cook, and naturally the social media manager of my “company”. I have to do everything on my own. (IP-30)

As we have seen above, some interviewees considered that one's involvement in all parts of the working process is a positive thing in the process of self-realization, but the opposite is also true. On the other hand, for many people, the isolation created by freelancing can make the whole process more unbearable. Having to deal with the whole process and all the problems encountered at work by oneself increase the physical and mental burden many times more:

It is better not to try to solve all the problems you face yourself. In freelancing, it's all on you. (IP-4)

The parts of salaried work that I miss is the connection with my colleagues. I've met some amazing people in my career and it's hard to find people who understand, appreciate or criticize my work as a freelancer. (IP-2)

No matter how experienced I was, it took time to adapt to working alone. I no longer had a coworker or boss to cover for me when I was sick or to support me when I couldn't make it, or a computer guy to run to the office when my

computer broke down. (IP-10)

I like not to answer to anyone, but there is no one to tell me my mistakes. I think being a loner – it's often praised - is problematic. I have to solve all my problems myself. Sometimes you have to look yourself taking one step away but I can't do that. (IP-30)

The important point here is that although the negative effects of this situation in everyday life accepted, the issue is still perceived on an individual level, and thus it is thought that the solution is to eliminate individual defects such as “not being able to adapt” and “lack of discipline”:

So personal planning is extremely important. I started off well, but now I get very scattered, that's the problem with freelancing. Everything is very personal, you are in control, but you have to plan very carefully or everything explodes. (IP-32)

Doing freelancing for long years is not easy. Aside from being one's own boss, it is very difficult to be disciplined. (IP-29)

Finally, one of the most profound negative effects of flexible freelancing in the lives of independent professionals is uncertainty, insecurity, and wage fluctuation. In the part where we examined the attractive aspects of freelance work, we saw that the freedom, autonomy, and spatio-temporal flexibility provide work motivation for independent professionals and satisfy their desires. But as I have argued before, freedom and autonomy are an illusion. Despite all its attractions, freelancing still makes independent professionals dependent on something, and this dependency creates a compelling situation in many cases because of being alone. In this context, while the flexibility provides a pseudo freedom, autonomy, and uncertainty (in positive sense), it creates also a deeper precarious and fragile situation.

The main factor that makes the life of freelancers uncertain is the lack of perpetuity and income guarantee. While working time flexibility is more tolerable, income irregularity makes life much more difficult. Many interviewees start freelancing by accepting this uncertainty and precariousness:

Before becoming freelancer you should accept that your income will be irregular. It fluctuates. (IP-12)

The biggest obstacle in my mind was whether I could provide a regular income. Finding a job is more difficult than doing the job in the first stage. (IP-9)

I have absolutely only one answer: Uncertainty. Uncertainty is the most difficult part of being a freelancer. I don't have a permanent client and I don't work every day, I don't even know if I will have a client or not. When I have a client, everything seems great, but after the project, it is a bit exhausting. (IP-25)

As I have stated throughout the study, precarity is not simply a pecuniary issue of employment and labor relations; as a vital and temporal mode of subjectivity, it appears in many places from emotional relations to consumption patterns. But we must also admit that this form of subjectivity arises from the precarious relations as a pecuniary issue. Precarity, as working without any income guarantee, without insurance, without knowing what will happen tomorrow shapes the material basis of the life.

The biggest problem of the interviewees about freelancing was the lack of income guarantee as a natural consequence of the precarity. Despite all the positive aspects of freelancing, many interviewees say that working without a guarantee, living without knowing whether they will have an income in the next month makes their life very difficult. When the material basis of their lives is unsecured or shaken, all the positivity on the surface is also shaken.

The severity of this shake is not the same for everyone. Some jobs, such as software development which makes it possible to make money with euros and dollars, can compensate the financial needs of freelancers more easily. Therefore, we can say that freelancers in this group do not experience precarity as much as others. But for the rest, the lack of regular income guarantee and the wage fluctuation make their lives very fragile, insecure, and uncertain:

First of all, it was not easy to maintain job continuity and manage this situation without getting stressed. There were many days when I felt anxious and thought that I would not be able to do it. (IP-10)

The downside of freelancing is that your income stream fluctuates. (IP-15)

Because there is a major source of stress: Lack of steady income stream. This makes everything more difficult. (IP-34)

We can say that the neoliberal work ethics' emphasis on individuality that we have seen throughout the other chapters is also present here. The problems created by

income insecurity and wage fluctuation push people to struggle with the uncertainty and stress in everyday life on an individual level in almost all cases. Income insecurity is considered as a problem that can be dealt with by individual maneuvers (saving money, making an investment, family & friend support, etc.):

But you always need some kind of reassurance. Because you never know. For example, some people say that business will decrease a lot in the summer period. So, I try to find some extra jobs. You never know when a job will end, so I also try to chase new things. (IP-24)

‘ve had a fairly regular income for a year and a half. But sometimes it can go up and sometimes it can go down. It is very uncertain. For example, in the summer, sometimes I may not even earn enough to cover kitchen expenses. At that time, my mother supported me a little. But for the last two years I have been self-sufficient without any support, I even managed to make a small savings. (IP-26)

Because I know that once things work out, if I work hard, I will earn more and if I work less, I will earn less. (IP-17)

Stress is not something that can be overcome, but you can cope with it. If your income is irregular, then plan your expenses regularly. (IP-34)

At the beginning, sometimes, especially after the first job, there may be situations like not getting a job, of course, the reason for this was that my experience was lower and I did not have the experience to apply for the right jobs. In these processes, there can be a loss of motivation, but you can get out of these difficult processes with the thought that “there are still many things I don’t know and I need to improve myself in these things, I need to learn new things”. This difficulty can actually be very instructive and useful. (IP-31)

We can say that the cases of IP-17, IP-31 and IP-34 are examples that are completely captivated by the appeal of the Passionate Work Ethics. All three acknowledge that uncertainty and wage fluctuation is a challenging situation. However, instead of thinking that this is a structural and social problem, all three think that it is a problem that they have to solve individually, holding the individual responsible. In fact, they do not only put the responsibility of solving this problem on the individual. Moreover, they point to the individual as the cause of the problem. As we can see, IP-31 thinks that the reason for his inability to get a job and the income irregularity it creates is his own inexperience, and even admits that this is “instructional and useful”. The individualism, which appears in many other spheres, will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion of this chapter.

3.2.1.2. Spatiotemporal Flexibility and Ability to Adjust Work-Life Balance

It seems that spatiotemporal flexibility is one of the most attractive features of the way freelance work functions in the eyes of the interviewees. What I mean by flexibility here is that freelancing allows employees to determine their working place and time. It is a fact that freelancers are more flexible than regular employees in determining when and where they work. Regular work has regular working hours which are, in most cases, spent at workplace. In recent years, corporate firms which have regular working conditions have started to offer their employees the opportunity to be more flexible, at last spatially, with options such as remote working. However, temporal flexibility, by its nature, is not suitable for regular work. What makes regular work regular is that it has a certain temporality, that is, the separation of working time and leisure time in everyday life is determined. Therefore, we can say that temporal flexibility is rather the distinguishing feature of freelance work, even if spatial flexibility exists in both forms of work.

For almost all interviewees, the temporal and spatial flexibility that freelancing brings to their lives is experienced as a positive development. In fact, for many, this desire for flexibility is exactly the motivation behind choosing a freelance job:

For me, the best part of freelance life is that I can work from wherever and whenever I want. (IP-12)

Being able to choose where and when to work is one of the biggest advantages for a freelancer. As long as the work is delivered on time and as requested, it doesn't matter where, when and in what clothes you work. (IP-22)

In this respect, freelancing is better in terms of adjusting my own time. (IP-5)

I am an interior designer and from the first day I started working, I dreamed of doing my own work every day. There were two main reasons for this: First is not being able to plan my own time. The second one is not being paid for the labor I put in. (IP-10)

I chose to freelance to create free time. (IP-26)

We can say that there are two forms of temporal flexibility. On the one hand, as IP-5, IP-12 and IP-22 stated, one can determine when and where one work. On the other hand, being able to determine the tempo and rhythm of work, as well as when to work, is another manifestation of temporal flexibility. In other words, on the one hand, the

flexibility to determine time periods of the day one works, and on the other hand, the flexibility to determine how long one works by adjusting the work tempo within work time.

Another remarkable point is that the interviewees describe the temporal flexibility by directly associating it with the satisfaction of their desire for freedom and independence. The freedom to determine the working time and tempo is seen as the great convenience of temporal flexibility:

I want to work from wherever I want, to be able to travel as I want. Even the idea of being able to “move wherever I want whenever I want” makes me feel free. (IP-18)

What I wanted most was to be able to work without being tied to a place and a limited period of time. (IP-7)

On the other hand, some interviewees are aware that a “price has to be paid” to achieve the “freedom”. For example, IP-6 has worked in many different freelance jobs in the media sector, and states that the motivation behind all of this is “to take control of his life” and “to have the freedom to work whenever and wherever he wants”. However, he also states that in the process of achieving this goal, “there are times when he spends more time than a typical office worker does”, that “he had to make sacrifices”:

So being “free”, freedom, liberty also has a price. I liken these difficulties to climbing a snowy peak. I endured those difficulties because I believe this is the way of the future. (IP-6)

Believing that freelancing will be the popular way of working in the future, that it will allow him to take control of his life, has made IP-6 work more and harder than a regular office worker for years, and made him think of working in this way as the price he pays for freedom he will gain in the future. IP-6 can be considered a lucky person, because he thinks that he gets the reward for the price he has paid. However, this journey may not end at the same stop for everyone, of course. For example, for IP-15, the impact of freelance work on his work-life balance in everyday life was rather negative. Freelancing, which makes everyday life more flexible for others in a positive sense, means “working for longer periods at a more intense pace” for IP-15, who works as a freelancer in an architecture firm. Whether this balance is in favor of the employee or not is in fact determined by the job. While some jobs are more convenient to achieve

this, in some jobs it can be more difficult. However, it is a fact that, as IP-15 puts it, “the employee has total control”. We need to understand this in two ways, positive and negative. On the positive side, it is a fact that freelancers have temporal control of their work. Temporal flexibility also creates a positive condition in their everyday life. But this is only possible when employees truly have control of the work, or, as in IP-26’s case, it is possible when one’s projection on life coincides with the temporality of freelance working. This is possible in very few cases. In most cases, freelancers are bound by the terms the employer offers them. In this case, both freedom and temporal independence are just an illusion. What is likely to happen to employees when this illusion is believed is the danger of spreading of working time throughout other domains of life. Precisely in this situation, a negative situation occurs in which it becomes one’s own responsibility to adjust the work-life balance and to keep the risk of working time penetrating leisure time under control. For example, IP-26 does not consider this as something negative because she states that she can “balance it thanks to her own discipline”.

We have seen so far that one of the most attractive features of freelancing is the spatio-temporal flexibility. The fact that independent professionals had the initiative to determine the place and time of work made freelancing attractive to almost all the interviewees. But flexibility is a double-edged knife. While it can provide temporal freedom in everyday life, it can also create the opposite. Many interviewees said that the temporal flexibility of freelancing allowed them to organize their free time as they wished in their everyday lives. On the other hand, for some, temporal flexibility means the expansion of working time to occupy leisure time. This situation disrupts the work-life balance to the detriment of leisure time in most cases:

But - in my opinion – don’t expect it to be an easy process. In the first phase, it is possible to work 24/7. (IP-9)

One of the consequences of the adaptation problem was that I worked too hard and forgot to take time for myself and my family. (IP-10)

If you want me to be negative, sometimes it is very difficult to be organized, both the organization of your daily life and the organization of work. Maintaining the work-life balance can be difficult. (IP-24)

Until 3-4 months ago, my work life was a nightmare because I could never finish my work, I had to work until the morning and I had great difficulties

because I did not take care of myself. (IP-29)

It's flexible. For example, on the days of the performance, you work hard in rehearsals, so forget about that day. You have no free time. (IP-28)

One of the reasons why leisure time is occupied by working time is that independent professionals often depend on the temporality of their clients to keep their jobs. In this respect, many of the interviewees do not have the luxury of doing the job at the time and pace they want, although this is considered to be the most attractive feature of freelancing. On the other hand, another interesting point is that even if the client's temporality does not directly impose such a temporal requirement, the employees themselves still internalize it and feel a temporal pressure on them. For example, IP-32, whom I spoke to on Saturday, stated that she would work the next day. She still had the time to finish the job. However, she stated that this situation made her "feel guilty" and that she could work even on Sundays:

I mean, I will work on Sunday so that the work is ready for tomorrow, I don't have to, but there will be a sense of guilt, the work is always in my mind. That's why it's a problem. (IP-32)

Another reason to feel guilty is that independent professionals have to find their own jobs, so they feel compelled to spend every moment of the day engaged in work-related activities and develop themselves. As IP-29 points out, when one does not engage in work-related activities during the day, does not look for a new job, or when one sleeps at night, an opportunity may be missed, or a problem may arise because the client cannot reach you. This fear also becomes something that damages independent professionals' own temporality.

If one dimension of the instability in work-life balance is that working time occupies free time, another dimension of this is the transformation of leisure time into working time. In other words, as we saw in the quotations above, in some cases, working time can be extended to free time, but beyond that, in some cases, leisure activities themselves turn into working activities. Activities carried out for work, self-development and learning new things during non-work time should also be considered as the usurpation of free time (we will touch upon this issue in detail later).

3.2.1.3. Self-Realization and Self-Improvement

During the interviews, one of the interviewees said that “you have to break the egg’s shell from the inside’ while talking about his freelance work experience. This is in fact an aphorism believed to belong to Rumi or Ibn Rushd. Its full version is as follows: “Life is like an egg in its shell. If the shell is broken from the outside, life ends; if it is broken from the inside, life begins”. I think that this is a very meaningful quote within the context of our discussion. Because it very clearly summarizes another feature that interviewees find attractive in freelancing: that is, the acceptance of work as something enhancing self-realization.

If we follow this egg-life analogy, we can say that the sense of freedom, autonomy, and satisfaction provided by freelance work and the individual work ethics it creates hide the fact that work is an external necessity. It also enables us to think of work as an opportunity for self-realization, self-development, creating a meaning in life, and revealing one’s authenticity. In other words, while work (wage labor) as an activity to earn a living is actually a necessary activity that breaks the life’s shell from the outside, when it is considered as a field of self-realization and self-development it can be accepted as a “free” activity that breaks the life’s shell from the inside. While some interviewees implicitly state that work is an activity that one actualizes oneself, others express it directly in these terms:

I am so happy, I really feel fulfilled. (IP-18)

In this respect, it can offer an environment where I can realize myself. (IP-4)

My dream is having a meaningful life, where I create something that can be useful to people, driven by my inner urge to create. I think this will be the point where I realize myself. (IP-12)

We can say that behind the attractiveness and motivation of self-realization lies the thought that the work is an “instructive”, “meaningful” activity, that it makes one “versatile”, allowing one to present “authenticity”:

I feel a bit lucky. I’m always discovering something about work and it motivates me, I like discovering it. (IP-24)

Because I am still learning something too, it is a mutually nurturing process. It is very valuable that work is something that carries me forward. That’s why it

keeps me. (IP-26)

It has to be a job where I can show my creativity and do it from the heart. (IP-5)

I don't have such big dreams. I do my job not to make money but to be useful, to work for my passion, to produce and to enjoy life. (IP-17)

In fact, its attractiveness and motivation allow work to spread to the whole life by eliminating the distinction between leisure and working time. One can enjoy work even when it “becomes one's whole life”. We can say that, in all these cases, the feeling of self-realization and self-development precisely reveals the neoliberal work ethics' emphasis on individuality. Individuality, intertwined with neoliberal entrepreneurial subjectivity, pushes one to think of life as a development-oriented process. In this sense, freelancing is attractive and motivating for most interviewees as an activity that serves their personal and career development:

After a while, I realized that the jobs I was taking were developing me at an incredible pace and that I was learning new topics and technologies without even realizing it. In the six months after my resignation, I gained more experience than I had achieved in ten years after graduation. (IP-3)

Moreover, when you become a freelancer, you have the opportunity to take part in many projects that are suitable for your skills and that will improve yourself. You can increase your experience and expand your portfolio by working in many jobs with different employers. (IP-22)

I am very motivated by a life where I discover something new every day, learn, see new places, have new experiences. (IP-12)

What is significant here is that all these activities undertaken to develop and not to stand still, despite all their difficulties, can be justified from an individual position. Considering that they serve the purpose of development and self-realization, all troubles can be adopted as positive factors. For example, we saw that IP-12, who states that she “acts with the urge to create” and dreams of living a “meaningful life”, is not disturbed by the obligation to have information of all the working process, and even enjoys it. Although she admits that “there are more important things in life than work”, she clearly states that she still enjoys work and is not disturbed by the fact that work becomes her whole life:

I don't consider myself a workaholic, for me there are more priorities in life, but I love to work. Creating something from scratch gives me incredible

satisfaction, so I think my profession suits me and I don't feel like working at all when I work on projects I love. (...) Working for my dreams motivates me. That's why I find it normal to work more in some periods and less in others. (IP-12)

We can say that IP-12 is not an exception. As we have seen, the sense of freedom provided by the flexibility also enables many to do meaningful, satisfying, and instructive work. This makes it possible for many to consider work as a self-actualizing activity. As we will see in more detail later, this situation functions as an affective suspension that allows one to endure hard work and difficult conditions, as in IP-12's case.

3.2.1.4. Affectional Satisfaction

Most of the interviewees stated that the most attractive feature of freelance work is that it "satisfies their desires". We have seen how the post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics attaches importance to the satisfaction of desires and thereby increasing the motivation to work. In fact, by satisfaction of one's desires, I mean the increase in one's *conatus*, the power to do, as I mentioned when discussing affective economy. Therefore, the desire-satisfying nature of the freelance work is not simply a feature of the way it works, but is the general affective state it creates along with other features. In other words, freelance working satisfies interviewees' desires because it gives the initiative to determine the place and time of work, gives a sense of freedom, allows one "to be one's own boss", and satisfies the sense of self-realization and authenticity.

While the interviewees state that freelancing is "satisfying their desires", they describe this satisfaction by saying that it is an "exciting", "pleasant" job which "makes you feel happy" and "peaceful":

I had always dreamed of having my own business, of being able to work from wherever I wanted, on the jobs I enjoyed. (IP-27)

In my ten years of working life, I am at the point where I feel the most peaceful. This was in line with the remote working practice that I have wanted for years. I have been longing for such a way of working for years. (IP-8)

But especially after my gap year, I realized that I really need to do what I love. At least after I got into freelancing, I realized that maybe it keeps my mind busy, maybe it prevents me from socializing, but the advantages that this job

gives me are many. I'm free, I can go wherever I want, I get a satisfactory wage, I also get extra pleasure. So I don't mind. (IP-5)

I have no such big dreams. I do my job not to make money but to be useful, to work for my passion, to produce and to enjoy life. When you do your job with passion, when you focus on production and development rather than making money, money comes with it. (IP-17)

I'm here because I can do what I love. That's the easiest way to deal with all the other challenges: that is, to devote time and energy to what you love, what I am an expert at and what I love, what I enjoy doing, what I find worth devoting time to. (...) If I am feeling down in my personal life, I go back to my work. (IP-34)

As we can see from these excerpts, freelance work is preferred for most interviewees because it provides a working environment they dream of, where they feel content, peaceful and comfortable, and satisfies their desires. However, what IP-34 states in the last quote is significant. Because he says that devoting time and energy to the work that he loves and enjoy is "the easiest way to cope with all other difficulties". In this respect, the various difficulties and troubles caused by having to work also valid for freelancers. However, what is important here is that a job that satisfies one's desires allows one to overcome and ignore all these difficulties and troubles. We can say that IP-34's case is an example in which the post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics is crystallized. But IP-34 is of course not alone. For example, IP-29 similarly states that she can work "even as a janitor" just to be able to do job she is passionate about in the most well-known, famous, prestigious companies in the market. The important thing here is that she has declared that she can even do a job that she deems worthless in order to do the job she is passionate about. We might think that IP-29 exaggerated this and would not accept being a janitor just to get into that company. But the Passionate Work Ethics, which imposes the motto of "doing what you love", seems in most cases to serve nothing but the purpose of legitimizing working conditions that do not benefit the employee. In many cases, employees learn to accept the negative conditions they are exposed to. For example, IP-14 is another case of this situation:

When you become a freelancer, statistically, one has to work more and for longer periods of time. However, this process is much more positive and intense in terms of knowledge-skills and emotions compared to the period spent as an salaried employee. (IP-14)

IP-14, who had regular working experience in a corporate firm before, has experienced

the positive features of regular work, and also states that the positive features of regular work are attractive in the face of some problems of freelance work. However, in the last instance, these problems seem more bearable and manageable to IP-14, as the freelance working is “affectively much more positive and intense”. Therefore, even if the working conditions are easier in some ways, it is more difficult to endure the challenges of a regular job, as the affective satisfaction is not as strong as in a freelance job. On the contrary, some difficulties of freelance work are accepted more easily because of the strong affective bond. This does not mean, of course, that the difficulties are “solved”. Rather, sustainability of the problems and tolerability without solving them seem more possible in freelance work.

However, as the problems remain unresolved, it still creates a great deal of stress for the employees despite all these satisfactory aspects. As we have seen in our discussion so far, many interviewees considered freelancing as a way to get the job they “dream about” and “desired”. For those who can find jobs that meet these expectations, freelancing satisfies their desire. But the opposite is also possible. Ursula Le Guin’s following statement explains the reason for this contradiction quite clearly:

Freedom is a heavy load, a great and strange burden for the spirit to undertake. It is not easy. It is not a gift given, but a choice made, and the choice may be a hard one. The road goes upward towards the light; but the laden traveler may never reach the end of it. (Le Guin, 1971, p. 141)

For the interviewees in this study, freedom is indeed a “strange burden” and a “choice made”. This choice is often made with courage, with an entrepreneurial thrust. Even the illusion of “free choice” created by freedom, the pressure to make decisions can turn into a heavy burden, a source of stress, as Le Guin says, in situations where it is not known what to do.

For example, lately I get up in the morning, I can sit at the desk at eight o’clock in the morning and get up at eight o’clock in the evening and do nothing. It happens. I don’t know what to do, you don’t do anything. Then comes the stress. (IP-32)

The results of this choice may not always come true as expected and hoped. The decision to work as an independent professional due to the attractiveness of its flexibility and uncertainty, can turn into a source of stress for some interviewees precisely because of flexibility and uncertainty:

I was constantly having to work until the morning, and on top of that I was having great difficulties because I wasn't taking care of myself. (...) That's why it is so important to make the right planning. It is very important not to give up your private life. Otherwise, you can't breathe, you continue with work day and night. You need to make time for yourself. (IP-29)

I carried the panic of "I'll do anything, as long as my income doesn't decrease and I don't have to go back to full-time work" at all times. (IP-27)

My doubts about returning freelancing life were similar to everyone else's: "will the work be steady?", "will I earn enough?", "will I be able to maintain communication with clients without getting burned out?", "what if I burn out?", "will I be able to maintain the discipline of working on my own?", and with the knowledge of my previous freelancing experience, "will loneliness affect me badly?" (IP-12)

In these examples, we can see what causes stress in freelancing for independent professionals. IP-12's quote almost sums it all up: the stress of not knowing if one can get a job again, the stress of not knowing whether the income will be permanent, the stress of constantly dealing with customers, and the stress of having to deal with all these processes alone. What all these stress factors have in common is that they stem from flexibility, insecurity, and loneliness. In other words, flexibility, uncertainty (positive sense) and individuality, which are considered positive features of freelance work, suddenly turn into insecurity, uncertainty (negative sense) and loneliness for some.

On the other hand, this stressful situation can make the benefits of regular work more attractive in some cases, even for those who praise and prefer freelance work:

I have to network, I have to do a good job, it doesn't tolerate mistakes. It's a bit stressful, to be honest. I would be a little more comfortable in a salaried, regular job. (IP-28)

Likewise, for IP-15, the short-term and long-term stress caused by freelancing allows him to stop working freelance from time to time and switch to regular work for a while, although he prefers to work freelance. Among the interviewees, there were many people who quit regular work and switched to freelance work, but no one left the freelance job and went to a regular job. Some could run two jobs at once. However, IP-15, who is a different example, was working as a freelancer intermittently: he works in a regular job for a while, then quits that job and works as a freelancer for a while, then quits the freelance job and works in a regular job for a while, and so on. We see

that the motivation behind his decision not to work as a freelancer all the time is the fear that freelancing will turn into a very stressful situation if it is done continuously.

3.2.2. Real Subsumption and Putting Subjectivity to Work: Working as an Independent Professional and its Impacts on Work-Life Balance

In this section, we will examine in more detail how work time colonizes leisure time. As I argued before, the neoliberal labor regime and the corresponding work and employment relations tend to push the real subsumption of labor to capital to its extreme. Spheres of life, our emotions and personal merits, that were not directly part of labor processes before are increasingly becoming part of the process of surplus value generation. So, the question we are going to cover in this section is how does this happen, and how is it experienced?

What I am trying to show in this study is that in the process of the real subsumption of labor to capital, a work ethics accompanies it, which facilitates capital's colonization of leisure time (thorough flexibilization and precarization), allowing it to easily penetrate social relations and to adapt it individually much more smoothly: post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics.

In this section, I want to show how Passionate Work Ethics colonizes everyday life (and its free time) through freelance work, how it subsumes labor to capital, and thus what kind of subjectivity it produces. What is important for us here, as I have tried to show throughout the study, is that this process of subsumption is also wholeheartedly, passionately desired by the employees. In other words, Passionate Work Ethics, so to speak as an affective lubricant, also produces an affective structure that allows this process to take root in everyday life. We have seen the elements of this affective structure: (1) being engaged in an enjoyable job, (2) having the initiative to determine the place and time of work, (3) feeling free and autonomous, (4) the experience of self-realization and self-development through work. Now, I would like to examine the ordinary effects of this affective structure in everyday life that shape the subjectivity of employees. These passionately appealing elements of freelancing establishes real subsumption in everyday life by (1) financializing everyday life, (2) dictating self-marketing and self-branding, normalizing networking, and (3) legitimizing the occupation of leisure time by activities related to work, thus produces a kind of

freelance, flexible and precarious employee subjectivity.

3.2.2.1. Financialization of Everyday Life

As one of the elements of the real subsumption process, we can count the “financialization of everyday life” in the first place. In fact, I use the term borrowing from the work of Martin (2002) and some other authors (Pellandini-Simanyi 2020; Pellandini-Simanyi, Hammer & Vargna 2015) but in a somewhat different sense. According to this, the financialization of everyday life refers to how systemic financial features permeate daily life, introducing additional degrees of financial risk and responsibility into other aspects of everyday life. In this regard, Martin argues that financial concepts and rationality permeate everyday life in various ways (financial literacy trainings, self-help literature, pensions, credits, debts, etc.) and shape society and individuals. From this perspective, financialization is not only a macro-economic process; it is also a form of sociability that influences and shapes everyday life, colonizing it, so to speak.

In this regard, we can argue that financial rationality has begun to spread, in various ways, to all the everyday actors who produce affects in everyday life. Haiven’s (2014) analyzes on financial risk management is, I think, instructive in this regard. According to him, all those rational, economic tools that have been developed and become increasingly widespread to predict and manage financial risks actually point to the fragility and uncertainty of the capitalist market economy. This analysis, in my opinion, makes sense precisely in the context of the neoliberal financialization of everyday life, since the actors are trying to find their way in a highly uncertain and risky economic and social environment. In such a situation, actors have to be “financial virtuosos”; that is, in the face of possible risks that they may encounter in every sphere of life, in an uncertain environment, actors have to improve themselves, make plans, predict their future, minimize the risks in the face of unpredictability, in short, find ways that will make them advantageous in the face of this uncertain and risky future.

Martin and other’s use of the concept of financialization of everyday life points to the fact that financial rationality and tools become ordinary, that they are adapted in an ordinary way by everyday actors in their everyday life, and that these actors are included by financial rationality. My use is slightly different. What I mean by the

concept of financialization of everyday life, rather, is that all areas of the lives of insecure and flexible freelancers are shaped by profit/loss analysis and risks analysis. I do not mean that they are directly included by financial rationality, which is another dimension of their situation of course. We can argue that in a life where the future is economically uncertain, freelancer's effort to make this future predictable and as risk-free as possible, and to reduce the shock and risks of this economic turbulence financialize all areas of their lives and turn them into neoliberal subjects.

In this regard, the excerpts below clearly show us that the freelancers I interviewed directly experienced the financialization of their everyday lives. For example, we can see this in IP-26's case:

Until the last three months, I was looking into my finances every day to check my income. (IP-26)

Of course, freelancers are not the only ones who regularly check their accounts and look into their finances. Those who work in regular, secure jobs, even if they have regular income, try to keep their lives under economic control and balance their income and expenses. But what is important here for our topic is that for freelancers whose income irregularity is a norm rather than an exception, this is a matter of life and death. When they cannot find a job to do, it is absolutely essential that they have saved some money to make a living. On the other hand, they definitely need to insure themselves, thinking about their future. In this respect, we can say that the financialization of everyday lives of flexible and insecure freelancers differs from the financialization of the everyday lives of other social groups.

On the other hand, we clearly see that the economic turbulence created by the financialization of everyday life and an uncertain and insecure life is worrying. For example, IP-2 and IP-34 express this clearly:

I cannot overcome the stress caused by economic uncertainty. Stress is not something that can be overcome, but you can cope with it. If your income is irregular, plan your expenses regularly. (IP-34)

This concern, which has just begun, has led me to think a little further ahead. I think I need to create passive sources of income and I am taking some steps. I also had some concerns about insurance and pension issues. I have drawn a road map for myself and I am slowly taking my own steps. (IP-2)

But the important thing here is that both take it for granted as part of their everyday lives. Although IP-34 deeply feels the stress caused by economic uncertainty and a turbulent life, he thinks that this is not something that can be overcome, and thus accepts it as an inherent feature of his everyday life. Likewise, IP-2 admits that she suffers from anxiety about the future. But this anxiety pushes her to take care of herself and “build his own steps”. She also accepts this anxious and turbulent situation as a result of the life she prefers and tries to find out what she can do and which paths she can choose. The individuality inherent in this attitude is evident in these two examples. Despite all the anxiety that an uncertain and insecure, economically turbulent life, they still seem to accept the financialization of their everyday lives, to spend every moment of their lives trying to eliminate the anxiety for the future, thus the subjectivity created by this, with the motivation of having a job they love.

On the other hand, IP-30, as another example, says that it is necessary to make a very good budget account. But what is interesting in his example is that he points to one of the pitfalls of the Passionate Work Ethics. His everyday life is actually financialized like the others. But IP-30 states that, unlike the others, this is to escape the traps of Passionate Work Ethics. According to this, people can continue to work in precarious and bad conditions for years by deceiving themselves, thinking that they are doing the job they love; Passionate Work Ethics can deceive them, preventing them from seeing things go wrong. According to IP-30, the financialization of everyday life, constantly seeing how much you have gained and lost, is precisely important in order not to fall into this situation.

When managing your own business, you need to make a very good budget account. Otherwise, you cannot understand what you earn, it is possible to spend years fooling yourself. Asking the question of how much I earn is a real confrontation. (IP-30)

3.2.2.2. Obligation to Self-Promotion: Turning Oneself into a Personal Brand

Another important pillar of the real subsumption process is self-marketing, self-promoting, and self-branding. Advertising is used by all companies to commercialize and deliver their products to consumers and is indispensable in this respect. Advertising in this sense has existed for many years. However, self-marketing, self-branding is a new phenomenon that develops with the experience of working as an

independent professional. In order to compete with other freelancers, to attract the attention of customers, to be one step ahead of others in this job market where working independent and alone is the norm, it is now almost essential to show that one is different from others, to increase the reputation, and to transform into a remarkable and trustworthy brand. As IP-9 points out, “no matter how experienced a person is, unless one can express this experience in various channels, it may not be possible to find customers” in the freelance market where competition is very high. In this respect, it is now essential to prepare a rich CV and portfolios showing past works and experiences, and to try to contact as many different people as possible through social media accounts and websites:

You make yourself and your work accessible in many places such as websites, LinkedIn etc. You gain experience by working in many jobs. Most importantly, you make yourself visible by making yourself memorable. (IP-11)

Once you have prepared a portfolio for yourself, you need to make it visible. (IP-6)

At that time, I wasn't very good at self-promotion. But that was a big mistake. Being a freelancer was all about how much you could market yourself and what you had to do was to actively use all social media platforms to show the people around how well you were doing. (IP-21)

It is very difficult to get the first job there without points, stars, portfolio. You need to market yourself. Now I am also developing my profile there. I need to ensure Twitter visibility, I am preparing my portfolio. (IP-24)

Moreover, we can say that self-marketing and self-branding activities are now a part of the working time. In other words, the time devoted to self-marketing and self-branding is actually time devoted to work, even if it is thought to be outside the scope of working hours. Therefore, freelancers must devote time to finding customers, advertising themselves on social media and marketing themselves, in addition to the time they devote to their work. For example, IP-24, whose excerpt I shared above, clearly states this by saying that her working life “is divided into two”. She says that she spends her “free time” after the work she does for customers, mostly on activities aimed at her own development and marketing. Even if she does not consider it a work activity, I still think we should accept it as such. Because, as an independent professional, she has to find her customers herself, so the activities she performs outside of working time to find customers are actually included in her working time,

otherwise it is not possible to find customers:

I have two areas, client work and personal projects, it's divided into two. I tell you that I work two-three days, but those days are what I make money from. Other than that, I am always doing something on the computer. (IP-24)

Thus, we can say that one's whole life, in almost all its dimensions, has turned into work; the job becomes much more what defines one's individuality. In this sense, by injecting self-commodification motivation into the person, the real subsumption process almost reaches total subjection. We know that in capitalism, labor power is already a commodity. However, beyond the labor power as a commodity, all the subjectivity and individuality of the person, his mind and body, his emotions become a commodity as a whole. Individuality thus becomes a marketed commodity, completely identical with work.

Some accept the directive to transform themselves into a brand without any problems, and therefore more easily and wholeheartedly fulfill the requirements of this directive of neoliberal work ethics. For example, IP-17 and IP-27 are clearly aware of what they need to do to increase their reputation, gain the trust of customers, in short, increase their "human capital". And for this purpose, they accept, without question, requirements such as taking tests of freelance job sites, thereby earning badges and increasing their reputation. Or, as in IP-27's case, as a complete "Me Inc.", she adopts an entrepreneurial attitude to sell her other skills and sees no problem in that.

When I wondered if I could sell other skills I had, I realized that I could use some of the experience I had gained in branding. (IP-27)

But on the other hand, some are aware that this self-marketing and self-branding imposition of the neoliberal work ethics has turned them into something they do not want, but they still accept it knowing that it is still necessary to survive in the freelance job market:

For example, LinkedIn is something I don't like at all, but I thought now to create an account. Freelance has a side that forces you to do things you don't like. For example, I don't want to exist in that way. But on the other hand, it is compulsory. (IP-28)

From this quote, we can understand that marketing oneself on social media and transforming oneself into a brand is experienced as a necessity, not an option. Even

though IP-28 loves his freelance job, he feels and experiences that apart from the attractive aspects of his job, there is also an aspect that forces him to do things he does not want. But he thinks that the attractive aspects of the job still compensate for this unattractive aspect, and he can continue his work in this way.

Another phenomenon related to self-marketing and self-branding is networking. Just as self-marketing commodifies individuality, networking commodifies social relations. Networking means building relationships for professional purposes. In this respect, it is essential to have strong and wide networks for independent professional who are their own bosses and therefore need to find their own clients. In this regard, many of the interviewees said that they found their jobs through networks. Some lucky ones said that they were able to progress in this process without the need for a network, but we can say that this is an exception. But the norm is that, in most cases, to reach the right customer, one has to enter the right social environments or get to know the people who can bring them in those environments. Otherwise, no matter how successful the person is, no matter how strong a CV and portfolio one has, one may not get the reward of one's talents. IP-21 clearly states this:

That's when I started to realize how important the network was, and over the years it has become my primary focus. Even if you produce excellent quality work, if you don't have a network to present it to, if you haven't developed the communication skills to explain it, you may have to work for very low wages. (IP-21)

On the other hand, IP-28, whose quote I shared above, was uncomfortable with self-marketing, said that he was also uncomfortable with networking. Luckily, he was able to find a job without the need for a network (but we learn that he still found it through someone he knew). But he also feels that reliance on networks to find a job is still uncomfortable and problematic:

This is a network society. You need to be part of a network. You need to connect with other networks. I found this place a bit by chance. But there are websites for that, I found it without getting into that network, but otherwise it's stressful. (IP-28)

Deleuze said that we need to free the concepts from advertisers, from being advertisements. He said this because he thinks that in the age we live in, thought has become worthless and loses its power when advertising has taken over. We can take

this interpretation of Deleuze a little further and say that today our individuality, personality and relationships have fallen into advertising. Independent professionals now act as “Me Inc.” just like companies; individuality and relationships become a commodity that can be marketed through work, like a brand marketing itself.

We can say that networking is one of the most striking manifestations of the individualization of labor relations in the neoliberal context. According to this, employees now have to devote time to find customers, commercialize themselves by entering the right social media, in addition to the time they devote to work. In other words, besides the working time devoted to work, non-working free time is now gradually allocated to such work-related activities. This undoubtedly indicates that one’s labor, temporality, and subjectivity are increasingly being subsumed to the capital. Moreover, as we have seen throughout the study, the greatest danger here is, I think, it is desirable.

3.2.2.3. Encroachment of Working Time on Leisure Time: Doing Job-Related Activities in Leisure Time

Another element of the Passionate Work Ethics that strengthens the real subsumption process is its directive to spend leisure time with job-related activities. Freelancers feel obliged to make all their virtues, their soul and body totally subject to the work process in order to survive in this market where competition is high, and they have to find their customers themselves. This, therefore, compels them to spend all their free time with job-related activities, such as improving themselves, learning new things about the job etc.

We can see that many of the interviewees willingly adopted this obligation. Of course, there are various motivations behind this. We can divide these motivations into three: (1) motivation for self-improvement by making up for deficiencies, (2) motivation for self-marketing and networking, as we saw in the previous section, and (3) motivation to enjoy learning something about the job just because the job is loveable. These three motivations entice freelancers to spend their free time in activities that benefit their work.

According to first motivation, many interviewees feel compelled to improve

themselves when they realize that some of their qualifications are insufficient for the job they want to do. This obligation outweighs so much that one can spend all time learning the job, eliminating her deficiencies without getting bored.

For a month, I focused sixteen hours a day on deepening my software knowledge, understanding what I could do from scratch, and learning how to do things by following courses. (IP-21)

On the days when I started to get jobs, my day was spent learning, researching and doing the work. I was in a very good process where both learning and working were carried out together. (...) When I look back, what I definitely did when I was feeling down was to make up for what I was lacking, to do research on those points, which was incredibly beneficial for me. (IP-31)

My biggest obstacle was language. In order to overcome this problem, I thought it was beneficial for me to provide long hours of consultancy for free. I was both practicing and trying to offer instant solutions by examining the problems of my customers firsthand. I benefited a lot. (IP-7)

As we have seen in IP-7's case, even working and practicing long hours for free just to improve himself is not a problem. He even says that it is very beneficial for him. Or IP-21 who says he works sixteen hours a day to learn software development. As we saw in the previous section, in which we analyzed the experience of the worker-to-be, one could say yes to unpaid jobs and internships in a situation of insecurity and uncertainty just because they might bring some future benefit. Similarly, IP-7 accepts long hours of wageless work just to acquire a qualification that he thinks will serve to improve himself in the future freelance job market.

On the other hand, when we look at the second motivation, we can say that many freelancers devote a significant part of their time to self-marketing, self-branding and networking activities. For example, as IP-30 told me, it is a striking example that he produces display products in his spare time just to display it in order to increase the trust of customers in him. Or, similarly, IP-17 says that she produces specific prototypes for every job she applies. She even states that even if she does not get the job despite these exemplary works, she is not offended by it, and that this gives her feedback and contributes to her development:

Then I sit at my desk and see if there are any applications I can make. I prepare sample works for the applications and prepare application letters for each of them separately. I make sample works for each job, which takes time, but even

if I don't get the job, I definitely get the feedback. This activity also keeps my hands warm. Afterwards, I have lunch and sit at my desk again, this time at the lessons and courses I bought online. If they are finished, I watch how-to videos from YouTube specific to my work. Every two weeks I write text for my own YouTube channel, shoot videos and edit them. (...) I don't have much portfolio work because I haven't done this job before, so I make it up myself. Or I help my friends and relatives, without getting paid, so that I can show a lot of my work. (IP-17)

As we can see, IP-17 actually has all three motivations she clings to her work: She does free work and take online lessons just to improve herself, and also produces content for his YouTube channel for self-marketing. And she looks pretty happy in this situation. Similarly, IP-30 too says that he is not bothered by the overflow of work into his free time:

I think I've found a balance that I think I've made relatively well here, because I don't feel like it's taking time away from me, because I can get short-term returns on what I'm doing. And there's no boss, no bureaucratic relationship. So, I don't mind when things drag on and seep into the weekend, when things take over my private life, because I accepted these things when I accepted the temptations of this job, these are the small price to pay for this job. Because there is never a perfect job. Compared to the alternatives, this job gives me a comfort. (IP-30)

While IP-30 takes flexibility in a negative sense in another part of the interview, here he says that he does not feel uncomfortable with this condition when we started to talk about the job he has been doing passionately. We understand that this did not cause uneasiness because he accepted such handicaps as "small prices to pay" when choosing this job. It seems that when compared to other alternatives, this job is much more attractive and comfortable for IP-30, so such problems do not bother him much. In this context, IP-30 readily accepts the usurpation of his free time by working time occasionally.

Of course, these activities are not considered jobs, as they are not paid activities. However, even if such activities are not considered a job, they lead to the usurpation of free time to the extent that they are carried out, as a kind of necessity, with the expectation that they will be beneficial for the job. Even if they say that they do such activities wholeheartedly, this motivation does not change the fact that these activities are activities that usurp free time and spread the logic of work to other areas of life.

In this context, as the third motivation, there is the motivation to enjoy learning and doing something about work even in non-working time just because one loves his/her job. The other two motivations, of course, operate on the level of desire, but when we compare the third motivation with the others, we can say that there is an aimless affective orientation here. In other words, there is just the motivation to spend free time with work-related activities and not be bothered by it, out of the desire to just doing what one loves. For example, IP-24 openly states that she does not consider such activities that she performs in her spare time as work, and moreover, she enjoys them:

I don't feel like work, I enjoy it. Watching something on Youtube, learning something about design, those don't feel like work to me. I think it might be tiring without realizing it. But I enjoy it a lot. (IP-24)

Like IP-24, IP-5 too says that she enjoys doing activities in her non-working time that will benefit her work, because it satisfies her desire to learn something about her job. What they have in common is that they both feel that these activities they do in their spare time can be tiring, but they still enjoy doing these activities simply because they love their job:

Maybe this is actually personal, but I am a person who likes self-improvement, who likes to learn things, who likes to improve myself. When technical issues come into play, for example, I take training, I am curious, I train myself, I increase my qualifications. But I do this not out of necessity, but because I like it. Sometimes it feels like work, sometimes it gives me satisfaction. (IP-5)

3.2.3. Individualized Work Ethics and the Precarious Freedom

So far, we have examined the general attitudes of independent professionals towards working, the financial conditions and background of freelance work. We also examined the attractive and unattractive aspects of freelance work. We have seen that these attractive and unattractive aspects are in fact symmetrically opposite of each other. In other words, an attractive aspect is at the same time the source of a problem. For example, temporal and spatial flexibility as an attractive aspect that augments the feeling of freedom also means irregular working hours and occupation of leisure time. As an independent professional, the price of “being one's own boss”, of being autonomous and free, is to take care of all parts of the work and to take all the responsibility alone. But we have seen that the appeal of Passionate Work Ethics makes it possible for most interviewers to ignore these negative aspects and hold on

to the positive ones. Of course, there are still some contradictions in all of the interviewees, but these contradictions are less for some and more for others.

So far we examined the extent to which working as an independent professional brought about the real subordination of labor to capital: We could argue that by financializing everyday life, dictating self-marketing and self-branding, and normalizing spending leisure time with work-related activities, it produces a flexible and precarious independent professional subjectivity. In the next section, we will discuss the three affective attributes of Passionate Work Ethics, as an affective lubricant, that legitimize and normalize precarious and flexible work. But before that, I would like to conclude this section by pointing out the two, closely related dimensions of post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics in terms of subjectivity, which are shaped around flexible and precarious freelance work: (1) individual work ethics, and (2) the experience of “precarious freedom”.

As I have tried to show throughout this chapter, there was always an emphasis on individuality in the narratives of my interviewees. Due to the nature of their working style, they both work without a boss, that is, they think they are their own boss, and they have to deal with all parts of the work process themselves. Therefore, this situation made them truly “individual”, “independent” professionals. However, as we have seen throughout the study, this state of “independence” did not simply create a positive situation. In some cases, this was considered a good thing by independent professionals, as it enhanced their feeling of freedom and autonomy. But in many other cases, this state of independence was an illusion. In other words, while there was a sense of independence there were also relations of dependence, exploitation and domination. I argue that it is the affective call of Passionate Work Ethics that creates this illusion.

We can trace this emphasis on individuality in narratives that grasp the solution of the problems created by the experience of working as a flexible and precarious independent professional on an individual level. In other words, for many independent professionals, work is an individual relationship. While Robert Castel described the issues related to work, employment and social security as a “social question”, in today’s neoliberal work ethics, all these are now completely pushed into the individual

sphere as issues that the individual has to shoulder and if there is a problem, he/she has to solve it. In this context, many interviewees talk about this issue through personal capacities such as “free will”, “courage”, “adaptability”. For example, some interviewees consider the decision to work as freelancer as an example of “courage”. According to this, the decision to work as freelancer means choosing to be free. Since this is a difficult and risky decision, the people who has “entrepreneurial spirit” are thought to be more courageous than others:

At that moment I realized that the biggest obstacle to achieving what I wanted was my fears and no one could stop me. (IP-23)

The biggest obstacle was myself. I took the courage to change my mindset day by day and start from scratch. When I had the courage to leave the expectations of society and my environment and ask myself what I needed, the rest came (IP-2)

Being a freelancer is not for everyone, as far as I can see, since I have wanted to do my own thing for as long as I can remember, this is what is good for me. Let's be honest, being a freelancer means getting out of your comfort zone. You lose the comfort zones of a normal job, at least in the first stage. (IP-9)

In this respect, freelancing is a working style that not everyone can afford, as IP-9 said. But the point is that not being able to endure the hardships of freelancing is seen as a personal problem by those caught in the call of Passionate Work Ethics. The issue is reduced to the abilities and choices of the individual, ignoring the non-individual, structural and economic problems created by precarity and flexibility in daily life. For example, as we can see in IP-22's quote, some interviewees describe the problems created by insecure and flexible freelance work and the obstacles it poses in life as simply a matter of choice, that is, as if one “really wants”, “takes a step” for it, everything will be okay:

As long as they really want it and take a step, the rest will follow. (IP-22)

In this context, another manifestation of individuality is that the task of chasing after everything in life is assigned to the individual. Everyone I interviewed agrees that making the decision to move from a regular and partially secure job to freelance work is not easy. As we have seen before, many saw this process as “going out of the comfort zone”, “breaking the shell from the inside”. But of course, this also brings uncertainty and risks. The task of solving all these uncertainties and minimizing risks is again

placed on the individual employee's shoulders. Many interviewees underlined the importance of "adaptability" while explaining this process. The manifestation of flexibility at the individual level requires acquiring the skills of individual agility and adaptation. Some think that those without agility and low adaptability are no longer able to survive in the job market. Here we see an example of the internalization of the neoliberal flexibility and entrepreneurship directive. Thus, the directive of neoliberalism for individual self-development, adapting to new conditions and taking advantage of opportunities can smoothly become ordinary. The ability to adapt as an individual obligation, without questioning why one should adapt to new conditions, is expected to be high in everyone:

So I think there is something bipolar. It's very easy both to earn unbelievably big money and to starve. You have to curl up like a snake. It is not possible to go somehow with the flow and build a life in this way. Chasing things and jumping from one thing to another. (IP-24)

As IP-24 states, precarious and flexible freelancing is like walking on a tightrope, swinging between two extremes, so to speak. It is very difficult to find a balance in life, as insecurity and flexibility make life uncertain and fragile. But while the obligation to keep this balance is disturbing, it is still relegated to one's individual responsibility. Even if taking responsibilities individually creates problems (we have seen that this leads to over-responsibility and loneliness in everyday life), it is praised as an "entrepreneurial" experience:

Who among us is not haunted by the fear of uncertainty? The only thing I know about freelancing is that the opportunities never end. You stumble but you don't fall, and if you fall, you get up again stronger and more experienced. There is no wasted experience in this world. (IP-11)

Because I think freedom is completely up to our choices. It's about choosing whether to do something or not. If we prefer to do something, we can do it while feeling free. So I don't consider work as a usurpation of freedom. When we make certain choices, we can't blame the system or life, we can't say "I'm not free at all", because we chose that job etc. We can also choose to go and live a different life away from the city life. So, this idea seems to me a bit like an escape, as a tendency to blame something. Maybe as an excuse for things they cannot face. I think it is an issue all about whether you have courage or not. (IP-5)

I think IP-5's quote is significant in this sense. Because this brings us to the discussion of the experience of precarity as a state of being free, as an experience of precarious

freedom, in relation to the narrative of individuality and free choice. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) argue, in discussing modernity, “precarious freedom” appears as a double face of individuality produced by modernity and risk society. According to the authors, “whatever we consider – God, nature, truth, science, technology, morality, love, marriage – modern life is turning them all into ‘precarious freedom’”. All metaphysics and transcendence, all necessity and certainty are being replaced by artistry” (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, p. 2). In this regard, the “state of being free” that modernity promises also imposes individuality and thus artistry. What it creates is the singular, lonely, deceived and beguiled individual who lives his/her precarity as a freedom, trying with her own individual effort and abilities to fill the void created by the disappearance of all necessity and certainty. I said these individuals were “beguiled” because they are under the spell of the Passionate Work Ethics that make them desire precarity as if it is a state of being free. As I mentioned earlier, one of the most dangerous pitfalls of Passionate Work Ethics is that the promise of freedom obscures the vulnerability created by flexibility and insecurity. In this respect, among my interviewees, there were those who believed that flexible and precarious freelance work, which they chose voluntarily, was an experience of freedom. The reason they believed in this illusion was that they thought that they made the decision to do the job they wanted with their own individual, free will:

I wanted this, I mean, this was something I wanted and I fought for it. I mean, especially in the last years of university, I dreamed of something and I am doing it now. (IP-28)

I’m doing the work I desire, I’ve worked hard for it and I’m still doing it. (IP-24)

I do what I want to do, and if that is freedom, then yes, I am free. I wouldn’t be able to do these things in any other job. If I can work fifteen hours a week and earn more than my mother who works ten hours a day, and I can do everything I want to do, that’s smarter choice. I also don’t like to settle for less, I don’t think it’s a good choice. (IP-26)

In this context, we see that the motivation to choose a freelance job with all those promises of freedom, autonomy and self-realization goes hand in hand with the motivation to do the job one loves and desires. From this point of view, some interviewees themselves propagate the “do what you love” ideology, just like Steve Jobs or another business and entrepreneurship guru. The fact that they are doing the

job they love, that they have chosen it with their free will, willingly, courageously, taking the difficulties and making concessions, and choosing to follow their dreams enable them to face all the difficulties they are exposed to. And that is why they are advising others to do just that. They advise that if they can find the job they love, they will be able to overcome all the negativities about the job, or rather, these difficulties will no longer bother them:

If you are going to be a freelancer, be a freelancer of what you love. Not what you will make money. Not your professional job. Start with what you enjoy doing. That's the easiest way to deal with all the other challenges. (IP-34)

We, freelancers, feel alive in our bones as we chase our dreams. (IP-8)

Work hard. And do your work with passion, if you are not focused on making money, but on producing and developing, money will come with it. (IP-17)

In this context, we can say that the new neoliberal work ethics puts all the problems arising from precarity and flexibility to the individual's responsibility. Neoliberalism, in other words, creates a work ethics that individualizes the responsibility to deal with all the problems created by uncertainty and risk. We can even say that it does not just impose the responsibility of dealing with risks on the individual; the outcomes of being exposed to all risks and negativities created by uncertainty and flexibility are also individualized. In other words, in most cases, the negative consequences and problems of neoliberal flexible and precarious labor regime fall on the employees' share, while the advantages fall to the employer's share. Because, as long as there is an unorganized and isolated workforce that has no bargaining power, employers, not employees, seize all the potential advantages of flexibility.

3.3. Three Attributes of the Passionate Work Ethics and Three Different Responses

3.3.1. The Passionate Work Ethics and its Three Attributes

As I have repeatedly tried to show throughout this study, employees are not simply exposed to flexibility and precariousness, but also desire it. In this respect, the question at the center of this study is what kind of desires and what kind of affective structure enables them to adopt flexible and precarious freelance work. As I tried to show both through freelancers and the experiences of worker-to-be who are on the verge of

entering into wage-labor relationship in the previous section, some advantages of flexible freelancing (mobility, freedom, autonomy, self-realization) are more desirable because they are more suitable for people's non-linear life aspiration. But again, we saw that people also have some reservations about freelancing because of some of its handicaps. We even saw that the attractive and unattractive aspects of freelancing are the exact opposite of each other. In other words, aspects that seemed attractive also seemed unattractive as the cause of some problems. For example, flexibility was attractive in the sense of having the initiative to determine the time and place of work, but it is unattractive at the same time as it led to irregular working hours.

In this context, I argue that the post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics functions as an affective lubricant to manage this contradiction, making it easier for flexible and precarious work to be affectively adopted by employees. This work ethics, I argue, produces motivation, drive, and desire to work in precarious and flexible conditions by creating (1) substantial attachment, (2) endurance, (3) excitement and enthusiasm in employees thanks to its affective promises which we have seen in the previous parts of the study.

As the first attribute, "substantial attachment" refers to the deep, meaningful, and solid bond with work. That is, work is considered as a substantial activity that gives meaning to our life, beyond simply being a necessary activity that we do to earn our living. This attribute of Passionate Work Ethics makes employees think that they are dealing with meaningful, important work. Substantial attachment gives us the answer to why non-pecuniary values are more appealing than pecuniary values. Like money, pecuniary values are of course still important for freelancers or those who want to become freelancer. However, as we saw when examining the results of the field study, there are rather non-pecuniary values such as self-realization, freedom and autonomy behind the motivation to take the decision to work freelance. Substantial attachment is a deeper, more individualistic motivation that comes from doing meaningful and authentic work. We can say that substantial attachment, which manifests as an inner impulse is actually a spiritual drive to find oneself, and to realize oneself. This deep, meaningful connection that the adherents of Passionate Work Ethics think they have established with work also allows the work to be intertwined with their personalities. In this sense, work becomes one of the most important qualities defining a person.

Substantial attachment also pushes their adherents to the pursuit of the job they love in most cases. As Steve Jobs said in the speech I quoted before, Passionate Work Ethics which constantly emphasizes that the search for the job that satisfies one's desires is never-ending (stay always "hungry" and "stupid" if necessary), also supports such an entrepreneurial subjectivity. Adherents express their work passion with words such as inspiration, drive, purpose, hunger, curiosity. One can endure all the setbacks and problems in these entrepreneurial efforts to the extent that they serve to realize oneself on the way to the job one loves. Therefore, this brings us to another attribute of Passionate Work Ethics, namely the "endurance".

"Endurance" refers to the stamina, strength, tolerability that Passionate Work Ethics creates in freelancers. In this regard, the work passion created by Passionate Work Ethics provides its adherents with an affective barrier, resilience and strength to endure affective challenges of freelance work. For those who have a work passion, everything is not perfect, they too may regret and complain, but they are under the spell of an ethic that makes them affectively stronger to cope with and endure these difficulties. On the other hand, as we saw in the previous relevant sections of the study, Passionate Work Ethics also legitimizes "hope labor", that is, putting up with poor, unattractive conditions in the present with the hope of future benefits. Both worker-to-be and independent professionals often accepted unattractive conditions such as unpaid internships, precarious work etc. with the hope that they would be rewarded in the future if they simply put up with these conditions. We can clearly observe this situation described by Lauren Berlant as "cruel optimism" in our study too. In this respect, we can say that the "endurance" as an attribute of Passionate Work Ethics is actually a cruel one. That is, it is an endurance that actually harms the tolerant, prescribing not removing unattractive conditions but enduring them. In other words, an endurance that creates submissive and docile subjects. Thus, it is in fact an endurance that enables one to be patient for these unattractive and poor conditions. Accordingly, we can say that endurance created by the desire for work also serves to individualize and psychologize all social and structural problems related to work, if we consider together with the substantial attachment established by the work. Since Passionate Work Ethics offers individual solutions to challenges related to work as a matter of whether employees have endurance or not, it is not possible to criticize structural exploitation

mechanisms. In other words, when individuals think that the solution to the problems created by the current precarious and flexible working conditions is to find jobs that they like and satisfy their desires, the structural problems of neoliberalism's precarious and flexible employment arrangement are covered up and the whole issue is reduced to individual preferences and abilities.

By “excitement and enthusiasm”, as the last attribute, I mean the thrill, and almost love, of work that Passionate Work Ethics evoke in interviewees. We can define enthusiasm as an individual or collective state of optimism and excitement that gives energy and creates a desire to engage in action. According to this, independent professionals who are excited and enthusiastic can be happy and joyful just because they are doing what they love. Or in other words, just being freelancer is enough for them to be happy, enthusiastic and excited. Attracted by the promises of freelance work, worker-to-be seem excited and enthusiastic when talking about the freelance work they prefer and love. Excitement and enthusiasm turn work from being a necessary activity to earn a living into an activity that individuals do just because they think they love it. As I mentioned while describing the neoliberal ideology of “do what you love and love what you do” in the previous parts of the study, it is possible here to talk about the presence of a neoliberal individualist happiness ideology built around “positive psychology” and the “happiness industry”. From maximizing individual potential to averting negative thoughts, Illouz and Cabanas decipher this happiness ideology, these new ways of guiding individuals, which rely on positive psychology to sell all sorts of methods to live happily, to achieve the ideal of happiness, serving neoliberalism both economically and politically. In this respect, experiencing excited events, being an enthusiast is no longer what a happy good life will provide, but the purpose of life itself; it is, so to speak, a dictation, a directive of the happiness ideology.

3.3.2. Three Forms of Responses to Passionate Work Ethics

From this analysis of how independent professionals experience precarious and flexible working conditions, how they perceive and make sense of work, it can be said that three dispositions have emerged in the context of Passionate Work Ethics³¹: (1)

³¹ I should also note that the patterns here can intersect with each other. We must keep in mind that these are ideal-typical typologies, and that I have presented the general characteristics of each here. In

those who fully adhere to and affirm the post-Fordist Passionate Work Ethics, (2) those who are not strictly adherents of neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics but accept it by necessity, and (3) those who keep a critical distance with neoliberal Passionate Work Ethics. We can present the distribution of the interviewees according to these three responses and their salient features, and the relationship between these responses and attributes in a table as follows:

Table 2. Three Forms of Responses to Passionate Work Ethics' Call

	<i>Some Salient Characteristics</i>
<i>Fully Adherent</i>	• They are completely fit to all three features of Passionate Work Ethics. • They prefer to work freelance not by necessity but by their free will. • They see freelancing as a permanent and only income generating activity. • Non-pecuniary promises are much more appealing. • They have the economic means to meet the material and moral burden required by the decision to pursue the desired job.
<i>Acceptance by Necessity</i>	• They are completely fit to the “endurance” and hesitantly positive to others. • They are inclined to accept freelance work because of the necessity imposed by external financial conditions. • Freelance work is either preferred as an additional job to the extent that it ensures to achieve a certain goal, or they are forced to do freelance work as the only income generating activity as a last resort. The nonpecuniary promises of Passionate Work Ethics are attractive. Against the unattractiveness of other choices at hand, freelance’s nonpecuniary promises allows accepting minimal material gains. • They often do not have the economic means to compensate for the material and moral burden required by the decision to pursue the desired job, and this seems to be the main factor creating the experience of necessity.
<i>Critically Distant</i>	• They are critically distant to all three of features of Passionate Work Ethics, to freelancing, and even to work in general. Nonpecuniary promises of Passionate Work Ethics are unattractive. They consider that these promises have negative sides that legitimizes precarity and flexibility.

this respect, these are not in fact self-closed typologies. That is, a person does not have to belong to only one of these typologies, there may be transitions between them. These three ideal typical affective attitudes and orientations indicate the general categories in which all interviewees’ responses can be included.

The most prominent disposition among all the interviewees was the idea that one should passionately do what they love. What characterizes those in this typology is that they are completely caught up in the call of Passionate Work Ethics. The internal contradiction and inconsistency of those in this typology are either absent or minimal enough to be ignored. The promises and attributes of Passionate Work Ethics have directly a positive meaning for the interviewees included in this typology. So, this makes them internally consistent subjects.

In this context, we should also point out that another important feature of those in this typology is that they prefer to work freelance “freely”, not necessarily. The key factor is the nonnecessity behind their preference of insecure and flexible freelance work. That is why they are grouped under the category of the adherents of Passionate Work Ethics. What “by nonnecessity” signifies is that passion-seekers do not have to do freelance work temporarily until they find a regular job, as they are unemployed; in most cases they want to do freelance work as their only income generating activity throughout their lives. In other words, their living conditions do not push them to work freelance; they desire to work in this way. In this respect, another important point is that they tend to think of freelancing not as a temporary job or side hustle, but as the only income-generating activity in their lives, in most cases permanent.³²

In this context, we can make a few general observations about those who are fully adherent of Passionate Work Ethics and adopt the principle of following their desires. First of all, as we can see from all these examples, Passionate Work Ethics – the belief that self-realization, self-fulfillment, freedom and autonomy should be the main motive in career decision-making – strengthens the mechanisms of socio-economic inequality and exploitation by offering individual and psychological solutions to the social-structural problems created by the work. In this way, it resolves the conflict and tension between capitalism’s obsession to create obedient, docile and efficient workers and the expectation of self-realization, self-fulfillment, autonomy, freedom of the

³² I should point out that I base the two criteria I present here – whether the preference for freelancing is voluntary or involuntary, and whether freelancing provides a supplemental or primary income – based on McKinsey’s report on gig workers motivation to work. Accordingly, this report produces 4 different profiles: “free agents” who do voluntarily only freelance job; “casual earners” who do freelance job freely as a side job; “reluctants” who do it as a primary income generating activity but have to do it out of necessity; “financially strapped” who do freelance job as a side job out of necessity. (Manyika, Lund, Bughin, & Robinson, 2016)

contemporary individual, meeting these two expectations. Individuals who think that they have achieved (or will achieve) the job they love by following their desires accept many harmful conditions of the neoliberal working regime in this quest.

These passion-seekers as well are aware of the importance of financial security and the challenges of employment. And in these conditions *Passionate Work Ethics* precisely offers them a way: if they follow their desires, try to find the jobs they love, they can get away from this discouraging, annoying situation. However, we need to see the dark side of this “promising” projection, and this study actually tries to do that. We can say that the path that *Passionate Work Ethics* offers to passion-seekers leads them, in Spinoza’s words, to desire their own slavery as if it were for their own salvation. As we have seen throughout the study, nearly all passion-seekers with a tendency to romanticize work did not object to the overflow of working hours into their free time, engaging in work-related activities even during off-hours – even if many of them were motivated to choose freelancing in the first place because of the spatial-temporal freedom. In this respect, we see that *Passionate Work Ethics*’ non-pecuniary promises (self-realization, self-fulfillment, autonomy, freedom) cause employees to sacrifice materiality. In many cases, the worsening of current working conditions and the belief that it will not improve push people to “passionately” accept jobs that are less materially satisfying but more “spiritually satisfying”.

On the other hand, *Passionate Work Ethics*’ call resonates because it can respond to the symptoms of the age of crisis and uncertainty. As we have seen in the related sections, in a society where the non-linear life and career regime has now become the dominant, and thus uncertainty is affirmed, precarity and flexibility are positively affirmed; being flexible, agile and versatile is promoted as the virtues that must be possessed in order to survive in such a life and in the labor market. In other words, precarity and flexibility, as a step taken in favor of capital in the labor-capital conflict, seem to be circulating as a kind of emancipation discourse.

At first glance, we can think that there is something positive here, because it is psychologically good for a person to spend time with the things they love, to go after the things they desire, to free themselves from necessity as much as possible, to increase their individual peace and to ensure their inner consistency. However, we

need to realize that there is a significant inequality here in terms of having economic, educational and social capitals. Not everyone has the opportunity to do what they love or go after what they desire. Many of those who can show the “courage” to go after what they desire are able to do so to the extent that they have the means to compensate for the material and moral burden of this pursuit. Going after one’s desire does not benefit everyone equally. Those who have the chance to pursue their desire either have an economic advantage that comes from their families, or they have succeeded in possessing skills that they are more likely to turn into money (knowing coding, using digital design tools, knowing a foreign language, etc.). In this way, they can overcome the handicaps they have to face while pursuing their desires, or they can resist these handicaps longer than others. We have also seen that among the economically disadvantaged, there are those who take the passionate work principle as a guiding principle and struggle to acquire these skills. Some of those in this group struggle and make concessions despite their economic handicaps and somehow reach where they want, but we see that this is exceptional. In most cases, they either struggle and give up at some point, or they cynically reject it from the start. And this brings us to the other two typologies.

The difference between the first and second positions, both of which are adherent to the Passionate Work Ethics, is that the first is carried by “free will” while the other is as a “necessity”. The important thing here, as my analysis shows, is that those in the first position are able to connect more naturally, willingly, and fondly to Passionate Work Ethics, as they have the means to economically compensate for the financial handicaps of the going after what they love. On the other hand, the adventure of those who are in a more disadvantaged economic position, who do not have means for financial compensation, ends up as staying in a job they do not prefer because they do not have the opportunity to continue this search for a long time.

Based on the two criteria I mentioned above, the difference between those in this typology and passion-seekers is that they prefer to freelancing, in most cases, not freely but out of necessity, and for many, freelancing is not the main income-generating activity, but a side job. Those whose main income-generating activity is freelancing are also in a poor economic condition in most cases and therefore continue to seek regular employment. Therefore, in most cases, they do not want to do freelance work

for lifelong like passion-seekers; they usually consider working as a freelancer temporarily until they achieve their goals.

But this is where Passionate Work Ethics comes into play. The interviewees in this group are still under the spell of Passionate Work Ethics, although not as much as the passion-seekers in the first group. The only difference from them is that the people in this group work willingly, if not passionately, but in a state of gratitude. Opportunities offered by freelance work (temporal and spatial flexibility, autonomy and freedom etc.) motivate them to work as freelancers in the face of other worse options at their disposal. So much so that the unattractiveness of other options makes them satisfied with minimal conditions.

Those in this group often do not have as much financial means for compensation as passion-seekers. They do not have much of an economic advantage from their families; their social and educational capital is not as convertible to money as those in the first group. In this case, responding positively to the call of Passionate Work Ethics does not take them forward in life like passion-seekers. Many of them do not do freelance work passionately, but out of necessity to survive as a result of not being able to find a permanent, regular job. As a result, in most cases, they are stuck with the poor conditions of freelance work while continuing to seek regular employment. But as their search brings no result, the risk of being stuck in the poor conditions increases.

Compared to the passion-seekers, we can say that the financial means of those in this typology are more limited. According to the interviews, we see that those who fall into this typology are predominantly social science graduates and economically more disadvantaged compared to passion-seekers. In other words, those in this typology neither have the economic advantages that come from their families and take them one step ahead in life, nor do they have the educational and cultural capital that they can turn into material capital in the job market.

On the other hand, the critical attitude towards Passionate Work Ethics is actually an attitude that we can detect at different levels in many people, if not in everyone, rather than one that permeates the entire discourse and action of a single person. In other words, among the interviewees, those who are critical of Passionate Work Ethics, and even those who are critical of work in general, can only express this critical attitude at

the level of discourse. On a practical level, the economic compulsion of capitalism that forces everyone to work for survival continues to operate in an insurmountable way.

In fact, we can divide those who are critical of work into two. The first group is the one that keeps a distance and critical approach both to Passionate Work Ethics, to freelance flexible work, and to the work itself. The second group, although distant and against the work itself and wage-labor relationship, is not against Passionate Work Ethics, and the call of Passionate Work Ethics provides precisely the motivation that pushes those in this group to work. The second group is the group that justifies, legitimizes, and affirms the existence of Passionate Work Ethics, as we have seen throughout the study. The first group, on the other hand, is the group I would like to address under this typology: those who are against the work and wage labor relationship, but who are also critical of Passionate Work Ethics.

The difference of this typology from the others is that even if they cannot resist the compulsion of work, they are directly opposed to the “do what you love, love what you do” mantra of Passionate Work Ethics and the directive “follow your desires”, and they approach it critically, not affirmatively. They are aware in most cases that this discourse and directive leads to the legitimization of flexibility and precarity, the encroachment of working time on leisure time, and the espousing of the working society and wage-labor relation. They are aware that Passionate Work Ethics is a discourse that makes those who have to work docile and obedient. Therefore, even if they are somehow working in the jobs they love, even if they think that doing the job one loves is positive on some level, making concessions on the way to do the job you love, putting the pursuit of your desires above everything else, being your own boss, in short, all the promises of Passionate Work Ethics that we have mentioned before are all problematic.

But the question is: To what extent does this critical attitude in these cases turn into resistant subjectivity? To what extent does this constitute a resistance to Passionate Work Ethics and the flexible and precarious working organization that it seeks to justify? The answer I can give to this question, at least in the context of this study, is unfortunately negative. As I mentioned before in the relevant section, we recognize the affect of “indignation” in cases that adopt a critical attitude towards Passionate

Work Ethics. We have stated that indignation is a purely political affect in the Spinozist sense, perhaps the first step of establishing a political organization. However, it seems that indignation that we recognize in the interviewees who take a critical attitude is not socialized and remains as an individual anger. Even if one is aware of the individualist discourse of Passionate Work Ethics, the stance against Passionate Work Ethics is only possible in individual ways, not in an organized way.

33

Perhaps the most important reason for this is that Passionate Work Ethics is successful in capturing even the strongest anti-work attitudes. Even those who are against work and aware that wage labor is a part of the capitalist exploitation may not be able to ignore Passionate Work Ethics. Since the only way to survive in capitalism is to enter into a wage-labor relationship, and since wage-labor relationship is experienced as an economic and structural compulsion, it does not seem possible to overcome it – without overthrowing capitalism from top to bottom. Thus, even those with anti-work tendencies are often tempted to be “exploited” in a job they might at least love, rather than being “exploited” in a job they hate.

³³ I say “in the context of this study” because there are of course political organizations trying to intervene in the flexible and precarious working relations created by freelance work, both in Turkey and in the world. We certainly cannot say that freelancers are completely isolated, disorganized, and unreactive to flexibility and precarity. However, this is a study that examines today’s flexible and precarious working relations and the new post-Fordist working ethics that makes these relations socially acceptable, rather than a study that thoroughly examines the working experience of freelancers. Therefore, this study examines the reasons why freelancers cannot organize against flexibility and insecurity, why flexibility and insecurity are taken for granted or even desired, and why they cannot take action when they are disturbed by them. If I must clarify my position on the matter, as Lauren Berlant puts it, “I am pretty weak at imagining a healed world. The best I can offer are depictions of what makes people feel stuck in the face of the vibrations of a devastating crisis.” Therefore, as a product of an effort to reveal the “affective structure” of today’s individual, collective and political life, this study pursues such a descriptive tone.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I draw on the conceptual framework of “affective economy” to theorize the Passionate Work Ethics that establishes the ideology of work in today’s flexible and precarious post-Fordist work regime. For this purpose, I interviewed not-yet-graduated/newly graduated students and people who are currently working as freelancers. It is important to underline here that this study does not attempt to fully reveal the affective structure of the capitalist relationship of wage labor in general. The conceptual framework of affective economy can of course be adapted to other periods of capitalism, other modes of production, other forms of labor, other forms of work, and different affective structures can be identified in those contexts. However, this study focuses specifically on immaterial labor as a form of labor specific to today’s post-Fordist capitalism and on its epitome, the flexible and precarious freelancing. Therefore, it is important to note that the Passionate Work Ethics I propose in this thesis is specific to the immaterial form of labor.

The fundamental question that formed the backbone of the hypothesis of the thesis was the one Spinoza asked centuries ago: how is it that people strive for, even desire, their own enslavement, as if it were in their own interest? This question has guided me in thinking about today’s labor relations. Because I was observing the following phenomenon on social media and among my colleagues and friends: many people today, if not everyone, “love” their jobs; they say that they “desire” their jobs; they think that work is “useful for their personal development” and creates the opportunity for “self-realization”. For example, I would occasionally see discussions, especially on Twitter, where freelance software developers would “praise” themselves by saying that they work hard, that they are constantly improving themselves, that they never have any free time, that they earn a lot of money and that their time is flexible. And these flexible-insecure freelancers would often accuse regular 9-to-5 workers of being

“slaves”, “not taking risks”, “not being brave enough”, “not having any entrepreneurial attitude”. This may seem like a simple case, but I argue that this attitude is a manifestation of contemporary neoliberal entrepreneurial subjectivity and a global phenomenon specific to today’s post-Fordist work regime and immaterial labor, which is covered by Passionate Work Ethics.

What is more striking is that many people who think this way are actually caught up in the affective aura and do not notice the poor conditions of their work, or if they do, they accept these conditions. As we have seen in this study, many freelancers, even those who suffer from flexibility and precarity, are drawn to the attractive affective promises of Passionate Work Ethics (narration of freedom and autonomy, spatiotemporal flexibility and ability to adjust work-life balance, self-realization and self-improvement, affectional satisfaction) and are willing to tolerate the material and moral burdens of freelancing.

In fact, this is a critical study that tries to show the “dark” side behind something that seems “good” and “pleasant” at first glance, something that people say they “love and desire” to do: People praise the flexibility of freelancing, but are at the same time uncomfortable with the fact that the flexibility destroys their work-life balance and provides an irregular income; they feel free and autonomous when freelancing and working without a boss, but complain about having to take full responsibility for the job... Therefore, this thesis tries to understand and show what it means to “love your job”, to “pursue what you desire” in today’s flexible and precarious post-Fordist capitalist working arrangement, and what kind of consequences it can have for us, “modern proletarians” who have no choice but to sell our labor power.

It can be said that Passionate Work Ethics functions as a guiding principle in job choice, especially in sectors dominated by immaterial forms of labor, especially among university graduates. Accordingly, the fact that a job provides a sense of freedom and autonomy, temporal-spatial flexibility, self-actualization and affective satisfaction is an important motivation for many to choose a job today. The interviewees in this thesis also made this clear. It seems that a temporally and spatially more flexible, autonomous working arrangement (post-Fordist) as opposed to a regular 9-to-5 (Fordist) working arrangement is emotionally much more appealing. Working in a

regular 9-to-5 job under a boss is often seen as temporally and spatially binding and an obstacle to freedom. It is precisely in these circumstances that freelancing, which is becoming more and more widespread today, comes into play as an “antidote” to this drudgery of work. We can observe this attitude both in the new generation who are about to start working and in the older generation who have a regular work experience and prefer later freelancing.

In this context, perhaps the most fundamental social implication of Passionate Work Ethics is that, through its affective appeal, Passionate Work Ethics reproduces existing socioeconomic inequalities and material disadvantages to the detriment of workers. As the interviews revealed, working in a hustle culture, under someone else’s order, with no control over the time and place of work, turns work into drudgery for many people. This is precisely where Passionate Work Ethics comes in with its affective promises, suggesting that work is not only this kind of drudgery, but that there are also jobs where one can feel free, flexible, fulfilled and satisfied. In fact, there is a very “human” and justifiable demand for people to get rid of the drudgery of work, to find a job they can love, and to be able to control the time and place of work. However, behind this “pleasant” situation that Passionate Work Ethics promises, there is a lot of tolerance, a lot of material concessions, flexible and precarious working conditions with low wages, and exploitation of emotions.

Passionate Work Ethics also goes hand in hand with the neoliberal ideology of individualism. As a social implication of the discourse of “personal responsibility”, “personal development” and “entrepreneurship”, Passionate Work Ethics serves to individualize and psychologize the structural and social problems inherent in work. While the promises of Passionate Work Ethics may seem like a prescription to get rid of the drudgery of work at the individual level, this prescription also places the solution to the structural, systemic and social problems inherent in the capitalist wage labor relationship on the individual. Therefore, it is left entirely to the individual to search for the job he or she loves, to solve the problems he or she encounters in this search, to bear the psychological burden of this whole process, and to have the mental and physical agility to tolerate the unfavorable working conditions at work. In this sense, precarity and flexibility, which are affirmed as if they were freedom, actually mean the liberation of employers from their obligations towards employees. In most cases,

employees are left with precarity, uncertainty, flexibility, low wages, long working hours, the destruction of work-life balance, and the invasion of working time into leisure time, all disguised as freedom...

An important consequence of individualizing and psychologizing the social and systemic problems of the wage labor relationship inherent in capitalism is to ignore the class inequality in the search for a job one loves. Not everyone has the same economic, cultural and social resources to pursue a job they love. Therefore, those who are able to compensate for the material and moral burdens of this search, and who have better economic opportunities, are more likely to somehow find a job with favorable conditions. However, those who are economically disadvantaged are either forced to choose a job that they do not like at all, or they forced to tolerate and “love” the poor conditions of a job they partially love, even though they have achieved it by making great compromises. In other words, the economically advantaged have the opportunity to experience uncertainty and flexibility as freedom, while the economically disadvantaged are stuck in “precarious freedom”. Thus, even if Passionate Work Ethics offers a prescription for solving work-related problems at the individual level, not everyone benefits from it in the same way.

Moreover, it seems that freelancers who have somehow found their desired job have internalized the discourse of personal responsibility, personal development and entrepreneurship. For most of them, this is a “personal success story”. They think that they have achieved this freelance life they love because they were assertive enough, dared to take risks, and were not afraid. Even though this process has not been easy for them too, we see that they criticize and almost accuse those who do not take this “risk” like them, who complain about the problems of the current flexible and precarious working arrangement, of “lacking courage” and “not having enough entrepreneurial spirit”. It would not be wrong to say that those who are more passionately committed to a Passionate Work Ethics are more inclined to ignore the structural problems inherent in the capitalist wage-labor relationship and the labor market, and to consider the problems of work life as one’s own failure, incompetence and “lack of passion”. We have said that Passionate Work Ethics, with its affective promises, actually functions as a guiding principle for those who are bored and uncomfortable with hustle culture and meaningless jobs. But when we look at the daily

lives and working practices of the freelancers, we see that this is not the case at all. Passionate Work Ethics, positively disguised as flexibility and freedom, actually serves to allow work time to take over leisure time. Even if the result is positive for a certain minority, for the majority, precarious and flexible freelancing leads to (1) the financialization of everyday life, (2) spending time on work-related activities even in leisure time, and (3) constantly marketing oneself and transforming oneself into a “brand” in order to survive in the labor market, in short, putting one’s leisure time and entire subjectivity to work.

This thesis does not only show that freelancing promotes flexibility and insecurity. The question this study seeks to answer is how flexible and precarious working conditions are desirable. Moreover, even if people desire freelancing, they are aware that it is not completely a pleasant situation and they experience in their daily lives that what they desire (i.e. temporal-spatial flexibility, feeling autonomous and free, engaging in work that fulfills them) has also some problems. Therefore, this study tries to understand what kind of affects and desires come into play here and enable adaptation to flexible and precarious work. As I showed in the case study of the thesis, what seemed to be an advantage of freelancing was also a disadvantage in everyday life. For example, working without a boss felt autonomous and free, but this freedom also came with a great deal of responsibility and solitude; flexibility provides temporal and spatial freedom, the initiative to determine the time and place of work, but at the same time it can disrupt the work-life balance much more. This is precisely where Passionate Work Ethics comes into play, functioning as an “affective lubricant”, serving to manage this contradiction, and to embrace affectively flexible and precarious work. And this post-Fordist ethos generates (1) substantial attachment, (2) endurance, and (3) excitement and enthusiasm in employees in order to adapt to flexible and precarious conditions where leisure time is usurped by work time, work-life balance is disrupted, and income patterns are fluctuating rather than stable.

Despite this contradictory situation, I think that Lauren Berlant’s concept of cruel optimism, which has made a significant contribution to this thesis, is important in explaining why people still have a strong desire to freelance despite being aware of its precariousness and flexibility. In this context, we can say that Passionate Work Ethics leads to a “cruelly optimistic” attachment with work. Lauren Berlant defines cruel

optimism as a form of optimism in which the object of one's desire that one is attached to prevents one from achieving exactly what one desires. For example, let's think about a love relationship. What we feel when we are in love with someone is, of course, happiness and fulfillment. So, we are optimistically attached to our lover. But, when we realize at some point that this relationship is not the kind of relationship we really desire, our love and optimism for our partner may prevent us from seeing that this is not the kind of relationship we really want. Moreover, if this relationship is harming us, we may not be able to end it, even though we are being harmed. Our love and our optimism may lead us to believe that this relationship is exactly what we want, and we may not be able to get out of it. This is the cruel dimension of optimism here: we actually have an orientation, an awareness, an impulse towards that object of desire that brings us joy, that we aspire to, but the relationship we are actually in takes its shape and cruelly prevents us from accessing it.

We can attribute the attractiveness of freelancing to this kind of attachment, because the freedom and flexibility that freelancing promises is indeed an understandable and justifiable demand. At first glance, this promise of freedom and flexibility of freelancing may indeed seem positive. However, to the extent that it remains within the capitalist wage-labor relation, this is not an emancipation *from* work, but an emancipation *within* work. Nevertheless, if we remember how the autonomous movement in the 60s and 70s approached precarity, getting out of a strict, regular working arrangement (Fordism) and having a temporal and spatial flexibility can perhaps be seen as a step towards emancipation from the capitalist wage labor relation. But on the other hand, we should also keep in mind that neoliberal work ideology is quite adept at redirecting these "line of flights", the aspiration to work outside the capitalist wage labor system, the desire to be emancipated from work, back into the system. As this study argues, Passionate Work Ethics, as part of the neoliberal ideology of work, serves precisely to render precarious and flexible working conditions desirable by holding these lines of flights, by absorbing anger at the obligation to work, by suggesting that work is lovable, desirable, and thus serves the affective, "voluntary", self-willing adaptation of workers.

I said that it is understandable to be attracted by the promise of freedom and flexibility of freelancing. Indeed, for the interviewees, the most attractive aspect of freelancing

is feeling free and autonomous, being flexible temporally and spatially. Therefore, it is an optimistic relationship that satisfies their “anti-work” aspirations. But again, as we saw in the thesis, this is not the case for most people. For most people, freelancing means a disruption of work-life balance, putting all subjectivity and leisure time for work, anxiety and stress. Therefore, far from fulfilling the desire to get out of the capitalist wage-labor relationship, to get rid of work as drudgery, to do meaningful work, it actually prevents them from achieving these aspirations.

As DePalma (2020) has argued in her own study similar to this thesis, putting desires and subjectivity to work, pursuing job that one love, is not in fact antithetical to precarity, rather precisely related to conditions of precarity and uncertainty. In a labor market where uncertainty and precarity are widespread and almost the norm, seeking and finding the job one love that fulfills the promises of Passionate Work Ethics is like seeking refuge in a harbor in a stormy weather, so to speak. In a neoliberal labor market where uncertainty and anxiety are felt very strongly, finding a job that one loves somehow helps to disperse these anxieties and somehow take an active rather than passive position in the face of the uncertainty of the future. As Bernard Stiegler said, work has a pharmacological effect: it is both a poison and its antidote. In this respect, I have said that freelancing is like an antidote to a strict and regular working arrangement, but it is an antidote that only functions on an individual level, and to this extent, it reproduces existing socio-economic inequalities and disadvantageous conditions rather than resolving them in favor of employees. Only a small group of financially advantaged people seem to benefit from the flexibility and uncertainty (in a positive sense) of freelancing and enjoy doing what they love. For the rest of the majority, however, Passionate Work Ethics, which pumps individualism and personal development, causes the narrowing of the perception of life to an individual horizon, and an unorganized, isolated collection of individuals.

One could say that what I have described so far is a “sad” picture. In other words, this is a descriptive study and tries to show “why people strive for their own slavery as if it were for their own benefit”. Instead of examining the experience of immaterial labor and freelancing in all its dimensions, this study rather, within the conceptual framework of affective economy, tries to show how today’s flexible and precarious post-Fordist working arrangement legitimizes itself, makes itself acceptable and

desirable, and how it functions as an implication of the neoliberal ideology of individualism and entrepreneurship. However, it should be noted that this is only one side of the coin. In other words, there are of course cases of resistance. Despite being perceived as an unorganized, isolated, individual group, there are freelance organizations on a global scale. But I should point out that this study “consciously” leaves this out. Because, to repeat, this study rather aims to show why freelancers cannot organize, why they cannot resist the conditions of precarity and flexibility, and why they accept and desire it. So there is no political prescription in this study. With reference again to Berlant, I can admit that “I am pretty lame at imagining a repaired world. What I provide best are depictions of what makes people stuck in the face of the ordinary pulsations of a fraying crisis” (2012). Therefore, the critical attitude of this study is rather more descriptive, and this can be considered as a limitation of this study.

Even though this “descriptive” aspect of the study that I mentioned is a limitation, I think it is also important in terms of showing that the class struggle revolving around working relations today should not be confined to the legal dimension. The governmental model of power developed by Foucault as a criticism against the legal model of power, draws attention exactly to this point: power does not only work with limitation and oppression in a negative way; there is a power in our modern societies that operates on a biopolitical level by supporting and enhancing its subjects in a positive way. We do not need to question the validity of this categorical distinction here for now: the legal model of power currently still works; we cannot say that it has completely disappeared. Therefore, we cannot ignore the contribution of struggles and achievements in the legal sphere. For example, the benefit of the 4-day workweek, which has been tried in various European countries recently, is of course important, and we need to struggle for this in Turkey too, because class struggle is ultimately a struggle over who will have control over the working day, and here the importance of legal tools cannot be denied.

This importance cannot be denied, but we must also give credit to Foucault’s caveat. Because we should not forget that a right gained in the legal sphere alone does not give its subjects the power to use and benefit from that right. In other words, having a right does not mean that we have the power to exercise that right. As this study shows, there

is a situation here that goes beyond regular working rights, making it difficult to fight legally. There is a productive power that affectively “motivates” its subjects, that is, freelancers and those who want to work freelance, towards flexibility and precarity. Therefore, the limitation of this study that I mentioned above actually points to the affective power of Passionate Work Ethics. We can say that today’s class struggle to improve working conditions must take into account the power struggle on the affective sphere, as well as developing and strengthening regular working rights for all employees on the legal sphere.

In this regard, it is also politically necessary to ask this speculative question: can we find something that can serve the collective interest in the promises of Passionate Work Ethics? It seems to me that the problem here is not loving one’s job, following one’s desires, seeking freedom and flexibility. Rather, the problem is that Passionate Work Ethics functions as an implication of the neoliberal ideology of individualism; it functions as a means of individual survival instead of aiming at improving working conditions and social transformation. In other words, it takes the problems inherent in the capitalist working from the social plane and transfers them to the individual plane, to the responsibility of the individual, and psychologizes them. Therefore, we can think of summoning the “glimmer of emancipation” that the autonomous movement found in precarity. Because in the demands of Passionate Work Ethics, as I argued above, there is definitely an anti-work impulse, a moment of emancipation, a demand for liberation from the drudgery of capitalist work, and optimism – explicitly or implicitly. This impulse and optimism are also evident in the interviewees’ discourses. For many people, freelancing is attractive and preferred precisely because of this. But it is important to note that for the autonomous movement, this moment of emancipation was not a given, spontaneous moment, but a moment of contradiction and conflict. What is important here is that the autonomous movement points to the dual potential inherent in immaterial labor: the contradiction between emancipation and necessity; between pleasure and pain (McRobbie, 2016, as cited in DePalma 2020, p. 281), between passivity and agency; between feeling empowered on the one hand and exploited on the other (DePalma, 2020) between having recourse to individual means of escape and aiming collectively for social change. Thus, we can say that Passionate Work Ethics is indeed optimistic, but in this form it is a cruel one. We could also say

that its promises are so attractive because they appeal to the anti-work impulse and the aspiration of emancipation. However, in the end, this leads to the use of all free time, cognitive, affective faculties, and all subjectivity, rather than emancipation if employees remain isolated and unorganized. Moreover, this work ethics operates in a much more insidious and cunning way, and is much more dangerous because it is carried out by appealing to affects and desires rather than through overt physical force.

Finally, to talk about the limitations of this thesis, as I said at the beginning, first of all, this thesis does not attempt to examine the general affective structure of the capitalist wage-labor relation. Rather, this thesis focuses on immaterial labor and freelancing as the epitome of contemporary flexible and post-Fordist work arrangement. This study can also be applied to other forms of labor and other ways of working, because I think that by applying the conceptual framework of affective economy to these very different forms, a general affective composition of the capitalist wage labor relationship could be revealed. On the other hand, the focus group in this thesis were precarious and flexible workers. But there is no single form of precarity. Today, almost all workers are precarious to some extent, although the doses and forms of precarity vary. For example, an academic whose tenure ends after finishing his/her thesis, civil servants working under contract, etc. Although they seem to be more secure than freelancers at first, it can be said that they also suffer from precarity. Or, as another case, the experience of unemployment. When the unemployment experience is analyzed, it will reveal a completely different affective structure than the Passionate Work Ethics identified here. Thus, there are different forms of precarity, security and unemployment other than the specific form of precarity that this thesis focuses on, and further studies examining these experiences will enrich the literature on affective economy, and the politics and sociology of affects and will contribute to our understanding of the affective structure of the capitalist wage-labor relationship.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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14 NİSAN 2022

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç. Dr. Kürşad ERTUĞRUL

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Mustafa Çağlar Atmaca'nın "The Affective Economy of Precarity and Flexibility" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 223-ODTÜİAEK-2022 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
İAEK Başkanı

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Atmaca, Mustafa Çağlar

Date and Place of Birth:

Phone:

email:

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MS	METU, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration	2017
BS	Istanbul University, Faculty of Political Science, Department of Political Science and International Relations	2014
High School	Polatlı Anadolu High School, Ankara	2010

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2023-Present	TED University, Department of Political Science and International Relations	Hourly-paid lecturer

2023- Present	The Transparency International	Freelance researcher
2017-2021	Turkey Council of Higher Education 100/2000 Ph.D. Project, METU Department of Political Science and Public Administration	Part-time research assistant
2015-Present	Various publishing firms	Freelance translator & editor

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English (advanced), French (research fluency)

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal

“Kairopolitik: Kapitalizmin Zamansal Bir Eleştirisine Doğru”
[Kairopolitics: Towards a Temporal Critique of Capitalism],
ViraVerita E-Journal, 7, 2018, pp. 15-28.

“Korkunun Güçleri Karşısında Lucretius ve Spinoza”
[Lucretius and Spinoza Against the Powers of Fear], *Birikim*
Journal, 355, 2018, pp. 97-108.

“Mikhail Bakhtin’in Ütopik Materyalizmi: Karnaval ve Diyalog
Bağlamında Kairolojik Bir Zaman Kavramsallaştırması”
[Mikhail Bakhtin’s Utopic Materialism: A Conceptualization of
Kairologic Time in the Context of Carnivale and Dialogue],
Kilikya Journal of Philosophy, 7:1, 2020, pp. 91-101.

“Kairopolitik: Spinozacı Bir Zaman Siyaseti” [Kairopolitics:
Spinozian Politics of Time], *Beytülhikme International Journal*
of Philosophy, 10:3, 2020, pp. 991-1007.

Book Chapters

“Zamandan Başka Suç Yoktur”, *Ulus Baker’i Okumak*, (ed. Onur Eylül Kara), İletişim Yayınları, 2021, İstanbul, pp. 339-346

Conferences and presentations

17. TSBD Ulusal Sosyal Bilimler Kongresi (1-3 February 2023)
– “*Sevdiğin İşi Yap Yaptığın İşi Sev*”: *Neoliberal Çalışma Toplumunun Duygulanımsal Ekonomisi* [“Do What You Love, Love What You Do”: Affective Economy of the Neoliberal Work Society]

Translations

Spinoza Par Les Bêtes (Ariel Suhamy & Alia Daval, Ollendorf & Dasseins, 2008) Otonom Publishing

Time (Philip Turetzky, Routledge, 1998), Otonom Publishing

Gilles Deleuze’s Lectures on Foucault, Otonom Publishing (forthcoming)

Cruel Optimism (Lauren Berlant, Duke University Press, 2011), İthaki Publishing (forthcoming)

SCHOLARSHIP & AWARDS

Turkey Council of Higher Education 100/2000 Ph.D. Scholarship (2017)

C. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

Bu alıřmada, gnmz esnek ve gvencesiz post-Fordist alıřma dzeninin alıřma ideolojisini tesis ettięini iddia ettięim Tutkulu alıřma Etięi'ni, duygulanımsal ekonomi kavramsal erevesi iinde teorize ediyorum. Bařka bir deyiřle syleyecek olursam, gnmz gvencesiz ve esnek post-Fordist alıřma toplumunun duygulanımsal ekonomisini inceliyorum. Daha spesifik olarak, post-Fordist kapitalizmin spesifik emek biimi olarak gayri maddi emek biimine ve bu emek biiminin epitomu olarak esnek ve gvencesiz freelance alıřmaya odaklanıyorum.

Bu alıřma etięinin, yani iřin tutkulu bir uęrař olması, gerekten keyif alınan bir faaliyet olması beklentisinin, 1990'lardan bu yana zellikle beyaz yakalılar ve gen niversite mezunları arasında kariyer tercihinde bir norm haline geldięi sylenebilir. Ben de bu baęlamda, Tutkulu alıřma Etięi'nin, post-Fordist dnemde hâkim olan gvencesiz ve esnek istihdam ve alıřma rejiminin olabildięince sorunsuz iřlemesini saęladığını iddia ediyorum.

Post-Fordist Tutkulu alıřma Etięi'nin gcnn, esasen olduka "insani" olan bir řeye, yani kiřinin gerekten istedięi ve sevdięi bir iřte alıřma arzusuna temas etmesinde yattığını savunuyorum. Sevdiięimiz iři yapmak iin duyduęumuz bu ikin arzu olduka "masum" grnmektedir. Buradaki sorun daha ziyade yapmak zorunda olduęumuz řeyi, yani emeięimizi satma zorunluluęu olarak cretli emeięi sevmemiz ve arzulamamızdır. Buradaki mesele, haz ve neřenin znde olumsuz duygular olması deęil, bunların kapitalist alıřma kořullarının kâr, retkenlik ve verimlilik odaklı itkisince ele geirilmiş olmasıdır. Bařka bir deyiřle, bu masumiyetin arkasında, gvencesizlik ve esneklik kořullarını, Spinozacı terimlerle syleyecek olursak, "edilgen neřeli duygulanımlar" uyandırarak ekici ve arzulanır hale getirmeye alıřan bir alıřma etięi yatmaktadır.

En temelde, bu alıřmaya yn veren soru, Spinoza'nın yzyıllar nce sorduęu bir soruydu: İnsanlar sanki kendi selametlerineymiřesine, kendi klelikleri iin nasıl uęrařabiliyorlar? Bu soruyu gnmz alıřma iliřkileri baęlamında gncelleyerek

tekrar düşündüm. Çünkü sosyal medyada, çevremde, yaptığım literatür taramalarında birçok insanın (herkesin değilse bile) işini “severek”, “arzulayarak” yaptığını; insanların işin “kendi kişisel gelişimlerine” fayda sağladığını; işin onlar için “kendilerini gerçekleştirme” alanı olduğunu düşündükleri görüyordum. Bu bana bir oksimoron gibi gözüküyordu, zira iş belki de toplumsal yaşamımızda maruz kaldığımız en büyük, en temel zorunluluk ilişkisini tesis ediyor: Hepimiz hayatta kalmak, ertesi gün faturalarımızı ödeyebilmek, arkadaşlarımızla görüşebilmek vs. için çalışmak zorundayız ve bu kaçınılmaz. Ama artık günümüzde işin bu zorunluluk boyutunun dışında arzulanan, sevilen bir boyutunun da olduğu tespiti bu çalışmanın ilk adımıydı. Öyleyse bu zorunluluk nasıl oluyor da arzulanır bir şey olarak deneyimleniyordu?

“Sevdiğin işi yap, yaptığın işi sev” söylemi kurumsal firmalarda çalışanlar için de söz konusu elbette ama ben bu çalışmada esnek ve güvencesiz çalışan freelance bağımsız profesyonellere odaklandım. Zira, bu çalışmada gayri maddi emek biçimini ve bunun epitomu olarak freelance çalışan bağımsız profesyonelleri incelemeyi seçmiştim. Bu vaka aynı zamanda Fordist, düzenli çalışma rejimi ile post-Fordist, esnek çalışma rejimi arasındaki farkı da daha iyi ortaya koyuyor diye düşünüyorum. Özellikle sosyal medyada esnek çalışan bağımsız profesyonellerin düzenli mesaili çalışanları “yeterince cesur olmamakla”, “yeterince girişimci olmamakla”, “risk almamakla” eleştirdiğine rastlıyordum. Bu açıdan bağımsız profesyoneller günümüz hâkim çalışma rejimini ve onun çalışma etiğini incelemek için oldukça zengin bir vaka.

Bu bağlamda, çalışmanın motivasyonu günümüz yaygın esnek ve güvencesiz post-Fordist çalışma rejiminin kendisini nasıl arzulandır kıldığını; bunu ne tür duygular, duygu yapıları, duygulanımsal mekanizmalar üreterek yaptığını; ne tür vaatler sunduğunu; bu vaatlerin nasıl karşılık bulduğunu ve ne ölçüde benimsenip benimsenmediğini anlamak.

Bu çalışma aslında ilk bakışta “iyi” ve “keyifli” gözükken bir resmin arkasındaki “karanlık” tabloyu gözler önüne seriyor. İnsanlar işlerini “severek” ve “arzulayarak” yaptığını söylüyor ama bunun arkasında, öyle görünüyor ki, çoğu durumda esnekliğin ve güvencesizliğin yarattığı olumsuz koşullar, düşük ücret ve uzun çalışma saatleri var. Dolayısıyla bu çalışma aslında günümüz esneklik ve güvencesizlik koşullarında

“işini severek yapmanın”, “arzularının peşinden gitmenin” bizim gibi “modern proleterler” için ne anlama geldiğini ve ne tür sonuçlar doğurduğunu göstermeye çalışan eleştirel bir çalışma.

Çalışmanın en temel hipotezi şu: Post-Fordist çalışma rejimi ve ona tekabül eden çalışma ideolojisi, yani Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği arzularımıza, umutlarımıza, korkularımıza yaptığı “duygulanımsal yatırımla”, güvencesizliğin üstünü örten “özgürlük illüzyonuyla”, Spinoza’cı bir dille söylersek, “edilgen neşeli duygulanımlar” yaratarak yaygın güvencesizliğin ve esnekliğin üstünü örten, sivriliklerini yumuşatan ve onu arzulanır kılan bir çalışma etiği tesis ediyor. Güvencesizlik ve esneklik olumsuz tınlayan kavramlar olmalarına rağmen çağımızın duygulanımsal yapısını tesis ettiğini öne sürdüğüm belirsizlik ve risk ile uyuştuklarından dolayı hâkim paradigmayı belirliyor ve meşruiyet kazanıyor. Bu çerçevede beni yönlendiren sorular ise şunlardı:

- Çalışanlar bu yaygın güvencesizlik ve esneklik koşullarını ne ölçüde, nasıl benimsiyor ve adapte oluyor, hatta kucaklıyor ve arzuluyor?
- Bunun yarattığı çelişkilerle nasıl başa çıkıyorlar? Bu çelişkiler nasıl çözülüyor veya sürdürülebilir kılınıyor?
- Ve bu çalışma etiği nasıl yeniden üretiliyor ve dolaşıma giriyor?

Burada, buradaki hipotezin bütün kapitalist sistem hakkında açıklayıcı olma iddiası taşımadığını belirtmek gerekir. Duygulanımsal ekonomi teorik çerçevesi içinde geliştirdiğim bu hipotez, diğer emek türlerine, diğer istihdam rejimlerine ve diğer üretim biçimlerine uyarlanabilir. Ancak bu tezde Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği olarak adlandırdığım şey, post-Fordist dönemin emek türünü karakterize eden gayri maddi emeğe ve onu kristalize eden bir vaka olarak freelance çalışmaya özgüdür. Başka bir deyişle, başka durumlarda, başka emek biçimlerinde, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin tesis ettiğinden farklı duygu yapıları tespit edilebilir. Ancak günümüz esnek ve güvencesiz post-Fordist çalışma koşullarının duygulanımsal boyutunun (Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği) kendine özgü bir yanı var ve bu çalışma, bu emek biçiminin (gayri maddi emek) kapitalist sömürü ilişkileri içindeki işleyişini ve bu işleyişte arzu ve duygulanımların rolünü açıklamaya çalışmaktadır. Dolayısıyla, bu otonomist teorik arka plan içerisinde gayri maddi emeğe ve freelance çalışmaya odaklanan bu çalışmanın katkısı, gayri

maddi emeğe özgü olan Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin işleyişini açıklama çabasında yatmaktadır.

Bu sorulara yanıt ararken kuramsal çerçevemi üzerine inşa ettiğim kavram “duygulanımsal ekonomi” kavramı. Marx ve Spinoza'yı bir araya getirerek öznellik üretimini ve bunun duygulanımsal boyutunu kapitalist üretim ilişkileri bağlamında düşünmemizi sağlayan bu kavram önümüze şu soruyu koyuyor: Kapitalist üretim ilişkisinin kendini her gün yeniden üretmesini sağlayan duygulanımsal mekanizmalar nelerdir ve bu süreçte özneliliğin duygulanımsal üretiminin rolü nedir? Spinoza'nın “kölelikleri için sanki kendi selametlerineymişçesine çabalıyorlar” tespitini hatırlarsak, burada hayatta kalmak ya da *conatus*'umuzu sürdürmek için bizi çalışmaya, emek gücümüzü satmaya, kapitalist üretim ilişkisine dahil olmaya ve bunu sürdürmeye zorlayan şeyin ne olduğunu sorabiliriz. Bu çalışma zorunluluğu kendini nasıl normalleştiriyor ve gizliyor? Yaşamaya zorlandığımız hayata, kapitalist üretim ilişkisinin dayattığı koşullara uyum sağlamayı nasıl öğreniyoruz? Ya da, seçmeye zorlandığımız bir şey nasıl “tutkuyla” arzuladığımız bir şeye dönüşüyor? Ve burada ne tür duygusal mekanizmalar devreye giriyor?

Kabaca söylersek, duygulanımsal ekonomi: (1) ekonominin mal ve hizmetlerin yanı sıra arzular, duygulanımlar, yani duygulanımsal öznellikler de ürettiğini ve (2) bu arzular ve duygulanımların, duygulanımsal öznelliklerin herhangi bir ekonomik üretim biçiminin kendisini yeniden üretmesi için elzem olduğunu iddia ediyor. Bu kavram benim için Spinoza'nın yüzyıllar önce sorduğu ama benim günümüz kapitalist çalışma ilişkileri bağlamında güncellediğim şu soruya cevap vermekte işlev görüyor: İnsanlar nasıl kendi selametlerineymişçesine kendi kölelikleri için çabalıyorlar? Bu ikazı günümüze uyarlırsak soru şu hale geliyor: İnsanlar sanki kendi selametlerineymişçesine ücretli emek ilişkisine nasıl giriyor? Güvencesiz ve esnek çalışmayı nasıl kabul ediyor, ve dahası nasıl arzuluyorlar?

Buna yanıt verirken, kapitalizmin dayattığı “emeğini satma zoru” bizi çalışmaya, ücretli emek ilişkisine girmeye muhakkak ki itiyor. Ancak cevabı bununla bırakmak, günümüz esnek ve güvencesiz çalışma ilişkisinin nasıl benimsendiğini anlamakta bizi eksik bırakıyor bana kalırsa. Çünkü günümüzde bundan farklı bir durum söz konusu. Yani, kapitalizmin ekonomik zorunun dışında, artık çalışmanın sunduğu birtakım

vaatler, sağladığı tatminler, arzularımıza yaptığı yatırımlar neticesinde, tutkuyla yönelinen bir boyutu var. Bu bağlamda, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği çalışma ilişkisine girmek zorunda olanların “neşeli”, “tutkulu” bir şekilde bu ilişkiye eklemelenmesine işaret ediyor.

Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin izleri aslında bir tür yaşam felsefesi olarak çok gerilere kadar takip edilebilir. Ama Steve Jobs’un 2005 yılında Stanford Üniversitesi’nde yaptığı “aç kal, budala kal” başlıklı konuşma, yeri ve zamanı itibariyle ironik. Bir tür “girişimci öznelliğin” kutsandığı bir konuşma bu: Aç kal, yani konforlu, düzenli, güvenli bir hayata alışma; budala kal, yani elindekiyle asla yetinme, sürekli kendini geliştir ve yeni arayışlara giriş.

Steve Jobs’u burada “öğüt” veren bir baba gibi düşünebiliriz, zira aslında kendisi bir tür “hayatta kalma” stratejisi sunuyor. Artık bir kişinin tek bir işte ömrünü tamamlamasının çok zor olduğu, esnekliğin ve güvencesizliğin norm haline geldiği iş piyasasında bu öğütler bir tür hayatta kalma stratejisi. Ama Jobs’un temsil ettiği baba, Fordist Henry Ford gibi figürlerden farklı olarak post-Fordist bir baba. Yani, çalışanların seks hayatına bile karışan Henry Ford’un temsil ettiği Fordist çalışma etiğinin karşısında post-Fordist çalışma etiği daha sinsice, gizlice işliyor.

Aslında güvencesizliğin ve esnekliğin katı, sınırlayıcı, düzenli mesaili bir iş organizasyonunun karşısında “özgürleştirici” olduğunu bile söyleyebiliriz. Yani, Fordist emek rejiminin yarattığı sınırlılıktan kurtulmak anlamında bir özgürleşme demek bu. Bu açıdan, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin vaatlerinin oldukça “insani”, anlaşılır talepler olduğunu söylemek mümkün. Kim sevdiği bir işi yapmak istemezki? Kim çalışma ve yeri üzerinde daha fazla kontrol sahibi olmak istemezki?

Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin gücünün tam da bu insani taleplere seslenmesinde yattığını, bu açıdan “masum” ve oldukça kabul edilebilir gözüktüğünü söyleyebiliriz. Ama sorun bu taleplerin kapitalist kâr, üretkenlik, verimlilik arzusunun hizmetine koşulmuş olması. Freelance çalışma talebinin taşıdığı bir tür “iş-karşıtlığı” tutumunu, tekrar kapitalist çalışma ilişkilerinin içine çekebilecek kadar sinsice işleyen bir çalışma etiği bu. Tabiri caizse, Hansel ve Gratel hikayesindeki gibi: Ormanda yolunu kaybeden çocuklar, sığınacak bir yer ararken cadının şekerden evini bulurlar ve şekerden evin cazibesine kapılarak eve giderler. Cadı onları güzelce besler, ama cadının asıl amacı

çocukları semirtip yemektir. Bu anlamda, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği tam da şekerden evin taşıdığı cazibe gibi işliyor; güvencesiz ve esnek freelance çalışmayı sunduğu vaatlerle ve yarattığı “illüzyonla” arzulanır kılıyor.

Ben de hem literatür taramalarımın hem çeşitli iş ilanlarını inceleyerek, hem de ön araştırma sürecimde çeşitli freelance çalışanlara dair gözlemlerimle Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin şu dört vaadinin freelance çalışmayı çekici kıldığını tespit ettim: (1) özgürlük ve otonomi vaadi, (2) zaman-mekansal esneklik ve iş-yaşam dengesini kurma vaadi, (3) kendini gerçekleştirme ve kendini geliştirme vaadi ve (4) duygulanımsal tatmin vaadi.

Özgürlük ve otonomi vaadi, patronsuz, hiyerarşisiz, kişinin kendi patronu olarak çalışması olgusuna işaret ediyor. Freelancerlar istedikleri işi seçme, istemedikleri sorumlulukları yüklenmeme, istemedikleri ilişkilennemelerden kaçınma şansına sahip olabiliyor. Buna göre, freelancerlar istediği yerde, istediği zaman çalışabilme, istediği müşteriyi seçebilme özgürlüğüne sahip. Özellikle 9-5 rutin mesaili, düzenli işte çalışmış olanlar için freelance çalışmanın bu özelliği cezbedici. Patronsuz çalışmak, kurumsal bir sorumluluk yüklenmemek aynı zamanda otonom olma hissini de tatmin ediyor. Bağımsız profesyoneller, kendi işlerinin patronu olarak kurumsal sorumluluklardan da kurtulmuş oluyorlar ve bu onların özgürlük ve otonom olma hislerini tatmin ediyor. Bununla paralel olarak Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin bir diğer vaadi de, zamansal-mekansal esneklik ve iş-yaşam dengesini ayarlayabilme vaadi. Kendini gerçekleştirme ve kendini geliştirme vaadine göre ise, freelance çalışma kişinin kendini gerçekleştirmesini ve kendini geliştirmesini de sağlıyor; kişinin tırışkadan işlerle uğraşmak yerine sevdiği, anlamlı işlerle uğraşmasını sağlıyor. Yani, işin sadece hayatını geçindirmek için yapılan bir faaliyet olmaktansa hayata anlam katan bir faaliyet olmasını sağlıyor. Duygulanımsal tatmin ile kastettiğim ise işin maddi olmayan bir tatmin sağlaması. Yani, ne kadar kazandığından vs. bağımsız olarak, kişinin sevdiği, arzuladığı bir işi yapıyor olmasının verdiği duygulanımsal tatminden bahsediyoruz. Kişinin yaptığı işten duygusal, entelektüel vs. tatmin sağlaması maddi tatminden daha değerli olabiliyor; hatta maddi sorunları aşma ve onlara katlanma dirayeti de yaratıyor.

Bu dört olumlu vaadi tartışırken, bunların tamamen simetrik olan olumsuz bir tarafı

olduğunu da görüyoruz. Yani, bu çekici vaatler aynı zamanda tam da bundan kaynaklanan olumsuz ve çekici olmayan bir yan da taşımaktadır. Burada önemli olan nokta, çekici ve çekici olmayan yönlerin simetrik olmasıdır. Diğer bir deyişle, freelance çalışmanın çekici yönleri olarak sayabileceğimiz özgürlük, özerklik, mekânsal-zamansal esneklik ve kendini gerçekleştirme aynı zamanda görüşülen kişilerin freelance çalışmanın çekici olmayan yönleri olarak gördükleri şeylere de karşılık gelmektedir: (1) özgürlük ve özerklik karşısında, güvencesizlik ve müşteriye bağımlılık; (2) çalışma yeri ve zamanını seçme inisiyatifi karşısında, düzensiz çalışma saatleri ve çalışma zamanının boş zamanı işgal etme eğilimi; (3) işin kendini gerçekleştirme alanı olması karşısında, işin kişiyi olumsuz anlamda tanımlayan bir şey olması; (4) işin arzuları tatmin eden bir faaliyet olması karşısında, stres yaratan bir faaliyet olması. Örneğin zamansal ve mekânsal esneklik cazip geliyor, ancak aynı zamanda bu esneklik düzensiz çalışma saatleriyle başa çıkmayı ve boş zamanın çalışma zamanı tarafından işgal edilmesine de yol açabiliyor. Ya da bir başka örnek olarak, patronsuz çalışmanın ve kendi işinin patronu olmanın özgürlük ve özerklik sağladığı düşünülebilir, ancak diğer yandan bu durumda tüm sorumluluk bağımsız profesyonellere düşmekte, dolayısıyla onları müşteriye bağımlı hale getirmekte ve müşteri kaybetmeme baskısı yaratmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, olumsuz faktörlere rağmen görüştüğümüz birçok kişi freelance çalışmayı sevdiklerini ve arzularını tatmin ettiğini söylüyor. Her ne kadar artılar ve eksiler birbirinin simetriği olsa da, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin çağrısı, kişinin çekici olmayan tarafların yarattığı sorunlara katlanmasını sağlayan duygusal bariyerleri sağlamaktadır.

Çalışmanın metodolojisine değinecek olursam, katılımcıların duygulanım biçimlerini şekillendiren arzularına, korkularına, umutlarına, beklentilerine ve pişmanlıklarına odaklanan, güvencesizliği ve esnekliği nasıl deneyimlediklerini ve anlamlandırdıklarını, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin nasıl işlediğini ve buna nasıl direnildiğini anlamaya çalışan bu çalışma için nitel yaklaşımın en uygun yöntem olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bu amaçla, gömülü kuram (*grounded theory*) yönteminden faydalandım. Bu yöntem, farklı kategoriler arasındaki ilişkileri göstermemizi, böylece veriler ışığında yeni teoriler üretmemizi veya mevcut teorileri zenginleştirmemizi sağlar. Gömülü kuramın en önemli özelliğinin, var olan bir teoriyi ampirik vakaya uygulamak yerine, mevcut kuramın ampirik vakadan çıkarılan verilerle

zenginleştirilmesine olanak sağlaması olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. “Duygulanımsal ekonomi”, “duygusal emek” ve “tutkulu çalışma” literatürüne ilişkin yaptığım taramada ortaya çıkan kategorileri kendi saha araştırmamda ortaya çıkan kategorilerle karşılaştırarak post-Fordist Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin belli başlı vaatlerini belirledim ve bunları vaka çalışmamda analiz ettim. Ardından, bu vaat ve yükümlülüklerin nasıl deneyimlendiğini ve benimsenip benimsenmediğini analiz ederek, insanların güvencesiz ve esnek çalışma koşullarını benimsemesini sağlayan Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin şu üç bileşenini çıkardım: “heyecan ve coşku”, “özlü bağlılık”, “dayanıklılık”. Bu şekilde, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin tek bir biçimde değil, farklı yoğunluk düzeylerinde farklı şekillerde işlediği ve farklı arzulama biçimleri yarattığı ortaya çıktı.

Duygulanımları sosyal bağlama ve etkileşimlere gömülü interaktif bir süreç, kolektif bir faaliyet olarak ele almak, etnografik yöntemlere daha fazla önem vermek anlamına da geliyor. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmanın etnografik bir çalışma olduğunu da belirtmeliyim. Gömülü kuram yaklaşımını etnografik yöntemler olan katılımcı gözlem ve mülakatla bütünleştirmeye çalışan bu melez yaklaşım, etnografinin betimsel sınırlılıklarının üstesinden gelmeyi de sağlamaktadır. Bu açıdan bu melez yaklaşım, etnografik çalışmanın betimleyici doğasını daha açıklayıcı hale getirmekte, böylece etnografiyi bir teori gerekçelendirmesinden ziyade teori üretmeye daha uygun kılıyor.

Bu amaçla çalışmanın örneklemi de iki ayak üzerine kurdum: (1) mezuniyet aşamasındaki üniversite son sınıf öğrencileri ve/veya henüz ücretli emek ilişkisine girmemiş mezunlar ve (2) ücretli emek ilişkisine girmiş ve halihazırda freelance çalışma deneyimi olan bağımsız profesyoneller. İlk gruptan on sekiz ve ikinci gruptan otuz dört kişiyle görüştim. Bağımsız profesyonellerin çoğunun düzenli iş deneyimi de vardı ve bu iki çalışma tarzı arasında kıyaslama yapabilmelerini de sağladı. Öte yandan, öğrenci ve/veya yeni mezun örneklemim arasında da öğrencilikleri sırasında freelance çalışanlar vardı ve onların bu deneyimi de önemliydi.

Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin vaatlerinin daha çok “beyaz yakalı”, yaratıcı işlerde çalışanlar için uygun olduğunu düşündüğümünden, bu çalışmada gayri maddi emek örneklerine odaklandım. Çünkü gayri maddi emek daha “sevimli”, “arzu edilir”, “havalı”, özerk, yaratıcı ve entelektüel işleri tanımlıyor. Dolayısıyla öncelikle bu

kavram, daha önce çalışma alanına ait olmayan duyguların, bilişsel yeteneklerin ve boş zamanın da çalışma alanına dahil olduğunu göstermesi açısından anlamlı ve bu nedenle gayri maddi emeğe örnek olarak freelance çalışan bağımsız profesyonelleri seçtim çünkü bu, emeğin sermayenin gerçek boyunduruğuna girmesi (*real subsumption*) tartışmasına da uyan bir durum. İkinci olarak, gayri maddi emek, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği tartışmam için de daha verimli bir vaka, çünkü Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin hem freelance adayı hem de freelance çalışanlar için sunduğu vaatlere daha açık ve müsait işleri içeriyor. Bu açıdan, gayri maddi emeğin günümüz güvencesiz ve esnek istihdam ilişkilerinin epitomu olduğunu düşünüyor ve hem çalışma ilişkilerinde hem de öznellik düzeyinde meydana gelen temel dönüşümleri anlamak için bir araç olduğunu öne sürüyorum.

Örneklemeimi neden iki ayak üzerine kurduğumu açıklamam gerekirse eğer, bu çalışma sadece mezunlara veya sadece freelance çalışanlara odaklanılarak da yapılabilirdi. Ancak hem yeni mezun freelance adaylarını hem de bağımsız profesyonelleri seçme kararımın, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin çalışanlar ve istihdamın eşliğindeki kişiler üzerinde farklı şekilde işleyen cazibesini daha iyi gösterdiğini düşünüyorum. Bu vakalardan sadece birini seçmek tek taraflı betimleyici bir çalışma olurdu. Belki de en iyisi uzun vadeli bir araştırma yapmak ve belirli bir grubun öğrencilikten çalışana kadar olan duygusal yapısını takip etmek olurdu, ancak ne yazık ki bu tezin sınırlı süresi içinde bu benim için mümkün değildi. Ancak burada yapmaya çalıştığım gibi, karşılaştırmalı bir çalışmanın Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin zamansal olarak nasıl işlediğini ve ne tür bir öznellik üretim süreci olduğunu daha iyi göstereceğini düşünüyorum.

Bunu yaparken ilk olarak örneklemeimi gençler üzerine kurdum. Çünkü Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin öncelikli hedefi gençlerdi. Bunun yanı sıra özellikle son yirmi-otuz yılda bahsettiğim yeni, alternatif istihdam ve iş düzenlemelerinin içine doğan yeni bir nesil de var. Üniversiteden iş hayatına, gençlikten yetişkinliğe geçiş, yani “kendi ekmeğini kazanmaya başlama” süreci, hayata dair kararların alındığı bir eşik dönemi ve bu post-Fordist çalışma etiğinin benimsenmesi ya da benimsenmemesi ve özneliliğin kurulması açısından kritik bir dönem. Bu nedenle vaka çalışmam için ODTÜ, Boğaziçi, Bilkent, Koç, Sabancı gibi üniversitelerde okuyan son sınıf ve yüksek lisans öğrencilerini seçmeyi uygun buldum, çünkü bu tutku paradigmasının

taşıyıcısı olan şirketlerin duygusal çekiciliği esas olarak bu öğrencilere yönelik ve bu üniversitelerde okuyan öğrencilerin de bu paradigmaya meyilli olduğunu varsayabiliriz. Bu bağlamda, vaka çalışmamın iki ayağından biri olarak, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin vaatlerinin ve freelance çalışmanın onlar üzerinde, bunu henüz deneyimlememiş kişiler olarak, nasıl bir duygulanım yapısı tesis ettiğini anlamak için bahsettiğim üniversitelerdeki son sınıf ve/veya yüksek lisans düzeyinde mühendislik ve sosyal bilim öğrencileriyle görüşmeler gerçekleştirdim.

Öte yandan, vaka çalışmamın diğer odağı, freelance işlerde çalışan bağımsız profesyoneller ve onların çalışma koşullarında ve gündelik yaşamlarında güvencesizlik ve esnekliği deneyimleme biçimleri. Güvencesiz freelance çalışanları seçmemin nedeni, giderek yaygınlaşan bu çalışma biçiminin hem boş zaman-iş zamanı tartışması hem de güvencesizlik ve esneklik tartışması açısından anlamlı olması. Dolayısıyla güvencesiz ve esnek çalışma ilişkisine odaklanan bu çalışmada, freelance çalışan bağımsız profesyonelleri seçmemin en önemli nedeni, bu çalışma biçiminin post-Fordist çalışma toplumunun ve etiğinin kristalize olduğu bir çalışma tarzı olması. Aslında bağımsız profesyonellerin de freelance çalışmaya duygulanımsal yönelimi kendi içinde farklılaşıyor: bunu zorunlulukla yapanlar var; tek gelir getirici faaliyet olarak yapanlar var; ek iş olarak yapanlar var; kalıcı olarak düşünenler var; geçici düşünen ve o sırada düzenli iş arayanlar var. Örneklemim bu açıdan hem zorunlulukla tercih eden hem de isteyerek seçenleri de kapsıyordu ki bu önemli bir ayrımdı.

Çalışmanın bulgularını tartışmaya geçecek olursak, öncelikle, özellikle gayri maddi emek biçimlerinin hâkim olduğu sektörlerde ve özellikle üniversite mezunları arasında Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin iş seçiminde yol gösterici bir ilke olarak işlev gördüğü söylenebilir. Buna göre, bir işin özgürlük ve özerklik duygusu, zamansal-mekânsal esneklik, kendini gerçekleştirme ve duygulanımsal tatmin sağlaması, günümüzde pek çok kişi için iş seçiminde önemli bir motivasyon kaynağı. Bu tezde görüşülen kişiler de bunu açıkça ortaya koyuyor. Düzenli 9-5 çalışma düzeninin aksine zamansal ve mekansal olarak daha esnek, özerk bir çalışma düzeninin çok daha cazip olduğu görülüyor. Bir patronun altında 9-5 düzenli bir işte çalışmak genellikle zamansal ve mekansal olarak bağlayıcı ve özgürlüğün önünde bir engel olarak görülüyor. İşte tam da bu koşullarda, günümüzde giderek yaygınlaşan freelance çalışma, bu angaryaya karşı bir “panzehir” olarak devreye giriyor. Bu tutumu hem çalışmaya yeni başlayan

yeni kuşakta hem de düzenli bir iş deneyimi olan ve daha sonra freelance çalışmayı tercih eden eski kuşakta gözlemleyebiliyoruz.

İlk grup olan son sınıf öğrencileri ve/veya yeni mezunlara bakacak olursak, bu grupta 9-5 düzenli mesaili çalışmaya dönük genel bir isteksizlik olduğu tespitini yapabiliriz. Bu tarz düzenli bir iş özgürlük algısına karşıt görülüyor. Ama bunun karşısında, freelance işin cezbedici geldiğini görüyoruz. Çalışma zorunluluğunun yarattığı bu baskı karşısında “sevilen”, “arzulanan” işi bulmak yol gösterici bir ilke gibi işliyor. Burada sevilebilir, arzulanan işin kıstasları da Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin vaatleriyle örtüşüyor.

Buradaki bir ayrım da, freelance çalışmayı “kötünün iyisi” olarak kabul edenler ile freelance çalışmayı “gönülden” kabul edenler arasında. İlk grup, çalışmaya karşı olsa bile bundan kaçamadığı ölçüde freelance çalışmanın daha kabul edilebilir olduğunu düşünüirken diğer grup freelance çalışmanın vaatlerini gönülden arzuluyor. Burada önemli bir diğer nokta da, bu gruptakilerin ağırlıklı olarak belirsizliği, riski, esnek bir yaşam tarzını olumluyor olması. Böylesi belirsiz ve esnek bir yaşam tarzı “çekici”, “heyecan verici”, “özgürleştirici” kabul ediliyor. Bunun önemli olduğunu söyleyebiliriz zira freelance çalışmanın sunduğu esneklik böylesi bir yaşam tahayyülüyle örtüşüyor ve bu yüzden freelance çalışma bir yaşam tarzı olarak kabul ediliyor.

Son sınıf öğrencileri ve/veya yeni mezunların duygulanımsal pozisyonunu en çok belirleyen şey, içinde bulundukları eşiklik hali olarak gözüküyor. Yani, eğitimden istihdama geçişin eskiye kıyasla daha belirsiz olduğu, yani eskiye kıyasla doğrusal olmadığı bu durumda, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin vaatleri bu döngüden çıkış için daha cezbedici görülüyor. Her ne kadar esnekliğe, güvencesizliğe, belirsizliğe yönelik olumsuz algısı olanlar olsa bile – ki bunlar azınlıkta – onlar bile düzenli mesaili bir iş karşısında esnek freelance çalışmanın daha özgürleştirici ve kişisel açıdan daha tatmin sağlayıcı olduğunu kabul ediyor.

Burada tespit ettiğim bir diğer önemli şey de “müstakbel emek” (*hope labor*). Bu kavram, gelecekte fayda sağlayacağı umuduyla şimdide bazı tavizler vermeye işaret ediyor. Bu çalışmada da, son sınıf öğrencileri ve/veya yeni mezunların içinde bulunduğu eşiklik halinin, onları ileride arzuladıkları, sevdikleri işe erişebilme

umuduyla ücretsiz staj yapma, güvencesiz koşullarda çalışma, düşük ücretle çalışma gibi şeyleri kabul etmeye ittiğini görüyoruz. Yani, verili kabul edilen güvencesiz ve esnek iş piyasası koşullarında, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin, bu gruptakileri sevdikleri, arzuladıkları, tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin vaatlerini karşılayan işlere erişebilmek umuduyla bu olumsuz koşulları kabul etmeye, katlanmaya ittiğini söyleyebiliriz. Böylesi bir iş piyasasında hayatta kalmanın yolunun “girişimci bir öznelliğe” bürünmekten, riski, esnekliği ve güvencesizliği kabul edip buna uygun araçları ve meziyetleri edinmekten geçtiği kabulü yaygın bir tutum olarak karşımıza çıkıyor.

Son olarak, hem esnekliğe ve güvencesizliğe, hem “sevdiğin işi yap, yaptığın işi sev” söylemine karşı olanlar olsa bile – ki bu çalışmanın örneğinde bu tutum çok azdı – onların bu rahatsızlığı da en fazla sinik ve nihilistik bir tutum yaratıyor. Bu söylemin ve esnekliğin olumsuz olduğunu düşünmelerine rağmen, bunu aşma araçlarına sahip olmadıkları ölçüde, sevdikleri işi yapma umudu onlara da kabul edilebilir gelmeye başlıyor.

Bağımsız profesyonellere bakacak olursak, freelance çalışmanın özgürlük-otonomi-kendi işinin patronu olma vaadi; mekânsal-zamansal esneklik vaadi; kendini-gerçekleştirme ve anlamlı işler yapma vaadi büyük oranda karşılık buluyor ve çekici geliyor. Çoğu durumda 9-5 mesaili, mekânsal-zamansal olarak düzenli bir işin dayattığı belirlilik karşısında freelance bu açıdan cezbedici geliyor.

Bu gibi maddi olmayan tatminler çoğu durumda işin güvencesiz ve esnek maddi koşullarından kaynaklanan handikaplarını kabullenmeyi, bunlara katlanmayı da sağlıyor. Örneğin, boş zamanlarda işe dönük faaliyetlerle uğraşmak freelance çalışmada çok yaygın ve bu kanıksanmış durumda. Yani esneklik, çoğunluk için, olumlu bir durum yaratmaktan ziyade çalışma saatlerinin düzensizleşmesine yol açıyor. Ya da gelir düzensizliğiyle başa çıkmayı öğrenmek gerekiyor. Öte yandan, kendi işinin patronu olmak demek aynı zamanda işin bütün sorumluluğunu tek başına yüklenmek demek. Çoğu durumda bunun da bir sorun olduğu belirtilmesine rağmen bu da kabul edilmiş görünüyor. Burada önemli olan, daha önce Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin vaatlerini sayarken belirttiğim üzere, çekici ve itici vaatlerin simetrik olması. Yani çekici gelen vaatlerin kendisi aynı zamanda bir problem de yaratıyor. Dolayısıyla ortada çelişkili bir durum olduğu aşikâr. Ancak yine de bu çelişkili durum içinde

freelance çalışmanın çekici vaatleri çoğu durumda ağır basıyor.

Tezin ilgili bölümünde tartıştığım üzere, bu tez gayri maddi emeğin, emeğin sermayenin gerçek boyunduruğu altına girmesi sürecini nasıl ileriye taşıdığını ve yaygınlaştırdığını da inceliyor. Diğer bir deyişle, bu çalışma boş zamanın, duygulanımsal ve zihinsel yetilerin, yani öznelliğimizin esneklik ve güvencesizlikle birlikte gittikçe sermayenin tahakkümü altına daha çok girdiğini ve Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin de bunu kolaylaştırdığını iddia ediyor. Freelance çalışan bağımsız profesyoneller örneğinde bunun esas olarak üç şekilde gerçekleştiğini söyleyebiliriz:

- Gündelik yaşamın finansallaşması: Bu kavramla, güvencesiz ve esnek çalışan, gelir akışı düzensiz olan bağımsız profesyonellerin hayatlarının her alanında finansal bir virtüözlük geliştirmeleri zorunluluğunu kastediyorum. Yani, bir ay sonra gelirinin ne kadar olacağını belirsiz olduğu bir durumda sürekli bunu düşünmek ve buna yönelik çözümler geliştirmek zorunda kalıyorlar. Sürekli kâr/zarar ve risk hesabı yapmak artık onlar için işin bir parçasına dönüşüyor. Başka bir deyişle, ekonomik olarak belirsiz bir geleceği sürekli olarak mümkün olduğunca belirli ve riskten azade kılmak zorundalar. Bunu kaygı verici bir durum olarak anlatıyor olsalar da, bu durum freelance çalışmanın doğal bir özelliği olarak kabul ediliyor.
- Kendini pazarlama ve kendini bir markaya dönüştürme zorunluluğu: Kendini pazarlamak ve kendini bir markaya dönüştürmek, bağımsız profesyonellerin güvencesiz ve esnek bir iş piyasasında hayatta kalması için elzem görülüyor. Diğer bağımsız profesyonellerle rekabet edebilmek, müşteri bulabilmek freelancerlar için elzem. Çünkü diğerlerinden bir adım önde olmak, tanınırlığını artırmak, farklı olduğunu gösterebilmek zorundalar. Üstelik, bu faaliyetler de işin bir parçası gibi boş zamanı işgal ediyor. Kimileri bunu doğal kabul ediyor ve bununla bir problem yaşamıyor. Ama kimileri için bu bir problem, fakat yine de istemeseler de bunu yapmak zorunda olduklarının farkındalar.
- Boş zamanın işle alakalı faaliyetlerce işgal edilmesi: Bu iki noktayla alakalı olarak son nokta da, boş zamanda iş işle alakalı faaliyetler yapma zorunluluğu. Buna göre, freelancerlar için boş zamanlarında sürekli olarak kendilerini geliştirmek, yeni şeyler öğrenmek vs. bir zorunluluk. Yani, sadece bir

müşterinin işini yaptıkları anlarda değil, boş zamanlarında da çalışıyorlar. Burada üç temel motivasyon olduğu söylenebilir: (1) eksikliklerini gidermek için kendini geliştirmek ve yeni şeyler öğrenmek, (2) kendini pazarlamak için web sitesi kurmak, portfolyo zenginleştirmek için reklam amacıyla işler yapmak vs. ve (3) sırf işini sevdiği için boş zamanlarında bu işle ilgili şeyler yapmak ve hatta yaptığı şeyi iş gibi değil bir hobi gibi görmek.

Daha önce belirttiğim üzere, esnek ve güvencesiz çalışmanın çekici ve itici yanları simetrikti. Yani, çekici görülen şeyin kendisi aynı zamanda birtakım problemler de doğuruyordu. Benim de iddiam o ki Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği tam da bu çelişkiyi çözüyor; güvencesiz ve esnek çalışmayı benimsenir kılıyor. Bu noktada, vaatleriyle çalışanlarda motivasyon, itki, arzu yaratan Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin şu üç temel özelliğinin bunu sağladığını tespit ediyorum:

- **Özlü Bağlılık:** Özlü bağlılık iş ile kurulan derin, anlamlı ve güçlü bireysel bağı ve motivasyonu ifade ediyor. Yani iş, sadece hayatımızı kazanmak için yaptığımız zorunlu bir faaliyet olmanın ötesinde, hayatımıza anlam katan önemli bir faaliyet olarak da kabul edilir. Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin bu özelliği, çalışanların anlamlı ve önemli bir işle uğraştıklarını düşünmelerini sağlıyor. Özlü bağlılık bize maddi olmayan değerlerin neden maddi değerlerden daha cazip olduğunun da cevabını veriyor. Para gibi maddi unsurlar da freelance çalışanlar ya da freelance çalışmak isteyenler için elbette hala önemli. Ancak, freelance çalışma kararını alma motivasyonunun arkasında daha ziyade kendini gerçekleştirme, özgürlük ve özerklik gibi maddi olmayan unsurlar olduğu söylenebilir.
- **Dayanıklılık:** Dayanıklılık, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin freelance çalışanlarda yarattığı güç ve tahammül seviyesine işaret ediyor. Bu bağlamda, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin yarattığı çalışma tutkusu, bu etiğin çağrısına ses verenlere freelance çalışmanın maddi zorluklarına dayanmak için duygusal bir bariyer, esneklik ve güç sağlıyor. Çalışma tutkusuna sahip olanlar için her şey mükemmel değil elbette. Onlar da pişmanlık duyup şikâyet edebiliyorlar, ancak bu zorluklarla başa çıkmak ve bunlara katlanmak için onları duygusal olarak daha güçlü kılan bir etiğin etkisi altında oldukları söylenebilir. Öte yandan Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği “müstakbel emeği”, yani gelecekte sağlayacağı

muhtemel faydaları umarak şimdiki zamanda kötü koşullarda çalışma durumunu da meşrulaştırıyor. Hem freelance adayları hem de bağımsız profesyoneller, ücretsiz staj, güvencesiz çalışma vb. gibi cazip olmayan koşulları, bu koşullara katlandıkları takdirde gelecekte meyvelerini toplayacakları umuduyla kabul edebiliyorlar. Bu bağlamda, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin bir niteliği olarak dayanıklılığın itaatkâr ve uysal öznelere yarattığını söyleyebiliriz. Bu bağlamda, çalışma arzusunun yarattığı dayanıklılığın, özlü bağlılıkla birlikte düşünüldüğünde, işle ilgili tüm toplumsal ve yapısal sorunların bireyselleştirilmesine ve psikolojikleştirilmesine de hizmet ettiğini söyleyebiliriz.

- Heyecan ve Coşku: Bununla, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin uyandırdığı heyecanı ve neredeyse çalışma aşkını kastediyorum. Burada coşkuyu, enerji veren ve eyleme geçme arzusu yaratan bir iyimserlik ve heyecan hali olarak tanımlayabiliriz. Buna göre, heyecanlı ve hevesli bağımsız profesyoneller sırf sevdikleri işi yaptıkları için mutlu ve neşeli olabiliyorlar. Freelance çalışmanın vaatlerinden etkilenen freelance adayları, tercih ettikleri ve sevdikleri freelance işten bahsederken bile heyecanlı ve hevesli görünüyorlar. Heyecan ve coşku, çalışmayı hayatını kazanmak için gerçekleştirilen zorunlu bir faaliyet olmaktan çıkarıp, bireylerin sırf sevdiklerini düşündükleri için yaptıkları bir faaliyete dönüştürüyor.

Ve buradan da Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'ne yönelik şu üç tutumu tespit ettim: (1) Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin çağrısına tam anlamıyla kapılanlar, (2) Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin çağrısına tam anlamıyla kapılmasalar bile zorunluluk gereği bu çağrıya uyanlar ve (3) Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin çağrısına eleştirel mesafeli yaklaşanlar.

Kabaca söyleyecek olursak, ilk gruptakilerin Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin tüm unsurlarına tamamen uyduklarını görüyoruz. Freelance çalışmayı bir zorunluluk gereği değil, özgür iradeleriyle tercih ediyorlar. Freelance çalışma aynı zamanda onlar için geçici, ek bir iş değil, tek gelir getirici faaliyet. Bu gruptakiler için maddi unsurlardan ziyade maddi olmayan unsurlar daha çekici ve freelance çalışma da bu açıdan onlara cazip görünüyor. Tam da bu bağlamda, arzu ettikleri iş arayışında karşılaştıkları maddi ve manevi zorluklarla başa çıkma noktasında ekonomik açıdan da avantajlı durumdadır.

İkinci gruptakiler ise, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin daha ziyade “dayanıklılık” unsurunu taşıyorlar ve diğer unsurlara çekincen şekilde mesafeliler. Freelance çalışmak onlar için daha ziyade maddi koşulların dayattığı zorunluluğun sonucunda alınan bir karar gibi gözüküyor. Bu bağlamda, freelance çalışmayı ya hedefledikleri bir amaca erişmek için para kazanmak amacıyla ek bir iş olarak yapıyorlar veya tek gelir getirici faaliyet olarak ellerindeki son seçenek freelance çalışmak olduğu için. Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin maddi olmayan vaatleri onlar için de çekici gözüküyor. Ellerindeki diğer seçeneklerin daha az çekici olması karşısında freelance çalışmanın maddi olmayan vaatleri çoğunu minimal düzeydeki maddi getirileri kabul etmeye itiyor. Onlar için bu zorunluluğu doğuran şey de, arzu ettikleri iş arayışında karşılaştıkları maddi ve manevi zorluklarla başa çıkmak için ekonomik açıdan ilk gruptakiler kadar avantajlı olmamaları.

Son olarak, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin çağrısına eleştirel mesafeli yaklaşanlar ise Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin her üç unsuruna da mesafeliler. Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin maddi olmayan vaatleri onlara diğer gruplardakiler kadar çekici gelmiyor, hatta bilakis bunlara eleştirel yaklaşıyorlar. Öyle ki, bu vaatlerin freelance çalışmanın olumsuz esneklik ve güvencesizlik koşullarını meşrulaştırmaya hizmet ettiğini de düşünüyorlar.

Son olarak, çalışmanın sonuçlarına ve sınırlılıklarına değinecek olursak, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin belki de en temel toplumsal çıktısı, yarattığı duygulanımsal çekicilikle, mevcut sosyoekonomik eşitsizlikleri ve maddi olumsuzlukları çalışanların aleyhine yeniden üretmesidir. Görüşmeler de ortaya çıktığı üzere, yoğun mesai temposu içinde, başkasının emri altında, çalışma zamanı ve yeri üzerinde hiçbir kontrole sahip olmadan çalışmak, birçok insan için işi angarya haline getiriyor. Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği devreye tam da bu noktada giriyor ve işin sadece bu tür bir angarya olmadığını; kişinin kendisini özgür, esnek, tatmin olmuş hissedebileceği işlerin de olduğunu adeta müjdeliyor. Aslında insanların angarya olarak işten kurtulmak, sevebilecekleri bir iş bulmak, çalışma zamanını ve yerini kontrol edebilmek gibi son derece “insani” ve anlaşılabilir bir talebi söz konusu burada. Ancak Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği'nin vaat ettiği bu göze hoş gelen tablonun ardında çok fazla tolerans, çok fazla maddi taviz, düşük ücretlerle esnek ve güvencesiz çalışma koşulları ve duygu sömürsü yatıyor.

Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği aynı zamanda neoliberal bireycilik ideolojisiyle de kol kola işliyor. “Kişisel sorumluluk”, “kişisel gelişim” ve “girişimcilik” söyleminin toplumsal bir yansıması olarak Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği, çalışmanın doğasında var olan yapısal ve toplumsal sorunların bireyselleştirilmesine ve psikolojikleştirilmesine de hizmet ediyor. Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin vaatleri bireysel düzeyde angaryadan kurtulma reçetesi gibi görünse de, bu reçete kapitalist ücretli emek ilişkisine içkin yapısal, sistemik ve toplumsal sorunların çözümünü de bireyin sırtına yüklüyor. Dolayısıyla sevilen işi aramak, bu arayışta karşılaşılan sorunları çözmek, tüm bu sürecin psikolojik yükünü taşımak ve olumsuz çalışma koşullarını tolere edebilecek zihinsel ve fiziksel meziyetlere sahip olmak tamamen bireyin sorumluluğuna kalıyor. Bu anlamda özgürlük kılıfında olumlanan güvencesizlik ve esneklik aslında işverenlerin çalışanlara karşı yükümlülüklerinden kurtulması anlamına geliyor. Çoğu durumda çalışanlar, özgürlük kisvesi altında güvencesizlik, belirsizlik, esneklik, düşük ücretler, uzun çalışma saatleri, iş-yaşam dengesinin yok edilmesi ve çalışma zamanının boş zamanı işgal etmesiyle baş başa bırakılıyor.

Ücretli emek ilişkisinin kapitalizme içkin toplumsal ve sistemik sorunlarını bireyselleştirmenin ve psikolojikleştirmenin önemli bir sonucu da sevilen iş arayışındaki sınıfsal eşitsizliği görmezden gelmek. Zira herkes sevdiği işi yapmak için aynı ekonomik, kültürel ve sosyal kaynaklara sahip değil. Dolayısıyla bu arayışın maddi ve manevi külfetlerini karşılayabilen ve daha iyi ekonomik imkânlarla sahip olanların bir şekilde uygun koşullarda bir iş bulma olasılığı daha yüksekken ekonomik açıdan dezavantajlı olanlar ya hiç sevmedikleri bir işi seçmek zorunda kalıyorlar ya da büyük tavizler vererek elde etmiş olsalar da kısmen sevdikleri bir işin kötü koşullarına tahammül etmek ve “sevmek” zorunda kalıyorlar. Başka bir deyişle, ekonomik olarak avantajlı olanlar belirsizliği ve esnekliği özgürlük olarak deneyimleme fırsatına sahipken, ekonomik olarak dezavantajlı olanlar “güvencesiz özgürlük” içinde sıkışıp kalıyor. Dolayısıyla, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği işle ilgili sorunların bireysel düzeyde çözümü için bir reçete sunsa bile, bundan herkes aynı şekilde faydalanamıyor.

Dahası, bir şekilde istediği işi bulan freelance çalışanlar kişisel sorumluluk, kişisel gelişim ve girişimcilik söylemini de içselleştirmiş görünüyor. Çoğu için bu bir “kişisel başarı hikayesi”. Yeterince girişimci oldukları, risk almaya cesaret ettikleri ve korkmadıkları için sevdikleri bu “özgür” hayata kavuştuklarını düşünüyorlar. Bu süreç

onlar için de kolay olmamış olsa bile, kendileri gibi bu “riski” almayanları, mevcut esnek ve güvencesiz çalışma düzeninin sorunlarından yakınanları “cesaretsizlikle” ve “yeterince girişimci ruha sahip olmamakla” eleştirdiklerini ve adeta suçladıklarını görüyoruz. Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’ne daha tutkuyla bağlı olanların, kapitalist ücretli emek ilişkisine ve işgücü piyasasına içkin yapısal sorunları görmezden gelmeye ve çalışma hayatının sorunlarını kişinin kendi başarısızlığı, beceriksizliği ve “tutkusuzluğu” olarak görmeye daha meyilli olduklarını söylemek yanlış olmaz.

Freelance çalışmanın çekici ve çekici olmayan özelliklerinin yarattığı bu çelişkiyi Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin nasıl idare ettiğini anlamakta, insanların güvencesizliğinin ve esnekliğinin farkında olmalarına rağmen neden hala freelance çalışmaya yönelik güçlü bir istek duyduklarını açıklamakta Lauren Berlant’ın bu teze önemli bir katkı sağlayan “acımasız iyimserlik” (*cruel optimism*) kavramının önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum. Bu bağlamda tutkulu çalışma etiğinin işe karşı acımasızca iyimser bir bağlılığa yol açtığını söyleyebiliriz. Lauren Berlant acımasız iyimserliği, kişinin bağlandığı arzu nesnesinin, aslında tam olarak arzu ettiği şeye ulaşmasını engellediği bir iyimserlik biçimi olarak tanımlıyor. Örneğin, bir aşk ilişkisini düşünebiliriz. Birine aşık olduğumuzda hissettiğimiz şey elbette mutluluk ve tatmin duygusudur. Dolayısıyla, sevgilimize iyimser bir şekilde bağlanırsınız. Ancak, bir noktada bu ilişkinin gerçekten arzu ettiğimiz türden bir ilişki olmadığını fark ettiğimizde, partnerimize olan sevgimiz ve iyimserliğimiz bunun gerçekten istediğimiz türden bir ilişki olmadığını görmemizi engelleyebilir. Dahası, bu ilişki bize zarar veriyorsa, zarar görmemize rağmen ilişkiyi sonlandıramayabiliriz. Sevgimiz ve iyimserliğimiz bizi bu ilişkinin tam da istediğimiz tarzda bir ilişki olduğuna ve bundan kurtulamayacağımıza inandırabilir. Bu tarz bir iyimserliğin acımasızlığı tam da buradadır: Aslında bize neşe veren, arzuladığımız bir arzu nesnesine yönelik bir yönelimimiz, bir farkındalığımız, bir dürtümüz vardır, ancak içinde bulunduğumuz mevcut ilişki esas arzu ettiğimiz şeyin şekline bürünebilir ve tam da ona erişmemize acımasızca mani olur.

Freelance çalışmanın cazibesini de buna bağlayabiliriz, zira freelance çalışmanın vaat ettiği özgürlük ve esneklik gerçekten de anlaşılabilir ve haklı bir talep olarak görünüyor. Freelance çalışmanın özgürlük ve esneklik vaadi ilk bakışta gerçekten de olumlu görünebilir. Ancak kapitalist ücretli emek ilişkisi içinde kaldığı ölçüde bu, *işten* özgürleşme değil, *işte* özgürleşmedir. Yine de 60’lar ve 70’lerdeki otonom

hareketin güvencesizliğe nasıl yaklaştığını hatırlarsak, düzenli ve katı bir çalışma rejiminden (Fordizm) çıkıp zamansal ve mekânsal bir esnekliğe sahip olmak belki de kapitalist ücretli emek ilişkisinden özgürleşmeye doğru atılmış bir adım olarak görülebilir. Ancak öte yandan, post-Fordist çalışma ideolojisinin bu “kaçış hatlarını”, kapitalist ücretli emek sisteminin dışında çalışma arzusunu, işten özgürleşme itkisini tekrar sistemin içine yönlendirmekte oldukça mahir olduğunu da unutmamalıyız. Bu tezin ileri sürdüğü gibi, post-Fordist çalışma ideolojisinin bir parçası olarak Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği, bu kaçış hatlarını tutarak, çalışma zorunluluğu karşısında duyulan tavrı soğurarak, çalışmanın sevilebilir, arzu edilebilir olduğunu müjdeleyerek ve böylece işçilerin duygulanımsal adaptasyonunu sağlayarak tam da güvencesiz ve esnek çalışma koşullarını arzu edilir kılmaya hizmet etmektedir.

Freelance çalışmanın özgürlük ve esneklik vaadinin cazibesine kapılmanın anlaşılabilir olduğunu söyledik. Gerçekten de görüşülen kişiler için freelance çalışmanın en cazip yönü özgür ve özerk hissetmek, zamansal ve mekânsal olarak esnek olmaktır. Dolayısıyla bunun, onların arzularını tatmin eden iyimser bir ilişki olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Ancak yine gördüğümüz üzere, çoğu insan için durum böyle değil. Çoğu için freelance çalışma, iş-yaşam dengesinin bozulması, tüm öznelliğin ve boş zamanın işe adanması, kaygı ve stres anlamına geliyor. Dolayısıyla, kapitalist ücretli emek ilişkisinden ve angaryadan kurtulma, anlamlı işler yapma arzusunu tatmin etmek bir yana, aslında bu isteklere ulaşmalarını engelleyen acımasızca iyimser bir bağlılık tesis ediyor.

Arzuları ve öznelliği işe koşturmak, sevilen bir işin peşinden gitmek, aslında güvencesizliğe karşıt değil, tam da güvencesizlik ve belirsizlik koşullarıyla ilişkili. Belirsizliğin ve güvencesizliğin yaygın ve neredeyse norm olduğu bir işgücü piyasasında, Tutkulu Çalışma Etiği’nin vaatlerini yerine getiren sevilen bir işi aramak ve bulmak, deyim yerindeyse fırtınalı bir havada bir limana sığınmak gibi. Belirsizliğin ve kaygının çok güçlü bir şekilde hissedildiği neoliberal işgücü piyasasında, sevilen bir iş bulmak bir şekilde bu kaygıları dağıtmaya ve geleceğin belirsizliği karşısında pasif değil aktif bir pozisyon almaya yardımcı oluyor. Bu açıdan freelance çalışmanın katı ve düzenli bir çalışma rejimine karşı bir “panzehir” gibi olduğunu söyledik, ancak bu sadece bireysel düzeyde işe yarayan bir panzehir. Ve böyle olduğu ölçüde, mevcut sosyo-ekonomik eşitsizlikleri ve dezavantajlı koşulları

alışanlar lehine özlemek yerine bilakis yeniden üretiyor. Sadece ekonomik açıdan avantajlı küçük bir grup freelance alışmanın esnekliğinden ve belirsizliğinden (olumlu anlamda) faydalıyor ve sevdikleri işi yapmaktan keyif alıyor gibi görünüyor. Geri kalan çoğunluk için ise bireyciliği ve kişisel gelişimi pompalayan Tutkulu alışma Etiği, yaşam algısının bireysel bir ufka sıkışmasına neden oluyor.

Ancak şu spekülâtif soruyu da sormak gerekir: Tutkulu alışma Etiği'nin vaatlerinde kolektif ıkara hizmet edebilecek bir şey bulabilir miyiz? Bana öyle geliyor ki buradaki sorun kişinin işini sevmesi, arzularının peşinden gitmesi, özgürlük ve esneklik arayışında olması değil. Sorun daha ziyade Tutkulu alışma Etiği'nin neoliberal bireycilik ideolojisinin bir uzantısı olarak, alışma koşullarını iyileştirmeyi ve toplumsal dönüşümü hedeflemek yerine bireysel olarak esnek ve güvencesiz iş piyasasında hayatta kalma aracı olarak işlev görmesinde. Başka bir deyişle, kapitalist işe içkin sorunları toplumsal düzlemde alıp bireysel düzleme, bireyin sorumluluğuna aktararak psikolojikleştirmesinde. Dolayısıyla, otonom hareketin güvencesizlikte bulunduğu "özgürleşme parıltısını" hatırlayacak olursak, Tutkulu alışma Etiği'nin vaatlerinde – açık ya da örtük bir biçimde – kesinlikle alışma karşıtı bir dürtü, bir özgürleşme itkisi, kapitalist alışmanın angaryalarından kurtulma talebi, bir iyimserlik var. Bu dürtü ve iyimserlik, görüşülen kişilerin söylemlerinde de açıkça görülüyor. Birçok kişi için serbest alışma tam da bu nedenle cazip ve tercih edilir duruyor. Ancak otonom hareket için bu özgürleşme momentinin verili ve kendiliğinden gelişen bir moment değil, bir elişki ve çatışma momenti olduğunu belirtmek önemli. Burada önemli olan, otonom hareketin işaret ettiği, gayri maddi emeğin doğasında var olan ikili potansiyel: özgürleşme ve zorunluluk arasındaki, zevk ve acı arasındaki, edilgenlik ve eylemlilik arasındaki, bir yandan güçlenmiş hissetmek diğer yandan sömürölmek arasındaki, bireysel kaçış yollarına başvurmak ve toplumsal değişimi kolektif olarak hedeflemek arasındaki elişki. Dolayısıyla, Tutkulu alışma Etiği'nin gerçekten de iyimser olduğunu, ancak bu haliyle acımasız bir iyimserlik olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Vaatlerinin çok çekici geldiğini çünkü alışma karşıtlığına ve alışma angaryasından özgürleşme arzusuna hitap ettiğini de söyleyebiliriz. Ancak sonuçta bu, alışanların bireysel ve örgütsüz kalması halinde özgürleşmeden ziyade tüm boş zamanların, bilişsel, duygusal yetilerin ve tüm özelliğın işe oşulmasına yol açıyor.

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