

CHAPTER 3

Domus Capitalismi: Abstract Spaces and Domesticated Subjectivities in Times of Covid-19

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Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to investigate the relationship between digital labour and urban space production in the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, and in the broader context of a crisis of capitalism. From a theoretical and interpretative approach, our inquiry posits the pandemic's social production of space as a lens to assess the dialectics of capitalist crises, which imply both how digital spatial remedies are powered by machinic fix capital (Harvey 2003) and the contradictory positionality of domesticated subjectivities.

In our view, one of the most significant aspects of the pandemic has been the production of *new social spaces* (Lefebvre 1991), generated by the tension between the stalling mobility of productive circuits in 'locked-down' conditions and the 'compensating' increased productivity of alternative sites under the accelerating propagation of digital connectivity and its distinctive realm, which we will define as digital abstract space. In this sense, we intend to further develop the notion of *digital abstract space* (Briziarelli and Armano 2020) in

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order to provide a tentative answer to the following question: how have capitalist spaces changed in pandemic times? In order to both answer this question and enrich the notion of digital abstract space, we argue that the Covid-19 pandemic-induced circulatory crisis has prompted a compensatory response that can be described as (the) *digital spatial fix* (Harvey 2001; Greene and Joseph 2015), which combines measures against the crisis as well as subsumptive phenomena mainly under capitalist forms such as *digital abstract space* and machinic fix capital. We will exemplify this by examining how the private residences of many workers are being subsumed as digital abstract space (i.e. a logistical space constituted by the synergic encounter between digital platforms and subjects that operate in machinic fashion) and are shaped by multiple overlapping spheres of action, which makes them *domesticated* (Bologna and Fumagalli 1997).

In order to expound our argument, we structure the chapter as follows: after a brief introduction on the Covid-19 crisis, and its impact as a circulatory crisis of logistical and platform capitalism, we will interrogate how capitalism has responded to the crisis by creating spatial fixes in urban realms. Finally, in the third section, we discuss the reorganisation of private space in relation to the capitalist process of valorisation and the circulation of capital. We specifically focus on the diffusion of so-called ‘smart/remote’ work demonstrating how, during the pandemic, digital abstract space expands in co-development with the subsumption of social (re-)production, resulting in a contradictory domestication.

The Covid-19 Crisis: Value in Motion ... Stalled!

The situation created by the Covid-19 viral surge since spring 2020 can be simultaneously understood as a pandemic, an epidemic and endemic. It is a pandemic because it is borderless and massive in its magnitude; an epidemic because it is also regionalised in its implications (e.g. different global regions are managing Covid-19 differently); and finally, it is an endemic as it can be framed by specific capitalist features. In our view the common thread here is the demic aspect, or the material social relations involved: as Ian thoughtfully states, ‘a pandemic isn’t a collection of viruses, but is a social relation among people, mediated by viruses’ (Ian 2020). As far as this present reflection is concerned, we argue that much of the pandemic’s significance can be assessed when confronted with predominant capitalist social relations mediated by the space of the city.

The generalised and quick spread of the disease caused an array of restrictions to the mobility of people and goods (i.e. curfews, quarantines, stay-at-home and shelter-in-place orders) in order to contain and prevent further infections. As a result, schools, universities, restaurants and other ‘non-essential’ businesses closed down. By April 2020, close to half of the world’s population was under lockdown (euronews.com 2020). The effort to flatten the curve of contagions

caused what many IMF economists defined as the Great Lockdown 2020 with a projected cumulative GDP loss of nine trillion US dollars (imf.org 2020).

There are many ways to understand this economic shut down: as an effective demand crisis, a financial crisis linked to the stock market crash of March 2020, and, last but not least, a crisis of compensatory consumerism and realisation of value. In this chapter, we frame the pandemic crisis as a force that effectively slows down the necessary motion needed by value circulation, a blockage of capital circulation in the urban environment.

In *Grundrisse* (1973), Marx distinguishes between productive consumption (e.g. essentially fixed capital) and final consumption of goods which, once consumed, exit the circuits of capital. In our view, through the spread of fear of contagion, and measures of social distancing and control, the pandemic creates circulatory slow-downs, interruptions and blockages in both areas of consumption. On the one hand, the flows within commodity chains currently required to produce relatively complex goods (i.e. manufacturing a car, IC technology or home appliances) have been disrupted as workers fell ill, were laid off or were subject to furloughs. At this level, due to flexible accumulation principles, timely logic and the tendency to avoid the formation of large inventories that could have otherwise sustained flows during lagging time, made these circuits particularly fragile. As a result, the loss of productive capacity translated into a loss of capital circulation and accumulation. On the other hand, Covid-19 restrictions impacted on final consumption, not only as populations become increasingly fiscally conservative in times of economic uncertainty, but also due to financial difficulties brought about by the pandemic, and the severe restrictions to spatial habits outside the domestic sphere (moving around, driving, going to the mall, dining out), particularly in urban spaces. Even at this level, capital circulation is vital: Harvey (2020) points out how exponential growth of capital accumulation is sustained by (relatively) instantaneous mass consumption such as tourism, spectacular cultural events and the Netflix economy. The loss at the point of final consumption translates into missing value realisation.

While issues of capital circulation and realisation possess a quintessentially global nature, we choose to concentrate on the space of the city because it simultaneously represents the social epicentre of the pandemic, and logistical activity, as well as of capital circulation and realisation.

At the Centre of Logistical and Platform Capitalism: The City

Thanks to the work of radical geographers such as Lefebvre (1991) and Harvey (1982), city spaces are privileged sites that detect and demystify both *long durée* and *episodic* kinds of transformations. In addition, over the last decade the city has become the main stage of the logistical and circulatory dimensions of contemporary capitalism (Nielson and Rossiter 2011; Huws 2006; Dyer-Witford

2015; Cuppini, Frapporti and Pirone 2015; Grappi 2016; Andrijasevic and Sacchetto 2017; Bologna 2018).

Thus, as a complex capitalist field of study the city contributes to a perspective that pushes back against a significant over-emphasis on the moment of production in relation to the whole process of capital self-valorisation. In this sense a focus on the logistical aspects of capitalism has rectified a blind-spot in the literature by recognising the circulatory logic of capitalism as a totalising entity, 'in terms of the contradictory interaction between moments within the total process' (Marx 1990, 46). From this point of view, we look at the city as a capital landscape made of fixed and circulating capital. Following Harvey's lead (1982), we assume that the pandemic crisis consists of a 'production of spatial configuration [which] can then be treated as an "active moment" within the overall temporal dynamic of accumulation and social reproduction' (374).

Furthermore, the logistical perspective that reads capital in terms of flows (such as financial, commodities, information and workers) allows for an appreciation of other circulatory aspects of contemporary capitalism, such as its platform nature, powered by information and communication technology (ICT). Framed as circulation, the logistical and communication aspects of capitalism demonstrate the logical and historical overlapping of transportation, communication and the circulation of capital. In this sense, we concur with Manzerolle and Kjøsen (2015) in construing ICTs as particularly effective tools to overcome space/time barriers in the sphere of circulation. For example, platforms, by gathering information on users, facilitate and accelerate the circulation of capital by more effectively matching commodities with particular consumers.

Therefore, if city landscapes are currently being produced by data and algorithms alongside bricks and mortar (Graham 2020), the emerging post-pandemic capitalist paradigm, exacerbated by increased digitisation, contributes to the rise of the so-called fourth industrial revolution, based on the integration of AI, Big Data, the insertion of robotics and technological automation into the circuits of capital, all boosted by giant tech companies. As we will elaborate later in this chapter, the digitalisation process propelled by practices such as e-commerce, telecommuting, consumer demand, last-mile delivery, virtual tourism and event-going, the digitalisation of public services and smart city models are all technological changes that can be understood as a spatial fix of a specific kind, which simultaneously contains both a crisis of accumulation (which is why a fix is needed), while laying out the conditions for a surge in capital circulation as well as increasing its mobility. Furthermore, consistent with a total integral perspective of capitalism outlined above, digital media constitutes both the material conditions for capital circulation as well as the necessary apparatus to control workers via automation and surveillance, intensifying their productivity by integrating algorithms, global scale production, and social reproduction (Baldwin 2020; Casilli 2020). In other words, digital media works at the same pace as the tools of production and circulation.

The underlying assumption informing our analysis is that these circuits assume a specific social sphere, which affect both the particular subjects and their specific activities. People's subjectivities are thus both the bearer of those social forms and their agents of change. We will illustrate such a hypothesis by examining how the pandemic affects urban social space and its acceleration as logistical abstract space, as well as the process of subjectification of individuals working and interacting with digital platforms. What happens when these flows get clogged, as in current pandemic times?

Reacting against the circulatory restrictions caused by the pandemic, platform capitalism finds, in the spaces of the city, both new barriers as well as spatial fixes to cope with such barriers. For Harvey (2003), spatial fixes are temporary and contradictory solutions. In fact, *fix* means both investing in fix capital and fixing capital in place and those two aspects controvert each other. In fact, the geographical/physical anchoring of capital makes it less prone to be realised because it cannot move:

The vast quantities of capital fixed in place act as a drag upon the capacity to realize a spatial fix elsewhere ... If capital does move out, then it leaves behind a trail of devastation and devaluation; the deindustrializations experienced in the heartlands of capitalism ... in the 1970s and 1980s are cases in point. If capital does not or cannot move ... then over-accumulated capital stands to be devalued directly through the onset of a deflationary recession or depression. (Harvey 2003, 116)

Capitalism thus overcomes space barriers by fixing infrastructures of production (such as factories, roads, power supplies) thereby reducing transport and communication costs. However, such tensions between fixity and mobility are destined to create the need for new spatial fixes because the physical fixity of capital tends to imprison capital, making it more static and unable to respond to everchanging political and economic scenarios. For this reason, Harvey describes how historically spatial fixes tend to create the conditions for further future fixes, in order to address the issues created by previous rounds of fixes.

Compared to traditional fixes, platform capitalism has generated digital fixes that operate with considerably less geographical and physical fixities. The prompt re-localisation of production during the pandemic points to such dynamicity: within a few weeks, a significant proportion of capital production was able to pass from offices to houses, by thus intensifying the pre-existing overlapping between labour and disposable time and space.

Especially exemplary are those 'domesticated' productive activities that can be performed via digital means, thus exacerbating digital labour and the creation of what we will define as digital abstract space. The transition to remote working and the expansion of gig work demonstrated how digital media infrastructures represent fix capital already in place and capable of responding

effectively to the abrupt changes caused by the pandemic crisis and its consequent circulatory restrictions.

Digitalised work provides the conditions for digital spatial fixes in the sense that the digital realm is currently ‘where capital seeks freedom from contemporary limits’ (Greene and Joseph 2015). However, while we agree with Greene and Joseph’s conception of digital space as material and not a mere representation, we also view it as possessing a distinctive ability to provide ‘fixes,’ as exemplified by the Covid-19 crisis. We argue that digital space relies on a combination of different kinds of capital: on the one hand, internet-based technologies necessitates capital fixed in immovable physical infrastructures such as home computers, servers, power grids, fibre and mined minerals; on the other hand, those fixes are able, comparatively more than other kind of spatialised fixes, to harness and mobilise flexible capital, i.e. people’s living labour. Furthermore, those fixes do not simply harness labour capacity but also labourers’ subjectivity (Armano, Murgi and Teli 2017), becoming a new and dynamic form of fixed capital (Read 2013).

This tendency to combine fixed and circulating capital was noted by Marx when he said that ‘Fixed capital is “man himself”’ (Marx 1973, 712): whereas machinery is understood as crystallised human intelligence, human intelligence also absorbs and ‘learns’ from machines. However, in the case of digital platforms, these mutual interactions between labourers and machinery seems to be qualitatively amplified. Illustrative of these interactions are the computational engines of platforms, such as algorithms, a form of fixed capital generated by social cooperation and interaction which could not exist or operate without integration – or *agencement* – (Gherardi 2016) with people.

Within platform and social media environments, fixed and variable capital are assembled together into a ‘machinic environment’ (Guattari 1995, 9), and working subjectivities are constituted by such a context. The combination of dynamic capital that is not simply fixed into immovable assets, the real subsumption of subjects under neoliberal forms of work ethic, flexibility and responsibilities (i.e. connected to the sudden reorganisation caused by the Covid-19 crisis), and the spatial fix from public to private, creates a general subsumptive tendency, which adds an expansion impulse to what was otherwise a contraction caused by the pandemic.

The renewed dynamicity of an otherwise less movable capital becoming machinic leads us to frame the Covid-19 crisis from a particular perspective, which demonstrates contradictions on two levels: on one level, crisis as an inner contradiction within the capitalist system; and on another level, the dialectics of crisis which can be understood as both a contractive and expansive capital circulation and accumulation. While the regressive/contractive side of crisis would suggest a connection between economic downturns and the unmaking of the conditions of subsumption (as such, subsumptive capitalist forms seem to lose their grip on society), Clover (2010) advances a persuasive insight about the intimate link between crisis and subsumption expansion in two main

ways: firstly by recognising the idea of spatial fix, because such processes trigger subsumptive dynamics in order to provide fixes to the economic downturn; secondly, comparable to the example of machinic fix capital, it can actually trigger a massive expansion of that sector as exemplified by the recent spectacular growth of the gig economy.

Overall, this dynamicity of digital fixes provides a surplus value in terms of subsumption at two levels that mirrors Marx's taxonomy as expounded in *Capital* (1990): real subsumption of labourers' subjectivity, which becomes domesticated, and the formal subsumption of environments such as the private sphere of homes that were relatively free from the instrumentalisation of production. As a result, the dynamicity of machinic capital goes beyond the fix, becoming an expansive capitalist force (as opposed to a limited and temporary solution) in so much as they imply subsumption of new spaces as well as of worker subjectivity.

Digital Abstract Space

Prior to the pandemic-induced crisis, categories such as platform-powered workers of micro logistics work, such as delivering food or consumer goods, were largely considered the prototypical 'gig worker' prior to the pandemic. However, within the context of lockdowns, many knowledge workers are experiencing remote working conditions that are frequently accompanied by the precarization and intensification of work.

While 'stay at home' conditions prevent contagion, knowledge workers are becoming new operators in an emerging realm, which is colonising the private sphere: by turning our personalised, idiosyncratic living space into an effective physical and digital platform suited to Covid-19 capital. As a result, this digital realm (what we define as digital abstract space), is increasingly subsuming lives by extracting metadata to both capture and measure the value of our social relations and transforming our interpersonal communication into a linguistic machine that translates concrete meaning into abstractable information (Briziarelli 2020).

By digital abstract space, we refer to space mediated by digital technology (Briziarelli and Armano 2020), drawing on Lefebvre's notion of abstract space (1991) as a space almost entirely instrumental to capitalism. For Lefebvre, abstraction refers to space that is artificially purified (thus preventing the flow of capital circuits) and privileging quantifiable and commensurable elements rather than qualitatively distinctive ones.

Digital abstract space constitutes a conjunctural social field: a preponderant logistical venue for digital capitalism, a *hyper-industrial* capitalistic mode of production (Alquati 2000), inhabited by self-directed and self-exploited neoliberal subjectivities that partly buy into a disingenuous narrative of 'flexibility' (Huws 2009); a highly intrusive digital connectivity ideology; and finally a protocological approach (Galloway 2004) to management that emphasises

computational logic. This sense of emergency and the politics of ‘essentialism’ (i.e. everything is shut down except essential services) has indeed established this realm as a primary abstracting force. In fact, as the lively public debate over health vs economics demonstrates, in a capitalist society everything that is not concerned with value production-realisation can be stripped out because it is non-essential.

In the context of the digital spatial fix prompted by the circulatory/pandemic crisis, digital abstract space is generated by digital machines of different kinds (e.g. the Internet of Things, Big Data, virtual reality, AI, the cloud, robotics), which by convergence generates the capitalist social form that seems to currently insinuate into every other social form: production, consumption, sociality and social reproduction. All these different digital tools share a common propensity to shape environments in which algorithmic instructions travel across connections points enabling dialogue between the physical world, people and machines. It is indeed the systematic production of such digital environments and their effective conduciveness to capital flow that creates the conditions for these machines to act as producers of abstract space in the Lefebvrian and Marxian sense.

Accordingly, qualitatively different kind of spaces, through means of connectivity, can from the mere point of view of value production, be subsumed as digital abstract space that is able to redefine organisational and productive logics, and to reconfigure it into more commensurable sites and relations of production. Commensurability is indeed another main facet of ‘abstraction.’ While we have discussed abstraction as the reduction of concrete complexity into artificial essentiality, here we also point to abstraction as providing the condition of replicability and the possibility of technological automation. Finally, the same digital spatial fix that transformed traditional modes of work into remote ways of working while increasing digital abstract space shapes its agents by subsuming them as domesticated subjectivities of a kind of ‘homey and cosy capitalism.’ However, as we will argue in the last section of this chapter, domestication is what dynamizes traditional fixed capital into machinic capital, but not without contradictions.

Domus Capitalismi: The Contradictory Facets of Domestication

Elaborating on the considerations above in the context of digital abstract space, abstraction simultaneously describes a fetishised and impoverished space, the conditions for more effective exploitation and then suggests a future where workers are potentially replaced with machines (Briziarelli and Armano 2020). We also claim that the current unique situation allows us to both qualify and enrich our understanding of such space: digital abstract space represents the framework of social relations mediated by the digital in which machinic fix

capital can move between contradictory states of abstraction and subjectification. Specific digital space produced by the Covid-19 fix must be found in the reconfiguration of space. Restrictive measures dealing with the crisis have brought about significant changes: examples include the appropriation of public space for private use, as in the case of the establishment of restaurant patios and street closures for open air dining (Trudeau and Wareham 2020); or the reconfiguration of abandoned/dormant public space, such as for mutual aid initiatives, utilising unused parking lots or converting space previously used for cars into cycle paths (Sarkin 2020).

However, in our view, the most preponderant tendency in space production consists of the acceleration of the general neoliberal tendency of privatising public space, which is accomplished by measures of partition and sanitation. Public spaces are viewed 'impure' and 'dangerous', with measures such as social distancing, mask mandates and sanitation stations attempting to impose order and control. The previous relative openness of public space now acquires internal boundaries that facilitate its control via processes of segmentation and partition in quantifiable parcels (for example, the six foot rule in the US or the two metre rule in Europe), which operate where people congregate, such as waiting in line outside a business or a government building.

Conversely, private space becomes a refuge from contagion/human contact and freedom from state-imposed restrictions. At the same time, due to digital platforms and technology, it becomes a super-locale (Fuchs 2020) where the intimate sphere is mobilised to become a productive sphere and a new sphere of socialisation via digital connectivity. In this new productive sphere (i.e. integrating public and private) inside homes, the spatial fix manifests through a re-compression of space and time (previously decompressed by lockdown restrictions) by pushing production towards more space and more time: overlapping and super-imposing working time/space over leisure time/space; and by compensating the disconnection from the traditional office, now deemed unsafe, with a permanent connection to a safer one. Such a digital and logistical safe-zone has materialised by means of smartphones, digital platforms, the endless intrusion of advertisements on our computer screens, the never-ending buzzing of delivery trucks carrying food and consumer goods, and waste management workers disposing of Amazon boxes and packaging material.

The subject at home thus pays for the privileged separation from contagion with new intrusive forms of value production and extraction that colonise their homes. Subjects experience an intensification of the pressure on individuals to combine operativity and productivity, i.e. the ability to manage and reproduce interstitial activities, to be adaptable and flexible, and to cope with high levels of transiency brought about by the pandemic (Burchi 2020; Risi 2021; Mazali, de Vita and Campanella 2021).

In this context, the worker is therefore *domesticated* twice over (Bologna and Fumagalli 1997): safe from contagion as well as subjected/controlled for smoother exploitation, while living a fundamental contradiction between an

abrupt separation from a public social life now deemed dangerous, but reconnecting via digital means, one of the few sites considered to be hygienic and compliant with anti-contamination measures. Domestication then implies a paradoxical reciprocal appropriation: capitalism spills over into the worker's intimate space while the worker confronts capital within the confines of the home, thus potentially gaining tools with which to push back against it.

Bologna and Fumagalli (1997) observe that while salaried workers used to spend their active productive time in places that were owned and organised by others, now the workers' private space is subsumed under capitalist forms while, at the same time, incorporating their work into their private lives. The considerable number of humorous memes of workers caught in inappropriate attire or postures while remote working is indicative of such a paradox: on the one hand, there is a recognition of work that has infiltrated our bedrooms and caught us in our pyjamas; on the other, work that has itself become *partly* domesticated by our environment, needs and desires.

The digital spatial fix and the consequent creation of digital abstract space led to a material reconfiguration of many homes in terms of consumption and social reproduction that results in a reconfiguration of production. For example, homes mimic, on a small scale the logistical space of the city with its landscape of fixed and circulating capital: leisure and/or spare rooms become home offices. Many workers as microtaskers increased bandwidth allowances to improve remote working and schooling; entrance halls become hubs where micro-logistics workers deliver and pick up packages; the multifunctional operativity of homes is also enhanced by the creation of areas for exercise – the treadmill, the exercise bike – thus reinscribing the neoliberal preoccupation with consumption and reinforcing the notion of the individualised consumer subject (Clevenger, Rick and Bustad 2020).

The paradox of digital abstract space is that while establishing an apparent order instrumental to circulatory capitalism, it also overloads the physical environment of workers' homes by creating potential new frictions. For instance, overloaded subjects such as working mothers are experiencing an intensification of the unfair sexual division of labour inside the home (Burchi 2020) that may impact upon their productivity and general well-being. Further, the Marxian labour theory of value suggests that the magnitude of value is determined by socially necessary labour time. When capitalism is understood as a circulatory process, one could argue that digital abstract space represents a kind of socially necessary labour space; capitalism implies the subsumption of different forms of concrete labour under abstract labour (Marx 1990, 128), and most such abstraction process takes place at the level of spatialisation. Digital abstract space represents capitalism's attempt to radically de-territorialize (and re-territorialize in purely instrumental terms) the concrete physical environment. Regardless of whether a worker is at their office, in their home kitchen, in a business suit or visiting the restroom at Heathrow Airport, thanks to digital connectivity they can now provide hours of productive work.

The aforementioned memes depicting people working in pyjamas, or in the bathroom, or drinking alcohol ‘on the clock’ are also indicative of this double-edged re-territorialization: they represent the intrusion of work into the intimate sphere, and the intrusion of the intimate sphere into work, reflecting how the dialectic of crisis expands abstract space as well as expands the abstraction of abstract space, i.e. its potential re-concretization.

Conclusions: Inescapable Social and Spatial Tensions

The pandemic has abruptly reconfigured social space and social praxis by reformulating a utopia consistently accompanying modern media: action at a distance – the exertion of influence upon an object that does not require physical interaction. While such capability has traditionally been associated with magic or mystical magnetism, in Covid-19 times it mostly refers to a vernacular of the ‘new normal’. The infrastructures required to develop contactless social practices were already in place thanks to the increasing preponderance of digital technologies in both the production and circulation of capital. In fact, the spatial fix to the crisis was so rapid that the narrative of acceptance of digital technologies as the best and safest option to enable work to continue despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic quickly established itself as the only apparent viable solution. As a consequence, the pandemic has transformed most of our cities into living social laboratories where it is possible to experiment with the permanent integration of digital technology in every aspect of life. The city becomes the sounding board for an all *shut-in economy* (Sadowski 2020), which keeps exploiting the rhetoric of ‘smart cities’ coupled with ‘smart working’ and living in a domesticated space. As a result, social spaces are re-invented, re-territorialized, secured, distanced, eroded and re-mediated by digital connectivity.

In this chapter, we have theoretically explored the idea of a novel abstract space reconfigured in digital terms and performing as a digital spatial solution to the crisis induced by the pandemic restrictions. We used the notion of digital spatial fix to make sense of the pandemic as a circulatory crisis at the level of commodities, information and worker flows. We also used the notion of digital abstract space to describe subsumptive phenomena linked to the expansion and re-localisation of productive activities and the mobilisation of a *kind of machinic fixed capital* in which subjectivities are fundamental. The realm of digital abstract space, gestures, words and relations are not only abstracted into data but also extracted from their informational, cognitive and affective value. The agents of such space are neoliberal subjectivities that seem to be receptive enough to remote working, thus dynamizing the typical fixation on the place of assets normally generated by such a spatial fix. In fact, for example, while the number of gig workers of all kinds has dramatically increased, their employers have not provided much in terms of adaptive measures, thus relying

on the typical self-responsibilisation and self-activation of neoliberal subjects. However, these subjectivities experience a contradictory situation: a tendency towards abstraction powered by digital abstract space/digital spatial fixes on the one hand, and the propensity towards the phenomenon of domestication inside their homes as the new emerging sites of production, on the other. While the former implies the alienation and deterritorialization of concrete spaces such as private space into an abstract locus of production, the latter leaves room to develop a more complex tension, a sort of re-territorialization and dis-alienation of production generated by the subsumption of private space as a space of production.

Domestication represents then the first dialectical limit of digital abstract space, which should be coupled with another: while enjoying an organic composition of capital that exploits the dynamicity of living labour in relation to constant capital, it also tends towards automatisisation, thus replacing living labour with machines. If we work with the Marxian assumption that value production only derives from living labour, then digital spatial fix would find itself in a 'catch-22' situation.

Domestication leads us to keep asking questions about subsumption under digital capitalist forms, especially under the broader and possibly quintessential capitalist tendency of abstraction, and especially when universal computational language and black boxed algorithmic management become more prevalent. Are such changes inevitable? Can they be reversed? After all, part of the argument advanced here is that crises are eminently, but also unpredictably, productive: they always oscillate between destructive creation and creative destruction.

While capitalist crises represent in themselves the most deifying arguments against capital as a telos of the 'end of history', the so-called 'technological solutionism' (González and Rendueles Menéndez de Llano 2020) constitutes a powerful rhetoric that keeps threatening our ability to voice our concerns and to envision alternative uses of technology rooted in communitarian and solidarist social relations (Scholtz 2016; Teli et al. 2019). In fact, the terms of the so-called return to a post-Covid-19 normality also depend on our ability to remain vigilant of the changes that are occurring, and to keep interpreting and critiquing them.

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