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BE LOUD AND BREAK STUFF! OBSOLESCENCE OF WORK AND LEISURE IN THE ERA OF EXUBERANCE

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Abstract: The immediate future is presented in the collective imagination as a contest between two scenarios that would supposedly resolve the sociopolitical contradictions of our contemporary *geist*. On the one hand, the total automation and digitalization of work freed man from its burden, and thus starting a new era dedicated to leisure, arts and non-utilitarian sciences. On the other hand, we see the total reterritorialization of the affects, emotions, data, clicks, movements, thoughts or even dreams into the capitalist machine, that is, the absolute commodification of every aspect of our world. The purpose of this article is to study a third term that would allow us to move towards the end of work and make it possible to think of different forms of leisure, breaking the binary work/leisure from within. We will address three main questions: in which mode of production do we find ourselves? Where does it come from? How do we break through? Using a genealogical-type mode of analysis, we will draw a cartography of the contemporary faces of capitalism (*semiocapitalism*, *biocapitalism*, burn-out society, etc.) through the work of various authors such as “Bifo” Berardi, Andrea Fumagalli or Byung-Chul Han. We will also turn our attention to the anthropological work of Pièrre Clastres, Marshall Sahlins as well as Bataille’s in order to find other economies that benefit the inner experience over capitalist profit. The aim of this article is to find contemporary examples that resonate with these “other economies”. So, the closing part of this article will be dedicated to one practice that could fit the task, the extreme music sub-genre of noise.

Keywords: postcapitalism, cognitive capitalism, posthuman agency, general economy, biopolitics, noise, expenditure, real.

FĂ GĂLĂGIE ȘI SPARGE LUCRURI! OBSOLESCENȚA MUNCII ȘI A TIMPULUI LIBER ÎN ERA EXUBERANȚE

Rezumat: Viitorul imediat este prezentat în imaginarul colectiv ca un concurs între două scenarii care ar trebui să rezolve contradicțiile sociopolitice ale nălucii noastre contemporane. Pe de o parte, automatizarea și digitalizarea totală a muncii îl eliberează pe om de povara acesteia, începând astfel o nouă eră dedicată timpului liber, artelor și științelor non-utilitare. Pe de altă parte, asistăm la reteritorializarea totală a afectelor, emoțiilor, datelor, clicurilor, mișcărilor, gândurilor sau chiar viselor în mașina capitalistă, adică la comodificarea absolută a fiecărui aspect al lumii noastre. Scopul acestui articol este de a studia un al treilea termen care ne-ar permite să ne îndreptăm spre sfârșitul muncii și ar face posibilă gândirea diferitelor forme de petrecere a timpului liber, rupând din interior binaritatea muncă/timp liber. Vom aborda trei întrebări principale: în ce mod de producție ne aflăm? De unde provine acesta? Cum putem pătrunde în el? Folosind un mod de analiză de tip genealogic, vom trasa o cartografie a fețelor contemporane ale capitalismului (semicapitalism, biocapitalism, societatea burn-out etc.) prin intermediul lucrărilor diferiților autori precum „Bifo” Berardi, Andrea Fumagalli sau Byung-Chul Han. De asemenea, ne vom îndrepta atenția către lucrările antropologice ale lui Pierre Clastres, Marshall Sahlins, precum și ale lui Bataille pentru a găsi alte economii care avantajează experiența interioară în detrimentul profitului capitalist. Scopul acestui articol este de a găsi exemple contemporane care rezonază cu aceste „alte economii”. Astfel, partea finală a acestui articol va fi dedicată unei practici care s-ar putea potrivi sarcinii, subgenul muzicii extreme care este zgomotul.

Cuvinte-cheie: postcapitalism, capitalism cognitiv, agenție postumană, economie generală, biopolitică, zgomot, cheltuieli, real.

1. Introduction

The immediate future is presented in the collective imagination as a contest between two scenarios that would supposedly resolve the sociopolitical contradictions of our contemporary geist. On the one hand, the total automation and digitalization of work freed man from its burden, and thus starting a new era dedicated to leisure, arts and non-utilitarian sciences. On the other hand, we see the total reterritorialization of the affects, emotions, data, clicks, movements, thoughts or even dreams into the capitalist machine, that is, the absolute commodification of every aspect of our world.

In short, we are falsely forced to choose between two options that, in turn, become one: total automation of the production and consumption process *so as to* reterritorialize every aspect of our lives into the capitalist machine. If we think about the outcome of both the scenarios, which would be the consequences for the notions of work and leisure? Let's take the second scenario, the hypercommodification of our entire cosmo/ecology: wouldn't this offer us a future where there would be no leisure since everything would be work(able)? It is a well-known topic among structuralists that the pair leisure/work forms a binary defined by antagonism, like the "raw and cooked" in Levi Strauss or Bataille's "sacred and profane". If so, one could think that when one side of the binarism will consume the other - eliminating work or absolutizing it - both ideas (work/leisure) will be meaningless.

The purpose of this essay is to study a third term that would allow us to move towards the end of work and make it possible to think of forms of leisure, breaking the binary work/leisure from within. To do so, we will divide this essay in three parts. First, the description of our current mode of production (*semiocapitalism*, *biocapitalism*, burn-out society, etc.), the subjectivity it produces (the self-made businessman, the *cognitariat* or the achievement-subject)¹ and the historic process where it was produced, namely the passage

from the Fordist to the post-Fordist mode of production. Secondly, we will seek to articulate a critique of the metaphysics of work - in ideas such as “accumulation” or “future” - in the capitalist economy, following the works of Bataille, Weber or Benjamin among others, in order to understand which are the principles that govern the capitalist *ethos*. With this, we will grasp why the question of the work/leisure is biased to begin with if we interrogate it within the capitalist epistemology of scarcity. Finally, the last part of our essay will consist of the cartography of another economy, one that allows us to break through the work *and still* be able to conceive a social form of leisure. This other economy - for instance, Bataille's general economy - conjures the mechanisms, apparatuses and structures of the State for a post-capitalist, and therefore post-human, future and agency; where the logic of the immanence-presence and de-subjectification allows us to become-other, become-one, return to the continuity and even return to the magic world of the ritual. We suggest that this other economy might be found, but not exclusively, in extreme artistic/musical practices such as the music genre of “noise”, an expression that concerns the body, interrupting the rhythms of capitalism and the rationale of the self: a line of flight that enhances posthuman agency.

2. Cartography: Where are we?

Let's start with the first possible future, which is in fact very present and very actual. The transition from the Fordist to the post-Fordist system of production and the advent of the digital paradigm in the so-called developed countries brought with it changes in the working division, the subject and the processes of subjectivity; all this taking into account the process of relocating industries to the global south to reduce labor costs. Various authors have discussed this new stage of capitalism: Fumagalli and the Turin school talk about Cognitive or BioCapitalism, for Berardi is the Cognitariat, Fisher called it Capitalist Realism and Byung-Chul Han has called it the Burn-Out society. These paradigms show us a reality where not only are more

and more aspects of reality commodified, but the dynamics of life itself, as well as the performance of the body and mind, become work.

After the oil crisis in 1973 until the global crisis in 2008, Fordism was replaced by another economic model: the “new economy” of neoliberal capitalism or post-Fordism. The figure of the state was losing its position as regulator of life and from 1980 the European Welfare State was replaced by the neoliberal policies of Thatcher and Reagan: destruction of public spending, privatization of sectors, reduction of the functions of the state and the submission of workers, politicians and the state itself to economic power, that is, the market, which should be exempt from regulations for the sake of its functioning that “supposedly” should provide wealth to society. Changes quickly affected the industry: decentralization, offshoring, flexibility, temporary contracts, cheap layoffs and weak unionization. Workers became another flow within a competitive, unfair and aggressive market. Precariousness, constant threat and abuse became the norm. The worker gave way to a new social class: the businessman. A new subject who, as Deleuze² explained, does not create union resistance alongside his colleagues, but competes healthily against them. In the professional field, the businessman emerged as a prestigious figure: executives, managers, leaders ... The American dream promoted by the media and films such as *The Wolf of Wall Street* (2013) and series such as *Shark Tank* (2009) ended up creating a new cultural hegemony based on the neoliberal dream of the successful businessman. A hegemony that would sink into individualism, ignoring the structural dimensions of oppression and only obeying an axiom: *try hard and you will win, and if not, try harder!*

Following the decline in manufacturing profitability, digital capitalism (another way of referring to the current scenario) turned to two new tokens: data and knowledge, both related. The raw material, the data (what happened?) is transformed into knowledge (why did it happen?). Thus, the data went from being a condition for the possibility of improving the service to being a collection of income for advertising or product placement. This is the scenario after the dotcom crisis, where platforms such as Facebook, Amazon or Google made their way as the new emperors of technofeudalism^{3 4}. The

exploitation of knowledge, what Fumagalli calls immaterial cognitive work, implies a new form and division of labor where the worker no longer produces objects but ideas, services, projects, programs or campaigns; that are no longer expropriated by machines but through intellectual property rights⁵. In the new cognitive capitalism, labor provision is increasingly totalizing and intellectual capacities take precedence over others, expressed in jobs that range from the *call center*, the paradigm of the banal cyborg worker as Fisher⁶ would say, to data collection, communication or platform management.

The subject has also undergone a transformation, as did power. Where the Fordist worker was subject to/by discipline, the post-Fordist entrepreneur becomes the free self-exploited subject. In addition, the self-discipline so praised in self-help programs and books has been perfectly integrated into contemporary capitalism given the seductive and intelligent dimension of power⁷, that is, power no longer tells you “do this, now!”, on the contrary it (violently) “suggests” it: “If you do this now you will be cool and will gain status”. The contemporary worker is a continually motivated subject, who must optimize their mental performance, must be flexible and improve their capabilities at any time. This has been nothing more than an update of the human capital theories of Becker and the Chicago economic school of Milton and Friedman, namely: the integration of the totality of life in explicit economic calculations as well as the intervention of the market and its laws over the bios as Foucault states in the *Birth of Biopolitics* in which he relates this with the birth of neoliberalism. Another concept that Foucault uses and that Han later recovered is that of the self-made businessman, a contemporary version of man (and I sexualize the subject as a man for obvious reasons), a Robinson Crusoe type man as Holly Lewis would say⁸, influenced by Locke's theories of individualism which, according to Eric Sadin⁹, has reached its maximum corruption in our days.

With the desiring cult of wealth creation and personal enterprise we witness with neoliberalism the birth of the subject of self-exploitation. This efficient subject exploits itself motivated by the famous insight “you can do it!”, an excess of positivity that forces it to invest in itself to become a business project, a self-brand. However,

neoliberalism does not leave aside the body for the mind. The body becomes the material support of the entrepreneur, it becomes an aesthetic object with exhibition value, in which the subject must also invest through fitness, gym, surgery and more. Cosmetic and physical appearance become part of the CV, allowing for the emergence of dissociation and other psychopathic conditions such as stress, depression, exhaustion, burnout, self-blame and high levels of narcissism. The subjectivity of the cognitariat remains as fragmented and flexible as the microtime capsules that capital buys¹⁰. The worker is no longer required to have a stable number of contracted hours but, rather, fragments of subject time are “bought”. The life span of the worker is dispensed with since only isolated fragments of his time are needed.

The dilution of the rigidity in post-Fordism has had diverse readings. Authors such as Bauman have focused on analyzing the explosion of consumerism, speed and fractalization in liquid modernity and its harmful effect on the individual who has replaced commitment with flexibility, excuses and shortcuts¹¹. It is true, the doors that the Internet has opened to the consumer (needless to say, of a certain well-off class) to obtain access to goods, services and consumables at a click away, along with the incessant bombardment of information, entertainment and images driven by algorithms and casino-type architectures, aggravated the subject's impatience and have “accommodated” him. This has translated into the “impatience syndrome” described by Bauman¹², where the subject identifies progress with shortcuts and where improvement consists of avoiding “tedious”, “boring” tasks and in which “time is wasted”. Therefore, we find a society that pushes the subject towards constant and never ending improvement at the same time that it allows it to take shortcuts, creating one of the symptoms of late capitalism, the depressive hedonia as that inability to do anything other than seek pleasure¹³. Of course, Fisher's reading of the pathologies of late capitalism follows Deleuze's line of argumentation, that is, considering pathologies as a response to, and somatization of, the extreme conditions to which the subject is exposed in certain systems of control and oppression under late capitalism. Accordingly, the

moment life has been totally subsumed by the accumulation process, exploitation is exploitation of life.

Within this finance cosmology, the subject develops its life around calculations that follow the logic of benefits, transmuting the old concept of alienation into the obscene notion of self-investment - a word more than repeated in Ted Talks, Instagram *posts* or podcasts. Read in conjunction, the postmodern fall of big narratives found its capitalist overcoming in the creation of personal identity through professional work (i.e. becoming a project manager or a businessman), therefore this rationality or subjectivity that marks the “future now” is not precisely freed from work but has actually incorporated work and the cosmology of finance into its psyche. The subject's incorporation into the accelerated, cybernetic, flexible, unstable and fragmented rhythms of the new stage of capitalism has caused a fragmentation, dissociation and acceleration not only of his identity but also of his cognition and neuronal structure. How many times have we noticed that in the morning, going to work, we are one person, at noon another and at night yet another, and I am not talking about Sphinx's riddle? From memory disorders, to anxiety, panic or bipolarity, the capital shredder has changed the rules of the social game for the (in)dividuals, i. e. the way individuals have become “dividual”²⁰ and the masses have become indicators, data, markets or “banks.” In *semiocapitalism*²¹ work consists of the multiplication, fragmentation and combination of signs, and everything becomes increasingly abstract, nomadic and delocalized. As work becomes scientifically and technologically professionalized, apart from being fragmented and dispersed in time and space, without “limits” (which translates as “I can't stop, or I might lose my job”) the worker ends up integrating work as a vital (if not identity-based) part of his life. Alienation in the plane of cognitive capitalism reaches total dimensions as alienation from life itself and from consumption or even the alienation of our mental states.

Early Foucault studied how discipline “controls every moment of disciplinary institutions, it compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In a word, it normalizes.”²³ As later Foucault started to theorize in the *Collège de France* era, something worse than

discipline emerged from within biopolitics and neoliberalism. The qualities of the self-made businessman are now produced in a "relationship of the individual with himself, with time, with the environment, with his future, with his family, with his partner, his insurance and his retirement", in what Foucault calls "a kind of permanent and multiple enterprise"²⁴. If more aspects of life itself (including abstract concepts like nature, nutrition or time itself) are being thrown exponentially into the capitalist machine, we can now raise an obvious question: how much will it take for *leisure* to be integrated as part of the economic calculation? Well, it already happened. As we said before, in the later cognitive capitalism the body has become a brand and, in order to compete with other brands, all hobbies and other form of leisure had been integrated as part of the lifestyle of the businessman: gym, reading (bad) self-improvement books, meditation (to be able to concentrate in your economic enterprise), etc. After all, the dystopian future where work will permeate all aspects of our life was already-here.

At the antipodes of this scenario we find the kingdom of freedom "[which] only begins where work ceases"²⁵. The abolition of work is an urgent matter, if not immediately necessary. We have plenty of reasons ecologically, technologically and ethically. At an ecological level, we know that during the Covid-19 pandemic there was a brief reduction in greenhouse gasses due to work reduction; while after that, in 2021, we generated the same CO₂ emissions between January and July as during all of 2019²⁶. Top industries that harm the ecosystem the most are fossil fuels, agriculture and fashion, this puts the capitalist production and consumption system in the spotlight. The consequences of the capitalist mode of industry and consumption appear obscene when we take into context the fact that, technologically speaking, in 2009 we already had the capacity to feed 10B people and "somehow" we still can't end world hunger²⁸. Why is that? Because industry follows a capitalist ethics and metaphysics based on what Heidegger called *gestalt*, that is, modern technique as a science treats every "outside" as a stock of existences, as resources to be exploited²⁹. Is it just work that we have to abolish? History tells us that the abandonment of the agricultural economy by industrialization

processes should have brought the working class to the forefront but that never happened because production was glorified at the expense of freedom³⁰. We have reached a point where there is not enough work for everyone, the symptoms of this are piling up: unemployment, underemployment, precarity, global favelas, mass incarceration. We must detach salary and work from identity since the problem is not only with the capitalist mode of production but the ideology that sustains it. How did we end up here?

3. Genealogy: Why are we here?

To answer this question, we will divide the argument in three parts. First, we need to understand how, on an anthropological level, societies divided human time in a certain way, the core of this division being the concept of work as opposed to leisure/rite/festivity. This of course recalls Bataille's analysis of sacred and profane time in his work *Erotism: Death and Sensuality* (1997) in which the concepts of work, taboos, violence and prohibition play a role in the conceptualization of human cosmology and chronology. Now, if we are talking about capitalism, one cannot but think about the works of Max Weber (1979) and Walter Benjamin (1978), both describing how this economic mode of production rooted its basis within a religious/transcendental framework in order to appear universal, theological and, therefore, ethic in the eyes of a subject aiming for an identity. Our target will be without a doubt the transcendental categories that sustain the capitalist edifice: accumulation, scarcity, future/afterlife, etc. The last step of our argument will be to contrast the capitalist (generally speaking) economy with an alternative model. In a very dialectical way, we will return to anthropology in order to, through the works of Clastres (1974) and Sahlins (1968), see how concepts like "scarce" are mere symptomatic projections from capitalist societies towards other (primitive) societies which refused to play the game of accumulation, having a completely different idea of the binary work/leisure.

Let's start by a short explanation of the emergence of civilization through work. In *Erotism: Death and Sensuality*, Bataille analyzes the

emergence of taboos in prehistoric societies along with the differentiation between human nature and animal nature, divided precisely by the entry of the former into the world of work and civilization. Bataille understands life and death as passages that generate the first two taboos: death and sexuality/reproduction³¹. These taboos divided human time between the profane (day, work, compliance) and the sacred (transgression, ritual, night). We observe how the binary we are working with in this article (work/leisure) resonates with Bataille's division of sacred and profane. But here we encounter a problem. In the same way as we can say that work in opposition with leisure shares almost complete similarity with the profane time as opposed to the sacred time, we can't say that about the other parts of the binary, that is: our common sense will say that leisure has nothing to do with the profane time *unless* we grant leisure the legal dimension of transgression. Nonetheless, we see more and more how oligarchs, businessman, cryptogurús or even heads of states (I'm thinking especially of Argentina's prime minister, Javier Milei) loathe those who either can't or don't want to (exclusively) work for life i.e. calling them lazy (*vagos*). Therefore, it is safe to say that some form of sublimation happened in history for leisure to be equated with the transgression of a law. In other words, work had to become law in order for leisure to become a crime. This by all means had to do with the Protestant ethics, which conferred the divine and religious (but not sacred in Bataille's terms) status to work and labor. Before jumping to the communion between capitalism and christianity, let's talk about another Bataille's concept, that of the violence, which is going to play a role afterward.

Bataille is clear when it comes to the relations between the human, the prohibition, the violence in nature and the working/profane time. He follows (and for sure was inspired by as we can tell from his close relationship with Lacan) the classic Freudian argument of his 1930s book *Das unbehagen in der kultur* or, as the english edition poorly translates, *Civilization and its Discontents*. In short, social order, reason and harmony that are needed to keep any society alive is maintained thanks to the prohibition that momentarily eliminates the violence of sexuality and death (drives) from human

life³². Still, we have to keep in mind that violence, as we humans are part of nature too, is not only a constitutive part of ourselves but that it is dangerous to suppress this violence in our (social) life, since it can lead to the acceptance of contemporary forms of violence such as the state/police brutality, hatred towards the otherness or the “far away” wars and genocides. Ignoring the violence in human condition is as foolish as ignoring the collective purpose for which the prohibition of violence was posited in the first place: “work is a matter of a collective.”³³ Bearing in mind what we exposed about the accelerated and exponential inclusion of more aspects of our non-working time (hobbies) into the working/capitalist economy - how we “carry” our work home by answering mails or whatssapps - it is clear how and why the brutal explosions of repressed (drive towards) violence emerges in our daily life: violations, drug abuse, public violence and, in the end, the rise of fascism in contemporary politics. Later we will explore how we can get in touch again with this lost violence in order to avoid toxic forms of its expression in current times. For now, let us talk about how capitalism in its Protestant variation sublated leisure into the legal field of prohibition and transgression and, on top of that, reduced this divine relation in terms of a personal relationship with the divine god.

The capitalist economy, its theological and ethical framework, was almost totally influenced by Protestant ethics³⁴. In fact, it was Benjamín who maintained the thesis that capitalism carries out the same tasks that religion did: a religion without dogmas, only gestures and worship.³⁵ Guilt-inducing gestures such as accumulation and consumption. The German word for guilt is also translated as debt, *Schuld*. This word has been debated by many thinkers, for example Nietzsche in his critique of the Christian *Schuld* exposes the guilt of a person who is a debtor and incapable of repaying the debt: “the guilt linked to duty, like all things on earth, has been deeply and long stained with blood.”³⁶ Debt is a symptom that activates the mechanism of Christianity and Christianized capitalism: debt because what one receives is a loan and guilt for possessing what is not one’s own. Is this not the weird feeling or intuition that underlies the individual when he thinks “why should one work”? The capitalist mode of production and

its theorization has convinced the individual that he cannot “live for free,” that he has a debt to society and the structures in which he finds himself. The myth of work through debt and guilt is what emotionally chains the subject to the system in which he lives. This is what makes us feel bad when we demand our rights from the boss or when we buy things and feel bad because we think it is a stupid whim. How is this related to the Protestant ethics?

The Protestant ethics (or morals, rather) of Calvinists influenced the development of capitalism by encouraging people to work in the secular world, to develop businesses, to buy and accumulate for future investment (either material or the afterlife itself). These values of Protestantism continue to influence contemporary *homo hypereconomicus*, which maintains the spirit of hard work and progress. But this devotion hides an internal contradiction. Devotion to capitalism is based on a contradictory asceticism, a rejection of worldly matters such as the pursuit of wealth and possessions, which is only achieved, paradoxically, through the acquisition of wealth and possessions without using them. The Reformation promoted the dignification of work and the consequences are very much present today: precariousness, insecurity, inequality and the demonization of the unemployed or the poor that the same system generates. The myth of capitalism as a symptom contains its own fracture, the fact that it is a fantasy that does not close its meaning. The spirit of capitalism is the constant search for profit and gain to prove something to someone, but to whom? To God, obviously. In the Reformation and then in its secular version, Capitalism, “the dynamics of accumulation defined the measures of value [...], the grace of God, manifested in the accumulation of wealth”³⁸. We can draw a parallelism between Weber’s view on the Reformation and what happened after the decline of the big narratives of Postmodernity, the bearers of teleological guarantees. In the process of the Reformation, after the absence of guarantees of salvation from the religious authorities of the Catholic Church, self-confidence through the Calvinist doctrine of double predestination replaced the priestly assurance of God’s grace. Self-confidence was a sign of faith – does this sound familiar? Cryptobros? Neogurús? The positivism of “yes you can!”?

With the Reformation, worldly success became a test of self-confidence, and vocation was no longer a matter of God's calling but other aspects such as occupations or trades. The exponential trend that followed with Pietism or Baptism channeled this extreme asceticism into certain beliefs: a strictly followed secular vocation increases the possibility of accumulating money and earning money implies demonstrated effort. Likewise, buying luxuries implies a symbol of sin and *sharing it with the poor was frowned upon because it encourages begging* - any similarity with Milei's hatred of the lazy must be pure coincidence. Protestantism dictated the rules that had to be followed during profane time: efficiencies, asceticism, exponential accumulation of profits, utilitarian reason and Cartesian calculation. This reasoning produced the fear of scarcity. However, could this scarcity be a mere symptomatic projection of capitalist society towards pre-capitalist peoples, the first considered abundant and the second scarce?

The anthropologist Marshall Sahlins criticized this idea of "primitive" (original, stateless) meaning scarce, arguing that it is precisely the original societies that were opulent, and that this narrative hides that it is in fact in capitalism where scarcity occurs³⁹. The concept of futurity (which rules the dedication towards Protestant ethics) only makes sense within accumulation, because accumulation is pursued for the sake of a future. On the contrary, these societies live in the world of presence, where the calculations of benefits and/or losses don't make any sense and, therefore, in which the capitalist mode of production and economy cannot emerge. Christianity, by introducing a linear history with a future and an afterlife, accelerated the social configuration around accumulation, futurity and savings. Capitalist work is based on the notion of surplus accumulation and the idea of afterlife in Christian eschatology, both being devices that allow the domination and control of the population. The erroneous view we hold that stateless societies are underdeveloped is a consequence of capitalist morality and the myth of progress. Clastres evidenced this in his 1974 book *Society against the State*, where he exposes that the relationship between societies and work has nothing to do (only) with

technology but with rationality and morality. This is exemplified by the introduction of the metal ax in Guaraní's society: work with the metal ax can be done ten times faster or ten times more work can be done and accumulated⁴⁰, guess which society would choose what? Why did the Guaraní people not choose the second? Going back to Sahlins, primitive societies were really affluent, they did not need to accumulate because they already had everything. In fact, they had too much surplus, so much so that they needed to consume it exuberantly.

Bataille interpreted Clastres's and Sahlins's investigations very well when he wrote about what he called the general economy (1987), which is based on the logic of pre-capitalist societies. The gift (Clastres), the potlatch (Mauss) or opulence (Sahlins) are different names to explain the same gesture, an economy of primitive exchange with the capacity to produce diverse effects: bringing back presence, blocking the logics of market and accumulation, conjuring state structures, wage war... The waste, frittering and squandering of surplus implies an anti-intuitive logic for capitalism (profit in loss) as shown in the second characteristic of the *titular chief*⁴¹: he has to be giving all the time in return for his status - for he is the chief. This logic has been the preconscious mechanism that has prevented the formation of representations such as the future, the market, the sharp division between life and death, and even the idea of the self in societies "without state". Having elaborated on the above, we are finally at the point where we can ask ourselves: which are the conditions for the implementation of this other economy into our world?

4. Lines of flight: How do we escape?

As Bataille says, "the subject abandons his own terrain the moment he worries about the future". He also says "if I don't worry about what will be but about what is, there is no need to conserve anything".⁴² The logic of capital is interrupted and neutralized by the sacrifice that cuts down the duration of the tools of the *gestelle*. That is to say, breaking with the capitalist economy means to destroy those categories that sustain its theo/teleological and metaphysical edifice.

Without accumulation, there is no future; without futurity, there is no accumulation. Immediacy (i.e. the present) must emerge again for it is an unproductive gesture whose function is to prevent the accumulation of surplus, it has to do with war: with becoming a Deleuzian war machine (which Deleuze takes from Clastres).

Well, what's the problem, one may ask? Bataille says: "In the lost worlds, it was possible to lose oneself in ecstasy, which is impossible in the world of educated vulgarity".⁴³ What ties together the logic of sacrifice and erotic or inner experience is that these experiences involve a contact with violence, something that Christianity and capitalism have stripped from our world. In the exuberant or general economy, the object loses its limits, it overflows. The inner experience implies a feeling of faintness and voluptuousness. An anguish that excites and generates energetic growth by putting our discontinuity (what separates us from other objects, dividing us from the flux of primordial magma, the One) in crisis. It implies an overcoming, the transgression of the limits of our self. A transgression that starts and ends with our body. Where can we find any practices in our times that echo this general economy (of the sacrifice)?

We can find examples of this general economy, this logic of decentering, of dispossession, of sacrifice, in noise music, the last bastion of noise as discourse. We can see the same principals at work in Bataille's descriptions of inner experience, since the experience we pursue is one that "questions the self, [...] [where] the being is objectively lost, but then the being [dis]identifies with the object that is lost [...] I lose myself".⁴⁴ In this (anti)music genre, artists dispossess themselves, they abandon themselves to become the presence, the moment. Noise comes to reestablish an important part that has been lost with capitalism: the violence, the horror, the fascinating - as opposed to the simply attractive. Noise releases the energy of music constrained by formalities. The surrender of the Apollonian (reason, order, profane) to the Dionysian (pleasure, rite, sacred). In this practice, there is an overcoming of structures and the system of norms through the parallelism between "musical norms" and "social norms." Noise does not necessarily imply a rhetorical figure at the service of the message, it can also be a place outside the world of ideas, a

temporary space of mental and sensory liberation where impulses not processed by reason can be released. It implies stopping thinking, stopping being, an Epicurean and cathartic becoming that avoids any observation from an outside reality. Masona, from the legendary Japanese band Hijokaidan, says (in an interview I've lost track of): "when I act I always end up hurting, the body becomes pure compulsion, its movements are noise, chaos made flesh". There is a temporary interruption of the social self, similar to that of the initiate in the ritual, where the body is a container that expels the usual content (consciousness, representations, prejudices, subjectivity) to be occupied by noise. It is a self-possession, it is emitter and receiver, the body generates the noise and it resounds back in it. A closed circuit is created like the one used to saturate the sound.

Noise is the musical expression that materializes the 20th century widespread aesthetic idea about art being corporal. The body was reformulated, functioning as a screen on which ideas such as anguish are projected, the body became a territory of exploration, quoting Piedad Solans⁴⁵: "once abandoned the canvas, the body becomes the topos of creation, the topography of analysis." The body becomes a vehicle for the symbolic destruction of order as perceived in, for example, Butoh, the dance of darkness of the Japanese avant-garde. The first Butoh can be interpreted as "a movement of antisocial resistance effectuated upon the destruction of the social body, the body culturally conditioned/constructed". Its dance questions, changes, destroys, transforms the social conditioning of the body, and digs into the native experiences of "the body that has not been stolen".⁴⁷ Returning to Bataille, transgression implies the embrace of carnality, allowing oneself to lose oneself in the totality, the infinity of death. Paradoxically, only by losing themselves, can humans experience the sovereignty of being by fleeing from the utilitarianism of everyday life, being is affirmed and lost simultaneously.

Surrendering to noise we break from the working self of the profane time, establishing both the transgression and the violence that renders the erotic experience possible. In noise there is a link between gesture and noise. Masato Matsumura⁴⁸, a Japanese scholar, expresses how this genre managed to turn action into noise and noise into

action, a bidirectional relationship where one element conditioned the other and vice versa. The violence of, for example, the most notorious janoise band, Hanatarash, was aimed at making noise through destruction and being noise through destruction. Noise becomes the essence detached from its formal character to lead it to the inevitable end, chaos. A chaos long promised by pop culture but precisely achieved when it detaches from it. In the same way that capitalism promises freedom when it is actually slavery.

As a final remark, we can see the connection between the general economy and the lacanian Real in their shared revolutionary potential. In dealing and fighting against capital's capacity to subsume everything into the profit coordinates, "[a] strategy against capitalist realism could be the invocation of the Real that underlies the reality that capitalism presents to us."⁴⁹ The lacanian Real (if we have to give a quick description of it) in this sense is not something outside but some outsideness, some remnant excess that emerges after the signifying operation that, once encountered, shows the contingency of any structured reality (which includes, of course, the capitalist, patriarchal or any other supremacist ideologies). Maybe an example will help. If the heteronormative predicament states that a man cannot enjoy anal pleasure but nonetheless, after erotizing the erogenous zone, or as Preciado would say "anal erotization as a counter-sexual practice"⁵⁰, finds pleasure, that is, encounters an overcoming Real of sexuality: who was wrong, the body (the Real) or the ideology (the Symbolic)? Noise music or Preciado's counter-sexual practices are examples of one of the possible ways in which the individual can dispossess himself, cease-to-be, abandon the rhythms of heterocapitalism or shake the representations that we naturalize, through the irruption of the Real as an event that tears the fabric of symbolic fantasy, that we usually refer to as "reality". If, as we argued when talking about the emergence of profane time (and its later absorption by capitalist economy), "prohibitions aren't imposed from outside"⁵¹, that means we can change them. In order to change them, we need to evince their contingency. That's the role of general economy, the Real or the inner experience: prevent the formation of

representations that allow work's logic and economy to take over the individual's life.

5. Conclusion

We began by raising a question: would leisure be possible in a world without work? We examined how the evolution of capitalist modes of production have transformed both the division of labor and the subject itself, increasingly colonizing all aspects of life. This fact has been contrasted with an urgent need: the reduction or elimination of waged work. This urgency of the post-work world responds to ethical and ecological imperatives. We saw, however, that the change from the agricultural mode of production to the industrial mode of production was not followed by an emancipatory seizure of power by the proletariat, the emerging social class during the industrial revolution. To answer why that happened, we turn to the anthropological studies of Sahlins, Clastres and the philosophy of Bataille. We observed how pre-capitalist societies were actually anti-capitalist, and that in their social practices lay the conjuring mechanisms of capitalist and oppressive structures and devices such as accumulation or futurity - both introduced by capitalist eschatology and the Protestant ethics. The purpose of this article has been, from the beginning, to find examples of these conjuring practices against capitalism in our world. I consider that the artistic-political practice of "noise" fits the axioms of the anthropological war machine and the limit-experience in Bataille. Although a subsequent study would be needed to correlate the exposure or practice of noise with an "anti-capitalist mentality", I consider that, after having personally attended and participated in the extreme and noise scene, we can confirm that there is an extended collective critical inclination towards capitalism and other forms of oppression in the scene, examples are: DIY, techno-hacking, body exploration, exchange of goods, home production, straight edge, veganism, collective experience, anti-speciesism, squatting, self-management and inclusion of queer and dissident identities. So, faced with the passive and diligent zombification of capitalism, we say: be loud and break stuff!

Notes:

1. This double triad of concepts belong to the works of Foucault (2008), Han (2012), Fumagalli (2010) and “Bifo” Berardi (2003). Throughout the essay, we will recall their theories to explain the sociopolitical transformations of both the mode of production and the psyche of the subject.
2. Gilles Deleuze, 1999, “Posdata sobre las sociedades de control” In Ferrer, C. (Ed.). *El lenguaje libertario: Antología del pensamiento anarquista contemporáneo*. (Buenos Aires: Altamira), 75.
3. Techno feudalism is a notion (very much) worked on but nevertheless not coined by Varoufakis. I thought it would bring some justice to add the reference of another author that used the term, if not before, at the same time as Varoufakis.
4. Cédric Durand, 2021. *Tecnofeudalismo: Crítica de la economía digital* (Gipuzkoa: Kaxilda) Yanis Varoufakis, 2024, *Tecnofeudalismo. El siglo sucesor del capitalismo* (Barcelona: Deusto)
5. Andrea Fumagalli, 2010, *Bioeconomía y capitalismo cognitivo. Hacia un nuevo paradigma de acumulación* (Madrid: Traficantes de sueños), 23.
6. Mark Fisher, 2019, *Los fantasmas de mi vida. Escritos sobre depresión, hauntología y futuros perdidos* (Buenos Aires: Caja Negra Editora), 167.
7. Byung-Chul Han, 2014, *La agonía de Eros* (Barcelona: Herder), 17.
8. Holly Lewis, 2020, *La política de todes* (Manresa: Ediciones Bellaterra), 40.
9. Eric Sadin, 2022, *La era del individuo tirano* (Buenos Aires: Caja Negra)
10. Franco “Bifo” Berardi, 2017, *Fenomenología del fin. Sensibilidad y mutación colectiva* (Buenos Aires: Caja Negra), 223.
11. Zygmund Bauman, 2017, *Los retos de la educación en la modernidad líquida (1.a ed.)* (México: Gedisa Mexicana), 22.
12. Zygmund Bauman, 2017, *Los retos de la educación en la modernidad líquida (1.a ed.)* (México: Gedisa Mexicana), 21.
13. Mark Fisher, 2018, *Realismo Capitalista: ¿No Hay Alternativa?* (Buenos Aires. Caja Negra Editora), 36.
14. Gilles Deleuze, 1999, “Posdata sobre las sociedades de control” In Ferrer, C. (Ed.). *El lenguaje libertario: Antología del pensamiento anarquista contemporáneo*. (Buenos Aires: Altamira), 76.
15. “With the expression semiocapitalism I define the predominant mode of production in a society in which every act of transformation can be replaced by information and the work process is carried out through recombining signs.” (Bifo, 2007: 107)

16. Michel Foucault, 2002, *Vigilar y castigar. Nacimiento de la prisión* (Buenos Aires: S.XXI), 170.
17. Michel Foucault, 2012, *El nacimiento de la biopolítica. Curso en el Collège de France, 1978-1979* (Buenos Aires: FCE), 277.
18. Karl Marx, 1977, *El capital. Crítica de la economía política* (Madrid: Akal), 6645.
19. UN. 2016, "La COVID-19 causó solo una reducción temporal de las emisiones de carbono -nuevo informe de agencias de la ONU", *UN Environment*, Sept 16, <https://www.unep.org/es/noticias-y-reportajes/comunicado-de-prensa/la-covid-19-causo-solo-una-reduccion-temporal-de-las>
20. Eric Holt-Giménez, Annie Shattuck, Miguel Altieri, Hans Herren & Steve Gliessman, 2012, "We Already Grow Enough Food for 10 billion People ... and Still Can't End Hunger", *Journal of Sustainable Agriculture*, 36, no.6: 595-598, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10440046.2012.695331>.
21. Martin Heidegger, 1994, "La pregunta por la técnica" In *Conferencias y artículos* (Barcelona: Serbal), 9-37.
22. Nick Srnicek, 2017, "El postcapitalismo será postindustrial" In *Avanessian, A., y Reis, M. (Eds.) Aceleracionismo. Estrategias para una transición hacia el postcapitalismo* (Buenos Aires: Caja Negra), 113.
23. George Bataille, 1997, *El erotismo* (Barcelona: Tusquets), 44-58.
24. George Bataille, 1997, *El erotismo* (Barcelona: Tusquets), 42.
25. George Bataille, 1997, *El erotismo* (Barcelona: Tusquets), 45.
26. Max Weber, 1979, *La ética protestante y el espíritu del capitalismo* (México: Premia), 32-33.
27. Walter Benjamin, 1978, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp), 822-823.
28. Friedrich Nietzsche, 2011, *La genealogía de la moral* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial), 94.
29. Franco "Bifo" Berardi, 2017, *Fenomenología del fin. Sensibilidad y mutación colectiva* (Buenos Aires: Caja Negra), 136.
30. Marshall Sahlins, 1968, *Notes on the original affluent society* (New York: Aldine)
31. Piere Clastres, 1978, *La sociedad contra el estado* (Barcelona: Virus), 171.
32. Piere Clastres, 1978, *La sociedad contra el estado* (Barcelona: Virus), 28.
33. George Bataille, 1987. *La parte maldita* (Barcelona: Icaria), 95.
34. George Bataille, 2003, *La conjuración sagrada. Ensayos 1929-1939* (Buenos Aires: Adriana Hidalgo, 228)
35. George Bataille, 1997, *El erotismo* (Barcelona: Tusquets), 35.

- ^{36.} Piedad Solans, 2000, *Accionismo vienés* (Guipúzcoa: Nerea)
- ^{37.} Sondra Fraleigh and Tamah Nakamura, 2006, *Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno* (New York: Routledge), 74.
- ^{38.} Masato Matsumura, 2014, "The birth of noise in Japan", *Red Bull music academy daily*, Oct 14th, <https://daily.redbullmusicacademy.com/2014/10/birth-of-noise-in-japan-feature>
- ^{39.} Mark Fisher, 2018, *Realismo Capitalista: ¿No Hay Alternativa?* (Buenos Aires. Caja Negra Editora), 43
- ^{40.} Beatriz Preciado, 2002, *Manifiesto contra-sexual*. (Madrid: Opera Prima), 26.
- ^{41.} George Bataille, 1997, *El erotismo* (Barcelona: Tusquets), 42.

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