CORA Cork Open Research Archive
Cartlann Taighde Oscailte Chorcaí

Title	Cooperation in contemporary capitalism: Significant factors that uncover why embodied cooperation among migrant nightshift workers is weakened
Authors	MacQuarie, Julius-Cezar
Publication date	2019
Original Citation	MacQuarie, J.-C. (2019) 'Cooperation in Contemporary Capitalism: Significant Factors that Uncover Why Embodied Cooperation Among Migrant Nightshift Workers is Weakened', Scientific works of UNSS / Naučni trudove na UNSS, 2 pp. 257-275.
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	https://unwe-research-papers.org/bg/journalissues/article/10100
Rights	© 2019. Made available under a Creative Commons Attribution license - https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/
Download date	2026-11-06 20:27:39
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/14946



UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

COOPERATION IN CONTEMPORARY CAPITALISM: SIGNIFICANT FACTORS THAT UNCOVER WHY EMBODIED COOPERATION AMONG MIGRANT NIGHTSHIFT WORKERS IS WEAKENED

Julius-Cezar MacQuarie*

> Working at night in this market café fulfils more than just making good sales; it has a social dimension. I don't know, you feel like a lonely person. Yeah, I would say [that about a] night job. There are so many people at the market, working here at night and they broke up with their wives because they would cheat on them because they would have no time for them. Many people explained to me… 'cause you know… I build up relationships with people, and they tell me everything… so when they wanna talk to someone, they come to me. [Flori, café waitress]

Flori, is a successful café server at the night market where I did my fieldwork in 2015. In her own words, Flori captured one essential facet of sociability among market workers – reproduction of life seemed subsumed to the means of making a life for the workers at the New Spitalfields market. My doctoral research investigated to what extent permanent night shift workers manage bodily precariousness to cope with the demands of the current capitalist climate that not only encourages competition, but also fragments the less-visible forms of cooperation in the workplace.

Richard Sennett's (1998, 2008, 2012) historical sociology of cooperation in the contemporary capitalism has formed the basis of the theoretical underpinning of this investigation. Empirically however, as an ethnographer, I put considerable strains on my daily life having immersed into the finite experiences of my co-workers (loaders, café waiters, forklift drivers, and salesmen). Thus, this article also addresses the difficulties and practical aspects of enacted ethnography inspired by Loïc Wacquant's flesh and blood sociology (1995, 2004, 2005, 2011, 2014, 2015). In the same vein, I have enacted migrants' lives by doing night shifts at the Spitalfields fruit and vegetable market and I draw on my twelve months nocturnal ethnography. In this sense I neither went native, nor was I a total stranger to highly precarious labour, as I shared to a degree the migrancy experience

* Julius-Cezar MacQuarie, PhD, Research Affiliate, Centre for Policy Studies, Central European University, Hungary, email: macarie_iulius-cezar@phd.ceu.edu, imailfromdrjc@gmail.com

spent in precarious work as a migrant in Turkey's late 1990s. Thus, my auto-ethnography consists of eight months of thick-participant observation coupled with the hard work behind the small talk or "schmoozing" (Driessen and Jansen, 2013). As I drew to a close nocturnal participant observation by the eighth month, I continued during the next four months to interview my co-workers, record audio/visual data collection from participants who worked as loaders, servers and forklift drivers.

Prior to my fieldwork, I presumed that solidarity and competition within and between groups of night shift workers existed in some form of sociability drawn along the ethnic lines. Following analysis, however, three themes emerged. The first, reveals how *night shift work depletes the workers' bodily resources*. The second proposes to envision *global cities that never sleep maintained by migrants or London's 'other workers'*; it highlights the strategic (yet largely undermined) role played by poorly paid and inadequately housed, precarious migrants working the nightshift in the sleepless city. I problematised the former two themes in earlier works (Macarie, 2017a, 2017b). The third however, determines that *migrant night shift workers do something together, but not with one another.* Here, I will analyse in-depth the latter.

Migrant night shift workers do something together, but not with one another. Night shift workers survive bodily precariousness because they are immune to co-workers' needs, and not because they offer each other mutual support out of humanness. It is perhaps counter-intuitive to solidarity proponents in the scholarly literature. Long-lasting cooperation is therefore limited not only to short-term, night-by-night actions, but carried out on an assessment basis that serves one's self-interests. Night workers are concerned with others only as long as coworkers do their work. They limit the number of interactions amongst them, even when they engage together on similar tasks simultaneously. The migrants in this investigation are not bound together by what Collins (1985) means "a moral feeling of belonging together" as in solidary ties with others from the broader society. My investigation revealed that cooperation amongst different bodies working together on their own terms is seldom present, and not sufficient to spur interest in the worker next to themselves.

Glick-Schiller and Çağlar (2016, p. 19) encourage us to take off the ethnic lens and inquire into the commonalities, such as performing precariousness by dispossession, because they are palpable and tied to relations of sociability, as captured in their recent work. In my dissertation, I argue that anthropologically-led discussions on transnational migrants' everyday lives should not discount the value of "domains of commonality". However, my investigation reinforces that workers have shown brief moments of cooperation in spontaneous interruptions – which I call trivial disruptions of the natural shift rhythm. Such disruptions strengthen collaboration among co-workers, but they are too infrequent to produce long-

lasting effects of cooperation outside the workplace, i.e. to act and claim collectively their rights to wages that loaders and drivers cannot fathom when compared to salaries of their employers. Sporadically, I found that workers invested in doing different task together they were naturally invested to cooperate, but the management's labour division tactics succeed in producing docile, obedient workers who in the long run remain disinterested in their co-workers' precariousness, and self-interested in revenues and survival of the night shifts alone.

Post-circadian capitalist climate disrupts capabilities for sociality and begins with the 1970's neoliberal project. By this, I mean that the neoliberal structural mechanisms and workers' migrancy conditions not only involve fierce survival and competition, but systematically draw on the power of weakening cooperation between workers. On the shop floor the management manipulates in-group members against one another by exploiting their bodily labour power for the company's benefit. It achieves that by extending the shift hours to 16 instead of 8; their workers are not guaranteed any healthcare benefits or holiday entitlements; and manipulates workers by forbidding them to engage in activities that brings extra earnings and threatens them with disposability and replacement with other workers.

If the intellectual gaze on any matter, is a "mental affair liable to an intellectualist reading" (Wacquant, 2005, p. 466), then the dare for this article is to offer an anthropologically inspired, bodily ethnography of nightshift work. As a practical, therefore, kinetic, and physical labour act, this nocturnal ethnography links the physical labour to the social attributes of nocturnal landscape of work. This article explores the processes and interactions that happen over time in the night shift workers' bodies through modes of embodiment of physical labour skills. The following three modes are crucial in explicating the development of embodied cooperation: *rhythmic practices* – rituals ingrained in the body through repetitive, physical labour; *physical motions* – informal social relations that have been borne out of physical, bodily gestures; *endurance against physical resistance* – due to which workers learn to engage meaningfully in dealing with ambiguity, social resistance and difference.

Differently put, the abstract modes enumerated above link ritualised acts to forms of bodily cooperation. Regarding the ritualisation process, firstly, physical labour ingrained into one's body through rhythmic, repetitive tasks becomes ritualised. Secondly, the bodily gestures ease social bonds with co-workers such as reading cues and signs: for example, winks and smiles that invite, warning frowns, handshakes, and shrugged shoulders that could either indicate a tired person (depressed shoulders) or someone saying with their body 'I do not know' (elevated shoulders). Thirdly, by honing resilience through confrontations with physical resistance-led tasks one's co-workers demonstrate how to deal with resistance in the social interactions with others who differ. By the end of the ar-

ticle, one will have translated bodily knowledge into an anthropological logic that demonstrates the functions of the body in constructing social competency (Wacquant, 2015, p. 7).

This article uncovers the layers and subtleties inherent in the abstract links to the embodiment of cooperation. It does so according to the principles of narrating and analysis of "lived experience". The purpose is to draw the reader into the precarious landscape of the market and depict the workers' skills which highlight how they ingrain with muscles and senses the social interactions whereby cooperation becomes embodied. It conveys the processes by way of mixing the narrations with conceptual and descriptive field notes based on observations of self and other workers foregrounded in this article. The empirical material combined enables me to address how workers nurture, through physical labour cooperative social skills regardless of differences in ethnicity, race, religion, moral value or sexual orientation. The article reveals that ritualised bodily cooperation in the workplace combines rhythm, gestures, and painstaking effort to learn social skills to work with others who differ and resist on their own terms.

The Development of Embodied Cooperation

All sixteen gates of the market hall are widely open throughout the cold, wintry nights. The wind wave dances through the main aisles of the market leaving one few options to keep away from the chill, either standing by the exhaust of a forklift with its gas engine running or between the aisles of a fruit and vegetable stand; downstairs, on the boxes of bananas; upstairs, on pallets of ginger and garlic; these three types of produce release heat during fermentation. At the start of every night shift (22:00), most loaders and drivers either warm up standing by the forklift's exhaust or sip warm, milky coffee. The latter used to warm-up one's upper body dressed in five layers during those long months. Six nights a week, co-workers enter the market hall slowly. They head towards the stand and disappear between the aisles of pallets of fresh fruit and vegetables. There are no changing rooms. They work in clothes they travelled with and hang their 'lunch' bags on the hooks nailed into the wooden pad tied at each end with a thin iron cable. Every smile given brings another in return, though not within the confines of this company's workers. Their weary faces and worn-out bodies hardly mutter or move at the start of a night shift.

Muro, a 43-year-old loader mutters in Turkish 'günaydın' (good morning) at 22:00. Then hides his iron box full of rolled up cigarettes under a pallet. Every now and again, throughout the night he takes out one cigarette from the hidden box. Basrí is thirty minutes late, again. Sheepishly, he avoids the look of the manager browsing his phone and pretending that he does not notice him. Basrí goes straight to another forklift driver sitting on the forklift with the engine started.

His swollen eyes are testimony that he woke up from a 2-hour sleep that he sandwiched in between the daily tasks to deal with the delivery of new furniture and toys for his younger son. He confessed about his home-schedule later that shift. For now, he mutters a half-pitched Merhaba (hello in Turkish). As I continue to scrutinise the scene, Nomar, one of the two check-men walks towards Basrí with a cup of coffee in his hand. He comes close to and leans on the back of the forklift which heats his lower limbs. He puts his hands on the metal frame of the forklift, warmed-up by the engine running on gas.

Contrasting with the males' behaviour, Flori, the café server passes by the stand. She appears lively in the hours of the night as she provides a mechanical and minimal service to café customers, workers or buyers of fruit and vegetables. As she passes by the forklift, she schmoozes the other three males, Basrí, Nomar, and the driver sitting on the forklift. In the end, she leaves with one order of an energising drink for Basrí; with light steps, she exits the market gate to enter the café situated across the way. Basrí associates the market rhythms with low and high-pitched 'ses' (voice). On this wintry night shift, he says, "the market has a little voice", meaning that the market is quiet.

Even quiet night shifts throb with Basrí's, Flori's, Muzo's and others' bodies. Most night shift workers suffer from sleep despoliation, physical aches and pains due to heavy loads, driving forklifts like 'sleepless bats' or walking like 'dead men' doing repetitive, monotonous tasks. The expectancy of a Thursday night shift involves repetitive tasks, and crazy rhythms; but not monotony. By midnight, loaders and drivers will be sweating and discard a few layers of clothes, when the gates open to customers. A long trail of forklift driver vans forms as customers drive onto the parking area of the market. Customers park their vans and walk quickly to the stands they buy from night-by-night. Loaders know their usual customers and vice-versa. One notes a friendly exchange of glances and smiles between customers, managers, owners, and café waitresses. As the crazy rhythms take over the night market, the shouting voices, the forklifts horns, the sound of the falling pallets on the floor, sometimes the screeching wheels, all meet the expectation of a hectic night shift.

Many workers agree that night shifting extends beyond its grounds and into their social lives and wellbeing. Young loaders like to toil with the heavy loads, night-in, night-out. Basrí and others younger than him, sweat from heavy loads that they carry onto their body, and so they feel no need to join a gym. The nightly exhaustion intrudes into the workers' social life and permeates deep into the daily episodes of their private existence. To paraphrase Hannah Arendt (1958), she explains in "The Human Condition" her concerns regard the fragile balance between private and public. Arendt envisioned that the 24/7 economy and its offspring the consumerist culture devours and discards everything that it meets, from production to end-consumer. In this "creative destruction" process, she ar-

gues that the rhythmic balance between "exhaustion and regeneration" is so fragile and unsustainable that things (and humans) exhaust themselves before they regenerate.

The balance tips when labour-caused exhaustion invades the workers' private space at the expense of reduced time for regeneration in the domestic environment. Her words echo in the respondents' stories. In Basrí's case, night shifting has become too strenuous for him to have a social life. More, on Thursday, Friday and Saturday night shifts (weekly nightlife hours for diurnal workers) are the week's busiest time at Spitalfields market. Like Basrí, another forklift driver confesses:

> I wake up at 9 pm. I come here for the 10 pm start. I have been working here for about 4-5 years, and I know people who have been working in this market for 20 years … night work eats your life away (Mehmet)

Market night workers do not socialise outside of working hours, except on rare occasions. Whatever stamina they have left in their bodies after one week of nights, they spend it on family time on Saturdays and Sundays. The price they pay for family time amounts to lack of sleep, and therefore recovery before returning to another week's night work. Saturday mornings the atmosphere of the fruit and vegetable stores brings temporary relief to workers. That hour signals the end of a hard-fought week of repetitiveness, monotonous, bodily strenuous labour.

For some workers, hidden pleasures came from managing bodily precariousness during social drinking at the market café. Basrí, for example, as a family man precluded himself from social gatherings in the café, on Saturday mornings. However, single wo/men or men with families away in their home countries (like Gică, Barik) congregated at café C1, almost ritually. Their bodies and minds gave away through gestures and showed the joy of relief at not having to return to loading, serving or selling for one night. The café servers counting the money at closing time share similar feelings. The workers sit and drink in teams, each belonging to his or her respective company. The divide is noticeable. The managers sit together. More noticeable is the divide between those who play a Kurdish card game (Lori) and others who do not.

It might be useful to render such instances of adult playing through Geertzian "scenography of deep play" where "adults seething and confessing enact everyday rituals to bind people together socially" (Sennett, 2008, p. 271). Nonetheless, in visits to the market café on Saturday mornings, none of the "deep play" was enacted. Put in a different way, no profound confession practices filled in the almost ritual gathering in the market café by single male co-workers. Rituals such as social drinking and playing cards happened weekly, loaders and drivers sat at tables in small groups of members belonging to the same company, and rarely mixed.

Moreover, they always played the same card game for hours on end as other workers watched. In contrast, outside of the weekly social bonding at café C1, managers were competing in sales of tomatoes (a favourite product) at the lowest price. On Saturday mornings, managers were back playing together the card game in C1. Managers repeated this ritual weekly almostwithout fail. There were exceptions, like the one on 11 July 2015. During the Friday night sales, the manager from Company D dropped the usual price of tomatoes from £1.70 to £1.00. This tactic convinced the buyer of Company A (a sizeable Turkish supermarket chain in London) to buy the tomatoes from company D instead of A. On that Saturday morning, the Company A manager entered the café looking for his competitor friend (Company D manager) for a game of Lori, the usual card game, but his game partner was nowhere. However, the next week, both were back in the game.

Nightly, loaders, check men and drivers enact wars with the use of "intelligent artefacts" objects of disruption, such as loaders' bodies, brooms, forklifts, and wrapping cutters (see discussion in conclusion) (Gherardi, 2006, p. 36). She (2006) argues that some practices aid whereas others constrain, depending on whom, for what purpose, and with what means they engage. Co-workers engage in pallet collection throughout the week. At the end of the week, they sell the pallets for extra cash. This side business involves several more steps. This practice is an intelligible means of activating (cohesive as well as destructive) social relations among group members at company A.

Nightshifts are deafeningly quiet sometimes at Spitalfields. Loaders are expecting orders, or they stand anxiety-ridden for the fear that they are expendable and will lose their jobs. Similarly, café waitresses schmooze longer than usual with customers and workers in the hope of selling drinks or food otherwise; they are fired without notice. During frantic rhythms, loaders night-walk similar distances to café servers while delivering hot and cold food and drinks at various stands, vans or straight into the hand of forklift drivers on-the-move. I asked Flori, the café server to monitor her walking distance with a mobile application similar to the one that I used to monitor walking distance during my fieldwork. At the end of the night shift, we walked the same distance; 16km. Most café servers average 16km on a nightly walk, but much less in smiles at the end of each night shift. Even on quiet nights, exhaustion throbs through workers' bodies.

Whenever Flori passes by the stand, she smiles and joins in conversations that end with sales of mixed-up drinks or food. Café servers take orders from traders' stands, either face-to-face or via the landline in the coffee shops. That involves physical skills, receiving, picking up and delivering orders, and social skills; selling the goods. Over several years Flori left and returned to work the night shift numerous times. I gleaned information on her motivation for repeatedly returning to work nights. Flori is not economically motivated to work nights, as most workers are. Instead, Flori tells me that "I work nights to stay out of trouble. I used to

get into fights with college girls."Flori is college educated, fluent in English and her parents can support her financially when needed. Her motives are, then, different in nature.

Flori is first-generation English-born, in her family of Turkish-Cypriot migrants. Due to her fluency in English, she sells more to the English market traders, who prefer her because she is "more outgoing, successful at flattering, laughing with her male customers" (Flori). For that, her boss values her experience as Flori is a key server in the team with the highest sales record to date. She thinks that is the reason why she sells more than Romanian or Lithuanian women working for the competing coffee shops in the market. Though, as Flori sketches below, she is good at small talk with her customers and successful at collecting information. Worthy of note here is the information that highlights similar challenges facing night shifters in maintaining intimate relationships, and in dealing with isolation and invisibility. Flori's personal wish is "to build up relationships".

Flori was motivated to work in the wholesale market because she finds it rewarding to soothe the solitude of the workers whom she schmoozes on shift. Finally, Flori's skills in being sociable with other night workers contrast Lexa's. Flori's approach is unique, as within the nocturnal landscape of the market, bottom-up sociality showing concern for different others' conditions is hardly visible, whereby if one worker helps another it seems out of place. Besides, her keen interest to engage with other market workers to confide, is the opposite to the ritual gathering in the market café on Saturdays which lacked dialogic exchanges between the single male co-workers.

Hence, except for Flori's personal wish to bond with other market workers on-site or out of the workplace night workers act out of competition or cooperate through instances of disruption. In general, they are *un*interested in building collective sociality outside of and within the workplace. While I will further elaborate on this in the remaining sections, the main claim for this section is that the development of embodied cooperation is a process that relies on the modes providing the basis for the simplicity of loaders', drivers' and salesmen's routinised gestures and movements, bound in rhythmic physical gestures and in working with ambiguity.

Rhythmic practices

I finished this week's work. I go, to the other side of the country and see my family. I travel there, see them for 3-4 hours, then I sleep. Then I wake up. We sit down and have a chat. I sleep for a few hours in the night, and I wake up at 2 am. Then, I sit down with my sis, my aunty, my family. My cousins, sit down with me when I get there. Then, I go to sleep again, like 7-8am. I sleep 4-5 hours again. I have something to eat. We go out for 2-3 hours. Then, I have 2 hours to

rest again. Then, I got to come back to London. So, I got to catch a train or a bus. I go straight back to work (Ayran).

Rhythmic, repetitive, work practices are the bedrock of any ritual. Ayran has repeatedly performed this ritual, on a weekly basis for 14 years. He visits his family living in the North of England. Rhythmically too, Ayran works around 66-70 hours per week, starting every night at 10 pm, and finishing around 9 am, for six nights a week. "Fluent and unselfconscious", Ayran moves and removes pallets (Sennett, 2012, p. 204); as orders complete, Ayran checks the goods before pallets leave the stand. If he finds mistakes – he is responsible for missing items – pallets remain. So, he observes with his dark peregrine eyes the whole store, from where he is standing.

One hears a slight accent in Ayran's voice as he is first generation British, born of parents from sub-continental India. If you do not hear his voice, you see him chatting with the trader opposite to company A or other Asian forklift drivers. As the work rhythm increases, his voice pitch raises, and he gets agitated. He shouts at his driver colleagues who need to speed things up as customers are waiting outside the market hall for the pallet. He continues to interact with customers, mostly. He talks all night to whoever passes by the stand. The market constabularies fined him and took his forklift licence for speeding.

As they pass by he talks even to them. His forklift driver skills were appreciated too. However, he says, "when you're working for a Turkish company because you're doing so many hours, you can't go out. The people who are working here are like dead men walking." On a nightly basis, Ayran does his duties responsibly. However, he confesses that he has "had enough. I worked enough doing nightshift." Moreover, the manager will not allow him to leave till he finds his replacement. "Every replacement I found for him, he found an excuse to refuse the person", says Ayran, because "you understand people. You understand drivers. You understand what to do. They do not. They need three months' worth of training. So, he never lets me go."

Ayran's wealth of experience is knowledge of others gained through an embedded understanding of the rituals in that specific space. It becomes unquestionable that the market site is the forge that moulds night workers into bio-automatons who defy circadian rhythms. The night workers' bodily capital – technical skills and strategic knowledge – become indispensable to the management.

One might ask why night workers like Ayran and Flori (both with excellent English language skills) do not renounce working in this market despite its precarious conditions? One then wonders what advantages the establishment offers to its employees to so that they remain or return to work at night? As Ayran confesses, despite his undisciplined behaviour, the manager has "been very, very, very good to me". Are experienced workers like Ayran non-expendable like the

other co-workers? In conjunction with Ayran's statements, we re-consider Flori's earlier conscious desires "to build up relationships" with other night workers. Could the need to stay away from an all-too-ordinary day-time life have become a subconscious one? One answer the market site protects her from day fights in the street or at school, as well as acting as a buffer to the insecurities of everyday life. in contrast to her nightly sociability.

Both her boss and her customers favour Flori. Night protects Flori in several ways and cocoons like-minded people whom she listens to every night. The night protects her from the vagaries of the mainstream and multi-cultured society where she was born. Could Flori's social abilities and Ayran's 14 years of strategic understanding of the place (market site with its social and economic transactions) learnt in nightly practices be transferred to another field of work?

Although individual self-development per se has not been part of the empirical investigation, one ponders whether a furnace like the market moulds migrant bodies into contributors of one kind or another to the 24/7 society? Moreover, beyond the penitential way of inhabiting and working the night shift, is there no place and space left for these individuals' inner transformation? If so, then, undoubtedly, these workers turn into bio-automatons living antithetically to the regular, day folk, and estranged in their relationship to themselves (Roberts 2015). They become the corroding, drifting entities in service to capital accumulation (Sennett 1998) at the expense of bodily and refined ties to one's society, which is badly in need of repair (Sennett 2012).

Spitalfields nocturnal workers still experience hidden pleasures through different rituals to diurnals. On Saturdays' mornings, they drink at the café after a week's worth of loading or driving; they have breakfast, smoke cigarettes while walking, carrying, loading; drink energising liquids, coffees and teas, after midnight when diurnal people sleep. The little food or cigarette breaks, for example, become a ritual of silence with co-workers sitting on pallets, as far apart as possible. All are examples of embodied rituals in the workshop, the forge that moulds bodies to be up and alert in the night. Inhabiting the nightscape, therefore, means to create time and space in repeated movements. Gestures become rituals that mirror others' movements in the same (night) time and space, in a continuum to the rhythm of the day. The repeated movements (handshaking, loading, drinking coffee) and gestures (eyes meeting) become harmonised between people sharing similar rhythms, and in some way predictable. The basis for this is the rhythmic, repetitive practice.

Moreover, there are no "night people", unless "day people" exist. A night person must experience what is like to be a day person. Both know each could not exist without the other. Hence, 'night' in conjunction with 'day' is the same entity. They beat in opposed tempo. Muzo, for example, explains the division of roles they assume to ensure that home and family duties (e.g. child rearing) are

satisfied even though in different tempos. In the past ten months since he has been stocking up the grocery store, with produce from Spitalfields market, he hardly sees his wife:

> My wife is a hairdresser. She leaves early in the morning; around 6:30 am. I don't leave work until 7 am. By the time I get home, she's already left. In the evenings, she comes home around 8 pm; I leave home at 7 pm. I mean, there is about one hour and a half difference between us. Sometimes, 4-5 days go by without seeing one another. We live in the same place, but we don't see each other.

Nevertheless, day rhythms in the workplace seem more structured. Day staff are less likely to transgress roles while management is present. The opposite seems to be the case in this night market. Boundaries seem to shift further, and managers transgress roles as the night frontier advances; like when the owner is absent, and market managers follow social media sites for hours-on-end, or around cut-off time between 2-3 am when the manager-turned-driver jumps on the forklift to speed-up the flow of the production-consumption cycle (sales-loading-wrapping-checking-transporting). This kind of transgression allows for openness and role changing. It explicates too, those unstructured workplaces at night permit managers to be more lenient towards irreplaceable skilled workers, like Ayran.

However, to the end-consumer or the casual observer this may seem like a haphazard syncopation. While diurnals sleep, rest or party, the fruit and vegetable wholesale markets are open for business through the night. Fresh fruits await the morning customer or may appear like a dessert on someone's plate for lunch or dinner. Perhaps, end-consumers are unaware, or caught up in their struggles to survive the incessant rhythms of the daily, regular beats. However, at night, rhythmic physical labour is executed by bodies awake and alert. Role-transgression is frequent. The balance between exchanges of competition and cooperation is delicate, with more competing instances erupting every night. Workers fight against physical hardships "without the intervention of conscious thought" (Wacquant 2004:97) and against social resistance (from co-workers, management and customers) with friendly gestures. If social fluency results partly, from worker's physical skills embodied into (social) rituals, then partly gestures build the informality needed for social bonding.

Bodily gestures

Gestures performed informally may mislead the observer into thinking that they are readily embodied. The simplicity of moving, lifting, gripping, making eye contact in a certain way depending on context and the message the signifier wants

to send, is learnt behaviour but can be deceiving if taken as "surface simplicity" (Wacquant, 2004, p. 69). Gestures are emotional responses through physical acts (showing vs telling someone) that build informality in social contexts. It was most deceiving to imagine that gripping tomato crates the way one did (as inexperienced workers do) was going to hide from co-workers the lack of experience one started with in the trade.

Loaders read gestures and embody basic movements fast. The better they embody gestures, the easier it becomes for co-workers to read the signs and intentions for cooperation (and competition). Subtleties in gestures go unnoticed to the inexperienced eye. I shared how I gained experience over time by observing the gestures of senior co-workers. I learnt that repetitive movements guarantee an automatised efficiency. The above phase involves months of bodily practice before being embodied.

Thought-based understanding, aided by visualisation is very different from feeling heavy crates slipping from tired fingers, knees aching from walking long distances, back bending and aching "in the heat of action" (Wacquant 2004:69). Shadow boxing moves and gestures are no use to a boxer without sparring or are even redundant in a fight with a real opponent. This is also the case with the forklift driver. Inserting the right fork at a 45º angle while going in forwards needs to meet several conditions. For instance, forklift drivers use the lever on the right (there are three in total) to adjust the mast so that as the forklift advances it pushes the right corner of the pallet to turn it sideways, so both forks fit neatly under the pallet. The pallet then fits the forks, like a glove on fingers. Experienced drivers like Basrí take 30 seconds to complete such task. Within weeks of passing the test, Basrí acquired gestures that sold his skills to the manager who hired him immediately. Basrí was unrestrained in his actions. Through his confident gestures, he created and demanded openness and lightness in such informal situations and relationships. In this scenario, Basrí's physical skills created a space for exchange, which is crucial in cooperation. He tipped the balance towards a favourable exchange of skills over money.

Admittedly, Basrí was a trusted employee with two years' experience at company A, and he swiftly learnt behaviour that called for exchange and cooperation. There were others, with more years' experience than him, and still, they did not perform similarly. However, it would be misleading to think that Basrí's skills, moves, gestures, in a word, body-capital, was built overnight. It would be even more incorrect to think that verbal skills play a significant role here. Basrí demonstrated what Wacquant (2004, p. 69) found through his boxing ethnography: being "natural and self-evident requires thorough physical rehabilitation, a genuine remoulding of one's kinetic coordination, and even a psychic conversion". Gestures, one of the necessary elements of embodiment

(together with rhythm and resistance) are not involuntary reflexes (e.g. touching one's stomach if feeling nauseous or one's throat when hyperventilating).

Gestures enact a relationship through minute movements, learnt over time in a specific space. Gestures embedded in the physical skills that apply to social life separate the novice from the pro. As remarked earlier, the novice in the trade is spotted immediately in her/ his clumsy, hesitating moves to grab, pull, lift, or drive a forklift. S/he signals the "intervention of conscious thought into the coordination of gestures and movements" (Wacquant, 2004, p. 97). Gestures express informal behaviour towards someone with whom we rehearsed gestures and now enact a relationship. One's body's precise gestures signals to others around confidence that the person knows well what s/he shows s/he does well; such gestures confirm habituated rhythms.

Dealing with resistance through dialogics

The informality in people's gestures who act together with minimum resistance shows that spontaneous moments of disruption (of routines) binds people briefly to cooperate, to discuss. Sennett (2012) finds that inherently people are inclined to cooperate. Ultimately, "physical labour can instil dialogical social labour" through rituals of exchange between cooperation (and competition) (Sennett, 2012, p. 199). Sennett (2012, p. 19) borrows the term dialogics from literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin who explains that during any one conversation between his literary characters there are many layers hidden in the communications that they exchanged. For Sennett (2012) practising dialogics means to listen carefully and distinguish between what people say and what they mean to say to you, but it is hidden or codified.

Though such discussions may never reach an understanding, an exchange takes place between the interlocutors, and a shift is produced through sensitivity-based empathy. Dialogics is unlike dialectics where one says something, and the other disagrees, then interlocutors go back and forth till they meet where they want to arrive – an agreement. Therefore, when engaged in dialogics, one needs to find ways to become skilled at finding out what the other means to say but does not want to show it. One understands the other better than before the dialogic encounter started without reaching an agreement. In dialogic-based forms of cooperation, unlike with dialectics, the goal is not to reach an agreement, but to handle ambiguity and difference.

My investigation complements and modifies his theory on cooperation by exploring the function of gathering, learning and practising bodily knowledge. In the encounter with Basrí I emphasise the bodily signalling, gesturing, subconscious reflexes before any language-based exchange takes place. My non-verbal, bodily expressions and facial gestures defuse tension. The development of embodied

cooperation is a process that involves intensive bodily learning in exchanges with another, and proves a challenging form of cooperation. It is like in family relations, learning when someone displays anger as a symptom of underlying anxiety, similarly to a child who needs help and shows anger instead. This form of cooperation is difficult to learn because, as Sennett (2012) explains, it uses the subjunctive voice – a more evasive approach rather than a direct one. The discussion evolves into exploration that requires sensitivity in dealing with ambiguity rather than clarity and working with resistance while employing minimum force; hence, one's difficulty in engaging with such an approach successfully.

Another aspect of Sennett's[*] proposal on this form of cooperation is informality, an aspect that was explored earlier through bodily gestures. One noted on several occasions that Spitalfields market is a challenging, tension provoking environment for workers. Wo/men are worn out due to physical exhaustion, stress, overall duress and anxiety. Informality lessens the tension and deescalates the accumulated emotion. Informal gestures ease the exchanges between two people because they can make people more prepared to explore the underlying layers of what the two meant to say one another. The opposite happened during the team meetings. One observed and noted how tensed and disengaged co-workers were. Everyone got their turn to speak, but low-skilled workers were interrupted by the manager who dismissed their ideas or suggestions. To the outsider (and non-Turkish speaker) this would appear as a happy family where everyone spoke. In real terms, no one engaged meaningfully. The manager was not interested in listening to what staff had to say. In turn, employees grew despondent yet showed no effort in confronting the management about being prevented from contributing with useful ideas.

Empathy is the last most crucial ingredient of Sennett's concept of cooperation – formulated so that it sits opposite to sameness-based solidarity. It is different from action-based solidarity out of sympathy for another. Empathy is a unique, less sympathetic approach, a more relaxed emotion, so to say, by which the empathic is more interested in what is happening with and less in 'feeling for another' person. Empathy is a matter of keeping distance emotionally while remaining curious without presuming. An empathic strategy tackles both ambiguity and engages with resistance through use of minimum force. There is a qualitative difference in the two approaches to tackle the same puzzle: use of one's social, interpersonal skills to resolve ambiguities and increase cooperation with another whose approach and demeanour differs. A fighting mentality drives the social resources and skills towards eradicating the problem – not knowing what the problem was that s/he was fighting for in the first place. Working with resistance invites one to learn how to understand the problem rather than shutting it down.

[*] Richard Sennett (2013) on an introduction on his book, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press) on The School of Life Show. Accessed: 3.12.2017, Available at: http://bit.ly/snntt_utb_tlk

Trivial disruptions

The monotony of the night shift for both workers and customers lifts as the rhythms increase. So, repetitive tasks melt into the sweats of loaders and drivers dressed in thick clothes. A forklift driver finds a host of small pleasures, like speeding above the five miles-per-hour limit or by blocking the central aisle with the forklift to have snatches of conversation with other drivers. Drivers take out their mobiles and glance together at football matches on YouTube. So, other drivers beep their horns for not being able to pass through. However, all drivers fear the market constabulary who walk with hand-held speed cameras, and the CCTV equipment installed on all aisles inside the market hall as well as throughout the site. Hence, they put their mobiles back into the pocket and smile with complicity to one another while other drivers swear at them for blocking the road – this behaviour seems acceptable to all drivers. Unspoken agreement floats in the air among drivers who behave similarly.

As the mayhem reaches its peak, the monotony breaks either in waves of friendship expressed by drivers getting off to pick up loads that fell off others' forklifts or in fits of anger; when drivers stop the forklift, swear at one another or simply speed up to cut the others' way. These are instances of trivial disruptions belonging to the rhythms and nature of night shift work. Trivial disruptions are instances that appear spontaneously and are not part of regular rhythms of production. For example, in instances of gossiping – "exaggerating events and information" (Sennett, 2012, p. 155), people dramatise and get stimulated by overly exaggerated information. They do not gossip to manipulate but to break from boredom.

Trivial disruptions are events that rouse workers, break into boredom, and bond and increase collaboration between co-workers on an informal basis. Trivial disruptions are short-lived because of the routinised, monotonous work of loading, driving, and waiting around for the customer, which drive workers to anomie. In such moments, the innate capacity to cooperate resurfaces and tests the social cohesion of the group. For example, when one-ton pallet falls off a forklift co-worker gather to replace produce and broken trays scattered across the shop floor. They all laugh while the driver swears; moving-as-one, however, all workers step slowly towards the fallen pallet. Put in a different way, in this specific task workers concentrate on the aims, and appear to cooperate briefly. Such short-lived cooperation, however, does not last. Brief team efforts are caused by bundles of instantaneous disruptions that bring the whole group together. Lastly, trivial disruptions produce chances for strengthening collaboration among co-workers, but they are too infrequent – not routinised into automatised responses.

In sum, the human body is the tool that intrinsically hones bodily cooperation. Solidarity, an established paradigm in social sciences, seems to omit the role of

bodily skills in strengthening (or weakening) individual social behaviour. In this article, I attempted to reveal what happens in the workers' bodies when enacting social bonds among humans turned bio-machines. The three modes are explained in this article as the basis of the development of cooperation and show that: rhythms and rituals ingrain in the body through repetitive movements; gestures build informality through actors' bodies and give birth to social bonding because they defuse tension in aggressive environments, dealing with complex situations. The three areas of the embodiment discussed elucidate how the worker's bodies cultivate physical skills that apply to bodily cooperation in social encounters outside of the workplace.

Workers' embodied cooperation reveals itself in moments of trivial disruptions that "contradict the public principle and ethos of unlimited competition" (Wacquant, 2004, p. 86). Workers bond briefly through non-resistance and tacit cooperation. Though limited in focus, the task-long project-based encounters in moments of trivial disruptions reveal that humans are inclined to cooperate. The market workers' capacity and will to cooperate is revealed in contexts where they are engaged in lucrative schemes for extra revenue. Self-interest based cooperation is fragile and weak and does not encourage collective action beyond the workplace. Market night workers in this study reflect a 'you're on-your-own' attitude. Hidden pleasures and moments of disruptions constitute a small proportion of the social scene at the market. There is "cosmopolitan sociability" among market workers which induces weak bodily cooperation (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016). Neither seems to enhance the workers' social livelihoods.

This study highlights that the respondents working at Spitalfields night market are not aware of their role in gratifying the appetite for food and services that satiate their needs of global city workers. But night-time workers in other global cities running on 24/7 rhythms are becoming aware of their primary role in those cities' maintenance. As their evidence shows (Sharma, 2014; Sassen, 2016, 2017), night janitors, cleaners, taxi drivers and loaders fulfil the second most important set of conditions after capitalist accumulation for ensuring a continuum of the day structure.

Bodily cooperation is weakened by structural factors and workers' individual conditions. This article extended the analysis beyond the learned bodily knowledge and its impact on one's social life skills. The night shift workers' experiences highlight that precariousness is inherent in their environment, i.e. the management did not encourage them to use their embodied capital to cooperate. Last, the article showed that although embodied cooperation reveals itself in trivial disruptions of night work activities, it is rare, and not solidified enough to organise the workers for collective actions or social interactions outside the workshop. Put different, the brief moments of embodied cooperation may not even be transferable outside of the market practices. One concludes that market workers do

something together, but not with one another. Whether this potential could spur interest in the worker beside them to do something together is a different question altogether that requires space for another discussion.

References:

Arendt, H. (1958), The Human Condition. The University of Chicago Press, London. doi: 10.2307/2089589.
Driessen, H. and Jansen, W. (2013), 'The Hard Work of Small Talk', Journal of Anthropological Research, 69, pp. 249–263. Available at: http://www.narcis.nl/publication/RecordID/oai%3Arepository.ubn.ru.nl%3A2066%2F84769.
Gherardi, S. (2006), Organizational Knowledge: The Texture of Workplace Learning, Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling. Edited by J. Child and S. Rodrigues. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford. doi: 10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004.
Glick Schiller, N. and Çağlar, A. (2016), 'Displacement, emplacement and migrant newcomers: Rethinking urban sociabilities within multiscalar power', Identities. Routledge, 23(1), pp. 17–34. doi: 10.1080/1070289X.2015.1016520.
Macarie, I.-C. (2017a), Invisible Denizens: Migrant Night Shift Workers' Fragile Possibilities for Solidarity in the Post-Circadian Capitalist Era, Centre for Policy Studies. 4. Budapest. doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.13770.06084.
Macarie, I.-C. (2017b), 'Invisible Denizens: What Possibilities are Left for Solidarity Amongst Migrant Night Workers in the Nocturnal City of London', Eux-einos, 22(03), pp. 63–78.
Sassen, S. (2016), 'The Global City: Enabling Economic Intermediation and Bearing Its Costs', City and Community, 15(2), pp. 97–108. doi: 10.1111/cico.12175.
Sassen, S. (2017), 'Predatory Formations Dressed in Wall Street Suits and Algorithmic Math', Science, Technology and Society, 1(2017), p. 0971721816682783. doi: 10.1177/0971721816682783.
Sennett, R. (1998), The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism. W.W. Norton & Company: New York and London.
Sennett, R. (2008), The Craftsman, Allen Lane. Available at: http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&btnG=Search&q=intitle:The+Craftsman#2.
Sennett, R. (2012), Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Co-operation, Aging. Yale University Press, New Haven and London. doi: 10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004.
Sharma, S. (2014), In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics. Duke Universtiy Press, Durham and London.
Wacquant, L. J. D. (1995), 'Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labour Among Proffesional Boxers', Body & Society, 1(1), pp. 65–93.
Wacquant, L. J. D. (2004), Body and Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York. doi: 10.1086/425391.

Wacquant, L. J. D. (2005), 'Carnal connections: On embodiment, apprenticeship, and membership', Qualitative Sociology, 28(4), pp. 445–474. doi: 10.1007/s11133-005-8367-0.
Wacquant, L. J. D. (2011), 'Habitus as Topic and Tool: Reflections on Becoming a Prizefighter', Qualitative Research in Psychology, 8(1), pp. 81–92. doi: 10.1080/14780887.2010.544176.
Wacquant, L. J. D. (2014), 'Homines in Extremis : What Fighting Scholars Teach Us about Habitus', Body & Society, 20(2), pp. 3–17. doi: 10.1177/1357034X13501348.
Wacquant, L. J. D. (2015), 'For a Sociology of Flesh and Blood', Qualitative Sociology, 38(1), pp. 1–11. doi: 10.1007/s11133-014-9291-y.

COOPERATION IN CONTEMPORARY CAPITALISM: SIGNIFICANT FACTORS THAT UNCOVER WHY EMBODIED COOPERATION AMONG MIGRANT NIGHTSHIFT WORKERS IS WEAKENED

Abstract

London's 24/7 rhythms throb with lives of nocturnal workers. The Sleepless Bats, whose nocturnal lives I have studied are bio-automatons remote from co-operating or from supporting each other in solidarity. Migrant night shift workers do something together but not with one another. Night shift workers survive precariousness because they are immune to co-workers' needs, and not because they offer each other mutual support out of humanness. Through the analytical lens of learned bodily knowledge, the study interrogated the modes of the embodiment that over time enhance night workers' social life skills. The becoming of embodied cooperation not only involves routinised, rhythmic practices ingrained in the body through repetitive, physical tasks, but also physical gestures that build social relations amongst workers who learn to engage meaningfully in dealing with ambiguity, resistance and difference. The relevant aspects of embodied forms of interaction investigated involve workers' trajectories being disrupted from naturally cooperative to socially competitive.

Key words: embodied cooperation, nightshift work, migrant worker, economic anthropology, economic sociology, bodily capital, social exclusion, social inclusion, social stratification, trust

JEL: Z130