

On the 'cinemaforum' of Occupy Poble Sec: listening to the screenings and accounting for the listenings as a ABR methodology

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In 2011, after the 15-M Movement occupation of Plaça Catalunya ended, several neighborhood-level assemblies were constituted throughout Barcelona. One of them, in the area of Poble Sec, organised a monthly 'cinemaforum' as a pedagogical tool to consider current political issues as well as its own presence in the city. In their meetings an open discussion, performed by a talking circle, followed each screening and situated the sounds and images of the film in the local context. I was involved in this activity from January to July of 2012, and had the opportunity to examine the assemblage required by its practice – an entanglement of film technologies, relational politics and the production of common-space. Furthermore, my research tried to link this particular mode of being together to a tradition that has often turned – from Dziga Vertov to Jean-Luc Godard – the black box of cinema into a school that brings the real closer and allows us to rethink it deeply (Daney, 2004).

At first, the inquiry took the shape of an ethnographic observation to see how objects and affects, times and spaces, words and bodies, were related and distributed into the encounters facilitated by that activist-cum-aesthetic activity. However, this approach had to deal soon with a paradoxical condition: although the 'cinemaforum' was most of the time a place full of images, the mechanics of the projection left spectators in the shadows and therefore, out of my sight. Due to this, the method relied more in listening than in seeing – or more precisely, in *listening to the screenings*. This sensorial turn also led me to have to answer two connected questions, with regard to the process of writing: What kind of account can emerge from this position of listening, even in a literary sense? And what work are images able to carry out in this account?

As Barone and Eisner (2006) and Hernández (2008) have argued, Art-Based Research (ABR) not only concerns visual or performative representations. It also includes textual productions whose heuristic aim is to find new ways of looking at the experience and to open questions – instead of giving answers – about features not perceived before. In this sense, I have tried to describe what happened during the screenings not in categorical terms, but attending to the «vitality affects» that, according to Raymond Bellour (2013), catalyse the encounter between cinema's body and the collective one formed by spectators. Unlike discrete and more conscious emotions, such as happiness or anger, this kind of affects need to be expressed by means of kinetics terms: shaking, crescendo, crash and so on.

In addition, these writings are intertwined later with several pieces of a genealogy on filmic pedagogies – yet maintaining each part as a different, fragmented stratum. Last but not least, a few sequences of photos come to reenact some 'cinemaforum' spaces, without people, in order to be «filled» by the texts that they have beside. Thus, it is about seeing by words and telling through the gaps between paragraphs and images.