title:

The Disappearance of the Working Class from the CInematic Screen

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> Now, political films are no longer shown in factories.
>
> They are shown in the museum, or the gallery – the art space.
>
> Hito Steyerl, "Is a Museum a Factory?"[1]

Cinematography occupies an ambiguous position within the field of cultural production, which stems both from its origins and its contemporary use. The emergence of the moving image is strictly connected to technological advancement within the capitalist system of production: it arose from factory halls, from market-driven advances in the process of the extraction of surplus value. Simultaneously, the wide dissemination of the medium announced a new iteration of the extractive economy, which turned towards attention and affects.[2] The mass of viewers, assembled predominantly from the working classes, became for the cinema – as it was for industry – an essential producer of value.[3] Therefore, it should come as no surprise that one of the first commercial screenings of the Lumière brothers, taking place on 28 December 1895 in the Grand Café on Boulevard des Capucines in Paris, featured the moving picture titled *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*.[4] This anecdotal moment of cinema's beginnings can be used as an entry point for an inquiry about the representation of labor on the cinematic screen. Such an inquiry, as we shall see, has to address not only cinema itself, but move towards answering broader questions arising from the conditions of the visibility of work in subsequent stages of capital's development.

The social history of art is a historiographic method originating in the work of György Lukács and developed by Arnold Hauser in the early post-war period. One of the crucial insights provided by this contested branch of knowledge[5] is the critique of autonomy in the field of art. In the context of modernity, following the work of Walter Benjamin and Jürgen Habermas, the social history of art suggested that the experience of the autonomy of an aesthetic object has become

a necessary condition of dominant bourgeois culture.[6] The critique of that autonomy shifts art production closer to the core subjects of the Marxist critique of capitalism – the critique of class society, the relations of production within it, and the alienated, exploited labor of the working classes. One of the questions arising from the social history of art therefore concerns the representation of the relations of production. In the painting and sculpture of the modern era we can see that the alienated worker is an underrepresented theme, with few notable examples, such as the work of Gustave Courbet.[7] In the 20th century, if the figure of the worker becomes represented by traditional art forms, it is usually subordinate to the broader ideological aim, as in the case of such representations in totalitarian states.[8] The situation appears to be different in the case of representation techniques that arose within the period of industrialization, such as cinema. There, as we mentioned, the image of the factory workers is the foundational image. And while the cinema, as popular art, was considered distinct from the fine arts, contemporary practices blur those distinctions and open up possibilities for producing accounts with regard to both.

Jonathan Beller described the cinematic mode of production as an all-encompassing visual culture, and its different formations, e.g. cinema or television, as "deterritorialized factories in which spectators work, that is, in which we perform value-productive labor."[9] Although it is important to maintain such a critical viewpoint on cinema, it is necessary to move beyond it in order to engage simultaneously with art and cinema – it is in fact necessary to situate ourselves in a more ambivalent position. That is offered by the field of video art, which emerged in the 1960s, in a time of soaring political activism and the increasing commercialization of art. Consumerist society came under strong criticism, as did the power structure projected onto it by television. When the first portable video camera was released by Sony in 1967, artists quickly began to exploit this new field of visual potentiality. Its foundation was interdisciplinary and experimental, being identified neither with the art world, nor with cinema or television. Examining video art in the context of cinema brings out a relation full of contradictions – in the matters of economies, politics, and the spatialities of films. As I hope is visible in my analysis, it is possible to find a common ground to discuss them all, handling their contradictory dynamics with appropriate care.

The following analysis focuses on three works of video art: Harun Farocki's *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* [*Workers Leaving the Factory*](1995); Steve McQueen's *Gravesend* (2007); and Yuri Pattison's *Outsourced Views, Visual Economies* (2013-2014). Farocki's work investigates the subject of industrial wage-labor in 20th-century cinematography; McQueen's film shows the postcolonial reality of coltan mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the most recent film, by Yuri Pattison, introduces the reality of immaterial labor. Its argument follows a simplified division between three modes of labor derived predominantly from Marx's *Capital*, and analyses works that remain in close connection to mainstream cinematographic production or its virtual extensions. Therefore, while trying to find a position between art and cinema, it doesn't engage with the subjects of domestic labor,[10] video art emerging from the feminist movement (as in the work of Martha Rosler), or research-based installations such as *Women and Work: A Document on the Division of Labour in Industry 1973-75* by Margaret Harrison, Kay Hunt, and Mary Kelly.

A similar study regarding the Fordist and post-Fordist models of production was developed by Michael Goddard and Benjamin Halligan in relation to mainstream cinematic production.[11] Their analysis applies an internal differentiation between biopolitical[12] and immaterial labor,[13] both of which are active and realized in the film industry. Their argument moves from classical cinema and its representation of Fordist models of work, to contemporary art-house cinema with its images of affective, immaterial labor. The following essay shares Goddard and Halligan's approach, but moves the

Harun Farocki, *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* [Workers Leaving the Factory], 1995. Video, Courtesy of Harun Farocki GbR, Berlin.

observation point towards the edge between cinematic and artistic production. Doing so, it aims to occupy a position that would enable further and deeper elaborations of relations between art, cinema, and representations of work and workers in both fields.

Part I: Workers Leaving the Factory

"The film *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory in Lyon* (1895) by the brothers Louis and Auguste Lumière is forty-five seconds long and shows the roughly one hundred

workers at the factory for photographic goods in Lyon-Montplaisir leaving the factory through two gates and exiting the frame to both sides."[14] This sentence opens an essay accompanying Harun Farocki's work *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik*, produced in 1995. In its original form a one-channel projection lasting 36 minutes, the piece evolved 10 years later into the 12-screen video installation now in the collection of Tate Modern.[15] It is an emblematic work for Farocki's practice, being at once artistic, critical, and yet situated within the film industry. This film-essay is a Lumière-inspired inquiry into the

Harun Farocki, *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* [Workers Leaving the Factory], 1995. Video, Courtesy of Harun Farocki GbR, Berlin

image of workers in the history of cinema. Viewers observe how – movie by movie, factory by factory, worker after worker – cinema has depicted the same scene. Farocki, the filmmaker, doesn't use any of his own interpretation of the subject; rather, he assembles the cinematic works of others: Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*;Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*;Andrzej Wajda's *Man of Iron*;Michelangelo Antonioni's *Red Desert*;as well as propaganda materials from Nazi-era Germany and other found footage. The ever-changing images are accompanied by the calm voice of a female narrator reading the abovementioned essay. The director here becomes more of a prophetic archeologist, who excavates the obscure matter of the past, only to invent it anew for the sake of the present.[16]

Chapters 13, 14, and 15 of the first volume of Karl Marx's *Capital* reconstruct the historical relations that contributed to the emergence of industry in the 19th century.[17] The philosopher points out the fundamental role of cooperation as the foundation for the new ways by which capitalists were able to extract surplus value. The analysis underlines the crucial qualitative difference between the work of individuals and the work of groups.[18] To realize this new quality of production, workers scattered around small towns and villages had to be brought together.[19] It is here that the capitalist

Harun Farocki, *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* [Workers Leaving the Factory], 1995. Video, Courtesy of Harun Farocki GbR, Berlin.

enters the scene, buying the labor power of idle or dispossessed workers, building the spaces that could contain them all, and introducing a new mode of production: manufacture.[20] It is but a short way from here to full industrialization. Work

becomes something quantitatively controllable, and capitalism starts to pursue the constant improvement of the ratio of surplus value, utilizing the tools of engineering and science. Machines are introduced, becoming the leading actors in the rationalization of the production process. The worker undergoes a metamorphosis from being a tool in the process to becoming a mere implement of the mechanical behemoth that is the factory. This process triggers the cycle of development and decline: the race between industrial capitalists towards better and faster machines, scientific developments, and constant technological revolutions, broken by reoccurring crises. In a dialectical view, it is the same process of technological improvement that brings the cinema – the medium of mass culture – into being, carrying within it the demise of factory labor in its traditional form.

The medium of cinema comes into being as a commercial entertainment, produced by capitalists for the mass public.[21] In the period between 1885 and 1900 the films produced aimed to show movement itself. They didn't yet mobilize the technique of montage, which is considered constitutive for the medium of film; however, they managed to extract surplus capital from the attention of the first viewers, creating a new frontier of commodification.[22] The Lumière brothers didn't need to look too far for their subjects. They needed an image that would be rapid, dynamic, and containable within the

Harun Farocki, Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik [Workers Leaving the Factory], 1995. Video, Courtesy of Harun Farocki GbR, Berlin.

shot. It is easy to imagine that the first space they considered was the Louis factory in Lyon, which at the time produced highly successful photographic plates.[23] Their film lasts for about one minute, depicting the end of the factory shift and the flow of workers emerging through the huge doors. The image is constructed in such a way that the workers form a giant mass of bodies, defined by the capacities of the exit, and then go through the image – becoming individuals again. And in this way their transformation can be interpreted as the movement from factory work into the individuated mass constituting the newly established cinema audience.

Historically, moving images allowed for temporal reconciliation between different strata of society for the sake of individuated entertainment. As Arnold Hauser notes: "The decisive step on the road to the origins of the modern mass production of art came with the blending of the bourgeois middle class and the industrial

workers as one cultural stratum and the participation of almost all classes in the film audience which filled the cinemas."[24] From this perspective we can see why, in his critical and left-wing approach, Farocki traces the subsequent imaginaries of the working classes in cinema. He states that workers scarcely occupy any visible place in cinematic narratives, which rather depict "that part of life where work has been left behind."[25] The industry of the cinematic imaginary rendered the problem of work peripheral, making it separated and isolated, belonging to the past. In the context of such a manipulation in the sphere of attention rather than visibility, contemporary artistic production employs film in museum spaces, which, curiously, are often transformed from factory buildings (as is the aforementioned Tate Modern). As Hito Steyerl claims, it is not because factories – now museums – became the ultimate realization of the bourgeois public sphere, but rather because they are spaces of *lack* on display. Spaces making *lack* public.[26]

Cinema as a creative medium provides a substantial change in the process of representation – bringing together both time and space into its image. Their unification and interaction becomes decisive for the structure of a movie.[27] At the same time, it is a medium that produces meanings from existing reality rather than introducing meanings into it.[28] Therefore, being conceived from technological improvement and the urge for surplus extraction in its beginnings, cinema records a glimpse of its foundational environment – the factory.

"Workers Leaving the Factory in Eleven Decades" in Raven Row London © Marcus J. Leith, 2009, Courtesy of Harun Farocki GbR, Berlin.

Facilitating the gaze of the industrialist towards the laboring masses, it grasps the movement of bodies in the defined time and the defined sphere of immediate production. Here, the medium proves restricted in its possibilities of representation. The moving bodies on the screen are unable to grasp the process animating them. Obscured or absent are the extensive processes of exploitation, extraction, circulation, and commodity exchange, which the working class guarantee and become the victim of. We observe here how "[...] filmic images grasp for ideas and are themselves seized by them [...]"[29]

Harun Farocki's *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* can be read as a practical proposal for establishing a discussion around the imaginary of factory work as depicted in a century of cinema. The gesture of the accumulation of similar images produces

the possibility of grasping the universal conditions of filmic expression – the factory is a frame; the worker is clearly differentiated from the rest of society within its boundaries. When the workers leave the factory this potential for filmic recognition is lost.[30] Simultaneously, in such an accumulation the individual parts of the collage are differentiated by the political conditions of their setting – which underlines the political framing of what is visible – as in the instance of the employees and workers from Siemens in Berlin in 1934 leaving the factory in order to join a Nazi rally. This creates an archive that – rather than proposing a particular reading – enables the possibility for tracing such change in the longer historical perspective.

Part II: Gravesend

In the opening paragraphs of his work *On the Postcolony*, Achille Mbembe unfolds a critique of the Foucauldian and post-structuralist approaches that tend to problematize the world in the context of the production of identities, fluidity, and negotiation in order to avoid reductionism and simplification. As Mbembe suggests, it is actually due to such approaches that historiography,

Steve McQueen, *Gravesend*, 2007. Video. Courtesy of the artist and the Marian Goodman Gallery.

anthropology, and feminist critique reduced the complex phenomenon of power to the matters of discourse and representation, rendering its subjects devoid of material existence. For the author this is particularly visible in the context of discussions concerning the African continent, utilizing discourses based on colonial domination, deeply embedded in classical European philosophy of the self and freedom.[31] According to the author, "[…] it is this elementariness and primitiveness that makes Africa the world par excellence of all that is incomplete, mutilated, and unfinished, its history reduced to a series of setbacks of nature in its quest for humankind."[32]

Mbembe's analyses are crucial for the examination of the spatial and symbolic reconfiguration that labor underwent with the rise of colonial empires and capitalist frontier economies. In the 2007 film installation *Gravesend*, Steve McQueen – for the second time in his practice – casts the lens of his camera onto miners.[33] This 18-minute, 35 mm video engages with the dialectics
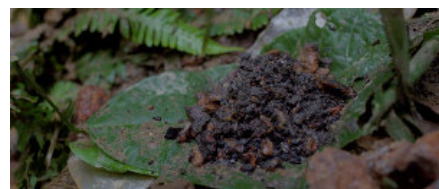
Steve McQueen, *Gravesend*, 2007. Video. Courtesy of the artist and the Marian Goodman Gallery.

between manual and mechanical labor in the neocolonial context. The single-screen projection in a dark art-gallery room assembles images from a coltan mine in DR Congo, the English port of Gravesend, and an almost fully mechanized assembly line located in Derby, England. Coltan is the common name for the mineral tantalum, which is widely used in the production of modern high-performance electronics such as smartphones and laptops. The mineral is found in different parts of the world, but since the early 2000s its price has soared, and mining companies have turned towards less-regulated ways of extracting it. To be precise, they started seeking the ore in DR Congo, which has the greatest deposits. The spike in prices is in direct relation to one of the deadliest conflicts since World War II – the Second Congo War, fueled by the market for the ore. McQueen surprisingly chooses not to point in this direction at all. His film instead draws its power from a simple juxtaposition of the black bodies of miners digging with bare hands or unsophisticated tools, and the clean, hygienic environment of high-tech machines operating on the Derby assembly line. As T. J. Demos writes in his recent book: "McQueen [...] convey[s] savagery through phenomenological estrangement. [...] *Gravesend* nevertheless mounts a political challenge by rendering visible those typically excluded from globalization's imaginary."[34] Moreover, McQueen traces the technological innovations and commodities consumed and treated as something neutral, scientific, and symbolically "clean" back to the process of messy, bloody, and deadly primitive accumulation.

This is a crucial insight, which can add to broadening our perspective on the uneven and violent process of globalization, and to understanding the perspective chosen by McQueen in *Gravesend*. The process of frontier capitalism and colonization, which takes us back to the early days of global exploration, also points our attention to the fundamental object of the worldview conceived in that period, namely the map. The map, the ultimate political tool of colonization, renders the world as reduced and horizontal. As it was then, so it is now: the horizontal view is embedded in any academic or non-academic conversation regarding globalization, capitalism, and war. Stephen Graham, in his recent book *Vertical*, aims to bring a different axis into being, enabling and exposing the verticality of systems of oppression and exploitation in the contemporary world.[35] Beginning with satellites orbiting around the Earth, Graham's analysis looks at the deepest frontiers of global capitalism – the Mponeng gold mine in Johannesburg, reaching a depth of four kilometers into the planet's surface. Following contemporary works in geography, Graham points to

studies that connect global cities – with their clean, sleek high-rises – to corporate mines deep under the Earth's crust, which, day by day, exploit the Earth to an ever-increasing extent: "Globally, the uranium, diamond and metals mining industries were worth $80 billion in 1995; by 2008, they were worth $463 billion."[36]

Demos recalls the work of Jacques Rancière, describing *Gravesend* as an engaged art form that "promises a political accomplishment that it cannot satisfy, and thrives on that ambiguity."[37] Following this, we can observe that the ambiguity of McQueen's position has to be located in the uncertainty of his position as a filmmaker. Using the medium of cinema in the context of art, McQueen goes beyond the horizontality of global vision, stepping down into a hidden, underground frontier. The imaginary of *Gravesend* transcends the boundaries of documentary or journalistic filmmaking, which would expose the bodies of miners according to the aesthetics of global reporting, aiming for the viewer's "bleeding-heart" engagement. The vividness of the imagery, which makes visible and brings to our attention the whole infrastructural system of exploitation, comes with the artistic usage of aesthetically sharp and "materialist" imaginaries. These manifest themselves in depictions of the purity of the laboratory environments of Derby, but even more so in those of the materiality of the mining process, where detailed visual relations shift our attention towards the particular moment when the body, the tool of the miner, digs into the humid red clay of the coltan pit in DR Congo. It is the contrast between the representation of cold matter and the warm, living body which produces tension, tension that we can refer to as political. It is particularly African workers, who – as a result of the historical processes of slavery, colonialism, and frontier exploitation – are denied any subjectivity in contemporary discourses.

Part III: Amazon Mechanical Turk

At first glance, the film installation *Outsourced Views, Visual Economies* relates neither to the history of film and labor, nor to the market reality of the laborer. The video provides the viewer with a sequence of ambient landscapes shot by cameras with different qualities. The screen is doubled, and the first frame in the center of the image shows immobile pictures of landscapes, both urban and rural. In the background, similar kinds of images are shown in a dynamic film version. No humans are present in these environments; we can only observe solitary buildings, cars, construction sites, trees, lawns, sand, and sky. The images evoke melancholia,

at times seeming to be glimpses of a post-apocalyptic future; at other times they look familiar, as if we could have shot them ourselves. The video alone does not give us any valuable information about what we see, hinting only by the means of its title.

The Mechanical Turk is a platform launched on November 2, 2005, by the global corporation Amazon as part of their Web Services platform. The name of the tool is derived from an 18th-century fake automaton, built to play (and win) the game of chess, which actually turned out to be a man hiding inside the cabinet of something that only looked like a machine.[38] The apparatus was an environment for a human body – a disguise, a trick. And this is exactly what the Amazon platform also is: a crowd

Yuri Pattison, *Outsourced Views, Visual Economies*, 2013-2014. digital video files and photographies. Courtesy of the artist.

of human workers merged into digital machinery. As the networked society emerged and many businesses became digital, new needs arouse, specific to the highly technological environment of the web. The Mechanical Turk is a platform invented to resolve problems, which appeared at the intersection of the human-machine encounter. As we read on the MT website: "[AMT] is based on the idea that there are still many things that human beings can do much more effectively than computers, such as identifying objects in a photo or video, performing data de-duplication, transcribing audio recordings, or researching data details."[39] These "things" are called HITs, which stands for Human Intelligence Tasks. This can easily be characterized as the ultimate realization of the capitalist dream and the workers' nightmare: the employer using machines as the most efficient and quantitatively manageable employees, and if those machines cannot perform certain commands, they can be cheaply and easily substituted by humans. But these human laborers are treated as machines themselves – they earn wages that cannot possibly provide them with the means of subsistence (a single HIT can cost as little as $0.001).[40] They work remotely, allowing the employer to cut all other factory-labor-related costs, and they don't benefit in any way from their workplace, as in reality they face the work alone. Their work is also strictly controllable and manageable by numbers – the ideal solution for problems that have "troubled" capitalists since the industrial era.[41]

The technology introduced by Amazon is a step in the ceaseless process of the commodification and accumulation of surplus value from laboring bodies. It points towards a simplified realization of what Italian post-operaist thinkers such as Maurizio Lazzarato tend to characterize as immaterial labor. It may seem that the work performed to fulfill the so-called HITs is similar to the Fordist mode of factory work, but set in a hyper-connected environment characterized by Manuel Castells as the "networked society."[42] However, the concept of immaterial labor introduces more complex insights into the traditional division between mental and manual labor. It is defined in an essay by Lazzarato as "the labor that produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity."[43] Immaterial labor merges several divisions that traditionally occurred within the capitalist division of labor. It involves workers manually in a certain process, i.e. digital communication, and intellectually, in the process of decision-making. HITs involve manual labor characterized by efficiency, calculability, and predictability, but at their core lies the difference between the human and the machine – the difference of sensibility.

According to the leaflet accompanying *Outsourced Views*, the images we see in the video were made by the workers of the Mechanical Turk's engine. The request for them was placed on the platform and paid for by the artist himself. The neutral, vague landscapes at once become filled with meaning – meaning that produces the feelings of disappearance and ambivalence. We do not catch a glimpse of the workers' faces or bodies; we are only shown the spaces and environments of their

Yuri Pattison, *Outsourced Views, Visual Economies*, 2013-2014. digital video files and photographies. Courtesy of the artist.

existence. Their bodies have disappeared through the work they perform; they have become machines situated in the landscapes of the modern world – from a tropical island to an American desert. The artist's decision to pay the workers to film their surroundings is a gesture of handing over the medium of film to them at a moment when there is no factory from which they could emerge – there are only their homes and computer interfaces, which constitute the basis of AMT production. Pattison invited those AMT workers for whom the platform is the main source of income. Their identities are not acknowledged as, through the process, their labor is detached from them. Yet in this instance we can suspect that the decision to turn the camera from the workers fulfilling the task towards the outside world is a crucial part of Pattison's idea. The artist makes the workers film and look outside, to point

out how the dematerialized process of production has left behind the temporal and spatial restrictions imposed by factory work.

Conclusion: Appearance and Autonomy

The Lumière's foundational image in the film *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory* placed the attention of the first audiences on the movement of workers emerging from the factory in Lyon. They appeared contained within the frame, just as they were contained within the space of the factory. At the time of its original screening their movement was not alien to the audience, since cinema constituted the commercial medium that mobilized the wide scope of society – the mass audience. As we saw, this image became the basis for Farocki's historical and artistic inquiry, which posed the question about the place of workers' representation within cinematic representation. Through the artist's montage we are able to see a visual tradition, a way in which the workers' image persisted within the field from its beginnings. Simultaneously, Farocki's critical commentary included in the piece underlines the ambiguous absence that truly characterizes relations between labor and cinema – an absence that is not imposed by the formal restrictions of the medium, but rather by its deep connection to capitalist aesthetic formations and ideologies.

McQueen's *Gravesend* transgressed traditional cinematographic modes of imaging, to approach the subject of work in the context of geographical and ideological displacements imposed by colonial and neocolonial economies. The work exposes the continuity and efficiency of infrastructure and production that cannot be fully comprehended by the viewer. The process of coltan mining challenges our understanding of the economy behind everyday objects, as it operates on a global scale with efficiency imposed by technological advancement. Simultaneously, occluded at its roots by spatial and political conditions, it operates with the most violent and deadly force. McQueen shows how, within the postcolonial era, the "Other" is maintained as a figure to work in slave conditions of terror, producing cheap raw materials to feed the mechanized factories and technologically advanced commodities consumed in the global North. Aesthetically, it is the most sophisticated of the movies discussed, restricting itself at the same time to pure exposition of the process, suggesting the impossibility of giving any promise of change or of taking a stand other than the one behind the camera.

Only in our last example, *Outsourced Views*, does the artist actually engage with the workers, mediating the interaction through the digital means activated by their labor. Yuri Pattison chooses to include himself in the production and consumption system, within the framework set by the machinery of Amazon. We can suppose that the artist was driven by the impossibility of approaching the workers of the AMT in any other way; he couldn't stand outside the factory and talk to them while they left their workplace. Their deterritorialization by means of interfaces, conditioned by the extraction of surplus value from immaterial labor, renders them scattered and hidden inside private apartments. They are asked to point their cameras towards the outside world, to show the artist and the audience what they see, and simultaneously to see it themselves. Watching the video with Farocki's work in mind, we are able to observe how the capitalist system rendered the worker mediated and occluded within sets of technologies and procedures. Simultaneously, the same system became freed from the spatial and temporal obstructions and restrictions imposed on it by the historical form of the factory.

Introducing his work on the cultural development of perception in the 19th century, Jonathan Crary states that "[...] spectacular culture is not founded on the necessity of making a subject *see*,but rather on strategies in which individuals are isolated, separated, and *inhabit time* as disempowered."[44] The three works of Farocki, McQueen, and Pattison use the medium of film in the task of representing the workers who, in mainstream cinematic production, became particularly "isolated," "disempowered," or just never existed within it. Each of those artworks inhabits and exhibits different paradoxes, tensions, and procedures that exist within the relation between the medium of film and the image of workers and their labor. Using their insight, we were able to observe how the process described by Crary is realized both within the field of cinema and in the system of production itself: namely, how the type of work – its geographies and mobilized means of production – shapes the visibility and appearance of the working class. The disappearing of the working class can therefore be understood not as a definite and concluded process, but rather as a set of obstacles, both within the medium and outside it. These obstacles are produced and reproduced by the material and ideological conditions of capitalist production. It is an overarching process, which includes the whole of society; it shapes all of its layers, despite the claims of autonomy in regard to culture and the sensibility of the middle and upper classes. And while acknowledging that, we can see how the figure of the worker becomes crucial to

observe. It is a figure in the foundations of the whole structure. It is with the representation of the worker that we are able to approach the entirety of the process, in order to grasp it and potentially make it appear vividly before us.

Footnotes

1   Hito Steyerl, "Is a Museum a Factory?," *E-Flux Journal*, https://www.e-flux.com/journal/07/61390/is-a-museum-a-factory (accessed November 1, 2018).

2   Jonathan Beller, *The Cinematic Mode of Production: Attention Economy and the Society of the Spectacle* (N. H.: Dartmouth College Press, 2006), Introduction.

3   Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume I* (London: Penguin Classics, 1990), 709.

4   Wheeler Winston Dixon and Gwendolyn Audrey Foster, *A Short History of Film* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 7.

5   Jim Berryman, "Gombrich's Critique of Hauser's Social History of Art," *History of European Ideas* 43 (2017), 494-506, https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2017.1373372.

6   Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "The social history of art: models and concepts," in: Hal Foster et al., *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011), 23.

7   Buchloh, "The social history of art," 26.

8   Ibid., 27.

9   Beller, *The Cinematic Mode of Production*, 1.

10   Silvia Federici and the Power of Women Collective, *Wages against Housework* (Bristol: The Power of Women Collective, 1975).

11   Michael Goddard and Benjamin Halligan, "Cinema, the Post-Fordist Worker, and Immaterial Labor: From Post-Hollywood to the European Art Film," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 53 (2012), 172-189, https://doi.org/10.1353/frm.2012.0006.

12   Goddard and Halligan, "Cinema, the Post-Fordist Worker, and Immaterial Labor," 173.

13   Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," in: *Radical Thought in Italy*, eds. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 133–147.

14   Harun Farocki, "Workers Leaving the Factory," in: Thomas Elsaesser, *Harun Farocki: Working on the Sight-Lines* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 237.

15   "Harun Farocki | Workers Leaving the Factory in 11 Decades," Tate Modern, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/farocki-workers-leaving-the-factory-in-11-decades-t14332 (accessed November 1, 2018).

16   Cathy Gere, *Knossos and the Prophets of Modernism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 23.

17   Marx, *Capital*.

18   Ibid., 443.

19   There exists a broad range of literature describing the long and complex process from which the modern proletariat arises, notably: E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (2nd impression) (London: Gollancz, 1964).

20   Marx, *Capital*, 447.

21   Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in: *Illuminations* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 237.

22   Arnold Hauser, *The Sociology of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 627.

23   "Lumière Brothers | FRENCH INVENTORS," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, http://www.britannica.com/biography/Lumiere-brothers (accessed November 1, 2018).

24   Hauser, *The Sociology of Art*, 621.

25   Harun Farocki, *Imprint* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2001), 232.

26   Steyerl, "Is a Museum a Factory?"

27   Hauser, *The Sociology of Art*, 629.

28   Elsaesser, *Harun Farocki: Working on the Sight-Lines*, 243.

29   Ibid., 243.

30   Ibid., 309.

31   Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 1.

32   Mbembe, *On the Postcolony*, 2.

33   In 2002 he realized another work on the subject, titled "Western Deep," see: "Steve McQueen | Caribs' Leap/Western Deep," Tate Modern, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/mcqueen-caribs-leap-western-deep-t12019 (accessed November 1, 2018).

34   T. J. Demos, *The Migrant Image: The Art and Politics of Documentary During Global Crisis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 28.

35   Stephen Graham, *Vertical: The City from Satellites to Bunkers* (London: Verso, 2016), ch. 15: "Mine: Extractive Imperialism on the Deep Frontier."

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38   Tom Standage, *The Turk: The Life and Times of the Famous Eighteenth-Century Chess-Playing Machine* (New York: Walker, 2002).

39   "Amazon Mechanical Turk FAQ," mturk.com, https://www.mturk.com/mturk/help?helpPage=overview (accessed November 1, 2018).

40   "Episode 600: The People Inside Your Machine," *Planet Money* podcast 01.04.2016, http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2015/01/30/382657657/episode-600-the-people-inside-your-machine.

41   See: Marx, *Capital*, ch. 13: "Co-operation."

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43   Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," 133.

44   Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 2001), 3.