

Time and Value: A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy of Time

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Abstract: In this text, I will focus on the four main theses on the conception of time Marx used in *Capital* and *Grundrisse* in order to deal with the problem of value and its relationship with the concept of time. These four theses appear at different stages in Marx's work, both at the level of political economy, in the analysis of capitalism as a system, and at the historical materialist level. Here, I aim to do boundary research by bringing these four theses together. In so doing, I will use a typological approach as well as a topological one in which the spheres of circulation and production of capital can be analyzed depending on its movement and the process of valuation. In the context of typological elements, I will consider three functions of the social surplus time and stage their three typological counterparts as no-one, someone and everyone.

Keywords: time, value, labour, capital

One of the major historical ruptures accompanying the birth of capitalist modernity finds its expression with the reversal that occurs in the modern development of the concept of time. We can describe this reversal as follows: As Plato, who invented the basic conceptual repertoire of ancient Greek philosophies after Socrates, stated in *Timaeus*, time is a "moving image of eternity,"¹ whereas for capitalist modernity, I think, *eternity is but the still image of time*. The ancient world of thought, trying to understand time with reference to eternity, finally grasps its concept as "time

¹ Plato, "Timaeus," *Complete Works of Plato*, trans. by Donald J. Zeyl, ed. by John M. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 37d, 1241.

is just this—number of motion in respect of ‘before’ and ‘after’² in Aristotle’s *Physics*. However, in capitalist modernity, we witness that the concept of time is translated into the most abstract scheme according to which the motion is organized as if completing the reversal mentioned above. And the reversals both between eternity and time, and between time and motion, are extensions of a very fundamental phenomenon that can be described on the plane of the historical and political fight over the conception of social time. In the context of the determination of social time, one of the most acute aspects of this fight is exemplified by the replacement of churches’ domination over the social time by clock towers’ or monuments of capitalist modernization.

Magnificent structures such as churches, which for centuries have determined the rhythmic order of cities on the one hand and are the symbol of the representation of time on the other, were undoubtedly the primary space of time until a few centuries ago. These structures represented a logic of counting time according to social necessities, but time wasn’t measured in the sense we understand today. The way of counting time was also quite different from ours: social time was not organized as a homogeneous and abstract conception independent of cosmic movements; even in its most advanced form, it was counted by numbers instead of counting the numbers themselves. However, a few centuries ago the development of capitalist modernity confronted them with another representation of time, namely the clock towers erected in the squares of cities. The church bell rang and the mosque adhan continued to be sung, but a new logic and economy that emerged particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took a central role in determining the rhythm of social life. This new logic of development regarded time as *tempo* distinct from cosmic events and nature, and most importantly placed it at the very center of economical rationality. Just as stated in an extraordinary passage in Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s *Time Regulation Institute*, one of the biggest breaks created by capitalist modernity in the representation of time was performed by counting time as an independent, abstract, and homogeneous number. One of the characters in this seminal novel says: “Civilization took its greatest leap forward when men began walking about with watches in their pockets, keeping time that was independent from the sun. This was a rupture with nature itself (...). For a timepiece is time itself, we mustn’t forget that!”³ Undoubtedly, a concept of time, which clocks not only counted but also measured, confronted theological monuments of time with a secular, homogeneous, and abstract

² Aristotle, “Physics,” *Complete Works of Aristotle*, Volume I, ed. by Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University, 1984), 219a30-219b1, 501.

³ Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, *Time Regulation Institute*, trans. by Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe (New York: Penguin, 2013), 117.

conception. Tanpinar was one of those who felt this tension between two different conceptions of time most deeply. In *Time Regulation Institute*, we see this tension in the implicit controversy between the wall clock called Blessed One, which counts time at its own calm pace and witnesses everything in the family for generations by getting an ethereal personality and a name, and the impersonal secular clock on the table.⁴ But this conflict should not be seen as a coincidence because the conception of social time has never been outside of power relations throughout human history. Especially since capitalist modernity began to organize with its own institutions and rationality, both the war between classes and the fight between rationalities have seen it as their own domains.

In this respect, it is remarkable that in one of Walter Benjamin's theses in *On the Concept of History*, the clock towers, which are the time monuments of capitalist modernization, were considered as being targeted during the July revolution: "On the first evening of fighting it turned out that the clocks in towers were being fired on simultaneously and independently from several places in Paris."⁵ Benjamin does not tell us about an ordinary anecdote here. If looked at a little deeper, the issue is actually tied to how social domination will be established over the representation of time and to which forces will dominate social time. Our question is as simple as this: If the forces that organize social time are also the forces that determine its production and distribution, is it possible today to think of time outside of capitalist economical rationality and to execute it differently in our practical world? We can begin by analyzing an indirect connection between time and economy, more precisely the conditions that make possible the subordination of the concept of time to economy. This question is now before us with its rich content that many thinkers have asked themselves. One of them is Tanpinar and he tells us that the logic that identifies clock with time also identifies work with time, and the problem is to identify the time-discipline that not only counts and measures time but places it in a paradigm of savings. A character in *Time Regulation Institute* says: "Work is a matter of mastering one's time, knowing how to use it. We are paving the way for such a philosophy. We'll give our people a consciousness of time (...). We shall declare that man is first and foremost a creature who works, and that work itself is time."⁶ The secular clock on the table has already displaced the Blessed One, the ancient clock on the wall, but the abstract time it brings with it now needs to be considered together with abstract labour.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5, 12.

⁵ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. by Harry Zohn, ed. by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 2007), 262.

⁶ Tanpinar, *Time Regulation Institute*, 117.

We are at the point where we need to rehearse Karl Marx's philosophy of time in order to analyze how time is imagined in capitalist modernity and how the relationship between capital and value is established with a certain conception of time. Marx inherited an extremely rich line of discussion on the concept of time with his analyses in *Capital* and *Grundrisse* among others. There are many critical axes on this line, from instructions that state that factory clocks must be adjusted to the time of the "nearest railway clock,"⁷ to the issue of the length of the working hours of children and "prolongation of working day,"⁸ when factory bosses exercise their pressure on time most strongly. For example, even though labour power is a commodity, the question of what it means for a labourer to work first and get his wage after,⁹ contrary to all other money-commodity exchanges, can be posed on this line. Moreover, when we ask about the value of a commodity, Marx already points out in *Capital* that the value of the commodity is the "average labour time for producing the product"¹⁰ or "socially necessary labour time."¹¹ As such, Marx's philosophy of time provides the ontological relation between value and time.

Economy of Time

In the background of the thesis "economy of time, to this all economy ultimately reduces itself"¹² lies Marx's general understanding of human activity. The link between the economical organization of human activity and its temporal organization is at the center of the problem here. If the history of human beings with the reproduction of their own means of subsistence and living existence, the broad range of this thesis suggests that not only capitalist society but also all social formations before it established a kind of connection between economy and time in various forms, and it also assumes that there is a relationship between meeting social needs and distribution of social time. But when the difference of the capitalist mode of production is taken as the production of commodities as commodities and the production and realization of surplus value, the current context of the relationship between economy and time emerges. Capital not only subordinates the productive forces of human activities to itself but also organizes the social time in which these activities take place by making them suitable for its own expansion. It

⁷ Karl Marx, *Capital*, Volume: 1, trans. by Ben Fowkes (London: Penguin, 1976), 394.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 526.

⁹ See *Ibid.*, 681.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1011.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1023.

¹² Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, trans. by Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin, 1993), 173.

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is the relation of capital, then, that under capitalism constitutes the mediation between the economical organization of human activity and its temporal organization.

One of the most crucial definitions of capital in Marx's analysis of political economy tells us that "capital is a relation,"¹³ not a thing, and another assumes that capital is a relation that can only protect itself by a tendency to expand itself boundlessly. These two definitions complement each other. However, the first should be considered together with Engels' statement that "capital locked up in a chest was dead capital, while capital in circulation increased continuously."¹⁴ Capital as a thing is only a store of value and cannot be the determinant of social relations. In this sense, to say that capital is a relation is to say that it is a relation established with labour or in Marx's own words "with not-capital, the negation of capital, without which it is not capital; the real not-capital is labour."¹⁵

It is clear that the irreducible contradictions between social productive forces and existing capitalist relations of production play a crucial part in Marx's claim that capital is a relation that can only exist by expanding itself.¹⁶ Moreover, when capital's endless tendency towards valuation is taken as a characteristic feature of it, it becomes even clearer why the expansion of capital is essential. So how does capital expand and how can this relate to Marx's thesis on the economy of time? In *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Engels pointed out this characteristic structure of industrial capital: "But an industry which does not expand cannot improve itself."¹⁷ Capitalist production must grow or die by increasing and expanding, and it can only expand itself by registering the productive forces of labour in its axiomatics of value, in short, by investing the commodity of labour power into production and appropriating the surplus value it produces. As such, the ontological condition of the expansion of capital is surplus value. But it must be remembered that Marx made a distinction between the production of surplus value and its "realization."¹⁸ Surplus value is produced when labour power transfers additional value to the commodity it produces. As to the realization of surplus value, this commodity must come to the market and

¹³ *Ibid.*, 676.

¹⁴ Friedrich Engels, *Outlines of a Critique of Political Economy*, Marx & Engels Collected Works: Volume 3, Marx and Engels (March 1843-August 1844), trans. by Martin Milligan (Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 418.

¹⁵ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, 279.

¹⁶ See *Ibid.*, 516.

¹⁷ Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, Collected Works: Volume 4, Friedrich Engels, trans. by Richard Dixon, Clemens Dutt, Jack Lindsay, Alick West, Alex Miller, Dirk J. Sally, R. Struik, Alick West. (Lawrence & Wishart, 2010 a), 260.

¹⁸ Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1, 437.

turn into money by realizing its *salto mortale*,¹⁹ and that money must be included in capital as money-capital and expand it.

Now the mediating relation established by the capitalist mode of production between the economy and time has become clearer. When social time is organized within the expansion dynamics of capital, an equation emerges that we can express in the form of the maximum value in minimum time. All time segments outside of the time of production have become an extension of this value axiomatics. Lewis Mumford provides important observations on the relation between time and labour in the development of capitalist modernity and how the movement of capital subordinates social time to its axiomatics of value: "Time-saving now became an important part of labour saving. And as time was accumulated and put by, it was reinvested, like money capital, in new forms of exploitation (...). Time, in short, was a commodity in the sense that money had become a commodity."²⁰ This is one aspect of the capitalist economy of time. However, it is not enough to deduce from this view that capital is a time thief because it offers a time-logic, a time-discipline, organizes the concept of time socially, and strives to transform itself into the original space of time.

Moments as the Elements of Profit

Marx thinks of capital-value as an abstraction "in actu,"²¹ as a functioning system. We live in this abstraction and reproduce it from moment to moment. So how do we do that? My answer to this question is as follows: Value-relation in capitalist society is established through a specific time design. Value becomes a social reality by being reflected on the mirror of time (*chronos*) as an abstraction in actu. This is one reason why time is a central concept of capitalist economic rationality. Now the concept of time has been reduced to the concept of capital-value; time belongs to a discipline and a logic of savings. The words of a factory boss portrayed by Marx in the first volume of *Capital* clearly reflect this situation: "If you allow me (...) to work only ten minutes in the day over-time, you put one thousand a year in my pocket. Moments are the elements of profit."²²

Marx's second thesis on time and one of the focal points of my analysis emerges on this axis. How can the moment be transformed into profit? Let us first ask how such a unit as the moment assumes a concept of

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 200.

²⁰ Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilizations* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), 197.

²¹ Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 2, Marx & Engels Collected Works: Volume 36, trans. by Samuel Moore, Edward Aveling (Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 110.

²² Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1, 352.

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time a priori. What is the time according to the moment? Just as modern atomism uses the atom to explain the formation of matter by designating the atom as the smallest indivisible unit, temporal atomism records the moment as the indivisible unit of time. But since the moment is the unit of measurement, it is also incommensurable. The problem here can be expressed as follows: how is it possible that a combination of unmeasurable units can produce a measurable quantity? In fact, the moment is a fictional boundary that cannot be transcended by time, just as someone who thinks that the line is made up of points accepts the point as a fictional 'trace' that cannot be transcended. The relation of capital to this limit differs from the material limits it encounters. Since this limit is fictional, capital carries out a micro-operation of the 'economy of time' to include this boundary in its rationality.

The issue is now focused on what the minimum unit of time will be in terms of capital's own development and growth. If this minimum was a unit day, we could be content with workday analysis and disclose this logic by determining how the relationship between time and value is organized during the working day. However, the problem has spread to a much more micro level. The biggest contradiction of this question emerges when we ask whether the moment produced to construct time is itself temporal. The moment, in its both immeasurable and non-countable nature, is just a 'trace' just like a point. However, when we follow it, it is not possible to encounter the temporal itself. Because this trace is a reaction to the definition of the non-measurable fiction as a measurable reality, and this reaction for capital is extremely valuable in transcending the limits of the time of appraisal. Capital has seized this atom of the temporal sequence, occupying this fictional unit in its phantasmagoria in actu. In the words of the employer, the desire to occupy the time of the working people as a whole is evident; he knows that he would earn two thousand pounds a year if he had twenty minutes of overwork per day, and twenty thousand pounds a year if he had two hundred minutes of excessive work per day. Capital-value then aims at the smallest constituent fiction piece to capture the whole. It is now clear why the savings paradigm of the 'economy of time' puts "moment" on its target, because the employer cannot seize the smallest temporal unit, say the second, unless he seizes the whole of the relative size that he will constitute. For capital, every moment when it cannot exhaust its labour power and add value to it is determined as a time of devaluation. The moment, therefore, taken as the unmeasurable unit of time from the standpoint of temporal atomism, is made part of labour time, surplus value, and therefore profit for the capitalist economy. Now capital takes on a new operation on the micro levels of time and money identity. The main goal for capital, organized as an element of profit, is to reflect time into the mirror of value. In other words, to produce a specific equation between time and value by imprisoning the idea of eternity

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under the value form, and to organize social time according to this equation. In this respect, any moment that cannot be converted into profit is a loss. Here is one of the most critical points of the analysis of social time: The moment is commodified in the capitalist economy of time, this is the capitalist axiomatics at the root of the creation of a wage-time regime, just like the wage-labour regime. The capitalist economy of time has accomplished what any economy of time has never achieved before in history. In this regime, capital occupied the moment.

We find another striking observation of such a concept of time in Tanpinar's *Time Regulation Institute*: "If every person loses one second per hour, we lose a total of eighteen million seconds in that hour (...). It's a maddening loss of time ... a loss in terms of our work, our lives, and our everyday economy."²³ The useful side of the time regulation institute is to establish value-time identity and instill the consciousness of time in people. But there is no need for such an institute today because we are far from thinking about a time concept that would break this identity. While it is not impossible, it is very difficult for us to think of a concept of time that is not commodified and integrated into the value system. In order to achieve this break conceptually, I would like to draw up another idea such as life-time identity as opposed to value-time identity. But the first thing to do is to analyze this capitalist commodity logic in detail, which identifies value with time. Lewis Mumford gives us an important insight on this issue and presents the link between the ideology of progress of capitalist modernity and the identity of value-time. "Value, in the doctrine of progress, was reduced to a time- calculation: value was in fact movement in time. To be old-fashioned or to be 'out of date' was to lack value."²⁴ At this very point, we must now rethink the subordination of time to the economy through the spatial construction of capital in order to bring to mind another conception of time that does not progress -linear or cyclical- or turn into *chronos*.

Capital, Space, and Time

While the capital in the field of production can turn space into its own space of self-valorization, in the field of circulation, space is a stretch that needs to be narrowed and, if possible, eliminated. The main tendency of capital in the sphere of circulation is to reset the time of circulation, that is, by maximizing the speed of circulation, and perhaps by subjecting all exchange processes to a regime of synchronicity, to eliminate the amount of time spent

²³ Tanpinar, *Time Regulation Institute*, 32.

²⁴ Mumford, *Technics and Civilizations*, 180-181.

on metamorphoses of value and the space in which this time is spent.²⁵ That is to say, the space occupied by being traversed in the production field is traversed by being occupied in the circulation field. When the occupation takes an absolute form, the time of circulation will be nullified, and social time will be organized around the relations of capital with speed and space. In this sense, under the conditions of capitalism, the target of capital is the whole global space. In *Grundrisse*, Marx gives us one more clue to help understand the connections between time of circulation and speed in terms of the organization of social time, while explicitly analyzing how capital destroys space over time: "Thus, while capital must on one side strive to tear down every spatial barrier to intercourse, i.e. to exchange, and conquer the whole earth for its market, it strives on the other side to annihilate this space with time, i.e. to reduce to a minimum the time spent in motion from one place to another."²⁶ According to Marx's analysis "even spatial distance reduces itself to time; the important thing e.g. is not the market's distance in space, but the speed - the amount of time - with which it can be reached."²⁷ While the movement of capital spatializes time in the sphere of production, it destroys space in the sphere of circulation by using this spatialized time, in other words, by the transformation of time into a social abstraction in actu as *chronos*. An occupiable design of space is required to homogenize time, and an image of time spatialized to demolish the space.

The homogeneous structure of the design of time produced by capitalist modernity also appears in Georg Lukács' analyses of the concept of abstract time as well as in Moishe Postone's concept of abstract labor which "is peculiar to capitalist society,²⁸" a mediating factor of all relations in this society. Abstract labour and abstract time are two main phenomena of the capitalist society's culture of abstraction from which all mediated and abstracted relationships between human beings stem by means of freezing all the flowing things under the capture of commodity. Lukács says: "Thus time sheds its qualitative, variable, flowing nature; it freezes into an exactly delimited quantifiable continuum filled with 'quantifiable' things (the reified, mechanically objectified 'performance' of the worker, wholly separated from his total human personality): in short, it becomes place."²⁹ Under the conditions of capitalism, time is transformed into space in the field of production, and space is destroyed by time in the field of circulation.

²⁵ Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, Volume 2, 129.

²⁶ Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, 539.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 538.

²⁸ Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 158.

²⁹ George Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. by Rodney Livingstone, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1971), 90.

Therefore, our main determination is that capital in the field of circulation transforms every spatial organization into time and tends to destroy space in time, although it draws a parallel rather than a contrast between the time of production and the organization of space, and the capital in the field of production clings to the process of self-valorization.

So, what is the source of these two seemingly opposite tendencies of capital? Since the existence of capital is characterized by its constant expansion, every place it occupies is a new frontier; this being-relation now faces a block of external barriers in the sphere of circulation that must be occupied before it can be traversed, as opposed to the sphere of production. That capital is “the living contradiction”³⁰ in motion can be clearly seen by this contrast of the designs of time in the spheres of production and circulation. Capital cannot expand itself in the sphere of circulation, it has to return to the production of surplus value it needs to increase its own existence, shorten the period of capitalization of the surplus value produced as much as possible, and occupy space before it travels. Hence, every moment when surplus-value is not produced is the moment when it cannot become an element of profit in terms of capital in production and therefore cannot be included in the time of valuation, and in terms of capital in circulation, every moment when surplus-value is not produced becomes an element of loss and therefore is the moment that is part of the time of devaluation. For this reason, the capital that has accomplished the conquest of moments is a conqueror who steps and traverses the lands it now occupies. Here, the world, just like the day, is no longer a cosmic entity, but in the capitalist economy of time, the world is the market for capital. But we still have to ask what it means to make the whole world its own market, and if capital will reach its limit when this happens. What does it mean to destroy space in time, to reduce even spatial distance to time, and how is this accomplished? One of Mumford’s important observations is as follows: “Instead of a local time based upon the sun, it was necessary to have a conventional time belt, and to change abruptly by a whole hour when one entered the next time belt. (...). The entire planet was now divided off into a series of time-belts.”³¹

We are now on the brink of a new conceptualization to observe how capital destroys space by means of time. We call the process of capitalism making the whole world its own market by carrying a concept in astronomy to a political and philosophical field, as ‘terraforming.’ For the axiomatics of capital, terraforming comes before the world, and this is the premise of a space-time design that we can call terraforming the world. In fact, this concept refers to the transformation of the planets and satellites outside the

³⁰ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, 421.

³¹ Mumford, *Technics and Civilizations*, 198.

world in a way that is suitable for the life of the living things on Earth and the application of a space-time plan in the form of the earth. The terraforming project, which is considered especially for Mars, is not only an astronomical project for our political and philosophical reading, but it can very well describe capitalism's attempt to conquer the world as its own market today. But we have to distinguish between the two interconnected contents of this concept. The first axis can be determined as 'terraforming of the world,' which we will associate with Marx's capital analysis, and the second axis as 'terraforming of other planets and satellites.' On the first axis, capital tends to overcome all spatial barriers external to it, reducing space to time, that is, what matters now is not the distances in space, but the length of time space is traversed by being occupied. In this respect, the term terraforming of the world does not refer to the same context as the first conception of world and the second one. The first concept of the world for capital is the totality of the cosmic space to be conquered, but the second one is the world as the political economy market. In astronomical terms, terraforming signifies a planetary engineering of the application of given conditions to other planets, while in terms of capital, terraforming refers to the breakdown of all barriers to exchange processes, the transition of the movement speed of capital from a maximum sequence to an optimum synchronization, and the transformation of the earth into the smooth space of the circulation of capital. But in this sense, the terraforming process began long before capitalism, and capitalism has found the accumulation of centuries that have formed trade routes, port cities, and networks of transport to be advantageous. However, the terraforming process of the world entered a new phase in the nineteenth century, with mechanization that increased the speed of production, the time of circulation for capital became a bigger obstacle. Considered from this point of view, the time of circulation limits the occupation of world-space by capital, as it contains obstacles to both the process of recapitalizing the surplus value produced and the transition to productive capital. Today, the judgment that the tendency of capital in the sphere of circulation is to decrease the time of circulation by increasing the speed of circulation at the maximum level is displaced by the judgment that it is possible to reset the time of circulation. However, the terraforming process of the world is not completed, and completing this process in terms of the movement of capital means converting all distances into time. Capitalism terraforms the world with its terrestrial movement; it occupies the world geography, but it cannot be the movement itself.

Free Time and Its Critique

The concepts of surplus time are pieces of social time outside of necessary time. Neither of these parts directly intervenes in the equations between value and time. In other words, they are factors indirectly involved in the value-time relationship and must be studied around the question of the distribution of social time. We need to show the distinctions between the three types of social surplus-time, which in Marx's terminology are disposable time, leisure time, and free time. The first thing to put forward is that leisure time is only a part of social time in which the bourgeoisie is the denominator. In Marx's words, "the worker is here nothing more than personified labour time."³² From this we can draw important conclusions about the temporal constitution of the class; for example, leisure time is personified in the bourgeoisie and embodied in it. The fact that workers get a share of leisure time does not mean that they have become the denominators of leisure time. This dichotomous structure is also on the agenda of Marx's analysis of capital, but his goal is neither to arrive at a society of leisure time belonging to someone nor to a time economy in which time is subordinated entirely to the economy. Marx is after an idea of collective time. I think the concept that gains importance here can be understood by analyzing the thought Marx expressed with the concept of everyone. Who is everyone? Undoubtedly, every era has a different design by everyone. So, what is everyone's time? For Marx, free time belongs to everyone—on what line can everyone be placed in Marx's analysis of surplus time?

First of all, we should point out that the concept of everyone in question does not appear as personified in a certain class; Marx's concept of free time can, in one aspect, be understood within the horizon of communist society, where classes are transcended, as a "historical counter temporality."³³ With the concept of free time or time of everyone the horizon of the capitalist economy of time is shaken and subjected to neither disposable time or time of no-one (the first function of surplus-time, universal negation, no-one) for capital, nor leisure time or time of someone (the second function of surplus-time, particular affirmation, someone) for the bourgeoisie. Everyone is the communal subject who has the power to establish surplus time as free time for herself. But it would also be hasty to say that all the content of free time belongs to post-capitalist society. Marx's concept of free time expresses a process of breaking from bourgeois society to human society or from bourgeois humanity to socialized humanity. Someone is a deviation of no-

³² Marx, *Capital*, Volume 1, 352-353.

³³ Massimiliano Tomba, *Marx's Temporalities*, trans. by Peter D. Thomas (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013), 3.

one, everyone is a divergence of both someone and no-one. Everyone does not mean a society of citizens, but human society, the development process of socialized humanity. We can clearly see this idea of human society and socialized humanity in Marx's tenth thesis on Feuerbach. In the period between *Theses on Feuerbach* and *Grundrisse*, there have been many ruptures in Marx's thought on many levels, but for his thought, these ruptures can also be understood as a condition of continuity of some problematic. At this point, we need to take a closer look at the connection between this idea of human society and leisure time in terms of our temporal analysis.

According to our analysis, human society can only be thought of as the deviation of no-one and someone, that is, as everyone. Let us now try to make a dialogue with Marx's statements about human society and explore how this concept relates to free time. In the tenth thesis of *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx says: "The standpoint of the old materialism is 'civil' society; the standpoint of the new is human society, or associated humanity."³⁴ Marx's new materialism takes as its point of view a horizon that eliminates the dichotomies of the capitalist time economy and embodies the goal of ending the paralogical uses of temporal determination. In this sense, human society abolishes the hierarchy established on someone's property of the means of production in the anonymity of everyone, on the one hand, and heralds the emergence of a new individual, on the other. This individual is a communal being embodied as socialized humanity. However, for such an individual to exist, it is not enough to eliminate the dichotomies of the capitalist time economy, it is necessary to establish the perspective of socialized people in free time. In this sense, the third function of surplus-time has to break up the capitalist value-center, which, unlike the previous two functions, synthesizes three value forms of capital and seizes infinity.

So, how can the intervention of free time, which is the founding concept of the point of view of this new individual emerging with socialized humanity, to the capitalist value-center be analyzed? How, according to Marx, can free time express the birth of a subjectivity that transcends the limits of the capitalist time economy? In *Value, Price and Profit*, Marx says: "Time is the room of human development. A man who has no free time to dispose of, whose whole lifetime, apart from the mere physical interruptions by sleep, meals, and so forth, is absorbed by his labour for the capitalist, is less than a beast of burden."³⁵ Free time also includes the possibility of the

³⁴ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, *Theses on Feuerbach*, Marx & Engels Collected Works: Volume 5, Marx and Engels (March 1845-August 1847), trans. by C. Dutt, W. Lough, C.P. Magill (Lawrence & Wishart, 2010), 8.

³⁵ Karl Marx, *Value, Labour and Capital*, Marx & Engels Collected Works: Volume 9, Marx and Engels 1849, trans. by Jack Cohen, Michael Hudson, Clemens Dutt (Lawrence & Wishart, 2010 a), 142.

transformation of the subject who uses it and starting from this contradiction that gnaws the economy of time from within, the social relation clusters imprisoned in the value-center begin to penetrate the horizon of the capitalist society. In this point one should ask does leisure design tend to destroy all economies of time, or is it just capitalist rationality at its goal?

As opposed to the first function, which turns all social time into its own time of self-valorization, free time interferes with the founding concept of the capitalist value-center, that is, the production of value as a social relation. In a human society, where free time is possible for everyone, it is impossible to talk about such a category as time of self-valorization. But this function that makes social time homogeneous, measurable, and expendable—that is, the function of surplus time as disposable time for capital, despite deviations in the value-center—can carry this function of being spendable to free time. Here is the ambivalence of the concept of free time. Personified free time attacks both capital's time of self-valorization and therefore the existence of capital as a social relation, and it acquires its condition of possibility through the concept of surplus time of capitalism. Social time appears in Marx's idea of communist society in the form of free time disposable to everyone, not time disposable for capital. At this point, however, we need to make a distinction between the intervention of the concept of free time in the actual plan of the value-center and its intervention in virtual plan. On the one hand, free time initiates an attack on the founding logic of the capitalist value-center and thus brings to our agenda a concept of social time that does not open up any space for capital's time of self-valorization, but on the other hand, it reconstructs social time by reproducing it as a measurable, homogeneous quantity, which is continued to be a negative, a surplus, more precisely a residue of necessary time. For this reason, we think that free time is a concept that is strong enough to break the actual boundaries of the capitalist economy of time but, in reality, it cannot escape from its virtual limitations.³⁶

One of the reasons our analysis has reached this point is that we have determined that as no-one is to disposable time for capital so is everyone to disposable homogeneous social time. Everyone is a deviation in a certain

³⁶ Although the historical and philosophical analysis of the relations between the state and social time is beyond the scope of this article, it is worth noting that the modern state has been instilling its own bureaucratic logic into the social body by organizing social time from the perspective of chronos for several centuries. Only through the bureaucracy of chronos, relations between things overcome relations between people. If communist society is understood as a movement arising from the inherent contradictions of capitalist modernity, the question of whether there is a break or a repetition in terms of the paradigm of time may arise here. While the principle of "each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," theoretically increasing the possibility of rupture, history of socialist experiences doesn't show that repetition is out of question.

logical order, not a deviation as deviation, both as the deviation of no-one and someone. In terms of its logical form, it belongs to the same universal-particular and negation-affirmation paradigm. But Marx offers us another hint for analyzing the temporal dimension of the distinction between this human society and bourgeois society, saying that free time opens up an essential space for human development. Human being using free time (this human being is no longer proletarian or capitalist, nor even free citizen) initiates necessary changes in the constituent elements of her existence. Since she is no longer subject to the socially necessary labour time system which is not a sum of the quantity of the social labour corpus but a “connection and relation,” and “a regulatory principle,”³⁷ a space has emerged in which the social being can develop its abilities. The source of Marx’s emphasis on the production of time for science, art, and other activities while analyzing the categories of surplus time is that free time opens up this transformative space. Now disposable social time is considered a space of metamorphosis and creation space of socialized humanity that cannot be translated into labour time. Indeed, at first glance, there is no difficulty to think that a design of social time that is not subject to the *chronos* of capital can correspond directly to the time of free activity. But this commonsense way of thinking completely obscures how the virtual boundaries of the capitalist time economy are reproduced as free time remains a function of social surplus time. With this third function, surplus time, in the mode of free time, immediately disconnects capital and time (cancels the capital’s time of self-valorization), but it preserves the social codes of capitalist time design to move to another social memory. A critique of free time has not yet been made.³⁸ To think of this mode of time as the temporality of communist society means to reproduce the *chronos* of capital in another social formation. The value-center confines infinity to value forms and the concept of free time that shatters the value-center but preserves disposable, abstract and homogeneous social time breaks up the value relation but cannot free the imprisoned eternity.

Hence, human society has liberated itself by time (free time) but not from time (from non-labour time or the domination of the negative). Free time cancels labour time, the founding concept of the capitalist value-center, while it carries a copy of surplus time into the value-center of the post-capitalist world and thus continues to mediate the relation between time and value.

³⁷ Stavros Tombazos, *Time in Marx: The Categories of Time in Marx’s Capital*, trans. by Khristakis Georgiou (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2014), 4.

³⁸ Undoubtedly, the history of philosophy gives us many clues for the criticism of free time. However, I am also talking about the critique of the horizon in which free time appears, that is, the horizon that determines eternity as either transcendent or bad infinities. Today, we are at the point where we need to decipher this horizon in order to break through the epistemological paradigm of capitalist modernity.

The annihilated value relation continues to preserve the phantasmagoria of the *chronos* of capital, the logic of capitalist modernity that divides desire and labour, and, of course, the distinction between necessary time and surplus time in a quantitatively abstract and homogeneous design of social time. The inner relation between the first function of surplus time and free time brings with it the idea of organizing social time in the form of disposable time.

In the context of the economy of time, Marx's thesis of free time is a thesis on whole society, because the third function of surplus time concerns everyone, not no-one or someone. However, everyone in question does not appear to us now as an existence belonging to a certain class. Free time is thought of as an empty space in which the class determinations generated by capitalist society are eliminated. It is clear that everyone who carries the attributions of this concept is a communal subject. The focus for a criticism of free time can be found by considering the possible relationships that this subject might establish with the eternity imprisoned in the value forms. A horizon that will liberate free time from *chronos* can only be reached through this criticism.³⁹

Conclusion

The four theses we examine based on Marx's analysis of capital can be best understood through an analysis of topological and typological elements.⁴⁰ Production and circulation fields at the topological level present the main axes to comprehend the temporal plan of capital movement. Determining a temporal quantity specific to each is a critical step in analyzing the relationship between value and time. On the other hand, the concept of time of turnover formed by the combination of time of production and time of circulation constitutes the existential rhythm of this relation-being called

³⁹ The history of actual experiences of socialism has shown that clues of a critique of the capitalist paradigm of time are inherent in the axiomatics of capitalist modernity; however, it does not promise us much about how an experience of time that is not subject to *chronos* can be constructed. Everyone has not stepped onto the stage of history as everyone, it is another subjectivity that can only bring it onto the stage by negating itself or functioning as the operator of negation: any-one. This subjectivity can appear historically when viewed from another horizon, which prevents the typological axes of capitalist modernity from overlapping exactly with the topological axes: always before the state and where time opens to eternity.

⁴⁰ While these four theses sometimes take an implicit role in the texts of Marx and Engels and are hidden in the argumentation, sometimes they appear directly as a constitutive thematic. In the first case, the discussion of time settles on a problem, while in the second it appears as an obvious thematic. However, in some cases this distinction becomes invalid. For example, in the discussion of circulation time in the second volume of *Capital*, thematic and problematic axes are intertwined. This shows that the distinction between typological and topological axes is only at the level of abstraction, that in the actual world every typology is linked to a topology as a particular problem, and every topology to a typology as a particular thematic.

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capital, which can only exist by expanding. The time of turnover thus marks the period of return of a quantity of capital-value.

As for the typological elements, the first determination manifests itself in the determination of the working class as personified labour time. However, most of the typological elements belong to the category of surplus time rather than necessary labour time. It is clear that the working class is enrolled in the necessary labour time. However, the concepts that are distinguished as disposable time, leisure time, and free time contain serious differences in terms of the distribution regime of social time. Leisure time always belongs to someone, that is, to the bourgeoisie class. The fact that the bourgeoisie does not have to work in a capitalist society and the fact that millions of workers have to work are two sides of the same phenomenon. Leisure time and labour time are mutual conditions for their essential determination. In a capitalist society, although the worker may have a share of leisure time, its absolute denominator is the bourgeoisie, that is, someone as the logical typology of the bourgeoisie. But disposable time belongs to no-one, it is neither of the bourgeoisie nor of the proletariat, for disposable time refers to the form of surplus time that results from the reduction of the socially necessary average labour time as a result of capital's relative surplus-value production. It solves the question of how to personify disposable time and the impersonal existence of capital and registers it in the persona of capital as no-one.

Perhaps we need a new and critical reading of Marx's concepts of time in order to think of a concept of time that will turn free time into *freed time* by adding the *d* of Jacques Derrida's *différance* and will break any kind of time-savings paradigm and any economy of time. Such a concept of time can no longer be dependent on the *chronos* of capital and described in terms of measurability and linearity. In order to reconsider the modern reversal between eternity and time mentioned above, we need a new conception of time that cannot be organized by the time regulation institutes of capital machine: a living time or fire, a concept of freed time or time of any-one, that cannot be fired by someone, no-one or everyone.⁴¹

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⁴¹ Any-one can be thought of as a new form of subjectivity in which historical meta-centered determinations are dissolved. Any-one is to everyone as the proletariat is to the working class; that is, it is a subjectivity that has the power to annihilate itself: the fourth plural person of politics.

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