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Positions through triangulating



When you wake up in the morning to your alarm clock, when you run to catch the bus to work, or when you look down at your hand while walking quickly into work, do you ever notice what is really pushing you, and what is limiting your movement? Is it time that is limiting you, or is it capitalism that is affecting you?

In article A Brief Economic History of Time, Thompson refers to capitalism's redefinition of the passage of time and its reset of time to restrict workers' work. They set this subjective perception of time into an objective existence and argued that defining time had a beneficial effect on workers' efficiency and economic development. (Thompson, 2016) Time moves with everyone every day and clocks are in everyone's life. Nowadays we use clocks to measure time, but how was time judged before clocks were invented? A long time ago, people measured time by the sun rising and setting in the west. People would go out to work when the sun rose and go home when it set. At the same time an incense burner was used to measure the time from the time it burned to the time it was extinguished. However, all these measures of time are non-authoritative, or subjective. It goes

without saying that objective time is clock time in the 24-hour system, so is objective time necessarily authoritative? Time is an illusion, an illusion of perception. Therefore, time itself does not exist, it is a virtual unit of measurement that we have created to measure changes in material space. As Thompson (2016) states, "The economy re-invented time". The Industrial Revolution has completely changed the way people measure, understand, feel, and talk about time. The time we are talking about is artificially set, and the objective time measured by clocks in life is also a subjective human construct. This artificially constructed objective time is not authoritative. In other words, subjective time is artificially set to exist as objective time by capitalism in its role of absolute power. So, can any subjective time exist as objective time under the action of absolute power?

Time in your own hands



一杯咖啡的時間

Time for a cup of coffee

ective

Subj



一支烟的時間

Time for a cigarette



一根蠟燭的時間

Time for a candle

Time

its

Un

一炷香的時間

Time for a stick of incense



However, Thompson was not aware of this artificial construction of objectivity. Instead, he felt that the regulation and setting of time provide a lot of convenience for life and work, and people are becoming more and more dependent on clocks. According to Thompson (2016), Taylor advocates in his productivity thesis that the use of clocks to mark the arrival times of workers maximises productivity and output. For capitalism, the definition and regulation of time is beneficial. Not only does it regulate the length of time workers work, but it promotes worker productivity and increases productivity. Along with Taylor's scientific management theory, the use of clocks and punching machines in the workplace also provided for productivity in factories. (2016) However, for the workers, the clocks set by capitalism undoubtedly became a restriction and a shackle for the workers. Capitalism regulates time and on the surface appears to be creating an objectively existing temporal order for the world. In fact, capitalism imposes its own subjective time on workers through absolute power, with the aim of satisfying its own interests and squeezing the productivity of workers to the maximum. In the same way, we can define the clock in a new way according to our own feelings about time. By creating our own subjective clocks through our personal definition and measurement of time, and fundamentally subvert this artificial creation of objective existence. This is what I am exploring in my own practice.

Before the invention and widespread use of the modern clock, every great

ancient civilisation has attempted to measure and define time in a non-authoritative way, included the use of 'shadow clocks' or 'water clocks'. (Thompson, 2016) All these ways of measuring time were subjectively attempted through ancient people, and there is something uncritical and unobjective about them. My opposing view is that time is inherently subjective. Because time is invisible, everyone has a different understanding of time. Invisible time can leave traces, shadows and sounds in visible things. In this project, I have attempted to experiment with the recording of time in these three different aspects through a method of investigation and classification. The experiment leaves behind the objective existence of the clock and focuses on the subjective perception of the individual body. I try to measure time through the subjective feeling of the human body. In the experiment of measuring time, I found that cigarettes, another product of capitalism, gave the exact opposite feeling. The worker will smoke to relax when his work is full of fatigue and stress. However, the addictive substances in cigarettes also physically push people to take their time. They can't help but light up the next cigarette when they become addicted. Addictive substances such as nicotine are also a drain on people's health and time of life. The experiment revealed that addictive substances affect the body's biological clock and that the body's physiological response to substances such as nicotine and caffeine is similar to the feeling of hunger and sleepiness. This biological clock, which is based on the body's perceptions, is more likely to express this state of absolute subjectivity.



Time is invisible
時間是不可見的



Fortunately, on some points Thompson shares my view. Capitalism's act of defining subjective time as objective time is driven through absolute power. According to Thompson (2016), capitalism set time and changed mankind's perception of the passage of time. Under the absolute power of the British Empire, clocks were invented and perfected, the use of watches was introduced into society and the time set by capitalism gradually became an appendage of mankind. Absolute power thus plays a huge role in the process by which subjective time is defined as objective time. This absolute power not only symbolises a discourse that cannot be challenged, but also carries with it the compulsion of unconditional obedience. By the same token, subjective time, as understood by each individual, can become an objective standard time in society if absolute power is brought to bear on it. Time is subjective, and each person can be the master of his own time and not be enslaved to others. Time is in each person's own hands and should be cherished.

In order to challenge the artificial creation of an objective existence by capitalism, I have tried to create a 'call to action' by falsifying absolute power and publishing it. The subjective time defined through experimentation in my project was published in a publication symbolising absolute power for promotion, calling attention to one's own subjective time. Power is likewise an invisible and imaginary substance that cannot be seen or touched. But this power of nothingness can be presented in some official publications. Firstly, as a product of official news and information, newspapers are not only highly communicative, but are also given as a symbol of absolute power. Few people question or object to the veracity of the content of newspapers, and most even believe the information conveyed in them unconditionally. In addition, I found that in the early days of the new China, the government would produce a portable publication of the statements of the country's leaders for the dissemination of statements and ideas. This red pamphlet was called 'Hongbaoshu', meaning 'Red Treasure Book', by its supporters. This act of adherence is testimony to the extremely high position of power conferred on this publication. Not only was there unconditional trust, but the pamphlet was held up as a kind of spiritual pillar. This has parallels with capitalism's construction of objective time through absolute power, with workers' time being influenced by capitalist law in the early days. By the time the Fair Labour Standards Act created the working day and weekend, workers' time was still dominated by capitalism. (Thompson, 2016) Both the newspaper and the pamphlet are highly communicative and compulsive, and the information contained therein cannot be challenged, but only accepted under duress. Even the content of any information becomes unimportant in the face of absolute power, and we are only entitled to listen.

However, each person's subjective perception and judgement of time exists on a different scale. Capitalism makes people more efficient by changing and setting time, but people do not get pleasure and fulfilment from it. If the time is based on each individual's subjective time, this may lead to happiness and freedom, but it is also a challenge to each individual's ability to discipline himself or herself. Refusing to accept clock time and sticking to one's own subjective time may result in procrastination. It may be possible to be in control of one's own time, in control of reality, but we cannot transcend the rules and changes of time. So, can we find a state of equilibrium in the face of the two opposites of subjective time and objective time (the clock time of immovability) at the same time?



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Subjective time can
主觀時間也可以作
also exist as an
為客觀時間存在
objective time

Under the use of absolute power
在絕對的權力的用下