

POST-FORDIST AFFECTS, TIMES, AND IMAGES:
AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF CIRCULATION
IN A DIGITAL ADVERTISING AGENCY IN ISTANBUL

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Selim Gökçe Atıcı, certify that

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ABSTRACT

Post-Fordist Affects, Times and Images:

An Ethnography of Circulation in a Digital Advertising Agency in Istanbul

This thesis follows the making and unmaking of commodity images, boundaries of embodied selves and emotional investments to work: cultivations regarding desiring and laboring, in relation to spatial-temporal dynamics between humans, things and affects. The discussion is set up against the backdrop of faster rates of commodity circulation, blurring boundaries between work and leisure and labor and play, and the augmentation (pervasiveness) of software, tools and possibilities of digital communication. It draws on my participant observation as a 'digital strategist' in a digital advertising company in Istanbul for four months. The Introduction defines several tensions that run throughout the thesis, which makes it more conceptual. In Chapter 2, I situate my ethnographic work in wider discussions on commodity fetishism and branding, attending to the practices of interpolation, tabulation and calculation as they reflect the making of novelty and fantasies of an automated society. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with the temporal self-understandings of digital media workers, and their relation to the workplace and the infrastructures of digital work. The final chapter plays with a working definition of 'genuineness' as an ambivalent affect that maps workplace authenticities and positions for self-fashioning in the workplace. The aim of this thesis is to situate digital/behavioral advertising work in a broader scale of global capitalism, informational networks, economic rationalities and space-time conundrums by engaging in dialogues with

temporal self-understandings, affects and emotions, memory and anticipation, abstraction and embodiment, space and place, production and reproduction, and the ways in which working selves configure power relations.

ÖZET

Post-Fordist Duygular, İmajlar ve Zamanlar:

İstanbul'da Bir Dijital Medya Ajansı'ndaki Tedavüllerin Etnografisi

Bu tez, çalışmaya, meta imajlarına ve bedensel sınırlara yapılan duygusal yatırımların yapımı ve bozumunu takip eder. Kısaca, arzulama ve emek vermeyi, şeyler, insanlar, duygular arasındaki zamansal ve mekansal ilişkiler içerisinde inceler. Yürütülen tartışma meta dolaşımının ivmelendiği, çalışma ve dinlencenin ve oyun ve emeğin ayrımının silikleştiği, dijital medya yazılımlarının, aletlerinin ve imkanlarının artan nüfuzunun deneyimlendiği bir arkaplan üzerinde işliyor. İstanbul'da bir dijital medya ajansında 2014 senesinde gerçekleştirdiğim katılımcı-gözlemci araştırmanın verilerinden yararlanıyorum. Girişte, tez boyunca iş gören kavramsal gerilimler ve çatışmalar tanımlıyorum. İlk bölümde etnografik çalışmamı, gözlemlediğim hesaplama, çıkarsama ve sınıflandırma pratiklerinin çağırdığı yenilik ve bütüncül toplum fantezileri dolayısıyla meta fetişizmi ve markalaşma tartışmalarına bağlıyorum. İkinci ve üçüncü bölümlerde dijital medya çalışanlarının zamansal ve mekansal dünyalarını örme biçimlerine ve bu anlatıların dijital işlerin mekanları, duyguları ve altyapılarıyla ne gibi ilişkiler oluşturduğuna eğiliyorum. Son bölümde, 'samimiyet' duygusunun muğlaklığına dair tanımlar yaptıktan sonra bunun işyerindeki hiyerarşik ve farklılaşmış pozisyonları nasıl haritaladığından hareketle, öznelerin kendilerini biçimlendirme pratiklerine dair çıkarımlar yapıyorum. Bu tezin amacı dijital/davranışsal reklamcılık pratiklerini küresel finansal kapitalizm, bilgi şebekeleri, ekonomik rasyonellikler ve zaman-mekan muammaları içerisinde konumlandırarak, zamansal anlatılar, mekan ve uzam, soyutlama

ve bedenselleřtirme, üretim ve yeniden üretim, duygulanımlar ve duygular, ve hafıza ve beklentilerle iřtigal eden iktidar iliřkilerine dair yeni diyaloglar geliřtirmektedir.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the nineteenth season of the infamous animation series, South Park -reformulated with enhanced digital animation (for your viewing pleasure) and improved scripting- digital advertisement is treated with considerable solemnity. Capitalist moguls have taken on and over the information-entertainment sphere of the United States, unleashing simulation as they incorporate every kind of media, from major newspapers and cable TV to micro-blogs and school newspapers. The ‘ideological’ operation pervades the whole of the nation, spreading with blind force the inseparability of information and advertisement. Corruption and triviality are not limited to body images -ideal screenings people have of themselves-, but extend to the very fabric of communication. The working dichotomies particular to modern societies, between advertisement and information, authentic selves and 'disingenuity', exchange value and use value of commodities, the past and the future are under the threat of digital bits of data collection and desire production, blind to everything but the pursuit of profit. It is a telling feature that the cause of the new progressive sect in the series (which embodies being ‘Politically Correct’), is hijacked for the purpose of commodification of information as we witness the invention of ‘sponsored content’ that looks like news, but acts like an ad. Whereas the veneer of ‘illusion’ is toppled in the TV show by the disabled Jimmy, the sprawl of advertisement we are witnessing today is unlikely to be unmasked by a hero.

Before I lay out the tensions I explore throughout this thesis, a few remarks regarding the ‘infosphere’ in which we find ourselves are in order. It is almost commonsensical in the media-saturated present-day to argue that we increasingly prioritize non-discursive communication through images, and say that the photographic message validates experience (Barthes, 1977; Benjamin, 1979; Sontag, 1977). The more easily we submit photographs and attach meanings to body images, which take the acceleration of circulation -of commodities, attitudes, promises and ideas- to an unprecedented level, the more saturated our surrounding environment becomes with externalized data¹. Signs of social meaning circulate more rapidly, in new forms such as tweets, info-graphics, 'listicles', avatars that work on the consciousness and the body, exceeding the limit of cognitive capacities and intellectual reflection towards practices less mediated by rupture, reflection and attention.

On the other hand, the obsolescence of electronic products we use are fueled by an economy of advertising, branding and packaging that pitch the consumption of the new as the defining mandate of our practices of consumption (Slade, 2007). The circulation of goods, ideas and discourses are annexed to the forgetting of some histories, particularly of those regarding the ‘anthropocene’, the co-constitution of human and non-human histories (Gibson & Graham, 2014; Parikka, 2015). This “noisy” world is marked by ‘degraded infrastructures’, constantly evolving complexities, and is produced by ever more particularization of jobs. A critical approach to this condition should engage with bringing new filiations, concepts and productive gaps into the world

¹ I use this phrase, 'externalized data' in order to draw attention to the technologically infused concretization of digitally collected data. Externalized, for data animates built and lived environment. For comprehensive approaches and further suggestions regarding the conditions and experiential aspects of 'smart cities', see Thrift (2014) and Günel (2014).

(Fortun, 2012; Ferguson, 2015) in order to counteract the mystifying force of capitalist economic formations.

If so, the ethnographer is invited to make sense of the ways in which these artifacts come into contact with one another, relying on the command of ‘smart’ technologies that thrive on tabulations, characterizations, algorithms and automated systems². Anthropology is and always has been conducive to understanding the structuring complexities of social life, particularly in situations that are vexing, contradictory, relational and novel (Fisher, 2009). Complex financial systems and informational mechanisms and companies preoccupied with data mining work today in accelerating the trajectories circulation, fashioning self-stylizations and understandings, deepening the reach of governmental technologies, broadening the scope of advertising and product soliciting, and are powered by the pervasiveness of online platforms (Illouz, 2007; Brown, 2015; Beer, 2013; Lipuma & Lee, 2005; Harvey, 1989; Terranova, 2010). As the conditions of work are rearranged aggressively, labor, affects, trajectories and new technologies erode and evade what counts as value, and new ethnographic frameworks resurface to understand conditions of generalized insecurity and uncertainty about the future (Berlant, 2011; Stewart, 2012; Povinelli, 2011b).

This thesis follows affective maps that figure and are figured through diagrams such as financial flows, the economy of attention (undergirded by infrastructures of a connected and technologized world) and procedures that mark the branding and marketing of the most ‘inner’ subjective experiences in perpetual modulations. These, in

² For instance, how does an anthropologist study the algorithm of Facebook as it gathers data to generate future responses? In an experiment, a conceptualization -which passes as emotional contagion- was defined to utilize the empirical finding that people respond to what they see, as they feel it. If a user responds to a 'happy' news (the selection process is ambiguous) by a mode of calculable engaging, Facebook makes sure that similar content will appear to generate more response from that very user. See <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jun/29/facebook-users-emotions-news-feeds>

turn, correspond to the capture of affect, labor and attention in workplaces.

Accompanying this schema is the workplace as it becomes routinized and relatively secured from traditional spatial enclosures. It thrives on the waning of visible authority and the capitalization of the creative potential of the workers. We can imagine a triangulated schema. It brings together the conditions under and by which a person gets preoccupied with the production of an immaterial/material good³ (the time and effort invested), the entitlement to a social status that comes with the titles, rewards, beliefs and desires in and around the said preoccupation, and the subjective attitude one feels towards the relationship of contract that makes it all possible. These spheres, of course, are imbricated with and mutually supportive of the Post-fordist regime of the organization of labor. It speaks of the shift to a 'control society'⁴ (see below and Chapter 5), 'sedimented' by and replacing the rigid forms of categorization, objectification, and regulation of spatial-temporal routes of conduct, mainly referred to as the configuration

³ This is a slight variation of the infamous conceptual schema brought forth by Lazzarato (1996, p.133) regarding the structural changes in the economy and a cultural shift to sustain the double operation of both the computerization of skills and the direct production of scripts of behavior, affects and knowledges: "[on the one hand,] the skills involved in direct labor are increasingly skills involving cybernetics and computer control (and horizontal and vertical communication). On the other hand, as regards the activity that produces the "cultural content" of the commodity, immaterial labor involves a series of activities that are not normally recognized as "work"—in other words, the kinds of activities involved in defining and fixing cultural and artistic standards, fashions, tastes, consumer norms, and, more strategically, public opinion".

However, I do not use the term "immaterial labor" in this thesis, to avoid the pitfalls of assigning today's produced objects a novel type of affective bonding and the surface value of the sign 'immaterial', although Lazzarato does not mean that this type of labor is 'less material'. Though this does not mean that I do not concur with the quote above, see Yanagisako (2012), Staples (2007).

⁴ Patricia Clough (2013, p.120) summarizes the features of 'the control society', where the power of preemption and a concomitance of the biological and the technological coincide:

"a term meant to point to a normative, if not compulsive, attending to the self, a dispersion of power, even to preindividual impersonal domains such as affect, with the accompanying smoothening of the space of civil society institutions, capitalizing on their increasing reluctance or inability to socialize, to interpellate individuals to the ideal of the nationstate. It points as well to a global extension of media, especially digital media, and their reconfiguring of the private and public spheres, economy, the state, and the market. While control society coincides with the shift from disciplining the subject to what Foucault called biopolitics, which focuses more on species life, expressed in terms of the capacity for life across populations, the shift to preemptive/hensive power is an intensifying of control at every scale of matter, a cosmological politics."

of a 'disciplinary society'. In other words, the relationship between technologically mediated discourses, affects in relation to the circulation of commodities, information and emotions are expanded by procedures that tie institutions historically to one another in distinct ways.

It is widely accepted that the dynamics of capitalist production now are widely concomitant with an emphasis on the shifting modes of production. That is, from the production of goods, we have moved to the production of services and thus from the emphasis on the advertising of a product, to that of the advertising of an image. I think adopting this approach is unproductive and reductionist, for several reasons. I am nowhere in the vicinity of saying that in nominal terms more tangible products are produced today, like appliances, cars and other goods as a percentage of total products. That being said, first, I believe putting the emphasis on the consumption of products then and ideas and moods now, overemphasizes the use value of a product. I do not deny the usefulness of a product, but defining a product on the basis of its use value obscures the role exchange value plays in structuring consciousness informed by the commodity form⁵. Second, the emphasis on production dovetails the methodological priority Marx (1976) put on production and consumption over circulation: although he did take into account the structural impetus to accelerate the circulation of commodities and the goal of shrinking time intervals in both production and consumption, he nevertheless did not (and perhaps could not) ponder on the production of attention and the creation of value by circulation. The latter is one of the defining mechanisms of online surplus value generation. The third point is the most important one and perhaps the result of the first two. Making the methodological distinction between the commodity itself as a tangible

⁵ See Sohn-Rethel (1978), Sahlins (1974), and Chapter 2.

object and the image of the commodity as an idea thereof muddles a fruitful approach. This approach puts the emphasis on how commodities and commodity-images are products of orientations towards objects that point to wider historical processes of how and to what extent they are idealized (Ahmed, 2006; Mazarella, 2003).

The above theoretical considerations reflect one of the approaches that this thesis is bent on: that social structures gain meaning in their relation to material processes that make themselves available to the researcher in particular institutions, objects, ideals, aspirations, representations and non-representational registers that play out in particular historical contexts. That being said, the labor of ethnography and writing also resonates with methodological and academic restrictions⁶ that are well documented, especially in relation to studying affects (Martin, 2013; Csordas, 2011). Rather than aligning the theoretical aspirations of this study with particular research agendas, I cite several positions that are multiple, multivalent and inchoate. That way, I hope that an anthropological study of culture can tune in to new institutions and subjectivities by sidestepping historical determinisms and adopting culture as a site of struggle for subjective relations. This approach observes institutional spaces as they facilitate ethical bonds, takes humans, things and affects in a tangled and relational field wherein forms of knowing affect what counts as meaning, while at the same time making and unmaking it (Fisher, 2007).

I have sectioned this Introduction into five parts, not by the logic of wagers explained above, but by a more pragmatic approach. First, in the following discussion, I explore various schools of thought writing on affect theory, in the hope of understanding

⁶ Inherent to many problems, from the cookie cutter format of the thesis to the perks of being an anthropologist with particular amenities amidst precarious working conditions.

working bodies in an assemblage of contemporary institutions and drives. This part also explains my theoretical standpoint. I also hope, in this section to present the changing conditions of production, elaborating on the ways we can address these conditions. Whereas the second section explains my fieldwork, the third part is a limited survey on how both the practices and theories of advertisement have been historicized. There I compromise with the established ways of addressing advertisement to fit the changing dynamics and technologies of digital advertising. The fourth section is a presentation of the contemporary capitalist formation, situating what it means to work today under Post-fordist conditions by looking at the composition of labor, meanings, affects and images. In the last part I expound on the organization of this thesis.

The last caveat I want to dwell on in this section is the claim that there is nothing inherently wrong about consumption, work, and markets. The desire with which we consume and incite in others participation in production and consumption, and the capacity we enlist for the production of commodities belong to an order of experience that can be appropriated by structures and markers of belief. These beliefs are knotted in the daily workings of institutions such as the state, labor organizations or the 'the family'. The meanings that are generated⁷ are recognized as representations and identities. However, this does not amount to saying that faculties of communication, belief, desire and labor give themselves readily to the historically specific modes of representation. Guattari (2009) has explained this by insisting on the analytical distinction between “machinic enslavement” and “social subjection”. Labor and desire either work in an order that defies being captured, circulating through unconscious, non-conscious, affective and perceptive processes, or they belong to an order of representation, politics,

⁷ We should recall here that there is no embedded structure of belief that is particularly capitalistic.

identity, sexuality, family etc. The latter locate the subject as she is re-membered in established structures of meaning. These are not, however, successive stages, but are processes that feed one another.

The relationship between "machinic enslavement" and "social subjection" becomes harder to pin down as the "surplus value becomes machinic" in the Post-fordist labor regime. 'Machinization' is a result of the changing relationship between the impact of techno-scientific and institutional practices on the body. The Post-fordist regime facilitates the conflation of constant capital and labor time (as it extends out of the factory to social life) (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). An example:

"One is subjected to TV insofar as one uses and consumes it...as the technical machine [it] is the medium between two subjects. But one is enslaved by TV as a human machine insofar as the television viewers are no longer consumers or users, nor even subjects who supposedly 'make' it, but intrinsic component pieces, 'input' and 'output,' ...[where] there is nothing but transformations and exchanges of information, some of which are mechanical, others human." (ibid, p.533)

The discussions on the 'recursivity' of data (as it is 'externalized') assume that consumption habits (as data) are algorithmically processed only to come back as banners, images etc. that inform new choices. Lazzarato (2014, pp.88-94) exemplifies this by recounting a day in his life: The electronic slip that beeps at the metro records the individual's itinerary by transmitting it to data banks, video and heat-sensitive cameras pin the whereabouts and timing of 'mobilities' in the city, the person who engages in monetary transactions through the ATM invests the machine, the data store of the bank and further possible encounters with her consumption practices and daily behaviors. Having smartphones, logging into 'geolocate' applications, uploading photographs, coding one's behaviors etc. calculate and generate data on daily human behavior that is

not separable from that of machines. This is not to fret over the ‘automation’ of human contingency, as if there is or was an instance that humans have acted free from any apparatus. The chunk of data gathered, similar to the heaps of statistical data gathered (Gupta, 2001), may never be put to use or may be used in ambivalent terms. What matters is that a new rational-technical discourse and corresponding ways of being are produced.

The distinction between “social subjection” and “machinic enslavement”, realization and 'axiomatization' respectively, if not made, can mystify a systematic working we so eagerly infer about capitalist historical processes (De Landa, 1998). Consider the initial hype over the internet: a disembodied person, bereft of all the taxing and dominating markers of gender, marginality etc., the hyperspace of infinite possibilities; only to be regulated by various systems that control, 'surveil', mine, and extract value⁸. In addition to Guattari's analytical distinction (between the realization and the 'axiomatization'), there is also a need to separate “the sexualized, racialized, and naturalized difference defined as a multiplicity system (and not as a mere quantitative proliferation) from the production of profit-oriented ‘differences’ in the political economy of globalized capitalism” (Braidotti, 2006, p.153)⁹.

The conceptual distinction between affects and emotions, similarly, is beyond mere metaphor. Brian Massumi and William Connolly have shown, by recent

⁸ Such as the BTK (Bilgi Teknolojileri Kurumu- The Information and Communication Technologies Authority), data collection technologies, and other ways of affecting unremunerated capture of labor and attention invested in online participatory platforms.

⁹ See footnote 15 and Benjamin (1979). In other words, what Braidotti argues here is that consumption categories and identity categories cannot just be enumerated. Thinking with advertisement is productive. It is one thing to say that market rationality is subsuming ways of being, and a very different thing to argue that advertisement refers to the making of that rationality. There is no direct connection and almost no material basis to the claim that image-production in the form of advertisement induces practices of 'mindless' consumption.

experiments in neuroscience, political developments and socio-historical mobilizations of affects, that the tension between the structural and ambivalent workings of affects operate on the register of the "preindividual", "intersubjective", and bodily capacities of affecting and being affected (Massumi, 1999, 2002; Connolly, 2002, 2010). These capacities are impersonal, as they course through machines, structures, assemblages, bodies, and selves. They correspond to flows that can equally map on to identities and can work to their unmaking.

Accordingly, bodies do not necessarily coincide with their social codes, as they are open to the radical flux of inter-bodily forces, of habits, memory and desire (Clough, 2007; Blackman, 2012; Seigworth & Gregg, 2010). This is not to declare that bodies are in constant flux, and that we are open to an all-encompassing vulnerability, that the borders visible to the eye are porous. A sensitivity to affect as the "virtual co-presence of potentials" helps us make sense of both individual, collective and historical motion. The past that endures in the individual, and the ways of being reproduced by capitalist institutions make 'the present' an affectively charged situation, attesting to the production of subjects who are multilayered and emergent. There are temporal force fields in operation, which, by dint of oscillating "between periods of relative arrest and those of heightened imbalance and change, followed again by new stabilizations," (Connolly, 2010, p.44) signify that no one particular discursive or non-discursive arrangement is here to stay. Whereas affects are 'asignifying', un/non-conscious, non-subjective, impersonal, equally nonhuman and inhuman; emotions are signifying, individual, linguistic markers of experience, in which one feels and represents the affect in operation. Some theorists of affect have outright rejected the need for such a distinction, as there is no 'individual experience' (no private, personal emotions) apart from

collective feelings. Sara Ahmed (2014), for her part, wagers that she is more interested in the making of the individual and/or social objects of emotion, whereas Berlant (2008, 2011) prefers to keep the distinction to understand the differential distribution of ways of feeling among other markers of social identification. Common to almost all materialist theorists of affect, though, is the caution with which they conceptualize affect: the emphasis on the filiations among bodies irreducible to individual expressions of experience assumes and pries open the “thinking movement” of a body that makes ethical connections in the irreducible “virtual co-presence of potentials” (Massumi, 2002a).

This is for me another way of saying that advanced technology cannot be taken in itself as a measure of understanding how the domains of the political, the social, and the economic are changing. In other words, the ‘ways of seeing and apprehending’ (media and technology) are changing, and the categories through which we understand them simply cannot keep up with the complexity of institutions, actors, machines and fluctuations that are linked to them. They should be addressed without losing sight of historical change. Therefore, my task is to take the ethnographic observation of the practical use and abuse of digital media work with a reformulation of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987, p.4) suggestion: I “will never ask what an [image] means, as signified or signifier...[rather, I] will ask what it functions with, in connection with what other things it does or does not transmit intensities”.

The marketing strategies, the organization of the genre of self-help publishing and the more general field of digital advertisement put producers and consumers into contact with emerging aesthetic categories, new fetishes, and vibrant spaces. Novel experiences of temporality cultivate ways of belonging to specific arrangements in

historical, institutional forms. There is human technology inasmuch as there is what we call 'technological advancement' (Foucault, 1996, pp.253-4; Deleuze, 2006, pp.32-37; Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.90; Crary, 2014, pp.40-47). Foucault's remarks on the architectural plans of houses that come to incorporate a chimney may be of use here:

"What is, in fact, interesting is that the two [technological change and the capacity to make it work] are rigorously indivisible. Why did people struggle to find the way to put a chimney inside a house? Or why did they put their techniques to this use? So often in the history of techniques it takes years or even centuries to implement them. It is certain, and of capital importance, that this technique was a formative influence on new human relations, but it is impossible to think that it would have been developed and adapted had there not been in the play and strategy of human relations something which tended in that direction. What is interesting is always interconnection, not the primacy of this over that, which never has any meaning." (ibid, pp.253-4).

The whole gamut of operations, images, discourses, things and peoples in the interface of digital media will be considered in view of the particular ways social formations work on the individual to align demands, needs, desires, productive capacities, and intimacies within a generalized regime of work¹⁰. I elaborate on this below, theorizing labor, affects and the production of the work ethic by taking into consideration a shift in the structuring antagonisms by tracing the historical change from the Fordist to the Post-fordist condition.

Increasingly, economic and technical rationalities define social interactions with labor markets through which not only workers but the very fabric of social communication is arranged, calculated, and subjected to markers of economic

¹⁰ This notion, 'generalized regime of work' is used to draw attention to the inseparability of work from leisure, and it emphasizes the ways in which user behavior is used by software/data companies as unremunerated labor.

calculation¹¹. This is not to say that we have entered a whole new historical arrangement in which people make affective bonds to their work experience. There has hardly been any instance of capitalist formation wherein workers and 'non-workers' (through reproductive work) have ceased making emotional investments to their source of remuneration (Yanagisako, 2012). However, the stakes of understanding the current state of capitalist relations means taking seriously the governing of social spheres impinging on the logics of economic calculation, and the quantification that is made through communicational labor that directly produces social relations.

There are myriad accounts on the historical change that capitalism was forced to undertake, from the contradictions between the rigid production and realization of the Fordist labor regime to the shift to the flexible, 'asynchronic' regime of Post-fordist labor; to the autonomist critique that hinges the change in the quality of labor to the struggle of the workers (Harvey, 1989; Virno, 2004; Staples, 2007). I will short-circuit some of the historical facts of economic and institutional change for the sake of clear argumentation without losing sight of the effects digital advertising produces and welcomes. This follows the changing anchors of self-understanding and self-stylization

¹¹ By saying this and especially throughout the chapters, I do not wish to attribute a totality to working rationalities of global capitalism. I follow the making and unmaking of rationalities in relation to their contradictory enactment by the fascination with the magical in advertising. Comaroff and Comaroff (2000, p.292) have dubbed this the defining element of 'millennial capitalism':

"Other features of our present predicament are less remarked, debated, questioned. Among them are the odd coupling, the binary complementarity, of the legalistic with the libertarian; constitutionality with deregulation; hyperrationalization with the exuberant spread of innovative occult practices and money magic, pyramid schemes and prosperity gospels; the enchantments, that is, of a decidedly neo liberal economy whose ever more inscrutable speculations seem to call up fresh specters in their wake... We seek, instead, to draw attention to, to interrogate, the distinctly pragmatic qualities of the messianic, millennial capitalism of the moment: a capitalism that presents itself as a gospel of salvation; a capitalism that, if rightly harnessed, is invested with the capacity wholly to transform the universe of the marginalized and disempowered". Although it may be redundant today to assume a discourse of salvation that is of a capitalist nature, the distinction here runs through the new opportunities that salvage some communities in the wake of the redistribution of wealth (Ferguson, 2015). In the case of advertising, the salvation that is promised by the good life embedded in the idea of the consumption of a commodity works in a similar fashion. The relationship between humans and consumed things is more than mere alienation of a human genuineness due to the commensurability of things produced.

today. I will pursue the Post-fordist interpretation of the modes of labor organization, by taking a genealogical approach to workers' changing relations to regimes of work, represented by the shift from the "factory model of production" to the "socialization of labor". The general contours of this argumentation follows the change in self-understandings and objective economic change, and concentrates on protocols of (embodied) meaning making in relation to changing aesthetic categories, technical arrangements and transmitters of information. What matters for our analysis (advertisement will be later explored) is to pursue the suggestion that "the relationship between techno-science and the body is an index of different historical formations" (Parisi & Terranova, 2000). The task of this endeavor is to frame the gaps and routes with which the affective composition between consumption and work, the "norms and structures that organise and structure action" (Read, 2016, p.161) are transformed.

The narratives of technological determinism and the trajectories of 'enabling' and 'time-saving' informational technologies should be addressed in explaining the daily production of meaning in work. In his famous interpretation of primitive accumulation, the crux of which is to understand the making of labor power rather than assuming it as a capacity, Marx (1977, p.899) notoriously argued that "the advance of capitalist production develops a working class which by education, tradition, and habit looks upon the requirements of that mode of production as self evident natural laws"¹². The "compositional" tradition of the Italian autonomist tradition explores this suggestion by referring to "the components of the labour process from the degree of co-operation and

¹² See also the fourth chapter and the conclusion of Jason Read's (2003) *Micropolitics of Capital: Marx and the Prehistory of the Present*, and Jack Amariglio and Antonio Callari's (1989) "Marxian Value Theory and the Problem of the Subject: The Role of Commodity Fetishism". These texts build on the fruitful exploration made on the assumption that it is not the economic reality that undergirds the making of subjectivity, but the historical making (overdetermination) of modes of subjectivation is itself a structuring element of that reality.

technological development involved, its degree of exploitation, the division between surplus value of necessary labor, and the extent of political organization and contestation” (Read, 2016, p.147; Berardi, 2009; Hardt & Negri, 1994). Jason Read (2016) claims that the affective composition of social labor plays on two intersecting axes, the constitution of individual and collective objects of desire on one hand, and the temporal understanding of the future, oscillating between hope and fear on the other¹³. I follow these suggestions throughout this thesis, looking at junctions that weigh on advertising workers, where the loss of historical trajectories of objects, drives to work for one's exploitation, the 'precarity' in making a place familiar, the anticipation of fear, and a constant demand to display a consistent self.

1.1 Studying JazzRabbit¹⁴: The digital workplace, advertising agency and the method

Dominic Boyer, writing on the fieldwork he collected in a German ‘news agency’ remarks that “the screens operated equivalently as panoptica, as messaging and filtering devices, as search instruments, as workspaces for articulation and correction” (Boyer, 2011, p.8). The sensory environment of the workplace and the interface of the devices through which workers “track, organize and engage a multiplicity of information feeds” set in motion a complex process that produces what we call 'news' out of the nexus of attention, memory, labor, and a genre-related temporal organization” (ibid, p.8). In a similar manner, but putting the emphasis on the specific organization of time that

¹³ This is, as the reader will notice, a refrain that I return to, assume, and enact throughout the thesis. It is entanglement that is key to this inquiry. The temporal structuring of subjective reflection and the making of collective and subjective objects of desire sit together.

¹⁴ All names of persons, locations, and the products of the company I worked in are altered. The names of our clients and some- brands are as used.

workers engage in, about, on and despite, this thesis aims to figure advertising work in its social production, temporal organization, labor compound and technical arrangements.

Digital advertising, while differing in its effects, does not in fact stray much from the shape news-making has assumed. In fact, the casualization of content production has brought about the making of news similar to personal statements and opinion shares, as much as it brought advertising closer to the format of what is perhaps too quickly denoted as 'news'. There is, for that reason as well, more to tweets, status updates, 'news' made in the name of and by using the authority of brand names in advertising. Thus, the stakes are not only the distortion of the entertainment-knowledge content by sponsored ads; the facts and figures of digital media use today show that the line between advertisement and 'informative' content are spilling into one another. The problem is not only the form of the 'sponsored content' -which is aggressive to the point of subsuming other forms of interesting material on the web-, but also the quality of the shared content itself is merging with the standards of seduction (Silverman, 2016). Given that there exists a drive engineered in individual attitudes to "run" oneself as a corporation¹⁵, and the inverse, that the corporations, including brands and 'love brands'

¹⁵ This tells the story of how corporate help-books, advertisers, managers and the 'therapeutic culture' is entertained with national sentiments. In the United States, "National advertisers promoted new therapeutic vehicles for temporary escape, vehicles more consistent with the "new American tempo" of continuous growth and regular sparks" (Lears, 1995, p.181). Cigarette consumption in China, on another note, has amassed masculine sensibilities with a particular mode of national consumption, "dangerously parlaying social and demographic changes around the world into market opportunities (Kohrman & Benson, 2011, p.335); see also Klein (1993), Taussig (1989), Jain (2003). Taussig referred to the 'mythification' of the Marlboro Man through advertisement as an upsetting figure of experience, not readily falling into categories of insipid consumption and obsolescence:

"Tobacco: a capital substance, and a mystical one too; a killer and a necessity. It enters not only the freeway of our imagination, as it does for shamans in the Orinoco Delta, but the blood that is our biological life-stream. Its meanings overwhelm us. Up there in the sky with his lariat and with the gods, more alive than you or me, the Marlboro Man...This is a question not so much of 'advertising' (a term that

are assumed as legal entities with vital needs and aspirations producing and produced as desire, the authority of a brand name evaluates, measures and weighs the informational value of a 'sponsored content'.

That being said, advertising perhaps still is the single process whereby the commodification of social knowledge can be detailed and the rift between the way workers are objectively cast into the institutional arrangements, and the way they conceptualize their condition in the language of the market can be demonstrated.

Mazzarella (2003, p.45), in his groundbreaking work made in the midst of narratives of a new global class of Indian technical workers, care-free subjectivities, and technological conformism in a subtle conceptual orbit of generic visions, claims that "the value is generated precisely out of provisionally harnessing the unpredictable concretion of images within linear narratives". He shows that the labor of advertising thrives on the incommensurability between the material practices and their "avowed social meaning"¹⁶.

It would not be conducive to the purpose of the writing of this thesis if what is presented will be taken as the 'busting of myths' peculiar to our 'postmodern times'. The author of this thesis, and many of the informants are well aware that technology does not make life better and more efficient in terms of 'time management'. The fact that we are

instantly makes one switch off one's politico-aesthetic scanner) but of the mythification of substances in a non-mythifying age of marketing rationality" (ibid, p.13).

¹⁶ Consider this quotation (ibid, pp.45-6):

"This, in turn, means revisiting the irreducible ontological duality of Marx's original concept of the commodity form. In terms of an ethnographic project, this also means attending to the process of commodification. Indeed, one of the underlying assumptions of this book is that it is only in the flow of practice that the duality of the commodity form becomes properly apparent. Nowhere is this clearer than in the production of advertising, where the value is generated precisely out of provisionally harnessing the unpredictable concretion of images within linear narratives...Perhaps the crucial factor is not, after all, a radical ontological distinction between "autonomous" and "commercial" forms of cultural production but rather the different considerations that are brought to bear upon particular, and always provisional, attempts to mediate the tension between the materiality and the avowed social meaning of an object".

increasingly surrounded by gadgets and scripts pertaining to digital media (the ethics of which, let alone the legal infrastructure is not a subject of public debate in Turkey), and the ‘digital revolution’ supposedly taking place often feels like a latent and bloated show. More ‘connection’ does not readily bring about more solidarity. That being said, the production of commodity images in a technologically integrated enterprise can be studied ethnographically, by leaning on the making and unmaking of fantasies, beliefs, values, dreams and desires.

This thesis builds on the ethnographic data I have gathered in the four months of work I have done with sixteen other colleagues in the digital advertising agency *JazzRabbit*, with an ‘impact factor’ and critical potential that I will expound on throughout the thesis. Among other traditional and digital advertising agencies based in Istanbul, the one I did my fieldwork in stands out in several ways. First, *JazzRabbit* was a relatively new advertising agency, founded in 2012 by two young entrepreneurs, and to be later integrated with an advertising agency based in the United States. Second, the agency I worked in was an ‘outlier’ (despite it being a defining feature of ‘cultural work’), as it had a very higher worker turnover rate, a faster growing work force and a more rapid extending product pitch. This condition unsettled the working experience not only by demanding flexibility, but also by demanding adaptation to new locations¹⁷. Another facet of the workplace was its “radical” move to bring together web-design, web-page coding, game-making, Artificial Reality and Virtual Reality applications with content managing, account monitoring, concurring (*konkur*)¹⁸, digital strategy, creative writing and advertisement production. In the parlance of the workplace, this was a rare

¹⁷ The agency had moved three times until 2014, and moved again two months after I had left.

¹⁸ By practicing *konkur*, firms outsource advertising strategy. They give the task of developing strategy to several agencies and in the end employ only one.

combination of “kreatif” and “web” production. Fourth, despite the common idea towards advertising (and perhaps the consequence of public representation) that it is a high-end occupation with hefty material income, emerging digital advertising methods can be performed not only by white-collar workers (Moore, 2003; Mazarella, 2003) but also, as in my work, by students, the flexibly employed, ‘unskilled’, and voluntary workers.

JazzRabbit had developed new digital devices and technologies by riding the wave of the ‘opportunities’. Belief in the limitless energy of the human mind and belief in the entrepreneurial spirit, the moral right of advertising, packaging and branding, a nostalgic reminiscence of the ‘good old simple things’ (the newspaper, the radio, print books and also television), were all baked in the promise of the endless possibilities of a digital ‘revolution’. The ways in which what working for a digital media stands for was explained, however, left the workers at JazzRabbit at a stalemate: most of them were denied a raise (on the brink of the ‘official low salary’), they were working late, more than half of the days they were paid to work. Especially workers who had to monitor accounts on popular platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Foursquare, Instagram and LinkedIn had to work at night and on weekends, and were not having as much *goygoy*¹⁹ time as other advertising agents who were rumored to have workers “drinking all day long”. JazzRabbit staged the indeterminate ground of hopes to moving to a better

¹⁹ Since I think that there is no ‘actual’ leisure time for workers under these conditions, I refer to times that workers ‘feel’ they are shirking with their own formulation: *goygoy*. It is also telling that they did not refer to *boş zaman*, literally empty (leisure) time, but to another time of enjoyment. See Alfie Bown’s (2015) new book, *Enjoying It: Candy Crush and Capitalism*.

advertising agency, networking with our clients to vie for competitive positioning, and an almost always failed dream regarding 'the agency climate'²⁰.

The architectural formation of the workplace was imagined to fit the requirements of being creative: "kreatif" on the first floor, 'web-based' and more formal on the second. The image of turbulence, increased speed of flows (of images, ideas, commodities) and a design fit for more interaction mapped on the 'creative activity' of the first floor. The walls were covered with vinyl and print that had the emblematic animal of the enterprise and slogans such as "An octopus may look hulky, but it's faster than a crayfish! MULTITASK!"; desks were clustered together, making four-to-four groups where workers conversed, eyed each other, watched videos, often listened to the same music, and joked. The CFO (Chief Finance Officer) Murat, his junior Metin, the chief CRM (Customer Relations Manager) Aynur, her junior Gülşah, the coordinator and manager of graphic production Cüneyt, his juniors Uğur and Sezen, and several content managers and creative writers, such as Güzin and Gözde, and ultimately the 'doorman' Zahmet shared this floor. This floor had also the door that made into the apartment, so the flow of goods, foods and persons were confined by the busy corridors and gateways located on this floor. In contrast, the second floor was made after the image of order and an efficient work office, where the digital strategist (I), web page graphics designers, Ayla and Erdem, and several IT workers and code developers shared rooms. It was relatively smaller with a terrace, overlooking the business and financial district in Güvenler. The workers had earphones, and sat facing away, at their screens and seldom speaking compared to the sonic sphere of the first floor, with continuous music, laughter, banter and work-related chat.

²⁰ "Ajans ortamı": the promise of work shot through with entertainment.

The architectural rigor in relation to the nature of the work is carried out also in the aesthetics of the clear-cut, minimal, sterile design of the workplace. Given the historical context and the specific technical arrangements of digital work, we must not lose sight of the gateways that open up the concrete, lived space of the workplace to the indeterminate infrastructures, sonic scape, to the hum and drum of the outside world towards which the digitally altered images and tentative architectures of software were dispatched. The person who enters the apartment climbs to the top floor, ringing the bell or tapping the security card on the sensory black display juxtaposed to the door. Entering the agency, one is immersed in the multiplicity of beeps, blips, hums and a plethora of other noises, rhythms and murmurs. From one of the rooms and from the terrace, one can observe the daily flight of a flock of trained pigeons, flipping and altering their routes on the horizon of uncannily tall skyscrapers and (as Şeref had once remarked) “a sea of concrete”. The inner circle of the agency had the olfactory mix of detergent, unused plastic, dust, tea and air freshener. The fragile electronic devices were held in check by Firat, the CFO, as he had under his command with the IT specialist the company’s credit card with which he ordered services of other providers who entered almost daily to the workplace to repair, remedy and transport our broken tools and any damaged concrete material.

The marketplace below the agency opened to the bustling district of Karanfil, where kiosks, restaurants, cafes and markets delivered goods and services to the financial district of Güvenler, full to the brim with automobiles, malls, lights, billboards and advertising displays. The routes of transportation remained relatively accessible for many of the workers and there were some who started working there for its location (*merkezi*). The infrastructure, electric lines, water pipes, natural gas routes, the

mushrooming cafes and kiosks, along with domestic appliance stores made up Karanfil into an rapidly emerging, always-in-construction, multi-faceted and tumultuous neighborhood. Indeed, the striking difference an advert poses regarding its modes of consumption and conditions of production, is lived also in the radical shift from the makeshift adaptation of Karanfil to an emerging economy of finance and digital infrastructures, including several advertising agencies. The design of the workplace which is supposed to be upbeat, hip, colorful, comfy, and spacious, played on the entrenched but faltering belief that the work is -in itself- an entertaining pursuit.

The making of the workplace as a media-saturated, wireless, high-tech and entertaining working environment should be supplemented with the conception of advertising as ‘fun’. Above, I have argued that the commodity form is cynically produced by the advertiser²¹, and that the contradictory statement with how the work is experienced involves a labor of self-persuasion and hype-production. With slight alteration, Evans-Pritchard’s (1976, p.88) observation of magicians among the Azande can also be extended to my initial consideration of workers of digital advertisement:

“There is no doubt that the success of the witch-doctor's [advertiser's] profession is largely due to the fact that he does not rely entirely upon the settled faith of his [assumed] audience, but makes belief easier by compelling their surrender to sensory stimuli” (ibid, p.88)

The extent to which an advertiser can assume the publics with which she would intersect, and without doubt the initiation and the afterimage of digital communities, follow a different logic than ritual gatherings of magic. The problem regarding the tabulations and calculations of labor and attention will be elaborated in Chapter 2. The solemnity that defines ‘creative’ advertising work today is compounded with a jovial

²¹ See footnote 16.

atmosphere and the said atmosphere is essential for the advertising work to be maintained, despite the fact that almost a quarter of all the images produced are disseminated and obtained from places outside of the designated workplace.

The first day I stepped into JazzRabbit, the workers and tools were just being put into place, and I had the chance to settle to the new office with the rest of the workers, expanding on the opportunity of small talk that accompanies the feeling of being out of place, a mix of novelty and the uncanny. I was taken into work with the fancy title of 'digital strategist' according to the plan Peksimet, Ekmel and I had made in the plenary job talk that took approximately fifteen minutes. They were excited to have a graduate of Economics from a prestigious university who convinced them that he can adapt to the workplace in a short span, and would agree to no more than the (official) minimal wage. I was assigned the title of Digital Strategist, the particularities of which still elude me, since what I actually produced in the course of my stay were tabulations, calculations, presentations, branding, advertising, imaging, account monitoring and translations. The first two months passed as I attended business meetings with Ekmel, spent at least an hour with every worker to get to know them and see how they lived up to their job titles, conversed, smoked, drank, and laughed with the workers. At the end of the second month, though, I was asked to calculate the worth of the work social media planners/executers were doing, and this came with its own tensions. Gradually, however, I became a trusted companion of my informants.

The materials I have gathered comprise of interviews with the workers, particularly with those who provide images, videos and games to participatory web platforms. They do this by taking on themselves the brand of other corporate entities, usually referred to as 'lovebrands'. For instance, the boss, Rahmi had defined himself

worthy of being a 'Kiğılı Man' (*Kiğılı²² erkeğı*), looking and acting like one, performing daily at work and on his social media accounts. These brands include a wide array of clients, from bakeries to construction conglomerates, advocate moguls to private hospitals, retail companies to 'manhunt' agencies, providing content approximately to (and these are only those who directly follow/subscribe to the accounts that possess the 'official' markers of brands) 800,000 users, with only a 20-30% of actively involved potential customers who flag, like, share, comment on, locate themselves, mention, follow (subscribe) by referencing the brand name/logo/icon. I made use of customer meetings, digital strategies, architectural forms of the workplace and digital platforms, videos, games, representative commodity images, infrastructures, stories, data, workplace magazines and books, and a plethora of other written/visual/sensory materials and texts to write this thesis.

1.2 Advertising today

This subsection does not have grandiose aims, such as developing a novel theoretical insight into digital advertising. That being said, Digital Advertising today, by dint of its discursive and affective networks, challenges the critical theory of advertisement to-date (elaborated below). It is customary to claim that the nature and tenets of advertising are tied with technologies of mass communication, boundaries of legality, and the organization of work: both the advertiser and critical scholars of advertising relate to the advent and ordinariness of advertising through a discourse that ties in well with technological change. At JazzRabbit -and these forms are almost already obsolete- the

²² Kiğılı is a male-only retail giant operating in several countries, main branches and brand history being from Turkey.

customer relations department mostly produced advertising formats such as banners, social media campaigning, e-posters, apps and their ads, engaging with viral-going twitter and Instagram users, Artificial Intelligence, interactive games, and what was gaining popularity when I entered, ‘Virtual Reality’ (VR) and ‘Artificial Reality’ (AR) simulations. Although the reader may be struck by the novelty of such methods of advertising, it is safe to say that advertisement enterprise is both a symptom and a pilot for the production of novel technology and subjectivity in an array of techniques, tools, 'knowledges' and power. This is expanded by behavioral studies, publicly and privately funded research programs, and the built infrastructure regarding technological tools and research institutions.

This thesis is not written to speculate, argue and demonstrate that advertising defines the deceptive instance whereby consumers are lulled by ideological conspiracies of capitalist exploitation. However, it is also not written to show that it is much more than that, that advertising is the definitive act through which meaningful communication takes place today, nor solely to make the case that some ‘social information’ is embedded in the products, which get mediated by the often cynical endeavor called advertising. It is one thing to say that the materiality and the circulation of objects matter, and another to show how and by what means, antinomies -conflicting processes inherent to subjective meaning-making- translate cultural processes into the production of desire and exploitation of labor. The following is a very short summary of scholarly divisions on the importance of studying advertisement. Without further ado, rather than making a comparative literature review, I lay out the main problems of behavioral advertising (as well as the problems inherent to traditional forms of advertising) and the stakes of making of digital commodity images.

The talk of advertising is the talk of dichotomies at the heart of the commodity form: about living and mediating the rift between participation and obsolescence, abstraction and embodiment, and memory and anticipation. That is, what can be loosely termed as 'advertising talk'²³ aligns the practices of advertisement with theoretical trajectories, which, rather than detailing and understanding how these contradictions play out, hastily judge these practices according to visions and versions of properly functioning societies. On the contrary, since the production of a commodity image embodies and works through the “gap” (between the dichotomies), the production of adverts attests to practices and processes in the making of the image: the meanings of images, their itinerary through business discourse and structures²⁴, and their afterlife necessarily go beyond the intentions and imaginations that have contributed to its making. The earlier representational and/or critical studies of advertisement fall into several categories that are shifting together historically and structurally with the normative vision of what the “real” behind the representation of images corresponds to (Manning, 2008, 2010).

The well-beaten path is of course the age-old analytical and cultural distinction between what is to count as use value and what as exchange value. This discussion is the gold standard when dealing with the making of a commodity and its image as a felt

²³ Thankfully, John Lye identified the major categories of advertising talk: *the conspiracy theory* ("the minds of the populace are being manipulated deliberately...in the pursuit of profit"), *the dominance theory* (theory of hegemony, claiming that media moguls and capitalist business owners have the same set of mind), *the homogenization theory* ("the media function to mainstream society", effacement of contingency and difference), *the political economy theory* ("to control labor one controls, among other things, information and ideas"), *the commodification theory* ("We become privatized individuals in a world of status and exchange value. In the meantime the real value of goods is replaced by their 'sign' value, or status value"), and finally *the erosion of rationality theory* (in the false world produced by advertising and commodification, we lose our capacity to communicate -a stumbling block to democracy-). Retrieved from <https://brocku.ca/english/jlye/criticaltheories.php>

²⁴ Consider the adman's truism: "the advertisement that works is not necessarily the advertising that sells goods" (Mazarella, 2003, p.25).

reality. But it is also a hot potato. Baudrillard's (1975) classical lampoon against Marx's historical and philosophical distinction between the use and exchange of things radically unmoored signs from their supposed material counterparts. According to Baudrillard's critical project, consumer society is marked by the rapid circulation of signs, blurring the boundaries between what is consumed for what purpose. This corralled individuals into a race of accumulating signs through consumption which corresponds to better positions and life standards. "Sign value" is his intervention into the dyad of use and exchange values, acclaiming the whole business of consumption as a socially constructed preoccupation. However, his project undermines the complexity and historical acuity of Marx's distinction between use and exchange value (Harms & Keller, 1991; Jhally, 1987; Klein, Leiss & Jhally, 1986). Perhaps his later writings are conceptually innovative and interesting, elaborating (not on 'hyperreality', but) on the introduction of computerized calculations, codes and algorithms as metaphors for thinking in place of individuals who comprise the advertised and media-saturated, 'advanced' capitalist societies (Baudrillard, 1990). Accordingly, the logic of *recombination* introduced by computer technologies works through the incorporation of free floating signs into *recycles, cycling* the natural use value into an endless concatenation. The 'natural' is wholly subsumed under the technical-symbolical. In this framework, what we call culture is the corollary of the medium which travels aggressively with its logic of simulation, reproduced by 'culture workers', such as advertisers, celebrities and popular private enterprises. This approach is fruitful insofar as it does not lose sight of the effects technological tools and gadgets have on the circulation of signs; but it is redundant for it is also nostalgic of the 'symbolic exchange' that supposedly marked the socialization of persons into societal organization (Noys, 2014; Toscano, 2007; Harms & Keller, 1991).

The critical studies that have gathered around the usage of the dynamic concept of ‘branding’ expedite the ubiquity and technical ‘determinations’ of signs without such a reactionary position. It avoids the pitfalls of ‘the talk of advertising’, which makes it suitable to understand precarious work, the making of national values, the affective composition of technical developments and in general is more wieldy of the developments in the technology of advertising. Whereas the technology of advertising has supplemented the tools researchers and advertisers have traditionally used with deeper, more reliable, aggressive²⁵ ways, the economies of circulation unleashed by financial capitalism have fed the making and unmaking of the ways in which data is produced, packaged, marketed and valorized, changing whole sectors, neighborhoods and attitudes through the media we use in everyday life (LiPuma, 2002; Thrift, 2014; Beer, 2013; Beer & Burrows, 2013). This involves several tensions, one being the condition that:

“as the indexical relationship between the mark and the product moves from separable to inseparable, contiguous to coextensive, the manner of realization of the different material exponents of brand increasingly will vary according to the variable form of the product, leading to what one might call the morphology of brand” (Manning, 2010, p.41).

‘Branding’ denotes a material excess from the meanings that have historically accountable roots (of practices) in relation to spatial²⁶ and ‘advanced’ methods of advertising. The material and imagistic anchors of these practices are ‘policed’ by financial instruments (Nakassis, 2013). Another remarkable application of ‘branding’ involves the labor of making icons, indexes, symbols and images stand for substances,

²⁵ Often in a way that posed an infringement on privacy see McStay (2011, 2014), Chun (2006, 2015).

²⁶ Space here involves both the urban soundscapes and landscapes, and the online interfaces and screens. It is safe to say that the amount and techniques of advertisement online will proliferate in their duration and impact.

for instance through the discursive formations of the ‘youth’, the ‘citizen’ and the ‘nation’ (Allison, 2009; Özkan & Foster, 2005; Manning, 2008; Yurchak, 2006)²⁷. ‘Branding’ is also about how the technical developments in tracking, categorizing, and ‘recursivity’²⁸ are mapped onto the tangible world, since “both the function and temporality of certain objects shift in relation to their explicit production as branded memorabilia” (Moor, 2003, p.40). Another tension that runs through theories of advertising bears on the solidification, capturing, making, constitution and expansion that the commodity image itself produces. This regards the question of how and in which form we can imagine a public of advertisement, whether it be that of consumers, producers, or brands as shifting forms²⁹.

Lazzarato’s (2004) claim is that corporations and advertisement facilitate not only the production of the commodity form that works on the level of individual consciousness. The striking difference of contemporary informational technology entails the production of *events*, that is, the preempting and spatiotemporal channelization of the communicational and creative potentials of workers in the service of the corporation. In other words, as I also argue below, the hopes, dreams and desires are harnessed into the production of a world that is distinctly commercial. Advertising enters here as the making of not only ‘the publics’ of advertising, but is also more pervasive in that it works to make the material and imaginary world resonate with the time and the rhythms of the

²⁷ This can be in the form of emphasizing the ‘localness’ of a certain product by making it harness the attention of tourists and local consumers as the product is made to embody the quality of belonging to that local area. It can also be in the form of privileging the universality of a supposedly national/local value. See Manning (2010) for a detailed positioning of research regarding substance-making in the more comprehensive theoretical consideration of branding.

²⁸ The algorithmically altered data flows back into daily life. See Thrift (2014), Günel (2014), Beer (2009, 2013) for further suggestions.

²⁹ See the first subsection in Chapter 2.

body³⁰. This is inseparable from a process whereby both identification and the production of desire towards brands (branding) occur. Consumption is the making of a consumer under the “sequence and rhythm of images...[which] resonate with us like motifs or chorus”, which is not simply about:

“buying or consuming...[for] it involves belonging to a world, adhering to a certain universe...[as] this world is constituted by the arrangements of statements, by regimes of signs where the expression is called advertisement/publicity and the expressed constitutes a solicitation, an order which are in themselves valuations, judgements and beliefs about the world, of oneself and others” (Lazzarato, 2004, pp.189-90).

Accordingly, this is similar to saying that now "our representationally available existence is subtended by a pure perception and a pure memory of which we have no direct conscious awareness, but which can be assessed and manipulated by technological dispositifs” (Toscano, 2007, p.85)³¹. As human labor gets more and more 'machinic', the machines themselves allow the generation of life-worlds, which then become the grounds on which the control on life, language and affects escalates. This in turn brings about a new form of value (cf. Negri, 1999; Staples, 2007) that is beyond labor time: this is an understanding of how these values can be re-appropriated to bring about a temporal modification and thus resistance to contemporary workings of capitalist abstraction. Thus, a metabolic recognition of the human capacity to invent is taken in relation to different segments, as "the living body becomes an object to be governed not for its intrinsic value, but because it is the substratum of what really matters: labor-power as

³⁰ See Lazzarato (2004, 2014) and especially Berardi (2012) on the advertisement, its colors, contours, sounds, images and affects (in short, rhythm) generating ways of being which work on elementary psychological faculties, for instance through mimesis and invention.

³¹ Toscano engages critically with the implications on memory and time Lazzarato's conceptualization has, as he (Toscano) sees the theoretical backdrop of Lazzarato's work hinging more on the time and image matter (of adverts) and their technical articulation than human conscious capabilities essential to human subjectivity.

the aggregate of the most diverse human faculties" (Virno, 2004, p.82). In Lazzarato's understanding, there are 'vital strategies' of 'collective powering', such as the faculty of mimesis and capacity for invention, which defy total abstraction and absorption into the commodity form. This remainder of political potential, which is named *noopolitics* (Read, 2016), seeks to overturn the modulation of time as generative force in the Post-fordist condition. The new technological tools can play with and manipulate time as flux and reflux, which allows for new modes of 'subjectivation'³². Nigel Thrift (2006, 2008), for instance, has written extensively on the communities of consumers who are not simply duped individuals subsumed by the capitalist forces that trample the multilayered subjective time, but as communities of practice that challenge the way we understand space and value. Toscano (2007) argues that although this is "phenomenologically" rich and conceptually innovative, it nonetheless accepts the ground on which capitalist abstraction works: Post-fordist aesthetic, technical and social configurations that modulate time as images and flows (of images, money, affects, beliefs etc.)³³.

³² See Read (2016), Lazzarato (2004, 2014), although see also Toscano *ibid.* and Tsianos and Papadopoulos (2006). The latter develop this insight into a prescription for *departure*: "That is not just simply to go with time, but to insert various speeds in the embodied experience of time. Tarrying with time constitutes the moment of the reappropriation of the productive means of immaterial labour (this because the productive means of immaterial production is the whole living labour of each individual). In other words, it is the moment where the immaterial worker's subjectivity is not constituted as a device for productivity, but it breaks the immediate flow of time, it becomes frightening because it escapes the dominance of the immaterial linear chronocracy...[What matters] is that tarrying with time is purposeless in itself, it has no object, it is non organisable, it defies regulation."

³³ This is not the position I take, my position is similar to Read (2016), Staples (2007) and Rosi Braidotti (2006, pp.144-5):

"The new global situation engendered by techno-science requires a robust new theory of the subject as a multi-layered entity that is not unitary and still capable of ethical and political accountability...Becoming nomadic is neither the swinging of the pendulum of dialectical opposition, nor is it the unfolding of an essence in a teleologically ordained process leading to the establishment of a supervising agency - be it the ego, the self or the bourgeois liberal definition of the individual. Nomadic becomings are rather the affirmation of the unalterably positive structure of difference, meant as a multiple and complex process of transformation, a flux of multiple becomings, the play of complexity, or the principle of not-One". Nomadic becomings are not molar identities and do not coincide with identity categories. Although they are impersonal and non-organizable, these differences may be occupied by subject-positions as they materialize on the skin, in attitudes, habits etc.

Thus, it is the constitution of the milieu itself, the event in the form of potentialities, consumption in its relational and ethical baggage, affects in their technical flow that inform workplace and social subjectivities, productive capacities, and affective reproduction of life. Recent explorations of the affective and ethical dimensions of advertising, consumption and consciousness relate to this readjustment. The packaging of emotions and ethical relations in and around consumption has become enmeshed in certain buffers³⁴ that safeguard consumers from the injunction to really “enjoy”, while making their activity available to imaginary relations between products (McGowan, 2004; Salecl, 2004; Žizek, 2008; Bell, 2013). That is to say, the projection of convictions to change this world, say, for a more sustainable environment ties well with the marketing of that product which contributes to the calamity it discursively remedies³⁵.

The not-yet-lived potentialities are sampled, distributed, patterned in a way that contracts the potential of things to come³⁶. The reanimation of space through the externalization of data and memory, and the shrinking of response intervals to the value

³⁴ 'Anxiety' for Salecl (2004), is such a buffer.

³⁵ What is perhaps equally important (and resonates with Lazzarato's re-reading of how the production of “the world itself” gains precedence), are the specific techniques that work on memory. Luciana Parisi and Steve Goodman (2011, p.165) have recently claimed that the present is produced beyond the preempting of lived memory through images, institutions, archives and spatial constructs. A form of “mnemonic control” invests:

“in intuitive, prehensive anticipation...[orienting itself] not just to the deferral of death through an investment in living memory, stored in humans or in machines, but also in the production of unlived memory, a preemptive memory of the future that does not oppose, but rather allies itself with, uncertainty and indeterminacy” (ibid, p.165).

³⁶ The individual and affective value that extends labor to the entire day, through anticipation, feedback, simulation, sampling and the becoming adaptive of norms to patterns (Massumi, 2008; Terranova, 2000; Clough, 2007, 2013; Savat, 2009) defines the post-fordist condition. The most fundamental aim of this arrangement is the way in which desire and belief are produced, itself a question of the organizational and libidinal processes, traversing biological, physical, and affective memory and knowledge. It is in that sense that proletarianization, in Stiegler's elaboration, ties the affective composition of the workforce (Lordon, 2014) (“norms and structures that organize action”) essentially to the transfer of knowledge from humans to machines (Read 2016, pp.164-6). Behavioral advertising (McStay, 2011), neurological sciences (Rose & Abi-Rached, 2013), practices of coding (Chun, 2015) and their incorporation into the production and routing of managerial sciences and their specific discourses are symptoms and focal points through which these technical and mnemonic knowledges and affects are produced.

generation gained by the labor of circulation and production (cf. Terranova, 2010) go together. The “free” labor of consumers and internet users are put to use by practices of data mining, surveillance, ISP networks and cookies, and in addition to voluntary practices of outsourcing, they extend remunerated labor to the creative capacity set forth by communicational practices and digital platforms.

The re-organization of work places by the tenets of new managerial sciences attests to the making of unlived memories, through the use of algorithmically organized past data and the pervasive belief in the calculability and facticity of such modeling (see also Chapters 1 and 3). The idea behind this is fairly simple. There are certain selective algorithmic processors that are put in place by coders, which sift through data that trace past behavior. These may be indicative of consumption patterns, i.e. what a user had bought in her earlier online consumptions. The data is clustered and categorized with a certain pre-programmed belief into what past behavior corresponds to, in terms of ‘taste’. The user is then faced with suggestions and online content that is decided by the processors of software, hence ‘recursivity’.

As Born’s (2010) work at the BBC demonstrates, this process touches not only on debates of privacy, data collection, algorithmic and ‘machinic’ developments of technology which enable the collection of vast amounts of data, making the surging interest bubble attractive and marketable. The double bind of the ‘preemptive’ production of ‘unlived memory’ is primarily moored to the overlapping (in humans and algorithms) of the conviction that people (read users) desire certain lifestyles, and act accordingly. “Imitation as projection” works by indexing the work of ‘creative production’ to what is projected to the future, effecting the production of a certain expectancy in the here and now. This, according to Born (ibid, p.238), is a fundamental

aspect of how markets are constituted everyday by “forecasting”, itself a “theatre of abstractions in which are enacted collective imaginings of the future, which are eventually concretized in commercial and regulatory strategies, thus (per)forming how markets develop”. Thus, ‘invention’ temporally folds in on itself and becomes enmeshed in predictive technologies that are contingent on the human belief in their efficiency.

Forecasting becomes “a sturdy oracle: through projection as hypothetical imitation, and its subsequent actualization in strategies, economic transitions are made more tractable” (ibid.). Another way to approach this is to figure out how “fellow feeling” works; as my colleague Gözde at JazzRabbit claimed:

"There is no way around it, after some point you have to imagine [konumlandırmak, literally 'locating'] yourself inside what you are writing as if it were your own. I am not really buying a house from Ağaoğlu, but I feel as if I will. Let me give you a specific example. I never dreamt of living in a gated community or in mass housing with security and all that, and I know that I don't want to but still feel as if I have to... It boils down to convincing others but I also feel convinced, but of course this passes very quickly... I don't know how right this is, but how we do it is like this. We take the target audience as a whole, say, as a style of living [yaşamstili, a 'sociological' term than the more ambiguous term lifestyle], how this is done in the sector. We do not only take the qualities of the product but [we take it] with a life around it, we feed the content with [symbols of] that the style of living. For instance if this is a luxury house what kinds of hobbies these people have, where do they go when they travel, where and what they eat if they are informed and rich enough to purchase this house."³⁷

I expand on this comment more in Chapter 2, adding this to Fırat's comments as he showed me how to cluster our target community with the data provided (by Google and

³⁷ "Evet tabii ki elimde değil yani yapacak bir şey yok bir noktadan sonra yazdığım şeylerin içinde konumlandırıyorum kendimi. Aslında o benim hayatımmış gibi geliyor. Ben de gerçekten Ağaoğlu'ndan ev satın almıyorum öyle bir hayalim yok. Ama sanki alacakmışım gibi hissediyorum öyle yapıyorum yani o işi. Ya mesela şöyle spesifik bir örnek vereyim ben mesela müstakil bir evde yaşıyorum hiç öyle bir sitede filan yaşama hayalim de olmadı yani. Büyük sitede oturma hayalim olmadı ama öyle bir müşterim olduğu için o kadar onunla içli dışlı oldum ki acaba öyle bir yerde mi yaşamam lazım sonuçta birilerini ikna etmek için. Bunun için bir şeyler yazdığım için bazen ben bile ikna olur gibi oluyorum..ama çabuk geçiyor. Yani evet bilmiyorum bu ne kadar doğru ama bu bizim kullanmaya çalıştığımız ve yaptığımız bir şey. Biz mesela hedef kitleyi bir bütün olarak alıyoruz mesela bir yaşam biçimi olarak alıyoruz. Sektörde de bu böyle yapılır. Biz sadece ürün değil yaşam biçimi alıyoruz kitleyi o yaşam biçimini destekleyen ve sonunda onu o ürüne ulaştıracak şekilde besliyoruz içerikleri. Öyle düşünüp yapıyorum bu adam bu lüks evi alabilecek potansiyeldeyse o zaman pahalı hobilere teknelere filan da ilgisi vardır..."

Facebook) to our company. Behavioral advertising works through advertisers who draw data from various sources to make these predictions. *JazzRabbit* was less ambitious in its data reach, but that did not prevent the ruling trio and workers such as Gözde, Fırat, Ayşenur and Güzin to take on themselves the work of harnessing samples with their own understandings of the advertised product and the corresponding target audience.

The legal setting in Turkey, is not well developed both for the tracing of cookies and ISPs conducted by transnational mobile ‘datavallence’ companies (such as Phorm)³⁸. Due to a silent non-transparency policy of the BTK and its collaborator TT (Türk Telekom- a formerly state owned Turkish Telecommunication company) regarding this issue, data collection and trade cannot be scrutinized- they are not made public (SoL, 2013). The soft-data collected by quasi-transparent companies, such as Google and Facebook, like they did with our company, do collaborate and open their data to the service of advertising companies.

Behavioral forecasting (the 'oracle' in the “sturdy oracle”, here made by advertisers), in its algorithmic and behavioral instruments, works on four levels. It differentiates the functioning of space³⁹; second, it changes the sequencing of events⁴⁰; third, it defines (the contours of the) the organization of activity, as the algorithmic data functions through matching and routing. For the fourth aspect of this differentiation that makes the practice of forecasting resonate with a subject, we should turn to the ways in which consumer culture is influenced by behavioral experiments and “mnemonic

³⁸ For a better understanding of behavioral advertising, their specific history in Turkey and to the sort of imaginaries it coordinates, see Chapter 2. There I focus on the ways in which statistics, tables, figures and commodity images are imbued with novelty and the belief in the correspondance between calculable online impact and subjective/behavioral human capacities.

³⁹ I do not just mean the online interface but also have in mind the online platform as an architectural form cf. Bratton (2010, 2014), see Chapter 4.

⁴⁰ Plays temporally with modes of behavior and imitations, effecting both the standardization of behavior and its specialization as distinct for each user.

control”. Particularly, the crucial change that Deleuze (1995) theorizes is about the production of “dividuals,” not as opposed to but in tandem with the production of an individual (Savat, 2009). Anticipation, understood here as pattern recognition, involves as much seeing as bringing about the outcome of future behavior (Savat, 2009; Bogard, 1996; Castel, 1991; Adams et al, 2009). Thus, the fourth aspect of the workings of database advertising involves the play of forces that tie knowledge production to the externalization, transmission and rerouting of memory, in a way that increasingly disposes of subjective intention and cognition (see Massumi, 1995, 2002b). This is related to distributions effected by power and knowledge: forms of advertising had always been in a relationship of co-constitution with the arrangement of related institutions, established hierarchical relations, laws, particular cultural codes and useful mechanisms and instruments.

In this schema, Gözde’s *fellow feeling* is as contingent on algorithmic and automated responses culled from databases (which of course raise questions on ownership, surveillance and the monopolization of data) as it is on her conviction that it is her ‘insight’, derived from her categorizations that consumer culture feeds and on which it depends. The “fellow”, however, is not bound by space and time and can be drawn from anywhere and anytime. It works on the temporal level as it increasingly (although never fully) determines the shape of the near future by curtailing the possibilities and contingencies the past and the recent present bring about. Crucial to the making of aesthetic communities of consumption, and productive memories of patterned consumer behavior is the *sampling* which helps building these patterns, and is distinctly oblivious to human cognizance (Savat, 2009, p.54; Deleuze, 1992, pp.179-80). Digital Advertisers tap on the management of behavior -enabled by new data technologies-,

subjecting it to their conflicting feelings of belonging, all of which produce the style of living and the *lifestyle* of imagined consumers. They produce a flitting image, a slick of affect (which gets amplified as it circulates). These products are markers of ‘ways of living’ that come into contact with consumer communities, data harvesting companies, legal limits and human attention. Later on, these images do not usually cohere into long-lasting brands and logos, nor do they find a place in catalogues⁴¹.

1.3 Affects, labor, the production of the work ethic, and the Post-fordist condition

The acceleration of the rhythms of life sits within a complex arrangement of the social that generates conduits shot through with contradictions: arising from the complex and global interrelations between the perceptive and the affective, the embodied and the abstracted, the multiply temporal and durational and the molar. I present an array of accounts in Chapter 3, explaining the acceleration of perceptual, sensual and affective aspects of lives under the condition of increased pervasiveness of mediating tools and information flows of contemporary capitalism. As the world of advertising and pervasive consumption set store by the creative force of inter-subjective relations, the model of the factory to represent the social nature of work no longer holds. In effect, the capacity to labor as well as to reproduce life are harnessed through “the subjective, affective, volitional aspects of production and reproduction which tend to become the main sources for the extraction of surplus value” (Toscano, 2004, p.210). This calls for a methodology that engages critically with the current arrangement of distinct actors,

⁴¹ Perhaps digital advertising images embark on a journey toward their inevitable transformation into “the debris of audiovisual production...a ghost of an image, a preview, a thumbnail, an errant idea, an itinerant image...squeezed through slow digital connections, compressed, reproduced, ripped, remixed” (Steyerl, 2012, p.33) and yet sampled and put to use.

spaces and affects of contemporary capitalism. Taking the speeding up of circulation to be the result of the accomplishment of a mere technological change is at fault.

Digital anthropology as an emerging field does not focus on why or what it means to be connected ‘more than ever’, but rather entertains the question of interconnectedness through relational indexing of cultures, historical and economic change, the stickiness of the "productivist ethos" and the binaries between real and unreal, material and immaterial, actual and virtual. By this I mean that it can help us understand why we see “predigital worlds as less mediated...[for] the rise of digital technologies has created the illusion that” as if they were (Boellstorff, 2015; Horst & Miller, 2012, p.14). On the other hand, digital technologies do change practices of imaging that are not simply representations, but are ways that inform how we act in time, and are imbricated with how we perceive space, time, motion and action, directly speaking to the ways in which we understand reality (Hansen, 2004, 2006). Perception in action is partly informed by the appearance of objects and commodities (also commodity images) tied to their abstract original (imagined) counterpart, but there is always an affective remainder, an afterlife of the image and its particular embodied effect that plays out on human behavior (Massumi, 2002a, 2002b, 2008).

Hence, an advertising image, circulating via digital domains and networked relations, retains the tensions that are inherent to a modern regime of realist veracity. The modes of the advert's circulation belies the fact that the “totalizing narrative” of abstracting images (which stick to adverts) circulate the idea that “the radical potential of the image was betrayed in favor of endless stereotypy”; which is itself contingent on the capacity attributed to the commodity form to subsume ambiguities, rather than being generative of the tension (between the 'original' image and its 'mere' representation) in a

given historical period (Mazarella, 2003, p.55, see Chapter 2 and below). There is, of course, an effacement of the particular (though not romantically embedded) histories of production and circulation that are represented by reference to their general equivalence.

Similarly, 'precarity' can be understood as the 'eating away of life' by the structuring tensions of capitalist working conditions, laying more tension on existing class, sexual and racial inequalities. Instead of thinking of the production of a capitalist 'zombie' class of 'the precariat', the ethnographer should attend to what the acceleration of life, the attenuation of workers' rights, and 'flexibilization' do: Anne Allison (2013, p.26) has argued that "in the terrain of social living, this [the ubiquity of irregular work] indicates a strain: straining to fit human time, energy, and relationships into a calculus of capitalist value". The making and unmaking of beliefs in this world is a stake that takes the organizational frameworks, empirical facts, racial and gendered histories in perspective and is analytically sound, conceptually innovative and critically productive.

The work ethic is reproduced today -and this is certainly not a rare argument- not only in the 'naturalization' of certain faculties like the 'scientificity' of rational calculation, private property, and the equalizing tendency of laws and institutions. The joyful affects produced towards working conditions also reproduce a work ethic, all of which may be conducive or detrimental to the working subject's 'flourishing' (Berlant, 2011; Weeks, 2011; Harvey, 2000; Lordon, 2014)⁴². This is not the same thing as saying

42 See Tsianos and Papadopoulos (2006) and their influential definition of the post-fordist condition of precarity:

"Precarity is the embodied experience of the ambivalences of immaterial productivity in advanced post Fordism. The embodied experience of precarity is characterised by: (a) vulnerability: the steadily experience of flexibility without any form of protection; (b) hyperactivity: the imperative to accommodate constant availability; (c) simultaneity: the ability to handle at the same the different tempi and velocities of multiple activities; (d) recombination: the crossings between various networks, social spaces, and available resources; (e) postsexuality: the other as dildo; (f) fluid intimacies: the bodily production of indeterminate gender relations; (g) restlessness: being exposed to and trying to cope with the

that there is a fundamental change in what makes us live, naturalize, adopt the main values that uphold a regime of endless work and consumption that secures the geographically, sexually, ethnically, and historically uneven accumulation of surplus value. There nonetheless is a technological change through which we behave partly informed by 'machinic' networks⁴³.

Then, to say that there is no instance today in which we cannot *not* consume and pay attention (to online networks and technologies) is an empirical observation the understanding of which should be cast in relations, institutions, meanings and circuits of attention (Crary, 2014)⁴⁴. 'Media anthropology' and the debate over whether 'the anthropology of mediation' can and should be clustered as a sub-discipline to understand electronic communication, its ways of apprehension and circulation is a historical question. This may as well be "framed historically by the collapse of cold-war geopolitics and geoeconomics, by the rise of market (neo)liberalism on a global basis, and by a concomitant exploration throughout the human sciences of analytical models based on liquidity and flow", insofar as the practical use of digital media "highlights mediating practices, technologies, spaces, materials and institutions" it interacts with (Boyer, 2012, pp.386-7). The new tools through which consumption and production are

overabundance of communication, cooperation and interactivity; (h) unsettledness: the continuous experience of mobility across different spaces and time lines; (i) affective exhaustion: emotional exploitation, or, emotion as an important element for the control of employability and multiple dependencies; (j) cunning: able to be deceitful, persistent, opportunistic, a trickster."

⁴³ This process is rampant with the introduction of participatory web platforms and the tracking of attention. Among others, see for instance Beer and Burrows (2007, 2010, 2013), Terranova (2010), Ateş (2013). The simplified version of what I am trying to say: consumers, surfers, clickers have become producers that are not entitled to the consequences of their effort. Online platforms outsource, hide, incite, privatize, solicit, objectify, classify, and utilize the said effort. The reader can also visit <https://thesocietypages.org/cyborgology/> for a platform that provides discussions and submissions regarding what new forms of laboring, imaging, and producing afford our lives.

⁴⁴ However, to declare images and their institutional renderings simply 'non-representational' is perhaps a way of short-circuiting the actual bodily tension that is lived affectively (Martin, 2013; Featherstone, 2010).

rearranged are also utilized in changing how the work ethic is prescribed. Spatial arrangements and ideological frameworks are still relevant through the practices of tabulation, calculation, arrangement, forecasting and so on, expanding on how ‘markets’ work, individuals adapt, and both governmental and corporate entities change according to the ‘temporal politics of markets’ (Born, 2007, 2009, pp.238-240). Markets and actors as consumers, however, cannot be assumed, but they make the market as they fashion themselves and objects⁴⁵. Data and interactive design muddle with what we understand from action. For instance, ‘software studies’ is an emerging field, looking at designs and data classifications which conflate (and is shot through with) real-life crisis and informational networks. It thrives on modulations of affects, which goes with the attribution of ‘agentic capacities’ to what is known as ‘codes’ (Chun, 2015)⁴⁶.

Technologies of mediation can be read by looking at changing structural formations, and the affective capacities they are in tandem with.

The Fordist labor regime is taken as the constellation of full employment, state pensions, organized labor, generalization of consumption stored in the historical period loosely between the Second World War until the late 1970’s. The making of the “consumer” and the constitution of a consumerist society and mass entertainment had, as

⁴⁵ Lazzarato (2004, p.9) avers that "Consumption cannot simply be reduced to buying or consuming... but above everything it involves belonging to a world, adhering to a certain universe...[as] this world is constituted by the arrangements of statements, by regimes of signs where the expression is called advertisement/publicity and the expressed constitutes a solicitation, an order which are in themselves valuations, judgements and beliefs about the world, of oneself and others." The incitement to consume, is above all the making of a style, a libidinal and productive rearrangement of the body. Indeed, consumption, more than it is a capitulation of social signs in the form of subjection to capitalism and the alienation of the soul, is a way of expression that can be thought at least as ambivalent. Rosi Braidotti (2006, p.144) draws on the “analytical distinction” of Deleuze and Guattari (1983) to conceptualize “market economy as an axiomatic system and capitalism as a historical event that captures and arrests the manifold potentials of a ‘free’ market”. See also DeLanda (1998).

⁴⁶ Recapitulating an older argument towards detailing the entanglement of crisis-prone social systems and their informational feedback production, Chun (ibid. 140) states that “software emerged as a thing—as an iterable textual program—through a process of commercialization and commodification that has made code logos: code as source, code as conflated with, and substituting for, action”.

its corollary, increased participation of the population in the work force, 'intellectual development', synchronic labor, generalized equivalence between work time and labor time, the promulgation of the ideology of the family etc. The contours of this understanding follow the "disciplinary formation" of society⁴⁷, the enclosures in the form of factory buildings, "a process of deployment and folding of the body" (Parisi & Terranova, 2000) where labor aside, a body was taken in its arrangements, places, functions, and capabilities to enhance the extraction of value (social and labor). Hence, the scientific studies on the health and reproductive capacities of the body went hand in hand with "home economics". However, the "turbulence" generated by the structuring antagonisms of the time, such as the one between labor and capital, had not resolved itself in the overturning of social norms and established institutions. Rather, the flows of money, the social time of institutions and the reproductive value of life assumed a different form, or had burst through rigid forms to adopt flexible, 'asynchronic', and more capillary qualities. The disciplinary society has not been dismantled entirely, but has readjusted some of its elementary social relations according to the "decoded flows" of arrangements that mark historical change: from markers of social status to codes, from the molding of the body in the image of the individual to its modulation in flows, to optimization, to the -at least discursive- eradication of hierarchy (Parisi & Terranova, 2000; Deleuze, 1995).

⁴⁷ This is a *very* loose adoption of Foucault (1975), see Deleuze's *Foucault* (2006) for a more comprehensive understanding of how capitalist processes speak to the disciplining of the body. Other historical facts are loose formulations I took from Terranova and Parisi (2000), Read (2016) and Berardi (2009, 2012).

The shift from “disciplinary society” to that of “control” can be observed by focusing on the way in which changing tools of communication⁴⁸ impose certain forms of discursive and non-discursive formations. Lazzarato (2009) has argued that the “ensemble” of economics, i.e. relations to work and unemployment, is undergirded by a complex and compounded arrangement of “two sets of dispositifs, those that establish the law, the norm, opinions, categories, knowledges (savoirs), and those that administer the conducts and the behaviour of individuals” (ibid, p.111). Discursive and non-discursive formations refer respectively to “words” and “things”, which are much more than that: whereas discursive formations are about statements, a space which defines the terrain of what is “articulable”, filling categories such as ‘unemployment’ and ‘work’ by issuing opinions, laws etc., non-discursive formations define the territory of “visibilities,” practices such as the law and insurance, schemas and logics that are applied daily and through which individuals are related to material income and social position (Lazzarato, 2009, Deleuze, 2006). The practices of “control” work on conducts.

⁴⁸ This allows for the classical contradiction posed by the Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall, -developed by Marx in *the Grundrisse*- to be made pervasive and displaced onto the entirety of the socius. The organic composition of capital, itself made of the ratio of constant capital (of machine and inventory investment) and variable capital (maintaining the subsistence of the workers for the labor power to reproduce itself) is effaced through the drive to develop more efficient means of production, to the point of shrinking human labor needed to produce commodities, undermining the surplus value which is the driving force in the first place. However, the technical rearrangement did not unfold that way: the productive capacities changed in nature but not in abundance, and the meaning generation through work was retained. What Marx could not foresee was the making of consumption (Stiegler, 2012; Debord, 1967; Jameson, 2012) which involves a more scientific and ‘cultural’ re-purposing of the productive capacities and the libidinal economy of subjects, expanding the question of political economy to that of aesthetic and informational production of subjectivities. The way in which social knowledge is passed onto machines, tools, and are automated through the uses of automation technologies -accompanied by the production of scientific knowledge, itself demonstrated in the model of behavioral advertising, code production and so on (see below)- thus breaks new ground in understanding how desire and affects take new roles in maintaining the hyperindustrialized, informational, ‘knowing’ (Thrift, 2005) capitalism. More than the making of automatons who are duped into a life of relentless consumption, political economy today should be understood as the production of habits, knowledges, affects; subjectivities.

It employs the existing structures to re-articulate meanings and protocols of action to the conceptual orbit of individuals⁴⁹. I turn to this question in Chapter 5.

Then, what we understand by the so-called re-institution of the social in Post-fordism refers to a certain arrangement of both the internal dynamics of these formations (discursive and non-discursive), and their interrelationship. Lazzarato recounts the making of the French working class in the Post-fordist labor organization by pursuing the changes in law and the shifting meanings of what it means to work, to labor (and so on) against the backdrop of the introduction of 'individual social responsibility'⁵⁰. Thus, discursive formations define human categories that bestow responsibility to the individual, whereas non-discursive formations knot them into economic 'precarity' by lawfully cutting their ties from secure work.

The main point I am trying to make is this: it might seem that terms such as “neoliberalization” had worked to muddle conceptual clarity in discussions on the composition of the work force and the capitalist organization of labor, more than it introduced new analytical tools. In this thesis, however, I take the use of the concept as a governing ethos that plays on the making of knowledge regarding how to conduct

⁴⁹ I want to complement Kathi Weeks' (2011) elaboration of structuring equalities and inequalities of the work ethic with Lordon's claim (by re-reading Spinoza and Marx) that capitalism, from the beginning has been the introduction of institutional bonds over the human capacity to strive and desire. The recombinations of “axioms” of capitalism with subjection -extending these dynamics onto relations and histories of certain institutions- have been recently attracting more theoretical attention to understand how technologies of communication and social value generate new forms of subjectivation (Braidotti, 2006; Guattari, 2009; Lazzarato, 2014; Povinelli, 2011a).

⁵⁰ The projection of responsibility onto the individual who is held responsible for her own acts is also referred to as 'responsibilization'. This is compounded with the making of competition laws. In the case of Turkey, Türem (2016) has recently claimed that the lived insecurity and anticipated uncertainty leaves individuals at a stalemate, they are burdened with the need to develop skills to embrace the future but also haunted by the changing pace of what they are required to cultivate in the first place: "one needs to strike the appropriate balance, which means that there is yet another level of looking at oneself from the outside and judging oneself from the view of economic/governmental rationality". This of course adds to their anxiety as the situation was exacerbated by the demand made through discursive and legal apparatus in the first place.

oneself in the face of social and economic change⁵¹. Philip Mirowski (2013), an economic historian, recently argued that, understood as the constellation of think-tanks, experts, economics departments, and individualizing forces of “markets” -as regulated institutions-, “neoliberalism” refers to the hard facts of certain assumptions about the ontology of the human and the market. More than who is or is not a “neoliberal”, we should perhaps take “neoliberalism” as an analytical concept that refers to institutional bonds undergirding the structures⁵² cultivating individual and market self-regulation. In other words, “neoliberal” marks not only the monetization of everyday life but also the calibration of social and political spheres in the image of the economic by way of conducting an order of governance (Brown, 2015) that works on the way in which we know about the human and the market. This is imminent by the twin operation on humans as dashboards of capabilities to be employed and corporations as sensuous beings, that accompany the setting up of markets as emotive structures, as “an ideal entity able to emit definite signals on what its perceptions, sensations, and affects are” (Terranova, 2010, p.162).

⁵¹ The network dependency of the labor force today, understood as the complex institutions and technological mediations one goes through both as a result of work and of the making of social relations, takes place in the digital network which is “formally autonomous but substantially dependent” (Berardi, 2009, p.89). Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt have popularized the understanding that labor has become *biopolitical*, that is, labor today does not only mark the capacity to embed products with living labor, but is directly capable and bent on producing social relations, and thus, what we understand from the value of labor should be extended to cover what they call “social value”, with an emphasis on revolutionary becomings and the role of ‘governance’ (1994; Negri, 1999)

⁵² The state has assumed new roles under ‘neoliberalism,’ which involve new institutions, remuneration mechanisms, classifications, economic calculations that manage the “intimacy” with which the category of citizens are made to correspond (Massumi, 2002; Muehlebach, 2013; Lazzarato, 2004, 2009, 2014; Braidotti, 2006). Capitalism “overcodes” thoughts, feelings and desires in generating the general equivalence of the value produced in the making of a commodity.

Hence, economics and subjectivity are cultivated together⁵³. This recognition is far from assuming the centrality of capitalism as an all-pervasive “economic logic”: what I call a governing ethos is constantly made and remade by “the relational performance of productive powers that exceed formal economic models, practices, boundaries, and market devices...[that flourish in] unstable, contingent networks of capitalism that surround us” (Bear, Ho, Tsing & Yanagisako, 2015). I would add to this what I aim to do in this thesis: to show that tensions that underlie and cohere ‘economic’ structures are lived by actors, workers, ideologues, politicians, products, spaces and times of contemporary capitalism.

1.4 The organization of this thesis

This thesis shows that advertising workers occupy an ambiguous ground where they sort images and commodities and make them circulate, carrying those tensions explained above. By the same token, advertisers sit and expand on several contradictions that are represented as such yet lived as antinomies⁵⁴. The all-pervasive tension strains the relationship within the lived reality of cynicism, where workers are burdened and divided by their understandings of how a commodity is valued. The social relationship that bestows value on a commodity and makes a commodity image work on the desires of aspiring consumers is effaced, and the value and the history that animate a product are

⁵³ Foucault’s writings in *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2008), where he collated groundbreaking lectures on the historical change dynamics of self-stylization suffered, shows that these techniques assumed different meanings and operational values. The lectures, however, and the making of ‘the homoeconomicus’ today should be compounded with the machinic, non-discursive and informational undercurrents of technological self-stylization. Among other influential accounts, fascinating writings of Moore (2011), Lazzarato (2009, 2014), Cockayne (2016), Savat (2009, 2013), Berardi (2012) comprise a diverse bunch.

⁵⁴ The wager here is that contradictions are destined for resolutions, whereas antinomies are structuring discrepancies that live on.

forgotten. The first tension, thus, is one with both a long and a short history: that of commodity fetishism. Chapter 2 deals with statistical models offered to customers (in the client-advertiser-consumer triad), the process at the end of which ‘the new’ becomes enchanted. This also speaks to the way in which certain images are made to represent managerial control, and the commodification of ‘events’. This is articulated in the context of digital tracking and behavioral advertising, in interactions with tools, materials and diagrams, informants, customer representatives and software. It also follows a strenuous process in which I was left in a stalemate: I was asked to produce diagrams and statistical methods and models to calculate the effort put by the workers in producing and disseminating product-related images and slogans, a process at the end of which some workers (though I figured which workers shortly) would be laid off. Moreover, the boss who asked of me to go through with this had already in mind which worker to lay off. The whole arrangement was nonetheless staged and legitimated by appealing to calculations and the ‘hard facts’ of performance criteria.

Another tension that is particularly difficult to theorize follows on from this chapter, and deals with the irreducibility of the productive contingency we live in: time. In Chapter 3, I map how temporal self-understandings, memories and anticipation are used, to understand how time works on bodies as affects that orient to the future one’s attention, desires and aspirations. I make use of theories that understand difference and repetition to be in constant flux and as generative (of new things, tensions, relations, etc.). Indicative neither of linear nor cyclical time, this approach, which tunes in to rhythms, flows, duration, and the sensuality of the place and the body is hard to anchor and write with. What I mean by ‘writing with’ is the knowledge as realization that the simultaneity of these flows is in contradiction with the linearity of writing. I stress the

ways in which the quandaries of time can be shown by looking at the circulations of materials at the workplace as they come into relationship with ways of being. Thus, I turn to representations, embodied tensions and self-proclamations, while pitting them against both historicist and wholesale approaches to the capitalist 'subsumption' of real time -be it under the clock-factory regime or the digital-financial-no-time regime-, and against the exaltation of local, particular and authentic time. I argue that there are multiple layers of time and space, co-constitutive of the present, to maintain work discipline, negative/positive affects, a space of reflection and/or the extraction of surplus value. I suggest that a theoretical approach that rethinks dead labor, dynamics of recollection, potentiality, space and materiality allows us to better understand the complexity and multivalent nature of both the presence and representations of time, particularly in relation to mediatized, digitalized and 'informationalized' lives.

In Chapter 4, I utilize several interviews, news, visuals, texts to understand how one produces enjoyment towards working conditions that puts that same body in a position of vulnerability, pain, and dissatisfaction. I course through the cultural codes of dissent at the workplace and the dynamics, tactics and combats that everyday frustration enacts, enables and at times, contracts. This will allow me to argue that it is through the objects, infrastructures and places of work that the trans-valuation of dissension gets mediated towards nostalgia, fear and hope. I consider this chapter an expansion on the second. It is a slightly altered version of a conference paper, which shows how the affective 'materialities' of tools, technologies and places at work hold workers in a precarious position. Under the structural and discursive impetus to accelerate their response to multitask and reduce time intervals, workers found themselves in a world of spatial control. I show that the driving force that keeps them working in and out of the

workplace, without clear boundaries of work and life and labor and play, hinges on the volatile volition to find pleasure in working. This, I suggest, needs to be detailed and understood through body images, the digital accumulation of data, the architecture of the workplace, and software related to which the life-worlds of digital media workers are made and remade.

I divert from these topics in Chapter 5, where I first present a discussion on the conceptual frameworks of ‘authenticity’ and ‘genuineness’ as the values through which workers are evaluated. I expand on the dynamics of expectation that the constant pretending of authenticity puts on workers. I understand this as a battleground where sincerity is performed as an affect that workers vie for, in order to gain work-related advantage over one another, creating a technique of individualization. Sorting through an array of Turkish politics, self-understandings and claims to being organic (genuine), I argue that sincerity as an affect underlies hierarchical positions, fears and tensions that define the everyday markers of work at JazzRabbit.

To sum up, each chapter deals with a certain aspect of time. The rhythms of historical formations that encircle conditions of work at the digital advertising agency are documented with particular aims. In Chapter 2, I try to understand the timeless assumption made through imagined habits of consumption and standards of life, as well as the making of the ‘image of novelty’. Time as the marker of changes in self-understanding is the stake of Chapter 3. Then, Chapter 4 is bent on defining rhythms that course through the infrastructures of the workplace, the hidden abode of *the backroom* and the indeterminate status of *the interface*. In these latter two chapters, I also try to make sense of time as it spills into spatial discipline. The final chapter deals with time as an affect of self-fashioning, which is shored up by hierarchical positions, represented

consumption habits and expectations of a performance that makes a subject's inner world synchronically observable. The conclusion recapitulates these arguments.

CHAPTER 2

PERVASIVE BRANDING:

IMAGING THE 'FACTUAL' AND THE RESIDUAL

“The new status of the object no longer refers its condition to a spatial mould-in other words, to a relation of form-matter- but to a temporal modulation that implies as much the beginnings of a continuous variation of matter as a continuous development of form.” Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold*

After my initial stage of adopting materials and work plans regarding the day-to-day workings of the agency, the de facto manager, Ekmel, called me to his room for a meeting. His plans involved a broad array of guidelines, 'starting from today' eventually making way for the merging of 'perception management' and corporate social responsibility. He predicted that digital advertising agencies will become the leading strategic hubs for corporate branding. It started with a simple plan of rearranging the work plan of JazzRabbit, and later building up towards making digital advertising the only game in town for “social entrepreneurship”.

The first project was rather simple: prepare a dynamic excel sheet to render the efficiency of each department for the bosses, particularly of the 'social media' segment. Content managers had the double responsibility of preparing 'visuals' (*görsele*),

commodity images of products they knew through our clients, and overseeing the circulation of these advertisements. Which involves evaluating the impact by measuring the attention (likes, shares, comments, opinions) and deleting or responding to complaints and ‘trolling’⁵⁵ activities of the user/consumers. So, the client would send us some suggestions through a look into their monthly product design, we would then collate graphics and photos with slogans and inform the company of our monthly plan. They would in turn ask us to revise those plans but in the end, we would reach an agreement with the company. The content managers then log in to the Facebook or Twitter account (bearing the name of the 'lovebrand') where they were the admins, and publish the agreed advertisement to all the followers, automating or manually publishing commodity images.

My task was differentiated as the strategist, building on the two projects and pillars that I will recount throughout this chapter. First: track the advertisement rates, the impact factor (consisting of a rating in relation to likes, comments, shares, 'fav's etc.) of the advertisement and compare it to the rates we read last month. Then, my second task was to come up with a fair measuring algorithm so that we can understand whose graphics and slogans were improving, and adjust these rates on the scale of hundred to rank the workers. In other words, the digital strategist incurred a new job specification: work control. Ekmel granted access to his master password no one but him knew, and I could monitor any correspondence that had occurred with the customers, among the workers, and track every mail sent from the email domain of the firm. I prepared

⁵⁵ In the common parlance of online ethics, 'trolling' simply refers to the deliberate acts of dissense against coherent meanings, popular frames of understanding, it can be adopted for political purposes, for entertainment, or for 'sinister' misrepresentation of information (see *The Yes Men* in Terranova, 2010; Zırh, 2012; Tüfekçi, 2015)

diagrams that charted how many images were produced, organized them according to their platform, objectified them in numbers and percentages, distributed them by inscribing points under the names of the workers, comparing the labor efficiency among social media content managers.

Workers were soon up-to-date about this devious plan. I had to inquire of them what they were preparing at that instance, and talked to them about their performance over the last months, checking disparities between the displayed advertisements that were not issued on our monthly plans etc. The self-proclaimed entrepreneur Peksimet had planned this process to increment the amount of threat posed to the workers: he insisted that we hang yellow stickers on an empty wall, and encourage each worker to match their digital performance as images put into circulation, match them on the monthly work plan hanging on the wall. Considering the sheer amount of commodity images for each project developed, this would amount to hundreds of yellow stickers on a single wall. Thought together with workers fretting over whether they had the right amount posted, I turned him down, trying to make reasonable explanations. Sırma (the CRM: customer relations manager) was more direct, moving in a different direction than Peksimet's aesthetic solution:

“I haven't seen anyone trying to improve their work here. There is a given order and no one puts anything on it. The strategies are at fault with our long-standing brands, although our designers do their work well, we still need better strategies that can increase the interaction [*etkileşim*]. For instance in Instagram, we should develop new concepts for *Kiğılı* by putting photographs that come alive [*yaşayan fotoğraflar*] so that we can attract customers to participate...no one here demonstrates that they create new images after 18:00. Like, they want to leave when it hits 18:00. I give them new tasks at 16:30 they start complaining [*bıkbıklanıyorlar*], this is perhaps a bit cruel but I agree with Ekmel to look at the amount of likes and the impact of interaction. [When asked if the metrics I introduced would make them change their attitudes] Yes, that's the point here but I know it might not matter, you cannot always measure...We don't know in

the last instance what made a customer interact with the product but perhaps in the long run..."⁵⁶

Although she took a more realist approach and acknowledged the threat mechanism behind the performance-enhancing scheme, she knew by heart the vagaries of making attention *count*. That is, she admitted that the performance of the workers were non-fungible, given the nature of our tallying mechanisms (those provided by Facebook and Instagram and GoogleAds) and the fickle nature of attention spans and the complexity of what works to capture user attention. Crudely, she translated my work for me: deal with your impossible project and let us deal with the tensions to be wrought as it develops, hoping that this would change things in the workplace in the way we desire it. I had beforehand reflected on the fantasy of Ekmel, as he too had conflicting feelings about how efficient I would be in producing the excel sheet.

Before I lay out Ekmel's second plan aiming at predicating 'corporate social responsibility'⁵⁷ to the affective opportunities of online content sharing sites and measurement tools, I should identify several tensions that course through this chapter. I intend to demonstrate that the making of at least three images -statistical, commodity,

⁵⁶ "Tasarımlarda da öyle mesela yani kimse kendini geliştirmek için uğraşmıyor burada. Var olan bir düzen var bunun üstüne kimse bir şey koymuyor. Markalarla stratejilerin de yanlış olduğunu düşünüyorum her gün içerik giriyoruz markalara ve markalar bunu bazen kaldıramıyor. Ama etkileşimi artırmak için yeni stratejiler ve müşteri ilişkileri geliştirmemiz lazım. Şimdi Instagram'da yeniden yapılanmadayız mesela. Bana göre Kiğılı'da yeni instagram yapılanmasına girmemiz lazım, stratejinin de yeniden gözden geçirilmesi gerekir, yaşayan fotoğraflar bir kahve fincanı filan koyarak geliştiriyoruz. Ama daha çok çalışmak lazım biraz acımasızca ama yani saat 6'dan sonra yapılan yeni bir şey yok. Saat 4 buçuk oluyor yeni iş almak istemiyorlar. Yeni iş veriyorum tek yaptıkları bıkbıklanmak. Acımasızca evet ama layk ve etkileşim oranlarını ölçebilirsek bu değişir. Yani önceki vaziyetleriyle alakalı moderasyon, her iki ekibin de bunu ölçebilmesi gerekir. Tabii ki insanın neyi anlayıp laykladığını da bilemeyiz ama uzun vadede belki bir şeyler değiştirir bu, elimizdeki en anlamlı ölçme şeyi bu aslında bunların hiçbirini anlayamıyoruz ama işte..."

⁵⁷ Corporate Social Responsibility involves Ekmel's own predictions regarding the subsumption of equilibrating mechanisms of civil society by monetary calculations, the 'free enterprise' and advertising agencies.

control- involves practices of commodification⁵⁸ and branding⁵⁹ which produces results that far exceed their intended consequences. This, in turn, builds on the making of 'factual' representations that result in attempts of work control and dismissal from work, fantasies of matching needs and desires by aggressive data tracking, the co-constitution of labor and play on the backdrop of rising cultures of circulation, harnessing economic and sensory behavior to the image of self-regulating trade, markets, and society. In each case, several affective states are made to depend on calculating capacities and existing significations of particular images to define the spheres of 'scientific' behavioral advertising, self-help managerial performances, and the making of communities of attention.

These discussions will be treated not only as the corollary of new technology which turns branding into a more comprehensive and rapid palimpsest which ties the material, tangible products to their supposed non-material qualities. I present this contention in a historical shift to the cultivation of subjectivity on the Post-fordist backdrop of the individualization of risk, intensification of cynicism, and a more general overriding of production and reception towards circulation, and the capture of affect and labor. I argue that a shift from more traditional methods of advertising to the one where web users participate in the composition of the ad itself carried some of the remaining disparities such as of the commodity form, building on the capture of labor and affect in the fetishizing of the 'new'. The (deliberate) misrepresentation regarding the competence of mechanisms of tabulation involves the cynical belief in the 'fungibility' of attention (sensual, affective labor) and the meta-discourse of pervasive, immaterial branding.

⁵⁸ Understood here as the making equivalent of particular embodied strivings.

⁵⁹ The sum total of practices which make brands/logos/images connote lifestyles, production capacities and consumer appeals in affective, emotive and linguistic registers.

Instead, I suggest we understand the affective intensities, labor of production and reproduction, and the connection between embodied practices through material mediations. The making of brand images, the fetishizing of the new, and the making and putting to work of events and affective capacities are key to understanding the materiality of advertising. We need to relate these questions to the capture of labor, attention and affect as interests, values, techniques⁶⁰ and histories that are wrapped in histories of accumulation and dispossession.

In the sub-sections of this chapter, I first entertain the question of who the consumer/receiver of the advertisement is, and how the figurations of the producers work with assumptions thereof. This part tugs at the representations, circulations, and objectifications of commodity images. Then, I suggest that with the currency of new techniques of advertising and new routes of online communication and geo-locative devices, the object, in its co-constitution with the subjectivity of the workers should be understood through practices of 'branding'. In the aftermath of the discussion of commodity fetishism and the production of subjectivities, I turn to the appeal of a total social imagination in line with the meanings attributed to Big Data, corporate social responsibility and the grand equilibrium attributed to the 'market society'. The presentation of cases from my participant observation are scattered in these latter sections, and grows exponentially as I demonstrate the making of the fetish of the 'new', *fellow feeling* and events as ways of capturing particular, concrete labor and the bodily

⁶⁰ For another claim regarding the incalculability of affects, hence glimpsing to the non-commensurability of labor time with the social value of mediated and automated processes that change the circulation of affects, see Parisi (2009, 2012) and Clough (2013). Clough (ibid, p.118) claims that "mathematization works as a technology of measure, where we enter the realm of the incalculable or the computationally open.. But, of course, it is not so surprising that focusing on technoscientific modulation of potentiality, or what is referred to as affect above, points to a calculation or measure that is computationally open".

capacities of the workers.

2.1 Forms and communities of circulation

*Behavioral advertising*⁶¹ differs from traditional desire production which marks a shift from practices of creating images that rely on posters, banners and videos in the hope of garnering attention, to one that demands the user's contribution into a symbiosis with the advertising protocol, the producer, the commodity, and the iconicity of the brand. The services generated by the casualization of participation⁶² in the advertising image (to the users) is not entirely new, but the services generated by digitalization deepen the unstable relationship between the material and semiotic form of a product, questioning further the form of the generic producer and the 'real' material. The digitalization of the making of commodity images, their specific relation to tangible materials (and not necessarily a use value) impacts on and feeds from the intersection of mixed semiotic registers (Keane, 2003), symptomatic but also generative of this tension. The specifics of such a turn in the history of advertising is beyond the scope of this chapter. What is relevant is the broader historical links that enable advertising techniques to go further into attracting individual response and affects not only as response as behavior, but also the way they participate in the making of the product. We can take 'branding' to stand for this changing relationship as it brings together trademarks, logos, and labor in the making of the space-time to generate 'the career' of the advertisement (Moore, 2003;

⁶¹ See McStay (2011, ch1, ch5).

⁶² See McStay (ibid.), Beer (2009), Beer and Burrows (2013), and Manning (2010).

Mazzarella, 2003)⁶³, which is indicative of the systemic qualities of capitalist exchange (Harvey, 1989; LiPuma & Lee, 2005).

This involves, as shown above, differentiations that make the commodity itself understood as referring to a bifurcation of use value and exchange value, image and product, producer and consumer and so on. In each encounter with the advertising image, cognitive or affective, these bifurcations are made and remade through 'indexicalities', symbolisms, designs, which are made through materials and thus are wrapped up in various histories.

Marx (1973, pp.196-7)⁶⁴ identifies the circulation of commodities as one of the defining social processes whereby the individual is abstracted of her labor. The producer recognizes her own activity as a generalized activity among others. The movement of a commodity -carrying labor time as its value- materializes its price in the duration of circulation. In short, the act of circulation is a dynamic nexus that commands attention, sets prices, stages consumption, valorizes production, and sits within particular institutions, affects, beliefs and desires that resonate with some histories more than others.

Marx's account of circulation is dependent on the realization of production: it is through the activity of exchange that the social totality of abstracted labor values become thinkable (Sohn-Rethel, 1978; LiPuma & Lee, 2002). This would presume that human attention is in a constitutive relationship with mechanisms of economic abstraction (such as 'financialization'). Marx's definition of commodity fetishism,

⁶³ Advertisements have careers: "an advertisement, taken as a kind of commodity, is never finished; its elements are sourced from an existing repertoire of resonances and meanings, and after being "produced," it continues to be made and remade throughout its public career" (Mazarella, 2003, p.21).

⁶⁴ see also Marx (1976, Chapter 4)

however, can also be taken as the making of social value (see next title). By contrast, it is a commonplace argument among futurists, venture capitalists, management gurus that in some way relate to the digital economy that the ‘digital revolution’ depends on harnessing the ‘economy’ of human attention which in turn makes a commodity (image) and digital services more valuable; to corporate growth (Read, 2014; Franck, 1999; Crary, 2014, pp.47-51). Yet, the circulation and the act of exchange (of attention) depends more on the merging of calculation techniques and displays with human attention, than attention as a scarce resource.

Jason Read’s (2014) review of Yves Citton’s yet to be translated book, *Ecology of Attention*, relies on his arguments which claim that: attention⁶⁵ is not only the driving force of the economy, but it is also *not* a scarce resource. Attention should be thought with its messy relationship to software, icons, architectures, mediated through materials and affects, shortly in a network wieldy of pointing to the circulation, consumption, and the making of attention in its relationship to affects and labor. Commodity images work in a dynamic routing and rerouting, which circulate by making ‘affective economies’ (Ahmed, 2004), where signs and bodies clash and transmit ways of being. Images warp the distance we assume between private containment of emotions and social abstraction. That is to say, due to the ascendance of attention to the forefront of the workings of new capitalist developments, the striking disparities between the actors and benefactors of data sources that measure, standardize and control attention belies the nature of attention. In short, attention is absorbed through a multiplicity of living and non-living

⁶⁵ Understood here in the context of the diverse practices of online communities and individuals as they use, peruse, abuse and construct the infrastructure and display of online technologies.

resources, which make it “non-fungible”⁶⁶. Thus, understanding of the conditions of circulation of ideas, images and commodities as they work on and through us goes through situating “individualistic neoliberal dogmas” and a “moralizing nostalgia” (Read, 2014), which “take it for granted that “paying attention” [is] a faculty that individuals intrinsically possess”; in and as the “contingent product of changing relations between individuals, collectivities, technological conditions, and social habits”.

Attention is captured in practices of branding, thriving on the cynicism⁶⁷ generated by the avowed inability to tally attention yet an unchallenged belief in the technical capacities of data collection. The 'misrecognition' serves to align more interaction from the user to the product. This will be considered again in the last section, as a practice involving the fetishizing of the new. Meanwhile, what makes the advertisement service so effective for the advertiser herself is a deliberately misrepresented activity⁶⁸. Sırma added that:

"There is a visual [*görsel*] of three t-shirts, we need to ask which one would they wear. You assign a, b, c, to these products, for the customer, here I mean the user to select from... Other adversaries [social media monitoring advertisers for rival firms] ask similar questions. Even if it means to be dumber [*salaklık da olsa*] in Turkey you have to lower yourself down to the level of those customers when it comes to brands. I traveled like a wasp between agencies [*hayvan gibi ajans gezdim*], commanded over the account management of more than 20 brands, including Mercedes and whatnot, I now know the intelligence level of people. They don't like nor share unless you ask them to. That's what I think, you have to type it on the visual, make it a game to make participation easier..."⁶⁹

⁶⁶ This is perhaps more so with the interpolation mechanisms that are deployed versus the inventive usage of social media platforms. See footnote 16, this chapter.

⁶⁷ See for more comprehensive articulations on *cynicism* Sloterdijk (1984), Žižek (1989, 2002, 2008, pp.107-161), Virno (2004), esp. Read (2008).

⁶⁸ See again the seminal work of William Mazzarella (2003)

⁶⁹ "Bunu bir oyun yapmak lazım ki kullanıcı da katılsın etkileşim yapsın. Mesela üç tane görsel var diyelim tişörtlerin işte bunlardan hangilerini giyerler diye sormamız lazım. Müşteri için, ay işte kullanıcı, bunlara a, b, c vereceksin o zaman... Diğer rakiplerimiz de bunu böyle yapıyor. Yani salaklık gibi olsa da Türkiye'de bu işler böyle, kendini müşterilerin seviyesine indireceksin bu iş ancak böyle olur. Ben hayvan gibi ajans gezdim ama markalarda bu işler çok öyle değişmez. Mercedes dahil 20 markanın müşteri ilişkilerini yaptım bırak da bileyim insanların zeka seviyesini. Onlardan bunu istemezsen kimse gidip görseli paylaşmaz. Katılımı oyunu kolaylaştırmak için tek tek yazıcaksın bunu görselin üstüne..."

The production of the image is a practice that flourishes on and demands the calculable attention that is bestowed on it. Add to this the interaction not only with the image in the form of comments, likes, re-tweets and so on, but also the commenting on made comments, likes made on previous likes and so on⁷⁰.

Digital advertisement makes visible the making of the untenable boundary between the image making and its tangible material substitute⁷¹. Sırma again is helpful:

"[when asked if they encounter any problems], the man asks why there is no Weber in Denizli... Say, there is a problem on this page [displays the Facebook page of Ağaoğlu, a construction conglomerate], there is a crisis and interaction because who likes and clicks to these visuals come to this page by searching his [Ağaoğlu, a public figure known for his sexist and impudent discourse] name, perceiving this as his fan page..."⁷²

In the Ağaoğlu case, we see that it is not only the product, nor the brand logo that captures attention. I elaborate on this case in the *lifestyle* section of this chapter, as Ekmel's second project involved the invention of corporate social responsibility digital service, of which Ağaoğlu was a pilot project. Advertising thus lives on the prepackaged⁷³ ideas in their interrelationship to figures that involve imagined producers, public personas, in short, the 'source' that is juxtaposed to the 'object' encountered. It extends not only to the tangible materials and their relationship to their representation. A second level of the 'thingness' of things encompasses the figures of attention as interpolations, the circulation of the personality that is made through the speech acts,

⁷⁰ The visualization of journalistic narratives and circulations of commodity images is an emerging field of study. It is also a fascinating line of thinking, for the visual representation of online flows of texts and graphs may possess story-like qualities (Bounegru et. al, 2016).

⁷¹ This is the ultimate contradiction of commodity fetishism, see below.

⁷² "Ya adam bana diyor ki Weber var mı Denizli'de, böyle yorum yapıyor görselin altına. ... Mesela sayfada bir sorun mu var, etkileşimde kriz var demek o zaman mesela biri çıkıp markaya Ağaoğlu'nun adını sörç edip geliyor..."

⁷³ See Manning (2010): the figure of the consumer, producer and the object in circulation are effectuated by imaginary forms regarding their tangible existence.

sector relations, incomes, which figure into the circulation, and the making of a brand.

Another level to this would be to question more than just the economic mechanisms and ideologies that uphold the shift to the valorization of circulation in the Post-fordist economy. Another reading would be through the ways in which an 'ecology' of workplaces is a witness to the labor that travels as obscured archeological histories, the histories of dispossession and environmental deprivation (Parikka, 2015). This is perhaps best explored in understanding the ethics of material connections that make biology, the vibrant materiality and the ecological; affective; cognitive interconnections human culture makes as it segments and increments into worldviews (Bennett, 2010; Parikka, 2015; Haraway, 2003). The natural and cultural are constructed in their relationship with tools, techniques and are mediated by lived, imagined, consumed and produced 'materialities'. The networks of media act as gateways which warp the space between its actors, and is thus "environmental", "ambient", and in substance, "elemental" (Galloway & Thacker, 2007, p.156-158). Parikka (ibid, p.139) expands on the notion of *medianatures* to point to the co-constitution of history, archeology, machines and human labor:

"Media materiality is not contained in the machines...[which] are more like vectors across the geopolitics of labor, resources, planetary excavations, energy production, natural processes from photosynthesis to mineralization, chemicals, and the aftereffects of electronic waste."

In addition, most of the advertisements are never recollected and represented in portfolios, not downloaded nor archived. For some, even for the followers of brands who at times are at most bystanders under the aesthetic domain of these ad-images, posters, queries, games and banners, adverts are nothing more than spam. Spams also count as part of the labor of attention since they both 'interpellate' the potential users and are

general in their call to participate, buy, consume, interest, and so on. Cüneyt, a graphic design manager at *Rabbit* told me, “ads elude me. I go home and it’s still all screens and social media and whatnot. There is no difference. I look at the design, well you are after all used to it, I think of it as contours and shapes only, I don’t even see them most of the time.” The spam as ad and ad as spam is a complex bind, as this distinction borders on the absurdity of the self-evident fugitiveness of the spam: whereas advertising images take their strength from brand images (logos, trademarks etc.) shot through with institutional, legal and affective histories and texts; spams are the floating, fleeting non-images which are body images *so* far from reality that they keep the possibility of people as event rather than representation (Steyerl, 2012, pp.171-173)⁷⁴. The ads that are registered as data and taken as technically adduced meaningful values, are, to some extent not representative at all. This double bind of stranger sociality⁷⁵ (spams and ads alike) is never complete and the circulation of ads (professionally produced) and spams (unclaimed nuisance) is not always concretized. “This [dynamic of circulation] is only true to the extent that the trace of our strangerhood remains present in our understanding of ourselves as the addressee” (Warner, 2005, p.77). And yet, the labor of attention is counted as data and is put in circulation with other labors of participation (“self-exploitation”) through clicks, comments and shares (Terranova, 2010, pp.154-6).

⁷⁴ In that sense, it could be argued that spam embodies the potentiality of the brand, as images that are not locatable, calculable, and thus profitable.

⁷⁵ I prefer to go with “stranger sociality” here not only because of the blurring boundaries of figures who produce and consume, but also because “identification” is not correlative with impact. Chun (2016) claimed that:

“These algorithms also will sometimes recommend materials they know you won’t like in order to make you feel like you’re not being interpellated. Disidentification makes us feel singular. Target got in trouble for sending out coupons for baby supplies to sixteen-year-old girls; they were accused of trying to get girls pregnant. Now Target allegedly sends out noise, for instance motor-oil coupons, alongside the diaper coupons; the motor-oil coupons can be ignored. Moments of identification are not necessarily the most important; it’s actually moments of disidentification that nevertheless produce action.”

Consequently, the gap between reception and participation becomes (falsely) calculable, valuable, and reusable.

The User/consumers augment the impact of commodity images by endlessly liking/commenting on the images, making them circulate in wider publics, which relies on the attention of other Users who take the sponsored/acquired popularity as a marker of the publicity of an ad⁷⁶. This lays on the imaginary public, the processes of making and contradictory moments of which are written by Michael Warner (2005, p.161): the circulation of these images do not correspond to a public (of mass consumption and citizen) but rather to “a statistically measurable series of others”⁷⁷. Yet, behavioral digital advertising is a challenge to this notion, by virtue of the generation of data sets which do not rely on the assumption of a public, but to an individual response pitch. But it needs its opinion polls and experts, too.

Then, mediating technologies take labor, affective, and temporal histories in comprising brand images, which evolve by making use of the making and forgetting of the routes and histories of commodity circulation. On another note, the circulation of images are more about ‘postproduction’ than the process of production; images are launched, edited and re-edited, purposed and repurposed, they accelerate and de-accelerate, sticking to bodies, histories, institutions and other images. Given that “the

⁷⁶ The labor of user/consumers is not always visible (Scholz, 2013; Ateş, 2013). That is to say (presumably) there might be a move towards reclaiming the labor that is put in online content production, however hardships it might entail to actually calculate that. However, some forms of crowdsourcing are not visible, for instance the counts of viewing or the interactive comments following the trajectory of some images/videos/tweets etc. There are mechanisms like the 'Amazon Mechanical Turk' set forth by Amazon that thrive on the incalculable labor/attention invested in them. The form of 'captchas' draws attention to a second feature, the labor is not only incalculable, but also 'in itself' meaningless to the user/consumer:

"The crucial aspect of this process is that no single individual who completes a captcha will ever be able to know the overall meaning of the text that was transcribed because of its fragmentation into single words" (Ateş, 2013, p.79).

⁷⁷ To be performatively assumed as 'a public' by opinion polls and experts.

microchipped world burns in intensity like millions of tiny suns” (Parikka, 2015, p.138), it takes an individualized attachment mechanism to monetary flows, financial and digital data sets and algorithms (Beer, 2015; Lipuma & Lee, 2002, p.210), producers, consumers and the form of the commodity, which makes the avowed social meaning misrecognized in the face of its affective, social, economic, environmental and historical circulations.

2.2 Commodity fetishism and branding: 'Semiologies' of attention

In the opening chapter of *Capital*, Marx (1976) links the forming of individual consciousness with the strange form of the commodity. The commodity is made as a product that has its socially determined use value, but *somehow* speaks to the subject in a way that makes the sensuous quality perceived immediately. This perception involves seeing the particular fruits of one's labor equivalent with the use value of other commodities, and to that of the abstracting money. The object is perceived as an object insofar as it corresponds to a use value of a particular object, yet also as it becomes substitutable to other objects, hence gaining its exchange value. We, as subjects who produce some objects and consume others, are caught in this mysterious relationship which obscures the roots of this gap as it is made in the “social hieroglyph”, and we instead conceive the commodity itself substitutable by the value embedded in it (Marx, *ibid*, pp.163-170).

This relationship, according to Balibar (1993, pp.51-60), can be discussed in relation to two processes which are co-constitutive. Subjects are in an 'aporia' where they perceive the qualities of materials (commodities and money, that of exchangeability) as

represented by humans (partners in commerce) in the double bind of: first, the circulation animated by money, and second, the ways in which social institutions facilitate the trade of equals⁷⁸.

To start speaking of exactly *how* this misapprehension occurs, the producer is made as the figure of producer, the consumed object as the bearer of exchangeable value, and the self-reflexive subject as the enjoyer of the use value of the product, we should begin by exploring the notion of “socially necessary labor time”. The labor time that is invested in the making of the commodity (or, in advertising, the commodity image) comes to be seen *as* the value that ‘commensurates’ “different kinds of labour as human labour”. That value is not the same objective value, which is actually mediated by social relations. That marks Marx’s words when he claims that “value...does not have its description branded on its forehead; it rather transforms every product of labor into a social hieroglyphic” (Marx, 1976, p.167). Thus, exchange becomes the moment⁷⁹ which is possible insofar as it structures the subject and its relation to money, commodities and social institutions in a liminal space.

Another way to understand the process by which objects/commodities are represented with a break from their past is to expand on the notion of fetishism. The histories of production which are lost to the subject are obscured, since “an economic, political and cultural system...opens up a gap between intentions and effects, between

⁷⁸ Balibar here introduces the contradiction that is a corollary of this circulation. There is a *necessary* element to the representational mechanism brought about by wage, money and commodity, posing as self-knowledges. Consider Virno’s (2007, p.42) formulation: “It’s not a question, in other words, of subjective errors produced by the dominant culture, but of representations forcefully suggested by a very concrete condition. What is needed is an identification of the grain of truth that sustains false semblance. Such an investigation aims at a materialist recognition of subjectivity as it exists within post-Fordist capitalism”. For instance, regarding self-employment in a flexible labor market, he claims that: “No workers believe themselves to be managing their own lives because of the way they work, but rather because of the way they come to terms with the labor market” (Virno, *ibid*, p.43).

⁷⁹ Sohn-Rethel (1978), Kojin (1995, pp.143-146).

piety and cynicism” (Read, 2005, p.147). The subjects come to attain memories of their own labor of production in a socially mediated manner. The dynamics of this constitution differ in relation to changing modes of production. Capitalism is a system where abstract quantities of labor assume an equalizing effect, through market institutions and the power of money in animating circulation. This is an effect, which produces more effects, that appear equally pervasive, yet are differentially experienced. Commodities are not the only objects that are fetishized, for “the object is “brought forth” as a thing that is “itself” only insofar as it is cut off from its own arrival...objects appear by being cut off from such histories of arrival, as histories that involve multiple generations, and the “work” of bodies, which is of course the work of some bodies more than others” (Ahmed, 2006, pp.41-42). The thingness of the object is a quality that does not appear without also having a specific contact among other subjects and objects.

This makes apparent that commodity fetishism is not a simple pitting of use value of a commodity against its constitutive moment as exchange value. The fetish is wrapped in the making of value as the making of subjectivity under given conditions of commodity production, circulation and consumption. This is to say that the production of belief and affects that situates the subject as the subject of a capitalist system involves the work of non-economic factors “of the social constitution of the individual as much a “precondition” for commodity trade as an effect of this trade” (Amariglio & Callari, 1989, p.34, A&C henceforth). Accordingly, the social constitution of the “necessary labor time” finds its realization in the sensorial and informational education of the subject, who is made into an individual who recognizes the others as equals, upholds the calculation mechanisms that pertain to “a consciousness of objectification” (A&C, p.44). More than being a *false* form of consciousness, objectification refers to “commodity

fetishism...[which makes] the qualities of individuals that transform the unequal exchange of actual labor times into an exchange of equivalents” (A&C, p.46). The upshot of this approach combines the social production of individuals who constitute the reality of the market and trade by way of “actually” quantifying trade, “actually” assuming the market as a self-regulating mechanism, seeing other individuals as equal agents (see also Balibar, 1993, pp.71-79; Pashukanis, 1989), and as subjects who respect the disciplined boundaries of private property.

Advertising is a field that leads to the making of commodity images, while assuming that the subject would (and should) be interested in the benefits of consumption. The commodity image indexes the subject’s choice to a particular form of aspiration, building on the taken for granted behavior patterns of a community of consumers. "Advertising transforms desire into aspiration by routing it through a symbolic field defined with reference to taste...[attempting] at once to appear naturally inclusive and socially exclusive” (Mazarella, 2003, p.105). The consequence of such an approach follows a combined understanding of taste informed by economic, functional as well as technical, affective and sensorial processes of valuation, which is apparent to the ethnographer at a particular time⁸⁰.

In addition, ‘branding’ also refers to such an understanding of ‘commodity

⁸⁰ The technical may work by by-passing consciousness, but is nevertheless dependent on human labor. What is understood as fixed capital that directly plays a part in the surplus production, i.e. the technological advancements today, bring about their realization insofar as there is a cooperation of minds. Consider this. Sezen, a content manager of the social media accounts of several brands, uses the cooperation of several machines in order to create the advert, the commodity-image, while also making use of artifacts of her relationships and the discursive tools that are at her disposal thanks to those relations. The fixed capital in this arrangement ensures that the ‘clicks’, the ‘listicles’ and the data is absorbed by data mining companies and in that instance and in the aftermath instills the desire to consume and/or is translated into advertising revenue. The desire to consume is produced thanks to the cooperation of at least several humans and a constellation of machinery. The paradox here lies in the fact that the exploited surplus is more than what is extracted. In other words, the cooperation creates a sum that is larger than its parts and it is only through understanding the nature and consequences of this cooperation that we can understand how pervasive exploitation today works, and possibly how capitalism endures.

fetishism' that goes beyond the unstable relationship between the subject and the object of consumption. In his work on the semiotics of branding in Russia, Yurchak (2006, pp.194-95, as cited in Manning, 2010, p.43) notes the disparity between the meaning attributed to brands and that of the relationship between products and their use value: "this empty status did not matter because the original meaning as consumable commodities (the actual liquor, beer, or cigarettes) was largely irrelevant. They were not commodities but shells of commodities whose role was to link the here and now to an 'elsewhere'". The contact that 'branding' achieved through its imagined semiotic value by the youth in Russia shows that the thingness of the thing can exist, even as a commodity, independent of its use value.

Another aspect of commodity fetish as a process of 'branding' involves opening up of the commodity form to the participation of the individual. The 'subjectivation' related to the fetish does not only produce a social actor who perceives the commodity in a distinct way (say, by dint of the subject's penchant for the legal status of commodities or the belief in the 'fungibility' of abstract value). But although not being the person who crafted the commodity, she is also as the collaborator of the production of the commodity⁸¹. This is mostly achieved thanks to the labor of attention and the circulation of the commodity as the product achieves a marketable status. Online, unremunerated labor overlaps with broader discussions on participatory web platforms open to user influence referred to as the advent of the Web 2.0⁸².

The consumer communities become not only passive observers of the semiotics

⁸¹ See Manning and Uplisashvili (2007), Manning (2010); Özkan and Foster (2005); Beer (2013); see also 'cool' labor and precarization of the Japanese Youth, by Anne Allison (2009).

⁸² As coined and used by Tim O'Reilly (2004), see Beer (2009) for an influential discussion, see also Terranova (2010).

of commodities, but active and constructive initiatives where the brand is made. This adds another layer to the reach of commodity fetishism understood as branding. Shifting focus from the producer and the fruits of her labor to the relationship of the consumer to the commodity, Nakassis (2013, p.113) notes that the “commodity form, historically...implies an excess of social meaning and value...that always already reaches beyond itself, beyond (but through) exchangeability into another realm of value, the prequalified realm of the immaterial: goodwill, reputation, loyalty and even love.” The making of the fetish is tied to the making of the brand in its relationship to communities of intimacy. The pervasiveness of branding extends beyond the making of the market and establishment of trade relations. Branding increasingly relates to the forming of citizens in the image of consumers who intimately relate to the images produced and embody the spirit of the nation⁸³.

Whether it be digital advertising through social media, mobilization of ads for political campaigns, making of the images of places and personas, the digital divide similarly muddles the complex interaction of the relationship between practices of advertising, labor, and affects. Online platforms bend, blend and enable data sets into meaningful interface design (Manovich, 2011).

Defined in the corporate parlance and the word of mouth by the co-founder of *JazzRabbit* as ‘lovebrands’⁸⁴, brands (companies) can command several advertising agencies -digital, video and print- to make their images flow. The trajectories involve crossing national boundaries and going through platforms, which thrive on the commitment and loyalty of their consumers. The brand and its product, in this view,

⁸³ For Turkey see Özyürek (2004), Özkan and Foster (2005), see also Muehlebach (2013) for nationalism, precarious labor and the production of joyful affects.

⁸⁴ For purposes of privacy and discretion, the address of the website cannot be provided.

float through the value form which is jointly made by the producer and the consumer. In the interview he gave to an online platform, Rahmi (the co-founder) called our work "çalışan billboard", which is to say a billboard that works, not only into the hearts and minds of consumers, but one that allows for their participation at the same time as it makes this interaction (*etkileşim*) calculable, objectified and comparable. A similar stance was taken by Sırma, the CRM of the company, who encouraged the content managers to make the images they post more playful. The condition of participation (of the user), however, as much as it rests on the expectation of the 'fungibility' of levels and metrics of interaction (made by the producer), also rests on the performance of an intuition whose obvious meaning eludes the producer⁸⁵. In the following parts of the chapter, I will detail the making of statistical, commodity and control images which are themselves produced by the tensions between three conditions. The first comes from the assumptions made on behalf of the user who seeks experience (of novelty), experience and consumption (which rests on the ideology of the market). The second is the making of interpolations by operationalizing the 'gut feeling' of producers which make their ways into the packaging of images and metrics in a way that attests to the 'scientific' work of the agency. The last is related to the apparent need to follow the latest trends in the advertising world, the pressure to be up-to-date with technological and managerial

⁸⁵ This fantasy is belied by several attributes of digital advertising. First, advertising would have to be a *deus ex machina* both inside and outside the market, as it too depended on the need for some products and functioned to regulate the market mechanism by creating lacks and disparities so that it initiates consumption. Another dissimilarity is the under-researched nature of the inconsistency between the trust in data sciences and online behavior as traceable and meaningful indicators, and the actually existing structural barriers through which online posts become clustered under wrong categories, represent cases of "social media algorithm avoidance", used for online 'trolling' (Zırh 2012) or the content is simply under the radar, 'unknowable' (Tüfekçi, 2014, 2015; Moor, 2003). It is also apparent that when digital advertising is thought with its wider links to the digital economy, the driving tenets of management consultants and advertising gurus regarding the 'communicational value' of online responses, these beliefs scarcely fit the communicational practices of online groups and individual clicks (Rushkoff, 2011, pp.107-111).

developments, despite knowing there is not much 'creativity', 'novelty' and 'efficiency' to begin with.

2.3 The appeal of autopoiesis

The fantasy of an 'autopoietic' system involves the system's 'self-referentiality', and ability to renew itself ad infinitum without any intervention of external sources/forces⁸⁶. Within the backdrop of the system, there exists ample amount of data and mechanism for the system to survive on its own. Thought with the mechanism of the market as a self-regulating system, which is actually made of protocols, institutions, things and subjectivities (i.e. policing), an 'autopoietic' system refers to the linearization of the desires and agendas of the elements (persons) taking part of such a system. Thus, without further ado, the assumption of a market mechanism is itself a pseudo-scientific, normative function which needs ideological justification, policing, disciplining and dispossession in order to make it viable (Polanyi, 1974; Graeber, 2001; Harvey, 2004; Elyachar, 2005; Blomley, 2007). And the making of the market as a governing force field involves the making of value. The value in turn is understood as "the way actions become meaningful to the actors by being placed in some larger social whole, real or imagined" (Graeber 2001, p.254, cited also in Elyachar, 2005, p.8), which is deemed to be 'socially necessary'.

If we understand "interesting" to refer to the pull of a third factor in making the involved (and interested) actors, texts, events and affects, how can we understand the

⁸⁶ See Roland Barthes' (2009, esp. pp. 66-73) fascinating work on the rhythms of life, spatial and fantasmatic structures that course through everyday life, particularly on the fantasy of sterile rhythms of autopoiesis, session on the 2nd of February 1977.

ways in which the imagination of the market becomes “interesting”? In an environment shot through with discourses of seamless calculation, tools of digital behavioral advertising, practices of corporate branding and the condition of hyper-information, what image makes the ‘managerially interesting’? The aesthetic experience of “interesting”, Ngai (2013, pp.110-117) shows, works through different fields (say, the sociological, the scientific) as it reflects the becoming situated of the person in between accounts that make an impact on her life by means of achievement and visibility. There should be a sense of expressive familiarity and a sense of belonging, an improvement in self-esteem. In the advertising world of JazzRabbit, following from the corollary of the discursive and economic incentives behind ‘scientific modeling’, the appeal of an impeccable visual rendering which makes apparent its ‘scientificity’, as I will show, relates to the ground of the interesting.

The domain of the interesting, then, relates to the making of visual representations which are more than both figurative vocabulary and objective scientific facts. Poovey (1998) makes legible the complex historical change, through which numerical values began to connote some forms of explanation. The statistical renderings of things were translated into the belief in a market society. Moreover, the representational difference between numerical values and interpretive descriptions was itself consequential to (and of) an epistemological shift, endorsing the double effect to “describe discrete particulars and contribute to systematic knowledge” (ibid, p. xii, p. xv). Numbers, she argues, gained unprecedented power as denotations of a system of “modern fact”, by dint of having “the connotations of transparency and impartiality” (ibid, p.6). In the example of the double-entry bookkeeping system, for instance, we witness the complex relationship between interest, credit (and credibility) and belief. It

is through the fictions of money, numbers (without a referent, see the labor of attention and its capture) and their representation -which were “being installed as props to systematic meaning and coherence” (ibid, p.11)-that claims to honesty (and “moral rectitude”), and an imagined harmony of the order of God were enacted. Lastly, “the market” in relation to abstractions shows that the numerical values that correspond to actors and things that are countable *in* the market actually are made countable *thanks to* the abstractions made *of* the market, always referring to normative assumptions made about the ordinary behavior of the market (ibid, p.216).

Accompanying the tensions of the commodity form and the mixed semiotics of branding, there lies the curious fact that an advertiser cannot but find herself in “a problematic space of uncertainty at the heart of the relationship between producers and consumers, deriving, perhaps, from the temporal and spatial separation of the production and consumption of adverts” (Moor, 2003, p.43). In other words, the rift posed by the commodity form regarding the historical routes of the objectification of an object, read here as data regarding the labor of attention and participation in the image, can be exported to making “interesting” claims to factuality.

The judgment that works by way of the interesting brings together distinct actors, agencies and interpretations under the promise of matching the needs and desires of the consumers with the commodity images and production units of particular brands, while also feeding on and securing brand loyalty. This adds to the claim that neither the user, the producer, nor the manager and business partners of advertising realize their desires in an isolated manner. I was drawn to the discussion of how a workplace or the society is managed in the image of a regulatory system, through the assumptions made by the effective manager of JazzRabbit, Ekmel. His version of a market society was allegedly

‘destructive’ but also somewhat harmonious. Having had his undergraduate education from the administrative sciences at a prestigious university in Istanbul, Ekmel was excited to be in the company of a graduate student who was also interested in markets, advertising and business models. In a conversation over the traffic of Istanbul about the rights to squatter settlements and the housing bubble of the city, he averred that the main motivation for him to run a digital advertising firm was:

“to bring together the needs of the consumers with the practical use value [*kullanım değeri*] of the product. I see myself as someone who creates value. Don’t portray me as a greedy capitalist, I am not. I know Marx’s theories of use value and exchange value. Take the real estate market [of Istanbul]. There are enough houses for everyone to live in, but because of the autonomy of exchange value over use, there are also many people who don’t have proper information and this is not fair...[belief] in the market is essential, but also belief in making value. See, I am not your bad capitalist, [as] I produce [use] value, it is crucial that *you* understand this.”⁸⁷

Thus, there was in his view a desire to match the use-values of the commodities with the desires of the consumers, which aims at by-passing the bubble created by the exchange value. But I suggest that this is yet another function of the ideology of the market society as it anchors belief in the natural disposition of the object itself and as it takes upon itself the bending of individual action clustered as “consumer choice”. Ekmel indexes use value to his imagined protocol of transaction that ought to occur between consumers and producers, following the impeccable model where desires subtend to needs. Adorno (1974, p.155) bitterly noted that "the more tightly the world is enclosed by the net of man-made things, the more stridently those who are responsible for this condition

⁸⁷ "Tabii asıl amacımız ürünün kullanım değeriyle müşterinin ihtiyaçlarını birleştirmek, pratik yani insanların şeyi ve işte biz oradayız bunu yapıyoruz. Şimdi sen beni orada öyle lanse ettirme, şey diye kötü işte kapitalist patron filan, bunlarla alakası yok. Ben değer üretiyorum hep de bunu savunurum. Biliyorum kullanım değişim değerlerini filan Marx da okudum zamanında. Emlak piyasasına bak mesela. İnsanların doğru düzgün bilgileri yok piyasa nasıl işliyor çünkü değişim değeri şuan daha büyük kullanım değerinden bu yüzden yeterince ev var yani aslında insanlar için. Bunu senin anlamın çok önemli, işimiz bu yani insanları aslında bilgilendirmek, piyasayı da bileceksin kullanım değerini de. Bu yüzden yani biz değer üretiyoruz."

proclaim their natural primitiveness”. Ekmel's attachment to an object of desire (housing) reflects the “naturalness” of the meanings attached with the use value of owning a house.

JazzRabbit tapped into the fascination with impeccable presentations of the metrics evaluated, collected and measured by the data sources banked in companies such as Facebook, Twitter⁸⁸, Klout and Google AdSense. I was made familiar with the operating mechanisms of Klout to which one can submit several accounts regarding a company to trace the popularity and shifts in ‘impact factors’. The task was often to measure the impact of the firm by looking at the accounts that we were managing, posting through, policing and embracing as our own. For instance, I took on the digital strategy of Kiğılı, a retail and men’s fashion company, and have observed that the metrics that I have provided, despite showcasing utterly no evidence to the ‘real’ engagement of ‘real’ customers with the products, games and images we have posted, had a positive outcome by the customer’s side insofar as the impact factor provided by Klout rose.

Particularly, my job as a ‘digital strategist’ was to gather from various online measuring sites the metrics regarding already existing participatory media accounts and design a monthly plan for the potential customer. This I laid out by making comparisons with other operating firms in the same sector, coming up with simple and appealing statistical measures, their visual renderings and percentages. Below, I also give in detail a peculiar strategy I developed for Ağaoğlu. This is about Ekmel’s first (see introduction

⁸⁸ I also made Twitter maps using the open-source Social Network Analysis software, NodeXL. This program, if fed the right variety of data, can produce stunning visual documentations and interesting facts about how tweets, words, statemets, hashtags etc. circulate. These visuals caused quite a stir in the workplace and made me into a 'data-scientist' in the eyes of social media managers. For an introduction, see <http://sunlightfoundation.com/blog/2012/05/24/tools-for-transparency-a-how-to-guide-for-social-network-analysis-with-nodexl/>

to this chapter) and second project he asked me to take head on, with help from endless resources, more experienced workers and his supervision at my command.

It should be clear from the first project I explained in the introduction that the making of the scientific image of the measures regarding work interaction and productivity served as an image of control. The rumors this process has given way to, the change I have observed to how other workers started seeing me from an enthusiastic and curious sociologist (and an intern) to the unstable and formidable colleague who now commands the measurement and presentation skills of their own labors are also telling. This change manifested itself also in the affects and attention the workers put into the execution of their own projects. What is perhaps more important here is the change this project has enacted in the affective bonds workers had previously built towards their work. This is detailed in the third (and partly in the fourth) chapter, as I contend that the complexity with which workers produce joyful emotions towards the 'precarization' of their working conditions is emblematic of the Post-fordist condition of laboring and desiring production.

I suggest that the entanglement of moral virtues and harmony in the workplace with the currency of clinical and scientific work techniques is one of the sentimental principles that help make the workplace in the image of a clockwork. Ekmel made his position one of virtue by his statements, but also it is clear from the first project how he imagined the workplace to be if the workers would still be working at *JazzRabbit*. He asked me to build a KPI (Key Performance Indicator) measuring schema, which he was later fascinated with and asked a new coming engineer to take on and improve after I asked my leave from the company. In the initial stages of the building of the KPI charts,

I had much help from the CRM of the firm as well as the CFO⁸⁹. Ekmel, Rahmi and Peksimet all have, in their own ways, intimated that their desire was to rearrange the social media section of the company so that it “runs itself”. They knew that I could not come up with such a mechanism that traced every act the workers do online, particularly the regularity with which they post for the customers, their designs and productions and the rate at which they were asked to be revised by the customers and the impact they caused and attention they garnered by the ambivalent boundaries and choice making strategies of online communities. However, they wanted me to pursue the Project nonetheless. More on their agenda was to make the workers *feel* that they were at the mercy of the new strategist, the tools of measure, curtailed rights of the workers and the conviction of the ruling trio. They *really* hoped that this system of “scientific measurement, which is the new thing [*olayı bu*] of digital advertising” as claimed by Ekmel, can bring about a visible increment in the sheer hours invested in making advertisement for our clients.

Accompanying their vision of a society where use values were made to upend the thrall of exchange value and where each and every consumer would be matched with their needs according to their desires, was the making of the commodity form and branding⁹⁰. Another firm Rahmi, Peksimet and Ekmel have founded was *Cognitamer*, where they purport to make experiments that deal with how potential consumers react ‘emotionally’, ‘neurologically’, and ‘scientifically’ to variations in taste, packaging,

⁸⁹ Chief Finance Officer. These fancy titles should not fool the reader, they are empty containers of the condition David Graeber has referred to as the creation of “bull-shit jobs”.

⁹⁰ The brands we manage and our brand, “lovebrand of lovebrands...an Agency in the A class” as referred to by Rahmi, were made to connote with ways of being rather than the sole purpose of consuming use values. Consider Mazzarella's (2003, p.45) claim that “the crucial factor is not, after all, a radical ontological distinction between “autonomous” and “commercial” forms of cultural production but rather the different considerations that are brought to bear upon particular, and always provisional, attempts to mediate the tension between the materiality and the avowed social meaning of an object”.

color and the smell of the product. Rahmi situates the company as an enterprise that “embraces the future”, which operates under *JazzRabbit*. 'Neuroscientific' explanations predicted and brought about future behavior, as the future is not only pursued, but generated; in Rahmi's words, “a social media agency is not only creative, but first, it is technical”. The neuroscience discursively legitimating the program of the company is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, referring to the view of a total command of needs and desires figured both into Ekmel's agenda as well as into the interface the website: the stimuli from the outer world came through our receptors to meet with our emotional structure, later to be filtered into behavioral responses, which in time gave way to the formation of habit, and in 80% of traditional marketing tools, we were left in the dark regarding the ‘real’ choice of products, since we are not capable of understanding how our desires operate! His 'autopoietic' system in the work place matched his desire to align all the desires of a body with the subtending product.

The commodity form-like presentation of the calculation of the ‘value’ produced shows itself in the incommensurability of the particular attention and labor the producer invests into the product, with the always already divided, partial and constructive attention and labor given to the commodity image by users. This expanded to the level of the impossibility of an exact calculation of these units, codes regarded as ‘behavior’ were packaged and encoded in line with the imagined moral good of the decision making agent⁹¹. Ultimately, as I was also early on let in to this fact, this schema proved to only end up in increasing the number of unemployed digital advertisers. After the

⁹¹ An interesting discussion here would be to inquire ways of apprehending the market not as self-allocating resource technologies but as an institutionally mediated social sphere. In the next chapter, although in a different context, I refer to the myriad ways in which entrepreneurs inflect the classical Western paradigm of free enterprise and self-regulating markets (Tuğal, 2012). Of course this would require a new data set regarding how the 'misapprehension' of market mechanisms work for interested parties.

conversation we had as he was being asked to present his resignation, Erdem texted me:

“Dude [*abi*] of course I recall what I’ve said about him [“Ekmel manipulates emotions”] and still think that he makes others feel like nothing. I spoke to Ayla the other day and he [Ekmel] promised her that I will be fired, and I know that this is *only* because I had asked for a raise, I know this. After I’ve asked for compensation of my work, only then he says, you are not adding to yourself, I fail to see any improvements [*kendine bir şey katmıyorsun, sende ilerleme göremiyorum*]. . . But he cannot fire me and thus I’ve quit, I knew about this.”⁹²

This spoke to his earlier concerns about the workplace, that insofar as he did not ask for a raise, his products were regarded acceptable, but when he asked for a larger amount of compensation (which is slightly more than the official minimum salary), he was reminded that there is no real improvement. His work turned uninteresting. More, he was constantly told and after some point was made to conform to the hypothesis that there are thousands of workers who are equally in search of a better salary, and that there are ample unemployed young and skilled workers who are fit for Erdem’s current contract. To cut the story short, the KPI⁹³ scheme was designed for the implicit but not avowed agenda of keeping alive the threat of unemployment that in the end effected the ‘willing’ resignation of Erdem and two others.

The technical solution to work problems spills into the management of desire and the shift in the quality of work as an endless "source of immediate joy", by dint of its aspirations in the correct forms of contractual behavior, in the terms of trade and social reciprocity. Erdem was disillusioned by his working conditions, he was not getting paid enough to feel dedicated to his work and thus take on himself to improve his ‘skill sets’.

⁹² "Abi ne dediğimi 'tabiki' hatırlıyorum hala öyle diyorum yani o herif insana kendini 'bi' hiç gibi 'hssettiriyo'. Konuştum Ayla'yla demiş ki kovucam Erdem'i. Ama biliyorum ben yani zam istedim çünkü o zamana kadar iyiydi ama işte ne zaman ki onu diyorsun birden öbür gün diyor ki kendini hiç geliştirmiyosun işte yok hiçbir şey katmıyosun kendine sende ilerleme göremiyorum. Kendim çıktım biliyorum kovucaktı beni ben de istifa ettim işte"

⁹³ Key Performance Indicator, an eclectic framework of sorting figures of labor performance into meaningful units of effort measurement.

Adorno (1994, p.105) has called this a defining quality of the high time of cultural production in the form of rational calculations, to the end “where the reader [advertiser] is authorized to get away from the routine of his life, it has to be assured that his outbreak will lead him finally into some repetition of the self-same routine he wants to get away from.” And yet, the defining undercurrents of the Post-fordist condition which deals in the making of affects in producing tangible or non-material products does not sit well with the drab of life; which finds joy in consumption and loses itself in the mechanization and rationalization of production. The packaging of work itself as a source of enjoyment is pervasive to the point that workers identify with what brands stand for, they refashion themselves in and out of work (which is a binary that does not hold anymore, if it ever did) in the face of firms and managers striving “to subordinate the *entire* life and being of employees to the business...to remake the dispositions, desires, and attitudes of enlistees” (Lordon, 2014, p.79). Frederic Lordon calls this process the “colinearisation” of the objects of desire both as products and brands, as well as the desiring of the subjects which are transfixed to the “total possession” of individual capabilities by the figure of the capitalist, translated by objects, commodities, logos, and money. The moral legitimization here can be seen in Ekmel’s desire to make work an end and digital advertising a tool.

The moral rectitude of the boss not only desires to re-do the ways in which workers make affective bonds to their own conditions of labor exploitation. It also reflects the procedures of work control that practically bring about work as an end in itself (If the subject does not give “itself” to the desiring of production, it is no longer *of* the workforce), which finds its moral ground in an unfailing belief in the market and work as a source of meaning. In other words, it is a social imagination embodied by the

boss that is carried out in the work place, along with the commitment to measure, calculate and execute. The second large project Ekmel enlisted Server and I to oversee can help clarify this.

2.4 *Lifestyle* and the style of life, 'autopoiesis' on the making

A “delirious” project: we embarked on a “social responsibility project” for Ağaoğlu, following Ekmel’s conviction that all brands and corporate structures will give way to the proliferation of digital advertising departments that excel in subsuming the work of NGOs, governmental organizations and what we know to be the remnants of the welfare state. Ekmel asked me to prepare myself to the conditions he projected to take place in the three years to come. Whatever I did, I was destined to undertake the project with Server and he promised that we will have any resources we need under our command as JazzRabbit evolves. The premise was simple as well as grandiose: welfare mechanisms of governments will be replaced with corporate social governing. It would not be the duty of a centralized government to calculate pensions, benefits and in general monetary and informational allocation, as corporates will vie for power through the ‘free’ market, and advertising will be the visual-discursive apparatus best suited for the publication of information regarding corporate agendas.

Ağaoğlu is a construction company that is well known by its grand projects advertised by companies that have long tapped into the controversial public figure of Ali Ağaoğlu himself. The digital advertising tools were novel to the company and Ekmel had intimate bonds with the communications strategy department of the company, arranging meetings and strategies weekly for the firm. One of my informants, Gözde,

had introduced me to the ‘fake account’ that was used by someone unaffiliated with the company, under the twitter alias, para_ali (literally money_ali). This account has made a show of the public persona of Ali Ağaoğlu, which can be summed up as an unrelenting and hyper-masculine leader figure who made it to the top by muddling in the dirt, at times playing unlawful as he climbed the steps to popularity on a massive pile of wealth. One of the tweets read, “we have never let our comrades walk alone, it is just that the poor have run out of gasoline”⁹⁴. The user was later hired officially to work for the communications strategy segment of the construction conglomerate. For Gözde, these accounts reflected a common tendency in the digital advertising world to hire user accounts, which are deemed as ‘Twitter, Instagram or Facebook phenomena’ and pay the interested parties to publish hidden or overt advertising images to praise the services of that particular brand. Indeed, the user of the account was hired by Ali Ağaoğlu himself as it hit at least 400,000 followers on Twitter.

Server and I were positioned at a level that disconcerted the established relations of the workplace, which made us both vulnerable and more commanding over others when it came to developing new strategies, expanding on projects. A similar thing, Gözde told me, happened when the firm took the social media advertising job of the municipality in Ankara: the president Melih Gökçek was not fancied by any worker at the company. The workers were openly defiant in their views towards the construction conglomerate. The CEO of the company, Ağaoğlu himself, at the time of our collaboration had been taken into custody for alleged corruption cases known as the "17th to 25th December events" that caused considerable tumult in the media and among

⁹⁴"Biz kimseyi yarı yolda bırakmadık, fakirlerin benzini bitti" status on 13.11.2013
Retrieved from https://twitter.com/para_ali/status/400700194356207616

political parties. It was with the idea that we can bend the public image of the firm, which was thought to be embodied by the persona of the CEO, that Ekmel's grand project of "generating social responsibility" was materialized. On another level, this was the high time of remonstrance against construction firms, for a criminal neglect occurred at the construction site of another firm, which caused concerns over work safety in the context of the tumultuous rise of the construction sector. We were briefed by the communications department to emphasize that the company had risen to the level of top brands chosen by the World Consumer Academy. In addition, the company had the highest percentage of engineers with work-safety certificates, which is higher than the required level: we were asked to consider this as a social responsibility event.

The digital advertising strategy of Ağaoğlu was mortgaged to the radical experimental vision Ekmel had regarding the market, the advertising sector and social responsibility, a vision that ranged from his command at the firm to the supposed genius Server and I were expected to perform. I will spare the details, but we designed a strategy with the help of a CRM and a content manager for the company, the aim of which was to 'give back to the community', where 'the community' can be read as the bosses who can amass enough capital to invest in luxury housing. Apart from the 'cultural section' of 'giving back' through concerts, theater plays, community dinners; we came up with a social responsibility project that deals with the animals of Istanbul who were residing earlier on the grounds on which Ağaoğlu housing units were established. "Let your home house everyone" (*Eviniz herkese yuva olsun*) was the project that, to our surprise and excitement had been approved by the communications quarter of Ağaoğlu.

The new business-social venture had Ekmel claiming that:

“a few years from now social media will be flooded with social responsibility [*sosyal sorumluluk*] advertisements. I think we should open up a branch from now which specializes in public relations with social media users in the name of the company. People want to see companies doing good things. And they want to let people know, I think you, Server [the new part-time recruit, eventually to replace me] and someone else can make a good team. A few years from now...I think there is much value there [*çok değeri olacağı*]...”⁹⁵

In the Introduction, I made an analytical distinction as used by the advertising community at *JazzRabbit*, resting on the imagined sociological explanation of the term ‘style of life’ (*yaşam stili*)⁹⁶ has, in contrast to the indeterminate aesthetic ground implied by the term, *lifestyle* (*layfstayl*), the cultivation of which is as difficult as coming to terms with which colors, contours, fonts, angles, shapes and forms congeal into one that advertisers believe to *represent* the task of matching needs and desires. Whereas *yaşam stili* is made to stick with online communities regarding age, income, gender and the choice of consumption, the latter is a jargon-laden token of expertise. There were two other processes other than the making of KPI charts and social responsibility projects, which somewhat involved the tension just mentioned more clearly. The first one was our initial agreement with an agent from the aggressive (using ISPs, explained

⁹⁵ "Bundan çok değil birkaç sene sonra görürsün her yerde sosyal sorumluluk reklamları olacak, gidişat bunu gösteriyor. Şirketler prlarını reklam şeklinde dijital ortamdan geliştirmek isteyecek, öncüler gerekecek. Biz ileride birkaç sene içinde açmamız gerekiyor böyle bir şube açmalıyız JazzRabbit'e bağlı olacak. Lazım yani insanlar böyle şeyler görmek istiyor şirketlerde. Server ve sen bunu yaparsınız yani çok acayip bir işi yok biz kaynakları filan sağlarız çünkü bekliyorlar şirketler böyle bir şey. Çok acayip değeri olacağı birkaç sene içinde bu iş görürsün..."

⁹⁶ *Yaşam stili* has drawn more discussion than what I can account for with my ethnographic observation. It marks the making of categories of youth and women in both the earlier phase of the republic and after the 1980 military coup, as they refer to consumption habits and self-stylizations, represented in the discussions of ideologues and media artifacts (Cantek, 2001). Moreover, the 'authentic' Turkish identity has shifted grounds, inflecting what *yaşam stili*, for instance regarding practices of piety had come to connote, through consumption, stylization, representation and performance (Saktanber & Kandiyoti, 2002). Özyürek (2004) has influentially tied the markers of embodied morality to the making of market and national identities. See also Navarro-Yashin (2002), Gürbilek (2011), Saktanber and Çorbacıoğlu (2008), Özkan and Foster (2005). Thus, the discursive trajectory of *yaşam stili* sticks to national, religious and ethnic identities, consumption practices, and hierarchical tokens of prestige relative to the assets one can amass.

below) behavioral advertising representative Phorm, and the second one was the (ab)use of the *fellow feeling* I made sense of when I was purchasing advert space from Facebook and Google with the help of Fırat (financial matters), Gözde (content, account and social media account designer) and Ekmel. The ambiguity of the term *yaşam stili* allowed the making of digital strategies and daily content production by drawing on arbitrary sources, by which I mean subjective interpolations.

The data provided by Facebook and Google’s ad services were displayed on the accounts with a user-friendly interface, that are provided for business enterprises such as ours. Fırat noted that Facebook provides him clear demarcations of the lower and the upper classes, based on his take on what the working notion of class corresponded to: “hobbies”. Translating the know-how of using ad-spaces to me, Fırat showed me how they decided on running adverts. In one instance, we yoked the users who had ‘liked’ yachting, whisky, a particular travel resort, a luxurious brand selling jewelry and similar big companies in the same sector, to Fırat’s understanding of “Class A” (*A sınıfı*) style of life. Running adverts of a project made by another construction company, 24, we advertised '24 Yaşam' (24 hours of living) in the hope of selling single occupancy housing units which were also offices, namely merging the life of work to the work of life.

Gözde’s *fellow feeling* works in a way that animates the flow of images and the commodity form. It speaks to the two-sided appeal of the interesting, which pervades the indeterminate ground, “creating relays between affect-based judgment and concept-based explanations” (Ngai, 2013, p.116). The interested parties are assumed by Gözde, and are translated into consumer communities which stem from her predisposition to classify, order and pair according to the way in which she brings together sociological

categories which can be measured using algorithms from software companies and metrics that are devised to presume what consumption habits, past locations and ‘interests’ as hobbies could be. The judgment leaning on the moral grounds of such self-righteousness was a hybrid of her right to judge an aesthetic standard in the form of a *lifestyle*. Gözde’s understanding of *lifestyle* added up to an aspiration:

“I think like this and then do it: If this guy has the adequate potential to buy this luxury housing, then he probably has interest in boats and such. The next day I post an advert that is not about the product, but about a hobby, thus I post a *lifestyle* content [*layfstayl içerik*]. And there we try to convey the image that if you buy this house, then you will attain such high and such distinct hobbies. I think people want this.”⁹⁷

Ekmel’s fantasy of a total design where needs and desires meet stems from a similar thinking but to a very different end, considering the differentials in position, capabilities and experiences. Another interesting thing here is that as the metrics become more ‘scientific’, this ‘classificatory imagination’ (I expand this below) works in a way that makes louder and more visible the part covered by the concomitant ‘moral rectitude’. The more technically seamless the algorithms, the measuring tools and the classificatory possibilities become, the less the person previously in that position establishes the connection. The more we exchange roles with automating tools, the louder and more self-confident data-packaging becomes. In other words, the moral basis of an ‘autopoietic’ consumer society, for the advertiser, is more of a reality, speaking, judging, measuring from a higher moral ground inasmuch as the agency of the advertiser can be substituted by that of a machine. I show that Ekmel’s ideas *and* our practical

⁹⁷ "Öyle düşünüp yapıyorum bu adam bu lüks evi alabilecek potansiyeldeyse o zaman pahalı hobilere teknelere filan da ilgisi vardır. Ertesi gün o adamın ilgisini çekecek mesela markadan bağımsız hobiyle ilgili layfstayl bir içerik giriyorum ve hani orada şöyle bir imajı vermeye çalışıyoruz bu evi satın alırsanız böyle yüksek böyle kaliteli hobileriniz olur imajı yaratmaya çalışıyoruz. İnsanlar öyle bir hayale ulaşmak için uğraşıyorlar bence..."

application of this process, with the rise of informational sciences, may mimic what Isabelle Stengers (2000, p. 88, see also Stengers, 2013, p.376) has called “the invention of the power to confer on things the power of conferring on the experimenter the power to speak in their name”.

One day the bosses Ekmel and Peksimet called me to attend a meeting regarding the advertising services provided by a multinational company, Phorm. We took our places in front of the banner of the *rabbit* printed on the backdrop of silky yellow cloth. The slick co-manager of the Turkey branch, I will here call Murat, presented us their service. He was asking us to commend their services to our clients and if we can strike a deal for the company and his advertising agency, we would be given a percentage of their services and ‘other deals’ he did not specify. He told us that their company -the first to do so- could track someone searching/surfing⁹⁸ the internet “more efficiently” and much “deeper” than Google. The wager of his enterprise was such that the trackers that record the data of a potential customer goes back to (visits to) five internet sites, rather than the mediocre three. In short, they know the sites a user has visited and optimize the advertisement accordingly: If you have visited a sports site, then, five pages later you may find advertisements regarding sports. I found out later that his company was outlawed in many countries, and three months after he paid us a visit, the company left Turkey for ‘financial reasons’. He deemed that although they gather information from ‘cookies’, they didn’t hold on to personal data, and his enterprise was “peaceful” (*barışçıl*). However, Phorm is known to work through the DPI 'adwares'⁹⁹ that intercept

⁹⁸ Search is the new surf (Sorensen, 2009).

⁹⁹ See McStay (2011, Chapter 3). "Until 2007 Phorm was known as 121Media, a company dealing in what for many was the dubious yet highly profitable practice of adware that involves gathering information about internet users' interests by bundling advertisement-serving software with other free applications"

user gateways to collect and manage data, which are legally controversial to say the least.

The deal did not go through, although the data optimization opportunities have left another imprint on the minds of advertising agents as the necessary development in behavioral advertising. The belief in the tendency to equilibrium that motors circulation and the mobilization of masses for commercial and political purposes is not unique to the age of hyper-information. This resounds in the familiar idea remarked in relation to Big Data: Robin James (2014) reminds us that in Plato's understanding, "social harmony was a matter of proportionality", and warns us against the "upgraded" neoliberalism and the agenda of measurement techniques that figure into everyday life to enact "'social physics' or, 'the reliable, mathematical connections between information and idea flow...and people's behavior'". The connection here can also be traced by recourse to the political endeavor of fascism, which assumes the position of crowds as the irrational, the sensual and thus in need of constant regulation and manipulation that gets delivered by reason, rising above the (female) mass. Zamponi (1997) notes that "by beautifying politics, fascism created the auratic distance between the regime and the governed necessary to channel people's involvement in politics through faith, myths, and cults" (p. 25): value is attributed to the past, according to Zamponi, by relaying a promise that "draws its aura from faith" in order to imagine in the past and create in the present, a "cultic experience". Thus, with its promise of equilibrium, classificatory ideology through which agents who are in crucial gateways of financial and desire flows 'sacralize' markets, operate with untenable fantasies in mind, which relegate human

(ibid, p.20). The upshot of this is that without the consent of the user, her data and privacy is utilized by companies that work on ambiguous moral and legal grounds.

agency to machines and self-regulating mechanisms.

David Beer (2013, 2015) locates the technical rendering of this “curious blend of elitist pedagogy and populist appeal” (Mazarella 2003, p.103) in the epistemological contradictions wrought by what he calls the “classificatory imagination”. In a fruitful correspondence with Foucault’s rigorous discussions on the gaps and disarticulated tensions between the process whereby classificatory mechanisms regarding the outer world are incorporated in the subjective gaze, and the very scientific cultivation of orders of knowledge, David Beer formulates his analytical concept. Popular culture is always made through these gaps that set in motion a dynamic field between known categories and contingent subjective meaning making processes. The *fellow feeling* of Gözde is no different. As the making of classificatory systems through the pseudo-scientific data accumulation and allocation has shown, the existing social realities are clustered through the partial recognition of data and subjective inferences workers who deal with this data have gathered beforehand. Nevertheless, this encounter is mediated by the gap (between the concretization and abstraction) that surfaces throughout this double process, it is made to connote to successful business plans in its presentation to clients, customers and target groups of users.

The 'encoded eye'¹⁰⁰ here can be taken as the embodied layers of social knowledge that are made through the making of belief systems, attitudes, 'knowledges' and ethical relations a subject maintains as a naturalized order (compare to the discussion of fetishism above). As I have argued drawing on various sources (see also the Introduction), this is the corollary of the mechanisms signifying the commodity form

¹⁰⁰ Very briefly, David Beer (2013) uses the term to denote the social processes by which one gains a particular realist view on how things should be evaluated.

as it is made and remade by the subject, according to the values that are made as a result of discipline and control, bodily and spatial arrangement of the practices of a subject. These assemblages in addition work by the informational systems of *sampling*, *simulation* and *pattern recognition*. Foucault's remarks here point to the possibility of using this gap between the 'encoded eye' and "reflexive knowledge", implying that "existing classifications are not all-powerful or completely dominant in shaping how we encode the world, but also that we are not free to interpret and classify as we choose" (Beer 2013, pp.44-5).

Accordingly, the 'encoded eye' that naturalizes in my case the wealth inequalities and the differential distribution and manifestation of taste among differing income levels, makes use of several 'grids' that come in handy at times of classifications. Fırat, Gözde and Ekmel compare, differentiate, categorize, sort and array potential target audiences as they wed their pre-conceived conviction that taste is a marker of level of income (and vice versa), thereby both naturalizing consumption habits as ways of belonging to the world, and by packaging this naturalization with a veneer of 'scientificity'. Statistical manifestations, they know, have the power to enchant, distract and convince. The timeless categories of consumers, help consumers become in their own image. The bodily knowledge issues orders:

"Order is, at one and the same time, that which is given in things as their inner law, the hidden network that determines the way they confront one another, and also that which has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language; and it is only in the blank spaces of this grid that order manifests itself in depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression." (Foucault, 2002, p. xxi; see also Beer, 2013).

2.5 Kai-Zen, the entertainment image and the fetish of the new

In practices of branding, we witness the transformation of trademark loyalty and the emphasis on the making of commodities of affection to that of the making of 'lovebrands', which demand and attach consumer loyalty to the indeterminate binaries wrought by practices of branding¹⁰¹. The consumer identifies with the brand, as it operates through medias, imaginations, spaces and time to effect the “reattachment of the alienated product” to the producer/consumer (Foster, 2005, p.11). The producer as advertiser is also haunted by the constant nagging of making novelty in the form of events, designing the future outcome by relying on the belief in and technical capacity at her disposal. To recourse to the heroine of William Gibson’s novel, *Pattern Recognition*, Cayce awakes to the advertising strategy that goes beyond the marketing of products, but of the dissemination of information that works more through “a certain lack of specificity”¹⁰², the gist of which is to make an idea feel as if it was forgotten¹⁰³.

This “certain lack of specificity” is wieldy of the developments that have rearranged the work place, work time, and work control regime of the Post-fordist labor condition. It is no longer only business plans, punch-cards, forecasting etc. that define temporal and spatial coordinates of laboring and desiring. The ambivalence, flexibility, and ‘event’ understood as ‘the present with imminent potential’ for invention, creation, variation and differentiation inserts itself in the making of subjectivity. “Instability,

¹⁰¹ Such as use value and exchange value, concrete and abstract, brand and product, consumer and producer and so on.

¹⁰² One such strategy that is not as technically well-versed: the name-dropping of products while conversing with people who are at the gateways of the glamour and attention economy, guiding popular culture and event business. A strategic location of advertising experts would be trained to conduct viral marketing with the ‘right’ people, at the ‘right’ time.

¹⁰³ Compare with this. “Cognition becomes even more of a joint experience between persons and things” (Thrift 2011, p.10), which fashions the “Lifeworld Inc [that] relies on a whole battery of explicated knowledges of the semiconscious glance which give the impression that ‘those particular images were already in my head, and I was looking for them’” (Sultan 2009, p.16 cited in Thrift, 2011, p.16). I take this to mean that particular acts of bodies are increasingly influenced by the management of anticipation. See also Chapter 3. Compare also to Stiegler (2010, 2012) and Parisi and Goodman (2011).

uncertainty, the necessity to face changes in real time, all deeply penetrate the organization of labor” (Lazzarato, 2004, p.192). With the rise of data collection and ‘smart’ branding applications, the predictions regarding the future projections made in the here and now are capable of generating similar or at least more technically determined outcomes (Savat, 2009). The 'eventfulness' of things, icons, images, spaces and laboring conditions are culled into grids. The making of 'intuition'¹⁰⁴ a 'naturally' felt category is one aspect new practices of advertising is intent on cultivating.

It wasn't at all unexpected when the business partner of my boss, Peksimet called me up into his room to discuss his cutting-edge business theories out of management textbooks and events for companies that he took pride to be the inventor. He proposed we undertake the management of organizational training and stress management 'in real-action' events in order to train the employees working for a bank. Another project was to stage so-called “stressful encounters” white-collar workers experience everyday, in studios that re-stage moments of hardship. Through these events, or rather, processes of event-making I came to realize that ‘keeping up with the times’ (*zamana ayak uydurmak*) was a recursive endeavor that retrospectively set the facts to make this kind of act plausible. In other words, Peksimet's self-acclaimed role in endowing the commodity image with the present quality of heralding what is to come, spoke to the broader question of a fascination with the novel aspect of new data algorithms,

¹⁰⁴ I think similar to Lauren Berlant (2008, p.5), who claimed that "to change one's intuition about it all is to challenge the habituated processing of affective responses to what one encounters in the world. In this kind of situation a process will eventually appear monumentally as form—as episode, event, or epoch. How that happens, though, will be determined processually, by what people do to reshape themselves and it while living in the stretched out “now” that is at once intimate and estranged". She expands on this in footnote 7: "Henri Bergson's *Matter and Memory* deems intuition the world of memory that shapes the present. In the model I'm putting forth intuition is the subject's habituated affective activity, the sensorium trained to apperceive the historical in the present by a whole range of encounters and knowledges, not just memory".

behavioral strategies and event-planning.

The scheme of Kai-Zen is pertinent to the tapping into the promise of the “new”. The managerial discourse of constant improvement and Peksimet himself as an ‘expert’ of corporate communication were constructions made by letting irrelevant materials and heterogenous actors blend in. Consisting of Japanese Kanji radicals of *kai* 改 (to modify) and *zen* 善 (good), *kaizen* (‘making things better’) has assumed through its deployment in managerial discourses and textbooks to stand to mean “constant improvement”. Peksimet, not content with my findings regarding the fact that there is no inherent or ancient (historical) meaning to the notion of *kaizen*, asked incessantly for me to make slogans out of the signifier which related to “improvement on a day to day basis”, purportedly contra-posed to the ‘Western dictum’ of revolutionary breaks to produce improvement and change¹⁰⁵. In the end, without proper referencing (neither to these texts nor to my efforts), he, in several speeches he gave to at least three hundred corporate workers, managed to color the image we have made, centering his speech on the need to improve oneself daily, putting blocks to one's 'human capital', gaining new skill sets, codes of corporate conduct relying on individual striving (done of course for 'the collective good'). According to Taussig (2004, p.29), Walter Benjamin averred that “Prince is a word with a star tied to it”, making the imagery that come with certain words and contexts relevant to our understanding of the tactility of language; that plays on the magic of “color image and word...[towards] a “hieroglyphic mode” of perception”. We are facing a hieroglyphic mode of perception that is in contact with pseudo-scientific self-help discourse of individual moralization and work-related affect

¹⁰⁵ Peksimet's knowledge of management sciences was thus hackneyed and orientalist, assuming a substance to being 'Western', sterile, rational, progressive, and to being 'Eastern', process oriented, substantial, traditional etc.

production. This ties in with orientalist and reductionist work control agendas, the rise of a new entrepreneurial class who talks in numbers, calculations, revolutions, and the self as an array (a dashboard) of assets and individual as market player; which of course intercepts the eventful possibilities of new technologies with a refrain of moral rectitude, technical know-how and claims to naturalized human behavior.

Peksimet held three cards, all flipped down for me to choose from. The cards contained projects that he came up with after a “long night” spent with Ekmel in the office. They were getting ready to show it to the communications department of a firm in order to help them organize their staff-training in a “contemporaneous” manner. They came up with three competition-training programs, supposedly by obligation, the workers would be trained in developing their “team-work” skills i.e. communication, decision-making under stress, and leadership. The simulations were designed to take place in kitchen environments, where workers would be tested on their ability to harmonize ingredients in a given time for evaluation. The one that attracted my attention was the project with the highest “production value,” where the competition was recorded and later screened by the team in order to identify outliers. The place-event of these programs were selected with the undertones of what Peksimet had in mind as affects that define the stumbling blocks of corporate creativity. He believed they could be exorcised through event-planning.

He accentuated the way “these things” were handled by firms now. “Everyone [big firms] knows they should be educating their staff with this kind of event. I want to sell this one [the expensive one] and get my cut, it is my duty to make sure that the kitchen [a culinary school] works like a clock”. The selected crew would be put to test in a modern kitchen with eight matching stoves and sinks, each player receiving the same

amount of ingredients to cook a simple meal. The meal would, of course, ask only for coordination and step-by-step thinking, to my dismay as I tried to come up with scenarios where ones that had no experience in cooking would botch the task.

Perhaps the most vexing experience for me was to understand to what extent the attainment of knowledge regarding corporate culture was conceptualized in the promised space of training and the ways in which the package under scrutiny suggested *itself* as a pertinent form of entertainment/training. In other words, how would an advertising expert intimate herself in the heart of the contradiction, understood as the making of dead memories through pattern recognition and event-making, which still operate through the upgraded commodity form of branding. Benjamin's (1978[1986], pp.152-3) advice could be to look at how Fashion refashions what is counted as novelty as the commodity image images itself after it: "Fashion prescribes the ritual according to which the commodity fetish wishes to be worshiped...[coupling] the living body to the inorganic world." In the case of behavioral advertising and branding, the inorganic world becomes the discourse and non-discursive practices of scientific measurement, which culls certain patterns of prescribed and heavily commercialized behavior¹⁰⁶ from the potentiality of things. Peksimet was a self-proclaimed advertising manager and a semi-self-trained entrepreneur, "a man who is almost worth a million", that is, in his portfolio that he interchangeably proffers to represent his worth in this business, the total monetary value his assets add up to. He would often lecture me and the others on cigarette breaks, seeing if we can keep up with his haphazardly thought jokes and trivia regarding what to say in business meetings and job interviews, with a veneer of self-

¹⁰⁶ See also Clough (2011), and especially the abduction of human (living) memory by machines, Parisi and Goodman (2011).

assured humor. Similar to Ekmel, he had the fantasy of an equilibrium where entrepreneurs gathered information regarding the fears and desires of a given population and match it with commodity producers, whether the discussion veered to services or tangible goods offered on the market. He suggested himself as a model for arbitrating between what 'these times' demanded, in his lexicon, an amalgamation of technical aptitude, knowledge on finance and trends in investment, generating “concepts” that imbue the lived moment with a *lifestyle* consisting of conspicuous consumption, which in the end of course “generates winners and losers” (*e tabii kazanamı kaybedeni olucak*). The upshot of this is that Peksimet set himself the task of penetrating, stimulating and regulating knowledge that pertains to how consumers act upon the commodity they encounter. This he wanted me to understand, or what I make of it as, a double bind: He would like to design “events” in a way that both worked as a commodity, his product of a training program, and this would itself be reproducing the logic of commodification that was supposed to incite the trained personnel’s motivation for selling their labor as a commodity. The contradiction here lies in the immediate insistence on both the particularity of the desires through which the commodity will be consumed, and the commodity itself assuming a diagram that works on desires.

As for the commodification of events, the temporal logic that such an endeavor tapped into requires understanding the intertwined relationship of how the juncture created by the advertisement of such an event circulates both discursively (in the form of statements, contents) and bodily (in the form of visibilities and movements, expressions). Add to this the commodification of the “event” in a double sense: both as the simulation of what is purportedly represented as real-life situations that occur in everyday corporate functioning, and as a rupture in the ordinary course of things. The

commodity image here is made to embody both “the future” and the subject in tune with it.

In this chapter, I hope to have shown several theoretical points and empirical figures that have made branding pervasive. This speaks not only to a corporate strategy to 'commodify' and measure life, which aims at squeezing value out of unremunerated labor. Imaging and branding have made their ways into the very making of space and time, thanks to persistent ideologies regarding the technical capabilities of our present age and the belief in a particular brand of human nature. What I did not want to argue was something towards the hackneyed assumption that in our ‘technosphere’ we are becoming more and more connected to each other, unburdening ourselves to the machines, and that our bodily, libidinal, informational and moral economy have been subsumed by capital flows. This is not untrue. But I wanted to show that the decisions made everyday by interested and/or disinterested humans that end up with this matter of things are the corollary of contradicting, cynical, partial, and disarticulate beliefs, processes, signs, semiotics and material processes that are set in motion by human labor and attention.

As we will see in a moment, Peksimet's obsession with inserting himself into the course of things to keep up with the set of values he believed to define the times we live in moves into other levels. This will allow us to recognize in the image he builds for himself, the workings of temporal affects. Through temporal affects, a subject imagines and constructs herself as a subject in time. I will read how these affects work through documents, tools, visuals, infrastructures and self-representations. Thus, I move from the making of the harmony of timeless categories of consumers and social functions towards inner worlds: rhythms.

CHAPTER 3

TIMES OF CIRCULATION:

MULTIPLE TEMPORAL REGISTERS AT WORK

"What it gives, the gift, is time. But the gift of time is also a demand of time. The thing must not be restituted *immediately and right away*. There must be time, it must last, there must be waiting—without forgetting [*l'attente—sans oubli*]. It demands time, the thing, but it demands a delimited time, neither an instant nor an infinite time, but a time determined by a term, in other words, a rhythm, a cadence. The thing is not *in* time; it is or it has time, or rather it demands to have, to give, or to take time—and time as rhythm, a rhythm that does not befall a homogenous time but that structures it originarily."

Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*

The previous chapter closes with Peksimet's valuations and evaluations¹⁰⁷ on what I have called the making of the fetish of the 'new'. However, I have yet to dwell on the ways in which the temporal affects, themselves oscillating between fear and hope, are made into perceptual, expressive, contentious accounts. This process involves expressing significant emotions which relate structurally to these affects. This chapter takes upon itself the wager of multiple temporal affects that annotate, taint and define the rhythms that structure lived experience in the context of the 'precarization' of work places and relations. As I will in a moment try to elaborate, the premise I hold goes like this: the historical conditions that structure affects register in working subjects certain self-understandings that make themselves visible in temporal paradoxes, circulations of objects, and engagements with the infrastructure of work. In turn, I look at how affective

¹⁰⁷ Recall that for Peksimet, projecting the conditions of new work environments onto other settings and his obsession with the making of the ambiguous image of the kai-zen provided us with both what he valued in human striving and how he set out to calculate and reproduce it.

experiences are framed by workers who deal with the infrastructure, the packaging and the dissemination of digital advertisement in a hyper-informational workplace.

The chapter is designed and divided into two sections, the first being the conditions of circulation of particular beliefs, ideas, images, forms, textual contracts as they acquire, relate, accumulate, channel, press and translate affects. I tie this to the making of subjectivity and tell a story of multiplicity that is rather neat. The second part of this double chapter is rather messy, I put more emphasis on tense moments and collate ethnographic data from the spatial, architectural forms through which embodied habits and places are made in relation to affects that work through memories.

I have discussed in the Introduction how the affective composition of the workers mattered for the making of collective and individual objects of desire on the one hand, and the temporal orientation, the way workers understand themselves in relation to their past and future, on the other. In this chapter, I dwell on several scenes I witnessed and interviews I conducted to map the temporal organization of the workplace as it is conveyed and felt by the workers at *JazzRabbit*. This choice resonates not only with my concerns regarding the nature of embodied time, it also follows my shifting status in the workplace. In the first two months at *JazzRabbit*, I adapted to the conditions of work and conversed with almost equal intervals with all my colleagues, learning from these conversations specifically what each of them do as work. This time also coincided with more meetings with Ekmel, the corollary of which I learned techniques of 'digital strategy', the parlance of digital advertisers, the codes of conduct at the meetings with customers and understood in broader strokes the dynamics and aesthetics of commodity images, advertising, urban life and the world of digital media. The last two months, however, were more intense in terms of the prolonged relationships and friendships with

a select group of workers, meetings at coffee breaks and on the terrace, and a more intimate kind of conversation. At that time, I leaned on more personal relationships for my data gathering.

The workers, whether they monitor 'social media' accounts, design webpages, narrate images with/to brand slogans or embody the classical sense of the entrepreneur (especially in the case of Peksimet), they all concur in drawing on stories that play on temporal understandings of what it means to work for digital media in an advertising agency. This understanding, of course, is situated in the structures that affect the ways in which desire for work is re/produced everyday. In turn, these statements show that the work ethic is compounded with desires not only conducive for more efficient work but intertwined with how one sees oneself: subjects of work create intimate bonds to their work/life going back and forth between fear and hope. They imagine better conditions of life to stitch themselves to a future where not only material gains, but also a meaningful future may unfold.

To map temporal flows coursing through a workplace, its subjects, histories and things falls short of any such ambitious attempt for obvious reasons¹⁰⁸. In saying that, I should state early on that this attempt is experimental and by no means exhaustive of the lived temporalities that go on in a sector, a workplace, or a moment of or beyond consciousness. That would be to deny the complex 'intertwinings' of time and space, as the co-constitutive relationship of our time-space eludes representations and experience,

¹⁰⁸ See the provisional attempt and insights regarding the tensions between documentations, material anchors, and the ways in which ethnographers 'apprehend' the temporal locations of the site Miyazaki (2006) provides. Miyazaki's suggestion is to apprehend the elusive moment of 'now' by looking at the circulation of documents, texts, acknowledgements in relation to the acts that have supposed to have taken place as said on the document. This requires from the ethnographer a retrospective analysis by taking the concepts produced in the field by those who represent their acts, creating a conversation between the ritual act of now and the capacity of 'hopeful anticipation' to animate social encounters.

making the relationship between bodies, things and spaces dynamic and open-ended (Massey, 2005; Ingold, 2008; Connolly, 2002, 2010). However, there are always multiple temporalities, meaning force fields of lived experience, memory and anticipation which are embedded in the dynamics of built environment, of reproductive and exploited labor, and digital technology. In each case, these forces are mixed with the delays, lags and promises of the commodities figured by the ‘intersectionality’ of the spheres of consumption, production and circulation. It is in that sense that I use the notion “mapping time”, to refer to practices in time, broadening the scope of “time-in-action” (Fabian, 2007). In this chapter, I take on three narratives (cases) that made themselves available to me in different times and through various media manifestations. These will be understood in their circulations and rhythms at work in the workplace, co-constituted historically with the affects of the Post-fordist regime.

In the first case, I reflect on the conversations with and diachronic meanings of work as defined by Gözde. Her account testifies to the multiple temporalities generated by the affective circulation of the commodity images she produces. Gözde’s case is special in its breadth but also somewhat stands for the attributes of works that make product representation and advertisement project their token of digital expression and reward. I understand her position in her claim that she writes creative slogans for ads by shuffling through the text messages from her partner, and inflects them to make them appeal to the presumed qualities of the brand. Then, these images circulate in participatory web platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. The first aspect refers to the archival work done by Gözde in her shuffling through older messages on her phone, her intimate sphere and memories of her feelings for the said messages. The second aspect of her work is on the translation of her intimate feelings for her object of

love into the promise of the lifestyle that the represented commodity (in the complexity of the form of the commodity image) comes to embody. This embodiment circulates through the materiality effected by software and hardware related to digital media spheres. The third aspect of her work relates to something beyond. Affects unleash through the promise of the commodity and the flows of the digital image: her initial excavation and translation makes its manifold circulation¹⁰⁹. This circulation is punctuated by several actors. The measuring tools channel her labor into the available metrics of calculation. These metrics are later taken up by a representative of the digital media company (in this case, by me) or that of our client (the 'lovebrand'). The consummated path of the image testifies only for a specific interpretation of that path.

The second case recounts the time of calculation, as in ordering one's past and future available to representation in an economic function. As a steady curve. Peksimet, already mentioned several times in this thesis, considered himself an avid entrepreneur. He often interrupted the workers and was most particularly bent on teaching me "the basics" of how decisions are made by humans (as a universal category). His attitude was in a form that convinced the listener: he took great pains to affect an air of 'these are things that set me thinking such and such, and no other interpretation was possible'. His case was very particular yet again played on those broader links of the social constitution of individual traits. As we will see he frames the gap between the lack of volition of others to invest in themselves as entrepreneurs and the ones who do, a metric of moral impediment. The difference is in "making it". The individual being, following his teachings -themselves a collation of ideas of therapeutic culture, self-help literature,

¹⁰⁹ This is an endless regression. The afterlife of these images turned into digital data and affects is simple to understand but implications of it are less so. Their career is shot through with informationalization. See the previous chapter and especially the emphasis on the 'careers' of adverts.

managerial basic knowledge and an emulation of (quantifiable) individual self worth-, could, if played her cards right, fill this moral gap with arbitrage. In other words, he had a normative vision of an entrepreneur who is smart enough to ride the wave and become rich. It takes perseverance, self-esteem and insider knowledge. This will be contrasted to the image of the ‘benevolent capitalist’ cultivated by Ekmel, the co-owner, the laborer (*bu işyeri için en çok emek sarf eden, ben bu işyerinin amelesiyim*) and the effective ruler of the firm. The third and final case does not correspond to a subjective delineation involving the tensions of the temporal dimensions at work. It is rather about the future aspirations of several workers- Aysel (creative web designer), Murat (the accountant-entrepreneur), and the reactions of Sezen, Tuna and Gözde in the face of the suicide of a well-known advertiser living in Istanbul, urging them to reflect on the psychological stress they find themselves under. This chapter argues that the way in which digital media workers position themselves between what they have been and what sort of future expectations they come to embody bear on their acts in the here and now, by working on and through the dynamics of fear and hope.

3.1 A critical view on the temporal, affective, ‘dromological’ condition today

In this part, I try to come up with a historically informed theoretical tool to write with the data I broached above. It was Reinhart Koselleck’s (2004) contention that modernity is a remarkable experience playing on the memory and anticipation set by particular historical institutions. We inhabit the present through the set of values that are not yet present, which work on the “space of experience”. The here and now of the modern way of life is torn between the contours of memory still operating in the present (hence

figuring the “space of experience”) and the projection of future values (“horizon of expectation”) onto the moment of now. However, the expectation binds the now to a structure of anticipation, thus straining the relationship between the memory and the future. Thus, this approach argues that the now is dynamic and is fundamentally a space of historical contention.

It is stressed by many theorists of late modernity that the time of reflection for the individual, and the space of experience for the collective has radically shrunk, thanks to the speed with which commodities are produced and circulate, concomitant with the 'financialization' of the future value of some assets¹¹⁰ (Crary, 2014; Rosa, 2013). Hartmut Rosa singles out empirically the changing velocity with which social change is experienced, to the point of speeding up the interval thanks to which social action could be reflected upon. That is situated in the three problems Rosa defines in relation to the experience of being modern, which triangulates between the pace of goal-oriented projects (instrumentality), perceptions of social change (with a curt response interval-we can think of the rate of circulation images and ideas have today) and the acceleration of daily interactions. A similar process is recounted in Crary's observation, with a knack for understanding the current media sphere. The shrinking of responsive time intervals, compounded with the proliferation of pseudo science of the mind work in upholding the ever more ubiquitous fantasy of a body with unlimited energy. Of course, this credo maps onto the needs of subjective reorientation to navigate in the neoliberal, networked capitalism, with an “absence of restraints on consuming...[an] absoluteness of availability, and hence the ceaselessness of needs and their incitement, but also their perpetual non-fulfillment” (Crary, 2014, p.8).

¹¹⁰ Understood here not only in the abstract but as tangible contracts, plans, protocols tied to institutions.

Without losing sight of the tension between the historical understanding of oneself and the objective economic and social change, I want to situate this split such that it speaks to the contradictory narrations with which workers under Post-fordist regime identify themselves. There is more to the rift between the subjective assimilation to the accelerated rhythms, such as to what extent the ‘real’ time of human experience gives in to the networked time. 'Hypercommodified' capitalism indeed still works and has not completely dispensed with the making of a consumer culture. The velocity with which financial transactions occur, our ‘machinic’¹¹¹ connection to the information inputs & outputs of TVs, digital platforms, tablets, smartphones, cameras and so on directly influence¹¹² our connection and space of action regarding other persons, communities and materials¹¹³. However, it is one thing to say that the present has shrunk, and another to claim that this works directly into the hands of the great capitalist project which aims to cultivate the individual "who is constantly engaged, interfacing, interacting, communicating, responding, or processing within some telematic milieu”

¹¹¹ See Guattari (2009), Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p.533), also see Introduction.

¹¹² We may consider here the technology of digital video and its relationship to sensuality beyond eyesight. The new media technologies, especially the economic and psychic investment made by referencing and readopting cinematic histories of perception brings on bodily and cognitive registers a way of being in the world and thus is directly related to the practices we monitor to comprehend, act, and be in time (Connolly, 2002, 2010). Recently, Marks (2009) had shown that the eyesight, which is known to punctuate a certain realist vision regarding the state of things and facts, is made in conjunction with the memory of touching. The ways in which advertisement, blockbuster movie flicks, books, albums, events and corporate-urban mixed enterprises utilize the temporal multiplicity that is embedded in video technology is not only a coded, represented ‘capture’ but also the harbinger and constitutive of a new world that goes beyond representation. See Crary (1992, p.19), Taussig (1992, 1993), For video technology, see Shavero (2010), Lazzarato (2007, although cf. Toscano, 2007), for the potential of CGI technology see Halberstam (2011), for urban scapes see Thrift (2008a, 2009). Speaking more generally, the post-fordist organization of labor ‘meters’ and ‘regulates’ bodily affects as individual bodies and icons are situated within this affective economy by their ability of transmitting and amplifying value as affect (Wissinger 2007, 2015). See lastly how the shift from press media to streaming brings about technological flows which consume, manipulate, and distill time (Stiegler, 2011; Read, 2016, pp.182-3).

¹¹³ Thus, to reality. Mark Hansen (2004, 2006; although cf. Featherstone 2010, p.195) is known for his rigorous theoretical framework on what he calls the body schema, “that is, the non-visual sense of the body, the haptic and proprioceptive feelings from the body – not just on the senses of hearing, smell and taste, but also touch and sense of inner body movement”. Reality is always "mixed reality" which sets itself to the subjects mediated through technology.

(Crary 2014, p.15), the corollary of which is the whole gamut of "disjunctions, fractures, and continual disequilibrium" (ibid, p.31)¹¹⁴.

Does accelerated circulation of affects entail a unity of experience? Another influential account of the acceleration of the speed of communication and the affects lived in common¹¹⁵ looks at the relative speeds unleashed by informational and warfare technologies. The philosopher/city planner Virilio's 'Dromology' (1977, 2010) introduces the currency of speed. In a fascinating attempt at cultural critique, Virilio (2010, p.27) aptly underlines the rhythmic acceleration that works on modes of 'subjectivation', but he perhaps overemphasizes and attributes totality to the hyper-information age and the synchronization of ways of being through the cue given by distinct actors and emotive packages distributed by media apparatuses:

"It [acceleration] plays a prominent role in establishing fear as a global environment, because it allows the synchronization of emotion on a global scale. Because of the absolute speed of electromagnetic waves, the same feeling of terror can be felt in all corners of the world at the same time...It creates a "community of emotions," a communism of affects coming after the communism of the "community of interests" shared by different social classes" (ibid, p.30)

I concur with his argument (ibid, pp.31-5) that we have switched from an *attempt* at the standardization of measures, ideas and ways of being needed to establish a consumer society to an *attempt* at the synchronization of emotions on a global scale. However, I

¹¹⁴ The workings of this temporal bind capitalizes on the tension between the limits of the body and the demands made of its potential, and the fantasy of fulfillment and delivery. The present has indeed shrunk due to these cited processes, but there is no real drive towards an annihilation of individual capacities. This reservation aside, the rigor with which Jonathan Crary formulates our current condition can be taken as an invitation to understand how indeed the change in the rhythm of everyday life can be narrated, conceptualized and further problematized. For a similar approach to understand the cognitive-aesthetic mapping of affects which relate to "what it feels like to live today", see Shaviri (2010)

¹¹⁵ Other than of course the infamous intervention made by Srnicek and Williams (2013) and the collaborated #Accelerate#: the Accelerationist Reader (Mackay & Avanessian, 2014). For a philosophical and historical introduction to acceleration, see Cunningham (2015) and Noys (2014).

think a critical project should precisely pit against this potential disruptiveness and indeterminacy of affects -that are transmitted through bodies, across things and communities who ordinarily make attachments to their own conditions of exploitation- another methodology. The acceleration of the circulation of affects sits with the abject, disenfranchised, disinterested communities, and the ethics of human time that are made by decisions by actors in a coordinated work with machines can inform us on the possibility of becoming otherwise¹¹⁶.

Among other strong currents in studying the tensions between economic, legal, and political spheres with self-references and collective ideological underpinnings, the “near future,” or, its evacuation, has not received enough attention (Guyer, 2007). The precise rhythm that works on and with the gendered, “racialized” and exploited bodies turns the attention from the constitutive power of a pervasive space-time abstraction of capitalism¹¹⁷. Jane Guyer embarked on an anthropological project to understand the ways in which we feel stuck in the present as we more and more lack the capacity to produce belief in and politics towards new social and economic imaginaries. She traces the genealogy of economic and religious discussions, and institutional tracts undergirding ‘financialization’ and the institution of insurance. Consequently, the near future “is so rigidly programmed into the formal calendrics of financial debt and benefit, self-renewal as a citizen, or insistent work schedules that experientially based intelligibilities have no room to gain any semiautonomous traction in the social imagination at all” (ibid, p.411). Although of course there had been a surge in anthropological accounts of what makes

¹¹⁶ Here I concur with Braidotti (2006, 2010, 2011); Connolly (2010), Freeman (2011), Povinelli (2011), see also <http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/652-gens-a-feminist-manifesto-for-the-study-of-capitalism>

¹¹⁷ I think these in relation to hasty conceptualizations of “a time that no longer passes”; see Harvey’s broad strokes, and later more dynamic approach on the “space-time compression” (Harvey, 1989, 2000).

people move towards alternative futures, whether through ruptures, 'disjunctures', sidestepping, a reorientation of experience and so on, all kinds of studies have shed light on the forms of knowledge people utilize¹¹⁸. What is perhaps most vexing about the approach that assumes a uniformity of experience¹¹⁹ under accelerated capitalism is that it is not attuned to understand at times the partialities, negotiations, filiations, gaps and silences that human and non-human material communities produce in making the fragmented fabric of time¹²⁰. Indeed, contingent upon our labor:

“[to] trace how the polychronies of finance capital, technological instruments, predictive devices, representations of time, social disciplines, non-human resources, and social reproduction are mediated within workplaces and communities...[we may] explore the heterogeneous forms of pacing, duration,

¹¹⁸ Among others, see Appel (2014); Miyazaki (2004, 2013), Chu (2010), Boellstorff (2007), Bear (2014), Munn (1986). On another note, a very interesting body of critical work considers *queer time*. This thinking suggests that a whole array of contestations, such as queer communities, resistance movements that challenge the mainstream valuation of work, and reproductive labor, are both empirically and fundamentally challenging the indexing of life to work. The popular benchmark work in that regard is Judith Jack Halberstam's *In a Queer Time and Place* (2005, pp.10-11), where he contends, against acclaimed theorists of capitalist geographies, that they lack comprehensive accounts of experiences born by “all kinds of people...[who] will and do opt to live outside of reproductive and familial time as well as on the edges of logics of labor and production...[for whom it may be that] time and space are limned by [shot through with] risks they are willing to take”. Moreover, queerness itself can be regarded as “a temporality — “a moment, it is also then a force; or rather it is a crossing of temporality with force”. More recent ethnographic and critical studies have taken up the lived experience of queer time as it comes into contact with sweeping capitalist circulations and financial mechanisms. Munoz (2009, pp.9-12), for instance makes a “hopeful” reading of the potentiality of “the anticipatory illumination of certain objects” to historical events in order to enact a “temporal calculus performed and utilized the past and the future as armaments to combat the devastating logic of the world of the here and now.

¹¹⁹ Even the claim that there is a “uniformity of experience” does not do justice to the affective histories in circulation, regarding which Elizabeth Freeman (2011, p.20) claimed that:

“Both individual dispositions and collective modes of belonging sedimented by rituals of timing that accrete over time, not only consolidates but potentially disrupts dominant class positions.” On the same line of argument, she avers: “Manipulations of time convert historically specific regimes of asymmetrical power into seemingly ordinary bodily tempos and routines, which in turn organize the value and meaning of time” (ibid.). Then, the historical and affective trajectories of inhabiting time are also potentialities that sidestep, punctuate and help us rethink the global, molar, unifying narratives of historical time. The individual attachments made to things, objects, histories, collectivities and fantasies that are made with conscious or unconscious motives are also a way of inhabiting the present ordinariness of things, that pervades every lived moment and rhythm.

¹²⁰ Which is shot through with what Stewart (2007, p.44) regarded as ‘queer temporalities’ in relation to the ordinary: “rogue intensities...roam the streets of the ordinary [as] there are all the lived, yet unassimilated, impacts of things, all the fragments of experience left hanging. Everything left unframed by the stories of what makes a life pulses at the edges of things.”

waiting, pause, obsolescence, and delay that also characterize its generative rhythms” (Bear et. al, 2015).

To remind again, this not to say that rapid 'financialization' of everyday life has not tied itself well with structures that inform temporal self-understandings of workers. Indeed, as much as there are firms that have gained 'impersonifications' in the social imaginary, subjective reflections have increasingly become inundated with the language of financial jargon, managerial attitudes and pseudo-scientific neurological meshwork. Today's psychological soul-searching has its roots in the historical process whereby the popular culture and therapeutic practices joined forces in making the prefix *psy* ubiquitous (Rose, 1989). In his analysis of the expert culture in and around the marketization and presentation of 'neuroscientific' findings, Rose further argues that the belief in the power of the mind over our belief, desires, motivation to action -that had gained ground in the second half of the 20th century- is now being replaced (but not overrun). This is about the production of discourses and practical 'knowledges' that operate through the image that experts and authorities, together of course with books, articles, videos, lectures, daily discourses and 'pop-culture' bend into a marker of the exaggerated influence of the brain over the mind (Rose, 2013). On another level, the installation of actuarial and insurance policies and mechanisms in a rational-economic calculation ethic imposes schemas of self-management of risk, as they employ moralizing discourses (O'Malley, 1991, see Peksimet's case below). All in all, it is safe to say that there are major currents that compel persons to subordinate what their communicational capacities and livelihood can do today.

And this is not something fundamentally new: It has always been a structural tendency of different moments of the capitalist mode of production to arrange the

economic and social imaginaries and perceptions on time in relation to that specific regime of production and realization (Jameson, 2012; Birth, 2007; Thompson, 1967). This is not to say that an understanding of a mode of production, or Marx's schema of the components of organic capital¹²¹ dictates that the temporal sway of the technology of capitalist production is directly in control of the body. On the contrary, and keeping in mind the multiple temporalities at work in any instance -say collective, historical, dispossessed, or subjective, contemplative, affective- there are multiple, fragmented and multilayered ways through which the body comes into contact with the tools, 'knowledges' and dominant practices of laboring. Marx's 'problematization' of the tension between the dead-past labor embedded in tools and commodities, and the laboring body of the individual¹²², as Jameson reads into it, steers us to new grounds on which we can perhaps understand what these antinomies generate¹²³. Then, we can say that it is the conjuncture of the temporal dynamics sifting through the raw material, the tool, the image, the labor power, 'the machinic' and the technical that the attention of the human laborer is mediated and figured in the process of, say, digital production.

¹²¹ Dead labor understood as the hidden vault of past labor, and variable capital as the labor power culled from labor, capacity, and knowledge of a person.

¹²² See Mitchell's (2003, p.241) inquiry into the relationship between built space and reproduction, circulation and laboring with a very provocative prompt (question):

"The best way to answer that question of how a landscape *is* sustained, therefore, is to change the question: if the landscape is a built, alienated, and fetishized *form* constructed through the labor of people under conditions established by the struggles of labor already dead, then what does the landscape *do*?" Jameson (2012, pp.101-102) relates the operation of dead labor on human reflective activity to a historical speeding up of the tension:

"It is not past labor and its structural relationship to the present which "extinguishes" it that is different, but rather the immense quantity of that past labor now deployed. ... At the same time the dead labor embodied in machinery suddenly swells to inhuman proportions (and is properly compared to a monster or a Cyclopean machine). It is as though the reservoir, or as Heidegger would call it, the "standing reserve" (*Gestell*) of past or dead labor was immensely increased and offered ever huger storage facilities for these quantities of dead hours, which the merely life-sized human machine-minder is nonetheless to bring back to life, on the pattern of the older production. The quantities of the past have been rendered invisible by the production process ... and yet they now surround the worker in a proportion hitherto unthinkable."

¹²³ Although of course this would be somewhat to dilute Jameson's theoretical rigour.

This is not a new story also in the sense that we are not the first detractors of the speeding up of daily life. There are distinct effects of acceleration on the ways in which consciousness relates to -in a world which seems dominated by information saturation and sensory overload it comes into contact with- the fast development of transformation technologies, turnover rates of the production of novelties (commodities) and the increased rate of transaction with the flow of money. Indeed, this is not new. Judy Wachman (2014) reminds us that the rapid surge of 'tele-communicational' amenities introduced in the 19th century had been met with agitation, anxiety and fascination. Moreover, she suggests that technology itself is not separate from the communicational infrastructures that are put in place by human needs and aspirations. This points out to the co-constitution of objects and technologies with defined tasks regarding human communities, which is a line of inquiry that sidesteps doomsayers or over-enthusiasts in relation to the impact of technology. The social time-space in capitalism, then, although marked by a tendency to accelerate the intervals between communication and transportation, is again ambivalent in the ways, situations, contours and possibilities in which it is deployed.

This does not derail the empirically rich and theoretically rigorous accounts of diverse scholars who have written on the exaltation of speed as an ideological construction that increases exploitation, wreaks destruction and introduces psychological disorders (Berardi, 2011, 2015; Virilio, 2010; Crary, 2014). It is possible to keep track of recent findings empirically (Rosa, 2013) and as a historical condition of the Post-fordist labor regime in its workings thanks to the recombinant and structuring relationship between techno-science, dissemination of knowledge and expert practices, and the laboring body. Yet, keeping in line with our approach, I suggest that it is not so much

the effects of technology that we should worry about. The cultural codes and credos on personhood maps onto these technologies, by way of sticking managerial discourse and configuring work, feeding the fantasies of a self-sustaining individual who orchestrates the digital tools and advancements to steer a way in life. This is troubling, and enabling at the same time. We socially manipulate markers of time. There is a need to separate the constellation of economic drives, clock times, digital times, from what they generate as they resonate with the rhythms of the body. In that sense, the time of the body relates to different registers that should be studied and cultivated differently.

Among other equally fruitful approaches¹²⁴, Lefebvre's (2004) project of *Rhythmanalysis* stands out as accessible, poetic, and it fits our purpose. It takes the felt rhythms of the body in a complex array of infrastructures, sounds, images, colors and resonances. Lefebvre juxtaposes bodily rhythm with both social and historical understandings of time and space, and with "timescales" of biological and physical processes. This enables him to address the interaction and trajectories of the relationship between humans and machines, workers and tools, the everyday and the abstract, and space and time (Elden, 2013). The *rhythmanalytical* project crosses the sensory input/output of the body through its historical significance. It also reads the body across, tuning into the production of the present by concretizing rhythms, which relate to things,

¹²⁴ For other influential accounts with a similar concern, see the approaches arrayed by Mcstay (2011, pp.91-106). In the footnotes above, I detailed the standpoints on the potentials of *queer time* and digital technology. We can extend these understanding the hypercommodified world and the promise of consumption that is made to bear on expectations. Marketing operations of 'branding' (Manning 2007, 2010) expands to the making of national icons, space-events, corporate social responsibility and so on. Braidotti (2007, pp.144-160) argues that the condition of late capitalism should alert us to cultural and technological dispositions of the subjects who are compelled to make sense of their condition by "synchronizing the heterogenous and fragmented time-sequence." These fragmented sequences are mediatized: "capitalist saturation of our social space by consumerism steals the present away from us; it deprives us of time, while offerring all sorts of technological gadgets that promise to save us time" (ibid, p.152). See Thrift (2006, 2008b) for what consumer communities imply.

words, and affects. "The act of rhythmanalysis integrates these things -this wall, this table, these trees- in a dramatic becoming, in an ensemble full of meaning, transforming them no longer into diverse things, but presences" (Lefebvre, 2004, p.33)¹²⁵.

The present becomes in time by the joint effort of built 'materialities', their trajectories of representation and affective encounters. It is the product of how things stand in relation to, extend, bend and generate space. The recent debates on the anthropology of the infrastructure has shown the ways in which architectural forms (and the concretization of spaces) help count, punctuate, and speak of time¹²⁶. I think taking rhythms as they confer motion and memory on infrastructures can extend our understanding to their practical use, expanding our take on the ways in which bodies interface with wider links and environments. This may help us sidestep discursive abstractions of unifying conceptualizations (of alienation) that help us in "conveniently escaping a confrontation with the messy world of practices through clean conceptual dilemma or eliminativist judgments" (Stengers, 2013, p.380). As Catherine Fennell (2015) has recently written:

"infrastructures do more than function or fail to realize the aspirations that established them. They put bodies in the path of things that hum, radiate, flicker,

¹²⁵ The rhythmanalyst uses 'his' body as a metronome. "He pursues an *interdisciplinary* approach...Without omitting the spatial and places, of course, he makes himself more sensitive to times than to spaces. He will come to 'listen' to a house, a street, a town, as an audience listens to a symphony" (ibid, p.33). The difference between *presence* and *the present* is key to this process, it is the codex employed by the rhythmanalyst.

"Its name tells as much, but the meanings of words fade over time. The present [bold in text] offers in all innocence and cruelty: open, evident, here and there. It can wear a smile, or be tinged with melancholy, provoke tears. But this evidence is misleading, fabricated. It is an adulterated product that simulates presence [bold] as a forgery imitates a fact of nature...A kind of (dissimulating) simulator of the present: the image!"

¹²⁶ See Appel, Anand and Gupta (2015) and further articles and opinions on the dossier 'the infrastructure toolbox', Fisch (2013), Stewart (2011, 2012), Larkin (2013), Povinelli (2011a, 2011b). See also "The Infrastructure Toolbox" <http://www.culanth.org/fieldsights/714-introduction-the-infrastructure-toolbox> ; http://www.culanth.org/curated_collections/11-infrastructure ; the spring 2013 edition of the journal *Public Culture* dedicated on urban infrastructures http://publicculture.dukejournals.org/content/25/2_70.toc

corrode, and lurch. They send them careening, changing their relationship to space and time. They raise the ambient envelopes of contemporary life, and they challenge us to understand the collective stakes of being emplaced within those envelopes."

3.2 Post-fordist affects and times: The circulation of a contract

The flexible re-organization of workplaces has brought with it an instability that makes survival harder and worker rights more precarious. However, this should be understood in the context of a generalized projection of risk onto the individual that accompanies 'financialization'. Rather than assuming the introduction of a cookie-cutter format of flexibility into work protocols, it is perhaps more clarifying to talk about the materialization of 'precarization' as it is felt as weariness, exhaustion, disbelief and an affective 'fraying' (Berlant, 2011, pp.200-203). This is not to say that defending the hours of work and claiming proper remuneration does not have a place in the current conditions of work. More so, it may be that the grounds of legitimacy to clamors of being wronged are defined by convincing others of the productivity and (calculable) hours with which one has worked (Staples, 2007; Weeks, 2011). Acknowledging that claims to equivalence and the case workers come up with as to how many hours they have worked may prove equally fruitful, the above cited theorists also want to unsettle the stickiness of 'productivism', particularly in the Post-fordist labor regime where the calculation of labor time (invested) in the production of a commodity is increasingly (and foundationally) destabilized.

As I talk briefly in the Introduction and Chapter 2 of this thesis, the circulation of a new contract (which I could not get my hands on) in the office was made operational thanks to my labor of 'economizing' the circulation of images made for brands. I had

calculated ‘Key Performance Indicators’ on the basis of a highly ambiguous protocol of calculation. The result of this, along with the use of belief in the ‘cold hard facts’ of statistics, was the laying off of some workers that was totally legitimate according to Ekmel, Rahmi and Peksimet (the ruling trio). Not only does the calculation of ‘actual’ labor, desire and attention put into those images defy calculation -both as a form and as the nature of the process of production- but also the statistics, stemming from the commercial and uncouth concerns of statistical tools I have used, were not fit for the rigor with which workers labored.

This led to the dismay of several workers who were already disheartened by their work environment. Güzin, a social media content advisor described the situation to me so that I would know that she was ‘in the know’ (*zaten biliyordum*). Referring to the ‘relatively’ secure worker rights in Turkey (*Türkiye’de yasa sadece çalışanları koruyor*), Ekmel had already told to me several times that the contract is “just a precautionary measure” as the workers had in fact not lost the privileges enumerated in their contracts dating from the more secure form of labor organization that pre-existed the deregulation of goods and labor markets concomitant with ‘financialization’. However, the facts of the contract¹²⁷ were laid bare to me by Erdem and Güzin: their compensation benefits, if they were to leave for another agency, were curtailed. On leaving the firm with intent, they were legally bound to not work in another advertising agency and any “related” sector for sixteen months, otherwise they were told they would have to pay the company an equivalent of their salary for sixteen months. The temporal workings of the contract, or its anticipation, were clear: any future claim was thus threatened, the future made

¹²⁷ The new contract, somehow, made its way to workers with lags, also producing the suspicion that the new contract was just a facade whose real purpose was to lay some workers off.

uncertain and workers were thus made to align themselves with the desires and discipline of the workplace.

Being compelled to conceptualize and reflect on these complex processes, I found myself in a conundrum. The workers are asked to desire the conditions that make for their imminent suffering, turning the break down of security and the proliferation of risk into an asset and a window of opportunity for the company. In other words, I was seeking to understand how it is that although there was more risk involved, the desire to gain wages in the short term, and to keep working to produce images of the good life that is promised to be taken away can outweigh dissent. One is increasingly less entitled to what their joy in creating materially brings about. The question that this prompts me to pose is then the following: what drives, in this schema, the power of a body in enhancing its capabilities to act (Lordon, 2014)?

The contracts and affects of work are organized such that every worker is compelled to 'add' to their 'capabilities'. This requires a certain understanding of self and ways of internalizing procedures of self-management (Donzelot, 1991). Fredric Lordon's (2014) Spinozist reading of affects implies that the 'inner drive' to endure in human beings, namely *conatus*, amplifies both the subjective capacities and their capture in the Post-fordist condition. In Spinoza's conceptual framework, we desire an object or position not because that entity is inherently valuable. We desire not because we value it. Rather, we value it because we desire it. It is the structuring of desire in particular aspects that bestows value on the object, by producing objects and images of a better life, surveillance, regulations, threats, and so on. In the Fordist regime, the objects of mediation were on display, that is, an array of variable commodities presented to the subject of consumer society. Thus, the image of a good life, or the desiring organization

of joyful affects were externalized into a marketplace of commodities. However, the ‘neoliberal’ couching of subjectivity, in Lordon’s account, the emergence of a new style of management and the self as an entrepreneur of herself has shifted these external causes (the causes are still external, but intensive) to joys that are directly produced by subjects, under the pressure of the structural deployment of competitiveness and flexibility. Lordon (2014) argues that affects displace wholesale the recourse to subjective volition. In Read's (2014) formulation:

"What individuals strive for is not determined by the quality of the objects of their desires but by the history of their relations....Encounters define our relations with objects and how we value them...[since] we all have our desires determined by our relations, are subject to affects we neither entirely cause nor entirely comprehend" (Read, 2014)

It is crucial to understand this affective mapping, I suggest, by clustering and embedding temporal self-understandings as they inform and are informed by tools, technologies, places and 'knowledges'. Contravening this collective production of social value, the entrepreneur relegates the labor of imagination, communication and collaboration to the self-evident laws of human nature embodied in the moral rectitude of the individual¹²⁸.

3.3 Three cases and circulations

I was chatting at lunch break with Ayla, the Graphic Coordinator of the Web Design section at the workplace on ‘emotional control’ under stressful conditions we witness

¹²⁸ Consider here the ideological workings of the individualizing trend introduced by the changing practices of entailed by the 'real subsumption' of life under post-fordist organization of labor: "Neoliberalism is a discourse and practice that is aimed to curtail the powers of labor that are distributed across all of society—at the exact moment in which all of social existence becomes labor, or potential labor, neoliberalism constructs the image of a society of capitalists, of entrepreneurs" (Read 2009: 33)

and labor with daily at work. When she asked what the interview I was doing will eventually serve, I thought cynically as always that the complex conceptual and analytical tools with wider histories of circulation did not appeal to my colleagues. However, I was taken aback when she claimed that she was working on a Spinozian understanding of affects to make sense of her desire for “being more alive” (*daha canlı olmak için*) and that she was looking for ways to get rid of stress in her everyday life at work. She suggested a book that I later found out was common knowledge to the whole workplace: the widely spread and uncompromisingly eclectic pseudo-science of the interconnection between the mind and the brain, namely “neurolinguistic programming” (NLP). Apparently, I was the only one in the workplace who could not keep up with novel psychological seminars and oeuvres that serve as the baseline of motivational conversation that facilitate a reorientation for the workers to better adapt to their working conditions. In a nutshell, that particular brand of NLP was portrayed as A Guide to Use Your Mind (*Zihninizi Kullanma Kılavuzu*), which took the sensorial infrastructure of the mind as “a neurological machine” whose motile parts can be rearranged¹²⁹. The book utilized business models and advice on how to make slogans and advertising images ‘stick to the mind’ of potential consumers, at the same time suggesting the same method to produce joyful affects towards work as a collective and individual object of desire.

¹²⁹ “Beynimiz anıları, deneyimleri nasıl depoluyor? Duyularımız aracılığıyla gelen verileri parçalara ayırarak tabii. Bunun bizim için önemli bir yararı var. İstemediğimiz parçayı değiştirebilme, farklı bir şekilde monte edebilme olanağı sunuyor bize. Bir makine parçalardan oluşmak yerine yekpare inşa edilse, arıza yaptığında onu toptan çöpe atmamız gerekirdi. Oysa parçalardan oluştuğu için bozulan parçayı yenisiyle değiştirerek makineyi çalışır hale getirebiliriz. İşte zihnimiz de deneyimlerimizi bunun gibi kodlayarak depolar. Duyularımızı detaylandırarak kayda geçirir. Bu detaylardan herhangi birini değiştirdiğimizde, bizde yarattığı duygu da tamamıyla değişir” Gün (2015: 181). For almost completely different implications of Spinoza, see Read (2016), Lordon (2014), Negri and Hardt (1994), Negri (1999), Sharp (2009), Braidotti (2006, 2011), and Deleuze (1988).

Ayla was bent on rearranging her ‘emotional orientation’ and work-place capabilities towards work. When I inquired further, she let me know that her purse and brand new iPhone 6 had been stolen on the subway and she had to get into contractual debt with the provider company to replace her phone (which at that time cost approximately one and a half times her monthly pay). The situation had exacerbated when her mother had had to move in with her, as she was going through financial hardship; the mother moreover expected her daughter (Ayla) to bail her out, having paid her tuition fees for the graphics department of a private university. She had to work only to settle her debts, she said; she wanted to be able to breathe easily (*düzlüğe çıkmak istiyorum*).

The fear of not being able to pay debts was exacerbated as the expectation of a precarious future is materialized by the contract. In the circulation of the contract mentioned above, anticipation worked as a resonant force field that accompanied the failed promise of the good life, spread by the rumors, numbers, and displays regarding the new contract. Adams et al. (2009) suggest that *anticipation* defines the curve through which “temporality and affect” become enmeshed in the political, as it is always already more than just a reaction to a static register. They define several affective states, such as:

“*injunction* as the moral imperative to characterize and inhabit states of uncertainty; *abduction* as requisite tacking back and forth between futures, pasts and presents, framing templates for producing the future; *optimization* as the moral responsibility of citizens to secure their ‘best possible futures’; preparedness as living in ‘preparation for’ potential trauma; and *possibility* as ‘ratcheting up’ hopefulness, especially through technoscience” (ibid, p.246, emphasis added).

Thus, anticipation is a multifaceted affect that intimates 'subjectivation' through institutions, contracts, technologies and the labor one puts in rearranging her priorities and emotional states; thus, individuals are made to work on their ‘capabilities’. In the

Post-fordist organization of labor, with the twin operation of flexible, intensive labor and amplification of work as a source of enjoyment, anticipation figures as an “intensified and stressed out learning curve about how to maintain footing, bearings, a way of being, and new modes of composure amid unraveling institutions and social relations of reciprocity” (Berlant, 2011, p.197).

Temporal multiplicity is embodied in the form of the contract: thus often it is non-human materials that anchor states of being. The form of the new contract throughout its life remained in excess of itself: it accomplished more than it purported to do. The resonance of anticipation showed itself in the emotional states of pretending, of hate towards the contract’s social, collective and individual representations¹³⁰, and in disgust (*iğrenç bir şekilde yapıyorlar bunu*, as claimed by Güzin, who resigned shortly after). These affects define partially but not exhaustively the affective states, temporal workings and spatial contours of the news regarding the circulation of the contract. The form was translated into a hate object, accumulating tension through nodes made up of individuals, rooms, pens, smirks, grins, and in the temporal shifts between the lags of the arrival of the copies (of the contract).

The anticipation emanating from the form of a contract is not only given as an opportunity or as a termination, but also a resignation, where the act of walking out is tethered to the fierce and intransigent act of delivering the paper/contract of resignation. Somehow, the workers mediate through the form of the contract, tensions they have in

¹³⁰ I mean the the domain and dominance of the law over workers, and the figure of the capitalist boss. See Miyazaki (2004, 2006, 2013) for how he understands the temporal gap in exchange as a stretching anticipation hovering between fear and hope in relation to knowledges one cites in order to make herself a person in charge.

their daily life, among themselves¹³¹ and towards other entities. Promises and threats of disintegrating security were made visible in their relation to the contract. Erdem, as I have explained in the previous chapter, had resigned with deep reproach against the ruling team of JazzRabbit, only to revert back to a retrospective position marked with equanimity and self-promotion:

“I visited the company a few months back. Upon my recounting of what I did outside the firm and in this new environment [he found a new job after a month of searching], Ekmel was surprised. I showed him the new stuff I had been working on; he was stunned [*dumur gibi kaldı*], he was like ‘dude these are really good stuff’ he was all impressed [*oğlum bunlar çok iyi lan falan diyor, tribe girdi*], he probably told Peksimet that they should not have let me go. Well, for my part I think it was an epic act for me to leave that behind [*oradan kurtulduğum efsane iyi oldu*]¹³²

This may also be thought along with another defining feature of the Post-fordist organization of labor: the instance at which risk, fragility, indeterminacy work in making 'precarity' a part of the attachment to normalcy (cf. Berlant, 2011). The anticipation of insecurity cannot be separated from mechanisms and discourses, which tie it to imminent opportunity¹³³. The breaking down of the contract is packaged as a precondition for a good life.

Three months in, I felt that Gözde was behaving differently to her colleagues. She paused and lagged behind more often, started smoking more than she already did. My sudden remarks of Gözde's arrival to our room occurred more frequently, she passed

¹³¹ In the aftermath of a fierce commotion, Sırma and Aynur simultaneously produced, while shouting, their official sheets of resignation. There was no singular worker who did not, in any way, come into contact with their terms, conditions, and materials of resignation. This did not happen just because the turnover rate in digital advertising is high: There is a productivity in inducing the fear that there is a reserve army of digital advertisers.

¹³² "Geçen aylarda şirkete gittim onu gördüm falan bu yeni işi anlattım dumur gibi kaldı sonra önceki yerde yaptığım işleri gördü. Olum bunlar çok iyi lan falan diyor, tribe girdi Peksimet'e anlattı büyük ihtimal keşke çıkarmasaydık falan tarzı ama bilmiyorum tabi. Oradan kurtulduğum efsane iyi oldu benim için."

¹³³ See Boltanski and Chiapello (2005, pp.63-65).

on more work, implied that it really is hectic with her workload and life, and that we were behind schedule. She not just seemed more exhausted and under stress, but also more unapologetic about relaying the tension that this situation caused. This was after our interview where she had complained: “For instance even I sometimes ask for extra work from my colleagues drawing on our sake [*hatır*], not that I particularly like doing that...after all work is one thing and friendship another, but some emotions are [nonetheless] exploited”¹³⁴. Since I started doing interviews and spending more time interfacing with the workers at the end of the second month, I was keeping an eye on her. I found out that we had both studied economics (though in different universities) and shared a disinclination (!) to pursue the tenets and work opportunities of the discipline. Her work was to monitor social media accounts of several clients, among which I can cite travel companies, prepackaged food distributors, a bank, a hospital, a “self-obsessed lawyer” and several others, and to help new ‘content producers’ adapt to the specifics of their occupation. This involved meeting with customers and also attending the events of product promotions to take photos and videos (to post them later). At its most revealing, she confided that at times when she lost the track of her thoughts or ceased being creative for her task of ‘creative writing’, she had cigarette breaks, the usual meandering, a distracted survey of her older works, the perusing through the posts of her friends, websites of ‘food culture’ and ‘lifestyles’ and a wide range of ‘listicles’¹³⁵, sponsored content and blogs. At other times, though, she suggested

¹³⁴ “Mesela bazen ben bile istemeden arkadaşlığımızın hatırına dayanarak iş rica ediyorum. Aslında bu benim isteyerek yaptığım bir şey değil ama ortam onu gerektiriyor. Benim hoşuma gitmiyor sonuçta iş başka arkadaşlık başka ama sömürülüyö tabii bazı duygular”

¹³⁵ See Chapter 5 for more information regarding the listicles. Listicles are part informative part ‘lifestyle’ articles that are rich on visualizations. Try www.buzzfeed.com, www.listelist.com, or www.onedio.com for a taste.

that digital workers had to come up with intimate, in her words “amateur” (*amatörce*¹³⁶) thoughts and feelings so that they resonate with potential consumers when translated into fungible units of invested attention.

I consider her daily work and its disruptions as indicative of multiple temporal registers at work, that knot together her avowed meanings, the design and conditions of her work, the specific customs of the workplace, and the lifestyle adverts that were produced by her. A combination also of intimacy, texting, surveillance, data, tracking, etc. At times when she could not come up with ‘creative’ and/or ‘unprecedented’ (*alışılmadık*) captions and slogans glazed onto the images by digital means (software, infrastructures and human labor), she “shuffled through my [her] messages to borrow [*çaldım*] from one of the messages my boyfriend had sent me [her]”, which she said was “not right”. Her work in the day involved revisits to what could be archived in the form of text messages and mails, moments of visiting temporal locations as they were layered with another living and factual temporality. The second wager here involves the software, hardware and the infrastructural network that is embedded in the tools, interfaces, 'knowledges' and embodied habits she works with, to some extent generalizable to the ways in which memory is encoded and translated. Speaking to the discussion above, the tools such as keyboards, screens, hand-held devices, various

¹³⁶ She used the phrase counterposed to being "professional", she was bent on striking a delicate balance inbetween. Regarding the call for professionalism and what its stakes are for the reorganization of the laboring capacities of a potential worker, Virno (2007, p.44) remarked that: "Far from referring to any particular skill, "professionalism" is the awkwardly roundabout term by which one refers to the putting to work of a person's most generic traits. Starkly put, it's nothing more nor less than the art of *being in the world*, of negotiating the most varied situations, of responding to the blows of chance. And it is highly significant that this art of being in the world, transfigured into "professionalism," presents itself as a *productive resource*". The "negotiation", observed ethnographically, reveals that the conditions of work require this contradictory happening, for it is by definition not possible for a worker to completely align her interests with the brand's.

furniture, the infrastructure of the workplace, from its electric routes to 'hardwired' internet, and the know-how that comes along and with these materials and software make up Gözde's line of work.

The third aspect of this involves more than her felt temporal emotion of shying out from her acts of digging up memories for the sake of work; this time it is the labor and history of circulation her intimate archive gains and regains (values and revalues) through the 'affective economy' (Ahmed, 2004) it creates by meshing bodies and signs in histories (and networks) of possession and dispossession. In the previous chapter I have dealt with the multiple communities circulation of affects and commodities acquire and dispatch in the history of their circulation. As Povinelli (2011, p.6) claims:

“things do not simply move. Routes figure space- they create worlds - and are figured by figured space, by the worlds through which they move....whether container ships, kin or stranger socialities, psychic expectations, affective intensities, linguistic forms: all form, conform, and deform existing cultures of circulation”.

In the form of commodity images and the radical motility of affective intensities which are transmitted between bodies, amplifying some capacities and curtailing others, there is a defining rhythm of each affect that courses through human bodies. When images move, bodies move along, alongside and through, they transverse the intensity of the image, as they 'become real'. They “spread through and beyond networks, they contract and expand, they stall and stumble, they vie, they vile, they wow and woo...[yet, they also get] translated, twisted, bruised, and reconfigured" (Steyerl, 2013, pp.1-2).

There is yet a fourth aspect of Gözde's temporal concerns, and this latter points to a more structural problem that relates to working hours. It was alluded to in the Introduction that the organization of the rhythm of the work day was arranged -spatially

and ideologically- such that the emphasis on the quality of the time that it takes to produce efficient advertisement went hand in hand with the increasing amount of time that is spent for work. At *JazzRabbit*, this worked through the fear of secret markers of time¹³⁷, the rumors about both the new contract and the Key Performance Indicator indices I was producing, the belief in the workplace as a source of (hub of) enjoyment, the refuge from the hectic traffic of Istanbul, and Ekmel's call for personal development all of which were in tension with Ekmel's avowed stress on flexible working hours. The naming of flexible working conditions with the reduction of stress of course was wrought with contradictions and was utilized to a bitter end (as can be seen from the data presented in the first chapter). Indeed, the length of workday shifts were determined according to the intensity of work and the schedule, rather than pre-arranged working hours.

It takes no sweat to put the blame on Marx for romanticizing the labor theory of value -the value that is measured by the amount of work embedded into the commodity produced- as an essential property of the individual and although immaterial, nevertheless objective. However, his critique should be understood as a move to disturb the general understanding of value and its relation to the temporality of the daily organization of labor power. This unsettles the daily understanding of hierarchical inequality, and feeds its displacement onto the realm of class struggle: the socially necessary labor time was well extended by the capitalist owner who "vampirically" sucked the surplus value by way of extending and naturalizing the hours of work (Marx, 1976; Harvey, 2010). This criticism is well applied by theorists of value who de-

¹³⁷ See Chapter 5 on authenticity, especially the role of Zahmet as a moving timekeeper with a malicious visual scope. He supposedly knew at what time workers came to work, who worked hard and who shirked. He was the 'caretaker' of the workplace, and also regarded to be the one to 'know it all'.

familiarize our understanding of the social value woven around materials and objects, ranging from the irreducible value to historical value, from the representational value to the value of the sign and so on (Kopytoff, 1987; Graeber, 2001; Miller, 2008; Baudrillard, 1981). It is the social meaning that is made to course through the object that is valued. We can then at least expect that, given the ambiguity in calculating the value accrued to commodities in circulation, the dislocation of labor from material products¹³⁸ has been fundamental to the sphere of value woven around objects. In the Post-fordist condition, the labor theory of value would be extended which carries the criticism of course to the political stakes directed at the erasure of the affects related to the labor of reproduction and attention (circulation):

“The more the measure of value becomes ineffectual, the more the value of labor-power becomes determinant in production; the more political economy masks the value of labor-power, the more the value of labor-power is extended and intervenes in a global terrain, a biopolitical terrain” (Hardt & Negri 1999, p.79)

The most influential criticisms, however, came from anthropologists who tried to understand the cultural circulation of value. The conceptualization of the ‘cosmology of value’ among the people of Gawa unsettles the universality of value, and shows the making of value as it inheres in the ‘metabolic exchange with nature’ (Munn, 1986). Gayatri Spivak's work focuses on the “expanded textuality of value,” which muddled our understanding of the value of work that arises from the 'productivist' “circuit” (Spivak, 1987). A temporally and socially accountable concept of value should attend to the historical, "racialized", gendered and reproductive nature (and trajectory) of labor

¹³⁸ Which is not the same thing to say that the capitalist economy does not hinge on the body, nor however it amounts to say that the industrial product is (was) not imbued with imaginative and affective values (Yanagisako, 2012).

and value. Common to all these¹³⁹ anthropological studies of multiple temporalities and valuations is the force with they dissect and map the conditions that make up the structural disposition of “the economy”. They show the processes through which our romantic assumptions regarding the nature of value are made: ‘the economy’ is a governing logic that has universal assumptions and inbuilt capacities to reproduce the daily realism of life forms under modern capitalism. The temporal lags and dislocations of labor value shows itself to the ethnographer in messy situations.

Let us turn to the temporal and affective role of *pretending* by drawing on Han’s (2012) influential interpretation of Austin’s (1958) several theoretical openings. This regards how pretending is an affect that works through a temporal paradox that impacts the bodily, spatial and atmospheric spheres in a given encounter. Gözde’s stress at work is also intimately related to pretending. What I keep from this for this discussion are two related scenes through which pretending gains life: the first is the fact that pretending recounts a past event that ‘has to have happened’, effected not then, but in the here and now. For instance, when Gözde claims:

"Now look I really have an issue with this. For instance some of the products of the customers I work with totally do not appeal to me, and it is hence or for I have never tasted or used that product that I live a contradiction [*ikileme düşürüyor*]. I frankly don’t know if this is the right way to do things but it is so that I have to write things I don’t believe in. At those times I am in a quandary [*bocalıyorum*] because those are not brilliant works and I feel really strained. I am compelled and hard pressed because I have to leave myself completely to become someone else when I’m thinking like this"¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ See Bear, Ho, Tsing and Yanagisako (2015), Munn (1992), Staples (2007)

¹⁴⁰ "Şimdi benim hakkaten bununla bir sorunun var. Mesela benim hani bazı çalıştığım müşterilerin ürünleri bana hiç çekici gelmiyor. Bana hiç çekici gelmediği için ya da hiç kullanmamışım hayatımda hiç istememişim mesela bazen bir ikileme düşünüyorum aslında yani o mudur doğrusu? Ben inanmadığım şeyler yazmak zorundayım sevmediğim şeyler yazmak zorundayım. Öyle durumlarda bazen bocalıyorum, onlar biraz sekteye uğruyor oralarda çok zorlanıyorum stres oluyorum. Çok zorlamak durumunda kalıyorum çünkü tamamen kendimi bırakıp bambaşka biri olmak durumundayım öyle düşünürken."

She is not only referring to the fabrication of 'undue' feelings. This recalls an event that was admittedly false, or an event that has not yet existed (she disliked the experience of consumption or she had not eaten that specific product). The 'enjoyment' has not occurred, in the event of which Gözde would have been living up to the moment of producing the ad with a conviction that the product is tasty/worthy of praise. However, due to the demands of her customer, she had to feign that some time in the past she had enjoyed the product. That false recognition is characteristic of the way in which the commodity image of a 'lovebrand'¹⁴¹ is produced. The second aspect of pretense is about its presence. "A pretence must be not merely like but *distinctively like* the genuine article simulated" (Austin, 1958, p.274, as cited in Han, 2012, p.87; emphasis added). Gözde, when pretending to have enjoyed a product, commits herself to an imagined experience that she must keep up with in order to keep her job as an advertiser. She is not "merely" pretending to like the product, she makes a case -to herself, to me, to other workers, to the client, and along with it she makes the suggestion to and incitement in online users to consume- to have shifted her attitude from 'not having liked it' to a performance and commitment of enjoyment.

The above accounts relate to Gözde's concern in additional ways. She not only expressed herself countless times to bemoan the "late hours she had to burn the midnight oil", "the weekends I[she] had to spend in lousy openings and book signings"¹⁴². On another note, we could also take her inexhaustible complaints (that took different types of expressions and varying tones of dramatization) to mean that she used the structural stalemate to lay an emotional burden on Ekmel and the others, to show that she was

¹⁴¹ See also Chapter 2.

¹⁴² As part of our agreement with a renowned lemonade brand, she went to the events of their sponsorship to tweet and post in the name of the brand while the spectacle ensued.

always on the receiving end, and thus, should not be penalized. It is 'the expanded textuality' of her demand for wage, paradoxically made, that allowed for such a scene to occur. In other words, she constructs ethical bonds by deploying reproach, anger, pretending collegiality, and staging fatigue. Particularly (and I am thinking with the text-message), the erasure of the time for reproducing her capacity to labor has also morphed the demands for less hours and/or more wages into a workplace reproach. And it adds to the complexity of her temporal predicament experienced at JazzRabbit.

The second case is related to what Cockayne (2015) has recently called “the entrepreneurial affect”, which ties ways of being and desiring to both the “economic infrastructure of production” and the discursive regime through which individuals are produced as self-cultivating agents of ‘human capital’. The affects are made to connote the style of entrepreneurship, which involves “networking” activities that in the end produce passionate attachments (“love”, “passion”, and “satisfaction”) to the cult of making meaning through work:

“taking work [and workplace] as a domain in which subjects are produced and affects circulate is a significant step in understanding the production of neoliberal forms of desire...[which serves as the] justification for the maintenance of this insecurity... an affective system in which taking on personally responsibility for one’s precarious, indebted subjectivity is more highly valued than democratic commitments to social systems of welfare, support, and security” (ibid, p.15)

This process is of course, as Cockayne also emphasizes, is not distributed evenly among the labor hierarchy, as some subjects live their 'precarity' more than others. The labor of anticipation I explained above is a good indicator of that. On another note, the labor one puts in re-aligning her desires involves defining step by step what counts as human value as it is reproduced in time. Peksimet had valued himself in millions: “I have recently

calculated my net worth, I am worth well over a million now, but that is not enough”.

Apart from the making of events on the go (see the previous chapter), Peksimet had made a point (and for Erdem and Cüneyt, a fool) of imaging himself as the successful entrepreneur who lectured in five minute coffee/cigarette breaks. His presence filled the room in the expectation that he never found anything done by any one else other than himself adequate to (whatever) the task.

It is commonplace among the scholars of the techniques of subjectivity in the neoliberal era to draw attention to how cultural and economic 'precarity' relates to histories, trajectories and narratives of moral attitudes that work on the body (Gill & Pratt, 2008; Tsianos & Papadopoulos, 2006; Foucault, 2008). What is interesting in the making of the self as an entrepreneur is not only the cultivation of techniques that the subject comes to realize as 'natural', 'self-given', but also the ways in which older forms of economic practices as well as the invention of certain practices¹⁴³ count as tenets and guidelines to how to become an entrepreneur (Brown, 2015). Cihan Tuğal (2012), in his fascinating work done amidst the rise of Islamic urban politics in Istanbul, relates the discursive chain of the notion of *serbest meslek sahibi* (literally free-lancer) to a complex composition that brings together neoliberal practices of 'subjectivation', histories of small-time economic production, and the framing of 'precarity'. Accordingly, what we call 'neoliberal subjectivity' involves an aggregate of interested and

¹⁴³ Brown (2015, pp.177-8) states that:

"*Knowledge, thought, and training* are valued and desired almost exclusively for their contribution to capital enhancement. This does not reduce to a desire only for technical knowledges and skills. Many professions today — from law to engineering to medicine — require analytical capacities, communications skills, multilingualism, artistic creativity, inventiveness, even close reading abilities. However, knowledge is not sought for purposes apart from capital enhancement, whether that capital is human, corporate, or financial. It is not sought for developing the capacities of citizens, sustaining culture, knowing the world, or envisioning and crafting different ways of life in common." See also Tuğal's (2012) work.

disinterested actors who mix techniques and sources at their hands in a process of partial, hazardous, insubstantial knowledge about structural economic facts. More importantly, the entrepreneurs had different agendas of distribution and re-distribution, objectively and curiously unsettling the ideological conviction that markets work as systems of efficient allocation.

Ekmel's brand of neoliberal subjectivity, to which I have referred in the previous chapter, testifies to these claims. Particularly the rise of Islamic bonds among entrepreneurs and distinct concessions given by official protocols and agents to enhance group solidarity among the business representatives with an Islamic bent (as Ekmel assuredly was) may point to the always arbitrary and contradictory agential capacities attributed to the market. More than an agent of efficient distributor or an arbiter of economic justice, however, Peksimet saw himself as an embodiment of a type of ferocious human nature. "It is up to us [*entrepreneurs*] to gain what is out there that stupid people [*öyle aptal aptal tipler*] know nothing about", was among his myriad claims regarding the potentials in a "fragile country" like Turkey, which of course came with its own opportunities, waiting for actors like him to tap into.

"A business mind, be careful here [*en önemli şey bu*], is what I always think. You go to your school and all those big names, professors teach you the same logic, only they don't even know themselves. They are charlatans, but you got to go out there, make yourself worth something. These people [meaning lower rank workers at the firm] don't know shit [*bir 'sık' bildikleri yok*], they banter and shirk all day [*goygoy yapsın ancak geyik, karı kız*], but you must learn how to make things useful, you should know what is coming in the future and take position accordingly....Everyone for himself, you have to step up and know what you are worth and how much others are worth, you must always seek to gain, that is what business is all about."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ "En önemli şey bu, sağlam çalışan bir iş kafası nasıl olur diye düşünüyorum. İşte gidiyorsun okullara derslerine giriyorsun sen mesela tüm hocaların aynı mantıkla sana anlatıyor ama aslında onlar da bilmiyor. Yaşamamışlar ki iş hayatı. Soytarıdır yani çıkacaksın iş dünyasına orada göstereceksin kendini. Bu tiplerin bir 'sık' bildikleri yok goygoy yapsın ancak geyik yapar karı kız konuşur seninle. Ne olacağını görmek

The making of value that is calculated according to monetary wealth is not a novel idea, nor is it unique to the historical trajectory of the entrepreneurial model. The more recent examples regarding how one situates oneself among other actors in society to make predictions is telling. The Raqs Collective (2011) has written on what it means to understand oneself in terms of the circulation of gifts, commodities and times. Exchanging things one way or another, sits with rhythms and vitalities that make up the shared time among human and non-human actors. Peksimet has shown his dedication to make himself a bank of human time stored as monetary value not only in his calculations where he avowedly saw that he was worth more than a million and counting. He rearranged his practical relationships with other actors in his life, whether involving himself as customer, manager or partner, according to his judgment of whether that act is worth his time. The answer to this question is not a simple no, as he too knows that it is about making things count in the way they present themselves to the mind of the ‘entrepreneur’. Self-making here becomes a fantasy: of designing encounters with objects according to the wish that these objects present themselves in a fungible, dirigible, and orderly fashion¹⁴⁵. Historically, we can observe the trend of the calculation of self-worth from the socially responsible accounts of actuarial and insurance schemes, and the calculation of figures of mortality. They have emerged in relation to the making of self-worth, an arbitrary mechanism that presents value that in terms (and techniques determining) of passing time (Raqs Collective, 2011, pp.4-6). This can be seen in Ian

lazım iş dünyasında. Fırsatları değerlendirmek lazım ona göre şey yapıcaksın kendini. Herkes senin ne mal olduğunu bilecek çıkacak göstereceksin herkese böyle olur bu iş çünkü göreceksin her koyun kendi bacağından asılır"

¹⁴⁵ And for that reason, it resonates with alchemy.

Walker's "Formula for the Value of Your Time"¹⁴⁶ as it fits to Peksimet's prioritization, itself a wish that saw his present worth, "what counts", in terms of money-time.

The third case is about the circulation of a video message posted by the acclaimed advertiser working in a well-known print-advertising 'creative' agency. On the 16th of October, 2014, a video circulating virally has appeared in front of the eyes of millions of viewers. Mehmet, in his last statement -before his suicide- talks about the hardships he found in dealing with the pressures in his life (which he does not specify) and thanks his fellows for being there in time of need. The content of the video was at first harshly deemed as "staged" by swarming comments in various digital platforms. Later, a second wave of comments, declaring that Mehmet Pişkin, a 35-year-old former engineer and worker in creative media advertising had indeed committed suicide right after the video he posted on his personal Facebook Page, declaring his last will, farewells and intimate words on his life, his interests and the people he loves; he was later found dead in his house. The comments and captions, photo galleries quickly followed the official news about his death. Some regarded his death and controversial comments on his declaration stating he had a wonderful life full of satisfactions and love quite a "waste", and were puzzled. Others were scornful about his indifference towards his own death, his corpse and grave. That he was playful in suggesting that his body would do more if burnt, given away to fish, cast away into the sea, given to kids to observe so on, left quite a few in awe.

He declared that he could not or did not want anymore to connect to his environment the way he used to, that he lost the energy to 'rebuild himself'¹⁴⁷. Perhaps

¹⁴⁶ $V = (W((100-t)/100))/C$, with "V" being the value of time, "W" the hourly wage rate, "t" the tax rate, and "C" the cost of living" (Raqs Collective, *ibid*).

taking chance in not interfering in the possible ways in which his statements would be circulated, clustered, categorized and commented on, Mehmet asked for his carcass to be left in the open for kids to play, for animals to gnaw on, for the ocean to carry away. This, at the time had led to the derogatory comments made on social media in a word saying that his act was ‘fake’ and that he was “an attention whore”, thus denying him the sympathy and solidarity he had been seeking. The impact and comments that came after he published the video had more positive responses from users and subjects of another bent: those who work in similar post-industrial jobs, and especially the crowd that Mehmet had perhaps 'interpellated' by his remark that "some people are just more prone to suicide, and when the glass is full to the brim, the last few drops are perhaps not as important".

The reception of the video had a distinct effect on the workers at JazzRabbit and was arguably received out of its context to fill in the space of the critique of the workplace workers articulated or enacted. For instance, Gözde said that:

“a lot of people judged him for [supposedly] he had done wrong by taking his own life and you know, the whole thing with not getting buried. But I don’t think it’s as black and white, I sometimes feel like him regarding his dislike of his tasteless life. I of course would not kill myself but I know I had times very similar to that, I said, well I feel the same at times. I know I work and do things I don’t want to and this has a point of exhaustion [*ama tabii bunun da bitiş ve tükenme noktası vardır*]”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ "bir de dönüp tekrar kendini inşa et falan filan...o konudaki ışığı kaybettim açıkçası"

¹⁴⁸ "Tabii ki oluyor bazen çok mutsuz oluyorum, yazamıyorum, gelmiyor içimden. Ya da yazsam da eğreti kötü sevimsiz şeyler çıkıyor ortaya, böyle durumlarda sıkışıp kalıyorum...En fazla bugünü atıyorum bugün böyle geçsin bari deyip öbür gün farklı mesai var diyorum. Sürekli bizi sıkıştıran bizi bekleyen bir şeyler var. Sonra şu olucak bitecek diye kendimi avutuyorum, çocukça ama bazen kendime bazı şeyler veriyorum. Şunu su saate kadar bitirip şöyle yapacağım ya da haftasonu kitapçıya gidip kendimi kaybedeceğim. Bazen bana da öyle oluyor dediğim şeyler oldu videoyu izlerken. Yani tabii o kadar siyah beyaz değil bende. Ama yani diyor ya tadı kalmadı öyle. Gömülmek istemediğini söylüyor ya çok büyüttüler ve intihar etti diye inançsız dediler ona. Yani tabii ben öldürmezdim kendimi, ama oluyor ben de istemediğim bir şeyleri de bazen yapıyorum ama tabii bunun da bitiş ve tükenme noktası vardır."

She thus saw her situation similar to Mehmet's, not projecting the psychological burden of the work/security conundrum onto the situation of work in general. Similarly, Sezen was "deeply affected" (*beni acayip etkiledi*) by the suicide, as she saw Mehmet as "one of us", a kindred soul suffering from very similar problems. In Sezen's version these problems existed "because people don't simply have any place left to breathe, there is too much pressure, too much burden". In Sezen's vernacular, Mehmet's claim that there are things in life that drove him to the point of suicide became translated word for word into the context she claimed to be wronged by. In other words, she solidified her own problem with work by means of abstracting Mehmet's stake. Differently, Tuna approached with recourse to the hypothesis of "the creative people", like Mehmet, are always hunted down by advertising business and end up by becoming people who are 'abstracting themselves from society' (*kendini toplumdaki soyutlayanlar*), which she saw as a counterpart of the exploitation of creative potential for corporate benefit. It was a matter of greedy capitalists, she averred, who do not respect the boundaries of individuals and end up doing things that are inhumane, culminating in disasters like this one. In all these cases, however, there was an implicit argument which perhaps can be summed as: work itself is the ground where we work not for meaning in life, but for warding off the fear that we otherwise would not be able to survive in this life, despite the fact that work itself is a gradual deepening of that very problem. What is a "waste" for actuarial schemes and internet trolls, became a gift in the workplace.

In general, it can be said that the dynamics of circulation, the new subject positions, fugitive communities and the emotive pitch this particular video had garnered seemed to follow Sara Ahmed's (2004, p.11) claim that "the attachment we feel to the movement of an object operates through the emotions that secure and effect the fictive

boundaries of the self and other”. The very bodily emotions strangers, participants, commenters, sharers of all walks of life have in the end had something to say about Mehmet’s body and their own, private emotional sphere: they saw them as either aligned or different, for various reasons. The things Mehmet said in the video, that he wanted to keep the kindness, cheerfulness, and upbeat morale and the decency and depth of his mind and soul all came to nothing since he was now giving up their reenactment; he failed to furnish himself with what prevents one from falling into darkness; he lost the hope, the “source” to extract from, the motivation and to dream of another future; he could not “make” himself anymore, he could not cope with what is untoward in life. The implications of it in the current economy is the becoming “waste” of a human. The sheer fact that he did not address anything to stand for the reason for his death would be enough for me to take it at its face value, as a viewer. But his “waste” has an afterlife. It structured the rhythms with which dissent against exploitation flowed. It gave time. His words and image circulate on the web and intimate themselves into the daily chatter of an immense number of people, mostly workers of the same ‘attention economy’. The very condition that bodies do not have to or cannot endure what is demanded of them is erased out by the attachment of certain movements and meanings to the object (Mehmet’s reception), like his immoral behavior (no proper burial). Moreover and through the circulation of these words and images, this process erects the very boundary between them and us: the healthy, the enduring, the ones who can psychologize and thus keep away the thought that the disappearance of his life has nothing to do with the wearing out of ours. In that same vein, workers who are subject to similar conditions thus both acknowledge life as precarious and work as its natural counterpart, projecting the fear from ‘being’ like him and the hope of ‘surviving’ as a matter of their individual strength.

3.4 Conclusion

In the first part of this chapter, I recounted Erdem and Özge's way of countering the circulation of the new contract, which, they knew, meant that they were 'kindly' asked to find themselves new jobs. But how can we understand the dynamics of fear in Erdem's case, considering the anticipation of getting fired? Does it not work on Erdem's present contemplation, undermining his self-esteem and unsettling him as he feels his aptitudes and desires to this day are being violated? Not quite. For that would be to assume that the past is the present that has been, and taken to its logical conclusion (which is of course fleeting), the model of the arrow of time -the past and the present on the same line- would imply that he can retain what has been the past ('I was doing well in my work, but then I was wronged'). In other words, if the past and the present work on the same line as successive instances, the present had to wait forever in order to be constituted as the past. When Ekmel offered the jarring contract and unleashed rumors that worked as anticipation (*injunction*) for Erdem, the latter was expected to leave the firm and this was hoped to be made into a show for others to study, and desire more work. There were markers all along, other rumors, stories, gestures i.e. indicators, which emitted signals of Erdem's insecure condition in the workplace. It was part and parcel of his work.

This is to say that anticipation is not contemporaneous with the act that constitutes the despair; it is already in operation in some sense, only to be named as the feeling that the subject had waited for all along. So, when Erdem was offered a new contract, he was already under the influence of a 'general' sense of 'precarity' where he

felt on the edge of being called unfit for further work. Deleuze (1968, p.79) calls the paradox above the “paradox of the present: to constitute time while passing in the time constituted,” from which he goes on to its function. This explanation resides in the introduction of “virtual memory,” that the past and the present coexist, the past as general and the present as the image affected by the immediate past. In short, “the memory of the present is the virtuality that perpetually accompanies the present; it is the shadow that makes it an actual present by putting it in contact with the past” (Al-Saji, 2004, p.216).

That, if you like, is the way anticipation works. It is a temporal affect that is felt as a preemptive mechanism. Erdem had the fear of being let go, of not gaining enough money and access to objects of desire. In another conversation, he had told me that this was his “battle for survival,” showing his father that he could earn enough money to gain his (economic) independence. The preemptive logic works in the register of time that is always a ‘will have done’ (the future anterior), Erdem will have already known that he was living under the threat of getting fired. The threat, an outcome that is not conducive to Erdem’s capacity to relate to his work confidently and produce pleasure with and within work, works as a form of managerial control. This control, in turn, is upheld by competitive labor laws, a generalized sense of insecurity, everyday signs of dissatisfaction and the feeling of subordination in the face of work hierarchy. In other words, a combination of institutional, legal, and affective states.

With other cases from the constitution of affective bonds through the structures of work-related self-technologies, this condition testifies to the differential distribution of temporal affects (of hope and fear), made into a self-practicing affect. I have argued in this chapter that the technologies of rhythm are entangled with the times of the body,

which can be traced through practices, habits, 'knowledges', tendencies and technologies in relation to self-understandings.

CHAPTER 4

INFRASTRUCTURES AND PRECARIOUS PLACES OF DIGITAL MEDIA WORK: MEMORY, EMBODIMENT AND THE INTERFACE

Sprayed on the wall in the film, *Throw Away Your Books and Rally on the Streets* (1971), directed by the experimental filmmaker and writer Terayama Shuji, is a slogan directly from the late 60s: "THE CITY IS AN OPEN BOOK. WRITE ON ITS INFINITE MARGINS" (Figure 2, appendix). It was, of course, the high time of collective resistance against the obsolescence wrought on the subjects of capitalism in the advanced industrial nation of Japan, which operated through common understandings regarding work, sexuality and reproduction. In Japan, it was an era which marked the rise of experimental photography, urban uprisings and a youth culture easily tainted as mimicking its counterparts around the world. The engagement with space and built materials of urban life to some extent marks the then and recent theoretical interest given to the mesh of human and non-human elements that make spaces of urban life a matter of common belonging and contemporaneity. A de-familiarizing critical work was and is on the move: how do we understand the aspirations, hopes and dreams we embed in and retain from places, and to what extent are these dynamics relevant to modern capitalism, 'financialization', urban life, and digitalization? Similarly, the photographers of the era¹⁴⁹, particularly Terayama's collaborator Nakahira Takuma photographed the abstraction of space to reflect the

¹⁴⁹ The photographers at the time collaborated in *Provoke*, an art magazine (Figure 3, in Appendix).

abstraction of human life, tacking concretized, embodied places to their counterpart, landscapes of 'dead labor'. These built spaces work on the human mind, in the service of abstract calculation and accumulation of affective and surplus value.

Regarding Nakahira's work and the antinomies between the concrete, embodied, living labor of individuals and the abstracting, built, dead urban space, Toscano (2010, p.7) claims that "the dwarfing (or expunging) of the human by the built has frequently been held up as an index of alienation". Yet, he adds, the 'man-made' landscape is in an undetermined and invisible relationship to human creativity, daily engagement and practical urban mobility. This is another way of pointing to the ways in which humans inhabit built space by re-appropriating, re-purposing the concrete, the shared space of affective belonging. In other words, there is no simple 'me versus establishment' where the cold dead spaces automate human contingency. It is with a similar concern that I write this chapter, upon my four months of ethnographic work. I explore the seemingly invisible relationship between tools, gadgets, routes and circuits that are annexed to human creativity to produce adverts, spams, images, games and videos that hinge on vague notions and calculations of human attention. However, the scope of the data presented here is minimal, aspirations of which are less so. It is my wager, which will be elaborated in a moment, that the affective temperament of the workers vent out in the place-event of work tools and places, which also act as moments of dissent.

In the cartoon below (Figure 1, appendix), the hip protagonist of the comic series, *Eycinsi*, proclaims that they had been burning the midnight oil for who knows how many days in a row, without any protection from the syndicates, working like "slaves" only to make the company richer than it already is. While he concludes his remarks in a matter-of-fact tone, "well, whatever, I'll take care of this early in the

morning you have a good night”, his co-worker has already melted down. With each angry remark chipping away at his wit, the background closes in, as if to strip his flesh in the face of his impassivity regarding his coworker's cynicism.

By opening the chapter on that note, I do not aim to generalize the conditions of digital media work. It is already well documented within the anthropology of digital media that global modes of communication shape and are shaped in myriad contexts that require ethnographic explorations (Coleman, 2010). Particularly, the work of advertisement production and ethnographies of digital media pose problems that can only be teased out by taking into consideration deeply ambiguous and unstable processes which tack historical-bodily regimes of accumulation to ‘economies of attention’. Emergent forms of life to which ethnography might find ways of relating take place in spatial forms that inhabit and suggest multiple time curves and histories (Fischer, 2009). This makes the anthropology of digital media both a fascinating and challenging preoccupation as it attends to the spatial-temporal conditions where actors face the making and undoing of their daily conditions in relation to infrastructures of digital media. Hence, this chapter's title. This chapter aims at exploring these routes and digital worlds by way of understanding their impacts on human memory, how they sit with bodily/affective states, and 'interface' imply the co-constitution of virtual worlds and embodied presence¹⁵⁰. In this chapter, I write on these junctures by two inseparable aims:

¹⁵⁰ Information saturation and sensory overload are generally regarded ubiquitous in the ‘digital age’ made present by technological production, the acceleration of commodity circulation and the laying out of ‘cognitive infrastructures’ undergirded by state intervention, corporate investment and individual participation (Crary, 2014; Shavero, 2010; Parisi & Goodman, 2011). The world of ever increasing connection demands and introduces a new economy of attention with an increased openness of the ability to affect and be affected (Massumi, 2002; Connolly, 2002). This demands a careful reading of interlaced and interdependent affects which facilitate movements of bodies, generate attitudes and dispositions which at the same time relate to the way they are experienced individually, i.e. their translation into emotions.

To explore (these themes by writing with) these themes as they are lived, and to articulate my ethnographic data into a critical project.

The condition that realizes the movement of bodies and building of environments are differentially experienced (Berlant, 2008, p.4). Even though we take some affects, say, love, as an intensity that amplifies one's capacity to act, as we will see from my fieldwork, loving work and the production of love in others towards products shows that love is an affect that can be experienced as hope and despair. As Lauren Berlant (ibid.) argues on the basis of Jean Luc-Nancy's proposition, if love posits a structure through which "I may desire to break my own heart to become open to your capacity to repair it to a state better than what it was when I met you", you may "sense it as love, desperation, bitterness, ambivalence, a drive to competence, anxiety, spaciness, and/or simply as a pressure in my [her] body that I [she] need to discharge". Then, it could be said that structures that undergird regimes of attention bring with them intensities, relative speeds and proximities, as they charge and are charged by subjects. This chapter is bent on understanding embodied feelings of digital media workers in relation to digital media infrastructures and temporal affects such as hope and despair.

The infrastructures are gateways, concrete material anchors and places of human-nonhuman interaction which stage the complex clash of discursive formations, abstractions, affective histories and monumentality. The spatial blocks of built material are intertwined with the possibility of making future claims, in a double sense with both the companies, builders and interested parties, and the users, disinterested/interested communities, political activists and workers (see Larkin, 2008). In highly digitalized environments, building on the human-data interaction as well as appropriating the knowledge thereof, data mining companies such as DeepMind, Watson, and Autonomy,

not to mention the giant players of the data industry, “polymorphously figure infrastructural reorganization around the ideal of something like pattern recognition or cognitive awareness...not so much as a matter of imagining, practice, configuration, or repair, but as a competitive cognitive challenge” (Mackenzie, 2015). Thus, the problem of infrastructures is a way not only of looking at pipelines, electric networks, navigational patterns, trade routes, monuments, squares and urban infrastructures. It is also a project to understand future potentials in and through them.

In the rapidly changing urban landscape of Istanbul, along with the “mobilities” of goods, people and images (Ozbay & Bartu-Candan, 2014), emerging digital work places are not well documented. Structural economic changes that took a distinct turn after the 2001 economic crisis and the AKP’s rise to political power in 2002 accompanied the gradual and increasing pervasiveness of digital media in everyday life. However, there is very little ethnographic research on digital media, particularly advertisement, content managing, the ‘share-economy’ and work-related issues that traverse white-collar jobs, volunteering, and the utilization of precarious working conditions that come into contact with histories of urban transformation, ethnic tension, or the emergence of a new technical-political ‘attention regime’. I use ‘precarious’ here in a sense that emphasizes the links between flexible employment, faltering labor organization and job security, and declining real wages as they utilize embodied feelings and labor, which in many accounts are referred to as ‘cultural work’ (Lazzarato, 2004, pp.186-9; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2006). In the production of advertisement, what is usually deemed as ‘immaterial labor’ is inextricably linked to the adoption of tools and habits that embody forms of ‘social knowledge.’ This not a way to say that any object, in any historical period has lacked the affective undertones that are

not similar to the ones we observe today, but it is that their dissemination, routes of circulation, gateways of transition, actors and titles of appropriation that have changed (Lipuma & Lee, 2002, 2005).

In a workplace that demands workers to utilize tools and objects to realize products, devices and the environment are not only technological objects that embody the knowledge to make constant demands on their user. Rather, tools “exist only in relation to the interminglings they make possible or that make them possible” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.90), that is to say, regimes of attention, historical formations and conditions of embodiment. I build on this suggestion with my work as a “digital strategist” in a digital marketing agency located in the rapidly changing urban landscape of Karanfil, overlooking the business and affluent district, Güvenler, in Istanbul.

I focus on this chapter distinctly on how workers endure the conditions of 'precarity' (understood as ways of embodying a general sense of insecurity) that hinder their flourishing and future aspirations, but, at the same time, put to work their habits, skills and aptitudes. This is not very farfetched from my writing in previous chapters, especially the last chapter. I have noted there that the making of space as the space of work requires from the ethnographer a comprehensive study with broader links and intellectual trajectories and a sensory attunement, drawing on different data that is hard to incorporate into the discussions made in previous chapters. The temporal and spatial affects influence workers, their practices of production and consumption as well as their places of work, which are designed to demand that their capacity be clustered into idealized body images and convictions of a good life, which are translated into advertising images. I ask this question in a particular historical context: how does the introduction of the possibilities of digital communication through neoliberal institutions

change space, which affects how workers understand affects? Specifically, I dwell on those instances when my co-workers relate their dissatisfaction with their lives to images they have of themselves. Their immersion in the economy and technology impels them to make sense of their spatial habitat and tools they create with. However, they are disturbed by the unequal distribution of income and opportunities of consumption and leisure and thus they are caught in a conundrum: through your own 'precarity', you offer others a blueprint towards having a good life. Their engagement with the world unfolds in certain embodied occurrences that invite more questions related to their bodily capacity, sensory experience and orientation in terms of how they occupy space and make familiar the material with which they engage. The operationalization of lived duration is one side-effect of this process: moments when workers recognize changes in their bodies in the form of agitation, arousal and weariness (Csordas, 2011, pp.147-149), combinations of which I tentatively cluster as 'hope' and 'despair'.

This chapter is sectioned into three. First, I give an account and a theoretical exploration of how digital media work creates 'events' and 'eventfulness', advertising content with graphics and slogans, fashioning "lifestyle" images imbued with a resonance of a desirable life. This relates to conditions of subjective place making. Here I explore theories of affect, the nature of 'immaterial' work and objects in their bodily implications. Second, I adopt the notion of *interface* to make a point of the overflow of information and how it is couched in the understanding of an embodied self, memories and images experienced by workers. I argue here that software are, more than inert matter, platforms that work on and through the labor of human engagement. Third, I look at the way in which workers anchor their experience through their orientations towards objects specific to places. Namely, the aperture of the *interface* and the refuge

of the *backroom* (the elevator shaft room) will be taken as interactive infrastructures and anchors to and through which emotional investments are made. I will demonstrate that while the workers open their bodies to the indeterminate flows of affects to produce 'creative' content and conform to their working conditions, their temporal understanding gets mediated through objects: hope and break-down make sense in concrete situations and material anchors which relate to dissatisfaction with idealized images. I argue that the way workers in precarious conditions 'make' place is haunted by the penetration of the world through the screen, facilitating a time out of joint, a heightened sense of living in the moment and the place on the brink of turning unfamiliar. This shows that the body is the locus where one makes sense of a space in putting the activity pursued with in the world, in time.

4.1 The 'Social Factory' and operational affects

What does it mean for a product to change hands, and how does that relate to the production at the same time of joyful emotions towards work? In a seminal consideration of the relationship between use and exchange value, Sohn-Rethel (1978) locates consciousness in its constitutive relationship with the activity of exchange. It is not the use value of a commodity that mobilizes exchange, but use value is made to depend on the activity of commensuration¹⁵¹, which makes 'use' a form of knowledge. The very abstractions stipulated and constructed by commodity exchange ties a subjective feeling to its objective social conditions with a gap in consciousness: the use

¹⁵¹ In other words, a subject comes to embody a mode of consciousness that can compare the labor time that went into an object with what is went to the making of others. The particular conditions of production are effaced when the knowledge of *how* this commensuration occurs is lost to the subject.

value of a commodity is effaced in favour of the exchange, a second nature where “the consciousness and the action of the people part company” (Sohn-Rethel, 1978, p.26). It is through the ‘more original’ exchange activity that persons value their labor and make sense of their preoccupation. In light of this, we can say that the space and time of the particular activity is taken up (or given up) by the commodity form to forge an understanding of pure, quantitative units of space and time. The conditions of this commensuration changes with the changes in ways of knowing.

The fundamental attributes of the product and its circulation have changed dramatically, and along with it, subjective experience is borne differently. The fundamental shift Paolo Virno poses -among other Autonomists- is that rather than the “real abstractions” pertaining to modernity (in the form of equivalence of units of space and time), the communicative frameworks that generate value today structure “models of social knowledge” that “constitute the premise for operative heterogeneous possibilities” and “act as premise to every type of action” (Virno, 2004, p.87). What Marx could not have foreseen (the change in what constitutes labor today; modes of communication and feelings) demands the reformulation of what we understand by knowledge and labor time. The objects that come to induce ways of thinking, then, are incorporated by subjects who embody these units of measurement in habits, skills and aptitudes. Virno accords the structural mode of behavioral responses to two generic attitudes: *opportunism* and *cynicism*. Life and language are cultivated in the ‘social factory’, by which we should understand that the production of work ethic does not (if it ever did) occur in the factory, but at home, in school, online, in everyday encounters and so on. The workers are adaptable and fluent in shuffling their priorities; they often dwell in miserable working conditions which they resent but value to the point of willingly

refashioning themselves for the better exploitation of their own labor and communicational capacities¹⁵². The technological shift driving capitalist production today has eroded the boundaries between work and leisure time, extending work time virtually into the entirety of a life.

Recent explorations in *affect theory* taught us to look at the way bodies encounter the world as an open-ended process, tuning in to the way in which memory both builds on and resurfaces in our engagement. This allows us to rethink how virtually and in action the processes of bodily engagement unravels. Work relations should be entertained with their inter-corporeal and inter-subjective nature in mind, which are instances of “brain-body-world entanglements” (Seigworth & Gregg, 2010; Blackman, 2012, p.1). Shifting our focus toward the transmission of affect and a sensibility in understanding how bodies and actions materialize, we look at material anchors such as speeds and intensities of “movement and rest” that do not only show that the world is in constant flux. Rather, they also imply the cosmic fact that “each force-field oscillates between periods of relative arrest and those of heightened imbalance and change” (Connolly, 2011, p.44), making them susceptible to periods of stagnation and stability as well as of change. In a hopeful if not optimistic tone, Massumi (2002) takes on a par “affect” and “hope” in a world changing rapidly in the amplification of affect as what facilitates his understanding of time: focusing on the near future of expanding creative potentialities weighs over utopian blueprints of social change¹⁵³. Then, when the human

¹⁵² I want to remind the reader the defining refrain of this thesis, which is the suggestion of Read (2016): what holds the contemporary capitalist formation intact is the libidinal investment in the making of subjective and collective objects of desire, as well as the temporal orientation of workers towards their working conditions, moored to differing degrees of fear and/or hope.

¹⁵³ In other words, there is no one specific path of change for the image that idealizes human flourishing. The generation of conditions in which new social and economic imaginaries might come to play (or the

mold is grounded in the ‘social factory’, it is open to affects and emotions that make her susceptible to the conceptual orbit of corporate culture, while also heightening the feeling of change.

Creative action in advertising is hopeful, in which new connections are forged to enhance the capability of the body acting upon and being acted by the world. This appears as the key to understanding the nature of digital advertisement. The immanent possibility of affect is in what lets the body amplify its effect on the world, but also making it more open and prone to hazards in its relation to outside forces. However, to discern the potentials of how a body may act on objects in its encounters, we should look at how forms of everyday engagement with the world materialize into encounters with objects. This lays the conceptual framework through which I understand places of digital media work—the limits and openings a body sets up in its engagement with the world. The body images and tools with which we work gain their operational value far from ‘neutral’ technological use-value, as it is encounters themselves that produce the surfaces through ‘sedimented’ histories and culturally imbued affects. These affects make some promises and words ‘sticky’ (Ahmed, 2006, 2010) and we should understand what a body can do by looking at ‘what sticks’. In a dense note, Bratton (2013) recently argued that the ‘program’ and ‘applications’ through our ready-to-hand gadgetry bridge our relationship to the world and in turn open the world’s material infrastructure to the manipulation of the hand. In other words, work places, tools and concepts one works with, are shaped before work, towards a body image and ideal that fosters the work ethic. This registers the progressive modulation of our ways of thinking. The tool is not

faltering of capitalist realism) carry more weight than, say, a schema of the redistribution of wealth by the state.

only an extension of the hand, but it actualizes the potential ways a body can move¹⁵⁴.

After all, the reach of the body is an essential aspect of its capabilities (Ahmed, 2006).

4.2 Infrastructures, *interface* and the making of place in digital environments

With that backdrop, I want to use the notion of *interface* to make several points. First of all, it aptly emphasizes the actual face-to-face interaction that occasions encounters between humans and machines. This process stages the discursive construction of the user as opposed to the device. Second, interfaces function as displays that welcome the User and accommodate the participant to the vagaries of a world connected between sensory and embodied matter and the physical and virtual architecture of the web. The pathway implies openness to different forms that we can interact with through a portal. By way of this, the third aspect that I think needs attention is the way what flows from one side of the “interface” affects and is affected by what is on the other side. What we term as “interface” becomes a site where the both sides of the screen are co-constitutive. Then, it is evident that I consider *interface* simultaneously related to place making by reference to embodied selves: users are preoccupied with the objects in their encounters, relaying affectively imbued cultural and pre-linguistic inscriptions with a remainder mediated by subjects in relation to body images. Interface is what brings embodied selves into contact with work tools and material infrastructures in a way that relays habits and affects, and puts to work the (creative) capacity to produce.

The platform as an architectural form is not far from the political stakes of using it. Hovering at the margins of what we take as given in the ‘platform’ - namely besides

¹⁵⁴ See also Hansen (2006).

the ubiquity of platforms and their applications-, Bratton (2014) argues, is a structuring mechanism which stages encounters between the layered design of the software and the users. The software is 'hard' material, not only because the dispositions and attitudes gradually freeze into habits. But also not (only) because of the data created by the encounter with the program, nor because these data and connections need the material infrastructure to keep them working. Also and more importantly, the design imposes its form on the virtual capacities that might engender modes of creative engagement. What computational technologies portend, according to Bratton, is an interactive arc that while belying its principles of formation in the phenomenological space initially posed by the interface, is nevertheless "forming the body of an accidental megastructure" that in time becomes "something not unlike a vast (if also incomplete), pervasive (if also irregular) software and hardware Stack" (ibid, p.1). For Bratton, this poses great political potential as what binds and imprints itself on us is this granular and pervasive hard-software, that structurally sidesteps "community consensus powered by moral hectoring" (ibid, pp.1-2). The 'interoperability' between the subject as User and the world as the "platform" dis-embed Users from spaces of activity submerged by the market or the state. This unhinges from and at once situates the subject into "the space in which the discursive formation of the subject meets the technical constitution of the User", enjoying "a much larger horizon" than subject as citizen or the productive subject conceived as 'homo economicus' (ibid, pp.6-7). We only need to realize this potential, and limits of software in bringing it about.

What I find inspiring is not only his project of discerning political 'subjectivation' and the emphasis on platform design for the future of communication, but also his emphasis on the interface as the site where the architectural form in the name of

‘platform design’ is made. It is from here that an operability is introduced- “a set of designed or designable scripts that organize organization itself, that imagine in advance how things will play out, and stage their interrelations accordingly” (Bratton, 2008, p.20). The idea of limit is the key. The limit posed by the software should be taken with the background material that is not present to immediate attention. Embedded in the architectural forms of the interface, together with uncontrolled surges of affect that congeal into intentional action, there are impediments to how a congealing thought can be expressed, issuing “backgrounds” out of place (Ahmed, 2006). A limit brimming with potential, slicks of affect escape “received psychological categories” (Massumi, 2002, p.27, cited in Bertelsen & Murphie, 2010, p.148).

The utilization of tools of digital communication cultivates the process of actualization of bodily potential. Bodies take “the shape of what they ‘do do,’ where the ‘do do’ does not simply keep the future open, but also *restricts possibilities for action in the present*” (Ahmed, 2006, p.62). The spatiality of digital encounters 'make' place through the way in which the “too much world” of digital information of the software meets the motor activity of the user through the interface. The limit and the potential of a software plays out in actualized behavior. That’s what I take Hito Steyerl (2013, p.3-4) to mean when she claims that in our online world “images become unplugged and unhinged and start crowding off-screen space”, invading “cities, transforming spaces into sites, and reality into realty” as “they materialize as junkspace, military invasion, and botched plastic surgery.” She further goes on to say that, attaining rapid circulation in a “spread through and beyond networks, they [these images] contract and expand, they stall and stumble, they vie, they vile, they wow and woo.” The limits of the

architectural design of platforms, then, are written on a background that is beyond representation, but they find their ways through the background.

It is with a similar issue in mind that we can expand on the spatial and temporal aspects emerging from infrastructures and their embedded networks. For instance, the place and tools as anchors and transmitters of social knowledge is a fascinating line of inquiry. Building on what I have elaborated in the introduction, namely that the knowledge of social interaction is becoming subservient to the appropriation of data -in the form of virtual data collection, the software, and tools that come with protocols and know-hows of engagement in the service of corporations- is telling. A recent collaboration occurred in a book, *Critical Terms for Media Studies*¹⁵⁵, among two philosophers of media, Stiegler and Hansen: they discuss the ways in which tools and infrastructures of advanced capitalism work by defining the ecology of attention and memory, to capitalize on the way humans make, change and store memory in practice. In other words, embodied ways of knowing come into contact with novel technologies that merge with devices incorporated into new economic enterprises involving the internet. Devices such as smartphones, laptops, PDAs and a whole gamut of technological gadgets backed by gigantic software and hardware companies producing on a global scale, which use highly mediatized and aestheticized promotion techniques, rely on the interaction between non-human devices, the environment and human sensorial and affective capacities.

¹⁵⁵ Edited by Mitchell and Hansen (2010).

Stiegler¹⁵⁶ and Hansen distinguish analytically between *hypomnesis*, “the technical exteriorization of memory” and *anamnesis*, “the embodied act of remembering” to understand the dynamics between the two historically:

“The new technological forms of knowledge, objectified in equipment and apparatus, conversely engender a loss of knowledge at the very moment one begins speaking of “knowledge societies,”...we delegate more and more knowledge to apparatuses and to the service industries that network them, control them, formalize them, model them, and perhaps even destroy them” (Hansen & Stiegler, 2010, pp.67-8).

Whereas the Fordist regime of labor and spatial organization worked on bodies according to a cognitive sequence, organized, trained and formalized by scientific measurement technologies and discipline; in the Post-fordist regime, this is compounded with tools which embody social knowledge, as they (the tools, the research and data thereof) are imported to the realm of biogenetics, pattern recognition and forecasting. If we consider the “conditions of memorization...the criteria of effacement, selection, forgetting, anticipation, retention, protention— in a word, of temporalization— [which] become concentrated in a technico-industrial machine whose finality is the production of surplus value” (pp.80-81), then we can hazard the idea that it is to this end that the

¹⁵⁶ Stiegler (2010, p.25) claimed that, the relationship between humans and machines is salvaged through the utilization of:

“not the energy of the proletarianized producer (labor as pure labor force), nor the motor energy of a new industrial apparatus (such as oil and electricity, which are placed into the service of the steel industry and the culture industries), but rather the energy of the proletarianized consumer— that is, the consumer’s libidinal energy, the exploitation of which changes the libidinal economy and, with it, the economy as a whole”.

In other words, material culture is vital to the production and transmission of memory. Materialities should be thought in a dialectical relationship between the human capacity to produce and the social and technical capacity of the machines: tools externalize, tap into and work, with and on the body and the environment. He proposes to turn to the externalization of memory into tools, and embodied knowledge into habits and managerial techniques so that we better understand to what extent today we pass our memories to machines and what this transmission implies for the shaping of the 'libidinal economy'. It is possible to summarize Stiegler’s theoretical insights by looking at how consumerization of society occurs through techniques such as the externalization and the autonomization of memory. The underlying assumption is the very process without which a society cannot materialize: insofar as there is the externalization of the capabilities of affect, language and memory, it is through their clinging onto certain anchors and prolonging through certain institutions culture is manifested and maintained.

spatial organization of the workplace and the temporal organization of the workers through affects operate¹⁵⁷.

4.3 How to get in and out of work: the case of JazzRabbit

The interface generates an affective resonance in the world, tugging at what is familiar. If “familiarity is shaped by the ‘feel’ of space or by how spaces ‘impress’ upon bodies” (Ahmed, 2006, p.7), can we speak of a familiar feeling in making a place one’s own, especially if that place is locked in an ever flowing world, the surfaces of which are shaped into existence by the indeterminate encounter between the subject of digital work and the platform? How does a “brain-body-world entanglement” stand, if not in the ‘precarity’ of its own “unworlding” (Stewart, 2012), attested to by my colleagues after one of the ordinary stress episodes? Erdem expressed his own position, “I cannot tolerate anymore the manipulation of my emotions”, adding typical swears to his statement, “I’ll wreck this place up and smash my computer and disappear”. A daily encounter that surprised me at first but I gradually got accustomed to the unsettlement, staging itinerant and fitful working rhythm, interrupted with cigarette and coffee breaks, banters mainly referred to as “goygoy”.

Erdem was a fresh graduate from a graphics department in a “mediocre” (*ortalama*) school, and as he told me, he worked in several companies without any payment for six months, only to land a job in this agency on the lowest pay possible, well below the official ‘poverty limit’. He was very kind and timid in his attitude towards other workers, especially towards me, but he fared terribly with the demands

¹⁵⁷ Although cf. Thrift (2006, 2008).

made by the bosses. He would cringe at the sight of one, swearing ominously to my surprise. He and I had long talks, Erdem insistently wanted to be let in on how the emotional capacities of the workers were being manipulated at the hands and discourse of the bosses. He randomly drew up psychology pages on Wikipedia, asking my opinion about how to control his emotions and become fit for work without losing his temper. Erdem often felt uneasy in the environment in which he produced advertising content, yet he would take things out on himself. The form of 'precarity' of which he was a part, involved both territorial, 'orientational' and emotional processes.

The “backgrounds” of attention, where one *feels* out of place, when there is “too much world” to cope with were occasioned in moments where the flows of images through the interface became ‘unbearable’. He botched his project at hand or shirked [*kaytarmak*] according to how he felt toward his security at keeping his job and how he saw himself as an emerging actor in the world of digital media design. Erdem’s case demonstrates both the informational saturation and sensory overload that accompanies the cultivation of material and moral interdependence. In Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) terms, the “milieu” of a “territorial assemblage” does not consolidate, a “rhythm and melody” made expressive by the *refrain*, marks territory (ibid, pp.323-329), but this milieu turned into a precarious form in the 'out-of-placeness' of the *interface*. The space-time consolidation is congealed and shattered at the same time, felt in the bones, coped with in sudden anger and resentment with cynicism in the aftermath. It is this 'out-of-placeness' that drives creative work.

The “too much world” tugs at (or explains) the workings of memory when the seemingly perfect (synchronized) ‘interoperability’ of the body with the surges of affect from the interface generates the feeling of out-of-joint. It is these moments that unsettle

the flow of things seemingly synchronized with the flow of time. We can define these moments when the time of exchange between the body and the interface breaks, as productive, queer encounters that allow “new lines to emerge, new objects, or even new bodies...in gathering” (Ahmed, 2006, p.63). This 'out-of-placeness' can allow us to see what is beyond the screen and in the world. Let me elaborate.

For Connolly (2002), Bergson’s notion of *subtraction* -namely the suggestion that our sensory organization eliminates from perceived information-, provides insight into the very workings of memory. The fulcrum of what we can(not) fully know what a body is capable of doing or becoming is contingent on the ways our “perception, thinking, judgment, and action” are mediated (ibid, p.15). In his elaboration, Connolly dwells on the mimetic techniques of advertisement, TV and cinema that tone the “sensitivity” through which our sensory matter influences “thinking, identity, beliefs, and judgement”. The forms and practices of screening twist and untwist the organization of sensory matter: Connolly situates there the importance of memory formation and voluntary and involuntary recollection, and inarticulate traces of affective memory. *Virtual memory*, in particular, holds the key to how the past survives in intractable affective frameworks of action, since Connolly argues that “the past operates on the present below the threshold of explicit” (ibid, p.23).

Everyday perception, then, is imbued with affective undertones that sidestep intellectual attention and intentional action. Combinations of virtual traces and recollections allow memory construction and thus congeal into action. Memory implies three layers:

“(a) explicit memories called up by an existing situation, (b) potential recollections that operate implicitly in action contexts because time is too short to pull them up as recollections, and (c) effects of the past on the present that

cannot take the form of explicit recollection...not because they are repressed...[but simply because they do not materialize into] an articulable thought or coherent image” (ibid, p.37).

The latter workings of memory affectively charges the given moment. They refer loosely to what happened in the past, a latent orientation that may engender creative surges from its indeterminate space: “contingent encounters between virtual memory and new events” are produced thanks to this unforeseeable dynamic (ibid, p.40).

In William Connolly's interpretation of Bergsonian memory, virtual memory is given ontological prevalence, and it is argued that we can understand what this potential does by looking at corporate and commercial operations. In the workings of enterprises such as Google and Facebook, and many other platforms that my informants used for their purposes, designing products and advertisements, there is an inherent tendency to accelerate time intervals between human action and its conversion into exchange and circulatory value (Crary, 2014, p.58). Thus, the introduction of digital media, as it were, shrinks the space of the first two layers of memory and accelerates and exalts virtual memory. Moreover, the constant demand made through the “User, it’s stipulation of “fluency and adeptness” is contingent on the normalization and the suggestion of the conviction that *that* technological product is a historical necessity, to the level of “indispensability” (ibid, p.75). This of course resonates with what I argued above, relying on Virno (2004), that “fluency and adeptness” are habituated in subjects by the modulation of their thoughts in making sense of their activity. That arranges a working space for “creative” content managers of digital participatory media, a space that facilitates control, allows tapping into the creative potential of the workers, and, at the same time, hovers on the margins of a break-down, a feeling of being out-of-place, a

background that makes the object at hand redundant. The architectural (Bratton, 2008), mnemonic (Connolly, 2002), temporal (Crary, 2014) and 'orientational' (Ahmed, 2006) levels spill into one another, involving the engagement with the digital flows and their affective resonance, the worker at the interface is haunted by what is felt as unfamiliar.

4.4 Images of 'precarity'

The affective resonance of the infrastructure and the flows of work are interpreted by the workers through body images. I spoke at length with Gözde (located on the same floor), who was preparing “lifestyle” content for a travel company for which she was asked to collate graphics that were to be “inviting” and “uplifting”. She contended that the slogans she came up with were the epitome of “creative writing” (*kreatif yazarlık*), with an alleged desire to incite consumption and empathy in the observer. The “content” would be faced through interfaces of participatory digital media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Foursquare. I was also involved with posting “content” at prearranged time intervals, but my job was more on the “strategy” side where I did most of my work convincing customers with arguments I’ve heard from the creators of content. What affective labor pertains to in Gözde’s case both follows and diverts from regular “feel good” work where workers are put to work with the help of negative affects such as dispossession and mourning. These affects are translated into sentiments that are familial and national (Muehlebach, 2013) by the amplification of bodily transmission conducted by those very workers. In other words, the negative affects that work through the fear from dispossession shift meanings in the way labor is organized. Gözde told me –and I would later find out, to everyone- frequently that she

hated her job, felt she was missing out on life. She said she used intimate expressions she exchanged with her lover in moments when she could not come up with a new slogan, and saw her life as being totally uneventful. She would cheer up in instances where her life converged with the images of lives she created; people traveling leisurely, not pressed for time; people whose only thought was consuming luxuries and so on. Alongside with feeling out of place, as her conditions of life –getting paid very little, working approximately 11-12 hours a day including some weekends, working from home as well- was not the life she made other people desire. Her job was to deploy the affective tones of a happy life, when thought with broader links of precarious labor regime, referred to the “approximat[ion of a] feeling of belonging to a world that doesn’t...exist reliably anymore” (Berlant, 2007, p.277 as cited in Muehlebach, 2013, p.74). What dawned on me very late was that she would weave carefully that aura of dissatisfaction also to solicit support from others in order to incite compassion by the very act of going about with a sullen face. She would ask for favors from me, or for me to give a hand precisely when she seemed to be on the verge of breaking down due to her backlog. I was to hear later (in the backroom) that she was getting prepared to ask for a raise.

Gözde’s general dissatisfaction and her dealing with it through the images she produced is only one part of the general process of thinking through objects of work at hand in making place. One day I was invited to take my headphones off while collating a “digital strategy” for the biggest construction conglomerate in Turkey, which the boss counted himself very lucky to work with. “One of the best companies in Turkey, I’m

proud that *JazzRabbit* is a part of it”¹⁵⁸. I was taken out the door, despite my objections as I was preparing for a work meeting. I went down the stairs with Erdem to meet up with Fırat and Cüneyt, all smiling wryly at my puzzled expression since I had no idea of what exactly might be going on. I got excited to be part of an activity they seemed to cover over. “Ok, now I go over, you look around, when no one’s looking, first you [pointing at Cüneyt], then you [I] follow me. Gökçe [leaning towards me in secret and silently], stoop to the right hand sight of the elevator, I’ll be waiting.” I left the security door to see Cüneyt gesturing me to follow suit. As we turned the corner to the right-hand side of the elevator, Erdem was standing by the fire-exit door, rather stressed, shushing us and ready to rush us through. We went up the stairs quickly to the top floor that narrowed into a hall with two exits. If I kept going, confided Cüneyt, determined, I would find myself among the discarded rubble and quaint objects that he saw when he once carried some extra chairs up there.

Erdem, however, was afraid of being heard and, catching up with Cüneyt, held him off. So, we took the door to our right, entering into a dusty, dark room with a terrible musty smell. Erdem helped us to the light, a light bulb hovering over our heads, held by cables nested on the ceiling through. The room was very small, about nine square meters with a ceiling about two and a half meters high. One of the first things I noticed was a red engine, as big as a wild boar, standing on the upper side of the terraced room. Revving to a high-pitch and then becoming low again, the engine was an uncanny object I took note to stay away from. On the back side of the wall, I saw a plastic board, the size of a laptop, laced in cables wherefrom white thick cables sprung, only to meet

¹⁵⁸ Whereas in many circles, the company was regarded as ‘evil incarnate’. See my comments on Ağaoğlu in Chapter 2.

another small white case with blinking green lights and several unreadable inscriptions. Only then it dawned on me that we were in the room where the elevator shaft is, high-fiber cables enclosing the engine, keeping the heavy elevator in motion. And the plastic object I mistook for a laptop turned out to be the main server of our workplace connected to the infrastructure that rendered our connection to platforms accessible.

I was still misinformed as to how and why I was taken to what I thought at that time was their hideout, a getaway from what I previously called the indeterminate place of the *interface*. Although from our earlier talks I was familiar, with Cüneyt and Erdem, with the amount and types of synthetic or regular cannabinoids they claimed to smoke, I was still taken by surprise when Erdem produced a ready-made ‘cigarette’ out of his pocket, his eyes gleaming and mouth opening to a leer. I took my distance and began my questions as they casually smoked the ‘cigarette’, the smoke staying still in the room without any ventilation, only to be layered with further smoke exiting their nostrils, covering the engine and servers with thick white mist. These conversations remained throughout the next two months of my full-time employment at JazzRabbit, and these sessions usually took half an hour since we were urged to leave the room in fear of – often made jokes about – suffocation. The frequency of our visits to the room changed week by week, depending on how hectic our schedule for projects was or contingent on the presence of bosses inside the workplace, determining both the frequency and time of our visits. In the sessions, they talked of myriad issues traversing Turkish politics, daily life, music, drugs, and depending on whether one of the women co-workers were present, on the dynamics of work. What I was able to gather from my observations can be clustered into three: gossip, banter and nostalgia.

I use nostalgia to mean the talk of the sensuality of what was purported to exist, but, did not anymore. The tone of nostalgia was dream-like, an uninvited craving for passion that got lost in the drag of work life. Cüneyt was mainly nostalgia-driven. He brought up the subject of a past rural life, or times of ease, in contrast to now. He confided, that these thoughts recur to him as he “takes refuge” (*siğiniyorum*) in synthetic and regular cannabinoids. In a way, he opened himself, bracing himself for what was to come by calling onto desires he had lost. He said he could find those desires in what I think are affective traces of the past, through what occurred to him as recollections, partially showing in intensities and attitudes towards others, especially in anger and resentment towards the bosses. This resonates with how Anne Allison observes the experience of 'precarity' in Japan, in the form of aspirations for a future that seek what is lost in the present, albeit showing how workers claim time for themselves (Allison, 2013, pp.81-88). I am not trying to argue here that smoking works like affective traces that partly shape memories and frames of action, but simply that an atmosphere that induces smoking may urge the user into a comfort zone, making the room a “place” bearing the qualities of what is familiar. At least, the push and pull of the feeling of familiar/unfamiliar is a process heavily informed by the tools at hand, whether for consumption, or creative production.

As in the workings of the *interface*, the backroom of infrastructural connections of the server and the elevator was rife with uneasiness as to what the motility of things inside the backroom could portend for the near future: for instance the arrival of the bosses, our neighbors, colleagues returning from their breaks, anyone and all others that were unaware of the whereabouts and the function of the backroom. The backroom was also the *refrain* of the workplace, a fugitive territorial assemblage, “a prism, a crystal of

space-time” that holds the promise of making a place familiar and the threat of dissolving into paranoia and despair, acting upon space with unexpected affects, bringing together “decompositions, projections, or transformations,” forming “organized masses”. The space dissolved into the unknown again, as the engine revved, the dissent of the workers staged the “amplifications and eliminations” of the affects that made the space familiar or unsettling (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p.348). Commenting on the political possibilities and ethics of the affective potential of events –as well as how they are hijacked by nations and disciplining powers-, Bertelson and Murphie (2010) maintain that *refrains* “join with future forces by stitching themselves into them” as “affects, as transitions or passages, are able to link up across senses, across events, across ‘temporal contours,’ between or within different aspects of refrains” (pp.145-6). An anticipation haunted Cüneyt, in almost all of our conversations, stemming from his reminiscence of days of youth that amalgamated in an image of both mourning and aspiration: his dreams of a lost past spilled into his dream in settling in a Southern town, quiet and serene, following a logic that stretches the now in anticipation of a future, a feeling of the embodied “not-yet-conscious” (Bloch, 1986, pp.11-12). Layering the image with tension, he was quite aware of the vagaries of territory already charted, such as the arrival of someone heralded by the revving of the engine.

The comfort zone of the secret getaway, then, is for workers, the locus of place making in the hope of distancing themselves from the surveillance and control of the workplace and the flow of images and affects from the *interface*. The uncanny objects and dark space of the backroom, a homely place where the unfamiliar and the threatening can creep into the registering of hope and communal relations between the workers, embodied in their craving for nostalgia and unattainable “aspirational

normativity”. The dreams of moving South, -a typical middle-class dream in Turkey- was often disturbed by the sudden revving of the engine; we then tune in to the whereabouts of the elevator, that engendered an uneasiness, dissipating the “crystal image” (Berlant, 2011). As it were, the 'precarity' of the feeling of being deprived of one's future, the surfacing of resentment in gossip towards other workers and bosses, the inability to cope with the demands made by the work, and the “inevitability” of the seeming seamlessness of the *interface* engendered problems of not keeping up with the times and was displayed in the inability of and ambiguity with which they were composing a place. As 'precarity' emerges to keep the 'out-of-jointness' of everyday life intact, the status of “ordinary tactile composition, everyday worldings that matter” (Stewart, 2012, p.519) become aspirational¹⁵⁹.

The temporal affects mentioned above, such as despair and hope, where the workers felt their creative potential diminished or amplified (respectively), have become instances of value creation. Indeterminate flows of affect and the habituated attitudes, dispositions in the form of skills and aptitudes function to produce a value-creating circulation as contemporary capitalism can tap into the affective and creative potential of workers, generating value even from abstracted spaces and 'virtualities'¹⁶⁰. I take this to mean that all acts, including the control of the workplace, are open, thanks to mapping and data mining, becoming a part of the production and circulation of capital flows. This process of generation of value transmits affects in and through bodies, opening them to

¹⁵⁹ This is an implicit reference to Berlant's (2011) *aspirational normativity*, in a word about the ways in which subjects under precarious conditions are structurally put into positions where they identify with norms that would hinder their wellbeing.

¹⁶⁰ Which Steven Shaviro calls “any-space whatever” and “disconnected space”, referring to Deleuze (see Shaviro, 2010).

each other and to their virtual capacity. In turn, subjective attitudes hover between opportunism, cynicism and hope.

In this chapter, I tried to make sense of how workers of affective labor make place and experience tools and objects under conditions of 'precarity'. What I wanted to argue was not that we are living in a world where communicative infrastructure and the aptitude gained by workers make their presence a threat to capitalism. Nor did I wish to side with an emergent homogenous experience forming a global class. But in a world where labor and play, work time and leisure have spilled into one another, it is critical to understand the way workers endure the conditions within work-places, the process of producing desire and the creation of an aptitude for the cultivation of this wider framework in embodied images. This embodiment of images of a better life in spite of the negative affects produced in tandem with pursuing them in real life, are relayed as hope, not only for the future, but hope as a visceral sense acting in the here and now, opening up oneself to affects. If we say that “disconnected” spaces (such as the regulation and flow of the interface) nest workers, then the subjective experience is at the brink of breaking down; we can also say that the space-time of this whole endeavor is also subjected to more indeterminate flows, captured by *refrains*, the tools one engages with and the backroom. After all, 'precarity's forms are “compositional and decompositional”, as they “magnetize attachments, tempos, materialities, and states of being” (Stewart, 2012, p.524).

CHAPTER 5

CALLS TO GENUINENESS: WORKING SELVES

BETWEEN AUTHENTICITY AND SINCERITY

It is in no way startling today to claim that “listicles”, “infographics” and sponsored content widely shared through participatory web platforms serve to align one’s interests and predilections with an imaginary community, a community that is particular enough to attract specialized attention yet common enough to go viral. Paramount on these platforms today are pseudo-scientific lists that display images from the zaniness of animals that face human ‘idiosyncracies’ to the lists that tell you how to “learn in which 17 ways you have a problem of procrastination”. I have found myself in several instances perusing through and enjoying “listicles” such as “19 Signs to Show You Are an Introvert, Although You Think Otherwise”¹⁶¹ or “17 Things Only the Self-Conscious Will Understand”¹⁶². These factoids are as much about the failure to adapt to circumstances that are ‘socially desired’, fostering the motivation to go back to work or teaching the ability to feign small talk, as they are about the latest glimpses into (and “hacks” of) new technological devices. Mostly, however, the logic of these personal yet generalizable suggestions about how to behave follow a desire to make-up for a lack of

¹⁶¹ “Öyle Olmadığınızı Düşünseniz Bile ‘İçine Kapanık’ Biri Olduğunuzu Gösteren 19 İşaret” <http://onedio.com/haber/oyle-olmadigini-dusunseniz-bile-icine-kapanik-biri-oldugunuzu-gosteren-19-isaret-372365>

¹⁶² “Sadece Utangaç İnsanların Anlayabileceği 17 Şey” <http://onedio.com/haber/sadece-utangac-insanlarin-anlayabilecegi-17-sey-318871>
<http://www.buzzfeed.com/erinlarosa/31-unmistakable-signs-that-youre-an-introvert#.kvM3Qkny8>

motivation in a daily routine or to fill a gap when one feels out-of-tune with the times, as in not feeling contemporary. By inciting the feeling of lack of introspection, the “listicles” invite the readers to share these musings by publishing them, eroding their peculiarity.

In fact, a recent article in the *New Inquiry* (Duca, 2016) grants that what is now a very commonplace form (“the listicle”) first became entrenched in 2013, through the publication entitled “31 Unmistakable Signs That You’re an Introvert” (Buzzfeed, 2013). For example, in this “listicle”, entry number 29th is “and plenty of SUPER-successful people are introverts, like Meryl [Streep] and [Albert] Einstein.” This is then followed by the 30th and 31st entries, which say “and while you may not always LOVE being in big groups...You know how awesome you are in your own element.” Finally, it concludes with the cynical remark, “Introverts, unite! Wait, never mind”. The introspection exalts the reader to make their peculiarity public, in the hope of incorporating others through their shares and likes. While Duca’s argument is that these pseudo-scientific mental health suggestions distort the public right and privilege to access scientific information, I want to focus on the particularities of the call to “introversion” and what this call does. Moreover, I think the search for an original peculiarity of the self makes sense in terms of questions regarding the logic of sincerity and the historical condition of authenticity. These issues in turn relate to contemporary politics, as they do to the libidinal organization of subjectivity and the economic organization of surplus-value extraction, in terms of both the capturing of value online, and the labor that makes and shares the list, let alone the labor that goes into the making of subjectivity.

The question of authenticity is understood as referencing a true, genuine self who upon demonstration, carries piggyback the person in question to a higher moral position of originality. We can start with the limits to thinking an individual, contained self in order to see how authenticity is an affect that constitutes the working subject.

Kierkegaard (1962) observed that the crowd is untruth, "by reason of the fact that it renders the individual completely impenitent and irresponsible, or at least weakens his sense of responsibility by reducing it to a fraction". This follows his belief that the existence of the "crowd" disembodies the individual of her particularities. In other words, he makes a simple argument towards the ideological operation of the thing we call a crowd. Assuming a crowd extracts the multiplicity of attitudes, self-understandings and habits of the subject in question, thus making up an untruth that defies and covers over the ingenuity of each and every individual. The question of sincerity plays out on a similar way, to produce the particular individual behavior one strives to perform as part of his/her self, as well as, an encompassing truth to which every sincere activity should readily align with. Kierkegaard's own notion of "sincerity" follows on from this definition of the crowd: in questioning the relationship between subjective truth and objective truth with regard of religious belief and the negotiations that occur between the individual and God, he limits the definition of authenticity of an objective truth to the inner space of an individual. But this individual becomes the sole palpable ground of truth.

Instead of this fickle ground human authenticity seems to rest on, and instead of limiting this individual to predefined truths, I want to ask questions regarding how to rethink authenticity in view of constant historical change. How does the truth of authenticity fare with new sets of values? In what sense does being true to oneself

disintegrate being true to common tenets? Or, when new sets of virtues become dominant, does the subject fashion herself according to a new set of orders, and how does she occupy the position of authenticity under these new conditions? But it seems in the present day we cannot address authenticity without referring to sincerity, a concept that does not assume an original, timeless self. So, before these questions, first, how can we think authenticity as a form of sincerity, and what can these concepts do to one another?

More than mapping the contours of the notion of authenticity, or what it means to the wider public, this chapter simply explores how authenticity emerges as a battleground for (to recall Norbert Wiener's fascinating title) 'the human use of human beings'. In the first section, I will elaborate on how authenticity is conceptualized as a philosophical problem¹⁶³, to the extent that it serves the blurring of boundaries between the subject and the object, especially in its changing historical pertinence. Then, with a short remark on Turkish politics, I will make the case for authenticity as performance; how making others fear of their lack of originality can be an effective tool in mobilizing action and assuming¹⁶⁴ consent. I will show that sincerity is first of all a claim that can mobilize the modern problem of authenticity to gain ground in the relentless battle for a creative subjectivity. The third section frames authenticity as a historical problem that is detailed, put to use, and along with a prolonged with a family of other techniques working on the bodies of potential workers, imbued with a more extensive affect in the Post-fordist labor regime. That section will show, by drawing on my fieldwork in

¹⁶³ Though I am nowhere near claiming that this will be an exhaustive or definitive survey.

¹⁶⁴ Opinion polls and assuming voter/participant behaviors is a way of 'engineering' the outcome, especially through adopting the signifier signifying the ordinariness of the said expectation. Compare with my comments on 'forecasting' in the Introduction and *fellow feeling* in Chapter 2.

JazzRabbit, how I first got involved with the question of authenticity and sincerity, and I will show that it firstly is a problem of performance, and only later, of power and self-knowledge. I will argue that authenticity is contingent on how sincerity is posed as a problem: the qualia of sincerity define the affective and moral landscape of subjective truth claims. In other words, this chapter traverses selective discussions on the 'originality' of selfhood based on arbitrary criteria of performance in order to show how the inner and outer space of selves are operationalized.

5.1 Sincerity, authenticity and the inside/outside divide: Towards a consistency

Back to the problem elaborated above. Sincerity can be thought as a 'performative' authenticity. More than a question of inherence or containment, sincerity here can be defined as sets of 'knowledges' and practices, cataloguing relations, defining silences and 'aporias' and ultimately putting to test the procedures, pressure points, negotiations and self-stylizations while tracing relations around a subject who simply *is*. This way, sincerity is conceptualized as a working definition that does things for an individual, expands and contracts her way of acting differently in changing circumstances, and is a modality of behavior following the dictums of being as one is. I disregard authenticity because it is a modern phenomenon, and because it relates to the practice and comfort with which one can judge the truth of an inner, persistent, stable, and contained self. Sincerity on its part, I argue, can be fickle, since it is 'merely' a presentation, whereas authenticity demands a sense of stability and consistency according to a kernel of truth making a person who he/she is. Whereas authenticity is more of an obsession with the truth of an inner self according to which others can be judged, sincerity is flexible, and

open to change; it does not hinge on an unchanging essence, more importantly perhaps, it rests on a much older genealogy than the modern question of authenticity (Shaviro, 2010; Trilling, 1972). While both rely on the presentation of the self, they open a terrain on which the credibility of a self can be attested according to its performance.

This definition of a performance principle is closer to a principle of *performability* than economic performance, or performance as effort. The performance principle alludes to the seminal work of Marcuse (1955), where he (in a nutshell) historicized the structuring contradictions of civilization, which departs from a purely psychic pleasure-pain distinction by introducing corporate culture and economic performance into the mix. In short, what we call civilization, that is, instrumental rationality attributed to ideals that are instituted by the tenets of the European Enlightenment, operates on the primal instincts and what is erotically charged in a human body. It puts to work the capacity to register and distribute pleasure: rather than a simple suppression, human erotic forces are being put to work, alienating the twin operation of labor and pleasure. The surplus value generating capital expropriates innate human erotic drives, be it libidinal forces, or the capacity to bring new things into this world. Marcuse brings together labor and desire in relations of production, while historically situating desire and its suppression, labor and its abstraction. He nonetheless posits performance as a repressed vitality that is scarce in the first place, and not *made* scarce by the repression mechanisms of enlightenment rationalities and class difference.

Performability on the other hand demarcates different grounds for the similar working principle. First of all, *performability* casts the question of ‘being put to work’ not necessarily as something that capitalism does. It sees the problem of living labor in relation to networked information and ‘machinic’ labor in ambivalent terms. It is

axiomatic¹⁶⁵. Second, rather than making assumptions of a self-centered human subject - a western, usually male, subject that is at the center of the process of extraction-, *performability* does not assume that what ‘makes us human’ is free from non-human and inhuman entities. The last issue I would like to consider concerns the issue of liberation: Marcuse argues that the great capitalist exploitation of libidinal subjective forces alienates the subject. While this is not untrue, it is not what I would like to concentrate on. Leaving aside the question of liberation, I also want to do away with the conviction that liberation and pleasure presuppose one another as argued by Marcuse. Unlike the Kierkegaardian notion of the authenticity of individual experience, and unlike the socially managed scarcity of labor and desire, *performability* does not take for granted a scarcity in individual productive and libidinal capacity (Holland, 1999, pp.3-15).

The *performability* of sincerity can both conform to pre-given forms of institutionalized behavior, as well as it can unsettle the very fabric of truth it is made to represent. In a rigorous essay from his essay collection, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Gilles Deleuze (1997) strikes a forceful distinction between the operations of *judgment* and *justice*. Whereas the former deals with the organization of sensory and cognitive forces of someone who is in permanent *debt*, thus enabling the relationship of dependence to bear on the subject; the latter drives the bodily forces in another direction, opens the body to affect and being affected, and thus follows the finite combats and tactics between bodies. Judgment, which holds the subject under the infinite mandate of “accusation, deliberation, and verdict” (Deleuze, 1997, p.126), underwrites the order, demanding conformity from the subject, who, in time, is burdened with synchronizing

¹⁶⁵ I will elaborate this point below. See also the Introduction, Holland (1999), Braidotti (2006), Guattari (2009).

her manifest behavior with what comes from 'within'. It must be clear by now that the authenticity that is made to stand for the operation of judgment -whether the authenticity will count or not- is, with this insight, contingent on what is considered to be the entity, concept or being to which we are *indebted*. In other words, the fickleness of judgment works on the very infinity of the debt we are obliged to return, whether this is made to the higher grounds of God, gods, the enterprise, the law etc. The combats and tactics of justice, the forces that work on and through the body are hijacked to stand in for markers of infinite debt, which works through the positing of an inner self. This 'inner self' is of course never totally locatable. The position I am trying to elaborate here takes the representation, the 'liminality', the interface to constitute the value it is supposed to represent. The question is, how is this value (this boundary) structured; what are the binaries through which this value is made to work, and what can the subject do in the face of these values? Is sincerity, by which I mean the quest for authenticity, an interminable force, which, in this theoretical framework, works against justice?

In order to understand the difference between sincerity and authenticity, let me further elaborate on how I operationalize Deleuze's understanding of justice. In its simplified form, the dynamics of judgment follow the correspondence of certain *lots*¹⁶⁶ with forms that establish one in a position that allows her to judge others. This collapses the distinction Kierkegaard brings to the particularity of subjective truth in judgment and an objective, all encompassing compromise. The subjective truth of an inner self is inter-subjective and affective, the articulation of which demands justice. The reverse is how judgment works: aligning subjects with their *lots* and thus their positions in a given social field. Suffice to say here that Deleuze and Guattari (1983) trace the

¹⁶⁶ By *lots*, following Deleuze, I mean predefined social-symbolic positions.

historical change familial and cultural guilt have followed, prolonging the debt one owes to deities from a finite time span to infinite indebtedness¹⁶⁷. On another note, Eugene Holland (1999, pp.10-11) argues that infinite and persistent debt is exacerbated when “debt comes to be owed primarily to other people”, namely relations that are increasingly organized by the flow of money (for instance, to the capitalist boss), “rather than to a deity”. To make things clear, it is harder to make just one figure (such as the boss) to take responsibility for the sense of guilt (of the worker), than it is to expunge the guilt itself. Therefore, until the advent of capitalism it was not possible for guilt to be institutionalized as lack. Moreover, they say, the relations of work take forms that are both productive and anti-productive (such as war, advertisement, social security), the creation of surplus-value is a blind force that drives social organization. It is in that sense that I follow Deleuze and Guattari’s and Holland’s suggestion that capitalism is inherently lacking meaning. It is more important to focus on the sense in which the abstract quantity introduced by money and the commodity form install indebtedness to the capitalist owner. The *judgment* prolongs debt by abstracting individual particularities and producing an unspecified debtor. *Justice* on the other hand is the (disinterested) overthrowing of the debt owed to the workplace and bosses, maintained thanks to markers of consumption, commodities and money all of which make up the capitalist organization of society¹⁶⁸. By historicizing the ways in which debt is felt as a burden

¹⁶⁷ See also Peebles (2010) and Nietzsche (2009).

¹⁶⁸ The reader should notice that Deleuze, by way of implication, uses the analytical distinction Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1987) persistently play on: between the axiomatic and the realization of a model, the affective and emotional, the machinic enslavement and the social subjection. Whereas the latter refer to ambivalent forces that decode the individual (like informational exchange, the market, consumption etc.) the former refer to reinvestments, re-memberings (like advertisement, corporate coaching, consumer identity so on). However, it should be noted that these do not designate (successive) stages, but “coexistent poles...[which] constantly crossover into each other and are themselves in communication.” (ibid. 1987, p.459).

(used in many accounts to show the originality of an inner self), Deleuze and Guattari show that social relations make scarce labor and desire, and that there are no 'real' selves to be discovered.

Adorno (2005[1974], pp.152-155), in what he defines as the modern problem of authenticity, remonstrates that there is no real beyond the real of social relations. Attesting to his claim is his idea that authenticity, as a marker of a genuine self is as fetishistic as gold, which is made to fix the value of a commodity in circulation, i.e. money. Adorno reminds us, rather like Orson Wells' film, *F For Fake* (1974), that it is fraud and the 'instrumentalization' of moral codes to mark something as 'unoriginal', that are made to uphold the very concept of an original identity, whether suggestive of a true self, the origin of a commodity, or an artwork. Put differently, Adorno defines authenticity in the negative: the position of originality cannot be severed from an obsession with what is its reverse identity, that which is unoriginal, insipid, lame, a simulation, a copy. It is in the service of individualist morality, typical of liberal humanism, that the claim to authenticity matters. It is when millions of the same product are in circulation, a situation upon which industry relies, that the idea can occur that what is unique and rare is worth more than its copies.

Authenticity is 'a discovery'. It is perhaps also the most ambivalent affect. Structurally, it functions in a similar way to *anticipation*: it hinges on the present while indexing the expectations to come to the here and now, to change the direction of what is now taking place. It is a retrospective, or better, a retro-futuristic affect. One feels under the pressure to perform her authenticity and true self, while constructing an inner self or reflection thereof, according to sets of behaviors one understands to be better in or well-

suited to a given encounter. This temporal orientation constantly works against its negative, i.e. fraud (inauthenticity) while never losing sight of it. In other words this shows that authenticity is defined in the negative. By way of this, it relates to and is at the same time temporalizing the most intimate sphere of a self, the interiority.

The 'sentimental spree', a term coined by Reddy (2004), by the French Revolution became visible for historians as the battleground for what will count as 'the natural feeling'. This battle is always already the product of a discipline, as a consequence of which the claim to genuineness became a field of force. Reddy (2004, p.164) notes:

"A person who embraced these ['natural sentiments'] ideas, and who said "I love," or "I feel pity," would regard any stirrings of feeling that confirmed these claims as deriving from an inborn sense, beyond consciousness or rational direction, needing stimulation, the source of all good and beauty...intensity and sincerity went together."

He argues that the power of the revolution was derived from the ability of a self to perform the right codes of conduct that were set to show national unification, a state to be achieved 'naturally', through emotional bonding. Although the guillotine frightened everyone, the queasy insistence of sincerity as a 'natural faculty' undermined the public integrity of the emotional surge that was put into place by the revolutionaries (ibid, pp.258-260). Hence, the expectations of a natural faculty of sincerity was itself made to depend on the fickle nature on the intensity that some subjects could deliberate, and some could not. This performativity then shows that the political imperative of indebtedness to certain ideals, tainted with the markers of sincerity, turns upside down the relationship between *justice* and *judgment*. What started out as a 'sentimental spree', in other words political creativity and claims to sincerity, states of being that could lead

to *justice*, transformed itself into the need to follow an order to be sincere, thereby becoming a *judgment*.

The last point I want to explain here is on how sincerity assumes a form through the acts and expectations of a subject. Sara Ahmed (2010, 2014) has extensively written, on her blog¹⁶⁹ and in various publications, on the vicissitudes of what we call the pursuit of happiness, later to be termed by the same author as a companion to "willfullness". Or rather, "willfullness" is the form that repudiates the bending of will by an outside authority. It is the refusal to comply, insisting on what does not properly fit. Ahmed (2014) makes the suggestion that:

"happiness should be thought of not as content but form: if in tending toward something, we tend toward happiness, then happiness provides a container for tendency. Happiness must be emptied of content if it can be filled by "whatever" it is that we are tending toward" (p.4).

In that sense, I think the *justice* of sincerity follows the *tendency* of happiness, sidestepping content that leads to *judgment*, by which I mean proper conduct and infinite debt towards moral values, which are upheld by modern capitalist institutions (and workplaces). In other words, the conceptual framework here reformulates Ahmed's question (2014, pp.4-17, p.200): what does *sincerity* do as a container of the will? Different from Ahmed's focus on the moments of an erring will, the claim to authenticity makes a case for being impervious to error, by using the error itself as a form of judgment. One can perhaps say that sincerity is the very ground where the operations of judgment and justice are decided, as they represent the fear of erring or indifference to it, respectively. In other words, sincerity displays both the *lot* and the form (to which it would have to correspond for judgment to occur). The structuring

¹⁶⁹ <https://feministkilljoys.com/>

binary introduced by the problem of authenticity, then, is this: the discussion never ensues from the position of *justice* (i.e. the relational nature of an innate self and how it makes itself present). Rather, the social ground of *judgment* is naturalized; it is a matter of claim and performance that one has or holds someone to have or to lack a correspondence or a relationship of synchronicity, between the inner world and outer presence.

To sum up: in this section, I reflected on a narrow selection of theoretical standpoints on what I tentatively call 'the making of the boundaries of an inner, authentic self'. I believe I can hazard to say that sincerity is the ambivalent affect through which one feels somewhere on the spectrum between guilt (towards hierarchical positions at work, towards the institution of the family, towards the lack that incites consumption, towards the bulldozing of individual particularities under the equivalence registered by the money form, and so on) and justice that topples any debt to a higher being. This ambivalent affect plays out on the very boundary that subjects (judges) others to the same test of *performability*, the showcase where the boundary between the inner self and outward performance will be drawn, and the position one takes as the identity that is true to herself. In the remaining sections, I will first present the recent difference of the two blocks of negotiation in Turkey that came together in 2015, after a build-up which was probably the most hopeful attempt to solve “once and for all” the Kurdish issue, how they made viable the use of the notion, *samimiyet* (sincerity). I believe that the popularity of the notion of sincerity is as related to its ambivalence as an affect as it is to the structuring tendency capitalism introduces to the formation of subjectivity. Thus, in the remaining part after the digression to the field of politics in Turkey, I return to the world of digital advertisement to link to workplace subjectivities claims to authenticity

workers have both verbally made and symbolically occupied. The last part works on a practical understanding of the divide between *judgment* and *justice*. I argue that whereas *justice* is this sole commensurability with consistency and thus can be appropriated by the boss or the workers to mobilize a naturalness to whatever effect, it is the arbitrary nature of this act that is obscured by a capitalist realism that establishes the positions of the workers and the boss, by simply accepting sincerity as the common ground, or the battleground, where games of authenticity take place.

5.2 A short digression: Feigning *samimiyet*

This concise sub section deals with sincerity as an ambiguous affect with a case-in-point: The one-sided dismissal of the infamous “Resolution Process” (RP). It is written not as a political commentary, more than to demonstrate how the *form* of the will (*niyet*) has unfolded (and proliferated) during the RP as a strategy to utilize the discursive means of claims to genuineness (*samimiyet*). On the 28th of February, 2015, the two sides of representatives which I will call the Kurdish Initiative (KI) and the Government Bureaucrats (GB) came together to publicize the much criticized and now-defunct ten prompts, pathways for "eternal peace" for the Kurdish problem. The resolution was under the scrutiny and impact of the President of Turkey, the government, and the triangulation of the semi-active convict leader of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), its active ruling cadre, and the Peoples’ Democratic Party. When the dust settled, starting from the agreement which fell through without any palpable institutional framework, and with the advent of horrible bloody protests in and at least equally brutal demolishing of Kurdish cities began; both sides have accused one another with feigning

samimiyet, with withholding a hidden agenda that of course worked for the demise of the whole authenticity and promise of the tentative contract. More than an analysis of who actually “toppled the tables”, I am interested in demonstrating the stickiness of the 'lack of sincerity' as a mechanism for slander. It worked as a concept that reworks what is felt as genuine or fake.

On this backdrop, and with the President’s initiative for (among other geopolitical and clandestine acts we are yet to know) ‘freezing the RP’, both sides have started using various media tools to gain effective political ground on a negative operation. The other party would be accused of failing to have lived up to their ‘original’ promise. These promises never converged, despite having somehow culminated in festive peace declarations and a slick show of a public declaration of the resolution. It is remarked that both sides have only made ground on ambiguity, as their political aspirations have diverged: while the KI was bent on cultivating zones and protocols of ‘autonomous self-governance’, the GB desired a more central and pervasive government with a powerful head of government (Başlangıç, 2016). This schema was later jolted with the revelation that more than the elections and political positions these groups had in Turkey, the *real* problem lied in the presence of PYD and Kurdish autonomous zones in Syria (Başaran, 2016). A ‘pundit’ who writes more on conspiracies and make-believes than documents attests that the conditions in Syria have changed the current climate, and it would be (and would have been) “naive to expect *samimiyet* from the PKK”; he adds to this that they acted in violation of the “spirit of resolution” (Selvi, 2015). It should be clear by now that the spirit is more akin to a hot potato than a ghost.

The political process of the failed resolution is not an isolated act, but is bound with economic and historical currents that helped put in place the current structure and

dynamics of governance. Bülent Küçük and Ceren Özselçuk (2015) have recently laid out the position of the ruling party with respect to its 'embeddedness' in the double bind of differentiating itself from the Republican party (with its nostalgic ideals of enlightenment universals of the foundational republican project), and setting the boundaries and playgrounds of political aspirations of the KI. This tightrope path plays out on the 'neoliberalization of governance', the vision-mission act, where economic calculation becomes the metrics of success, coupled with a new conservative ethos. They make explicit that 'neoliberalization', defined as the individualization of responsibility in the light of the pervasiveness of economic calculations, or the economization of individual desires, is happily wed to a form of neo-conservatism. New publics are made and assumed by articulating persistent sensibilities, as the *cemaatleşme* (the making of communities, often on religious grounds) imbues the subject positions of the rightful, of the loyalist empty subject with a lively economic and social establishment. The authors point to a “partial recognition”, which, while discursively occupying both the position of the granter of rights and the guardian of certain sensibilities -the established ‘red lines’ of state-making-, it navigates this binary for the efficient functioning of economic 'neoliberalization' and moralist identification. It is, they argue, this 'liminality' that the state assumes and constructs through acts and techniques of governance, extending its control on the body-politic, by also extending certain institutional relations, protocols, procedures and a moralizing interpretation of lawfulness.

The debates over who gets to occupy the political position of authenticity is thus concomitant with a regime of governance that monopolizes the right to occupy the truth-claim. It is perhaps embodied in the then vice prime minister Yalçın Akdoğan’s vision of

multiculturalism that challenges 'the West', 'the media', the KI, the right-wing nationalist party and several other organizations and imaginary others with the lack of *samimiyet*. The negative construction of the community in this game follows the logic of "partial recognition": the vice president never delineates clearly his criteria other than only more ambiguous notions such as the 'persistence of dialog' and 'political consistency', while at the same time profiting from this ambiguity, through the efficient use of media tools and the 'instrumentalization' of law. Similar (and dangerously close) to the rhyme-generator-robot, the invention of Trurl the mad scientist from Stanislaw Lem's *Cyberiad*, the Vice President ever generates truth claims by employing the sign *samimiyet*. He can thus occupy the position of besting other claims to authenticity by playing on the moralist identification that in its turn relates historically to the emergence of the *form* of cultural recognition and identification (read *judgment*) rather than the more radical irreducibility of difference (*justice*). In other words, the form of the will in the case of *samimiyet* comes with a whole package of institutional and political burden, and the side that can tap into the established modes of remonstrance, in this case, the one that embodies the purveyor of higher ideals, prevails. The other side of the debate, of course, would be judged by the regressive, infinite debt to the 'benevolent' state. This moralist identification conjoins the claims to being 'the wronged' (by the early republican repression, by international conspiracy, by the radical left-wing etc.), to the community of pain, the sharing of wounds that work on the body-politic, in order to salvage the inner victim and the community of sensitive, rightful citizens.

The final note on this digression is to point out to the ways in which constituting the market identities, consumers, entrepreneurs etc. goes hand in hand with the

production of regimes which demand sincere subjects, and this point is made throughout the discussion below.

5.3 Claims to authenticity, inner selves and workplace authenticities

The claims to authenticity -as a historical problem- can also be reformulated as the necessary quest for 'subjectivation'. In the workplace, the markers of what makes a persona count as real and genuine, rather than a protean trickster (and a hypocrite) is displayed in a complex constellation of capitalist bosses, institutional bondage, and daily acts of negotiation. With regards to my understanding of cynicism (in Chapter 2), I again take for granted the argument that the workers at JazzRabbit frame their struggle against the threat of falling into 'inauthenticity' and 'insincerity' as a contradictory position. They represent their individuality as organic, where they are avowedly in pains to cultivate their selves synthetically, and they enhance their human capital thanks to the pervasive idea which takes a self in its likeness to a dashboard. The work of advertisement, one hinging on the production of the experience of verisimilitude -albeit with a play- would, of course, instill a self, who questions the processes of that correspondence. In short, I approached the question of 'originality' with an expectation similar to what I (maybe too readily) found in understanding exploitation. In other words, I presupposed that workers would dovetail the "radical lability" that is demanded of them. How else could one work on the verge of being culpable, which draws a fine line between a true and authentic self, and a simulation of what represents a 'real' person?

Instead, I have found that the claims to having synchronized one's internal spirit with outward presence plays on a very complex ground and that is indeed a larger question than 'authenticity'. This set me thinking of sincerity as the play of the corresponding in/out of a working self. The "connexionist world" demands from the workers to work on themselves in order to enthusiastically temper their habits to be "adaptable" *and* "flexible" (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2007, p.112). The imperatives involve being:

"adaptable and flexible, able to switch from one situation to a very different one, and adjust to it; and versatile, capable of changing activity or tools, depending on the nature of the relationship entered, into with others or with objects...[as it is] this adaptability and versatility that make him employable — that is to say, in the world of firms, in a position to attach himself to new projects" (p.112)

Finding herself in sets of relations and institutions that value such scripted forms of conduct, a worker would have no choice -if she is to pursue the material and economic gains in order- but make her *project* visible, quantifiable and comparable.

Then, making one's life as a *project* begs a question larger than mere 'authenticity'. In the formulation above, there indeed is no place for the self who actually has an organic and 'original', resilient essence. Rather, the *performability* of the belief in authenticity is closer to the making of a neoliberal subject. As Steven Shavero (2010, p. 91) has remarked, there is a tenacity with which *sincerity* is still "powerful and moving," this time not as an immutable origin in a world "with no depths...where 'personality' is entirely a matter of self-promotion and of continual adapting to changing

circumstances," but as a "certain *consistency* in the way that a being acts and presents itself, without presupposing anything about the basis of this consistency"¹⁷⁰.

The etymological genealogy and itinerary of the word, *samimiyet* can be helpful here. *Samim* is an Ottoman-Turkish word which denotes the inner side of things, the marrow, the inner kernel of an entity¹⁷¹. On a similar note, the concept, *samimiyet*, which has made its way much more deeply into the Turkish vernacular than *samim*, refers to a subject with the 'natural ability' of synchronizing between the outer veneer guiding and displaying one's actions, and the inner truth. It connotes the grace with which one does things, an originality that hinges on the commensurability, the synchronicity of what is *in* and what is displayed *out*. Moreover, being *samimi* with someone expands this notion towards noting a familiarity, differing degrees between practical kinship and stranger sociality. It refers to an intimacy that feels natural as it grows.

How can we make sense of the 'return' or the 'refrain' of authenticity as a form of genuineness, and what does it have to do with what I have referred to earlier as the workings of contemporary 'control society'? Patricia Clough (2007, p.19) argues that control "is a biopolitics that works at the molecular level of bodies, at the informational substrate of matter" and its target "is not the production of subjects whose behaviors express internalized social norms; rather, control aims at a never-ending modulation of moods, capacities, affects, and potentialities, assembled in genetic codes, identification numbers, ratings profiles, and preference listings, that is to say, in bodies of data and

¹⁷⁰ Meltem Ahiska (2009, p.24) argues that the possibility of politics under the condition of neoliberal subjectivation should be sought in the play of representation as it may disturb the organic unity of a timeless essence that belongs to the non-fragmented subject or an eternal symbolic source that stands in for the nation. "The organic rebounds as a persistent metaphor for the social as long as individuals are provoked to search for "origins" and "identity" against the threat of fragmentation. They are called to "sincerely" claim selfhood amidst the vast darkness that cuts through them."

¹⁷¹ Nişanyan sözlük, see <http://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=samimiyet&x=0&y=0>

information”. To specify, though, this is not in the way of subjects of work who articulate their notions regarding self-making. They display themselves through the refrain of ‘authenticity’ which references an immutable origin. That is to say, if the objective workings of the constellations of power do not *require* a performance of genuineness, this is not the same thing with saying that it does not *demand* so. The labor of technology, for instance (similar to that of the modeling industry), navigates in a world “aimed at modulating the affective flow- to be activated by the model’s presence in person, or by his or her virtual presence in photographs” (Wissinger, 2007, p.235). In the “attention economy,” models are demanded to replenish the value “produced through enlivening, capacitating, and modulating affect”, to the effect that the reproductive labor of bodies are subject to exacting conditions that may entail attrition of what should regenerate (Wissinger, 2007, pp.235-8).

Indeed, I argue that as far as the ‘culture work’ demanded by the Post-fordist organization of labor (from precarious workers) can be maintained, the conditions of articulation may well be made to correspond to an ‘inner self’ in reference to a true, genuine essence. In other words, adapting to flexible, opportunistic, and cynical subject positions ask from the potential of *a* body to transmit affects, invest labor, and garner its attention for corporate gain. Deleuze’s understanding of what comprises a historical shift would not shun such an argument. Let me elaborate, starting from the ‘double articulation’ specific to each historical period. The “double articulation” is a combination of the things that are “sayable” and “visible” in a given period. They are imbricated and co-constitutive, and irreducible to one another. The discursive formations that make up families of statements are informed by thresholds that determine what is “sayable”. They give content to subject positions, as they ‘name’ them (such as the

prisoner, the worker, the entrepreneur). The thresholds of what is “seeable” are ecological arrangements and assemblages that refer to non-discursive formations. They are related to expressions. Power relations change historically through and among assemblages, which are referred to as new “stratas” of power relations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Holland, 2013, pp.56-66; Deleuze, 1988[2006], pp.47-70).

The arrangement of individuals who act as corporations and corporations that act as individuals, by which I mean the “stratum” today, attest to the “double articulation” of visibilities and families of statements that follow the abstract diagram of “control” (replacing while also prolonging the older abstract model of “discipline”). The workers who are informed by this diagram are in line with the formation of what Deleuze later called “dividuals”, which is not a way of saying that there are no individuals, but to say that the components and techniques that carve out an individual from an ‘uncultivated’ human multiplicity are increasingly baked in automated processes of a ‘machinic’ kind (Deleuze, 1995; Savat, 2009; Guattari, 2009). It is thus a way of saying that although the individual as we understand it has changed, there are still processes of individuation with reference to an ‘authentic’ self. To put it more precisely, the earlier mode of power worked on the spatial and temporal arrangements of the body, instilling the awareness that bodies internalize the condition of being observed, watched, categorized etc. The modulatory form of power, however, works more on the possibility of preempting behavior and designing behavior beforehand, mostly without the subject knowing. One can easily think of the acts of profiling, genetic mapping, risk management, and in my case, data mining and behavioral advertising (Bogard, 1996; Savat, 2009). “Marketing is now the instrument of social control and produces an arrogant breed who are our new masters” (Deleuze, 1995, p.181), making ‘the advertising world’ a hub of techniques

which privileges certain subject positions (such as experts, data ‘scientists’, entrepreneurs). This defines a plethora of self-making techniques, through which the affect of ‘genuineness’ extends to subjects’ own self-understandings.

In this environment and through the historical change towards the individual as the managed and preempted corporate unit, the ‘abstract’ model refers to the ‘societies of control’. The ‘control society’ is generated not just by behavioral advertising and institutions which practice ‘branding’, but also fed by other families of institutions. “Para-strata”, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argue, exist alongside the corporate stratum responsible of regulating, controlling, and modulating ‘the individuals’: the juridical, the techno and bio-scientific, and the prison can be counted among the myriad strata that exit *alongside* the corporate. The “stratum” of control is not only horizontally imbricated with these institutions, but also vertically in concomitance with “epistrata”, referring to “an entire discursive formation” such as discursive chains attached to “delinquency” and “prison” in disciplinary power, and “sampling”, “corporate”, “information age”, “being an introvert”, “networking” and so on in the power mechanisms of control¹⁷². Previous discursive formations also provide content for individuation, and this is my point with “genuineness”. They operate alongside and on top of ‘the cynical’ (see Chapter 2) and the flexible rearrangement of the individual entrepreneur (see Chapter 3), all of which set in motion the subjective positioning of the workers, demanding the linearization of a consistent inside and outside.

This observation can bring us to sincerity as the stacked token, with which one makes a case of the singularity of her will. The so-called *ethical turn* in anthropology

¹⁷² For a more precise categorization, see Boltanski and Chiapello (2007). Virno (2007) sees the rise of *professionalism*, *individualism* and *self-employment* as naturally felt conditions of the necessarily false workings of objective structural-economic change in the post-fordist condition.

demonstrated a vast literature, and produced a lively field regarding the intellectual and emotional investment different communities (not just from the Western world) put in cultivating a self (Panand, 2010; Mahmood, 2005; Laidlaw, 2002; Mauss, 1985 [1938]). The labor with which one cultivates moral and economic interdependence does not stipulate an original self. It is a much more complex and multilayered process that comprises a self, which is synthetic, both extending outwards (in the sense that credence, prestige, social roles etc. are maintained) as it also 'infolds', through commitment to certain promises, self-stylizations and moral embodiments. In what follows, I try to show that as a constant anchor of self-understanding, sincerity appeals to markers of authenticity for workers who gain strategic ground in establishing work relations. This final section, then, is written to map the space of maneuver through which *justice* is hijacked for *judgment*.

With presenting the characters of the workplace as players of sincerity, I do not aim to recapitulate sincerity as a trait of character, or the attribute of a subject. Rather, sincerity, as I argued above, is a complex function that mobilizes intents, objects, itineraries, and most importantly it merges with affective and moral landscapes on the plane where boundaries of an inner and outer self and authenticity claims are made. The positions in *JazzRabbit* regarding the correspondence of character followed at least three logics of genuineness: originality, 'liminality', and cynicism and doubt. I designate two corresponding yet different positions of the workers within each logic. Although these logics at times overlap and are generally imbricated, the grid I superpose is for the sake of clearance. I argue that whereas *justice* is this sole commensurability of consistency and thus can be appropriated by the boss or the workers to mobilize a naturalness to whatever effect, it is the arbitrary nature of this act that is obscured by a certain capitalist

realism that establishes positions of the workers and the boss, who accept authenticity as the common ground, a battleground, where games of originality take place.

The first form of genuineness that worked as a gateway to differential power relations in the workplace was originality, embodied by Şeref (a fresh graduate who worked as a front-end developer, i.e. web interface designer) and Zahmet ('the doorman', 'the caretaker'). I use 'originality' here to simply refer to the act by which the others know the (performing) individual to be devoid of the humdrum of the life of the metropolitan, detached from the worldly and entertaining, and as a person who abstains from any form of addiction that involves consumption (of alcohol, tobacco and drugs). The form of genuineness they posed to others at work oscillated between being imposing and implicating (as in the conviction that others will never be competent or 'genuine' enough to live up to the empty dream of originality), and admiring.

The originality embodied by these two colleagues itself compartmentalized into two. Zahmet asserted himself as the very image of originality: he did not continue to high school, he was the oldest in the workplace, he was quite reticent to others and to the bosses, and he was never seen indulging himself. He worked clinical and kept to himself. He pointed out to me several times that he knew all the supermarkets in the area and was the smartest mind in the workplace as he 'economized' very effectively. In his conceptualization, the others (meaning the older 'caretaker', other workplaces, shoppers, including the boss, the mid-manager Fırat and I) were gullible (*keriz*, used interchangeably with *kek* and *mal*), and thus we were preyed upon by the conspiracy of high prices among supermarkets. The most interesting function of his 'originality' showed itself on several occasions where I was told by Cüneyt and Fırat that he was working as a "spy" for Ekmel (the boss). Thus, he not only was 'original' due to his

social-symbolic position in the workplace and his consumption habits, but also he maintained this position by affecting an air of collegiality yet noting every ‘inauthenticity’ that marked the claims of other workers. This regarded the workers’ hours of entry and exit in the morning and at lunch break, their uninformed breaks, bantering and telephone conversations. His presence was imposing: when he entered into the kitchen, the atmosphere changed and conversations that were thought to involve some secrecy were hushed.

The other sub-section of originality was the abstinence of Şeref, a fresh graduate of computer sciences from a mediocre department. JazzRabbit was his first experience as a front-end developer, where he worked at least ten hours everyday to keep up with the demands of our customers, designing interfaces and defining functions inbuilt to the code of the web-page. He had not made any friends from the workplace, and preferred his lunch in private. The three topics through which I could attract him to a conversation were: pigeons, aquariums (and fish), and traffic/transportation in Istanbul (as he lived in Güvercin, app. 100 minutes one-way from the workplace). Coming from a vocational school in a small town at the outskirts of the city, together with his “upbringing” (*yetiştiriliş*) kept him away from the “dangers” of the high-end life of Güvenler. His form of originality stemmed from his introversion (*içekapanıklığımdan*) and a ‘non-involvement’ policy, which gave him plenty of time to watch pigeons with me, comment on the cement-sea of Istanbul, on the harrowing traffic, and on the guppy fish he had at home for which he worked meticulously -finally building an aquarium, and perusing through informational videos on the life of fish.

Sincerity comes in other more aggressive modalities. The second form is about the cynical position of ‘liminality’ which comes with the knowledge that being genuine

in a workplace simply does not sit with the corrupting structure of work. Yet, the contradiction is absorbed by the idea that trust and geniality must be adopted and used strategically. In other words, this second form demonstrates that genuineness is untenable yet necessary.

Cüneyt had his own vision of a cynical human nature, which he formulated as the triumph of human dominance over the world. For him, eating animals was the most natural thing a human can do, although he knew that it is known to devastate natural resources. Similarly, the “fake” relationships and screen personalities that were abound threatened “real” human conversation, yet advanced technology and up-to-date modes of communication were necessary paths humans should take. For him, the “plaza lives” we were living cannot but corrupt human soul, and that we should redesign our tactics accordingly. Erdem’s ‘liminality’, by contrast, hinged upon certain ruptures rather than a pervasive cynicism. Erdem was allegedly facing a collective conspiracy in the workplace, brewing against him. He believed that Aysel, his manager, was dissatisfied with the work Erdem was producing, and she decided to “rat out” (*arkamdan konuşuyor*) to other co-workers and to Ekmel. Whereas Erdem reproached against the Janus face of his superiors, Cüneyt advised him to sleep on it and let *him* deal with Erdem's supervisors and the bosses in order to manage the perception they had of Erdem.

"I am the only unsuspecting person in this workplace. I swear on that. I don't hide what is inside of me. That is how I am but they make you regret for acting natural"¹⁷³. Erdem's words marked a new period in his sincerity, as things have “culminated to this degree [threshold]”. This was not his first disillusionment. He

¹⁷³ "Tek saf benim bu işyerinde valla Gökçe yemin ediyorum sana içim neyse dışım da o. Ben böyle biriyim insanı doğal davrandığına pişman ediyorlar."

was once called to a meeting by Ekmel to the meeting room and was scolded for botching the design he was supposed to deliver. Then, Ekmel had raised his voice. Erdem, being intolerant to anger directed against him, told Ekmel to stop or he would beat him up. Erdem decided to act “insincerely” in the aftermath of the conversation I quote at length below.

I have already written (especially in Chapter 4) extensively on Erdem’s felt contradictions through which he understood the tension between the nature of his position and the work he is conducting. The reproach against his work, however, this time worked on a different setting. In our first meeting, he told me what the boss had demanded (that he should ‘add to himself’, for he was doing ‘sloppy work’) from him, which later lead to an outburst that everyone in the workplace had witnessed. He nearly jumped on the boss on that occasion, as he thought that no one can “raise his voice against me [him]...We are civilized people here and one must properly speak and every one of us can communicate calmly”. However, this time he took injustice more laidback and with respite. In the backroom, Cüneyt, Erdem and I had a conversation:

"E: I think Aysel [his supervisor, though admitted to work later than Erdem] told the boss that I am not doing my designs well. She is always watching me when I am listening to music or looking stuff [*bir şeyler bakarken*, meaning while he is surfing the internet, whether looking for factoids and lists, or checking his 'social media' accounts].

C: Of course, lad. This is how things work. Aysel is like anyone in this workplace, they are exploiting you. You are a person for whom these things loom large [*sen içinde büyük yaşıyorsun*] and I know that you are one on the inside and outside. And they are using it against you. You shouldn’t be the dupe, they will always topple on you.

E: I will f*** them all sideways. F*** them. One day I’ll show them all their hypocrisy. That Ekmel (boss) bastard will get his lot too. I swear I am very naive and taken advantage of.

C: Relax. I know what to do. Just don't trust anyone besides me¹⁷⁴. I will speak with Ekmel. He knows that Aysel is not normal. But know that you can trust your *brother* (*kardeşin*). Just don't sign the paper yet and wait for my signal, I will arrange a meeting for the three of us (Ekmel, Erdem and him).¹⁷⁵

The next day, when Aysel was not in the room, Erdem was very calm. When I asked, he responded,

"Brother [*abi*] from now on things will be different. I know what to do, they ask for it. I discovered what that bastard [Ekmel] is after. I know how he works. He manipulates emotions. I looked it up, I know I am not much when it comes to these things, but I read when I want and on Wikipedia I found something. There are people who can use emotions of other people against themselves. They are doing *emotional exploitation* [*duygu sömürüsü yapıyorlar*], it is all written. I will behave differently from now on, I know that everyone is against me. I think differently now. You know me, I am really how I am on the outside, I am no fraud, whatever my feelings, I am on the outside like that. That's why I couldn't stay in that room because if I did, I would have disfigured Ekmel [*ağzını yüzünü kırardım*]"¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁴ Emir had confided in me before that he trusts no one but Cüneyt and I. I found out later that he presumed that I will never turn greedy and that I was not after a better position because I will go back to the university, that I *knew better*. He trusted in Cüneyt for two reasons, Cüneyt knew him from his university and helped him land on this job in the first place, and because he always put in a good word for Emir.

¹⁷⁵ "E: Ben biliyorum o Aysel gitti patrona dedi ki Emre'nin işleri çok kötü çıkıyor. Ben bir şeyler bakarken ya da işte telefodayken biliyorum hep beni izliyor sonra yetiştiriyor bunları. C: Herhalde abi bu işler hep böyle. Aysel gibi diğerleri bunu yapmıyor mu sanıyorsun? Herkes birbirinin ayağını kaydıracak bu işte kural böyle. Ben biliyorum ama sen onlar gibi değilsin, senin için dışın bir. Büyük yaşıyorsun içinde sıkıntın bu, onlar bunu anlıyor bu yüzden oynuyorlar bununla. Öyle açık görünüyorsun onlar da biniyor üstüne.

E: Hepsinin A.... K.... Göstericem hepsine ikiyüzlülüklerini birgün. O Ekmel denen g.. de alıcak cevabını. Yemin ediyorum ben çok safım diye üstüme geliyorlar.

C: Hayır abi, sakın olucaksın. Sen güveniceksin kardeşine, ben gidip ikisiyle de konuşucam bu iş neyse çözeriz. O da biliyor Aysel manyak. Sen sakın o kağıdı imzalama, benden sinyal bekle ben üçünüzü yüzleştirmeye çalışacağım."

¹⁷⁶ "Abi bundan sonra işler çok daha farklı olacak önce sen görürsün. Onlar kaşındı, görecekler. Ben artık farkındayım bu Ekmel i...si neyin peşinde. Anladım işlerin nasıl yürüdüğünü bu işyerinde. Ş..siz insanların duygularını manipüle ediyor, ilk günden beri yapıyor bunu herkese yapıyor artık ben anladım. Hep bana kendini geliştirmiyorsun diyor belki bazen haklıdır ama ben de araştırıyorum. Geçen Wikipedia'da araştırırken buldum, varmış yani onunki bir durummuş, insanların duygularını manipüle edebilen insanlar varmış bunlar hep yazıyor yani duygu sömürüsü yapıyorlar. Onların bana karşı olduğunu biliyorum bundan sonra ben de farklı davranacağım. Sen beni tanıyorsun, ben onlar gibi değilim içim neyse dışım da o, ne hissediyorsam öyleyim. O yüzden o gün çıktım gittim o odadan, yoksa dayanamazdım yani onun ağzını yüzünü kırardım elimden alamazlardı. Onun da g.tü atmıştı yani."

His form of sincerity could not stand intact in the face of a coordinated “conspiracy”, and he decided to rearrange his attitudes to “be like them”. Emotions, for Erdem, did not correspond to forces that are indifferent to subjective registers, on the contrary, they were either a manifestation of (his ideal version) or the manipulation of (how he understood the wrongs done to him by others, coworkers and bosses) how one is on the inside. Since no one was as ‘pure’ and ‘disinterested’ as him, he challenged the manifestation of his intentions. This model represents the belief in intentions and tendencies one has. As the subject becomes interested, she alters the appearance of her inner state for gains, whether that is an expected gain of psychological relief (*ego tatmini*), of material gains (*çıkar peşinde*) or out of sheer evilness (*‘götlük’ yapmak*). Thought with the Deleuzian model of *judgments* and *justice*, it can be said that Erdem’s quest for *justice* was stifled, for he understood that a force was working on his conduct and thus incapacitating his flourishing, in this case his search for *justice* was hijacked by *judgments*. Rather than articulating his problem on the very permeability of what is outside and inside, he instead mapped subjects differently, on the one hand with good intentions (himself) and others who are driven by the evil force of domination to gain from his naivety, on the other. He aligned and judged the others (now he, in terms of principles of conduct was a part) with the infinite debt of being good or evil, sincere or secretive, with the good will of heart or a hidden agenda, so on.

The third and the last form of sincerity was utterly cynical, utilized by Ekmel and Ayla, the manager of customer relations. The cynical sincerity is the experience of having a will that one brings about *in time* (Ahmed, 2014) and the acknowledgment not the genuineness of the will (the will belonging to a subject), but the belonging of the subject *to* the individual *by* making herself readily willing. Before our first -and last-

meeting that occurred at a new found fashion enterprise, *Y2V2*, located in Kasnak, Ekmel called me at night to make sure that I dress myself properly for the meeting (*smart casual*), he reminded me to let him do the talking and to interfere if I have a suggestion on marketability of their products and on possible social media campaigns. He also added that the bantering of the moguls (*kodaman*) of the fashion industry often veered in the direction of bawdy and near the knuckle (*bel altı*), as he had the idea that I might take things too seriously and spoil the agreement on behalf of the impudence of our potential customers. Just before the meeting, he wanted to convince me that he didn't like their jokes either, but that was the way things were in the industry and that is how he was compelled to act, if we wanted to see the agreement through. The meeting commenced with casual remarks on soccer games, continued with banal jokes to which Ekmel laughed and it ended after tense negotiations on our prices for "covering" their 'social media'. Ekmel embodied the utmost position that perhaps was also telling of how sincerity worked as an affect: it is the form of sincerity that opens one to be shaped by the form of sincerity (making inside meet outside) while at the same time shaping the will of others, forming their will in the image of what is required of their position.

Ayla, however, helped me realize how sincerity can be employed as an effective tool to gain strategic ground against the bosses in daily work. After I had sent an e-mail to both bosses regarding a media strategy -'CC'ing Ayla- she came to my desk to remonstrate as apparently I wrote a tad too casually and, she added, in an obscure way, using incomprehensible words; which of course should be replaced with the common parlance of digital media vernacular. On another note, as I was to her the novice digital strategist who had not worked in the field of advertising before, she made a point of

teaching me the art of *judging*, i.e. subjecting yourself to the demanding task through which you can outpace others. She accomplished this by rendering a hierarchical position, and then showing the emptiness of its promise, its ‘inauthenticity.’ Although she invited me to be ‘insincere’ and adopt the common markers of respect towards asymmetrical relations at the workplace, she ‘repurposed’ that form of deference: when the entrepreneur-boss Peksimet burst into the room in which we were designing a digital strategy with Ayla, she scolded him for sending her curt e-mails that have angry tones, using an acrid tone to make Peksimet understand that she will not tolerate that kind of injustice.

To conclude, let me wrap the arguments I made regarding the ambivalent affect of sincerity. Sincerity, the way I understood it, is not an ideological gimmick that makes rampant the illusion of an inner self. I understand sincerity as much as an outward movement one makes regarding the assumption of correspondence with an inner self, as I understand it to refer to a set of relations of cultivation of an inner self, with the prescription of the need to project that self outwards. Then, sincerity is an ambivalent affect which incorporates certain elements that comprises a self, in order to reflect it on the behaviors, attitudes and habits in a given social field.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In circulation, times, affects, and images compound bodies. Objects circulate and change the routes through which they affect working selves. This thesis presented materials from the labor of reading and the labor of participation I have put into the making of 'behavioral' digital advertisement. The following short conclusion recapitulates the tensions, the arguments, and the restrictions that I want to tie together.

I have used a particular methodological (abstract) diagram that is partially extended in each chapter, but is implicit throughout. By this, I mean that the things I have chosen to understand and think together, for instance thinking the changing form and meaning in the making of a contract in relation to workplace insecurities, are designed to fit a research agenda. This methodology, by format, valorizes association. Things, persons, affects are in constant circulation. These circulations are informed by historical arrangements, technologies and human communities. The current historical formation is accompanied by pervasive 'financialization', digitalization and acceleration. Against that setting, workers and communities of digital worlds are strained to understand the joy in production and alienation in value absorption. As in all ethnographic work, I have sought to highlight the making of subjectivity, since the sets of meaning through which a person can understand these changes are not readily apparent. In order to be able to do this, I privileged particular moments and data as a way of engaging critically with inequalities generated by and in work.

The historically charged 'economic' endeavors of precarious workers, I argued, should be understood in the networks that are made through two interrelated processes.

The first is about how objects are valued, both socially and personally. The second is how subjects are oriented in time, about how they feel the current moment and how they project their affective orientation towards subjection, aspiration and dissent. In the following, I reflect on each chapter after the Introduction, to understand how these two wagers reveal the discursive and expressive ways in which capitalist formations knot workers into precarious working conditions.

Chapter 2 recounted a complex mixture of tasks, traditions and technologies to understand how the making of images, and the measure of labor, affect and attention used in the workplace belie their conditions of production. A pervasive fantasy of an automated society ties in well with an imagined timeless category of consumers and producers. Behavioral advertising makes this double relationship observable, calculable, and again, marketable. Workers dealt with projects through and thanks to which they generated and imagined (with) statistical models that soft-data companies provided to our company. Particularly, what this erasing of 'consumer' and 'user' particularities roaming digital spaces of brands allowed, is not limited to the making of categories of timeless producers and consumers. It also reflected an entrepreneur's, a 'data scientist's and enthusiastic workers' fantasies through which they imagined themselves as an agent with a distinct past and a future.

Whereas Chapter 2 inclined to understand the changing nature of objects and objectification thanks to digital communication tools and a pervasive technical-rational discourse, Chapter 3 dwelled on subjective meaning-making procedures. Working selves made sense of their 'precarity' or their entrepreneurial capacity through things that circulated, which gave them time: to reflect, to feel, to exchange, to expand. This, in turn, and, due to the particular historical dynamics that informed ways of being in time,

is mapped onto the insecurities that accompany seeking creative work through a complex oscillation between fear and hope.

The fourth chapter took from the circulation of things, such as contracts, videos, and time as money, and spilled unto the protocols through which workers relate to the built space around them. Work itself was understood through the spaces and the places of work, places to which workers connected with those tools (and software) that drive them to work. I tried to understand the phenomenological condition of the digital/concrete divide through the portal of *interface*, which demanded 'creative' work to the detriment of the workers. However, the workers had developed another understanding of their working places, by carving out a *backroom*, which acted as a hub for stress relief. While also allowing me to think and write with broad scholarly tides such as the anthropology of infrastructures, phenomenology of digital media, and theories of 'precarity' and architecture, this chapter also showed that the social lives of things are embodied in subjects and places. These subjects and places are tied to the conditions of recollection and anticipation in digitally altered spatial environments. Thus, after the previous chapters of time-figures and time-circulations, this chapter reflected on time-places.

The last chapter is more experimental in its selective philosophical considerations. It ultimately tries to make sense of how working selves under Post-fordist conditions cultivate themselves as dashboards, by temporalizing their representation of a genuine, inner self. Again, here I try not to lose sight of historical change in relation to conceptual schemas. I develop a working definition of sincerity that a subject can operationalize to gain strategic ground, which makes sense when thought with more extensive games that involve discovering original selves, feigning

genuineness to make a case of one's suffering or moral rectitude, and games that involve particular ways of being in the service of the changing conditions of work.

To summarize, time, by way of giving, taking, prolonging itself through things, humans and affects, configures the condition of digital media work today. It is calculated, streamlined, projected, lost, found, played with, and most importantly, embodied. In this thesis, it is made to value subjective and social objects of desire, as well as being entwined with affects to orient working selves in our 'informationalized', digitalized, technologized world of hyper-consumption. Digital Media and technologies work on lived time, but how that time will count is a matter of ethical bonds.

APPENDIX



Figure 1: Guven, Can. *Eycinsi*. Retrieved with the author's consent from:

<http://eycinsi.tumblr.com/> [date of access: 17.10.2015]

“How many nights has it been! I only go home to sleep, like a goddamn hotel! I’ll tell you what we lack: syndicates! None of this would’ve happened if we had one.../ It’s not like this abroad, oh well they have human rights hence the shutters go down after 5 pm.

We work like slaves damn it!/ It's better to be a salary-man, you get 9 to 5 shifts, and lots of holidays as well/ We work night and day, for what! The agency lands on it anyway!/ Well, whatever, goodnight mate. I'll wrap this up in the morning..."

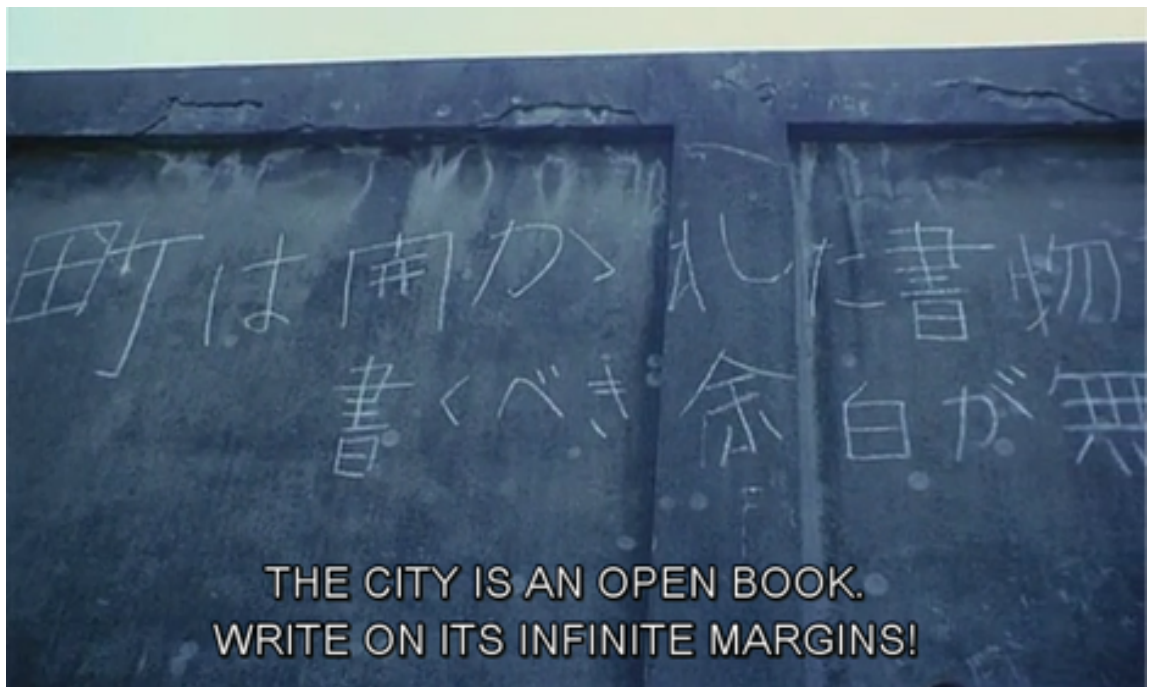


Figure 2: Still from the motion picture *Throw Away Your Books and Rally in the Streets*

(dr. Terayama 1971)



Figure 3: Shomei Tomatsu's work titled "Takuma Nakahira", Photographer, 1967.

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