

Constructive resistance to the dominant capitalist temporality

Abstract

The logics of capitalist temporality dominate western society today. Drawing on Barbara Adam's work, we explore two important dimensions of this dominant temporality. Standardised and abstract clock time involves a detachment from seasons and the life-world, closely related to the *commodification of time* exemplified by expressions like "time is money". Many initiatives attempt to challenge the dominance of capitalist temporality, amongst which we present: (1) worker cooperatives that organize work and its temporality as alternatives to capitalism; and (2) timebanks where people exchange services with each other based on time rather than money. We investigate how these illustrative examples differ from the dominant capitalist temporality, and in what ways they depend on the same logic that they resist. The analysis shows that the initiatives divert from the dominant temporality in important aspects, but also reproduce it in other ways. Thereby, this article contributes to theorizing resistance in connection to time and temporality, and gives insights in the potential and elusiveness of constructive resistance to dominant temporality.

Keywords: time, capitalism, constructive resistance, worker cooperatives, timebanks

IN THE 15TH century, capitalism started to grow in Europe and opposed the then dominant feudalistic economic order. Today the logics of capitalist temporality dominate western society, involving features such as *abstract and standardized clock time*, a standardized detachment from seasons and the life-world, and a *commodification of time*, exemplified by expressions like "time is money" (Adam 1998; Martineau 2015). These aspects of capitalist temporality not only dominate in the operation of capitalism itself, but has seeped into almost all aspects of life, suppressing other temporalities connected to the lifeworld. For instance, the drive towards efficiency and time segmentation has resulted in a view that time is something to "save", even outside work, involving a decline in private social relations, devaluation of private life and the outsourcing of what was previously private matters (Hochschild 2001; 2012). Nevertheless, a considerable number of individuals and organisations attempt to counter this dominance by constructing alternative ways of living and relating to other people. We explore two of these alternatives and aim to answer the following questions: 1) In what ways do the alternatives differ from the dominant capitalist temporality?

2) How do these alternatives construct resistance that may have the potential to mitigate the dominant capitalist temporality in the short and the long run?

Resistance is often conceptualized as open forms of protests, riots, revolutions and the like, practiced from a subaltern position. We take a different point of departure and draw on the concept of *constructive resistance* to investigate some of the links between time, resistance and capitalism. Constructive resistance is people's attempts to build, organize and construct the social relations and society they want, rather than attempts to tear down and destroy what they object to and confront. The desire for something different is an implicit critique of the status quo, but instead of waiting for the perfect conditions to construct the new society "after the revolution" they start here and now to create alternatives within the shell of the old society (Sørensen 2016). This involves an interesting temporal aspect in itself, but the aim of the present article is to explore how examples of constructive resistance against capitalism relate to the dominant temporality of the contemporary capitalist society that they confront.

The relation between resistance and power has been conceptualized in many different ways (See for instance Baaz et al. 2016; Hollander & Einwohner 2004). Two of the pioneers in resistance studies, Stellan Vinthagen and Mona Lilja, have defined resistance in their entry on "resistance" in *Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice*:

Resistance is a response to power; it is a practice that challenge and negotiate, and which might undermine power. Depending on the definition of power, different types of activities will count as resistance. (Vinthagen & Lilja 2007:1214).

Vinthagen and Lilja conceive of resistance as relational, specifically concerning the relation between resistance and power. When power turns into perceived dominance that creates subordination, for example through discourses that create boundaries, label identities and order performance, resistance practices to change such hierarchies and stereotypes are likely (Vinthagen & Lilja 2007:1216). We follow Vinthagen and Lilja in this wide definition of power and resistance, that action is resistance if it has the potential to mitigate dominance.

But what is dominance? Within a certain sphere or field, one can identify the dominance of a norm, a discourse, a conception of reality, or a type of organizing that potentially marginalizes or rules out alternatives. When it comes to capitalism, its dominance is presently being enacted in many different aspects (see e.g. Castree 2009; Harvey 2006; Illouz 2007; Mjøset 2011; Moran 2016). Capitalism is becoming increasingly widespread, not only geographically, but also regarding aspects of life which are being commodified, for example reflected in the present-day possibilities to buy organs on the market or rent a womb to carry one's child.

The spread of capitalism has led to counter movements of greater resource awareness and sustainability efforts. An early example of initiatives of constructive resistance to capitalism and its temporality is the slow-food movement, originating in Italy in the 1980's as a direct reaction to the growing popularity of the fast-food industry. Today it is a diverse global movement promoting high quality locally produced food and

criticizing industrial food production and exploitation of labor and the environment (Hendrikx et al. 2017).

In this article, we study two illustrative examples of collectively organized constructive resistance against the dominance of capitalism, namely: 1) *worker cooperatives* (co-ops) that organize work and its temporality as alternatives to capitalism, and 2) *timebanks* where people exchange services with each other based on time rather than money. We have picked two examples of collective organizing where there has been an explicit intention to create social practices and ways of relating to other people which differ from the mainstream. In that way, the participants in the timebanks and co-ops can be understood as challenging capitalism in their attempts to act otherwise. Such constructive resistance has the possibility to make the dominant system obsolete and could potentially lead to the emergence of a new society. However, many initiatives of opposition to capitalism risk drawing on aspects of capitalist temporality, which brings forth the need of studying to what extent resistances to capitalism challenge and/or reproduce the temporality of the dominance that is being resisted.

Capitalist temporality is complex, but the two dimensions, *abstract and standardized clock time* and the *commodification of time*, are essential parts of capitalist temporality (Adam 1998). We investigate how the illustrative examples of worker cooperatives and timebanks relate to and differ from these two aspects of the dominant capitalist temporality. The analysis shows that initiatives that challenge capitalist ways of organizing work and time reproduce the dominant capitalist temporality in some ways, at the same time as they do divert from the dominant temporality in other important aspects. We also explore what potential these alternatives have, in the short and the long run, to undermine the dominant capitalist temporality. Thereby, this article contributes to research on the relation of resistance and power, specifically in connection to time and temporality, and gives insights in the potential and elusiveness of practicing constructive resistance to dominant temporalities.

Below we start by presenting our methods and illustrative examples, followed by an introduction to the theoretical approach and previous research. The subsequent analytical section is structured according to the two dimensions *abstract and standardized clock time* and *commodification of time* of capitalist temporality. We conclude with a discussion of the article's results in relation to further theorizing of constructive resistance and implications for future research.

Method

The aim of this article is to explore the complexities involved in engaging in constructive resistance. We do this by focusing on how examples of constructive resistance against capitalism relate to the dominant temporality of the contemporary capitalist society that they confront. In order to do so, we set out to identify as many and different examples as possible of such initiatives. We started from theoretical assumptions based on the literature about time and capitalism and searched for empirical phenomena we thought might be insightful in order to explore the relation between time, resistance

and capitalism. Originally, we included cases of individual resistance for analysis, but due to lack of space we here use the two collective examples of worker cooperatives and timebanks because we think collective efforts have the greatest potential creating long term change. The two examples are not directly comparable due to the different types of data, but our intention has been to theorize about constructive resistance rather than make a comparative study. We purposefully selected these two examples because they are organized, collective efforts with an explicit and outspoken attempt to provide an alternative which in theory and practice have a potential to undermine the dominant capitalist order. Capitalist notions of time and temporality are expressed within both initiatives as part of their resistance against capitalism. The timebanks are publicly explicit in how they relate to time, and we have therefore been able to use secondary material available on their own websites and previous research in the exploration of how their practices possibly differ from capitalist temporality. As for how worker co-ops relate to time, the issue is not discussed on their websites or in previous research. The empirical example of worker co-ops is consequently explored using first-hand material generated mainly through qualitative interviews by the article's second author.

By having two examples to illustrate our theoretical argument (discussed in further detail below), we demonstrate attempts to deal with time in different areas of life, but can also illustrate how one example might succeed in being an alternative in one aspect, while the other will succeed in another aspect. Other cases would of course have provided different details, but would with all likelihood not have changed the main conclusion to any large extent – that all attempts at constructing alternatives will still have to relate to and to some degree incorporate the dominant capitalist temporality.

We have employed a theoretical approach in this article inspired by literature that connects time and the modern world of capitalism (Adam 1989; Hochschild 2001; Rosa 2013b). Specifically, from Adam's (1989) investigation about the links between time, science and economics, we have chosen two general dimensions, namely, 1) abstract and standardized clock time and 2) commodification of time. We do not wish to reduce capitalist temporality to these two, but they are very essential for the conceptualization of time in capitalist societies. Through these two dimensions, we look at how the timebanks and the worker cooperatives relate to capitalist temporality in their resistance against capitalism. Analytically, we have constantly moved between our theoretical assumptions and empirical examples in an organic analysis. In our approach, we have been inspired by Swedberg's (2016) proposal for analytical creativity and the call to work on the theorizing which precedes theory. Following Swedberg, we consider this a prestudy of constructive resistance to capitalist temporality and hope it can inspire future theory development in resistance studies. The empirical examples helped us develop our understanding of the theoretical concepts, and they serve to illustrate the points we want to make regarding the challenges of practicing constructive resistance within the shell of the dominant society.

In the following sections, we present the selected illustrative examples in more detail – timebanks and worker cooperatives.

Timebanks

A timebank is a network of people who exchange services based on the time the members contribute and use, rather than money. If one member walks another member's dog for one hour, this person has "earned" one hour of time. This hour can be spent on getting someone else in the network to help in the garden or repair the car. The system is not based on direct reciprocity but can be conceptualized as a formalized general exchange (Whitham & Clarke 2016), so time can be earned and spent independently of who one has exchanged with previously.

The idea of timebanks are usually traced to Edgar Cahn who developed the scheme in the US in the late 1980's (Lee et al. 2004). Timebanks are just one example of many types of locally based alternative exchange systems and they have been explored from the perspective of local currency and collaborative consumption with numerous examples from the US and different European countries, for instance the UK, Spain, Greece, the Netherlands and Finland. (See for instance Laamanen, Wahlen, & Campana 2015; Papaoikonomou & Valor 2017; Valor & Papaoikonomou 2016; Whitham & Clarke 2016).

Those who work on organizing community exchange systems globally have a rather sophisticated theoretical critique of money and profitmaking. Some timebanks organize their exchanges through the webpage www.community-exchange.org, and here one can read how they understand alternative ways of organizing exchanges as a radical alternative. Although the webpage does not use the word "resistance", it is a devastating critique of global capitalism and money systems based on debt. Under the heading "why we need a new exchange system" it says:

The money systems we use are not neutral, non-partisan, services provided by our governments. They are a 'service' provided by private financial institutions (banks) specifically for their own benefit rather than those who use them. Our conventional money systems only work for those who already have money and marginalise the rest. They are also the fuel that powers the growth imperative of our economies, forcing us all to compete and having disastrous consequences for the health of our planet. (<https://www.community-exchange.org> accessed June 6 2018)

The contemporary money system is a condition for capitalism to exist in its present form, and the quote above shows how those who develop alternatives to it raise issues of how capitalism and banks exploit both people and nature.

In the existing studies of timebanks, there is surprisingly little focus on temporality, and the aspect of resistance that we are interested in is either completely missing or briefly mentioned in passing. The term "timebank" is also used to cover a quite diverse range of practices. In a study of Greek and Spanish timebanks, Papaoikonomou and Valor (2017) identified four prototypical timebank logics. In the Political Logic, the resistance to capitalism is explicit and the timebanks in their empirical data grew out of the 15 M movement (Spain) and the Syntagma Square movement (Greece)

in connection with the financial crisis in 2008. These timebanks are organized in egalitarian and democratic ways, there is no money involved, and roles are rotated. Timebanks which follow the Social Logic focus on strengthening local communities, and compared to the first category this is more reform oriented. In the timebanks belonging to this category there is usually a management team which might control the agenda. In timebanks following the political and social logic, everyone is expected to give and take equally and no charity is involved. Timebanks which have developed according to the Social Welfare Logic, of which there are many in the UK and US, are explicitly directed towards those who are socially excluded. However, they are not based completely on egalitarian principles since different types of members have different status and not everyone is expected to use services, some can be "volunteers". Finally, Papaiconomou and Valor (2017) have identified a few timebanks following a Market Logic which are explicitly preparing the members to find work or start a business. In our study, we are interested in the timebanks which belong in the first two categories in Papaiconomou and Valor's typology, Political and Social Logic, since they are the ones that can potentially provide constructive resistance to the dominant capitalist temporality.

Our illustrative example of timebanks is based on a secondary analysis of existing literature on the phenomenon. We used the search term "timebanks" in academic databases to identify possible articles and also searched webpages of organizations organizing timebanks. We read the collected studies with a particular focus on competing temporalities and resistance to capitalism, a reading which also led us to some sources that briefly discuss the issue of resistance in the broader literature on community currencies and collaborative consumption. Our findings are presented in the analysis below.

Worker cooperatives

Worker co-ops are organizations run and owned equally by the members who work in the organization, in contrast to traditional capitalist enterprises often owned by external capital owners. Worker co-ops can be described as a form of self-government where the workers rent capital, rather than workers selling their labor power to an employer. Besides the management principle "one member, one vote", co-ops are guided by seven cooperative principles such as democratic member control, autonomy and independence, and concern for community, outlined by the International Co-operative Alliance (2018).

The cooperative values and principles can be understood as a challenge to capitalism by for example opposing profit acceleration for potentially external owners (Satgar 2007) in favor of emphasizing democratic member control, economic democracy and independence (Paranque & Willmott 2014; Rothschild & Whitt 1986). Other studies show how co-ops through self-government have the potential to oppose dominance (Vieta 2014), for example challenging state power and neoliberalism by taking control of policy implementation and design (Pahnke 2015). However, cooperative self-government reflects a "dual reality" by emphasizing social ideals and participatory

democracy but still practicing economic business within existing capitalist markets (Diamantopolous 2012; Puusa, Hokkila & Varis 2016; Vieta 2014), and "is not a ready-made solution for liberation from capitalist exploitation" (Vieta 2014:800). Even Marx paralleled Bakunin's warning that co-ops, "if limited to a 'narrow circle' of private work disembodied from greater struggles against capital, 'will never be able to arrest the growth... of monopoly, to free the masses'" (Marx 1992:80). This highlights how worker co-ops involve a potential to undermine capitalism but at the same time have to relate to a surrounding society of economic markets dominated by capitalist temporality.

The empirical material analyzed in this article has been generated from five Swedish worker co-ops through a qualitative study with interviews, document collection and observations conducted by the article's second author (Wiksell, in press). The five co-ops have up to 11 active members and work in different sectors (transportation, heritage, drama, environment, and art) in different parts of Sweden. All co-ops are organized as economic associations that understand themselves as worker co-ops, where the members are those who work in the organization and receive income from that work (Pestoff 1991; Vamstad 2012). Such organizations can be understood as a marginal form of organization in Sweden, comprising less than 1,4% of all registered businesses (Bolagsverket 2019).

Although the capitalist temporality of industrial wage-labor has been transformed in many sectors with the acceleration of time (Rosa 2013a, Rosa 2013b; see also Adam 1998) and the Swedish labor market of today is frequently characterized by flexible working hours (Allvin 2006), the co-operators who engage in alternatives against capitalism often contrast their practices with a traditional 40-hour week and strict working hours. Despite this paradox, this illustrates how the dominant idea of capitalist temporality with standardized clock time and commodification of time is a target of the constructive resistance of worker co-ops. All five co-ops included in the present study articulate resistance against capitalism, where the present dominance of capitalist ways of organizing and understanding time and temporality is expressed as one associated aspect. Each of the five co-ops emphasize reduced working hours and value work according to other values than monetary ones. Worker cooperatives are thus an example of an attempt to transform the dominant capitalist order by organizing and valuing time and work differently.

In sum, the illustrative examples of timebanks and worker co-ops can be understood as collective, explicit initiatives that may have the potential to challenge dominant capitalist temporality. In the following section, we discuss the theoretical approach employed in this article in order to analyze how these two initiatives practice such constructive resistance.

The temporal aspects of capitalist society

To investigate time is nothing new in social science – already Marx' analysis of work and capitalism included temporal aspects (Castree 2009; Nyland 1986), and in 1981 Thrift (1981) analyzed how the contemporary time consciousness, where time is linked closely to a future-oriented calculating rationality, has evolved together with the rise of capitalism. Thompson writes how the value of time in industrial capitalism is reduced to money and must therefore not be wasted: "Time is now currency: it is not passed but spent" (Thompson 1967:61). Recently Castree has argued that time-space is an integrated part of capitalist accumulation, where time and space cannot be separated from each other. Building on the work of David Harvey and Doreen Massey, Castree argues that "capitalism (...) is an economy of time-space that *by necessity* makes history and geography together" (Castree 2009:52, emphasis in original). With the rise of global capitalism in the 1990's and early 2000's, the demand for increasing speed in profit generation also rose, disrupting previous ideas of long term planning and investment for the future (Hope 2011). Zygmunt Bauman (2007) refers to this presentism as a liquid modern condition where time has become pointillistic or punctuated, characterized by an inconsistency of moments to be fulfilled in the now. Analyzing the financial collapse in 2007–2008, Hope (2011) concludes that the crisis was a "crisis of temporalities", and that this type of crisis is likely to recur because it is built into the system of global capitalism. He points towards three aspects of this "crisis of temporality": 1) The temporal contradiction which exists between the short-term interests of the financial market and the long-term strategies needed to handle a crisis, and 2) the speed of decision-making processes in political parties and national assemblies which marginalizes them, and 3) the difficulty in translating macro-economic alternatives into practice. Hope does not consider the current unregulated financial capitalism to be sustainable over time, at the same time as he does not see any alternatives emerging.

The capitalist economy has brought forward a close connection between time advantages and competition advantages, identified by Hartmut Rosa (2013b) as an economic engine that contributes to the ever-increasing social acceleration of the late modern society. According to Rosa (2013b), acceleration takes three different forms. First, there is the technological acceleration, which we see in areas such as communication and transportation. Secondly, people experience an acceleration of social change, and thirdly, the individual tempo of life is accelerating when more activities have to be carried out in a shorter amount of time. That people feel rushed and stressed and pressed for time both in private life and work life is also overwhelmingly documented by numerous empirical studies (See for instance Southerton 2003; Wajcman 2015). Arlie Russell Hochschild (2001) acknowledges that corporate notions of thinking about time that premier efficiency and speed have entered the private realm as "a domestic version of "office hours"" (Hochschild 2001:230). With increasing acceleration, time becomes something to save, which makes quicker versions of "quality time" worth the same as it's slower counterpart.

In our analysis, we will take the point of departure in Barbara Adam's work. In her

book "Timescapes of Modernity", Adam (1998) investigates how the environmental hazards facing us today cannot be understood by using traditional perceptions of time. Through the concept of timescape, Adam highlights the problems which arise when people's understanding of time is reduced to "clock time", and argues that clock time has become commodified with the rise of capitalism. Thus, clock time and capitalism are closely associated, which can be seen in the ways that capitalism is discounting the future. Based on Adam's analysis, we have identified the two essential temporal dimensions in capitalism which we use to analyze the empirical examples of workers cooperatives and timebanks, namely: 1) *abstract and standardized clock time*, and 2) *commodification of time*.

The first dimension, *abstract and standardized clock time*, refers to the tendency to associate the concept of time with clocks and calendars. This tendency has a long history which Adam (1998) traces back to Newton. Newtonian science emphasizes linearity, and time is reduced to motion and is decontextualized from the living processes which reality is. Clock time is abstract, standardized, and "atemporal". It ignores the fact that people's experience of time is connected to changing seasons, special holidays, life, death and fear, and hope for the future. In Newtonian science, a detached observer records from a distance, focusing on cause and effect, isolating parts from the complex whole, searching for certainty and proof. This linear perspective permeates our everyday existence, from science, journalism, and politics to the general public. Although newer fields of science, such as thermodynamics and chaos theory, approach time differently, the Newtonian perspective is still very much engrained in our societies, with devastating consequences for the environment as a result.

The equivalent to Newtonian science can be found in neo/classical economic thought. The second dimension, *commodification of time*, draws on Adam's (1998) investigation of how time is deployed in the capitalist economic system. In economics, the role of nature is to be exploited, and not to exploit resources is equivalent to losing money, although nature remains outside calculations of profit and loss. Time as a natural resource is also closely linked to money and can be exploited – labor is often paid by the hour, and machines have a certain lifetime that has to be calculated. One of the most well-known expressions of this perception is Benjamin Franklin's saying that "time is money". Although it is widely spread and quoted, such an idea is only possible as long as both time and money are something abstract and without context, when time is turned into a commodity with exchange value. However, as Adam (1998) points out, time is not like money at all, because time passes outside of our control, bringing us closer to death, while money can be stored and passed on to future generations. And within a capitalist logic it is only the time associated with productive work that is valuable. The time of the unemployed or in the old people's home is worthless.

A central aspect of Adam's analysis of the commodification of time, and its consequences for the environment, is the way speed is important in the production process when time equals money. In order to compete, it is essential to get first to the market with a new product and avoid having products waiting in storage or spending long periods in transport. But speed is a question of energy, and this energy is not included

in the economic calculation. In our examples, the effort to build alternatives is not only related to time, but simultaneously attempts to undermine other aspects of the rat-race, such as consumption and a culture where wage labor is the norm. Adam's analysis shows how they are onto something when they see these links. This meshes well with Rosa's (2013a) work on acceleration where he is reformulating the concept of alienation to probe what has happened when such high numbers of people express feeling forced to spend increasing amounts of time doing things they do not really want to in so many areas of life. He suggests that the late modern society's demands to keep up alienate people from their experience of space, things, their own actions, time and consequently also from themselves and who they would like to be.

Similarly, Hochschild (2001) acknowledges that through the modern capitalist incorporation of domestic values into the sphere of paid work, such as social relations and leisure time, the alienating attributes of work are being transferred to the devalued realm of home. She stresses that "the more women and men do what they do in exchange for money and the more their work in the public realm is valued or honored, the more, almost by definition, private life is devalued" (Hochschild 2001:198). Hochschild concludes her thorough study of work-life balance in an American company by noting that the workers were pulled into this hurried rat-race despite family-friendly policies. When it comes to constructive resistance against the capitalist temporality, however, we have only found a scarce number of examples in previous research. We discuss some of these in the following section.

Research on constructive resistance and temporality

As long as capitalism has existed, it is reasonable to assume that workers have tried to resist and undermine the efforts to control their time. Subsequently, there have been many temporal aspects to workers' resistance against exploitation. Stopping work through strikes is of course an obvious deceleration of the capitalist logic where time equals money and all delay in the production and transportation of goods is a disaster. However, workers also have more subtle decelerations at their disposal. Roland Paulsen's (2015) study of how people spend their time at work on other things than work is one among many examples of this. In contrast to the protest-oriented resistance of strikes and individual 'disobedience', our aim is to explore collectively practiced constructive resistance as a "prefigurative" politics and organizing (Reedy, King & Coupland 2016), where people resist a perceived undesired dominance by simply starting here and now to create alternatives within the shell of the old society (Sørensen 2016).

Literature that explicitly explores the temporal dimension of constructive resistance is very limited, but in her article "Time against Time", Davina Cooper (2013) presents a study of LETS (Local Exchange Trading Schemes) in the UK, a "cousin" of the timebanks popular in the UK in the 1990s. Cooper's study is interesting because from a temporal perspective, she has investigated why LETS failed, in spite of being promising in theory. Her conclusion is that there were "competing temporalities" within the initiative. On the one hand, in LETS there existed a discourse about "community time"

which was a contrast to the compressed, controlling and demanding capitalist temporality. LETS focused on local communities, generosity, sharing and repairing. This "community time" also meant that there was a slower pace and that services and goods were not always available. In contrast, LETS also include a discourse of "labor-market" time, where time was valued because of its labor and the participants constituted themselves as sellers of goods and services. Cooper writes that "LETS depended on time functioning as an alienable resource" (Cooper 2013:41). Thus, within LETS there were two different temporalities – one part of it seen as a resistance to capitalism, the other part as a bridge to capitalism. These two temporalities were not compatible, for instance it became problematic when it took a long time to arrange a trade.

With this overview, we have presented some key aspects concerning characteristics of and resistance to the dominance of capitalist temporality. Turning to the analysis, we investigate how timebanks and worker co-ops practice constructive resistance to capitalist temporality with the potential to mitigate its dominance, but in some aspects depend on the same logic that they attempt to confront.

Abstract and standardized clock time

We begin by analyzing the illustrative examples of timebanks and worker cooperatives according to the first dimension *abstract and standardized clock time*, referring to the tendency in the dominant capitalist temporality to associate the concept of time with clocks and calendars which entail an abstract and standardized, "atemporal", understanding of time (Adam 1998). This is followed by the analysis of the illustrative examples concerning the second dimension of capitalist temporality, *the commodification of time*, before we discuss the resistance potential of these alternatives in the short and the long run.

Timebanks and clock time

The timebanks do count clock time, one clock hour is one timebank hour, with some variations. Sometimes, they call it something other than clocktime – for example, in the Finnish case they call it a "tovi", which means "moment" (Joutsenvirta 2016). Nevertheless, even if it is called something else it is still a unit to account for time and a certain value is associated with that unit. Thus, the timebanks attempt to oppose clock time but are still dependent upon it. However, a study of Spanish timebanks has showed that the timebanks are more symbolic than practical. The number of transactions is very limited, and most members have never carried out a single transaction (Valor & Papaoikonomou 2016). The problem with a limited number of transactions is also reported from Greece (Papaoikonomou & Valor 2017). People seem to join because they like the idea, but the timebanks do not offer the services people want or the transactions are difficult to carry out in practice.

A major problem for the timebanks is that the users are part of the surrounding society and its dominant standardized clock time. The time transaction often entails that the involved individuals have to be at a certain place at a certain time, which

must be coordinated according to their clock time schedules, as compared to turning to someone who offers the service as a full-time job. A quote from one of Valor and Papaoikonomou's (2016) respondents can illustrate this:

For instance, my mother is a member of the time bank and she cannot handsew, she needs someone to handsew her trousers. But this means: she has to call us, then she has to give the information, we find the person, they arrange when to meet, she brings him her trousers and then the other person does it for her. And in this case it is for free, but it is a slower process. And my mother has credit, like 5 hours, because she has participated doing different things. But she will probably just take the trousers to the shop and have it done for 5–6 euros. The rhythm of society is fast. You probably prefer to pay the 6 euros and have it done now! And this is a problem that we have, everything is like fast food! (Valor & Papaoikonomou 2016, no page number).

The coordination of the timebanks' transactions can take some time to achieve in itself, something Cooper identified as a major problem for keeping LETS viable. It simply means that different forms of temporality have to compete. This is probably also the reason why most timebanks described in the literature appear to have a very limited number of transactions. Apparently, people like the idea of being a member of a timebank. In a Spanish study of timebanks, almost half the members report that they have joined for political reasons such as "protesting against the system" or "setting an example", which was also the case for timebanks not created for an explicitly political purpose (Valor & Papaoikonomou 2016). However, in a Greek study about the four most active timebanks that emerged as citizen's initiatives during the financial crisis, a timebank which has 120 members only has an average of 90 transactions per month (Amanatidou, Gritzas & Kavoulakos 2015).

In some ways, timebanking is radical and can be seen as resistance to capitalism and the acceleration in our societies today. Most timebanks apply the principal of one hour for one hour (Papaoikonomou & Valor 2017), and when everyone's time is worth the same, it is a huge contradiction to the wage labor economy where some people's time is worth so much more than others. On the other hand, as Papaoikonomou and Valor (2017) point out, timebanks use a terminology of banks, credits and accounts which is borrowed from capitalism. A few timebanks in their study has abandoned the practice of registering accounts and keeping track of transactions, but it is not clear how the timebanks then function.

In an article about institutional trajectories of degrowth, Joutsenvirta (2016) uses the debate about the Helsinki Time Bank to illustrate some of the obstacles that initiatives meet when they try to work in ways that is implicitly critical of the current economic world order and try to scale up alternative economic activity. Helsinki had a quite small but growing timebank in which the tax authorities took an interest in 2013. At its busiest month, it had an average of 10 daily transactions of 40 hours. In spite of this quite moderate activity, the taxman decided that timebank activities

should be taxed because of the risk of it contributing to illegal underground economic activities. No involvement in money laundering or corruption had been uncovered, and many people and institutions protested. Nevertheless, timebank activities are now taxable, something which makes it less attractive to take part in the timebank, because when you exchange a service, you have to pay tax on it even if no money is involved (Joutsenvirta 2016).

The situation in Sweden is similar to the one in Finland, making legal timebanking an unrealistic alternative, since it requires money to be involved in an exchange where the logic is to get beyond money. Thus, the only Swedish experiment which has taken place has been in Bergsjön in Gothenburg where TidsNätverket I Bergsjön organizes different kinds of group activities and avoid the one-to-one exchanges which would have to be taxed (Molnar 2011).

Worker cooperatives and clock time

Members of the five worker cooperatives in this study express explicit opposition to having strictly controlled working hours and being forced to work full-time, that is, 40 clock time hours per week. They articulate how the co-ops resist such dominance by practicing a democratic self-governance in which the members can plan and structure their time freely. Some of the members in the worker co-ops also express relief about not having to monitor clock time connected to their work, illustrated by the following quote from a member in the Heritage Co-op:

Something for example, that we've discussed and would in that case decide, is that I work 60 percent, period. Then I would like, then I'd have to keep track on it all the time, that I didn't work more or less than that. It would be pressuring to clock and keep track on that like... so I'd rather not. (Member 3, Heritage Co-op)

The member expresses opposition to the idea of working a specific time percentage per week since that would add a pressure to keep track of the time. However, instead, the co-op pays wages for the members' work according to the time reports, in which the members actually note how many hours, counted in clock time, they have worked each month. This holds for most of the co-ops and means that they have not departed from abstract and standardized clock time. Even if the members can work when and where they wish, they note their working hours and receive salary according to that logic. A text from the work manual in the Transportation Co-op exemplifies how clock time is adhered to in the co-op:

One fills in the time reports with one line for each category of work. There are four categories: Driving, administration, reparation and sales. It is not super important with exactly correct distribution of the time if one mixes several tasks at one day. [...] Time is written as hours with quarters in decimals. 0,25 is one quarter, 1,5 is one and a half hour, and so on. (Work manual, Transportation Co-op)

The time reports and work time percentages require that the co-op members keep track of clock time. If the members lose track of time while working, they have to reflect upon it afterwards. Some of the interviewees commented that members may not report their working hours in the same ways, for example, that one hour of work may involve unequally effective work for different members. This shows awareness that one clock hour can be qualitatively different for the members, but it also indicates that the members are concerned with assuring as much equality as possible regarding how clock time is exchanged into money.

Thus, the co-ops do not fully resist clock time. They explicitly oppose the strictly controlled nine-to-five working hours connected to a perceived dominance of traditional, capitalist wage labor, but nevertheless use clock time in their practices.

Commodification of time

The commodification of time necessitates abstract and standardized clock time, with the addition that it is *commodified* (Adam 1989), turned into a commodity with exchange value, exemplified by the quote "time is money". This is a temporal dimension which is both being resisted and reproduced in our empirical examples, below analyzed first regarding the timebanks and secondly regarding the worker co-ops.

Timebanks and commodification of time

The timebanks entail the very obvious exchange dimension that is a core in the capitalist notion of "time is money", merely that it is not money but only time (and its use for different services) that is being transacted. There are several different types of timebanks, some much more institutionalized and "professional" than others. Those who manage to remain active over time usually have an administrator/time broker who works specifically at coordinating the contacts and administrating the exchanges between the members. This key person can be compensated for the work either (or both) through economic compensation or receiving "time units" in the timebank, something which is an explicit commodification of time. Papaoikonomou and Valor (2017) point out some of the problems facing the Spanish and Greek timebanks in their study. A major hindrance for many is that they have too few exchanges, something which is related to the problem quoted in the previous section, that it takes time to organize a transaction. People might hesitate to spend time as long as they still have to relate to a society where the discourse of time as a scarce resource prevails.

Another problem reported by Papaoikonomou and Valor (2017) is hoarding of time credits, that people will do things for others, but not ask for any services themselves. Although common perceptions might imagine a free rider problem where people use other people's time without giving anything in return, a bigger problem according to the literature on timebanks actually seems to be that people want to give their time to others but without using any services themselves. Many members appear to be supportive members who like the idea of timebanks for political reasons, while only a few members are very active. The dominant social norms discourage people from asking for

services, fearing they are abusing the system. However, the timebank logic is based on reciprocity and not charity, and giving without receiving undermines the functioning of the timebanks. The timebanks try to counter this by encouraging users to have a balance close to zero, and some have a limit to how much surplus and debt one can have, such as 20 or 30 hours. The authors comment that four of the 38 timebanks in their study had to close due to lack of activity before their study was published and identify this "internal" threat as a "fundamental problem" (Papaoikonomou & Valor 2017).

In relation to the dimension of commodification of time, one can say that these obstacles occur when the timebanks are not commodified *enough*. The timebanks constantly have to negotiate between the temporal logic of their idea of reciprocity and community and the commodification of time in the surrounding society which values acceleration and effectiveness. This clash with the norms in the surrounding society is not only related to temporality, but also to issues such as how to evaluate a service. Should members write comments online about how (dis)satisfied they were, or is this a potentially harmful practice spilling over from mainstream consumer society? (Papaoikonomou & Valor 2017).

In Lee et al.'s (2004) comparison of different British local currency systems, including both LETS and a timebank, they mention how LETS is "drenched in mainstream conventions" (Lee et al. 2004:609) in spite of its attempt to provide an alternative exchange system. They quote one of their interviewees to illustrate how the mainstream norms about values are difficult to abandon:

I know [that] in Mendip LETS the view there was ... [that] an hour of one person's time is worth an hour of another person's time, it doesn't matter what you are doing. And I was doing acupuncture then, and I had a babysitter, and in some way it didn't feel quite balanced for me, because somebody could come and do four hours of babysitting – and that's quite nice – two hours you're sitting reading a book, and I mean, that's fine, but for me to do four acupuncture treatments – four people – you can't [do it]. You know, it's not quite the same. So, to me that's one of the difficulties, which is just the nature of life. You have to address these issues (Lee et al. 2004:609).

It is exactly this aspect of conventional exchange that is a major difference between the timebanks and the capitalist "time is money" equation. The timebanks' ambition is to make every individual's time equally valuable (Papaoikonomou & Valor 2017), but as the quote illustrates, conventional thinking can be hard to overcome. In capitalism, the price of a service depends on the market, and usually a lawyer will be able to demand a much higher salary than a dogwalker. One of the political Greek timebanks has used a different approach and exchanges one service for another no matter how long each one takes (Papaoikonomou & Valor 2016).

Worker cooperatives and commodification of time

The worker cooperatives oppose the commodification of time in some aspects, where one example is the equal ownership of the organization. This involves that the members make use of their time for their own gains through collective self-government, rather than ‘selling’ their labor power to an employer. However, the co-operators do get financial compensation for their working hours within the co-ops. Wages are distributed amongst the members who have partaken in income-gaining projects based on their reported working time. This involves a commodification of time, exemplified by the following quote from a member in the Transportation Co-op:

If I put in 15 more minutes, I know that I will get something for it, compared with if one would not get paid over-time somewhere else. And then, it always turns out that one does some things without writing it down or time report is or something like that. (Member 2, Transportation Co-op)

The quote illustrates how members may be motivated to put in extra work in the co-op since they know that they will get economic compensation for it, which clearly reflects how their time is being commodified. But the member also says that the time is not always reported, an aspect that connects to what was mentioned above that the members may not report their time in the same way. This means that time is an unstandardized commodity, but a commodity nevertheless.

However, the co-ops practice resistance to the commodification of time to some extent by using work time for projects that do not generate money. The Heritage Co-op has a system for reporting working hours that includes time spent on work that does not generate money, neither for the co-op nor the member. The co-op also spends potential profit on projects that are seen as valuable but will not be profitable.

[W]e make sure then to do some other things at times, that may involve a loss – that we actually use our profit to projects involving a loss but that can raise bigger issues and make some other impressions in the society. (Member 2, Heritage Co-op)

Further, in the Drama Co-op, they talk about how to resist the enhanced pulse and stress in the surrounding society – the social acceleration (Rosa 2013b) – and include time for reflection in their salaried working hours. They emphasize having “non-productive” time that assures physical and mental sustainability as resistance to a perceived capitalist, exploitative working life. However, the co-operators also talk about their non-productive reflection time as something that will improve the output, advancement and quality of their produced work.

Thus, even if the co-ops value time that is not productive, and work for themselves rather than selling their labor power, their “oppositional” time to some extent reflects a capitalist logic where time is valuable according to its conversion into money.

Constructive resistance or reproduction of the dominant temporality?

In the introduction we asked how the alternatives differ from the dominant capitalist temporality and to what extent they depend on the same logic that they attempt to confront. The analysis above has shown that timebanks and worker co-ops both resist and reproduce the abstract and standardized clock time and commodification of time of capitalist temporality. In organizing their activities, timebanks depend on clock time as a way of measuring a service, reproducing this aspect of capitalist temporality. However, a basic principle in timebanking is that everyone's time is worth the same, something which challenges the usual market system of unequal returns for labor. Worker co-ops oppose the strict 40-hour work week and resist the "time is money" equation by valuing time that is not productive according to traditional, capitalist wage labor, but in some aspects reproduce the dominance of clock time and commodification of time, for instance by being paid according to clock time hours.

We also asked how these alternatives construct resistance that may have the potential to mitigate the dominant capitalist temporality in the short and the long run. This final question is addressed in this section by discussing the issues of mainstreaming vs. radicality and the spread of social innovations.

The two analyzed examples of collective organizing have an explicit intention to create social practices and ways of relating to other people which differs from the mainstream, which in the present day means a society where capitalism and the market economy dominate the organizing of work and service exchange. Globally, those who work on organizing community exchange systems, such as timebanks, have a rather sophisticated theoretical critique of the exploitation of global capitalism and present-day money systems. Many Swedish cooperatives have also chosen their organizational form in order to enhance other values than the dominance of capitalist logics.

Both timebanks and co-ops face a dilemma when communicating with others. Should they emphasize their radicalism and stick to the principles, even if it means remaining small and mainly organizing those who have a political motivation? Or should they "mainstream" themselves as a viable alternative which works in practice, as one more option to choose from in system which celebrates "individual freedom to choose"? The last option might have a greater potential for fast growth, but at the expense of compromising basic principles and creating internal contradictions.

The question regarding how much to mainstream in order to make a difference is central in both our cases. It takes time to create new norms, not least when the attempts are made within the same system that is being opposed. Many of the interviewed co-operators, for instance, articulate that they may have to tone down their reference to organizational form in order to receive customers. This indicates, in line with the work by Jaumier et al. (2017), that cooperatives may be either pragmatist, reformist, or political in relation to capitalism. Worker co-ops can thus be framed as compliant with capitalism, for example through articulations that cooperative enterprises can be a way for the worker to earn more money (Wiksell 2017). This points to an understanding that the co-ops' constructive resistance against capitalist temporality is not a

feature built into the organizational form itself, but practiced due to a political effort of individual worker co-ops.

Similarly, in the context of LETS, a close cousin to the timebanks, North (1999) has pointed out the tension between radical resistance and mainstreaming. Whereas some participants emphasized LETS as neutral and apolitical, those with explicitly anarchist views saw it as completely different. To them, LETS was a tool for resistance based on alternative economic values. Although LETS was not a timebank, these members emphasized how work should be valued equally for the time it took rather than the skills it required, an important principle in the timebanks' efforts against the commodification of time.

Although mainstreaming might in the short perspective bring in more customers or participants to the timebanks and worker cooperatives, recent research on the spread of social innovations indicate that for long term radical change to take place, there might be good reasons to nurture the radical elements even though this means remaining relatively small and isolated for the time being (Törnberg 2018). In the area of *transition studies* on how socio-technical innovations spread, it is well established that innovations are easily incorporated into existing systems as long as they are faster, cheaper and better. However, completely new approaches that clash with existing systems and norms may break through only if first nurtured in a protected niche environment, where they can "learn to fly" without competing with the dominant systems. In a theoretical article, Anton Törnberg (2018) combines these insights with the literature on social movements, in particular the part focusing on free social spaces and prefigurative politics. Törnberg concludes that for bottom up social innovations driven by social movements to succeed, it is essential that the alternatives are pre-existing and ready to exploit a window of opportunity when it arises. Such alternatives might "be a social haven where critical social movements are free to develop new stories and counter-discourses that go beyond the constraining narratives of the hegemonic regimes of today – stories focused on building the new, able to conjure new specters, to haunt the dream of the old" (Törnberg 2018:404). In applying Törnberg's conclusion to timebanks and worker co-ops, it means that if they want to become the new norm in the long run, their emphasis should be on developing *functioning alternatives* which will be ready to show the way once the opportunity reveals itself. In the context of temporality, this means that functioning alternatives beyond clock time and commodification of time should be the focus, not the size in itself.

To find a protected niche environment is a challenge for both worker co-ops and timebanks since they act within the capitalist system. As we have shown, both alternatives to some degree reproduce capitalist temporality, which diminishes their radicality in this aspect. This conclusion is hardly surprising, because even when people are making a serious effort to think and live differently, it seems unrealistic to expect a small alternative operating in a world dominated by global capitalism to be completely anti-capitalist throughout. It remains to be seen how these and other initiatives of constructive resistance against capitalist temporality can practically handle the balancing act of organizing radical alternatives without too much mainstreaming. When timebanks and cooperatives are the new norm, people who join do not need to consider these practices as alternatives

to capitalism, but at the moment, intentional and collective efforts seem to be a condition for being able to explicitly challenge dominant values.

The aim of this article was to theorize the complexities of resistance and investigate the nuances of practicing constructive resistance, and our two examples have illustrated that resistance is not a question of either/or. One aspect of capitalist temporality can be reproduced by alternatives while another aspect is simultaneously undermined. The examples illustrate some potential alternatives, but also the elusiveness of practicing constructive resistance to dominant temporalities. Future studies will show whether such a reproduction and undermining of dominant values is also taking place when it comes to other forms of constructive resistance and other aspects of dominant norms.

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