

## **Ca-4: "Capitalism in 2050 – Expansion, Destruction, Transition?"** **[in English]**

**Saturday 15 October, 11.15–13.00, Hedén**

### ***Jamie Woodcock: "Understanding digital labour: between autonomy and automation"***

*(Ph.D., Cass Business School, London)*

This paper focuses on the concept of digital labour and how work is being transformed by new technologies. It therefore engages with the first theme of the conference: Capitalism in 2050. In particular, it draws attention to the contradictions of new forms of work, caught between the possibilities of autonomy and automation. The role of technology is interrogated, along with the shifting balance between labour and capital. In order to explore this phenomenon, the paper draws on a heterodox Marxist approach, taking inspiration from Autonomist Marxism and the disparate tradition of workers' inquiry. Empirical examples are taken from an ongoing multi/interdisciplinary project on digital creativity, covering the entertainment and video games industries. These illustrate key tendencies in the current moment and suggest how these dynamics may unfold in the future. The arguments follows from the pressing need to refresh Marxist(s) theories in relation to the changing nature of work and structure of capitalism. This does not only have implications for academic theory, but also for emergent practices. Digital labour itself has been the subject of a range of different theorisations – some wildly optimistic and others depressingly pessimistic – and the contribution of this paper seeks to chart a critical path through (and potentially point beyond) these conceptual issues. Rather than fixating on the Marxological and dry debates, this paper seeks to engage with a range of sources to rejuvenate and push the theory into conversation with new forms of practice.

### ***Güven Savul: "Can Immaterial Labour be an "Emancipatory Subject"? Some Findings concerning the ICT Sector in Turkey"***

*(PhD in Labour Economics and Industrial Relations)*

This paper aims to critically evaluate the argument of the pioneering role of immaterial labourers as a skilled section of working class by referring to the Turkish data. A significant part of the contemporary literature on working class claims that immaterial labour can have the role as the proletariat in the 19th Century. Such concepts as "immaterial labour", "affectional labour", "digital labour" etc., are used to define the current labour practices, those which are strongly associated with immaterial commodity production. Especially, Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt (2008) claim that there is a significant immaterialisation in the production processes. Negri and Hardt emphasize that the intensification of the

digitalized production processes and the number of the labourers who are employed in these fields in the core-capitalist countries paved the way for such claims mentioned above.

On the other hand, there is a remarkable counter-argument about the immaterialisation of the production processes. For example, H., Münkler (2011) criticizes the tendency to focus on the immaterial labour in the core capitalist countries instead of the material labour performing in so-called Third World countries, severely exploited by the capitalists under miserable conditions.

Along with Münkler's perspective, Alberto Toscano (2011) also remains distant to the concepts such as immaterial labour and so on. He underlines that, although the labouring practices have transformed through digitalisation of the production, the logic of exploitation and the real subsumption of capital over labour remain the same as emphasized in Marx's works.

In the light of pro and counter arguments about the immaterial labour concept, this paper will focus on the labourers who are employed in the immaterial activities (like software specialists, coders, character and concept designers etc.) of the ICT Sector in Turkey, and try to understand what the potential capacity of these labourers in taking over an emancipatory role in a rising moment of the class struggle is.

### ***Carina Guyard & Anne Kaun: "Workfulness – Disconnection is the new black"***

*(Senior lecturers in media and communication studies, Södertörn University)*

Telenor, one of the major telecommunication companies in Scandinavia, recently introduced the notion of *workfulness* adapting the well-established idea of mindfulness to the workplace. Developed in collaboration with brain researcher Katarina Gospic, *workfulness* is aimed at companies that are working in digital connected working environments at high-speed. *Workfulness* encompasses strategies of disconnection for the employees to enhance focus and efficiency including mobile and e-mail free work hours and technology-free meetings.

The article seeks to investigate the concept of *workfulness* as part of an emerging trend towards disconnection in digital media industries. While earlier workflow models of companies within the digital economy emphasized increased connection, disconnection has now become a new way to organize the work of stressed laborers.

Drawing on a diverse set of materials ranging from a critical textual analysis of Telenor's *workfulness* guidebook to the analysis of promotional videos as well as interviews with key persons at Telenor and managers at companies that have implemented *workfulness* into their workflows, we are investigating how disconnection is constructed as a product that relies on the value accumulation through the dispossession of non-usage. At the same time we are investigating why particularly online technology-intensive companies such as Telenor are forerunners in the field of digital disconnection.

While earlier studies of the digital economy have focused on connectivity rather than disconnection, we suggest that there are new trends emerging that actively incorporate non-usage into the realm of digital economy and value production

**Daler Dzhabborov: “Limits of Market economy in context of new society of realm of freedom”**

*(Senior researcher, Institute of New Industrial Development, Saint Petersburg)*

**Natalia Yakovleva: “Education as basis of new economy: political economy view”**

*(Researcher, Institute of New Industrial Development, Saint Petersburg)*