Article

Anticipation as Platform Power: The Temporal Structuring of Digital Everyday Life

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Abstract

This article explores anticipation as a temporal structure in digital platforms. It contributes to the growing research of platformisation of everyday life by focusing on temporality as a central dimension of platform power, a key mechanism tying participants by structuring intimacies, socialities, and relations that platforms enable and engender. The article shows how the temporality of foreboding, prospecting and speculating about one's own and other's social media presence and actions permeates the user experience. Studying media diaries and interviews with participants from different social and occupational groups (politicians, actors, the unemployed, undocumented migrants), the article analyses anticipation as a structure of feeling, as time- and energy-consuming digital labor and as the embodiment of platform power's mechanisms. While anticipation has previously been examined as operational logics of the platform economy, this article demonstrates how anticipation also concerns ordinary media users on the level of their everyday life worlds, experiences and practices.

Keywords

Social Media, everyday life, platformisation, intimacy, temporality, affective labor, structure of feeling

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In this article, we study anticipation as a key mechanism behind digital platforms tying participants to themselves. Based on empirical research on everyday experiences of platformisation and social media platforms in particular, we show how the temporality of foreboding, prospecting and speculation regarding one's own and others' social media presence and actions permeates the user experience. We suggest anticipation be conceptualized as the temporal and affective structuring of intimacies, socialities and relationships that platforms enable and engender.

The role of social media in structuring everyday life has been identified in a range of studies that explore the dominant temporal regimes or power dynamics involved in daily life, as shaped by platforms and social media (Abeele et al. 2018; Haber 2019; Jordheim and Ytreberg 2021; Kaun and Stiernstedt 2014; Poell 2020). Connectivity, networking and personalized logics are recognized as part of the anytime, anyplace communication that shapes daily life (Abeele et al. 2018). Those studies that focus on the temporal structuring of the everyday often indicate presentness, immediacy, speediness, and newness as dominant temporalities of social media (Haber 2019; Kaun and Stiernstedt 2014; Poell 2020) while also pointing out the multi-layeredness of the "affective temporality of social media" (Coleman 2018), with the constant co-presence of the past (Paasonen 2021).

In our approach to anticipation in the context of platformisation (Lobato 2019; Poell et al. 2019; Van Dijck and Poell 2013), we draw on the research tradition that focuses on media and everyday life, highlighting the ambiguous ways in which media become intertwined with the rhythms, spaces and relationships of our lives. In this scholarship, how media follow, adapt to and organize the spatial and temporal rhythms of domestic everyday life has been viewed as central to their relevance in people's lives (Scannell 2014). The use of social media is bound tightly to everyday contexts, including our daily rhythms of waking up, checking our messages and scrolling social media feeds while we wait for something or take a break at work (Highmore 2004). Different feelings of comfort, pleasure and frustration are connected with routines and experienced differently within various social groups and identities (Cavalcante et al. 2017). The important insight derived from media-and-everyday-life studies is that the power of platforms resides in these banal routines. To quote Chun (2017, 1), "our media matter the most when they do not seem to matter at all."

In this paper, we study anticipation as (1) a key structure of experience in contemporary everyday platform activity, (2) time- and energy-consuming digital and affective labor, and (3) the embodiment of platform power's mechanisms. In identifying anticipation as a structure of experience and feeling (Williams 1977) that unites various users, we argue it offers insights into platformed temporality as "power-chronography" (Sharma 2014), a social ordering that structures various online experiences and social struggles. While the structure of experience is shared, the implications of platform power vary according to one's social position and life situation. Empirical studies that delve into differences in social position allow for nuanced situated knowledge about how platformed everyday lives are lived, but here, we focus on anticipation in order to foreground the structuring power of platforms, which, we argue, affects the socialities of all. While offering our analysis as a contribution to theory about platform

power, we build an understanding of anticipation at the grassroots level of media use, as described by people using digital platforms in various social and life situations. By researching experiences of digital everyday life through empirical interviews and diaries, we are able to advance debates on anticipation by "enfleshing" the hold of platforms, showing how it materializes in the form of anticipation.

Platformisation, Anticipation, and Affect

In recent research, anticipation is, firstly, discussed as an affect and a central experience in digital culture (Jansson 2013; Lupinacci 2021). It has been discussed as a component or driver of affective attunement toward the future (Papacharissi 2015). Drawing on Grusin's (2011) concept of premediation, Papacharissi (2015) describes the centrality of "intense anticipation" regarding what might happen next as an important part of digital culture. In this approach, anticipation is described as premediation that mobilizes affect "in producing a mood or structure of feeling that makes possible certain kinds of actions, thoughts, speech, affectivities, feelings or moods, mediations that might not have seemed possible before or that might have fallen flat or died on the vine or not produced echoes and reverberations in the public or media sphere" (Grusin 2011, n.p.). Lupinacci (2021) and Jansson (2013) have identified anticipation as one of the key characteristics that shapes our experience of platformed life. While analyzing social media users' experiences in the UK, Lupinacci (2021) described how the liveness of continuous connection results in a "constant state of anticipation." Jansson (2013) describes premediated anticipation of the "circulated self," which is related to the demands of social media, as an important part of the transmedia textures of the mediatized lifeworld.

Anticipation has, secondly, been examined as operational logics of the platform economy (Helmond 2015; Poell et al. 2019). Political-economy analyses of automation and surveillance capitalism indicate a new temporal shift in the platformed media ecosystem (Andrejevic 2020; Zuboff 2019). Prediction through data has become a central way to do business and governance. Anticipating audience behavior, tastes and habits is used for marketing purposes to create targeted, predictive advertising on social media platforms. Carmi (2020, 1) originated the notion of rhythmmedia to capture how "media companies render people, objects and their relations as rhythms and (re)order them for economic purposes." In this way, digital devices operate increasingly as "orienting" devices (Ahmed 2006; Twigt 2018) that focus on the future via the temporality of anticipation.

Thirdly, the practice of anticipation emerges in theorizations about algorithmic imagination. Examining how Facebook users make sense of algorithms, Bucher (2017, 41) highlights how imagining the functions of platforms is productive: "the ways in which algorithms are experienced and encountered as part of everyday life become part of 'force relations' that give people a 'reason to react'." Studies of social media entrepreneurs discuss anticipation as a practice of predicting and "gaming" algorithms to maintain and increase visibility (Bishop 2020; Cotter 2019). This research on algorithmic imagination has demonstrated that users are simultaneously

highly aware of the platform logic and negotiate its rules while assuming agency (Ruckenstein and Granroth 2020).

Inspired by these approaches, we study anticipation as platform power, focusing on relationality toward other people and foregrounding the temporal, affective structure of these relationships. While approaches to anticipation as affect in a digital context may eschew the question of platform power, the political-economy perspective tends to overlook messy, ambivalent everyday platform experiences. Moreover, anticipation is often associated with the attention economy and commercial interests, whereas a wider analysis of everyday platform experiences highlights the continuous balancing between visibility and invisibility among many users (Abidin 2021; Talvitie-Lamberg et al. 2022).

Anticipation highlights temporality, and as affect, within our approach, it denotes both open-ended orientation toward the future and context-specific, named emotions, such as anxiety or excitement. We suggest that platformisation entails experiencing a temporal ordering of digital everyday life that qualifies as a particular structure of feeling. In defining the "structure of feeling," Raymond Williams (1977) highlights the coexistence of temporalities. Williams (1977) offers this concept to underline the importance of studying not merely the dominant or that which is waning but also what he termed the "pre-emergent" and "emergent" aspects of culture: social experiences "in solution"; the ephemeral but acutely felt and the "active and pressing, but not yet fully articulated" (p. 126). Reinterpreting Williams's definition as highlighting a context-specific arrangement of temporalities as power in process, we invoke the notion of power-chronography (Sharma 2014) to highlight how power operates as a "biopolitical economy of time," as various institutions of the modern power structure control and enhance "people's qualitative experiences of time" (Sharma 2014, 19).

Platform power, we suggest, operates by imposing and normalizing a temporal order of anticipation, that is, expectation and alertness in relation to what is happening next. As such, anticipation is both an imposed order *and* a mode of agency and survival. It is both feeling and practice, imagination, and materiality entangled in everyday life. The concept of anticipation allows us to grasp the complexities of the micropolitics of time and the way in which people in different life situations synchronize to one another's time and to the larger structure of time. Thus, this synchronicity is "at the heart of everyday material relations" (Sharma 2014, 7), structuring intimacies, socialities, and relationships (Berlant 1998).

Methods and Data

As Helen Kennedy (2018) argues, research on platforms and datafication must be examined not only from the perspectives of technology and industry but also at the everyday level to capture how people understand, feel about and deal with data-gathering practices, as well as how these practices may affect different groups of people in different ways.

This research project is based on media diaries and interviews with participants in four social and occupational groups in Finland: politicians, actors, the unemployed,

and undocumented migrants. Instead of focusing on one particular group or media users in general, we study experiences of digital life across these groups in a context in which myriad activities, from public services and work practices to personal connections and family life, are increasingly organized through digital devices, applications, and services. These particular groups were chosen to provide insights on the experienced differences and similarities in a platformed everyday life, which might not have been captured by using a more homogeneous user group. The politicians and actors were chosen due to their public occupation, which becomes enacted through digital platforms in various ways, whereas the unemployed and undocumented migrants were chosen due to their life situations, which render them targets of various governance strategies and surveillance (Nikunen and Valtonen 2023). We acknowledge that a focus on various user groups may entail a risk of essentializing users as representatives of a group and treating these groups as given categories. However, acknowledging such groups and positionalities offers valuable insights into differences in power-chronography in the digital everyday. At the same time, this approach enables us to identify shared experiences across groups. This serves our aim, which is to make visible the different contexts of everyday life in which platform power operates. All these groups may be rendered vulnerable in digital everyday life, albeit in different ways and with different consequences based on a person's social status or life situation. Here, our interest is not in individual experiences of social media platforms but, rather, in the ways in which social structures and platform power intertwine and shape the everyday.

The research was conducted in 2020 to 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Everyday life in Finland was interrupted by two lockdowns (2.5 months in Spring 2020 and 6 months in Winter 2020-2021); however, the restrictions were not as severe as those in many other European countries. While people worked from homes, there were no curfews imposed. Even though it is likely that the context of the pandemic intensified the digitalization of daily life, the participants in this research project discussed their digital everyday lives in general terms and only occasionally addressed the specific conditions brought about by the pandemic. The empirical data were collected at the beginning of the COVID crisis and, therefore, do not reveal the changes in digital engagement caused by the prolonged state of the pandemic. The participants kept diaries of their digital everyday lives for 7 to 10 days, after which time each participant was interviewed face-to-face, on Zoom, or by phone. The recruitment of the participants was performed by contacting them directly by email or phone (politicians and actors) and also through various day centers and support groups (the unemployed and undocumented migrants). Altogether, thirty-four politicians (twelve young politicians and twenty-two Members of Parliament), fifteen actors, thirty unemployed people, and sixteen undocumented migrants participated in the study. The participants were able to keep the diary in the language of their choice and in the form of either an audio or written version. The diaries offered the chance to address issues that were relevant for the participants, without predefined topics. The diary notes were used in interviews as examples or queries to reflect upon, except for the MPs, who only participated in the interviews. The concept of a diary was not familiar to everyone, and

particularly among the undocumented migrants, the diaries varied in format and content (Nikunen and Valtonen 2022). These differences in the data are themselves revealing of the distinct life situations of the participants, and on a whole, they speak to the "messiness" of researching everyday life (Law 2004; Postill and Pink 2012). Such messiness is also a site of knowledge that requires reflexivity in terms of how it relates to the constructed research setting and goals of the study.

Both the diary and interview data, representing 157 documents in total, were transcribed and coded thematically with Atlas.ti software using fifty-two codes. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Messenger, LinkedIn, Snapchat, and TikTok were the platforms most frequently mentioned in the data. To understand how platforms are entangled in everyday social relations, we focussed on specific self-surveillance (138 mentions), self-presentation (428), social-surveillance (235), and management-of-social-relations (201) codes, which provided a specific perspective on experiences of and everyday labor in managing relationships on social media. In the preliminary analysis of our empirical data, our focus was on social relationships and self-presentation. The coded data were discussed and re-read together with the research team over several sessions. We searched for various ways in which these groups made sense of their digital relationships, and we found that temporal orientation (i.e., anticipation) appeared to be prevalent across all groups. Once we identified anticipation as a shared experience in the data, we began a more detailed analysis of the meanings and practices surrounding anticipation, distilling three anticipation dimensions in the process: (1) anticipation as a structure of feeling, (2) anticipation as practice, and (3) anticipation as a manifestation of platform power.

Anticipation as a Structure of Feeling

Anticipation, as a structure of feeling, illustrates the fact that social media's key temporality is the potential of imminent future promise (i.e., "things just around the corner") (Paasonen 2021, 73). While social media users generally search for affective intensities and many expect moments of amusement or interest, in our data, the futurity of platformed everyday life also entails worries and fears. In other words, the participants anticipated sharing news and entertainment with friends and family, but these positive expectations were accompanied by concerns over potential problems. Thus, as a structure of feeling, anticipation entails both expecting and imagining what lies ahead, as well as attempts to control potential risks and harms in advance. The participants actively feel and imagine others and their own relationships to others, as well as their atmospheric environment on the platforms. Their expectations regarding platforms arose out of past experiences and expected future outcomes.

In our data, anticipation was linked intimately to the felt co-presence of both known and unknown others. Participants oriented themselves by imagining their own actions' potential effects (Cefai and Couldry 2019). The participants planned and evaluated their modes of being on social media platforms from the perspective of actual and imagined users, as well as their motives and goals, but also in relation to the algorithms' imagined operations. Their online activities and motives behind their social

media presence varied, but they described emotional efforts related to anticipated or unforeseen interactions. For participants in public roles, such as politicians or actors, anticipation is a part of their professional identity. They, like other participants in our data, nevertheless described platformed everyday life as entailing a large amount of affective labor.

Attempts to prevent "uncontrollable relationality" (Sedgwick 2003, 37) led to participants carefully monitoring their own and others' behavior. Professional actors in our data described how they pondered over planned posts, imagining or expecting potential responses. Anticipation materialized as attempts to control impressions toward and interactions with actual and imagined audiences:

> 'If I get an idea that, for example, now, I could share this thought, then I start to consider very carefully what I will communicate with this [post] outwards if I share this kind of thought on social media. How much of the post, 60 percent or something else, is my own and not somebody else's opinion? Could somebody read this and think, "Hey, I cannot work with this person because they think like that" or "Do I have to care about these things?" And, somehow, it has been like that. I haven't liked to do that brainwork yet, so I have sort of remained in the background, so I more like to watch and listen and I'm not an active agent in that way on social media' (Actor 15).

This participant controls his presence on Instagram by imagining potential colleagues who, upon seeing his updates in the future, might be offended or react negatively. Our data demonstrate that planning or sharing posts is often accompanied by anxiety, caution and suspicion concerning the future (Soronen and Koivunen 2022).

The participants in our project recognize and reflect on platform expectations, affective atmospheres and social expectations. They admitted to everyday pondering and the affective work that this imagining, speculating and fearing entail, even if the user may not act visibly on platforms. An unemployed participant noted, "Well, I don't know. Instagram is quite OK. I don't have anything bad to say about it, but (on) Facebook, if you end up commenting on something, you may get dirt for nothing, so it is better to be silent" (Unemployed twenty-six). Many participants question platform expectations, and when they post, they take precautions to minimize the odds of drawing the wrong kind of attention or creating unwanted consequences.

In our data, anticipation often focuses on the assumed or imagined affective atmosphere of the platform. For some, expecting and preparing for rude comments and microaggressions overshadows their presence and agency on social media. For politicians, knowing about platform affordances, communication styles and particular emotional architectures (Wahl-Jørgensen 2018), as well as imagining each platform's user demographics, is partly a question of professional competence and performance, something that concerns them as individual social media users. Twitter and Instagram emerged as contrasting examples. One young female politician described Instagram as "low-threshold social media" for newcomers because "adversaries" are not expected, while Twitter was described as the opposite. A male member of parliament (MP nineteen) described Twitter as an arena for "wars" and having an atmosphere of "scandals

and outrage, and feelings of hate and anger," in which he nevertheless participates. Politicians described Twitter as an essential yet contradictory arena for public discussion. A sense of felt duty and angst over potential attacks is present constantly, as one of the participants explained:

> 'It is not funny at all; it requires a kind of backbone. It is almost like having short circuit yards. . . These are the dangers of contemporary life, particularly for public figures, which the members of parliament are by necessity. [. . .] I often have motivational conflicts about whether I'm going to take part in this or should I just let these absurdities go on. It is constant negotiation [regarding whether] one should correct the information' (MP 5).

A young female politician who expected to be "lynched" on Twitter wondered whether she was "strong enough to do politics and be in politics." Pondering an upcoming election campaign, she asked, "Does one endure it? Perhaps, one sort of grows up and, of course, gets more adult and so on. But (pause) can one put up with it?" (Politician 1). Our data indicate that professional role, better resources (in the case of MPs, parliamentary staff and support groups in one's constituency) and social media strategies cannot protect the individual user from feelings of vulnerability and anxious foreboding (Hokkanen 2022; Hokkanen et al. 2021).

The anticipatory structure of feeling features a sense of duty toward participating and reacting during topical discussions, requiring the active monitoring of one's social media feed and an ability to react quickly when something personally or professionally relevant occurs. Emotional efforts are intense when following others' posts and ongoing discussions closely while simultaneously making decisions about whether to react. While some unemployed participants viewed themselves as uninteresting from other social media users' perspective, politicians described feelings of duty.

The imperative nature of sharing (van Dijck 2013, 58) and the "circulation of self" (Jansson 2013) was a structural feature of social media networking sites that was also invoked by the undocumented participants:

> 'The social media. . . it kind of lures (you) to tell much more. It is like part of the whole thing about it. . . that I have to cross boundaries and tell so much in order to be somebody there. But I don't want to tell what is going on at home; I don't want to [post] pictures because they [other people online] are strangers. But they, they (talk about) their vacations and disputes and meals and everything with pictures, and that creates pressure and contradiction. Should I tell (them) too? It is very hard to keep boundaries, even for me. And, then, I think that it cannot be interesting to (give) my opinions. And I don't want to know these things about others' (Undocumented 13).

For this undocumented participant, the felt platform expectation entails foreboding because visibility carries the risk of being identified by the authorities (police, border guards, and immigration services) or endangering their own families. Simultaneously, the participant expressed a sense of non-belonging and expected non-interest on the part of others, similar to what some unemployed participants expressed.

Many participants described how anticipation entails a constant awareness of and reflection on boundaries. The way in which the participants described their platformised lives incorporated the idea of frequently negotiating about various boundaries. Social media induce them to reveal things, resulting in a continuous balancing act between concealing and revealing. In the participants' imaginations and experiences with boundaries, the way in which they react to situations may threaten their boundaries (Collignon 2019). Typically, these boundaries are invisible to the participants' followers, but in their own minds, these boundaries are enforced over and over against during their datafied everyday lives. Affective bordering can shield personal, interpersonal, professional or civic aspects of their lives. While participants aim to avoid situations that involve revealing specific emotional expressions, they often perform their sovereignty through "diplomatic" or "tactful" behavior to protect themselves from being abandoned (Collignon 2019), ignored or misinterpreted.

Anticipation as Practice

While anticipation, as a structure of experience, is connected to imagining, anticipation also entails a variety of concrete social media practices that involve cleaning, editing, delaying, fixing and removing social media posts, and apps in everyday practice. Thus, anticipation becomes manifested in anterior measures intended to manage one's posts and appearances on social media, as well as in the after-edits connected to removing traces of one's posts or appearances. Anticipation then establishes itself materially in this repetitious digital housework and constant affective labor (Jarrett 2016), which is intended to keep one's home safe and presentable. The participants described various pre-emptive practices and tactics via which to protect their privacy and security and thus keep unwanted, destabilizing content and contacts away. The concrete practices of cleaning profiles, managing and restricting relationships with followers and editing and removing posts from one's social media feed can be viewed as a part of digital housework, illustrating the concrete, material and laborious side of anticipation.

Cleaning up social media feeds was a pre-emptive practice that repeatedly came up during the interviews. However, the practices differed in relation to the occupational and social situations of the participants. For example, the actors explained how they anticipated reactions on the part of their followers and often attempted to pre-empt difficult discussions or unwanted questions. This included tidying up their personal profiles at times and removing some posts if they reflected only momentary feelings or included disturbing elements. In the case of Instagram users, the Story feature made this digital housework easier because posts disappear after twenty-four hours.

These anticipatory practices also include adopting particular "styles" that generate as few disturbances and dirt as possible (Soronen and Koivunen 2022). One actor describes their profile as follows:

> 'I try to keep it as light as possible, so I have, for example, decided not to share much political content, and I tend to keep the texts fairly short so it's as easy as possible and I can, for example, do some political work in my personal life but not make it public.

> Because there's always all that hate mail when you make even small references to, for example, your own political status or. . . or opinions. You notice comments [from those who] disagree. So, I don't have the energy to start dealing with these issues in such an environment' (Actor 5).

Ensuring that one's profile remains as inconspicuous as possible was a practice among the unemployed and undocumented participants as well, albeit for different reasons. These groups described the compulsory visibility that social media participation entails, as well as ways to remain "uninteresting" and not attract too much attention. To do this, they would double-check posts or, in some cases, avoid "liking" others' posts or not post on social media altogether:

> 'As a refugee, I have to be careful always. When I'm going to post, I have to double-check what it is. It really affects people. [. . .] Because, since I'm living in [a] different community, people are different always, and you're different from my [people] [0:28:09], so I have to think before I post anything. And even if I think I can post something. . . if I post and I think it might [make] people think [I'm] wrong, I will delete it again' (Undocumented 1).

Another participant explained how they restricted posts to what they felt to be safe:

> 'I am just giving a heart. A like. (Nothing) more. It is very rare [when I] comment. Sometimes, I don't even give a like to (-) [0:07:06] something that I really like. I just give the like to something that I feel is safe to like' (Undocumented 2).

The undocumented migrants also described how they would create different profiles that are connected to different national and international communities to keep their groups of contacts separate and ensure that their posts would not endanger their personal lives or those of their loved ones. Indeed, unlike what the literature on the attention economy seems to suggest, many participants in our study devoted a substantial amount of digital work to making their social media accounts unnoticeable so that they generate as little controversy as possible. This also involved restricting followers and whom they follow. Disengaging from content and conversations that they viewed as difficult, leaving groups and opting out of discussions consisted of constant everyday labor.

While a substantial amount of participants' labor was used to manage social media sites and control their profiles, traffic and content, as Mols and Pridmore (2021) argue, gaining control appeared to be difficult or even impossible. Their boundaries were constantly shifting due to the technological, data-driven culture of connectivity (van Dijck 2013), and content collapse (Marwick and Boyd 2011) or digital sociality's irresistible allure as a conduit to other people.

Efforts to control social media flows into various corners of everyday life were connected with scheduling and time management, which included silencing notifications, restricting social media use at night or removing apps for days or even weeks as a way to keep potentially disturbing content and contacts at bay. These practices, however,

were particularly relevant for those who had a working life. For example, politician participants, whose work often requires a ubiquitous presence on platforms, described how their work requires adapting to platforms' rhythms and algorithmic logics, as well as how they still attempted to set boundaries on social media by silencing notifications and not using social media at night. This anticipatory practice was connected with attempts to balance what the platform requires and what is good for oneself, as a form of self-care:

> 'It is (a) relevant social impact in a way, but particularly, this autumn has been really hectic, and I have been drawn, beyond my own control, into all sorts of storms, and so, I have noticed that I have, in a way, limited (use) in the evenings. . . Like, at 9:30 in the evening, I close the Internet on my mobile phone, so I'm not on social media. Somehow, the last hours of the day calm down so that one can get some sleep; otherwise, it feels like an electric rabbit' (MP 9).

In the similar vein, the actors described how social media shape the rhythms of the day in ways that require scheduling and time-management practices (cf. Cavalcante et al. 2017; Highmore 2004; Silverstone 1994) (e.g., shutting off mobile data from smartphones at night or postponing the opening of any new email messages or answering work-related messages on WhatsApp and Messenger). This means not yielding to the pressure to answer quickly simply because others in the group notice whether or not one opens messages promptly (boundary work focusing on controlling absence and presence; see Mols and Pridmore 2021). Social media's intensity and pervasiveness are apparent among those in work life, leading some to seek moments of peace and privacy. However, such structuring of everyday life is not necessarily a priority for the unemployed or undocumented migrants, who have more time on their hands. Sometimes, such practices are not even possible in an extremely vulnerable life situation, as one undocumented participant explained:

> 'Yeah, for example, I really have to follow WhatsApp every day. If I get a message, even if it is not my brother, I check to see (whether it concerns) my brother. [. . .] Before I went to Turkey, the police there arrested my brother. He called me on WhatsApp. He sent a message, and I saw it was 20 minutes before I noticed. I was somewhere at work, and when I looked, he had called maybe 10 times. Then, he was already in prison with the police. I talked with them and explained to the Turkish police that we have this, that we have made this family unification. I (gave them) my ID and passport number, and my brother has an image of my passport. He showed it (to them), and then, he was released' (Undocumented 8).

Social media silence may not be experienced as a luxury at all. For example, the unemployed may not be able to abstain from social media, as unemployed participants described pressure to produce more traffic on their sites to become more visible to potential employers. The uneven distribution of power, privilege and difference appears in practices in which "the fast class" (i.e., politicians) have assistants who do their digital housework for them, including deleting unwanted messages, so that these

politicians can concentrate on relevant content and relationships. On the other end of the spectrum are the undocumented participants, who struggle to understand social media content in a new cultural context, as they often have limited linguistic skills. This increases uncertainty and sometimes results in random anticipatory practices, such as deleting an app for a day or abstaining from reacting to any social media posts (see Nikunen and Valtonen 2022).

Anticipation's complexity also manifests in the uneven distribution of power and the variety of motivations that drive people to clean and style their social media profiles, traffic, and connections. While the undocumented are driven by a fear of being recognized by hostile audiences and authorities or the need to keep themselves informed, actors are more concerned about their livelihoods and public image. For politicians, the need to be available constantly creates a desire to silence social media, while the unemployed feel pressure to be visible through social media as a part of job-market realities. These differing motivations fall under a temporal structure that appears to be the same for all, but its implications can be distinct and unequal.

Despite Everything: The Hold of the Platforms

The participants in our project described attempts to set limits on how much time they spend on social media platforms. Many described negative feelings, the toil of affective labor and decisions to leave or take breaks from social media:

> A: There are maybe six, seven hours in a day that I am NOT on the phone or social media. It is very addic, what is the proper word?
>
> Q: Addictive? Addiction?
>
> A: Yes, it is addictive. People use it all the time. I talk about people because I am myself like that all the time. At times, I close accounts, as I have the two, for instance, two Instagrams and two Facebooks. I have Snapchat; I had TikTok and everything. Well, I removed some of them because the whole day is, like, watching and reading something. My brain cannot slow down.
>
> Q: So, you have restricted use?
>
> A: Well, at least I have tried, many times. I don't know if it leads to anything. I cannot. I don't know. If it reminds me of something bad' (Undocumented nine).

However, despite all the affective efforts and digital housework, the participants remained on social media. These accounts resonate with previous studies that have identified a similar difficulty in disconnecting from such platforms, even if people would wish to do so (Lupinacci 2021, 281). While previous research has connected the hold of these platforms to the continuous fear of missing out, we also interpret the difficulties of leaving social media as an illustration of the platforms' infrastructural power and intimacy, that is, the degree to which they are intertwined with aspects of

everyday life. Importantly, the sense of dependency is present even when people do not constantly update their social media profiles but, rather, wish to remain invisible on platforms. The need to remain on platforms is connected to daily rhythms and routines (Highmore 2004), as well as to the concrete tasks, errands and interactions that can be accomplished only through digital media. Furthermore, the platforms are an integral part of the social fabric of the everyday, the infrastructure of social relationships and public life.

Our data describe the continuous everyday labor of being in touch with others and maintaining social relationships for personal and professional reasons through social media, mainly Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Snapchat. Social media operate as an intimate infrastructure (Wilson 2016), enabling and shaping relationships and, thereby, becoming a necessity. Despite anticipated conflicts, hostility, anxiety, attacks, and danger, social media seem to be so deeply inscribed in people's social textures that the idea of leaving these platforms permanently seems impossible.

One undocumented participant described Facebook as delivering "really bad news every day," leading to them deleting the app and then reinstalling it again to remain in touch with friends in Afghanistan and, crucially, "waiting, if my mother or father finds it and sees that I am here" (Undocumented five). This quote demonstrates how inextricably entangled our social relations and intimacies are with social media platforms, as well as how anticipation is the structuring feeling of platformed everyday lives.

When ordering tickets, finding bus routes, reading the news and chatting with friends embody digital media's infrastructural relevance, the need to remain on platforms is fundamentally about anticipation–the sense that something (good or bad) is about to happen. Papacharissi (2015) aptly described the structure and agency online as "an accelerated reflexivity" that entails a "constantly in-flux mode" and an "almost obligatory expectation of the new" (Papacharissi 2015, 124). It is this temporal structure of affective intensity—the here and now, which is geared toward the new, with constant reflexivity around what is experienced and imagined—that ties the participants to the platforms:

> 'Social media uproars happen so quickly that if you have stayed away from the Internet for two days, you feel that the world has changed its position. My relationship to this is somewhat ambivalent. I love it, but then, I hate it because–because it is like this–it may keep one hooked. Somehow, you feel that, if you are not reacting to something, you miss out on something' (Politician 3).

The platforms' allure is, in this sense, affective: "Affect generates participation, and participation generates affective encounters" (Karppi 2018, 55). As a temporal structure–a distinctive power chronography of platformed everyday lives–anticipation comprises what Lauren Berlant (2011) terms "the affective structure of an optimistic attachment" (p. 2). In our data, participants said they embraced platforms in the hope that connections and social relationships would be generated, using expressions such as a "feeling of togetherness" or "companionship." These sentiments direct the focus not toward individuals and their social media presences, as evaluated in the form of

posts or likes, but, rather, toward social bonding. As one unemployed participant explained, "Somehow, it is that one is part. . . it is the sense of togetherness. . . Something like I'm part of this thing here, that I know what is happening. I'm also here, and I can post a comment here if I want to" (Unemployed eight). However, such optimism, as Berlant (2011) famously argues, is "cruel when the object/scene that ignites a sense of possibility actually makes it impossible to attain the expansive transformation for which a person or a people risks striving" (p. 2). Our data have confirmed that the affective ambivalence of platformed everyday life—and whether one remains on or leaves platforms—is intertwined with the particularity of temporal experience.

Conclusion

This paper set out to explore anticipation as the temporal structuring of platformed everyday life among various social and occupational groups. While various studies on platformisation and social media have pointed out the ways in which the social media logics of connectivity and personalization shape everyday life, our research emphasizes how platform power temporal and affective structures the intimacies, socialities, and relationships that the platforms enable and engender. With our perspective on temporality, we have highlighted the centrality of anticipation as a structure of feeling, both open-ended and context-specific, making visible how it materializes in everyday routines and practices and the various meanings it holds for the different user groups. Our approach, we suggest, contributes to previous research on platformisation by illuminating how affect, as temporal entanglement, operates as a mechanism of platform power.

The empirical data allowed us to examine complex engagements and experiences over the larger structure of time, thereby illustrating the workings of power-chronography, "where individuals and social groups" sense of time and possibility are shaped by a differential economy, limited or expanded by the ways and means that they find themselves in and out of time' (Sharma 2014, 9). While anticipation was a key structure of experience across various groups, the motivations and implications of anticipation differed, illustrating an uneven distribution of power. Some in the "fast class," such as the politicians, anticipated an overload of social media attention and sought to limit their connectivity in the evenings and on weekends. Actors curated their social media and professional image in anticipation of work opportunities. Others, such as the unemployed, used pre-emptive practices not to avoid social media traffic but, rather, to protect themselves from a sense of unworthiness. The undocumented migrants desired to be part of the social world of social media but anticipated exposures that could risk their safety. Anticipation entails expectations, as well as fears and concerns, and in this paper, we have focused on the concerns, as they emerged more prominently in the data. It is quite possible that the ongoing COVID crisis and the increased time spent on social media further intensified the experience of anticipation, even if it was not explicitly addressed by the participants.

Our research shows that, while anticipation, in one sense, constrains agency, it simultaneously provides participants with agentiality. The degree of foreseeability or

sense of control and security, however, varies among participant groups. For some, risks are higher than for others. However, the ways in which constant negotiation over how to express oneself and react and respond to potential messages and reactions from others have altered daily life across all these groups, demonstrating how platform power is organized as a temporal, intimate infrastructure in everyday life.

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