

National Research University  
Higher School of Economics

As a manuscript

Nesterov Oleg Georgievich

**The concept of post-labor society and the evolution of the philosophy of labor**

Dissertation Summary

for the purpose of obtaining academic degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

Academic supervisor:

DSc, Professor

Tatyana Y. Sidorina

Moscow

2024

## **CONTENTS**

<b>GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>THE MAIN CONTENT AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>APPROBATION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS .....</b>	<b>36</b>

## **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK**

### *Research Relevance*

Today we are witnessing changes in the culture and ethics of work. The transformation of attitudes towards work is a consequence of the changes taking place with and around work. Socio-economic relations are changing, scientific and technological progress contributes to the renewal of methods and means of production, against this background, the role of classical labor is weakening. Industrial labor as a type of human activity is losing its importance for human and society. It is replaced not only by non-material labor, but also by other new types of labor, as well as a new activity that is fundamentally different from labor as an activity. The metamorphoses of work are reflected in numerous and diverse types of new activities, forms and formats of work, new types of employment, new working conditions. Information (post-industrial, late) capitalism, which was talked about at the end of the XX century, has evolved to a digital, supervisory, communicative, platform appearance, which creates new challenges facing human and society as a whole. Along with the change in work, the attitude towards work also changes, a new anthropological type of human arises. In the conditions of cardinal changes taking place in the methods of production, technology, methods of implementation and types of labor, communication and interaction of people, interaction of human and technology, a new work ethic is emerging. The changes that are taking place are shaping an unprecedented perception of technology, different from the times of industrialization; labor relations, colleague relations, family, romantic and friendly relations; working and free time, and time as such; the mode and pace of work and rest, the pace of life, leisure and consumption, etc. The ongoing changes have a significant and noticeable impact on a human's lifestyle, attitude to life and work. A variety of images, scenarios, strategies and tactics of life arise. Changing work affects all aspects of a human's social and personal life.

In the last thirty years, and especially in recent years, a large number of scientific papers have appeared on changes related to labor in one way or another. The emerging concepts of late capitalism and post-capitalism, as well as the concepts of post-labor society, reflect the demand of intellectual thought and society for a revision of work ethics. Fundamental changes in labor require philosophical thought to find answers to the following questions. What is going on with labor today? How is the attitude towards labor changing in society? How does the value and meaning of labor change for a human? What kind of work ethic is being formed in the context of ongoing changes? What social problems does the transformation of labor involve? And other related issues.

The dissertation attempts to show the changes taking place with labor, the evolution of philosophical thought about work, to conduct a critical analysis of the concept of a post-labor society, and also to show how the human attitude to work changes with the change of labor and capitalism. At the end, a hypothesis is put forward about the emergence of a new work ethic in late digital capitalism. However, unlike the works in which a request for a revision of work ethics is formed, this study hypothesizes the emergence of a new work ethic based on the evolution of the philosophy of labor, on new labor phenomena, the transformation of society and capitalism, a change in human attitude to technology and nature, etc.

One of the basic prerequisites of our research is that we live in late digital capitalism, which today is understood as post-industrial capitalism, which is a set of features of digital capitalism: information capitalism, cognitive capitalism, big data capitalism, surveillance capitalism, communicative capitalism, platform capitalism, as well as some features of post-capitalist features of Dmitry Davydov's post-capitalism concept (2021), Paul Mason (2015) and the post-labor society of Srnicek and Williams (2015) adapted to the real conditions of the functioning of the state and society, etc.

The transformation of work and the change in attitudes towards work were influenced on the one hand by all the same processes that led to the formation of late capitalism, and on the other hand by relatively recent phenomena, for example, the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the spread of remote work formats, the digitalization of the economy, education and labor.

As a starting point for the study of the concept of post-labor society and the evolution of the philosophy of labor, there are questions about the change of labor, society and capitalism, about the emergence of new labor phenomena and their impact on humans, about changing the meaning and role of labor in human life, changing human attitudes to labor. Scientific and technical achievements lead to the improvement and creation of new ways of production, which in turn leads to the transformation of traditional ways and types of labor, and on the other hand, creates new types and forms, as well as new working conditions: from freelancing and precariat to gig-employment, creative class work, remote work, digital activity, odd and on-demand work, network work, etc. The reconfiguration of the content and structure of work leads to a new social stratification, the emergence of discourses about new types of societies, discourses about the end of various types of labor, a change in human attitude to work and technology, a change in social relationships, which in turn allows us to put a comprehensive hypothesis about the emergence of a new work ethic in late digital capitalism.

The purpose of the research is to study the changes in the philosophy of labor, the concept of labor, the concept of post-labor society, and labor culture in the context of late digital capitalism. To achieve this goal, it is necessary to investigate modern conditions and the transformation of labor, the features and new labor phenomena of late digital capitalism, the changing structure of society, discourses about the emergence of new types of societies and the end of labor, as well as to conduct a critical and logical analysis of theoretical material. The transformation of late digital capitalism can include a change in cultural characteristics, values and structure of society, a change in the meaning and lifestyle of a human, ideas about a human, as

well as the content, meaning, essence, form, conditions, modes and rates of work, leisure and recreation, transformation of the economy, the emergence of new production opportunities, the emergence of new professions, changing the ways and opportunities for income generation, as well as discourses about the end of classical, useful, hired and paid, non-material labor, discourse about post-labor, an automatic and post-capitalist society. The main focus of the research was on the changes taking place in modern labor, society and capitalism.

Discourses about the "end of labor", the end of "labor society" and "post-labor society" were studied by the Russian philosopher, Doctor of Sociological Sciences Polyakova N.L. in the article "The image of modern societies in the sociological theory of the late XX – early XXI centuries" (2009). At the beginning of the XXI century, they talk about the end of labor "in a new way": the end of classical labor is becoming more and more obvious. The role of non-material and creative work is significantly increasing in the economy and society. And already in the second decade of the XXI century, the ideas of the end of "useful" work (Graeber), the end of wage labor (Standing, Crouch, sharing economy, platform employment, etc.), the end of payment (Zuboff, Srnicek and Williams), the end of free time (Huws, Zuboff, Crouch, Nesterov), the end of intellectual labor (Stiegler), etc. In these circumstances, it is appropriate to raise the question of the future of work. The most complex and radical concept problematizing labor and human attitude to work today is the concept of a "post-labor society" by Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams. Therefore, it was chosen in this work to conduct a critical analysis in order to find an answer to the question about the future of work. The concept of a "post-labor society" was developed by N. Srnicek and A. Williams in their work "Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World without Work" in 2015. Combining the theoretical heritage and modern ideas about the labor crisis under capitalism, the thinkers put forward a comprehensive ideological program for the formation of a new society beyond the "civilization of labor" (Sidorina 2014). The project "post-labor society" touches on other relevant related issues about the advantages and disadvantages of "unconditional basic

income" (UBI), the limits and prospects of automation, the possibility of distributing the necessary labor among all members of society, shortening the working week, changing morals and the human as such, in the end – about changing work ethics. Updating the discourse on the «end of work» had led to the appearance of numerous scientific papers on the problem of free time in late capitalism and post-capitalism (Dzhokhadze 2004, Sidorina 2013, Huws 2014, Mayatsky 2015, etc.). Thus, the question of the present and future of work, about changing human attitudes to labor, about the culture of modern work remains open and it remains relevant today.

### *Object, Subject and Methodology of Research*

**The object of the study** is labor as a cultural phenomenon of a post-labor society.

**The subject of the study** is the philosophical and anthropological aspect of labor in a post-labor society.

**As a methodological basis**, we rely on traditional methods of philosophical, cultural, anthropological and socio-philosophical research, as well as well-known formal methods of scientific cognition. The study and critical analysis of the scientific material allowed us to conclude that the concepts of the post-labor society of A. Gorz, P. Mason, N. Srnicek, A. Williams, D. Davydov, etc. In fact, they assume the essential role of labor and the socio-economic order of the capitalist type. These methods also made it possible to identify antinomies, risks and problems of the concept of post-labor society by N. Srnicek and A. Williams as the most complex of them. The system analysis made it possible to study the impact of labor transformation on society in various contexts: professional and personal relationships, in particular the role of labor in human and family life, the structure of society and new social classes, the emergence of new types of laborers, etc. A comparative analysis of the role and importance of work, as well as attitudes towards work in industrial and post-industrial societies, allowed us to identify the distinctive features, trends and work ethics of late digital capitalism. The application of the anthropological approach made it possible

to consider the impact of labor transformation on human change as a type, to characterize the "evolution" of human activity and the conditions of human existence. The socio-philosophical approach made it possible to explore the change in social reality, social interrelationships, a human's attitude to work and free time, perception of time, and a change in a human's lifestyle as a result of a change in a human's attitude to work. In particular, the dissertation notes that today there is «filling free time with busyness», and also that time-saving strategies are becoming the basis of the lifestyle of a modern human, which also reflects the problem of speeding up time. As a result of structuring the studied material, various discourses on the end of work and discourses on solving the problem of free time were highlighted. As a result of the study, logical reasoning and synthesis of scientific material, a new type of activity of late digital capitalism has crystallized – «nudging-forced» leisure, involving significant social risks.

The methodological limitations of the study are the framework of the concepts of post-industrial society, late digital capitalism and post-capitalisms.

### *The Aim and Objectives of the Research*

**The purpose of the research** is to study man and his work as a phenomenon of the culture of a post-labor society.

To achieve the set research goal, the **following tasks were solved**:

1. Study of current issues of philosophy of labor in post-labor society.
2. Study of new types of labor as phenomena of post-labor society culture.
3. Critical analysis of the concept of post-labor society by Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams.
4. Analysis of changes in culture and labor ethics in post-labor society.
5. Conceptualization of principles of new labor ethics of post-labor society.
6. Study of new forms of labor and interaction between people in the process of automation and digitalization of labor.



## 7. Generalization of research results and formulation of conclusions.

### *Novelty of the Research*

The scientific novelty of this dissertation research is reflected in the results presented below.

1. **Four evolutionary stages of the philosophy of labor are identified:** the first – from Karl Marx to Zygmunt Bauman (from the "alienation of labor" to the discourse on the end of classical labor); the second – from Zygmunt Bauman to Andre Gorz (the transition from classical labor to immaterial labor); the third – from Andre Gorz to Nick Srnicek (from the concept of cognitive capitalism to the concept of a "post-labor society"); the fourth is from Nick Srnicek to Bernard Stiegler (from a "post-labor society" to late (digital) capitalism and the "reinvention of work").

2. **Four groups of theories dedicated to solving the problem of free time are identified:** free time as an opportunity (Gorz 2010; Dzhokhadze 2004; Sidorina 2013; Agamben 2019; Srnicek, Williams 2019); free time as a burden (Mayatsky 2015; et al.); free time as digital labor (Huws 2014; Zuboff 2019); free time as a digital activity (Dean 2014; Zuboff 2019; Pogrebnyak 2019; Nesterov 2023b).

3. **Five philosophical discourses on the end of labor are highlighted:** "the end of classical labor" (Bauman 2002; Gorz 2010; Sidorina 2014), "the end of useful labor" (Graeber 2013), "the end of wage labor" (Standing 2014; Crouch 2020), "the end of paid labor" (Huws 2014; Zuboff 2019; Srnicek, Williams 2019), "the end of immaterial labor" (Stiegler 2015, 2018; Stiegler 2019).

4. **The concept of "nudging-forced leisure" or "paid leisure", a new type of activity of late digital capitalism, was introduced,** representing, on the one hand, an activity that substantially coincides with digital leisure, but on the other hand, has signs of work, since it involves payment for online activity, and therefore differs from digital leisure.

5. **The social risks of "nudging-forced leisure" are identified as one of the prospects of a post-labor society.** In particular, the most significant risk is the prospect of the implementation of "nudging-forced leisure" as a substitute for the

welfare state and an analogue of unconditional basic income; the transformation of digital leisure into digital labor under the influence of "nudging" (indirect nudging (Thaler, Sunstein 2008)); the problem may be the dominance of gambling digital platforms as one of the types of platforms or part of the platforms — a source of unguaranteed earnings and likely impoverishment; the prospect of "digital-totalitarianism": digital slavery as a result of the critical gap between the rates of payment for digital activity and the prices of goods and services – users will spend the maximum amount of time online for minimum earnings.

6. **The concept of «filling free time with busyness» is introduced,** reflecting the complex phenomenon of the expansion of working time beyond the norm and the change in the informal normality of working time by increasing the labor required to find a job, maintaining "employability" and carrying out work, which is also a consequence of the new work ethic. At the same time, the phenomenon of "filling free time with busyness" reflects the reorientation of an individual's perception of free time from "rest from work"/"rest for resuming work" to settings such as: "time to search for work or orders", "time to prepare for work", "time for professional development", additional time for earning", "time for reflection on work," etc. This term also considers the spread of irregular work schedules, temporary employment contracts, flexible working conditions, time-based work, etc. In addition, it includes increasing the necessary preparatory activities for getting a job and carrying out work: job search, preparing and updating resumes, communicating with an employer, searching for orders, training, retraining, etc. At the same time, this term also reflects the spread of the phenomenon of "connectivity" as a principle of inclusion in modern work, the "dispersion" and porosity of working time, as well as the phenomenon of "fetishization of free time", in particular leisure (Pogrebnyak 2019). Thus, firstly, "overworking" is what happens at the level of the socio-economic order, that is, it reflects the spread of a culture of irregular work ("connectivity", 24/7 work); secondly, this phenomenon reflects an increase in the necessary auxiliary labor to find work and maintain "employability" (preparation and updating of resumes, job search and orders, retraining, retraining, advanced training, related necessary

communication, etc.); Thirdly, the spread of the practices of forced leisure (Nesterov, 2023b) and free labor (Huws, Afanasov), the transformation of leisure into labor (Pogrebnyak, 2019).

**7. The phenomenon of "saving time" is considered as a distinctive feature of the modern lifestyle of an individual of the post-industrial (late capitalist digital) era.** In particular, we are talking about the consequence of the problem of speeding up time (Castells, Urry, Wajcman, etc.) and the problem of "24/7 connectivity" (Crary), which is an individual's orientation towards organizing life and daily routine according to the principle of minimizing waste of time (and by waste of time individuals can understand different things depending on individual values, however, the focus on saving (or "finding extra time") remains common to them.

**8. It has been revealed** that synthetic freedom is becoming both a condition of work and a reward for labor today.

**9. The principles of the new work ethics of late digital capitalism are formulated:**

a) The principle of self-development (accumulation of knowledge, skills and abilities) replaces the Protestant principle of wealth accumulation (through educational "investments")

b) The principle of constant retraining to ensure the consistency of technical knowledge and skills in labor communities - in the context of constant development and the emergence of new technology and tools, software updates, a person must constantly improve his level to the required "standard" dictated by the modern labor culture of a particular community (and society as a whole).

c) The principle of demonstrating consumption, luxury and wealth replaces the Protestant principles of modesty and restraint.

d) The principle of autonomy in the labor process and the functionality of professional communication: a society of self-developing professionals ("self-enterprises").

e) Self-development, synthetic freedom, consumption, solvency and prestige are becoming the values of the modern labor culture.

f) Transhumanism as an ethical component of labor in a post-labor society is aimed at expanding synthetic freedom (full satisfaction of basic needs, expansion of the boundaries of human and social capabilities) through the synergy of man and technology in the process of labor.

g) The principle of careful attitude to nature and the surrounding world in the process of labor.

### *Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Research*

The theoretical significance of the dissertation is due to the contribution to the development of the philosophy of labor and the understanding of the concept of post-labor society, the understanding of modern labor and employment, as well as the poorly developed discourse on the work ethics of late digital capitalism. The obtained results and conclusions of the dissertation can be used to criticize the concepts of post-labor society for the productive development of programs and concepts of the future. In addition, the dissertation attempts to adapt the most comprehensive concept of post-labor society by N. Srnicek and A. Williams in the real conditions of the functioning of the state and society, which, on the one hand, creates additional difficulties for the development of concepts of the future, and on the other hand represents a special optics that can be used for more thorough conceptual developments. The findings and principles of work ethics of late capitalism can be used to revise the principles of labor relations, the format and structure of educational programs, political projects and scientific discussions. The identified problems of free time in late digital capitalism, a new type of activity – paid leisure, and its risks; the development of time-saving strategies as lifestyles, the conceptualization of discourses about the end of work and the problem of free time can be useful to cultural philosophers, social theorists, sociologists, political thinkers in theoretical and practical activities. In addition, the materials of the dissertation can be used to prepare lectures and seminars on similar topics.

### *Extent of Prior Research into the Problem*

The dissertation examines the structure and features of modern society as a consequence of the transformation of labor and capitalism. A comprehensive analysis of modern capitalism, social interactions, and human lifestyle is carried out through the prism of labor practices and human attitudes to labor, technology, work and free time, personal and professional relationships. The characteristics of modern post-industrial labor are investigated. The article examines the human attitude to work, to remuneration for work, as well as post-industrial principles of work. The author examines the meaning-forming, ordering, organizing role of labor in comparison with industrial and Protestant principles of labor. The author examines a human's attitude to working and free time in the context of the changed content, role, formats, conditions, requirements and expectations from work. The perspective of a post-labor society is explored.

Labor and society, the attitude to work and views on their future in the era of industrialism of the XX century, as well as the reflection of the transition stage to post-industrialism were studied in the works of such outstanding thinkers of the XIX-XXI centuries as K. Marx and F. Engels, P. Lafargue, M. Weber, J. Ortega y Gasset, M. Heidegger, H. Arendt, F. Junger, E. Junger, J. Ellul, E. Mounier, Frankl V., Fromm E., D. Bell, R. Reich, E. Toffler, M. Castells, F. Fukuyama, V.L. Inozemtsev, Z. Bauman, A. Gorz, T.Y. Sidorina, A.Y. Ashkerov, et al. The structure and features of modern society as a consequence of the transformation of labor and capitalism are studied within the framework of the concepts of various types of "societies" and new strata of society characterizing social and economic relations, lifestyle and human activity. Such concepts include the works of the theorists of the "end of labor society" (R. Darendorff, K. Offe), post-industrial society (A. Touraine, et al.), as well as concepts such as the "information society" (Bell 1986, works by O. Toffler, F. Ferrarotti, et al.), "network society" (Castells 1999), "risk society" (Beck 2001), "individualized society" (Bauman 2002), "consumer society" (Baudrillard 2006), "automatic society" (Stiegler 2015), "rent society" (Martianov, Fishman, Davydov

2019), and others. Many modern thinkers note the emergence and expansion of new social classes, in which the type and form of work play an important role. The most important "new" social classes are "creative class" (Florida 2012), "precariat" (Standing 2014), "amphibian" workers (Sidorina 2017), "personaliat" (Davydov 2021), freelancers (Strebkov, Shevchuk, 2022), digital nomads (Bauman 2000, Kuzheleva-Sagan 2016, 2019, 2020a, 2020b), etc.

As a result of the transformation of capitalism, the format and content of labor, and the expansion of new classes in the XXI century, new discourses about the "end of labor" have been formed. The traditional and relevant discourse is "the end of classical labor" (J. Rifkin 1996; Bauman 2002; Gorz 2010; Sidorina 2014). At the same time, in the last decade, discourses about the end of "useful" work (Graeber 2013), the "end of wage labor" (Standing 2014; Crouch 2020), the "end of paid labor" (Huws 2014; Zuboff 2019; Srnicek, Williams 2019), the "end of immaterial labor" (Stiegler 2015, 2018; Stiegler 2019).

A comprehensive analysis of modern capitalism, post-industrial labor and employment, social interactions, and human lifestyle in late digital capitalism, produced through the prism of labor practices, has been carried out within the framework of numerous works of our time: "cognitive capitalism" (Gorz 2010), "communicative" capitalism (Dean 2014), "platform" capitalism (Srnicek 2019), "surveillance" capitalism and "instrumentalism" (Zuboff 2019), "ethical" capitalism (Collier 2021), "24/7" capitalism (Crary 2022), etc. And also, in the works of Russian thinkers (Afanasov 2019b, Pavlov 2021, Safronov 2020b, etc.). Modern thinkers have also analyzed various features, features and types of modern work: mobility and fluidity of work (works by Bauman, Urry, Florida), creativity of work (Florida), immateriality of work (Gorz), lousy jobs (Graeber), precarious employment (Standing 2014), gig-employment (Crouch 2020), sharing economy ("sharing-economy": Botsman, Rogers 2010), "platform" employment (Srnicek 2019), etc. The phenomena of remote work have not been sufficiently studied, however, their characteristics are given in general terms within the concepts of digital nomads and freelancers.

The concepts of post-capitalist and post-labor projects, as well as related issues, in particular, the limits and problems of labor automation, the problems and prospects of unconditional basic income, the concept of synthetic freedom, etc. are explored in the works of modern thinkers. Among the concepts of post-capitalism, one can single out "project zero" (Mason 2015), "post-labor society" (Srnicek, Williams 2019), "personalistic" post-capitalism (Davydov 2021), and some other concepts of post-capitalisms. The most radical concept of post-capitalism can be considered the project of the "post-labor society" by Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams (2015), consisting of four main provisions: full automation, reduction of the working week, the introduction of unconditional basic income (UBI) and the negation of work ethics. In addition, the ideas of "accelerationism" (Srnicek, Williams 2018) and its criticism (Srnicek 2018; Noys 2018), the idea of "synthetic freedom" (Srnicek, Williams 2019; Pavlov 2020; Nesterov 2023a), as well as a request for rethinking work ethics (Srnicek, Williams, 2019). The concept of Srnicek and Williams in the last few years has caused a "lively" discussion among social theorists, economists, political philosophers and philosophers (Pavlov 2019; Kravchenko 2022; etc.). Attempts have also been made to combine the concepts of "accelerationism", "platform capitalism" and "post-labor society" (Safronov 2019, Morozov 2019, Nesterov 2023a); and there was also a comprehensive criticism of the "post-labor society" as a prospect (Davydov 2020, Nesterov 2023a). Numerous modern works are devoted to the prospects, limits and problems of automation (Beck 2001; Gorz 2010; Standing 2014; Stiegler 2015, 2018; Srnicek, Williams 2018, 2019; Erofeeva, Klowait 2019; Stiegler 2019; etc.). The results of experiments, philosophical foundations and variations of UBI are widely understood in the scientific literature (Gorz 2010; Srnicek, Williams 2019; Martianov, Fishman, Davydov 2019; Van Parais, Vanderborcht 2020; Pisarev 2020; Pavlov 2020a; Pavlov 2020b; Sidorina 2014; Sidorina, Zabolotin 2022; Nesterov 2023a).

The attitude of a human to working and free time in the context of the changed content, role, formats, conditions, requirements and expectations of work, as well as

the meaning-forming, ordering, organizing life role and function of work in comparison with industrial and Protestant principles of work are studied in the works of modern domestic and foreign philosophers. At least four groups of theories are devoted to the problem of free time: free time as an opportunity (Gorz 2010; Dzhokhadze 2004; Sidorina 2013; Agamben 2019; Srnicek, Williams 2019); free time as a burden (Mayatsky 2015; etc.); free time as digital labor (Huws 2014; Zuboff 2019); free time as digital activity (Dean 2014; Zuboff 2019; Pogrebnyak 2019; Nesterov 2023b). An extensive analysis of the problem of acceleration of time, transformation of temporality in late digital capitalism is presented in the works of social theorists and sociologists: "The New Spirit of Capitalism" (Boltansky, Chiapello 2011), "Sociology beyond societies. Types of mobility for the XXI Century" (Urry 2012), "Time is short: Accelerating life under digital capitalism" (Wijcman 2019), "24/7. Late Capitalism and the Goals of Sleep" (Crary 2022), et al. (including Southerton, Tomlinson 2005) and others. The modern human attitude to work and remuneration for work, as well as the ethics of work, have been studied in the works of many thinkers (Gorz 2010; Inglehart, Welzel 2011; Pogrebnyak 2019; Podoroga 2020; Weber 1990; Koval 1994; Magun 1998; Sidorina 2018; Mironov 2020; Davydov 2021; Nesterov 2024).

The concept of a post-labor society, as well as issues of the future of labor, the evolution of the philosophy of labor, the transformation of attitudes to labor due to the historical specifics of the speed of changes in society, capitalism and labor, leaves an extensive number of questions and problems in need of reflection, reflection, search for answers and solutions, clarification of characteristics, updating of the terminological apparatus, as well as development and testing of new concepts of work and principles of work.

## **THE MAIN CONTENT AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

**The first chapter of the dissertation** is devoted to the analysis of modern labor and (post-labor) society in conditions of labor change. We are talking about the transformation of the social structure and society as a consequence of scientific and



technological progress, changes in culture, role, types, conditions and forms of labor reflected in the evolution of the philosophy of labor. In the conditions of the "end" of classical (industrial) labor, modern thinkers talk about the "rise" of new social classes, groups and strata of society. The transformation of the social structure allows thinkers to talk about the transition from a "labor society" to its new types. The concept of "labor society" was replaced by the concepts of "information society", "network society", "post-labor society", etc.

Before talking about the transformation of the "labor society" of the XX century and the future of labor, it is appropriate to recall the place of labor among other types of activities and identify the work that will be discussed in this dissertation. In the *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Sociology* (1995), labor is "an expedient human activity in which he uses tools to influence nature and use it to create objects necessary to meet his needs." Labor is a unity of three points: purposeful, expedient human activity or actual labor, objects of labor and means of labor. In the scientific literature of the XX and XXI centuries, this understanding of labor has become considered classical. Nevertheless, in particular cases, work is understood in different ways. Labor can be abstract, living, concrete, necessary, social, alienated, surplus, mental, physical, etc. [*Encyclopedic Dictionary of Sociology*, 1995]. Today they talk about work in a "new way". In particular, they talk about intangible, creative, intellectual, digital, online, free, domestic, gender-based work, and other types and types of it. The German-American political philosopher of the XX century, Hannah Arendt, in her work "Vita activa, or On Active Life" (1958), distinguishes work among other activities. The philosopher writes about mental activity, contemplation, leisure, recreation, hobbies, labor (work (body)), work (creation), actions (deeds), etc., as separate types of activity. For H. Arendt the transition from "vita contemplativa" to "vita activa" characterizes a change in a human's lifestyle. The thinker refers to the mode of "vita activa" three types of activity: labor, work and action. Labor as work (of the body), inherent in antiquity mainly to slaves, is characterized by difficulty, hardship, pregnancy, necessity. Work as an activity inherent, for example, to artisans and artists, characterizes the transformation of the

natural world into objects of the environment. Actions (deeds) as a separate type of activity, characterizes the assumption of something new: an act, as H. Arendt writes, creates a new thread in the fabric of intersocial connections and interactions. This is a step towards the future, where there is always uncertainty of consequences.

Today it is also customary to distinguish between the concept of “labor” and “work”. Despite the fact that they usually coincide in practice, nevertheless, terminologically, the concept of “work” has rather a socio-economic connotation. The German philosopher Friedrich Junger characterized the concept of work as a social concept: "We can say that where everything is determined by the laws of nature, the concept of work has no place, since the working nature of the actions performed cannot yet be separated from the force acting during this process" [Junger, 2022].

In this dissertation, we are talking about labor in the classical sense, unless otherwise indicated or special clarifications are given about which labor we are talking about. At the same time, we will talk about labor replacing the classical one, expressed in the concepts of post-industrial society and post-capitalism projects, including the concepts of post-labor society. In this light, the philosophy of labor acquires a new meaning, especially in the context of modern technical innovations and socio-cultural changes.

The first "project" of society beyond compulsory labor is traditionally considered to be the Communist society of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (1848). In the second half of the XX century – the beginning of the XXI century, social theorists, philosophers of culture, society and technology pose the problem of the end of classical labor. Emmanuel Mounier asks the question – "What will a human do if he does not have to work?" (Mounier 1999). Zygmunt Bauman declares the end of the "classical" labor (Bauman 2002). Andre Gorz marks the rise of "immaterial labor" (Gorz 2010). The discussion of labor initiated by Karl Marx in the XIX century largely determined the discourses of the XX and XXI centuries. At the same time, the "labor society" has been replaced by a "consumer society", in which, nevertheless, the amount of necessary labor does not decrease, the economy and culture stimulate a

constant increase in consumption and sales, and modern companies strive to increase their profits day after day.

**The first paragraph of the first chapter** deals with the transformation of society as such, human as a part of it, the role and crisis of labor in society. According to the presented results of numerous studies, the society of the XXI century is radically different from the society of the XX century. The most distinct features of modern society include a pronounced attitude towards "individualism" (the concept of "individualized society" by Z. Bauman), a lifestyle "here and now" that becomes the only rational one in conditions of constant "risk" (the concept of "risk society" by U. Beck), a huge amount of information and an extraordinary increase in the speed of information exchange (M. Castells, J. Urry), intensification of consumption and consumerism, consumer lifestyle (J. Baudrillard), the loss of technical knowledge and understanding of the principles of functioning of the surrounding world (B. Stiegler), the spread of a rental lifestyle (V. Martyanov, L. Fishman, D. Davydov), etc.. Within the framework of this part of the dissertation, the most significant concepts that influenced the formation of the structure of society of late capitalism and the new work ethic were considered. One of the main features of modernity is becoming "flexibility", which is expressed in changing working conditions and new work, causing the restructuring of society, the emergence of new socio-economic groups, and at the same time – a variety of images and lifestyles, labor values, which become the basis of the new work ethic of late capitalism.

Today, it is often said that we live in an "informational" (E. Toffler, D. Bell, M. Castells, etc.) or the "network society" (M. Castells). This type of society is characterized by the complication of social and organizational relationships, the decentralization of interactions, the intertwining of numerous streams of a huge amount of information and "connectivity". At the same time, there is an increase in "distrust" in modern society, as a characteristic and ailment of modern capitalism [Collier, 2021], as well as feelings of loneliness (Z. Bauman) and fear (W. Beck), leading to a reduction in the planning horizon at different social levels. Modernity

often seems to thinkers to be the end of history in widespread automation and the subsequent loss of technical knowledge about the complexity of the world around us, which allows us to talk about an "automatic society" (B. Stiegler). In these conditions, the pace of life accelerates (J. Wijnman), contributing to the development of a specific lifestyle of the individual and the culture of the "consumer society" (Baudrillard). Against this background, the "lazy" lifestyles characteristic of the "rental society" are spreading (Martyanov V.A., Fishman L.G., Davydov D.A.). In modern society, in particular, new labor values, attitudes and requirements to work are being formed in its individual strata, on the basis of which the concepts of a "post-labor society" and the concepts of post-capitalism arise (A. Gorz, P. Mason, N. Srnicek and A. Williams, D. Davydov, etc.).

**The second paragraph of the first chapter** explores the changing structure of society, labor, and attitudes towards work in post-industrial society. The task of this part is to consider the emergence of new strata and individual groups in society, to explore the change in the culture of work and human attitude to work as a consequence of the transformation of the role, types and forms of labor. In the conditions of post-industrial labor, new classes and social strata of society have emerged. Modern social stratification is largely determined by the nature and content of the changed labor, its roles and forms, although other factors certainly take place. However, within the framework of this paragraph, they have mostly been put out of brackets. Let's make a reservation that the objectives of this paragraph do not include the formation of a holistic multilateral understanding of the structure of modern society. For this reason, the focus of attention is on such phenomena as the emergence of the "creative class" (p. Florida) and his requests for new working conditions, including those reflected in a new type of worker, whom the philosopher of labor Sidorina T.Y. called "amphibians" (2017), as well as reflecting a change in human attitude to work. At the same time, we are talking about the emergence and problems of the precariat, a "new dangerous class", as the author of the concept of the "precariat", the British thinker G. Standing, calls it; about the emergence of new "elites" of the post-capitalist "personalism", focused on competition for "attention"

through digital "creativity" (D. Davydov); about a new kind of entrepreneurs combining the features of the precariat, classical entrepreneurship, wage labor and the creative class – freelancers (D. Strebkov, A. Shevchuk); about the growing proportion of remote workers and "digital nomads" (I.P. Kuzheleva-Sagan), combining travel and work, shaping their lifestyle. This section analyzes a wide range of works devoted to the analysis and criticism of the structure of society in the information age.

Modern cultural philosophers, social and political philosophers, social theorists and sociologists tend to define modern society based on a pre-selected theoretical optics and a separate social problem. Nevertheless, the phenomena they describe and the social features they study, which have a long tradition and often rich empirical material, so thoroughly permeate modern social life and are felt at the individual level that they are generally understandable, relevant and fundamental "vertebrae" that support modern social values and culture, in which new lifestyles and labor values are formed and work ethics.

**The second chapter of the dissertation** is devoted to the analysis of modern capitalism, new labor phenomena and discourses about the "end of labor" in the context of changing capitalism. The emergence of new concepts of capitalism and post-capitalism reflect the transition to a post-industrial society, a change in labor and human attitudes to labor. Today, they talk about various concepts of "late" capitalism, which include "cognitive capitalism", "digital capitalism", "communicative capitalism", "surveillance capitalism", etc. The transition from industrial capitalism to the post-industrial type is characterized by a change in labor and its philosophy. The need to work under emerging conditions of flexible and unstable forms of employment, types of capitalism poses new questions and problems to the philosophy of labor. The problem of "alienation" and the question of the future of labor (the concepts of "communism" and "society of laziness"), characteristic of industrial capitalism and society, are replaced by questions about human in the conditions of new types and forms of labor, mutual responsibility and trust in society (the concept of "ethical capitalism"), the role of, the dignity and value of a human in new working

conditions, the problem of free time, leisure and lifestyle of a human in general, the privacy of his personal life, etc. In the end, new labor phenomena and types of employment, the emergence of new theories of capitalism and post-capitalism led to the emergence of discourses about the "end" of various types of labor, reflecting the demand for a rethinking of the traditional work ethics that has dominated for centuries.

The late digital capitalism has changed the idea of labor, its form, essence and meaning. Capitalism based on classical industrial labor has been replaced by a complex, multifaceted adaptive late digital capitalism, which, as we can note today, involves various modes of production, including not only disappearing classical labor, but also intangible labor, labor in the format of digital creation, labor representing "leisure", network work, and other different work options and formats. Despite the long history of the concept of "late capitalism", dating back at least to Werner Sombart and Ernst Mandel (Afanasov 2021), today it is most often understood as the post-industrial stage of capitalism based on automation, digital production, non-classical labor, etc. In this configuration, other concepts of capitalism become synonymous with late capitalism, which function in capitalist logic, operating with new forms and types of production, labor and activity. In particular, late capitalism is understood as a consensus of ideas and concepts that pointwise and often practically in a "vacuum" explore certain aspects of capitalism. In fact, according to the author of this study, they reflect various aspects of the complex contradictory multifaceted adaptive late (most often digital – based on digital technologies – N.O.) capitalism. Moreover, a number of post-capitalist projects, obviously separating themselves from capitalist logic and most often in the context of discourses about the prospects of late capitalism, nevertheless also prove useful for understanding the features of late digital capitalism and changing attitudes to labor. Ideas about the distinctive features of the "new" capitalism are scattered from thinking about information as a key product and a new source of progress, to data as a new resource and means of exploiting individuals, as well as to digital creativity and leisure as a new, often unnoticeable and free labor for

a human. The change of capitalism turns out to be an extremely important and useful topic for the study of the labor crisis.

Summing up the chapter, it should be noted that most thinkers agree that we live in a "new" capitalism, different from the industrial one. It should be noted that modern late "digital" capitalism already has grounds for distinguishing it into a different type of capitalism from the "late capitalism" of the late twentieth century. First of all, modern capitalism differs in its diversity from the late capitalism of the late twentieth century. The diversity of modern capitalism, which, according to the author, retains the signs of "capitalism", is expressed in various concepts of "the same" capitalism (which in this work we define as "late digital"), and some concepts of post-capitalism, as well as new types of societies. Common to most concepts are such features as: network organization, digital technologies, digital communication, connectivity, mobility (blurring of working and free time, weakening of territorial fixation), weakening of strong social and hierarchical ties, adaptation, short-termism, intangible (creative, intellectual work), gig-employment (working on platforms, odd and free labor), multiple forms and conditions of work, growing social inequality on a geographical basis, as well as in working conditions and formats, and free time; autonomy; and more classical capitalist features: the presence of antagonistic classes and strata of society, unevenness in the distribution of labor and its results, etc. Labor is also undergoing changes, giving rise to new professions, forms of employment and ways of doing work. Classical labor is being replaced by remote intangible work, gig-employment, "creativity" as work, "leisure" as work, network work, etc. New types of laborers are emerging, quickly adapting to constantly changing working conditions and new types of labor, a "nomadic lifestyle" is reviving, based on "digital" intangible remote work, a layer of rental income recipients is growing – both on the basis of classical sources of rent – rent, interest on deposits, and less obvious ones, for example, agglomeration advantages [Collier, 2020, p.228-p.247]. The role of digital technologies and digital communication in the process of work is increasing. As a response to the growing public risks, a request is being formed in society for "safety", "environmental friendliness", "mutual trust" in the progress of work, which affects

both labor migration and requests for living conditions. At the same time, the precariat and gig-employment seem to be a serious problem. First of all, for reasons of social destabilization and existential threat. At the same time, the risks of job meaninglessness, expressed in the discourses of the end of useful and immaterial labor, look real.

**The first paragraph of the second chapter** presents the results and analysis of various scientific studies describing the new phenomena of labor and employment characteristic of late digital capitalism. These phenomena largely shape and reflect changes in working conditions, human attitudes to labor, and a qualitative transition from traditional work ethics to the work ethics of late digital capitalism. The transformation of forms and conditions of employment is important, in particular, the reduction of social responsibility on the part of companies and digital platforms, the spread of precariat, freelancing, remote work format, platform employment, sharing and gig-economy, etc. The ongoing changes lead to a rethinking of the role and essence of labor for human and society. The transformation of working conditions requires continuous learning, flexibility, adaptation, mobility, connectivity, etc. from a human.

The development of science and technology, the transformation of society and capitalism have led to the fact that industrial labor, characteristic of a labor society, has declined. The development of capitalism has led to the emergence of new types of activities, types, types and forms of labor. At the same time, man's attitude to work has changed. The problems of labor transformation in the context of the development of science and technology, freedom, free time, the value of labor and man, the meaning and role of labor in human life and society, human attitudes to labor, etc. have come to the fore for the philosophy of labor. Modern labor has many socio-economic characteristics that classical industrial labor did not possess. Post-industrial labor is characterized by fluidity, flexibility, immateriality, lack of a strict work and rest regime, etc. A large number of unspoken obligations are formed around direct labor, which become an inseparable part of the labor implementation process. These



include the need for retraining, self-development, the ability to work with digital technologies and programs, connectivity, digital communication, mobility, multitasking, as well as other various skills and abilities. At the same time, there are changes in working conditions. There is a decrease in social guarantees and obligations, the gap in the comfort of working conditions and content between the creative class and the precariat is increasing, new employment formats are emerging – from platform employment to remote work format, opening up opportunities for new lifestyles, but bearing new challenges and threats. Labor becomes a factor and condition for the growth of social inequality and stratification – a criterion for dividing into "ours" and "others". At the same time, there is a trend towards the "randomness" of work, the "transactionality" of work, the "situationality" of employment, which in principle force us to raise the question – can such an activity be considered full-fledged work? Today it is becoming obvious that classical labor, which requires a specific but rather general specialization, involves diligence, diligence, and often self-realization in the process of work through awareness of social significance, public recognition, solidarity and cooperation, and self-alienation in work, disappears. It is being replaced by a bifurcated reality – on the one hand, it is a new activity with the characteristics of creativity, intellectual work, "digital" handicraft, requiring a completely new ethics, organization and discipline of work; and on the other hand, for those who are less fortunate, it is an activity to fulfill simple assignments and tasks – from fulfillment "orders" and "tasks" to simple online activity that do not require any special training and education, except for legal capacity and basic skills in handling digital technical devices. The danger lies not only in the fact that such work is deprived of social guarantees and human dignity, but that it can become the main activity for those who are capable and possibly aimed at more.

**The second paragraph of the second chapter** reflects the results of research on the features of late digital capitalism, as well as research on the prospects of capitalism. Numerous concepts of capitalism and post-capitalism are an expression of the demand of modern culture for a rethinking of traditional principles and values of labor. In late capitalism, new means and methods of production are taking the place

of labor and capital, based on digital technologies and big data, on communication and creativity, on surveillance and exploitation of human free time, on cooperation between human and technology, etc. The emergence of various concepts of post-capitalism in the last decade clearly indicates the transformation of traditional ideas about capital, labor and work ethics. At the same time, "non-capitalist" post-capitalisms are somehow reduced to "capitalist" in the same way as socialist industrialism represented capitalism with centralized production planning. Nevertheless, trends and trends are extremely important, on the basis of which images of the future are formed, reflecting new features of modern society in general and work ethics in particular. Thus, in the second paragraph, we clarify the definition and features of late digital capitalism as a combination of cognitive, digital, supervisory, communicative capitalism and other concepts of capitalism and "capitalist" concepts of post-capitalism. Also, topical issues of the philosophy of labor, problems of labor and attitudes to labor are studied, analyzed through the prism of changes taking place with capitalism.

**In the third paragraph of the second chapter**, discourses about the "end" of various types of labor are conceptualized. Against the background of the ongoing changes and the emergence of new labor phenomena described in this dissertation, new discourses about the "end of labor" have formed in the XXI century. Well-known social theorists, political philosophers, philosophers of culture and technology have written explicitly and latently about the "end" of labor. In the late XX – early XXI centuries, thinkers talked about the end of labor in the "classical sense", but today we can talk about at least five discourses reflecting the evolution and dynamics of philosophical thought about labor and modern society. Based on the analysis of scientific literature, within the framework of this dissertation, a classification of discourses about the end of labor was carried out: "the end of classical labor" (Bauman 2002; Gorz 2010; Sidorina 2014), "the end of useful labor" (Graeber 2013), "the end of wage labor" (Standing 2014; Crouch 2020), "the end of paid labor" (Huws 2014; Zuboff 2019; Srnicek, Williams 2019), "the end of immaterial labor" (Stiegler 2015, 2018; Stiegler 2019).

**The third chapter of the dissertation** reflects the main issues of modern labor philosophy, as well as examines the problems of labor and human in new working conditions. In addition, the final paragraph presents the concept of a new work ethic of late digital (multifaceted, adaptive and contradictory) capitalism.

In the first and second chapters, a comprehensive analysis of modern society and capitalism was carried out, in which new working conditions are being formed, replacing the classical one, and a new work ethic, different from that which was characteristic of industrial society (traditional). Within the framework of the third chapter, the vectors and conceptual boundaries of modern labor philosophy are outlined, the prerequisites and consequences of the concept of a post-labor society are investigated in an attempt to adapt it to the real conditions of the functioning of the state and society. The concept of a "post-labor society" actualizes the philosophical problems of labor, free time, human dignity in new and future working conditions, human freedom and understanding of "just" freedom in society, a new work ethic characteristic of post-industrial society within the framework of late digital capitalism, etc. A critical analysis of the concept of a post-labor society, as the most radical and meaningful attempt to rethink the culture and ethics of work, is carried out considering and referring to the results of the analysis of modern working conditions and the features of late digital capitalism obtained in previous chapters. Within the framework of a critical analysis of the prospects of a post-labor society, such consequences as the problems of free time of the "post-labor society" and late digital capitalism are investigated: in particular, a new type of activity "paid leisure" or "nudging-forced" leisure, different from "digital leisure" and "digital labor", which is rather a form of "network labor", while retaining the signs of leisure activities; the phenomenon of "filling free time with busyness", reflecting the dispersion of working time across the entire canvas of an individual's biological time as a result of the emergence of new ethical norms of human participation in modern labor, in particular, we are talking about the "porosity" of working time, the transformation of temporality in late capitalism "24/7", the need to be connected and "connected" to the network for the possibility of "on-demand" communications, the dissemination of flexible

employment conditions – gig-economy, sharing economy, platform employment, remote formats and irregular work schedules, and other more standard forms of flexible employment; dissemination of "time saving" strategies expressed in the intensification of consumption, leisure and labor, etc. At the same time, such concepts of providing a human with necessities as UBI and "payment for online activity" are considered. The study of these phenomena and problems, based on the research results obtained in previous chapters, allows us to put forward a hypothesis about the formation of a new work ethic of late digital capitalism, the principles of which are discussed in the last paragraph of this chapter.

Thus, the first chapters assumed the substantiation of the hypothesis of the emergence of a new work ethic, while the third is aimed at analyzing modern labor problems and labor philosophy, exploring the principles of a new work ethic and its direct conceptualization.

**In the first paragraph of the third chapter**, the critical analysis of the concept of post-labor society by N. Srnicek and A. Williams is carried out, in which it is shown that the transformation of labor activity raises the question of the transformation of labor and human attitude to work. The problem of free time in late digital capitalism is being actualized. The question arises about the limits of automation, the possibility of a fair distribution of labor among all members of society, and the understanding of "fair" freedom. Alternative models of providing human necessities are analyzed. Against this background, there is a transformation of the culture and ethics of work. The emerging concepts of a "non-labor" society cannot answer the questions posed to the modern philosophy of labor, offering perspectives that are largely divorced from reality. When trying to adapt to the real (I emphasize that we are not talking about actual conditions, but about possible) conditions of the functioning of the state and society, the concept of a "post-labor society" by Srnicek and Williams falls apart. Firstly, the transition stage to a post-labor society, a set of transitional measures, intermediate solutions becomes the permanent (marginal) state of the "post-labor society". Secondly, the concept of "synthetic freedom" becomes

heterogeneous and unfair, contradictory in itself, causing a new social inequality in the distribution of income and free time, thereby discrediting itself. Thirdly, the concept of UBI, as the most popular measure in scientific discussion designed to solve most socio-economic problems, has not yet overcome its economic, political, psychological, philosophical and, eventually, ethical contradictions. In the concept of Srnicek and Williams, the introduction of UBI turns out to be unworthy and untimely, ineffective in the task of reducing the social significance of traditional work ethics. As noted by the author of the dissertation in one of the recent articles: "in addition to the fact that the UBI is introduced in addition to the social state, it must exceed the "living wage", which contributes to the non-economic justification of the UBI by the Highlander, aimed at understanding "freedom" as an opportunity for "self-creation" (Nesterov 2023a).

But is there any reason to believe that UBI will be implemented in the near future or will society come to other ways to provide itself with the necessary? This seems unlikely based on the discussions and the mood of the international political elites. At the same time, there is a need in society and, it seems, conditions have been formed for rethinking traditional labor principles that are effective for the industrial economy, but are losing their relevance in late digital capitalism.

**In the second paragraph of the third chapter**, conceptualization of theories devoted to solving the problem of free time is carried out: free time as an opportunity (Gorz 2010; Dzhokhadze 2004; Sidorina 2013; Agamben 2019; Srnicek, Williams 2019); free time as a burden (Mayatsky 2015; et al.); free time as digital labor (Huws 2014; Zuboff 2019); free time as a digital activity (Dean 2014; Zuboff 2019; Pogrebnyak 2019; Nesterov 2023b). Within the framework of the consideration of the fourth discourse, the conditions of the emergence, content, and principle of functioning of a new type of activity "nudging-forced leisure" are characterized, as well as its impact on society and human in the perspective of a post-labor society adapted to the real conditions of functioning of the state and society. Within the framework of the paragraph, it was found that nudging-forced leisure differs from

digital labor and ordinary digital leisure. The operations of a new activity are usually simple actions that often require only attention and simple manipulations on the screen from the individual. At the same time, socio-economic conditions in which there is a lack of useful labor and work contribute to the erosion of the intrinsic value of paid digital leisure, turning it into an "empty" meaningless activity, full-fledged work with low tariff rates and piecework wages. This metamorphosis means the weakening of digital leisure as a means of self-realization, learning and recreation, enslaving a human in a virtual space. This perspective corresponds to the forecasts of Kuzheleva-Sagan I. P. that the class of "virtual digital nomads" will be the most widespread among digital nomads. Using the conclusions of this dissertation, it is possible to estimate the capacity of this class. At the same time, online activity can be considered as an alternative to DBD: "Features of inequality in post – labor society: choice of profession and work, strategies for spending free time, synergy of labor-centrism trends and strategies for eliminating time, intensification of consumption – all this contributes to the effectiveness of forced leisure in new economic conditions and can compete with the model of unconditional basic income" [Nesterov, 2023b, p. 176]. Also, within the framework of this paragraph, the risks of the spread of "nudging-forced" leisure, which can become a prototype of labor activity in the perspective of "instrumentalism" (Zuboff), are considered. In particular, the most significant risk is the prospect of the implementation of forced leisure as a substitute for the welfare state and an analogue of unconditional basic income; the transformation of digital leisure into digital labor under the influence of "nudging" (indirect nudge (Thaler, Sunstein 2008)); The problem may be the dominance of digital gambling platforms as one of the types of platforms or part of the platforms – a source of unguaranteed earnings and likely impoverishment; the prospect of "digital totalitarianism": digital slavery as a result of the critical gap between the tariffs for digital activity and the prices of goods and services – users will spend the maximum amount of time online for minimum earnings.

**The third paragraph of the third chapter** analyzes the problem of time acceleration in late digital capitalism, which Jonathan Crary also qualifies as "24/7

capitalism", paying attention to the changing pace and rhythm of work and life. This section shows that the problem of time acceleration reflects the phenomenon of "filling free time with busyness" and actualizes the problem of organizing human life in accordance with the principles of saving time. In such conditions, strategies for "saving time" are developing. The transformation of temporality under 24/7 capitalism means nothing more than a change in the image and rhythm of human life, as a result of the desynchronization of social rhythms of life, an increase in temporal density and dispersion of working time across the entire canvas of a human's available time (with the exception of sleep, Crary notes and adds that efforts are already being made in this direction to "improve" a human with the aim is to reduce the need for natural rest [Crary, 2022, p.11]). As noted earlier, in the conditions of late capitalism, adhering to the discourse about the claims of capitalism on all the free time of a human, time-saving strategies are formed that constitute the principle of organizing new lifestyles. Generally speaking, this "turn" reflects, among other things, one of the principles of work ethics of late capitalism "24/7" in the same way as labor-centrism was a reflection of traditional work ethics (work is the guiding vector of life, organizing and ordering life). In this case, work becomes a fixed point, which, despite the possibility of temporary defocusing, is always in the field of human vision and requires attention, permanently occupying thoughts and filling maximum free time, but unlike labor-centrism<sup>1</sup>, concentration<sup>2</sup> on work is not conditioned by the "guiding" and "organizing" function of labor. Work "25 hours a day", without canceling the possibility of preserving a labor-centered lifestyle under late capitalism, nevertheless contributes to the transformation of the latter into the former, through a new norm of saving time as a way of life, requiring an individual to exhaust, thereby meaningless work and life, permanent involvement in capitalist processes of consumption and

---

<sup>1</sup> Sidorina T.Y. is referring to human-oriented labor-centrism, which organizes and disciplines the daily routine and life, within which work is the guide of human life and systematizes it since the emergence of industrialization. In this understanding, labor organizes life, families, societies, states, etc. In the labor-centric paradigm, the meaning of labor for a human is to guide a human. Work helps to achieve the goal and formalize, organize life.

<sup>2</sup> At the same time, lowering the "concentration" of working time within the framework of the day is irrational (unethical) in the corresponding culture of late capitalism "24/7" ("exculpatory mode"/"grad" - in the Boltanski and Chiapello terminals).

labor, claiming to be its extreme, as Crary repeatedly writes, as shown earlier, on the biological needs of a human (not to mention desires and values).

In these conditions, the wide variability, diversity and divergence of individual social practices, schedules, rhythms and lifestyles, the high density of professional tasks and communications, personal affairs within the framework of the day, the expansion and intensification of consumer practices become problems of modern culture, emerging in the conditions of late capitalism, where the interaction of individuals is legitimized only if their rhythms of life coincide. Personal life and free time are possible only through privilege or marginality (extreme cases), an extreme degree of saving (organization) of time or intensive (networked, connected to a network of communications and tasks in a constant access mode) work. With this configuration, the problem of late capitalism may be an attempt to go beyond the totality of "24/7", focusing on strategies to "save time" and intensify labor in order to increase its efficiency in conditions of the need for constant retraining, 24/7 availability and multitasking. This is facilitated, firstly, by the transformation of free time and leisure into labor, secondly, by the need for permanent retraining and self-development, subordinated to the interests of business and the accumulation of "human capital" (in terms of Boltanski and Chiapello – to support their "employability"), thirdly, cultural ideals ("workload" Gershuni and Sullivan's consumption strategies), fourth, communicative capitalism, the competition of digital platforms for the attention of an individual, as well as digital nudging<sup>3</sup>. As Antonella Korsani declares: "If Fordism set the rhythm of life, dividing time into working and free, and the wage labor society guaranteed social rights in exchange for the self-alienation of a human in work, then new management technologies adjust society to a new model, where the firm becomes the standard of any social form — from the individual to the state. The soul and subjectivity must be brought to work continuously" [Korsani, 2015, p. 67].

---

<sup>3</sup> The term "nudge" came from the theory of indirect stimulation or pushing a person to make a certain choice, introduced by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein in 2008.



In these conditions, "effective" (from the point of view of common sense capitalism 24/7) life strategies in which it would be possible to save a workplace, withstand the onslaught of precarious<sup>4</sup> working conditions, remain "fit for hire" or resist career downshifting, while not losing the remnants of "human" values and not giving up personal needs – become strategies for "intensification" of work and "saving time" in order to create a sufficient gap of free time for the implementation of personal, rather than professional and labor intentions.

In this case, the question arises – will there be a place in a human's life for simple "everyday" joys, for creating a family, for a good rest, for meeting friends, for the development of other individual inclinations? In contrast to direct sabotage, deprofessionalization and marginalization, a strategy of adapting a human to the requirements of the new rhythm of capitalism "24/7" is more likely, in order to find a new balance (balance) of work and personal life. In this case, in conditions of 24/7 totality and an appropriate choice architecture that promotes the realization of free time in the space of digital platforms and the accumulation of "human capital", a human's personal temporal orientation to increase the efficiency, productivity and intensity of their own work, as well as optimizing the daily routine and ordering the sequence of cases, and other time-saving strategies, with the purpose of creating a "gap" of free time for personal life and self-interests. In general, it is possible to hypothesize about the emergence of the principle of work ethics, suggesting that it is unethical to have free time. Against this background, it becomes urgent to develop effective time-saving strategies, such as attempts to find "extra" time for a person, for his personal affairs and ambitions that go beyond work, nudging and the temptations of digital platforms. In such a paradoxical way, the "productivity" and "efficiency" of late capitalism's labor may be an attempt to get out from under its surveillance beyond the totality of "24/7".

---

<sup>4</sup> In turn, the precariat and individuals working in gig-employment (couriers, taxi drivers, etc.) also resort to another strategy – "parallelization" of the duties performed and personal intentions. A demonstration of the implementation of such a strategy is a real-life example that probably everyone who used the services of taxi drivers and couriers "hired" by platforms has encountered, namely a video conversation with close relatives or friends, carried out during a direct trip with a "client" or during the delivery of goods, even at the time of its transfer "from hand in hand" by courier to the client. Refraining from assessing "professional" ethics, it is important to state the existence of the phenomenon itself, which, in our opinion, is a reflection of the problems described in this work.

**In the fourth paragraph of the third chapter**, the conceptualization of the principles of work ethics of late digital capitalism is carried out. In this paragraph, as in the whole of this dissertation, a hypothesis was put forward and substantiated about the emergence of a new work ethic in the conditions of late digital capitalism and its characteristic new work activity – intangible, creative, intellectual, network, digital "free" work, digital creativity, digital network activity; and work – precarious, unstable, gig-employment, in new working conditions – destabilization of social guarantees, schedules, modes and rhythms of work, territorial mobility, network complexity, constant 24/7 availability, fragmentation of labor, etc. Modern labor is aimed at the comprehensive improvement of human, the expansion of the boundaries of human and social opportunities, the reinvention of human, but at the same time, the common sense of labor, consistent with neoliberal logic, most often turns out to be consumption, "solvency" and prestige. The new work ethic is based on a new attitude towards technology as an ally, on an adequate perception of environmental risks, on building a moral society and an environmentally friendly reality. Modern labor is the result of the synergy of human and technology. The constant reinvention of the human, the reorientation and reweighing of values, efforts to expand synthetic freedom transform the ethics of work, forming a new labor morality, which can be called transhumanistic. Transhumanism corresponds to the spirit of development of modern late digital capitalism, more adequately fitting a human into the conditions of new and future work aimed at the synergy of human and technology, instant communication, "mobility", "connectivity" and "accessibility", self-realization, permanent self-improvement and self-development, perception of oneself and each other as competing "socio-economic machines", "self-enterprises". At the same time, new labor requirements are being formed – labor should develop a human. The need for constant retraining and "preparation" for work outside of working hours is becoming a new labor norm. Self-development and permanent retraining become a necessary condition for the inclusion of a human in modern labor. There are also changes in communication between colleagues, subordinates and their supervisors. The relations of "partnership" and hierarchical relationships characteristic of industrial labor are replaced by the principles of "horizontalization" of vertical connections and functionality of professional

communication: a society of self-developing professionals ("self-enterprises"), in which each of the individuals strives to act "effectively", increase and monetize "human capital", reduce communication to the necessary at a minimum, clarifying the necessary questions remotely, by e-mail and via the network. In conditions of "lack" of time, individuals strive to optimize and increase the effectiveness of communication. At the same time, consistency of knowledge, skills and abilities in working with digital technologies, understanding of advanced technological solutions and the context of interaction are expected from all participants in communication. The "filling free time with busyness" and the spread of "time saving" strategies in building an individual's lifestyle mean that productivity and pragmatism become attributes of choice and organization of work. At the same time, synthetic freedom, as flexible, mobile, remote working formats becomes a new working condition. Synthetic freedom becomes both a new working environment and a reward for labor. Demonstrations of consumption, luxury and affluence are replacing the Protestant principles of accumulation, modesty and restraint. Against this background, there is a rethinking of expectations from remuneration for labor. Today, as a reward for labor, a human expects self-realization, including public recognition or recognition of a certain social group, prestige, expanded consumption opportunities and new working conditions.

The impact of the new work ethic is not great at the moment, however, with the development of science and technology, with the growth of environmental risks, with probably unsuccessful but reality-transforming attempts to go beyond capitalism, with the change of several generations, when the oldest of us will be "digital aborigines", it will increase. Like traditional work ethics, some of the principles of work ethics of late digital capitalism will come to naught, and the rest will increase their importance. It is important to reflect that the transformation of labor and capitalism does not happen without a trace, the industrial monumental pillars are replaced by a post-industrial network reality with new flexible unstable weak connections, which today form a certain socio-economic order with growing risks, which reflect the request for a revision of work ethics and in which its beginnings are formed. Also, within the framework of this paragraph, conclusions are drawn that the labor implies a careful attitude towards nature and a

respectful attitude towards human. The role of ecology in human life and work is pointed out by many modern thinkers (Bauman, Beck, Gorz, Srnicek and Williams, Stiegler, etc.). This principle is broader than the requirements of "green" activists representing the international environmental agenda. Considering environmental risks means the need to rethink the ethics and essence of work. Accelerationism, automation and algorithmization contribute to the displacement of a deep technical understanding of the principles of the surrounding world, which, as B. Stiegler notes, contributes to an inadequate perception of technology and growing environmental risks. This means that modern professionals and employees must be technically educated, cultivate expertise, act towards its increase and practice, and not vice versa, have a fundamental education, adequately and predictively understand the consequences of their actions, make informed decisions, carry out knowledge-intensive intellectual labor, be able to conduct a reasoned professional dialogue in order to find the best solutions. Environmental risks imply the formation of professional communities in which professional knowledge will develop. Environmental risks direct capitalism to resolve its systemic contradictions. As U. Beck believed, environmental risks should promote the unity of people in spite of the divisive forces of modern culture and capitalism. In turn, the need for dialogue and communication means that people need not only communication skills, but also fundamental respect for each other. Thus, the principle of "environmental friendliness" is aimed at expanding and deepening theoretical technical knowledge, increasing expertise, public morality and mutual respect.

## **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this study was to examine a person and his labor as a phenomenon of the culture of a post-labor society. As part of the study, we were able to determine the features of the emerging post-labor society, identify new types of labor characteristic of the reality of digital capitalism. Under the influence of changes in labor activity, the essence of a person changes. Human freedom and his existence in a post-labor society become "synthetic" and "modeled", subject to the economic logic and nudging practices of digital platforms, determined by the structure and regime of new labor phenomena. In the context of new technological labor practices, in a seemingly contradictory way, a

symbiosis of labor and free time occurs, free time becomes more and more working. Under the influence of the "working" of free time in the culture of modern labor, such phenomena arise that can be characterized as "work-leisure", "work-leisure", "work-rest", etc. A distinctive feature of the existence of a person in a post-labor society is the phenomenon of "saving time" in the organization of life and everyday social practices. Thus, with the change in labor and the emergence of its new types, a transformation of man occurs, the emergence of new ways of existence, "dependent" on new types of labor.

Today we can talk about the pluralism of types of labor. In the dissertation, we classified new types of labor by a set of formal and substantive features: digital, network, invisible (or free), gig labor, 24/7 labor, etc. To the new phenomena of "labor activity" we can also add "nudging-forced" leisure.

The dissertation also provided a theoretical description of the changing structure of labor. Key changes occurred primarily in the labor culture of the post-labor society.

The modern culture of labor is characterized by the combination of labor activity with leisure and rest, "floating" the beginning and end of the working day, the spread of "24/7" labor. The culture of individualism is also reflected in the goals of modern labor. In a post-labor society, work is performed primarily for the purpose of personal achievement, in contrast to the collectivist goals of work in the socialist society of the 20th century, or the transcendental goals of work characteristic of the Protestant work ethic. Work ceases to be a process of co-participation. At the same time, in the modern work culture, expectations of the worker change. Initiative, involvement, "proactivity", "progressiveness", "creative" approach to work, the desire to expand the range of knowledge, skills and abilities that go beyond the list of those required in the current workplace, diverse professional experience, etc. are valued in workers. For comparison, in an industrial society, such qualities as diligence, hard work, discipline, reliability (including loyalty to the enterprise and their work) were valued above all others in a worker. Zygmunt Bauman already at the beginning of the 21st century said that in the post-labor society, professional dynasties, stable and reliable working conditions with a clear schedule of work and rest time are being replaced by a work culture characterized

by “flexible” working conditions, blurring of the boundaries of work and free time, weakening of strong social ties and legal guarantees (Bauman 2000, Bauman 2001). Long-term employment contracts are being replaced by short-term employment based on temporary labor relations. In the work culture of the post-labor society, regardless of the working conditions, a person always treats his or her place of work as “temporary”. Changing jobs as a strategy for career and professional growth becomes the main one, in contrast to the strategy of employee “loyalty” to one enterprise, which is characteristic of an industrial society. The growing competition that accompanies these changes requires a person to constantly retrain, which also differs from the periodic “advanced training” characteristic of an industrial society. In these conditions, the relationship of partnership in the labor process and "collectivity" as an effective way of carrying out labor are replaced by a culture of personal efficiency, autonomy of individualism and self-development.

In addition, the most noticeable changes have occurred in the content of labor, which is reflected in the transformation of the tool (technology) and the product of labor (knowledge, information, data), the emergence of new professions, as well as new requirements for the knowledge and skills of workers. In addition, the method and nature of labor have changed, expressed in the working conditions that have arisen in the post-labor society (irregular working hours, remote work, "digital nomadism", etc.), the work and rest regime ("porosity" of working time, "fetishization of leisure", "24/7" work regime, the phenomenon of "working" of free time, etc.). Changes have occurred in labor ethics, the role of labor in society, and a person's attitude to work.

The human worker at the machine has been replaced by a human on the network, producing an immaterial product. Moreover, this image is constantly changing. The evolution of the "working" person is expressed in the emergence of creative workers, freelancers, amphibians capable of adapting to any type of immaterial labor, digital nomads, gig workers dependent on the availability of digital devices, electricity and the network. Thus, the changing structure of labor can include the increasing role of technical awareness and adaptability, the ability of a person to retrain, the weakening of spatio-

temporal restrictions and labor regimes, as well as the weakening of social and legal guarantees, the evolution of technical means of production, changes in the nature of raw materials, objects and products of labor. The prospects for human labor are directed towards activities carried out on the network. Simple digital activity on the network and nudging-forced leisure are examples of such activities. Nevertheless, the new activity, the work that is replacing the classical forms of labor, is increasingly difficult to define as a form of labor: this activity ceases to be work as a system of labor relations based on stability, reliability, and social guarantees. The weakening of the usual characteristics and principles of labor is also happening in another direction. Labor is dissolving in working time and consumption due to the weakening of discipline, the rhythms of work and rest, the mixing of work and free time, and the loss of the meaning and value of labor itself. In these conditions, one of the prospects for studying post-labor sociality is the emergence of new types of social inequality. Social inequality of a post-labor society assumes that one part of society is in service (mandatory necessary work) and receives additional income for this, while another part has the opportunity not to work or does not have the opportunity to work at all, but at the same time has a lot of free time. Discussions about new ways to provide people with everything they need, alternative ways of earning income, such as unconditional basic income, rental lifestyle, payment for online activity, etc., create grounds for rethinking capitalist relationships, allowing modern researchers to create new, often utopian, projects for social development. The study showed that in the long term, the labor of the future will increasingly differ from classical labor and move into intangible, digital, network and other forms. At the same time, in the context of the development of platform capitalism, gig employment, casual labor and labor on demand, it makes sense to ask about the future of labor as such. Today, labor continues to occupy an important place in the life of a person and society, shaping the essence of a person, a person as a unique being. At the same time, with the advent of a post-labor society, labor as one of the most important types of activity is undergoing significant changes: the types and nature of labor, the attitude towards labor are changing. The socio-economic value and meaning of labor are changing. The subjectivity of a working person is changing. However, the question of a new type of person and the end of labor remains open, as

indicated by discussions about the role of labor in the modern world. The trends outlined by gig employment, platform employment, digital network activity, attempts by surveillance capitalism to take control and model the life of an individual (instrumentalism - S. Zuboff) point to potential changes in the sphere of labor, the emergence of other types of activity and social practices.

Within the Marxist tradition, modern philosophers of labor continue to explore the alienation of labor, the role of labor in the life of man and society, the prospects for the end of labor, reflect on freedom (leisure, creativity, rest, free time) and the meaning of labor for man (Rogozhnikova 2017). The evolution of the philosophy of labor occurs as a result of interaction with other disciplines, within which man and his labor are studied in the context of social relations and changes in society, problems of time acceleration, development of technologies and equipment, changes in the economic and political system. At the same time, the ongoing changes and new phenomena of labor pose new tasks for the study and analysis of labor activity, culture and labor ethics of a post-labor society. The ongoing changes in labor and labor relations problematize the traditional labor ethics formed over the centuries. A new labor ethic is coming to replace it, which takes into account the expansion of the boundaries of personal and social possibilities (synthetic freedom), the realization of personal intentions, self-realization, prestige, professional communication, and careful attitude to nature. In the conditions of new labor, man changes. Transhumanism promotes adequate inclusion of a person in new labor. That is why it can become the basis of new social morality. At the same time, today we should talk about the incompleteness of the process of forming a new labor ethic, which currently represents an open system. It continues to form and develop in the context of changes in the late forms of capitalism, which is a complex, contradictory, continuously changing system. The new labor ethic arises in response to changes in the organization of labor, the introduction of new technological processes that radically change labor and its capabilities. However, the capitalist system and technological progress contribute to the further dispersion of working time, mixing working time with free time. Platform surveillance capitalism and nudging as tools for modeling human life contribute to the weakening of the meaning and role of labor. The philosophy of labor faces unresolved



issues and challenges. Will labor be able to survive in its high meaning-forming significance under these conditions? What changes await a person in the future? These questions await answers, and they are, one way or another, addressed by the topic of this study. Before we can find answers, however, we need to understand what is replacing industrial society, classical work, and the Protestant work ethic. In this study, we hoped to take another step in that direction.

## APPROBATION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

### *Conference Presentations:*

1. “Posttrudovoe obshchestvo v filosofii Nika Srnicheka i Andre Gorca [Post-labor Society in the philosophy of Nick Srnicek and Andre Gorz]” [in Russian]. Conference Mezhdunarodnaya nauchnaya konferenciya studentov, aspirantov i molodyh uchyonyh "Lomonosov-2021" (April 12-23, 2021, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow).

2. “Sovremennoe osmyslenie krizisa kapitalizma i krizisa truda [Modern understanding of the crisis of capitalism and the crisis of labor]” [in Russian]. Conference Mezhdunarodnaya nauchnaya konferenciya «Filosofiya i vyzovy sovremennosti. K 90-letiyu Instituta filosofii NAN Belarusi» (April 15-26, 2021, Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Minsk).

3. “Za predelami civilizacii truda: obraz zhizni privilegirovannyh klassov raznyh istoricheskikh epoh [Beyond the civilization of labor: the way of life of the privileged classes of different historical eras]” [in Russian]. Conference Novye ob"ekty i novye strategii sovremennoj filosofii (October 30, 2021, Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow).

4. “Trudovaya etika i problemy pravovogo regulirovaniya truda v cifrovuyu epohu [Work ethics and problems of legal regulation of labor in the digital age]” [in Russian]. Conference Vtorye stepinskie chteniya «Racional'nost' v cifrovuyu epohu» (November 9-10, 2021, Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow).

5. “Vyzovy etiki truda v sovremennom kapitalizme [Challenges of work Ethics in modern Capitalism]” [in Russian]. Conference Mezhdunarodnaya nauchnaya konferenciya studentov, aspirantov i molodyh uchyonyh "Lomonosov-2023" (April 10-May 23, 2023, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Moscow).

6. “Etika truda budushchego: 24/7, 25 chasov v sutkah i krajnij trudocentrizm [Work Ethics of the future: 24/7, 25 hours a day and extreme labor-centrism]” [in Russian]. Conference XIV mezhdunarodnaya konferenciya SHkoly

filosofii i kul'turologii NIU VSHE «Mir/miry budushchego» (April 15-26, 2021, HSE, Moscow).

*Publications on the topic of the dissertation:*

Works published by the author in journals indexed in international indexing and citation databases, as well as included in the list of high-level journals of the National Research University Higher School of Economics:

1. Nesterov, O.G. 2023. “Posttrudovoe obshchestvo: sinteticheskaya svoboda i trudovaya etika [Post-working Society: Synthetic Freedom and Work Ethics]” [in Russian]. *Voprosy filosofii [Problems of Philosophy]* 2, 79–88.

2. Nesterov, O.G. 2023. “Problema svobodnogo vremeni v kapitalizme platform: novaya zanyatost' – oplachivaemyj dosug ili... «nadzhing-prinuditel'nyj» dosug [The Problem of Free Time in Platform Capitalism: The New Employment Is Paid Leisure or “Nudging-Compulsory” Leisure]” [in Russian]. *Filosofiya. Zhurnal Vysshey shkoly ekonomiki [Philosophy. Journal of the Higher School of Economics]* 7 (1), 165–179.

3. Nesterov, O.G. 2024. “Principy etiki truda pozdnego kapitalizma [The Principles of the New Work Ethic of Late Capitalism]” [in Russian]. *Gumanitarnye issledovaniya v Vostochnoj Sibiri i na Dal'nem Vostoke [Humanitarian Studies of Eastern Siberia]* 1 (67), 118-127.