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## RELATIONS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND POLITICS IN THE ART INSTITUTION, THE CASE OF THE 33RD SÃO PAULO BIENNIAL

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**Abstract:** The article presents a way of acting in the exhibition different from the reception of the participants expected in a traditional educational visit. Protocols common to all actions preserve the unity of the group; the stages can be lived individually or in a collective, in silence, so that the way of “dedicating attention” is reserved for the experience of the one who is exposed to the work. The intention is to present a new way of relating to artistic objects beyond the traditional ways proposed by educational teams to audiences that in general involve lectures, explanations of content and directed dialogues.

**Keywords:** Visual arts, exhibition, education, mediation.

Historically, curators in the São Paulo Biennials are involved with socioeconomic policies that trigger work processes for the exhibition and for the educational sector. The curators present challenges for the exhibition that involve everything from artistic production to reflections on emblematic problems of today, which involve the art system and issues related to the political conjuncture, as occurred in the case of the 33rd Biennial, held in 2018. One of the main challenges of the 33rd edition of the show was to mobilize structures and suggest other behaviors for visitors and, consequently, to change the practices of mediators who worked directly with the attention exercises proposed in it, whether in relation to works present in the exhibition or outside of it, in activities carried out with teachers in diffusion work that occurred outside the exhibition environment and in Ibirapuera Park, when actions were made with elements to be seen, but not necessarily understood as “art”. This concern appears, for example, in the event’s organizational motto presented by the curator Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro:

With this publication, we assume that any work created to be seen, heard, touched or perceived in some way can be the object of attention. We do not intend to offer examples of what is or is not art, but to invite teachers, educators and mediators to think about what art can be and where it can be.<sup>1</sup>

For the 33rd Bienal’s curator, the “relationship between the visual arts and attention seems evident: art exists to be perceived and, for that, it is necessary to pay attention”.<sup>2</sup> Pérez-Barreiro also emphasizes, in his curatorial texts, the way people move around in museums and exhibitions, the time they take from one object to another: “without lingering for more than a few seconds on each of them. Visiting exhibitions, by becoming a habit, seems to have somehow worn out the possibility of meaningful encounters with the objects presented”.<sup>3</sup>

Precisely because of this, Pérez-Barreiro bets on “the power of the affections that the encounter with art can produce”.<sup>4</sup> From this understanding, the Biennial team, together with the curator, invited a group of eighteen professionals - among teachers, educators and researchers - to collaborate in the elaboration of some attention exercises that aimed to free the perception of possible external conditioning, since they could interfere in the appreciation of artistic productions.

In the current context, the amount of available information mobilizes perception all the time, and the result is a standardization of experiences. Thus, individuals lose their sensibility and their capacity for critical reflection. Based on contemporary challenges, the 33rd bienal also sought to reflect on the impacts caused by technological transformations. In this process, technology companies succeed in capturing the attention of individuals, while turning them into mere products. Immersed in this logic of consumption, the disinterested perspective cannot fully develop. Thus, according to

Pérez-Barreiro:

Some of the world's most successful companies (Facebook, Google, Apple) thrive on capturing and reselling our attention, turning us from mere consumers into the product itself. Perhaps revealing is the fact that these companies have better understood something that the art world still has trouble realizing: that attention is our most valuable asset.<sup>5</sup>

From the interest in observing and dealing with these new behaviors, the 33rd biennial aimed to create spaces favorable to the construction of new forms of aesthetic fruition. Thus, for the development of the themes of this edition of the show, the event's curator used two references that address issues related to the multiplicity of experience: on one hand, he sought inspiration in Goethe's novel *Elective Affinities* (1809); on the other hand, in the text "On the affective nature of form in the work of art", written by Mário Pedrosa in 1951.

In the first reference, Pérez-Barreiro is interested in the multiple possible associations contained in the "affinities", from the point in history where Goethe leads us to trace connections between the natural world and the world of emotional and spiritual relationships, in their conflicting meanings. *Elective Affinities* presents, already in its first pages, the complex relationship of a bourgeois couple whose lives suffer interference with the arrival of two new characters: the wife's adopted daughter and a childhood friend of the husband. From these unusual relationships, answers emerge for coexistence that go beyond the conventions of the time.

According to Professor Arlenice de Almeida Silva, who uses the reading of the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, present in the text "The naturalness of language in Goethe", the work of the German romantic writer seeks to establish a free agreement with the reader, insofar as the reflections

inserted in the narrative "do not result from conceived plans, but from a procedure, in a carefree, almost accidental or occasional way".<sup>6</sup> Pérez-Barreiro's perspective underlines this open dimension of the Goethian novel by discussing how we form a taste that is not fully conscious. In this sense, in the words of the curator, "perhaps we are facing a system of organization that is not exclusively moral, cultural, or biological, but a strange amalgam of all three, in which our affinities, whether conscious or unconscious, lead us".<sup>7</sup>

Pérez-Barreiro's second theoretical reference is in Mário Pedrosa's text, as already mentioned. In the context of the creation of the Biennial, in 1951, the art critic wrote his doctoral thesis "On the affective nature of form in the work of art". In this text, Pedrosa used the gestalt theory to develop a reflection on how the spectator follows the interpretive path of a work of art, taking into account the relationship between the formal characteristics of the artistic making and the psychological structure of the individual receiver. From this work, Pérez-Barreiro draws some consequences that deal with the relationship between the public's individuality with the work and its inherent affections exposed in this contact. Such a bond interests the curator to the extent that

Pedrosa articulated a profoundly humanist perspective by which it is possible to understand art and its effects (or affects, to use his terminology) regardless of the dominant ideological battleground in which an art form *x* is considered inherently superior to an art form *y*. For Pedrosa, art was to be judged essentially in terms of its ability to create a productive relationship between the artist's intention and the viewer's sensibility. One of the most important political activists of the 20th century, Pedrosa was also very clear about the revolutionary potential of art within this framework of individual emancipation, resisting the proposal of a "political" art within its narrative content.<sup>8</sup>

Even if there was no political theme directly guiding the 33rd Bienal de São Paulo, there was a problem to be addressed in this field: the relationship between layers of individual affectivities in working fields of an operational system of art, given by artists, curatorship, production, art critics and the apparatuses of mediation with the public. Faced with Pérez-Barreiro's questioning, "Do the concepts of affinity and affection provide a different structure or operating system within which it is possible to organize a Biennale?"<sup>9</sup>, defined an educational publication that involved a new structure and a new curatorial dynamic around seven artist-curators. This new operating system model proposed by the curatorship reflects, according to Pérez-Barreiro, the need to rethink the tradition of artists as curators, considering that this practice has defined the directions of modern and contemporary art history.

Within the context of the 33rd bienal, each artist-curator worked with total freedom to organize his or her curatorial practices and methodologies; their diversity also guided the show's organization. In addition to the seven group exhibitions, twelve individual projects by different artists were chosen. Of these twelve projects presented, three were posthumous exhibitions of some artists from the 1990s who did not receive due recognition in life: Lucia Nogueira (Brasil), Aníbal López (Guatemala), and Feliciano Centurión (Paraguay). The artist Siron Franco (Brasil) also participated in the 33rd bienal. He was present with a selection from his series "57th Street" (1987).

As for the educational publication of the 33rd edition of the bienal, it emphasized the issue of attention by means of protocols that guide the procedures and the duration of time to appreciate a work. The attention exercises make up a publication entitled "Invitation to Attention". In it we read: "Visitors to the

33rd Bienal are offered several exercises or protocols through which they can experience the exhibition in different ways, in an attempt to compensate for the natural dispersion of this type of large-scale exhibition"<sup>10</sup> The protocols are defined as follows by Masschelein:

The protocol is a clear orientation, which the individual follows over and over again, but which has no clear "end," no destination. It is a kind of "path" that leads to nothing, it is like a cut that opens into a world. Following this path does not mean carrying out someone's intentions or responding to someone's expectations, but it is a path that implies mechanical repetition and regularity, without "meaning," precisely to decentralize our intentions, to get the subject out of the way, so to speak, or at least to expose it. The protocol helps to suspend overly familiar stories; it helps to install a certain discipline of body and mind, trying to open a space that allows experiences, a space for [...] the individual to expose himself, in order, as Bergson said, not to see what we think, but to think about what we see, to expose our thinking to what is happening (to the present) and to overcome our own reflections, to break them. This calls for an art of being "there," which transforms a "there" into a "here."<sup>11</sup>

To conceive a form of mediation given by exercises that organize what to do in a protocol form, without a dependence on the directed discussion proposed by mediators, a restructuring was then made in the modes of relationship between educators and the public in the exhibition. The protocols also organize, in addition to what to do, the time allotted for the experience with the works, so that the subject perceives himself as involved in a relationship that is not based on the traditional dynamic in which knowledge holders transmit their knowledge to those who do not possess it. When considering this change in the form of relationship with the object, one rethinks the ways of facing the historical conceptions of art, originating from

an institutional inheritance, redistributing the talks, which are no longer interposed by mediators or educators and start operating from the individual field.

This is how attention exercises are described:

The attention exercises presented here are practices focused on the contact between a person, or a group of people, and a work of art. They offer a structure that organizes this contact, without predetermining the outcome. They constitute a type of mediation that emphasizes openness to what may emerge from the experience of paying attention to a work of art for an extended period of time... Each exercise is composed of four steps: 1. find a work of art / 2. pay attention to it / 3. record the experience / 4. share it.<sup>12</sup>

The curator's intention is to destabilize hierarchies so that artists, curators and viewers are treated equally, since, according to him, "everyone is capable of building their own affective affinities with art and the world beyond it".<sup>13</sup>

The proposal of the educational publication is to be in front of the object for a determined time, without external mediation or context that leads the work to something outside it, an interpretation given a priori or an organization of meanings prior to the person's contact with the work. The proposal consists in emphasizing the relationship between the object and the observer. As the text by educators Lilian L'Abbate Kelian and Helena Freire, which composes the educational publication, points out:

The French philosopher Simone Weil (1909-1943) states that the condition for attention is a look and not an attachment. And, in fact, the interpretative position of the subject in this state of attention becomes somehow "weakened," diluted, suspended. Occupying this position can have something uncomfortable or uncomfortable about it. After all, we remain searching, without guides, without explanations. But it is in

this state of exposure that it also becomes possible to be surprised. In this condition, it is possible to put aside, at least temporarily, what we believe, what we like, what we know, to get in touch with the work in another way.<sup>14</sup>

This is a practice that modifies the bodies and the behavior of the public in front of a work, as the participants are led by protocols that propose new experiences of perception. One of the protocols elaborated for the 33rd bienal consisted of a set of playing cards organized according to different categories, according to the intentions of each stage of the exercise. The playful character of such action provides new forms of interaction with the public.

In the process of this activity, the educators understood that a draw would be the best way to define the sequences and make the instructions available. The objective of this practice was to develop in the public the perception about the several ways of relationships mobilized by the works of art. The first stage brought the issue of encountering a work of art; the second dealt with the ways of paying attention; the third referred to the ways of registering. At the end of the activities, a colloquy was organized so that everyone could listen to the participants, without the educator directing the conversation or interruptions from those present.

This practice presents a way of acting in the exhibition different from the reception of the participants expected in a traditional educational visit. The protocols common to all actions preserve the unity of the group; the stages can be experienced individually or in a collective, in silence, so that the "paying attention" mode is reserved to the experience of the one who is exposed to the work.

In a conversation with a participant of a group of psychoanalysts during a practice of attention, she was asked: "do you think that the suspension of judgment and interpretation



Affective affinities 33rd Biennial/SP

finding a work

Until the encounter, there is a path to be traveled.  
 Observe your steps,  
     your choices,  
     what is around you.  
 Take the risk to choose the work  
 that challenges you the most.

Collages by Antonio Ballester Moreno, artist at the 33rd biennial

“1. find a work”.



Affective affinities 33rd Biennial/SP

**devote attention**

**5 min** Investigating the work: what is it?

**5 min** To turn away from the work and undo the thoughts and the previous thoughts and sensations thoughts and sensations, walking freely.

**5 min** Return to the work and ask what it needs.

Collages by Antonio Ballester Moreno, artist at the 33rd biennial

“2. devote attention”.



Affective affinities 33rd Biennial/SP

**register experience**

Get away from the work. Recollect yourself for a few minutes.

What does your body want after the experience you had with the artwork?

Acknowledge this desire and hold on to this feeling.

Collages by Antonio Ballester Moreno, artist at the 33rd biennial

“3. record the experience” share” - collective mode.



Affective affinities 33rd Biennial/SP

### share individual mode



- Choose one of the sharing proposals or create a new proposal
- Based on your registration, talk to someone about what you have seen and experienced during the exercise
  - Share your registration at [exercicio33.org.br](http://exercicio33.org.br). There you will have contact with other people's records
  - Gift yourself with the log and choose a place to keep it. Find it again after a month.
  - Invite a group and do the attention exercise in collective mode.

Collages by Antonio Ballester Moreno, artist at the 33rd biennial

### “4. share” - individual mode



Affective affinities 33rd Biennial/SP

### share collective mode



- Gather the group together and report on how your completion of the step went. Find a work
- Direct each person in the group to report on the realization of the steps. Pay attention and record the experience.
- Organize the order of the speeches, making sure that everyone listens to each other and that the word circulates without hierarchies
- Avoid interruptions
- Ensure that the stories are not discussed or commented on until everyone has finished.

Collages by Antonio Ballester Moreno, artist at the 33rd biennial

### “4. share” - collective mode



Attention exercise with spontaneous public at the 33rd Biennial (2018).

experienced in the exercise is different (and to what extent) from what occurs in the psychoanalysis session with a patient?” The psychoanalyst answered that she saw a relation because, just as in the attention exercise, in the psychoanalysis session there is no judgment on the part of the psychoanalyst, the psychoanalyst works with listening to what comes from the patient and throws to him his own speech, which enables an interpretation in the interrelation with himself, from the elements that were previously fragmented and come together in him. This process is not done by the psychoanalyst, but by the patient. The interpretation and the judgment take place at a level that, many times, is not even verbalized.

For the mediator Josiane Cavalcanti, who worked at the last Biennial and used the attention protocols: “The main propositions made during the mediation work at the 33rd Bienal include the attention practices and the attempt to create a time-space of free aesthetic fruition, considering the public’s agendas and interests and articulating with them ways of seeing and relating to art”.<sup>15</sup> According to the mediator, her performance in this edition of the Biennial “sought to reflect on the field of mediation and review its relationship with education”.<sup>16</sup> This new work structure made it possible to resize the time and ways of acting systematized by the exercises. In “Invitation to Attention”, the emphasis is on the direct relationship with the work, without necessarily addressing the historical frame of references beforehand.

Within this context, Josiane Cavalcanti continues the reflection as follows: “In this sense, the practices I approached were less circumscribed to the field of art teaching and the interpretation of the work.”<sup>17</sup> It is concluded, then, that there are possibilities for research in fields other than those related to education, and that it is not just about

handling new subjects, but about tinkering with the structures of the system. This, in turn, involves the dynamics of the bodies in the exhibition. Moreover, it is also inferred that the strategies of interpreting elements of the work are not fundamental to the intended fruition, although such practice is often used in educational processes. Thus, as we highlighted earlier, the 33rd Biennial also aimed to present the works to visitors without the need to decode them according to a predetermined set of observations.

Besides the attention practices, the educational program developed an anti-racist action. The activity took place within the course for mediators, to address issues related to the ethno-racial context.<sup>18</sup> To this end, proposals for mediation and relations between the artworks and the public were developed in a systematic manner, so that these proposals acquired as much relevance for the mediators’ practice as the “Invitation to Attention” proposal.

From the educational practices developed at the 33rd bienal, it was possible to develop other ways of operating and triggering relationships with visitors and the works in the exhibition. Both proposals, the “Invitation to attention” and the anti-racist approach, produced reflections that modified the structures in the conduct of work and reoriented some places of listening and speaking in the mediation practice.

Mediator Josiane Cavalcanti mentions how changes in the ways of conducting the fruition, even without the use of the educational publication protocols, are related to another permanence time in front of the works and with critical modes of operation that are beyond the historiographic concepts of art:

In this sense, the educational publication brought new possibilities of mediation practices that could be experienced even when we do not have the material at hand.

The ideas and perspectives it gave us were of great contribution in the field of mediation.<sup>19</sup>

Still in the mediator's words, it is concluded that:

[...] It is important to emphasize the contribution of the meetings on ethno-racial issues in the context of mediation in order to rethink our mentality and actions and move towards the establishment of anti-racist practices both institutionally and in mediation practices.<sup>20</sup>

The protocols that called for a longer attention span in front of a work did not necessarily involve changes in the format of developing a visit or an action with the public. Even so, there was a longer time for silence and periods in which the public was alone without the interference of others. As Lucas Oliveira, who also worked as a mediator at the 33rd bienal, reflects:

The guided tours with school groups were the epicenter of our work in the Biennale. In general, I took the tours as an opportunity to test some of the principles proposed by the curatorship and by the "Invitation to Attention": to seek a greater immersion in the relationship with the works. This happened in several ways: I tried to create situations in the visit so that the groups could walk with more freedom and choose how much time to dedicate to the encounter with the works of their interest; reduce to the minimum the statements about the exhibition-islands, in order to dilute, at least a little, the centralizing role of my spoken discourse; give up the logic, the scripts; renounce, many times, to the question, to the colloquy, because the encounter with the works sometimes requires digestion and the silence is, many times, fuller of meanings than the compulsory speech.<sup>21</sup>

Oliveira brings to light the dynamics of the exhibition governed by a logic of visitation organized through school schedules, a common practice in the institution, although the publication "Invitation to Attention" was not directed to teachers. With the training

effort that involved ethno-racial issues and the practices of attention, new dynamics of circulation of the word, of the ways of acting and positioning oneself in the exhibition were proposed.

In time, it is necessary to point out that the preponderant difference between the notion of education with previously established intentionalities and attention, which may or may not have as an end the teaching of something, is presented by Jan Masschelein, an author quoted in the educational publication, from the following meanings: "I want to 'understand' or 'educate the gaze' not in the sense of educare (to teach), but of e-ducere, as to lead out, direct oneself out, take out. The process of e-ducere does not mean to acquire a critical or liberated vision, but to liberate our vision.<sup>22</sup> For the author, the objective of consciousness is knowledge, attention; it is the state in which the subject is also in play, together with the object. There is a dialectical relationship between the one who looks and is looked at by the object, which favors self-transformation, with a kind of practical freedom.

Masschelein understands that attention, whose conception is independent of intention, suspends judgment and has in the waiting the possibility of criticism, not because of the speed of analysis, but because of the waiting itself, of the time dedicated to attention, which would make criticism possible. He continues his reasoning by telling us that critical educational research "requires a poor pedagogy, a poor art: the art of waiting, mobilizing, presenting. It is also something that goes nowhere, offering no possibility of identification (the subject position, be it that of teacher or student, is, so to speak, empty).<sup>23</sup> He concludes by saying that there is no comfort zone.

The position of vulnerability takes us out of the comfort zone, so that we can be attentive

and be attentive to the things that surround us, as an endless learning. There is no end state; therefore, the act itself is conceived as learning something, without a previous objectification. There is no objective in the attention exercises to teach something that is missing or to eliminate some unequal condition.

One can notice, therefore, that the educational practices adopted in the 33rd Bienal differ greatly from the conduction by questions that generate dialogues or a directed discussion with a guiding thread, typical of educational visits. The 33rd Bienal is established in silence and attention, while some Biennials, such as the 24th Bienal de São Paulo, took place in the discursive and directed dialogue dimension. In the case of the 33rd Bienal, there is a central axis of education that can be defined by the learning of the mediators and the internal team of the Bienal about racial practices and how to reexamine them to produce new practices, the antiracist ones. Thus, the educational practices of the 33rd edition with early delimited goals are centered on teaching the other and oneself about something that is missing, is a question that Achille Mbembe designates as a fundamental point of the construction of the black as a racialized subject in the West.

Grada Kilomba, an artist present at the 32nd Biennial, reappears in the issues addressed among the mediators at the 33rd edition for having left a legacy of learning for the exhibitions. Kilomba writes that: "Something amenable to becoming knowledge then becomes every epistemology that reflects the specific political interests of a white colonial and patriarchal society".<sup>24</sup> The relationship of art with the political sphere, in the case of this artist, reminds us of the hegemonic narrative and the privileged look of the one who has the power to demarcate what is equal or different. From the white

man's view of his black body, Kilomba presents the problem created from a set of power criteria: "Many times we are told that we are discriminated against because we are different. That is a myth. I am not discriminated against because I am different, but I become different precisely because of the discrimination I suffer."<sup>25</sup> With the reflection brought by Kilomba, we identify that the different is a decision of the privileged.

There are, on one hand, the proposals of silence and a silent listening without intervention in the 33rd Biennial and, on the other hand, a very contextualized speech, guided by the works in the exhibition and allied to the revision of the teaching of another anti-racist historical narrative, a field of research that involves two practices that complement each other: one for making oneself seen, perceived, and inquired, and the other for proposing to review oneself, to re-examine individually and in groups the very ideas and conclusions we have.

Another point of convergence between the proposals is the emphasis on the gaze, which leads us to resort to the teacher and philosopher Jacques Rancière when he deals with the emancipation of the spectator, problematized from the distinction between domination and subjection. The spectator acts while looking because he "confirms or transforms this distribution of positions. The spectator also acts, just like the student or the intellectual. He observes, selects, compares, interprets. He relates what he sees to many other things he has seen in other scenes, in other kinds of places."<sup>26</sup> Em relação às duas propostas de atenção e revisão das práticas racistas, acredita-se numa perspectiva da ação e não de favorecimento de uma contemplação passiva dos visitantes ao observarem as obras na exposição.

## **ULTRA-RED: POLITICS AS ACTION FOR SELF-ACTUALIZATION - RELATIONS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND POLITICS**

*Sound as matter for collective processes* organized by Diogo de Moraes and myself at the Lasar Segall Museum in the city of São Paulo, Brazil, on October 28, 2017, was attended by Ultra-Red, a collective formed by activist artists (represented by Chris Jones, one of its founders, and mediated by Cristina Ribas, the group's Brazilian interlocutor). We can consider that the collective carries out a sound documentation practice that involves recordings and the practice of listening to them. The group was founded by AIDS activists, and continues to investigate local and global political situations, including migratory rights, anti-racism, participatory community development, and HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment policies. The group works by defining a central question for their research, and goes into the field in search of elements that corroborate the question. After recording the audio coming from this search, they listen to it in several transmissions: via radio, performances, recordings, installations, reading of transcribed texts, and public actions. The group pays attention to stories in dispute, political echoes that involve the scenes researched from listening protocols.

Ultra-red's proposal is directed towards an objective fact, known by all agents and those involved. There is no narrative that gives unity to the practice. Its members have created a book entitled *Radical Education Workbook*<sup>27</sup>, which, in its Introduction, situates the political moment they were experiencing: the coalition government in Britain in 2010 had established a program of austerity. They understand that education is essential to the social and political organization of the practices they carry out and that they are engendered within a notion of radical pedagogy, not in the sense

of making grand claims of a political nature, but in that they involve popular research, militancy, collective practices, participation.

"What is the sound of the crisis?," for example, put by the Ultra-Red collective during the meeting, made it possible to find distinct layers of what the crisis in Brasil would be, and even led to the questioning of whether there would be a crisis or a neoliberal political project under development. As each of the participants asked and went in search of answers to this question, we located variations that went in opposite directions: while some observed that the crisis is in the hierarchical conception of social relations, others concluded that the politics of the crisis can be fought in public manifestations of divergent thoughts; some located the crisis from a subjective and individual scope, while others did so from the point of view of the politics of globalization. Demonstrations of this nature can be part of the educational conceptions of cultural institutions because they involve public policies, political conjunctures, and awareness of power relations that have direct implication on the ways of acting and conceiving educational actions.

The practices of talking and listening, listening to each other, are routines for a conception of teaching and learning within the practice of those who drive the group's actions. There is an important point to be made about this collective conduct, because, as mentioned above, there is no action that guides a general practice and that, when there is evaluation, it is affirmed from a starting point given a priori. Teaching, in turn, is not given to others beyond those involved with its practice. Movements in relation to others outside the group also become research material. Those involved know that they are in a political action; when there is sound listening, everyone knows its implications for

the ways of interpreting and reacting to those recordings.

We can point here to relationships with the concept of self-actualization present in bell hooks' engaged pedagogy. Self-actualization, for her, supposes that confessional devices enable exchanges, narratives of their own experience for discussion in the classroom, eliminating the possibility of acting as omniscient and silent inquisitors. And, in this perspective, a self-actualization is reached, which has as a challenge, as pointed out by the author, the increase of the capacity to create pedagogical practices, because they interact with the dominant discourses, impregnated with norms, and those involved start to know how to distinguish them from those lived in practice, confessed by them. In the process of self-actualization, unknown stories come to the surface and subjugated problems become part of the field of creation, which will inform which actions must be developed and which problems will be in the participants' field of work.

When entering an art exhibition, a person who is not an art or education professional might not imagine that someone would want to teach him something. Differently, in the works developed by Ultra-red, the participants know from the start that they are involved in an action related to education or politics. Hannah Arendt relies on freedom as the sign of human dignity. The birth of new men and women would constitute, for her, a permanent response to totalitarian pretensions, as well as a promise that the mentality of the animal laborans, which undermines the remotest possibilities of politics and diminishes everything, will not prevail once and for all. She writes:

Our hope always hangs on the new that each generation brings; precisely because we base our hope on this alone, however, we destroy everything if we try to control the new in such a way that we, the old, can

dictate their future appearance. It is precisely for the sake of what is new and revolutionary in each child that education needs to be conservative.<sup>28</sup>

In this sense, we can understand that the research done by Ultra-red is affirmed as a resource from the field of the political that develops with education, because adults not only teach children, but they themselves learn through the political, as if they were building at the junction of the two actions (teaching-learning), simultaneous, a dynamic that tensions the conservative parameters of what was taught.

It is, then, in a field of transitoriness and mutual interchange of interests that the journey Sound as Matter for Collective Processes was developed. The intention was, together with other mediators and educators, to search for new problems through a practice of documentation and, with artists, to rescue the social and pedagogical dimension of their practices through contact with works that went in this direction, that were developed and thought out from the bases of popular education, militant research, joint research, worker investigation and participatory action-research.

In this sense, the centers hitherto called "educative" or "educational" would start looking at a new set of problems and interests of the public, hitherto unimaginable, possible only with the practice of specific documentation for each show. Thus, educators and mediators would objectively create other work systems based on the new guidelines that would emerge.

There are several tools for collecting and documenting what happens in the relationship between people and the works of art in the institution's space and also outside it, in situations that influence the dynamics and behaviors in the exhibition. Sound practice is

one of them, for activating fields of the political that can mobilize new practices and set up diversified operations within an institution, a place, a specific situation. But what is different about this from the creation of a pedagogical or educational process?

The researcher Cristina Ribas, who developed a Political Vocabulary for aesthetic processes from localized experiences, practices and research in a given situation, interacts with the hypothesis that there are other ways of relating to the work of art, different from the one determined by a teaching and learning system. She states:

The institutionalities of art are full of separations and hierarchies. The artistic production seems to be able to rearrange the rules of the game when it puts in suspension the truth that the work is “closed” to be experienced [...] I see this “closure” also in the idea of the artist’s formation. Artists are in process, they go through the old dichotomy practice x theory, and I think that the Political Vocabulary comes, in this sense, to assume the radicality of a “learning together” [sic], learning with each other, and opening the production of the meaning of art, of artistic production.<sup>29</sup>

The political vocabulary, developed as a project that unfolded into the edition of a book entitled Political Vocabulary for Aesthetic Processes, contributes with the research of new agendas for the work in cultural institutions once it creates, from the political, artistic and social practices of small and large groups, ways to agency and organize what emerges from these relations created in politics. It allows us to think politics not in the inaccessible space of power,<sup>30</sup> to use Ribas’ expression, but understanding the common as something that intersects and tensions the individual and the collective. And thinking politics with education in the space of the institution would make it possible to create different times from the usual ones,

resizing the three times called welcoming, development, and closing, a form commonly used by educators in their visits and that ends up ordering the bodies, breaths, and cognitive processes in a consensual way.

Politics from the concept of “disagreement”<sup>31</sup> formulated by Rancière can remind us of the complexity of speech and how it is good to dwell on it longer than we have been doing, especially because when we speak to the public of an exhibition, we are dialoguing with people who are strangers to us, unknown to us, and who have their own trajectories and baggage, to which we had no previous access. The “misunderstanding”, for Rancière, is not restricted to contact with strangers, but refers to a relatively common speech situation: that in which “one of the interlocutors at the same time understands and does not understand what the other one says”.<sup>32</sup> It is a conflict present when two people are using the same word, which shows that speaking is a complex act, even when one seems to be saying the same thing. Rancière adds: “it is the conflict between the one who says white and the one who says white but does not understand the same thing, or does not understand that the other says the same thing with the name and whiteness”.<sup>33</sup>

From the notion of learning defined by Ribas, we can orient ourselves by a political key that governs that which we cannot identify beforehand and with which we need to relate first in order to understand it in direct relation to it, without presupposing its meanings a priori:

We take learning as movements that arise from the self and for the self, or a knowledge of the self coextensive with a knowledge of the world. Learning acts on the processes of subjectivation, acts on the constitutive processes and, therefore, acts on an individual formation in direct relation with collective formations. Thinking from the perspective of learning does not mean

defining a precise method (a how to do), but implies the exercise of a relational, contingent and constitutive tool, which operates to break hierarchies and verticalized processes (RADICAL >TRANS), promoting the encounter of agents in a dialogical and cooperative state. At Desarquivo.org we do not think of learning in instrumentalizing ways (it is not a knowledge about art, for example), but a knowledge that produces possible ways, productive modes of subjectivation creating new actions, new ruptures in artistic practices.<sup>34</sup>

The context of those who speak, how they speak, under which instrumentalizers, is as relevant as the content spoken. In this sense, in many cases, when one mediates between educational relations with art, the content of the speech is altered, as, for example, when one starts talking about racism when mediating a work by the artist Kilomba, mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation, or by Keita, whom we mentioned when dealing with the educational material produced at the 24th Bienal. However, the methodology and the way of enunciation are still conditioned to the institutionalized way of doing teaching, which guides within the field of interpretation and representation.

Even if subjects are political, there is a series of procedures lived in the body that restrict the political nature of the action, so it is risky to say that all education is political. No doubt it is political because it institutes an ideological strand, but to have in form an implication of the political field, it is important the “creation of signs that resist the division between signifier and signified, between expression and content”<sup>35</sup>, as Tatiana Roque teaches. In this sense, as the author also points out, we need a “grammar, but also a corporal semantics of fights”<sup>36</sup>. Roque further signals that: “The choice of words is not anodyne, nor is their meaning. The diagrammatic is a refusal to rebut the enunciation about the enunciates, in a world populated by slogans”.

With this, Roque wants to oppose the axiomatics of capital, escaping from a type of mechanism that articulates ways of operating, of translating codes, and can be enunciated in institutions linked to education. The author writes that:

There have always been codes, but now it is necessary for everyone to be equivalent. Minorities are also codified, appropriated by fixed identities, and can become hostages to the mechanisms of capture. For Deleuze, there are two ways in which capitalism codifies social formations, and which are internalized by minorities: the national/extranational cut, which makes every minority composed of foreigners, even if foreigners from within; the individual/collective cut. The minority is constituted in the impossibility of internalizing this last division, because everything that seems to emerge from the individual (familial, conjugal, psychic) is linked to other issues that are not individual at all (ethnic, racial, sexual, aesthetic), with a relevance that is immediately collective and social. One of the ways in which capitalism codifies social formations, in order to integrate them into its own dynamics, is that of communitarization, that is, the isolation produced by the fixation of an identity.<sup>37</sup>

The problem of mediation, also presented by Roque, affirms the need for links with other struggles. Mediation, by connecting with other problems of contemporaneity, will be able to read, in the artworks present in the exhibition, the structural field they speak of, and not only the transversal issues that can be debated with the public. Roque brings a word to the political vocabulary that is “diagrammatic politics”: “to operate by transversal relations between distinct problems and oppose the automation of capitalist axioms”<sup>38</sup>, which, in this case, involves ways of operating and systematizing practices based on self-actualization (to use Bell Hooks’ term).

It is necessary to observe when our practice in the art institution is indiscriminately linked

to an art teaching concern, when this is not the intention of the public when visiting the exhibition. When we mediate the visitors' journey in the museum, we are managing ways of operating linked to teaching and learning from some paradigms without the visitors having been precisely informed about this process and without them being able to choose how to individually see the exhibition and apprehend it in their own way. To engage with other agendas to find new paradigms and engage with contemporary contexts of other orders is the task of documentary practice, as well as to reflect on what practices that involve political actions can teach for the practice with education and mediation in the context of cultural and art institutions.

To aesthetic processes, contributes with the research of new agendas for the work in cultural institutions once it creates, from the political, artistic and social practices of small and large groups, ways to agency and organize what emerges from these relations created in politics. It allows us to think politics not in the inaccessible space of power,<sup>39</sup> to use Ribas' expression, but understanding the common as something that intersects and tensions the individual and the collective. And thinking politics with education in the space of the institution would make it possible to create different times from the usual ones, resizing the three times called welcoming, development, and closing, a form commonly used by educators in their visits and that ends up ordering the bodies, breaths, and cognitive processes in a consensual way.

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own way. To occupy ourselves with other agendas to find new paradigms and engage with contemporary contexts of other orders is the task of documentary practice, as well

as to reflect on what practices involving political actions can teach for the practice with education and mediation in the context of cultural and art institutions.

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