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Precarious Labor vs. Human dignity

The main findings of the research on precarization of labor and life on the example of journalists and questioning the possibility of resistance

From time to time, social thinkers recall the accuracy of some of Karl Marx's claims and predictions. It seems that it's kind of rare to recall the forgeries like the one of Joseph Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili. Sometimes history itself plays with some predictions. For example, in German Ideology, Marx argued that according to the division of labor "everyone receives a certain exclusive circle of activity, which is imposed upon him, from which he cannot walk out; he is a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critic and he must remain to be so if he does not want to lose his livelihood." But one day in a communist society, Marx predicts, a man can "be trained in any branch" and "society...allows me to do this today and do perform another activity tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, to fish in the afternoon, to breed cattle in the evening and criticize after dinner, - as much as I like - without becoming a hunter, a fisherman, a shepherd, or a critic."

*But it happened that the darkest capitalism is reviving this vision of Marx for us. So today we are one thing, tomorrow we are a day laborer and tomorrow a scribe, today we are a forger and tomorrow a welder, today we are a sociologist and tomorrow a peasant, **today we are a journalist and tomorrow a clerk** ... this is called the flexibilization of labor. Almost the same as Marks predicted, with some minor differences. Instead of free choice - coercion; instead of free labor - slavery; instead of a free society - a society of precarious workers ...*

A Summary of the Research on Precarization Results

1.

Today, three claims about the media have become common: 1) the claim that media working in the public interest (including television and print media) are decaying and disappearing, along with the collapse of journalistic integrity and the working-legal status of journalists; 2) the claim that tabloid media are taking over in the production of public; and 3) the claim that the opportunity for media freedom lies in non-profit media, in internet portals before all.

2.

In general, the freedom of media does not differ significantly from freedom in other parts of the society. Differences occur to the extent that freedom of the media is one of the prerequisites for emancipatory activities in a given society. On the other hand, the resistance to media freedom and the appropriation of media from dominant social groups and those who strive for domination are proportionate to the possibilities of the media as a very useful means in de-emancipation and ultimately in the colonization and enslavement of the society. The media, therefore, have the nature of Janus, not only because of their two faces, but also symbolically because Janus was the god of every beginning - and the media are usable in the activities for freedom and in the activities against freedom. That is why the media are targeted by both the advocates and the opponents of freedom.

On the long run, opportunities for media freedom are increasing to the extent to which new technologies open up new opportunities for expanding space of that freedom, although many people are seeing just the opposite, the disappearance of print media due to new technologies. We could notice cynically that the media under strong influence of political and financial power are disappearing, while the new media that are less influenced by any hegemony are emerging. (Of course, this does not mean that the Internet is "harmless"; it is almost literally a funnel for everything, including the advocates as well as the opponents of freedom.)

3.

The degree of media freedom is found in its representing the public interest and in the work of the media on the expanding the limits of freedom in general. We can especially emphasize the representing precarious social groups and individuals, which also include the socially excluded, marginalized, socially vulnerable groups...

Basically, the representatives of public interest are civil society and the media. If we have an underdeveloped or silenced public and media that are below the level of tasks related to the public interest, then one should ask: What now? Is there an opportunity for a reversal? How to put the public and the media "into function"? In fact, it would be more correct to talk about the creators of the civil public and active citizens on the one hand, and about journalists and other media workers on the other. In this context, the real question is how much are the creators of the civil public and journalists working in the public interest and in the interests of freedom, and how much support is provided in the work of the entire civil society and all the media workers?

Journalists cannot singlehandedly fight for the right to represent the public interest, and have passive public and silenced (or non-existent) stakeholders on the other hand. The question: "And what are the journalists doing?" or "What can the journalists do?" is inseparable from the question "And what is the public doing?" Good results in representing the public interest and the interests of freedom could be expected only in the collaboration of journalists and stakeholders of the civil public.

To investigate the issue of the activist and organizational capacities of media workers, journalists above all, without analyzing the situation in the civil public and its emancipation capacities would be in vain and more complete results could not be expected there.

4.

It is sensible to talk about opportunities and specific activities that would support the media representation of public interest through the development of activities for raising the activist and organizational capacities of the civil society and the media. It is possible to separate projects for investigating and designing activities for the media and for the public only in the operational sense. Hence, the emancipatory capacities of media workers cannot be investigated without examining the emancipatory capacities of the civil public or the same capacities of any relevant social group oriented towards democracy and a social welfare state.

5.

Looking into the real constellation of media relations and the real constellation of relations in which journalists operate is an initial step in investigating the possibilities for a wider and more intensive labor of journalists for the benefit of public interest and the interests of freedom and democracy.

6.

Step one in the analysis of the constellation of relations in which journalists operate and the precarious life of journalists or the perceived and real safety of workplace and life. The relative safety of the workplace (and it is necessary to talk about relative rather than absolute safety) and the relative certainty of employability - can only be considered in the framework of guarantees of other types of safety, starting from the physical to legal... However the relative safety of a workplace and the relative certainty of employment, stem from guarantees of the right to life, to freedom - on the most general plan, the generic safety. Relative generic safety is a condition of all conditions, and above all a condition of struggle for a dignified life and a condition for all emancipatory activities.

7.

The solutions of the existential and professional status are often stretched, because there is no real, free choice. Most often, the least painful and least uncertain solution is required:

(a) the acceptance of all and various requests of the precarizers (the owners of the media, politicians, editors ...) does not guarantee any lasting safety; any safety is like a leaf in the turbulence of politics and profit. We have discovered that one in five journalists has expressed readiness to accept everything that their bosses and other superiors ask for. (a tabloid has recently changed the political side for which it is cheering and this has not led to a change in the employees - this example raises doubts about our data on the extent of journalistic obedience.)

(b) the escape from precarious journalism, fleeing from the profession, can be some kind of a solution for those who want and can find another job; after all, in our research, we found that two out of five journalists would leave the profession if they had a choice.

(c) staying in the profession - two out of five journalists are ready to remain at the job as long as they can and to fight for their status and the status of the profession as long as possible.

All three options open a key question: whether the solution is accepting all the requests of the precarizer; whether the solution is an escape from the profession; finally, can a lonely individual effectively fight for his own dignity and the dignity of the profession?

8.

It should be noted that the neo-liberal cliché that the precarization affects bad workers (bad journalists, in our case), is nothing but a false justification for everything that affects those who are not obedient and who are not always able to anticipate the "wishes" of their masters. This is evidenced by the dismissal of several top journalists in the last few years or the withdrawal of their broadcasts.

9.

So, what can a journalist do as an individual, what are his possibilities, and finally, does what he could do have any effect? Two questions precede these final questions.

Are journalists aware of their position in professional sense (in the sense of professional identity and integrity) - in the context of de-identification; and are they aware of the socio-material position - in the sense of de-grading, or falling down the ladder of social hierarchy?

Are the journalists willing to risk their professional identity and do what is below the level of profession and personal dignity; also, are they are willing to risk their socio-material or class position (both of which include the family as a factor to be taken into account when making decisions).

10.

The social consequences of the precarization of labor and life of journalists are primarily seen in the degradation of the profession, in the instrumentalization of the media for the purpose of political manipulation and for the purpose of subordinating the media to extreme profit generating. Media freedom is marginalized and the media are increasingly subordinated to political and financial centers of power; Media are no longer in the service of the public, democracy and freedom, they are in the service of profit and politics.

12.

Are journalists aware of the social consequences of precarization? We have assumed that such awareness exists if the perception of the media is close to the real situation and if the index of criticism of the media environment (state/government, media owners, media editors as exponents of the owner...) is relatively high.

We have seen that journalists assess the situation in the media as very bad. The responsibility for this situation is primarily recognized in politicians and profit-obsessed owners, and it corresponds to what we have designated as a state/government (the centers of political power) and obsession with profit of those owning the media. Obviously, at the social level, journalists quite accurately perceive the real state of affairs and pinpoint the responsibility for the current state of affairs in the media, unlike the individual level where the awareness of the profession and the their own position, in the context of responsibility and the possibility of change – that are rather vague, dispersed and somewhat contradictory. This

confusion is a result of precarization and it can generate any, even ideologically contradictory solution.

13.

The media workers, journalists before all, as well as the media themselves, are exposed to multiple pressures for full control of the media and for a rounded manipulation with this extremely important means of fighting for or against freedom, for or against democracy, for or against the public interest. Owners of the political and financial power use political means, financial power and the cumulative power of various forms of precarization in conquering the media and subverting the media profession. In addition to this triad of the media colonizing means, two more processes should be identified - the process of individualizing media workers and the process of opposing every form of collective action (all the way to the direct prohibition of union organization).

14.

The fundamental role of the media, in a completely simplified approach, could be reduced to (1) providing reliable information, and (2) the watchdog role. In the next step we can comfortably conclude that without deeper research, using almost superficial observation, that the media in Serbia today cannot do their job properly or that they do not perform these two key functions. Our research shows that that this assessment is shared by journalists themselves, and they see the responsibility in both their profession and in the environment, or in a coalition of political parties and private equity.

15.

In the fight against media colonization and against the precarization of labor and life of journalists, several paths can be distinguished (and preconditions for taking these paths).

The first step is a precise analysis of the situation in which media workers, journalists, and the media themselves are; specifying the causes of such a situation and the actors who produce such a situation. This analysis must go through a process of public discussion and alignment.

Media that is not under the pressure of the centers of political and financial power deserve special attention; primarily referring to the media in the collective property of journalists and the non-profit media (internet portals, social networks, newspapers, magazines and various manufacturers of radio and television programs).

Action capacity, more or less spontaneously organized (semi-organized spontaneity), mostly through social networks have recently shown ("the kneeling event"), are not to be underestimated.

The media unions, despite numerous weaknesses and numerous cubicles, remain the potential that journalists can use much more than before.

Professional journalists associations certainly represent an underused capacity of collective activity of media workers.

All in all, the activist and organizational capacities of media workers should not be underestimated as they can simultaneously and synergically occur in an interface with civil public stakeholders.

16.

Finally, we ask ourselves: Why do we demand from journalists for what we do not demand from ourselves? We expect them to be truthful, brave, smart, and critical, to be the representatives of public interest, to say what we dare not say. Are we not asking them to be all that we are not? We say it's their job. However, is not it the job of all of us to create such social conditions in which a public word will not reap the consequences for the one who has publicly spoken it? If we fail to do so, we will all become victims of precarization as a process of forceful creation of the obedient and the informers, of sycophants and people without dignity, of puppets and the miserable.

Introduction

In 2015/16, the Center for the Development of Syndicalism, with the full financial support of the Open Society Foundation carried out a research "Precarization of Labor and Workers - Workers Without a Profession and Media Workers – a Typological Analysis", and in 2016/17 a research "Capacities of Journalists in the Representing the Public Interest, Defense of the Profession and in the De-precarization of Labor". The results of the first research were published in the book *"From Journalist to Wage Workers. Precarious Labor and Life"* (Belgrade, 2015), and the results of the other research were published in the book *"Passive Activism of Journalists"* (Belgrade, 2017). Both surveys were carried out by an interdisciplinary team of sociologists, politicologists, psychologists, economists and journalists. The following authors have contributed to the first book: Srećko Mihailović, Miroslav Ružica, Tanja Jakobi, Boris Jašović, Gradimir Zajić, Mirjana Vasović, Zoran Stojiljković, Vojislav Mihailović i Dušan Torbica. Drugu knjigu potpisuju: Srećko Mihailović, Đokica Jovanović, Miroslav Ružica, Galjina Ognjanov, Zorica Miladinović, Đorđe Vlajić, Gradimir Zajić, Dejan Kožul, Tanja Jakobi, Zoran Stojiljković, Vera Didanović, Zoran Stanojević and Vojislav Mihailović..

The first research was conducted on a sample of 1719 respondents, or 1153 employed and unemployed media workers (mainly journalists) and a control group of 576 employed and unemployed physical workers (workers without education higher than elementary and without qualifications or those working on such jobs that do not require a higher level of knowledge). There were 619 unemployed and 1100 employed participants in the sample. This is a suitable type sample, as there was no possibility to take a probability sample. Therefore, the findings of the research should be taken as indications and not as reliable findings that could be expanded to the total population of media, that is, physical workers. Findings within the structure of the analyzed phenomena can be considered reliable. The second research was conducted as a questionnaire (303 respondents), in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The findings of this research are orientational in character.

Explanation of approaches and basic concepts

Precarization of media workers, primarily journalists was in the focus of our research, carried out during 2015/16. We also investigated precarization itself and its individual and

social consequences, both in relation to a specific profession (**professional integrity**) and in relation to the valid performance of a social function (**media in the function of public interest**). Physical workers, as the "bottom" of the social hierarchy, were a comparative and control group for assessing the extent and intensity of precarization.

The possibilities for initiating and increasing the activist and organizational capacities of media workers in order for them to achieve more adequately the fundamental functions of the media, and above all (1) **in terms of defense and broader representation of the public interest and the general benefit**, (2) **in terms of defense and representation of professional identity and integrity**, (3) **in terms of defense and broader representation of interests and rights of media workers** (de-precariation of media workers) were in the focus of our second research carried out during 2016/17. Based on the research, it was necessary to point out suggestions that could contribute to increasing the activist and organizational capacities of media workers.

In theoretical terms, we have encountered great problems with defining concepts of precarity and precarization, as well as other relational terms, especially since precarity researches are very rare globally, and so far they have not been carried out here. The evaluation of our research indicates that we have had some success in this.

Precarization is a relatively new type of a social relationship that leads to degradation (social component) and the de-identification (the social-psychological component) of the worker.

Precarity is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon that denotes different relationships of uncertainty, primarily in the field of work (flexibility of labor and other labor-related phenomena), compensation for work (salaries, wages) and employment (different types of labor contract, work without a labor contract, absence of work for money or other compensation). Precarization of work necessarily leads to the precarization of the entirety of workers' life. Precarity manifests itself as uncertain work and hence uncertain salary, which directly reflects on the existence of workers and their families. An insecure work role generates an insecure social position.

Indicators of Precarization are the flexibilization of labor and the accompanying phenomena that go along with this kind of work, and above all poverty and social exclusion. In the operationalization of the precarity, we have defined 9 basic groups of indicators of precarity of the employed media and physical workers, i.e. 42 individual indicators. These are the following indicators: in/security of employment, in/security of working hours, in/security of compensation for work (salary, wage), in/security of health and safety protection, in/security of working conditions, in/security of labor rights, in/security of status (status of survival) and existential in/security.

We have decided to accept the identical criteria and procedure for determining the precarity index for the employed media workers and physical workers. We have considered that the same indicators can measure the degree of in/security, although physical workers are in some measuring at the bottom and near the bottom of the scale we measured, while the employed media workers are at the top of the scale. Significant differences between the media and the physical workers challenge the significance of summing up the precarity of journalists and physical workers into a single scale; but they do not challenge applying the same criteria for measuring precarity; the criterion is applicable, but not the summing up of the measured

into an average score for the employed as a whole, be it the media workers or physical workers. This is particularly noticeable with some indicators; for example, for status in/security indicators.

It is clear that the criteria for determining the Precarity Index for unemployed workers cannot be the same as the criteria for determining the index for employed workers. The fundamental status of employment (including what employment brings, starting with money) in determining the individual's position in the social hierarchy, on the one hand, and the huge negative, individual and social consequences of unemployment, on the other hand, prevent these two categories of workers from being treated together in terms of precarity, let alone when it comes to other dimensions of work and non-work. It is therefore impossible to measure precarity with exactly the same criteria both in the case of employed and in the case of unemployed workers. On the other hand, we have endeavored to achieve as many common criteria as possible.

We concluded on the precarity of unemployed journalists and physical workers on the basis of the following 6 indicators: in/security of working status, uncertainty of earnings, in/security of health care, acceptance of uncertain and difficult working conditions, in/security of status (survival) and existential in/security.

1. Assessment of the situation in the media

Two thirds of the respondents think that the state controls the media and that at the same time self-censorship is more spread than censorship. The face of Janus of abused media is the consequence of synergy between censorship and self-censorship. The state directly or (apparently) less directly (through money) censors the media, and by placing journalist in the precarious position optimally develops self-censorship and in the case of journalists produces a sense of guilt for the state of the media in which the journalist profession is degraded. Let's look at more specific data:

1.1. There is no media freedom

Both employed and unemployed journalists agree that there is no media freedom in Serbia. This is what three fifths of the respondents think (62%), a quarter (25%) are undecided, while only 13% of respondents believe that there is media freedom in Serbia.

1.2. State control of the media

More than three-quarters of journalists (77%) believe that the state controls the media, only 5% denies state control, while 18% are undecided. Interestingly, unemployed journalists (82%) than those who are employed (75%) slightly more often think that the state controls the media.

1.3. Self-censorship is very widespread

Almost three-quarters of journalists (73%) think that self-censorship is very widespread among journalists; only 5% reject the claim of self-censorship, while 22% of respondents are indecisive. The unanimity of journalists in the assessment of the presence of self-censorship is remarkable. If we excluded the undecided journalists (approximately every fifth) and retain

only those who agree or disagree with the claim that self-censorship is very widespread, and then the ratio of respondents who think that self-censorship is very widespread to those who disagree with this is 93% to 7%.

1.4. Self-censorship is more present than censorship

Three-quarters of the journalists (76%) believe that there is more self-censors than censorship today, because journalists fear from losing their jobs; 5% of journalists do not agree, while one fifth is undecided. There is no difference between employed and unemployed journalists, and there are also no statistically significant differences in relation to all examined independent variables.

1.5. A general assessment of the situation in the media

When asked to choose - two-fifths of journalists would leave journalism; the same percentage would opt for a media in which they can freely write regardless of the status and amount of salary, while one-fifth of journalists would opt for a safe job even at a price of not writing what they think and what they know.

There are no statistically significant differences between employed and unemployed journalists, between those employed in state owned and in private media, there are no differences related to their regional affiliation, with their sex, age, education, salaries and other incomes, membership in trade unions, political parties and professional associations, and even with the type of work contract ... In a few cases, we have encountered a mild connection between the ratings of the media and the independent variables; for example, in the case of an assessment of the freedom of the media, greater criticism was found in respondents with a lower educational level, in respondents with higher social status and respondents satisfied with their jobs. The only significant correlation was determined in the case of feelings of job insecurity and assessment of the freedom of the media - those who feel more secure are less critical, but there is also over one half of those who claim that there is no media freedom. - Overall, a poor assessment of the situation in the media is a result of the belief that is not significantly related to any of the investigated features of the status and role of journalists.

2. Index of professional (self) criticality

In order to determine professional self-awareness, i.e. to establish self-assessment of the responsibility of media workers, we have constructed an index of professional (self) criticality¹. It is an internal control locus that locates the responsibility for the situation in the media in the journalistic profession itself. A high index of professional self-criticism marks

¹ The index of professional self-criticism was established based on the agreement or disagreement of the respondents with the following assertions: (1) mostly dorks go into journalism, (2) the journalists try hard to write the truth, (3) the dignity of the profession is ruined, (4) the journalist self-censorship is very widespread, (5) self-censorship is more widespread than censorship because journalists are afraid, (6) journalists are themselves guilty for their position, (7) journalists are afraid of losing their jobs, (8) there is fear of sanctions against the media they work in, (9) journalists are unprofessional, (10) there is a fear from worsening their relationship with the editor.

taking responsibility for the situation in the media, while a lower index marks the "removing" of responsibility from the journalistic profession.

The grade of the index of professional self-criticism, between 1 and 5, is 2.7. The medium self-criticism characterizes two-thirds of journalists, that low self-criticism and absence of self-criticism is present in 29% of journalists, and that only 4% of newspapers are extremely self-critical. These data can be interpreted in various ways, but the fact is that the majority of respondents are not ready either to condemn their profession or to abolish it; our respondents understand, but also condemn their colleagues, and all this is mixed up in some way. However, one should not overlook the fact that 29% of journalists are non-critical or self-critical.

On the other hand, if we simplify things, so instead of the 10 indicators of professional self-criticism, we take only two: the answer to the claim that journalists themselves are guilty for their professional status and the response to the claim that journalists are afraid of losing their jobs and therefore self-censor - then we see that things are somewhat different. 45% of journalists think that they themselves are guilty for their professional position (23% think they are not guilty, and 32% cannot decide). So, if they are guilty for their own position, why do they not do something to change that? On the other hand, almost two-thirds of the respondents (63%) explain the self-censorship with the fear of losing their jobs.

All in all, a large number of journalists take responsibility for their professional position, and a large number of journalists explain their unprofessional behavior by fear of losing their jobs.

We can conclude that journalists are not taking their destiny into their own hands because they fear losing the little they have. On the other hand, a large number of journalists have a positive attitude towards participating in protests: for example, 45% would protest in spite of the assumed success or failure of protests, and 47% would protest even if the majority did not protest. On the third side, we see that there is no protest, or that they are very rare (but more will be said about that later on).

It seems obvious that at the level of individuals, there is considerable confusion about understanding their own status, the status of their profession and the ability to fight for change! We see this confusion as one of the consequences of the journalists' precarious position.

Otherwise, we did not find significant correlation between professional self-criticism and independent variables, even in the case of employment or unemployment of journalists, nor in the case of the media type (local, national). A slight, but statistically significant correlation was found in the case of job satisfaction (the contingency coefficient - $C_k = 0.24$), higher self-criticism is shown by respondents who are satisfied with the work (self-criticism increases with the increase of satisfaction: 27% -36% -42%), as well as by respondents who think that they would easily find a new job if they lost the existing one ($C_k = 0.20$). There is somewhat greater self-criticism of respondents who have confidence in the government ($C_k = 0.20$) - self-criticism increases with the increase of confidence: 28% -32% -39% -47%.

3. The media environment criticism index

The media environment criticism index (external control locus) was formed on the basis of 10 indicators². The high media environment criticism index (state, government, political parties, economy, equity owners...) means locating responsibility for the situation in the media in the media environment, while the lower index denotes the "removal" of responsibility from the media environment.

In grades from one to five, the environment criticism index is 3.4. If we reduce the five-point scale of criticism to a three point scale, then we have this distribution of answers: 4% are uncritical or a bit critical, 54% are critical, and 42% are very critical.

Criticism of the environment is either medium or large, unlike professional self-criticism that is medium or small. Journalists are more critical of the media environment (government, state, media owners) than of their own profession. However, this does not imply that journalists transfer the responsibility to others, but only that they identify primary accountability in the environment, and then in their own profession.

When it comes to the self-criticism index and the environment criticism index, it should be said that they are around the arithmetic mean, but in the case of self-critical index they fall below the average score (2.7), and in the case of the criticism indexes for the environment they go above the average grade (3.4).

As with the scale of professional self-criticism, in case of the scale of the media environment criticism, we found weak, but statistically significant correlations, most often in the absence of correlations. A mild growth of criticism towards the environment was recorded with the loss of a steady employment relationship ($C_k = 0.20$), with growing dissatisfaction with life ($C_k = 0.20$), with a decrease in the estimated possibility of finding a job in case of loss of the present ($C_k = 0.22$). The decrease of criticism of the environment occurs in the case of greater confidence in the parliament ($C_k = 0.21$), in the political parties ($C_k = 0.22$), in the government ($C_k = 0.23$), in the media ($C_k = 0.24$), in the president of the republic ($C_k = 0.24$).

The nature of the media environment is also reflected by media workers' assessments of the impact on media editorial policy (in grades from 1 = no impact, to 5 = full impact):

- 4.2 - the interests of politicians (they influence fairly and very much, 82%),
- 4.1 – the pressure of circulation, ratings (they influence fairly and very much, 77%)
- 3.8 – advertisers' interests (they influence fairly and very much, 67%),
- 3.6 - the chief editors' and collegium's orientation (they influence fairly and very much, 57%),
- 3.0 - the need for informing readers, viewers (they influence fairly and very much, 33%).

² The the media environment criticism index (external control locus) was formed on the basis of the agreement or disagreement of the respondents with the following assertions: (1) media editing is not governed by the idea of informing, (2) media are edited to the interests of politicians, (3) advertisers' interests, (4) the media are edited under the pressure of circulation, ratings ... (5) the state controls the media, (6) there is no media freedom, (7) the editors reject "edgy" texts, (8) the editors change the "edgy" texts, (9) the editors do not accept "edgy" themes, (10) journalists reject assignments because they are not in line with professional standards.

In total, the state / government creates such a media environment in which there is less and less room for media freedom and for journalists to carry out their work in accordance with ethical and professional standards. Precarization of the work and life of journalists is one of the two main means by which the state / government colonizes the media and keep them obedient.

4. Work Precarization Index

Precarization is a complex, poly-dimensional phenomenon that marks different relationships of insecurity and uncertainty primarily in the field of labor (flexibility of work and other work related phenomena), compensation for work (salary, wage) and employment (different types of labor contracts or work without a labor contract, or absence of work for money or other compensation). Precarization of labor necessarily leads to the precarization of the entirety of worker's life.

Precarization occurs as a minor or greater insecurity and uncertainty of the lives of workers and their families. In social practice, precarization is expressed as insecure work and thus insecure salaries, which directly reflect on the existence of workers and their families. Insecurity and uncertainty of work is accompanied by many other uncertainties besides insecure income from work.

An insecure work role generates an insecure social position. Stripping the work role of security (as a process) and the consequences of this lead sooner or later to the stripping the social position of security (as a process). An insecure work role and an insecure social position necessarily lead to an insecure life, an uncertain life.

4.1. Precarization of employed journalists

Precarity of work and life is a multi-dimensional phenomenon of cumulative character. The results of the research indicate a worrying precarization (under this term, three intensities of precarity are recognized: medium, high and very high intensity). Two-fifths of journalists (39%) are either not precarious or are precarious to a small extent, but on the other hand we find **three-fifths of the interviewed journalists (61%) characterized by a worrying precarity of work and life**. Journalists are most concerned about legal insecurity, insecurity of working hours, job and working conditions. The height of the work-life precarity index and the life of journalists are most influenced by four types of insecurity: legal insecurity, insecurity of working hours, workplace and working conditions. The degree of worrying insecurity in the case of the above-mentioned indicators of precarity ranges between 35% and 37% (arithmetic mean ranges between 2.26 and 2.34).

The four indicators do not significantly differentiate journalists from physical workers, but make them similar: existential insecurity, legal insecurity, job insecurity and insecurity of working hours. Obviously these are characteristics of general precarity.

Comparison of precarity indicators of the media and physical workers shows significant differences. With journalists, the insecurity in employment (employability level) is eight times lower, uncertainty in earnings and status insecurity are five times lower, and uncertainties about health and safety protection, as well as uncertainty about working conditions are two times lower. These findings significantly differentiate between the media

and physical workers. On the other hand, the remaining four indicators do not differentiate significantly more journalists and physical workers; they indicate a similarity between them: existential insecurity, legal insecurity, job insecurity and insecurity of working hours. Obviously these are characteristics of general precarity.

4.2. Precarity of unemployed journalists

On the basis of six indicators, we have made conclusions on the precariousness of the work of unemployed journalists (and physical workers): job insecurity, insecurity of wages, uncertain health care, acceptance of insecure and difficult working conditions, uncertainty of status (survival) and existential insecurity. The key difference between the employed and the unemployed is not in working and earning, but whether someone is employed for an indefinite period of time or is in some other type of employment or it is a matter of working without a working contract (work in an informal, "gray" economy), or complete absence of work.

Two-thirds of the unemployed journalists (63%) are worryingly precarious, and slightly more than one-third (37%) are out of danger from precarization (no danger - 7% or small danger - 30%). Although the comparison is only conditional, however, one should say what is expected and what could hardly be denied: the precarity of the unemployed is greater than that of the employed journalist, although both are big and substantially over 50%.

While in the case of indicators of employee precarity, we could not identify any indicators that predominantly determine precarity, in the case of unemployed journalists, we have such an indicator. It's about uncertain working status or unemployment itself. In the case of the working status of the unemployed, we find an incredible 94% of the worryingly precarious and only 6% of those who have managed to avoid all the traps of precarization.

Over half (52%) is also willing to accept uncertain and difficult working conditions - willingness to accept work in bad conditions, willingness to accept work for any salary, acceptance of any working hours, willingness to accept any type of employment contract, willingness to move to another city for employment.

The biggest correlation between the individual indicators and the index of precarity of unemployed journalists appears in the case of existential uncertainty (0.64) and uncertainty of earnings (0.62), on the other hand, the lowest correlation was established in case of uncertainty of working status (0.44), of social status (0.44) and of health care uncertainty (0.46).

The comparison of precarity of unemployed journalists and precarity of physical workers provides interesting conclusions. The security of the social status of unemployed journalists is seven times higher than the safety of the social status of unemployed physical workers; the security of earnings is twice as high for journalists (54%) than for physical workers (24%). On the other hand, the security of the working status of unemployed journalists (6%) is five times lower than the security of the working status of unemployed physical workers (30%).

The insecurity of physical workers is higher in all indicators, except when it comes to the uncertainty of their working status.

Of the total number of unemployed journalists surveyed, 63% are worryingly precarious, while the percentage of such workers among the physical workers is as much as 91%. The number of respondents who feel safe or just a little precarious is four times higher

in the case of unemployed journalists (37%) than in the case of unemployed physical workers (9%).

5. The relationship between the perception of the media and the precarity of journalists' lives

The perception of the media situation and the precarity of employed journalists: with the increase in the number precarious employed journalists there is a growing number of journalists who believe that there is no media freedom in Serbia. The correlation between these two phenomena is low (0.20), but it is statistically significant.

5.1. Perception of the media situation and the precarity of the employed journalists.

With the increase in the number of precarious employed journalists, there is a growing number of journalists who believe that there is no media freedom in Serbia. The correlation between these two phenomena is low (0.20), but it is statistically significant.

5.2. The perception of the situation in the media and the precarity of unemployed journalists.

The contingency between the assessment of the freedom of media and the scale of precarization of the life of unemployed journalists amounts to 0.34, indicating a correlation of the medium intensity. With the increase in precarization, there is an increase in the number of journalists who claim that there is no media freedom.

5.3. Professional self-criticism and the precarity of employed journalists.

The contingency between the assessment of the professional self-criticism of the employed journalists and the scale of precarization is 0.16, which indicates a very low correlation between these two phenomena.

5.4. Professional self-criticism and the precarity of unemployed journalists.

The contingency between the assessment of the professional self-criticism of the unemployed journalists and the scale of precarization is 0.22, which indicates a slight correlation between these two phenomena. There is no distinctive regularity in the direction of a correlation.

5.5. Criticality towards the environment and the precarity of employed journalists.

The contingency between the criticism of employed journalists of the environment assessment and the scale of precarization is 0.33, which indicates a medium intensity correlation between these two phenomena. With the increase precarity, there is a growing criticism of the media environment.

5.6. Criticality towards the environment and the precarity of unemployed journalists.

The contingency between the criticism of unemployed journalists of the environment assessment and the scale of precarization is 0.34, which indicates a medium intensity correlation between these two phenomena. With the increase precarity, there is a growing criticism of the media environment.

6. Precarity destroys the media, precarity is the plague of modern civilization

In the opinion of the journalist, the situation in the media is bad. The media environment is primarily responsible for this - the government, the state, the owners of the media, and then the journalists themselves. The role of journalists in emancipation and defense of the media is under constant and growing pressure of the precarization of work and life of journalists. It is hard to expect a greater engagement of media workers in a situation where their work and employment are endangered, and when the conditions for a decent life are uncertain on a daily basis.

Our starting hypothesis on the relationship between journalists' attitudes towards the media and the precarization of journalists has been largely confirmed. There is no doubt that the unemployed journalists see the media to a large extent from the perspective of growing precariousness into which they fell (not willingly, of course) - this is confirmed by two contingency coefficients of medium correlation between precarity and the attitude towards the media (to some extent confirmed by the contingency coefficient, which indicates a slight correlation between precarization and professional self-criticism). With employed journalists, the correlations are somewhat more complicated. The precarization influences to a medium measure a greater criticism of the media environment ($C_k = 0.33$). We noted a slight correlation between precarization and the assessment of media freedom, but we did not find a significant correlation between precarization and professional self-criticism ($C_k = 0.16$). as a matter of fact, with unemployed journalists there is also no significant correlation between professional self-criticism and precarity ($C_k = 0.22$). In all likelihood, a strong professional identity places an obstacle for any endangering of that identity.

In total, a number of journalists are torn between their own precarity and their professional identity. The majority of them remain in journalism, although they would like to go as far as possible from the profession; the smallest number (approximately one fifth) remain in journalism to write and speak as others want them to; in the end there are (approximately two-fifths) journalists who preserve media integrity and professional identity, apparently at a great price.

In the study of media workers precariousness we have found a large volume of worrying precarity - two-thirds of employed and unemployed journalists is exposed to precariousness at a medium and large scale. Their work and life are uncertain; their job is growingly insecure, and the employability degree decreases. There are more and more different types of uncertainties that are accumulating and leading to insecure life. The consequences of precarization on the individual, on his professional integrity, his family, children and their education are also cumulative. - In most other spheres of work, other activities, precarization can only be stronger and broader than in the sphere of media; the precarious workers in general can only fare worse and experiencing an even higher degree of insecurity than the media workers.

Precarization is not a natural human feeling, nor is it a normal state in modern civilization. There are professions and are activities in which all the consequences of precarization crush on the man-worker, but there are activities that gradually crumble, or will gradually crumble under the weight of growing precarization. Media is such a profession, and science, high education, culture and art follow.

By precarization of work, as the essence of a human being, the character and the very essence of that human being also change. Those who cite the argument that this already used to be so, overlook one simple argument - that what used to be in social history is no reason for it to repeat today, especially when "today" a matter of will, not of necessity. What neoliberal cynics keep repeating - "*Once you accept the fact that life is not 'fair', you will be much happier*" is ultimate cynicism.

7. Precarious worker - singlehandedly against everything and everyone

Precarious work is not a matter of choice. From an individual's point of view, precarization occurs just like earthquakes, hale, floods and similar disasters occur. We try to get away from them, to reduce their consequences, but also to adapt to them, to live with them. But does the precarization really have the power of a natural disaster?

Precarization is a "natural disaster" for every isolated and lonely individual. Especially for individuals with little or no equity, both cultural and social. This is so because the users of the precarization of workers first weaken their opponent, atomize, fragmentize, disintegrate, crush, de-socialize, completely impoverish him...

Precarization is survived individually, yet it is to be combated collectively and in an organized way. The lonely, individual resistance to precarization has a limited range. In any case, the key question for a mass individual is - How to survive the overall uncertainty and the great uncertainty of work and how to survive from such work? We have noticed, not counting the non-doing, two classical strategies and several models of behavior. It is a strategy of asocial individualism ("alone vs. all") and the strategy of collective action ("If you cannot do it alone, do it together with others").

The first strategy is initiated externally and widely accepted by the workers, especially from the precarious workers. It is the result of the manipulative work of all class enemies of the world of labor on one side, and the low degree of self-awareness of the precarious workers, on the other. The imposed social model of forced disengagement and passivity dominates.

The strategy of collective action is related to the possibilities of self-organization of the workers and the willingness of those who are precarious to engage in organized resistance. The strategy of asocial individualism is supported by the owners of equity and their ideological mechanisms and their mechanisms of coercion, while the other strategy occasionally develops despite these mechanisms. In this other strategy, workers and precarious workers "wage their war" relying on their own resources. However, in the absence of conditions for normal survival and the absence of elemental social security, instead of self-organized collective action, there is somewhat greater probability for spontaneous mass revolt, for the rebellion of a *lonely crowd*!

When the precarization of workers takes its final form, when survival colonizes the entire life, when precarization reduces the life to a struggle for survival, then survival becomes an obsession. Obsession with survival, just like the obsession with profit, does not provide solutions at the collective level. Within the framework of obsession, there is no solution. The obsessed do not seek for solutions outside their obsession. There are no others for the obsessed - there are no groups, no collective... For obsessed workers, there is also a

nation as an *organic entity* and/or an authoritarian leader as the set framework for finding the final solution. Obsession blocks, stops, slows down, petrifies, paralyzes action ... Obsessed people are not free people - they are slaves of their obsessions.

The obsession with survival and obsession with profit has a demonic character, with one major difference. Precarious workers are obsessed with surviving and they reject every risk (and capitalist political systems make each resistance extremely risky). On the other hand, a certain risk is embedded in the genetic structure of capitalists. Their obsession with profit persists until the other side, i.e. the precarious workers host a demonic fear of risk. Fear of risk is the basis of precarity. As long as there is fear, there will be precarious workers!

In our research, we found that four-fifths of the journalists explained the low attendance of recent journalistic protests with greater or lesser fear - 49% fully agree, and 31% partly agree with the statement "*The protests were small because journalists are afraid of potential sanctions.*"

Fear defines the reach of right and artificial solutions. Fear blocks the way to the right solutions. Fear and the "*prisoner dilemma*" (non-cooperative play) are an obstacle to any collective action. Extreme precarization voids any possibility of a "*convincing game*" (a cooperative game) as the only rational option in a given context. However, key words are competition and the development of competitiveness, not cooperation and "comradery", or, God forbid, the hated collective action.

All institutions of political systems with all forced and manipulated monopolies, channel and/or transpose resistance to precarization in adapting to the precarious conditions of work and life. The B strategy refers to the demassification of protests, to their segmentation, individualization. The common denominator of this individualization of workers is the deconstruction of man as a social being.

With precarious workers, self-awareness is reduced to the instinct of survival, and without self-awareness there is no identity; precarization produces identity destruction as a rule, (if there was an identity at all). The precarization de-socializes workers and turns them into lonely creatures. The precarious worker is a lonely individual with social connections in the process of redistribution. The precarious worker is alone and opposing everything and everyone. One cannot count on resistance, protest, rebellion with such workers. However, this does not mean that a rebellion cannot and will not occur. It will be a rebellion of the mass of lonely individuals with a lack of self-awareness and identity, and with excess of indignation and destructive wrath.

While some psychiatrists see the obsession with profit as a mental illnesses, some biologists place the obsession with survival of the precarious workers among basic instincts of the living world. And the rebellion of the precarious workers will be a matter of instinct and a rebellion of biology.

8. Models of behavior of precarious journalists and workers in general

How to behave in the fluid and unstable chaos of the almost general anomie, deregulation, general devaluation, overwhelming insecurity and uncertainty? How to behave when there are no rules or when the existing rules are growingly disrespected?

A simplified view of the behavior of precarious workers is within the framework of a strong dilemma: to accept precarity, or to resist it. If we resist it, do we do it according to the rules of resistance or within the rules imposed by the mere precarization? If we resist precarization by the rules of resistance, do we see opponents in our colleagues in precarity or in the users of the precarization of workers' lives? Simplified even more, are other workers enemy partners of the workers or are their enemies in the world of capital? (Although the word "enemy" is a difficult word, euphemism leads nowhere.)

Either way, one side will bend their head and close their eyes – so they see nothing, they will cover their ears to hear nothing and seal their lips so that they do not accidentally say a word. Similar to the three monkeys in the Japanese golden rule for good life: "See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil." Or like that rule of the *mafia omerta*: "I did not see anything, I did not hear anything, I shall say nothing." And when the journalists are silent, it's a sign that things have gone too far. Others will keep silent about what they see and what they hear and talk about what they do not see and what they do not hear. They will replace the unacceptable reality with the non-existent, yet acceptable reality that is acceptable both for them and the editors of the real reality.

In fact, our research of the precarious workers and their precarious life, and in the case of journalists, suggests the existence of at least eight models of realistic and possible behavior of precarious workers/journalists:

- 1) *Zombie model*: passive acceptance of the state of precarity. The key is almost absolute obedience. Patience and silence.
- 2) *Escape from one's own identity* - the model of accepting "imposed" identities or the model of displaced identities. There is usually some kind of organic collectivity (the nation, for example). This displacing of identity often arises in extremely precarious workers when they are in a situation when they do not see and do not know where they are, where they are going, who they are or what they are!
- 3) *Formal adaptation model* - specific *Catman behavior*: apparent and/or partial conforming. Get used to and adjust, but protect yourself. Do not stand out - visibly. Fit in - visibly. Fake it, but don't lose yourself.
- 4) *Model of actual conformist adaptation, obedience*. Give what is required of you. Be what they want you to be. Bend and bow. (The difference from the zombie model is in the mindset of obedience - the zombie model has no awareness of conformity, it is almost instinctive.)
- 5) *Model of escape to various forms of usually "softer" social pathology*.
- 6) *Model of individual resistance*. Fight alone and only for yourself, any way you know and can. The distrust in others is marked by three-quarters of the interviewed journalists, and the extent of mistrust in the general population is similar.
- 7) *The model of collective resistance*. Fight together with others and for others.

8) *Model of plebeian rebellion* - extorted spontaneous rebellion of a lonely crowd. - Is there a way out of this 'voluntary' slavery, without it being an explosion of accumulated misery and wrath?

[Here I am now pointing out four typical behavioral patterns of precarious workers, i.e. precarious media workers. In conclusion of my attachment to my book on passive activism of media workers, I wrote about activism/passivism, that is, about a behavior in the context of the profession through three models: the flight from the profession, staying in the profession at all costs, and the disrespect for the profession.]

9. Zombie model of the precarization of workers

As with other definitions, Vukajlija (Slang Dictionary) gives a valid definition of the term zombie: "Zombie is the living dead with only the most basic motoric and psychic functions and the sole goal of his being is food and search for food." The meaning of zombie in this text is given from Vukajlija's definition, while all other definitions are intent on mystifying it by taking away its social and political meaning and attributing supernatural origin and an apocalyptic function to it. In a sociological sense, zombie is the final phase of self-destruction of *Homo sapiens* and it occurs as a result of the operation of the profit-obsessed capitalists and their ideological mercenaries in the social sciences, the media, politics and public life in general.

We are ready to accept the claims of some scientists that GMO are dangerous because no one can predict the consequences the change of only one genome in one plant will lead to (as for example, claimed by the molecular biologist John Fagan). On the other hand, we are much less prepared to at least seriously think about the consequences of changing the character of work and its precarization in the context of changing the nature of man and his humanity. As if they did not leave a trace of warning about the acceleration of the dehumanization process of the modern civilization, the fact that civilization is rapidly losing its human face. The breaking point is the change in the character of work as a fundamental determinant of a human being. It is not yet known what will the structure of this civilization look like when its foundation rocks and changes. The earthquake area requires different construction.

Opportunities for rational behavior of precarious workers are greatly reduced in case of existential blackmail. Blackmailed by work, the precarious worker cannot say NO. And the postmodern worker is under permanent existential blackmail. At the same time, the chief editors of the precarization process obsessed with profit and their ideological mercenaries are trying to convince us that (only) an existentially endangered worker is a productive worker. It is pointless to attempt to prove that almost the only result of an existentially endangered worker is the exerted slavery that does not give any results even under constant rigid scrutiny and scolding.

How does this person bear, how does this person behave when the foundations of their survival change? There are several catastrophic answers to the labor crisis. The *Zombie model* is definitely among them. It is about passive acceptance of precarization of work. It's about

suffering. Patience and silence, accept the inevitable because there is no alternative. The key is obedience. Be obedient to the end. Behave the way you are required to... And only look after yourself and your interests!

The Zombie worker has no awareness of his slavery. Awareness is blocked by his survival instinct. His obsession with survival does not leave room for self-awareness! The awareness of the precarious zombie worker is the awareness of a robot. Simply put, there is none. There is no awareness and knowledge exists within a given scope, marked area, rigid boundaries...

The Zombie model of the precarious workers is the most favored among the capitalists, these postmodern owners of our lives. They love the *tabula rasa* ("empty head") of the precarious worker, even of those who see the solution to their insecurity in adapting and literally accepting everything that the bosses say or think! Hence the postmodern capitalists and their ideological mercenaries nourish and regularly water what is to them a very important plant, the plant of zombie-precarity!

10. Precarity imposes displacement of identity

The precarious workers today endeavor in a Robinson Crusoe adventure. It is easier for the capitalist *leviathan* to fight an individual than to fight against a group, a collective, a community. They know that the key is in prevention. That is why much effort is directed towards the individual being de-socialized, to be alone on his own. Therefore, many procedures have been developed to separate an individual from a group, from an organization, from a union, from any association, from any relevant form of community, all for easier handling of anyone who considers disobedience or resistance. *Dividi et impera*: individualize, segmentize, fragmentize, separate, disperse, disintegrate... against cooperation, association and alliance...

A part of extremely precarious workers believes to be an important part of a larger and supernatural entity (the Nation, for example) or believe they are a key part of the divine plan of a genius leader or an important participant in the success of some of "our" sports. I am better, bigger, stronger, braver, smarter than I am because I am part of this or that. - It's somehow normal not to see with eyes shut, it's a little less normal not to see with eyes wide open, but it's the least normal to have illusions, to see what is not there and for the imaginary to be an "instruction for living" and a "leadership in action".

Workers, and especially precarious workers, are increasingly torn between a worker and a warrior identity for this or that holy cause. The sacramental are all around us and must be fought for. From the nation to the sports. In the meantime, here are some games, although the bread is less and less!

Generally speaking, imaginary collectivities (like Benedict Anderson's idea of a nation as a imaginary community) have their counterpart in the imaginary individuality. It's about false identity and false community. That is why the rise of individualism and community defamation dominate. [*A specter is haunting the world – the specter of the community, communion. All the new and old powers have entered into an alliance to exorcise this specter...* - *The Thing*, no. 3] Survival is promised only to a lonely individual who is loyally

fighting for the profit of his owner. At the same time, authentic communities are crushed and crumbled on one side, while pseudo-communities are developing on the other.

The isolation of precarious workers follows the de-identification process. The lonely precarious worker, as a rule, loses his worker identity and is looking for other identities. The identity with pseudo-communities from a range of offers of ideological manipulators of the ruling profiteering class is the easiest to accept. This is how the workers from Rakovica could come to that famous protest in front of the Assembly as workers, and leave the protest as Serbs.

Pseudo-individualism and pseudo-community are tools of the profiteering class. The role of these main and falsified types of human existence today is related to the passivizing the capacity of the human individual as a community being. Hence, so that there will be no resistance to the precarization of our lives - only the organizing that is at a great distance from all the real issues about the relationship between work and equity is acceptable to the equity owners.

Big crises create a craving for the community, for the collective (for the herd, if we would say it bluntly). There is a need not to be alone in dealing with an enemy or any kind of misfortune. This is an ur-need, which occurs in continuity since the times of living in packs. However, today there is generally no adequate choice of how to meet the need for a community. The ideological mechanism of the ruling equity, on the one hand, creates and reinforces the artificial need for pseudo-communities, and on the other, imposes the "choice" of false community. The ideological narration tells us that a copy is better than the original, that the authentic community is a utopian idea, that it is easier to enjoy dreaming than to live that the *yellow trade unions* are more useful than the real trade unions...

As a worker, you are an individual and only an individual, Robinson Crusoe on a deserted island. If you want to be a part of a collective, a community, or just to feel like you are a part of a bigger picture, then you must be a Serb, a German, a Spaniard ... Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim ... "White", "Black"... An individual therefore imagines his racial, national, religious, political or any other community, in order to overcome the imposed void of his individuality. Such an individual is the creation of all those who benefit from the existence of imaginary communities. Profiteers of the pseudo-collective have developed all forms of ideological manipulation to tear the de-socialized individual apart between pseudo-individuality and pseudo-community.

At the level of the theory, the dualism between the individual and the society is most often expressed in the dialogue between the liberals and the communitarians, where in the extremes one side almost exclusively represents the individual, and the other almost exclusively represents the community. Both of them foresee that man cannot exist without a community, or that a community cannot survive without people. Every imbalance is fatal for a man. In the comparing of these two theoretical concepts, the ideological-typological models of man-individual and community are confronted, hence the discussion takes place in the metaphysical level far from the reality in which pseudo-individuals and pseudo-communities are dimensioned. One are promised freedom in their individuality, and others in their blending in the collective. Yet there is no freedom for the un-personalized individuals, nor for the "individuals" that have blended in the collective and have become unrecognizable. After all, there are no significant differences between un-personalized and individualized individuals

and those individuals who can only be statistically identified in the mass of various collectivities. Both are victims of great social engineering directed against a man as a social being. So far, the truth has been successfully concealed by the extremist and liberalist and collectivist ideologies that are closely related to them. One would simply isolate a man from the community, and the other would simply drown him in it! Only in this way can they make a warrior from the precarious worker and have him serve various needs. I guess this is how it should be: For slavery in the name of freedom!

11. Conformism - "Do as you are told!"

The model of blind obedience is the third on the list of the worst reactions to the state of precarity; right after the transformation of workers into *warriors* (model of identity change) and the transformation of workers into the "walking dead" (zombie model).

An ideal-type image of blind obedience is found in the First Book of Moses when God tempts Abraham: "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." (Genesis, 22.2). Today, postmodernist capitalism tempts precarious workers - either obedience, or will sacrifice yourself and your family.

There is *no alternative to obedience* for many precarious workers (the famous: *There is no alternative*). Get used to it, adapt, fit in; obedience as a way on getting by, and even if it is a fake. Total obedience: do as you are told, no matter what it leads to. Does not one of the antiheroes in Huxley's dystopia, the "Brave New World," say that non-conformism is a crime worse than any crime (a quote from memory). Bend your back, lower your eyes, bow, be prepared to kiss a hand, kneel, although nobody is asking you to, but just in case! - Be obedient to everything and everyone, to the boss before all and above all!

When the precarious worker finds himself facing the dilemma: To be obedient or to die, not many people opt for the other possibility! Obedience to a boss/employer is the source of every other obedience and humbleness. It is not a long way from obedience in the sphere of work that ensures existence to obedient participation in acts of malice ("the crime of obedience"); there is always the famous justification "*I was just a screw in the mechanism*".

Obedience is an individual phenomenon, while disobedience only has a purpose if it is a group action. At least two people are needed for disobedience. Obedience is the thing of an individual, while resistance is a collective matter, a matter of an organization... Asocial individualism is a prerequisite for all obedience. Blending in the collective, as well. In this context, the distinction between individual and organizational obedience should be emphasized. Individual obedience in precarious work is a prerequisite for organizational obedience. Of course, it is also necessary to differentiate other types of obedience, starting with the difference between voluntary and forced obedience. There is a difference between, for example, obedience to a perceived authority, and the respect of the requirements arising from the division of labor or from the production technology. Still, obedience should not be confused with conformism, or with authoritarianism, although obedience, that is, authoritarian submissiveness, is one of the central dimensions of authoritarianism.

When a precarious worker faces the possibility of the precarization intensifying, or the possibility of permanent unemployment, obedience acquires another explanation, another

moral justification: I did everything, I did everything they asked of me, I sacrificed, and here's what happened to me.

The obedient precarious worker is lonely; obedience does not seek company. According to Erich Fromm, modern age causes anxiety and isolation, and obedience serves to avoid uncertainty and insecurity. The obedient precarious worker communicates with others through conformism, so he can say "I am like everyone else," but this is already a sphere of self-justification and righteousness in front of others. Obedience remains a personal relationship with the authority of the boss or any other powerful person.

Behind obedience, there is no risk, and if there is, the obedient do not see it and they will never see it. In fact, obedience is a way of avoiding any risk. Obedience is a way of avoiding every responsibility, every will, self-assurance... Stanley Milgram sees the essence of obedience to lie in the fact that "*man begins to perceive himself as a tool for the fulfillment of other people's wishes*", thus distancing himself at the same time from responsibility for his own behavior. (earlier experimental research of conformism by Solomon Ash and Milgram's experiments on obedience, have broken many misconceptions about the nature of man, demonstrating his willingness to conform his behavior to the majority and to follow his authority regardless of the consequences.)

Obedience is the acceptance of the simplest solution, the avoidance of any complexity, the rejection of all dilemmas. Obedience denies the need for any awareness of oneself and one's position. Obedience is timeless, there is no past or future, everything is just one extended present. Obedience hurts less than disobedience. Obedience is acceptable to such an extent that it is embedded in all religions and all ideologies, in all organizations, in every hierarchy, and of course - in every power. Obedience is a divine solution. The obedient are provided a place in heaven.

Precarious workers are more obedient than other workers. Those workers who have not yet encountered precarity still have some choice. The choices of precarious workers are narrowed, and above all, almost forced. It does not mean that there is no voluntary obedience, but with the precarious workers it is more seldom than coerced obedience.

At the periphery of our research on the process of precarization, there were also questions asked about the reasons for obedience to the bosses to those respondents who react to the precarity of work and life with obedience. The following reasons for obedience were given: not to lose a job or to "get" a better job, not to worsen a work contract, or to "get" a permanent job, not to reduce the wages or to get bigger wages. We see that the authority of the boss comes from the fact that he can reward and punish - and to many this is a sufficient reason for obedience! Of course, it is understood that the worker wants to be rewarded and not be punished.

One saying from Mount Athos says that "*listening is life, and disobedience - death*". However, I do not know how much this doctrine can help the three of our five respondents who declare that they are forced to listen to bosses, even when they are wrong. The words of some respondents that the obedience to their bosses is limitless sound dramatic. - "*I am ready to do anything, because there is no other solution!*"

12. Protest, resistance, rebellion

Do precarious workers have the need for protest and rebellion? Is there any reason for resistance to precarization and rebellion against the precarizer? Only then, the question: **why is there no protest** may follow.

Do those who are in the claws of the invisible market have reasons for protest, resistance, rebellion? Do these sharp claws satisfy them masochistically, might they be insensitive, maybe they do not see, maybe they do not feel, maybe they do not know what... Or they realize that this is how it must be and that it cannot be different, because if it were, it would be bad for the richest and then for the state itself. There are those among us who understand that if "they" were to fare much better, we must fare worse (the *trickle-down economy*). Or they think that this is how it should be, that this is how it is everywhere in the world today, and that is what Europe, IMF, Troika or God require us to do. After all, it's important that the neighbor is not doing any better and that it is bad for everyone around me and everyone I know ... Maybe it is God's will.

In our research of precarization, we found that only 5% of employed journalists are dissatisfied with their lives, and that employed physical workers are dissatisfied with their lives three times more - 15%. The unemployed are more dissatisfied with life - 20% of journalists and 31% of physical workers. It makes no sense to count the average dissatisfaction for these two very different categories of workers. Still, it should be said that **on average, every fifth journalist, employed or unemployed and every fifth physical worker, employed or unemployed are dissatisfied with their lives**. By the way, the dissatisfaction with work (of employed workers) is slightly higher than dissatisfaction with life - in the case of journalists it is 7 to 5%, and with physical workers it is 19 to 15%.

In our research we have pointed out the phenomenon of the reasons for the protest (resistance, rebellion) more with the question of the possibilities for a person to control his life, than with the question of dissatisfaction with life and dissatisfaction (even though the answers to these questions are in a very high correlation). The question on the possibility of controlling one's own life was once asked in general (agreement or disagreement with the statement "*What happens to me in life is out of my control*"), and the second time it relates to the working status - is it the in/ability to control life the result of your working status, or not. In case of journalists we had a high-match; 15% of journalists say that what is happening to them in life is beyond their control, and 12% linked the impossibility of control to the current working status. In the case of unemployed journalists, both percentages are higher - 22 to 20. With physical workers, the inability to control one's own life is twice as high - 36% of the employed, and 40% of the unemployed, while only half of these respondents, whose lives are controlled by others, connect the "controllers" to their working status. **On average, the inability to control life is characteristic of every sixth journalist (17%) both employed and unemployed, and of 40% of the employed and unemployed physical workers**. It would be good if the remaining percentage, i.e. 83% of journalists as the representatives of Serbia's most educated workers and 60% of physical workers, as the representatives of workers without a school and without profession - were *socially adult* and had control over their lives!

These findings can include the data on the total number of unemployed workers (real figure - one million people), the number of employees who are barely surviving with their

often irregular salary, the number of retired workers who "help financially" their adult children (i.e. both employed and unemployed) either to survive or sustain them completely... etc. Let us presume that the number of those who have reason for protest (resistance, rebellion) ranges between 17% of the number among the media workers and 40% of the physical workers. Let us presume that all other citizens are adult, that they can control their lives and have no reason to protest. I also assume that the assessment of our research team about the expansion of the process of precarization of work and life is correct. The estimate says: one quarter of employees, unemployed and retired workers is affected by precarization. Their life is more or less insecure and their future is uncertain. They simulate life and are so far surviving.

The activist capacities of journalists, as the focus of our second survey of the precarization of media workers and workers in general, were examined through conventional forms of activism (professional associations and media unions) and through unconventional forms (protests, strikes ...). Journalist activism has been analyzed in several papers published in the book "Passive Activism of Journalists": Tanja Jakobi - "Professional Journalists' Associations, Warlords Without a Strategy, Army and Support", Zoran Stojiljković - "Syndicate (self) Organization and Cooperation of Journalists: Mission Impossible?", Vera Didanovic - "Spontaneous and unconventional actions of media workers", Zoran Stanojevic - "Media Activism, Digitalization, Internet" and Vojislav Mihailovic "Social Equity of Journalists in Serbia".

Regardless of the low confidence of journalists in professional associations and even lower confidence in the media unions, the capacities for organizational activism can be awakened if normal communication between all professional organizations and all media unions is established. The focus groups we have organized indicate that there is a need for a mediator to initiate the discussion and prepare the factual basis for the talks and dialogue. On the other hand, several protests of journalists that have taken place over the last two years give hope for the journalists' willingness to activate themselves outside official institutions, and at the same time point to the potentials of this type of activism. "Viewed from a certain time distance, measured by the distance between the last protest meetings and the time of the research, it can be concluded that the media workers, in relation to both observed protest initiatives, generally have a positive attitude. This has nothing to do with self-delusion and an attempt to present the reality in a more beautiful light - protests, according to the majority of expressed opinion, were unsuccessful, but at the same time they were a good way of defending the dignity of the profession and informing the public about the pressures on the media and the journalists. Their relatively low attendance is mainly explained by the fear of sanctions." (Vera Didanovic)

In total, the journalists' protest activity was positively assessed by one-fifth of the interviewed journalists, while two fifths assessed the protests as partly successful and partly unsuccessful (almost a third of the interviewed journalists thinks the protest were unsuccessful). Vera Didanovic wrote in the above text that Nedim Sejdinovic, president of NDNV, claims that the two protests "gave rise to hope" and showed that "the media are not, nor can they be much better, or much worse than the society they come from." For journalist Ivana Milanović Hrašovec, the protest "Journalists do not kneel" was a rare honorable move in the current epoch of journalism: "Perhaps because journalists did not rebel because of their

terrible salaries and for their personal interests, which is usually the case in local protests, but in support to their profession, to responsible journalism, which is in the public interest, the news about the gathering had good publicity, they echoed in other cities, even outside the country. I would say this protest was a driver for widespread protests that came later on..."

The point of the figures mentioned here in the context of our analysis is not in their magnitude but in their vertical and horizontal distribution, in their pronounced dislocation. This dislocation is at the same time the dislocation of the reasons for the protest (rebellion, resistance), all of which resemble the colors of leopard's skin. When we add to this the long-lasting violent atomization of all sorts of things, the prevailing asocial individualization (without power for at least molecular integration), then we get a relatively low energy status of protests, resistance, strikes, rebellions... But there is no doubt that the potential exists.

X X X

Is it possible for a man-worker-journalist to adapt to the conditions of precarious work and life, without only his being changing? Is it possible to work and live without a salary, to work without knowing when you will be paid, to work for a salary that is insufficient to live on, to work without basic rights (health and social care), to work without a permanent employment relationship (occasional, temporary, part-time work), to be overqualified for the jobs we do, to do jobs for which you have not been educated, work outside the environment in which you are socially networked and settled, do a job that exceeds your capacities, work longer (overtime, work weekends, holidays... often without compensation), work shorter hours, work on call, work in bad (often inhuman) conditions, work sick (and you work because you're afraid the boss will fire you if you take a sick leave), be mobbed at work, work in constant fear of various things, work without the ability to influence anything, even without the right to express an opinion, to do a job you do not like, to work in a company where unions are forbidden, to work in a company where you have to ask the boss for a permission to go to the washroom...

Is it possible for a human-worker-journalist not to see himself only as "Robinson Crusoe", but as a member of an authentic community? And so, while we are rightly obsessed with changing our own position, the view of this position has been turned upside down. My salary is small and irregular. I'm dissatisfied. I'm looking for ways to get a higher salary. I engage myself to increase my salary... On the other hand we find a distance towards attitudes such as: Our salaries are small and irregular. We are dissatisfied because of that. We are looking for ways to get to higher salaries. We engage ourselves to increase our salaries...

Is it possible for every man-worker-journalist to be more professional, more skilled, smarter, faster, more flexible, stronger, handsomer, more ingenious, more productive, taller, more professional, more experienced, more innovative, more communicative, more obedient in comparison to others; to smile all the time, to flicker with his eyes; to be a team player, to be a bigger sycophant than the biggest sycophants, to learn throughout his life, and even after, to step in whenever nobody will, not to go to the washroom during working hours, to do what no one else would accept, to work in conditions that are hazardous for his health and life, to work for a wage that is difficult to survive on, to risk his head when others would

not even risk their toe, to be satisfied even if there is no reason for it... In short, *one should die for the boss!*

Adapting to bosses' demands is, as a rule, carcinogenic, "*maybe you survive, maybe you don't*". You never know. Precarious workers relate to the boss as to a god. Some "are *waiting for the things to get good*", while others are trying to make it happen. The worst thing is that nothing guarantees that you will do well and even when you do everything they ask you to and the way they ask you.

The impotence to overcome the individual state of things, the frog's angle of the individual perspective, our own egoism - all these are measures of our dissatisfaction and measures of our lives over which we are losing control more and more quickly. The passive activism of journalists is a measure of our cramped possibilities. **Our activism is deactivated by the absence of synergy and solidarity, thus being transposed into passivism.** The limited abilities of journalists to fight for the public purpose of their profession, for their calling and for the dignity of their lives, indicate even smaller chances for those whose capacities are, in relation to journalists, smaller and who work in worse environment. This means that chances for a dignified life of the greatest number of other people are even smaller.

In the context of precarization, dignity only has a chance from the perspective of synergetic activism, with the renewal of solidarity and with the awareness that "one who cannot live in a community or who needs nothing, because he is self-sufficient is not part of the state, and he is either a beast or a god" (Aristotle). Looking at the media sphere separately, one can conclude that some optimism is spawned by two journalistic protests, as well as the obscured capacities of the media associations and media unions that can be activated by a systemic dialogue within an organized part of the media scene focused at questioning the possibility of at least a minimum unity in joint action.