



The Emergence of Labor : Visual Culture and Foyers of Observation

Foyers of labor observation are spaces within which labor emerges as an object of the gaze. This thesis proposes an aesthetic and genealogical analysis of those spaces where schoolchildren, professionals, and self-entrepreneurs of the contemporary economic market learn to recognize labor and to live under the yoke of its truth. It aims to develop a methodology for analyzing *dispositifs* of labor observation, understood as arrangements of techniques (textual, photographic, cinematic and digital) and statements framing institutionalized practices of observation that produce subjectivities capable of recognizing the forms and meanings of labor. Labor will be framed as the result of a series of aesthetic, epistemological and ontological configurations that will be mapped out and their main genealogical lineages identified. Primary consideration will be given to three models of configuration: the *school foyers*, the *autoplasmic foyers*, and the *operational foyers* of labor observation. These three models of gaze production *dispositifs* concern, respectively, the practices of occupational guidance of young people and their pedagogical and psychological frameworks; the practices of self-promotion of active agents in the labor market and their poetological legacy of constructing a public personality; and finally, the practices of professional training and knowledge management in corporations, whose history – as with that of the former practices – can be traced back several hundred years. This thesis thus offers a macro-historical and transdisciplinary approach that addresses pedagogical, psychological, literary, cinematic, sociological, cybernetic, ergonomic and management theories in order to outline a theory of the contemporary visual culture of labor. Its ambition is to provide an analytical methodology for research on “utilitarian cinema” according to which images can be considered as technically configured symbolic atmospheres. The notion of the *foyer of observation* proposed here links the question of power *dispositifs* to that of anthropotechnics and cultural atmospheres. In the process, it should demonstrate that the cinematic construction of spaces of attunement is a key component in contemporary practices of labor force governance that ultimately produce the subjects who are intimately concerned with the production of wealth.

Keywords:

Foyer of observation, Labor, Aesthetics, Useful Cinema, Biopolitics, Dispositif, Atmosphere, Discipline, Genealogy, Epistemology, History of labor, Media Theory.