

Experimental divides and new industrialisms: Factories for returning life to life.

“This system does not produce pleasure anymore”. With this title philosopher Bernard Stiegler, in an interview given in 2010, introduces one of the major problems of our times: the lack of ‘knowledge about how-to-live’ which, ultimately, he says “deprives society of their joy of life”. Much of this lack of knowledge resides in that in a society organized under the logic of capital, outstanding economy as that what rules any decision making process, life ends up becoming -as Marazzi (2007) recognises- the “means of labour production”.

I am now in the latest phase of my thesis in which, my final goal, is to understand the procedures through out which capitalism achieves precisely what Stiegler points at as a lack of knowledge. For such a research, I take the artistic practice of Cine Sin Autor collective and their temporary construction of a factory using a novel form of production as an exemplary case study. Cine sin Autor’s practice has lit up in me the drive for understanding how this lack of knowledge is produced, as well as, to discover how art practices can help in reverting such a disarming condition. I don’t have enough time here to present the whole apparatus of Cine sin Autor factory defined by the three main gestures around which, to my understanding, their novel production is organised for helping to restore life: these are the gesture of the author’s disappearance, the parrhesiastic gesture and the cinematographic one. Considering time limitations and with the intention to frame my exposition specifically on the symposium theme on divisions I would focus my contribution in the articulation of the double preoccupation mentioned before through Stiegler’s and Marrazzi’s and use it to open a potential horizon for thinking of future “experimental divides” through out new artistic methodologies. Divides are, according to Piore and Sabel, brief moments in which the path of a technological development is at issue. These moments are turning points that can open conditions of possibility for diverting the existing industrial paths. Moments for empowering what Stiegler calls as new industrialisms. The factory of Cine sin Autor searches for a new industrialism, setting up a new archetype for production that precisely aims at opening a process for returning life to life.

Stiegler’s “lack of knowledge about how to live” and Marazzi’s “life becoming the means of labour production” are for me two sides of the same coin. They are intrinsically related one handholding the other. One is the effect and the other is the cause. That is, since life has become the means of labour production we are lacking the knowledge about how to live. For the problematization of this cause and effect double take, the study of the capitalistic model is necessary. Apart from that, it is the model that defines the life of our times, it is as well so, in as much it allows us to understand the process of subsumption of life to work, including culture and representation as part of such a process. But, one not only needs to understand how it is that life gets finally and entirely put to

work. Besides, one needs to also grasp what is comprised in that life and therefore what it is that has been lost concerning life.

Two things are of great relevance to understand what is comprised in a life and how that got to be put at a loss: to recognise what defines the life of a human being and how the processes of labour production have subsumed what distinguishes precisely that life. So, that is why I propose to travel to the origin of human species and to the origin of the factory. If we track back to the origin of the human species we can extract what are the virtues proper to humans that define their life. And, by analysing the archetype of the factory with its subsequent evolution until the present, we can understand how this very qualities have been put at a loss to such an extreme that what is at stake today, as Stiegler says, is the deprivation of our joy of life. If, as I defend, the archetype of the factory is what erases life through labour production to that extent, there should be the possibility to think of a different factory archetype that reverses the process with the goal to return life to life.

I am going to start first with the origin of human species following a text by Frederick Engels published posthumously in 1896 called "The part played by labour in the transition from Ape to man" - which I will use as well as a kind of structuring inspiration in this presentation. The interest of such a text does not reside in its scientific value for providing us with evidences of the missing link between primates and humans. Its value resides, rather, in the direct connection Engels establishes between how labour since the origins of human species nets an intrinsic relation with life and also, the importance he gives to their correlation. For Engels labour is crucial for transforming life counting for such a venture with a whole set of qualities such as they are technics, language, communication, care, socialization, attention and imagination.

Engels places his statement for relating work and life at the very beginning of his essay, precisely calling for a vision of work that exceeds the view given and consolidated by the economists that promoted the pre-capitalist and the capitalist order. Maybe his view will allow us to think of life and work from a point other than the persistent logics of capital. Engels opens the text by saying:

Labour is the source of all wealth, the political economists assert. And it really is the source – next to nature, which supplies it with the material that it converts into wealth. But it is even infinitely more than this. It is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself. (Engels, 1996)

And right after assigning to work the creation of man he builds up the path to construct his defence. He starts by describing the living of the Ape to then explain how the transition from Ape to man took place. Engels tells how a particularly highly-developed race of anthropoid apes -completely

covered with hair, with beards and pointed ears, living in bands in trees- started freeing their hands from using them to climb and walk. And this, according to Engels was the decisive step in the transition from Ape to man. Two important things took place as a consequence of their hands liberation. One is that they adopted an erected posture to walk and to stand and this gave them the possibility to see the world from a different perspective. The other was that they had their hands free to make, and in making, achieve more perfection. Many thousands of years had to pass until the hand was ready to produce a stone knife: men and women making tools, men and women exploring technics and their technical being. "Thus", Engel's says "the hand is not only the organ of labour, it is also the product of labour"[...] "Mastery over nature began with the development of the hand, with labour, and widened man's horizon at every new advance".

Here Engels is enabling us to link the capacity for using the hand in connection with the brain in order to produce tools that facilitated human's goal of transforming nature, the environment that surrounded us, transforming ultimately our very being, our very life; through a creative act as well as one needed for survival. Stiegler, in the interview mentioned earlier, also refers to this technical essence of the human being explaining the existence of a technological memory, of a third memory, following Leroi Gourham's investigations. This memory has enabled the transmission of individual experience over the generations, thanks to its inscription in technical artefacts. Stiegler says:

"It is important to understand that technology is a process, an evolutionary process. What is technics, or technology, or technicity? It is a new form of life. A very specific form of life, for until the onset of anthropogenesis, forms of life were transformed exclusively through a genetic process of transformation, that is to say through sexual differentiation and the relationship between sexualized organisms, which is the case for plants and animals. But about three million years ago there occurred a fundamental change in this process of transformation within the human species, due to the appearance of a new system of inheritance based not on the transmission of genes but of technical artefacts. So with respect to anthropogenesis, we are not talking about a Darwinist situation anymore. But neither is it a Lamarckist situation. It is something completely different, due to this apparition of a third memory". (Stiegler, 2010)

The human is also technical, says Stiegler, "Humanity cannot even be understood without technics"

But the organ of labour, that is the hand that shapes the technical object, says Engels, is integrated into the whole body, and the whole body is affected in different ways by the primary organ of labour. Labouring in the transformation of nature for survival, using our hand as the primary organ, is also what put us together, helping each-other in the achievement of our needs, one in front of the other, one next to each other creating the need for communication. For language, for reunion, for exchanging, for caring, for socialization, for assembling. Labour is first intrinsic to human life, the hand is the organ of labour, we help each-other in the collective activity, we speak and we assemble. Engels explains it this way:

[...]The development of labour necessarily helped to bring the members of

society closer together by increasing cases of mutual support and joint activity, and by making clear the advantage of this joint activity to each individual. In short, men in the making arrived at the point where they had something to say to each other. Necessity created the organ; the undeveloped larynx of the Ape was slowly but surely transformed by modulation to produce constantly more developed modulation, and the organs of the mouth gradually learned to pronounce one articulate sound after another...

First labour, after it and then with it speech – these were the two most essential stimuli under the influence of which the brain of the ape gradually changed into that of man[...]. Hand in hand with the development of the brain went the development of its most immediate instruments – the senses. Just as the gradual development of speech is inevitably accompanied by a corresponding refinement of the organ of hearing, so the development of the brain as a whole is accompanied by a refinement of all the senses [...]. And the sense of touch has been developed only side by side with the development of the human hand itself, through the medium of labour.

Engel's unfinished text continues explaining the evolution of labour until arriving to the modern notion introduced by capitalism. Actually, it is due to such a capacity of transformation, not only of nature but also of labour itself, that men and women also conquered the necessary conditions to reach, at a certain point, to our modern notion of work: that for which there was enough capital accumulation for the creation of industries and markets, and its expansion and circulation nationally and globally in exponential parameters forcing speed and the compression of time for augmenting continuously the equation of growth. In fact, labour, seen as a productive force ruled by economy, only appears as an invention of capitalism, woven into the relations of production. This is when we reached the point in which the condition intrinsic to our human species reverses: That is to conceive life as the course in which, through work, we developed our capacity to transform the world. It reverses, since today, it is work instead that occupies life and uses it to accomplish such world transformations. And in such an achievement it has destroyed all the resources proper for living a life. It is precisely the moment that economy starts managing production using the notions of wealth and growth and its values expropriating them from the parameters given by nature. It is the moment as well in which the virtues proper of human's life mentioned earlier: technics, language, communication, care, socialization, attention, imagination, etc, which had been distinguished qualitatively enter into the domain of quantification and subsumption thanks to the development of the archetype of the factory through its systematic scientific and technological management applying endless forms of divisions.

The part played by technics and life in the transformation of labour

Around the half of the XVII century the notion of production will progressively be transformed into that of labour. And labour ever since will carry growth/surplus as its main measure of success. Production will turn from *poiesis* -production understood as the creation of things or as the sustenance of life- to production promoted as the bases of national growth -population working in the production of commodities in exchange of a salary-. It is along this shift that a new modality in the agency between technics, humans and value is introduced in production processes under the archetype of the factory which will be endlessly reproduced until today. Although I am aware that the complex systems that model society can not be reduced to the relation of capital and labour, its evolution along the last and the present century – for which art has also played a role- give clear evidence of its actual relevance. Today we know that working has gone from the exchange of our abilities and knowledge in a fixed amount of space and of time to the total precarization¹ of life that is put to work 24/7. Life becomes “the means of production” as Marazzi has suggested. Work has revealed itself as the most efficient mode for regulating and deregulating society as a whole. More than ever, we have the right to say out loud “life is what they owe to us”².

According to Foucault, around the same time that labour started to be promoted as a way to increase national wealth, two forms of power overlapped contributing to the expansion of capitalism: the anatopower and the biopower. The “machine enters the factory and disciplines the body” through out the production process. And while this takes place, *life enters history*, that is” the entry of life into history, into the order of knowledge and power, into the sphere of the political techniques” (Foucault, 1990; p. 141, 142) since power gives itself the function of its administration and management. Life becomes a political object and an object for which to think of forms of resistance. The change is of a radical magnitude. As Foucault explains in *The will to know*, the ancient sovereign power based on death -on the right to “take life or let live” (Foucault, 1990; p 138)- is replaced by a power which relegates death to the limits of its domain and concentrates instead in managing life -incite, reinforce, control, monitor, regulate and organize it – (Foucault, 1990). There will be coexisting an anatomical and a biological power acting on the performances of the body and the processes of life very much regulated by labour production in the factory

The factory archetype. Men-machine and value. From life to economy

Adam Smith believed that there was a direct relation between the progressive intensification of the process of division of labour and capital’s success (Díez Rodríguez, 2014). Marx pointed at the machine as the perfect device for the augmentation of value (surplus). And Taylor defended the scientific organization of work -the scientific management- in order to mobilize the entire economic

¹Precarity is an English neologism coming from the French *precarité* which have been in used since the 80’s but expanded more recently with the use made by European activist movements and protests (EuroMayDay 2004 (Milan and Barcelona) and 2005 (in seventeen European cities), Precarity Ping Pong (London, October 2004), the International Meeting of the Precariat (Berlin, January 2005), and Precair Forum (Amsterdam, February 2005) (Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter, 2005) It has been used in order to name a general and progressive situation of deterioration and dispossession of one’s own life against changes on work conditions introduced since postfordism.

²Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional

capacity of labour processes (Díez Rodríguez, 2014). The assembly line -the sequential organization of workers, tools or machines and parts- was originally developed in a slaughterhouse company in Chicago where carcasses were butchered by workers as they moved along a conveyor. The efficiency of one person removing the same piece over and over caught the attention of industrialist at large. The conveyor belt, the assembly line, the standardization of the parts, the organized moving bodies cooperating, the coordination of it all conforming the “factory system”, is a very descriptive way of seeing the force of (at that time) disciplinarian and control power being expressed through out an institution (the factory) on behalf of national wealth. Never again will this picture be so heavy machinic, so corporeal, so touchable since it will eventually become abstract and immaterial.

That is why, the factory, precisely in its industrial stage, is the ultimate visual expression and the very first of discipline and normalization against difference and singularity of the human beings: of its bodies, which later will be of its language and knowledge to finally capture the soul, their attention and emotions, their sociability. It is also very concrete in what concerns the human and machinic cooperation, coordination and organization on behalf of growth. Discipline is not obtained only by confronting the machine with the human body for the maximization of production. It implies as well a reorganization of space, of time and of socialization. The factory can not represent alone the set of institutions through which power integrates and stratifies but is the most evident example where to start looking at how the agency, situated between machines, bodies and value, was progressively adapted to economy. As Foucault extensively explained in his task to reveal the secrets of power, schools, prisons, hospitals, asylums, as well as factories, will be the places of enclosure where to discipline difference. But, under the regime of capital the factory has distinguished itself by establishing an archetype of production: that of a specific mode of agency put to work between machine -be it industrial, computational or algorithmical-, the body -be it its language, its soul, its attention- and value based on an economy against life that prevails today.

Industrial capitalism, cognitive or semiotic capitalism and the actual data and social capitalism are “updated versions” of the same model of production which actually keeps on improving feeding its engines using our knowledge, language, experience and cooperation and eventually our lives. The factory, -the archetype for labor production processes under capital’s regime and the one that inaugurates its “abstract and estranged”³ form of agency between machines-bodies- value “put to work against life”, on behalf of economical success-, keeps “confining the outside” on and on employing different ones but always machines, parts of our bodies and souls weakening once and again our sensible resources and only caring about the increase of wealth. This “confinement of the outside” reaches its highest expression with the factory of our days in which it is our entire life which enters the factory; life is “put to work” says Virno (2004). Life would be the labour process that produces wealth recalling Marazzi (2007). The archetype created by capital for labour process

³“Estranged labor” says Marx “estranges the species from man. It changes for him the life of the species into a means of individual life. First it estranges the life of the species and individual life, and secondly it makes individual life in its abstract form the purpose of the life of the species, likewise in its abstract and estranged form” (Marx, 2009; p: 31)

ends up being the archetype for labouring life. The birth of the factory was a model for capital production and to the different restructuring models it has adopted. The factory should be understood in here as the first that reorganizes (labour/life) production processes in order to satisfy the creation of wealth by upgrading the precarization of life.

New experimental divides

Tools for the hand that labours becoming technical objects-machines that needed nature in the form of energy and men's information to function and them as an agency put to work under the regime of surplus value through divisions gave birth to the factory system. The factory is the one that has been and that keeps furnishing the world, the real and the virtual, be it producing clothing, cables, houses, etc, or be it commodifying risk, relations and "likes". The factory system, succeeds in finding the alchemical formula for capital: eternal natural sources, a technical object/machine and human's living information being the machine and the obtainance of surplus value both the parameters around which the rest gets organized. Marx put it very clear, under capitals logic the machine is the device of maximization to which men and nature adapt. "Technology is labour embodied" said Panzieri⁴ (Bologna 2014). It can sound ironic but it is actually men himself who, according to Charles Babbage, thanks to the division of labour in manufacturing processes improves the tool into a machine, improving as well the factory system. This again eco's Engels conception of the hand as the organ of labour. The organ shapes labour as labour shapes the organ, but labour shapes life as well. Life should shape labour but under the model of the factory technology and economy end up shaping life under their regime.

Deleuze already said that each kind of society corresponds to a particular kind of machine and that the specific machine of each time does not explain anything by itself but it needs to be considered in composition with the society of its time. Today algorithms can be seen as the best expression of Charles Babbage logic referring to what empowers an improvement for a tool -mens very singular information- which is subsumed by the machine -fragmentarization of information- achieved through division of labour and its later commodified recomposition. It won't come as a total surprise to note that Charles Babbage together with Ada Lovelace are credited for having invented already in 1843 the first algorithm to be used in Babbage's Analytical Engine, which is also the first credited computational machine, the same that will be improved to function as the perfect engine for the continuity and evolution of the factory system. My position is not against machines and its innovative capacities, but rather to understand, as Deleuze proposed, how they become powerful actors who share with men the task of shaping the world so to also imagine them functioning not under the regime of capital but as useful engines for experimental resistances.

Up until now, my intention has been to give visibility to the virtues that comprise human life and

⁴ Technology plays an ambivalent role, because it "liberates" the workers from work, but at the same time "submits" them to more rigid forms of control (Bologna, 2014)

how these virtues have been subsumed by capital throughout labour production processes under the archetype of the factory which has been informing and intervening ever since its birth in the relation between humans and life using technology and labour to obtain surplus-value subsuming progressively all the qualities proper of a human life. If we are to think of new experimental divides or of new industrialisms, these need to be able to re-establish a relation between the human being and its life, reconnecting all those virtues proper to the human species, reconceptualizing labour and technology as well as its relationship with the hand, the body, language, communication, care, sociality, and so on and so forth: with the value of life instead of that of economy.

The factory of Cine sin Autor tries to re-establish this through a factory of authorless cinema in which the production is organised under an assembleary mode that counteracts against any form of division of any type using language as a common horizon that allows anyone to position their being in the world with others. As I said before, I don't have time to explain how in Cine sin Autor's factory their proposed form of production restores specifically, one by one, the qualities proper to the human being. I will only explain here, the part played by cinema which relates to how, in this case technology, could help for making us come back to recognising the joy of life. The part that cinema can play for that should not be conceived in isolation from the rest but embedded into a more complex and specific factory new archetype which we won't see in this presentation completed but rather very quickly sketched.

The part that can be played by Cinema but not by cinema alone.

First of all, we should think of cinema as both the production (filming) and the projection of movies, a double function comprised in only one technical object, the cinematographer thanks to which, cinema was born. The "mechanical eye" was the machine with which, in the case of cinema, men established its agency in order to capture the image in motion that the course of life produces to later be screened to people through the same "mechanical eye". This performance, in the first years of cinema, the times of the Lumière's brothers, had the powerful ability to give "vision to life", a singular quality that would only last for about a decade, after which, the factory system would inevitably impose onto it its own model.

It is important to remember that cinema -as well as capital-, would evolve since the very beginning, except for the first years of its history, in a continuous relationship of agency between men-machine and surplus value. The camera-projector is in the case of cinema the technological object with which men and machine generate its agency of production. But different to capital's phylum, a very particular and unique form of agency, is the one deployed in the birth of cinema that some years later, the birth of its own factory would blind hiding the virtues of its power by subsuming them, as factories often do, to maximization in relation to profit.

But, in the case of cinema, different to the rest of labour forms of production at the time, for which

the introduction of the machine maximizes production by capturing the knowledge/information and experience previously achieved by the artisans flattening their role to mere “estranged” operators, the relation of men with the technical object of the camera does not take place in this way. Lumière, just as an example, had no experience with regards to real motion representation and in that sense there was no knowledge that could be subsumed by the machine. Representation was rather a practice concerning the art field and not the sphere of the worker as such. In fact, there was no artisan anterior to Lumière in what concerns to filming. But the relation is also distinguishable in as much, the form of agency between men and machine, allowed any one who had the possibility to have a mechanical eye/projector on his/her hands the contemplation of life out of the very moment in which it was lived. And this, in essence, entailed the possibility of both contemplation and reflection of life once and again. The very first intention of cinema -facilitated by the agency of machine and men- was that of capturing reality in time and space both at once and its later presentation through its projection. The “re-enactment” of what, until then, only the eye and the brain could capture which, for the first time, reaches its reproduction in an environment exterior to both. This reveals the power that cinema was able to concede to observation and to its experimentation.

What would be subsumed at the end, with the passing of the years and the transformation of cinema into a factory, would be representation itself. At last this is always the tyranny of capital. In the regime of capital, the machine is for work a promise of liberation which is turned into rather the opposite. The machine is for cinema that which enables the representation of life which will be turned into the representation of cinema itself, of its institution and its business company. But, the importance here, is not what cinema has rather become -although in fact it also matters- but what it actually was able to deploy at least in its origins, in its very specific and particular concatenation of machine-body-value before it would be eventually transformed into a factory -that of course would end up following the same archetype of the labour production factory-

The factory imposed on cinema a system of maximization sacrificing again men and machine’s agency with the rationalization of production in order to deliver films for mass consumption and spread standards of representation. This means that the factory transformed cinema by spreading globally a universal form of representation obscuring cinema’s primary virtue, that what I call as giving “vision to life” through representation.

Even further, in the genealogy of media seen from the present perspective, cinema can be accounted according to film theorist Jonathan Beller (2006) as the precursor for TV and computing and Internet, that is, of anything known as Media, for bringing industrialism to the eye. What is being termed as attention economy. Media theorist Alexander Galloway (2004) has recently identified capital directly with Media, being the later, he says the system through which capital has been expanding its logics broadly, following a kind of a “cinematographic technic” building up its

narrative -as cinema does- hiding the machine with which the narrative is created.

In 1927, Soviet film director and theorist, Sergei Eisenstein wanted to create the cinematographic version of the concept of capital developed by Karl Marx in his book *Das Kapital*, but he did not manage. German film director and author Alexander Kluge in 2008 completed a lengthy homage to Eisenstein's unrealised film entitled *News from Ideological Antiquity: (Marx – Eisenstein - Das Kapital)*. Kluge bases this film as an investigation through which to question whether the book can be adapted to film at all. In his film, Kluge “examines the possible ways in which the gargantuan socioeconomic text can be realized in popular art forms. Such an effort, as Kluge illustrates, becomes especially challenging in film since it would mean attempting to capture the abstract nature of capital in the concrete events and things around us. But the abstract nature of capital is already embedded in our lives until such an extent that we are not able to differentiate life from capital. But cinema, as I said before, has in its origins the virtue to give “vision to life“

Then, CsA brings Eisenstein's unfilmed *Kapital beyond capital* by using a cinematographic technique radically different, in order to project its function beyond capital's limits, logics and representation. CsA invites assemblies to sustain their condition and to empower imagination with the help of the machine, never hiding the camera but placing it in the hands of the common people who is in need to imagine and give vision to their lives outside the logic of capitalism.

What if, believing in the empowerment that cinema carries since its birth, despite having been silenced, together we could agree to film that what we are able to imagine and to think collectively. What if we produce films together. Just by assembling as the social movements have recently showed that is possible. Turning their backs, literally, to power, to the buildings of the State-Market -Wall Street, Tahir, Sol or Syntagma Square- and looking one to each-other with power being left behind us, behind our backs. It is not anecdotic and should be highlighted, that people have been assembling in the real space occupying it with their bodies and not in the virtual latest media of the Internet. What they have done together is to invoke the virtues that reside in the origins of human species: language, imagination, attention, socialization and so on and so forth, and they have prescribed for themselves, collectively, their own set of protocols, experimenting with them, with no other restrictions or mandates than the ones imagined by them in this world. Maybe, and this is of importance, what was still missing there has been to think in terms of “labour” production, as if we were “workers” of a factory in search for a new industrialism. To think of a possible new relation with our technical being, with a machine able to transform the surplus value into the value of life, through a mode of production able to link up labour with the transformation of life, recuperating language as the “house of being”, our bodies to occupy the space for representation, using the hands -the organ of labour- to carry, in this case a cinematographer that we share with others and that we never hide, in order to film what our sociality is imagining for the future, and to project all those events of life that we collectively agreed to film. Some filmed while they are taking place, some

performed to be recorded as imagined and all of them to be watched and discussed by all of us, showing to ourselves that what we do and that what we are able to imagine collectively. As a constant form of production. And see, if truly, film gives a “vision to life” as the Lumière brothers believed, and bit by bit cure the virus that has been eating the reality of our referents and, eventually, making us living a life that we, at present, hardly recognize as such.

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Bio

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