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INDUSTRY *FORGING* MASCULINITY: "TOUGH MEN", HARD LABOUR AND IDENTITY

In a wide range of virilities, male identities and their modern historical representations that start with a "chivalrous" attitude, as George L. Mosse puts it, one of them is unique – not only because it excludes "classical" physical aesthetics, so important in forming many male identity stereotypes, but also because it exists alongside and "in opposition to" other expressions of masculinity. Hard-working men in a heavy industry milieu – e.g. shipyards, mines, construction or metallurgy, have developed a somewhat different attitude towards unhealthy, difficult and often very poorly paid jobs which created the very core of their masculine identity. That is why it must be seen as part of Gramsci's propulsive concept of popular culture opposing the hegemonic culture which, according to the author, is "born inside the factories"; i.e. these "tough" men (and often women e.g. *Stakhanovism,* Shock work) were the industrial "version" of "progressive folklore".

Key words: industry, manliness, hypervirility, work

In a recent Hollywood blockbuster comedy *Zoolander,* the main protagonist Derek Zoolander, a top male model fed up and disappointed with work in a high fashion milieu in the city, wants to come back to his family roots – where he came from.[1] This is in the mining county of New Jersey where he makes every effort to bond with his father and brothers in a colliery. After many failed attempts, the situation culminates with them sitting in a bar and drinking beer with other workers. At that moment, the whole bar sees him in a TV commercial dressed as a mermaid and his humiliated father asks him – "Why did you come back here? For me you are dead, deader than your mother". Although the scene (and the film) ridicules the "superficial" world of fashion and its feminine masculinities, what can we conclude

[1] *Zoolander* was directed by Ben Stiller (2001, Paramount pictures and Village Roadshow Pictures).

from it? Why is it important for us in the context of virilities? First, Eric Zoolander had to leave the city and go to what we would call in this context the "hinterland" – dirty industry, shipyards and mines where its workers are very often placed "outside urban centers" or on its peripheries.[2] Also, the entrance in these areas is mostly restricted "for safety reasons" to those working in the plants. This, often physical separation from the rest of the population and work milieu, is one of the reasons for the dubious manner in which industrial workers are perceived – with aversion as "others", albeit with fearful respect. That attitude was well described by Barbara Freese using coal miners as an example: "The symbolic importance of British coal miners comes from the unique mixture of awe, sympathy, guilt and fear that these workers have long inspired. It stems from their work in that most mysterious and dangerous place, the deep underground, and from distinctive and isolated tight-knit communities" (Freese 2003:234). Kuntala Lahiri Dutt has named this sort of analysis underscored by Allen as masculinist – "[…] mining evokes popular images of hard men, distinct and separate from other workers, hewing in mysterious dungeons of coal: dirty strange men, in some ways frightening and for this reason repellent, yet attractive because they are masculine and sensuous […]" (Allen 1981:4). That is why another author romantically saw in industrial mine workers – "the Clark Gables, the Reds of class struggle" (Campbell in Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006:5). But if industrial workers with their particular identities were often perceived as "others" within the wider society, then the women were seen as quintessentially "other" from their male colleagues in a hard-working environment.

Secondly, in my opinion, the reason why the director of the movie laughs at the world of high fashion and its version of virility although, *nota bene*, he does not assume a similar attitude towards the "hard labour" mining world and its culture, is because he recognises these manual workers as some kind of *les nobles sauvages* – possessors of "pure" pre-modern culture humans transformed through the absence of an existence within idle and decadent urban centers. That is why the main character in seeking his roots and understanding "who he is" had to leave the surface – the superficiality of existence, enter the depths and dig, i.e. think about "truth" in an "essential" way through hard manual labour. The quality of hard

[2] Often, industrial urban centers are marked by geological and environmental determinism, created around or in the vicinity of the plants, factories and mines but only after they are developed to the point where there is need for a hidden working force. Mining towns in Istria – Raša/Arsia, Podlabin/Pozzo littorio, and the southern Sardinian city of Carbonia point to this. Peter Bell wrote that "Geographers have created a number of useful models which, given the parameters, climate and terrain, can accurately predict the location of farms, agricultural settlements, towns, ports and roads. Mines are located where there are minerals; they cannot be anywhere else. And frequently the location of those minerals gives rise to settlement in regions where farmers and shepherds do not go: across Australia there have been mines and mining settlements in utterly waterless deserts, in tropical rainforests and on frozen mountain tops" (Bell in Knapp, Pigott and Herbert 1998:27).

labour in that sense is perceived as anthropogenic and even more – androgenic. That sort of attitude was very clearly highlighted by the "Communist agitator Jimmy Reid during the 1971 Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' work in: we don't only build ships on the Clyde, we build men" (Bellamy 2001:199). Of course, our main character was unsuccessful in understanding who he was; he failed to achieve these qualities and "mutate" into a "man"; he was too "soiled" by the mundane high fashion life. Thirdly, there are no women portrayed in an industrial context. The only female that is mentioned is Eric's deceased mother, and that fact underscores the prevalently androcentric character of a "dirty labour" environment. The new target for this misogynous attitude in our scene is Eric himself, whose identity is rooted in his aesthetics. Knowing that the lack of importance of an exterior aspect is one of the principal *leitmotifs* on which the workers' identity lies, George L. Mosse wrote – "in their thoughts there was no place for aesthetics, so important in the formation of masculine stereotypes" (Mosse 1997:160).[3] But "force and beauty", writes Mosse in another part of his book, "were recurrent themes in the propaganda material concerning workers. The half-naked labourers on manifestos and picture postcards are proof of this, although for the workers' movement the male body never had the whole symbolical importance which it had for the rest of society. A German Social Democratic party electoral manifesto designed in 1932 during the Weimar Republic, for example, shows a half-naked worker chasing away Nazis and Communists; but his fundamental characteristic is strength not beauty" (Mosse 1997:164). That is why Eric Zoolander is the perfect substitute for women, who were almost always excluded from the industrial process of production. This rather relatively permanent and often legalized[4] absence of female presence in heavy industry is also one of the principal props on which this sort of

[3] Similar conclusions could be drawn from the Ronnie Johnston and Arthur McIvor visual supplement "The reins of industry" to their text *Narratives from the Urban Workplace* (Johnston and McIvor 2007:34), which seems to be a commercial for Dick Balata industrial belts and ropes. It represents a semi-nude man standing in the courtyard of a declining "Greenhead works Glasgow" factory controlling two steel earths by a belt and a driving rope. Part of his torso and genitals are covered with animal fur, probably cheetah, which, in my opinion, was supposed to add something of the animal's speed, precision and cunningness to a man's obvious physical superiority. We should notice that both workers (on social democratic party manifesto and Balata's commercial) use both hands in their actions.

[4] For example, in Croatian legislation men and women will be equal in their working rights during the year 2009. Until then, it was illegal for women to work – "underwater as diving instructors, underground as miners, exposed to dust, noise and huge vibrations in industry" (*Vjesnik* January 16, 2009.). The same exclusion is described by Ronnie Johnston and Arthur McIvor in the context Clydeside (Scotland) heavy industries – "Protection of what was widely assumed to be the 'weaker sex' was frequently enshrined in law through, for example, the Factory Acts, Mines Acts and Special Regulations in 'dangerous trades', such as work with lead. Men were considered to be able to look after themselves" (Johnston and McIvor 2004:137). In another paper they pointed out that – "Women working in underground pits were banned by legislation in 1842" (Johnston and McIvor 2007:28).

masculine identity lies. The other two are relations between co-workers and with employers.

Hypervirility and Health

Although it is not my intention to write about movies, they represent a vast collective imaginary litmus-paper as a significant part of pop culture and, in our case, a suitable departure point for a paper that treats the argument of masculine, hard labour identity. That identity has a performative side which has to be perpetuated on a daily basis – "In industrial modern European and American societies the proofs of virility by definition of male identity […] are prevailingly carried out, not in the ritualistic form of consecration to maturity, but are rather part of the daily behaviour routine, and therefore, have to be offered continually and not be pointed out as such" (Meuser in Wulf 2002:392), i.e. their identity is constructed by hiding the elements of "construction" and showing them as "natural". Besides work, micro-rituals were perpetuated on an almost everyday basis, e.g. drinking with working mates, talking about work, striking, fighting or denigrating managerial stratum, as the daughter of an Istrian miner pointed out:

> These men were very cheerful, they were little brawlers in a sense – very good people, but they were competitive and then it was village against village, mostly Rependa against Brgud (villages near the central eastern Istrian coast). And they were constantly fighting; something akin to a display of superiority, a marking out of territory. It was a well-known fact – everybody would come home with their clothes torn, and mother was always stitching clothes. Even women sometimes took part in them (Interview with Maria Vorano in the city of Labin, January 10, 2008).

These "significant actions" lack the solemnity of major *rites de passage* that often mark the entrance into manhood, but fighting and shunning a display of emotions was encouraged by older miners as "training that you got to take to become hard men" (Campbell 2000:238). A citation underlined by Martin Bellamy for Scottish shipbuilders could be read on the same level; it was almost impossible to avoid the cult and the construction of hard men: "Even the man that didn't want a drink was more or less forced to have one" (Bellamy 2001:106). Alcohol was often part and parcel of the working day – "At the main forge are thirty or forty blacksmiths. The shed is dark. Each man stands before his hooded fire, his face smoky and reddened by the flame and glistening with sweat. This is one of the muscular, skilful and genial trades. The sweat pours out; the beer has to pour in – even at the present price, which hits the blacksmiths hard" (ibid.:32). But lacking solemnity does not mean that the importance is lost. This "hegemonic masculine identity does not structure only the relation between sexes but also relations between the men" (Connell 1987:184). It is also in these situations that one proved his masculinity.

The workplace relations were, however, essential in forging a "hard men" hegemonic mode of masculinity – often defined by scholars as "hypervirility" (Meuser in Wulf 2002:394). Although the term is mostly applied only to men who develop aggressive behavior, I will apply it in a somewhat extended context to include also a lack of emotional display, risk-taking, denial and minimizing obvious danger at work that influenced the formation of a specific form of maleness; it is one that George Orwell in the case of young mine fillers described in these words – "It is impossible to watch the 'fillers' at work without feeling a pang of envy for their toughness… the fillers look and work as though they were made of iron" (Orwell in McIvor and Johnston 2007:38); the self-perception of a young miner was congruent with Orwell's observation: "When I was eighteen year old, nineteen year old, eh… I was drawing one hundred hutches a day. No kidding you, I was like steel. I was a hard man then. We were the first to go down there, first to go in the morning and last away. Aye, we made good money then" (McMurdo in McIvor and Johnston 2007:263). The other side of this toughness was the high occupational mortality rates in British pits which in 1910 outstripped those working at sea. "It was still the case in 1914 that a miner was killed in Britain every six hours, and severely injured every two hours" (Benson in McIvor and Johnston 2007:38). The hazardous work was the heart of the "labourer's sense of crude manliness that emerged from the roughness of physical strength and dangerous work while the respectable craftsman's manhood arose from refined values of control, skill, autonomy and independence" (Lewchuk in Meyer 1999:118).

That is why one of the conclusions to be drawn here is that hard labour virility was partially forged through the impossibility of controlling and predicting the future of one's health – "Most of these men worked in traditional male occupations and took the view that because they needed to work, and the work was inevitably unhealthy, their long-term health was beyond their control" (Cockerman in McIvor and Johnston 2007:19).[5] Many workers' testimonies recall how there was no other solution for them than to go to work in precarious occupations – in coal-dust mining pits, which caused many respiratory diseases such as pneumoconiosis and emphysema; it was everywhere – there was no way of escaping from it – "It was so dusty that you couldn't see your hand in front of you" (Coombes 1939:262). These however were seen, if at all, as long-term diseases – ones that developed over twenty or thirty years; the most dangerous thing in working in industry was sudden injury, which prevented men from working and earning money, and of course the constant threat of death at work. The fact was that many workers in shipyards worked with asbestos up to a point where they were called "white mice because they were always covered in asbestos and for that they frequently developed asbestosis, an inflammation of the lungs caused by inhalation of asbestos

[5] In the mid XX century boys went into British underground mines when they were sixteen.

dust" (Bellamy 2001:52).[6] Working without any protection did not bother them at all; on the contrary, using protection was seen as a sign of weakness and a defeat for masculinity.

"Hypervirility" (and hard labour virility) was hazardous for men. It was destructive for their body and their masculinity, so it could be said that this sort of masculinity was self-destructive; on many occasions it literally "destroyed itself". But on the other side, if risks at work were inevitable, as McIvor and Johnston pointed out, what could workers do except incorporate these risks as some kind of proof of their manliness, virility and, therefore, identity. For example, as Tom McKendrick described frame bending: "The thing that was amazing about it was that this was the most dangerous job in the yard, because you had all this kind of debris about your feet and one slip, one fall onto this white hot beam, and you were a goner (McKendrick in Bellamy 2001:36), and the "kings" of the shipyard workers "undoubtedly used to be the riveters. They commanded great awe and respect for their physical strength and skill, and many a legend grew up about them in the yards" (ibid.:22).

But this hard work which later, in medical terms, was shown to contain "unhealthy attitudes" had another formative quality for the stratum of men whose identity was often formed in opposition to a "managerial" one.

I Work, Therefore I Rebel

Management had obvious benefits from workers' "masculinity" which had to be demonstrated by long, hard and dedicated labour, i.e. higher production that often influenced one's health. This is why it can be concluded that hard-working labour virility, interpreted in terms of sacrifice and manner of demonstration to working mates and peers, was destructive for these men. That sort of masculinity was very hazardous: Connell in *Men and Boys* reminds us that "working-class culture is full of *Stakhanovite*[7] examples of workers pitting themselves against

[6] As Pat McCrystal, speaking in *Clyde Shipbuilding: A Collection of Source Material*, in 1995 stated: "During my period 'at the tools' (1940–1964), I was constantly in an asbestos environment. To be on a ship being outfitted, i.e. nearing completion, meant that all outfit workers were exposed to asbestos fibres and filament for the whole of the working day, for the whole of the working week. […] I often came home off the ship at the end of a shift white as a baker, totally covered in asbestos detritus which had rubbed off or fallen on me as I worked as a shipwright (a cleaner trade) (McCrystal in Bellamy 2001:72).

[7] On the night of 30/31 August 1935, a Donbass miner, Aleksei Stakhanov, hewed 102 tons of coal, or fourteen times his quota, for which he earned 200 rubles instead of the 23-30 he normally received. From that moment on, the Stakhanov movement, named Stakhanovism, was born. It was one of the results of forced collectivization in the USSR, which saw 9 million peasants moved to the cities and employed in industry during the First Five-Year Plan that began in 1929. During years the movement became synonym for hard, exhausting and self-sacrificing work.

the accepted limits of wage labour – such as the miner who loaded 'sixteen tons of number nine coal', or another worker's fatal attempt to compete with a steam hammer. A competitive spirit was part and parcel of a *machismo* work culture, as was a high tolerance of danger and propensity to take risks" (Johnston and McIvor 2004:137).[8] But an analogy between the worker and soldier can be drawn from that fact; their "virilities" at some points overlap. George L. Mosse wrote that "pain and suffering, together with a propensity to sacrifice were essential for the new education of virility. A new bellicose masculinity (concerning the First World War) was the amplified version of an older masculinity; even those who did not participate directly in it considered it exploitative in their undefended battle against physical and moral degeneration" (Mosse 1997:150).

How can we explain this apparent "paradox" of an attitude which was congruent with managerial expectations, apart from the fact that more dangerous work sometimes meant higher wages? Was it all about money or was there more to this attitude in the domain of power relations between worker and the superstructure? Although Johnston and McIvor underline maximization of wages as the central motive in workers accepting high levels of risks, in my opinion risky attitudes must be looked at from another point of view. Part of the response can be located in Slavoj Žižek's *The Sublime Object of Ideology*:

> Let us recall Otto Fenichel's interpretation of the obscene gesture called in German "the long nose" (*die lange Nase*). Spreading the fingers in front of the face and putting the thumb on the nose supposedly connotes an erected phallus. The message of that gesture would appear to be a simple showing-off in front of an adversary: look how big mine is; mine is bigger than yours. Instead of denying this simplistic interpretation directly, Fenichel introduces a small displacement: The logic of insulting an adversary always involves *imitating* one of his/her features. If this is true, what, then is so insulting in an imitation which points out that the other has a large and powerful virile organ? Fenichel's solution is that one has to read this gesture as the first part of this sentence while the second part is omitted. The whole of it reads: "Yours is so big and powerful, but *in spite of that, you are impotent. You cannot hurt me with it*". In this way the adversary is caught in a forced choice which, according to Lacan (1979, ch. XVI), defines the experience of castration: if he cannot, he cannot; but even if he can, any proof of his power is doomed to function as a denial – i.e. masking his fundamental impotence as a mere showing off, which just confirms in a negative way that he cannot do anything. The more he reacts, the more he shows his power, the more his impotence is confirmed. It is in this precise sense that the phallus is the signifier of castration. This is the logic of the phallic inversion which sets in when the demonstration of power starts to func-

[8] This kind of attitude in industry exists even today. As I write this text on January 23, 2009, the *Glas Istre* journal reports a tragedy which occurred in Uljanik, the biggest and Croatia's most productive shipyard – "K.K. (43), a citizen of Serbia died yesterday during welding in the confined space. He probably suffocated from butane gas or was burned alive by the fire which erupted from the contact of gas and sparkle" (*Glas Istre,* January 23, 2009).

> tion as confirmation of a fundamental impotence. This is also the logic of so-called political provocation addressed against a totalitarian power structure. The punk imitating the "sadomasochistic" power ritual should not be conceived as a case of the victim's identification with the aggressor (as is usually interpreted). The message to the power structure is, on the contrary, the negation implied in the positive act of imitation: You are so powerful, *but for all of that, you are impotent. You cannot really hurt me!* In this way, power is caught in the same trap. The more violent its reaction, the more it confirms its fundamental impotence (Žižek 1989:157).

Interpreted from this point of view, excessive and sacrificial work also assumes the quality of resistance – the message to the superstructure in that sense would be – *go on, even if you force me to the exhausting production rhythms in hazardous habitats, even if you have the power to decide over my life, I can bear it. I am stronger than your decisions are, you cannot really hurt me at all! Your impotence is reflected in the lack of ability to fulfill the tasks that you order us to complete.*

Martin Bellamy's observation in that sense is significant – "Although injuries (in shipyards) were feared by the men, they were so commonplace that they were almost accepted as an inevitable part of the job. The highly dangerous nature of the work also helped to build a common bond among the shipbuilders and increased their pride in being able to survive in such a harsh environment. In fact, the men showed great resistance to new safety measures e.g. hard hats and protective goggles, when they were introduced in the 1960s. They were hard men and felt that wearing safety gear was somehow a sign of weakness" (Bellamy 2001:52). The same attitude could be found in all industrial sectors because "Resistance to dominating images and practices becomes a significant factor in the reconstruction of identity of those who are constructed by those in control" (Buchowsky 2006:474). Although from the workers' point of view using protective gear at work was seen as a sign of weakness, we should not exclude the fact that this same gear was propagated and came mostly from management – the superstructure. In my opinion, it is partially possible to trace the discourse central to Gramsci's focus, i.e. that – "The basic opposition in any society is not that between the traditional and the modern but between the dominant and the dominated" (Crehan 2002:66). Can we in rejecting security gear and taking "high professional risks", which was often seen as part and parcel of hard workers' identity, notice also the disorganized struggle against, in Gramsci's terms, class hegemony?[9] In my opinion, all those

[9] Gramsci never gave complete and neat definition of hegemony; it is rather, Kate Crehan, notes "a way of marking out ever-shifting, highly protean relationships of power which can assume quite different forms in different contexts. One of the most helpful ways of approaching Gramsci's admittedly difficult concept of hegemony is a way of thinking about the complicated way consent and coercion are entangled with one another, rather than the delineation of a specific kind of power" (Crehan 2002:101); or as Michèle Barrett underlined "Hegemony is best understood as *the organization of consent* – the process through which subordinated forms of consciousness are constructed without recourse to violence or coercion. The ruling block, according to Gramsci,

elements which created industrial and often very industrious "hard men" must not be seen as an ephemeral phenomenon which was reflected and can be explained only in terms of ignorance, profit or careless perception of proper body and health, but as a "conception of the world and life implicit to a large extent in determinate (in time and space) strata of society and in opposition to 'official' conceptions of the world (or in a broader sense, the conceptions of the cultured parts of historically determinate societies)" (Gramsci in Crehan 2002:99). The opposition of the subaltern strata, in our case worker groups, and the question of power inequalities between members of subaltern and power holding groups is at the center of the culture of "the lower classes which, historically on the defensive, can only achieve self-awareness via series of negations, via their consciousness of identity and class limits of their enemy …" (Gramsci 1975). Let us return to Martin Bellamy and yards in this context when he writes that the "Shipyards were the places of great social conflict. The fundamental difference was that between the workers and the bosses. The bosses were primarily concerned about their own profits and treated the workers essentially as disposable cogs in their machines. With their comfortable houses, big cars, and strict bowler-hat dress code, they did little to build bridges with their workers […] a deep-rooted hatred of the bosses was bred among the workers" (Bellamy 2001:154). The militant striking and unionism could not always be a panacea for such inequalities because the police and military forces were often on the side of the bosses and those often "imposed lockouts against the workers so that no one could get in to work. With no wages coming in, the men were effectively starved into backing down and returning to work" (ibid.). The only thing the workers could do was to rebel "silently" by executing their daily working tasks in harsh conditions; i.e. to highlight the bosses' impotence on a daily basis by showing "physical and mental superiority" in executing all the difficult tasks as the very core of a proper identity. This is the moment in which the hard-labouring man perceives himself as a "winner" because of his capacity to invert an "obvious weakness" into a privilege by activating this "defensive mechanism". This is why the absorption of this sort of work performance is equally, if not even more, "subversive" than the classical workers' strike: besides the fact that it created the core of self-esteem needed as a prerequisite for public striking, it often also functioned as a permanent implicit and capillary opposition difficult "for the bosses" to perceive as such.

operates not only in the political sphere but throughout the whole society. […] This is not a matter of economic interest alone, for Gramsci opposes economic reductionism and conceptualizes hegemony as political, cultural and social authority" (Barrett in Žižek 1994:239–240).

Androcentricity Discussed

Although a hard-working industrial environment has almost exclusively been reserved for the male presence, up to a point where many workers found it "impossible" to talk about a female permanent entrance into that milieu, industrial history is full of examples which show female and male workers collaborating. Their sporadically visual inclusion was mostly due to particular situations and roles that industry played in certain periods – e.g. *Stakhanovists* in the USSR,[10] in Western Europe in pre- and post-World War II period there were also women: during great wars the "weaker gender" were often the backbone of industrial production – "women were an important part of the automotive workforce and entered the shops in large numbers during the World War II years" (Meyer 1999:132), not to mention, for example, the many "'pit brow lasses', *kamins*, *pallirs* and *dulangs* – invisible women miners crucial to building a gendered understanding of mining" (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006:3).

Industry is probably a key element in the modernization process, and excluding an entire gender from production discourse meant not only diminishing their significance in the modernizing process but excluding it completely from its main dynamics. Yet, claiming it to be exclusively and "naturally" a masculine environment because it was dirty, hazardous and loud, and for that reason unsuitable for woman, is simply wrong. Some examples call into question the concept of industry interpreted absolutely in male terms. For *dilutees* – women that worked in the shipyards during the war – an eminent Scottish shipyard expert wrote and concluded in 1918: "Strength and endurance alone prevent women from doing all the jobs. They are intelligent enough – more intelligent than many of the men; they work hard; they don't get "fed up" with doing the same job constantly. On board women fit electrical apparatus for yard lighting, mains and telephones, and do complex wiring work generally. Also they chip, scrape and paint. In the yards they carry out hydraulic riveting, scraping and coating the bottoms of destroyers and submarines, drive cranes (some of 50 tons), French polishing, labouring (carrying 60lb weights singly), loading into wagons and barges, cleaning and painting cables. […] But there are jobs they cannot do: heavy riveting; working up to their knees in water and mud repairing the keel of a ship, moving ships round, and so on" (*Daily Chronicle*, May 9, 1918 in Bellamy 2001:39). What the shipyard expert pointed out was what women were unable to do. But British Reverend Eddy, writing of miners, underlined their daily experience in collieries – "[…] females submit to labour in places which no man, or even lad could be got to labour in;

[10] In his manual/manifesto for the industrial Stakhanovite army – "The Stakhanov Movement Explained" A. Stakhanov besides the best male also presented two female Stakhanovite workers – "Claudia Sakharova and Evokia Vinogradova, members of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R, standing on the balcony of the Grand Palace of the Kremlin, Moscow" (Stakhanov 1939:13).

they work in bad roads, up to their knees in water, in a position nearly double; they are below till the last hour of pregnancy; their limbs and ankles swell, and they are prematurely brought to the grave, or what is worse, a lingering existence" (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006:5).

Therefore, the theory of women's psycho-physical incapacity to "complete a man's job" is a very untenable one. The industrial context should be understood as particularly fertile for hypervirility manhood construction and not as an *a priori* man's exclusive natural environment. We could also conclude from Stephen Meyer's narrator in Ohio Fisher Body Plant that the "stronger gender" often did everything to expel women from the industrial milieu: "many men are completely unabashed about letting the women know that they are being watched and discussed, and some men are quite open about the results of analysis. Really attractive women have to put up with incredible harassment, from constant proposition to mindless and obscene grunts as they walk by" (Meyer 1999:120). If for many women their inability to work in industry meant inability to work at all, thus foregoing economic power within proper hands, then their expulsion from it should be seen mainly in terms of dominance and control. This lack of independence was a "reflection" of the hierarchical relationships in the factories – "If the subjection of the bulk of the male population to the drilling impact of factory work was the principal method of production and maintenance of social order, the strong and stable patriarchal family with the employed ('bread providing') male as its absolute, uncontested ruler, was its necessary supplement; not by chance were the preachers of work ethics as a rule also the advocates of family virtues and the unshakable rights and duties of family heads. Inside the family, husbands/fathers were prompted to perform the same surveilling/disciplining role towards womenfolk and children as factory foremen and army sergeants performed in relation to them on the factory floor […] The husband/father's authority inside the family conducted the disciplining pressures of the order-producing and order-servicing network to the parts of the population which the panoptical institutions would not be otherwise able to reach" (Bauman 2004:18).

Thus, industrialization where a new social corrective moment was introduced in the production process, additionally excluded women from it. The "militarization" of a labourer's working day, constituted the partitioning of time, gestures, bodily forces, strong hierarchical relationships and lack of craftsmanship among workers, i.e. disciplining it had a strong impact on gender relations within family and factory floor. As Foucault noted – "[…] the massive projection of military methods onto industrial organization was an example of modeling of the division of labour following the model laid down by the schemata of power" (Foucault 1977:121). This schema of power and the additional division of labour had a strong impact on gender roles and was perpetuated within the factory and house walls, in Foucault's term, on a capillary base. The proximity of male and female bodies

in plants was seen as hazardous vis-à-vis the need for production increase – as the Royal Commission for mines of 1842 put it – "[…] both sexes are employed together in precisely the same kind of labour, and work for the same number of hours; girls and boys, young men and women, even married women with child, commonly work almost naked, and the men in the mines quite naked – this testifying to *the demoralizing influence of the employment of females underground*" (Burke in Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006:27). In that year British women miners were prohibited from entering the mines. The Fordist/Taylorist practice and the rationalization of work which was connected to prohibition politics and "morality" of labourers had the same significance. Antonio Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks* highlighted the significance of "the inquiries that industrials conduct on the life of their workers, the inspection services created by some factories for 'morality' control of workers are the needs of this new working method. Who dare laugh at these initiatives and see in them only a manifestation of the hypocritical 'puritanism' would negate every possibility of understanding the importance, significance and *objective hugeness* of this American phenomenon […] which was the harbinger to creating a new type of worker and men. […] new methods require a rigid discipline of sexual impulses (the nerve system), i.e. reinforcement of the family" in the broad sense" (Gramsci 1975:2165).

That is why one of the reasons for female estrangement from hard workers' milieu must be seen also in terms of production elevation which was "endangered" by possible "eroticized" contacts in the factories and mines where workers were "almost naked" due to the conditions of work. That legislation additionally enforced male dominance in an industrial milieu leaving women without the possibility of earning a wage and developing a proper identity as hard workers. This is an important part of "gender ideologies that infantilize woman within the spheres of industrial production" (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006:6) who have to be "protected" from danger, dirt and harsh life by fathers, brothers and husbands. But protection that rests on disqualification is a "hidden" discrimination.

Hugeness Ascribed – A Case Study

When a famous American photographer Lewis W. Hine published one of his most important books entitled *Men at Work: Photographic Studies of Modern Man and Machines*[11] in 1932, it was probably the first organic visual admiration in the U.S.A of a stratum often considered marginal. This admiration, enthusiasm and discovered greatness of manual workers is best described by a preface author Jonathan L. Doherty – "Lewis W. Hine went out and photographed workers at the docks, in

[11] Hereby we thank Dover Publications, Inc. for granting us permission to use photographs from the book *Men at Work: Photographic Studies of Modern Man and Machines* by Lewis W. Hine.

glass factories, powerhouses, machine shops, mills, railroad yards and everywhere else he could find them. This series of pictures climaxed with the extraordinary photographs that Hine took on the construction of the Empire State Building from the bedrock to the top of the mooring mast. The book as a whole corresponds to the idea of the Protestant work ethic. Hine looked at workingmen with his camera and found strength in them and a pride in their work that was common to all. Hine showed the relationship between men and their machines – i.e. it is the men who control the machines to create a better life for themselves. They are not dwarfed by the construction of a giant turbine or a railroad car or a great skyscraper, for they are the ones who built them. In fact, in *Men at Work* Hine elevated the American worker to the status of a hero" (Doherty in Hine 1977). The "revelation" that even the manual worker could be seen as great, as a hero, and "bigger" than the machines he constructs and uses, continues in Hine's publication with praising the demiurgic, almost in a biological way, essential quality of workers' labour – "Not in clanging fights and desperate marches only is heroism to be looked for, but on every bridge and building that is going up today, on freight trains, on vessels and lumber-rafts, in mines, among fireman and policeman, the demand for courage is incessant and the supply never fails. These are our soldiers, our sustainers, the very parents of our life" (James in Hine 1977). The attributes which the author uses in his book of photographs to describe these workers are perfectly congruent with the preface content. Instead of ordinary people doing their job they became "Foundation Man", "Sky Boy", "Spider Workers" and "Modern Thors". This representation, interpretation and epistemology of "common people" were part of the need to "show the things that had to be corrected […] and the things that had to be appreciated".[12] It was another side of the coin of the reformist documentary politics that was "historically instituted as a genre of artistic–political condemnation, oriented to the persuasive representation and mass–reproduction of the life of poor people with the objective of achieving a real change" (Ribalta 2008:13). But change did not only have to be social in the strict sense of the term; Hine's work had to influence the collective imagination and the way workers were perceived; it had to elevate their prestige, put a "face" and accord importance to those who were at the base of a production pyramid. Perhaps in that attitude and goal we can find reasons why he published only photographs which show the "positive" side of work – there is not even the slightest evidence of dispute, difficulties, sorrow,

[12] Started in 1907, the work of Lewis W. Hine, who defined his expression as "social photography" (Burke 2002:26) for the National Child Labour Committee, can be considered the foundation of a genre "rhetoric of the victim" (Ribalta 2008:12). It was with his photographs and posters named "Making Human Junk" and "What are we going to do about it". Trying to protect childhood for the organization, Hine represented a "mediating figure between disadvantaged groups and the state, with the objective of introducing reforms and improvements for the working classes. His work is at the crossroads of the appearance of social – and mass – education methods promoted through reformist policies" (Ribalta 2008:12).

exhaustion or even "technologically problematic situations" that his *69 in Black and White classic photographs* represent. On the contrary, even if the explanation under one of the opening photos is – "Their noisy pneumatic drills break up the bedrock where a new building is to stand. They work in a haze of rock dust which they know will shorten their lives" (Hine 1977), his perspective as an outsider captures them as lighthearted diligent men: diligent up to a point as to identify them completely with their work. Their names become identical with super-hero comic book characters: besides those above-mentioned "Sky Boy", "Thor", "Spider Worker" there was also "Derrick Men", "Riveting Gang", "Railroad Man". Not only do their personal names pale insignificantly vis-à-vis representation of their collective duty, but their personal techniques of performing and executing the work remain obscure.

Lewis W. Hine's work does not represent *photo vérité*; it does not belong to the *candid camera* philosophy but rather to the "process in which the artist and subject act as accomplices" (Burke 2002:30), one of the main reasons why a portrait, photographed or painted, "does not represent the everyday life, but a particular form of *performance* and for that a sort of […] illusion" (ibid.). The author's photographic poetics could be defined as panegyric in describing and representing the workers; he is fascinated by them just like a boy is fascinated by his favourite comic book hero. But his fascination tells us nothing about them and their quotidian attitude towards work. It rather tells us about the politics of revelation of the "human giants" among us. Just like the S*takhanovists* after 1935 in the USSR was alleged to be *Homo extraordinarius* (Siegelbaum 1988:211) and described with fearful respect, *Men at Work* interprets "others" in hypertrophied terms i.e. *mitopoiesis*; this in modern terms could be described by a "positive discrimination" syntagm, keeping it at a safe distance.

Conclusion

My aim in this paper was to highlight some elements of hard workers' culture and a particular sort of masculinity that is ascribed to it. Of course, there is always a variety of juxtaposed masculinity cultures within an industrial environment which vary from one industrial center to another, but they almost always have the same common denominator; i.e. these virilities and manhood postures are largely constructed in workers' relations with each other, with their employers and with women. In my opinion, a fourth element should be introduced, which influenced their self-perception and perception of their identity. This is an "outsider's point of view" that became important with mass media development, particularly with photography and video being used as propaganda means. Apart from the intensive Russian propaganda of the *Stakhanov* workers' movement, *Men at Work* is a well-

articulated example of this "outsider's point of view" which tends to show worker even as *demiurges* of life itself.[13] Artificially elevating the reputation of "common working people", the "result" is an idealized and romanticized view which had no roots in the labourers' weekday. If one aspect of workers' identity was that of a highly-politicized and "dangerous" proletarian subject "in the forefront of industrial action" (Lahiri-Dutt and Macintyre 2006:27) then in *Men at Work* and *Stakhanovism* case we have its antipode – depoliticized "gentle giants" that go along with establishment and employers' politics. That is why it is important to "investigate" their identity from within by ethnography and oral history methods. The results will not always show polite, refined, mannered or courteous groups of people. On the contrary; we will often find them misogynous, "rude" and conflict searchers; e.g. as an anonymous metal worker stated: "when I was eighteen I knew it took four things to be a man: fight, work, screw and booze" (Meyer 1999:116). This identity distinctiveness should also be understood as part of a process created "in opposition" to principal values in dominating structures. Stressing "undesirable" characteristics in the right place, contextualizing them as a frame within the larger social relationships is a good starting point to avoid "rose-tinted" or "uncomplimentary" interpretations that industrial hard workers have been particularly subjected to. These visions of masculinity articulated through popular culture, as the *Zoolander* movie example shows, were the end result as well as the source, cause and effect, of these stereotyped images.

[13] Slavoj Žižek noted the similar for "The Dickensian gaze peering at the 'good common people' so that they appear likeable from the point of view of the corrupted world of power and money […]", and continues "We perceive the same gap in the Brueghel's late idyllic paintings of scenes from peasant life; Arnold Hauser pointed out that these paintings are as far removed as possible from any real plebeian attitude, from any mingling with the working classes. Their gaze is, on the contrary, external gaze of the aristocracy upon the peasant's idyll, not the gaze of peasants upon their own life. The same goes, of course, for the Stalinist elevation of the dignity of the socialist 'ordinary working people': this idealized image of the working class is staged for the gaze of the ruling party bureaucracy – it serves to legitimize their rule" (Žižek 1989:107).

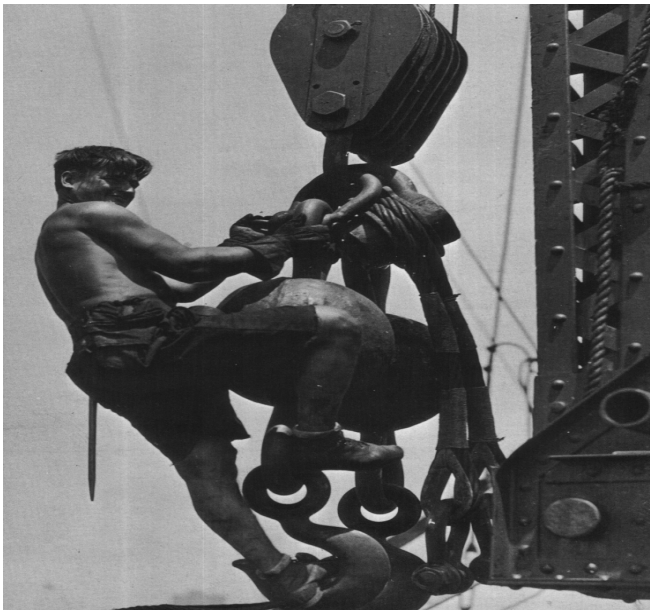

Figure 1: Connecter goes aloft

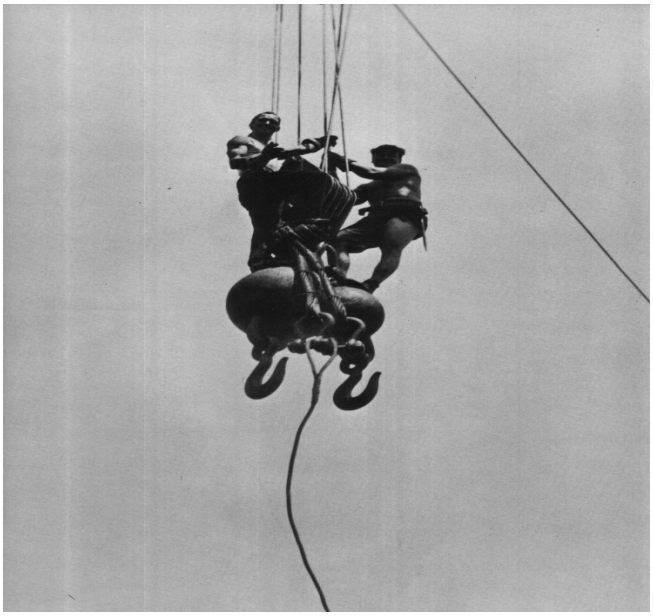

Figure 2: Connecters

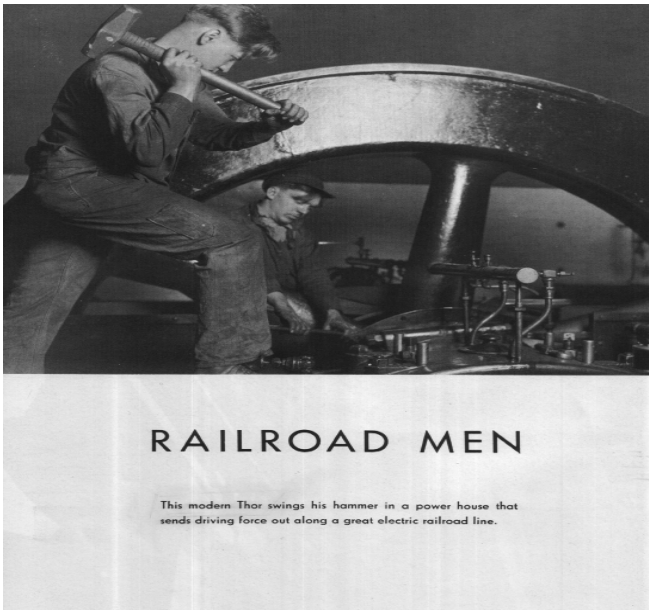

Figure 3: Railroad men

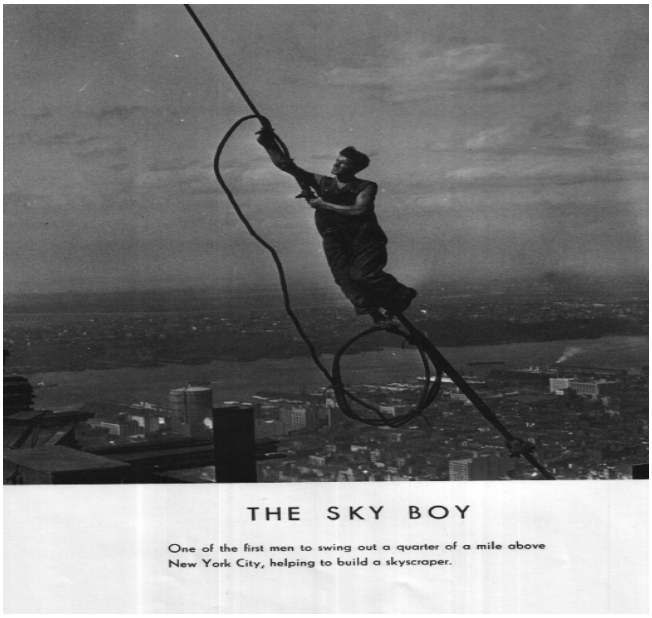

Figure 4: Sky boy

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KALJENJE MUŠKOSTI U INDUSTRIJSKOM MILJEU: "ČVRSTI TIPOVI", FIZIČKI RAD I IDENTITET

SAŽETAK

U širokom rasponu viriliteta, muških identiteta i njihovih suvremenih prikaza koji, prema Georgeu L. Mosseu započinju "kavalirskim" ponašanjem, ističe se poseban tip muškosti ne stoga što iz vlastitog imaginarija isključuje "klasičnu" fizičku estetiku – važnu komponentu u oblikovanju mnogobrojnih stereotipa muškosti, već jer postoji uz, ali i "u opoziciji" s ostalim izrazima muškosti. Muškarci koji su radili ili rade u teškoj industriji – npr. u brodogradilištima, rudnicima, na građevinama ili u čeličanama – razvili su poseban stav prema nezdravom, teškom i često slabo plaćenom poslu koji je činio samu bit njihova maskulinog identiteta. Stoga u analizi valja rehabilitirati Gramscijev koncept popularne kulture koja se dijelom stvara u opoziciji prema hegemonijskoj, a koja, smatra autor, i "nastaje u tvornicama" pa "čvrste tipove" u tome miljeu (ali nerijetko i žene što, na primjer, dokazuju stahanovizam i udarništvo) možemo smatrati industrijskom "verzijom" "progresivnog folklora".

Ključne riječi: industrija, muškost, hipervirilnost, rad