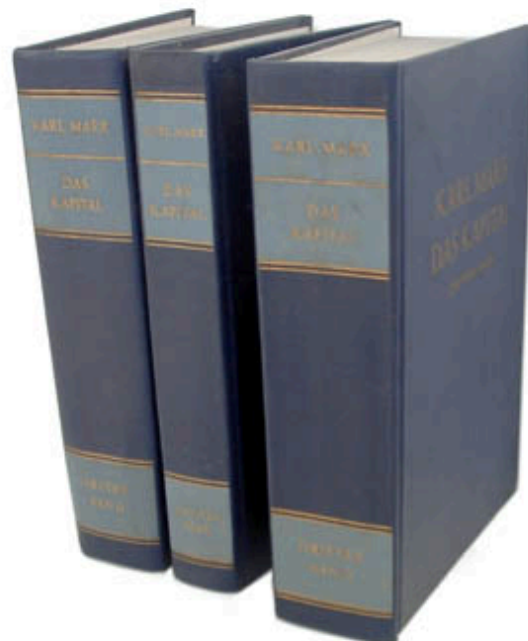


Call for Papers: Philosophers of the World Unite! Theorizing Digital Labour and Virtual Work: Definitions, Forms and Transformations
Special issue of tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique

Supported by COST Action IS1202 “Dynamics of Virtual Work”-Working Group 3 “Innovation and the Emergence of New Forms of Value Creation and New Economic Activities” (<http://dynamicsofvirtualwork.com>, <http://dynamicsofvirtualwork.com/wg3/>), tripleC (<http://www.triple-c.at>): Communication, Capitalism & Critique. Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society.

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In 1845, Karl Marx (1845, 571) formulated in the 11th Feuerbach Thesis: “The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it”. Today, interpretation of the world has become an important form of labour that is expressed on and with the help of digital media. It has therefore become common to talk about digital labour and virtual work. Yet the changes that digital, social and mobile media bring about in the world of labour and work have thus far only been little theorized and theoretically interpreted. In order to change the information society to the better, we first have to interpret digital labour with the help of critical theories. Theorists of the world from different fields, backgrounds, interdisciplines, transdisciplines and disciplines have to unite for this collective philosophical task.

The overall task of this special issue of *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* is to gather contributions that help to an understanding of how to critically theorize digital labour, virtual work and related concepts. Theorizing digital labour requires us to provide grounded

1) definitions of digital labour and virtual work, 2) systematic distinctions and typologies of forms of digital labour and 3) theorizing the transformations that digital labour is undergoing.

All submitted papers should be theoretical and profoundly engage with the meanings of various concepts. Rather than presenting case studies, papers should focus on fundamental theoretical concepts and discuss definitions. They can also explore the relations between concepts, the historical development of these concepts, typologies and the relevance of different theoretical approaches. The special issue is interested in theorizing the broader picture of digital labour.

We welcome submissions that cover one or more of the following or related questions.

1) Concepts of Labour

- * How should concepts such of work and labour be defined and what are the implications of these definitions for understanding digital labour and virtual work?
- * Which theoretical or philosophical definitions of work and labour exist and which of them are meaningful for understanding virtual work and digital labour?
- * What is the difference between labour and digital labour? What is part of digital labour and what is not? Which online, offline, knowledge, physical, industrial, agricultural etc forms of work are part of it or not part of it? Is digital labour only knowledge labour that happens online or do we have to extend the concept to the offline realms and physical labour? Where is the demarcation line? Is digital labour also labour where digital technologies are of vast importance or not? Does digital labour involve the physical forms of work necessary for producing digital labour?
- * Is there a difference between 'work' and 'labour' and if so, how does it matter for the discussion of digital labour and virtual work?
- * What is the role of Karl Marx' theory of labour and surplus value for understanding digital labour and virtual work?
- * Is the traditional distinction between the material base and superstructure in the realm of social media and digital labour still valid or does it become blurred or undermined? Are new information and communication technologies and social media, their production and use (n) either part of the base (n) or the superstructure or are they part of both?
- * If in the agricultural and industrial age land and nature have been the traditional objects of labour, how do the objects of labour and productive forces look like in the world of digital media and digital labour and how are these productive forces linked to class relations?

- * What is meant by concepts such as digital labour, telework, virtual work, cyberwork, immaterial labour, knowledge labour, creative work, cultural labour, communicative labour, informational work, digital craft, service work, prosumption, consumption work, online work, audience labour, playbour (play labour) in the context of digital media? How should they be defined? How are they related? How have they developed historically? How are these concepts related to the wider social context and the existing capitalist order? How can a systematic typology of the existing literature in this research field be constructed? Should any of these concepts be rejected? Why? Why not? Do any of these concepts especially matter? If so, why?
- * What is the etymological history of concepts such as work and labour in different languages and how have these concepts changed throughout history? Which of these

historically different meanings are important for understanding digital labour and virtual work?

* What are historically new aspects of digital labour, what are predecessors of digital work and which aspects of digital labour have parallels to the pre-digital era?

* What is the role of the concept of value for understanding digital labour and virtual work as well as “immaterial” labour, affective labour, knowledge/communicative/information work etc in the context of digital media?

2) Forms of Labour

* What is the role of agricultural, industrial, service and knowledge work in the world of digital labour and how are they related? How are different modes of production related to each other in the world of digital labour?

* What are the important dimensions for constructing a typology of work that takes place in online spaces (e.g. crowdsourcing, online gambling, gold farming, turking, microwork, production of and trade with virtual items, clickwork etc)?

* How can a typology of alternative forms of online work that rejects the profit logic be constructed (e.g. free software development, creative commons and copyleft publishing, Wikipedia collaboration, peer-production, open access publishing, file sharing etc)?

* Which forms of labour are involved in the global value chain of digital media, how do they differ from each other and how are they related (e.g. mining, hardware assemblage, call centre work, software engineering, transport labour, prosumer labour, e-waste labour etc)?

3) Transformations of Labour

* How can blurring boundaries between toil and play, labour and leisure time, the factory and society, production and consumption, public and private, the sphere of production and reproduction, economic value and social wealth in the realm of digital media be conceptualized?

* What is the relationship between creativity, participation, do-it-yourself culture on the one hand and exploitation, alienation and/or emancipation on the other hand?

* What is the role of the concepts of the working class and the proletariat for theorizing digital labour?

* How would the concepts of digital work and digital labour look like in a post-capitalist society? Does the post-capitalist end of the working class also mean the end of and abolition of digital work? Or just the end of digital labour? What are the anthropologically constant and the historically variable dimensions of productive human activities? How should they be conceptualized and named? How are they related to the realm of digital media? Do concepts such as anti-work, zerowork, the abolition of work, post-work and the right to be lazy take the anthropological, creative and productive aspects of human life that are expressed on digital media into account? What are the elements of digital media activities that will continue to exist in a post-capitalist society? What are the historically continuous and discontinuous elements of digital labour?

* What has historically been the role of communications – including digital communications – in labour transformations and in the construction of global labour chains (e.g. global division of labour and social interdependencies; the concept of collective worker / Gesamtarbeiter; socialization of labour etc.)?

The Crowdsourcing Process In Eight Steps



Image by Daren C. Brabham | www.darenbrabham.com

Deadlines:

Abstract submission: July 31, 2013

All abstracts will be reviewed and decisions on acceptance/rejection will be communicated to the authors at the latest by the end of summer 2013.

Full paper submission: January 15, 2014

Please submit article titles, author names and contact data and abstracts of 200-400 words to:

Marisol Sandoval, marisol.sandoval@uti.at

Marx, Karl. 1845. Theses on Feuerbach. In *The German ideology, including Theses on Feuerbach and Introduction to the critique of political economy*, 569-571. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

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About the Journal: tripleC

Editor: Christian Fuchs, University of Westminster

tripleC (<http://www.triple-c.at>): Communication, Capitalism & Critique. Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society focuses on information society studies and studies of media, digital media, information and communication in society with a special interest in critical studies in these thematic areas.

The journal has a special interest in disseminating articles that focus on the role of information (cognition/knowledge, communication, cooperation) in contemporary capitalist societies. For this task, articles should employ critical theories and/or empirical research inspired by critical theories and/or philosophy and ethics guided by critical thinking as well as relate the analysis to power structures and inequalities of capitalism, especially forms of stratification such as class, racist and other ideologies and capitalist patriarchy.

tripleC is a transdisciplinary journal that is open to contributions from all disciplines and approaches that critically and with a focus on power structures analyze the role of cognition, communication, cooperation, information, media, digital media and communication in the information society.

tripleC is indexed in the databases Communication and Mass Media Complete and Scopus. Its application for inclusion in Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) is under review/observation by ISI Thomson.



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