Durham E-Theses

Making Life Work: Work and Life in Coliving

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Abstract

This thesis explores how life is made to work. This means, firstly, understanding how life enters the relations of production and how it is made to expend energy and produce value. Secondly, this means understanding the arrangements and practices that make life work in the sense of reproducing it, maintaining it and preventing it from falling apart.

This theme was explored through an ethnographic study of coliving - a purpose-built accommodation for professionals and entrepreneurs - which strives to create conditions most conducive to professional success. The thesis analysed the ways in which personal and domestic life is redesigned and rearranged in relation to the ideals of productivity and how new ways of living can simultaneously offer mutual support and assistance among workers while also normalising practices of overworking, precarity and (self)exploitation. This research is pertinent to debates about the impact of work and economic practices on contemporary life and argues that academic and political debates must go beyond the focus on work-life balance and address the multiple pressures on personal and domestic life both within and outside of the workplace.

The thesis develops a series of wider theoretical arguments and recommendations for future research. Firstly, it is argued that to understand the preference for modifying personal and domestic life, social analysis must go beyond ideological and discursive factors. It should consider the combination of discourse, attributes of the job situation, and characteristics of social reproduction that together produce a particularly intense commitment to work. Secondly, the thesis argues that in addition to focusing on how life is balanced with or colonised by work, the social analysis should focus on the social and material arrangements that maintain working lives. Thirdly, it argues for the importance of studying reflective and evaluative operations undertaken by social actors that question but ultimately reproduce intensive work-lives.

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Declaration

I confirm that no part of the material presented in this thesis has been previously submitted by me or any other person for a degree in this or any other university. In all cases, where it is relevant, material from the work of others has been acknowledged.

Based on some of the work within this thesis, the following publication has been submitted for consideration:

Chapter Four

Musílek K, Jamie K and McKie L (2019) Cold Winds and Warm Attachments: Interrogating the Personal Attachment to Neoliberal Work and Economy. *Work, Employment and Society*. (Forthcoming).

Statement of Copyright

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores how life is made to work in contemporary capitalist societies. By making life work, I mean firstly how life enters the logic of production, how it is made to expend energy and produce value. Work has always been a part of human life. However, the way in which life is made to work – how it is understood, how it is shaped and trained, and how its content and rhythm change in relation to work - vary greatly across times and social contexts. Secondly, I ask what the social structures that make life work in the sense of reproducing it, maintaining it and preventing it from falling apart are. Any version of working life depends on a web of cultural, social and material structures that shape it, preserve it, but also maintain it in a form which corresponds to the prevailing logic of work. How life is made to work is an object of historical change, social variation, and importantly, of social and political struggles. This thesis, therefore, contributes to the way we think about the politics of working life today.

The theme is explored through an ethnographic study of the phenomenon of coliving, which can be understood as a recent development in the long history of making life work. Coliving is a new type of communal living which is purpose-built or refurbished accommodation in which individuals (often defined as "professionals" and "entrepreneurs") live together and strive to formulate and practice a lifestyle defined by a set of shared values. Coliving is a form of cohabitation in a built structure which seeks to formulate a particular vision of life and puts in place arrangements (social, spatial, temporal, discursive) to create and sustain it. This vision of life revolves around a set of ideas concerning the arrangement of work, personal life, and housing.

As I argue throughout, it presents a fascinating case for the exploration of transformations in contemporary work-lives.

This introductory chapter contextualises the thesis within some long-standing sociological inquiries into the relationship between work and life. Firstly, it introduces the coliving phenomenon and its basic principles and features. Secondly, it briefly comments on the use words "work" and "life" in contemporary language (and in this thesis) and highlights potential problems. Thirdly, it considers how historical transformations and contemporary developments in work and life have been understood in sociological accounts. Fourth, it provides a brief overview of theoretical perspectives on what is life and how can it be understood. Finally, it outlines details of the specific research questions which underpin the fieldwork and analysis, and provides an overview of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 The Case of Coliving

This thesis explores the contemporary transformation of domestic and personal life in relation to work with reference to the phenomenon of coliving (see Chapter 2 for a more detailed overview). Coliving is a new type of communal living which is purpose-built or refurbished accommodation, in which individuals (often defined as professionals and entrepreneurs) live together and strive to formulate and practice a lifestyle defined by a set of shared values. Coliving is a form of cohabitation in a built structure which seeks to formulate a particular vision of life and puts in place arrangements (social, spatial, temporal, discursive) to create and sustain it. This vision of life revolves around a set of ideas concerning the arrangement of work, personal life, and housing.

Spreading predominantly in areas with burgeoning new technology and creative industries and start-up "ecosystems", coliving establishments are connected to a wider milieu of work in the "knowledge economy". Even though the emergence of coliving spaces is a recent trend, new establishments are emerging around the world and the new phenomenon has been publicised in influential media outlets such as the New York Times (Marikar, 2018), The Guardian (Bearne, 2019) or the BBC (Shaw, 2016). Moreover, the development of new coliving space is a spreading business model currently attracting multi-million-dollar investments (Cadwalladr, 2016; McAlone, 2015) with new projects appearing around the world.

The attention and investment that coliving attracts signals the centrality of issues of organisation of life and reproduction around work in post-Fordist economies. The declaratory purpose of coliving is to create living conditions that are most supportive of living a successful entrepreneurial life. The central principles of coliving are to foster a commitment to work, to stimulate creativity and innovation, and to enable the effective development of one's entrepreneurial project or career and encourage sharing of knowledge. Simultaneously, it seeks to create ties of friendship that can offer emotional support and help to manage strains resulting from the intensity and the unpredictability of entrepreneurial work. Moreover, through the organisation of various social events, coliving presents a strategy of preserving desirable and fulfilling social life through the organisation of social events and facilitating social interaction between coliving members.

Even though there exist considerable differences between currently existing coliving establishments, we can say that they are connected by a certain vision of redesigning domestic life in relation to the demands of work. The central idea of coliving is to create conditions where life reaches a fulfilment through the realisation of professional

or entrepreneurial ambition and which maximise the chances of work-related and economic success. Simultaneously, colivings seek to make life 'liveable' and attractive in relation to often intense and demanding work. This is achieved by creating and enhancing opportunities for effortless socialisation, providing options for easily accessible leisure activities, and helping with tiring and mundane aspects of life which could stand in the way of professional success and enjoyment of leisure.

The new phenomenon of coliving shares certain similarities with other contemporary living and housing arrangements, such as alternative communities and cohousing arrangements whose purpose is also to cultivate a way of life different from the mainstream arrangements of production, reproduction and leisure (Farias, 2017; Jarvis, 2011; Skinner, 2012; Sullivan, 2016a). However, crudely put, colivings differ from these arrangements in the direction of travel from the "mainstream". Cohousing and other alternative communities seek to formulate an alternative to the capitalist way of life, and question the values of economic and professional success. Coliving, in contrast, does not question these values but rather seeks to formulate a way of life which encourages and normalizes high work commitment. It re-arranges life in such a way to make work intensive life less strenuous and reconciles it with demand for socialisation and attractive forms of leisure (this will be further elaborated in Chapter Two and Chapter Seven).

In sum, coliving spaces present a novel way of making life work and are an appropriate object of sociological analysis of contemporary working lives. This thesis seeks to understand what the underlying causes and reasons behind the emergence of coliving spaces are. In addition, it will explore how intensive working lives are modified, redesigned and sustained coliving spaces. Finally, it will draw lessons for politics of understanding and relating to work and life today.

1.3 Meaning and Connotations of "Work" and "Life"

This thesis explores the reconfiguration of life in relation to work in a coliving space. Even though the terms "work" and "life" have a common sense meaning in everyday language use, some clarification on how the terms will be used in this dissertation is needed. It is not necessary to steer clear of how the terms are used in everyday communication, and the words work and life are used in their everyday meaning throughout this text. However, it is beneficial to highlight the connotations and aspects of work and life that common usage of these words can make less apparent.

The most common understanding of work and life today seems to follow the binary structure where work is a physical or mental activity we do to earn money to make our living and life is what we do with our time after or outside of work. Again, there is no need to abstain from using the words in their common sense meaning. However, we should be clear that this meaning is not immemorial, but rather, reflects the temporal, spatial and organisational separation of work (emerging in the form of formal paid employment) and life (the activities done outside of the workplace or after work) that occurred with capitalist industrialisation (Granter, 2009) (this will be elaborated in the next section).

The point is not simply that the meaning we associate with words work and life is historically specific. Rather, it is important to be aware that their usual connotations can make us less sensitive to important problems. Firstly, not all work – understood as a physical or mental activity done to achieve some result – takes place within the confines of paid employment. Caring and domestic work, still disproportionately carried out by women, is often unpaid and done outside of a formal employment relationships. So is an economically gainful activity of many individuals who are self-employed. Secondly, work (paid or unpaid, within employment or not) does not take

place "outside" of individual's biography, but is necessarily part of 'global structure' (Lefebvre, 2002: 235) of everyday life.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the problem with using words work and life in their common contemporary sense is that it obscures the extent to which life does not simply exist outside or after work but is rather heavily influenced and shaped by work. As scholars (e.g. Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997; Fraser, 1985; Glucksmann, 1995; Lefebvre, 2002) have previously pointed out, the patterns of reproduction, of entertainment, of thinking about what it means to live a life worth living are strongly influenced by the prevailing forms of organisation and dynamics of work. Understanding work and life as distinct spheres of existence – for example within a popular discourse of work-life balance (Warhurst et al., 2008) – risks concealing this interrelationship and mutual constitution of "work" and "life" and the way in which they unavoidably influence each other. Even though this thesis cannot avoid using the words "work" and "life" in their usual connotations described above, it strives to emphasise their mutual constitution and problematise their taken for granted meaning. Where possible and appropriate, the term "work-life" is used to accentuate this connection.

1.4 How Life Relates to Work

At the most general level, this dissertation is about two things: about life and work. It seeks to understand the relation between life and work and asks how they influence each other: how they interact and how they shape each other. Their intermingling and interactions will be studied in a context of capitalism and economic forces in which both work and life become enmeshed. Talking about the relation between work and life opens a question whether these two things can even be thought about separately. Is work not always part of life? Can there be life without work? Should they be thought

of as separate entities? With a degree of simplification, we can say that classic sociological narrative (e.g. Bittman, 2016; Edgell, 2012; Slater, 1998; Veal, 2004) about the changing relationship between work and life divides the historical development into three periods: pre-industrial societies, industrial societies, post-Fordist era.

This classic sociological narrative starts with the pre-industrial period, where work was regulated by tradition and by natural and religious cycles of a year. In spatial and temporal terms, there would be no clear distinction between a place and time of work and place and time of private and domestic life, as work and family life would be combined in a household and regulated by tradition, religious calendar and natural cycles (Anthony, 1977; Bittman, 2016; Edgell, 2012). The onset of capitalism and industrialism are seen as introducing a radical shift, which forces a sharp separation between work and what was now constituted as a life outside of work. The imperative of increasing production meant the concentration of work in a factory where work can be measured, and the workforce controlled (Thompson, 1967). We see a clear and guarded boundary emerging between home on the one hand, and a specialized workplace on the other hand (Edgell, 2012). A similar boundary emerges between 'the person of a worker and the labour-power he [or she] sells on the market' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 154) and between working time and leisure/family time (Bittman, 2016; Thompson, 1967)

The politics of working time became one of the central industrial conflicts in modernity and the amount of time spent on work was reduced progressively in most western industrial countries in the twentieth century. However, irrespective of the side of the conflict, what is important here is that the (temporal) separation of working and 'leisure' or 'domestic' time was widely accepted and impressed itself in social and

political imaginary of work and life as the two spheres of life. This was true on the side of the management. Beynon documents this through the example from Henry Ford's philosophy, which demanded a strict separation between 'work' and 'play':

> 'When we are at work, we ought to be at work. When we are at play we ought to be at play. There is no use trying to mix the two. When the work is done, then the play can come, but not before.' (Henry Ford, cited in Beynon, 1975: 26)

The desirability of clear separation between labour and "life" is clearly indicated also on the side of the labour movement and reformers. This was perhaps most famously expressed by a Welsh reformer Robert Owen who coined the slogan 'eight hours labour, eight hours recreation, eight hours rest'. Workers movements' demand for reduction in working hours and following changes in legislation led to progressive reduction of work time from a typical day being 12-14 hours to eight hours becoming a norm in most of the Western world in the first half of the twentieth century (Bittman, 2016). The reduction of work time was seen as essential to the improvement of quality of personal and family life, through increasing the amount of time available for domestic duties and leisure (Weeks, 2011)

Discursive separation of work and life was not limited to domains of management or labour politics. On the contrary, it penetrated the popular culture and clear separation of work and leisure became a recommended approach for maintaining a good and healthy lifestyle. In his analysis of a Los Angeles Times' astrology column, Adorno (2002: 97) observed how clear separation of work and leisure was recommended as a part of the larger bi-phasic approach. As he puts it:

'The idea is that by strictly keeping work and pleasure apart, both ranges of activity will benefit: no instinctual aberrations will interfere with seriousness of rational behaviour, no signs of seriousness and responsibility will cast their shadow over the fun'.

Influential contemporary accounts argue that the onset of what is termed post-Fordism, post-industrialism or neoliberalism in the 1970s introduced further changes in the relationship between work and life. According to these accounts, the social division between work and life introduced with the onset of industrial capitalism is beginning to lose importance, becoming less rigid and blurrier, or disappearing altogether. More optimistic accounts of this development claim that demise of the division between work and life is an effect of the enjoyable character of post-industrial work, workers' increasing freedom to determine their own schedules, and flexible policies of progressive workplaces (for overview see Lewis, 2003).

Other accounts see the development in a more critical light and emphasise changes in technological developments and organisation of work over which individual workers have little control. Some scholars highlighted the role of information and communication technologies in breaching the boundary between a space of work and home (Wajcman, 2008; Wajcman and Rose, 2011). Other scholars focused on the logic of work, productivity, and management increasingly serves as a guideline for the organisation of personal life through popular magazines, self-help literature and practices of personal coaching (Hancock and Tyler, 2004). Yet other accounts explain the dissolution of the boundary between work and life by emphasising organisational discourse increasingly portray work as a sphere of personal self-realisation (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Rose, 1999a) or by highlighting the organisational practices

through which life is increasingly incorporated into the workplace (Fleming, 2014; Fleming and Spicer, 2004).

In this narrative, work and life go through three stages of (i) original integration in the pre-industrial period, (ii) separation after the onset of capitalism and industrialism, and (iii) finally blurring of the boundary between them in our post-Fordist present. The development of work-life relation here is reminiscent of baroque contradance. At the start, dancers stand close to each other, holding hands, only to be separated as the music progresses. They bow to the audience and to each other while maintaining their distance. After a brief separation, they engage again in a series of polite turns and twists. Integration, separation, re-integration is the rhythm of this work-life dance.

There is no doubt a great deal of truth in this general account. It highlights significant large-scale developments in the history of capitalist societies. As any general account portraying social developments spanning centuries, this narrative can be criticised for being too schematic, not paying attention to smaller developments, omitting historical detail and counter-developments. The high level of abstraction, however, is not the problem I want to address here. Instead, this thesis shifts the emphasis from relation between work and life as two entities that encounter themselves externally, to a perspective that explores and emphasises their mutual influence and co-constitution.

As Marxist and feminist scholars argued persuasively, "work" in capitalism – however formally guarded against the influences of "life" – always required conditions that it did not create itself. In other words, production always required re-production. The industrial enclosure of labour behind the factory gates would be unfeasible without reproductive labour that has occurred outside of formal boundaries of the workplace. By the same token, the domestic life and reproductive labour cannot be unrelated to

the sphere of production and workplace. Throughout history, life was profoundly shaped by the imperatives of production and vice-versa.

The perspective adopted in this thesis is rather different from integration, separation, re-integration accounts. It emphasises that the logic of work never shied away from moulding and organising life outside of the workplace. However much signs of personal and family life have been kept outside of the factory; this did not prevent the logic of production heavily impacting the organisation of daily life. This is not to argue that the general account of the relation between work and life described above does not hold water. Rather, it is to argue that shifting attention towards life in relation to work complicates and alters the story in an analytically fruitful way.

1.5 But What is Life?

Every account of social life is grounded in ontological, epistemological, and theoretical perspective. This can work at the level of specific elaborations of reasoning for the research. However, it also works at the level of wider intellectual, theoretical, and even emotional influence some traditions of social thought have over our work. My understanding of life as an object of sociological analysis was influenced by three theoretical sources. What connects them is the emphasis on seeing life as an object that has always been profoundly shaped by social forces, rather than something natural, innate and shielded from external influences. In this respect, they all contribute to our understanding of how life is made to work.

The first conceptualisation that I draw on is Foucault's concern with the way in which life is shaped by various technologies of power on the one hand (1977, 1998) and with the ways in which individuals fashion their lives drawing on various technologies of the self (1990, 1992). Foucault seems to be particularly fascinated with the moment

of 'entry of life into history; that is, the entry of phenomena peculiar to the life of human species into the order of knowledge and power, into the sphere of political techniques' (Foucault, 1998: 141–142). Life, of course, was always a concern of power. For the most part, however, power over life expressed itself negatively – as a power to negate, to take life, as a punishment for transgression of the law. Around the seventeenth century, however, life is increasingly understood as a thing to be fostered, managed, and 'maximized' (Foucault, 1998: 123) in accordance to the imperatives of knowledge and demands of production. Rather than being simply subjected to domination, 'life as a political object' (Foucault, 1998: 145) becomes the centre of social and political struggles.

This thesis is partly inspired by Foucault's conceptualisation of life as an object which is profoundly shaped by technologies of power and practices of the self. However, in some respects, understanding of life in this dissertation differs from his conceptualisation. Foucault's project centred on an understanding of long-term transformations in the way the subject is shaped, often encompassing several centuries. Foucault's term subject refers to historically variable 'subject position' (Faubion, 2011: 4), rather than to specific human beings and their unique biography.

This thesis, however, is ethnographic rather than historical work and it seeks to engage living people with names, stories and thoughts. This is where the conceptualisation of the sociological question by C. Wright Mills enters as a second source of inspiration. According to Mills (1959), sociological imagination revolves around the moment where individual biography meets social structure and focuses on the interplay 'of [wo]man and society, of biography and history, of self and world' (1959: 4). In this conceptualisation of life, 'the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals' (1959: 5) has central importance. When encountering the varieties of

individuals, sociological analysis asks 'in what ways are they selected and formed, liberated and repressed, made sensitive and blunted' (1959: 7).

The final conceptualisation of life that this thesis draws on comes from the sociology of everyday life. This tradition stresses a need to attend to how events and thoughts evolve in social interactions, paying attention to how life unfolds through repetitive and mundane events and how informal and habitual scripts express certain tendencies of social life (Sztompka, 2008). Rather than understanding 'discourses in the abstract' (Hacking, 2004: 278) it means paying attention to the ways they might be adopted by human beings in everyday interactions, everyday rituals and daily reflections. As Lefebvre (2002) argues, everyday life should not be understood simply as a spontaneous, free activity that is shielded from the influence of power and material concerns. Rather, it is lived within social, technological and material structures of capitalist society which shape it in a profound way. Simultaneously, it is an object of everyday contestations, however big or small.

In sum, life can be sociologically understood as an entity that is shaped by knowledge and power throughout history, where the object of analysis are historical transformations of the doctrines and technologies that seek to produce life in certain forms (Foucault, 1998). It can also be understood as an individual biography in interaction with the dominant social structures of a given society, that involves a subjective element of relating to and perceiving life as an individual with a story (Mills, 1959). Lastly, it can be explored at the level of everyday interactions, rituals and rhythms that together structure the experience and reproduce a certain form of life (Lefebvre, 2002). What all three accounts share is an emphasis on the investigation of concrete structures, technologies and practices that shape life in particular ways and understandings of human life as an artefact, rather as innate "natural" entity. In this

sense, they are compatible rather than mutually exclusive. This dissertation draws on each of these three perspectives. The dimension of historical transformations is addressed through a dialogue with academic literature, whereas life as an individual biography and life as an everyday reality are explored to a larger extent through an ethnographic study of coliving.

1.6 Thesis Overview

The thesis explores the phenomenon of coliving as an example and trend of contemporary developments of arrangements of working life. It reviews current sociological theories of working life and draws on findings of the ethnographic fieldwork to answer the following key research question;

- What motivates the emergence of the coliving phenomenon and how does it relate to the dynamics of contemporary working life?

In addressing this question, three key sub-questions are asked and addressed in the theoretical and empirical chapters;

- How can we understand the reasons for tightly integrating work and domestic life in coliving? (Chapters Four and Five)

- How are intensive work-lives sustained and reproduced in coliving space? (Chapters Six and Seven)

- How do coliving inhabitants relate to and reflect on work and life in coliving? (Chapters Seven and Eight)

The thesis adopts a somewhat unorthodox structure. It differs from the standard structure, which starts with a discussion of theories, continues with a description of methods, and finally introduces empirical findings. Instead, the thesis discusses themes of the research in several 'couples' of chapters where each theoretical chapter

is followed by an empirical chapter to discuss a theoretical problem and empirical findings jointly. This somewhat unorthodox structure was chosen to emphasise connections between complex theoretical discussions and empirical analysis. Discussion of approaches and concepts in each theoretical chapter is followed immediately by empirical analysis and excerpts of data from the fieldwork in the following empirical chapter. The interposing of theoretical and empirical analysis in this way should help the reader to link the empirics with wider theoretical concerns more than separating theories and empirics into theoretical and empirical parts of the thesis.

The thesis starts with an introduction of the coliving phenomenon. This chapter (Chapter Two) defines coliving as a type of communal living which seeks to organise life around concerns with work. It introduces basic principles of coliving and sketches the way in which coliving spaces seek to make life work by modifying spatial and social arrangements of housing. It then briefly surveys how coliving is understood and represented in media discourse and what other phenomena it is linked to. Finally, it introduces Habitat, which is the coliving space where the fieldwork informing the findings of this thesis was conducted.

Following on from this, Chapter Three gives details of the methodological perspective and the methods used to research coliving. This chapter describes the methodological perspective on studying life in coliving. It then moves to elaborate on how coliving can be understood as an object of sociological analysis. The chapter then outlines reasons for adopting ethnography as a research methodology, describes the evolving process of the fieldwork, describes the methods of data collection and outlines the ethics arrangements of the research.

Chapter Four and Five discuss the issue of personal attachment to work and focus on what makes work – in some situations – exceptionally tightly interwoven with personal life. This problem is discussed first as the investment into and dynamic of entrepreneurial work, which are central to understanding reasons for individuals choosing coliving as an arrangement of work-life. As will be explained and illustrated below, it is the high tempo and extensive demands of entrepreneurial work that make coliving an attractive solution in the eyes of research participants.

Chapter Four presents an overview and discussion of contemporary theoretical perspectives on personal attachment to work. In doing so, it seeks to understand why some people feel heavily invested in their work, which can be seen as a motivation to integrate work and domestic life in coliving spaces. It reviews four perspectives on personal attachment to work (enterprise discourse, biocracy, affect, and ethics), interrogates their theoretical underpinnings, empirical focus and juxtaposes their position to make explicit their differences. It argues that understanding personal attachment to work would benefit from a greater appreciation of specifics and differences of work situations and taking into consideration financial and material factors of work and social reproduction. Finally, it introduces a framework that can be used for the analysis of intensive work-lives in coliving.

Chapter Five uses this framework for an analysis of intensive entrepreneurial work-lives in Habitat. It describes the discourse and ethical orientation encompassed in improvement principle, which postulates that the goal of entrepreneurial work-life is to contribute to a large-scale positive change in the world. It then shows how this principle combines with the notion of 'scaling up' and the financial logic of start-up enterprise to produce a particularly intensive work-life dynamic. It illustrates this dynamic on three empirical examples from the work-lives of Habitat members.

Whereas Chapters Four and Five provides insight into *why* coliving can be seen as an attractive arrangement of work-life, Chapters Six and Seven look more closely *how* personal and domestic life in coliving is re-arranged in relation to work. Chapter Six lays the foundation for the analysis of social arrangements of work-life in Chapter Seven. It discusses the way in which work and life – and the relationship between them – were understood in contemporary social science and science. It surveys three influential representations on working life: work-life balance, thesis about the colonisation of life by work and the perspective stressing the interconnection between production and reproduction. The chapter draws on these perspectives to suggest a focus on mutual co-constitution of work and life and proposes an approach to the analysis of social arrangements that produce and maintain certain versions of work-life.

Chapter Seven puts this approach to use and illustrates how coliving can be understood as a social arrangement that seeks to modify and redesign social and domestic life. It introduces the notion of 'max-life'. At its core, is the idea that private and professional life should and can be arranged in such a way that both spheres of life are maximised, that they lead to a maximum level of experience and satisfaction. The chapter then describes practical arrangements, social structures and interaction patterns that seek to practically accomplish this vision: overlap of work and life, social automation, social moderation, understanding and shielding of life.

Whereas previous chapters deal with the question of why coliving can be seen as attractive or needed and how it practically rearranges life around work, Chapters Eight and Nine discuss the issue of subjective relation to an intensive work-life through the lenses of debates on power and reflexivity in relation to contemporary work. The overarching theme concerns how do people in coliving relate to and reflect on their

working lives and what position do they adopt in relation to ideologies and rules of work and life.

Chapter Eight introduces the last theoretical theme: Foucauldian account of power over life and relation between subject, power, work and life. The chapter is organised around a discussion of three themes within Foucauldian scholarship: (i) change in the operation of power in neoliberalism and societies of control; (ii) development of Foucault's work on technologies of the self and implications for our understanding of subject, autonomy and reflexivity; (iii) understanding of reflexivity in Foucault inspired analyses of working life. It clarifies my position on these issues and gives pointers for empirical analysis of relating to and reflecting on work and life in coliving. It argues for understanding relating to work and life, and reflexivity more generally, as socially situated phenomena and suggests exploring specific ways of reflecting and their implications.

This perspective is then applied on relating to and reflecting on work and life in Habitat in Chapter Nine. The chapter illustrates this way of perceiving oneself in relation to work and life through the perspective of the technology of the self. It shows how working life in Habitat revolves around the ethical substances of potential, freedom and determination. It then shows how reflexive way relating to these ideals of work and life fostered in Habitat. It then shows how this is practised in the form of 'deep conversation' as well as individual introspection. This chapter concludes with reflections on the critical elements as well as costs of this way of understanding oneself in relation to work and life.

In Chapter Ten, the analytical themes running through the thesis (personal attachment and intense commitment to work; re-arrangement of personal and domestic life in

relation to work; and the way of relating to and reflecting on work-life) are drawn together in a discussion of key findings and implications of the thesis for social scientists examining contemporary working-lives. The chapter brings the individual findings and concepts together and provides a general scheme of coliving as an arrangement of work-life. The discussion chapter also links the findings and themes of the research to working lives beyond coliving through making connections with wider trends in contemporary work-lives (managing personal and domestic life in relation to work intensification; outsourcing of private life in relation to the crisis of social reproduction; prescribed forms of self-managing and self-reflexive subjectivity) and through relating the work-lives of coliving members to the lives of PhD researchers.

Chapter Two: What Is Coliving?

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One introduced the theme of the thesis as an exploration of contemporary transformations of domestic and personal life in relation to work. It also suggested that the new phenomenon of coliving presents a referent and the case for empirical research into this topic. Coliving is a relatively new phenomenon which only entered public attention in the past few years and has not yet been empirically examined within sociology, organisation studies and management studies. The following chapter, therefore, seeks to introduce what coliving is, describe its main tenets, and introduce the coliving space where I conducted the ethnographic study which is the primary source of empirical material informing this thesis.

The chapter proceeds to do this in several steps. First, it briefly defines coliving as a new type of communal living which seeks to organise life around shared values and lifestyles and highlights the connection coliving makes between concerns with work, life, and housing. Second, it sketches the way coliving transforms life through modifying spatial and social arrangements and managing everyday practices. Third, the chapter briefly outlines how coliving is constructed in media discourse and how it is discussed in connection to phenomena such as tech and creative industries, coworking, and so-called 'millennial' lifestyle (Raval, 2018). Fourth, it introduces Habitat as a coliving space which provided the setting for the ethnographic study which informs this thesis. Fifth, the chapter relates coliving with similar organisations in order to situate it within a broader phenomenon of organising life and emphasise its similarities to other institutions, as well as to highlight its specific features.

2.2 What is Coliving?

At the very basic level, coliving is a new type of communal living which is purpose-built or refurbished for the new purpose and in which individuals (often defined as professionals and entrepreneurs) live together and strive to formulate and practice a lifestyle defined by a set of shared values. Coliving is a form of cohabitation in a built structure which seeks to formulate a particular vision of life and puts in place arrangements (social, spatial, temporal, discursive) to create and sustain it. This vision of life revolves around a set of ideas concerning the arrangement of work, personal life, and housing.

Coliving spaces are appearing all around the world and vary when it comes to important characteristics. Colivings come in various sizes. The smallest coliving space I came across, Techsquat in Prague, only hosted six inhabitants. The biggest coliving at the moment, the Collective in London, accommodates more than five hundred people. They also vary when it comes to their organisational form. Some colivings are run as grass-roots projects started and run by individuals living in them (e.g. Rainbow Mansion described below). However, some colivings are started by a (real estate) business with an important goal of generating profit from an enterprise within a competitive real estate market (e.g. the Lansdowne in Birmingham). Colivings also vary when it comes to the intended length of stay of their inhabitants. While some colivings are permanent homes for people to live in for several years, some are intended as short-stay establishments that offer a service combining work and travel (e.g. Roam, a chain of coliving spaces in different locations around the world).

Nonetheless, coliving establishments are connected around a certain understanding of work, personal life, and housing that can be summarised as follows:

1) Work, industry, economy – Coliving spaces, their websites, and the media discourse around them often define their 'ideal' or target inhabitant as a particular type of worker. Group of workers that colivings are seeking to appeal to, and create ideal work-life conditions for, are named as 'entrepreneurs and tech workers', 'middle-income workers' 'creative set', 'freelancers' and so on.

2) Life – The discourse around colivings understands life, often life in relation to characteristics of work in the sectors as mentioned above, as something that demands a change in arrangements that surround it and shape it (social, spatial, temporal, discursive) in order to allow maximum productivity, fulfilment and wellbeing.

3) Housing – Housing and domestic life is the sphere of life that is an object of intervention, which can be practically re-arranged in order to sustain and change lives in relation to certain ideals of productivity, sociality and fulfilment. As many (but not all) coliving spaces are businesses, it is also important to mention that housing is the commodity which is sold and which generates profit.

2.3 What Does Coliving Do?

Colivings are a form of cohabitation and accommodation provision. However, they are also united by a certain vision of needs of their tenants, of a particular ideal of combining and reconfiguring work and life in a new way, and by their intended effect on the life of their inhabitants. The central idea of coliving is to create conditions where life reaches fulfilment through the realisation of professional or entrepreneurial ambition and which maximise the chances of work-related and economic success. Simultaneously, colivings seek to make life 'liveable' and attractive in relation to often intense and demanding work. This is achieved by creating and enhancing opportunities for effortless socialisation, providing options for easily accessible leisure activities,

and helping with tiring and mundane aspects of life (such as cleaning or shopping for household essentials) which could stand in the way of professional success and enjoyment of leisure.

Coliving establishments offer a mix of features that are supposed to facilitate successful, intensive and enjoyable working life. The name coliving and the specific type of organisation it corresponds to is a new phenomenon. However, the ways in which coliving seeks to modify working life are not in themselves new and have historical antecedents. Moreover, many of the features observable in coliving spaces have equivalents in trends and developments in other contemporary organisational arrangements and practices. The novelty of coliving, therefore, does not necessarily lie in inventing new ways of organising life, but rather in combination and intensification of existing trends and practices within a housing situation. The following paragraphs and Table 1 describe these features and connects them to equivalent historical and contemporary examples.

1) At the level of *space*, the place of residence and place of work are frequently combined in one building. In practice, this means providing a shared workspace (often referred to as coworking) within the coliving establishment. By removing the physical distance between the living and working space, it is deemed that coliving inhabitants will save time and energy that would otherwise be spent commuting, and which can be instead invested into the realisation of professional goals or enjoyment of leisure activities. This can also mean that work and life are seamlessly integrated, and interruptions are minimised so the maximum energy and commitment can be devoted to pursuing success in work and success in life.

The feature of ccoliving to design housing space and arrange domestic life in relation to work to enhance producdtivity and to control working life, is not a new phenomenon. Provision of housing and control of workers' domestic life was an important feature of industrial paternalism of Fordist era (Beynon, 1975; White, 2004) and remains strategy to control industrial workforce today (Smith and Pun, 2006). Moreover, the practice of modifying domestic arrangements in relation to work has affinity with trends in contemporary work organisations which seek to transcend the boundary between a workplace and home (e.g. through semi-compulsory "team-building") and between personal and professional life (Fleming, 2014; Fleming and Spicer, 2004; Ross, 2004). Coliving, in a sense, intensifies this trend by consciously transforming living provision with a goal to create conditions of domestic life compatible with an intensive work commitment.

2) At the level of *social relations*, coliving seeks to create so-called 'intentional community' which includes individuals with similar values, a shared orientation towards work and life, and with compatible lifestyles. This can include matching inhabitants based on their line of work (e.g. tech and creative workers), their work status (e.g. entrepreneurs and professionals), but also emphasising personal characteristics and lifestyle preferences (e.g. people who are "fun", people who are outgoing and who actively contribute to the quality of communal life) that prospective inhabitants should have. The careful selection of inhabitants (which sometimes follow formal procedures, such as application form and interview) should create a social environment where individuals can offer each other help and share knowledge in order to support each other to advance in their career projects. The selection should also ensure that inhabitants complement each other in their personal preferences and that they can engage in mutually pleasurable free time activities.

Building a community of individuals who share professional interests, industry or orientation towards economic success is not exclusive to coliving. Coworking spaces that provide shared working space for independent workers in so-called "knowledge industries" similarly seek to create a community and support networks around work in specific industries (Gandini, 2015; Garrett et al., 2017). Similarly, Fridman (2014) researched groups of financial self-help genres who form support groups with others who seek affluence and financial independence. We can say that coliving takes this tendency a step further by embedding the community organised around professional and economic ideals in a housing situation, thus potentially intensifying its promised effects.

3) At the level of *organisation of everyday practices*, life in coliving is both "managed" and "outsourced":

(i) Life is *managed* in a sense that formal structures are in place to provide infrastructure for living a successful, fulfilling and hassle-free life. This can mean organising regular events that aim to increase socialising (e.g. common dinners), relaxation and wellbeing (e.g. on-site yoga classes), and creativity and inspiration (e.g. talks given by external speakers), but often have a clear purpose in increasing personal productivity and chances of success inhabitants' careers (e.g. networking events, talks given by successful entrepreneurs). Some coliving spaces hire 'community managers' (Davies, 2015) or 'social engineers' (Semuels, 2015) who are responsible for organising these events and increasing the quality of communal life.

Emphasis on "managing" life in this way is not a feature exclusive to coliving, as self-help and lifestyle genres increasingly adopt the idea of life as something

that should be managed to maximise both work productivity and enjoyment of leisure (Hancock, 2009; Hancock and Tyler, 2004). Rather than inventing the principle of managing life, coliving takes this approach further by moving it from an individual to an organisational level and embedding it in a housing situation.

(ii) Life is *outsourced* (Craig and Ritzer, 2009; Hochschild, 2013) in a sense that those aspects of life which are not essential for increasing personal productivity or wellbeing are taken care of by the establishment and menial tasks of everyday life (e.g. domestic labour) are done by hired workers. In some colivings, rooms are ready for an instant moving in. The rooms are furnished and fully equipped to the smallest detail, including cutlery and bed linen. Workers are hired to clean the communal space, but in some colivings also to clean the rooms, to change linen and to restock items of everyday consumption such as toilet paper and soap.

Again, the trend of "outsourcing" aspects of domestic life is not unique to coliving. Scholars (Craig and Ritzer, 2009; Hochschild, 2013) have documented the increase in the supply of paid services that offer to take care of aspects of personal, domestic and family life to help clients deal with demands of intensive work. Coliving, to some extent, makes this a part of the housing situation that is designed to enable and support a work-intensive life.

Coliving spaces, therefore, seek to create a form of accommodation and living environment which is supposed to fulfil a specific function: to enhance the chances of success in work and career while also providing comfort and making life 'liveable' or even enjoyable in relation to work and economic demands. In other words, we can

Feature	Manifestation in Coliving	Precedents
Modification of housing space in relation to work	Providing collective working space within a housing arrangement. Organising work and profession related events in the housing situation.	Industrial paternalism (Beynon, 1975; Pun and Smith, 2007; White, 2004); Modern workplaces providing lifestyle infrastructures (Fleming, 2014; Fleming and Spicer, 2004; Ross, 2004).
Building and modifying social relations around work	Concentrating people working in a specific industry (e.g. entrepreneurship); Matching inhabitants based on their work and lifestyle.	Coworking spaces (Gandini, 2015; Garrett et al., 2017); Self-help groups (Fridman, 2014).
Management of everyday life	Social and professional events organised by the organisation; Professional success becomes an objective to be managed within the sphere of everyday domestic life.	Self-management in self-help books and lifestyle magazines (Hancock, 2009; Hancock and Tyler, 2004).
Outsourcing of everyday life	Everyday tasks are taken care of by paid workers to enhance work-life productivity of coliving members.	Paid services offering to "outsource" personal, family and domestic tasks (Craig and Ritzer, 2009; Hochschild, 2013).

Table 1- Features of Coliving

say that coliving spaces seek to *make life work* in both senses of the phrase. In a literal sense, they seek to make life work by increasing its productive capacity and its potential to succeed in professional and entrepreneurial pursuits. In a figurative sense, they seek to make life work by finding a practical solution to arranging life in relation to work, dealing with the pressures of work, providing support and helping to relieve

their negative impact intensive work can have. As a result, life is not only maintained or sustained. Instead, it is re-designed and modified in relation to work.

2.4 Variety of Colivings

The definition and general description of coliving presented above should be understood as the identification of phenomena as an ideal type. Even though various coliving spaces are connected by name, the ideal function, and the discursive connections to other phenomena, during my initial exploration and my fieldwork, I came to recognise that there exist considerable differences between coliving spaces which were not always reflected in media discourse about coliving.

The scope of differences can be perhaps best illustrated by contrasting two cases that I discovered early in my research. The first example of coliving I came to know is Techsquat in Prague, Czech Republic. Techsquat is a small establishment consisting of one flat with several bedrooms. At the time of my visit to Prague in January 2017, six people lived in Techsquat with the addition of two occasional lodgers who stayed on occasions when they were visiting the capital. Techsquat is run collectively by the people who live in it. Tenants divide the rent and collective expenses (such as payments for cleaners or household supplies).

In contrast to Techsquat is The Collective in London, which I discovered soon after moving to the UK in 2015. The Collective claims to be the biggest co-living in the world, currently offering accommodation to some 500 lodgers. The Collective was not started collectively by people who live there but was,instead, opened by a real-estate company using the investment from undisclosed investors. These two examples demonstrate that while sharing a common name, colivings vary in their organisation, origins, and size.

Based on my exploration of news articles and websites about coliving, field visits to several sites, and informal conversations with individuals active in coliving, I came to identify four types of colivings:

1) *Communal / Entrepreneurial colivings* – This can be seen as the original and 'purest' form of coliving. It involves workers and entrepreneurs living together to create an 'intentional' and supportive environment and community. In these colivings, a few entrepreneurs and tech-industry workers decide to live together to create a space where they can live their lives following their professional and personal ideals. The "original" example of coliving, Rainbow Mansion in California, falls into this category as do other examples such as StartupHome in London, Techsquat in Prague, and Habitat, the main case of this thesis, which I will describe in the greater detail bellow (Section 2.7).

2) *Work-Travel retreats* – This is a relatively numerous category of colivings which are often situated in attractive travel destinations. The idea behind these colivings is to allow working people to travel and work in exotic environments promising exploration of a new place and benefits of sunny weather, beaches, or a calm environment for recreation. The emphasis here is on making work enjoyable in an attractive location and connecting work with travelling experience. Examples of this type of establishment are, for example, Sun&Co in Spain, Mokrin House in rural Serbia or the chains of multiple colivings such as Roam.

3) *Corporate colivings as a housing solution for young professionals and 'millennials'* – These colivings are similar to the first category of entrepreneurial/communal colivings but establishments falling into this category were started by real-estate companies or established coworking providers moving into a new industry. These

spaces do not necessarily connect to work in entrepreneurial, tech or creative sectors, however, they define their inhabitants as 'young professionals' and the living environment claims to provide support for life in relation to intensive work. In addition, it seems that these colivings emphasise their utility for maximisation of enjoying one's life through taking care of basic tasks, by bringing 'similarly minded' people together and maximising the range of free time activities available to tenants. The Collective mentioned earlier, as well as networks of corporate colivings such as WeLive in the United States, are examples falling into this category.

4) *Coliving as a housing strategy which offers affordable yet luxurious living –* Colivings in this category have the weakest link to the logic of work or entrepreneurship and are concerned with providing rented accommodation in lucrative urban housing markets. They can be seen as a real-estate business model which seeks to provide relatively luxurious rented accommodation with some communal aspects and spaces which might appeal to young, affluent urban workers. Examples of this type can be built-to-rent development such as Clarendon Quarter in Leeds, Vivahouse in London, Lansdowne in Birmingham, or The Slate Yard in Salford.

2.5 Name, Discourse, Connections

Notwithstanding their diversity of origin, location, organisational form, and size, these establishments are connected under the name 'coliving'. We can say that the act of naming, in this case, connects a variety of types and cases and makes them part of the same discursive phenomenon. Moreover, it delimitates coliving spaces from other phenomena such as common house sharing, co-housing, student dormitories and, at least at the level of language and discourse, makes them into a distinct entity which is identifiable, searchable, communicable and, and in many cases, commodifiable. If

considered as an object produced by discourse, the production of coliving was somewhat successful considering its successful proliferation.

As the Figures 1 and 2 show, general interest in coliving has increased significantly over the last five years as shown by the number of news items mentioning coliving and searches for the term on Google. Coliving has also been increasingly publicised in influential world-wide media outlets such as the New York Times, The Guardian, The Times, BBC and Wall Street Journal. Beyond the big media brands, coliving is a frequently discussed theme in specialised online magazines and the blogosphere. For example, London and New York based architecture and design online magazine Dezeen has a section named 'Coliving and Shared Accommodation'. There are two thematic websites - coliving.com and coliving.org – devoted to spreading information about coliving and providing lists of existing coliving spaces. YouTube searches of the term 'coliving' returns thousands of videos including media reports, interviews with coliving organisers, public debates on the topic, TEDx talks, and also a coliving version of 'why' and 'how to' videos (e.g. 'Why You should Give Coliving a Try and 'How to Start an Entrepreneurial Mansion'). The term coliving is also finding its way into policy debates about housing provision as the two reports recently published by Social Market Foundation and the Royal Society for Arts (Corfe, 2019; Shafique, 2018).
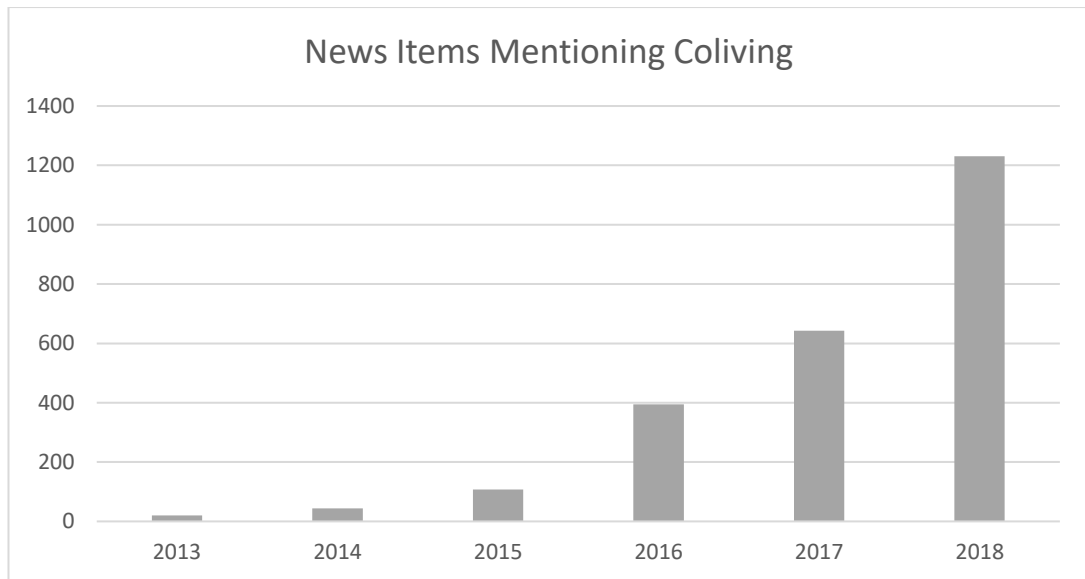
Figure 1 - News items mentioning coliving. Source: Factiva.

The discourse on coliving at points refers to a shared 'story of origin'. This goes back to an appearance of Rainbow Mansion, which some news articles refer to as the establishment where the trend of coliving originated (Dembosky, 2012; Reeder, 2012). The Rainbow Mansion, located in a house in California, was established in 2006 by a group of young engineers working for NASA. which pooled their resources together to rent a property. The practical aim to save money was not the only reason for sharing a house. Reportedly, it was also a desire to live with others who have a similar orientation toward life, work, and the world. As the website puts it: 'we are all striving in our work lives and our home lives to improve this world we share' (The Rainbow Mansion, n.d.). In Rainbow Mansion, this meant mostly teaming up with housemates to work on technological innovation. Indeed, inhabitants have co-founded several start-ups and produced considerable software innovation (Metz, 2012). In addition to sharing the house, inhabitants of the Rainbow Mansion started to organise social events inviting 'the best and brightest' to participate. This establishment is still in operation (albeit with different tenants) and is frequently cited in news articles as an inspiration behind later coliving spaces. Interestingly, one of the founders of the

Rainbow Mansion since became 'an advocate' of coliving, currently running a network of colivings called 'The Embassy'.

Relative Google Search Interest in Colving
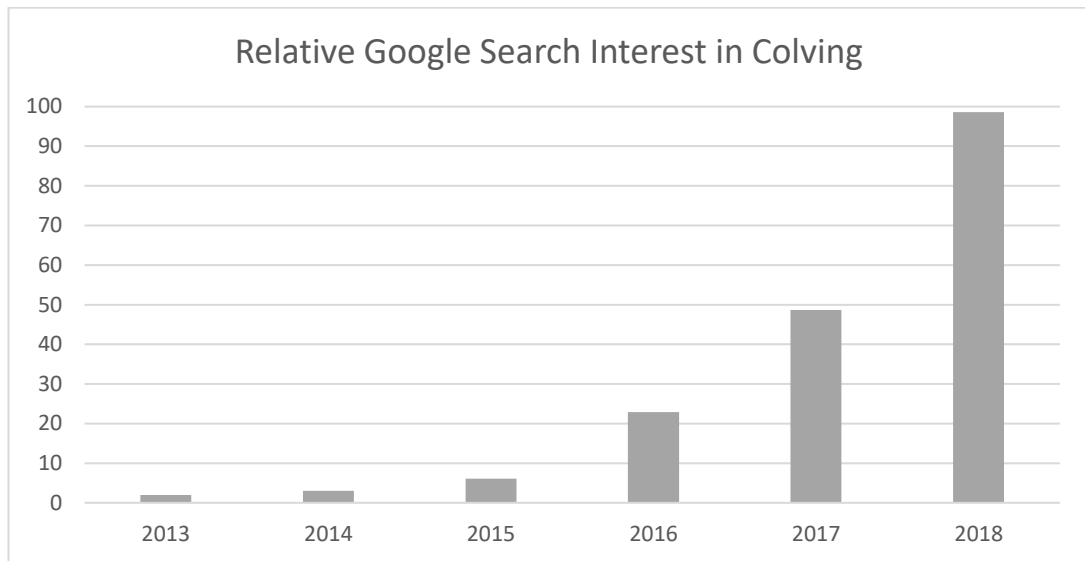
Figure 2 - Relative Google Search Interest in the Term Coliving[1]. Source: Google Trends.

The media discourse about colivings also connects them to other phenomena. Very often, colivings are mentioned together with coworking spaces. Co-workings are 'shared workplaces utilised by different sorts of knowledge professionals, mostly freelancers, working in various degrees of specialisation in the vast domain of the knowledge industry' (Gandini, 2015: 194). Practically, co-workings are 'office renting facilities where workers hire a desk and a wi-fi connection' where 'independent professionals live their daily routines side-by-side with professional peers, largely working in the same sector'(Gandini, 2015: 194–195). Co-livings are often described as a continuation of coworking (Davies, 2015; Kessler, 2015). In other words, they are

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[1] Numbers represent relative values to the highest point on the chart for the given period of time. A value of 100 is the peak popularity for the term, a value 50 means that the term is half as popular. The value for every year is an average of monthly values recorded for months in that year. The graph therefore records the trend (increase in interest in the term coliving), rather than absolute numbers.

seen as coworking taken a step further to include accommodation and in a sense, encompassing the entire life of an individual.

Colivings are also related to the phraseology and vocabulary around the phenomena of entrepreneurial and knowledge economy such as 'start-up', 'sharing economy', 'tech and creative industries' or 'Silicon Valley mentality' (Davies, 2015; Kosoff, 2015; Tiku, 2015). The origin of coliving is connected to the emergence of these industries and lifestyle, requirements and needs of their workers, who are variously described as 'freelancers', 'entrepreneurs and tech workers', 'creative set', 'makers and creators of London's urban fabric' or 'young working Londoners' (Brignall, 2016; Peters, 2015; Reeder, 2012; Tiku, 2015). Colivings, particularly those in attractive holiday destinations, are also seen as serving the needs of so-called 'digital nomads' (Bearne, 2019; Tay, 2015), meaning independent workers with no permanent accommodation, combining work with travelling and who connect with their workplaces or freelance jobs via the internet.

Media sources also connect the emergence of coliving spaces with certain transformations in lifestyle and changing conditions of social reproduction. References to "millennials" as a generational group feature prominently in news articles about coliving (Bearne, 2019; Raval, 2018; Sanghani, 2019); coliving is seen as a solution that fits the (assumed) preferences of the 'generation rent', such as the desire for flexibility and non-linear careers, combining work and leisure and blurring the line between the two, post-material values and freedom of movement. In addition, articles connect the demand for coliving spaces to a desire to seek social connections and a need to avoid the loneliness that millennials purportedly feel (Raval, 2018). Colivings are, then, understood as a continuation of products of the so-called 'sharing economy' which allow for flexible consumption rather than more lasting investment

into the material property (Sanghani, 2019). Less frequent but present is a critical perspective that sees coliving as a business strategy to exploit the problem of unaffordable housing and low incomes, rather than a reflection of generational preferences (Elledge, 2016; Harris, 2018).

2.7 The Case of Habitat

The coliving where I conducted my fieldwork and which informs the vast majority of empirical insights in this thesis is called Habitat[2]. In the remainder of this chapter, I offer a description of its essential characteristics and features. These include a description of Habitat's origins, its locale, built environment and key characteristics of life within it, and finally briefly sketching how Habitat combines concerns with life and work.

2.7.1 Locale and Built Environment

Habitat is located in the vibrant capital of a Nordic country, just on the edge of the busy streets of the historical city centre and across the street from the central train station. It is situated on the intersection of two busy streets, one of them being the kernel of the city's paid sex industry. A little bit further away, some 10 minutes by walking, is the busy night entertainment district, where empty factories, workshops and warehouses of a by-gone industrial past were filled with DJ's turntables, bars and crowds of dancers and drinkers. A similar distance away is the complex of artificial lakes at the heart of the city which serves as a popular environment for strolls, jogs and occasional picnics.

Physically, Habitat is formed by four apartments spread across two floors of a larger apartment building. Habitat – a non-profit organisation - does not own the apartments.

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[2] Pseudonyms are used instead of the real name of the organisation and real names of the participants.

The rooms are rented by individual tenants from the landlord. Individual apartments host four to six people and the entire Habitat can host 21 people at its maximum capacity. Even though members rent a room in a specific apartment, Habitat seeks to encourage interaction across the apartments. To ensure this, each member can use their electronic key to unlock the door of every apartment and can meet every other member of Habitat when they need or want to.

The spatial and social heart of each apartment in Habitat is a kitchen. The kitchen of each apartment is designed to encourage interaction and socialisation; it is spacious enough to comfortably fit more than ten people at a time and more than twenty people with a little bit of effort, and includes a large dining table and a sofa or a cushioned platform for a more comfortable sitting (often over a drink).

2.7.2 The Beginnings

Early on during my fieldwork, I came across the story of Habitat's origin. The central tenets of the story are two friends – Svend and Lars - and a few bottles of wine. Dissatisfied with their housing situation at the time, the two founders wanted to create a community where entrepreneurs could live with others who understand and inspire each other. At the time of the conversation, Svend had just broken up with his girlfriend started to look for new accommodation. He was attracted to the idea of living with others. At that time, Lars lived in college accommodation, enjoying the idea of communal living. However, he did not feel his housemates understood his lifestyle, which would often involve working hard and late. That is when the idea of living together with other entrepreneurs in shared accommodation developed. As Svend put it, part of the desire was to build something 'bigger than us' – a lasting community of ambitious entrepreneurs.

Soon after the initial conversation, Svend and Lars teamed up with a few more enthusiasts and formed the team of eight founders. Two tasks followed. Firstly, finding a suitable and large enough property in the centre of a busy city within a challenging property market. After dealing with real estate agents and landlords for several months and after some let-downs and disappointments, the team eventually secured the space where Habitat is located now. The second task was equally demanding. Instead of looking for a place to live, it involved finding and selecting the best housemates. Interest was high enough. When the team launched a website to survey the interest, they received ten applications almost immediately after launching the website and soon had more than seventy applications. Instead, the difficulty lay in selecting the ideal members. The process was taken 'very seriously'. The team deemed it crucial to find people who were a good fit not only when it comes to their entrepreneurial credentials, but also when it comes to 'temperament and attitude'. To select the right candidates, the founders decided to organise a couple of networking nights where people get a chance to meet, chat and get to know each other. After these events and some collective discussions, the original 21 residents were selected and moved together in 2014.

2.7.3 Structures of Interaction and Socialisation

In Habitat, interaction between members is encouraged, and inhabitants are expected to take an active part in the communal life.[3] The social aspect of living together, in the sense of social ties that develop in Habitat, is seen as a crucial part of its existence. The opening sentence on Habitat's website says 'you are the average of the people you

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[3] This can be noticed, for example, when it comes to access to space.

gather around you'. Living and interacting with others is seen as contributing to the constitution and personal development of each member.

The importance which is given to social ties is reflected in the selection of the members. Choosing the original set of inhabitants was rather a laborious process, and the same principle applies to choosing every new member. The process involves two steps. Whenever a room becomes free (after an inhabitant moves away), the vacancy is advertised on Habitat's website and through social media (members are encouraged to share the advert to maximise the reach). Applicants are asked to fill in a short online form which, besides recording personal details such as name and contact information, asks a series of questions such as 'What is your entrepreneurial experience?' and 'Why are you the right person to live in Habitat?'. The most promising candidates are invited for an interview with existing members, where they are further assessed on their potential contribution to life in Habitat. The selection process should ensure that new members are a 'good fit', both professionally (i.e. they have a knowledge and skills from which other members can benefit) and personally (i.e. they seem to be pleasant and fun people to live with).

The communal life in Habitat unfolds through a variety of more or less scripted and formal interactions. As in most other homes, some interactions happen rather casually and spontaneously. Casual everyday conversations in the kitchen (the primary shared space in each apartment) and occasional collective cigarette breaks or drinks (usual beverages of choice included wine, beer, or whiskey) are obvious examples of this. However, there are also more formally scripted occasions for interaction. Perhaps the most central one is bi-weekly common dinner taking place every other Sunday. Apartments take turns in preparing the dinner, and all the residents are invited. Not everyone comes to every dinner; however, participation is expected and encouraged.

Dinners are an opportunity to reconvene with members from across the apartments, to talk and have fun over a glass of wine or beer. Conversation predominantly revolves around business and work; however, it tends to be discussed at a more general level. Ideas about new technologies and trends are discussed alongside topics from personal life (e.g. holiday destinations, relationships).

Besides bi-weekly common dinners, every apartment should hold a weekly apartment dinner which allows members who share an apartment to spend time together in a more closed group. Other communal events take place less frequently. Among them is a yearly cabin trip which allows residents to spend a weekend together in the countryside and the 'legendary' Habitat New Year's Eve party which is (at least when it comes to numbers) the biggest social occasion in Habitat. Guests from outside are also invited to this event. The New Year's Eve party takes place in one of the downstairs apartments, which has the largest kitchen. A year-long reminder of this event is the mirror ball hanging from the ceiling. Social life in Habitat also includes smaller traditions, such as having breakfast on the morning of each members' birthday or occasional trips to swim in the cold water of the city's harbour.

2.7.4 Habitat as a Work-Life Arrangement

This is how Habitat describes itself in the opening paragraph of its website:

> 'Habitat is home of opportunity for the creators, builders, and dreamers of tomorrow. We are 21 entrepreneurs living in four apartments in the heart of the city. We created Habitat to build the best home possible for entrepreneurs to live full and happy lives. In Habitat, we believe that nothing is impossible, nothing is too crazy, and everything is achievable with the help of a few fellow dreamers.'

As the description suggests, Habitat is a home, which is conventionally understood to be the location of the private and domestic sphere of "life". However, it also strives to be more than that. Importantly, it is designed to host people in the same work situation, entrepreneurs. It seeks to ensure that the entrepreneurs live 'full and happy lives' but also that they will succeed in achieving their dreams with 'the help of a few fellow dreamers'. Habitat, therefore, infuses home with a particular orientation to work and professional life and creates structures that should support an entrepreneurial work-life. This can be summarised by two main points.

Firstly, Habitat is built around the preference to live with 'like-minded' people. In Habitat's case, this means people who are entrepreneurs (or work within a wider entrepreneurial environment) often already having a considerable entrepreneurial experience when joining Habitat. Besides being home, Habitat fulfils certain work functions. Members are therefore expected to contribute to the shared pool of knowledge and provide advice when needed (e.g. when it comes to hiring employees, striking a deal with venture capital fund, or when planning an expansion to new markets). Moreover, the crucial part of Habitat is maintaining an orientation towards entrepreneurial success. Members are expected to contribute to the collective spirit and inspire and motivate each other to work hard on achieving their ambitions.

Secondly, Habitat creates a social environment which respects and is built around the logic of entrepreneurial work-life. As was understood and emphasised by Habitat members, the entrepreneur is a busy person, often working long hours and having only limited energy that can be spent on socialising. Habitat removes the hassle of organising one's social life as friends are readily available when the company is needed. This also means living with people who understand the strains and demands of entrepreneurship and who provide emotional support when a member encounters

an obstacle on their start-up journey, but also celebrating and highlighting success. It also means understanding the dynamics of entrepreneurial work-life, which often means working long hours, sometimes including evenings and weekends. Members of Habitat are expected to understand this dynamic and maintain a version of collective life which respects the time and energy strains this entails.

In sum, Habitat is a home, but a home that creates and maintains arrangements of domestic and personal life that serve a function of advancing entrepreneurial and professional projects and create an environment which helps to deal with demands and strains this involves. As other colivings, it can be understood as a structure that formulates a vision of life in relation to work and develops discursive, temporal, spatial, and social arrangements to make it work.

2.8 Coliving as a Case of Organising Life, Its Precedents, and Counterparts

Coliving can be understood as a form of organisation of domestic and personal life in relation to work. I use word organisation based on Martin Parker's (2007) understanding of the term. This includes understanding organisations as processes of organising rather than simply as inert things and hierarchies. Moreover, focusing on organising means enlarging the sphere of attention,going beyond formal organisations and business hierarchies and instead paying attention to a diversity of ways that seek 'to collect and divide people and things according to some kind of pattern' and that 'constitute the social, that construct differences and similarities across space and time' (Parker, 2002: 2).

As I argued in Section 2.3 coliving is a novel way of organising life through a variety of arrangements at the level of space (providing shared workspaces in a place of

residence), social relations (selecting people with similar values, interests, and work orientations), and organisation of everyday practices (management of social activities and outsourcing of domestic work). However, coliving is certainly not the first organisation seeking to organise personal and domestic life in relation to a certain end. Throughout history, there were attempts to organise life in order to shape it in relation to certain ethical ideals, to produce certain outcomes, and to make it work in different ways. Comparison with examples of these organisations can help to situate coliving in broader concern with organising life, but also to highlight its specificities. The next four subsections offer examples of such organisations and compare them to coliving. I focus on organisations that, similarly to coliving, foster a specific ideal of life, put it in relation to work, and do this through interventions in arrangements of personal and domestic life. The examples discussed include monasteries, student colleges, capitalist housing interventions and socialist urban designs, workers' dormitories, and alternative communities. This brief overview is not exhaustive but rather seeks to identify analytically and comparatively meaningful cases.

2.8.1 Reconstituting Life of Prayer and Education: Monastery and College

As I pointed out above (and as I will further elaborate in Chapters Seven and Nine), coliving seeks to rearrange life not only in relation to work but also in accordance with a certain vision of what is a desirable life or a life worth living. In this respect, it shares similarities with other organisations that sought and still seek to achieve similar goals. Among these, monasteries are an example of organisations that harboured the desire to impose ethical and religious visions of life in the strictest sense. According to Agamben, monasteries can be understood as organisations seeking a 'flight from the world' (Agamben, 2013: 50) of sin and constitution of a new community where everyday life takes the form of a 'total and unceasing liturgy' (2013: xii). In this sense,

monasteries present an example of organisations where life is to be removed and isolated from common concerns and sinful temptations of the world at large – understood as a sphere of the 'infernal darkness' (2013: 10) - and reconstituted in a new form following a an ideal of spiritual and pure life in every aspect of everyday existence.

Individual and collective life in the monastery was organised in such a way as to establish a new habitus – understood as a thoroughgoing 'way of being and acting' (2013: 13) – that would infuse every aspect of existence with religious significance. This was achieved through a series of temporal, social, spatial and aesthetic arrangements. Monastic life was characterised by strict regulation of time, specifying a detailed schedule of activities 'in which every moment has its corresponding duty, either of prayer and reading or manual labour' (2013: 21). The spatial arrangements of monastery reflected the wish to isolate monks from the hassle of the lay world and to reinforce the presence of spiritual elements in everyday life. For instance, separate corridors and spaces were built to prevent pilgrims from interfering with monks' activities, and the layout of refectories would enable sitting arrangements reminiscent of the Last Supper (Dale and Burrell, 2007). Monastic life would also involve a range of practices that should shield monks from sexual desire, including cultivation of male comradeship, nonsexual love, or "training" of chastity through early physical contact between monks and nuns (Burrell, 1984). The appearance of monk's dress was also dictated by religious meaning, with each element symbolising a principle of religious life. For example, alba signified the purity of the flesh and belt stood for determination to limit impulse towards illicit behaviour (Agamben, 2013: 17).

Work had an important place in the rules of life of the monastic community. On the one hand, an entire life of a monk is devoted to 'divine work' and prayer, which is at

times likened to manual labour. For example, like blacksmith 'while he is hammering the metal, has in mind the will of the customer, so the monk caries out "his every action, great or small"… with care, because he is conscious in every instant of doing the will of God' (Agamben, 2013: 23). In this respect, monk – through strictly controlling his desires and actions in accordance with the rules of liturgical life – is seen as 'a worker in the service of Kingdom of God' (Weber, 2001: 72). On the other hand, manual labour is an essential part of the monastic ascesis, as 'the work of the hand is an indiscernible part of the *opus Dei*' and should be therefore conducted with undivided attention (Agamben, 2013: 23). In this respect, work was seen as essential in filling in time and thus preventing undesirable sexual behaviour. In sum, while the spiritual life of prayer is always understood as work realising the will of God, manual work is simultaneously spiritualised as a form of ascetic religious practice.

Monasteries are also an object of contemporary ethnographic research. Interesting examples are Paganopoulos' (2009) study of the orthodox monastery in Greece and Bargiela-Chiappini's (2007) study of the Cistercian monastery in the United Kingdom. Both authors document how contemporary monasteries continue to seek separation from the external world in order to practice and preserve a different way of life. However, rather than strict isolation, both communities are open to visitors and pilgrims. This presents the fulfilment of a tradition of hospitality, but also provides a valuable income for the organisation. The division between monastic and lay life is also transgressed by the exchange of goods (e.g. selling of "religious" goods) with the world outside. Both authors also highlight the strict time control of activities that fill monk's days from early morning to late evening. In other words, core activities 'such as prayer, meditation and work are "protected" by careful [time] zoning' (Bargiela-

Chiappini, 2007: 130) and '"blind obedience" to the daily program' is one of the central values of the monastic life (Paganopoulos, 2009: 368).

Paganopoulos (2009) vividly captures how practices of religious life such as prayer, psalmody and confession overlap with material concerns such as selling of goods and providing (paid) accommodation and services to the visitors. At a certain level, the spheres of spirituality and work are temporally separated, as the life of monks was based 'on praying during the night and working during the day' (2009: 363). As the author observes: 'During the day, I had to work under the supervision of the priest… in the role of the verger, while every second night I had to confess to a Cypriot priest, who became my "spiritual father"' (2009: 366). However, as several examples illustrate, the separation was far from absolute. The simple task of recycling wax from candles was likened to the way in which Jesus "recycled" his body. Moreover, prayer was recommended as a way of imposing a regular rhythm on work, but also as a way of keeping sinful thoughts at bay during the manual activity. In addition, singing of religious songs was one of the central religious rituals of the monks' life. However, the recorded music was also an important article to sell to the outside world to generate income for the monastery.

Monasteries seek to shield communities from the influences of the mainstream world and reconstitute life anew as a form of unceasing religious practice. They are characterised by a strict organisation of time, careful organisation of space, and protection of the spiritual way of life from undesired disturbances and temptations. However, monastic life is not separated from concerns with work. Rather, the 'unceasing liturgy of Divine Office' (Agamben, 2013: xii) is itself interpreted as a form of work. Moreover, work is valued for its role in maintaining spiritual life and

becomes an integral part of monastic ascesis. We can say that work is regulated by religious rules but is also seen as essential in putting them into practice.

Colleges and student dorms can be understood as another organisation that seeks to shape life in relation to ethical ideal and to a certain function, in this case, the pursuit of education and knowledge. In their beginning, colleges in England provided a space of education for clerical, medical, educational and administrative elite. The early benefactors of colleges sought to create a spaces where knowledge could be pursued without material constraints and pressure of financial hardship: 'Provision [of gifts]… seem to point to the design of securing that thoroughness of study which can only come of leisure, and that dignity of tone which is hardly attainable where the struggle for bread begins too soon' (Venn, 1913: 23–24). Colleges sought freedom from work producing "mere" material and financial value to enable the work of scholarship.

Relatively austere life in a medieval college revolved around independent study but would also be regulated by the daily rituals of (compulsory) morning mass, communal meals, and public disputations which ensured a temporal synchronisation of collective life. Similarly to monasteries, colleges sought to shield life from daily life outside of its walls. This separation worked, for instance, at the level of communication, where Latin, rather than vernacular, was a prescribed language of all conversations (Venn, 1913). Pre-reformation college life was also to be shielded from leisure pursuits popular among men of the time – hawking, hunting, and football – were prohibited by the college statutes and considered incompatible with the ideals of scholarly life (Venn, 1913).

Today, colleges perhaps lost most of their austere character and can be described as a place where students 'live, learn, eat, play, and generally fraternize with other students

from various disciplines' (Dacin et al., 2010: 1399). However, rather than being simply providers of student accommodation, college officials see them as organisations which foster scholarship, shape character of their members and provide conditions for fulfilling and enriching student life. As two former principals of Durham University colleges put it in a chapter named 'Building Characters, Sharpening Minds' (Burt and Evans, 2016) colleges see their role as 'enabling educational experience' (2016: 76) characterised by ideals of scholarship and community, self-discipline and responsibility. In addition, colleges should provide opportunities for 'the joys of creative leisure and recreation' (2016: 78) including sports, arts, and community organising. In sum, colleges seek to provide an enriching but also supportive environment to 'interesting and engaged students' (2016: 85) and support them through 'thick and thin' of their student experience. Providing support and attending to student's welfare, colleges are seen as playing an important role in improving student retention through fostering university experience that is 'sufficiently attractive' and 'sufficiently well-supported' (2016: 85).

Besides fostering a fulfilling and supported university experience, it should be added that building "character" in colleges also seeks to cultivate individuals who belong to or are expected to fulfil expectations of social, financial and cultural elites and that educational institutions continue to play in the reproduction of social inequality (Griffiths et al., 2008; Rahman Khan, 2012). In this respect, the ethnographic study of formal college dining at Cambridge by Dacin and colleagues (2010) is illustrative. As the authors argue, formal college dinner can be understood as a social ritual which maintains not only organisational identity of a college but also maintains elite social class as an institution. During the ritual with many features of social drama, and performance, students are not only introduced to the traditions of academic

community, but also required to take on numerous social skills and traits, including ability to distinguish between insiders and outsiders, boost expectations of their future social status, change their accents, and develop a taste for 'finer things in life' (2010: 1402). Formal diners and other college events are also, predictably, seen as an opportunity to boost one's social capital and become part of the elite social networks. Taken together, elite college environments 'provide an environment in which students learn the norms, values, and the behaviours that are legitimate and appropriate in the upper stratum of British society' (2010: 1398).

2.8.2 Reforming and Controlling Industrial Work-Lives: Industrial Paternalism, Socialist Urban Design and Dormitory Labour Regime

For monasteries and colleges, work (in the sense of materially and financially productive activity) was of secondary importance. However, with the emergence of industrial capitalism, reorganisation of life in relation to work became a more pressing issue, and the capitalist modernity witnessed "invention" of several ways of organising that would seek to reconcile personal and domestic life with imperatives of production. An important example of these efforts is industrial paternalism that White (2004: 45) defines as a 'method of business administration whereby a company decides what is in the best interests of its workers in a manner suggestive of a father's dealings with his children'. The paternalist efforts of companies are motivated chiefly by companies efforts to 'maintain a stable and efficient labour force', and its primary goal is to 'ensure capital accumulation' (2004: 46). However, as will be illustrated below, these efforts also involve the consideration of what is a good form of life, which corresponds to certain moral and ethical concerns.

An important example of industrial paternalism is the functioning of the Sociological Department established as a part of the bureaucracy of Ford Company in 1913. The

founding of the department coincides with the introduction of Ford's famous five-dollar day wage in 1914. The wage increase was not unconditional. As Loizides (2004: 55) documents, only workers who complied with a set of conditions 'revolving around work and family values' were eligible for the wage "premium" that guaranteed a minimum five-dollar daily income. In order to qualify for the "extra" wage, workers had to demonstrate that they take 'good care of their families if married, are of good habits' (2004: 56) including temperance and thriftiness, and were living in satisfying home conditions. The explicit goal of the control of family life and housing conditions of workers was to improve workplace productivity, as "unsatisfactory" domestic conditions were deemed to have a negative impact on performance (Beynon, 1975).

Originally, around forty per cent workers failed to qualify 'without [first] raising their cultural standards to meet those outlined by Ford' (Hooker, 1997: 48). To "help" workers to attain the required standards of life, but importantly also to monitor compliance, Ford established Sociological Department which at its peak employed two hundred employees, many of them as 'investigators' who monitored workers after work behaviour, offered advice, and ensured compliance through house visits. This is how Loizides (2004: 59) documents the operation of the department:

> 'The investigations of the Sociological Department included family, housing, and neighbourhood conditions, as well as the personal habits of the workers. A number of thorough and exhaustive investigations were set up to explore these issues. The guidance offered to employees by the Sociological Department took many forms. They would, for example, advise workers as to the company's conception of thrift, legal matters concerning real estate and issues revolving around social and economic behaviour, including treatment of one's family, and ways to spend one's money. Furthermore, sociological

investigators would intervene whenever deemed necessary and "encourage" workers to alter their behaviour. For example, on one occasion, upon establishing that a worker neglected to take good care of his family, investigators withheld his share of the profits and gave it directly to his wife to meet family expenses'.

Ford's efforts to reform the lives of workers were not an exception. We can find another important example of industrial paternalism in Baťa company's developments in Zlín in Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), dating back to 1920s. The company's architectural programme involved the construction, not only of factories, but also of housing for workers' and their families. Together, the plan was supposed to build a vision that was described as 'a factory within a garden' (Pavitt, 1994: 36). The urban design that would later be replicated in the design of industrial communities over the world[4], was based on workers' houses built in proximity of the factory and preserved a pattern of uniform 'detached or semi-detached properties placed at alternate ends of a garden plot, thus ensuring maximum "free" garden space surrounding the houses', ensuring that housing is 'healthy and economical' (Pavitt, 1994: 39). Baťa's influence over the urban design of Zlín design was not limited to building industrial complex and workers' housing but extended to construction of infrastructure, educational and medical institutions, commercial buildings and numerous leisure spaces (e.g. stadiums, gyms, cinemas). The merging of the city structures and space was enabled and consolidated at the political level, with the company controlling the city administration and the founder and director Tomáš Baťa becoming a mayor (Marek and Strobach, 2011; Pavitt, 1994).

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[4] English example of Baťa's industrial community can be found in East Tilbury, Essex (Pavitt, 1994).

Company's provision and control of built infrastructure in the city corresponded with its attempts to control workers' lives inside and outside of the factory walls. Many of the workers moved to Zlin at a very early age, being schooled in the company's school and living in the company's dorms. Their time was strictly controlled by a schedule comprising factory work, organised sport and socialisation, and evening education (Mareš, 2013). Not only trainees but also experienced employees were expected to engage in sporting activities in order to improve their fitness and productivity (Marek and Strobach, 2011). The company sought to organise leisure activities in the city through the organisation of various public events and celebrations that would be saturated by company ideology (Marek and Strobach, 2011; Mareš, 2013) and references to the workplace affairs, such as honouring especially productive workers (Marek and Strobach, 2011; Mareš, 2013). The company also had its own Department of Personal, Social and Accommodation Affairs overseeing workers personal and domestic life. When workers did not perform according to expectations, the Department investigated their domestic and family conditions seeking the causes of their insufficiency in their personal life. Workers whose life was deemed failing risked sanctions in the form of losing company benefits, lay off, and eviction (Marek and Strobach, 2011).

Instances of redesigning and reorganisation of workers' lives were motivated primarily by concerns with increasing efficiency of production, ensuring discipline, and reducing the rate of turnover (Hooker, 1997; White, 2004). However, they were also infused by moral values reflecting the dominant ideologies of their times. The ascetic protestant work ethic resonates strongly in the words of Reverend Samuel Marquis, director of the Sociological Department: 'The idea is that every man wants to be a sober, capable, industrious citizen and that such a man is the best investment

the company can make' (Marquis, quoted in Beynon, 1975: 23). The protestant ethic was also reflected in Baťa company values and propaganda, with its stress on thrift, morality, physical and sexual purity and readiness for self-sacrifice (Holubec, 2009). The mission of the Ford's Sociological Department was heavily influenced by Anglo-American ethnocentrism in its aim to 'Americanise' the immigrant workers, which meant imposing 'a particular middle-class vision of the role of the family and the home' and what was seen as 'the American work ethic' (Hooker, 1997: 48–49). Both Ford's and Baťa's vision stressed the traditional and patriarchal family values, and economic activity by (male) workers' (female) family members was considered by the companies as negative and damaging to the vision of satisfied and healthy single male earner household (Loizides, 2004; Mareš, 2013; Pavitt, 1994).

The attempts to reform the lives of the workers, however, were not exclusively a concern of capitalist employers. There are well-documented examples of socialist governments and authorities seeking to change life in relation to work, and architecture and housing were seen as a central concern to the efforts of creating a new socialist way of life. Nowa Huta in Poland – a settlement built to house workers of a steel plant in the 1950s – is an interesting example. The architectural design of the district reflected not only the need to provide housing, but also included 'theatres, houses of culture, libraries, cinemas, parks, sport fields, and stadiums' (Lebow, 2013: 129) and other spaces for entertainment, seeking to integrate 'home, work and leisure'(Lebow, 2013: 6). Another example can be found in 'New Ostrava' (now Poruba) district in the industrial city of Ostrava in state socialist Czechoslovakia. Being a prime example of socialist realist style of architecture, the settlement 'was imagined as a productive landscape, a space of leisure dialectically opposed to Ostrava's spaces of work' (Zarecor, 2011: 150). It needs to be said, however, that both plans were only partially

realised and financial and material concerns often meant that the vision of generous provision of spaces of leisure was cut down considerably in the actual realisations (Lebow, 2013; Zarecor, 2011).

Providing, influencing, and controlling worker's housing and their domestic life perhaps reflects the dominant values of Fordism and Taylorism. However, there are also important contemporary examples of companies heavily shaping the domestic lives of workers. In this respect, research on 'dormitory labour regime' in China is an important example (Pun and Smith, 2007; Smith and Pun, 2006). Dormitory labour regime is a systemic use of dormitories owned and/or controlled by the employer to house migrant workers near factories where they work. The reliance on migrant labour 'facilitates the continuous access to fresh labour reserves from the countryside, depresses wage demands and inhibits collective organization by workers in a particular industrial space' (Smith and Pun, 2006: 1457). It also allows the employer to extend the control of the workforce to lifestyles outside of work and 'that management agents could prescribe controls and lifestyle choices in a way not possible where there is a separation between home and work' (Smith and Pun, 2006: 1465). The rules in a dormitory researched by Smith and Pun included the prohibition of 'noise' after midnight, forbidding visitors to stay overnight, and limiting movement in an out of the compound after 12am. This allows employers to exercise control and prohibit behaviour that could endanger productivity. Altogether, the dormitory labour regime 'creates a modern *extensive-intensive* production regime for prolonging working hours, lowering wages and tightening management control over workers' (Smith and Pun, 2006: 1460).

2.8.3 Alternative Communities and Communes: The Practice of Living and Working Differently

The previous section covered practical plans for reconfiguring work and life of workers by employers and state authorities. However, there are also examples of organisations that seek to change the patterns of life through self-organisation and collective decision making. These 'alternative organisations' seek alternatives to prevalent ways of organising work and life, often going counter the dominant organisational tendencies of 'globalizing capitalism and market managerialism' (Parker et al., 2014: 625). An important motivation behind alternative organising of this kind is a desire to achieve personal flourishing in line with certain ethical ideals through collaboration and sharing values and efforts with others (Reedy et al., 2016). In this sense, these organisations pursue 'the creation of new forms of life in the here and now' (Reedy et al., 2016: 1553) This often involves prefigurative practices that aspire to realise political ideals through everyday life and action in the present, rather than 'protecting the desired outcomes of political action into the future' (Reedy et al., 2016: 1557).

Some of these organisations are called 'intentional communities' and can be defined 'a residential community which has in some way been more or less consciously designed in order to encourage certain forms of interaction' (Parker et al., 2007). Cohousing communities are an important contemporary example (Jarvis, 2011; Sullivan, 2016a, 2016b) which strives to 'maximise shared open spaces for social interaction; common facilities for shared daily use; and non-hierarchical consensus-based resident management' (Jarvis, 2011: 560). This is done by the design of housing with shared premises, including a 'common house' that hosts dining room, large kitchen for communal cooking, workshops and laundry facility (Sullivan, 2016a).

Besides fostering community and mutuality in a society seen as individualising and alienating, cohousing is often motivated by a desire to live a life that is conscious of ecological problems and lessens environmental impact (Jarvis, 2011).

In her ethnography of a newly established cohousing community in the USA, Sullivan (2016a) shows how the desire to live with others is motivated by the search for an alternative to the 'ubiquitous housing options that insulate people and weaken neighbourhood ties' (2016b: 603). The members of the cohousing community invested hopes in the potential of communal living to make routines of everyday life and reproduction more enjoyable through sharing them with others. For example, cooking was deemed to become a welcome opportunity for socialisation more than a chore. Having company after work and sharing everyday problems was seen by many participants as an important perk of collective living.

However, the commitment to collective life was also complemented and at points contradicted by what Sullivan calls (2016a: 606) 'expressive individualism' which is characterised by 'focus on self-esteem, self-actualisation, and self-acceptance'. Sharing life with others was also seen as a tool for self-development when members hoped that they would pick-up new hobbies, skills and adopt new habits together with others. Even though sharing time and space with others was encouraged and "built-in" the housing situation, members, nonetheless expressed concerns with protecting their privacy and sought arrangements (e.g. living in a more remote house) that could ensure a degree of isolation. The collective decision making, which is an integral part of the process, was seen by some as too demanding and tiring; an obligation, rather than a part of the enjoyment of communal life. In other words, the ideals of community and individualism in the cohousing community had to be carefully negotiated and

sometimes were in conflict that both 'aids and inhibits the goals of activists' (2016a: 621).

Farias (2017) and Skinner (2012) ethnographically studied communities that are oriented by more explicit ideological concerns. Farias (2017) participated in a commune in France whose members strive to enact the way of life that presents an alternative to capitalist exploitation and individualisation. Besides the concerns with participatory decision making and formulating an ideological alternative to the mainstream capitalist way of life, Farias describes patterns and meaning of work in the commune. Not only is agricultural production and maintenance work informed by ecological concerns, but it is also deemed to contest 'the search for productivity within the larger society by performing work differently' (2017: 586). Work is understood as a fundamentally social activity and as a 'convivial moment in which everyone invests its own skills, rhythm and energy for the collective good, regardless of the results' (Farias, 2017: 586–587). As Farias documents, members were wary of attempts of others to privilege concerns with efficiency over the free and autonomous approach to collective work.

Skinner (2012) studied life and work at the self-managing farming community, which was organised around an ideal of living an environmentally sustainable life. Even though members often had part-time or full-time jobs outside of the community, each adult in the community was expected to contribute several hours to communal work. The work and life at the community were profoundly influenced by concerns with 'organic' farming and way of life (including consumption patterns). As Skinner points out, the notion of organic life should not be understood simply as a given, but rather as an ethical ideal that was continuously debated and negotiated, both individually and collectively. Concerns with what was proper organic and how organic should the

community be were very much an object of reflexion and negotiation, particularly in relation to concerns with practicality, self-sufficiency, and affordability. Work in the farming community and constant renegotiating of the ideal of organic life was seen as part of ethical self-formation as much as of producing livelihood.

2.8.4 Coliving in Comparison with Other Organisations of Life

Coliving shares similarities but also important differences with the ways of organising life described above. Like monasteries and colleges, coliving seeks to organise life in accordance with certain ethical ideals. However, whereas for monasteries the ideal is religious devotion and for colleges it is the pursuit of knowledge and scholarship, coliving seeks to create conditions for life reaching a maximum level of professional success and personal fulfilment. With a degree of simplification, we can say that its ideal of life is more profane and epicurean, rather than sacred and ascetic. The goal of coliving is not to practice ascesis in a monastic sense, but rather to combine a commitment to work and enjoyment of leisure in the most effective way (this will be further elaborated in Chapter Seven about coliving as a social arrangement of Max-Life).

The relative difference concerns the nature of ethical and moral code and authority enforcing it. Monasteries are based on the following and enforcement of a formal and codified set of rules of devote religious life. At the level of everyday life, this translates into strict enforcement of collective synchronisation according to a rigid schedule. In contrast, the organisation of life in coliving is less formal, open to negotiation, and individual discretion. Participation in collective events is encouraged but not strictly enforced. The organisation of time is characterised by informal moderation of time spent socialising and depends on individual preferences to a bigger extent than on a dictate of a clock and schedule (this will be further elaborated in Section 7.3.3).

Moreover, the ethical principles of hard work and determination that are an important part of life in coliving are negotiated through individual and collective reflection, rather than requiring strict obedience (this will be further elaborated in Chapter Nine).

The additional difference lies in the way coliving and monasteries and colleges seek to 'collect and divide people' (Parker, 2002: 2). Monasteries and early colleges were preoccupied with keeping the temptations of the lay world outside in order to protect the life of devotion or erudition. In principle at least, anyone can join[5] as long as they are willing to part with the sinful ways of the life outside. Coliving spaces, on the other hand, are less concerned with preventing intrusions from the external world and more with attracting individuals with specific characteristics. Members do not have to give up their sexuality, leisure pursuits or change the way they dress or speak when they join coliving space. What matters is that they have the right profession, share the right orientation to work and a compatible lifestyle. I already mentioned the importance of the selection process and criteria on members in Section 2.7.3 above and this aspect would be further elaborated in Chapter Seven, Section 7.3.1.

In respect to purpose, coliving is closer to attempts to arrange working lives in industrial paternalism than it is to quest for spiritual perfection or knowledge in monasteries and colleges. Like industrial paternalism, coliving seeks to reorganise structures of domestic life and leisure in order to increase productivity (this will be further elaborated in Chapter Seven). There are, however, important differences between the two approaches to organising life. One obvious difference concerns the scale; whereas Fordist and Socialist projects concerned lives of tens of thousands of workers and sought to build or transform entire towns or city districts, colivings

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[5] In practice, of course, the access was often limited by social status, gender and wealth.

usually involve a few dozens of individuals and are restricted to a single building. Another manifest difference concerns the type of workers they sought to influence; whereas industrial paternalism targeted mostly manual factory workers, colivings are seeking to attract professionals, entrepreneurs, and freelancers.

However, perhaps the most analytically important difference between coliving and instances of industrial paternalism lies in the nature of domination and the way power is distributed and exercised. In the case of industrial paternalism, employer controls access both to jobs and to the built structures of social reproduction (housing, leisure facilities etc.) and its dominant position in the relationships of production and reproduction is used to control the workforce. In contrast, coliving is not tied with an employing organisation and its members are not bound by loyalty to a single employer, as they work for different companies or are self-employed. Entry to coliving is based on individual decisions. Members join as voluntary members of a community or are in the position of service users in the case of commercial coliving. Arguably, the access to and membership of coliving is based more on individual volition and preference for a particular lifestyle, rather than on force and necessity.

In this respect, coliving is similar to the last type of organisations discussed above - alternative communities and communes – which are 'elective' in the sense that members join voluntarily in order to pursue a specific way of life together with others with similar preferences and ideals. Their purpose is to cultivate a way of life different from the mainstream arrangements of production, reproduction and leisure. However, it is a direction of travel away from the mainstream way of life where alternative communities and coliving differ. The former – often motivated by an ideology that proposes alternative to prevalent values and rules of life in capitalism – seek to create a situation partially shielded from hectic tempo of individualistic life in search of

economic success. Coliving, in contrast, does not question the value of mainstream economic and work success. Rather, it seeks to formulate a new way of living which makes high work commitment less strenuous and reconciles it with demand for socialisation and attractive leisure. With a degree of simplification, we can say that whereas alternative communities seek to move away from the mainstream arrangements and rhythms of work, coliving seeks to intensify them and arranges domestic and personal life accordingly (this will be elaborated in Chapters Five and Seven).

In sum, coliving can be understood as part of a bigger phenomena of organising life in accordance to certain ideals and values and can be compared to other organisations which sought to organise life for different purposes. Through contrasting coliving with these organisations, several characteristics of coliving become more apparent. First, rather than formulating a version of ascesis that seeks to limit enjoyment of worldly pleasures, coliving seeks to make arrangements that enable combination of professional success with satisfying leisure and consumption. Second, rather than subjecting life to formal and codified rules that are authoritatively enforced, coliving seeks to regulate life by informal means. Informal rules of life are maintained by community sharing values and individual discretion and volition are accepted. Third, rather than policing the boundary between inside and outside in order to keep undesirable practices and influences out, coliving is permissible when it comes to lifestyle choices. Concentrating individuals with desirable characteristics (e.g. profession, orientation towards success) is more important than keeping the undesirable practices out. Four, even though coliving seeks to rearrange life in relation to work, this is not done within a confines of a relationship to a particular employer or government authority. Coliving members join of their own volition and are in the

position of clients or voluntary community members. Relatedly, rules of productivity and effectivity are not enforced by the employer, but rather promoted by shared values and collective pressure. Six, coliving like other alternative communities seeks to shape a form of life different from the mainstream patterns of work and domestic life. However, rather than seeking to escape pressures of capitalist productivity and efficiency and to structure life around alternative ideological commitments, coliving seeks to rearrange life so it becomes more productive and effective and rearranges domestic and personal life accordingly.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided a concise introduction to the emerging and growing phenomenon of coliving. It argued that coliving can be understood as a new way of organising life in relation to work which seeks to rearrange domestic and social life in relation to ideals of productivity and professional success. It has also described portrayal of coliving media discourse, where coliving is connected with the phenomena of creative and tech industries, "digital nomadism", and "millennial" lifestyle. Chapter also introduced Habitat, which is the coliving space where I conducted the ethnographic study that is the primary source of empirical material informing this thesis. Finally, the chapter compared coliving with examples of other organisations that, similarly to coliving, sought to foster a specific ideal of life in relation to work through a rearrangement of domestic and personal life.

The next chapter gives details of the methodological perspective and the methods used to collect data. It describes the methodological perspective on studying life in coliving. It then moves to elaborate on how can coliving be understood as an object of sociological analysis. The chapter then outlines reasons for adopting ethnography as a

research methodology, describes the evolving process of the fieldwork, describes the

methods of data collection and outlines the ethics arrangements of the research.

Chapter Three: Methodology

- Yeah. I think your research is similar to coding. Like you sometimes cannot really explain what is going on, and what you are doing, why are you doing it. And you want to explain that but sometimes you can't.' (Soren, Fieldnote #122)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have outlined the general theme of the thesis and introduced coliving as a new phenomenon which modifies the personal and domestic life is shaped in relation to concerns with work. This chapter moves on to describe the methodological perspective and methods through which the data informing the conclusions of this project were gathered. This chapter begins with an outline of the methodological perspective on studying life, which is inspired but also considerably differs from Foucault's study of life and power. It then moves to elaborate on how coliving will be understood as an object of analysis. It explains why ethnography was chosen as a methodological perspective of this research, describes the unfolding process of fieldwork, and discusses data collection methods utilised. The approach to and process of data analysis is outlined, and finally, the chapter discusses research ethics steps taken during the research.

3.2 Methodological Perspective

This research explores the transformations of personal and domestic life in relation to work and production through the ethnographic study of coliving. However, before I proceed to describe methods of data collection and interpretation, it is necessary to clarify the methodological perspective that influences what we understand by life and guides the way it can be approached as an object of empirical investigation. As any other methodological perspective, this entails a set of epistemological and ontological assumptions about what the world is and how it can be known (Hughes, 1997).

The choice of epistemological and ontological perspective is not an easy thing to justify by reference to facts or empirical evidence. As Hughes pointed out, 'claims and evidence are only articulable once there is in place some framework for underpinning them' (1997: 3). In this sense, our interpretation of facts, or even what we consider facts to be, is dependent on conscious or less than conscious epistemological frameworks. The reasons for adopting an epistemological perspective, moreover, are seldom fully explicit at the beginning of the investigation and remain implicit until they are reconstructed ex-post. Bearing this in mind, I believe that there are three main reasons that make Foucauldian toolkit an appropriate and valuable methodological perspective for studying arrangements of work-life in general and way of living in coliving in particular.

Firstly, Foucault's writing continues to stimulate ongoing discussion about the way we live our lives today. The developments in Sociology of Work and Organisation Studies show that Foucault continues to be an important framework for analysing working lives today (Burrell, 2006; McKinlay and Starkey, 1998; Mennicken and Miller, 2014). Situating the inquiry in a tradition of debate allows the discussion to be grounded in and reflect upon a continuing conversation about how life is shaped and governed in contemporary societies. Part of these debates is, naturally, criticism of Foucault and of works developing his work (e.g. Ackroyd and Thompson, 2016; Newton, 1996, 1998; Thompson, 2016; Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995). I acknowledge and at points draw on these criticisms in my theorising (particularly in Chapter Four and Chapter Eight). In this section, however, I focus on methodological aspects of Foucauldian analysis, its challenges for studying coliving and my departures from Foucauldian methodology.

Secondly, Foucault offers a perspective appropriate for analysing the way working lives are organised, partly because life was an analytical category around which some of his most interesting debates were centred. Foucault understood 'life as a political object' (Foucault, 1998: 144) around which the most important social and political processes and struggles of modernity were organised. This means understanding human life not as a natural, independent, freely unfolding entity, but rather as an object that is profoundly shaped by various objects, be them discourses, institutions, technologies and practices. This also means understanding life not as an object that remains unchanged throughout time, but rather as an object whose meaning, understanding, and experiencing is profoundly dependent on changing historical and societal constellations. In this regard, Foucault's approach opens a question of how life is managed, organised and shaped in various contexts, which is a crucial question of this dissertation.

Finally, Foucault's toolkit enables analysis that brings together several levels of analysis and is therefore appropriate for work that seeks to combine a complex understanding of a particular way of living. It invites attention to discourses that guide the way life is understood (Foucault, 1981). However, the emphasis on discourse is combined with close attention paid to concrete practices by which life is shaped and governed (Foucault, 1977). Moreover, particularly in later writing, Foucault added attention to practices that we ourselves adopt in our efforts to become beings of a particular type. In this sense, the way life is understood is, in Foucault's writing, connected to the ways individuals understand and act on themselves (Foucault, 1992) Finally, the inquiry into how is life made to be what it is, in Foucault writings, is connected to the ethical dimension of how one should live (Faubion, 2011; Laidlaw, 2014). Combination of these aspects in a theoretical tradition creates a solid basis for

a complex analysis of a way of living, such as entrepreneurial work-lives in coliving situation.

Foucault named his overall research variously as 'critical history of thought' (2000a: 459) or 'historical ontology of ourselves' (1984: 45). His endeavour is primarily an understanding of historically variable ways in which life and human beings become an object of scientific knowledge, shaped into a certain version of subject by technologies of power, and finally how human beings are guided to understand themselves as subjects. Foucault's objective was 'to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects' (Foucault, 2002d: 326). This connects with what Foucault calls 'scepticism towards all anthropological universals' (Foucault, 2000a: 461), which means a rejection of a general theory of what a subject is and what its essential qualities are (e.g. is subject reflexive or not?; is subject self-constituting?). Rather, the crucial question is how and into what form is the subject constituted in this or another period, and by this or other practice (e.g. how is subject led to reflect on the world and on itself?; through what practices and through knowledge does subject constitute itself as this type of subject?).

The focus on historical changes is reflected in Foucault's methods, which he described as 'archaeology' and 'genealogy' (Foucault, 1981), both terms with strong connotations with historical research. These methods also have ontological implications, in a very simple sense that they make certain 'things' more likely to be an object of analysis than others. In what he describes as his archaeological period, Foucault would focus mostly on the archive of texts written over centuries on a certain subject (i.e. madness, 'human' as an object and subject of knowledge). In his turn towards genealogy, Foucault announced his intention to complement attention on changes in knowledge and give more space to technologies and apparatuses of power.

However, the material that informs Foucault's account has not changed considerably. It is predominantly still informed by historical texts, plans and designs of institutions and accounts of practices. Even within Foucault's writings about technologies of the self, we do not learn (for obvious reasons) about what everyday practice of reflecting on the self looked like, but rather how these practices are prescribed in 'prescriptive texts' (Foucault, 1992: 12).

Like any other methodology, Foucault's analytical toolkit has ontological preferences and limitations. In other words, while his accounts allow us to see to certain things (various forms in which human subjects were conceived and acted upon differently throughout history), it is likely to make other things less visible. A critical dimension of social and organisational life that Foucault's methods do not make visible is the dynamics of the everyday operation of organisations and social settings (Hacking, 2004; Lukes, 2004). Foucault traces the long-term changes in the functioning of practices of power and the different ways human subjects are conceived, and he is interested in showing cumulative (and often complex and contradictory) effects these practices have on our subjectivity and acting. This, however, should not be confused with the immediate efficiency of practices of power (e.g. subject changes thinking and acting immediately as a result of surveillance). Nor should we conflate the plans and designs for institutions with the dynamics and politics of their everyday functioning. We learn less about this dimension in Foucault, including how norms and rules are reproduced, resisted (and quite often ignored) in interactions and negotiations between actors. The behaviours, rituals and everyday interactions that reproduce norms and power situations in everyday life are mostly missing from Foucault's account (Hacking, 2004).

A related issue is what Foucault means when he talks about 'life' or 'subject'. We learn about how the subject is conceived in knowledge, how it is imagined in and worked upon by apparatuses of power, and how it is asked to conceive itself in various traditions of ethics of the self. Foucault's primary concern is with how the subject is imagined and worked upon by discourses and technologies rather than the subject as a specific individual human being and its specific biography, thoughts, feelings, and voice. Foucault's agent is conceived as a 'subject position' (Faubion, 2011: 4) within the discourse or mechanism of power, rather than a 'flesh-and-blood human being' who can occupy this position (Armstrong, 2015: 29). Whether and how much this position influences how the subject conceives itself is something that sociological analysis should explore, rather than something that can be simply taken for granted (Armstrong, 2015). By the same token, 'life' in Foucault's work mostly does not concern individual life in the sense of individual biography. Rather, it is conceived as a force that is moulded by discipline (at the individual level) and biopolitics (at the level of the population). As Hacking puts it, we do not learn about 'how the forms of discourse become part of the lives of ordinary people' (2004: 278).

This point is essential for the analysis of coliving in this dissertation. It focuses on how life in coliving is shaped by shared discourses and how coliving works to maintain a particular form of life. However, its focus is not on historical transformations in discourse or technologies, but rather how certain principles are created and maintained in everyday life and how they are understood and reflected upon by coliving members. This calls for a methodological departure from genealogical research towards ethnography that explores enactment of discourses and practices in everyday life and which can make sense of more localised ways of acting, talking and sense-making by actors. Moreover, this calls for greater appreciation of messiness and undecidability

of what some authors would call everyday life (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013; Sztompka, 2008). This involves attentiveness to how events and thoughts evolve in social interactions, paying attention to how life unfolds through repetitive and mundane events and how informal and habitual scripts express certain tendencies of life (Sztompka, 2008). Rather than understanding 'discourses in the abstract' (Hacking, 2004) it means paying attention to the ways they might be adopted by human beings in everyday interactions, everyday rituals and daily reflections. It means appreciating how discourses are always only partially effective, and their enactment depends on uncertain and improvised social interaction. However, the analysis here should also avoid idealisation of everyday life where it would be understood simply as a source of the boundless reflexivity, creativity, and resistance. It should avoid the celebration of everyday life as an idealised strata which stands in isolation or in opposition to 'system' or 'power'. In this respect, my understanding of everyday life is as having 'a history, one that is intimately bound up with the dynamics of modernity' (Gardiner, 2002: 6) and being 'riven with numerous contradictions and marked by a considerable degree of internal complexity' (Gardiner, 2002: 26).

The methodological position of this thesis, therefore, departs from Foucault's study of life as a historically changing entity that it is shaped and transformed by discourses, technologies and practices. It does so by complementing it with and emphasising life as constituted by everyday, ordinary activities and experiences. In addition, it highlights the dimension of life whereby the subject is not only shaped by discourses, institutions and practices but actively reflects on them, utilises them and recreates them in relation with others. Rather than seeing life as being one or the other, it seeks to combine these aspects by studying a dimension that has been variously called 'interaction between the lived, the discursive, and the conjunctural' (Saukko, 2003:

261), 'the looping effects' and 'making up people' (Hacking, 2004: 279, 297), or 'analytics of interpretive practice' (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011: 341) and that seeks to connect production of discourse, technologies, and practices with studying action and sense-making of social actors.

3.3 Coliving as an Object of Analysis

- '*What is the theme of your thesis again? ... Wow, Habitat must be a real goldmine for you*'. (Felix, Fieldnote #62)

The phenomenon of coliving can be understood in several ways. As the previous chapter discussed, it is a type of communal living, but it is also a name emerging from discourse and through the same discourse connected to various other phenomena such as "tech and creative industries", "sharing economy", "entrepreneurs and professionals". Moreover, colivings are formed by physical objects (buildings, spaces) and people inhabiting them. As I have foreshadowed, colivings can also be understood as a set of practices and arrangements that seek to affect life and are therefore characterised by a certain function. The understanding of coliving in this thesis, therefore, calls for ontological elaboration. Not necessarily in the sense of questions about the nature of existence, but rather as a more practical concern with 'what kind of thing' (Hughes, 1997: 4) can we understand coliving to be for the purpose of the analysis.

In this dissertation, coliving will be understood as a part of the problematisation of life in relation to work and capitalist economy. In Foucault's writing, problematisation stands for the way in which certain objects become a problem for thought. In other words, problematisation is a process whereby a particular aspect of life is translated into a question or 'an object of thought' (Foucault, 2000b) that can and should be addressed and potentially resolved through new knowledge and political, social and

material arrangements and practices. The analysis of problematisation means not singling out behaviours, ideas, or ideologies, but rather focusing on the ways 'through which being offers itself to be, necessarily, thought – and the practices on the basis of which these problematisations are formed' (Foucault, 1990: 11).

From this angle, coliving can be understood as a part – however small – of centuries-long process of problematising life in relation to work, economy and production. Even within the Western capitalist modernity, we have seen a long development of thought and practical arrangements on how can life be combined with work, how to create and maintain a version of life compatible with industrial production and its strains. I will explore this problem at much greater length in Chapter Seven. Here, it is enough to stress that coliving reopens the questions of what life is in relation to work (e.g. what is the value of working-life and what is a life worth living?), how can it be arranged in order to maximise productive power and enjoyment (e.g. what arrangements can be put in place to improve the chances of professional success and enjoyment of leisure?) and seeks to formulate a practical solution that shapes life in particular ways. Coliving, therefore, can be seen as an innovative development within the problematisation of life in relation to work in our era.

Another concept close to my understanding of what coliving is, is the *regime of living* as described by Collier and Lakoff:

> By 'regime of living' we refer to a tentative and situated configuration of normative, technical, and political elements that are brought into alignment in situations that present ethical problems - that is, situations in which the question of how to live is at stake. (Collier and Lakoff, 2008: 23)

Regimes of living are identifiable constellations of reflection and action 'in situations in which "living" has been rendered problematic' (Collier and Lakoff, 2008: 22). They encompass actions and thought revolving around particular attempts to answer questions such as 'What is human life becoming?' and 'How should one live?' (Collier and Lakoff, 2008: 22) The concept of a regime of living seeks to connect reflection on techniques, practices and rationality involved in particular attempts to find an answer to these questions and solution that would bring these answers into a practice that transforms the way humans live. Importantly, the emphasis on 'ethics of life' should not mean isolating the problem from the question of everyday, material, pragmatic aspects of life. Rather than studying ethics of life in isolation from mundane aspects of life, the concept of regimes of living sees 'biological and social processes for sustaining and reproducing human life' as 'central problems' (Collier and Lakoff, 2008: 28).

Colivings can be understood as being part of a 'regime of living' that problematizes life in a particular way, seeks to define what life is and what it should be, and seek to put in place practical arrangements to modify and sustain a particular version of what is deemed to be a good life. It includes a normative vision of life which combines work and life outside of work in a single project whose ultimate goal is to reach maximum fulfilment of professional and personal ambitions. It uses spatial, social and temporal arrangements to make this version of life possible and formulates a social and political alternative to what is seen as inadequate and lacking "standard" way of living.

However, colivings should not be understood simply as environments or settings that create space for the life of certain kind to unfold. Rather, they seek to shape life into a particular form and to have a certain effect on individuals living in them. This goes beyond changing the way how life is experienced. Rather, through seeking to change

thoughts, aspirations, habits and every day actions, coliving seeks a transformation in how life is lived. In this sense, coliving can be understood as a set of discursive, social and material arrangements that do not only seek to change experiences and perceptions but rather to shape life in a certain way and to produce a subject of a certain kind.

In this respect, colivings can be understood as what has variously been defined as apparatus (dispositif) by Foucault (Foucault, 1977, 1980). The concept puts an emphasis on the combination of various elements – discourses, organisation of space, architectural forms, regulations, bodies, affects, energies – that together produce certain outcomes. Foucault stresses that apparatuses do not only provide a scene or context for life, but rather are productive of certain versions of life and subjectivities which are enabled and fostered by the arrangements. In other words, concept of apparatus captures the combination of discursive and non-discursive elements that together modulate life in certain ways.

The apparatus is not a permanent, unchanging structure, but rather a set of interrelated elements which are in movement and which can be (and are) dynamically reassembled. In this respect, apparatus is similar to the concept of assemblage. As Law notes, 'if "assemblage" is to do the work that is needed then it needs to be understood as a tentative and hesitant unfolding, that is at most only very partially under any form of deliberate control' (Law, 2004: 41–42). When thinking about 'life' that is an outcome of a certain assemblage then in a similar way it might be better understood as a set of dispositions to act in a certain way, rather than an entity that is automated to follow a set of rules. This is well captured by Callon who put emphasis on agencements (or assemblages) as 'socio-technical arrangements when they are considered from the point of view of their capacity to act' and as generating 'a variety of forms of action' (Çalışkan and Callon, 2010: 9–10; see also Cochoy, 2014).

For the purposes of this thesis, coliving can be understood as a part of problematisation of life, the regime of living, and apparatus or assemblage which shapes life in a particular way. The terms are of less importance here and the conceptualisations they offer are compatible. What matters is the focus on the way coliving renders life into a problem for thought and action, how it combines ethical concerns with their social, technological and political context and how it produces a version of life that enables and maintains a certain way of living and acting.

3.4 Choosing Ethnography as a Research Methodology

- *'How are you going to use what you observed today?'* (Jens, Fieldnote #79)

This thesis seeks to understand how life is changed in relation to work and production in a social setting of coliving space. I have suggested that this requires understanding discourses and technologies, but also practices, interactions and messy realities of everyday life. Moreover, this means paying attention to the ways individuals collectively (re)produce conditions of life and the way they experience, understand and make sense of them. Arguably, ethnography is the most appropriate methodology through which these dimensions of life can be accessed and understood. As Atkinson (2015)puts it, ethnography, being based on 'intensive period of engagement in given social milieu'(2015: 12) and 'participation in the everyday life of the social world under investigation' (2015: 25), is especially well positioned to understand not only participants meanings, but also 'social relations, forms of social order, ritual and routines of everyday performance' (Atkinson, 2015: 28).

Ethnography, albeit being sometimes identified simplistically with participant observation, is a methodology that draws on a variety of research methods and seeks to capture multiple dimensions that together constitute social settings and by extension a certain version of life (Pole and Hillyard, 2016). Fieldwork as a 'strategy' typically

draws on participant observation, interviews and conversational methods, document analysis and visual data. Ethnography is therefore a highly suitable methodology for research that seeks to explore the interaction between discursive and non-discursive elements, practices and participants' perceptions, which is the goal of this thesis.

Moreover, ethnographic research is suitable for researching the dynamics of everyday life as its core requirement is participating closely in everyday activities in a chosen research setting over an extended period (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). As Atkinson puts it, ethnography allows research to access 'socially shared practices that make everyday life possible, the shared conventions, that render culture comprehensible and the social distributed competences that enable actors to create everyday life' (Atkinson, 2015: 13). Ethnographic fieldwork seeks to explore 'what is happening' through first-hand observations of events, activities and rituals within the dynamics of everyday life and to understand the significance of these occurrences to participants in the given social settings (Pole and Hillyard, 2016). This is especially useful for understanding lived reality from the perspective of those who are being studied and capturing the logic of a version of life as it unfolds. In sum, it allows research account to closely observe lived realities and the multiple dimensions of their constitution and perception.

3.5 The Fieldwork Process: Guessing, Exploring and Accessing Coliving

Social research is often presented as a structured and linear exercise that proceeds through identifying a research theme, engaging with existing literature, formulating appropriate research questions, collecting and analysing data, and finally formulating and writing findings and conclusions. However, as Maxwell (1996) points out,

qualitative research only rarely follows this sequence of steps and should be understood as a more iterative process of constant reconsiderations and the juxtaposition between purposes, conceptual context, research questions, methods and data. This is especially true of ethnographic research where development of analytical themes can be seen as 'an emergent property of our engagement with the field, and of our systematic reflections on the data' (Atkinson, 2015: 11). What is more, the definition of the problem or even of the case of analysis often changes during the fieldwork. This is mainly due to the need to respect the characteristics of the phenomenon (about which often very little is known in advance) and practical limitations imposed by the field (which can be somewhat unpredictable). As Pole and Hillyard put it, when it comes to ethnographic fieldwork 'there are limits to which planning is possible' (Pole and Hillyard, 2016). Retrospectively, I can say that this research unfolded through three stages of guessing, exploring and accessing the field.

In 2015 when I submitted the research proposal and later started this PhD research, coliving was a very new phenomenon. I learned about coliving rather accidentally in a conversation about new approaches to work with a friend of a friend, who mentioned a coliving space in Prague. The conversation sparked my interest in coliving as an object for sociological research. With very little information, this started a process of *guessing* what coliving is and how it can be researched. In the beginning, this meant exploring website of the said coliving establishments and formulating basic ideas and formulating a research proposal with limited information. The result of this guessing became part of my application for PhD research, which started in 2015, when coliving was a very new phenomenon. At the beginning of the PhD, I began exploring scarce traces of coliving in the press and on social media and a simple content analysis of the discourse presented therein. At that time, I also noticed the opening of two coliving

spaces in London and went through their propagation materials (websites, videos, articles). The research started with this observing from a distance which provided some understanding of basic features and discursive connotations of coliving.

After identifying several coliving spaces suitable for empirical research, I planned to explore them more closely and started to develop contacts in the field. This involved contacting two coliving spaces and sending over information about my research. Given the lack of response, I tried to explore other ways of establishing contact. This included exploring shared LinkedIn connections between me and coliving founders or management, asking for an introduction. In addition, I travelled to London in November 2016 to try to establish contact face-to-face. In one instance, this involved signing up for a tour for prospective tenants. In another case, it involved knocking on the door of the coliving space and hoping to meet inhabitants on the doorstep. The later strategy resulted in an invitation for a talk and dinner in a coliving space, which I attended and had an opportunity to chat with founders and inhabitants. In January 2017, another coliving responded to my email. I was invited for breakfast with inhabitants, which I attended.

In the end, none of these contacts led to gaining access to the research field. Representatives of one coliving space did not answer any of the further communication following the visit and representatives of two more explained that they do not have the capacity or are too busy to deal with my research. Nonetheless, this stage was useful as a way of preliminary *exploring* coliving. I took fieldnotes about the encounters and observations and got a chance to interview some coliving founders and inhabitants informally. This led to critical initial insights into the logic of coliving and the way it works, which was useful for subsequent fieldwork. On top of this, I conducted two three-day pilot observations in coworking spaces in Newcastle upon

Tyne and Brno, Czech Republic, to learn about the discourses and practices of work within the creative and tech industries. All these activities and observations were essential as a preparation for further fieldwork and for developing my initial ideas and intuitions about coliving and its organisational and discursive context.

After a few initial setbacks and failures to gain access, I emailed another coliving space – Habitat – in April 2017. This was initially left without an answer until I messaged Habitat on Facebook and managed to schedule a Skype conversation with Habitat's representative. The informal conversation allowed me to learn about Habitat as well as to introduce my research. Towards the end of the interview, I inquired about the possibility of conducting an ethnographic study in Habitat and later sent a formal gatekeeper information sheet, asking my contact to discuss my research plan with inhabitants and was eventually granted access after the decision was made jointly by Habitat members. After agreeing on formalities about the beginning and length of the stay, I secured overseas fieldwork funding, completed an institutional risk assessment and was finally able to move into Habitat in July 2017. After *accessing* the field, I conducted more rigorous and formalised data collection, which is described in the following section.

3.6 Methods of Data Collection

The conclusions of this research are informed by data gained through three main methods of data collection that were part of ethnographic fieldwork: document analysis, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews. I describe my take on the methods and the process of data collection below.

3.6.1 Document Analysis

Documentary methods can be defined as 'the techniques used to categorise, investigate, interpret … physical sources, most commonly written documents…' (Payne and Payne, 2004: 60; see also Bowen, 2009). The emphasis on 'the physical' nature of documents seems to be outdated today when social research increasingly recognises 'virtual' documents to be an important source of information and internet to be an important object of analysis (Bryman, 2012: 654–657; Markham and Stavrova, 2016). In addition, even though the focus is traditionally and dominantly on text, there is a growing interest in the analysis of visual materials, such as photographs or videos (Bryman, 2012; Margolis and Zunjarwad, 2017). Whereas document analysis can be conducted as a self-standing research method, it is frequently utilised as a part of the ethnographic research where it is used to collect and analyse documents encountered during and produced by fieldwork research (Jacobsson, 2016).

I drew on document analysis in two stages, initially during preparatory stages of fieldwork and later during the fieldwork itself. The first stage was exploratory, following the strategy of gradual sampling through internet and database searches but also through following references and hyperlinks of the documents collected. The documents accessed in this way included news articles and video reports, websites of coliving establishments, propagation videos of coliving establishments and other videos about coliving found on YouTube. I then selected the seventeen most informative news articles for content analysis. This involved relatively simple coding to learn about the ideas behind and surrounding coliving, the way it is presented and in connection to what other phenomena it is discussed (e.g. tech industry, sharing economy, housing, millennials, work-life relation). In addition, this led to the identification of potential cases for the participant observation part of the research.

The first stage of document exploration and analysis led to a basic understanding of how coliving is presented and understood in propagation materials and public discourse. In other words, it led to an exploration of what Atkinson and Coffey (2010: 77) call 'documentary reality'. As they emphasise, documents do not merely reflect underlying organisational or social reality, but rather produce a distinct reality which represents organisations to themselves and others and which is performative; documentary realities 'actively construct the very organisations they purport to describe' (2010: 77). In this respect, the image of coliving derived through documentary analysis performs coliving for various purposes (including promoting a product in a case of commercial colivings), rather than simply reflecting what coliving is in the sense of practice and everyday lived reality.

The second stage of document collection and analysis was an integral part of the fieldwork in Habitat. I took notes and recorded documents as I encountered them. This included Habitat's website, news articles and videos published about Habitat, and regularly checking the Facebook group for Habitat residents. Collecting and reading these documents helped me to understand how Habitat is perceived by its founders and members who authored the documents, but also the image of Habitat that they want to project to the broader public. Reading Facebook groups posts was essential not only to keep in touch with what is happening in the coliving (e.g. what events are on), but also access the way of talking about practical realities and concerns of life in Habitat. This included participants discussing everyday upkeep and events, but also asking for advice on a work-related problem, sharing articles about entrepreneurship and other items of interest. In addition, I produced documents as a part of my research, including photographs of physical space, decoration and posters, and of social events

in and outside of Habitat to capture discursive and aesthetic aspects of coliving and its wider social and spatial context.

3.6.2 Participant Observation

- *'Good notes, good notes.'* (Sam, Fieldnote #121)

After securing access, I moved to Habitat and lived there for three months between July and September 2017. As is often implied, successful ethnographic fieldwork requires the researcher to 'immerse themselves in what action is taking place' (Pole and Hillyard, 2016: 15). In the case of this fieldwork, it was about immersion into the way of life in coliving, rather than in a specific action. Living in coliving, rather than just visiting for specific events, allowed me to experience life in coliving first-hand, to become part of the life of my participants, to see what significance and meaning life in coliving has for them, and to notice subtle and mundane rhythms of entrepreneurial work-life. In my research, the importance of 'being there' (Geertz, 1988: 1) lays in allowing me to notice and reflect subtle occurrences, states and experiences which are difficult to pin down and to communicate explicitly. As Atkinson puts it, transcripts and notes are important 'but they do not and cannot capture the entire range of knowledge and understanding that the ethnographer acquires and then brings to bear' (2015: 63). Living in Habitat generated tacit clues that helped to shape my interpretation of life in coliving, especially when it came to answering a fundamental question of why coliving is a thing and why would anyone want to live there, which would be very difficult to understand from the outside.

That being said, the crux of my fieldwork was "conventional" participant observation understood as 'engaging with others … to describe their cultural practices, understandings and beliefs' (Wright and Hobbs, 2006: x). During three months in Habitat, I joined numerous common dinners (participated in cooking and preparing of

a couple of them), celebrations and 'drinks'. I was present during the 'steering committee' meeting and attended several interviews with prospective members. The fieldwork also included trips outside of Habitat, such as visiting participants' workplaces, following them to parties where they celebrated their start-up successes and attending their various talks and public engagements. I attended a festival about innovative technologies that was taking place in the city during my fieldwork, joining a session about coliving and coworking establishments. Most importantly, I was part of hundreds of small everyday encounters, including collective smoking breaks after work, casual chats in the kitchen, and having an occasional drink to celebrate, relax, or to dispel gloom.

I took notes throughout the fieldwork. This meant either writing notes during the encounters or reproducing the situation or conversation shortly after, if taking notes at the time was not feasible. I followed the standard practice of writing down short jottings during the event and later reconstructing the scene or conversation more fully while transcribing notes from notebook to a computer file (Emerson et al., 1995). Altogether, I produced 123 transcribed entries of various lengths – ranging from notes capturing a whole observation day, sometimes a single event or reflection – that I used for the overall analysis.

Conducting ethnographic fieldwork focusing on the relationship between work and life through exploring a housing situation of coliving has presented me with several challenges, that might be viewed as relatively unusual from the perspective of traditional organisational or workplace ethnographies (Ciuk et al., 2018; Down, 2012). Even though organisational and workplace ethnographies stress the need to explore mundane, everyday occurrences (e.g. Courpasson, 2017) they nonetheless remain mostly limited to exploration of what happens at and around the workplace. Ciuk and

colleagues (2018: 271) argue that 'organisational settings typically are less immersive cultures themselves; people come and go to work, only exceptionally do they dedicate all of their lives to it'. For my study it was crucial to underscore the ways in which life can be dedicated to work to an exceptionally high degree. In addition, this study reverses the approach of many organisational and workplace ethnographies as it explores predominantly what goes on when people leave their workplace and how this part of life is nonetheless, to a large degree, organised about certain logic of work and productivity.

This study focused on the aspects of people's domestic life in relation to work. This made the focus of the study, at least initially, rather less thematically delimited. This presented a certain dilemma when it comes to deciding what observations are relevant and what lines of inquiry I should pursue. In the initial phases of the fieldwork, I was puzzled and uncertain of what the relevant moments were and how occasions where intersections of working and personal and domestic life can be traced. The examples of organisational discourse in Habitat were an obvious target, as the focus on "professional" aspects of this housing situation was conspicuous and rather extraordinary (this is captured in some detail in Chapter Five). However, identifying what aspects of participant observation were relevant was much less clear at the beginning. I experienced a degree of uncertainty and anxiety, worrying that I am missing important aspects that will be crucial for writing a dissertation. Only later I found out that understanding of coliving as a work-life arrangement would come from a long-term participation in in and talking about how structures of life in Habitat fit and maintain the dynamic of entrepreneurial work-lives (this is illustrated in Chapter Seven).

Answering the question of what and how to observe was further complicated by the fact that arrangements and organisation of life in Habitat was a matter of tacit and informal, rather than explicit and formal, aspects. A comparison with another institution seeking to organise life – monastery – can help to illustrate the point. As I argued in Chapter One, life in a monastery is governed by a detailed and strictly enforced schedule. The time to work, the time to pray, even the time to eat is a subject to an official collective synchronisation. Furthermore, every aspect of life – including the food and dress – is directed by a detailed code and rules of monastic practice. Moreover, significance and religious connotations of the organisation of daily activities are spelt out in the various documents elaborating principles and symbolism of monastic life (Agamben, 2013).

If monastery organises life as a 'total and unceasing liturgy' (Agamben, 2013: xii) through an explicit codex and strict scheduling of everyday life, mapping out how life in coliving is arranged around intensive work often meant focusing on less formal ways of organising. Coliving space organises the time of its inhabitants partly through a series of communal events, attendance of which is encouraged. However, rather than strictly enforcing participation like monastery does, coliving space rather "invites" its participants to join and any organisational influence over it is based on the principle of peer pressure rather than hierarchical imposition. Moreover, the content of the events is usually not strictly scripted to reflect an explicit ideal, unlike the way monastery organises life around religious prayer. During the events, talk about entrepreneurship and working life was ever-present, however, this was recognizable through attention to the content of members' conversations, rather than an official script. My understanding of how life is organised around work in coliving developed gradually throughout the fieldwork, as I learned that important principles of life in

coliving are often tacit and informal. The work-related function of coliving lies in everyday actions, interactions and networks of support, as well as in temporal arrangements of collective life, that I describe in detail in Chapter Seven.

Another challenge I encountered was the lack of temporal delimitation of the scope of the fieldwork. Whereas in most workplace ethnographies the target of observation is delimited by a set of activities (e.g. working, meetings, negotiations) which usually occur at a set time (e.g. working hours), this was not the case for me, when trying to make sense of organising life in coliving. Attending a formally organised event in Habitat (for example steering committee meeting or a regular common dinner) was as relevant for understanding life in coliving as joining a casual conversation in a kitchen or having a drink or a cigarette with participants. My strategy, at least initially, was trying not to consciously leave out any occasion for participating in life in Habitat.

The same applies to the lack of special separation between the site of participant observation and other work and my living space. The access to coliving space and participation in its functioning required me to rent a room and live in the coliving establishment. On the one hand, this facilitated participation in a way similar to a life of coliving member and allowed me to fully engage with life in Habitat. On the other hand, this presented a challenge when it comes to organising my own work-life. At moments I felt as though I had very little control over when to work, and when not to work. On many occasions when I planned to take time off, I felt like I could not miss participation in whatever was happening in Habitat. This also made the organisation of fieldwork more challenging. Often when I planned to transcribe field notes, write memos or organise the existing observations, I would end up joining the participants in some activity (e.g. trip outside of Habitat to visit a housemate in the workplace) or indulge in unexpectedly long conversation. Whereas at the beginning of the fieldwork

I was trying to experience as many aspects of life in coliving as possible, later I decided to impose (with various degrees of success) some evenings and weekends off, mostly by leaving Habitat, meeting people from outside of coliving and engaging in exploration of the city.

The all-encompassing nature of the fieldwork in a housing situation proved to be a challenge for the maintenance of a regular work routine. To a certain extent, there was an identifiable, however informal and changing, rhythm to the day in Habitat. On a typical working day, most participants would leave in the morning to go to their workplaces. During the morning and afternoon, Habitat was relatively quiet. Habitat usually got busier in the evening hours when the majority of the participants returned from their day jobs. Evenings were also the time when Habitat got a little bit more social. This means either because participants would engage in spontaneous conversations while cooking and eating their dinners. Most formally organised events, such as common dinners, drinks to celebrate arrival of new members, and other activities (interviews with prospective members, steering committee meetings) would happen.

However, from a perspective of a fieldworker, the day in Habitat was considerably less predictable than what the simple description above suggests. Usually, there were a few participants present even during the day, either because they decided to take time off or to work from home. Chatting with participants who stayed home often presented an opportunity for surprisingly long and captivating conversations. On many occasions, what I expected to be a calm time and opportunity to move on with transcription and analysis, often turned out to be a crucial opportunity to get insights into participants' perceptions of and reflection on work, life, and coliving. Moreover,

the mornings and afternoons were often an opportunity to follow some participants to their workplaces or on short trips around the city.

The all-encompassing nature of fieldwork in the housing context meant that any regular routine proved very difficult to follow. I, like many other ethnographers before, had at points experienced the "maddening frustration" which result from attempting to produce a formal academic report about inevitably informal and elusive ways of living (Rose, 1990: 33). The recommended routine of observing during the day and leaving the field during the evening to write (Emerson et al., 1995) proved rather difficult to maintain in my research practice. Living in a space where I was conducting fieldwork gave me very little control over my routine as leaving the field for an evening was not possible. Often when planning to transcribe or write, I was alerted to something happening, saw or heard participants hanging out or was asked to take part in some activity. Stopping fieldwork during the evening would not be practical also because evenings and nights – after most participants returned from work - were naturally the busiest times in Habitat. I decided to transcribe and write during the morning instead; however, even then I often ended up engaging in conversations with participants who stayed over. Instead of transcribing, I often inevitably ended up jotting more fieldnotes. In the end, I tried to be flexible, trying to use calmer times to transcribe and write. The advice to establish a routine of altering between active periods of observing and quiet periods of writing and reflection proved to be neither feasible nor desirable in the case of my research.

Finally, a methodological note about what is the 'stuff' that is an object of observation is needed. Many of my fieldnotes would be records of conversations I had with participants. This goes against the image of participant observation as it is sometimes presented in methodological literature. For example, as Waddington puts it, to do

participant observation means "to study […] behaviour of subjects in particular situations, and, if necessary, to talk to them about their feelings and interpretations" (2004: 154). This definition stresses observable behaviour and action, with talk to be included only if necessary. Forsey (2010a, 2010b) criticises the emphasis on observing visible behaviour as opposed to talking and listening, stressing that talk is as much a part of social life as visuality and observable behaviour and there are no reasons to side-line or overlook the former. Especially in environments where conversing is an important part of everyday social encounters engaging in conversations and noting what people talk about means participating in the participants' life at least as much as observing behaviour.

Conversations between and with participants formed a substantial part of my fieldnotes. This would include small everyday chats in the kitchen, but also noticing what people talk about during social events, such as a common dinner. Especially small unplanned events were a great opportunity not only to learn about participants' everyday experiences (e.g. how was their day at work), but also to seek clarification on observations and things that had been said. These conversations were initiated by participants as often as they were by me and were a part of our living together as housemates as much as they were encounters between researcher and participant. As Chapter Nine illustrates in greater detail, participants often saw engaging in 'deep conversations' as an essential and crucial aspect of living in Habitat. Noticing and taking part in these conversations was therefore an essential part of participating in the collective life of Habitat and led to important insights that are reported throughout the empirical chapters.

3.6.3 Interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews to gain further insights into the ways inhabitants reflected on their work and life in coliving space. Semi-structured interviews follow a standardised script; however, they should also follow up on themes and angles introduced by interviewees (Brinkmann, 2017). It gives the researcher control over the content and focus of the interview while allowing research participants to develop their own accounts and use their own terms to describe their experience (Braun and Clarke 2013: 78–79; Kvale 2007: 10–11). This makes semi-structured interviews an appropriate method for interpretative research which seeks to understand participants' self-understanding and sense-making (Soss 2006). Interviews are best suited to explore themes with participants who have 'a personal stake' in the phenomenon being explored (Braun and Clarke, 2013: 81). It is a method well positioned to explore subjective experiences and perceptions.

In the last month of fieldwork, I conducted fourteen formal semi-structured interviews with current inhabitants of Habitat (see Table 1 for an overview). The interviews followed the same interview schedule. However, I allowed enough space for variation and improvisation to follow ideas and themes as they were emerging during the interviews. The interviews ranged in length between fifty-four minutes to one hour and a half, with an average interview length being one hour and sixteen minutes. I transcribed all the interviews for analysis. On top of that, I conducted seven informal interviews with informants, including two residents of Habitat who moved out during my fieldwork, three interviews with Habitat founders, one interview with a former Habitat founder and one interview with a visitor (see Table 2 for an overview). Whereas formal interviews followed the same schedule and covered more or less the same themes, informal interviews were more conversational and usually revolved

around a more specific set of questions. I analysed the audio records and notes taken during the informal interviews.

Anonymised Pseudonym	Age	Sex	Length of stay in Habitat (months)
Aren	26	M	41
Astrid	24	F	32
Axel	28	M	1
Eva	31	F	10
Felix	27	M	20
Jens	28	M	30
Joren	23	M	11
Arya	38	M	2
Kirsten	34	F	7
Kristian	28	M	12
Niels	29	M	20
Sam	26	M	9
Soren	25	M	41
Raj	36	M	11

Table 2 - Semi-Structured Interview Participants

I planned to recruit every current resident (twenty in total) in Habitat during my fieldwork for a formal semi-structured interview. I distributed the call by email, advertised on Habitat's Facebook group, and did my best to arrange interview times

personally with participants who did not respond to email. Unfortunately, three inhabitants excused themselves because they felt they were too pressured for time to take part in the interview part of the study. Two more inhabitants did not answer my requests a number of times and we finally failed to arrange a mutually agreeable time. As the interviews were based on informed, voluntary consent, I did not consider it appropriate to continue asking after several attempts. I interpret the participants' inability to take part as resulting from a lack of time, rather than an unwillingness to participate.

Anonymised Pseudonym	Relation to Habitat	Sex
Allison	Resident left before the end of the fieldwork	F
Frans	Resident left before the end of the fieldwork	M
Klaus	Former resident	M
Lars	Founder, former resident	M
Soren	Founder, current resident	M
Stefan	Resident left before the end of the fieldwork	M
Steven	Visitor	M
Svend	Founder, former resident	M

Table 3 - Informal Interview Participants

The interviews in this research should not be understood as isolated and independently standing data, but rather as an integral part of the overall fieldwork research. I drew on insights from document analysis and participant observation heavily in formulating the interview schedule. For example, I included an excerpt from a newspaper article about coliving spaces as a prompt in the interview, which elicited especially vivid

reflections on what coliving is and what it does in the view of participants. Insights from participant observation were crucial for formulating questions based on the knowledge of life in coliving and themes and representations that were part of conversations in Habitat. In addition, I was able to draw on examples and instances of the shared time in Habitat and observations about participant's lives to further elaborate on themes emerging during interviews. Importantly, living with and knowing my participants for few months before conducting the interviews helped to establish an informal atmosphere of mutual understanding and trust, and created shared knowledge about life in coliving that would have been very difficult to achieve otherwise. In this sense, interviews were heavily influenced (and enhanced) by being part of the overall ethnographic fieldwork.

Accounts produced through interviewing here should not only be understood as part of overall fieldwork research but also as a part of a social and discursive and environment in which they took place. It is increasingly recognised that interviews do not merely capture pre-existing ideas, attitudes and perceptions, but are 'active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually based results' (Fontana and Frey, 2005: 698). The narrative that emerges, as a result, is not only influenced by the personality and practice of the interviewer, but also by the expectations and strategies of the interviewee and their interaction.

Several authors have also warned against the simplistic idea of the interview participant as 'romantic speaking subject' who reveals a pre-existing authentic truth about her life (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997: 305; Brinkmann, 2017; Gubrium and Holstein, 2012; Wetherell, 2008). Instead, these authors stress the importance of recognising that speech in interviews always draws on certain scripts and is part of discursive domains that are available to the subject. The speech invited and recorded

through interview records personal voice; however, this voice is not independent of resources and discourses available to the subject, or indeed, shaping the subject.

As Wetherell (2008: 79) points out 'communicative practices are both socially regular and person constituting'. Research that recognizes this should focus, rather than on exploration of authentic speaking subject, on psycho-discursive practices, defined as 'recognizable, conventional, collective and social procedures through which character, self, identity, the psychological, the emotional, motives, inventions and beliefs are performed, formulated and constituted' (2008: 80). In this respect, interview accounts are not only reflections of the individual consciousness or interactive process of interviewing but are also influenced by social and discursive environments that form 'narrative footing' (Gubrium and Holstein, 2012: 38) providing clues and discursive repertoires on which interviewees draw in their accounts. This means that participants' voices and narratives do not only reflect on their subjective experience, but also on how this experience is itself influenced by the discourses and rules available to them in various social and organisational contexts.

In this sense, we should understand the interview accounts reproduced here as being grounded in narrative environments. Habitat as a coliving space is saturated by a certain vision of life which is reproduced in its organisational discourse but also fosters socially learned and maintained ways of understanding and talking about work and life. Moreover, Habitat (and coliving more generally) is embedded in broader organisational and discursive structures of the 'entrepreneurial ecosystem' or 'start-up economy' which formulate and proliferate discourses and ways of understanding work, life and one's self. For example, chapter five discusses the notion of "improvement" which postulates that the most important goal of work and life is to contribute to the improvement of the world through an entrepreneurial project. As will

be demonstrated in much greater detail, "improvement" offers an important individual justification of hard work, but its origin transcends an individual subject. It is a normative notion that is collectively shared and affirmed in Habitat, but also in the broader environment of the start-up economy. Interview accounts reproduced here should be understood as being produced by interviewees, in interaction with interviewer and interview situation, but also as reflecting and reproducing collectively shared and maintained discourses.

3.7 Data Analysis

All the fieldnotes and formal semi-structured interviews were transcribed into a computer file and used for analysis in Atlas.ti. When deciding what style of analysis to adopt, I was considering an approach that would encompass a wide variety of data sources (fieldnotes, memos, websites, interview transcripts, photographs) and data of rather different natures, ranging from very brief one-line jottings to hour-long interview transcripts. In addition, as I have explained above, I intended to understand coliving as a regime of living/apparatus/assemblage. This requires understanding how several aspects of reality (e.g. discourse, built environment, organisational practices, social interactions) combine to shape and maintain a certain way of life, rather than focusing on each of them separately. This called for a general approach well equipped to make links between different layers of reality, rather than an approach more specifically focused on particular kind of social object (e.g. conversation analysis, some versions of discourse analysis).

It was also important to use a method that does not privilege the frequency of occurrences when it comes to the importance of observation for formulating findings. Qualitative research focuses on meaning rather than on counting. However, even some qualitative data analysis methods privilege occurrences that happen more frequently

and regularly. For example, thematic analysis formulated by Braun and Clarke rests on the presumption 'that ideas which recur across dataset capture something psychologically or socially meaningful' (2013: 223). The presumption makes intuitive sense – it would be difficult to argue the opposite - but is far from granted and might be less suitable for some styles of research (as Braun and Clarke acknowledge). There are things left unsaid, or mentioned only rarely, that can nonetheless have a profound influence on life in a social setting. Moreover, events or conversations that happen only once during the fieldwork can lead to an understanding of the social setting that highlights something that was ignored before or that was largely taken for granted (by the researcher, but potentially also by participants). A document spelling out core values of the organisation can reveal a lot about its underpinning discourse, even though it is encountered only once and forms only a small part of the data set. In sum, in fieldwork which combines various kinds of social objects and types of data, research occurrences can have "asymmetrical" impact on understanding the social setting, and for good reasons.

I chose situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) as an approach to analysing the data. Situational analysis combines interactionist and post-structuralist influences and seeks to combine analysis of social action with attention to discursive, visual, and material elements that together compose a social situation of interest. The core task of the method is to produce maps of all the elements shaping a social situation (be them actions, ideas, discourses, material objects) that are relevant to both participants and the researcher. After outlining all the identified elements of the situation, the analysis seeks to identify and describe interrelationships between them to understand what elements 'make a difference' (Clarke, 2005: 87). This process should answer a fundamental question of 'who and what are in the broader situation?' (Clarke, 2005:

94) and what relations between elements produce and maintain a particular social situation the way it is. Situational maps present a 'reading of the situation' (Clarke, 2005: xxxvii) which is rooted in observations, discourses, participants' accounts and that seeks to trace meaningful relations between elements and which is grounded in the ethnographic inquiry. However, the analyst (and the reader) should be aware that however grounded in the data this reading is, it is well reasoned and careful reading among other potential readings, rather than the only possible reading of the situation.

Situational analysis fits the aims of this research in two important aspects. Firstly, emphasising the interrelation between action, discourse, and material aspects, situation analysis encompasses analysis of several data types and several layers of reality that together constitute coliving as a living situation. Secondly, the emphasis on the mapping of all the relevant elements invites a type of analysis that seeks to outline the complex situation rather than privileging codes and elements that appear frequently and regularly. In addition, it allows consideration of elements that can be taken for granted or that can be relevant albeit they are present – for the most part – only implicitly. These aspects make situation analysis an appropriate approach for analysing coliving as a complex regime of living/apparatus/assemblage.

After collation and transcription of the data, I coded transcripts and other materials inductively in a 'bottom-up' fashion. However, the analysis was influenced by sensitising theoretical ideas identified in a literature review, but also by analytical ideas recorded in analytical memos written during the fieldwork and transcription. In the first phase of analysis, I focused on identifying actions, ideas and discourses that I saw as relevant elements of coliving as a social situation. This stage of coding was very open in the sense that I was aiming to produce a wide variety of codes, rather than restricting their number or immediately focusing on thematic fit. The first phase

of coding resulted in the production of a large 'map' of codes that were outlined next to each other in the Atlast.ti network view tool which allows positioning of codes in two-dimensional space. The second phase of analysis involved identifying codes that were relevant for a specific theme of interest and tracing connections between them to understand how elements combine in relation to a specific topic. This resulted in a production of more specific situational maps that allowed the closer specification of relations between elements relevant for the understanding of central issues in the life within coliving space.

It was within this secondary and more detailed analysis that the empirical frameworks discussed in the following empirical chapters were identified. Chapter Five identifies extensive and intensive work as being an important defining feature of life in Habitat. It illustrates how hard work is justified by the normative principle of 'improvement' but is also tied to a logic of entrepreneurial practice and concerns with money as capital and personal income. It will be argued that it is a combination of these elements that together influence and maintain a particular dynamics of work-lives of Habitat residents. An orientation towards work and life that postulates that both spheres should be 'maximised' is at the centre of Chapter Seven. This chapter demonstrates how this orientation is implemented in everyday life in Habitat by overlapping work and personal connections, 'automation' and moderation of social life, and intentional creation of a social environment where norms of intensive work-lives are collectively understood and protected from unfavourable judgement. Finally, Chapter Nine identifies 'existential attitude' as an important aspect of thinking about work and life in Habitat. It demonstrates how this orientation is developed and practised within a specific technology of the self based on the celebration of notions of potential, freedom

and determination, and how it involves practices of conversational reflection and individual practices of self-monitoring and negotiating of work-life scenarios.

3.8 Research Ethics

- *'Karel, this will not go to the thesis!'* (Kirsten, Fieldnote #18)

The research was approved by the Sociology Department's Research Ethics Committee. The standardised Research Ethics and Risk Assessment probes research questions, data collection methods, recruitment, consent, anonymity, and potential risks to participants and the researcher. Essential documents informing participants about the research, consent forms and preliminary interview guide were attached to the form and a subject to approval, which was secured before the beginning of the fieldwork.

The research sought the consent of the participating organisation (Habitat) and individual participants (Habitat members and other persons encountered in Habitat and during fieldwork) in two phases. The first phase involved negotiating access and informing the gatekeepers. I got in touch with Habitat through an email and a Facebook message and agreed on a Skype conversation with a chairman of the coliving space. During an informal conversation we had an opportunity to talk about Habitat as well as about my research interests. I also had an opportunity to express interest in researching Habitat and joining for a mutually agreeable period. Following this, I sent a gatekeeper information sheet to the chairman, asked him to discuss my research plan with inhabitants and was eventually granted access after a decision made jointly by Habitat members. At the beginning of my stay in Habitat, I again informed inhabitants about my research and encouraged participants to get in touch with any questions or concerns and asked them to let me know if they have any reservations about taking part in the research (none of the inhabitants expressed any concerns). The second

phase involved informing participants who consented to be interviewed and securing their informed consent. This again included presenting participants with an information sheet and securing their informed consent at the beginning of the interview.

Ethnographic fieldwork, however, poses ethical questions and problems that go beyond formalised research ethics planning and approval processes. As Pole and Hillyard point out, ethnographic fieldwork requires participating in daily life as an unfolding and unpredictable process which encompasses 'participating and doing whatever is being done' (2016: 31). Participating in everyday life events as they happen makes rigid planning difficult and requires the researcher to 'think on his/her feet, to make and change plans as the social action unfolds before him/her' (Pole and Hillyard, 2016: 31). Reflecting on the partial unpredictability of fieldwork, Atkinson (2015) questions the suitability of formal ethical regulation for ethnographic research. As he puts it:

> '… because the nature of the [ethnographic] research is an emergent property of the processes of data collection and research design, that are themselves emergent, unfolding processes, it becomes all but impossible to solicit consent to the research that is "informed" in the sense of being predictable and explicable before the research itself is carried out' (2015: 179)

In ethnographic research, ethics can hardly be considered as a one-off thing that can be reviewed before the fieldwork. By the same token, consent becomes a part of an ongoing research relationship and negotiation, rather than of a single transaction. In addition, following real-life situations means finding oneself in unexpected situations,

or at least in situations which cannot reasonably be tackled with a formal approach to research ethics.

One of the issues that I tackled with is the presence of "irregular" research participants, meaning persons who were not Habitat residents and thus not formally briefed about the research, but who were nonetheless present in situations that were part of the research. This would typically include visitors, participants' friends, partners and colleagues, but also contacts that I made during trips outside of Habitat (for example, when visiting participants at work or when attending social events). In most situations, securing formal consent proved extremely impractical. For instance, taking part in a social dinner or a party would hardly mean 'participating' in an ethnographic sense if it involved handing out information sheets and asking guests to sign a consent form before engaging in a conversation. The approach I took was characterised by openness, informal notification, and not withholding information about the research, rather than securing a formal consent. Practically, this meant that I would introduce myself as a researcher when I had an opportunity, informally briefed conversation partners about the nature of my research and answered questions they might have as a part of a conversation.

Another issue involves unfolding and continuous – both formal and informal – negotiation of consent with participants. Even though the theme of research is not particularly sensitive, the fieldwork was taking place in people's home and focused on the organisation of personal and domestic life in relation to work. In addition, the relationship between researcher and participant included an aspect of being housemates who share the same domestic space in an environment which seeks to create and maintain close and trusting friendship between inhabitants. This inevitably meant not only developing a friendship with the participants but also talking about

personal and sometimes intimate matters. On a number of occasions, participants in conversation indicated to me that what they are sharing should be treated especially sensitively and confidentially, for example, that some information should not be published or should be anonymised in such a way that the participant will not be identifiable even by other participants. In case these conversations entered the final fieldnotes or interview transcripts, I coded them separately to make sure that the preferences of participants in this respect were not omitted.

Access to Habitat and consent was negotiated formally with gatekeepers, rather than with individual participants, which is a standard practice in ethnographic research where individual negotiation of access is often unfeasible. As mentioned, I also asked Habitat members to let me know if they have any reservations at the beginning of the fieldwork. Even though no one objected at the time, a few members during the fieldwork informally expressed concerns about what, and how, will be revealed about either their personal or professional activities. Recognising the potential sensitivity of the research and its taking place in partially private settings, I agreed to give participants an option to read the thesis and following publications before submission or publication. I shared the invitation for research output consultation repeatedly on Habitat's Facebook group during and at the end of the fieldwork and several participants opted in. This provided an opportunity for participants to identify details that they founnd sensitive and encouraged them to work together to either change details to make the person or situation less identifiable or removing an excerpt if necessary.

3.9 Conclusion

The research informing this thesis adopted an ethnographic approach to understanding how life is understood and shaped in coliving space. It drew on methods of document

analysis, participant observation and semi-structured interviews to gain a complex understanding of this problem. Data analysis followed an approach of situational analysis, focusing on mapping the relations between elements that together constitute the work-life in coliving and paying attention to interrelation between discourse, action and talk.

Chapter Four: Personal Attachment to Work in Neoliberalism

4.1 Introduction

As was suggested in Chapter Two, coliving establishments formulate a vision of reconfiguration of the relationship between work and personal and domestic life in a particular way. One of the central ideas of coliving is to create conditions where life reaches a fulfilment through the realisation of professional or entrepreneurial ambition and which maximise the chances of work-related and economic success. Coliving establishments rearrange spatial arrangements, social relations, and everyday practices to create an environment where personal and professional life are seamlessly integrated.

An important part of understanding coliving is, however, answering the question of how can we understand the desire to integrate personal/domestic and working life in coliving establishments? What motivates the emergence of this phenomena and what makes them attractive in the eyes of their tenants? In an attempt to shed light on these questions, this chapter discusses the issue of personal attachment to work in neoliberal capitalism, which is a subject to some controversy.

Since the start of the unravelling of Fordism in the 1970s (Beynon, 2016) work in advanced economies has been undergoing far-reaching transformations. Among these are the decline of standard employment contracts (Aerden et al., 2013; Carré, 2016), rise of self-employment and proliferation of entrepreneurship discourse (Parker, 2001), increasing precarity (Prosser, 2016), intensification (Thompson, 2003), and outsourcing (Trusson and Woods, 2017). These changes have been understood under the term of neoliberalism that connects changes in organisation and practices (Crowley

and Hodson, 2014) with their ideological underpinnings and justifications (Springer, 2012). In this context, the issue of personal relation to work has been widely debated in the sociology of work and beyond (Beech et al., 2016; Doherty, 2009; Foster, 2012; Strangleman, 2007, 2012b).

Some suggest that personal attachment to work has weakened. Beck (2000), Bauman (2004) and Sennett (2007) claim that work loses its role as an important source of identity formation. The changes connected to neoliberal economy make it more difficult for workers to develop a subjective attachment to work or meaningful personal narrative around their working lives. While old sources of attachment are being eroded, new versions of the self – based more on the logic of consumption than work - are seen as short-term and shallow affairs (Bauman and Raud, 2015: 59–74). In this perspective, changes associated with neoliberal economy work as 'cold winds' harmful to human feelings and desires (Musílek et al., 2019).

In contrast, others argue that work remains an important source of identity (Doherty, 2009; Foster, 2012; Strangleman, 2012b) or even that the logic of work and economic productivity permeates our personal life more deeply than before (Fleming, 2014; Hancock and Tyler, 2004). Where old identities are eroded, new forms of personal relation to work and economy take their place. Though, generally, most agree with the critical account of changes connected to neoliberal economy, they nonetheless argue that some workers continue to build intense personal attachments to work (Fleming, 2015; Konings, 2015).

This chapter discusses the theoretical framings which have underpinned attempts to understand the way individuals relate to work in conditions of the neoliberal economy. It connects often isolated strands of theorising and seeks to make their similarities and

differences explicit. The chapter argues that there are four ways that personal attachment to work and economy has been dealt with in contemporary social science literature primarily based on divergent understanding of the main driving force behind the formation of subjective relation to work and economy: (i) entrepreneurship discourse, (ii) biocracy, (iii) approaches emphasising desire, lack and affect, and (iv) approaches emphasising the role of normative justifications and personal ethics. It interrogates their theoretical underpinnings, empirical focus and juxtaposes their position to make explicit their differences to facilitate the discussion across the various streams of theorising.

4.2 Personal Attachment to Work and Neoliberal Economy

Changes in individuals' forms of attachment to work are understood as part of wider shifts in the organisation of production frequently discussed under the term neoliberalism (Crowley and Hodson, 2014). While acknowledging Venugopal's (2015) argument that the concept of neoliberalism has multiple and contradictory meanings, this chapter takes neoliberalism as a form of governmentality which is 'the conduct of conduct: a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons' (Gordon, 1991: 2), emphasising individuals as enterprising subjects seeking to maximise potential, value and satisfaction. The market is seen as an ideal arena where this pursuit takes place, allowing free and independent maximisation of utility. In relation to work, neoliberal ideas in management engage individual motivations and psychology, while downplaying wider social and organisational factors (e.g. joint decision making and conflict) in labour relations (Keenoy, 2009).

Using such broad concepts, however, risks overstating the differences between contemporary processes and those of by-gone periods, as well as misapprehending

general problems inherent to capitalist societies. Meštrović (1991) argues that contemporary economic deregulation and its impact on other spheres of life is strikingly similar to the situation in the late nineteenth century described by Durkheim. Inasmuch, stressing the 'newness' of current workers' attachments to work runs a risk of overlooking continuities in the politics of work under capitalism; work in capitalism always needed a justificatory ideology and ways to manage and control workers (Anthony, 1977). However, there *are* traceable changes in the ideology and technologies for governing workplaces. Differences in the emphasis and content, scale of deployment of certain techniques and ideologies, and reliance on new ways of controlling the workforce can be discerned (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Rose, 1999a).

This chapter focuses on how personal attachment to work is produced in the new conditions described above. Forms of attachment can change and new ones can emerge in relation to the changing politics and organisation of economy and the workplace. As Strangleman (Strangleman, 2012b) reports in his study of the railway industry, younger workers may base their attachment to work less on collectivity and solidarity and more on a sense of individual achievement. Similarly, Foster (2012) argues that contemporary work identity can be expressed using 'the individualistic language of personality and introspection' (Foster, 2012: 948) and responsibility to oneself rather than to a company or colleagues. Rather than a demise of personal attachment to work we can observe its transformation in the new neoliberal climate characterised by increasing individualisation of concerns with work (Crowley and Hodson, 2014; McCabe, 2007).

Contemporary scholarship highlights personal attachment to work despite its changing organisation and nature. Personal commitment to work in new conditions can be

justified by values such as freedom, creativity and personal employability (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). Companies seek ways to incorporate personalities of the worker within the workplace, be it through spatial and temporal arrangements (Fleming and Spicer, 2004) or cultures emphasising self-realisation and authenticity (Rose, 1999a: 55–122). In some cases, the negative changes brought about by changes in economy and work organisation (e.g. uncertainty, long working hours) can be a source of intense personal attachment as they generate affection through anxiety or imbalance (Bloom, 2015; Cockayne, 2016). In other words, difficulties and struggles can reinforce rather than weaken personal attachment to work (Beech et al., 2016). In addition, rather than centring one's personal narrative around life-long career in one organisation, individuals can base them on the notion of career as a life-project to be managed individually and outside of a workplace (Hancock and Tyler, 2004). Such an individual interpretation is bolstered by discourses of individual responsibility in relation to increase in self-employment and entrepreneurship (Coulson, 2012; MacDonald, 1996; Mallett and Wapshott, 2015; Parker, 2001).

The following section discusses four different ways scholars make sense of personal attachment to work and economy in the newly emerging conditions. The discussion of each approach is organised around four aspects: its empirical focus (the main objects of empirical study of the respective approach), the source of attachment (how the personal attachment to work is produced), leverage (the main analytical purchase), and blind spots (the main theoretical limitation or empirical omission). However, these approaches should not be understood as watertight compartments. Points of overlap exist between them and authors often draw on multiple perspectives throughout their work. The following outline is intended as a heuristic device for mapping out distinct

theoretical themes and highlighting the points of difference. It provides a theoretical context for the analysis of intensive commitment to work in coliving in Chapter Five.

4.3 Discourses, Organisational Strategies, Affects and Ethics: Four Conceptualisations of Personal Attachment to Work in the Neoliberal Economy

4.3.1 Entrepreneurship Discourse and Enterprising Selves

Originating in the ideology of the New Right and neoliberal economic theory and stressing individual initiative and responsibility, the enterprise discourse established itself in policy circles and became understood as a cure-all for unemployment and economic stagnation despite very limited delivery on its promises (Bögenhold and Staber, 1991; MacDonald, 1996; Parker, 2001). The enterprise discourse translates into organisational cultures and strategies (Du Gay, 1996; Rose, 1999a) and self-conceptions of individuals (Fenwick, 2002; Mallett and Wapshott, 2015). The personal attachment to work, according to this perspective, is formed through discourses and policies which create a particular subject position for individuals to occupy. The central model of subjectivity that neoliberal discourses promote is an entrepreneur of the self (Foucault, 2008: 226–228) - an individual who ostensibly applies economic cost-benefits analysis to decisions in all spheres of life with a goal of maximising its human capital in expectation off future profits.

Through policies citizens should be 'activated' to increasingly accept responsibility for individual welfare and use 'private initiative' to navigate their economic lives (Lesenich, 2010). Employees are increasingly seen as entrepreneurial subjects finding self-actualisation in work and working towards increasing their employability (Rose, 1999a). Du Gay (1996) illustrates how dominant discourses of work increasingly

resemble the sphere of consumption in that workers are encouraged to search for individual self-realisation while concerns with work organisation and work conditions are translated into individualising language of autonomy and self-management. As Harvey and colleagues illustrate (2017: 31), the promise of benefits of becoming an entrepreneur leads to acceptance of highly disadvantageous working conditions in the so-called gig economy. The enterprising subjectivity is promoted through a wide range of areas, including very personal and minute activities such as time management and personal productivity and reaches beyond workplace. These discourses circulate through self-help books and lifestyle magazines and are at points adopted collectively outside of formal organisational settings (Fridman, 2014). Application of this entrepreneurship discourse is not limited to economically active population but reaches groups such as students (Berglund, 2013) or the unemployed (Boland, 2016). In a sense, the very personality of individuals is seen as an economic project.

The advantage of this approach lies in its ability to connect personal dimensions with wider political and discursive changes in neoliberal societies. Additionally, it reveals how certain economic logic works on the individual not only inside but also outwith a workplace through various channels of communication. However, this perspective's utility for analysis of personal attachment to work is limited. As others have highlighted, the impact of enterprise discourse can be exaggerated and portrayed in an over-deterministic manner (Armstrong, 2001; Fournier and Grey, 1999). This often ignores the role played by alternative discourses (such as that of professions, family) and leaves only a very limited space for resistance. This leads to missing insights into organisational dynamics as well as the ways individuals actually engage (or not) with discourses of enterprise (Coulson, 2012; Fenwick, 2002). Moreover, studies in this approach do not sufficiently explain why the image of 'homo economicus' would be

accepted by individuals as the model for their own subjectivity (Jones and Spicer, 2005). This is especially true when the enterprising self is portrayed as a calculating and purely utilitarian subject, as is sometimes the case (e.g. Hamann, 2009). What would motivate a thinking and feeling subject to fill this subject position? Narrow understandings of neoliberal discourse – emphasising cognitive and instrumental aspects - may lead to downplaying of the role of affects and emotions play in acceptance of the dominant ideology (Campbell, 2010). This perspective's understanding of the way subjective attachment to economic practice works can therefore be seen as too straightforward, obscuring the complex ways in which power works and the necessary ambivalence of lived experience of capitalism (Konings, 2015).

4.3.2 Biocracy: Trapping Life in Work

Rather than focusing on a discourse, some authors focus on the shifting boundary between working and personal life occurring as a result of management strategies to gain a more productive and committed workforce. The major force creating the personal attachment to work, in this perspective, is the organisational strategy to increasingly incorporate 'life' into the workplace. This tendency is perhaps most succinctly captured by Peter Fleming under the concept of biocracy (Fleming, 2014), by which he means 'instrumentalization of all personal life attributes that were previously considered exogeneous, irrelevant or detrimental to formal organizational productivity' (Fleming, 2014: 885). In other words, a managerial strategy to make workers personally invested in their job by effectively displacing the boundary between work and personal life. Fleming and Spicer (2004) offer an example of this strategy in their study of call-centre management where, they argue, the workplace increasingly incorporates aspects of life that would be previously deemed

unacceptable in a work environment. Inasmuch, employees were encouraged to express emotions, share personal stories and simply 'be themselves' in the workplace. Bosses would often offer advice on private matters and understood themselves partly as counsellors. Relatedly, the workplace is understood as a place where workers can display their 'authentic' personal and social traits (e.g. subcultural symbols) (Fleming and Spicer, 2008; Spicer, 2011).

The advantage of this approach is that it captures the organisational dynamics that aim to build personal attachment to work by shifting (or displacing) the boundary between 'work' and 'life' as a part of a strategy to achieve a 'more committed and dedicated workforce' (Fleming and Spicer, 2004: 79). The focus is chiefly on management strategy and may underplay the importance of the agency of workers in resisting and/or co-producing the workplace dynamics (Ackroyd and Thompson, 2016). Even though this strand of critical management studies theorising is clearly inspired by Foucault, the emphasis is mostly on strategies of control and domination (Burrell, 2006), thus side-lining later concerns with self-formation of the subject (Skinner, 2012). In general, the emphasis on strategies of management can overshadow the ways in which individuals relate to their work and personal attachments function from the perspective of the 'receiving' subject. It can also be less effective in in understanding situations where intense personal attachment to work is created in absence of direct managerial control such as entrepreneurial work in growing creative and tech industries (Cockayne, 2016; Fenwick, 2002).

4.3.3 Lack, Desire, and Affect

Various scholars have emphasised the role of desire, affect and subconscious in fostering the personal attachment to work. Even though their works draw on different theoretical sources, the common thread is an ambition to address how discourses and

strategies of control are effective. In other words, rather than focusing on how and why the discourse is produced, the locus of attention moves to questions of how and why they are accepted by working individuals. Additionally, the authors share an appreciation of ambivalence of our relation to work (Strangleman, 2012a). It might often be an experience of dissatisfaction, hardship or lack that can paradoxically reinforce subjective attachment to work.

Jones and Spicer (2005) argue that the discourse of entrepreneurship is effective precisely thanks to its vagueness and ambivalence. As, from a Lacanian point of view, the impossibility of full and permanent identification is at the core of logic of subject formation (Lacan, 2001: 1–8), the emptiness of the entrepreneurship discourse is precisely what makes it attractive. This vague and ambivalent image of an entrepreneur allows the subject to engage in ceaseless work of self-identification. Bloom explores 'affective identification' (2015: 2) focusing on the discourse of work-life balance. The individual is maintained as a particular subject of organisation through the impossibility of finding a balance and finally finding a joy 'from being "imbalanced"' (2015: 2). Konings (2015) similarly argues that personal attachment to the economy operates through a logic of 'wounded attachments' (2015: 94). Driven by a fantasy of an anxiety-free state, the subject attaches itself ever more closely to the very things producing its anxiety. As Cockayne (2016) observes, the entrepreneurs in the digital media sector form affectionate relationships with their entrepreneurial projects that allow them to perceive precarity as tolerable or even liberating. Conditions of uncertain work and exhaustive workloads are interpreted through passion for work and freedom of the entrepreneurial situation.

Affect and emotions are becoming an increasingly prominent theme in both managerial literature and are seen as having implications for how workers are

managed and relate to themselves. Hughes (2005) reports how employees are expected to produce specific kinds of emotional display and how these influence ideas of personal and corporate success. Employees are expected to develop a character that is 'attuned to the transient and indefinite flux of a flexible workplace' (Hughes, 2005: 619), managing their emotions in reaction to organisational changes and demands. Focus on emotions and affect keeps the focus on the mental dynamics of the individual, but also captures how affects circulate between individuals and intensify through sharing and exchange between them (Ahmed, 2004). This is well captured by Richard and Rudnyckyj (2009) who explore the role of affect in the justification of organisational change in an Indonesian steel plant. Managers and employees underwent a complex training which involved expression of affects such as shame, grief, joy or fear, sometimes accompanied by ritual crying. Strong affective reaction – including shedding tears – was seen as essential for deep subjective transformation of individuals into 'a disciplined but entrepreneurial worker who will work hard and avoid corruption' (2009: 71). Experience and genuine expression of affects was seen – both by managers and employees – to be necessary for undergoing deep subjective transformation demanded by success in the changing economic conditions.

The analytical purchase of these works lies in its closeness to a subject at the receiving end of the various discourses and organisational strategies that foster personal attachment to work. Rather than focusing on how and why these forces are created, it gives an account of how and why individuals might accept them. In doing so, it also highlights the role of emotions and desire in the personal life of the worker which is a welcome correction to some tendencies to portray the neoliberal subject as a purely rational and utilitarian character. However, this approach has a tendency to treat the forces of attractions of neoliberal work as ahistorical, unchanging entities. We may

say that reference to universal dynamics of subject formation (e.g. tendency to satisfy the lack at the centre of subjectivity or tendency to overcome anxiety through wounded attachment) does not necessarily help us to understand historical and social specificity of contemporary work situations.

4.3.4 Normative Justifications and Ethics of the Self: Reflexivity and Self-Fashioning of the Working Subject

The final analytical thread concerns the normative dimension of personal attachment to work and capitalism. Works taking this approach focus on the ways in which individuals make ethically informed judgements in their relation to working life. Even though authors come from different theoretical traditions, they share an emphasis on reflexivity and ethical dimensions of subjectivity, thought, and action.

Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) show how 'the new spirit of capitalism' offers a justification of work in capitalism in the face of changing work arrangements. They stress the importance of investigating how new discourses of management address long standing normative concerns such as autonomy, security, and fairness. They show how the new ideological formation emerged in the 1980s to legitimise and justify the changes in company and welfare state arrangements. The new flexible work arrangements are legitimised by ideals of freedom from authoritarian control, self-management, and by creativity and employability. Boltanski and Chiapello also demonstrate that justification of capitalism is partly formed in interaction with social critique thus making a connection with wider developments in social thought (see also Boland, 2007). Whereas Boltanski and Chiapello draw on elements of Weber in their approach, other authors take inspiration from late Foucault to describe the ways in which individuals incorporate diverse ethical ideals in their self-shaping efforts related to work and economic productivity. These include autonomy, freedom and

independence in the case of self-help manuals and coaching (Fridman, 2014), principles of 'organic' life (Skinner, 2012) or even notions of Islamic piety and honour (Rudnyckyj, 2009). Together, these works illustrate how economic practice is often saturated with ethical concerns and normative justifications, both at organisational and individual levels.

This perspective sheds light on the ways in which ethics and values are important motivating forces in shaping subjects' relation to work, economy and productivity. Additionally, it complements a picture of larger power structures with a focus on individuals and their self-fashioning efforts. However, the emphasis on immanent ethicality of social life is not without problems. As Fassin (2014) notes the language of ethics may be seen as congruent with emphasis on ethics by management, corporate groups and their public relations departments. Recasting of some issues in this language may 'contribute to a form of depoliticization' (Fassin, 2014: 433). Moreover, ethical statements are often targeted towards others for performative purposes (Lempert, 2014). To take this one step further, professions of ethical beliefs can be part of instrumental self-presentation of both individuals and organisations and can be partly used to achieve instrumental goals, rather than expression of purely normative concerns.

4.4 Discussion of the Four Perspectives

Scholars have focused on the new ways workers form personal attachments to work. However, the extent to which these modes of attachment effectively create and maintain durable attachments to work remains unclear. To unpack this, the following discussion focuses on three questions. Firstly, what is the reach of these new ways of producing attachment; to what workers, to what workplaces and to what social groups do they apply? Secondly, to what extent do these approaches take account of

conflicting values and complex politics of the workplace? Finally, how far do these approaches make space for workers' reflexivity, agency, and potential for resistance?

Most studies discussed above focus on work/workplaces where these trends of personal attachment might be developed most profoundly. Mostly, discussions centre on paid work, predominantly in the global north, and especially in Anglo-Saxon countries. Most of the reviewed research focuses on either office jobs (e.g. retail management, call-centre) or independent and entrepreneurial jobs (e.g. media start-ups, organic farmers). Yet research on work orientations shows workers' expectations and satisfaction vary considerably among occupations and depend on factors like type of contract, gender and level of education (Gallie et al., 2012; Rose, 2003). As McDowell (2001: 455) argues, 'construction of individualized workplace identity' might be associated with elite workers more than, for example, the growing sector of low-paid service jobs (which is increasingly feminised). New ways of controlling or 'motivating' the workforce based on cultural, normative and emotional management may be less necessary to manage low-skilled and more precarious workers where economic necessity and threats of unemployment/underemployment play a primary role (Warren, 2015). In the context of punitive workfare policies and re-commodification of labour (Greer, 2016) the commitment of workers resulting from punitive labour market discipline (rather than normative and cultural controls) should not be underestimated.

The second question concerns how much space these four approaches allow for alternative discourses, values and influences in their understanding of power and mechanisms forming personal attachments to work. All four approaches focus on how a certain discourse, ideology or orientation to work is imposed on and/or adopted by workers. Most studies stress the ways workers are asked to adopt an entrepreneurial,

economistic look on their work and lives. However, as moral philosophers point out, there are limits to the incursion of market principles into all spheres of social and individual life (Sandel, 2013; Satz, 2010). From a different angle, Skeggs (2014) criticises the assumption that the logic of financial value permeates every aspect of life and is automatically internalised by individuals. Countervailing logics and values (e.g. value of care) cannot easily be captured by the capitalist (re)valuation and continue to play a role in everyday negotiations. The question is to what extent do the approaches emphasising new ways of creating attachment to work make space for more complex combinations of influences, values and conflicts in contemporary working life?

Studies of the enterprise discourse and biocracy, with a degree of simplification, focus on the production of discourses, policies, and organisational practices more than the exploration of workers' experiences. The major contribution of research in this area is that it situates the issue of attachment to work within wider societal and political discourses. Additionally, it reveals how certain discursive logics work on the individual both inside and outwith workplaces through various channels of communication. Similarly, biocracy studies explore the workings of organisational strategies aiming to build personal attachments to work by shifting the boundary between 'work' and 'life' to achieve a 'more committed and dedicated workforce' (Fleming and Spicer, 2004: 79).

These two approaches are predominantly concerned with discursively and organisationally-prescribed selves. However, this focus on discourse or organisational strategy can leave personal-level and everyday negotiations underexplored and can downplay the issue of how far the enterprise discourse or integration of life into the workplace is accepted by the subject. The pervasiveness of enterprise discourses can

be exaggerated and portrayed in an over-deterministic manner (Armstrong, 2001) ignoring the role of countervailing values and discourses (e.g. professions or family) (Fournier and Grey, 1999). For example, within the gig economy, workers' complicity is ensured not only by discourse, but also by close monitoring of time, activity and output suggesting that the entrepreneurship discourse is not in itself enough to ensure worker complicity. This perspective's understanding of the subjective attachment might therefore be too straightforward, obscuring the complex ways power works and the necessary ambivalence of lived experiences of capitalism (Konings, 2015). Similarly, within biocracy studies, the focus is chiefly on management strategies which may underplay the importance of workers' agency in resisting and/or co-producing workplace dynamics (Ackroyd and Thompson, 2016). Though this strand of theorising is inspired by Foucault, the emphasis is mostly on strategies of control and domination (Burrell, 2006), thus side-lining later concerns with self-formation of the subject (Skinner, 2012). In general, the emphasis on management strategies can overshadow the ways individuals relate to their work and personal attachments function from the perspective of the 'receiving' subject.

On the other hand, the approaches stressing desire and affect and studies emphasising ethics explore more closely the reception of discourses by the subject. The focus on desire and affect highlights the role of emotions in workers' lives which is a welcome correction to portrayals of the neoliberal subject as purely rational and utilitarian. The studies focusing on the role of ethics and normative judgments shed light on the ways ethics and values shape subjects' relation to work, economy and productivity. Both, albeit based on different theoretical traditions, complement a picture of larger power structures with a focus on the subjective micro-level.

However, although these perspectives focus more on subjective perceptions and judgements, the problem with the complexity of influences, values, and negotiations remains. Further exploration is needed to understand how affective and ethical dimensions of personal judgement relate to more instrumental and material aspects of work and job situations. Ethical statements and convictions do not exist separately from more material concerns with work and are often targeted towards others for performative and political purposes (Fassin, 2014; Lempert, 2014). To take this one step further, professions of ethical beliefs can be part of instrumental self-presentation of individuals and organisations and used to achieve instrumental goals, rather than an expression of purely normative concerns. As Ekman (2013) points out, normative ideals such as 'authenticity', however desired for their intrinsic value, can be mobilised in struggles over work control and content by both workers and managers.

The final issue concerns the four approaches' limited scope for workers' reflexivity, agency and resistance. Some studies offer valuable insights into the changing cultural meanings of work and changes in organisational practices based on discursive and textual research. This is a valuable contribution, especially in cases exploring historical discursive change (notably Rose, 1999a; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). However, even interview and ethnographic studies often do not explore the issues of workers' reflexivity, agency and potential resistance, instead emphasising the effects of new ways of forming and maintaining personal attachment to work. Across the four approaches, the issue of distance and resistance to new ideologies and technologies remains underexplored. Labour process scholars have criticised the tendency of post-structuralist accounts to assume that the new attempts at cultural control of the workers' subjectivity are effective and uncontested (Thompson, 2016; Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995) and suggested that more attention should be paid to dissent and

oppositional practices. Of the authors discussed above, Fleming and Spicer (2003, 2008) offer critical discussions of the reception of the new trends in producing personal investment in work. As they show, attempts to manage employees' selves frequently lead to dis-identification with the organisational discourses. Cynical and instrumental performance of commitment, rather than sincere personal attachment to work and organisation, is a possible outcome.

While the recognition of failures to foster employee identity is important, the discussion of personal attachment to work should go beyond the dualism of work having no personal significance or workers being fully invested in the new ideologies of work without limits and space for negotiation. The literature stressing new ways of fostering workers' attachment provides important evidence that individuals continue to invest personally and shape their personalities around work. However, as was discussed above, what remains often side-lined in this literature is exploration of how the new ways of attachment connect with characteristics of work and material factors of social reproduction. The next section describes an analytical scheme that takes these factors into account and Chapter Five applies it on the intensive work-lives in coliving.

4.5 Making sense of Intensive Work-Lives

These four theoretical perspectives served as sensitising ideas that I took to the field and were part of my attempts to make sense of work-life in coliving. In ethnographic research, an interpretation of phenomena emerges through constant iteration between concepts and data (O'Reilly, 2011; Shank, 2006). Throughout the fieldwork, I began to increasingly reflect on the complexity of work-life configuration in coliving and started to formulate an approach that would allow me to make sense of the situation. As suggested above, analysis of attachment to work should take into consideration not only forces such as discourse, organisational influences, affect, or ethics, but also

explore how they combine with the logic of work situations, material aspects of life and how together these aspects produce (or do not) dynamics of intensive work-lives.

Figure 3 provides a general outline of the analytical scheme that I developed throughout the analysis of work-lives in coliving. It draws a more complex picture by taking into consideration other important elements that combine to produce certain versions of work-lives. The framework recognises that entities such as discourses, affects and ethics play an important role in formulating and justifying certain visions of work-lives. However, to understand how they change the dynamics of work-lives - including its rhythm, reproduction, orientation towards future – analysis should explore their interaction with other important factors. One of them is the logic of the work situation. Work situations can vary from a standard employment contract to self-employment or entrepreneurship. The logic of work, degree of control over external control over work tempo and intensity, its predictability and orientation towards the future can be radically different in different scenarios. Another important aspect of work-life dynamics are conditions of social reproduction of life and labour power. These are heavily related to the work situation, however, can have dynamics of their own. For example, the resources for reproduction can be partly sourced through non-work (or non-market) means which gives an individual more leeway in negotiating work commitment. Moreover, social reproduction can change and restrict work, such as when an individual has a caring commitment to dependents.
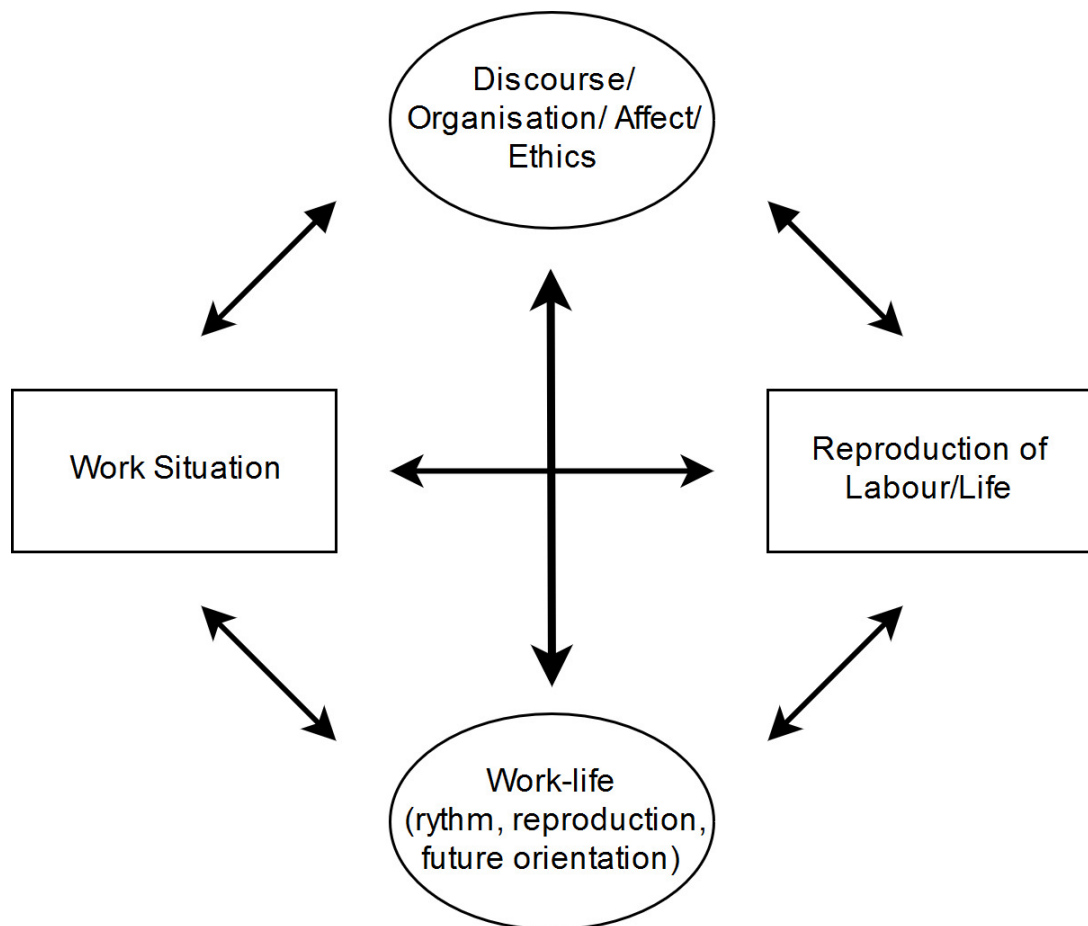
Figure 3 - General Scheme of Work-Life Dynamics

This general scheme does not formulate a theory. Rather, it is a heuristic device that highlights all the potential interconnections between various factors that can be relevant for understanding a specific work-life situation and its dynamics. In particular, it seeks to highlight that dynamics of intensive work-life – or what holds work and life close together in some contexts – cannot be simply read from a focus on the interaction between discourse and individual life but should be understood in relation to other factors.

The next chapter is a companion to this one and illustrates this through an example of entrepreneurial work-lives in coliving. As suggested above, entrepreneurial work and life are held close together, when it comes to intensive and extensive work, but also a

high degree of integration of work and personal life when it comes to time, social ties and space. It draws on the general framework introduced above to make sense of the situation. It illustrates how an intensive work commitment is justified by a reference to a discursive and ethical ideal that I call improvement principle, which postulates that the ultimate goal of work and life is to contribute to a positive social change. However, this in itself is insufficient for the understanding of a preference to tightly integrate personal and professional life such as in coliving. The principle of improvement connects with the notion of a start-up enterprise, which is seen as an ideal vehicle for achieving large scale social change. In turn, the entrepreneurial work situation is in particular relation to the logic of social and material reproduction, creating a particularly close relation between start-up capital and personal finance. The chapter will illustrate how these factors combine to produce an investment orientation to work-life when it comes to time, rhythm, and future orientation.

4.6 Conclusion

Coliving spaces present a new development in work-life relation and modify spatial arrangements, social relations, and everyday practices in a way that tightly integrates professional and domestic life. This chapter set out to explore how can contemporary social theory help to understand the desire to combine personal and working life in this way. It has reviewed and discussed four important theoretical ways of making sense of personal attachment to work in neoliberal capitalism: enterprise discourse; biocracy; approaches emphasising lack, desire and affect; and finally works emphasising normative justifications and ethics of the self.

While recognising the contribution of these theories to our understanding of the close connection between work and life in neoliberalism, the discussion identified limitations of the current scholarship. It argued that making sense of personal

attachment to work would benefit from (i) taking into consideration the diversity of contemporary work situations, (ii) a more complex understanding countervailing discourses and values as well as more material concerns with of work-lives and logic of social reproduction, and (iii) allowing more space for reflexivity, conflict and potential for resistance in contemporary work politics.

Finally, the chapter introduced a general analytical scheme for understanding influences on the dynamics of work-lives, which was developed through the fieldwork and data analysis in this research. It emphasizes exploring how discourses and other factors combine with characteristics of work situation and processes of social reproduction and together change the dynamics of work-lives. The next chapter applies this approach to the analysis of intensive work-lives in coliving. It illustrates how the normative ideal that I call improvement principle combines with the logic of enterprise and its distinctive financial logic to produce a particularly close relationship between entrepreneurial life and work.

Chapter Five: Entrepreneurial Work-Lives in Habitat

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter argued that in order to understand intensive work-lives it is necessary to take into consideration not only discourses, ethical notions or affective forces, but to see how they combine with characteristic of work situation, material and financial factors of social reproduction and how these factors together produce certain dynamics of work-life by modifying its meaning, rhythm, and future orientations. This chapter applies this perspective to account for intensive entrepreneurial work-lives in coliving.

The chapter first outlines how entrepreneurial work is – among Habitat members – understood to have intensive and all-encompassing qualities. Even though the specific work situations of participants differ, they are all to a certain degree characterised by an intensive commitment to entrepreneurial projects. The chapter develops an account of how this intensive commitment is justified and what is the dynamic of work-life that holds work and life close together.

Figure 4 provides a schematic overview of the links between various elements discussed in the chapter and sketches the account explaining how the elements combine to produce a work-life dynamic. The intensive character of entrepreneurial working life is justified by an ethical ideal that I call improvement principle which postulates that the goal of entrepreneurial work-life is to contribute to a large-scale positive change in the world. The improvement principle works as an 'ethical motivation' or 'telos' that justifies a firm commitment to entrepreneurial work. As will be illustrated, rather than being merely an individual orientation, the improvement principle is a feature of a discourse that is socially and collectively reproduced in

Habitat, as well as a discourse of wider organisational environment of the start-up economy and in Habitat.

The improvement principle combines with the logic of start-up enterprise, which through growth can bring about large-scale change. In turn, improvement and enterprise establish a connection with money as an income and as a capital that makes it possible. I then illustrate how this combination can modify the dynamic of work-life, drawing on examples of three situations observed and recorded during the fieldwork. These situations coalescence of personal income and start-up capital, investment orientation to life, and the shift from work-life balance to the logic of future returns.
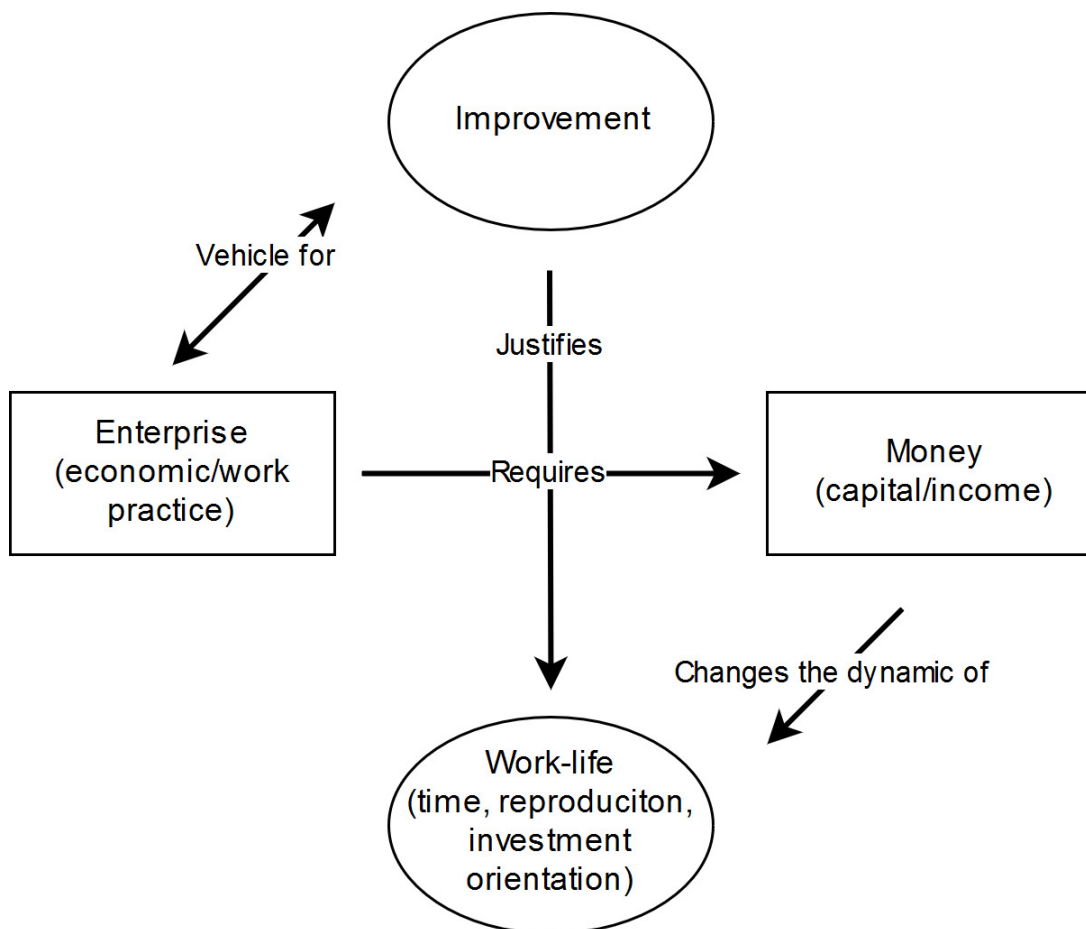
Figure 4 - Scheme of account of entrepreneurial work-life

5.2 Intensive Entrepreneurial Work-Lives: 'We're always in, we're never out.'

Most work-lives in Habitat were characterised by an intensive work commitment and extensive work hours. For some participants, this meant working not only during weekdays, but also in the evenings, nights, and weekends. On a few occasions, this would also mean working during social events when a particularly burning task needs to be finished and the deadline was tight. Intensive work commitment and the all-encompassing nature of entrepreneurial work was widely shared and acknowledged among Habitat inhabitants and recognition of this fact can be seen as one of the defining characteristics of life in coliving space.

The ethos of demanding entrepreneurial work in Habitat was characterised by imperative that individuals should be willing to make considerable sacrifices to the entrepreneurial project, to go 'all in', to try as hard as one can. This was not necessarily seen as an attitude that must be maintained all the time. However, at least in situations critical for the success of a start-up (e.g. during a round of fundraising or early stage of product development), it was implied that an entrepreneur should be willing to sacrifice personal time for the benefit of the entrepreneurial project and focus fully on entrepreneurial work. Sometimes, this would be reflected upon as a more general requirement of entrepreneurial work. This can be illustrated by Frans' observation during a small gathering around drinks:

> 'We're always in. We're never out. You are still thinking about it. You are selling, or you are recruiting. You are still in that mode. It's not like football. Like football is demanding, but you can only play 90 minutes and there is only so much training you can do.' (Frans, Fieldnote #56)

While this might not be an accurate representation of work-life of professional footballers, it is a fitting and succinct representation of a widely shared perspective on work-life of entrepreneurs in Habitat. Entrepreneurial work can be all-encompassing and overwhelming. It does not easily fit within strict boundaries of work and life. Rather, it requires a considerable commitment and demands a dedication which can (and in the entrepreneurial ethos shared in Habitat also should) go beyond the commitment to a 'nine to five' job. It requires an attitude of constant attention, dedication and determination.

This does not mean that the work patterns were uniform across participants. Both time invested to work and time invested in leisure pursuits varied depending on preferences, but also on the work situation of the individual participant and could change with time. With a degree of simplification, we can identify three different work situations among Habitat residents:

Full-time entrepreneur – This is perhaps a situation which is most valued and sought by Habitat members. It allows their work time to be fully focused on their entrepreneurial venture and gives an entrepreneur slightly more freedom when it comes to deciding how much of their time is dedicated to working on a start-up and other pursuits. This can occur through two ways; both of them most likely when the start-up company is more advanced. The first variant is when the start-up has already received funding from some source (most likely venture capitalist fund and/or government fund) and this capital can be used to pay for wages of the founder and employees. In the second variant, the start-up has already developed its product to the stage where it can be sold to customers and makes enough profit to pay for the wages.

An inhabitant of Habitat and my next-door neighbour, Soren, exemplifies this situation. As another participant commented, Soren's start-up was 'taking off very well'. The start-up has already developed their product and achieved a level of sales that allowed him not only to pay (modest) wages of the founders but also to hire an extra employee to help with further software development. Soren's work commitment was sometimes very high. I would often see him sitting behind the computer working on a code late into the night. However, he would also take time off to see his girlfriend, family, or to invite his friends over.

Bootstrapping entrepreneur – Bootstrapping means, in the vocabulary of entrepreneurs, running a business without or with only little external funding or when a start-up is not yet making enough profit to sustain wages of founders and employees. This often means that running of the company requires the entrepreneur to gain income elsewhere to sustain their own life, but also (at least on some occasions) to fund the running of the entire company. This can be achieved through savings, but more often, it requires the entrepreneur to gain money through a day job or freelancing work. Given the need to combine a day job that provides capital with work on the start-up this often means, at least temporarily, extremely high work tempo and long working hours.

This work situation can be best illustrated by the situation of Kristian with whom I shared a flat for half of my fieldwork. I repeatedly noted that whenever I saw Kristian in his room, he was working on his computer. Kristian's start-up deals with real estate business, trying to match companies in search of offices with office space providers. As became clear later, Kristian did not spend a majority of his time working on his start-up. As he explained, he worked on a series of freelance projects to save enough money that would allow him to sustain his life for few months in the future when he

was planning to focus his full attention on his start up again. Kristian was not only saving money for himself. He was earning money to fund the running of the company and pay wages of co-founders. The agreement was reached that Kristian will earn money through freelance work as he is a programme developer and has the highest potential to earn the most money. His two other cofounders, meanwhile, worked fulltime on running the start-up.

An employee in a start-up company or wider entrepreneurial environment – Not every inhabitant of Habitat runs (or co-runs) their own start-up company. Some residents work for a start-up but are not founders or owners. Some residents work for an organisation such as coworking space or accelerator programme. This situation allows, in theory, greater control over work-life balance and greater distance from the intensity of start-up work.

The situation of Niels falls into this category. After starting several start-ups in the past and working as a freelance consultant, at the time of my research, Niels worked as a sales representative of a start-up company offering marketing services to other businesses. Being an employee, rather than a founder or a partner, Niels treated his work as a standard job with clear limits when it comes to the investment of his time, mostly sticking with nine to five routine. This, however, did not mean that his after-work time would not be devoted to entrepreneurship. Niels would use the period of work for the company as an opportunity for discovering and deciding on what his next entrepreneurial project should be about, meeting with friends and contacts and discussing his ideas for the future ventures.

5.3 The Improvement Principle

When reflecting on the intensity of work commitment of Habitat members, participants would often refer to what I call the 'improvement principle'. The improvement principle postulates that the most important goal of working life is to contribute to the improvement of the world. This means that entrepreneurial activity and its outcomes – new product, new service, or technological change developed through a start-up enterprise – should contribute to a large-scale positive change in people's lives. This is how Aren reflected on why he, and Habitat residents more generally, work as hard as they do:

> 'At a certain level of a start-up life you'd just like would do anything to achieve your vision. Including working forty-eight hours a day. And eight days a week. And hopefully, people are driven to do that because they're passionate about the goal the start-up has set for the product and the company. *That they're making a difference in the world*.' (Interview with Aren, emphasis [in original/added?])

Aren's words capture a widely shared orientation towards work among Habitat members. This is how Soren reflected on the same question:

> 'It's like "I fucking want to do this". … I'm not going to sit at home on my hands and not do anything. I wanna create something, right? *Something that has an impact on people, on the world and to make this a place a better place for everybody*. … That's the goal. Like "I want to fucking help people". For me, that's how it is. I don't know if it's necessarily like that for everybody in Habitat. But I think to some extent it is.' (Interview with Soren)

The orientation towards improvement should not be understood as being simply born at an individual level, but rather as a part of collectively and organisationally reproduced discourse. As argued above, Habitat can be understood as an environment which is characterised – among other things – by a shared discourse and a shared way of reflecting and talking about life and work. The improvement principle was one of the central tenets of the ethos of Habitat. This can be evidenced by its prominent place among Habitat's values represented on a poster hanged on a wall of each of Habitat's apartments The improvement principle featured prominently on the poster, being inextricably connected with the definition of core values (see Picture 1). The value of creativity commands Habitat residents to 'never stop making the world better.' The value of mutual support suggests that other members 'want your advice on how they can make an impact on the world'.

Picture 1 - Habitat's values and the improvement principle

The improvement principle is therefore not simply an individual justification of hard work, but a notion that is discursively and collectively shared in Habitat. Moreover, the improvement principle is not limited to Habitat but is part of the wider discourse of tech and entrepreneurial environment of which Habitat is a part. In the course of my fieldwork, I visited coworking spaces where some of the research participants worked. The improvement principle was featured prominently in organisational discourse in these spaces. Again, texts displayed in shared spaces illustrate this (see Picture 2). A mural in one coworking space celebrated entrepreneurs 'who want to

make an impact' and 'who work for a better world'. More boldly, a banner in another coworking space compelled workers to 'build an abundant future for all'.
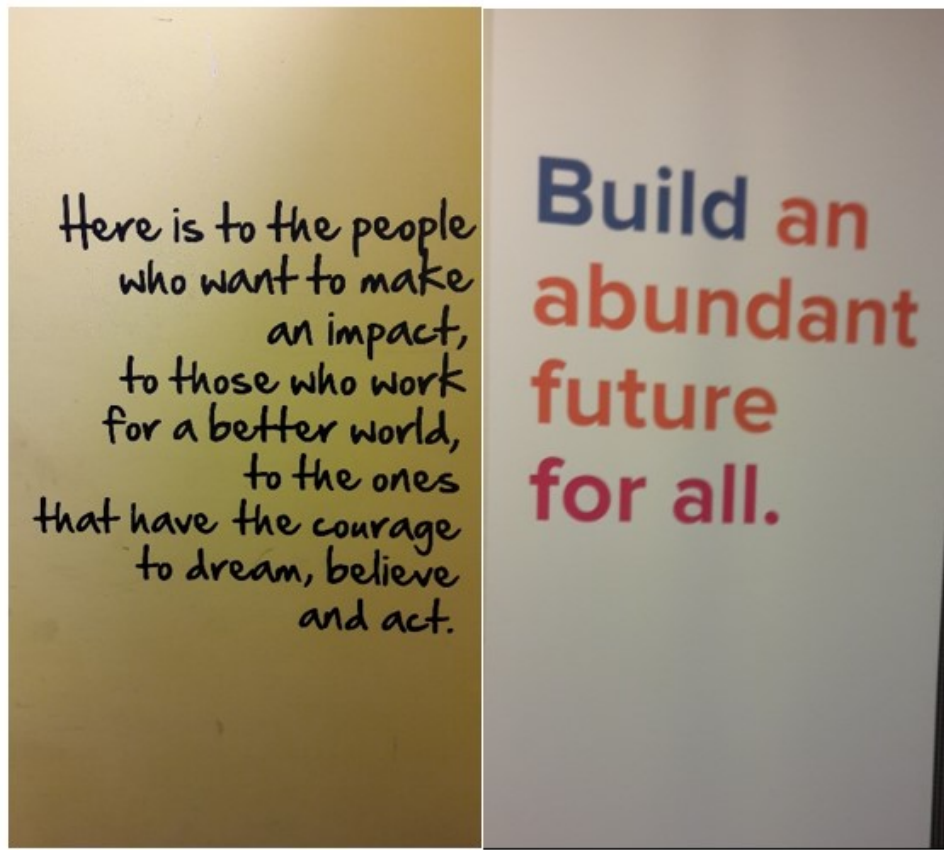
Picture 2 - Improvement principle in coworking spaces

The improvement principle is a part of a discourse of tech and creative start-up economy more generally. In what was called variably as 'the discourse of innovation' (Moffatt et al., 2016), 'Silicon Valley ethos' (Levina and Hasinoff, 2017) or 'aura of the digital' (Betancourt, 2006) social and economic investment into business and technological innovation is seen as a potential for and source of positive and empowering societal change. Readers will be familiar with a nearly messianic discourse that permeates adverts of large tech companies such as Apple, Facebook, or PayPal. Enterprise fuelled by technological and/or social development is promising to bring us closer together, help us to share resources, save time or money, make us healthier and more educated, remove stress, and resolve long-standing societal

problems in general. To make the world a better place, to improve the way we do things, to make an impact on the world around us are phrases that are frequently used in news reports about developments in tech industry, adverts and propagation materials of tech firms, as well as present in organisational discourse of coworking and accelerator spaces.

When it comes to thinking about the importance of entrepreneurial work in Habitat, the improvement principle presents an important justificatory notion that legitimizes high work commitment. In some aspects, the justification of entrepreneurial work through the improvement principle is remarkably similar to Weber's (2001) description of the ideal of 'calling' in Protestantism. According to Weber, in the Protestant ethic, work was not seen simply a means of earning money or increasing wealth, but rather the way to 'increase the glory of God' and to realise 'His will in calling' (2001: 104). In a similar manner, work for entrepreneurs in Habitat is not only a way of making a living or profit making but serves an ethical end by contributing to the improvement of human life. However, the moral justification of work through the improvement principle is secular rather than religious in nature. It can be seen as what Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) call 'ethical motivation' or 'moral reason' that are a necessary part of the ideology that justifies everyday efforts and work in the entrepreneurial economy.[6] It can also be understood as what within Foucauldian ethics of the self (Foucault, 1992) would be called 'telos' - the outcome which the effort of a subject is directed towards. Contribution towards the improvement of the world

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[6] Boltanski and Chiapello (2007) acknowledge inspiration by Weber. Without entering the debates about validity of his claims about actual influence of Protestantism on the development of capitalism, they draw on his 'idea that people need powerful moral reasons for rallying to capitalism' (2007: 9).

would be – as we have seen both individually and collectively – seen as an important justification of intensive and extensive commitment to entrepreneurial work.

5.4 Enterprise and Scaling Up

As I argued in the previous chapter, our understanding of personal attachment to work and dynamics of intensive work-lives should not be limited to invoking a single entity (e.g. discourse) that 'makes us work'. Rather, the analysis should take into consideration how certain a discourse combines and fits in with specifics of work situation and characteristic of social reproduction in a particular social position and environment. In this respect, the improvement principle as a discursive and ethical ideal is not enough to understand why entrepreneurial work-lives in Habitat are so closely aligned with each other.

The notion of enterprise and work in a start-up enterprise is an important factor that we need to take into consideration. It is closely aligned with the improvement principle in the sense that it is entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial work which are seen as the best possible means of improvement. In the view widely shared by Habitat members, it represents an ideal business and organisational form, which has the potential to change the world. It is seen as a vehicle for innovation which is not restricted by inflexible corporate structures. Moreover, it avoids the rigidity of government and chaos of social conflict that burdens social change through politics. Further, it avoids the slow tempo and difficulties of implementation associated with academic research. In short, entrepreneurship is seen as an ideal vehicle for impacting the world and as an economic practice that is best positioned to make large-scale change happen. In the perspective widely shared in Habitat, and in the discourse of the start-up economy more generally, normative commitment to improvement and development and growth

of a start-up company are seen as inherently connected and inseparable. This can be illustrated by a conversation during a social gathering in Habitat:

> The conversation turns into a talk about the nature of innovation. 'There are tech teams emerging in NGOs and I think we need them', Kirsten explains. 'I think the innovation is going to come from social entrepreneurs'.
>
> Jack: 'Yeah, there is a difference in how people think. I think there are often policy documents, but there is often no idea how to actually make those things happen'.
>
> Kirsten: 'Yes. I think there needs to be more collaboration between the research world and policymakers. But it's problematic. Like the government world is quite slow as the emphasis is on stability and it takes time to implement anything new. The academic world is also quite slow. The emphasis is on writing and reading papers. And unless something is well supported by existing research, there is often no action. I think research and innovation need to go more together.' (Fieldnote #40)

Start-up entrepreneurship is seen as the ideal vehicle that can bring about change in society. However, not just any enterprise will do and entrepreneurship as such is not a guarantee of the improvement in a proper sense. To contribute to substantial improvement, a start-up must prove its potential – in the language of my participants – to 'scale up'. Scaling up is a process whereby originally small-scale economic activity grows beyond the confines of a small company and becomes applied on a larger scale, conquering new markets and replicating the innovative solution beyond their initial context. Emphasis on scaling up is not a notion unique to Habitat. As Dey and colleagues (2016) show, the signifier of 'scaling' is a characteristic of a wider

entrepreneurial environment, replicated in discourses of specialist media, funding bodies and various intermediary organisations.

The importance of scaling-up was part of everyday conversations in Habitat and a principle that many participants felt strongly about. Whether a new entrepreneurial venture does or does not have the potential to scale up was a frequent object of excited collective discussions but also of more private reflections. In a sense, the potential for scaling up was a *sine qua non* of a desirable start-up enterprise. For Klaus, the ability to impact the world at large through successful scaling was part of at the very core of the entrepreneur's identity, which distinguishes him or her from a small business owner:

> 'I think there is an important difference between an entrepreneur and a small business owner. …You know, you can be a small business owner who has a small business for himself and his family. And that is good. But an entrepreneur is different. *Entrepreneur wants to go big. Because he wants to make a change. He wants to change the world*.' (Klaus, Fieldnote #37)

Klaus' words capture the importance of scaling up and 'going big'. Start-up enterprise, and entrepreneurial work in it should not be focusing merely on generating income that guarantees a decent level of sustenance. It should also not be limited to product provision and sales in a limited context. Rather, the improvement imperative connects with the imperative of growth and expansion beyond the immediate context of origin. This logic of growing and expanding enterprise establishes a particular orientation to money, as will be illustrated in the next section.

5.5 Improvement, Enterprise and Capital: Money is Not Important, Money is Crucial

The imperative of improvement and the logic of scaling enterprise establish a distinctive relation to material aspects of working life, including concerns with resources for reproducing the entrepreneur's labour power, taking care of the financial side of life, and ensuring the continuation of the start-up enterprise. Money is a crucial part of the equation. Schematically, it matters in two related guises. Firstly, as an income needed for paying the bills, buying food and reproducing life and labour power of an entrepreneur. Secondly, as a capital needed to sustain the start-up enterprise and, at least potentially, to sponsor the future impact and improvement.

In the view of many participants, money as an income was seen as necessary, but as soon as a minimum level of sustenance is guaranteed, it becomes relatively unimportant when it comes to the meaning and quality of entrepreneurial work-life. Some of the participants acknowledged that they could achieve significantly higher immediate income if they chose standard employment instead of working on their start-up enterprise. Relative modesty of life and occasional financial difficulties were justified by the desire to contribute to the improvement of the world as well as relative freedom of the entrepreneurial work liberated from standard organisational hierarchies. Money as an income was necessary to guarantee the reproduction of life and labour power of an entrepreneur, but relatively unimportant as an end in itself or as a source of consumption and luxury.

On the other hand, in an entrepreneurial situation, money was seen as crucial as a capital that finances the running of a start-up enterprise. Money as a capital ensures the continuation of the start-up when it comes to the reproduction of labour power of

the founder, wages of employees, and rent of the office space. Money as a capital is also needed to finance expansion and scaling-up. Crucially, securing sufficient capital is what makes the focus on improvement possible. Securing money, either through venture capital funding or selling of a service or a product, means that an entrepreneur can focus his or her energy on the 'impact'. This is only possible when there are financial resources available to cover the cost of life and to finance the running of the company. The improvement principle is therefore inexorably connected to the need to secure financial resources for the enterprise.

In the Habitat members' thinking about entrepreneurial work-life, money is therefore relatively unimportant when it comes to disposable personal income, wealth or luxury. However, money becomes crucial as a capital that fuels the start-up enterprise and makes improvement possible. This was clearly expressed by Soren during an interview:

> 'To me, a good life is not about having tons of money. My ambition is to have an impact on the world. But money probably has something to do with my life because of my aspirations, you could say, probably correlate with money. My ambition is to have an impact on the world. In like a positive way. For me it would be ok to just have a normal salary if I could improve the whole world in some way.' (Interview with Soren)

Sometimes this means earning money through a financially successful enterprise which will generate a profit that can be invested into an 'impact' focused enterprise in the future:

> 'You can say that [working on a current start-up] I am not really doing it right now [changing the world]. But it's a start and it's also going somewhere. I

think to be able to do that [to have an impact on the world] to some extent you also need money. So if I earn a lot of money doing this, some future ventures will be easier to do. But, but, money for me is not directly the goal. … If money was my direct goal, I could just go and freelance because I can get a pretty decent salary as a programmer.' (Interview with Soren)

For Soren, to have a good life means working on improving the world around him. Money as a personal income is of secondary importance. However, money as a capital that can be invested in the future enterprise – aims of which he could choose independently on immediate financial constraints - is an essential part of the game. Another participant, Joren, similarly hoped to earn resources that can be further invested to work on improvement without financial constraints:

'There is this famous movie called The Gambler. I don' know if you've seen it. But there is a really good scene where someone wins two million dollars and his friend tells him that two million dollars are the "fuck you amount". Because once you have two million dollars in your bank account, you don't have to care about what your boss says, your friends say, anything. You're good for life, right? You don't have to worry about anything. Ever. And I really liked that quote. It really defines what I'm trying to do right now.' (Interview with Joren)

The 'fuck you amount' stands for freedom from financial limitations and by extension from the power of others over one's life and work. However, for Joren the 'fuck you amount' should not be used simply to achieve freedom from work and to live a life of leisure unrestrained by the everyday financial necessities. His ambition is to use the money gained from the enterprise to gain the freedom to focus on developing

technologies that are most necessary and have the highest potential for improving the world:

> 'I would buy a lab somewhere, get together with friends and work on core new technologies. And not having to worry about it being profitable. Maybe we'd do some non-profit stuff. I really just want to work on exciting new technologies. But right now I'm quite steered by how profitable these technologies are gonna be. And I wanna change that to be steered by how good this is going to be for the world. But I cannot do that right now because one day I might need money to buy an apartment or whatever that'd be.' (Interview with Joren).

We can again draw an analogy between the orientation towards money in the entrepreneurial economy and Weber's (2001) observations on Protestant ethic. In the Protestant teachings, wealth acquired through work and business is not sinful. In fact, 'private profitableness' (2001: 108) was seen as a sign that an individual is fulfilling the God's purpose in their calling and 'the faithful Christian must follow the call by taking advantage of the opportunity' (2001: 108). However, the wealth must not be used for earthly luxuries, impulsive enjoyment of life, or to finance a life of idleness. Instead, the profit should be reinvested to further the God's purpose on the earth. It is the combination of limited consumption and financial austerity with the approval of acquisition of wealth which, according to Weber, made 'the productive investment of capital' (Weber, 2001: 116) possible and desirable in the Protestant milieu and ultimately enabled the development of capitalist relations of production.

The approach to profit and wealth in Habitat is not the same as Protestant ethic as described by Weber. Enjoyment of worldly pleasures is not problematic as such and

enjoyment of a decent lifestyle was seen as an obvious value by the participants (this will be further elaborated in Chapter Seven, sections 7.2 and 7.3.3). Moreover, money as capital is important to fuel secular notion of improvement, rather than to further the glory of God. The similarity lies rather in privileging income as a resource to be invested in future improvement and technological innovation, as opposed to its value as a mean of consumption or source of luxury. As will be illustrated bellow, the investment orientation is not restricted to money, but can be applied to thinking about working time, leisure, and long-term planning of life.

5.6 Dynamics of Intensive Entrepreneurial Work-Lives

The improvement imperative is a notion that was often invoked by Habitat members to justify an intensive and extensive commitment to entrepreneurial work. As was illustrated above, it combines with the logic of enterprise growth and the need to secure financial resources needed to fund expansion and (potential) large-scale change. In the following three sections, I illustrate in greater detail how the principles of improvement, enterprise, and capital combine together to produce particularly intensive dynamics of entrepreneurial work-life and how they hold work and life closely together.

5.6.1 Bootstrapping and Blurring of the Line Between Start-Up Capital and Personal Income

Money, albeit seen as relatively unimportant as a source of consumption and luxury, is an important factor that ties entrepreneurial work and life closely together. This is hardly unusual or surprising. In the lives of wage workers, financial reward is a crucial reason for work and a source of reproduction of life. Put differently; wage is a primary condition of reproduction of labour power within capitalist relations of production. In

the lives of entrepreneurs, however, the connection between personal life and working life through money gets even more intense and intimate.

The personal financial situation of the entrepreneur is often absolutely dependent on the uncertain prospects and financial situation of the start-up company. This is, to a certain degree, true of workers in general, where wage depends on the financial health of the company. However, riskiness and unpredictability of entrepreneurial situations are often higher than that of salaried employees of larger organisations. Moreover, the connection between personal income and the financial situation of the start-up company also works in the opposite direction. Frequently, income from other sources (income from a day job or savings from previous employment) is what keeps the start-up company running. Unmediated personal dependence on a financial situation of the enterprise, together with a personal financial sacrifice to the running of the company, shows how money cuts through the personal and professional and, at least on some occasions, tightly and intimately holds them together.

This can be well illustrated on the practice of "bootstrapping". Bootstrapping – a term frequently used in the start-up economy - means supporting oneself and sponsoring the running of the company without external funding, relying on money generated through one's own effort, quite often by an income from a day job. Alternatively, the money to sustain work on a start-up can come from personal savings or personal debt. Bootstrapping is often an important reason why an entrepreneur 'goes full in' and invests most of their waking hours into work. The day is spent working on a financially gainful activity, while evenings and weekends are devoted to the work on the start-up which does not yet generate income. The hope is, of course, that if the start-up company succeeds and grows bigger, it will generate sufficient income to allow a less

work intense lifestyle and, if possible, create a degree of financial freedom when an entrepreneur can decide more freely where their energy should be devoted.

The following fieldwork encounter illustrates this point vividly. Close to the beginning of my research, members of Habitat were invited to a party organised to celebrate the success of a company of one of our housemates. Raj's company raised a round of funding in the total amount of eight hundred thousand dollars. This meant that the company was able to hire new employees and expand the team and, at least for some time, focus on developing the product further and to increase sales. However, this also meant that the company can start paying wages to the existing team again after several months with no resources. As I learned later, before the round was closed, Raj (the founder of the company) has financed his life and invested into the company from the money he managed to save during years where he worked in the corporate sphere. A situation would be similar for the rest of the team.

The party was hosted in the local accelerator and coworking hub. When I arrived, the fun was already well under way, supported by bottles of prosecco, cans of beers and a generous amount of finger food and pizza. Later in the evening, the conversations were getting understandably louder and more humorous and jovial. Themes of the conversations often switched from the discussion of business to exchanging jokes and talking about personal lives. I was engaged in a conversation with two entrepreneurs who came to the city for an international study exchange, however, decided to stay to pursue their entrepreneurial ambition. At one moment, I have noticed that Katarina, one of the founders and 'the CTO' (the Chief Technical Officer) of the company, did not seem to be in a celebratory mood and my impression was that she looked slightly tired or irritated. This is how our conversation unfolded:

Me: 'Are you enjoying yourself? This is after all *your* celebration'.

Katarina: 'No, not really. I am not really in a celebratory mood. I think I am mostly exhausted. These were really difficult months. I have also pumped out my credit cards, so it is not that easy to relax now'.

Me: 'Can I ask you what did you use your credit cards on?'

Katarina: 'Well, what do you mean on what? To pay the bills, to pay for food. We didn't have wages for some time. Now it's going to be alright as we can pay ourselves wages again'. (Fieldnote #35)

The meaning intended by the conversational partner is not always easy to interpret. It is even harder to convey the feel of the conversation in written words. However, as I have noted, I had a strong impression that Katarina was at best surprised and at worst, irritated by my question. Besides demonstrating my lack of conversational talent, it illustrates that personal financial investment to the running of a start-up company is taken as a matter-of-course in the start-up community. For Katarina, my question was surprising precisely because a person more familiar with the start-up environment, it would be obvious that she went to personal debt in order to get through the period when a start-up is lacking the capital to pay wages and to sustain her life by other means. The episode also illustrates how close 'personal' and 'business' finance can get in the start-up situation. Sacrificing personal income or incurring personal debt can be tightly connected to the situation of a start-up company. Vice versa, funding available to or profit generated by the start-up company can improve the state of personal finance.

5.6.2 Investment Orientation to Work-Life

Lack of separation between personal income and company finance can correspond to a blurring or a demise of the boundary between worktime and personal time. In entrepreneurial situations, and with a degree of exaggeration, we can say that all aspects of life – be it time, money, energy – can be perceived in terms of investment into the future success of the enterprise. When translated into the logic of investment, the boundary between personal life and work is at least temporarily displaced. During an interview, Joren expressed this logic surprisingly literally. As Joren puts it, leisure time can be seen as too 'expensive', as something that is not worth the investment of time, or at least as something where "savings" can be made:

> 'The living aspect is difficult. I think especially for someone like me, who probably works a bit too much. I probably put all of my energy into work and sort of setting up a social life after work often gets deprioritised a lot, which means I don't really wanna spend a lot of my time sort of setting up dinners with friends or going for drinks. Not that I don't like those things. It's just the investment of keeping those things alive and doing them regularly is very expensive for me. … The problem is in my full-time work I'm kind of also an investor, so it's probably a bit flawed to look at everything in my life as like an investment, but to some degree it comes down to that, right?' (Interview with Joren)

The logic of investment allows life and work to be seen as commensurable entities that can enter a calculation. Time, money, energy can then be conceived as properties that can be invested in either. Simultaneously, this allows consideration of them as entries on a balance sheet and assessment of the future return on investment. The question is not 'do you work too much?'. Rather, the question stands as 'will this investment yield

returns in terms of future creative potential, future freedom, and future free time?'. Joren acknowledged that he probably works 'a bit too much'; however, he also knows why. The investment into work should lead to him achieving the level of financial freedom which will allow him to choose more freely (i.e. more independently on economic pressures) what future ventures he wants to devote his effort to. For this reason, time and energy should be invested to work even though it leaves only a little amount of the same resources to be invested in the organisation of social time. For this problem, coliving offers a solution, as will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

5.6.3 From Work-Life Balance to Future Returns

The logic of investment changes the way relation between work, leisure, and time are understood. If seen through a prism of investment, they become commensurable entities that enter a calculation and consideration of what combination will yield the best results when it comes to future potential for profit and improvement. We move from a logic of work-life balance which rests on the negotiation of what proportion of a day or a week should be devoted to working and what proportion should be devoted to reproduction, leisure and fun. Within the logic of investment, this negotiation becomes less important. Negotiating the proportion of "work" and "life" at the present moment or in the immediate unit of time (e.g. one day or one week) is to some degree replaced by the logic of investment into entrepreneurial project and expectations of future returns.

Kristian's situation and our conversations about his work-life illustrate the point. Kristian was among the Habitat dwellers who worked the hardest, at least during the time of my research. As I have noted, I would often see him working late to the night and at weekends. This, to a large extent, comes down to Kristian being a bootstrapping entrepreneur. In Kristian's case, this meant doing as much freelance work as he

possibly could. The first reason for this was to save as much money as possible during a short time period in order to be free to sustain himself over next few months when he was planning to devote his attention fully to his start-up. In entrepreneurial jargon, and in Kristian's case, this would mean to 'earn a runway'. In addition, income from freelance work was used to support two other co-founders of the company so they can be working on the start-up. Kristian being a programmer, the decision was made that he has the best chance of earning a large sum of money, so he took the responsibility to support the running of the company at the stage where it was not generating enough revenue to pay wages to the founding team.

Working extremely long hours and keeping socialisation to the minimum, Kristian was often kind enough to find a few minutes for a conversation with me when we bumped into each other in the kitchen of our apartment. As he explained to me, his plan is to earn as much money as possible so he can focus on start-up work in the future. However, he was also looking forward to returning to a less hectic lifestyle that would allow more time to focus on his relationships and hobbies:

> 'I need to make more money now, so I can take a break. I want to have time for other things I like to do. To see my girlfriend, to see my family, to do my hobbies… there are things that I like that I was not able to do in years'. (Fieldnote #87)

As Kristian makes painfully clear, engaging in leisure pursuits now would have financial consequences for his plans. If he invests his time to work now, he will be able to do them later. Fundamentally, in a longer horizon, if his start-up company scales up and becomes financially successful, the time invested into it should pay off in the form of financial reward and potentially financial freedom.

'Yes. I think I want to have freedom. But at the moment I do not have it, right? Because I have to pay the rent. If I wanted to play the piano tomorrow, I could do that. If I wanted to go on a trip tomorrow, I could do that. But then soon I would be on the street because I couldn't pay the rent. That freedom is very important for me. The plan is to start a company that can run and make a profit for you, so you don't have to work. Then you have that freedom to do what you want. Only to do things that make sense to you.' (Fieldnote #87)

During another, albeit very similar encounter in the kitchen, Kristian talked about how the very intense work period should be over soon when he finishes his freelance work:

I asked Kristian what his plans are. He told me that he is going to work some more in the evening and asked me what I am up to. I told him that I will explore what others are doing. Kristian asked me if I'm going to do that 'with beer' to which I have replied that yes, indeed, I will use beer as a "research instrument". I was partly joking but was also hoping that I could convince some participants to join me for a pint. 'Oh yeah, I would like that. I'm going to enjoy beer in October', said Kristian. When asked why in October, Kristian explained rather dispassionately: 'That's when work on most of the freelance projects is going to be over. I will have a personal runway. I will only work on the start-up and I will have much more free time. Beer is going to be my favourite tool, then too'. (Fieldnote #66)

Kristian's situation illustrates rather vividly how the relationship between work and life is transposed from the concern with the immediate balance between work and free time into a logic of investment of time and money into the enterprise accompanied by hope in return on the investment in the form of future improvement, free time and

freedom. The boundary between work and life becomes, at least temporarily, less salient or even replaced by the logic of investment and future returns. Free time is sacrificed to freelance work in order to earn money which can be invested in the enterprise. Enterprise, in turn, should yield return in the form of money that will, if everything goes according to plan, allow more free time and freedom in the future. In the meantime, however, it is the logic of investment and enterprise that cuts through work and life and holds them tightly together.

5.7 Conclusion

Intensive commitment to entrepreneurial work plays an important part in the lives of Habitat members. Moreover, it is one of the central objects around which the collective life in the coliving space is organised. This chapter sought to give an account of what holds entrepreneurial work and life close together and how the commitment to hard work is justified in Habitat and in accounts of individual participants. To this end, the chapter applied the framework developed in Chapter Four which argued that in order to understand the personal attachment to work analysis should take into consideration how do discourses and other entities connect with the characteristics of work situation, concerns with material reproduction, and together change the dynamics of working lives.

Within Habitat, intensive entrepreneurial work is made sense of and justified through the prism of the improvement principle, which postulates that an important goal of work is to contribute to the positive change in the world. The improvement principle can be understood as an 'ethical motivation' or 'telos' of entrepreneurial work life. However, the improvement principle in itself is not sufficient to understand how the intensive dynamic of entrepreneurial work-life is produced. The improvement principle is connected with a logic of enterprise, which is seen as an ideal vehicle for

delivering a large-scale social change through scaling up. As was illustrated, improvement principle and logic of enterprise establish a specific relation to money which albeit seeing money as relatively unimportant as a disposable income, sees capital as a crucial for financing the running of the enterprise and enabling improvement. Drawing on three examples, the chapter sought to illustrate how the combination of these factors can contribute to a particularly intimate connection between professional and working life.

The next two chapters develop further the problematics of work-life relation. Chapter six discusses three important ways of conceptualising this relation: work-life balance; the 'colonisation' thesis; and the logic of reproduction of production. It argues for an approach to analysis which acknowledges the dynamic co-constitution of work and life and exploration of organisational, material, and social structures that maintain certain versions of work-life in place. It argues that coliving establishments can be seen as a specific example of social arrangements that creates and reproduces life in relation to work. Chapter Seven then complements Chapter Six and provides an empirical analysis of social arrangements in Habitat to empirically substantiate this point.

Chapter Six: Work and Other Life's Concerns

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters discussed possible answers to the question why are personal lives closely attached to work and explored the factors that contribute to intensive and 'all-encompassing' character of entrepreneurial work. Chapter Five also illustrated some of the ways this dynamic can lead to a change in how life is perceived and lived. However, relatively little was so far said about the arrangements and everyday events of life in coliving space. This theme will be addressed in this chapter, which discusses theories and conceptualisation of life in relation to work and in the next chapter, which provides an empirical analysis of coliving as a social arrangement of work-life. Whereas previous two chapters sought to understand *why* life is modified in relation to intensive work, these two chapters focus more on *how* can we understand the relation between work and life, *how* we can grasp the mechanisms through which they influence each other, and *how* re-arrangement of domestic and personal life is practically accomplished in coliving space.

This chapter discusses important ways of understanding the relationship between work and life in contemporary social science and social theory and formulates a perspective on the analysis of work-life arrangements such as coliving. The chapter starts with the notion that is perhaps most dominant in contemporary academic and popular discourse on the relation between work and life – work-life balance. It discusses the underpinnings of the discourse of work-life balance and various problems identified by its critics. It then proceeds to discuss the thesis about increasing colonisation of life by work. However much can be gained from accounts of this perspective; it will be argued that it adopts a view of work and life that is theoretically and empirically

problematic and can obscure the important ways in which work and life shape each other. Specifically, it will be argued that the vision of 'life' (in a capitalist society) which exists ontologically separately from work is simplistic and obscures deeper interconnections between work and life. The third perspective discussed in this chapter puts stress on the totality of relations of social reproduction of production. It will be argued that this perspective helps to shed light on interconnectedness and mutual constitution of life (reproduction) and work (production). It helps to understand how both work and life are part of cross-cutting social relations and how life has perhaps always been profoundly shaped by concerns with work. The chapter then critiques, following work of Martijn Konings, the conceptual separation between 'economic' and 'social'. Finally, the chapter draws on the previously discussed perspectives on work and life to suggest a focus on a constitution and embeddedness of work-life in social arrangements which make certain ways of life feasible and durable. It proposes to understand coliving as a social arrangement of work-life that seeks to produce and maintain a dynamic of life compatible with entrepreneurship as a type of work and economic practice.

6.2 Work and Life: On Balance, Colonisation, and Reproduction of Production

As I suggested in Chapter One, the meanings we associate with work, life and the boundary that separates (or things that connect them) is not simply given but is rather historically and socially variable. We can say the different ways of understanding and representing life in relation to work are based on different ontological assumptions, in a sense that they provide different answers to the ontological question of 'What kind of things are there in the world?' (Hughes, 1997: 1). The following sections examine three influential ways of conceptualizing work, life and the relationship between them

and highlights how they conceptualise work and life to be different "things" and assume different relationships between them.

The dominant way of conceptualising work and life is work-life balance. As the next section argues, the discourse of work-life balance assumes work and life to be two different entities, two different spheres of experiencing and relating to the world. The relationship between them is conceptualised as an act of balancing the time that is devoted to the two. Another perspective discussed in this section can be labelled as "colonisation thesis". The critical perspective maintains the separation between work and life, however, differs from the work-life balance discourse in the way it conceptualises the relationship between them. Rather than focusing on balance, it foreshadows the ways in which the sphere of life is increasingly "colonised" by the sphere of work and production. The third perspective discussed here can be labelled as the thesis of reproduction of production. It problematises the conceptual separation between work and life as two mutually exclusive spheres and highlights their mutual constitution and interdependence. This elaboration and comparison of the perspectives on work and life create a background for the proposed focus on work-life arrangements in section 6.4.

6.2.1 Work-Life Balance: As if it Was a Pie Chart

Work-life balance is a widespread perspective of understanding the relationship between work and life nowadays. The term occupies a central position in popular, business and academic discourse. A simple web search reveals an abundance of items concerned with work-life balance, ranging from academic articles, health advice, and self-help guidelines offering practical tips of achieving and maintain the balance between work and personal and family life. The issue at the centre of the work-life balance discourse concerns ensuring that 'workers can satisfactorily combine paid

work with private life, and moreover, get satisfaction in both' (Warhurst et al., 2008: 1)

In graphic form (see Figure 5), we can imagine work-life balance as a pie-chart. The overall surface of the pie chart presents the totality of an individual's life, which is divided between two categories: work and 'other aspects of life'. The two categories are mutually exclusive. Whatever is added to work must be taken from 'other aspects of life' and vice versa.

Figure 5 - Work-life balance as a pie chart
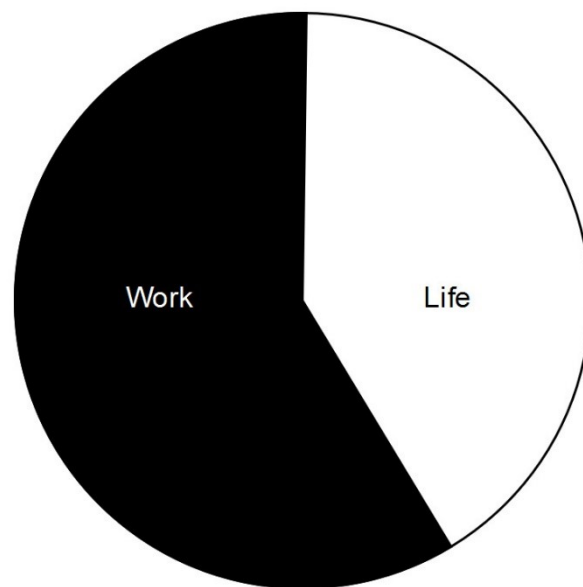
The origin of academic and policy discourse of work-life balance dates back to the1980s when the issue of work-life balance started to be discussed mostly in relation to balancing paid employment and family and other caring responsibilities through so-called 'work-family reconciliation policies' (Gregory, 2016: 505). Achieving a good balance between work and other aspects of life is often seen as having a beneficial

effect on both lives of employees and the companies who see it as beneficial for better retention, lower turnover, improved work organisation and skills preservation (Gregory, 2016). As the terminology and highlighted concerns suggest the corporate environment was an equally important locus of development of work-life balance discourse (Fleetwood, 2007; Hoffman and Cowan, 2008). Despite (or perhaps because of) the popularity of work-life balance in contemporary discourse, the perspective has attracted considerable criticism in social science literature. The critiques can be divided into two basic groups. The first strand is focusing on work-life balance as a concept used in social research and examines its analytical limitations. The second strand focuses on the work-life balance corporate arrangements and employment practices and highlights its political effects, power imbalances and unfulfilled promises.

Within the first strand, scholars criticised work-life balance perspective for its simplification of the problem of the relation of work and life and argued for 'more nuanced appreciation… of the complex relationship between work and life that goes beyond the current zero-sum assumptions of work-life balance and perceptions of work and life' (Eikhof et al., 2007: 331). The key problem is the assumption about the conceptual and practical separability of work and life as two separate spheres of life that can be contrasted against each other. As Eikhof and colleagues argue, only some workers experience work and life as 'separable or balanceable' (2007: 325–326); 'for other workers, work and life are intertwined, even amalgamated, so that they cannot or do not want to distinguish and disentangle work and life' (Eikhof et al., 2007: 326). We can add that the desire to achieve a balance between the two is often assumed, rather than demonstrated. For some workers, work can represent a way of self-expression and even an escape from the burdens of domestic life. In other words, work

can function as 'a sustenance in times of personal difficulty; providing opportunity for socialisation or distraction and an escape from domestic stress (Eikhof et al., 2007: 330; see also Bloom, 2015).

Crucially, the relation between work and life is often seen simplistically as work cutting out more than its fair share of the work-life balance pie and life is portrayed as a victim or at least as an unproblematic zone of free socialisation and rest. However, little attention is paid to the ways in which some desires associated with life after/outside of work shape the need to work more. As survey data suggest, people often want to work more to earn enough money to fulfil their lifestyle and consumptive aspirations (Eikhof et al., 2007; Roberts, 2007). As Roberts (2007) argues, the concerns with 'balance' between work and life cannot be attributed (automatically) to a raise in working hours as at least on average working time has not lengthened. Even though long hours are often a problem of employees in high-status jobs, more often other factors such as work intensification, work being done at non-standard hours, the spread of new information and communication technologies and increased labour market participation by women are behind the perceived time squeeze (Bittman, 2016; Gregory, 2016). Interestingly, the pressures stemming from lifestyle concerns and a desire to enjoy more (and better) leisure can be an important source of perceived time-scarcity (Roberts, 2007).

The second strand of critique focuses on the role the work-life balance discourse plays in the politics of work and working time. Even though the work-life balance and associated policies for flexible working can be veiled in the language of individual freedom and liberty, it is often used to justify policies that mean increased flexibility for the employer, rather than employee (Fleetwood, 2007). The emergence of flexible labour policies was seen as a solution to high unemployment in the 1980s (Fleetwood,

2007). Later, in the 1990s, the flexible working policies started to be important for increasing labour market participation of women with caring responsibilities in the new 'war for talent'. Even though employee-unfriendly flexible working practices remain in operation (alongside the employee-friendly policies), they are 'veiled by the mask of work-life balance discourses with their employee-friendly connotations' (Fleetwood, 2007: 396).

Hoffman and Cowan's (2008) analysis of 100 employer's websites shows that work-life balance discourse in a corporate environment is based on a few rather simple tenets: work is the most important element of life, life means family, individuals are responsible for balance, organisations control work/life programs. As the authors show, corporations portray the concerns with balance largely as an issue of employee self-management, rather than as an object of a work-place conflict. Provision of the flexible work programs is portrayed as a benefit to employees, which hides the fact 'that the ultimate goal of the program is to enhance organizational effectiveness by getting more work out of individual employees' (2008: 240) and the corporate discourse of work-life balance ultimately serves to obscure the contradiction between the interests of employees and organisation. As the authors conclude 'although marketed, and often perceived, as leading to "balance" between work and life, organizational messages actually increase the level of organizational influence in non-organizational life' (Hoffman and Cowan, 2008: 229).

For the analysis in this thesis, the crucial aspect of work-life balance lies in its conceptualisation of the relation between work and life. Conceiving of work and life in terms of balance assumes that they are mutually exclusive or at least easily distinguishable from each other, as if work did not impact on life in profound ways and vice versa, as if we do not live when we are at work and we do not work when we

leave the workplace. This suggests a more profound problem related to how both work and life are imagined in the work-life balance discourse. Work is associated (or reduced to) paid employment and life is primarily understood as family and caring duties. The question of work and life is reduced to the question of dividing the time of a day (or, in a more sinister light, time of our life) between the two. Not only is this perspective reductive (shouldn't we hope that there is more to life?), but it also seems to omit the historical developments which led to a separation between work (in the form of paid employment) and life (as a reproductive labour) in the first place (Bittman, 2016; Thompson, 1967).

Moreover, representing the relation between life and work in the way of work-life balance, where two clearly separable spheres compete (or should be balanced), ignores more complex relations between the two. Importantly, it overshadows the issue of their mutual constitution. As the social reproduction perspective outlined below argues, production (work) and reproduction (life) present very much interconnected spheres of life that not only make each other possible but are also interconnected when it comes to social relations, everyday practices, and material aspects of life. The analysis of arrangements of working and personal life should go beyond the concerns with balance and make the interrelation and co-constitution of work-life visible.

6.2.2 Work Colonizes Life: As if it Was a Venn Diagram

The work-life balance debate focuses on balance between life and work as two separate entities. Some critical perspectives to some degree maintain this view of life and work being (at least conceptually) separate, however, rather than on balance they focus on the ways in which work and management logic increasingly breaches what would previously be considered as a boundary between life and work. Authors who share this perspective emphasize temporality of the problem in a sense that this breach

is seen as being a contemporary trend or at least a process that has significantly accelerated and intensified in recent decades. This is seen as being connected to the onset of the neoliberal economy and corresponding changes in the organisation of work and economic life. In this perspective, the new era sets a different rule for the relationship between work and life and pushes for a profound reconfiguration and change in the meaning of both. Some of these concerns have already been discussed in Chapter Four about personal attachment to work. This section focuses on two illuminating contributions that explore the changing relationship between work and life: Hancock and Tyler's (2004) work about the spread of management discourse into everyday life and Fleming's (2014) concept of biocracy.

Hancock and Tyler argue that 'discourses, techniques and imperatives associated with the management of work organizations [are] increasingly colonizing the everyday sphere of human communication and sense-making' (2004: 619). More specifically, they focus on how management, seen as a 'socio-cultural ideology' (2004: 642) leaves its domains of origin in work organisations and seeps into a sphere of life which is seen as a sphere of everyday sense-making previously free of imperatives of formal rationality and productivism or as 'the realm of non-formalized activities external to the structured domain of work organizations' (2004: 621). To explore this process, Hancock and Tyler researched the discourses of management books and lifestyle magazines discourse combined with semi-structured interviews. Through the study of these devices, they illustrate how life is increasingly seen as a 'project' that should be planned and managed following advice of experts who can provide specific skills and resources of reflection and self-management. These discourses reformulate what life is or should be in an important way. For once, they promote an 'investment orientation to the self' (2004: 630) which frames the efforts of self-improvement as a rational

investment with expectations of future capitalisation of self-managing efforts. They also apply 'performance principle' (2004: 634) into all spheres of life. This principle dictates that life should be oriented on constant improvement of human attributes such as financial and occupational status, physical fitness and attractivity, self-esteem and even sexual performance (see also Tyler, 2009). Taken together, they frame life as a project that should be managed and improved so the subject can, in the future, reap the reward for its efforts.

In a review article on biocracy, Peter Fleming (2014) developed a complementary argument about changing the relationship between work and life. Fleming argues that we are observing is a rise of 'biocracy' understood as an 'instrumentalization of life attributes that were previously considered exogeneous, irrelevant, or detrimental to formal organizational productivity' (Fleming, 2014: 885) by company management. In other words, our 'life abilities and extra-work qualities are now key objects of exploitation' (Fleming, 2014: 875). This instrumentalization occurs in several spheres. Our subjectivity, meaning our personal attributes, affects and emotions are integrated into the management of the workplace. All these aspects of life previously expunged from a workplace are now accepted and included in the organisational space. Work and work-related socialisation which was previously confined to the limited hours of a workday now breaches the boundary between the workday and the private time spent outside of the formal workplace (Fleming and Spicer, 2004). The blurring of the boundary between work and life is a result of double movement where on the one hand "non-work themes" such as lifestyle, sexuality, entertainment are evoked in the workplace and on the other hand work and job performance (in a sense of doing work but also performing certain subjectivity) reaches the sphere of home and private life (Fleming, 2014; Fleming and Spicer, 2004). By biocracy – which is a term

paraphrasing Foucault's concept of biopolitics – Fleming captures the principle of operation of power which entangles the subject as it 'already is, rather than composing or reconstructing him into a desired image' (Fleming, 2014: 876). 'Life itself' then stands for 'everyday qualities' (2014) of a human being, which are now utilised in the sphere of production.

In this perspective, work and life are seen (to a large degree) as two distinct entities. However, rather than focusing on how they are or can be balanced, the authors focus on how one sphere – work - 'colonizes' (Hancock and Tyler, 2004) or 'instrumentalizes' or 'indexes' life (Fleming, 2014). Rather than being concerned with a balance between the two, the concern is with the way in which work breaches the boundary and influences life in the new ways and to a greater extent. We can say that the representation of work and life shifts from a pie chart to a Venn diagram where work increasingly eclipses life (see Figure 6).

Figure 6 - Work and life as a Venn diagram
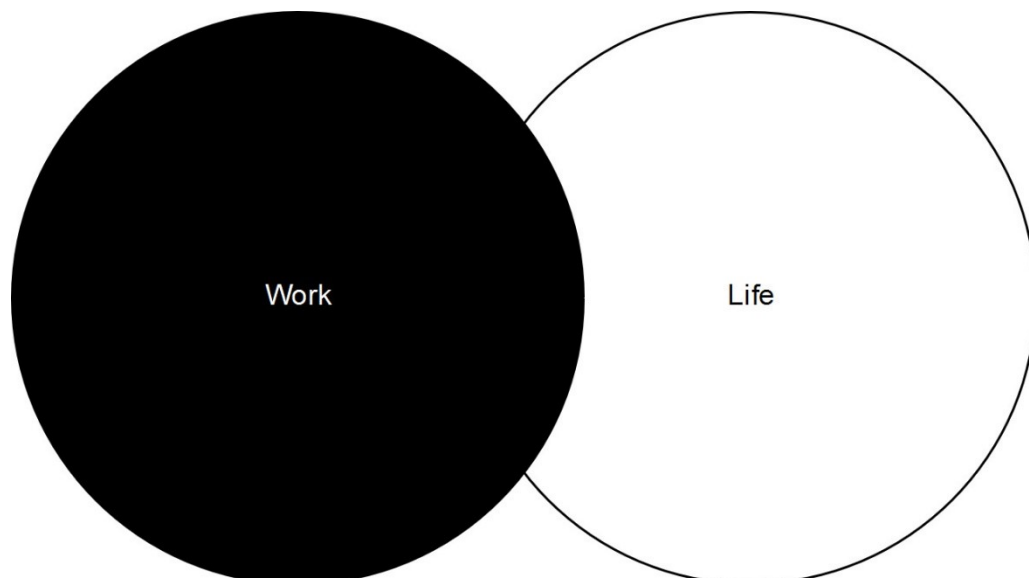
This perspective raises timely concerns and identifies important trends in the politics of work and life today. Similar concerns with managerial language erasing the

boundary between personal and professional were identified by other commentators (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Rose, 1999a). Moreover, the boundary between work and life has been further blurred by the spread of information and communication technologies that allow the duty to work to reach beyond the workplace (Wajcman, 2008; Wajcman and Rose, 2011). Popular discourse in magazines and self-help literature turns life into a project which should be managed in the same way as a work project (Binkley, 2009, 2011). The logic of employability pervades non-work contexts such us education (Berglund, 2013; Down, 2009; Handley, 2018) and unemployment (Boland, 2016). Whether inviting life in or seeping into it, it is argued that work enlists personal life more than ever before.

However, many concerns and insights this thesis shares with this approach, there are some important issues that limit this perspective's potential for analysis of work-life arrangements such as coliving. First, at the conceptual level, there is the dualistic understanding of 'work' and 'life' as two separate spheres that this perspective shares with the work-life balance debate. If work is capable of 'colonising' or 'indexing' life, we must assume that some entity as the life which exists independently from (or is temporarily shielded from) the influences of work exists to be colonised or indexed in the first place. Concerns with this understanding can be raised on theoretical and empirical grounds.

Hancock and Tyler draw on Habermas' dichotomy between the system and the lifeworld. In this image, the system (concerned with formally rational organisation of production) is juxtaposed to the lifeworld understood as a sphere of 'the communicatively ordered interpersonal relations' (Hancock and Tyler, 2004: 624) which is realised in (quoting Habermas) 'everyday acts of mutual understanding' (2004: 626). It is a sphere where regulation occurs based on 'shared beliefs and values'

and where meaning is contested and created, rather than subsumed under the rules of formal and instrumental rationality.

Habermas' dualism of the system and the lifeworld has been criticised for potentially obscuring as much as it reveals when it comes to politics of work and life in capitalist societies. Fraser (1985) argued persuasively that Habermas' identification of the former with material reproduction (and functional rationality) and the latter with symbolical reproduction (and communicative rationality) is problematic conceptually, empirically, and politically. For example, childrearing activities – which are by Habermas associated with symbolical reproduction – have both symbolical and material aspects. By the same token, capitalist paid work – which is by Habermas associated with material reproduction – 'occurs via culturally elaborated social relations and symbolically-mediated, norm-governed social practices' and 'maintain and modify the social identities of persons directly involved and indirectly affected' (1985: 101). To associate paid work simply with material reproduction and (often) unpaid domestic work with symbolic reproduction seems to be untenable, as they both are likely 'dual-aspect' activities (1985: 101).

The same can critique be applied to Habermas' association of paid work with unfreedom and necessity, and life outside of paid work with freedom and self-actualisation As Cook puts it:

> 'Habermas uncritically describes and endorses a completely sundered society where individuals are simultaneously free and unfree, unconstrained by material concerns in their leisure activities and denatured by the struggle to survive in the workplace, fully human in their social intercourse and dehumanised in their labour.' (Cook, 2005: 71)

Cook argues persuasively that it is difficult to maintain a conception of individuals who fully submit to functionalist rationality as soon as they enter the workplace but are ready to exercise their freedom and creative faculties as soon as they leave. A critical consideration of life in capitalist society should acknowledge that work and life outside of work are profoundly interconnected (materially, socially, temporally), rather than one influencing the other, so to say, 'from outside' (Cook, 2005: 74).

In sum, Habermas' conceptualisation of the system and the lifeworld seems to obscure the mutual co-constitution and interrelation between work and life outside of work. Insofar, it risks obscuring the nature of work-life relations, as well as some political tensions involved (e.g. association with domestic work with freedom). Hancock seems to be aware of the limitations of Habermas' concepts and in later theoretical work (Hancock, 2009) paints a more complex historical picture, drawing on Weber, Adorno and Lefebvre, among others. Here the language of colonisation of life by work is replaced by more specific and nuanced 'integration of the values and principles of modern management itself … into the cultural resources that contribute to the values and practices of everyday life' (Hancock, 2009: 11).

Whereas Hancock and Tyler (2004) base their conceptualisation of work-life relations on Habermas, Fleming (2014) finds inspiration in Foucault. Fleming derives his concept of biocracy from Foucault's biopolitics and we can presume that the phrase 'life itself' also refers to Foucault. Foucault uses the phrase in a discussion of wider issue of biopower in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* where he says that with the onset of the new power constellation emerging in modern Europe, the 'mastery over people would have to be applied at the level of life itself' (Foucault, 1998: 143). Biopower, rather than being based primarily on a threat to take life (as would be the case with the sovereign form of power) presents a power over life,

meaning that it seeks to shape it and to make it docile, useful and productive through disciplining its movement and modifying its biological parameters and material conditions. However, Foucault situates the emergence of biopower roughly within the seventeenth century. From this viewpoint, it seems to be difficult to maintain that 'life itself' existed in a relatively independent state until it was instrumentalised or indexed by neoliberal work organisations. As Foucault was at pains to show, human life (in modernity at least) is not a "natural" or innate entity, but has been an object of shaping and manipulation by the twin technologies of discipline and biopolitics for centuries and has been importantly reshaped in relation to production (this theme will be further elaborated in Chapter Eight).

The echo of the ontological binary between life and work that is subtly implied in the work of Hancock and Tyler and Fleming (albeit based on different conceptual traditions) is questionable. Much more convincing than the language of colonisation or indexing is their careful depiction of concrete changes in how life is approached, in what language it is conceived (e.g. as a project to be managed), and what aspects of subjectivity and lifestyle are invited into the workplace and seen as an object of management. We can say that what Hancock and Tyler and Fleming show are important changes in the way organisations and discourses of production approach life, rather than a process where hitherto innate life becomes newly incorporated into work. However, even in that case some caution is needed. Some of the trends that the authors associate with the onset of neoliberalism have much earlier and important precedents. As will be illustrated below, work organisations sought to control and shape life well before twentieth century. In addition, ideologies of work have for a long time concerned also management of life outside of the workplace (Anthony, 1977). Moreover, it is worth probing whether life becomes more enmeshed in the web

of rationality or formal organisation of production than was the case previously. Whereas there can be a change in dynamics, content, or shifting of the boundary, it would be difficult to imagine that before the 1980s 'life' existed shielded from the forces and discourses of production.

The point that will be developed further in the next section is that, at least in capitalist societies, life and its social and material conditions has always been profoundly shaped by the relations of production. Hancock and Tyler and Fleming juxtapose the new configuration of life in relation to work to Fordism or industrialism. However, the case can be made that organisations within the Fordist economy sought to profoundly influence the social and material aspects of life outside of factory gates.

This can be illustrated by the example of industrial paternalism that I have already discussed above in Chapter Two, Section 2.8.2. Ford's Sociology Department established in 1913 was charged with overseeing of the workers' domestic and family life and imposing rules and demands on their conduct out of work in exchange for eligibility for five dollars a day wage. In other words, the job of the Department was to help to maintain domestic life that maintained the best conditions for reproduction of labour power and greatly enhanced employer's control over workers' life (Beynon, 1975; Hooker, 1997; Loizides, 2004). The same principle applies to Baťa's company's strategy which, through provision of housing and facilities, managed to extend the control of workers into the domestic, leisure, and consumption activities (Marek and Strobach, 2011; Mareš, 2013; Pavitt, 1994). Imperatives of production were, at least in these cases, profoundly influencing the life outside of the factory gates a long time before the onset of neoliberalism. This point will be further elaborated in the next section about the dynamics of production and reproduction.

The intrusions of the logic of production into life outside of work and its engagement with workers personalities went beyond the influence on housing and material conditions of life. Work ethics and economic principles have been used as guidelines for life in the early capitalist ideology. E. P. Thompson provides vivid examples of this in his classical essay Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism (Thompson, 1967). Employers and other 'propagandists of discipline' (1967: 80) sought to influence values and motivations of the workers a long time before the neoliberal fascination with the self. In his *Friendly Advice to the Poor* published in 1755, Rev. J. Clayton was deeply concerned with the unproductive and sinful life of the poor and recommends the benefits of industrial discipline for improvement of domestic habits and family life: 'The necessity of early rising would reduce the poor to a necessity of going to Bed betimes; and thereby prevent the Danger of Midnight revels' (cited in Thompson, 1967: 83). The organisation of time around the industrial clock was also deemed to improve the quality of domestic life. As Thompson quotes, 'early rising would also "introduce an exact Regularity into their Families, a wonderful Order into their Oeconomy"' (Thompson, 1967: 83 capitalisation in the original). Among other institutions, the school was seen as an institution that should instil the industrial discipline into the habits of the youth. In this sense, 'life' was hardly shielded from the discourse of production.

There are interesting examples of managerial discourse and practice engaging workers subjectivities and personal lives before the onset of neoliberalism. Illouz (2007) points out how Elton Mayo's research on management and related experiments conducted in the 1920s – strongly influenced by psychoanalysis – sought to engage with subjectivities of workers when it comes to their emotions and personal and family situation. In Mayo's approach, workplace dynamics were seen as a continuation of the

life outside of the workplace, rather than as a separate sphere. An example includes a conflict between a worker and manager being interpreted as resulting from her relationship with stepfather:

> '…one woman worker… discovered during an interview that her dislike of a certain supervisor was based upon a fancied resemblance to a detested stepfather. Small wonder that the same supervisor had warned the interviewer that she was "difficult to handle".' (Mayo, cited in Illouz, 2007: 14).

Mayo's approach to management research and practice sought to know workers' personalities through open and essentially therapeutic interviews. In turn, knowledge of their family and personal life was seen as essential to deal with workplace conflict and to increase productivity. This example shows that subjective and personal lives were not always expulsed from the workplace and seen as 'exogeneous, irrelevant, or detrimental to formal organizational productivity', as Fleming (2014: 885) argues. Instead, even before the onset of the neoliberal governmentality and workplace, at least in some cases, 'the language of emotionality and that of productive efficiency were becoming increasingly intertwined, each shaping the other' (Illouz, 2007: 14).

Notwithstanding these examples, Hancock and Tyler and Fleming document important trends and provide valuable points of critique of neoliberal work and performance discourses. However, we can say that what they point out is an intensification of certain trends and change in the way life outside of work is engaged by management and work organisation, rather than the beginning of 'colonisation' or 'indexing' of life by work. As will be argued below, to understand transformations and concrete developments in contemporary working lives, it might be beneficial to shift the perspective from work colonizing life to exploration of how is life modified

in relation to work and economic practice and what are the social and material structures that reproduce and maintain certain version of working lives. However, before we move towards the further formulation of this perspective, we should explore one more perspective on the relation between work and life which is influenced by Marxist and feminist writing on the relations of production and reproduction.

6.2.3 Reproduction of Production: As if it Was a Heart

Marxist and especially Marxist feminist scholars have gone farthest in questioning to what extent 'work' and 'life' ever existed as two spheres of feeling and acting that can be contrasted against each other. Moreover, scholars in these traditions have cast doubt on the approach that argues that life ever existed in factual isolation from work. Rather than focusing on the relation between work and life, authors in this perspective stress the mutual constitution of relations of production (what we could understand simply as work) and reproduction of life (what we could simply understand as life). This tradition argues that the analysis of (economic) life and work must take the totality of these relations into account so as not to risk reproduction of artificial distinction between the two.

To put it crudely, without reproduction of life there could hardly be any work (or production) and vice versa. It would also be untenable to think that life outside of work (domestic, personal) ever existed shielded from the influences of the organisation of production. This is why analysis of work-life needs to consider, in historical materialist terms, 'the totality of social relations that are required to reproduce the relations of production over time' (Edwards, 2010: 284). The emphasis on materialism here should not be mistaken for focusing simply on 'immediate process of production' (Edwards, 2010: 284) but rather as encompassing 'material practices in the sense that they involve human bodies actively engaging with and transforming the material

world and in that they are, at the same time, social activities' (Edwards, 2010: 285). This means that analysis has to take into account not only the organisation of spaces of production but also 'the constitution of experience through the manifold forms of material practice outside the immediate space of production' (Edwards, 2010: 288).

The problematisation of reproduction in relation to production has always been a part of Marxist analysis. In Capital volume 1, Marx makes the inseparability of production from reproduction clear:

> 'A society can no more cease to produce than it can cease to consume. When viewed, therefore, as a connected whole, and in the constant flux of its incessant renewal, every social process of production is at the same time a process of reproduction. The conditions of production are at the same time the conditions of reproduction' (Marx, 1990: 709).

This means simply that without reproduction of physical capacities of labourers, in fact without biological reproduction of humanity, production would be impossible (and one might add, utterly meaningless). In a capitalist societies, where the main mode of subsistence is selling labour power for wages and buying goods necessary for reproduction at the market, the relations of reproduction attain capitalist form, or, as Marx against puts it: 'if production has a capitalist form, so too will reproduction' (Marx, 1990: 709). The matter of reproduction reaches beyond a simple concern with biological reproduction in at least two ways. First, the consumption part of reproduction attains a distinctly commercial character where goods are purchased on the market in exchange for wage gained through employment. In this sense, reproduction itself becomes a constitutive part of capital accumulation, as goods produced by the workers are necessarily bought by the workers, while profit is

maintained by the capitalist. Second, reproduction of labour entails reproduction of skills required of production, as a skill is passed from one generation to another, either through family or institutionalised education. In all these ways '[t]he incessant reproduction, this perpetuation of the worker, is the absolutely necessary condition for capitalist production' (Marx, 1990: 716).

The Marxist analysis was considerably extended and developed in a critical dialogue by feminist scholars. This led to a problematisation of how relations of reproduction are profoundly implicated in the reproduction of 'male supremacy', but also to a more fine-grained understanding of how life outside of work has been shaped by the politics of production and vice-versa. In this context, the boundary between work and non-work, between public and private, production and reproduction is seen not as given, but as a moving and shifting object of further exploration and contestation (Fraser, 2014; O'Brien, 1983). In this sense, work is not 'assumed to be a discrete activity carried out in exchange for remuneration in institutions (although it can be) but, rather, is conceptualized as being embedded in other domains and entangled in other sorts of social relations' (Parry et al., 2006: 4). Rather than isolating work from non-work activities and social relations 'the project becomes one to explore the points at which they become entangled and embedded as well as differentiated' (Parry et al., 2006: 10).

The focus on social reproduction illuminates how life is shaped in relation to concerns with work. The attention shifts from focusing on the boundary between work and life and the way they can be balanced to understanding their mutual constitution and dynamics between them. From this perspective, we could visualise the work-life relations as a heart. Production and reproduction are two distinguishable but necessarily interconnected chambers with blood circulating between them. However,

the heart shape should not suggest that the dialectics of production and reproduction is a harmonious or romantic process. Rather, capitalist societies have seen a series of upheavals driven by the demands of productions that would often lead to rapid changes in livelihoods, dispossession, and misery, as well as reform of the relations of production through an organised social struggle. This perspective acknowledges that 'personal' or 'family' or 'non-work' life in industrial society was always shaped by demands of production and reproduction of labour and vice versa (Glucksmann, 2006). However, it also recognizes that 'life' is never fully managed, never fully enlisted by the organisation of production and that it is oriented by and creates values that go beyond the logic of capital (Skeggs, 2014). Rather than life being simply 'co-opted' by work, this perspective allows exploration of how it is built and constituted in relation to concerns with work.

Figure 7 - Production and reproduction as a heart
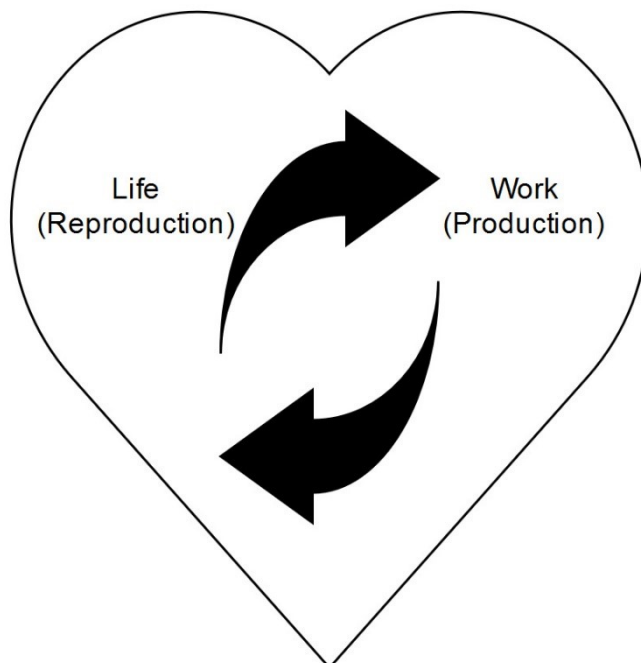
Glucksman's (2006) contribution provides insights into the shifting historical dynamics of work and non-work or rather on the way the relation between work and

non-work activities is articulated in relation to historical changes across the interconnected processes of production, distribution, exchange and consumption. A proliferation of ready-made meals is an illustrative example. The emergence of 'TV dinner' meant for many women liberation from a proportion of drudgery of domestic labour. However, they also transferred formerly domestic work into the sphere of industrial production and market distribution, where the new jobs would be taken up by (predominantly) female workers. What we see is a 'reconfiguration of women's work between household, factory, and retail outlet' (Glucksmann, 2006: 27).

Underpinning this change in the nature and content of domestic work is technological innovation. For example, the emergence of washing machines for domestic use meant a change of domestic practice and the emergence of 'new form of work being undertaken in the home, requiring new skills on the part of the "consumer"' (Glucksmann, 2006: 30). In addition, sometimes the decline of a sector of paid work has also meant change in the ideal of domestic life. As Glucksman points out, the decline of domestic paid work of servants in the early twentieth century was accompanied by an emerge of 'the ideal housewife running her ideal home' (Glucksmann, 2006: 33). All these examples show how domestic or 'non-work' life has always been profoundly shaped by the developments in production and how production necessitates changes in domestic life (see also Boris, 1985, 1994).

Glucksmann's work illustrates the point that the difference between what is classified as work and what is classified as life (or non-work) is historically and socially variable. Moreover, the boundary between work and non-work should not mean an equation of work with paid work or employment and life or leisure with domestic life. In addition, the analysis of working life should pay attention to how domestic environments change in response to the demands of production, but also how production responds

(and commodifies) the domestic life. Glucksmann's argument is useful in shifting the focus from balance and boundaries to specific social arrangements of work-lives and exploration of how different versions of life (in relation to work) are constituted and what structures hold them in place.

The concern with social reproduction, however, goes beyond the problem of the articulation of work and non-work activities. As Fraser (2016) puts it, social reproduction is comprised of a wide set of activities that form 'human subjects', provide for their material needs, but also constitute them as social beings with distinct habits and abilities and maintenance of communities with 'shared meanings, affective dispositions and horizons of value…' (Fraser, 2016: 101; see also Skeggs, 2014). These activities are necessary to maintain production over time; however, they are also profoundly shaped by production and wider socio-economic factors. In capitalist societies, dominant modes of social and family reproduction are dependent not only on the organisation of production but also the wider mode of capital accumulation and of governing the social body (Fraser, 2009, 2016). For example, in contemporary 'financialised' neoliberal capitalism, the divestment from welfare arrangements and recruitment of women into the workforce leads to the model of the two-earner family with various mixes of market or private provision, or as Fraser puts it 'new, dualized organisation of social reproduction, commodified for those who can pay for it and private for those who cannot'(2016: 112).

The focus on the dynamics of production and reproduction not only broadens the horizon in which work-life should be understood. It also calls for consideration of mutual influences and co-constitution of work and life and transcends the binary or focus on boundaries between the two. This, however, should not be interpreted as the distinction between work and life being meaningless. For many people, historically

and today, the boundary between work and life was/is an important normative and political distinction. Rather, it allows re-interpretation of work and life as being different at the level of ideals, however, ontologically connected if seen as important parts of the total relations of reproduction of production.

6.3 The Economic vs the Social?

This chapter so far has discussed three ways of understanding contemporary work-life. So far, the focus has been on how the relation between work and life can be understood in sociological and social theory. However, another 'dichotomy' – between economic and social - should be discussed in order to allow an analysis of coliving as a social phenomenon. In this area, the work of Martijn Konings is illuminating.

In *Emotional Logic of Capitalism*, Martijn Konings (2015) sets out to criticique what he calls a 'progressivist narrative of capitalist development'. The target of his critique is a conviction, inspired to a large extent by Karl Polanyi, that development of a capitalist economy operates through a logic of consecutive stages of the economy being emancipated from social norms and demands (dis-embedding) and a subsequent stage where society and state renew their control of capitalist economic forces (re-embedding). What this perspective misses, according to Konings, is an extent to which economic forces (material, financial and symbolic factors) permeate social and symbolic fabrics of society. Means of the capitalist economy (such as credit and money) do not exist in isolation from social ties and values. On the contrary, they are part of the constitutive forces that shape our social and political imagination and are resources which we use to fashion our subjective attachment to the world. Koning argues that the progressivist narrative and its political and emancipatory hopes are

based on a false dichotomy between corrupting economy and autonomous social life of communities.

Reducing economy into mere chrematistics – the art of getting rich, of producing monetary value – fails to capture how economy permeates both collective and individual ideology, narrative and imagination. Konings, echoing Agamben (2009), argues for the understanding of economy in a way formed in early Christian theology; as an application of God's laws on earth or as a force ordering relation between the whole and parts. In this sense, the economy has a much wider and deeper meaning than pure science of wealth production. As Konings puts it: 'the economy is not a discrete method or an easily wielded instrument of control, but refers to the semiotic dynamic whereby we become invested in the sign and internalize a particular relation to the unobservable' (2015: 52).

As the title suggests, in his account, Konings stresses the importance of understanding how individuals and society form an emotional attachment to institutions of the capitalist economy. Money and consumption become an important part of social and subjective life, offering important symbolic resource and shaping affective relations to the world. In a sense, there is no pre-economic self that stands apart from financial pressures and lures. By the same token, there is no society or community isolated from economic logic. Ideological narratives and social values are profoundly shaped and transformed by economic logic. Our beliefs, hopes and passions do not stand isolated from economic signs and symbols waiting to be confronted with the harsh economic reality, thus offering an opportunity for the confrontation of the logic of life against impersonal forces of the economy. Imagination, libidinal and affective investments are developing in relation to, not in opposition to, economic factors and symbols. Even

though Konings uses money and credit as a central example, this can be applied to other aspects of economic life, including work and employment.

Koning's critique offers a good corrective to some perspectives in the sociology of work that see economic and social as two separate and conflicting spheres. For example, Richard Sennett (1998) in his influential book *The Corrosion of Character* sees forces of 'flexible' economy as damaging to the reproduction of social life. The corrosive forces of (dis-embedded) economy are damaging not only to individual character but also to familial and social ties. Relatedly, a lack of predictability and a requirement of flexibility and risk-taking in the worker's life make it impossible to be meaningfully engaged in the social and political life of communities. Thus, changes in the sphere of production lead to disengagement in the public sphere and civil society. Going against the stability and duration needed to create meaningful and strong social ties, the new capitalist regime '…provides human beings no deep reasons to care about one another…' (1998: 148). Observing this trend, Sennett predicts that such a regime '… cannot long preserve its legitimacy…' (1998: 148) and we may suspect that Sennett anticipates its demise. Communities and solidarity, the dangerous 'pronoun "we"' (1998: 137), will, according to Sennett, work as a site of resistance to the new regime of flexible capitalism.

Some issues with Sennett's account of the corrosive effects of flexible accumulation on social and familial ties were discussed in Chapter Four. The point I want to make here is about the distinction he seems to be making between the social and economic when it comes to the analysis of what he calls 'the new capitalism' (Sennett, 1998: 25). The disagreement is not about the political dimension of Sennett's claims - changes in the economy, organisation of work and factors of social reproduction continue to be an object of social mobilisation and struggles. However, what should

be corrected – to understand phenomena such as coliving – is precisely the binary division between social and economic. As will be argued later, in coliving, we can see exactly the emergence of 'the social' around concerns with the emerging economic and work practice. Rather than social and economic being separate, we see a dynamics where the economic transforms the social and the social enables certain economic practice.

6.4 Work-Life Arrangements and the Case of Coliving

How can we conceptualise coliving in the light of theoretical approaches to work-life relations described above? As will be argued in more detail later, coliving cannot be easily understood through the optics of work-life balance. For my participants living in coliving, work and life are often seen as intimately connected and (for most of them) the view of work and life being two separable and balanceable entities does not make much sense. Indeed, coliving presents a strategy of integrating rather than balancing work and life, in as much as the categories are intelligible as different. As the next chapter illustrates, social arrangements of personal and domestic of life are practically modified with a goal to make a certain version of work-life feasible and, to some extent, enjoyable.

Is this the case of colonisation then? Many of the factors the authors above have discussed are indeed present in coliving. Coliving establishment re-arrange life around imperatives of entrepreneurial work and to a certain extent understand life as a continuation of an entrepreneurial project. However, several objections to this perspective can be made. As pointed out previously, the extent to which life in capitalist societies can be understood as lying outside of relations of production and as something that can, therefore, be colonised by external forces is questionable. While the changes in the ideology of work and emergence of new techniques of shaping life

around production are well documented by those detailed above, as scholars focusing on politics of reproduction argue, life was hardly ever an entity that would somehow lie outside of the influences of production and strategies of capitalist control. Rather than focusing on the binary – life being colonised vs. life not being colonised – there might be good reasons to shift attention to what is actually happening with life in relation to the forces of production. Moreover, when it comes to coliving, it would be difficult to maintain that life is simply colonised in the sense that it ceases to be different from work. Rather, what we are observing is a reformulation of what life *means* and what a good life is. At least from the subjective standpoint of my participants, the statement that their life is colonised would not make much sense. Rather, we should focus on understanding what principles and values their life contains and how is it reshaped by the logic of work and economic practice.

I argue that for understanding coliving, and perhaps for the understanding of work-life arrangements in capitalist societies more broadly, the mutual influences and mutual constitution of work and life should be understood beyond the emphasis on balance and colonisation. The changes in economic and work practice have been dramatically transforming arrangements of life throughout history. The effects of industrialisation and a large influx of populations to centres of industrial production can be understood as one of the most dramatic examples. Following agricultural dispossession and emergence of employment opportunities in cities, European countries have witnessed large movements of people to the cities, accompanied by well-documented problems of unemployment, poverty, urban slums and disease. As Braudel (1981) records, cities were dependent for the influx of labour from the countryside near and far both to provide services for the richer city-dwellers and to work in the newly emerging industries:

'Such constant recruitment was a matter of necessity. Before the nineteenth century, cities had scarcely any excess of births over deaths. They were areas of high mortality. If they were to expand, they could not do so unaided. Socially as well, they left the lowly tasks to new arrivals. Like our over-charged economies today, the big city needed North Africans or Puerto Ricans in its service, a proletariat which it quickly used up and had quickly to renew. "The scum of the countryside becomes the scum of the cities", wrote Sébastien Mercier of the domestic servants in Paris – an army of 150,000 strong apparently. The existence of this wretched and lowly proletariat is a feature of any large town'. (Braudel, 1981: 490)

As Braudel documents, the mass of the poor and workers (and poor workers) constituted a practical problem for the administration of a city, with overcrowded poorhouses, orphanages (filled largely with child immigrants from the provinces) and a need to deal with sick and dying. However, rather than simply meaning disruption to the previous way of life in city centres, we have observed major transformations in life, both planned and spontaneous; both as originating in capitalist and moralist philanthropy and as a necessity to newly emerging urban class struggles (Braudel, 1981: 512). The industrial forces, expressed in England perhaps sooner than elsewhere, were drastically changing the landscape of cities.

As a reaction to these problems, early capitalist societies saw the emergence of 'sanitary' workers' housing and other attempts to improve and influence workers life (both by governments and capitalists) (Foucault, 2002a, 2002b)The change in political economy, economic practice and the logic of work led to major modifications of life and, as Foucault (1998, 2002c) has argued, to an emergence of a new way of governing which would make the management of populations its primary target. We can say,

with a high degree of simplification, that changes in the logic of production gave rise to problems to which solutions were sought through modification of existing, and creation of new, social structures that made certain versions of life feasible. The new form of life, now embedded in social, temporal and spatial structures, then solidifies the economic and work practice in a sense that life is, sometimes literally, built around it. As life has been transformed, the economic and work practice is now embedded in life practices through various arrangements that attain a degree of solidity and duration. Moreover, at least on an ideological level, it makes the new arrangements of work and life to appear 'as if' they were corresponding with the way life simply is and therefore being to some degree required and dictated by the logic of life. The new way of life then also imposes certain demands on production, both in terms of its organisation and demands of consumption.

The understanding of life and work in the sociology of everyday life captures this principle well. According to Lefebvre (2002), sociology should study the life of workers as a whole and explore the way work and life outside of work constitute and limit each other. Work and domestic and family life and leisure, for example, should be studies as 'a unity' (2002: 226) or as a 'global structure' (2002: 235) as the amount of time to spend on either is clearly determined by the other. Moreover, post-work activities are necessarily influenced by work and position within the division of labour. This does not mean that there is no difference – especially in capitalist society – between experience within the formal sphere of production and life, for example, within the domestic sphere. However, these spheres are also not completely separate and profoundly influence each other. As Back (2015: 820) puts it, domestic sphere is often arranged in such a way as to make the lives of the workers 'liveable' in the face of the work and economic pressures.

With the onset of capitalist societies, work and life outside of work became in one way separated and differentiated, but in another way 'they came to constitute a unified whole' (Lefebvre, 2002: 227). Place of paid work was increasingly differentiated from a place of family life (and unpaid reproductive work), with the emergence of the factory (Bittman, 2016). The distinction between work and non-work time became salient with the measurement of time in industrial settings (Thompson, 1967). Moreover, the late modern era sees an emergence of leisure as a sphere with increasingly independent dynamics and importance for personal identity (Koshar, 2002). In this sense, work and non-work emerge as distinct entities.

However, work, leisure and family time – for Lefebvre a conceptual triad of everyday life - should be nonetheless studied in their 'unity and totality' as their combination and constitution are what 'determines the concrete individual' (Lefebvre, 2002: 228) and her overall (everyday) life situation and experience. As was argued above, the logic of production heavily influences (and relies on) social reproduction. At the same time, leisure is shaped by and influences both work and domestic life. The analysis should, ideally, go beyond postulating that things are interrelated and complex and explore the dynamics and transformations in the relations (for Lefebvre dialectical), between the elements.

For the analysis of life in coliving (presented in the next chapter), I therefore adopt a perspective (graphically represented in Figure 8) where instead of on conceptualising work and life as distinct spheres we see work-life as a singular object which contains multiple activities, be them work, leisure, socialisation and so on, and explore its qualities and characteristics. Rather than focusing on balance or colonisation, emphasis in this analysis should be on practical social arrangements that make a certain version of life viable and that play a role in sustaining and reproducing this

version of life. Through this lens, we can understand coliving as a particular social arrangement that shapes life in relation to an economic practice of entrepreneurship. As the previous chapter illustrated, start-up entrepreneurship can create particularly demanding and intensive work dynamics which can require rearrangement of social and personal practices. Coliving can be understood as a social arrangement that seeks to consciously modify life in order to make it compatible with these demands. In so doing, it necessarily changes lives around the requirements of entrepreneurship. Tentatively, I suggest that this modification then feeds back to the economic practice as it makes it liveable, feasible, and perhaps even attractive. When the 'compatibility' of life and economic practice is increased and potential frictions are reduced, the economic practice appears as if it was stemming from the 'life itself' and makes the continuation of economic/work practice possible.

Figure 8 - Work-life and social and material arrangements
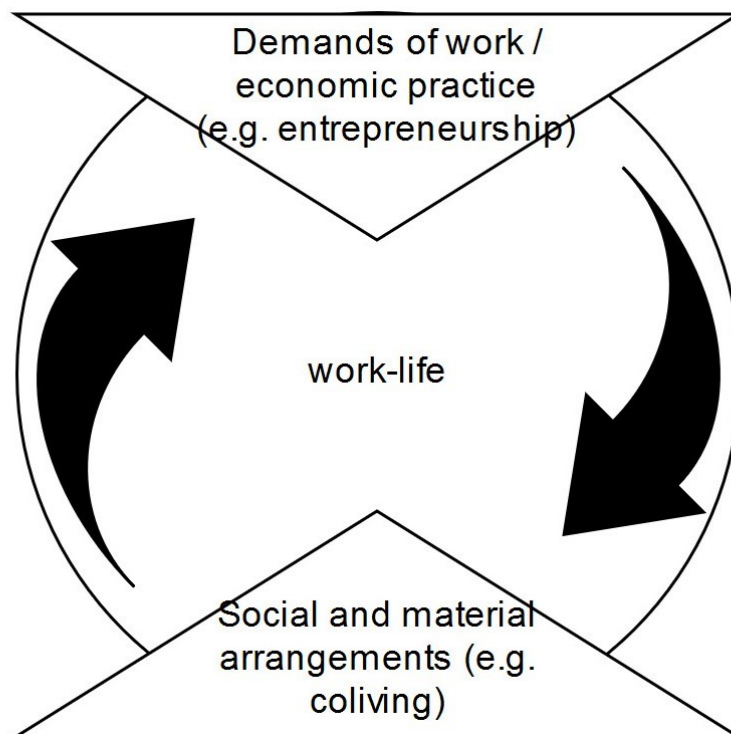
6.5 Conclusion

This chapter outlined a perspective for understanding work-life dynamics in the coliving space. It argued that instead of understanding work and life as separate spheres and focusing on the balance between them or colonisation of one by the other, it can be analytically useful to instead focus on their mutual constitution and to explore how a particular dynamics of working life is maintained and reproduced by social arrangements and structures. In this way, coliving space can be understood as a social arrangement that holds a certain version of work-life together and makes it 'liveable'.

The next chapter applies this perspective in the empirical investigation of domestic life in Habitat. It starts with an exploration of the understanding of work-life relation present in accounts of participants which is based on the idea that practical solutions can lead to a version of work-life that 'maximises' the life experience, be it work or leisure. It then discusses how this version of life is enacted through concrete social arrangements of deliberate overlap between work and life, and how is entrepreneurial work-life in Habitat automated, moderated, understood and shielded.

Chapter Seven: Coliving as a Social Arrangement of Max-life

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed theoretical frameworks for understanding relations between work and life, argued for an approach that explores how work and life co-constitute each other, and analyses how a particular dynamic of working life is embedded and enabled by social and organisational arrangements. This chapter will apply this perspective on the way personal and domestic life is re-arranged in Habitat and how this makes it compatible with characteristics and demands of intensive entrepreneurial work. In doing so it builds on the problematics discussed in Chapters Four and Five which explored factors that contribute to intensive personal investment to work. It will illustrate that intensive work-life is not only an effect of powerful discourses and demanding work situations but must be understood within the context of social arrangements that sustain it, make it liveable, and thus reproduce its intensive form. It suggests that to understand a dynamic of working life, we must not only reflect on ideologies and characteristics of work, but also seek to understand re-arrangements in the sphere of everyday life.

Coliving can be understood as a social arrangement that allows one to re-design and re-shape life in accordance with demands of work and economic practice, in this case, entrepreneurial practice. Entrepreneurship is characterised by a high work commitment, frequent time scarcity, and relative unpredictability. These qualities induce certain pressures on individual life and create a need to arrange life in such a way that it is 'liveable', sustainable, or even attractive in the face of the pressures. In this sense, coliving can be viewed as a social arrangement with a particular effect: to

make individual and collective life most conductive to success in entrepreneurial and professional life while also making it sustainable and enjoyable.

Coliving, in this sense, presents an effort to redesign life - to modify its daily arrangements - with an intended effect in mind. This should not be understood in deterministic terms, where the logic of work induces pressure on life and life simply 'adapts'. Whereas this understanding can have its merits, more goes into the building of life in coliving. Rather than the resignation of life to the pressure of necessity, life is consciously designed in a certain way to 'maximise' enjoyment, the level of experience and making it fit within the limitations set by requirements of entrepreneurship. Rethinking what life should be and how it should work is a question of great importance to Habitat members and the process of figuring out how it can be best arranged is an object of reflection and elaboration. The arrangement of life in Habitat follows a certain ideal of what life should be and practical considerations of how this ideal can be achieved. Rather than being in contradiction, the logic of necessity and logic of conscious design go hand in hand in Habitat.

This chapter starts with a description of what I call the 'max-life' imperative. Based on observations and interviews with participants, I propose that the max-life imperative serves as a normative and practical notion that captures the ideal of life in coliving. At its core, it rests on the idea that private and professional life should and can be arranged in such a way that both spheres of life are *maximised*; that they lead to a maximum level of experience and satisfaction. Inasmuch, the ideal of work-life cultivated in Habitat rejects the binary division between work and life that characterises the work-life balance discourse or the critical commentaries on the colonisation of life by work. The distinction between the two is replaced by an understanding of a unitary work-life project which should be filled with the maximum

amount of achievement and experience. The chapter then describes the practical arrangements of life in Habitat that seek to practically accomplish this vision of life, vis-à-vis the intense character of entrepreneurial work practice. I will illustrate the design of life in coliving through five inter-related themes: overlap of work and life, social automation, social moderation, understanding, and shielding.

7.2 Max-Life

In Habitat, life is seen as something that can be modified, re-designed and consciously re-built in order to achieve a specific desired effect. The idea of life expressed in Habitat and other coliving spaces could be accurately captured by the notion that all aspects of life should be maximised, so that life reaches the biggest possible amount of experience and/or most intense level of experience. The belief is that if life is re-arranged in line with imperatives of practical efficiency, it will become possible to fit an increased amount of both professional and personal enjoyment within a single lifetime. Rather than simply drowning life in work, we can see a reorganisation of life to consciously make life work differently. I propose to understand it through a principle I am calling 'max-life'.

The idea of max-life is based on the premise that life is something that can and should be maximised. Professional success, enjoyment of non-work time, the experience of various objects of consumption (of goods, of events, of relationships) should reach a maximum level. The idea is different from work-life balance, as rather than balancing, the task becomes one of redesigning life so it can fit more of 'work' and 'life' simultaneously. In addition, work and life cease to be different spheres of action and experience and are rather seen as a continuation of a single work-life project. The idea of max-life is also different from life being fully sacrificed to work. Coliving spaces are certainly not based on the idea of indefinitely postponed gratification. Whereas

enjoyment of leisure and indulgence in (economically) non-productive pursuits should be moderated as part of the max-life principle, the moderation follows a principle of well-measured hedonism, rather than of ascetic life devoted to maximisation of economic utility. Rather than fully submerging life in the logic of economic efficiency and sacrifice of enjoyment, 'maximising' life applies the logic of efficiency to life in order to maximise the level of satisfaction, achievement, experience and enjoyment.

This is how one of the participants, Astrid, reflected on life during a casual conversation after dinner:

> 'I think we only associate ambition with a job and we quite often associate it with money. Instead, we should think about self-development and our goals and what parameters we set for ourselves. Like for me, it's not about ambitions; it's about reaching *maximum experience*'. (Astrid, Fieldnote #121)

She then developed the thought drawing on her experience during a recent break:

> 'I think that's what I got from my trip to Croatia and the Faroe Islands. I think people there really enjoy life. I think they don't necessarily have all those things that people here have. But I think they are happy. They can work long days but then they go home, and they eat meals with family and friends. That's what they say. They have fresh fruits and vegetables and they have wine and they enjoy it. Here people do not enjoy themselves that much.' (Astrid, Fieldnote #121)

In Astrid's account, long working hours or relative material modesty of life are not necessarily a problem. It is not the time spent at work that as such matters. Rather, it is the maximum level of enjoyment and maximum level of experiencing of life that is important. Work and life are not seen as being in conflict, as long as they are arranged

in a way that leads to (or rather, strives to achieve) a maximum level of experience. Arguably, Astrid's account can be seen as romanticizing poverty and material deprivation by framing them in the language of simplicity and authenticity. Nonetheless, it captures the idea that an ideal life is not necessarily characterised by short working time, but rather by the amount of fulfilling experience that can be achieved despite long working hours.

Kirsten expressed a similar idea about work and life. Rather than seeing them as two separate spheres of experience that should be balanced, work and life are connected through a medium of 'energy' that they give her.

> 'You know, Karel, I don't think in Habitat it is like this. People work a lot. I don't think it's about balance. Like this distinction… I don't think it is that important, at least for me. I think it is important for people to do what they get energy from, what they find a purpose in. It can be spending time with friends. But it can also be working. I think many people in Habitat actually get their energy from working on start-ups. So I don't think there is actually a balance. It's more about doing what you like' (Fieldnote #27)

Kirsten explicitly questioned the importance of work-life balance. Moreover, as she makes clear, she does not see work as a limit to self-realisation or personal happiness that should be balanced or limited. Instead, she understands working as a source of 'energy' and 'purpose'. In this sense, she rejects the idea of work as drudgery which underpinned most of the classical and early Christian thought about work (Anthony, 1977; Mills, 1973). In addition, the value of work here is not understood in the same way as in Protestant teaching as an activity that prevents sin from entering individual's life (Mills, 1973; Weber, 2001). Rather, she understands work as having intrinsic value

and being a source of personal fulfilment and individual purpose. This conceptualisation of work as a source of fulfilment of an individual life is not unique to Habitat. As other authors observed, the notion of work as a source of personal fulfilment and passionate investment is part of the entrepreneurial ethos in other contexts (Cockayne, 2016; Fenwick, 2002) and can be seen as a part of the contemporary justification of work more generally (Rose, 1999a). For our purpose here it is important to note that seeing work as a source of personal fulfilment, in the eyes of Habitat members, further weakens the perceived need to balance it with "life". Rather than the negation of "life", entrepreneurial work is seen as a way of realising life's potential and as a source of personal satisfaction.

The idea of life in Habitat is that both personal and professional aspects of life can be maximised, can attain the maximum intensity, level of experience and satisfaction. At its core is the idea that instead of being balanced against each other and their intensity limited, personal and professional life can be arranged in such a way that they both benefit, grow, and intensify. Rather than an act of balancing, arranging one life becomes an effort of finding the right formula and investing enough energy to make both aspects of life thrive. Achieving maximum possible fulfilment in both, without sacrificing any, is seen as an object of the conscious effort to practically arrange life to make the highest satisfaction in both feasible. During an interview, when asked about the negotiation of a boundary between personal and professional life. Stefan alerted me to his critique of the concept of work-life balance:

> 'I think, first of all, the word work-life balance is very misleading and flawed because it suggests that work and life are kind of two different things. You know. As if you wake up in the morning and you start something that's called life. And then you get on your bike and you ride to work, and this thing called

life stops and you start this other thing called work and then in the evening you

drop your pen and this work stops and you start this thing called life again. I

think it puts this very low bar on how fulfilling work has to be. Because it's

not even life then who cares. It's not even my life. I live when I'm not at work.

So, I find it very irritating'. (Interview with Stefan)

Stefan criticizes the concept of work-life balance because he sees work as being

inevitably a part of life, rather than something that can be balanced with life. This,

however, does not mean that he does not make a distinction between work and

personal aspects of life. Criticising work-life balance is not a way of dismissing life in

favour of work. Rather, both spheres of life are something Stefan is 'ambitious' about:

'The concept is still ok but I think you can balance your work-life and your

private life and your girlfriend and your hobbies and something but you cannot

balance work and life. That wouldn't make sense. But I am still someone who

still makes a very clear distinction between my work-life and my private life

and I have high ambitions for both these things. I'm equally ambitious about

my relationship as I am about my job.' (Interview with Stefan)

Rather than balancing, the approach to life turns into a task of arranging intense work

and personal life in a way that overall experience of life can be maximised. Within the

idea of max-life is contained conviction that it is an individual responsibility, or rather

an individual competence, to combine all aspects of life in such a way that they can

all thrive. Moreover, rather than being an act of balancing, achieving a good life is a

matter of conscious re-configuration and finding a solution that allows maximum

satisfaction and fulfilment, rather than limiting one sphere or another. It is an

individual responsibility, as well as individual craft, to set boundaries and to make an

arrangement which is most conducive of having fulfilled life in most situations. The overwhelmingly strong conviction was that achieving a perfect mix is a matter of individual choice. Niels captured this logic perhaps most clearly when asked if coliving spaces remove the boundary between personal and professional life:

'Your living situation is not what determinates your work-life balance or whatever you call it these days. It's your approach to your everyday life. You should be able to fucking decide for yourself. If you can't make that decision, just stop breathing. I have to say. Like what the hell is this about? [Person should be able to make] decision to say "I'm gonna stop working now and I'm going to take the rest of the day off and start working again tomorrow". If you can't make that decision, it's not about where you live. It's about you not being able to find out what is the optimal working rhythm for you. It's the same for everyone." (Interview with Niels)

Arranging one's life takes a form of reflection and planning that is amenable to change over time. Rather than achieving a rigid balance between work and life, the different spheres of life can be emphasised or played down depending on a life situation, current needs and desires. It is imperative for a person to skilfully arrange different aspects of life in order to achieve a maximum outcome without losing any important aspect fully from sight. This is how Jens formulated the idea during an interview:

'You have one hundred per cent [of time] and you need to fill it with something. So, if it's my choice to spend ninety per cent of my focus and time on work, I have only ten per cent left to do anything else. So I can choose it as I want. So in the next six months, I'll be working a lot. After that, I'll be working less and focusing more on my family. It is changing all the time. It's

not that you have to choose it right now and then you just live the rest of your life after that. It's a matter of focus… So it's a choice, really.' (Interview with Jens)

The max-life imperative that underlies thinking about work-life in Habitat rejects the ontology of work and life being two separate spheres of experience that can be balanced against each other. Rather than accepting the binary division between work and life, max-life imperative understands work-life as a single vessel which can be filled with the maximum amount of experiences. The distinction between professional and personal life is seen as less important and experiences should be judged, predominantly, on the amount of satisfaction and fulfilment they give to the individual. The max-life imperative replaces the act of balancing with the task of arranging life in such a way that facilitates the maximum amount of satisfaction and realisation in work-life, seen as a single project rather than as an entity split into the sphere of work and the sphere of life. This rejection of a clear separation between work and life is not unique to the discourse in Habitat. For example, in their review of changes in the ideology of work, Boltanski and Chiapello (2006) observed that 'the new spirit of capitalism' emerging since the 1990s increasingly rejects the separation between personal and professional spheres. This rejection is an important part of the understanding of work-life in Habitat.

If arranging one's professional and personal life is a problem that requires a practical, inventive solution, rather than balancing, we can understand Habitat, and coliving more generally, as a collective attempt at this solution. As I will demonstrate below, both official and practical, spoken and unspoken arrangements within Habitat strive to sustain a version of satisfying (or at least acceptable) life in relation to intense entrepreneurial work. In what follows, I will describe coliving as offering a solution

to the problem of combining ambition in work with a fulfilling personal life at the level of everyday life in Habitat.

7.3 Arranging the Max-Life

7.3.1 Work and Life Overlap: 'It's all Baked into the Living Situation.'

One of the ways in which Habitat reconciles high commitment to work and a desire to maintain satisfying personal life is through deliberate creation of a social setting where the support of professional ambitions and support of working life is seamlessly blended in with the domestic environment. This does not mean that Habitat is the main or even "second" workplace. The decision was made early on during the preparatory stage of Habitat that the residents should not use the coliving space as their main workspace. Work in rooms or in the communal areas is not forbidden or discouraged, but the understanding was that Habitat is not a place to 'run your start-up from'. This principle is firmly stated on the Habitat's website in a frequently asked section providing information for new applicants:

> 'Can my start-up work from Habitat? No. Habitat is not a co-working space, nor is it a "second workspace." Of course, you can have meetings and work from home, but it's not for running your business out of.' (Habitat's website)

This, however, does not mean that Habitat does not seek to influence one's entrepreneurial career. As the reformulation of the statement on the homepage signals, Habitat influences entrepreneurial lives through a conscious selection of its members:

> 'Just to get it straight, we are not a co-working space. The people in Habitat are close friends and roommates. We drink red wine, eat together, watch movies, and talk about everything from business to life and relationships. The difference is that your roommates also happen to be amazing innovators who

are changing the world just like you. In Habitat, we believe that nothing is impossible, nothing is too crazy, and everything is achievable with the help of a few fellow dreamers.' (Habitat's website)

Whereas making Habitat into a main workplace is discouraged, the coliving space seeks to create a social setting composed of individuals with the same mode of work (entrepreneurship), with experience and knowledge that can be of benefit to others, shared normative orientation towards work (seeing entrepreneurship as a means to change the world), and who help each other to maintain a high level of determination and ambition. In short, whereas Habitat seeks to resist becoming a workplace, the housing and living situation should perform a work-related function: it seeks to create a social environment which incorporates elements of determined orientation towards work and which through several elements enhance the chances of entrepreneurial success. The intended effect of this environment is again clearly expressed on the website:

> 'We've seen it happen many times that someone asks residents for help, an introduction, tips, or advice and solves a problem much faster thanks to our kick-ass network of talented, ambitious and well-connected people. It also helps that we have founders, coders, designers, and creatives living in Habitat, so even the expertise in-house is extensive.' (Habitat's website)

Habitat seeks to create a selective social environment composed of members who can contribute knowledge, experience and network to others and who display a high ambition in their work. In this sense, the 'living situation' itself should have positive effects on individuals' careers. To this end, prospective members of Habitat are selected in a formal application process involving a panel interview where applicants'

personalities and social competence are assessed alongside the level of their entrepreneurial experience and their potential to contribute to the 'knowledge' and 'network' of the Habitat community. This is how participants explained the importance of selectivity:

> 'You know, it's about attracting the right kind of people. You know… interesting people who have a good profile. It's also good to spread awareness about Habitat. … People need to be handpicked and selected… we must get the best people and they must know that we are here'. (Eva, Fieldnote #22)

> 'You have to understand we specifically select for kind of [hard working] people, right? So that's probably the main reason that the set of people that is here today is here today, 'cause we chose them largely on their hard work but also made sure they work on different things'. (Interview with Joren)

In Habitat, the ties of friendship and professional ties intersect. Sharing knowledge, help with resolving everyday problems with the running of start-up companies, and providing each other with access to members' professional networks were three most frequently mentioned work benefits of living in Habitat.

> 'No matter what problem I encounter in my work, there is always someone in the Habitat community that I can reach out to who's been through something similar or who knows someone who can help. From that perspective, the community really works. … Also, there's a network I can share things with. People are organising stuff. There is a lot of interaction. Yeah. The network is useful if I need something. You can always ask'. (Interview with Niels)

Even though Habitat is not a workplace, work is never far away. Part of this is the availability of help with everyday work problems, but also the more general

willingness of Habitat members to discuss the matters of start-up economy, to have a conversation about plans and ambitions and about the realities of entrepreneurial life. Habitat, therefore, offers a professionally supporting and motivating environment without a need to seek it in the wider environment outside of one's household. In the accounts of participants, it was precisely the combination of both elements that made Habitat an attractive place to live. In this sense, the living situation should by default have an effect on entrepreneurial work and success. We can say that the ideal is of seamless integration of work elements into the housing/living environment:

> '[In Habitat] we have good conversations about professional issues as well. But it's all kind of baked into the living situation. You don't have to. I mean, I think, If I were to live somewhere else like maybe in the apartment where people would be doing something very different than entrepreneurship erm, I would have to go and look for these conversations elsewhere.' (Interview with Kirsten)

> 'We don't see it [talking about work] as "Oh, I'm helping you with your company". Of course I am. But it's also helping you and whatever you might do in the future. You can probably use this. Obviously, you're also helping professionally and blah blah blah. But what I guess I also meant is we are friends and it's not like I'm going to start a clock now, because now I'm consulting you. No, I'm actually helping my friend.' (Interview with Sam)

7.3.2 Social Life is Automated

As Chapter Six illustrated, entrepreneurial life is, at least at some points in time, characterised by immense time pressure. This can be connected to the logic of bootstrapping and a need to combine financially gainful work with work on a start-up.

Sometimes, this is a result of a need to secure funds from investors, which involves considerable promotional and negotiation efforts. However, in a more mundane way, this can be a result of an intense everyday commitment to the entrepreneurial project and demanded by everyday running of a start-up and a need to meet deadlines for product development, promotion, sales and administration. Being busy, both in practice and in one's mind, becomes a normal, everyday fact of life.

The hectic tempo of - and intense personal investment in - entrepreneurial work imposes strain on inhabitants' social life. As I observed, and my participants pointed out, organising social life outside of work becomes difficult. The participants would often perceive an acute lack of time to get to know people outside of work and to organise social encounters such as drinks, dinners or cultural events. To this problem, colivings such as Habitat offer a solution. Collective living with 'like-minded' people means that some degree of socialising is 'in-built' into the home. This means, very simply, that inhabitants are surrounded by others by default without having to put too much time and effort into scheduling social encounters. This idea was captured, perhaps most succinctly and sharply, on a website of Habitat, in a post spelling-out most important benefits of coliving:

> 'If you are an entrepreneur, you probably have noticed that you tend to work more hours than some of your friends outside of entrepreneurship. Therefore, you might sometime have experienced the desire to be social, but realistically don't have the right hours or energy to practically plan something with friends. Living in a coliving space solves this problem. You find yourself with a built-in social life. If you're tired, go to your room and lock the door. If you're feeling talkative, go knock on someone else's door or make a post in the Facebook group and see if someone's up for a party, movie, talk, or bottle of

wine. Undoubtedly, it will only take a few minutes before you find yourself in good company.' (Habitat's website)

Participants saw the fact that Habitat comes with 'in-built' friendship and support network as one of its key advantages, partly because they do not require extensive time investment:

'With all the stuff that I do, it's a problem of how do you have a social life without having tons of time to do that. But when you're here, you come home from work and you are with people that you trust and you have conversations with. It's all just there when you get home. You don't have to go out and look for it. Like I couldn't personally make a lot of appointments to meet with people and go out for drinks. Because I just don't have time in my schedule to do that… Habitat, I think for all of us, it creates so much more efficiency and quality in the, in our social connections (Interview with Kirsten)

'Like one reason [to move to Habitat] was obviously a social reason. I wanted to meet more people. Because working in my start-up it gives me a very limited opportunity to socialize and I was living alone. … So I mean the main reason was that I wanted to increase my social network. Because I did not get the time to socialise too much because of my work. So this basically gave me an opportunity to be kind of forced to take time out. And obviously, because I'm living in this place, I get to meet more people'. (Interview with Raj)

Coliving gets rid of the hassle of arranging social encounters and makes them available 'by default' as they are 'inbuilt' in the living situation of Habitat. Social automation, or social life by default, is seen as one of the main advantages of living in Habitat. As many participants reported, this is especially needed as they feel they are too busy with

their work or simply do not feel to have the energy to spend on organising time with friends outside of work. In a sense, coliving offers a convenient solution to keep some social life without sacrificing work-related ambitions and efficiency.

7.3.3 Life is Carefully Moderated

Built-in social life was seen as a key feature by inhabitants and events, both regular and irregular, were set in the common schedule to keep the flow of entertainment going. Besides regular events such as common dinners happening bi-weekly, Habitat inhabitants would organise parties to mark a special occasion (e.g. a resident moving in and out) or enjoy the company of each other and guests (e.g. summer barbeque). Everyday life in Habitat also includes an occasional glass of wine or whiskey, a collective cigarette break or just a chat in a kitchen over a cup of coffee. Inasmuch, everyday life in Habitat is not characterised by the absence of leisure and socialising. However, what I found striking is how non-work aspects of life are 'carefully moderated'. This can be illustrated with several examples of organisation and rhythm of social events in Habitat.

When attending my first common dinner in Habitat, one feature of the event struck me from the beginning. I was impressed with the way that the occasion was carefully prepared. A lot of attention was paid to the quality of food, and to the way the dinner table was set. This is how I recorded the occasion in my field notes:

> I arrived at the apartment very shortly before 18.30, when the dinner was set to start. Quite a few members were already chatting in the room. One of the first things I noticed was how beautifully the table was set. It seemed that the hosts took quite a great care in preparing everything so the evening feels nice. Quite a lot of work and time had to be put into this. Stefan and Raj were frying

fish on a pan as the main course was fish tacos. Everything else (vegetables and condiments, including jalapenos, French dressing, and chipotle mayo) were ready on the table. Soon the room began to fill with other guests and we were asked by the hosts to sit at the table. It seemed that the dinner was very well-orchestrated and everyone knew what script to follow.

I sat between Sorren and Joren. We were encouraged by the hosts to start eating and everyone started to prepare their fish tacos, filling it with ingredients of their choice. I do not eat meat, so I have served myself with vegetables and avocado. The tacos seemed to be the right choice of a dish as it made the meal rather more social. We had to move different ingredients and condiments around the table, passing it from one guest to another. Stefan and Raj kept reminding guests about what is available on the table so they do not miss any speciality and reminded us that more is coming. (Fieldnote #26)

I noted on several occasions that communal events were prepared to a high standard and characterised by a careful orchestration of the shared time. Food, settings and occasional decorations did not have to be luxurious, however, were expected to meet a reasonably high standard and to guarantee comfort for guests. Be it Pancake Tuesday organised by Eva and Soren, Friday Morning Coffee organised by Niels or occasional birthday breakfast thrown for one of our housemates, the organisation of events and attention paid to their realization signalled that the time together is taken seriously in Habitat. This goes beyond preparing food or arranging a table. Making sure that members remember housemate's birthday and that they celebrate a special occasion in someone's life was of great importance.

However, the attention devoted to organising social events was accompanied by another tendency in social interaction. Even though a lot of energy and attention was invested in preparing events, this would not always be reflected by the amount of time spent enjoying the celebratory and uplifted mood. The pressure of time and the demands of work were only rarely fully absent from communal life in Habitat. In this sense, social life in Habitat was moderated by the ever-present awareness of remaining duties and time-pressures of entrepreneurial work. Life in Habitat was carefully moderated in a sense that social activities would not spill over so much as to disrupt the devotion to entrepreneurship.

Further observations illustrate this point. Towards the end of the first month of my fieldwork, three members of coliving were expected to leave the Habitat because they were moving abroad to pursue their careers in Asia and the United States. To mark the occasion and bid a farewell, a Sunday brunch was organised for Habitat members. After the brunch, the plan was to go together to an ice-cream shop run by one of the Habitat residents. Again, everything was prepared with great care. We were served two different kinds of smoothie and the table was laid with several additional fillings, including various kinds of nuts and seeds, oats or pieces of chocolate. All three members who were leaving were asked to announce to the group what are their plans for the future. During this time, I noted that Allison - one of the three residents soon to leave Habitat - was sitting on a couch and working on her laptop:

> Allison is still sitting on a sofa with her laptop on her lap. I asked her if she's working. "I have to. It came in yesterday", she replied. Allison is going to Hong Kong, where she's going to work for an IT start-up. Allison explained that she's going to arrive in Hong Kong on Wednesday morning, but in the afternoon she already leaves for Singapore on conference business. She's

worried about jet lag. She also says that she is doing some brokering on the side. Then she laughs and comments with words 'You know… work hard, play hard'. (Fieldnote #37)

Allison was busy preparing to start her new job and did not feel that she can take a rest during the farewell brunch, where she said goodbye to her friends. The situation is understandable; life events do not always happen in the way we planned and perhaps all of us have been e in a situation where things get a little bit too busy to relax. However, what I found rather surprising was the matter-of-course way other friends accepted the way she works during a social event. No one asked a question or discouraged her from working. It was the normalcy and acceptance of combining fun and work and its complete legibility to others that I found telling.

Soon after the meal was finished, conversation broke into smaller groups, most of it revolving around work.

> Within half an hour after the meal was finished, I noticed that many housemates have already left and only a smaller group was waiting to walk together to the ice-cream shop. There we were served an ice-cream made especially for the occasion. The discussion soon turned back to work, this time to Dana's business. Jack and Raj were asking where to leave a positive review to help the ice-cream shop. Dana suggested that Trip Advisor apparently is not very popular in Europe and it's better to leave a review on Facebook or Google. The discussion then turns to the details of Dana's lease on the shop and the prospects of running an ice-cream business over the winter. I note that this is a typical example of Habitat members talking about work in quite some detail on a day off. Soon after finishing the ice-cream, most people decide to return

home. It starts raining quite heavily and some of us take the bus. I follow Joren
and Steven back to Habitat. (Fieldnote #37)

Two aspects of this episode stand out. First, note the ease with which the conversation
and mood flow between leisure and work whereby jovial conversation and joking
switches to a general discussion of innovation in Tech industry rather seamlessly. I
noted on many different occasions that this is a typical situation for Habitat.

Second, and more importantly, I was surprised by the 'moderate' nature of
socialisation. Many Habitat residents made an effort to come to the farewell brunch
and as usual, the event was very carefully prepared and organised. However, I noticed
many housemates left very soon after the meal was finished and only a few people
stayed to go to the ice-cream shop. After the visit to the ice-cream shop, we did not
continue to hang out as everyone returned to Habitat, and as I suspected, quite often
resumed their work. In this sense, I noted, life *is carefully moderated*. The arrangement
of social time is taken seriously, both when it comes to the organisation of collective
events and their practical preparation. However, the time invested in enjoying the
events is limited by the need to work and focus on the thriving of one's entrepreneurial
project. The lack of time and easiness of switching from leisure to work was something
I wanted to inquire about further. An opportunity presented itself on the same day,
during a kitchen conversation with Kirsten:

> After coming back, I met Kirsten in the kitchen. She asked me what the most
> interesting thing is I have learned so far during my fieldwork. After a while, I
> said that I noticed events in Habitat are rather carefully prepared. That people
> take great care of the events they organise when it comes to organisation, food,
> and that people seem to care about everyone having a good time. However, I

added that I noted that these celebrations are sometimes restricted when it comes to time. 'You know. Many people have left already during brunch. The rest of us went to the ice cream shop, but then people seemed to be in a rush to leave'. I contrasted this with what often happens during a lazy afternoon out with my friends. Sometimes we would go for a lazy Sunday lunch and finish late in the evening drinking beer in a pub. To this, Kirsten replied:

'Karel, you need to realise that people are very busy here and they have a lot to do. Everyone understands that. Like, for example, Eva and Raj they had to go to work [on Sunday], and everyone knew that. Everyone understands that. I have a lot of work myself that has to be done today. And people understand that you have to work and we cannot hang out the entire day.'

I replied that it seems that communal life is concentrated into relatively short segments of time when everything is perfectly prepared, perfectly orchestrated. 'It seems that at those occasions everything must be perfect'. Kirsten replied 'not necessarily perfect. But it has to be meaningful. It has to be worthwhile'. (Fieldnote #40)

A similar conversation happened once again, this time over a cigarette with Frans, one of the veteran Habitat members. Like Kirsten, he asked me about my findings so far and I used this opportunity to hear his take on the topic of carefully moderated life. I mentioned that dinners and other collective events are carefully prepared. However, people often seem to be rather measured when it comes to the amount of time they want to spend enjoying them:

Frans: 'Yes… I think people are very time aware here. Very time conscious. They are very careful about their life and what they fill it in with… I think life

in the capital is very different from the rest of the country. There is more money, more capital and there is less time. You can see it on Sam who moved here from a smaller town. How he has changed…'

Karel: 'Do you mean he had to adapt?'

Frans: 'Not really. Not to adapt. But he learned. People here learn quickly.'

Both these conversations suggest that the feeling that the time which can be invested into socialising must be moderated is a normal, common notion in Habitat. Kirsten highlights that the business of entrepreneurial life is well understood among Habitat residents; it becomes a norm of life and being busy with work is respected. Members are not going to judge someone because they need to work during a social event or because they must leave early, as it is understood by others that this is a part of a busy entrepreneurial lifestyle. In both cases, being prudent with the use of one's time and not allowing an 'excess' of leisure that would interfere with entrepreneurial ambitions is a notion clearly understood and respected among Habitat residents.

Another episode illustrates the issue of carefully moderated life rather well. Towards the end of my fieldwork, it was our apartment's turn to prepare a common dinner for all the Habitat residents. The task fell on Arya and me as the other residents were either away or too busy with work. Arya took the lead, planning to cook lamb curry. I was assisting him with the preparations. For this dish, the meat had to be bought one day in advance and left marinating in a fridge. On the day, we started to cook early to make sure everything is ready for dinner. Soon I've realised that we might not have enough seats for everyone and I had to ask several Habitat members to help me carry tables from other apartments. Together with preparing food and necessary side-dishes, the preparation of the common meal took almost the entire day of work. As I noted in my

field notes, I was rather stressed with preparations, as I have never hosted that many dinner guests before. However, at the time of the dinner, we were all set and ready to welcome twenty-one guests comprised of Habitat residents but including few visitors as well.

> After most of the guests finished their meal, conversation breaks into smaller groups. However, I notice that very soon people start to take their leave. I find this rather surprising as the dinner only started around seven and it is only eight. Niels is among the first people to leave and I asked him, rather impertinently, why he has to go. "I need to go back to my to-do list", he explains briefly. I saw two other friends who are visiting Habitat tonight leaving and I asked them if they are leaving already. "Yeah, it's Sunday. We are working tomorrow so it's time to leave".

Again, I was surprised by the short time that most guests decided to devote to socialising after dinner. With around twenty people in the room, I would normally expect that people stay for a drink and a chat for a few hours after dinner. However, in Habitat, on many occasions the situation was different. What also differed was the expectation of understanding that work must often assume priority over leisure. The common understanding was that return to work is the important and often necessary principle that overrides expectations of spending too much time together after the dinner. At least at a time when start-up work requires heightened commitment, being too busy to spend a long time with friends is understood by other Habitat members.

When Svend, one of the founders, was recollecting the early days of Habitat, he captured the principle of carefully executed life rather poignantly:

'We had a moving-in party which was definitely legendary. And our house warming and our Christmas parties became fairly legendary since. But it's definitely not like there was a party every weekend. I think every weekend or every second weekend there were people drinking a couple of glasses of wine and then maybe hitting the town. But it's not like there would be a party in Habitat every weekend because there were a lot of people also working on Saturday and Sunday. And again, that's back to the kind of people who were living there. They were not students. You know, they were not traditional single people who were just having a good time. These were very serious, ambitious, talented people who wanted to change the world. And that was the first and foremost thing.'

The practice of combining the enjoyment of sociality and leisure in Habitat takes a form of careful moderation. To understand its character, a comparison with Weber's description of 'worldly asceticism' that was a central tenet of puritan ethic and origin of the spirit of capitalism (2001: 53–101) is useful. As Weber puts it, Calvinist puritanism demanded 'a life of good works' (2001: 71) where the totality of conduct of a believer 'at every moment and in every action' (2001: 71) was assessed on its moral worthiness and was a part of 'proving one's faith in worldly activity' (2001: 74). In this doctrine, any kind of 'spontaneous enjoyment of life' (2001: 111) was seen as sinful and holding the believer from realising 'the divine glory' (2001: 106). As Weber puts it:

'Impulsive enjoyment of life, which leads away both from work in a calling and from religion, was as such the enemy of rational asceticism, whether in the form of seigneurial sports, or the enjoyment of the dance-hall or the public-house of the common man' (2001: 112)

Careful moderation of social life in Habitat differs from the strict avoidance of pleasure characteristic of puritanism. Enjoyment of socialising, leisure and everyday pleasures are not seen as problematic or sinful, and it is to a certain extent collectively cultivated in Habitat. Rather than avoided, enjoyment of everyday pleasures and socialisation should be moderated so that they do not encroach on work to the extent that would diminish productivity and endanger the success of the entrepreneurial project. Moreover, moderation is not based on the categorising of some activities as sinful. Rather than being concerned with the nature of activities, moderation is purely concerned with quantity and extent. In this sense, it is closer to the ethical orientation described by Nikolas Rose (1999a) where the 'limit of the permissible' is not determined by restrictive moral doctrine and prohibition of acts, but rather by the imperative to prevent excess so that enjoyment of pleasures does not endanger productivity and effective functioning of the subject.

7.3.4 Life is Understood

As the last section illustrated, an important feature of social life in Habitat is that members understand that their roommates' work can take priority over a time spend socialising. However, the importance of understanding among residents goes beyond this aspect and encompasses the issues of lifestyle, ambition, and more general orientation towards work-life. Numerous times, I heard from participants that it is important to live with people who 'really understand you'. This understanding relates to the dynamics of life influenced by the intense and demanding tempo of entrepreneurial work. For example, it is expected that other inhabitants will understand why you are coming from work late in the evening. They will also understand that in especially intense and demanding phases of the start-up work, a housemate may decide to shut themselves in their room, being simply too busy and unable to 'afford' social

time with friends. However, this also means creating a social context in which subjective dimension of entrepreneurial life is understood, where one feels comfortable talking about both professional and personal problems and where friends are ready to offer practical, verbal and emotional support.

The wish to live with other people who 'get it' was at the very beginning of Habitat. During a 'legendary' evening, two entrepreneurs and founders of Habitat were drinking 'quite a bit of wine' and talking about life. One of them was living alone after a break-up with his partner, the other one living in a student dormitory, they were both looking for a new place to live. At that time, they came up with an idea about living with other entrepreneurs. Living together with people who 'get it' was a strong motivation behind their decision to start a coliving space. This is how Lars, one of the founders, described his experience at that time. Even though he liked living with other people in the dormitory, he often felt that the lifestyle of his housemates and lack of their understanding of entrepreneurship was limiting:

> 'It was because I have been in this start-up. I started three companies and was involved in entrepreneurship. So, yeah. In any profession like if you have been doing whatever for a long time and you talk with someone who is doing something different. It's maybe that mindset is different. People in my dorm didn't have an entrepreneurial spirit. It was more about studying, drinking and going to school. Studying, drinking, going to school… And I felt a need to be with people who understand me. It's frustrating If you don't have someone who understands and can share your experience.' (Interview with Lars)

Svend, the other founder, always lived either alone or with his partner. However, when meeting with Lars, he too felt a strong need to live with others, and preferably with people who understand the nature of entrepreneurial life:

> 'Lars was living in a dorm and he was actually getting pretty sick of living there, not because of the dorm. Not because of the concept of the dorm, but he was sick of living with people who didn't understand why he was doing what he was doing. He felt like he had to defend why he was working late and so on. And I had the same feelings in other places. Erm. In my life. Hanging out with people. … I think I had it with girlfriends and friends.' (Interview with Svend)

The understanding which Lars and Svend talk about is tied to understanding entrepreneurial work and its influences on life. It is about accepting a lifestyle built around extensive work (e.g. coming home late), about rejecting conventional rhythms of life (go to school, study, drink), and about valuing an intense personal investment into entrepreneurship. The desire to live with other people who understand was an important motivation that was confirmed in most accounts of current residents. In Axel's account, the importance of people who understand that entrepreneurial work does not stick with the limits of conventional work-life rhythm, is made very strongly:

> 'I'm always pretty interested in the whole idea of living with others. I've not been part of that way of living while I have lived in [this city]. It has always been my own place. But I wanted it. I mean, If I should live with others, it should be people who understood like the special way of living when you build stuff and you don't have like a nine to five working hours but you have your work. Sometimes and sometimes you don't. But you in general work [laughs].

As for instance, our conversations about having a weekend day, right, sort of a Saturday when you get things rolling. So, having people that sort of have some of the same mindset and eagerness to do stuff.' (Interview with Axel)

The hectic tempo and all-encompassing nature of entrepreneurial life can lead to the experience of stress. In that situation, Soren finds it important to be with people who experienced stress themselves, who understand it to be a part of start-up life, and who are willing to discuss things through:

'People understand here that you are stressed sometimes. My prior roommate is really relaxed. Was really relaxed. Like not a guy who stressed about anything. But in here a lot of people deal with stress and this kind of work situations so a lot of people here know what to do and how they handle it and so on, so it has been really nice talking with people who want to go into deep conversations with you. And that's also something people want to do a lot.' (Interview with Soren)

In Habitat, understanding also involves appreciating and maintaining intense emotional investment into entrepreneurship. In other words, it entails sensitivity to and consciousness of the significance of a life of a start-up to which outsiders might not attribute much importance. This entails both positive (such as closing a deal with an investor or finalising a product) and negative (such as losing money, start-up going bust) occasions. In either situation, the significance of these events and their emotional intensity should be understood by the Habitat dwellers in a sense that they are both rendered "real" (through sharing of emotional experience) and their effect is either collectively celebrated or – in a case of negative event – compassion is offered by fellow Habitat members.

'If entrepreneur gets an investment, he needs people who will not just say "great, well done". You need people who shout "fuck yeah" and who will celebrate. People who understand the difficulty of running a start-up and the significance of events like this. On the other hand, when things go wrong, you need people who cry with you, people who will cry with you when you lose an investor, for example.' (Niels, Fieldnote #1)

Understanding here is more than just about dealing with the problem. It is about understanding the commitment to entrepreneurship and helping to maintain it. During an interview, Kristian recalled an experience where he did not feel that his former housemates understood the significance of a work problem he was dealing with:

'[In a previous house share where Kristian lived] I would talk about this problem I had in my company that was very frustrating to me. There was a person who just got home from his or her job and they were like "so now we have free time, do you want to get a beer?". I was like "no, I have this fucking problem in my company. I need to fix this, because it's my responsibility". So there is this. It was not really felt on the other side of the table. What I was going through. And that I get way more in Habitat than in other places I lived. So that was my whole reasoning for applying in the first place. To get that sense of belonging.' (Interview with Kristian)

The understanding involves recognizing the significance of entrepreneurship and work events for individual life. This can mean attributing importance to problems or successes, but also more general shared understanding of devotion to entrepreneurship. Soren pointed this out during an interview. Understanding can be about collectively maintaining ideals and commitment to the entrepreneurial life. It is

about finding a community which understands the entrepreneurial purpose and which 'inspires' and 'pushes' one to do more:

> 'Erm. But the main reason why I joined Habitat was because I wanted someone to talk with and live with that was very interesting. Also someone who understood what I wanted to do with my life. And I wanted to about ideas with people who were inspiring and pushed me to do more. I didn't feel like I got that from where I lived before.' (Interview with Soren)

7.3.5 Life is Shielded

Entrepreneurial life should be understood by those who share a similar experience and perspective on life. The importance of understanding has a parallel side. It should also be shielded from unwanted or troublesome influences of those who do not. Throughout my fieldwork, I began to pick up references to what I begun to label as 'hostile others'. Hostile others are people who do not understand entrepreneurial life. They can be simply people who are not entrepreneurs and who do not understand what it takes. Often they were described as people who live 'standard' life of nine to five work routine and who maintain a clear separation between professional and personal/domestic life. They can be friends, romantic partners, family members, classmates, but also society in general.

The hostility of these others should not be interpreted literally, as they can quite often be people who are either indifferent towards, or more often caring about, the entrepreneur in question. However, entrepreneurial form of life should be shielded from people who could criticise its tempo, question the devotion, be worried about the impact the work tempo has on an individual, or simply think that entrepreneurial life is too hectic or damaging. Even though contact with these others is sometimes

desirable, it should not exceed a certain limit. To maintain an enthusiastic and sometimes devoted attitude to hard entrepreneurial work is seen as a delicate affair. As we have seen above, enthusiasm and devotion should be collectively fostered and fuelled. Interaction with questioning others can make this difficult and endanger the precious chemistry of entrepreneurial passion. Discouragement or pleas for slowing down can be seen as unhelpful.

This aspect occurred during another kitchen conversation with Kirsten a few days later. This time we were joined by Steven, Kirsten's friend from her time at the university in the United States. Steven asked Kirsten if she misses the United States. This is what Kirsten replied:

> 'No. Not really. I think if I haven't lived in Habitat, I think I would miss the entrepreneurial spirit, but thanks to Habitat, it's alright. I think this society is not entrepreneurial… I think they like a financially stable and predictable life. People here appreciate limited work. I think in the US it's different because you need to try harder to get somewhere. Like for example, you don't have to take a college loan here. Like you can, but it is optional. People here appreciate different work tempo, I think. And they often do not understand why would you do that [become an entrepreneur].' (Kirsten, Fieldnote #41)

In Kirsten's account, Habitat is seen as a space that maintains norms of entrepreneurial, risk-taking and hard-working life inside a society that prioritizes standard working time and predictability. This is seen as a product of social norms, but also of a welfare system that guarantees free education and enforces certain norms of work. In this context, Habitat is seen as an island of 'entrepreneurial spirit' that Kirsten would otherwise miss.

Shielding oneself from unwanted norms of a wider society in order to preserve the commitment to entrepreneurship was also mentioned by Astrid, who stressed the importance of Habitat for protecting the entrepreneurial drive from wider social influences:

> '[Prevailing societal norms] mean that you should not be different from everyone else. You should not really stick out. And that does not really work for entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs must be different. Entrepreneurs need to actually try to do something different. They need to be passionate about what they do. And it is much more acceptable now, but it was different some five years ago. Being an entrepreneur was not seen as a respectable career. It was perceived like you did not have a normal job. So it was important for people to be together with other people who understood what does it mean to be an entrepreneur.' (Astrid, Fieldnote #74)

In several instances, participants described the lack of understanding from their family members, most often parents. This can be simply because family members do not have enough knowledge about entrepreneurship and struggle to imagine what it involves. On occasions, this can mean contrasting the riskiness, unpredictability and occasional financial strain of entrepreneurship with more traditional prestigious careers in the corporate sphere:

> 'And it [entrepreneurship] is not like taking a nine to five job. It has been doing things that have frustrated my mom like hell, right? Because, like, [laughs] her little son not being like she imagined in any kind of way but always be sort of on edge, right? Erm, but that's what works for me. That's where I feel like I can do the most.' (Interview with Axel)

'I think my family is very ordinary, in this respect. Like, they've never done anything crazy. Never explored the world, never bought fancy stuff, always gave a lot of money to the family. Like, there is a lot of love, but there's nothing extraordinary about my parents. So they have hard times I guess understanding why I would do these things. And I also told them about some of the job offers that I got and they would be like "Wow, why you didn't take that?". You know. They just see the security and the simplicity of it; they are more risk-averse. I would take bigger risks compared to them. They don't understand it fully, but yeah, they support me.' (Interview with Sam)

Besides expressions of doubts about life prospects of entrepreneurial careers, the family also enters the picture in more everyday respect. As some participants reported, their close family members would occasionally express concerns about their health and wellbeing in connection to demanding entrepreneurial work. Even though the pleas of family members to slow down or take a rest are appreciated and participants understand the good intentions behind them, they also expressed a need to live in a domestic environment that sends a different message:

'People here try to help you, right? And then they are also really supportive. And I would say that's a big part of it that they are supportive about what you do. And they understand what you do. I don't know if that's a good or a bad thing, but they are not like like one's mum, right? My mum is often very much like "be careful with yourself". Like, watch out for your health. I just had another discussion about health when she was here the last time. Like a couple of days ago. It feels like whenever I say something nice that happened at work, a couple of seconds later she says something like: "But you have to take care of yourself. Promise me that you are taking care of yourself. Don't work too

much. Also, remember to take a vacation." Whereas people here are more like [exclaims] "Yeah man. Go! Dude. Trash yourself". Right? To some extent, this is awesome' (Interview with Soren)

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Habitat can be understood as a social arrangement that seeks to re-arrange life in relation to work through shaping the domestic environment and the nature of interaction within it in order to make a certain version of life possible and 'liveable'. I conceptualise this principle as 'max-life' which is an ideal of arranging life with an ambition to achieve a maximum level of success and experience in both professional and personal life. However, the modification of life in Habitat goes beyond an idea of what life should be. The chapter has demonstrated that life in coliving space is modified through a series of conscious and practical arrangements that create an environment conducive of a certain way of working and living. These include (i) intentional selection of members so as to create a situation where work and personal life *overlap*; (ii) '*automation'* of the social life which guarantees a degree of (relatively) effortless socialisation; (iii) careful *moderation* of fun and social interactions which seek to combine social life with high work commitment; (iv) curation of environment where high-intensity and ambitious work-life is *understood* and (v) *shielded* from a negative judgement of others.

In relation to perspectives discussed in the previous chapters, Habitat is not concerned with work-life balance in the conventional sense. Rather than balancing work and life, we see a reformulation of what life is (or should be) in relation to intense entrepreneurial work. Moreover, it would not be entirely accurate to interpret the situation in Habitat as a process of colonisation of life by work. It is true that life in Habitat undergoes modification and rearrangement in relation to concerns with work.

We can also say that, to some extent, the concerns with productivity, efficiency and success of working life are an important underlying factor motivating practical arrangements of life in coliving. However, it would not be accurate to describe the process as 'colonisation' in the sense that life hitherto standing outside of 'work' is passively colonised by work logic. Instead, what happens in Habitat is a conscious re-arrangement and modification of life, change in its meaning and everyday practice. Efforts to this effect are motivated by the desire to succeed in work, but also by the desire to live differently and to find fulfilment in "maximising" the life experience, including both work and leisure.

This is not to propose to abandon concerns with what scope of time is devoted to concerns with work. Neither is it to give up on critical engagement with how contemporary politics of work impacts ideals and imagination of what is the life worth living. In this respect, both work-life balance literature and critique of changes in lifestyle are meaningful. Rather, this is to suggest that critical analysis of work-lives can benefit from going beyond the focus on balancing or colonising and encompass the way in which what life *is* and how it is lived has been shaped and continues to be shaped by concerns with work. Moreover, in this equation, life should not be understood as simply the "victim" or an object that is passively shaped by work, but rather as a sphere with its own dynamic, routines and tendencies that make certain work-life scenarios more acceptable and desirable than others.

Chapter Eight: Power, Self, Work and Life

8.1 Introduction

Chapters Four and Five discussed how ethical orientations to work, characteristics of work situation, and patterns of social reproduction lead to a particularly intense commitment to work and contribute to a coalescence of what would be conventionally understood as professional and personal life. Chapters Six and Seven then explored how is personal and domestic life in coliving reformulated and practically rearranged so it is compatible with the high tempo and heavy demands of entrepreneurial work-life. However, what was so far covered only to a limited extent is the question of how individuals in coliving reflect on and relate to their work and life. In other words, the question remains how they understand themselves as working and living subjects and how they position themselves in relation to the ideal of work-intensive lives in coliving. The theme of the relationship of the subject to work and life in coliving is an issue addressed in this and the following chapter.

Contemporary social science and social theory offer several ways through which the conduct of the subject can be understood (Laidlaw, 2014). Are members of coliving obeying the dictate of material and discursive structures? Or are they seeking success in entrepreneurship and life in coliving because they were socialised and disciplined in a particular way? Are they simply adhering to the command of authoritative ethical doctrine, or are they freely shaping themselves into a particular kind of a subject, carving the space for autonomous existence in opposition to the dominant rules of work and life? This and the following chapter consider these questions in a dialogue with Foucault's social theory of power, subjectivity and practices of the self and its applications in contemporary sociology and organisation studies. This chapter

develops an analytical position through conversation with contemporary Foucauldian scholarship. The next chapter applies this perspective on the "existentialist" way of relating to and reflecting on work and life in coliving space.

This chapter takes Foucault's account of power over life as an inspiration and as a point of reference. Foucault's understanding of power has been extremely influential in reflection on work and life in social theory, sociology of work, and organisation and organisation studies (Burrell, 2006; Clegg et al., 2006; Mennicken and Miller, 2014; Warren, 2016) and it continues to be an influential source for thinking about life, work and power. Rather than providing an overview of Foucault's writing on the subject and themes developed in Foucauldian tradition of research, I organise a discussion about the set of questions in reception and discussion of Foucault, seek to clarify my understanding and reading of aspects of Foucauldian thought, and give pointers for empirical analysis of relating to work and life in coliving that is developed in Chapter Nine. This chapter starts with a brief summary of Foucault's understanding of power over life as it developed in Europe since the seventeenth century. I will emphasise links Foucault makes between capitalist work and production and power over life as well as his thoughts on how central political conflicts of our era are formulated around a question of 'life as a political object'(Foucault, 1998: 145).

The chapter then discusses three issues in Foucauldian reflections on working lives. Firstly, the reformulation of Foucault's thought on power in relation to developments of neoliberalism and society of control. While I appreciate the contribution in this area, I criticises the tendency to overestimate the extent of change and the simplistic, 'desocialising' (Newton, 1996: 137) view of the subject. Secondly, I consider reflections on Foucault's work on technologies of the self. In doing so, I argue against the tendency to simplistically associate technologies of the self with autonomy and

reflexivity and argue for an understanding of the relationship to the self within a larger power situation. Thirdly, I discuss the meaning of reflexivity in Foucauldian accounts of neoliberal discourses of work. I appreciate the critical accounts. However, I argue against associating reflexivity with critique and resistance. Instead, I argue for understanding reflexivity as a socially situated phenomenon and suggest exploring specific ways of reflecting and their implications.

8.2 Foucault's Analysis of Power over Life

Foucault's understanding of power and subject is well established in contemporary social theory and social science, including the area of sociology of work, critical management studies and organisation studies. It is therefore not necessary to give a long and detailed elaboration of basic concepts. However, the vast scope of interpretation and re-interpretation conducted both by Foucault and his various interlocutors often involve different points of emphasis, differing definitions and at times, contradictory arguments. Therefore, it would be useful for the analysis to clarify what I mean by power over and through life in Foucault's work.

Foucault offers perhaps the clearest and most systematic description of his understanding of power in relation to life in the first volume of *History of Sexuality*. Here, Foucault describes what he calls the moment of 'entry of life into history' which means 'the entry of phenomena peculiar to the life of human species into the order of knowledge and power, into the sphere of political techniques' (Foucault, 1998: 141–142). Of course, there always existed power in human societies. However, until what Foucault considers to be a turning point in roughly the seventeenth century in Europe, power would predominantly exist as a 'power to decide life and death' (1998: 135) or 'the right to take life or let live' (Foucault, 1998: 136). In line with Foucault's earlier description of sovereign power (Foucault, 1977), power here exists as something

mostly negative, a right to seize life in specific moments, the ability to end life in reaction to acts of breaking the order, acts of disobedience or resistance.

Foucault locates the change in the way power relates to life roughly in 17th century Europe. Rather than power working against life (being able to seize life and end life), it starts to work on and through life, applied 'at the level of life itself' (1998: 143). Life becomes an object which power seeks to 'maximize' (1998: 123). Rather than limiting life when needed, European societies at that time saw a reformulation of techniques of power which were instead 'bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them' (1998: 136). In other words: 'now it is over life, throughout its unfolding, that power establishes its dominion' (1998: 138). Foucault calls this new modality of power over life 'biopower' and sees it as formulated through two basic 'poles', discipline and biopolitics, or 'subjugation of bodies and the control of populations' (1998: 140).

The concept of discipline (or disciplinary power) that Foucault described most exhaustively in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977) he calls here 'an *anatomo-politics of the human body*' (Foucault, 1998: 139). The disciplines are:

> '…centered on a body as a machine: its disciplining, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls…' (1998: 139)

Foucault calls the second crucial form of power included in biopower *biopolitics of population*. Rather than focusing on the individual body as the discipline does, biopolitics takes a population as its object of focus and intervention. Biopolitics:

'…focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological process: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary.' (Foucault, 1998: 139)

Foucault also connects the development of biopower to the development of capitalism, not necessarily as a direct result, but definitely as a synchronous and related process and as a necessary condition of the ascendancy of capitalist relations of production:

'This biopower was without question an indispensable element in the development of capitalism; the latter would not have been possible without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic process. But this was not all it required; it also needed the growth of both these factors, their reinforcement as well as their availability and docility; it had to have methods of power capable of optimizing forces, aptitudes, and life in general without at the same time making them more difficult to govern. If the development of the great instruments of the state, as *institutions* of power, ensured the maintenance of production relations, the rudiments of anatomo- and bio- politics, created in the eighteenth century as *techniques* of power present at every level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies), operated in the sphere of economic processes, their development, and the forces working to sustain them.' (1998: 141)

The new modality of power that is biopower and centres on maximisation, fostering and regulation of life, however, was not without opposition. As is a common principle

that pervades Foucault's work, technologies can change the way power is organised and the way it operates. However, this does not mean that the new economy of power does not generate opposition, resistance and struggles. Rather, we could say that invention and increasing application of technologies of biopower led to a redefinition of the object and strategy of these struggles:

> '… against this power that was still new in the nineteenth century, the forces that resisted relied for support of the very thing it invested, that is, on life and man as a living being. Since the last century, the great struggles that have challenged the general system of power were not guided by the belief in a return to former rights; … what was demanded and what served as an objective was life, understood as the basic needs, man's concrete essence, the realization of his potential, a plenitude of the possible. Whether or not it was Utopia that was wanted is of little importance; what we have seen has been a very real process of struggle; life as a political object was in a sense taken at face value and turned back against the system that was bent on controlling it.' (1998: 144–145)

In sum, the modernity is, in Foucault's understanding, characterised by ascendancy of a new type of power which makes human life its primary object. Rather than to simply restrict life or end it in the specific moment where the norms are breached, power in modern societies begins to function as a continuous mechanism which shapes, forms and invests life with a goal to maximise both its docility and utility. The process, however, is never complete. The invention of the new technologies of power did not lead to a situation of total domination, but rather to a shift in the object of social and political struggles, which would now make life its primary object of contestation. Rather than focusing on the ancient or feudal idea of the right to be shielded from

effects of power, the new battle map was charted which put at its centre contesting requirements of what version of human life is acceptable and desirable and what material arrangements are necessary for its realisation.

8.3 Neoliberalism, Societies of Control, and Decline of Disciplinary Organisation

An important theme in the contemporary Foucauldian scholarship concerns the development of the themes of power, subjectivity and organisation in reaction to the onset and transformations of neoliberal capitalism. This line of theorising is often based on the development of Foucault's remarks on neoliberal governmentality (2008). I will first very briefly describe Foucault's thoughts on neoliberalism in relation to power and subjectivity. Secondly, I will show how the themes were developed in relation to organisation and work in governmentality studies (Rose et al., 2006) and in relation to Deleuze's 'update' of Foucault concerning the onset of societies of control (Deleuze, 1992). Most importantly, I will sketch some reservations concerning the tendency to downplay social and organisational influences within contemporary politics of working life and explain the implications for understanding coliving.

In his thought about the onset of neoliberalism (which he theorised before New Right ascendancy), Foucault claims that the ideal agent of neoliberal governmentality is a figure of homo economicus in the shape of an 'entrepreneur of the self' (2008: 226). It is a notion of an individual who approaches life as an investment project and rationally applies cost and benefits analysis to decisions in all spheres of life with a goal of maximising its 'human capital', expecting this human capital to yield present and future profits:

'Homo economicus is an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur of himself. This is true to the extent that, in practice, the stake in all neoliberal analyses is the replacement every time of homo œconomicus as partner of exchange with a homo œconomicus as entrepreneur of himself, being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of [his] earnings.' (Foucault, 2008: 226)

The neoliberal way of government alters the way the subject of government is addressed and has important implications for the operation of power in the late twentieth century. In his analysis, Foucault sketched a society in which power operates rather differently from the disciplinary model:

'… you can see that what appears on the horizon of this kind of analysis is not at all the ideal or project of an exhaustively disciplinary society in which the legal network hemming in individuals is taken over and extended internally by, let's say, normative mechanisms. Nor is it a society in which a mechanism of general normalization and the exclusion of those who cannot be normalized is needed. On the horizon of this analysis we see instead the image, idea, or theme-program of a society in which there is an optimization of systems of difference, in which the field is left open to fluctuating processes, in which minority individuals and practices are tolerated, in which action is brought to bear on the rules of the game rather than on the players, and finally in which there is an environmental type of intervention instead of the internal subjugation of individuals.' (Foucault, 2008: 259–260)

Foucault's thoughts on neoliberal governmentality have been picked up and developed by what is known as the governmentality school (Barry et al., 1996; Miller and Rose,

2008; Rose, 1999b; Rose et al., 2006) and analysis of this tradition also includes important re-formulations of the terrain of politics of life and work. We can say that the model of homo economicus is generalised into an ideal model of life in neoliberal capitalism, including questions of work and production. Through a series of policies, citizens should be 'activated' to increasingly accept responsibility for individual welfare and use 'private initiative' to navigate their economic lives (Lesenich, 2010). Employees are increasingly seen as entrepreneurial subjects finding self-actualisation in work and working towards increasing employability (Rose, 1999a, 1999b; Du Gay, 1996). Discourses of enterprise and personal investment are not limited to the workplace. They circulate through self-help books and articles and are at points adopted collectively outside of formal organisational settings (Fridman, 2014). This does not apply exclusively to employees. Boland (2016) explores the ways in which the unemployed are asked to self-discipline themselves, to adopt a particular self-fashioning attitude, change their attitudes, and master art of impression management. In a sense, the very personality of an individual is seen as an economic project and life can be understood as an enterprise.

Foucault's remarks on neoliberal changes in the modality of power also led to calls for reconsideration of how power involves and influences subject (Binkley, 2009, 2011; Burchell, 1996; Dilts, 2011; Fridman, 2014; McNay, 2009; Read, 2009). Firstly, these accounts stress the decline of normalisation in the sense of applying rigid norms for the exclusion of certain subjectivities and lifestyles. In other words, authors stress the decline of important normalising divisions. Instead of strict policing of normative and social boundaries, the new modality of power seeks to alter thought and behaviour 'not through the imposition of social conformity, but through the organized proliferation of individual difference in an economized matrix' (McNay, 2009: 56).

Secondly, what changes is the decline of the importance of institutional and organisational forms of power. Power in disciplinary societies relied heavily on mechanisms of power concentrated within enclosed spaces of surveillance and training (school, hospital, prison, asylum, factory). In contrast, power in neoliberalism relies less on disciplining subjects in specific institutional contexts and relies more on subjects' willingness to engage in self-management and self-control across social and organisational contexts. The surveillance and disciplinarian mechanisms are increasingly replaced by ways of encouraging individuals to adopt self-regulating strategies of maximisation of utility and happiness and view their lives as a type of self-governing enterprise (McNay, 2009).

A similar line of reasoning was developed in reaction to Deleuze's text *Postscript on the Societies of Control* (1992) which received considerable attention in academic circles, including in studies of work and organisation (Lazzarato, 2006; Martinez, 2011; Peters, 2011; Pongratz, 2011). The text was intended as a speculation on the need to revise Foucault's thesis about disciplinary society for changing conditions of post-Fordist or neoliberal capitalism. In fact, Deleuze claimed that Foucault foresaw movement away from the importance of the disciplinary form (Deleuze, 1997). According to Deleuze, Foucault saw disciplines as something we are 'slowly ceasing to be' and emphasised the need to analyse apparatuses 'taking shape in attitudes of open and constant *control* that are very different from the recent closed disciplines' (Deleuze, 2007: 345–346). Deleuze's text contains two main theses about the change of functioning of power in contemporary capitalism.

Firstly, Deleuze postulates a crisis and decline of disciplinary institutions (such as prison, hospital, factory, family, barracks). These 'spaces of enclosure' (1992: 3) were based on discipline practiced within enclosed and functionally specific environments.

Even though the functioning of disciplines in each of the institutions was analogous, there was nonetheless discontinuity when it comes to their specific requirements and roles they enforced. According to Deleuze, analogous but discontinuous spaces of enclosure are increasingly giving way to the mechanisms of control which do not rely on enclosure and discontinuous control, but rather operate throughout the social space and seek to maintain continuous influence on the individual.

Secondly, besides operations of power being less dependent on particular institutional enclosed context, it is also the modality of power that is changing from discipline to control. This is perhaps best illustrated by Deleuze's metaphor of disciplinary technologies as moulds and control as modulation. Moulds give the matter a stable shape, produce distinct castings, each fit for a particular purpose. Modulation, on the other hand, works on the signal, tweaking its own properties, changing its frequency. Rather than forming matter and producing a permanent shape, modulation regulates the received signal, changing its volume or pitch according to a current need. Whereas moulds shaped an individual into a concrete form (student, worker, soldier), modulation presupposes an incoming signal with distinct qualities which are then shaped in agreement with a particular (and perhaps transient) need. Deleuze's remarks on the notion of 'motivation' (1992: 7) in the sphere of employment suggest that the webs of society of control presuppose an individual working on his own will (signal) to undergo ceaseless self-transformation, rather than waiting to be shaped into a stable form according to particular disciplinary needs.

Deleuze's thesis was also applied to the changing politics of work and working life. For example, Lazzarato (2006) claims that workers are no longer primarily controlled through spaces of confinement (such as the factory) and disciplinary mechanisms within them, but rather through public mass communication and flows of information.

Martinez (2011) points out the increasing utilisation of continuous modes of surveillance and performance monitoring through digital technologies, which are complementing the hierarchical structures of control and command. Pongratz (2011) and Peters (2011) highlight the way in which education increasingly stresses the value of future employability and valorisation of human capital, thus producing self-guiding and self-assessing workers, who are in turn easily controllable without a need for a disciplinary oversight.

The accounts of societies of control and neoliberal governmentality offer interesting insights into how the Foucauldian analytics of power over life can be brought up to date in order to make sense of developments of neoliberal or post-Fordist capitalism. However, the emphasis on change here should be taken with some caution. The danger lies in potentially overstating novel trends that lend themselves to theoretical innovation and sacrificing more detailed analysis of how different (and sometimes contradictory) influences operate in specific social settings. The supposed decline of normative and disciplinary organisational forms can be exaggerated. It does not seem that school, prison, hospital or factories are going away any time soon, albeit the logic of their functioning might be shifting. We can say that the organisation of work and production is undergoing changes. However, this does not simply mean the abandonment of surveillance, control and disciplinary mechanisms (Alvesson and Thompson, 2006). There are well-documented influences of enterprise discourse and attempts to reformulate the role of the employee as self-reliant entrepreneurial subjects (Du Gay, 1996; Rose, 1999a). However, these discourses and efforts operate alongside and are frequently constrained by more "traditional" and bureaucratic rules and forms of control, such as budgetary accountability, performance measures, and hierarchically imposed standards (Armstrong, 2015; Fournier and Grey, 1999). By the same token,

whereas governments and public welfare institutions might indeed be trying hard to 'incentivize' populations through propagating economic self-reliance and entrepreneurial activity, this often goes hand in hand with punitive and disciplinary measures (Greer, 2016).

The additional problem is that the focus on the shift to neoliberal governmentality or societies of control can sometimes lead to downplaying of social and organisational dynamics of power in contemporary societies. Studies which focus on more subjective dimensions of neoliberal power often stick with studies of textual resources and explore how they formulate a certain version of subjectivity. For instance, Binkley (2009) explores the self-help bestseller *The Tale of Two Dads* to describe how readers are instructed to adopt a more calculative and entrepreneurial approach to work and finance. His study should enrich our understanding 'of the inner life of neoliberal subject' (2009: 61) and 'the practical, ethical work individuals perform on themselves in their effort to become more agentive, decisionistic, voluntaristic and vital market agents' (2009: 62). In a similar manner, Handley (2018) studies graduate employers' websites to document the extent to which 'employers shape graduating students' subjectivities' (2018: 239) and work by 'extending mechanisms of managerial control into the pre-employment domain, thereby making graduate employees more governable' (2018: 253).

The obvious limitation is that the study of texts does not tell us much about whether and how they are actually read by individuals and to what extent they lead to the effects that are implied. However, more importantly for the subject of this dissertation, these studies often omit organisational and social structures in which prescriptions and norms for subjectivity operate. Newton calls this trend in Foucauldian analysis 'desocialising tendencies' (1996: 137) meaning the reduction of the subject to the

product of discourses without explicating the social process in which subjects learn and adopt the discourse which creates a 'desocialised view of the world wherein it almost appears as though we read the text and we follow it' (1996: 140). Newton instead emphasises the importance of studying complex social arrangements that not-only disseminate the discourse, but also maintain socially shared norms and in which individuals are lead to adopt 'an appropriate practical consciousness, and display the subtle and generally tacit codes of behaviour' (Newton, 1996: 143).

Even if we accept the claim that the institutional and organisational context is changing and that power relies more on 'self-regulating' activities of enterprising subjects, this should not mean avoiding inquiry into how these techniques are nonetheless regular, socially mediated and how they are held together by various social and organisational contexts. Entrepreneurship and coliving is an important case in point. Entrepreneurs (particularly at the early stage of their project) are often engaged in individual or small group business activities outside of formal organisational hierarchies. In many ways, they should be a prime example of entrepreneurs of the self or Deleuze's self-modulating subject. However, the way entrepreneurial work-life is understood and lived is nonetheless importantly shaped socially and organisationally. Chapter Five highlighted how the discourse of improvement is propagated through organisational spaces (including the coliving establishment itself) and shared socially, rather than simply accessed by individuals. Moreover, a certain attitude to work and organisation of time is maintained through the conscious organisation of social ties an interaction.

Rather than proclaiming the decline of organisational influence and onset of the self-regulating subject, research should pay attention to the new collective and organisational forms that emerge within the new conditions. Coliving is a case in point. It is rather far removed from the classic examples of institutions within Foucault's

carceral archipelago (Foucault, 1977: 297). The members join voluntarily, undergo a formalised admission process to guarantee a place and in fact pay extra for an opportunity to live in a community of 'like-minded' others. Rather than organisationally imposed discipline, what we see is rather informal peer influence and social practices that seek to form a particular version of entrepreneurial life based around values of potential, freedom, and determination. Nonetheless, life in coliving is far from a vision of individual self-determination of the neoliberal or self-regulating subject. Instead, what we see is an emergence of socially and organisationally regulated life that follows collectively maintained norms with a high degree of regularity. More generally, we can say that in the situation of the absence of disciplinary organisation we can nonetheless see an emergence of perhaps different kind of organisation, rather than the decline of organisations or institutions as such or emergence of a free-flowing self-regulating subject.

8.4 Technologies of the Self and Reflexivity, Autonomy and Power

At the beginning of this chapter, I briefly described the key elements of Foucault's analysis of power as he summarized them in the first volume of *History of Sexuality* (1998). Later within the same project, however, Foucault introduced an important methodological shift. In the second and third volume, Foucault introduced a further dimension to the disciplines and biopolitics, what he described as 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1992). This is how Foucault describes the development of his thought in this period:

> 'After first studying the games of truth (*jeux de verité)* in their interplay with
> one another, as exemplified by certain empirical sciences in the seventeenth
> and eighteenth centuries, and then studying their interaction with power
> relations, as exemplified by punitive practices – I felt obliged to study the

games of truth in the relationship of self with self and the forming of oneself as a subject, taking as my domain of reference and field of investigation what might be called "the history of desiring man".' (1992: 6)

We can say that Foucault retains a focus on the ways human beings interact with various 'games of truth', however, he found it necessary to shift attention from 'sciences' that approach human beings as an object of their knowledge to the (related) games of truth that formulate how the subject should relate to and know itself:

'What are the games of truth by which man proposes to think his own nature when he perceives himself to be mad; when he considers himself to be ill; when he conceives of himself as a living, speaking, labouring being; when he judges and punishes himself as a criminal? What were the games of truth by which human beings came to see themselves as desiring individuals?' (1992: 7)'

Foucault studied what he calls practices or technologies of the self, understood as prescriptive and more or less systematised ways of relating, knowing, and acting on the self. Here his emphasis was (comparatively) less on the ways the sciences render the human being as an object knowable by formal scientific procedures, less on the ways in which institutions discipline and train bodies, but rather on the traditions of thought and action that prescribe a way for a subject to understand and act on itself. Importantly, these technologies are not concerned solely with knowing for knowing's sake, but rather seek to shape and transform life in relation with certain ethical imperatives revolving around a question of what it means to live a 'good life' or what it means to lead a life worth living. As much as ways of knowing, they are ways of acting on the self to change one's thinking and acting in a desired way in relation to a

specific (more or less systematised) ethical doctrine. What Foucault also calls 'arts of existence', or 'practices' or 'techniques' of the self can be defined as:

> '… those intentional and voluntary actions by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct, but also seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria.' (1992: 10–11)

The techniques of the self differ from the two poles of power over life – discipline and biopolitics – that I described above. Perhaps the most useful angle for illustrating this difference is by focusing on the contrast between how they seek to engage the human subject. In other words, we can highlight a difference in how much willing cooperation and active reflection they presuppose.

In principle at least, various kinds of discipline can have an effect on the individual without taking into consideration what individuals think about them or how they view themselves in relation to these technologies. The subject can be made 'docile' and 'useful' through procedures that do not require its approval. For example, a conscript can be trained to salute, to march, and to maintain certain body posture as a soldier without continuously reflecting on what it means to be a good soldier or perhaps even without wanting to be one. The disciplines work through placing the individual body within the architecture of power, by monitoring and training the body and by applying pressure and punishment when necessary. They become (historically speaking) effective quite often through overcoming misbehaviour and imposing certain norms of behaviour over a long period of time until the resistance is forgotten and the new way of being a subject becomes an established norm.

In contrast, technologies of the self demand more of the subject – its active and willing participation. Unlike disciplinary practices, these practices require the subject to actively consider itself in relation to an ethical ideal and to participate in self-shaping efforts. Cooperation is necessary and the subject must do its homework. For example, to maintain an ancient Greek ethical position of a 'free' subject of sexual practice required a subject to recognise moderation as being an element of freedom and the freedom of this kind to be an ethical ideal worth pursuing. It also required subjects to engage in active self-observation and 'vigilant attentiveness to themselves' (Foucault, 1992: 108), sometimes including record keeping in the form of written diaries. By the technology of confession requires individuals to reflect on their practice and to actively engage in introspection, if only to record their sinful thoughts to be reported to priestly authority. In this way, various techniques of the self necessitate active participation of the subject in the form of reflecting on the self in relation to a certain ethical ideal.

The dimensions of practices of the self in relation to life in coliving will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Nine and we do not have to cover the specifics of Foucault's investigation here. The issue I want to explore here, however, is in what relation are the practices of the self to Foucault's earlier work on power over life? And what understanding of them we should adopt in relation to themes of power, subject, autonomy, and reflexivity in the studies of work and organisations?

When dealing with the problematic of practices of the self, some accounts tend to interpret Foucault's work in a tradition that Nealon (2007: 10; see also Allen, 2011; Harrer, 2007) calls '180-degree turn consensus'. By this he means a tendency of commentators to adopt a reading of Foucault's intellectual development which emphasises the narrative of a movement from a 'middle' Foucault emphasising

various technologies that shape individuals (such as discipline and biopolitics) to a 'late' Foucault which explores autonomous ways in which individuals engage in reflexive self-fashioning and celebrates acts of individual resistance. The discussion about the shift from 'early' or 'middle' concerns with power to 'late' concerns with ethics and techniques of the self has to a certain degree influenced analyses and debates within organisation studies and the sociology of work (for an overview see Burrell, 2006; Mennicken and Miller, 2014).

The original adoption of Foucault mostly drew on themes of discipline and control and focused on the technologies of surveillance (such as a computer, CCTV, micro-management) that were increasingly adopted in post-Fordist workplaces (Sewell, 1998; Sewell and Wilkinson, 1992). From a different angle, Foucauldian analyses would theorise the ways in which workers' subjectivity is importantly and profoundly shaped by management discourse and organisation of production (Knights and Willmott, 1989). This theoretical and empirical focus prompted some influential critical reactions from labour process scholars (Smith and Thompson, 1998; Thompson, 2002; Thompson and Ackroyd, 1995) who criticised 'a shift in radical theory to Foucauldian and post-structuralist perspectives' for portraying surveillance as too omnipotent, power within organisations as too totalising and ignoring the practices of workplace misbehaviour and resistance. However, the critique of the overemphasis of power and a tendency to understand power as successfully saturating organisational spaces and subjectivities was shared by Foucauldian scholars who would at occasions see a turn to 'late' Foucault as a useful correction.

For instance, Burrell (2006) admits that the division of Foucault's work into three phases is 'easy to say but less easy to justify' (2006: 164), however, nonetheless uses it to make sense of different emphases of Foucauldian accounts within organisation

studies. He points out that these studies often drew heavily on the middle period and themes of discipline, panopticon and surveillance that Foucault developed in *Discipline and Punish.* Burrell argues that the third period's 'direct relevance for the social theory of work needs much effort to pull it into view' (2006: 164) and that limitation of organisation scholarship drawing heavily on *Discipline and Punish* 'provides us with very skewed understanding of what Foucault might have wished to say about organizing' (2006: 165). Burrell argues that greater emphasis on themes developed in the second and third volumes of *History of Sexuality* can shed light on the issues of the aestheticization of labour and sexual desire at the workplace. More importantly, through a focus on practices of the self that escape discipline and normalisation, it can offer resources to develop 'modes of understanding and behaviour' (2006: 174) independent of the dominant relations of power at work.

In her study of an organic farming community, Skinner (2012) also develops a critical reading of Foucault-inspired studies of work and organisation through engagement with Foucault's 'later studies of Antiquity' (2012: 906) and 'later work on technologies of the self' (2012: 907). As she says, her analysis following later Foucault 'sits uncomfortably with much of the Foucauldian management literature on subjectivity and may disrupt orthodox perceptions of how to apply Foucault's work to organizational life' (2012: 905). Skinner strives to counter the orthodox perceptions of Foucault as a theorist of power and domination through developing Foucauldian understanding of human actor as 'more active subject' and 'reflective and self-forming being' and emphasising 'autonomy of the self' (2012: 907). She draws heavily on the second (but much less on the third) volume of *History of Sexuality*, emphasising technologies of the self based on the principle of care of self, personal ethics, and self-examination. Her reading of technologies of the self understands them as a moment of

contingency within constellations of power and emphasises their potential for personal self-transformation:

> 'Technologies of the self provide an intervention mechanism on the part of active subjects, injecting an element of contingency to everyday encounters and alleviating the determinist effects that technologies of power would have otherwise.' (2012: 918)

I do not disagree with Burrell's and Skinner's well-grounded discussion of Foucauldian scholarship and I agree with their emphasis on issues of ethics, autonomy and freedom as a corrective to the way of reading Foucault which maintains a rather dystopian, all-encompassing view of power. However, there is a danger the reading of Foucault which juxtaposes 'early' and 'late' Foucault and associates the former with power and later with free self-formation and autonomy. As others have pointed out, Foucault saw themes of autonomy and power (or domination and resistance) as tendencies that are present in power situations, rather than as mutually exclusive principles (Allen, 2011; Harrer, 2007).

We can add that Foucault's conceptions of 'power' and 'autonomy' are not exclusive because they are not defined as transcendental categories, but rather as changing qualities that are immanent to a particular epoch and particular power constellation. Moreover, it is important to emphasise that Foucault does not seek to develop a general theory of subjectivity (i.e. ask a question if the subject is essentially reflective of self-forming) but engages in the historical exploration of how human beings are made and make themselves into subjects of a particular kind. In this respect, the effect of technologies of the self changes with their historically changing content and context. Whether they foster autonomy – and autonomy of what kind – and how they relate to

dominant power effects is not something that can be decided by theoretical reflection but should rather be an object of empirical analysis of complex power constellations. In sum, the conflict between domination and potential for emancipation is real, but the conflation of techniques of power with the former and techniques of the self with the latter risks obscuring more than it reveals.

The point can be illustrated by the way Foucault captured the transformation of technology of the self in his exploration of changing of relation of subject to the themes of desire and sexuality. I want to especially focus on the way Foucault illustrates the changing nature of reflecting on the self. In post-classical Greece, the approach to desire was characterised by the imperative of continuous reflection on one's desires and behaviours. The ethical ideal of self-mastery through 'moderation' (1992: 89) in sexual pleasures often called for a practice of continuous self-reflection that Foucault described as 'vigilant attentiveness to oneself' (Foucault, 1992: 108) and which was at points practiced through record keeping in the form of written notes. In this context, the meticulous practice of self-observation was aiming at establishing a reflexive practice of freedom through self-mastery.

However, as Foucault shows, the way of reflecting on one's self underwent an important transformation in the Roman Empire. The change did not take a character of a radical break, but rather 'a shift, a change of orientation, a difference in emphasis' (Foucault, 1990: 67). The problematisation of sexual pleasure intensifies the duty to undertake 'the care' or 'the cultivation' (Foucault, 1990: 43) of the self and the technologies of the self acquire a 'more rigorous style' characterized by 'a closer attention, an increased anxiety concerning sexual conduct' (Foucault, 1990: 36) which is now characterized by greater 'scope, constancy, and exactitude of the required vigilance' (Foucault, 1990: 41). The practice of self-observation in this elaboration of

ethics of the self changes from a record keeping to a more rigorous self-examination characterised by an imperative to 'not conceal anything from oneself and omit nothing' (Foucault, 1990: 62). Not only does the practice of self-reflection become more scrupulous, but its character changes somewhat. Whereas self-reflection in post-classical Greece had a rather practical and situational character, the duty to reflect on the self in imperial Rome increasingly referred to criteria of 'universal principles of nature or reason, which everyone must observe in the same way, whatever their social status' (Foucault, 1990: 67).

The nature of reflecting on the self in relation to sexuality has undergone more radical transformation with the onset of Christianity which replaced the notions of the care of the self with much more stringent 'hermeneutics of desire' (Foucault, 1992: 89) which found its purest expression in the technology of confession. Here, as Foucault points out, the task of the subject would be much less to reflect freely on its desires and passions but rather to search one's conscience for sinful pleasures defined by 'the law and … pastoral authority' (Foucault, 1992: 92). Christianity required different relations to one's desires characterised by the process of 'decipherment-purification' (Foucault, 1992: 70) requiring the subject to 'recognize himself in his singularity as a desiring subject and to purify himself of the desire that was thus brought to light' (Foucault, 1992: 89). It was the confessional model of knowing oneself that was adopted by the science of sexuality that established itself in the nineteenth century and which was adopted by modern apparatuses of justice, medicine, education, and family (Foucault, 1998).

The point here is that the relationship to oneself that technologies of the self foster differs across their historically variant formulations. It is true that this relationship can create space for reflective, self-forming, relatively autonomous way of knowing and

acting on the self as Skinner (2012) posits. However, this is an empirical, rather than a theoretical question. As we have seen, technologies of the self, while requiring an active participation of subject, can also work to extend the oversight of normative knowledge to the inner subjective life of an individual. Instead of simply associating technologies of the self with autonomy (in opposition to power), the analysis should ask what kind of reflection and to what ends a particular technology of the self cultivates. In other words, rather than asking whether the subject is reflexive, or whether the relationship to the self counters power, we should be asking what this or that way of relating on the self does, what effects it has, and at what costs.

Moreover, as I have already pointed out, the effect technologies of the self produce depends on the overall situation of power and knowledge of which they are a part of. The themes of authenticity, genuine self-reflection and autonomous self-creation can be effectively incorporated into the dominant ways of governing subjects, especially in the neoliberal power constellation which increasingly relies on forms of 'regulated self-responsibility and depoliticized autonomy' (McNay, 2009: 62). As numerous examples show (Binkley, 2009; Boland, 2016; Fridman, 2014), contemporary technologies of the self can both foster a self-reflexive, active and creative relationship to one's self *and* be perfectly compliant with the dominant ways of governing individuals. For instance, Boland's (2016) study of advice for job seekers shows how employability discourse incorporates themes of self-control and authenticity and freedom through enterprise. However, this problematisation of the self cannot be read in isolation from wider strategies of governing where responsibility for employment is increasingly shifted on the individual and success in the punitive job market becomes the final test of truth. The point is that the effect of the technologies - whether

they increase the autonomy in any real sense - depends on their combination with more complex power situation in which subject finds itself.

These points have implications for the analysis of coliving in this dissertation. As the next chapter will show, inhabitants of coliving space that I studied maintain a remarkably reflexive relationship to the issues of life and work and emphasise individual and collective practices of reflecting on one's life which emphasise freedom, autonomy and authenticity in what I call, following Hacking (2004), an existential attitude to work and life. However, to what extent this reflexive relation to the self is creating a space shielded from dominant relationship to work and to what extent it instead furthers commitment to exhausting and intense work situation is an open question. As I will illustrate in Chapter Nine, a self-reflexive attitude to one's self can maintain or even strengthen, rather than necessarily relax commitment to dominant imperatives of work.

8.5 What Does it Mean to Be Reflexive?

The next chapter will explore how members of Habitat reflect on their life and work. However, this aim begets a question of what we mean when we say that people reflect or that they are reflexive. As Lynch (2000) argues, reflexivity has a wide variety of meanings in social science discourse, ranging from a universal attribute of social actors to a specific state that is achieved through a concentrated introspection. Here, I want to discuss some ways reflexivity is referred to in Foucauldian studies of working life and sketch out an understanding of reflexivity that will guide the empirical exploration in the next chapter.

We have already discussed the contribution of Hancock and Tyler (2004), where they explore the ways in which individuals are increasingly asked to approach their lives

as projects to be managed. Among other things, they note that in our era, 'social relations become increasingly subject to the principles of rational organization, themselves underpinned by the profit imperative of contemporary capitalism ' (2004: 621). Further, they note that what we are observing is 'performative reflexivity and an investment orientation to the self' (2004: 630). Here, reflexivity oriented towards performance becomes a little more than a coating of seeping of productivity imperative and managerial ideology into the personal life, or in their words 'more performance imperatives than genuinely critical reflexivity'(2004: 639). Reflexivity that is encouraged in self-help discourse is seen as a part of bigger 'pseudo-rationality' which hides the performance principle of management discourse. Similarly, the promise of actualization through the application of self-help discourse is seen as leading to 'appearance of self-actualization rather than the genuine pursuit of an inter-subjective self-consciousness' (2004: 639).

Garsten and Grey's (1997) study of managerial self-help texts aims at an analysis of a phenomenon similar to what I mean by capitalist existentialism (Chapter Nine). They see self-help texts as essentially offering a strategy of maintaining an acceptable image of oneself in the face of changes brought about by the demise of bureaucracy and predictability within the sphere of work:

> 'In the face of widespread organizational change which some claim heralds the demise of bureaucracy, and in the context of the cultural and intellectual uncertainties of postmodernism, how do people in organizations respond?' (1997: 211)

In their account, self-help texts offer a promise of self-reflexive discovery of one's inner self, one's authentic personality, desires and skills in the face of anxiety and

insecurity caused by re-structuring of businesses and the cultural logic of post-modernism. Moreover, the advice in self-help texts is geared towards achieving 'things which seem to give meaning to life in the face of meaninglessness', such as consumption, leisure, sex, family, or as is our concern in the paper, work' (1997: 215). However, as they are quick to point out, their goal is to:

> '…identify contradictions within the how to phenomenon and to point to its disciplinary meanings and its ultimate inability to speak adequately to either the consequences of post-bureaucratization or the intellectual challenge of postmodernism.' (1997: 212)

In their analysis, self-help books that promise authentic self-discovery and individual meaning in an anxiety-driven world do not offer an authentic project of self-creation, but most of all present 'internalized rules of behaviour based upon common values' (1997: 214). In this sense, self-help books – rather than offering a prospect of reflecting on life – work as a tool of control of the subject in post-bureaucratic, post-modern environment. Not only do self-help books maintain a strong performance orientation (in the sense that achieving more is the leading motive), but they also extend the productivity control and work-ideology into the subjective life of an individual. In the end, the authors note that self-help mantras 'must be seen as congruent with the control problems associated with post-bureaucracy' (1997: 222).

What these accounts share is scepticism towards reflexivity as it is presented or promised in the powerful discourses addressing working life today. Rather than offering a real tool of self-discovery and conscious self-shaping, the reflexivity and the ways of knowing oneself within these practices are seen as blankets covering the extension of managerial ideology, principles of productivity and control of the self.

We can conclude that they share an understanding of reflexivity as critique and resistance. This means that to be considered genuinely reflexive, the subject would have to reject the neoliberal discourse of work and constitute itself in opposition to it. Or, at least, the reflexivity must be critical of the conditions in which contemporary life unfolds.

We can say that in contrasting genuine or real self-reflection and self-realisation with a mere semblance of these efforts, they set the bar rather high for what can be described as genuine reflexivity. This confounds the act or state of being reflexive with the pre-determined conclusion to which the act of reflection should arrive at if it is sufficiently reflexive. In other words, this means that reflexivity is only considered as 'real' in the case that it leads to the critique of the capitalist way of living and emancipation from capitalist ideology. This is problematic not because of the authors' own critical stances. Rather, the problem is that understanding reflexivity in this way conflates reflexivity and critique and makes it harder to explore how people are reflexive and what forms of reflexivity can lead to a critical stance towards the status quo. It also leaves an option that reflexive subjects can choose the way of life or self-understanding that does not convene with the critique of neoliberal capitalism. In other words, being reflexive means arriving at a particular conclusion, rather than capacity or an act of reflecting on the conditions of life.

There is no need to abandon the critical edge of these accounts, as they raise important concerns about the ways working subject is asked to relate to itself in the contemporary discourse of management and work. The problem is rather analytical and lies in the fact that understanding reflexivity in this way does not lend itself for exploring actual acts of reflecting undertaken by social actors. These works are based on studies of text and the visions of subjectivity they propose. What remains unexplored are the ways in

which certain cultural resources are taken up by people in their everyday lives and what processes of reflecting on the self and shaping one's self they can be used for.

Laidlaw (2014) makes similar points about the related issues of ethical reflection, agency, and freedom in social theory. He points out that in much of sociological and social theory, ethical reflection, freedom and agency is recognised only if it leads to 'actions conducive to certain outcomes: those that are structurally significant' (2014: 5). In other words, the actions that do not seek to alter the dominant structures of society or regular practices are then seen as unreflective and as explainable by causal forces and objective structures influencing social actors, rather than resulting from (at least to a certain degree) an act of ethical evaluation. Laidlaw calls for a reconsideration of the presence of ethical evaluation in analyses of social life. This does not mean to say that people are essentially good. Rather, it is to claim that 'everyday conduct is constitutively pervaded by reflective evaluation' (2014: 44) or to claim that '[people] are evaluative' (2014: 3). In addition, this does not mean denying that lives are profoundly influenced by structural forces. Rather, this approach calls for investigation of 'which kinds of relations enable, and which impede, the achievement of what kinds of freedom' (Faubion, 2014: 439).

I would argue that there is something to be gained from abstaining from what Eva Illouz calls 'pure critique' which demands 'counting the ways in which culture either emancipates or represses, delivers "trash" or "treasure", a position which in turn threatens to impoverish our analysis of culture' (2007: 92). As Illouz argues, analysis can gain much from temporarily suspending the evaluative stance and adopting a pragmatic position of exploring 'concrete cultural practices of ordinary actors' (2007: 93). As she continues:

'I suggest we analyse the social without presuming to know in advance the emancipatory or the repressive, but rather that we make these emerge from a thick contextual understanding of social practices' (2007: 95)

This means, among other things, paying closer attention to the practices of actors in which acts (in our case) of reflecting on one's self occur, appreciating their ambiguity, and analysing what purposes they may serve in contemporary lives, without foreshadowing them being necessarily fully emancipatory or serving merely the capitalist domination. In other words, this requires a pragmatic move from structures of discourse and culture to the inquiry 'about what people actually do with knowledge, how they produce meanings that "work" in different contexts and social spheres' (2007: 18–19).

Konings (2010, 2011, 2015) similarly calls for a more pragmatic understanding of the subjective side of life in contemporary capitalism. Analysis should, he contends, focus on the ways in which the versions of capitalist subjectivity allow individuals to shape themselves and act on the world. In other words, he argues for a shift of focus from 'forces that cage human agency' to the pragmatic understanding of how social rules are interpreted and applied by actors and the ways in which they 'constitute powers and effects of agency' (2010: 56). The question is what do the various discourses and practices allow an actor to do, how they make sense from a perspective of navigating life in contemporary society, and what they allow and not allow one to see and do, rather than solely on their ideological and freedom limiting effects. In other words, the question becomes how certain ways of acting and perceiving the world become 'subjectively meaningful and pragmatically useful' (2015: 25) for a subject and therefore attain a normative force as a guideline for acting.

This analytical position is compatible with the notion of reflexivity we can read in Foucault's writing on the technologies of the self. Foucault understood the ways of reflecting (and acting) on the self to be socially constructed and historically variable practices. In this mode of analysis, the question of what constitutes "true reflexivity" is bracketed from the analysis at hand. The primary concern is an analysis of the specific ways of reflecting and understanding the self as they are prescribed and/or practiced within a specific time and in a specific social context. The task of the analysis is to explore:

> '…the constitution of the subject as an object for himself; the formation of procedures by which the subject is led to observe himself, analyse himself, interpret himself, recognize himself as a domain of possible knowledge. In short, this concerns the history of "subjectivity", if what is meant by the term is the way in which the subject experiences himself in a game of truth where he relates to himself.' (Foucault, 2000a: 461)

and

> 'the forms and modalities of the relation to self by which the individual constitutes and recognizes himself *qua* subject' (Foucault, 1992: 6)

The task of the analysis is then to describe the ways in which the subject is led to reflect on the self in a specific tradition, rather than to pass judgement on whether a particular way of reflecting is genuine or not. Reflexivity here is historically and socially situated and shaped quality, rather than an essence of the subject or particularly 'critical' attitude. This does not necessarily remove the opportunity for critical evaluation of specific modes of relating to oneself. However, the question is not whether this or that way of relating to oneself is sufficiently reflective in absolute

terms, but rather what its cost is and what are its implications for relations to dominant structures of power over life?

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter has considered Foucault's formulation of power over life, considered its various developments and discussed how it was applied in accounts of contemporary working life. The chapter focused on three main developments in literature and through dialogue with empirical work formulated a perspective on aspects of power, self, and life that can be applied to the organisation of work-lives in coliving. The discussion can be summarized in three main points:

- The chapter considered the development of Foucault's thought on power in the tradition of neoliberal governmentality studies and works arguing that we are undergoing a transition from disciplinary societies to societies of control. These works offer a stimulating extension of Foucault's analysis of power to a contemporary situation which, arguably, relies less on disciplinary mechanisms and exclusionary norms, focuses on modifying actions of the subject, and relies on forms of control that can exist across and outside of formal institutions. However, the chapter argued for caution when it comes to claims about the decline of institutional and organisational power and formal bureaucracy. Formal organisation of work and production does not seem to be declining, and even when the principles of its functioning can be changing, "traditional" forms of surveillance, control and disciplinary mechanisms remains a part of their operation. More importantly for this thesis, I argue against 'desocialised' understanding of power and subject (Newton, 1996) that is partly present in some accounts of neoliberal governmentality. Focus on the text and individual practices should be complemented with attention to how is

the enactment of discourse socially mediated and focus on new forms of organising life of which coliving can be an example of.

- The chapter considered the question of exploring how subject approaches and shapes itself as it was formulated in Foucault's studies of sex and desire in antiquity under a rubric of technologies of the self. It has addressed the interpretation of this theme in parts of Foucauldian scholarship which portrays technologies of the self as a source of autonomy and resistance to power. Whereas I agree that technologies of the self require active reflexion and participation of the subject and thus potentially create a space for autonomous thought and action, I argued that this is largely an empirical rather than theoretical question. In Foucault's writing, technologies of the self *can* counter dominant power influences, but can also work alongside them and further their effect. This depends largely on specific content of a given practice and its position within a larger power situation.

- Finally, the chapter considered how is reflexivity understood in Foucauldian accounts. Following two examples, it showed the reading of reflexivity as being identical with a critical attitude towards neoliberal discourse. I argued that such an understanding of reflexivity sets the bar too high and makes difficult an empirical analysis of the acts of reflecting and acting on the self that can be performed by social actors. Instead, I proposed to focus on evaluative operations, reflection and pragmatic understanding of life by individuals and for uncovering how reflection actually works in specific contexts and what ends does it lead to. I argued that this perspective is compatible with Foucault's framework for understanding how the subject relates to itself in the technologies of the self.

The next chapter draws on these points and utilises Foucault's account of technologies of the self to explore the way Habitat members reflect on and relate to work and life. It argues that the approach to life and work in Habitat is characterised by an 'existential attitude' which emphasises the transient nature of social norms and human ability to design a life according to their own ideals. The way of relating to work and life stresses the need to reflect on one's ideals, desires, and preferences, and places emphasis on continuous evaluation through dialogue and introspection. However, this attitude and approach, rather than leading to the critique of norms of intensive work, valorises intensive and demanding – however reflexive – working life.

Chapter Nine: Existential Attitude and Reflecting on Work and Life

9.1 Introduction

Chapter Five addressed the intensive and demanding nature of working lives in Habitat. Chapter Seven described the ways in which coliving formulates 'maximising' attitude towards life and how it works as a social arrangement that makes intense entrepreneurial life viable. However, empirical chapters so far only partially considered the way in which individuals in Habitat relate to the ways and rules of working and living in the entrepreneurial economy and the coliving space. This chapter builds on and adds to the themes of the previous chapters by developing a more comprehensive account of how Habitat members position themselves as subjects in relation to shared values and principles of work and life. It focuses on the specific mode of thinking about, reflecting on, and relating to working life that I have observed in Habitat.

The previous chapter noted that in contemporary critical accounts, the way of thinking about self and work that is present in contemporary discourses is related to a notion of 'pseudo-rationality' (Hancock and Tyler, 2004: 639) or conflated with 'internalised rules of behaviour' (Garsten and Grey, 1997: 214). Rather than leading to a 'genuinely critical reflexivity' (Hancock and Tyler, 2004: 639), this form of reflecting on work and life is described as furthering projects of control and (self)discipline in a situation characterised by uncertainty, unpredictability, and lack of reliable organisational structures. Without disputing the critical diagnosis of these accounts, I question the theoretical validity of juxtaposing "real" and "pseudo" reflexivity, instead arguing for empirical investigation of socially and historically specific forms of reflecting and

analysis of how this is practiced by social actors. I propose to analyse the form of reflexivity formulated and practised in Habitat along the dimensions of Foucault's understanding of technologies of the self and 'constitution of the subject as an object for himself' (Foucault, 2000a: 461).

The empirical account opens, firstly, with a description of the 'existential attitude' (Hacking, 2004) that captures the essence of the reflection on life in Habitat, understanding coliving as a critical experiment with the way of living and capturing a version of reflexivity which is deemed to be stemming from the practice of entrepreneurship. Secondly, I explore how ideals of potential, freedom and determination are identified as central materials for reflexive and ethical work in Habitat. Thirdly, I describe how 'reflexive' relating to these ideals of work and life is expected and fostered in Habitat, with participants seeing a critical and reflexive way of thinking as one of its key features. Lastly, I explore how this way of reflecting is practised through a format of 'deep conversations' as well as an example of a particularly illuminating individual practice of conscious reflection on the role of work in a participant's life.

9.2 Foucault and the Ways of Knowing and Forming One's Self

This chapter will illustrate the ways Habitat members reflected on their life and work and, more generally, describe an observed way of relating to one's self. The account presented here is structured along Foucault's conceptualisation of technologies of the self, which can be understood as the way subject experiences, reflects on and conducts itself in relation to a certain ethical ideal. Through technologies of the self, human practice is problematised and becomes 'an object for concern, an element for reflection, and a material for stylization' (Foucault, 1992: 23–24). As Foucault foreshadows, technologies of the self can take a form of a 'coherent doctrine and an

explicit teaching'. However, they can also be 'transmitted in a diffuse manner' (1992: 25). Most generally, we can understand them as the ways 'individuals or groups conduct themselves in reference to a prescriptive system that is explicitly or implicitly operative in their culture, and of which they are more or less aware' (2000a: 26). Whereas in some cases the rules can be rather explicit and highly codified and enforced, in other cases their 'exact observance may be relatively unimportant' (2000a: 30).

Following this perspective, the chapter describes the largely informal and unscripted - but nonetheless regular and collective - practices of reflecting on the self as they were understood and practised in Habitat. Rather than seeing them as an individual affair, I will seek to emphasise that they are part of a certain approach to life in Habitat as a social setting and demonstrate how they are expected and appreciated by Habitat members and constitute a way of relating to life and work in the coliving environment. I will organise the discussion around three dimensions of technologies of the self as described by Foucault (1992) and adopted and developed elsewhere (Faubion, 2011; Laidlaw, 2014).[7] Technologies of the self can be analysed around the following dimensions:

> 1) *Determination of ethical substance* - 'the way in which the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct' (Foucault, 1992: 26). Or as Faubion puts it 'stuff… which demands attention and fashioning if a given actor is to realize himself or herself as the subject he or she would be' (2011: 4). This dimension is associated with a

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[7] Foucault describes technologies of the self along four dimensions, instead of three. The fourth dimension is 'telos of the ethical subject' (Foucault, 1992: 26) and has been already discussed in relation to the imperative of improvement in the chapter five.

question of 'what is the part of oneself that is the object of thought and work?' (2014: 103).

2) *Mode of subjection* – 'the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice' (Foucault, 1992: 27). In Faubion's formulation, this dimension concerns 'the manner in which a given actor evaluates and engages the criteria that determine what counts as living up to being a subject of one or another quality or kind' (2011: 4). This dimension is associated with a question of 'what are the ways in which people position themselves in relation to their ideals or injunctions or rules?' (Laidlaw, 2014: 103).

3) *Elaboration of ethical work* - 'that one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one's conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behaviour' (Foucault, 1992: 27). Faubion describes this dimension as 'the particular work that a given subject has to perform on his or her ethical substance in order to become a subject of a certain quality or kind' (2011: 4). This dimension is associated with a question of 'what form does one's self-forming activity take?' (Laidlaw, 2014: 103).

9.3 Habitat and Existential Attitude

The norms of hard work, entrepreneurial success and achievement of the maximum level of experience in life are an important normative principle of life in Habitat, as I have described in the previous chapters. However, this does not mean that these principles were accepted as being incontestable, self-evident, or simply as a doctrine that must be followed with devotion without room for questioning. On the contrary, a

great deal of emphasis was placed on the attitude towards norms in life in general that was based on a requirement of individual reflexivity, creativity, and self-understanding. Habitat, and coliving more generally, can be understood to some extent as an experiment in the form of life, which involves reflection on the prevailing norms of life in contemporary society and a desire to experimentally formulate a different way of living which involves a frequent examination and interrogation of how to live.

We can say that understanding of life in Habitat revolves around what Hacking calls 'existential attitude' (Hacking, 2004). The existentialist attitude entails a conviction that 'nothing [is] as fixed as it seems' and that one has an ability to question the conventional way of living and act in a non-conforming way. As Hacking notes, this attitude can be expressed by 'thinkers with the highest standards of rigour' as well as by 'ignorant enthusiasts' (Hacking, 2004: 281–282). Rather than denoting the philosophical doctrine of existentialism exclusively, it encapsulates an attitude that turns human existence, human nature and ways of life into a question and emphasizes the necessity of reflection and choice:

> 'It is in the nature of a human being to have no intrinsic nature, but to live one's life constantly choosing who one is, and being responsible for the person one chooses to be. Virtue and authenticity consist in being well aware that one is choosing who to be, and in being responsible for those self-conscious choices.'(Hacking, 2004: 281)

The aspect of Habitat that resonates very strongly with the existential attitude is the understanding of life as something that should be consciously (re)designed. Life is understood as something that should be reflected upon, known, observed, and actively changed through a reorganisation of social ties, habits, and lifestyle. Life then becomes

an object of contemplation, experimentation, and conscious effort to design it differently. With this comes the rejection of 'mainstream' values, social rules and social structures that prevent a desirable form of life from unfolding. This aspect was expressed especially clearly in a conversation with Svend, one of the two original founders of Habitat. This is how Svend reflects on what is the most important thing he learned from Habitat:

> 'One of the things that I think I gained most from Habitat. So I think a thing that came very very clearly to me. So I think that before I moved to Habitat, I knew that everything that was created by humans can be changed if you put enough resources to it. But I think that it was because of Habitat that I understood what that meant. That everything that is created by humans, be it governments, laws, physical structures, anything that is created by people can be changed if you put enough resources into it. And I think that has made me be way more bearish when it comes to the laws that are placed on us. I have a lot less respect for laws and things, the structures that we've built around us. I have a lot less respect for them after we created Habitat. Because it became clear to me that we can create a world that we want to live in.' (Interview with Svend)

Svend sees Habitat as an example of recognising the relativity and changeable nature of the social arrangement and practically designing life differently. The fascination with the act of conscious re-designing of life is strongly present in Svend's memories of the preparatory stage of planning Habitat and early days of its functioning:

> 'So it was a start of creating what Habitat is today. What did we want Habitat to be? Of course, we had some thoughts about that. But we needed to come

together all six of us and discuss what it will be. And we also wanted to involve the people that we choose to move in. So it became a very high level of design of what Habitat is going to be and how is it going to be run and what the governmental structure is going to be. And then the process started off choosing people, which was a process that we took very seriously. And at that time, we agreed that the government structure should be as this and people will choose the way they are and the rules for choosing people.

And at that moment we sat down and we printed out the floor plans of all four apartments. And then we printed out pictures of the people that we really wanted to have in. … [We discussed] what they were into, what they liked, what they didn't like. How they wanted to live, how they didn't want to live.' (Interview with Svend)

Despite the careful and time-consuming planning and meticulous selection of Habitat members, Svend remembers the first days of Habitat as characterised by a mix of excitement with the new experiment, but also puzzlement on how to live:

'So the first day was like the first day at school. It was completely crazy. Then we were sitting in the evening in a room. Sitting there on these old chairs that we've just hustled. All kinds of different chairs looking like a flea market. We were just sitting there, looking at each other. Like "ok, what's next?". Then there were all these social things. Of people finding out how to live in a place like this. And so many practical things as well.' (Interview with Svend)

Habitat can be seen as an experiment in the intentional design of life. First, the habitual structures and conventions are identified as inadequate, nonefficient, or even hostile. In previous chapters, I have discussed numerous examples of this, such as socialisation

requiring too much time, and the social environment not understanding entrepreneurial life. Second, after the diagnosis of the inadequacy of the structures of everyday life, there follows a reflection on, and design of, new norms and practices of collective life in coliving. In this respect, we can say that Habitat is an example of an 'existentialist attitude' combining a belief that norms governing our lives are not fixed and permanent, but fluid and open to change and a desire to consciously alter these norms to create an experimental form of life.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, some authors see "true" reflexivity as being incompatible with an affirmation of the prevailing values of productivity, economic valuation and managerial approach to the self. In other words, for reflexivity to be recognised as real it must go against the grain of the predominant forms of economic practice, organisation of work and the wider societal discourse of self-valorisation. In Habitat, however, 'reflexive' attitude towards life and work is seen as not being in contradiction with, but rather stemming from and being reinforced by, engagement with entrepreneurship as an economic and work practice. Entrepreneurship, to a large extent, was seen as the origin of a particular reflexive approach to life. As Axel put it in the interview, being an entrepreneur means making 'active decisions' in life, consciously exploring non-traditional career paths, taking life seriously and determination to explore the ways of living differently:

> 'People [in Habitat] have often taken some active decisions in their life and they're pretty aware of what they want erm with their life. And that's, that's just great, you know. People are sort of. [They] thought about stuff. Not being afraid to sort of give themselves questions of "Ok. How could my life be if it was not like this?" Yeah, so people are sort of take their own life seriously. In a way that we don't become an accountant. Because that also looks very

serious, but for me, it's much more serious giving yourself a question of "ok, how do I really want this to be if I don't take just a safe road because that's what you do?". Thinking about what I'm really passionate about and try to make that happen.' (Interview with Axel)

In the following section, I will describe the aspects of Habitat as a social setting that maintains and actively encourages certain 'reflexive' attitude to norms and life. I will focus on how the rules for life are approached through an attitude and practice of collective and individual reflection.

9.4 Potential, Freedom, Determination: An Ethical Substance of Life in Coliving

What is the object of individual and collective reflection in Habitat? What is the matter on which the thinking about life and work focuses? What are the aspects of life that should be known and acted upon? In Foucault's writing about the ways of knowing and acting on the self, answers to these questions would fall in the dimension he calls *determination of ethical substance* by which he means 'the way in which the individual has to constitute this or that part of himself as the prime material of his moral conduct' (Foucault, 1992: 26).

In Habitat, the centre of reflection and understanding of the self is an individual with (i) *potential* to succeed in entrepreneurial life, (ii) *freedom* to determine one's own goals, ambitions and dreams, and (iii) *determination* to work towards their accomplishment. These qualities are understood as something that Habitat members share, embrace both individually and collectively, and that should be cultivated by the social environment fostered in coliving.

As I described before, members of Habitat are chosen (at least partly) according to their *potential* to succeed in entrepreneurship. The potential, however, is not limited only to the success of members' own projects. It involves their potential to contribute - by support, sharing knowledge, by offering an encouragement - to the success of others. I have illustrated in Chapter Five how this is potentially connected to a wider normative orientation towards the improvement of the world, in which entrepreneurship should play an essential part. These are the ways in which participants described emphasis on fostering collective orientation towards the realisation of one's potential as an important feature of coliving:

> '[Individuals who are selected for membership of Habitat are] people who have great potential, right? We do take a lot of people who. Maybe people who get here don't really, have never done any big entrepreneurial achievements. … Mainly people … who either have already proven themselves or we think they based on interviews and referrals or whatever that they will do great things.' (Interview with Joren)

> 'I was talking to my friend about this today. [Benefit of Habitat is] this kind of that you are you are surrounded by people who want to do more with life. Who have higher ambitions. And I was like "It doesn't matter if you're an entrepreneur right now. The point is that you have this drive. You have this urge to do more in life". So you don't have to do it right now. For your personality and mentality to be significantly different than regular people.' (Interview with Niels)

Even though having the potential and ambition to succeed are crucial aspects of the collective life and reflection of participants, on their own they are not sufficient for

the definition of the ethical substance of live in Habitat. For the potential and ambition to fit the account of life worth living, they must be put into the service of accomplishment of goals and dreams that an individual freely sets for herself. In other words, the *freedom* to set goals and objectives according to one's own personal and ethical commitments is an important part of the 'stuff' that makes up a good life in Habitat. The freedom of entrepreneurship – the ability to choose one's own goals, dreams, and build one's own legacy – is in the participants accounts often contrasted with the 'unfreedom' of conventional employment in hierarchical organisations. This excerpt from the interview with Axel illustrates this point well:

> An important part of a good life is definitely freedom. But it's of course also matter of creating impact. But the reason why freedom comes to mind and so so so directly as a first one is that the choices that I have made with my life are very much towards freedom. Like. So I say that it's not the goal, the goal is of course to create meaning and that is for me very related to impact. But my way of creating impact has been through freedom in many contexts. And that is not taking a nine to five job. It has been doing things that have frustrated my mom like hell, right? Because, like, [laughs] her little son not being like she imagined in any kind of way but always be sort of on edge, right? Erm, but that's what works for me. That's where I feel like I can do the most.' (Interview with Axel)

Freedom to choose one's own way of working and one's own goals in life is an important principle in Axel's account. The freedom is worth paying the price, even though it might necessitate (as he explains) sacrifice of secure standard employment and not living up to his mother's expectations. The risky freedom of entrepreneurship, in other words, beats the secure unfreedom of standard employment. In a similar

manner, Niels contrasted freedom of entrepreneurship with unfreedom of corporate jobs during an encounter in our kitchen:

Karel: 'Why did you become involved in this start-up thing?'

Niels: 'I don't know. Just something that was interesting. Something that was quite inspiring [long silence]. I think I also didn't want to get on a classic corporate ladder. I think it's repulsive. Maybe not repulsive. But I think it's not inspiring. Like my friends who are working there. I think they hate their lives. I think I liked that energy [of entrepreneurship]. I think it has a lot to do with autonomy. When you start your start-up, you have a huge responsibility. You can do what the fuck you want, as long as you have an argument for it. If you have an argument, you can have a trust of the team. You do what you want. You have that freedom to do it.' (Fieldnote #61)

In a similar manner, Kristian reflected on his experience with employment as an unfree experience where he had to work on 'someone else's dream':

'So I had jobs before. And during that time, I was reminded of the reason that I entered this whole entrepreneurship world anyway. So five years ago I had this job and I got fucking tired of it and I lost myself in it, it sucked. I was like, I [in a loud voice] "I need to do something by myself". So, I ran on this [entrepreneurial] path. And then, later after I had a talk with my mentor, I went to think about it for a year while I freelanced and I said: "Well, I might not have been, you know, aware of what I'm missing." So, I got a job [again]. I was there for a half a year; I lost myself again, I think it was fucking shit. I couldn't. The people there were amazing. But. It was just that the whole [takes a deep breath], yeah, being in that constellation of working on other men's

dream I simply couldn't do it. And I'm not gonna get a job. If I can avoid it.'
(Interview with Kristian)

Entrepreneurship, on the other hand, is seen as a form of work that promises the maximum degree of freedom to follow one's own goal, to work on a work that is personally meaningful, and that allows a person to fully explore and fulfil their potential.

The emphasis on entrepreneurial freedom and critique of the unfreedom of conventional employment conditions the perspective on a wider set of concerns with work and the role it should play in an individual's life. Being an entrepreneur does not mean freedom from work. In fact, as participants would frequently recognise and emphasise, it requires a considerable investment of time and energy, which often supersedes time and effort required by a regular job. However, the freedom to work on one's 'own dreams' and to work on a personal 'legacy' is what makes sacrifices of time, energy (and often money) acceptable. In other words, the entrepreneurial *freedom* to choose one's own goal requires the *determination* to work hard on their accomplishment. This is how Kirsten put it during one of our kitchen encounters:

> 'You know, entrepreneurs have the freedom to define their own mission. They have the freedom to decide what is it going to be. You don't work for anyone else. You define your own purpose. What is it going to be. But the work efforts is not optional. You cannot decide not to work hard. And there is not only exciting work. There is also boring stuff and you have to do it. You have to do taxes, you have to do fundraising, you have to do your finance… and that's not always enjoyable. But it has to be done.' (Kirsten, Fieldnote #27)

In other words, the freedom of entrepreneurship does not necessarily make everyday work enjoyable. It does not remove the repetition and boredom of mundane, repetitive tasks. Rather, it gives them meaning as these tasks are seen as a part of a bigger project of fulfilling individual ambitions and goals, rather than being dictated by goals of a large organisation. Eva captured a very similar principle. Entrepreneurship does not mean complete freedom to choose tasks on which an individual works. As she admits, some tasks she works on are boring. It does not mean that the individual decides what to do and when. Eva welcomes restrictions and pressure of deadlines, as they help her to get more focused on her work. However, what is crucial is that the need to do 'boring things' under pressure is counter-balanced by the freedom to do 'awesome things':

> 'That's also why I'm very good at like talking to people that I work with and being like I need to have like very specific dates and stuff. Because if I'm just being handed everything like "dude, whenever you want to" then usually I don't get that much done. So that for me, that sense of urgency, that's very useful for me and I also work with that actively. But also just like. Sometimes. Yeah. But again, I don't see it as much as work as I see it as doing awesome things. Like sometimes you have to do boring things to do awesome things.' (Interview with Eva)

9.5 Work Hard, Reflect Hard: On the Mode of Subjection

The ideals of potential, freedom and determination are important ethical principles of individual and collective life in Habitat. This, however, does not in itself tell us how Habitat members relate to these ideals and what is seen as an appropriate position to adopt towards these imperatives. To understand this dimension, we have to explore what Foucault calls *mode of subjection* and describes as 'the way in which the

individual establishes his [sic] relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice' (Foucault, 1992: 27).

The relation to the rule of developing one's potential and living a successful entrepreneurial life that is practised in habitat is characterized neither by religious adherence nor by an uncritical stance towards entrepreneurship. As I will illustrate below, entrepreneurial life is also an important object of continuous conversation and individual reflection. The way of relating to entrepreneurship that is fostered in Habitat is characterised by ongoing questioning, introspection and re-evaluation of one's situation, motives, feelings and desires. Part of this reflection is an acknowledgement of the exhaustive and all-encompassing nature of entrepreneurial work. The difficulty of and sacrifice to the entrepreneurial project is not a taboo, but rather something that should be recognized and can be collectively discussed.

This point can be perhaps best illustrated by one of the first situations I have encountered, which alerted me to the way of reflecting in Habitat. It took place during an informal gathering organised to welcome Arya – a new member – to Habitat. The conversation unfolded over cans of beer, hummus, and garlic bread with members sitting on a sofa and around a kitchen table. The largely joyful and humorous atmosphere got more serious, when Frans started to think aloud about the nature of entrepreneurial life:

> 'We are always in. We are never out. You are still thinking about it. You are selling, or you are recruiting. You are still in that mode. It's not like football. Like football is demanding, but you can only play 90 minutes and there is only so much training you can do.'

After this, Frans turned his attention to Raj who's start-up company has just recently raised 700 000 $ in a round of funding which was an achievement celebrated during a party that took place a week ago:

Frans: 'So, how do you feel. Do you feel like a winner?'

Raj: 'I will never feel like I won. I think it's more like a series of victories. One small victory after another. Until you die' [smiles]

Frans: 'Until you die? Do you dream of exit? Do you dream about the end? '

Raj: 'No, I think. If the [the product made by his company] is used by people all around the world, if it's a new way of doing things, I am never going to leave it'.

Frans: 'Do you think you would be really content? Do you think you would be satisfied? … I think there are too many assumptions. Assumptions about how is it going to be [when you succeed], but most of that is a fiction' (Fieldnote #56)

At this point, Frans turned his attention towards me as I could not hide my interest and puzzlement with the situation (perhaps I looked over-eager to record the interesting dialogue).

Frans: 'So let's take you as an example. I guess you have some ideas about how is it going to be when you write that article. I mean … what you imagine. Girls, fame, success. Is it really going to be there? Like what do you expect?'

Me: 'Hm… I don't know. I guess I don't expect much fame as this is not how academia works.'

I could not help feeling that my answer, hesitant and not very revealing, did not catch Steven's attention, perhaps because it did not fit the sincerity and depth of the mutual questioning that was central to the previous conversation. Steven turned his attention back to Raj:

> Frans: 'I think you need to ask yourself what makes you happy. There was research done in hospices … do you know what people mostly say about what they would do differently?'
>
> Raj: 'I think it is most important to be healthy. I think family is also important.'
>
> Frans: 'Yes. And friends.'
>
> Raj: 'I think that's something we all know, but often we do not do it. We often do not spend enough time with family' (Fieldnote #56)

A few themes from the conversation are especially worth highlighting. It started with Frans contemplating the demanding nature of 'all in' entrepreneurial life, drawing attention to its exhaustiveness and all-encompassing nature. The motivation for being an entrepreneur and investing time into the enterprise became the focus of questioning with emphasis on the promises of success being 'real' in contrast to personal 'happiness' more likely to be found in other spheres of life (family, friends). Death was mentioned as the ultimate limit of life. The mention of death prompted Frans to introduce the possibility of exit, the possibility of change and opened a space for questioning of meaningfulness of highly demanding work habits from the perspective of individual life. It also served as a vantage point from which life and its content can be interpreted retrospectively. The perspective of hospice patients regretting not spending more time with their families was used as a corrective, as a note of caution of investing too much into entrepreneurial work.

In their interview accounts, participants often emphasised the need for continuous self-reflection and the imperative of 'knowing' and 'reflecting' on the self. This rests on the conviction that motivations for work and motivations for living a life in a certain way, motivations for investing one's time into a particular project, should be reflected upon and should be made an object of both collective and individual introspection. Working towards success in entrepreneurship and improving the world through entrepreneurial activity were central normative maxims for life, which would only rarely be questioned. However, these imperatives were accompanied by a strong belief that in the process, an individual should be undergoing continuous reflection on entrepreneurial life, on its purpose, its strains and sacrifices, and on the satisfaction or dissatisfaction it leads to. To reflect on one's life and work, to monitor oneself and to continue to examine one's feelings and experiences was a strong principle in the way Habitat members related to themselves.

During an interview, I asked Eva what her medium-term plans are when it comes to life and entrepreneurship. To Eva, making longer-term plans did not make much sense as the entrepreneurial journey seems unpredictable:

> 'Like I'm just like why should I spend time trying plan something that I can't foresee. I know that what we want to do with [her start-up community organisation] is to try to go to a new city. Build up a community and then start harvesting work from there. But that's the idea and that's what I want to go towards now. And then to actually know what's gonna happen in five years. Like why, why bother wasting my time with that. [laughs].' (Interview with Eva)

Given the unpredictable nature of entrepreneurship, Eva does not see much meaning in drawing a rigid plan for her business and for her life. However, what she sees as important is continuous evaluation of how she feels in relation to work and the trajectory of her life:

'I think the most important thing is that I really want to spend time and energy evaluating. Constantly evaluating if I'm happy. Also, what's not making me happy and try to get away from away. And do more of the stuff that makes me happy. And I want to feel successful. That's the thing that I'm mostly preoccupied with at the moment.' (Interview with Eva)

As Eva explained, what she finds important is that she makes space for reflection on whether what she does makes her happy and makes her feel successful. A similar emphasis on the necessity of reflecting on one's emotions, feeling of achievement, and on one's personality in general, was present in numerous interviews. During an interview, Jens told me that when moving in, he was hoping that Habitat will help 'shaping [him] into that person I wanna be'. He continued with an example from his work as an owner and manager of a small company:

'So yeah. I've been working on that. So, I've been working on how to be a good manager in my business. And there are so many parts of me that I needed to work with to become this person or to become myself. … I need to figure out who I am. And how do I get to from here to where I want to be in the future. So, I'm not where I want to be right now but I'm on a rising curve and I'm on the right path to where to this goal. I would say.' (Interview with Jens)

As Jens admitted, the process is not always easy, as the hectic tempo of (mental and physical) life intervenes. But like Eva, he finds it important to create a space for

concentrated evaluation. When I asked Jens what does a good life mean to him, he emphasised the importance of continuous reflection and 'getting to know oneself':

> 'Jens: So being happy and what is a success and what is happiness is actually the question. I don't know. I'm trying to figure that out. What do I actually want? ... Sometimes you only think about that little bit of you who are always there. The thoughts and feelings. I wanna know that person. I wanna know myself better.
>
> Karel: In your life. I mean. What would have to happen for you to feel happy?
>
> Jens: I guess it's the same question. At least there is the same answer to that question. That I'll know that better when I know myself better. Yeah. [pause] So I just need to know myself.' (Interview with Jens)

For Felix, to live a good life means to continue reflecting on the self and searching for what makes life enjoyable and what leads to satisfaction. Similarly to Eva and Jens, he put emphasis on the continuous reflection and getting to 'know thyself':

> Karel: Can you tell me what comes to your mind when I say a good life?
>
> Felix: Know thyself.
>
> Karel: Ok. What do you mean by that?
>
> Felix: I think being aware of, knowing where you thrive and where you have a good and stable life. You will also be able to kind of search for it. Because I think it's a continuous process — the life of kind of finding yourself.

The approach to life which entails continuous evaluation and re-evaluation, as well as making a conscious decision in shaping one's life, was seen by many participants as an important characteristic that is shared among Habitat members. This way of

engaging with life and the self was seen by participants as stemming from the practice of entrepreneurial work. As some participants stressed, they are convinced that entrepreneurial practice encourages a reflexive stance towards life and work that they are striving to develop and that they seek in others. This is how Kristian and Kirsten reflected on the issue:

> 'The majority of people in Habitat like to explore or ask questions. Or be maybe more reflexive around the things that are going on. … Like when you are in this start-up or business, starting a new company, a new journey, you have to make a lot of decisions. All the time. This is not a job where someone comes around and tells you what to do. So, I think that forms a certain kind of thinking. Because you know you have the choice to decide, so if you are, you know, making decisions ten times a day or twenty times a day, mm, where your business is gonna go, I have a hard time imagining that that kind of behaviour is not going to reflect in the rest of your life. So, taking, you know, taking something into consideration, if it's a good thing or a bad thing or where do you want to go with it applies to business but applies to society and applies to personal relationships and applies to everything. I think entrepreneurs, and people in certain jobs, you know, people in leadership, they probably get this muscle trained more than if you're just sitting at the post-office sorting letters.' (Interview with Kristian)

> 'I think the common trait among us [Habitat members] is that they are interested in being analytical. Whichever thing we do in our work lives there is always some focus on analysing what we are doing wrong, what could we do better are. How we understand issues. … Because of the life that people choose to live here, starting their own organisations, growing a team, leading

a team, like all of these things are more of a deliberate choice then, let's say, compared to graduating from college and going to work for a big corporation. … So, I think for that because of the nature of what people have deliberately chosen to do here there's much more deliberate, there are many more small and big choices that you have to make yourself as an entrepreneur, compared to working in a big organisation. And so I think that forces people to be more analytical about what they do.' (Interview with Kirsten)

All three accounts emphasise the role of entrepreneurship in leading to an 'analytical' or we can say reflexive stance to work and life and society more generally. The necessity to make serious decisions on a daily basis, the inability to rely on an organisational structure and demand to explore things independently leads to a more probing, analytical, and 'deliberate' approach to life which leads to greater questioning of societal influences and common-sense guidance for living. This is contrasted with routine work or work in larger organisations. The reflexive or analytical mode of thinking developed in entrepreneurship is then seen as leading to a different, probing and daring approach to life. This involves making informed, deliberate, reflexive choices in life, actively exploring sources of happiness and unhappiness, asking oneself a question of what a meaningful trajectory in life is, and, fundamentally, what does one 'want' from life. In a way, all accounts share a persuasion that as a result of entrepreneurship, life becomes less a habitual, script following activity and is turned into an object of conscious reflection and deliberate choice-making.

9.6 Deep Conversations: Elaboration of Ethical Work

How is the ethical orientation towards life, which involves continuous reflections on the self practised in Habitat? What are the ways in which Habitat members reflect on their lives, their work, both individually and collectively? These questions are

pertinent to Foucault's third dimension of the technologies of the self, which he calls elaboration of ethical work 'that one performs on oneself, not only in order to bring one's conduct into compliance with a given rule, but to attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behaviour' (Foucault, 1992: 27). I have already described some aspects of moderating work and life, of offering mutual understanding and support in Habitat and other aspects that could be included in performing 'ethical work'. Here, however, I want to focus more specifically on the practices that help to establish the 'reflexive' and questioning attitude towards work and life that I have illustrated in the previous section.

The collective way of practising a reflexive attitude to work and life in Habitat is what some of my participants would call 'deep conversations'. As the previous section showed, members of Habitat often felt that both economic and personal life (and their entanglements) should be reflected upon and continuously examined. They stressed the importance not only of monitoring of oneself but also of continuous 'figuring it out'. This reflection, however, does not need to be an individual act. Ideally, it would be an object of collective conversations with people with a similar orientation of life and with similar willingness to engage in this examination. Indeed, the availability of 'deep' conversations was seen by many participants as being an important feature that Habitat brings to their life. A contemplation of life with others was seen as crucial to the quality of both individual and a collective life in Habitat.

During my fieldwork, I have often noted how easy it was to enter into long and intense conversations with participants in Habitat. I gained an impression that willingness to engage in conversations about life which go beyond simple 'how are you' was rather a common trait among Habitat dwellers, but also something that would be expected from others. In other words, Habitat formed an environment where a particular

discourse and a way of reflecting on life was expected and encouraged. This was demonstrated by numerous encounters with participants that would often start as a spontaneous encounter in a kitchen but soon develop into rather long conversations about life. Let me demonstrate this principle by a brief description of a few of these encounters.

On one of the first nights of my fieldwork, I bumped into Eva in the evening. What started as a casual and polite conversation soon turned into a long personal conversation over a glass of whiskey. The conversation soon turned to romantic relationships, continued through discussion of the economy, and ended with talking about our past work experiences. Two things, in particular, struck me about the conversation. Firstly, I was surprised by the fact that Eva was prepared to discuss very personal and intimate topics with a relative stranger openly. Secondly, I was fascinated by the way in which the conversation flowed from a discussion of intimate life to economy and work and by the way Eva drew links between these areas. This is how I recorded the experience.

Eva explained to me that what she seeks partners who are passionate about what they do in life. The object of passion can be anything. What matters to Eva is that people have some form of passion in their life that they pursue. When the conversation developed, Eva mentioned her past boyfriend. She was studying, but he was not. He had a 9-5 job and did 'not really have much passion for anything in his life'. As she put it 'he earned money so he can get drunk on the weekends, that's it'. Eva used this story as an example of a person she could not be in a romantic relationship with.

I said that this was always a working-class tradition, in my mind, to work hard during the week and enjoy a drink on the weekend. I also said that perhaps people feel a need to drink on the weekend to deal with the strains that result from work. This prompted Eva to reflect on the future of class in relation to the economy. In Eva's opinion, societies are undergoing a change. In the future, there will be a growing division between 'intellectual classes' of inventors and business leaders, and employees working for them. 'I think Uber is really an example. With the owners and the drivers. There are people who want to do something new and who think of something new - like Uber owners. And there are others who just want to go about their lives, but they will be the drivers'.

Later we talked about Eva's work history. She told me that she had worked as a specialist in a start-up but had to leave. She was not happy as she felt she was not ready for the position yet as she needed to gain experience, but too much was expected of her. Since then, Eva prefers to work on her own entrepreneurial projects. (Fieldnote #8)

Let us consider one more example of an unexpected conversation in the Habitat:

I was reading a book in my bed, having a calm evening. Then I noticed that Arya messaged me, inviting me to have a beer with him. As was his habit, this was rather late, around 9pm. I was tired after a long day of work and was planning to go to bed soon. Then, however, I have told myself that I do not want to miss an interesting conversation. I came to know Arya as a very nice and talkative guy and I was happy to meet in the kitchen of his apartment.

When I came, Arya told me that he saw my 'post with window' on Facebook. 'I also feel like that some times. So I thought I would call you down for a beer'. He was referring to an ironic post I shared on Facebook showing a rainy window [it was raining that day], making fun of the fact that summer in my new destination does not feel much warmer than summer in the North of England. However, Arya understood (not yet being used to my attempts at humour) this as an expression of sadness, perhaps loneliness. Even though this was not a correct reading of my mood, I was very happy to learn that he cares and was pleasantly surprised by the gesture.

I asked Arya how is he doing, and this led to a rather detailed explanation of what is going on in his life at the moment. It seemed to me that Arya is going through some questioning period in his life and he has doubts about his life and work.

'So this guy [Arya's collaborator] was supposed to come from Berlin. And he got in touch and he cannot come now. He can only come later in August. It is difficult. I work part-time, he works part-time, so I cannot really force him.'

Then for some reason, Arya started to talk about Silicon Valley:

'This is not Silicon Valley. People there. You know, they work 9 to 9. And that is the minimum. Minimum! And they work on the weekends. Here it's very different. People quite often work until 3. They say "I need to take kids from school" and they leave at 3. Sometimes they do it 3 times a week. And I have this. I want to work on the start-up. But sometimes it does not make sense. I sometimes ask myself. What am I doing? Is it my ego? I don't know.'

I've said that when I was studying, I was quite competitive. I would work very long hours. I said I wanted to prove that I am intelligent to my classmates.

'Yes, I think I also want to prove myself. I want to do something extra. So I stay at least one hour later than others. I work a little bit on a side. I want to learn about what is going on, what is new. So here it means that I stay until 6. In Silicon Valley, I would have to stay until 10 [he laughs]. I keep asking myself… what drives me?' (Fieldnote #60)

These conversations have an important point in common. Firstly, they are unplanned, spontaneous encounters that developed unexpectedly into bigger and longer dialogues. Secondly, they were had by relative strangers and included discussion of relatively personal and intimate matters. Thirdly, they all involved (to a various degree) discussion of norms of work, success, and motivations in connection to life stories, perception of human relationships and participants self-perceptions. The willingness of Habitat members to talk and a surprising mode of the conversations is something that caught my attention from the beginning of my research, as I noted in a memo:

It is rather interesting how easy it is for people to share their stories. From work to relationships and how are these things intermingled. People want to talk. Quite often, I do not even hope to have a research conversation, but the simple question 'how are you' leads to rather deep confessions about plans, desires, stresses, feelings, and life histories. At points, what I expect to be thirty minutes encounter goes on for much longer and leads to very interesting insights. In this environment, people are used to talking. At one occasion I was going to sit down and read, hoping to bump into someone perhaps. But I was not expecting an hour-long interview to happen instead. (Fieldnote #25)

My insights about Habitat being an environment where this kind of conversations is not only common but also expected was confirmed by several participants' accounts. Axel moved into Habitat while my fieldwork was underway and was, therefore, like me, a relative newcomer to Habitat. He, like me, was rather surprised by the way conversations unfold in Habitat. When I asked him, during an interview, to reflect on his experience with Habitat so far, he mentioned 'existential' conversations to be one of the most remarkable features of his life here:

> 'And you are very, very close to other people's lives. So their ups and downs also become your ups and downs, right? And, yeah. I don't think I expected that before I moved in. But surely like people are very open, you know. […] You get really really close relations. And I can see that already now, you know? You can, like, talk about personal stuff you know. All kinds of personal things. When something happens in your housemate's family, you might be the first person they tell it to, right? Breaking down in tears. Other people may have problems at work. They had their job and they find out they will quit. You have a conversation with them about it "Ok. Why would you quit, and would that make for your situation and do you need to sublet your actual room and like" You become part of the many big almost existential discussions with people. And that is very interesting but not something I really expected. So that has been a bit of a surprise. But you know since I've been interested in philosophy it's not a bad thing at all. It's interesting when people have those kinds of big questions. But it is, yeah, that is something I was not too aware of.' (Interview with Axel)

Axel's account captures three interrelated elements of conversations in Habitat. Firstly, the relatively fast and automatic establishment of openness and intimacy

between housemates. Axel (like me) was surprised by the easiness with which Habitat members are ready to engage in personal discussions about life. Secondly, he highlights what he calls 'existential' nature of discussions which are about 'big questions' in life. These conversations were seen as an important feature of life in Habitat by other participants as well:

> 'My prior roommate is really relaxed. Was really relaxed. Like not a guy who stressed about anything. But in here a lot of people deal with stress and this kind of work situations so a lot of people here know what to do and how they handle it and so on, so it has been really nice talking with people who want to go into *deep conversations* with you. And that's also something people want to do a lot here.' (Interview with Soren)

> 'I think the majority of people in Habitat [clears throat] like to… In my opinion, like to, explore or ask questions. They are a bit more maybe, reflective around the things that are going on than other people that I've lived with. [pause] So the conversations you have are going to be different. [Talking about] sports and stuff like that is totally fine. I haven't talk sports with any person in Habitat yet. Whereas in every other apartment I lived in I was, you know, talking about sports or other things that in my opinion did not really matter that much to how we evolve as human beings. Or maybe that's wrong to say that's sports are not a part of that because that's also a community, something people have shared interest in. I wanna say, there's less small talk here. There's more substance to the conversations that you have. In my opinion. Compared to the other places where I lived.' (Interview with Kristian)

'And the fact is that you can actually have these talks in a friendly and homely, domestic, I environment. So, for instance, I was out in the backyard with Jens and Felix and we were talking about motivation. And I felt like it got to a really high level and we draw parallels to like stoicism and erm, like why do people buy a fancy car, why do they want to show off. Do you actually get motivated like working for that? Why do you have to post it on social media? What is the driver behind that? So, we got into a lot of stuff that actually got us to think. And I guess that develops a person a lot instead of just taking in knowledge or not taking in knowledge, but actually balancing it off. And formulating your own ideas and connections. Yeah. So I guess It's the talks'. (Interview with Sam)

Habitat is seen as an environment where inhabitants can engage in 'deep conversations' about both working and personal life. It is an environment where openness to a certain way of conversation which involves reflection on life, on one's motivations and on the direction one's life is taking. This includes the preparedness to care for each other, a degree of trust, as well as a certain attitude towards life where 'big questions' can be asked and explored in a conversation with others.

9.6.1 Individual way of Reflecting: An Example of Astrid's Passion Planner

Besides emphasising the importance of 'deep conversations', many Habitat members engaged in various individual ways of reflecting on life. These included reading various texts that problematise life and in relation to (self)management, business and work or various self-help manuals. Jens, for example, mentioned texts 'The Law of Success' by Napoleon Hill or 'How to Win Friends and Influence People' by Dale Carnegie. He found them essential for his 'self-development', as they provided 'a form of guidance' and 'answers' in a difficult moment n his life. Astrid recommended the

book 'Power of Meaning' by Emily Esfahani Smith, which sees the search for meaning, rather than pursuit of happiness, as the key to a satisfied life. In addition, participants engaged in practices of more concentrated contemplation. Meditation, especially facilitated with the help of digital applications, was another popular way of reflecting. During my stay, several participants recommended the use of the phone application Headspace, which guides its user through meditation and monitors and rewards their progress. Here, however, I want to focus on a specific case of reflecting on life and work that I have encountered in Habitat that I got to observe and discuss in greater detail– Astrid's use of 'passion planner'.

One day I encountered Astrid accidentally when smoking in a communal garden adjacent to the block of flats where the coliving space was situated. I did not recognize her at first, but she greeted me and invited me to talk with her. I asked Astrid if she's working on her diary. She explained that she's not, but she's working on something similar – a passion planner. I could not hide my surprise as I have never heard about passion planner before and Astrid explained the concept to me:

> 'It is a birthday present from my brother. My birthday is on the 14th of January. And I was telling people that, you know, CEOs in large companies have this "year in review" where they review their past year. And I was saying that it would be good to have something like that. It felt like I have very little time actually to think about what is going on in my life. I felt like I do not have an opportunity to really reflect on it.' (Fieldnote #65).

Astrid's desire to reflect on her life, or at least its form, was inspired by CEOs' technique of year in review. It prompted her to use a passion planner in order to reflect on her everyday life and on the ways she could change its flow and content. Passion

Planner is a type of diary that invites a person to reflect on their lives and to question whether they are happy with its form and direction. In short, it invites its user to record and review what is happening in their lives. It also contains sections that invite a monthly reflection on successes, happy moments, and aspects of the past month that did not go to the user's satisfaction.

> 'Passion Planner is the one place for all your thoughts. It's more than just a planner—it's a tool that helps you break down your short and long-term goals and incorporate them into your daily life. It has been designed to encourage you to plan for the future, reflect on the past, but most importantly, act on the present. Think of it as a 24/7 life coach that fits in your backpack—always ready to challenge you to focus on what is most important, accept your thoughts and ideas without judgment, and prompt you to reflect on your everyday life. We hope that it becomes a place where you can declutter your mind, allowing you to focus on the present moment.'[8]

Passion Planner is divided into several sections. 'Passion Roadmap' allows the user to produce a scheme of wishes for different time horizons (lifetime, 3 years, one year, 3 months) and it comes with instructions on how to best brainstorm about how should their 'ideal life' look like. 'Ask yourself: If I could be anything, do anything, or have anything, what would it be?' The passion planner invites its user to look beyond the unwitting business of everyday life and focus their attention to their passion and ambitions and turns mundane events into a record for conscious reflection.

The 'Weekly Layout' section is very similar to the standard diary where the user can enter future events. However, it also invites the user to record retrospectively on what

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[8] https://passionplanner.com/what-is-it/

and how they spent their time. It includes a smaller space called 'This Week's Focus' that encourages its user to record 'good things that happened'. An example of entry on the product's website simply reads 'started meditating'. It also includes space for 'day focus', 'personal to-do list' and a 'space of infinite possibility'. The 'Monthly Reflection' section asks the user to reflect on the memorable part of the past month, lessons learned, priorities and progress made, and about satisfaction with their use of time. However, this is not just about fulfilling goals and meeting priorities, but also about personal transformation: 'How are you different between this past month and the month before it?'.

Passion Planner seems to be a part of a wider self-help industry which helps individuals to 'manage their lives' and can be seen as a part of 'the apparent seepage of management discourse and practice into the extra-organizational sphere of everyday' (Hancock and Tyler, 2004: 621). The self-management classics *Getting Things Done* by David Allen (2002) similarly invites its user to reflect on priorities in their life in different time spans ranging from 'life' through 'one- to two-year goal' to 'current actions' (2002: 51). At a general level of planning their life, users also encouraged to ask themselves 'Why do *you* exist' (2002: 53). However, the reflection encouraged by Passion Planner seems to be quite different. It is retrospective as much as forward-looking. It invites scrutiny of one's feelings as well as work priorities. It encourages its user to imagine what they would be if they 'could be *anything'*. Even though similarities between Passion Planner and self-management literature are easy to spot, it also seems that there is more going on than just 'managerialist colonization of everyday life' (Hancock and Tyler, 2004: 619). Rather than simply "colonizing", the Passion Planner opens new space for reflection, albeit inspired by self-help and self-management.

In Astrid's passion planner, different activities were highlighted by different colours. As she explained to me, work is blue, leisure time is green, but she also used a specific colour for fitness activities. When giving me examples of what kind of reflection Passion Planner has lead to in her case, she talks about the desire to spend more time alone, take better care of her health, and be more grateful for time with friends:

'For example, I have realised that I almost do not spend any time alone. I mean, just listening to music, or watching TV, or reading a book. Or just being alone. I realised I almost never do that. I think I am a person who is very outgoing. And I am very social. For example, I am usually the last one to go to bed. I always tried to stay up until the last person went to bed, so there was nothing to do. I realised I cannot do that. I realised that I need some time alone… just to relax and to reflect.' (Fieldnote #65).

For Astrid, however, Passion Planner was not only about planning enjoyable things and formulating her priorities. As she explained during an interview, a strong part of her desire to use the planner to record her feelings about life was to record negative feelings and difficulties:

'I did it because I tried to do one of these *year in review* where you look at your life in what is good and bad. And you know the saying that you learn the most from your failings. And I realised that of course you can't remember your whole year and everything that happens, and a lot happens in this world. Because there's just so much going on. And I looked at it and I realised we don't have a plan for the bad things. We always plan for the things we look forward to and copy dates and trips or whatever else. So, I had no record of the bad things and the low days or the learning moments, which were failures or

whatever. And so, I wanted this tool where I could write something down. For me, it became more of a reflection tool and a record where I will go back and write what I did that day. How did I feel? And I think that the way to re-figure out something is when I look back at the end of the year and have some time away from it to see how it impacted me.' (Interview with Astrid)

Reflecting further on her use of the passion planner, Astrid said it is characteristic of a more general attitude common among Habitat members, and that was already expressed above by several participants. In Astrid's account, it encourages an active reflection on life, continuous monitoring, and a determination to make active choices and actions in life to control one's habits and feelings:

'This thing is very useful for realising what might be wrong [in your life]. I think here in Habitat most people have a very "to do" attitude. I think if people feel that there is something wrong, with their lives or something else, they have an attitude… they ask themselves "What can I do to change things? What can I do to feel differently?" (Fieldnote #65).

During an interview with Astrid, I learned that her use of Passion Planner is a part of a longer period of reflecting, reconsidering, and figuring things out. As she pointed out repeatedly, she finds herself at a stage of trying to understand her ambitions and plans better and refiguring out how to lead her life in the future. When I asked Astrid what a good life means for her, she told me that her understanding of life is undergoing in change:

'My definition has changed. And I think it keeps evolving and changing and that's probably why I'm talking about it all the time. Because right now I think I'm re-figuring out what it [good life] means. Until recently, I was a student. I

just stopped being a student last June. This is my first year of a hundred per cent full adult working life. It's also a different way of living in Habitat. Because before I was always. I was very busy. I was studying and I had a part-time job that was like a full-time job. And I was the chairman of Habitat and I had a social life with different people outside of Habitat and I also liked doing some other things on top of that. I think it is very much about having diversity. Having a life outside of your work. You need to have multiple sources of inspiration and multiple sources of meaning.' (Interview with Astrid)

Astrid felt a need to reconsider her idea of a good life in relation to transition from more varied and busy student life to what she describes as less varied (and perhaps even more busy) 'hundred per cent full adult working life'. As she explained later, she is worried about losing her 'sense of the self' in relation to work:

'So I think it's [important part of good life] not losing your sense of self amongst what you're doing. Not to lose your identity. So that you are still a full person that is not only dependent on what you do as an entrepreneur. And it could be in any job the same. You are defined by more than just what you do.' (Interview with Astrid)

However, at the time of the interview, and in this period of her life, Astrid did not have a definite, coherent idea of what this 'self' might be. Rather, she felt that in the period of change, it is an open question, something that she must 'figure out':

Karel: Do you have that, that self. How you…

Astrid: No, because really trying to figure that out know.

Karel: How are you figuring it out?

Astrid: I've no idea. Didn't I say this? [sighs]. I feel. I have had a couple of bad months. … I think I had a lot going on before. I was doing a lot of things that I mentioned and now I'm not. I have to kind of re-figure out who am I and what am I without being the chairman of Habitat. Without going to school anymore. Without this without that. And that takes time. I do not know the answer to your question other than I'm trying to figure that out and wait to see what happens. (*Interview with Astrid*)

Astrid was going through a phase of 'figuring out' how to live in a situation of change after she finished her studies and began to work fulltime. As she says, the support of other Habitat members was crucial for her in the period of searching and puzzlement. As we discussed further, 'figuring it out' involved a reconsideration of the role of work in her life, her professional ambition and, to a certain extent, questioning the investment to work and entrepreneurship. When I asked Astrid about her medium-term plans for work and life, she made it clear that it is also an object of reconsideration:

'I think in my case one thing I'm grappling with is [sighs]. You very much see the under-belly of currently being an entrepreneur and running the company and you also see the things that are amazing. And I've seen both sides, so there is a lot of. I'm not really sure if that's the life I want to live or the responsibility I want to take on. Because I'm very aware that the reality is… I used to think "I'm gonna go for top leadership somewhere" and now I'm like. I don't know if that's actually what I want. Because I've seen the kind of life you have to lead and the responsibility you bear. I feel like I'm in this phase of just figuring out what is it. What is my good life and what do I really want? And you can't go after what you want until you know what you want.' (Interview with Astrid)

As a part of her reflections, Astrid was also trying to formulate an alternative to the all-encompassing, passionate work that majority of Habitat members shared:

> 'I think generally people are ambitious types of personalities. And I know from many people their work is also their hobby and that's what they're passionate about and they're extremely curious, so they like inventing, they like creating, they like being problem-solving. So, I think for many people, this is what erm. What actually drives them. What they get meaning from you could say. Buuut. I don't know. I don't even have a good answer. I think that's just what people love to do. That's what I'm trying to fight against and to try to do something different though at the same time. And I think it's pretty hard because most people are like "Noooo. I love what I do, it's great" [in ironic voice]. But I actually really firmly believe you should not, you should not just work all the time. Yep.' (Interview with Astrid)

For some time at least, Astrid's work-life future was supposed to remain an open-ended question:

> You have to know yourself. That's the only answer. As you actually need to take a minute to stop and think about "what do I really want to do?"

9.7 Conclusion

The way of reflecting on work and life in Habitat presents somewhat of a paradox, at least when seen through the lenses of traditional positions within social theory. On the one hand, entrepreneurial work-lives show a high level of devotion to work, as was illustrated in the previous chapter. Moreover, structures and interactions of everyday life are to a high degree modified, so they are compatible with a high work tempo and intensive work commitment. We can say that the way of life is re-arranged, so it

reproduces a very intense dynamics of work-life. Seen from the point of view of some critical analyses, this could be interpreted as a case of ultimate subsumption of the subject in the webs of neoliberal discourse and way of life. Perhaps there is a great deal of truth to seeing life in Habitat in this way.

On the other hand, we have seen that approach to life and work is characterised by 'existential' attitude which sees life (and structures in which it unfolds) as an object of conscious reflection and careful redesign. Moreover, the way of relating to work and life in Habitat is not characterized by an unquestioning devotion to dogmas and axioms, but rather by continuous contemplation of one's preferences, feelings and desires. The "heaviness" of work-intensive life is not denied but rather reflected upon both individually and collectively. In some rare instances, such as Astrid's struggle against 'losing [her] sense of self', this reflection went against the grain of dissolving life in work. This could perhaps be still read as an example of pseudo-reflexivity which merely keeps the subject going, clinging to a mere phantasy of the genuine self-realisation. Based on my fieldwork experience and encounters in Habitat, however, I have to say that the dilemmas and engagements with the question of work and life felt very real; as a serious engagement with some bitter questions of how to live, rather than as a mere distraction from the unbearable reality.

Both interpretations are plausible. We can see the subject following rules while maintaining an illusion of freedom and autonomy, which, in fact, is just a game of truth played out within the larger structure of discourse. We can also construe the reflexive subject who engages in profound introspection, reflects on the power that shapes her and through negotiation and collective deliberation chooses to construct her life differently. Both positions are a matter of theoretical preference, rather than something that could be simply read out from the data. From a Foucauldian standpoint,

however, perhaps this is not an important question and we can leave it to others to decide what the ultimate truth of the subject is. The question for us is not whether the subject is truly reflexive (and what that means), but rather what this specific way of reflecting on and seeing oneself does; and at what cost (Nealon, 2007).

In this sense, we can say that the way of seeing oneself, life and work in Habitat entails a critical and emancipatory element. As Bolland (2007) argues, critique does not stand outside of modern subjectivity, but in fact, critique and criticality are its constitutive part. According to this perspective, it is through the negotiation of what one is, but also what one is not and what one does not want to be that we constitute ourselves. As Bolland puts it: 'the image of the modern subject is a continuous and always incomplete performance of "autonomy" and "detachment" from cultural practices' (2007: 124). From this angle, Habitat can be seen as an experiment with living differently. This entails a rejection of a traditional distinction between work and life and an effort to modify the living situation in a way that should lead to 'maximisation' of life experience. The intensive nature of entrepreneurial work-life is recognised by Habitat residents. However, so is the unfreedom of waged labour against which freedom of entrepreneurship – freedom to set one's own goals rather than spend life working 'on other man's dreams' – is contrasted. Life in Habitat is designed and understood in opposition to norms and routines that are seen as unfree and alienating. In this aspect, the way of perceiving work and life comes suspiciously close to the classic themes of sociological critiques of capitalist labour and reproduction.

There are, of course, elements which are noticeably missing from the routine way of reflecting in Habitat. The entrepreneurial work situation, as we have seen, is not characterised only by freedom or desire to improve the world, but also by financial and market forces which are quite oblivious to the preferences of an entrepreneur.

Often the freedom to work on one's own goals and effort to "change the world" is only made possible by extreme work effort. Moreover, the goal of finally 'making it' – achieving 'impact' and attaining financial freedom - might never arrive, no matter how high the personal sacrifice is. The intensive work-life, even when arrangements are put in place to make it endurable and enjoyable – has its costs. At points, Habitat members were acutely aware of the sacrifices they make, when it comes to time spent with loved ones or finding new friends and partners. Sometimes hobbies and non-work interests must give a way to work on a start-up. In some cases, it is mental health that suffers, as the high expectations and work tempo can lead to stress and anxiety. The investment logic of life – postpone enjoyment now and expect future returns – can simply fail to deliver. These factors cannot be resolved by redesigning or re-arranging life on a small scale. They are also not completely exhausted by knowing oneself and individually reflecting on happiness levels. They are a matter of wider politics of working life, with its long-standing power structures and ongoing conflicts.

Chapter Ten: Concluding Discussion

10.1 Introduction

Coliving is a new type of communal living in which individuals live together and strive to formulate and practice a lifestyle defined by a set of shared values. It articulates a particular vision of life and puts in place arrangements (social, spatial, temporal, discursive) to create and sustain it. In doing so, coliving spaces bring together concerns with contemporary work and new growing industries (such as tech entrepreneurship and creative work), lifestyle, and configuration of personal, social and domestic life. Coliving spaces present a novel way of making life work and are an interesting and fruitful object of sociological analysis of contemporary working lives.

This thesis has explored work-lives in coliving through an ethnographic study of Habitat, which defines itself as a coliving space for entrepreneurs. It has focused on the dynamic behind intensive and all-encompassing nature of entrepreneurial work, on how social and domestic lives are redefined and redesigned in relation to the hectic nature of entrepreneurial work, and finally how Habitat residents subjectively relate to and reflect on work and life. Through this analysis, this thesis contributed to (i) research on factors behind intensive personal commitment to work, (ii) literature on work-life relations and organisations, arrangements and practices that reproduce intensive work-lives (iii) research on power, practices of the self, and reflexivity in relation to work and life in contemporary societies. Overall, the thesis argued for the importance of an approach that understands contemporary work in relation to arrangements of personal and domestic life and structures of social reproduction.

This concluding chapter draws together and reflects upon the key contributions of this thesis. In doing so, this discussion reflects on the sociological understanding of the

dynamic of life in coliving and what implications this might have for sociologists examining contemporary working-lives beyond coliving. Within this, Section 10.2 summarizes each of the main themes of the theoretical and empirical chapters and points out possible lessons for future research on contemporary working lives. In addition, it brings the individual findings and concepts together and provides a general scheme of coliving as an arrangement of work-life. Section 10.3 links the findings and themes of the research to the sociological understanding of working lives beyond coliving in two ways. Firstly, it relates the themes of the research to wider trends in contemporary work-lives, including practices related to managing intensive work, the concerns with social reproduction and outsourcing of private life, and construction of self-reflexive and self-moderating subjectivity. Secondly – drawing on reflexive field notes and memos - it relates the lives of Habitat residents to my life as a PhD researcher, finding links between different, yet strangely similar work-life dynamics.

10.2 Summary of Findings and Implications for Future Research

10.2.1 Intensive Working Lives in Coliving

Chapters Four and Five explored the dynamics of intensive working lives in relation to coliving phenomenon. Coliving spaces can be seen as a new development in organisation of work-life that seek to modify spatial arrangements, social relations and organise everyday practices in a way that simultaneously integrate domestic and working life and make intensive working lives feasible.

Chapter Four provided a theoretical discussion of theories and approaches that address the issue of the relation between work and personal and subjective life. While some authors argue that work is no longer an important source of contemporary identity and self-understanding (Bauman, 2004; Beck, 2000; Sennett, 1998), others claim that work

remains an important source of identity (Doherty, 2009; Foster, 2012; Strangleman, 2012a), or that it indeed influences our personal and subjective lives more than before (Fleming, 2012; Hancock and Tyler, 2004). The chapter discussed four theoretical perspectives on understanding personal attachment to work to shed light on the dynamics of intensive work-lives: (i) entrepreneurship discourse, (ii) biocracy, (iii) approaches emphasising desire, lack and affect and (iv) approaches emphasising the role of normative justifications and ethics of the self.

Discussing and assessing these theories, I outlined limitations of these approaches to understanding the dynamics of work-lives and proposed a more complex analytical framework for understanding work-lives in Habitat that took shape during the fieldwork. The framework suggested that understanding of the dynamics of working lives should make more space for the characteristics of the work situation and features of social reproduction in order to understand how these factors together shape the dynamics of work-lives when it comes to time, rhythm, and future orientation.

In Chapter Five, I empirically supported this argument drawing on examples from the ethnographic fieldwork. I identified the improvement principle which postulates that, for the research participants, the most important goal of working life is to contribute to the improvement of the world. In this sense, the improvement principle represents 'ethical motivation' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 7) or 'telos' (Foucault, 1992: 27) that justifies an intensive commitment to entrepreneurial work. Rather than being simply an individual orientation, it is grounded in a wider discourse of the entrepreneurial and tech industry and proliferates through the media content and organisational spaces associated with the wider entrepreneurial environment, including the shared discourse in Habitat.

However, the ethical orientation to work is not the sole factor behind intensive working lives in Habitat. It combines with the characteristic of enterprise and entrepreneurial work, which is seen as the ideal vehicle for delivering a large-scale social change. The combination of the improvement principle and expanding enterprise together establish a particular orientation to money, which is crucial for financing the growth of the enterprise and potential for future improvement. Combined, these factors can lead to a particularly intimate connection between working and personal life, through blurring the line between capital and personal income, investment orientation to work-life and intense periods of extreme work that should lead to expected future returns on investment.

Two more general and more widely applicable points can be drawn from these observations. Firstly, there is a value in extending the studies of contemporary intensive work-lives beyond the study of what we might simplistically call discourse or neoliberal ideology and other entities such as emotions and affect. This is not to say that they are not influential when it comes to shaping the way working lives are understood and lived. Rather, more attention should be paid to the ways in which these factors combine and simultaneously justify "practical" aspects of work situations, how they influence and support certain approaches to social reproduction of life, and how daily activities (which are nonetheless understood and perceived through the lenses of these discourses) and practical concerns change in relation to the factors named above.

Secondly, future research would benefit from paying attention to a dimension that I would call the personal political economy of work-life. This means simply to engage holistically with financial and material aspects of the logic of reproduction of working individuals, which considers their financial and material logic and the influences this has on the way they understand, live and plan their lives. Current research in the

sociology of work and organisation studies highlights organisational influences. In addition, it sheds light on how powerful discourses reformulate individuals' approach to life. However, what seems to be somewhat lacking is a consideration of how these combine with pragmatic demands, negotiations and expectations of workers when it comes to the questions of financial (in)security, wealth, or future financial and material expectations. These factors exert influence on the dynamics of work-life, albeit are not necessarily part of observable organisational practices and strategies or being represented in dominant discourses of work. For example, intense and demanding work commitment can be justified through the expectations of future returns in the form of freedom to choose one's commitment or even freedom from work as such. This shouldn't be interpreted as the juxtaposition of discursive with material aspects of life. As the observations presented in Chapter Five suggest, these elements are profoundly interconnected; or rather there is no strict separation in the first place.

Arguably, these aspects can be more important in accounting for a situation of self-employed and entrepreneurs, compared to the situation of employees. Even though entrepreneurship takes place within an organisational context, the organisation of work in the sense of an employing hierarchical organisation is missing. Moreover, financial pressures (and expected financial returns) are likely having a bigger influence on work-life in an entrepreneurial situation than when it comes to employees where we can assume higher stability and predictability. However, the research on contemporary working lives beyond entrepreneurship would benefit from taking into consideration financial demands and stresses associated with social reproduction and the role they play in sustaining an intensive dynamic of work-life today.

As others have pointed out (Cook, 2018; Dean, 2014; Tellmann, 2009), Foucauldian analyses of contemporary governmentality often leave out financial pressures (such as

debt) from the analysis, even though they are important factors in governing economic and working lives today. Fleming (2017: 693 emphasis in the original) argues that conditions where costs of labour are increasingly pushed onto workers (e.g. in the form of education debt or responsibility to pay for means of work) lead to the situation of '*radical responsibilisation* of employment, whereby responsibility for all the costs and benefits associated with being an economic actor are solely theirs'. In the situation of increased financialisation of housing (and following the financial crisis), mortgages increasingly work as 'a disciplinary mechanism for a precarious labour force that found themselves under conditions of increased volatility after having signed mortgage contracts' (García-Lamarca and Kaika, 2016: 324). Future research would benefit from paying greater attention to the way in which ideologies, work situations and financial conditions and expectations influence the dynamic of contemporary work-lives.

To summarize, in Chapter Four and Five, I presented an innovative analysis of intensive entrepreneurial work-lives. In doing so, I developed an analytical framework that puts stress on the *combination* and mutual influence of discourse of and ethical orientations to work, characteristics of the job situation, and factors of social reproduction that together produce a merging of working and professional life and create particularly intense commitments to work. The framework allows for a more holistic analysis of intensive commitment to work and can be used to move beyond a restricted focus on discursive and ideological forces that characterises a considerable segment of contemporary critical research. Even though developed through a case study of entrepreneurs, this framework has the potential to be applied to the comparative research of other jobs and work situations and be developed into a more comprehensive account of the political economies of working lives.

10.2.2 Coliving as an Arrangement of Work-life: Max-Life

As was argued in Chapter Five, entrepreneurial work is characterised by a high work commitment, immense time pressure, and unpredictability. Given this, it imposes pressures on life outside of work and changes its dynamics. Habitat can be seen as a social arrangement that re-arranges life in such a way as to make it compatible with intensive work. Moreover, coliving does not simply approach the problem of how to live life from the perspective of necessity. Rather, necessity combines with a certain ideal of how life should be lived. In this sense, coliving can be understood as a social arrangement of life which seeks to reformulate and re-design what life is in relation to work. This theme was theoretically and empirically developed in Chapters Six and Seven.

In Chapter Six, I provided an overview and discussion of contemporary conceptualisation of work-life relations. I criticised the perspective of work-life balance chiefly because it underplays the mutual influence and constitution of work and life. I identified a similar problem has been identified in the approach that emphasises the colonisation of life by the logic of work. The perspective of social reproduction of life offers a useful correction to these perspectives because it highlights the mutual constitution and historically shifting dynamics of production and reproduction. I argued for a perspective that – instead of focusing on balance or colonisation – studies the concrete ways in which life is re-arranged and reformulated in relation to work, focusing on the changing dynamics of work-life as a totality of work and non-work arrangements and practices. Moreover, I highlighted the importance of understanding social, temporal, and material structures in which work-life unfolds and that make a certain version of work-life liveable.

Chapter Seven applied this perspective, portraying coliving as an example of arranging work-life. It argued that Habitat seeks to reformulate what life is in relation to work and puts in place social arrangements and everyday practices that sustain a version of intensive work-life and make it viable, endurable and simultaneously enjoyable. The social arrangements of life in Habitat are connected to a notion of what I have called 'max-life', which posits that if carefully arranged, both work and non-work experiences in life can be maximised, in the sense of bringing the maximum possible output and enjoyment. Practical arrangements through which this is achieved in Habitat involved (i) intentional selection of members so as to create a situation where work and personal life *overlap*; (ii) '*automation*' of social life which guarantees a degree of (relatively) effortless socialisation; (iii) careful *moderation* of leisure and social interactions which seek to combine social life with high work commitment; (iv) curation of environment where high-intensity and ambitious work-life is *understood* and (v) being *shielded* from the negative judgement of others. Through the combination of a vision of what life should be and practical arrangements, Habitat reformulates and redesigns what life is and sustains this version of life through rearranging social, temporal and material structures of everyday life.

Coliving can be seen as a reformulation of life in relation to the norms of hard-work and simultaneously articulating a new ideal of life which instead of contrasting work and life seeks to combine them in a new way which 'maximizes' the overall level of life experience and enjoyment. The new way of life does not exist merely as a vision but is instead implemented through a set of social practices and arrangements that make this version of life liveable.

Coliving spaces are a relatively small phenomenon, and most people in contemporary societies do not live in organisations that explicitly seek to rearrange domestic and

personal life in relation to work. Nonetheless, links can be drawn between observations of life in coliving and more common ways contemporary working lives are lived. Practices of increasing personal productivity and wellbeing – of making life work and making life liveable in relation to work – were always present in capitalist societies, and we can say that their prevalence is increasing. These can be relatively organisationally non-mediated activities such as having a drink, going for a run, or gardening after a working day (Schoneboom, 2018). However, they also include more structured and often commodified practices such as formalised time-management techniques or life coaching (Binkley, 2011). Moreover, individuals increasingly use mobile technology-enabled practices, such as popular mindfulness and self-tracking applications promising to relieve stress and improve wellbeing (Gregg, 2018). Recognising that we live with a considerable amount of pressure and seeking the ways of dealing with pressure (rather than reducing it) seems to be very much a mantra of our times.

Sociologists of work highlight the pressures that work practices put on personal and domestic life, be it precarity associated with non-standard employment (McDowell and Christopherson, 2009), intensification of work effort required by employers (Thompson, 2003), blurring of traditional work/home boundaries (Wajcman and Rose, 2011), or increasingly challenging conditions of social reproduction (Bakker and Gill, 2003). An issue that is explored less often is how the challenging and exhausting work-lives are sustained and what the concrete practices and structures are that hold it together. Future research would benefit paying attention to practices, organisations, materials, and forces that keep work-life in a productive state. This is not merely an empirical or practical question of understanding how individuals maintain themselves and their labour power. Rather, understanding how intensive work-lives are

maintained in their productive form can provide illuminating insights into the politics of work today. Given the damaging effects of work today, why do we not see more resistance and stronger demands for change? How is life made to work despite immense demands and pressures? Attention paid to re-organisation and reproduction of contemporary work-lives can play an important role in answering these questions.

In summary, in Chapters Six and Seven, I pointed out the limitations of conceptualisations of contemporary work-life relations and emphasised the importance of studying social and material structures and arrangements that maintain and reproduce work-lives. I applied this perspective on an analysis of an ideal notion and practical arrangements of max-life in a coliving space. However, as I argued above, this perspective has a potential to benefit the wider area of research on the dynamics of contemporary work-lives, given the spread and popularity of practices of increasing productivity and managing wellbeing in present societies. Analysis of arrangements and practices that maintain and reproduce contemporary work-lives can provide important insights into the politics of work today.

10.2.3 Reflecting on Work-life in Coliving: Existential Attitude and Questioning Devotion

The previous two themes focused on understanding the intensive commitment to entrepreneurial work, its impact on everyday life and the ways in which personal and domestic life is rearranged and reformulated to make an intensive work-life viable. Put simplistically, the issue lends itself to a functionalist reading; a problem emerges that demands a change in social structures which adapt to restore the frictionless operation of the social system. However, as was pointed out above, social problems do not just appear but are rather produced in the process of problematisation where a certain aspect of living is made into a question and a problem for thought and reflection

(see section 3.3). In this sense, life and work in coliving are an object of thought and reflection on what life is, what it should be, and how to live it. This issue was discussed in Chapters Eight and Nine.

Chapter Eight addressed the question of power and reflexivity in Foucauldian and critical scholarship. It argued that instead of focusing on whether a form of reflection or self-shaping undertook by social actors is truly reflexive or autonomous, analysis of working life can benefit from focusing on reflective and evaluative operations undertaken by social actors without presuming what true reflexivity is. Chapter Nine examined the way inhabitants of Habitat relate to work and life and how they position themselves as subjects of reflexive practice. It argued that thinking about arranging life in Habitat is characterized by 'existential attitude' (Hacking, 2004) which postulates that social norms are transient and changeable and puts emphasis on the active role of social actors in shaping themselves and conditions of their life. Moreover, relating to work and life was characterised by a practice of continuous self-reflection and contemplation, both individual and collective. Whereas the norms of hard work would not really be questioned, participants firmly believed in the value of observing and evaluating their feelings, motivations, and happiness.

The way of reflecting on life and work in Habitat is characterised by a somewhat paradoxical combination of sensibilities. On the one hand, it affirms the norms of hard work and devotion to professional success. The fast tempo and exceptional intensity of work are fully embraced, and everyday life is built around it so as not to cause too much friction. On the other hand, the devotion to fast and intensive working life is not received automatically and without questioning. Habitat members are encouraged and expected to engage in deep conversations and introspection where the strains and loses of high-velocity life are reflected upon, contemplated and appreciated, and ultimately

reproduced and legitimated. The norms of hard work are not accepted in a manner of unquestioned devotion. They are also not approached with an attitude of sincere opposition and desire to formulate an alternative. We can call the type of attitude to intensive work-life "questioning devotion".

The combination of affirming high tempo work-life while simultaneously contemplating its strains, however, may not be unique to Habitat or coliving spaces more generally. In his study of performing cultures in the new economy, Thrift (2000) notices how business texts and organisations seek to form a new style of 'fast' subjectivity that 'can cope with the disciplines of permanent emergency' (2000: 675). The emphasis on fast delivery of profit, however, is accompanied by stress on constant change and questioning of established ways of doing things. Reflexivity and questioning are to a certain extent inseparable from sensitivity to exhaustive nature of the fast capitalist life. As Thrift puts it: 'indeed, what is interesting about current management literature, from the popular to the academic, is the amount of space given over to the stresses and strains of being a member of the new economy' (Thrift, 2000: 68). In a sense, the subject is put (or puts itself) under increasing pressure, but simultaneously develops a sensibility which allows it to deal with the pressure through constant reflection and voicing of the strains.

Work and career are increasingly understood as projects of the self, whereby workers are guided to see work and career as a means of self-realisation (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Rose, 1999a). However, as Thrift (1997) points out, management knowledge adopts a progressively relativist tone. Business conditions and the nature of the world are seen as increasingly unknowable and unpredictable. Correspondingly, the subject is not given a strict code of conduct or a clear model of subjectivity to follow. The imperative to fulfil a role is replaced by an imperative to become what

one wishes to be, or in other words, to become one's authentic self. However, the more open-ended project nonetheless requires adaptivity and reflexivity and monitoring of one's performance and emotional states. As Hughes (2005: 620) puts it, 'character, under this new guise, resides not so much in the adherence to absolute moral principles, but in an individual's performance in responding to the flow of working life'. Dealing with the hard edge of work in what Thrift (1997) calls soft capitalism, then, becomes less of a matter of opposition, confrontation and resistance, and more of a self-reflexion and continuous adaptation. Unsurprisingly, while the individual may reflexively change and adapt, the problematic structures of demanding work and intensity of (self)exploitation may remain intact.

To sum up, in Chapters Eight and Nine, I offered a critical reading of contemporary Foucauldian scholarship in the area of sociology of work and organisation studies. Most importantly, I criticised the tendency to understand practices of the self as automatically fostering a space for autonomy from or resistance against the dominant power structures. At the same time, I argued against understanding contemporary forms of reflecting on work as merely providing a smokescreen for domination. I argued for an approach which focuses on reflective and evaluative operations undertaken by social actors. Following this principle, empirical analysis in Chapter Nine illustrated a collective way of relating to the self, life and work that affirms high intensity work-life and simultaneously reflects on its strains. This analysis, in connection with other observations (Thrift, 1997, 1997), signals scope for further research on contemporary subjectivity maintained through a "questioning devotion", rather than through simple conformity with or principled confrontation of structures of work and life in contemporary capitalism.

10.2.4 Coliving as a Way of Arranging and Organising Intensive Work-life

Taking the three themes together, we can see coliving as a way of organising domestic and personal life around concerns with work. Orientation to work in Habitat is shaped by a discourse prevalent within the wider organisational environment of the tech economy, which celebrates an individual striving to achieve success and improvement. This goes hand in hand with the recognition of the all-encompassing nature of entrepreneurial work in Habitat. The ideal of entrepreneurial work combines with the financial logic of enterprise to produce, at least in some cases, a particularly intense commitment to work and economic success. The goal of Habitat, however, is not so much to impose limits on work. In fact, what we see is that Habitat creates conditions to further chances of entrepreneurial success, whereby social ties in the domestic and personal sphere simultaneously fulfil a work-related function. For example, housemates and friends are also entrepreneurs, who can offer advice and professional help, can motivate friends to work harder and not to let the dream of entrepreneurial success die.

Rather than countering and diminishing the pressure and tempo of work, Habitat seeks to consciously redesign the structures and rhythms of life to make it enjoyable despite–or rather in line with – intensive work demands. Ties of friendship and work overlap, so one does not have to make a strict choice between work and fun during leisure time. Moreover, opportunities for socialising are readily available without a need to invest too much time into arranging social encounters. The leisure and social activities in Habitat have a quality of moderation, in a sense that it is understood that collective life should not take over concerns with work and members respect that their friends might experience lack of time. Lastly, Habitat seeks to create an environment where demands and strains of work are understood by others who seek to help to maintain a

version of high-tempo life and are ready to provide friendly and emotional support when it's needed.

Habitat also formulates a specific collective and individual way of reflecting on work and life. This mode of relating to life does not see coliving as a submission to the necessity of hectic work-life where coliving would be seen as making the best out of a bad situation. Rather, the organisation of life is approached with an 'existential attitude' (Hacking, 2004) whereby life is seen not as something given, but as an object that should be reflected upon and that should be purposefully re-arranged in relation to a desired way of life. Correspondingly, the working individual is not seen as someone who must conform to the general societal norms, but rather as someone who accepts the ideals of hard work out if its own volition, while continuing to search for meaning, strives to know and understand one's self, monitors its happiness, feelings and mental states, reconsiders priorities in a quest for productivity, achievement, and self-optimisation.

The Figure 9 maps the themes and concepts discussed throughout the theoretical and empirical chapters. Coliving can be seen as an arrangement of work-life that is connected to several concerns within the sociology of work. Certain discourses or ideologies of work formulate an orientation to work, in the case of Habitat characterised most of all by an improvement principle, which interprets work as a mission to contribute to a large-scale positive change in the world through entrepreneurship. However, as Chapter Five argued, to understand how this orientation influences life, we need to take into consideration characteristics of entrepreneurial work situation, which is based on the understanding of expanding and scaling-up enterprise and necessitates an effort aimed at future growth. This relates to a specific logic of reproduction of life, where personal finance and start-up capital are

intimately tied together. Together, these factors put pressure and demand the change in the rhythm, patterns and understanding of work-life.
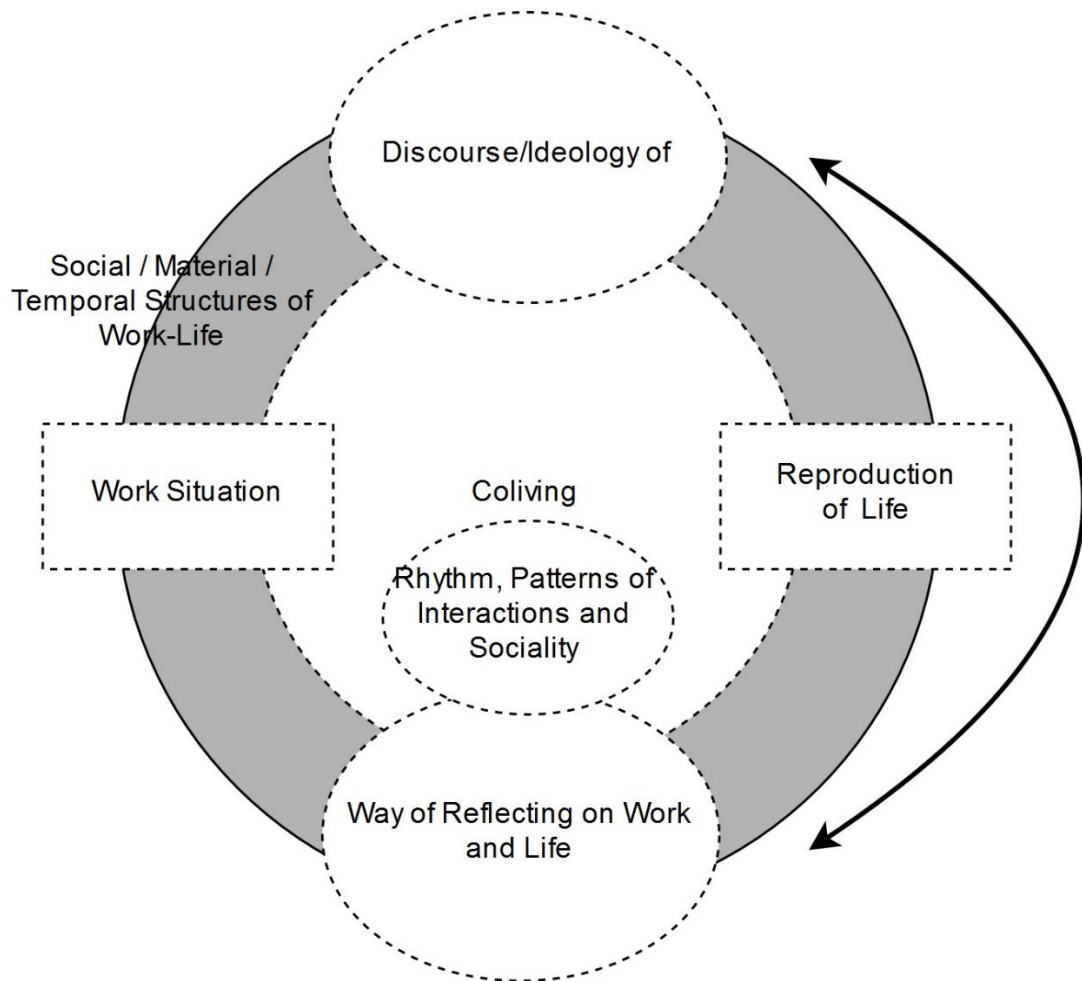
Figure 9 - Coliving as an arrangement of work-life

Coliving space reproduces certain orientation to work, but also seeks to practically redesign life in such a way that it becomes compatible with the work pressures and its effects. As Chapter Seven illustrated, it creates structures of socialisation, interaction and support that help to deal with the demanding tempo of entrepreneurial work-life. Coliving seeks to formulate an alternative to the prevailing way of organising life in society and designs an organisation of life where the structures of everyday life are modified as to make them compatible with the logic of intensive work as well as the

ethos of life which demands a combination of maximum professional success without entirely sacrificing personal enjoyment. Simultaneously, Habitat formulates a collective and individual way of reflecting on work and life, which stresses the importance of choice and continuous self-examination. The pressures of work-life are to be contemplated and their impact on life to be assessed, either individually or collectively. The discourse and ideology of work prevalent in Habitat are therefore an object of debate and examination, rather than something that should be accepted without questioning.

10.2.5 Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations of the present study of coliving that are worth reflecting on, not the least because they highlight opportunities for future research. It is worth noting that even though the ethnographic case study of Habitat enabled in-depth exploration of working lives in a single coliving space, it does not necessarily cover the diversity of coliving spaces that currently exist. Even though the study was informed by brief visits of other coliving spaces, exploration of their propagation materials and media discourse on coliving, it only offered limited insights into the functioning of other organisations and other types of coliving (as described in Chapter Two, section 2.4). Unfortunately, this comparison was not feasible within the limits of this PhD research, given the difficulties of securing access to coliving spaces as well as time and financial demands of ethnographic fieldwork. Future research on coliving could explore this comparative dimension to produce more general knowledge of coliving as a new type of organisation of work-life. In particular, comparison with a large commercial coliving spaces (e.g. The Collective in London) which do not host entrepreneurs specifically could lead to interesting insights and shed light on how findings from Habitat apply to other colivings and other work situations.

Direct comparison with other contemporary forms of organising life (such as cohousing and alternative communities described in Chapter Two, section 2.8.3) could explore the similarities and differences between organising life in contrasting types of organisations.

Another limitation of the study relates to time. This research was based on three consecutive months of fieldwork, which offer sufficient time span to understand life in coliving in depth. However, conducting fieldwork in one period only offers limited insights into an organisational change of coliving and possible alteration of social meanings, rules and practices over time. This alteration can occur, for example, with the arrival of new members. The same limitation applies to individuals and changes in their life. It would be interesting to explore if work-life habits and attitudes vary with a change in circumstances; for example, with the growth of a start-up company. Another interesting dimension to explore in future research is a change in relation to life events and lifecycle. Coliving is an organisation that attracts individuals in specific life situation, i.e. mostly without family commitments and not in a serious relationship (moving in with a life partner was perhaps the most common reason for moving out of Habitat). Observations on a possible change in an individual's thinking about work and life in relation to change in personal circumstances could bring important insights. Revisiting the field at different points of time, however, was not within the possibilities of this study. This is partly because of the difficulty of accessing coliving, which depends not only on approval by the gatekeeper but also on the availability of the room. However, funding conditions also play a role, as ESRC's current rules for overseas doctoral fieldwork do not provide financial support for revisiting the same field over time. However, I continue to maintain research relations with research

participants (some of whom have already moved out of Habitat) and conducting further research in the future could lead to fascinating insights.

The final limitation rests in lack of insight into participant's routines outside of coliving, in the workplace and in-between work and home. During my fieldwork, I used opportunities to visit participants in their workplaces and tried to follow them to various social events where possible. This provided some valuable insights, for example, into the discourse of improvement within coworking and incubator spaces, that I presented in Chapter Five, Section 5.3. However, the primary focus on life in the coliving space allowed only limited insights into the temporal and social structuring of participants typical workday outside of coliving. A more thorough exploration of this issue, regrettably, was not practically impossible within this research, given the focus of the study and time restraints of the fieldwork. However, future exploration of the temporal and social dynamic of an individual workday inside and outside of coliving could yield interesting insights into what role does coliving play in the overall structure of an individual life. Ethnographic shadowing, a method based on the close following of participants during their typical day (Quinlan, 2008; Rebecca Gill et al., 2014), is especially useful for exploring naturally unfolding activities in everyday life and across social contexts and could yield important insights in future research.

10.3 Working Lives Beyond Coliving

Habitat and coliving more generally are relatively new phenomenon and generalization from a case study is a tricky exercise, carrying risk of interpreting the world based on relatively limited observations and extrapolating observations from a specific social setting on the world at large. As Becker (1998: 96) argues, scholars often rely on 'the classical trope of *synecdoche*, a rhetorical figure in which we use a

part of something to refer the listener or reader to the whole it belongs to'. It would be incorrect to say that coliving represents a synecdoche of life in contemporary capitalism in general. Most of us, after all, do not live in an organisation which explicitly and purposefully seeks to alter the structures of everyday life to make them compatible with work. Moreover, there is a danger in proclaiming that a small trend characterises the general tendency of the time, ignoring countervailing trends and contradictory developments (Fevre, 2007).

It would be wrong to declare that we live in "the Age of Coliving" or in "the Coliving Society". Nonetheless, this thesis provides insights and suggestions for research on contemporary work-lives more generally. In particular, the thesis argued that there are good reasons for focusing holistically on relations of work and structures of personal domestic life and the way they combine in order to make certain versions of work-life viable. In order to understand working lives in capitalism, the changes in production and work should be understood together with social structures that change in order to make life liveable in the new conditions. Moreover, sociology of work should pay attention to how changes in work and dynamic of social reproduction change social, temporal, and material structures that in turn make life "compatible" with work.

As I argued in Chapter Six, personal and domestic life in capitalism has always been an object of planning, organisation and intervention and these efforts go further than a specific bounded organisation, such as coliving. Ethnographic research on coliving presented here – given its limited scope and attention paid to the details of the case – can make some of the trends more visible and their combinations more obvious. It is worthwhile therefore to sketch the ways in which coliving spaces are symptomatic of larger trends in contemporary societies and work-lives within them. The next two sections do so in two different ways. Section 10.3.1 draws parallels between arranging

life in coliving and wider sets of practices of contemporary work-lives. Section 10.3.2 relates the observations from Habitat to my own working life and the lives of my PhD colleagues, drawing on everyday observations and reflexive field notes and memos.

10.3.1 Making Life Work Beyond Coliving

As others have pointed out, a significant proportion of contemporary working lives face pressure of intensification (Thompson, 2003; Wajcman, 2008). As Green (2003) reports, the proportion of workers who agree or strongly agree that they work under a great deal of tension or that their job requires them to work very hard has increased significantly from the 1990s to 2000s. Researchers have connected these trends to factors such as increasing utilisation of information and communication technologies which lead to higher pace work and greater demands on multitasking (Chesley, 2014) but also increasing demands by employers who extend and expand the demands on skills and productivity of the work-force (Thompson et al., 2001).

The trends in working hours are less clear. Workers increasingly report that they feel pressed for time (Edwards and Wajcman, 2005) and longitudinal surveys reveal declining satisfaction with hours worked (Rose, 2005). This, however, cannot be interpreted simply as a reaction to objectively increasing working hours, as there is no clear evidence – on average - of significant increase of working time (Bittman, 2016). This can be explained by the increasing number of workers working long hours and increasing numbers of workers who work part-time or on casual contracts. As Edwards and Wajcman (2005: 46) put it 'the overall picture… is one of an increasing polarization of working time, between those who work very long hours or overwork, and others who work few or no hours'. The increasing pressure that working individuals feel can be attributed to the increasing time scarcity at the level of the household. After an increased entry of women to the paid labour force, households are

now 'supplying more working hours to the labour market than ever before' (Edwards and Wajcman, 2005: 47). An additional problem is destandardisation of work-time with an increasing amount of workers working non-standard hours (e.g. nightshifts, irregular working time). As Bittman (2016) suggests, what we are observing may be loss of opportunities for social coordination, meaning that social relations and non-work responsibilities are increasingly difficult to coordinate.

Given the pressures intensification and increasing difficulties in managing life outside of employment, how do we make life work today? In other words, what makes individuals accept and deal with the pressure? Well explored is the role of the new discourse or ideology of work which reformulates the conception of who the workers are, what is expected of them, and justifies the changes in the organisation of work drawing on long-standing normative ideals. Rose (1999a) shows that since 1980s work is increasingly interpreted as a sphere of self-realisation, rather than simply a sphere where work effort is exchanged for money. As Rose (1999a: 104) puts it: '… the individual is not to be emancipated *from* work, perceived as merely a task or a means to an end, but to be fulfilled *in* work, now constructed as an activity through which we produce, discover, and experience ourselves'.

In a similar way, Boltanski and Chiapello (2006: 162) point towards 'the ideology that justifies people's commitment to capitalism, and which renders that commitment attractive' when accounting for lack of radical alternatives to neoliberal rules of work today. Besides promising self-actualisation, the new demanding and intensive regime of work also promises security not through a collective defence of worker's rights or other forms of collective solidarities, but rather through increasing individual employability and labour market value through an increase in one's work experience and human capital. Seen through the optics of studies of discourse and ideology, the

pressures and demands of contemporary work are justified through a new ideal of work and a worker who accepts the pressures in her quest for self-realisation and self-perfection and overcomes strains in expectation of future returns of employability and wealth.

Even when one agrees with the description of the neoliberal discourse and ideology of work offered in these accounts, there is a sense that something is missing. After all, the analysis presented in this thesis sought to demonstrate that in order to understand how work changes life and makes it work, we have to take into consideration technologies and structures of personal and domestic life and the social infrastructure that makes the intensive work-lives liveable. However persuasive, ideologies do not necessarily help to resolve everyday tensions and practical questions of how to live and how to reconcile the demands intensive work has on time and energy. As this study has illustrated, arrangements of work-life – however always interpreted and motivated ideologically – often take a more practical form and alter the structures of life at the level of sociality and rhythm of interactions. Even though the transformation in life after work may not always be as explicit and deliberate as in the case of Habitat, there are enough examples of practices through which life is made to work beyond the confines of specialised establishments such as coliving. These practices (often being offered as products and services on a commercial basis), seek to redefine the vision of a good life, its practice and as a result, shape the social ties and structures in which contemporary work-lives unfold.

These practices can take a form of productivity-enhancing techniques that promise to deal with the time pressure and exhaustive work through increasing personal efficiency. The resolution of the strains of work is promised to come through doing things more efficiently, having greater control, and fitting more into a day. Gregg

(2018) observes that the individualised technologies of improving the self and productivity offered in myriad self-help manuals are increasingly replacing collective action that would seek to alter the structural conditions of work. In this sense, self-help advice on increasing productivity presents a 'predictable narrative that provides satisfying imaginary resolutions to persistent social contradictions' (Gregg, 2018: X). As she points out, the attention turns increasingly from facing the structural conditions causing the time strain towards 'inwardly generated methods of self-scrutiny and enhancement' (2018: 4).

While these practices seek to accommodate the demands and strains of work through managing individual productivity, the technologies focusing on improving one's wellbeing are also on the rise. Interestingly, wellbeing and wellness are not achieved through limiting the work hours or work tempo, but rather through careful management of mental health, physical fitness, and overall capacity to deal with intense work. Cederström and Spicer (2015) call the contemporary constellation whereby wellness is made into a moral and practical imperative by prevailing discourses, employing organisations and educational institutions a welfare syndrome. Authors provide concerns with fitness as one of the examples of this new orientation towards wellness. Companies increasingly incorporate 'behavioural interventions' (2015: 35) concerning employees' diet and exercise in the hope of a productive workforce. Moreover, employees working extremely long hours find fitness and dieting as a tool for increasing and maintaining endurance and dealing with the demands of extreme work. Maintaining a healthy body that can endure stress and strains of intensive work becomes an activity situated between work and leisure, or rather crossing the line between them.

Fitness is not an exception when it comes to the value of leisure activities being increasingly judged against their contribution to managing work and productivity. This dynamic is very well captured in Schoneboom's (2018: 367) study of allotment gardening, increasingly popular with busy professionals, which can be seen as a form of 'obligatory leisure'. Gardening is obligatory in a sense that the necessities of maintaining the plot 'obligate' (2018: 361) the individual to make time, but also in a sense that gardening is necessitated by a need to escape from and relax after intensive and hectic work. Allotment gardening protects at least some of the leisure from being encroached by paid work but also helps to deal with stresses of employment. However, participants also reported gardening as helping them to gain perspective on problems encountered in work, engage in 'strategic thinking' about work 'that happens unintentionally, in the background' (2018: 369). We can see that to some extent a form the leisure activity takes is necessitated by a need to deal with the pressures of work, but is also seen as performing work-related functions in a sense of helping to deal with work-related problems.

Not only leisure but also the logic of social reproduction finds itself under an increasing strain. Fraser (2016: 99) argues that the emerging '"crisis of care" is best interpreted as a more or less acute expression of the social reproductive contradictions of financialized capitalism'. As Fraser (2016: 112) puts it, the globalizing and neoliberal form of financialized capitalism 'promotes state and corporate disinvestment from social welfare, while recruiting women into the paid force – externalizing care work onto families and communities while diminishing their capacity to perform it'. However, even here the ultimate contradiction seems to be partly softened thanks to the rearrangement and commodification of aspects of life such as caring, family responsibilities, and emotional and romantic life in a process

that scholars call outsourcing of private and family life (Craig and Ritzer, 2009; Hochschild, 2013). The examples of outsourcing include delegation into the hands of business providers things such as the organisation of family celebrations, child and elderly care, dating, but also small things as showing affection through giving flowers or card-writing. The price to pay for compensating intensive work in this way, according to the authors, is increasing the intrusion of market logic and formal economic rationality into the affective relations (see also Illouz, 2007).

What kind of subject is produced by the dynamic of the hectic work-life where intensive work-tempo and commitment to work demands constant effort of combining and reformulating relations between work and personal and domestic aspects of life? This probably is not just *homo economicus*, at least if understood as an agent which foregoes enjoyment and affection in its efforts to maximise economic value. After all, life in contemporary capitalism does not replace personal life with work but rather sees combination and reconciliation of work and life in new ways. I have already mentioned Thrift's (1997, 2000) notes on the subject who accepts the fast and hectic life and deals with it through the search for practical solutions as well as constant evaluation of its mental and emotional states and strains that the fast life in capitalist brings. We can also add, with Rose (1999a), that it is a subject with very few rigid restrictions when it comes to the enjoyment of life. Rather than imposing strict moral limits on what is allowed when it comes to consumption and enjoyment, the only 'limit of the permissible' appears to be a conduct which is excessive, 'that manifests lack of the exercise of will and free choice, whose epitome is the alcoholic or the heroin addict…' (1999a: 267). When the careful moderation and increasingly difficult reproduction of life are at stake, the excess could endanger the constant effort to make life work that is required by capitalism today.

As Chapter Eight argued, life in capitalism has always been shaped by the logic of production. The trends overviewed above point towards a continuing transformation of what life is and how it is lived in relation to concerns with work. The demands of intensive work necessitate changes in practices of sustaining work-lives, structures and arrangements of social reproduction, and reformulation of subjectivity along the lines of self-evaluation and self-moderating subjectivity in search of optimisation and wellbeing. The framework stressing the interrelations of discourse and ideology of work, dynamic of social reproduction, practices of everyday life and forms of subjectivity can help future research to understand how contemporary work-lives are sustained and made to work in a particularly intensive way.

10.3.2 Making Life Work as a Habitat Entrepreneur and as a PhD Student

The second way I want to relate observations from Habitat to working lives outside of coliving context is through my personal experience with PhD studies. Through writing reflexive fieldnotes and memos during and after the fieldwork, as well as through conversations with my supervisors, I came to notice how the reality of coliving which I originally considered quite different from the way me and my colleagues live our lives, quite surprisingly resembles patterns of work-life in contemporary academia as I came to know it. As scholars point out, academia is a sphere where high commitment to work is relatively common (Clarke et al., 2012), where focus on career success is an important way of navigating and managing working life (Clarke and Knights, 2015) and where the way of reflecting on work and life often takes a form of contemplation of their bittersweet quality (Knights and Clarke, 2014). It, therefore, makes for an interesting case for comparison as well as the situation on which I can reflect based on my personal knowledge.

The area and nature of work of Habitat entrepreneurs and PhD students at contemporary university are different. At risk of simplification, we can say that whereas entrepreneurs embrace the world of capital and use it as an important measure of success, PhD students often seek a distance from conventional economic measures of worth in their quest to produce knowledge that should be – at least partially – free from utility concerns. On the other hand, there are conspicuous similarities when it comes to determinants of PhD and entrepreneurial working life. PhD students, like entrepreneurs, draw on the strong ethical notion of producing knowledge worth writing, sharing and reading. Whereas this knowledge does not have to lead to a large-scale change in the world, the desire for one's contribution to be recognised by the community of peers can be identified as one of the important orientations to do research in the first place. The expectation of coming up with the next scientific breakthrough often dwindles after encounters with the mundane reality of research, but also through encounters with peers, supervisors, and critical publics. Me and most of my PhD friends increasingly developed a more cynical attitude that could be characterised by a common phrase 'I honestly just want to finish and get a job'. Nonetheless, I would guess that the desire to produce a meaningful and perhaps an excellent piece of research that deserves its place on the library bookshelf next to the work of respected peers remains as an important source of motivation of many PhD students.

In section 9.4, I identified the ideals of potential to succeed in work, freedom to determine one's own goals, and determination to work towards their accomplishments as important ideals that together make up the ethical substance of entrepreneurial subject in Habitat. Even though content and interpretation of these ideals would perhaps differ among PhD students, they are nonetheless an important part of doing

the PhD. At least in my own case, the desire not to waste my intellectual potential has been a strong motivating force behind entering the PhD. Moreover, I have contrasted the relative freedom of academia – which at least during PhD granted me a freedom to conduct the research that I chose – with the alienating experience of paid work where I often felt that I am fulfilling goals set by organisation that had very little in common with my beliefs about what is worthy activity in the world. The determination to succeed – or at least to finish – also seems to be an important part of the PhD game. The determination to 'get on with it', to continue to work when research gets hard and tiring and to overcome setbacks, is an important part of completing a PhD. During my PhD time, I have tried to motivate colleagues to persevere and to continue working numerous times and I have received at least an equal amount of support from my supervisors, peers and wider academic community. The determination – the desire to overcome the hurdles and to see the project through – is a value that is individually and collectively maintained in academia.

A further similarity between entrepreneurial and PhD work situation lies in the relative unpredictability of the career progression, relative lack of external oversight and lack of external measures of success. The entrepreneur often bets years of work and a substantial amount of money on a project outcome of which is highly uncertain. As I illustrated in Chapter Five, this often leads to investment orientation to life, where work effort is often invested with little reassurance in the hope of future returns in the form of free time, success, and wealth. The idea of success shared by PhD students takes perhaps a different shape. None of my peers dreams of developing a product that is going change the lives of millions. However, the orientation towards future success remains.

The motivation to work among PhD students has been an object of countless discussions with my friends. In particular, conversations with my friend Harry stand out in my memory. As Harry pointed out, PhD students are mostly not compelled to work by a formal organisation or an employer. At least in our own supervision relationships, the supervisor would not act as disciplinary employer setting targets and strictly demanding results, but rather as an understanding figure who helps to keep us going and helps to clarify how research projects should develop. In our own situation of fully-funded PhD students, we were also temporarily shielded from immediate financial influences, as our scholarships would continue to arrive independently of our immediate work performance.

Nonetheless, many PhD students that we knew worked very hard and their work routines would sometimes be quite similar to entrepreneurial lives in Habitat. Some of our friends, and occasionally ourselves, would frequently work until late, and often work weekends. At the time when these conversations were taking place, we were frustrated with friends who would not want to go to the pub, hang out or go for a trip with us because they were simply "too busy". The question that was very much on our mind during those conversations was, why do some of our colleagues – and sometimes ourselves - maintain strict or even harmful work ethics?

Based on my own personal observations, I would bet money that this has something to do with the unpredictable character of academic career progression. The question on many PhD students' mind is whether they are going to "make it", in the sense of getting an academic job after completion. The stories about how hard it is to get an academic job are very much common in the PhD environment, and the likelihood of getting a job was very much on my mind, as well as on minds of my peers. What often

motivates hard work is the knowledge of future confrontation with a ruthless academic job market.

The workshops and conferences for PhD students are often full of advice on how to get published, how to gain valuable experience, and how to "get yourself out there".[9] In a situation where one's future value on the job market is difficult to determine (is one paper enough? did I organise enough conferences? did I prove that I can attract funding? should I do more teaching?), almost any activity is worth doing and almost any achievement is worth pursuing. In combination with the constant comparison of one's success with the success of one's peers, this leads to rather frantic efforts to increase one's indicators of success and future employability. Whereas entrepreneurs in Habitat would often bet years of work on a success of their product and enterprise, many PhD students are investing their work, sacrificing their weekends, and spending their nights with anxiety in the hope of future success of their careers. As we know, the chances of success are debatable, and available measures of esteem have only limited potential to predict how well will one's career kick off.

In this respect, PhD work can become overwhelming in a similar way as entrepreneurial work. To paraphrase words of Habitat resident Frans, sometimes it indeed feels that we are always in and never out. Reflexive field notes perhaps illustrate this nicely. Before leaving for the fieldwork, I decided to attend the Critical Management Studies conference in Liverpool and fly to my fieldwork destination from there, which made the preparations for the fieldwork slightly more hectic:

> 'Leaving Durham, I didn't feel rested at all. Instead of being completely ready
> to enter the field, I knew that there is a conference before me and the start of

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[9] Unfortunately, the crucial advice on how to fit all these things at once into a busy PhD schedule seems to be strangely missing from most of the events.

the fieldwork. I chose to present two papers. I knew that I would have to rehearse my presentation, read through the conference programme and prepare myself for three intense conference days. I had packed all my stuff and cleared my room just a few hours before I left for the train. Packing everything and cleaning my room was a longer and more demanding process than I expected, as it usually is' (Fieldnote #61)

'Flying to [the city where the fieldwork took place] I felt exhausted from a conference and from a night with only two hours of sleep (unfortunate timing of the flight). I couldn't really sleep as I was nervous. I will miss my train to the airport. I was unhappy with being so tired. I regretted entering the field so tired, as the handbooks say that the first moments in the field are the most important as they offer an opportunity for especially vivid observations when researcher sees things for the first time. However, I think my state is more of a sleeping deprivation than excitement.' (Fieldnote #9)

As I noted in Chapter Three that describes the methodology of this research, the nature of fieldwork in Habitat was often rather demanding, and I had only limited opportunities to control the tempo of my research. Sometimes multiple things had to be done at the same time. Sometimes, I feel it was my desire to see as much as I can or at least not to miss any opportunity that could lead to insights that would improve my research. Many field notes attest to the all-consuming quality of the fieldwork research:

'Today, I didn't want to do any serious work when it comes to observing. I think I felt a need to be alone a little bit, to read a book on ethnography, and get my thoughts into some kind of order. I think I felt a little bit dragged by the

dynamic in Habitat. I am in the field all the time unless I go for a walk or to sit in a café to do some catching up work. Being pre-occupied with observing, partly being driven by my fear that there will be not enough data (the fear that I always have), I was meticulously making notes about anything that happened, and I didn't want to miss any opportunity to go wherever I was invited to go. Even though I just wanted to catch up with work, things did not really go as planned' (Fieldnote #24)

'To be honest, I did not really want to engage in any more conversations because after the morning I was in a situation of small data overload and wanted to make sure that I can write my notes down properly. However, when Niels suggested that I talk with Klaus over a coffee, I did not dare to say no. I am happy that I didn't.' (Fieldnote #34)

'It's 8 PM. In the end, I didn't go to the museum as I planned. Instead, I was writing some memos, analytical insights and other stuff' (Fieldnote #66)

'The improvised interview was fun, but I was very tired. I have asked for thirty minutes, but it eventually went on for much, much longer. Towards the end, I found it very difficult to concentrate and to ask meaningful questions. At one point, I was already very, very tired. Even though the topic we got to was very interesting, I could no longer steer the conversations creatively. However, it was difficult to end as the most interesting point happened towards the end quite unexpectedly, when the interview was almost over.' (Fieldnote #68)

Towards the end of the field work, I also became busy with a work task not related to the research. I was the main organiser of a BSA doctoral regional conference for which I won a small grant from the BSA. As the event was scheduled before I knew when

the fieldwork would take place, combining organising work and the fieldwork was the only option. Coincidentally, most work on the conference organising was happening when some of my participants were preparing events for a local tech industry festival. This provided some opportunities to complain together about how busy we are.

> 'It seems that quite a few participants involved in the organisation do not have much time to put in the organisation and people seemed to be quite stressed. I know that Arya is organising an event and he was still finalising it yesterday, and it does not seem that he has finished yet. Eva was stressed last week about her event too. She said that there is quite a lot of work that she simply has no time for. We could at least complain together about how we are not managing to organise our events.' (Fieldnote #95)

The work-lives of entrepreneurs in Habitat, those of my PhD friends and my own are different as they operate in different value registers and strive to achieve different goals. However, there are also striking similarities. The work orientation is often characterised by strong ethical investment either into improving the world or producing valuable knowledge. Potential, freedom, and determination are important characteristics of one's self, entrepreneurial or academic. Moreover, the types of work situation and reproduction of life (financing and maintaining one's life) are characterised by unpredictability and investment orientation towards the future. Can we also trace similarities in how entrepreneurs and PhD students make their life work?

For myself and many of my friends, PhD work time does not strictly end when we leave the office. Even though many of us try not to work evenings and weekends, we nonetheless carry our academic interests outside the office, to our homes and often to pubs. This is how I described the situation in a memo:

'If you think about it, it seems that my participants and me (and my friends) have some things in common. Most of my friends now (given my isolation from previous, non-PhD life) in Durham are PhD students. Our chats inevitably include chats about our work in the broadest sense – theories, politics, research, arguments. They also include quite a lot of talk about practical matters of doing and surviving PhD and when times get bad, an occasional supportive chat. I, Ludovico and Harry meet in the evenings to read and discuss texts from our respective fields. They are not necessarily relevant for our research as such, but we try to learn a bit more from each other, especially around our shared interest in capitalism.' (Memo, 19th July 2018).

Besides conversations about the theme of our work being had in our after-work time, there are additional similarities in the way my participants and I and my friends live our lives. Note that most of the friends I meet on a daily basis are also PhD students. In my case, this is by default, rather than by choice, and perhaps reflects the reality of living in a small university town. However, like entrepreneurs in Habitat, I and my friends spend a considerable amount of time talking about work with friends who "understand" the reality of doing PhD, in a similar way to how Habitat residents understand the lifestyle impacts of working in a start-up enterprise. This makes support to deal with occasional pressures easily accessible without requiring too much explanation. Moreover, my peers understand the significance of doing the PhD and rarely question the choice of doing one (not least because they made the same choice). The same applies to frustrations with a paper being rejected, job application not being successful, or having an unpleasant conversation with senior academics. In addition, they understand that sometimes working towards a deadline means staying in the

office till late or working on the weekend[10], even though this happens to a much lesser extent than in the case of entrepreneurs in Habitat.

The striking similarity between lives of Habitat entrepreneurs and my PhD friends lies in the amount of time devoted to dealing with the question of how to keep oneself going: how to "manage" work, how to fit demanding work into personal life, and how to deal with its pressures. This is reflected in the amount of official or professional advice available. I have already mentioned the plethora of advice during various conferences, workshops and discussion events targeting PhD students and early career researchers. Within these, it seems that therapeutic and medical language is becoming increasingly prevalent, as demands and hardship of work are more and more translated from the language of work politics into the language of mental health and resilience. However, this theme also seems to be a preoccupation of frequent conversations between PhD students themselves. Numerous conversations I had with friends on this topic ranged from sharing practical advice on how to deal with aspects of the PhD, how to best organise time, and how to take 'care of oneself'. Let me again illustrate this by reference to a research memo:

> 'Every day, I receive about three emails that offer me new opportunities for training and improving my skills, so I can become a better and happier researcher. Courses, workshops, summer schools, writing retreats. They promise to help me to become a more effective writer, to hack the academic job market, or to master the art of time-management. I know I don't have time for any of that now. But I usually do not feel like deleting them straight away. What if there is a fantastic offer that I just cannot afford to miss? What if some

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[10] In addition, unlike my father, they understand that I simply cannot take two months of holiday in the summer.

of it is actually useful? I normally just leave the emails to rot there, hoping to have another look at some later point. I then normally delete them weeks later when the deadline for applications will have already passed. Sometimes I pass them on to my friends so we can ridicule the neoliberal mantras of perfect productivity together.

With my PhD friends, we talk a lot about how to navigate one's life and how to shape one's life in relation to work. At a party recently, I had conversations with Alex and Sarah. We talked about how to organise one's day, when to take time off, how it is important to start saying no to things, how to have the best work routine, when to go for a run , how to have a low energy time, how to make ourselves most effective while also having at least partly pleasurable life. We only rarely talk about the need to work less.' (Memo, 19th July 2018)

PhD work for my friends and for me only rarely reaches the intensity and extent of that of entrepreneurs in Habitat. Nonetheless, at least occasionally it becomes overwhelming. Even though we do not live in coliving, some ways of making life work – when it comes to an understanding, support, and spill-over of work themes to personal life – are strikingly similar. There is, however, one important difference in the approaches to work-life. Habitat is an example of consciously designing life in a way that corresponds to the hectic work tempo. In other words, there is a conscious decision that life *should* be arranged around work, so it becomes most effective and free of friction. Habitat takes the principle of all-encompassing nature of entrepreneurial work as a given and consciously builds a life around it. On the other hand, my friends and I do not consciously formulate a vision of life characterised by extreme work. Rather, we are mostly trying to deal with the pressures, hoping that the situation will improve and that we will achieve a more satisfactory balance between

work and life in the future. Whereas entrepreneurs in Habitat want to redesign life consciously, so it becomes more economically successful and compatible with work, my friends and I are trying to "manage" while often being bitter about the workload and impossible expectations of contemporary academia. We can say that whereas entrepreneurs in Habitat make life work by design, my friends and I make life work by default.

10.4 Leaving the Field

The end of my fieldwork in Habitat came after three months of continuous stay. Like many other fieldworks taking place in institutions (Pole and Hillyard, 2016), the length of my stay in Habitat was agreed in advance and this period was a maximum I felt sensible to ask for. My room in Habitat was advertised, and by the time I was leaving a new tenant was found. External constraints, most importantly funding and a need to write up the report were also pressing.

On a personal level, even though I felt a degree of sadness when leaving people that I had spent three months of my life with, I remember feeling a strong sense of relief as well. The busy end of the fieldwork which included the majority of interviews made me feel exhausted and I felt that it was time to go. The words of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 96) capture my sentiment at the end of the fieldwork well: 'Frequently, the ethnographer leaves the field with mixed feelings, and some sadness, but often with not a little relief'.

At the end of the fieldwork, together with some friends in Habitat, we decided to throw a small evening gathering to chat and say goodbye. I was rather impressed with the turnout and felt happy to meet my housemates in a relaxed and jovial atmosphere. A group of participants decided to give me a farewell present: a USB reading lamp (to

aid me with my further studies) with a humorous note. The spontaneity and joviality of the present took me aback and made me feel more pressingly the personal dimension of the end of the fieldwork. However, the feeling of melancholy soon dissolved in the merriment and comradery of the night.

When leaving Habitat, I reflected on the end of the fieldwork in a memo. Besides noting sadness of saying goodbye (but also exchanging invitations to visit each other in the future), I noted that 'I will miss Habitat friends. I say Habitat members rather than Habitat intentionally. I don't think I will miss Habitat as an institution' (Fieldnote #123). Despite the appreciation of friendships and exchange of perspectives on life that they enabled, I remained critical of the way of living and working Habitat represents, shapes and maintains. However, I believe that the fieldwork experience enabled me to grasp, however incompletely, the role and significance it plays in participant's lives. In this sense, I did not become a convinced 'Habitat member', but perhaps got a taste of situation of reversal, in which we are 'unable to become the other even while distanced from ourselves, unable to hide from the others, and having to confront others who are different and who resist who we thought they might be' (Rose, 1990: 50).

There is some indication that my fieldwork succeeded in offering an account of Habitat that, however critical, resonated with participant's own understanding and experience. Kirsten, commenting on the draft of chapters, let me know that she found my analysis 'pretty spot-on'. Later she added: 'I shared the chapter with my mom, and she now feels like she understands what this Habitat place where I lived for two years was all about'. Kristen's comments gave me some reassurance that even though no doubt the differences in our perspective remained, we can both relate to the account of Habitat

how it is reported in this dissertation. Conversely, as detailed in previous sections, stay in Habitat made me realize similarities between my life and life of Habitat members.

After I left the field, I got briefly in touch with some participants on numerous occasions. This was facilitated mostly by our connection on Facebook that we established during the fieldwork. I would update the Habitat members about the submission of the dissertation and formally thank them once again for allowing me to peek into their lives. Unfortunately, so far, I was not able to revisit Habitat, despite invitations from former participants. This was mainly because of the restrictions of schedule and budget. With few participants we discussed an option of debating the ethnography together in Habitat, however, this is yet to be realized if the opportunity comes. Like with so many other friends, our relationship is now in the state of warm hibernation, maintained by occasional messages and uncertain promises of future meetings.

10.5 Prospects for Future Research

This PhD research highlighted the role of social arrangements and everyday practices through which collectives and individuals make life work, deal with intense work pressures, and sustain life in a particularly intensive form. However, they also have the potential to reproduce and normalise structures and dynamic of overworking and exploitation. As the previous two sections suggested, these arrangements and practices are not limited to working lives in coliving but can be seen as a more general phenomenon. This suggests scope for a more comprehensive research project exploring how personal lives are changed by everyday practices and technologies through which individuals plan, manage and sustain their work-lives in relation to changing work conditions.

Section 10.2.3 already mentioned examples of these practices that are described in academic literature, including gardening as 'obligatory leisure' (Schoneboom, 2018), time management techniques and life coaching (Binkley, 2011), or use of self-tracking and mindfulness applications (Gregg, 2018). However, the research so far has focused largely on individual practices in isolation from the dynamics of everyday life. Moreover, the focus is often on the design and discourse of these practices rather than on how they are used. Lastly, structural differences in contemporary work situations and livelihoods are largely absent from research to date.

A future research project focusing on how contemporary lives are made to work could expand on the findings from coliving to explore the arrangements and practices through which individuals manage their work-lives, and that reproduce working lives in their intensive and exploitative form. This could potentially involve the use of mobile ethnographic methodology, such as ethnographic shadowing, that would explore how these practices are used within and how they modify the dynamic of contemporary work-lives. It would also ideally compare different work situations and different positions within the structures of the political economy to produce a more general account of working lives today. Such research could yield valuable insights into the politics of work and life in contemporary societies.

10.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the key findings and concepts of the thesis, bringing them together and formulating some pointers for future research on the dynamic of contemporary working-lives. Firstly, it has argued for paying more attention to the ways in which discourses and ideologies of work combine with work situations and financial concerns with a reproduction of life to impose an intense dynamic on working lives. Secondly, it has argued that future research would benefit

from looking at practices and arrangements that keep contemporary work-lives in place and to ways individuals maintain their working lives despite the numerous pressures they face. Insights in this area can benefit our understanding of the politics of work today, namely, why do we not see more resistance and stronger demands for change. Thirdly, it argued for further exploration of the formation of contemporary subjectivity which demands continuous self-reflection, recognition of strains of work, but simultaneous self-management and self-moderation in the face of pressures of contemporary work.

Coliving is a particular – and rather unusual – arrangement seeking to make a specific form of life work. However, as this chapter suggested, it epitomizes some more general trends in how lives are made– and how do we make them – to work. At the most general level, we can argue that to understand the way life is made to work today, we should attempt to understand the complex interrelations between discourses and ideologies of work, how they justify intensive work and demand change in social reproduction of life, and how is this dynamic embedded within the changing structures of everyday life. In this respect, we can understand how working life is thoroughly a 'political object' (Foucault, 1998: 145), which is shaped and maintained in particular form by powerful discourses, social and organisational arrangements and various practices that individuals use to maintain themselves in an economically productive state. From an analytical angle, more holistic understanding of the complex arrangements of work-lives can lead to better analysis of how intensive work-lives are maintained and why they work despite the pressures. Politically, this should lead to an enhanced understanding of the multiple levels and dimensions of the struggle against increasing intensification and exploitation of life by the demands of productivity and profit extraction. These struggles could perhaps be more successful should they put

more emphasis on the interrelation of fronts of ideology and organisation of work, patterns of personal and domestic life, and material dynamics of social reproduction.

Appendix A: Email to Habitat

Dear Habitat

My name is Karel Musilek, and I am a sociology research student studying towards a doctorate at Durham University. My research focuses on co-living as an innovative way of organising life and work.

I am contacting you because Habitat is of great interest to me; it presents a fascinating setting for research on this subject. I have explored your website and some online resources. However, I would love to learn more from you, people and living in and running Habitat. I would be very thankful if someone could spend 20-30 minutes talking with me to give me some insights for my further research.

I look forward to hearing from you. I would be happy if you could advise me on how to best get in touch. It will be my pleasure to answer any questions you may have about this research project.

A little info about me: I am studying towards PhD in Sociology at Durham University. My research is about innovative approaches to working life. It is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, which is the UK's largest public organisation for funding research on economic and social issues. Linda McKie and Kimberly Jamie are experienced sociologists supervising my research. Please, find full contact details below if you want to get in touch with my supervisors or me.

Yours faithfully

Karel

Karel Musilek
Research Student, Sociology, School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University
Research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council
email: karel.musilek@durham.ac.uk
Supervisors:
Linda McKie - linda.mckie@durham.ac.uk
Kimberly Jamie - kimberly.jamie@durham.ac.uk

Appendix B: Gatekeeper Information Sheet

Learning about life in Habitat

I am a research student at Durham University conducting research for my doctoral dissertation. I am researching innovative approaches to working life. My research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council which is the UK's largest public organisation for funding research on economic and social issues.

My intention is to explore innovative ways of combining personal and working life. For this purpose, I would like to conduct participant observation and interviews in Habitat. By participant observation I mean being present on the premises, observing activities there and taking notes about what I see, hear, and feel. I would also like to take photographs of the premises, upon your permission.

Why was Habitat chosen for this research and what does it mean for us?

Habitat presents an organisation with innovative approach to combining professional and personal life. It therefore presents an ideal setting to learn more about current trends in this field. The observations will not disturb normal activities of Habitat members.

What will happen to the data?

Reported results of this project will ensure anonymity of persons participating in the research. Aliases or pseudonyms will be used in the report instead of real names of persons.

The data collected for the research will be stored on the university computer in password protected folders and files. The data collected will be used primarily for the purpose of writing a doctoral dissertation. They will also inform articles in academic journals, academic books, and become part of conference presentations resulting from my research.

Are there any risks of taking part?

Even though every care will be taken to protect anonymity of persons, we cannot fully guarantee anonymity of the organisation. This is because co-living is still a relatively rare phenomenon and there are not that many co-living establishments. Even though the proper names of organisations will not be used in the research outcomes (dissertation, academic journal articles, conference presentations), please be aware that their audience could still potentially identify your organisation. In

addition, photographs of the premises can lead to identification of your organisation by audience of research outcomes.

Does Habitat have to take part? Do our members and visitors have to take part?

Your organisation is not obligated to take part in this research project, and can withdraw from participating at any point up until two weeks after the observations have been conducted.

Your members and visitors are also not obligated to take part in the research project. I will ask you to inform your members about the research so they can ask questions, express their reservations, or refuse to take part in the research.

In the later phase of the research, I would like to interview some of your members. In that case, members who will be interviewed will be provided information about the research and their informed consent will be sought. They will be informed that they can refuse to take part in the interviews and/or refuse to answer any question during the interview.

The photographs taken as a part of the research will, in the majority of cases, not contain people. However, in some instances they might. In such a case participants' consent will be sought. Participants will be asked if photo can be taken, taken and faces blurred or not be taken at all.

Those participants who will express a wish to do so will be offered an option to consult sections of my work containing information about them before the results of the study in Habitat are made publicly available and/or published. The relevant sections of my work will be send to the email address they will have indicated before the end of the study. They will be given a week to discuss their concerns and to make me aware of any information that they would feel is potentially sensitive (for personal or professional reasons). This will enable us to work together to make the information more anonymous and/or less sensitive by changing or removing details.

About the researcher and how do I get in touch?

My name is Karel Musilek and I am studying towards PhD at Durham University. My research is about innovative approaches to combining working and personal life. It is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council which is the UK's largest public organisation for funding research on economic and social issues. Linda McKie and Kimberly Jamie are experienced sociologists supervising my research. Please, find full contact details bellow if you want to get in touch with me or my supervisors.

Researcher contact details:

Karel Musilek
Research Student, Sociology, School of Applied Social Sciences, Durham University
Research funded by Economic and Social Research Council
URL: https://www.dur.ac.uk/sass/staff/profile/?id=14373
email: karel.musilek@durham.ac.uk

Appendix C: Gatekeeper Consent Form

GATEKEEPER CONSENT FORM
Learning about Life in Coliving

Karel Musilek

☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet document for the above study and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

☐ I understand that the participation of our organisation and members in the research is voluntary and that the organisation or members are free to withdraw from participating at any point up until two weeks after the observations have been conducted, without giving a reason and that this will not affect our legal rights.

☐ I understand that members of the organisation are free to refuse to answer any question asked by the researcher.

☐ I understand that the study may involve photographs of the premises being taken. If the photographs include persons, the consent of those persons will be sought and they can also refuse to be photographed.

☐ I agree for our organisation and members to take part in the above study.

Name of the organisation: ....

Gatekeeper's Name: ....

Gatekeeper's signature: ....

Date: ....

Appendix D: Interview Invitation Email

Dear _____

I would like to interview you for my research about Habitat. I would be very thankful if you could give me a short piece of your time and talk with me about your life, your opinions and beliefs, and your experience with Habitat.

Your participation in the interview will help me to understand life in Habitat from your individual perspective and will thus bring very valuable insights for my study of coliving. You are not obligated to take part, but your participation in the interview would be very valuable for my research.

Please, follow the doodle link to reserve a date and time that is the most convenient for you. The interview will not take longer than 90 minutes. Please, kindly choose a time slot as soon as possible. In a case, none of the timeslots fits your schedule let me know so I can arrange a different meeting time.

[Doodle link]

I suggest that we meet for an interview in my room (former Joren's room). If you'd prefer a different location, please, get in touch. I am happy to travel where convenient for you, however, please bear in mind that the location should be silent and private so we are not disturbed.

Please, let me know if you can make it for the interview. Also, get in touch if you have any questions about the interview or about any other aspects of my research.

Best wishes

Karel

FB name: Karel Musilek
email: karel.musilek@durham.ac.uk
Web profile:
https://www.dur.ac.uk/sass/staff/profile/?id=14373

Appendix E: Interview Invitation Reminder

Hello _____ ,

Did you have any chance to consider taking part in an interview? It would help me

tremendously with my research.

If you agree to take a part you can pick a timeslot here:

[Doodle link]

Alternatively, please, get in touch and we will work something out.

Best wishes

Karel

Appendix F: Interview Confirmation

Dear _____

Thank you for choosing to take part in the interview. I would like to confirm that the interview is scheduled for:

[Date and time]

Please, find attached a brief information sheet. It explains some practical aspects, including anonymity and contact information for future reference.

Before the interview, I would like to ask you to kindly fill in a very brief form containing some very simple questions. This will only take a minute:

[Google form link]

I look forward to meeting you for the interview. If you have any questions, please, get in touch.

Best wishes

Karel

Appendix G: Interview Information Sheet

Learning about life in Habitat through interviews

I am a research student at Durham University, conducting research for my doctoral dissertation. I am researching innovative approaches to working life. My research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, which is the UK's largest public organisation for funding research on economic and social issues.

My intention is to explore innovative ways of combining personal and working life. For this purpose, I would like to interview the current residents of the Habitat. I would like to talk with you about your life, your opinions and beliefs, and your experience with Habitat.

Why was I chosen for this research?

You were chosen because you are a current resident of Habitat. Habitat presents an organisation with an innovative approach to combining professional and personal life. It, therefore, presents an ideal setting to learn more about current trends in this field. Interviews with individual members will help me to understand life in Habitat from the members' perspective.

What will happen to the data?

Reported results of this project will ensure the anonymity of persons participating in the research. Aliases or pseudonyms will be used in the report instead of the real names of persons. In addition, participants who will sign up will be offered an option to consult sections of my work containing information about you before the results of the study in Habitat are made publicly available and/or published. You will be given a week to discuss your concerns and to make me aware of any information that you would feel is potentially sensitive (for personal or professional reasons). This will enable us to work together to make the information more anonymous and/or less sensitive by changing or removing details.

The data collected for the research will be stored on the university computer in a password protected folders and files. The data collected will be used primarily for the purpose of writing a doctoral dissertation. They will also inform articles in academic journals, academic books, and become part of conference presentations resulting from my research.

Are there any risks of taking part?

Even though every care will be taken to protect the anonymity of persons, we cannot fully guarantee the anonymity of the organisation. This is because co-living is still a relatively rare phenomenon, and there are not that many co-living establishments. Even though the proper names of organisations will not be used in the research outcomes (dissertation, academic journal articles, conference presentations), please be aware that their audience could still potentially identify your organisation.

Do I have to take part?

You are not obligated to take part in an interview. You can refuse to answer any interview question. You can withdraw from participating at any point up until two weeks after the interview have been conducted.

About the researcher and how do I get in touch?

My name is Karel Musilek, and I am studying towards a PhD at Durham University. My research is about innovative approaches to combining working and personal life. It is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, which is the UK's largest public organisation for funding research on economic and social issues. Linda McKie and Kimberly Jamie are experienced sociologists supervising my research. Please, find full contact details below if you want to get in touch with me or my supervisors.

Researcher contact details:

Karel Musilek
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Research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council
URL: https://www.dur.ac.uk/sass/staff/profile/?id=14373
email: karel.musilek@durham.ac.uk
Supervisors:
Linda McKie - linda.mckie@durham.ac.uk
Kimberly Jamie - kimberly.jamie@durham.ac.uk

Appendix H: Interview Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Learning about life in coliving through interview

Karel Musilek

☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information document for the above study and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

☐ I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any point up until two weeks after the interview has been conducted, without giving a reason, and that this will not affect my legal rights.

☐ I understand that I am free to refuse to answer any question during the interview.

☐ I agree to the interview being recorded and later transcribed.

☐ I agree to take part in the above study.

Participant's Signature: ....

Participant's Name: ....

Date: ....

Appendix I: Interview Topic Guide

Opening / Biographical

- To start with, I would like to quickly check some simple details with you
- Can you tell me about your work? What do you do?
- Age: Can I ask you how old are you?
- Length of Stay in Habitat: Can you tell me when is it you moved to Habitat? (month and year)

Life in coliving and the 'good life'

- To start with, can you tell me about how you came to live in Habitat?
  - o Prompt: What were the reasons for joining?
  - o Prompt: What were you hoping to get out of it?
- What would you say are important things that Habitat brings into your life?
  - o Prompt: What are the benefits of living in Habitat?
- Based on some conversations with people in Habitat, it seems to me that people think quite seriously about how to live a good life. Can you tell me what comes to your mind when I say "good life"? What does a good life mean to you?
  - o Prompt: What things does it involve?
  - o Prompt: How would you such a life look like?
- How does life in Habitat fit your idea of a good life?
  - o Prompt: Have your life changed for better since you joined Habitat?
  - o Prompt: Are there some ways in which it helps you to live a good life?
  - o Prompt: Can you give me an example?

Work-life relation

- I am going to present you with a statement. It is taken from a newspaper article about coliving spaces (Tech Insider). I would like to know what do you think about it:
  - o Prompt: 'Coliving spaces blur the line between your work life and your personal life until the two are indistinguishable.'
- Would you say that living in Habitat brings some benefits to your work?
  - o Prompt: What are they?
- When it comes to your work and life, do you have a medium or a long term plan? Where do you see yourself in a medium or long term?
  - o Prompt: If you are successful, how will your life look like in ten years?
  - o Prompt: How would success look like?
  - o Prompt: What are your hopes for the future?
- It seems to me that many people in Habitat work quite a lot. Sometimes they work until the night or during the weekend. Do you have any idea what drives them?
  - o Prompt: Does it capture your situation?

        o   Prompt: How do they stay motivated?

- It seems that a way to success involves quite many obstacles and can be full of lows as well as highs. Can you tell me what keeps you going when times are more difficult?

Ethics/ Social / Politics

- Do you think people who choose to live in Habitat are 'different' in some way?
- Do you think there are people for whom Habitat is not the right choice?
- There are coliving spaces emerging all around the world nowadays. Why do you think we see colivings kicking off today?
  - o Prompt: Why do you think we see the emergence of coliving nowadays?
  - o Prompt: Why do more people find it attractive to live in coliving?

Dark Side / Pressure / Drive

- Are there any negatives to living in coliving?
  - o Prompt: Can you tell me about that?
  - o Prompt: Does it sometimes feel not so good to live in Habitat?
- Do you ever feel like you would like to take a break from Habitat?
  - o What makes you feel that way?
- Are there aspects of life in coliving that you are not very happy about?
- It seems to me that Habitat is an environment where people have high expectations of themselves and of each other. Do you sometimes feel under pressure?
  - o Prompt: When have you felt under pressure?
  - o Prompt: Can you tell me more about that?

Life course / relationships / family

- In the future, what do you think would make you move out of Habitat?
- When do you think that might happen?

Closing

- Is there anything you would like to tell me? Is there anything I didn't ask, but you think is important?
- Is there anything you would like to ask me?

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