
HISPANIC URBAN STUDIES
JONATHAN SNYDER
POETICS OF OPPOSITION IN CONTEMPORARY SPAIN
Politics and the Work of Urban Culture

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Jonathan Snyder

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Jonathan Snyder

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Preface

After tugging at the wrists of his gloves, the artist opened an envelope of graphite filings, scooping them in spoonfuls onto an oversized sheet of white paper. He then suspended the material above a record player; on its turntable rotating at slow speed was a magnet and positioned next to it, an electric amplifier. Although he could hardly be seen over the crowd standing in the dark warehouse, the image of this apparatus, captured on closed-circuit video, was projected on the wall where it would remain for the next three hours. When the bassist plucked a chord the filings scattered around the paper, some standing on end as they drew wobbly, jagged patterns in circles. The band would play intermittently, amid screenings and other distractions to be discovered around the warehouse—projected slides of landscape photography in muted colors, videos of everyday objects presented as trompe l'oeil, a painted display of pop icons glowing under ultraviolet light, and so on. Occasionally, the digital silhouette of a monumental pack of elk would race around the perimeter of the wall where it met the ceiling and at other times, a flock of ravens. This warehouse was one of the many vast spaces in Madrid's former slaughterhouse El Matadero, renovated in 2007 to become the capital's largest cultural center, something of a small city housing several exhibition spaces, theaters, an auditorium, a cinema, a library, and a media center, among others.

The public invitation to this one-time event announced "No hay banda" citing the master of ceremonies from the unusual stage show in David Lynch's film *Mulholland Drive.* Curated by Abel H. Pozuelo for some ten participating artists and musicians, *No hay banda* promised "un experimento en el tiempo" [an experiment in time] in an announcement that told readers what *not* to expect, or then again, a rather playful denial of all that it would entail: "No es un concierto ni una exposición colectiva, no es un happening ni una performance ni tampoco una improvisación multidisciplinar" [This is not a concert or

a collective exhibit; it is not a happening or a performance, nor interdisciplinary improvisation]. The event delivered what it promised as both a (non-)happening and a temporal experiment, harkening back to the "radical juxtapositions" of unlikely assemblages, according to Susan Sontag, characteristic of happenings in the 1950s and 1960s. Much like them, it was unclear when the nonhappening started or ended while visitors would come and go as they pleased, with simultaneous events taking place around the room in overlapping succession. And the crowd, guided to move through the warehouse by interest or surprise, seemed as much to form part of the performance, too. As such, when the band took pause a spotlight focused on participating artist Fran Mohíno who dialed a number from his cell phone to activate the sculpture *We_Love_You*. Positioned on a crane above the crowd, a towering black cylinder spoke, in a thundering male voice, a random sequence of three words accompanied by flashes of strobe light: "We, Love, You." Like Mohíno's other work on childhood subjectivity and memory, this piece had spectators momentarily blinded and deafened, one might say smothered in most senses, by an overpowering iteration on love. The arrhythmic blasts at intervals long enough to ready oneself for the next flash also provoked some irritation and much amusement among visitors. The crowd retracted from the tower in a movement that seemed comparable (at least to me, looking away to see the projection on the adjacent wall) to that of the graphite filings shuffled around on paper.

Sometime later, I spoke with Fran Mohíno when I had the chance to ask him some questions about his own work and this group show. "This kind of event would have been unthinkable a couple of years ago," he noted—if readers will allow me to paraphrase Mohíno's words—that is, the invitation to experience this nonhappening simply wouldn't have made sense. This observation on sense-making struck me, given that two parties could agree in conversation on what seemed to be sensible change in the present without knowing how to articulate precisely the factors at play in making this so. Under what changing circumstances did the occurrence signify in ways that seemed to "work" for its audience, if not *on* its audience? In what ways, if at all, did this sensible change dialog with the turn to the experiential, alternative practices of a collective bent becoming more commonplace in Madrid amid times of austerity? What did this assemblage of cultural works that resisted narrative and instead invited visitors to collective experience in this space, accomplish in form and function? Beyond the

context of the performance alone, these general questions prompted by sensing that "somehow" things are different than only shortly ago, could be said to outline the essays in the following chapters on cultural analysis and the political.

The global financial crisis and recent social mobilizations, such as the 15M mass protests in Spain, have inaugurated renewed interest in critically rethinking Spain's present cultural, social, and political circumstance, from the democratic *Transición* to its adhesion to the European Union. In the wake of the crisis in Spain, critical readings of and responses to the present scenario take at least two main stages of activity: cultural production in urban centers, often of an alternative status, and protests and assemblies in public spaces throughout Spanish cities. The essays gathered in the following chapters address how recent cultural production in Spain (fanzine poetry, video performance, photography, theater, from 2008 to 2013) grapples with the conditions and possibilities for social transformation in myriad ways that dialog with the ongoing crisis, neoliberal governance, and political culture in Spain's recent democratic history.

In his proposal for microcultural studies, Chris Perriam argues that ephemera can prove a "weighty witness" to the times. "What the ephemeral witnesses and documents above all," Perriam writes, "is the combination of the unknown cultural configuration which preceded it, surrounded it, and gave it momentary meaning" in the present of its production (2010, 292). Consider, for example, fanzines and some independent self-publications from the scene of cultural activity often regarded to be the urban underground. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, self-publishing in Spain has received renewed interest among amateur and professional creators alike. Augmented uses of desktop publishing software have facilitated accessible, do-it-yourself production supports for creative work in print and online distribution. Among the most fringe independent self-publications, fanzines today exhibit more polished layouts, illustrations, typesetting, and even binding than their predecessors from the 1970s and 80s (Compitello, 2013, 203–31), a circumstance attributable, in part, to digital production. Still, many retain the manual and analog practices, true to fanzine origins, in cut-and-paste design, mixed-media collage, cartoons, and illustrated fiction of an underground aesthetic (Duncombe, 2008; Librería Bakakai, 2006). Of a much wider panorama than fanzines alone, the great variety of independent print matter today—hand-sewn literary journals, artist books, and pamphlets categorized as ephemera—range in support

from bound cardstock to sleek, glossy color prints, which on the whole demonstrate that self-publishing has traveled in multiple low-budget projects from the underground to the commercial upstart.

Independent self-publishing today provides an illustration of Perriam's claim for its alternative status in relation to institutional supports and funding sources, and to the markets that make some established circles of cultural and literary production a more sustainable, if not at times lucrative, business by comparison. For many creators, self-publishing provides alternative, inexpensive channels to distribute work against the publishing crisis in recent years, which has writers and artists face increasingly limited possibilities to see their work in traditional print media (Martínez Soria, 2013, 12–14; Rodrigo et al., 2012). These practices hold an alternative regard and readership appeal that stand in opposition to the established, exclusive publishing circuits and their authors in the arts and literature (Acevedo et al., 2012). In this sense, although fanzines oppose and critique commercial culture for its potential to absorb almost any material of marketable value, as Stephen Duncombe has noted, it seems that in times of crisis, to the contrary, fanzines may have subsumed the commercial aesthetics of some independent self-publishing (2008, 159). On the other hand, many self-publishers and independent presses, though by no means all of them, are committed to the distribution of cultural material as public domain against copyright restrictions, known as the *copyleft* movement (Martín Cabrera, 2012, 583–605; Moreno-Caballud, 2012, 535–55). In these practices, there exists an oppositional tension between some official spaces of cultural production (sponsored creation, exhibition, distribution, publishing, and so on) and their alternative counterparts whose works seldom reach channels of public visibility, other than through local circuits of readers and collectors (Guirao Cabrera, 2013, 5). To return to the nonhappening of Pozuelo's group show, many artists, acutely aware of the material limitations and languishing institutional support in times of austerity, pool their resources collectively in order to continue practicing and exhibiting their work. Their production can provide a weighty witness to the times, as Perriam notes, a point I take up in this book, less from the position of how economic factors alone can shape cultural production with material limitations and contribute to emergent practices among artists, noted all too briefly here, than from that of questioning the *work* that cultural production accomplishes as it imagines worlds shaped by conditions and possibilities for change from the sociopolitical circumstances in which it materializes, at present.

What follows is an attempt to think through the relationships between cultural production and political culture in the urban milieu during this time of crisis. The gravity of the economic crisis and the still-emerging social mobilizations have incited a process of change that may yet amount to a paradigm shift, which raises the question of precisely how and why this is so. These essays aim to contribute modestly to this sense-making of the present circumstance in which over time, writes Lauren Berlant, "a process will eventually appear monumentally as form—as episode, event, or epoch [—] while living in the stretched out 'now' that is at once intimate and estranged" (2008, 5). At my time of writing, the essays take up this line of inquiry from a present sensed as one enduring historic change at great speed, for both everyday life in urban centers in Spain and possibly for scholarship on interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary Spanish culture, politics, and society. In this sense, they have also been written from a sense of urgency in order to address Spain's crisis, neoliberalism, and the relationships between culture and politics at present, particularly where I view my own teaching and scholarship striving for the tools to address the current conjuncture. First drafted between September 2012 and February 2014, they date from the adoption of Spain's deepest cutbacks to social programs in its democratic history, to elected officials' first proclaimed indications of an economic recovery, the social effects of which have yet to be seen. To place a date on these essays is, referring to the work of interpretation in the following pages, to situate them within the circumstance of their production at a time moving with great speed.

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crisis, the mass demonstrations consolidated after May 15, 2011, known as the 15M movement, drew unexpected multitudes of protesters before the local and regional elections. Outrage and the slogan "¡No somos mercancía en manos de políticos y banqueros!" [We're not goods in the hands of politicians and bankers!], were understood to be the common denominators among protesters, called the *indignadxs*—the angry ones.[1] Demonstrators occupied public plazas and raised self-managed encampments throughout Spanish cities, communicating among them through social networks, cell phones, and the web. Mobilizing against the government's austerity measures, rising unemployment, political corruption, restrictive copyright laws, among numerous other reasons, the protesters endured confrontations with the police through passive resistance and the National Election Board's verdict that declared the demonstrations illegal. By mid-June, protesters in Madrid's kilometer zero at La Puerta del Sol lifted the encampment voluntarily, for the 15M movement had transformed into a network of local assemblies and working groups coordinating sustained actions, which since then have received widespread sympathizers across demographics (Sampedro and Lobera, 2014). Across Spain to date, self-organized networks of civilians have stopped forced evictions for homeowners and the deportation of immigrants, rallied against privatization and cutbacks to public education and healthcare, and organized debates, textbook exchanges, and neighborhood film screenings, to name a few lines of action. Though unexpected, May 2011 marked an event that reinvigorated direct democratic participation in public affairs in which according to Spanish public television (TVE), an estimated 6 to 8.5 million residents in Spain had participated to some degree in a matter of three months ("Más de seis millones," 2011).

Although Spanish cities served as their *stages* for protest, the 15M demonstrations likewise *transformed* the urban environment through oppositional practices that released the potential for common production in assembly, experimental problem solving, and concerted action toward change. As the primary civilian response to Spain's compounded crises, the 15M mobilizations have forcefully "irrumpido desde la primavera de 2011 como un actor nuevo en la ciudad" [irrupted as a new actor in the city ever since the spring of 2011] (Observatorio Metropolitano, 2013, 171). I take as my point of departure the premise that multitudes in 15M and its derivations have proved capable of reshaping urban space through oppositional practices in assembly and protest—configured in their fixed encampments and swarmlike movements in the city, their performed gestures and chants, their standoffs

before the police and parliament, their networked actions and sensible intensities, all matters explored in this book.

In the urban setting, 15M and its derivatives have reappropriated and resignified space (Sampedro and Sánchez, 2011), that is, they have produced space toward the protesters' aims at once *within* and *in opposition to* the existing capital flows and regulatory policies of the city. Although the protesters' reshaping of the city may be precarious, forever on the shore of its own disappearance, to paraphrase Jacques Rancière (2010, 39), what persist when demonstrators no longer occupy the square, and when the urban milieu may succumb again to routine commerce, private enterprise, and property speculation, are the transformative practices of protesters who *read* their common subjugation critically and, in the process, make the sources of domination *legible* as a collective circumstance, with material consequences. There exists no one material that is read and made readable in these practices but an array of singularities bound together by the common circumstances of production across them, in the sinews between them. Protesters read and denounce the processes of gentrification and privatization in the urban landscape, rhetoric on austerity circulating in the media by government officials and policy makers, precarious conditions of everyday work-life, economic-political consensuses forged against the interests of the represented, social inequalities recast in media analysis as the personal failings of the poor, and so forth. Reading, it seems, plays an important role in constituting and reconstituting multitudes that mobilize toward change.

What are the mechanics of these readings? How are they produced, and what work they *do* across different publics? An inquiry into the relationships among oppositional readings in 15M, or the question of what holds these critical practices together and what makes them tick, is one main line of investigation in this book. In approach, this work examines the mechanics of how these readings are practiced in form and function as the urban landscape is reshaped in protest, and, conversely, what demonstrators can and have accomplished collectively as their practices articulate desires for change—taken up together, the *poetics* of oppositional practices at my time of writing.

II.

Each chapter of *Poetics of Opposition in Contemporary Spain: Politics and the Work of Urban Culture* explores the relationships between culture and the political in an attempt to understand how the former works

through current change and imagined alternatives, with their shortcomings and liberating possibilities, from a present in which government officials and policy makers have denied repeatedly the existence of any alternative, at all. Across the chapters, the project explores the practices of urban protest in Madrid, the roles of affect/emotion in demonstrations, and the critical activity of "reading the crisis" by protesters, as part and parcel of the urban transformations in the public square. The analytical drift of this line of research interrogates how creation, or the poetics of the cultural production examined in each case study, configures both the liberating and policing functions of the current circumstance within the prevailing powers that shape, in part, the real. Culture, it seems, accomplishes a kind of immeasurable, uncountable work for viewers and readers in critical opposition to a pervasive "political rationality that tries to render the social domain economic" amid the neoliberal governance of contemporary times (Lemke, 2001, 203).

Readers interested in an overview of the global and Spanish crises since 2007–8 will find these matters addressed in chapter 1, Lessons Felt, Then Learned, which approaches the role of affects/emotions, among them outrage, as potentially mobilizing forces for the 15M demonstrations. Although "anger" and other emotions could easily be regarded as the personal feelings of protesters, I caution against this presumption by exploring the collective circumstance of their production in times of austerity. Sketching out a system of thought on the crisis, the chapter examines official state discourse on austerity during the tenure of socialist (PSOE) and conservative (PP) rule, which draws from "humility," shame in "living beyond one's means," and "the honorability of sacrifice" whereby policy aims are asserted as an intimately personal matter. Considering the frequency and volume of these iterations in circulation in the media, and their potential emotional pull, this chapter lays the basis for further discussion on neoliberal governance and the oppositional practices of protesters, respectively. In doing so, I address existing scholarship on how affects, emotions, and feelings are produced, and their potential role in moving actors to take action in political mobilization.

The second part of the chapter examines Gregorio Apesteguía's free-verse poems published in literary fanzines, which situate readers in an imagined future after a financial collapse. The poetic voice registers the detached experiences of an automated life in the postcrisis city—among them, precarity, insolvency, and commercial desire. Apesteguía's verse exploits what Franco "Bifo" Berardi calls the immeasurable "process of emancipating language and affects" in poetry and the sensory

experience privileged in poetic voice, against the accountable financialization of the economy in which almost everything, even emotion in marketing strategies, is capitalized upon for calculable profits (2012, 16). The present of an immeasurable social catastrophe, it seems, cannot be charted by the forecasting logic of capital accumulation, which works to destabilize any affirmation on positive economic recovery. In verse, Apesteguía's poetry turns to "others" by viewing their condition as one's own under the rule of capital, which provides the mechanics for the poetic "I's" eventual transformation that has this voice recognize its own voluntary participation in sustaining "The Great Fraud" and financial collapse. In this *becoming-other* for the poetic voice, to take stock of the present is also to provide an emancipatory knowledge for change, one that must be committed to remembrance of the present crisis in posterity.

Ángel Luis Lara described the encampment raised by 15M demonstrators as a miniature "city within a city" in Madrid's La Puerta del Sol (2012, 652). Requiring ample space, chapter 2 also takes the form of a mini-book within this book in order to address the 15M Sol encampment's practices of protest and assembly, the role of affect/emotion in them, and their shaping of the urban milieu in 2011. In it, I pay particular attention to the plural responses from protesters who read critically and refused the official state discourse on the crisis amid the deteriorating conditions of life in the economic downturn. In the protest actions and banners of the *indignadxs*, there is no one subject position that can be claimed to produce these oppositional statements, of course, which rather form a field of discursive production from multiple positions, as a *practice* of reading among many. In one possible approach to the 15M protests, then, I examine the demonstrators' language and performative actions in assembly as a form of *oppositional literacy* (or, a knowledge and practice of reading) that bears the possibility for transformation examined in Ross Chambers's *Room for Maneuver* (1991). Chambers interrogates the oppositional practice of *reading* as a cognitive one of self-education capable of producing changes in desire and, thus, desirable change. In 15M, taught and learned from one another in assembly, and by doing things together without the need for formal education, the knowledges and practices of oppositional readings (or, "literacy") might confront academic endeavors with a challenge to reassess the task of criticism in order to account for the transformative capacity of what is already being practiced in the streets.

Reflecting on the lessons of the 1968 uprisings in Paris, Chambers tempers the claims made by Deleuze and Guattari that resistance can

escape *outside* the existing structures of power (the "line of flight"). One might also look to the experience of modern history in the West from the French Revolution to twentieth-century totalitarianisms, or elsewhere in the world, to observe that as resistance struggles secured positions of power they tended to reproduce the very regimes of violence, repression, and terror that their followers sought to topple. Chambers proposes a nuanced understanding of how critical interpretation, in narrative reception and address, partakes in an oppositional practice capable of producing desired change *within* predominant power structures that, in turn, can shape them. The effect that oppositional reading has, in practice, is one that shows power to be relational and necessarily mediated wherever it lays a claim to its authority. Extrapolating from Chambers's argument, in the first instance, to read oppositionally is to question from the reader's subject position how desires are shaped or repressed by the prevailing structures of power, that is, to conceive of their authority as necessarily mediated in order to become "an object of interpretation" (*Room for Maneuver*, 179). And secondly, once the latter are constructed with readability, it is to articulate oppositional maneuvers in speech and action within these predominant power relations, thereby mitigating them wherever they work to repress or police the possible.

To argue this point, I look to different scenes of readerly activities in the 15M protests, and their mechanics, that respond to authority with oppositionality in speech, space, and affective intensity: first, in the demonstrators' critiques of how existing powers (political, economic, financial) shape the conditions of life at present and, then, in the liberating possibilities of collectively imagining and creating alternatives that maneuver these conditions wherever they are identified for producing a policing or repressive function. Opposition to authority, notes Chambers, is discursive in part, in which "'narrative' opposition [. . .] has as its distinguishing feature the power of 'authority' to affect people, mentally and emotionally, and by that means to change states of affairs in general" (1991, 12). The forms of opposition, nonviolence, and care developing in assembly procedure and the protests, in this light, consist in what Deleuze and Guattari understood as a *minoritarian politics* capable of transforming the majority in opposition to it. In afterword, the section closes with an audiovisual analysis of the televised 2011 General Election campaign by the conservative Partido Popular (PP) that would secure an absolute majority in parliament. Notably, the campaign evokes emotions for change and "hope" without stating an explicit platform, other than through its "warm" values on perseverance and industriousness amid difficult times. My hope is that these

reflections on 15M and its oppositional practices can contribute to analyzing some of the mechanics and defining features of the mobilizations as one possible take on the events of 2011, without intending to speak for or "represent" the movement.

In closure, chapter 2 addresses the inheritance of Spain's *Transición* from dictatorship to democracy through a critique of the Culture of Transition and its consensuses—among them, the bipartisan turn between socialist and conservative rule—challenged by the practices of 15M. I explore the urban performance *Los encargados* by Santiago Sierra and Jorge Galindo, of a Situationist bent, in which the video recording of a simulated presidential motorcade down Madrid's Gran Vía calls into question the relationship between spectators (pedestrians) and state security in urban space. The spectacle of democracy critiqued in this intervention, as Spain's heads of state since the *Transición* parade solemnly down Madrid's emblematic boulevard, resides in the spatial distance between citizens (spectators) and the state (the motorcade), and the latter's ceremonious demonstration of power and security—indeed immunity—over the interests of its constituents. The mechanics of what the parade accomplishes in sight, sound, and space are examined for the contradictions that arise when reading the parade through the lens of political ideology.

From the pressing need to address neoliberal policies, among them austerity, chapter 3 endeavors to analyze the governing logics of neoliberalism and some myth-making assertions around the policies that call for the autonomous self-care of the population through private investments. In Spain, as elsewhere, rhetoric on neoliberal policies often justifies privatization initiatives and reduced public expenditures—generally, the dismantling of the welfare state—as an intensely personalized matter that upholds "empowering" narratives on enterprise, equal opportunity, and economic self-sufficiency for life. This chapter revisits Michel Foucault's lectures on the biopolitics of neoliberalism, in the history of the twentieth-century equation between free-market policies and democratic freedoms, and since the time of his lectures, in recent attempts to pin together, metonymically, certain social judgments about welfare, un/employment, and the model behaviors of an ideal economic subject (*homo oeconomicus*). That model behaviors and values for the population are crafted around neoliberal policy aims, it can be said, operates as a *dispositif* to correct others and oneself in alignment with the discourse of power. Informed by an extensive review of the publications from neoliberal think tanks in Spain, among them the Fundación para el Análisis y Estudios Sociales (FAES) that guides the policy agendas

for the ruling PP, this reading does not intend to be exhaustive but to generate some critical tools in order to approach the social production of neoliberal thought operating beyond, and conversely in relation to, state policy aims—or, their biopolitics.

Aside from the oppositional practices of protest, what happens in everyday life amid austerity when it seems that, generally, not much is happening at all? To close the chapter, I look to Nophoto's collective photography project *El último verano* on downward mobility, precarity, and emigration. Drawing from Lauren Berlant's writings on the *impasse*, I read how these photos expose *la crisis* through the subject's affective attachments to perceptible losses and then in strategies for survival developed amid an ongoing crisis. To take stock of the present at an impasse, I argue, is to immerse oneself in a strong sense of temporality in which induced change and loss destabilize the present, evoking senses of return, nostalgia, future projection, escapist fantasy, and anxieties about projected risk. In Nophoto's photographs, the composite character of this project indexes plural ways of viewing times of crisis that assemble a collective, shared circumstance of everyday life amid austerity. The indexical character of the photographs, which has them move from capture to the *production* of such effects in viewers, muddies any strict dichotomy between the viewing subject and viewed photograph in ways that tend to suggest, as David Levi Strauss (2003, 23) has noted, that images "exist and operate on an axis of selection meaningful in relation to other photographs in proximity," and perhaps in relation to other viewers, too.

Reading and (il)legibility is the main thrust of the final essay, in chapter 4, House Rules, in which I read stage theater and the impunity of political and capital interests in the Spanish state at my time of writing. To begin, I propose rethinking political theorist Carl Schmitt's classic formulation of the "state of exception" in an attempt to account for the current practices of *selective exemption* and self-impunity in the Spanish State for measures that are paradoxically called "exceptional" even as they escape Schmitt's historical definition of sovereign exceptionalism. Some of these undemocratic measures include parliamentary mandate by decree, the cancellation of the State of the Nation debate, parliament's refusal to hold public hearings for corruption charges, the conservative party's purging of journalists from Spanish public television and radio (RTVE), and recent laws that criminalize protest, to name a few. Returning to Nicos Poulantzas's writings on state authoritarianism amid the economic crisis of the 1970s, I propose straying from Poulantzas's original proposals to reconsider the current conjuncture as a form of

(il)legible exception that, instead, could perhaps be understood more accurately as a plural, micropolitical field of struggle against the practices of selective exemption and impunity within and beyond the state.

Questioning how desires for transformation alone are not enough to enact substantive change, the book concludes with a discussion of Abel Zamora's stage-play *Temporada baja* and his microtheater production *Pequeños dramas sobre arena azul*. In both works, I explore how Zamora invites his audience to view the characters' frustrated, unrealized desires for change and the missed encounters among them, as conditioned by the prevailing structures of power (social class, gender, sexuality) that speak through the characters' interactions. Policing each other and themselves, the characters expose for the audience their own participation in conditioning possibilities for substantive change, even paradoxically, against their own desires. The characters' inability to read their relationships to each other and to the modern hotel they inhabit, or the *non-place* that frames their encounters, per Marc Augé, leaves them largely atomized from each other, pigeonholed and incapable of viewing their collective circumstance in this tightly controlled space of surveillance. The prevailing structures of power, then, are not presented as abstract conditions for these exchanges but are located in the characters' actions and speech, and in their own participation in reifying the disciplinary forces of their environment.

Poetics in literary and cultural analysis, writes Justin Crumbaugh, is eclipsed, if not subsumed by a contemporary interest in *praxis*, often privileged as the social and political nexus to a given work's circumstance of production by standards of authorship (2012, 41–53). The attribution of authorly responsibility for creation, notes Crumbaugh in his reading of Marx—that is, the individualization of the creative act in industrial and advanced capitalism—tends to collapse creative production (*poiesis*) into authorly decision and intention (*praxis*) in the modern cult for an attributable subject responsible for creation itself.[2] For Marx, notes Crumbaugh, to ignore the collective character of production (*poiesis*) is also to disregard its transmutative possibilities in which *poiesis* can not only transform the makers in the process, but also the material and social environment of production itself; that is, it is to overlook the entangled character of practice and creation, never in diametric opposition, as a transformative process of "consciousness" (for Marx) upon which work depends. Tracing a brief but excellent comprehensive overview of *poiesis* in Aristotle, Marx, and Agamben, Crumbaugh proposes revisiting poetics in critical analysis, then, as a way of considering creation "un fenómeno radicalmente desindividualizado" [a radically

de-individualized phenomenon], capable of suspending "la subjetividad moderna y [abrir] paso a otros esquemas conceptuales y nuevas condiciones de posibilidad" [modern subjectivity and opening ways to other conceptual schematics and new conditions of possibility] (2012, 42). Or, to restate Crumbaugh's proposal for my scope here, an endeavor into poetics would require, on certain terms, forms of analysis that take into account the transformative capacity of creation and practice wherever the capitalist mode of production serves to represses *poiesis* (and its possibilities to engender *becomings*) from *praxis*.

An inquiry into poetics, as I refer to the term here, supposes approaching cultural production, in part, as an ensemble of operations and mechanics that have produced a given work and, in turn, *can work on* viewers and readers as a kind of device. In this way, I analyze these operative parts, at times, for how political rhetoric slides together concepts (metonymically) from one to the next in order to pin them together in the social imaginary, for how oppositional readings by protesters are performed into existence or displaced (in metaphor), and for the ways in which demonstrators assemble a string of ideas together (polysyndeton) to express desirable change across conjunctions. It also requires, at times, taking a look at how visual and narrative stories on the crisis fit together and speak to each other (indexically). What the work of culture can do, on the other hand, bears no specific formula, of course, and it requires a turn to its context of production and reception, which can never be a total or complete endeavor. But nor does the context of reception presume the critical activity of reading as a form of passive intake. Rather, the work of culture viewed or read, heard or perhaps even consumed, is not conceived of as an object per se, but as the result of an assembled configuration of processes in which reception of its so-called product likewise configures multiplicities of readings from its mediated context of reception. This result of what viewers may see and hear, read and interpret, is not an end-object itself, but another assembled moment in movement, of processes of delivery and reception that bear possibilities for interpretation within the subject-object world in which it is reassembled (or, in interpretation). Implied in the language of the term, the *work of culture*, then, moves from the object of study as an isolated "work" or product, to the relational processes of production in the *work* that it can accomplish for readers and viewers in different contexts—its mechanisms *at work*—as a device that questions possibilities for change.

The politics of dissent today, as well as the collective projects forged in opposition to decried injustices, may have carved out an alternative

regime of signification in contemporary Spain. This observation is not an abstraction but rather bears material forms, such as those processes of change "enfleshed" in city areas transformed by protests and mobilizations defending the public "right to the city" (Feinberg, 2014, 8–10, 14). Much like the city, shaped and reshaped materially in relation to and conversely by inhabitants, the production of culture can be said to bear some traces of this resignifying process. Cultural production, particularly that of an alternative urban bent, partakes in these critical practices by imagining the very conditions of possibility and limitations for desired change. And much like the resignified city, this production (fanzine poetry, video performance, collective photography, stage- and microtheater) explores changes that must necessarily embark from what is already being practiced at present, from at once *within* and *in opposition to* the predominant power relations shaping everyday life. Cultural production, then, is not simply an expression or representation, but shows itself as bearing some working parts and mechanisms of this resignifying process *as* it resignifies. First, though, what were the 15M protests, and how have these demonstrations been read by others?

III.

"Nobody Expects the Spanish Revolution" reads one sign from a widely circulated photograph of the first 15M demonstrations. In it, a protester masked as Guy Fawkes from the film *V for Vendetta* offers a political twist to Monty Python's comedy sketch ("Nobody Expects the Spanish Inquisition!"), for a movement characterized by its seriousness of action and occasional irony of forms. In protests, demonstrators have used the term "spontaneous" to describe their actions when interviewed by the media, as have commentators and journalists. Its usage, however, implicitly skirts the difficulties that arise in any attempt to describe a field of possibilities, actions, and contingencies from which mass mobilizations emerge seemingly overnight, gain supporters, lose them, and disappear from public view until the next demonstration appears visibly in the streets. Spontaneity and its many synonyms have become the shorthand to describe the time with which the May 2011 protests irrupted with great intensity and specific demands, in an unexpected tempo of "sudden" emergence.

In some sense-making narratives on the spontaneous character of 15M, the search to pinpoint the movement's origins contributes indirectly to portraying the multitude as an anomaly—unusual, out-of-the-blue, and destined to disappear in due time—thereby taming it through

prediction. In others, readings rely on the operative concepts in liberal democracy and class struggle to explain a movement that problematizes these analytical frameworks. And for many protesters, spontaneity is a powerful choice of words to express the incalculability of the multitude's actions against the speech of government officials who attempt to criminalize the demonstrations in public opinion. In all cases, however, the use of the word "spontaneous" grazes over the field of contingencies from which the protests emerged.

Here, I set out to address how some news media, official state discourse, and critiques on the 15M phenomenon have portrayed or analyzed the movement through operations that tend to assimilate its sudden emergence and intensity within specific logics that somehow fail to explain it. The shortcomings of these readings may speak more to the methodological displacements required to analyze mobilizations or the conventions of class struggle and liberal democracy, than to the authors' own responsibility for them. In this regard, by reading them against their moment of production, one may begin to articulate a narrative over time of how 15M was interpreted from different perspectives in its first few months of existence in order to arrive at a discussion of what critical tools are available to understand its emergence. After all, 15M is a critical moment that questions operative notions of the public, the media and digital culture, and direct democratic participation in ways that exceed institutional knowledge of the kind deployed in state decision making, all of which entails revisiting the ways in which 15M *has been read*.

One of the earliest substantial attempts to make sense of the spontaneity of the 15M movement is that of journalist Alicia G. Montano, director of *Informe Semanal* (TVE) news program at that time (2011). Delivered less than four months after the first demonstrations in Madrid, G. Montano's exposition is a necessary interpretation of the movement's origins and consequences for partisan politics. The events of 15M proved powerful enough to require politicians to address mass demonstrations that had spoken first with the cry "¡No nos representan!" [They don't represent us!], in great numbers, and then with specific demands for government officials. G. Montano's analysis cites footage from *Informe Semanal* dating to April 2011 in order to explain the economic conditions that laid the foundations for the protests in May, as well as the organization and literature that influenced protesters. Moving through the backdrop of the financial crisis, she traces the first appearance of the 15M movement in part to the unemployed university-educated founders of Democracia Real Ya! (Real Democracy

Now! – DRY), one of many platforms participating in 15M, and the great influence of Stéphane Hessel's bestseller *¡Indignaos!* [Time for Outrage!] published in Spanish translation in 2010. In his timely reflection, Hessel speaks to his readers as the surviving author of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, calling for peaceful insurrection against human rights violations today, specifically, on the discriminatory laws of European states against immigrants and the military offenses against civilians in the Middle East. Reading 15M through Hessel's influence, then, G. Montano's analysis and dual attribution—on the one hand, to a university-educated leadership core, and on the other, to a human rights guru calling for peaceful insurrection—is spoken from specific coordinates in time. This analysis dates to the end of summer 2011, after the Sol encampment was lifted, when the movement had not yet demonstrated its endurance with sustained actions over the year; when public speculation wondered if 15M would turn into a political party; and when its participants were likewise faced with a potential reinsertion into everyday routine in the fall season. In this sense, my reading of G. Montano's analysis takes into account both the operation that must identify the materialization of a movement with definitive leaders and a specific literature, and the time of her reading the movement against its potential disappearance.

However involuntarily, to assign the movement leaders and locatable origins recasts 15M as a replicated extension of class struggles and positions within civil society. For, although it is clear that the reported name given to the *indignadxs* shares the title of Hessel's manifesto, it is not certain that demonstrators in late May 2011 found in Hessel their very reason to join the protests, or if a significant number had read his work before migrating to the encampments. At the root of this operation is a direct cause-effect relation, which shuttles from circumstance to production, from Hessel's bestseller to direct action, in a suture that explains the multitude's sudden mobilization. As does the necessity of locating a specific origin for the movement in a leadership core, which known with greater clarity in hindsight was dispersed among multiple platforms with different causes, addressed in chapter 2. At my time of writing as then, the governing norms of debate and organizational structures of 15M rely on mechanisms that actively disable the concentration of power within a specific leadership, as its popular assemblies and working groups are open to all participants whose administrative responsibilities rotate among volunteers. It would seem as though a first analysis, spoken from a specific time inflected by the movement's potential reinsertion into daily routine, or its presumed transformation

into a party, would find in 15M a microscale reproduction of civil society's hierarchies engaged in class struggle: a certain cohesion among the socially stratified masses, an educated elite at the helm, and an influential text. To stretch this comparison in terms translatable to the state, the movement is seen through a lens that likens its components to a class alliance, a party, and an ideology, all of which constitute the analytical tools of institutional hegemony and political strategy in state theory, for a movement that at that time resisted both institutionalism and the standing system of partisan politics. G. Montano's important analysis, in my view, is inflected by the circumstance from which it was produced and the operative procedures required to assimilate its inexplicable spontaneity and direction. This reading that tends to normalize the movement within class struggle "as usual" is spoken from the time of its possible disappearance or institutionalization as its participants again assimilated into everyday routine after summer 2011.

Departing from G. Montano's analysis then, one can begin to approximate a concept of the *multitude* that has since proved resilient to class definition and institutional structuring within the existing partisan channels. In their work *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue that the accelerated distribution of labor in advanced capitalism and its de-territorializing effects have contributed to new forms of transversal solidarity across workers in different sectors and classes. Such solidarity among socioeconomic segments and labor sectors certainly describes the composite picture of the multitude of protesters and participants in 15M, who in demographic terms, come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and labor markets. Ultimately, Hardt and Negri (2005, 107) explain, this potential for cross-segment solidarity stems from the regime of productivity in late capitalism in which all workers participate, whether by providing services or manual labor. Whereas notions of class difference and class alliance may have been fundamental concepts to explain past labor struggles, today the lack of political priority for forms of labor in advanced capitalism bears the potential to render this distinction a secondary consideration to all workers' productivity. That is, despite class difference, workers share in common their proletarian condition as laborers and producers. Therefore, "the multitude is an open and expansive concept. The multitude gives the concept of the proletariat its fullest definition as all those who labor and produce under the rule of capital." This is not to say that the social production of class difference is erased in the multitude, but that one point of transversal solidarity binding its multiplicity together resides in the collective recognition of

a shared exploitation (one source of outrage) and common production in assembly. As such, the encampment in Sol had achieved a creative accomplishment for common production: it suspended the rhythms of everyday life in the open plaza, reconfiguring its functionality as a space for protest, dialog, reflection, and collective labors for the demonstrators' plural aims (Corsín Jiménez and Estalella, 2013; Sánchez Cedillo, 2012).

Perhaps it is this creative potential of the demonstrations, together with the movement's aims, which has led some academic criticism to construe a form of humanist ethos from 15M. In this vein, another critical contribution on the movement within months of its appearance comes from the architect Cristina García-Rosales and professor of philosophy Manuel Penella Heller (2011, 66) in their coauthored work *Palabras para indignados. Hacia una nueva revolución humanista* [Words for the *Indignados*. Toward a New Humanist Revolution], which projects 15M as a revitalizing project for liberal humanism. As such, the spontaneity of the movement is erased through a procedure that grafts it within a homogeneous, historical time. As the title implies, the text is addressed to both those interested in learning about the movement and those already participating in it, as a dual appeal to readers who might join or sympathize with its aims, on the one hand, and their education on the movement's humanist precedents, on the other. Constructing a "history of humanism" that originates in Greek stoicism and continues in Christianity, the Enlightenment, and antifascist resistance in the twentieth century, the authors build a philosophical and moral tradition for the movement through an astonishing act of imagining the community for the community, the very task upon which nation building has historically depended. Their project is borne from "la necesidad histórica de salvar la parte noble del liberalismo" [the historical need to save the noble part of liberalism] for the common good. If precedents for 15M exist, however, they are located in the *practices* of demonstrators and in the assemblies, which have brought together participants from both the antidictatorship struggles and a new generation of cyber activists, and draw from the established resistance movements of the 1970s Madrid Neighborhood Associations to the activist networks mobilizing in defense of the commons at present (La Parra-Pérez, 2014; Sampedro and Lobera, 2014; Vilaseca, 2014).

Nevertheless, to describe 15M as a phenomenon arising from a historical tradition of humanism—and to inscribe the movement within a revitalized liberal project rooted in "where we came from"—performs however unintentionally a sleight of hand that reintroduces

the movement within the logical schematics of modernity's most exclusionary machinery: liberal notions of the "common good" and humanist universalisms that slip dangerously into moral judgment. The myth-making that ensues in *Palabras para indignados* finds its justification in the sutured, homogeneous narrative of a timeless humanist history across millennia. The text in this sense proposes a return to projects past without a critical take on their violent, exclusionary results in history. Stated otherwise, any proposal to return to the falsely universal axioms of humanism should confront its greatest critique in Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. García-Rosales and Penella Heller's work, however, is also written from a specific moment, published within six months of May 2011, and as such proves important for its attempt to foster the movement's expansion through interpretation, in which sympathizers will find reasons to participate through identification, in this case, with a sense of timeless humanism. Yet, even as 15M's practices in assembly procedure and direct democracy break away from the conventions of liberalism, the authors' critical lens recaptures it as a new imagined community of the People, as a historically determined product grounded in two millennia of resistance struggles in the West.

As Hardt and Negri argue in their work *Empire*, the multitude differs from the concept of the People imagined historically in nation states:

> The multitude is a multiplicity, a plane of singularities, an open set of relations, which is not homogenous or identical with itself and bears an indistinct, inclusive relation to those outside of it. The people, in contrast, tends toward identity and homogeneity internally while posing its difference from and excluding what remains outside of it. Whereas the multitude is an inconclusive constituent relation, the people is a constituted synthesis that is prepared for sovereignty. The people provides a single will and action that is independent of and often in conflict with the various wills and actions of the multitude. Every nation must make the multitude into a people. (2000, 103)

The concept of the People in liberal democracy is inherently imagined from an exclusionary principle, required historically to define a nation, that constructs categories of difference to Others—with both interiority to its marginalized and exteriority to "foreign" peoples and nations. Conceived as a singular entity united by will, the People is constituted for and by the nation state as a collective subject of governance. As every nation state must mold the multitude into a People it can govern, the conditions of its subjecthood for rule are reproduced in a

social relation imagined as the governed who must be governable to the state. In 15M's refusal of this presumption, however, feelings of outrage and anger are named for a shared condition among protesters, produced from the sense that sovereignty has been usurped, specifically, by state decision making that has the burden of the financial crisis come to bear upon Spanish residents through cutbacks to social programs, healthcare, education, and so on, denounced in the slogan, "¡No pagaremos vuestras crisis!" [We won't pay for your crises!]. Though perhaps an inheritance from national projects past, today the state must govern the multitude as a collective subject, as the People. In contrast, however, the multitude is irreducible to a singular identity, subjectivity, or homogenizing principle, thereby bearing the possibility of constituting itself within a multiplicity of social relations by refusing collectively the sovereign "We" of this People. In doing so, the multitude deploys this "we" in a collective refusal of its condition as a subject (in this case, reduced to an object), "We are not goods in the hands of politicians and bankers!"

Among responses from the state, government officials were left with little recourse other than to comment on the mass protests, particularly during the final stretch of an election campaign. Among statements from the conservative Partido Popular (PP), Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría seconded the protesters' "indignation," recasting their outrage as a tool to criticize the ruling Socialist Party's responsibility (PSOE) for high unemployment rates,[3] while the PP's leader Mariano Rajoy, when pressed to comment on 15M, dismissed the protests as facile criticism of politicians.[4] Among candidates on the left, Tomás Gómez (PSOE) and Cayo Lara from Izquierda Unida (IU) both empathized publicly with the protesters' aims, contributing indirectly to a far-fetched conspiracy theory in the rightwing media that the ruling PSOE had engineered protests that were neither chance nor spontaneous (Seco et al., 2011; Cué, "Los indignados," 2011). On the other hand, President Zapatero of the ruling Socialist party (PSOE) expressed the need to listen and be sensitive to the demands of protesters, while stressing the need for a representative democracy with a party system (Cué and Díez, 2011). In different ways, despite much partisan finger-pointing, elected officials of all stripes found a form of appropriation in the mass mobilizations, either to seek potential votes in the coming elections or to bid lessons on conserving the status quo of the standing partisan system. In this way, President Zapatero's words indeed drove at the heart of a perceptible antagonism between the direct democracy of assembly procedure practiced in the 15M encampments and the representative democracy of the Spanish state that protesters claimed was in need of considerable reforms.

Tellingly, in the following months, the PSOE's presidential candidate Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba would elaborate the most direct response to the movement in his proposal for the "351st seat" in parliament, which would have allowed for one civilian representative to participate in parliamentary debates, an initiative that never came to fruition (Garea 2011). In theories on hegemony, Rubalcaba's proposal, at least in design, would have equated to an attempt to co-opt the movement into the existing representative channels, for participants in a movement who had largely refused their condition as the governed in the standing electoral system. In all cases, then, the public address of politicians demonstrated that institutional knowledge rested upon addressing the multitude from a hegemonic position toward the People, presumed naturally to be partisan voters of one political color or another in the standing party system. And in these cases, their language showed traces of the undeniable force with which the multitude had pronounced itself with great international projection. For, the presence and visibility of the demonstrations proved capable of interpellating politicians in a manner that incited a direct response to channel voter interests into partisan lines. These responses spoken from the Spanish State were not addressed to the multitude's positions of negation that had refused the deteriorating conditions of life and their status as "the represented" by the prevailing partisan system, but instead were articulated from a hegemonic position when speaking to the electorate, a potential constituency, as the People (Hardt and Negri, 2012).

Symptomatic of the need to make sense of the multitude's composite character, the mainstream news media offered countless portraits—photo reports, televised interviews, and news columns of an artistic and informative bent—of the individuals participating in the events of spring and summer 2011 (Alcaide, 2011; Gil, 2011; "Indignados," 2011; Santaeulalia et al., 2011). "Citizens demand rebuilding democracy," summarizes the title to one article in which protesters young and elder, employed and seeking work, lawyers and executives, teachers and students of different socioeconomic backgrounds, list their desires to change the present circumstance and construct a different future than the one envisioned by government officials (Alcaide, 2011). In a sense, the attention paid to the professions in the article may be said to underwrite an appeal for a middle-class readership to identify with 15M's aims. Similarly, the *El País* photo report released during the first encampment in Sol and, one year later, in the country-wide march to Madrid, may be read as evidence of a certain investigative necessity to describe not only the diversity of profiles and causes comprising

the "outraged" multitude, but their accumulative desires for change, written on notes, categorized by theme, and released for publication in the mainstream press (Comisión de Información, 2012; García de Blas, 2012). The chance for readers and viewers to identify with specific profiles and faces, diverse backgrounds, and reasons for joining the protests, speculatively, may have benefited the 15M movement to mobilize others, as much as it also speaks to a certain necessity to conceive of the multitude as a composite of desiring individuals, rather than an amorphous, ungovernable mass.

The desires for social change that characterized the demonstrations are conveyed in some news coverage on the initial protests. In one remarkable example, the opening sequence of *Informe Semanal*'s first report on the *Indignados* (broadcast May 21, 2011 and cited in G. Montano's analysis) displays a series of close-up shots of the faces of protesters, who open their eyes in a gesture of political awakening while the camera zooms into focus to show the outward appearance of diversity among its participants (figure I.1).

The narrator's voiceover is reinforced by sound clips from interviews with the *indignadxs* (to paraphrase the words of one protester, "it's a spontaneous movement without any political party," and another, "all of us learned about it on the Internet"), as the crescendo of Calexico's protest song "Victor Jara's Hands" is marked by accelerated camera shots of different faces. The camera then cuts to a fast-paced sequence and slow panorama of the massive concentrations in Sol. As a document to its time, the news clip is extraordinary, in my view, for having conveyed in this crescendo of song and image, the affective intensity with which the demonstrations took place. In this sense, the magnitude of

Figure I.1 15M portrayed as a political awakening. Sequence of still images from *Informe Semanal* (TVE), "Indignados," broadcast on 21 May 2011.

the protests, the creative productivity among unknown others who also desired change, and the suspension of disbelief in the first mobilizations are conveyed to viewers in the audiovisual sequence through a portrait of its most immeasurable feature: the intensity of its affect, of its ability to move and trigger movement in others. The audiovisual sequence does so, in part, through camera and editing work that builds in intensity by showing the rapid succession of scored images, which establishes a rhythm simulating a narrative arch, its climax and denouement in the thousands of protesters gathered in Sol. This sequence aptly conveys the time of the multitude's seemingly spontaneous appearance for its affective potential to stir awe or disbelief in viewers, which the report casts in a positive light as enthusiasm for uncertain change.

Now, in stark contrast to the affective intensity of the mass demonstrations and the encampments, there also exists a patent fear of the masses, evident in the political discourse about civilian protests since 2011. For government officials, particularly among the political right, the unpredictable appearance of mass demonstrations has stirred significant anxiety for its incalculable potential for action. This anxiety is made clear in the apocalyptic discourse of politicians who attempt to criminalize protesters as "radicals" and antisystem, violent types who desire "urban guerrilla warfare" and even "terrorism" (Gobierno de España, Congreso de los Diputados, 2012, 12–13). The potential ungovernability of multitudes that refuse the subjecthood of state rule can be said to reside at the core of legal provisions in response to these anxieties. This cataclysmic picture upheld by government officials not only infringes on the democratic right to demonstrate peacefully, but has materialized in the reforms to the Penal Code (Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Justicia, 2012). When proposed in 2012, the Judges for Democracy (JpD) spokesperson Joaquim Bosch denounced that these reforms criminalize certain forms of protest thereby turning "a social state to a penal state" (Fabra, 2012). Since passed into law, the Ley de Seguridad Ciudadana [Law of Citizen Security], commonly known as the "Gag Law," interprets passive resistance and other forms of protest as infractions punishable by prison and heavy fines, as it also outlaws demonstrations from raising encampments again, specifically, in La Puerta del Sol. Violent police interventions in demonstrations, as well as persecution and intimidation tactics used against organizers and the press attempting to cover them, have become increasingly commonplace at my time of writing.

The state response to the multitude further demonstrates that institutional political strategy continues to operate within the dualities of

hegemonic power by treating the multitude as a singular subject that must be forged into a People. The multitude, in other words, is a project for the state. It must be constructed in speech and law as the state's adversary, according to this logic, in which the People is a friend of the state insofar as it concedes to its subjecthood for state rule. This friend/enemy distinction is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the words of Valencia's Chief of Police Antonio Moreno, who refused to disclose to the press the number of security forces dispatched to disperse, by violent force, the secondary school teachers, parents, and students protesting cutbacks to education, since one should not "proporcionar esta información para el enemigo" [provide this information for the enemy] (Ferrandis, 2012). In response, however, demonstrators mobilized in opposition, proclaiming, "¡Yo también soy el enemigo!" [I too am the enemy!]. As government officials attempt to legitimize state authority through the bellicose friend/enemy distinction in speech, force, and law (Schmitt, 1996, 19–45), it paradoxically undermines the very legitimacy of democracy in the state. In this sense, when peaceful protesters use "spontaneous" to describe their actions, it proves an empowering gesture on the incalculability of the multitude. For, although this may not be the protesters' aim, the unpredictable time of the multitude's spontaneity destabilizes the state's potential to police effectively that as Chief Moreno exposes in his statement, is required for the state's own administrative time-cycle to produce a calculated response with political and policing strategy.

Moving toward a conclusion, then, it seems that different narrative logics aiming to make sense of the 15M movement and its spontaneous character have tended to analyze the phenomenon through the lens of liberal democracy, class struggle, and hegemonic power, assuming that the movement operates within a certain conceptual domain that it tended to resist in its first few months of existence. Surely, the political strategy deployed by the state to forge the multitude into an enemy and thereby reconstitute its legitimacy of rule for the People, demonstrates that its operative power-knowledge rests on engaging the multitude from a hegemonic institutional position. However, the transversal solidarity that characterizes the composite multitude (understood as a cross-sector and -class proletariat) and the production of its temporal and affective incalculability, tend to overflow the conventions of analytical frameworks required to explain it. The multitude's emergence and crystallization into an operative network for mobilization constitutes an event that exceeds institutional knowledge on governability, in which state powers respond, noted by sociologist Manuel Castells, with

coercion and the construction of (negative) meaning in people's minds, if not fear (*Networks,* 2012, 5–7).

What escapes these analytical procedures is a critique of how a given mobilization first crystallizes and manifests itself visibly, undeniably present, with force. Here the force to which I refer is specifically bound to an action (protest) and subsequent demand, summarized largely as that of the multitude's collective, plural grievances against the Spanish state for its pursuit of neoliberal policies and the elite who benefit from them, explored in subsequent chapters. Articulated with increasing complexity in the wake of 15M, the movement's proposals and actions call for significant reforms to both the structure of the state and its policy positions, which constructively question directly or indirectly, democratic sovereignty itself. Furthermore, although the actions and demands of 15M have been articulated with particularity to the Spanish state, they also respond directly to the increasingly exclusionary consequences of austerity, privatization, and widening class disparity as a systemic crisis, which—as all power is a paradox—strengthen the movement's potential solidarity within a network of other groups that make likeminded claims articulated from the local and regional.

Passing, then, from the first mass mobilizations to common production, 15M and its many derivations have since materialized into plural demands, actions, and operative working groups in Spain. Its political survival—or, rather, its constant transformation to *becoming* something other than it was—resides in the crystallization of operative horizontal governance (structure), sustained by the inclusive debates of popular assemblies, commissions, and working groups that generate specific demands and proposals (enunciations and actions) on a local level. It is this particularity of the local that may be the movement's greatest motor for continued action and community involvement in which a sense of common ownership of the public (public space, services, education, healthcare, and so on) constitutes its transversal solidarity with similar actions organized in defense of shared, inclusive public ownership and rights on a regional and international scale. Its nonhierarchical, networked structure endows the movement with its possibility to reenact mobilization with new initiatives, proposals, and demands. This has been achieved with remarkably great speed as the movement transforms continuously, and as such, so do its trajectories of proposed actions and the locations of its enunciations. They emerge from a diverse range of collectives and individuals within and beyond the so-called movement, from platforms, neighborhood associations, parents and teachers, state employees, and so on. It is, after all, organized within a networked

social field in constant flux, in motion, in contradiction, which the sociologist Manuel Castells has aptly suggested, in language he attributes to a 15M protester, as bearing the form of a rhizome ("12M#15M," 2012; *Networks*, 2012, 110–55).[5]

Following the 1968 uprisings, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari theorize some of the organic properties of the *rhizome* as a conceptual model to understand social interconnectivity and the seemingly unlimited maneuvers provided by its distribution. The rhizome is conceived as a multidimensional space in which any point may be connected to any other with networked, heterogeneous multiplicity; thus, unlike the roots of a tree, the rhizome grows horizontally in lines and curves, and tends to be resilient to the structuring of rigid hierarchies within it. Resisting specific coordinates, its properties are never static or total, but bear the possibility of transformation through motion and contact, a moving-through with no specific beginning or end. The rhizome is always both the middle from which it grows and *in medias res*, exceeding the trajectories from which it grew. When a line within the rhizome comes into contact with a separate plane, its properties transform to become something else but not wholly other, in a trajectory that bears the possibility of constant metamorphosis, that is, a *becoming-other*. Organically speaking, the rhizome cannot be reduced to a single element within it, nor can its multiplicity be traced to a single origin. "It is not a multiple derived from the one, or to which one is added (n+1). It is comprised not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion. [. . .] It constitutes linear multiplicities with *n* dimensions having neither subject nor object, which can be laid out on a plane of consistency, and from which the one is always subtracted (n-1)" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 21). Abstracted in mathematical terms, n-1 is the formula of multiplicity and difference in the rhizome, in contrast to a purely accumulative principle (n+1).[6]

Viewed through Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual model, the rhizomatic form of 15M's organization is indeed cited within some of the communication platforms related to the movement, notably the self-managed N-1 network. Named after Deleuze and Guattari's principle of subtraction that gives way to multiplicity in the rhizome, N-1 is an open-source platform for registered users (called "inhabitants") to share documents, audiovisuals, and archived resources, to establish self-managed working groups, and to disseminate information among other inhabitants. Its subtraction consists in its parallel structure to, and removal from, other social networks (such as Facebook, Twitter, Tuenti), allowing for specific organizational initiatives to develop in

communication within it and in dissemination to other public sites, social networks, and webs. Activities on N-1 develop in tandem with, and separately from, 15M and other participants in international movements, as well as the former's public domains: the documentation center maintained in collaboration with MediaLab Prado, the launching of the 15M-pedia, the development of WikiLibro, the operative network of popular assemblies across Spain and their activities on the TomaLaPlaza web, and a long list of etceteras. Within this networked fabric, the "spontaneity" with which initiatives may be articulated and enacted in any given local node of activity, with any precise quantification of its total magnitude within and among these or other domains, is incalculable to administrative logics that require temporal precision and specific measure.

The following chapters are dedicated in part to a brief, incomplete account of 15M that attempts to map the "force" of outrage arising from the circumstance of the crisis, to the movement's crystallization as a structure of horizontal governance. On a precautionary note, however, all contemporary activism in Spain should not be attributed to the organizational structures of the 15M movement as though the notion of the multitude has only one voice and site of activity, rather than a plurality of enunciations. Nor should the heterogeneous, composite character of the 15M movement be reduced to one unified platform or entity, or a static structure. It would be an impossible and mostly undesirable task to grasp a totality of the so-called movement, a term I try to use sparingly hereafter, for its multiple particularities in the local and its diverse actions coordinated within its virtual and physical assemblage of networks. These points are ultimately what make the 15M phenomenon difficult to pinpoint, as it slips into a transformative field of social relations on the move. Here, I focus exclusively, at the risk of reductionism, on the urban site of Madrid as one networked node of activity, itself an intensely plural site of networked activity, which should not be collapsed into the entirety of 15M per se. Nevertheless, the local and regional interconnectivity of platforms, commissions, and working groups has become the sort of channel for an operative plurality of demands that productively revitalize direct democratic participation at my time of writing.

I hoped to have shown briefly here that the question of reading the multitude's "sudden" emergence escapes the terms used to describe, and sometimes can contribute to confining by prescriptive language, a phenomenon that resisted assimilation into some normalizing discourses projected upon it. Instead, as in the following chapters, I look

to the protesters' actions and language from which, potentially, cultural analysis can learn. How to read the transformations implicit in an act of becoming, on the other hand, while related to this matter, would require questioning critically the act of reading and, informing this activity, the analytical tools already known to readers. In this sense, paying attention to the act of reading and to the conclusions it provides, can point to the ways in which analysis is undergirded by power-knowledge. I should like to suggest throughout this book, then, that the political instance of the 15M phenomenon might also entail a crisis of interpretation, said in a positive light, in its invitation to read the ways in which these oppositional practices, readings, and re-significations by protesters have produced and can produce change, whatever the scale. My approach is largely concerned with examining how they work in the operative mechanics, forms, and functions of oppositional practices and readings—that is, their *poetics*—as one kind of material from which to analyze their relation to the current conjuncture of Spain's crises.

CHAPTER 2

On Affect, Action, Urban Intervention

Desires can be changed because they are mediated by power: being mediated, they are subject to operations of appropriation and seduction—operations that are not exploitative or violent when . . . the deflation of desire results from a self-education, of the awareness of the damage done, to ourselves and to others, by the desires that are controlled by power.

—Ross Chambers, *Room for Maneuver*

Si no nos dejan soñar, no les dejaremos dormir.
(If they don't let us dream, we won't let them sleep.)

—Banner at the 15M Sol encampment

Practices of Oppositional Literacy in 15M

I.

In 2011, protest slogans and banners in Madrid's Sol encampment formulated plural responses to the circumstance of the crisis. On the one hand, these statements expressed the refusal of protesters to accept their constituent condition as *the represented* by government officials and policy makers making decisions against their interests and without their consent: "¡No somos mercancías en manos de banqueros y políticos!" [We're not goods in the hands of bankers and politicians!], "¡No pagaremos vuestras crisis!" [We won't pay for your crises!], and so on (Hardt and Negri, 2012, n.p.). On the other hand, and related to the former, the language of protest critiqued the growing social exclusions being forged amid the economic downturn and the dismantling of social welfare protections: "Violencia es cobrar 600 euros" [Earning 600 Euros is violence], "España, un país de gente sin casa y casas sin

gente" [Spain, a country of people without houses and houses without people], and so forth. How do these statements identify and contest the standing political and economic powers for the ways in which they condition everyday life? What practices of opposition characterize the 15M protests and assemblies, in their multiple demands, areas of action, and desires for change?

Critical *readings* of Spain's crises in 15M can be understood as a form of *oppositional literacy* (or, knowledges and practices of reading) that bear a specific mechanics and have proved capable of fostering common production toward desirable change. First, in their oppositional readings, 15M protesters critique how predominant powers shape the world through which subjects move and, then, in assembly, pursue imagined alternatives that mitigate the authoritative effects of power wherever they bear a policing or repressive function—a dynamic comparable to oppositional narrative examined in Ross Chambers's *Room for Maneuver*. In certain contexts of storytelling, notes Robert C. Spires, "Chambers argues that oppositional reading consists of seducing the reading subject away from the subject position of narratee into that of interpretive subject" (1996, 208). The practices of protest, in the ways I address them here, are less concerned with narrative seduction, or the act of being drawn into the story, though they certainly may do so, than they are with the transformative *becoming* in this movement from addressee to interpretative subject that responds oppositionally to power (as addresser, in protest); that is, Chambers provides some analytical tools that can approach the mechanics of this productive drift in 15M from constructing the political as legible material for the ways in which it shapes everyday life, to diminishing its authoritative status through oppositional readings and practices that articulate desirable alternatives to, and within, the current conjuncture (Chambers, 1991, 179).

In his analysis on the politics of spectatorship, Ángel Luis Lara argues that 15M may be understood as a rebellion of the public from its constructed role as passive viewer (the "represented") whereby "los públicos ya no se contentan con la recepción de las narraciones y los contenidos culturales, ahora se los reapropian, los reescriben y resignifican" [publics are no longer satisfied with receiving narratives and cultural contents; now they reappropriate them, they rewrite and resignify them] (2012, 662). In the practices of the *indignadxs*, the activity of critical reading shifts from the "passive" reception of addressee (the "represented") to an "active" participant as addresser when interpreting the collective sources of perceived domination—indeed, even an active participant in mobilizing for change in opposition to them.

To understand the materialization of the 15M movement in 2011 is to explore, in part, the enunciations and actions of demonstrators in their context of production and address. This task involves analyzing the mechanics of the demonstrators' critical readings and voiced desires for change as a potentially transformative technology for political action and assembly, as they reappropriate, rewrite, and resignify meanings in the public square, reshaping the city all the while. Although the 15M demonstrators' claims register inequalities in their refusals and denouncements, both of which are strongly tied to (or, fuel and may be fueled by) political anger and outrage, protesters also assembled in public space to pursue alternatives through multiple actions and demands with great hope for change (Castells, 2009, 363; 2012, 110–55). If there is some character to "being drawn into" the narrative, it would possibly start with the plaza, which was a place that invited viewers to read its multiple statements and commentary on the recent aftermath of Spain's crises, and to do so among a growing plurality of readers who also participated in weaving the narrative through statements and actions.

Banners, slogans, and the language of protest tend to contest official state discourse on neoliberal policies in particular, and the ways in which these policies shape inequalities and exclusions from public access to an extensive range of issues in general (access to public education, free culture, the right to the city and housing, and so on). They are, in the words of protesters, struggles for "dignity" and the "quality of life." These are two interrelated types of critical reading, the former based in refusal, and the latter in observations on how inequalities and exclusions to access are shaped. Both are strongly associated with "anger," "outrage," and frustration, among others, notes Manuel Castells, from the sense that autonomous decision was usurped from the population in the Spanish State's management of *las crisis* (2012, 110–55). Democracy, to cite the words of the first demonstrations, had been "held hostage" by elite political and economic interests in which Spanish residents were targeted to repay the public debt funneled into private enterprise and rescued banks ("¡Manos arriba! ¡Esto es un atraco!" [Hands up! This is a robbery!]). The demands for "Real Democracy Now" captured the popular estrangement from democratic participation against those interests that protected financial and banking capital, the fiscal priorities of the European Union, and the existing partisan system at great costs to social rights.

As Chambers notes, "the very possibility of appropriation" of powerful discursive formations, much like the critical interpretations by protesters in 15M's speech acts, "is evidence that *no* meaning can be

'dictated' permanently and that change is therefore always possible" (Chambers, 1991, 220). As political discourse attempted to legitimize law and policy on austerity, speech acts also became fodder for demonstrators who read critically and opposed the official state discourse on the crisis. On the whole, forms of protest and action challenged claims from government officials and policy makers who in the neoliberal rhetoric of 1980s Thatcherism, denied repeatedly the existence of any alternative at all. The protesters' response, in opposition, is captured in one slogan from the demonstrations, "¡Somos la alternativa!" [We are the alternative!]. The assertion by government officials that "there is no alternative" was contested directly by 15M Sol's open call for proposals on change, as the very possibility from which to imagine alternative models of direct democratic participation, constitutionalism, and inclusive social well-being.

As the demonstrators in Madrid's Sol encampment transformed the public square into a space of reflection, action, and expression for the movement's plural aims, the protesters' multiple statements—their oppositional *readings* of the crisis—traveled beyond discontents articulated against government officials and policy makers, into practices of collective action, captured in the Sol encampment's banner, "Si no nos dejan soñar, no les dejaremos dormir" [If they won't let us dream, we won't let them sleep]. By late June of 2011, 15M developed into, and drew from, horizontal networks of working groups, commissions, neighborhood organizations, and an extensive list of platforms, which have operated through direct democratic participation in assemblies. Among 15M's self-managed initiatives and the expertise of its participants, these rhizomatic channels of democratic participation have engaged in collective problem solving on complex issues through deliberative process termed *cognitive democracy*—from the housing crisis and the protection of equal access to public services, to copyright restrictions, and structural state and election law reforms, among many others (Acampada Sol, *Propuestas*, 2011).[1] As Raúl Sánchez Cedillo argues, the first mobilizations materialized quickly into what Félix Guattari understood as, "una tensión afectiva y cognitiva que, por así decirlo, pone en suspenso, tornándolo susceptible de cambio y mutación enriquecedora, el régimen normal de las funciones de trabajo-vida sometidas a la movilización total" [an affective and cognitive tension, so to speak, that suspends the normal regime of the functions of work-life subjected to total mobilization, turning it into something susceptible to enriching change and mutation] (2012). Deserving greater attention here, the mechanics of this transformation in the practices of

protest and informed public debate, shared a critical dynamics in common with the activity of interpretation among participants attempting to address these complex problems through coordinated, self-managed action. "If reading, then, is the mediation by which narrative discourse makes its impact on history," writes Chambers, "this impact depends on the fact [. . .] that reading is itself a realization of the implications [. . .] of the phenomenon of mediation," or the oppositional interpretation of power and collective subjugation constitutive of the multitude, a point explored in this chapter (1991, 18).

Oppositional literacy does not presume a body of literature per se, nor is this line of inquiry concerned with perceiving in social movements a form of literary practice that "reading literature" might imply from the privilege of an academic position. Rather, oppositional readings can be, and indeed have been, taught and learned from one another, even mimetically, in the experimental practices of assembly by *doing together* without the need for formal education (Corsín and Estalella, 2013, 73–88). Reading critically, in this sense, is one of self-education practiced collectively, which pays great attention to the cognitive process of analytical thought, on the one hand, and to the "contagious" character of emotions/affects that take shape around certain forms of reading, on the other ("Organiza tu rabia, pero no te olvides de defender la felicidad" [Organize your anger, but don't forget to defend your happiness]). As Judith Butler has noted on demonstrators in Tahrir Square in 2011, the language of protest is indissociable from what performative bodies do, and can prove capable of doing, when assembled in specific spaces and contexts, around specific issues; this returns us to the context of reading for the ways in which bodies perform interpretation through action, as well as situate and are situated by what they read, say, and do.[2] Transformation resides, in part, in the critical activity of reading and responding with oppositionality, or of identifying and contesting the existing structures of power for the ways in which they shape the possible (desires for alternatives) and, in turn, condition the real. In other words, the tools of interpretation already known at present, to draw from Chambers's argument, have been able to provide the necessary "room for maneuver" in order to pursue desired change through collective action. On the other hand, as all power is a paradox, oppositional "relations of power are not in a position of exteriority" to predominant relations decried by protesters (economic, state, and so on), and indeed always risk dissipation or absorption within the logics they oppose, which makes them precarious (Foucault, 1978, 94).

These are the three entrance points I take up when mapping 15M: the practices of oppositional readings in the enunciations of protesters; the roles of affect/emotion in mobilization; and the production of a space of articulation for the movement in the urban milieu, specifically, in the Sol encampment in 2011. These points of entry do not aim to be exhaustive, fixed, or total, nor do they pretend to stake a claim as the only critical concepts from which to approach 15M. Rather, in the practice proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, these points may be considered a map that is "detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits" in the entanglements between these entryways or others (1987, 23).

II.

To understand what protesters *read* is to map out briefly the many groups comprising the first 15M demonstrations, not exhaustively—at least enough to grasp the questions binding them together from their plural set of common concerns. Notably, any register of these platforms and organizations appears as a series of conjunctions (in polysyndeton, "and . . . and . . . and"), or an assemblage of bodies for Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 23). In the multiple interstices among them, one can get a picture of 15M's plural demands for desirable change articulated in its assemblies. By winter of 2011, some organized causes and platforms had already established online social media, web pages, and working groups to plan actions and publish initiatives from user to user. Groups fostering international exchanges such as ATTAC and Universidad Nómada, counted on ample experience with conferences and publications within the alter-globalization movement. Whereas the Madrid Neighborhood Associations were actively involved in social struggles since the late years of the Franco dictatorship ("Memoria," n.d.), the recent local assemblies formed after the 2010 general strike continued to meet in preparation for a greater nationwide protest the following summer. Locations in Madrid such as the self-managed La Tabacalera cultural center, MediaLab Prado, and the Centro Social Casablanca from the *okupa* squatter movement served as meeting points to develop self-managed initiatives in defense of the commons, the right to housing, and free culture.

Many activist groups had organized independent actions by spring of 2011, which included platforms originating in university protests against the Bologna Plan (JuventudSinFuturo), others for copyleft and the protected online distribution of cultural material against the

"Sinde Law" (NoLesVotes), and others against the reported abuses of copyright fees collected by the Society of Authors and Editors—SGAE. Groups like Estado de Malestar protesting "social ills" and the corruption scandals of politicians had hosted periodic events in collaboration with other cities, Seville and Santander, for demonstrations, awareness campaigns, and debates. Other platforms included those in defense of LGBTQ rights and gender equality, eco-activism and renewable energy, and the constitutional right to decent housing (V de Vivienda). There were also those in solidarity with Judge Baltasar Garzón to try crimes committed under the Franco Regime, and others against the privatization of public services, to name a few. Although these and other groups were not in active coordinated communication with each other, their participants' critical responses and practices channeled some of those shaping the 15M movement in Madrid and would materialize later in the popular assemblies' first proposals seeking change through multiple actions. The endless conjunctions between their many areas of action, and still others that escape this list, provide some threads of the desirable changes debated in the assemblies (. . . and . . . and . . . and . . .).

In an action clamoring against the Spanish State's management of the crisis, reported corruption scandals, and so on, the platform Democracia Real Ya! (Real Democracy Now! – DRY) distributed an open call for a nationwide demonstration on 15 May 2011, which was seconded by numerous others. The protest #TomaLaCalle [Take the Streets] would be held "without ideologies" or adhesion to a specific political party, one week before the elections for municipalities and autonomous communities in Spain. The demonstration was articulated from a position of *refusal* itself: removed from any specific ideological banner, party, or labor union, the organizers rejected existing institutionalisms and partisan channels—that is, the refusal to be represented, or at least not in these ways (Hardt and Negri, 2012, n.p.). Therefore, one organizing principle for the first demonstrations was intimately related to the inclusive uses of public space as the locus of demonstration and assembly, which would transform with the practices of protest throughout the consolidation of the Sol encampment.

As Víctor Sampedro and José Manuel Sánchez have noted, these practices of "reappropriating space" for public usage were bound up in the discursive practices of "reappropriating political discourse" in cyber-culture already practiced at that time, whereby the network of "virtual" protest activities materialized in the public plaza and contributed to garnering support for assembly in urban space, in corelation with it (Sampedro and Sánchez, "Del 15M a la #acampadasol," 2011;

"La Red," 2011). The correlation between spatial and discursive reappropriation, following Sampedro and Sánchez, resided in the protesters' actions to retake urban space on the one hand and to sustain within them a space for deliberative discussion and debate in order to elaborate proposals, on the other. Both forms of reappropriation proved vital to the production of space through the protesters' practices:

> tras sucesivas reformas, la Plaza del Sol, como tantas otras, era un "no-lugar": un espacio de paso, sin bancos ni árboles, donde conversar o encontrarse resultaba casi imposible. Tomar las plazas no pretendía sólo visibilizar determinadas demandas. Implicaba detenerse y habitar los espacios colonizados por el tráfico y el capital. ("La Red," 2011, n.p.)
>
> [after successive renovations, the Plaza del Sol, like so many others, was a "non-place": a space of transit without benches or trees where it was nearly impossible to meet or talk. Taking the square not only aimed to make certain demands visible. It involved stopping and inhabiting spaces colonized by traffic and capital.]

Describing Sol as a space of transit and commerce alone, or a *non-place*, the authors make reference to Marc Augé's assessment of the kinds of spatial arrangements proliferating in advanced capitalism, which are dedicated to the priorities of the service industries, transit, entertainment, and flows of commerce and investment capital over those of public interest and collective use (1995, 94). For 15M demonstrators, the spatial practices of assembly and protest in the urban milieu arose together from the outset to articulate desirable change. The reterritorialization of public space and political discourse to which Sampedro and Sánchez refer is one that hinged upon the critical activity of refusal: "We're not goods in the hands of politicians and bankers," "They don't represent us," "We won't pay for your crisis," and so forth. Specifically, in space, the language of refusal also pointed to the demonstrators' participation in deliberative democracy and assembly as a struggle for the public, subtracted from the channels of popular sovereignty that had failed to represent them ("La lucha está en la calle, no en las urnas" [The struggle is in the streets, not in ballot boxes]). Practiced inseparably in language and space, then, was a refusal to concede a collective right to the city, as the host to inclusive democratic assembly in urban space, against the priorities of capital flows in everyday urban life.

To illustrate the authors' claim, one needs only to consider the ways in which the protesters and campers in Madrid's La Puerta del Sol had produced space *and* these oppositional readings together within some five days of May 15. Sol's buildings under renovation, covered by

scaffolding, became motley collages where demonstrators pinned banners on the surfaces of walls, billboards, and facades. Their oppositional readings, which combined language and visual elements, pointed out the responsible parties for the crisis in the protesters' view, made appeals to readers in solidarity, and denounced the deteriorating conditions of life, often in English for a movement aware of its possible international projection: "Bankers, Robbers, responsible for the crisis"; "Working-class families demand a solution for our mortgages"; "People of Europe Rise Up!"; and so on. Wrapped around one scaffold was a commercial advertisement for L'OREAL shampoo, which demonstrators had cut and added words in order to form the demand, "REAL democracy now!" Such a reshaping of the commercial billboard, which nearly left the whole of its advertisement intact, stood as an exemplary form of "reappropriation" in the interpretive activities of the demonstrators through art and posters in which the original material of critique (here, consumer society) was layered with readings for viewers to see in slogans, banners, and calls to solidarity. As the Sol encampment reappropriated language and space together, the multiple responses to political and economic powers were not only captured in protest slogans used to redesign the "look" and "feel" of Sol but also formed an integral part in *producing* this space through resignifying practices.

In slogans, billboards, and chants, the language of protest was repeated and interpreted with difference, as it was online in coextension with the plaza, creating a sensible "volume of noise" about what was going on in Sol as elsewhere in Spain.[3] For brevity, I call this open series of statements circulating online and in the plaza the *multiplicity of refusals*,[4] which in the practices of the *indignadxs* made possible the assemblage of multitudes in Sol and may have reenergized mobilization with growing numbers. The multiplicity of refusals encompassed more than a series of outraged protest statements alone, but in repetition and social circulation articulated plural critical readings in open association with others who made likeminded claims. Here, the "volume of noise" about the protests and encampments plays an important role for its mobilizing potential, as one would sense the sheer magnitude of the refusals circulating online in images and statements. Concomitant to the reclaiming and rewriting of public space was Sol's generator-powered communication hub of tech teams who worked to distribute information online with growing visibility: to document events, communicate with other camps, and issue statements on Twitter, Facebook, Google Maps, its own webpage, and a "live TV" webcam broadcast online (Saleh and Pérez, 2011). This confluence between uses of public

and virtual space sustained the autonomous, self-managed network of the encampments with growing sophistication and public visibility. By broadcasting itself live online, Sol circumvented the mainstream media through direct communication with potential sympathizers for the demonstrations, via alternative media sources online, as it transformed the public square. "Nos hemos enterado todos por internet" [We all learned about it on the Internet], stated a protester compelled to join the demonstrations in Sol ("Indignados," 2011). In effect, the intensity of this volume of activity, online and in the square, can be said to be sensed before it is articulated, as one might say "something is going on in Sol." This uncertain "something" is made perceptible by the buzz of activity surrounding it, due in part to the volume of noise generated in these plural critical readings and refusals. Noise, which contributed to the visible irruption of the protests in virtual and physical space, may have been a technology to mobilize sympathizers in great volume, though it cannot substitute for assembly or for the kinds of critical readings that brought protesters together.

Specifically, the multiplicity of refusals had a mechanics to them: they were spoken from the protesters' plural readings of social and political relationships between the technologies of government and the governed ("No to Bankers and Politicians") and what was inseparable from them, the ways in which these predominant power relations shape inequalities and limitations to access in everyday life, in sum, their biopolitical dimension ("Spain: A Land of People without Houses and Houses without People"). They are, in other words, critical readings that articulate political subjectification in great volume and difference, constitutive of the multitude. Stated in announcements for demonstrations and the slogans and signs used in them, these plural responses detected and refused the discursive formations of power in the everyday, even if their statements were not formed uniquely through negation alone ("Capitalism: System Error, Reboot"). As Eduardo Romanos and Ángel Luis Lara have noted, respectively, the 15M protest statements, banners, and slogans interpreted and re-appropriated the language of power, often with irony, in which oppositional practices can be said to form a part of a transformative process of critical interpretation in plural ways (Romanos, "Humor," 2013; Lara, 2012). Should visitors in Sol have any doubt about the occasional irony of these readings, a black-and-white portrait of SS officer Heinrich Himmler was depicted wearing a Mickey Mouse cap with the euro currency symbol centered between the ears. The use of metaphor, in this case, took the perceptible source of outrage and domination—confluent economic and political powers—and

rendered them visually as a Disneyfied fascist regime under the rule of capital, the euro as the common currency. This visual troping of power in urban space indeed performed the *language* of statements refusing subjection to the perceptible source of domination, such as the statement issued later by the Economy Group from Sol that attributed the usurping of popular sovereignty to the Spanish state's complicity with the "dictatorship of the markets":

> Elevar a rango constitucional la limitación del déficit público no solamente es un atentado contra la vida de los habitantes de nuestro país, [. . .] es un golpe de Estado encubierto de los mercados, al que nuestro gobierno se somete de manera voluntaria. (Acampada Sol, "Grupo de Trabajo," 2011)
>
> [To raise the public spending cap on the deficit to a constitutional level is not only an attack against the lives of residents in our country . . . ; it is an underhanded coup by the markets to which our government has submitted itself willingly.]

Although "noise" refers in certain contexts to intelligibility, of not being able to hear or discern what another is saying, in this case the volume of the refusals lend themselves, to the contrary, to be read in multiple ways from different subject positions. In this sense, in practice, the protests' subtraction from institutionalisms, parties, or ideological banners for the demonstrations may have played an effective role in mobilizing protesters, due to their openness *to be read*. On the one hand, these institutions were often the very subject of disenchantment and refusal in the context of Spain's crisis. And on the other, this plurality of protest statements likewise contributed to the multiplicity of readings, in difference, articulated across common concerns. Perhaps one of the technologies of mobilization was the openness of these statements in their difference and troping of each other, *to be read with difference* across segments of the population that found some form of agreement with the content of what they denounce or, as Manuel Castells (2009) notes in other social mobilizations, with the emotional attachments formed around the injustices they decried. Multiple refusals, in many senses, had an open character to them—in open circulation in physical and virtual circuits, and in open association with others who made like-minded claims. In this light, discourse, per Judith Butler, is not a simple expression in language but rather bears the potential to perform what it speaks, and its speakers, into material practice (2011). In circulation via social networks and other circuits, these series of statements comprised an open field of social contact and relational difference with new and

repeated critical readings for other readers—not through accumulation (n+1), but through difference in their many enunciations repeated in other contexts: "Lo llaman democracia, pero no lo es" [They call it democracy but it's not], "Más educación, menos corrupción" [More education, less corruption], and so forth. The volume of noise generated by refusal, in other words, may also bear its own "riff," so to speak, in which statements can be read with multiple meanings while readers are invited to join in contributing their own note.

On the other hand, the content of what readers *read*, and reappropriate from the discourse of power, is an activity that involves critical thought and response to different forms of political subjectification, whether articulated as one's indebtedness to banking institutions on a subprime mortgage or as the conditions of precarity sustained by labor law, and so on. Official political and economic discourse on the crisis, in this light, provides one kind of material that protesters read. Reading the discourse of power literally, of course, presumes receiving the terms of an intended or implied message as it is dictated to the addressee, or to Spanish residents at large. But, as I mentioned earlier, in the practices of the *indignadxs*, statements by government officials and policy makers are not read literally as they are delivered to the general public. On the relations of power and authority in address, Chambers notes:

> If reading [. . .] is a technology of the self that is fostered in social formations [. . .], we can understand that fact in terms of an apparent paradox. Power depends on that which simultaneously opposes it, that is, on "reading" as a manifestation of mediation. If we need to *learn* to read—learn, that is, to oppose power in acquiring the techniques of interpretive reading [. . .]—it is because reading is *also*, and primarily, a condition of the production of authority, and "power" is a product of the same system as "opposition." Power is not given but a (produced) "effect of power," an allegory read as literal; and it depends therefore on being read, a by-product of that fact being that it is simultaneously vulnerable to oppositional (mis-)reading. And so the "effect of power," when it succeeds, is itself the product of a repression, since it is the inhibition of oppositional (mis-) reading through the ability to "forget" and to cause to "forget" the role of mediation. It is only as a result of that inhibition that the discourse of power comes to seem (to be read as) literal. (1991, 251)

Following Chambers, the refusals of protest statements in their many forms negate the assertions made by power, such as those on "No Alternative" by reinstating their mediated character, via interpretation, from these statements' literal address. Therefore, the interpretive

character of protest language performs something else in its production of statements: it restores the possibility of reading the discourse of power wherever the latter asserts its authority at face value, "with no alternative" but to be read literally. If for Chambers, this form of oppositional reading rebukes the literal—and in the practices of 15M, reading tropes it in multiplicity (sometimes with irony)—then the repression emanating from the assertion of authority is one that hinges upon "denying" any room for interpretation, that is, repressing the mediated character of power upon which this authority depends. One might say that dictation, in this light, works to "naturalize" the authority of the power relationship over the addressee in the asserted speech act itself. It is in this way that speech acts can, in part, perform their authority. As Chambers reminds his readers, the activity of critical reading and response can likewise always destabilize the "naturalized" character of this authority by pointing out that powerful assertions are necessarily mediated within this dynamic, however imbalanced the strike between addresser and addressee. Such a power dynamic, stated otherwise, is at the heart of sovereignty, in which the sovereign's right to rule (authority) is dependent upon the willingness of his subjects to allow him to do so.

In 15M, oppositional literacy entails identifying the predominant powers that have woven a discourse and system of thought amid the crisis (government officials, media analysts, banking and financial institutions), one that operates from the dictation that "there is no alternative" to austerity. Official state discourse on austerity in Spain, from both the political left and right, has drawn from narratives on humility, the shames of excess and economic insolvency, and the honorability of sacrifice in attempts to identify Spanish residents as responsible parties for repaying the public debt funneled into private interests and rescued banks—one of several primary issues that sparked the 15M mobilizations. In oppositional practice, however, protesters read this pedagogical project critically in plural ways that identify this discourse and its "emotive" lessons dictated to Spanish residents as an assertion of authority attempting to conserve political and economic interests. That is, the *indignadxs* do not read this official discourse literally but interpret and re-appropriate its language in protest statements, providing one indication of opposition as a mediated, transformative process of interpretation. In this light, many slogans took aim at the channels through which this discourse reached residents at large, in the news media ("Televisión, Manipulación" [Television, Manipulation], "Apaga la tele, enciende tu mente" [Turn off the TV, turn on your mind], "El derecho a la Revolución no se puede callar con manipulación"

[The right to Revolution cannot be silenced by manipulation], and so on). In response, the language of protest answers to power with refusals and rebuttals, which suppose distinguishing between the (dictated) meaning of this official discourse on the crisis and a reality quite different from the picture being painted in literal address. The gulf between the two marks a specific space for *readability* in which the work of interpretation on the discourse of power locates its possibilities of opposition in the divide between "what one is told to believe as true" and "what one observes critically"—a mediated space of reception in address that allows for a plurality of interpretations. The many refusals by protesters negate the literal character of (dictated) truth in order to arrive, instead, at different conclusions. And in doing so, they point out to powers that their authority necessarily rests upon mediation, one that the official discourse on the crisis tends to deny ("there is no alternative").

This relational field of indirect address—for protesters, one of reading the discourse and everyday materiality of political subjectification—tends to suggest that outrage is not a purely emotional reaction but is necessarily seated in *readerly responses* as a basis for action and possible mobilizing potential. The activity of critical reading by protesters comes to light as a necessary condition to understand how "outrage" and its many forms arise as an affective critical response capable of compelling demonstrators to act, not only from specific social circumstances of economic hardship, but from the multitude's plural readings, for example, of how officials justify the adoption of economic policies that foster disparity. Or, of how media analysts attempt to recast citizens as irresponsible economic decision makers. When taking into account their mobilizing potential for action, emotions and affects can take shape around, and are reciprocally shaped by, critical responses to events, statements, and surroundings, as much as they are also formed by contexts, experiences, and systems of thought that inform interpretation. It is in this manner in which folded within so-called *indignación* in the 15M movement is the oppositional practice of reading critically and, inseparable from it, its affective potential to compel one another to take action from stasis. Affect is the nexus of intensity for action and critical response that are bound together, arising in the same way in which one who views a video of a policeman wielding the force of a truncheon upon an unarmed protester, recognizes "that's an injustice" without necessarily passing through the cognitive process to articulate the ideals informing this immediate response in this viewer's specific context. Or, far from any physical violence exerted upon the body, in the same way in which one would hear an analyst on television argue that Spanish

residents have lived beyond their economic means irresponsibly, which stirs a critical response without thinking twice: "that's simply not true"; and then, "What about government officials' appropriation of public funds to benefit their own spheres of influence?" And yet, certainly not all viewers will respond similarly.

III.

On 15 May 2011, over one hundred thousand protesters marched in fifty cities across Spain, extending in Madrid alone from Cibeles to La Puerta del Sol. Despite the peaceful but tense nature of the march in Madrid, near its end, the anti-riot brigades charged to disperse protesters who had stopped traffic on Gran Vía, moving these demonstrators into side-streets where they were subject to police force—a violent policing strategy employed in other demonstrations in Madrid. In isolated incidents, property was defaced and trash bins burned. As many as 20 were arrested, several of them bystanders, charged with disrupting public order and undermining authority. In separate events, after the demonstration, some 20 protesters later joined by dozens others, gathered in Spain's kilometer zero and the symbolic center of the capital, La Puerta del Sol, where they discussed their determination to stay.

Arab Spring had sparked a series of revolutions against oppressive regimes, and protesters in Iceland had forced the ruling party's resignation for its management of the financial crisis, followed by a popular referendum on its sovereign debt and "crowdsourcing" to draft a new constitution (Castells, 2012, 31–52). Whether or not the protesters in Sol located in these events their inspiration to camp is perhaps less relevant than the irruption of a political instance that they together entailed by reconfiguring the sense that change is possible. It is an act of *dissensus* for Jacques Rancière, a "demonstration of a gap in the sensible itself," that is, one that "makes visible that which had no reason to be seen," here in public and virtual space, among those who "belong to a shared world that others do not see" (2010, 38). If this politics bears an affective intensity, it can perhaps be said to shape and take shape in the attachments forming around this collective reconfiguration of the possible, what Castells calls "hope," somewhat metonymically. Or, in one blogger's words, "INCREÍBLE AMANECER EN SOL. Abres los ojos y ves que no estás solo, cada vez somos más" [AN INCREDIBLE DAWN IN SOL. You open your eyes and see that you're not alone, there are more and more of us], in which the breakfast donated by local businesses, a form of care and solidarity, is perceived as "un síntoma

más del incondicional apoyo popular que recibimos, al que los políticos hacen caso omiso, ¡que reaccionen!" [another symptom of the unconditional popular support we receive, which politicians ignore, Let them react!] (*Acampada Indefinida*, 2011).[5] Although this "unconditionality" may be an enthusiastic overstatement, it is noteworthy here that care and solidarity are formed in attachment to this "incredible," "unbelievable dawn" as one that shuttles between the collective "you" and "we" in opposition to "them" (politicians who ignore an elided "us"). Enthusiasm and the suspension of disbelief are attached to these acts of care, and shaped around them, to the articulation of a shared condition ("we" and "you") that "politicians ignore," or the irruption of the political for Rancière. Notably, the open call to government officials (*Let them react!*) lays bare the oppositional character of a protest action that seeks a re-action (by politicians).

Labors to make this configuration visible arose at once. Working quickly to launch Sol's first webpage, the demonstrators named the group @acampadasol on Twitter, announcing their intention to remain in Sol until Election Day on May 22, while calling for supporters to join them urgently. Protesters drafted their first declaration of intent, identifying themselves as persons unaffiliated with any political party or association, brought together by shared aims to advocate for social awareness, dignity, and uncertain change toward a "society that gives priority to life above all economic and political interests." These words were accompanied by an affirmation of the demonstrators' peaceful, nonviolent aims:

> Abogamos por un cambio en la sociedad y la conciencia social. Demostrar que la sociedad no se ha dormido y seguiremos luchando por lo que nos merecemos por la vía pacífica. (*Acampada Indefinida*, 2011)
>
> [We advocate for change in society and social awareness. In order to demonstrate that society is not asleep and that we will continue to fight in a peaceful way for what we deserve.]

Although subsequent declarations would see this language change over time, from the outset the Sol encampment was articulated as a biopolitical struggle in defense of "dignity" and the quality of life against the priorities of capital and political interests, on the one hand, and in the creation of alternatives through social change that had yet to be defined, on the other. On the first day of the encampment, the protesters established a live broadcast of Sol and published their declaration, schedule for assemblies, and links to a weblog on social media. Early in

the morning on May 17, the local and national police dispersed more than 200 protesters from Sol, by force and arrest, among seated demonstrators chanting "¡No a la violencia!" [No to violence!]. When communicated through social networks, the incidents drew greater numbers to join them when retaking the public square. Citing Articles 20 and 21 of the Constitution on the freedom of speech and the right to demonstrate peacefully, the protesters returned to Sol to establish the beginnings of the first encampment seen in press images, where they held further assemblies on how to proceed.

As demonstrators in Sol were drafting their first public statement on May 15, incidents of police violence had continued in scattered points in downtown Madrid, in what became an important necessity for protesters to articulate a position, speaking from the particularity of this specific circumstance, to denounce all forms of violence, whether by security forces or other demonstrators. The incidents required them to enunciate publicly and collectively their defense of civil disobedience and passive resistance, which later proved a key action for numerous sympathizers to associate with the movement, granting legitimacy to its future lines of action. In Eduardo Serrano's analysis of discursive reappropriation in 15M, protesters uphold "no-violencia" as a value that grants legitimacy to their actions, while also demonstrating "ejemplaridad [y] autodefensa paradójica" [exemplarity (and) paradoxical self-defense] that delegitimize the "efficacy" of violence—hence, the paradox of nonviolence as an oppositional practice—when exerted by security forces or other demonstrators (E. Serrano, 2011). If the mass demonstration on May 15 and its offshoot in Sol constituted a multiplicity of critical responses addressed to politicians and the public at large, then the movement's constituent act was founded in the protesters' collective enunciation and public dissemination of a specific position of nonviolence before the state and its policing apparatus. In this manner, the generality of protest claims from the march acquired their status as singularities grounded in the physical encampment in space and in the positions spoken from a specific context in time, from that of nonviolence.

In the following weeks, as now, the legitimacy of demonstrations has indeed hinged upon the reenactment of this defining moment in practice whereby protesters distance their activities from engaging in, or associating with, violent forms of protest despite police repression. As government officials have attempted since to construct the multitude as the state's adversary in political rhetoric and law, the eruption of violence in protests only serves to benefit policing strategies within this dialectic: in the use of police force on demonstrators, in the campaign

against demonstrations in public opinion, and in the engagement of multitudes within the friend/enemy binary constructed for the state's policing strategies. If considered from Deleuze and Guattari's notion of *affect*, of the ability to move and be moved, then these three strategies can be understood to generate an affective force aimed at decreasing a body's potential to act. Fear is deployed as a powerful emotive instrument, in this light, to deter further demonstrations through self-correction in Foucauldian terms, either to protect oneself from physical harm or to foster dissociation from demonstrators through social atomization. Played out in physical space, police violence is employed in order to disperse concentrations of protesters, which aims for a similar effect of stasis and atomization in social circuits. In the discourse of 15M, observes Eduardo Serrano, "fearlessness" (*sin miedo*) cancels this "fatality" and "paralysis" of inaction by upholding bonds of solidarity in which "together *we* can" and "*you* are not alone" in the political instance (2011). Therefore, the affects attached to collective action cannot be understood simply as "enthusiasm" for an "unbelievable dawn" but take shape in emergent "emotional power hierarchies that may emerge *within* activist groups" around specific valued practices such as nonviolence (Wilkinson, 2009, 40).

Civil disobedience and passive resistance reinforce the constituent practices of the movement to refuse the friend/enemy distinction through the protesters' reenactment of nonviolence. In this manner, when the police and anti-riot teams advance on peaceful demonstrators, the protesters reenact a declaration of nonviolence by practicing, time and again, the same gestures with an intensely affective force—by holding open-palmed hands in the air or by kneeling before the police while chanting, "No to violence!" and "¡Estas son nuestras armas!" [These are our weapons!]. This practice reenacts the oft-repeated slogan "No tenemos miedo" [We are not afraid] before the police, in what confronts the state's policing apparatus directly with the multitude's position of refusal (to engage violence), here against the potentially debilitating power of fear. It is a performative act, as Butler understands it, in the coordinated actions of bodies that bear an affective intensity in this confrontation, one in which the demonstrators' solidarity and corporal blockade (often, performed by sitting down together in numbers) are enacted repeatedly in different contexts as the practice of disengaging violence (2011).

These practices also provide a sense of security in numbers, in which their repetition—as Deleuze and Guattari would have it, in *habit*—cannot be teased apart from the performative practice and language

of bodies, the affective force of the tense standoff before the police in space, and the habitual reenactment of the activist community's values in "nonviolence" and "fearlessness." More than habit alone, though, this knowledge has been cultivated in documentation. The labors of peer education among demonstrators (on the protesters' rights before the authorities, the legal uses of public space, and the norms of civil disobedience, as well as other educational and juridical issues) have since been developed extensively by legal experts and volunteers who distribute this information through the 15M network of legal commissions (*Comisión Legal Sol*, n.d.). Therefore, teaching and learning from one another on the legal rights to demonstrate and the practices to disengage violence have unfolded in 15M as a form of self-managed care for the movement's participants. If a "body of literature" for this oppositional practice exists, it is compiled in this documentation and is reenacted habitually in actions and speech that disengage violence in the standoff scenario before security forces.

In a defining moment of civil disobedience, some 200 protesters gathered again in Sol, determined to camp until Election Day ("Yes we camp!"). Different groups in cities across Spain quickly joined them by setting up simultaneous encampments in Barcelona, Seville, Valencia, Granada, Tenerife, Santiago de Compostela, among others, eventually totaling 58 reported encampments at that time, and over 100 documented later.[6] Communicating primarily through online social media and the web, the Sol encampment resisted in numbers, gaining thousands of supporters every day who responded to news of police repression in other encampments and, as oppositional practice would have it, to the Ministry of Interior's public order to disperse protesters in the event of disturbances. Others joined after hearing first word of the protests through the mainstream and social media, in association with the protests' multiple refusals, "They don't represent us" and others. When taking the public plazas, demonstrators in several cities renamed their place of encampment "Plaza May 15th" in Spain's co-official languages, highlighting the movement's constitution as a networked assemblage of multiplicities arising from the regional and local. Internationally, by May 18, the movement had stirred protests in solidarity in Amsterdam, Berlin, Rome, Mexico City, and New York, as elsewhere.

Against the extraordinary numbers of demonstrators and their growing visibility in the international press, the Ministry of Interior ordered the police not to intervene, justifiable only in the event of public disturbances. In separate incidents, video recordings and photography of police brutality, when distributed online, were a powerful tool to

denounce violations against democratic rights, as well as to mobilize protesters in critical reaction to these abuses. In this sense, the freelance and independent press played a fundamental role in defending the rights of protesters in Madrid, as did casual bystanders who recorded incidents of police violence with their mobile phones to distribute them online. As Manuel Castells argues on the simultaneity of digital media to potentialize mobilization, "A short SMS or a video uploaded on YouTube can touch a nerve in the sensitivity of certain people or of society at large by referring to the broader context of distrust and humiliation in which many people live" (2009, 348). Thus, it is not by chance that the state has attempted since to restrict the media's access to mass demonstrations before parliament and has outlawed photography and video recordings of on-duty security forces, as the public visibility of police repression has indeed fueled public outrage and, with it, greater numbers of demonstrators in defense of the right to assemble.[7]

The protesters' decision to broadcast the Sol encampment live effectively reappropriated one technique of state security for its own aim by transforming a powerful tool of surveillance into a protective measure to deter police intervention by force, which may have contributed to conserving the protesters' democratic right to demonstrate peacefully. One protest sign read: "Si viene la policía, sacad las uvas y disimular" [If the police come, take out grapes and pretend (it's New Year's Eve)], referring to the Spanish holiday tradition of eating grapes to ring in the New Year. What the sign points out humorously, however, are the "acceptable" practices of public space condoned by the authorities, for celebration and festivities, in contrast to a politically motivated occupation that faced plausible police intervention. As labors for common production may be "closely interwoven with the themes of constituent power—adopting new media (cellular technologies, Twitter, Facebook, and more generally the Internet) as vehicles of experimentation with democratic and multitudinary governance"—Hardt and Negri explain, so too was the technology of public surveillance made to work for the movement's own defense (*Declaration*, 2012). In this sense, oppositional practices demonstrate the paradox of power observed by Chambers, one that is necessarily mediated, not only in the content of its address but also in its form, here, as the very tools of constituent power can be harnessed and reappropriated toward oppositional ends.

Demonstrators in Sol held the first few assemblies addressed at collective needs and self-management (food provisions and supplies, camp maintenance and monitoring, peer education on protesters'

rights, the prohibition of alcohol on site, and so on), at the same time as debates on its initial demands. Labor committed to these structural, logistic, and educational matters was, in part, the basis from which Sol could develop sustained actions and demands through deliberative process. An accessible sign-language was employed as a voting system for inclusive, horizontal participation in the popular assemblies (to express agreement, disagreement, continue to the next topic, and so on), in which administrative roles rotated among volunteers elected by the assembly (moderator, secretary, caller-of-turns, etcetera). It is noteworthy that the Madrid neighborhood assemblies modeled after Sol would also designate volunteers to care for the *ambiente* or atmosphere where the debates took place—particularly, in the distribution of water, spray bottles, fans, sunscreen, and so forth—calling attention to the situation of the debate in a hospitable environment. This arrangement and its attention to care, note Alberto Corsín and Gabriel Estalella, is one element that may contribute to making the assemblies "stick around" through the attachments developed in hospitality toward others:

> Like all experimental forms, however, the assembly and the neighbour share in the problem of duration. It remains unclear and uncertain how to make experiments last. Thus, an organisational problem for the assembly, common to squatting projects at large, is that people are known to come and go, only to eventually disappear forever. "People show up to help, work awhile, then disappear," Keith Gessen noted of Occupy Wall Street. Hence, perhaps, the practice of care: a technique for upholding hospitality under conditions of provisionality and adversity. Hence, too, the importance ascribed to the atmospheric, which performs the role of a political ambulatory. ("What Is a Neighbor?," 2013, 14–15)

Thus, care is not exclusively an oppositional practice for demonstrators faced with the task of disengaging violence, who must attend to each other and themselves, collectively, in the standoff scenario before the police. As Corsín and Estalella argue, an open disposition to others in hospitality and ambience may have contributed to the sustainability of the assemblies for the forms of care developed in these practices.[8] Attention to care in the assemblies and protests, as a practice of caring for the other, takes shape around the collective project at hand and toward others participating in it. The sustainability of activism, in this light, is one that depends, in part, upon "the emotional value of protest [as] continually *re-experienced* [. . .] to remain emotionally fulfilling to be sustainable" (Brown and Pickerill, 2009, 30). Or, as Eduardo

Romanos notes, the spatial arrangement of the assemblies was an *invitation* for participants to join in them:

> One of the novel aspects of the 15-M movement was the way it placed experiments with new forms of democracy in the centre of public space. In this way, the movement brought practices of deliberative democracy—previously confined to more or less limited spaces such as social forums, social movement headquarters, peace camps and social centres—out into public squares, where passers-by were invited to join in. ("Collective learning," 211)

There is something to be said, then, about the openness of the assemblies and this openness to others as part of the critical practices of opposition in 15M. It is, after all, a practice that is valued by protesters, named, and reenacted in procedure with political implications.

All participants, regardless of citizenship, had a voice and vote in the open-air assemblies in which long debates favored processual cognitive "synthesis" sustained by plural contributions among members, rather than an "outcome" by a given majority alone (E. Serrano, 2011). The question of reaching a plural "consensus of minimums," however, would become one contentious point that transformed over time in different assemblies and their debates on procedure.[9] In this manner, the assemblies' initial operative structure aimed to disable the potential concentration of power or cooptation of interests by specific platforms, partisan politics, or individuals among its participants, which when reenacted in practice contributed over time to defining another element of its self-managed care for the assembly: the defense of inclusive participation against potential concerted interests among its participants. The structuring of alternative modes of policing, those developed in order to defend the assemblies from cooption by specific interests, can be understood as a self-regulatory mechanism aiming to protect the open inclusiveness of the debates, while at the same time, they tend to articulate "social forces grounded in values and not merely organizations or networks" (Eyerman, 2005, 42).[10] The attitudes and practices of open engagement with others would be defined subsequently in the online 15M WikiLibro resource as the foundations from which to conserve the movement's horizontal, inclusive participation: "nonviolence, no-machismo, no-homophobia, no-racism, no-leadership, no-membership . . . " and so on, thereby giving names to a series of common values for engagement (a polysyndeton, as . . . and . . . and . . . and . . .) already in practice ("Descripción," n.d.).

Self-managed labor and deliberation were practiced through an open engagement with others, among participants familiar with assembly

procedures who could teach and learn from one another by doing together, before procedure itself was a matter of contemplation. For Deleuze, these practices would constitute acquired *habits* or routine repetitions subject to change over time as they are practiced. "Repetition is a condition of action before it is a concept of reflection," Deleuze stresses. "We produce something new only on condition that we repeat—once in the mode which constitutes the past, and once more in the present of metamorphosis" (*Difference,* 1994, 90). As Jon Beasley-Murray takes this observation further in his work *Posthegemony*, repetition in the practice of "habit leads us to the multitude: a social subject that gains power as it contracts new habits, new modes of being in the world whose durability is secured precisely by the fact that they are embodied well beneath consciousness," that is, folded into action over time, as habit, before these actions are the subject of contemplation (2011, 178). Beasley-Murray's argument on the multitude here rings true, for self-managed labor and the open engagement of others were routine practices in the Sol encampment well before they were named, documented, or consciously contemplated for improvement. Stated otherwise, bodies came into contact with others by doing together, and their practices transformed into new habits and ways of doing together, in repetition. In this manner, the popular assemblies' guidelines for propositions, deliberation, and consensus would continue to change over time, developing into the movement's multiple lines of self-management and democratic process, compiled today on the Madrid Popular Assembly website ("Metodología asamblearia," n.d.). If reading is a social practice, to return to Chambers for a moment, then it should not go unstated that the forms of oppositional literacy outlined here (practices and knowledges of critical reading) have developed from contingent social relations, of being and doing together, and of teaching and learning from one another—or, for Corsín and Estalella, the politics of care in 15M—that have in common a hospitable disposition to alterity, to others, in these valued procedures for assembly and demonstration.

The generic structure for local working groups and commissions would be reproduced with growing complexity as the movement in Madrid expanded beyond Sol, which intended to "export" a form of deliberative democracy to Madrid's neighborhoods:

> De entre las diversas razones para continuar la acampada que han expresado los asistentes a la asamblea destaca la de exportar el modelo de trabajo a los barrios de Madrid. Se pretende que los vecinos y vecinas de la ciudad experimenten el sistema de participación directa que se vive en Sol. (Acampada Sol, "Acampada Sol continuará," 2011)

> [Highlighted among the diverse reasons to continue the encampment expressed by the assembly's attendees is the exportation of the working model to Madrid neighborhoods. This aims for men and women neighbors of the city to experience the system of direct participation existing in Sol.]

When in contact with the nascent local assemblies and decision-making practices in activist groups and organizations—or, other bodies and habits of doing together—these channels developed in plural ways into the deliberative procedures employed by the 15M neighborhood assemblies in Madrid, which would become an extensive operative network by June 2011.

Within these rhizomatic channels at my time of writing, the commissions operate with horizontal interconnectivity, working to sustain the basic structural, communication, and informational needs of the local assemblies and their working groups. The *commissions* function as independent service providers, so to speak, and technical consultants with specialized knowledge whose activities are dispatched to support the self-managed working groups and assemblies that propose actions for specific causes from the local. Their coverage is extensive, worth repeating here. They include infrastructure, internal and external coordination-communication, analysis and documentation, legal advice and residents' rights, technical support for web design and audiovisuals, news feeds and 15M Ágora Sol Radio, information and recruitment, and arts initiatives and cultural activities, to name a few. Through similar channels, the *working groups* within a given assembly serve a dual purpose as both observatories and task forces that identify and address the neighborhood's needs. Their areas of action entail short- and long-term political initiatives, labor actions and strikes, the neighborhood economy, employment opportunities for residents, housing rights and evictions, services for small businesses and self-employed persons, international relations, the financial system, the environment, public education and the university, culture and thought, social cooperation and diversity, feminism and LGBTQ rights, ethical journalism, and so on.[11] Comprising volunteers, the self-managed working groups and commissions propose initiatives for the local assemblies and may be created, dissolved, or divided into subgroups on an ad hoc basis, as deemed fit by the collective decision of its participants. Informational sessions organized by 15M protesters, such as inviting guest speakers with specialized knowledge on economic and financial matters, on negotiating debt forgiveness, or the "alternative" State of the Nation debate held in the

public square, articulate another value for the movement, one in which the bases for proposed actions must necessarily be critically informed.

As such, one of the 120 assemblies in the Autonomous Community of Madrid, the Chamberí Popular Assembly, has gathered petitions against the privatization of Madrid's public water supply in the past and has organized back-to-school events for parents and schoolchildren. It hosts repeated actions to halt forced evictions this week and to support the student and parent strike against cutbacks to public education. It will offer a seminar on constituent power in mobilizations next week and will develop further plans to install a new *okupa* social center in an abandoned building, to name only a few. That is, its channels of activities operate through diverse circuits across the local and regional, from which new initiatives may be proposed among different nodes of activity over time. As a decentered structure in constant flux, the so-called movement bears no static, polarized concentrations of activity or influence within it, rather giving the image of networked social relations. Within this rhizomatic fabric, initiatives may gain visibility across working groups, commissions, or other platforms, through online interfaces such as social media, listservs, and the N-1 web, and thereby may enact specific actions in solidarity with others. This is the tempo of adaptability with which participants can propose and carry out initiatives with apparent spontaneity.

In protest, when this incalculable "spontaneity" is practiced in physical space, demonstrators communicate, in part, through online social networks and mobile phones (particularly, WhatsApp and Twitter), reenacting the mobilizing capacity of the multitude to abandon the public square suddenly, which to the surprise of the police, migrates to Gran Vía where demonstrators stop traffic to seize the street in an unannounced march through Madrid. Together with the gestural reenactment of nonviolence in protests, this repeated practice—a sort of nomadism that requires active coordinated movement and the contingent flocking of other demonstrators—has become a habitual maneuver for protest in Madrid at my time of writing. This practice in public space, however, also illustrates a parallel to the networked operations of working groups and commissions in communication through online media: their short- and long-term initiatives rely on actions coordinated across networked channels and on involvement among supporters who join in their lines of action disseminated through social circuits.

In virtual and physical space, these oppositional practices overturn what Franco "Bifo" Berardi describes in the behavior of multitudes as both the *network*, "a plurality of [. . .] humans and machines who

perform common actions thanks to procedures that make possible their interconnection and interoperation," and the *swarm*, "moving together in the same direction and performing actions in a coordinated way" (2012, 14–5). Whereas the *swarm*, for Berardi, describes the behavioral activity of individuals who assimilate the routine flows of traffic in city space—as automatons in transit—it would seem that, on the other side of the same coin, protesters who move through urban space in a *swarm* can also harness this maneuver to their advantage in oppositional practice. Such a swarm, then, refuses to engage the authorities suited in anti-riot gear, moving instead to reclaim an avenue of traffic in a performance that makes itself undeniably seen.

IV.

In the days before the regional and local elections, the Madrid Regional Election Board declared the Sol encampment an unauthorized demonstration that, in its view, could hinder the democratic freedom to vote, which in critical reaction drew thousands more to join the protests in Sol and to camp in Madrid and other cities (Barroso 2011). Supporting this decision, the National Election Board likewise interpreted the protests as potentially disruptive to the election process, thereby declaring all demonstrations illegal after midnight on May 20, within 48 hours to the end of Election Day.[12] With the successive prohibition of demonstrations throughout the week, the Sol encampment drew more protesters, as it drew supplies, materials to improve its infrastructure, and food donations from sympathizers and local businesses (the movement refused monetary donations), in tandem with growing visibility online and in the mainstream media.

Defying the Election Board's verdict, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators in public plazas across Spain participated in a synchronized "silent scream" at midnight on May 20. It was a definitive moment that strongly rebuked interpretation of the election law by defending the right to demonstration and public deliberation in democracy. For many, it constituted a kind of "political awakening" rife with an affective intensity for uncertain change. In Madrid, this coordinated action proved evocative of other mobilizations in recent memory, as the silent scream and the gesture of raised open palms had been practiced seven years earlier—at that time, in mass demonstrations on the eve of the 2004 general elections after the 11-M Atocha train bombings. In the 11-M bombings, specifically, mass protests responded to the ruling PP's assertion that the Basque separatist group ETA—not an

Al-Qaeda cell—was responsible for the attack, despite evidence to the contrary. The motives for these protests were worlds apart, yet both shared in common their circumstance as an outlawed demonstration before elections that refused the literal address of government officials. So too did both moments prove capable of mobilizing seemingly spontaneous multitudes through new technologies, as 15M's forms of cyberactivism echoed the *pásalo* ("pass it on") text messages disseminated seven years earlier. However, for many protesters, the crowds also paralleled Spain's mass demonstrations before 2004, when mobilizing against President Aznar's complicity in the Iraq War or, for some, even the mass protests against ETA's assassination of Miguel Ángel Blanco, both of which also drew record numbers (Fajardo, 2011). And again, the motivating reasons for these demonstrations are contradictory, far from what brought protesters together in 15M. For others, it was evocative of a peaceful 1968. And for yet others, the protesters' use of the hashtag #SpanishRevolution was only evocative in name, but not in similarity, to the 1936 Spanish Revolution in which workers collectivized businesses for self-management and defense after the Nationalist military coup that instigated the Spanish Civil War. Although the historical circumstances are worlds apart, the use of "#SpanishRevolution 2.0" to describe the 2011 protests, drove at the protesters' denouncement of the "concealed coup d'état by the markets." A sort of free radical capable of eliciting many pasts in association with the present, despite the evident political contradictions underpinning each event in time, this and the other mass demonstrations of 15M proved strongly evocative of unprecedented mobilizations in memory, even history.

To draw from Deleuze's argument on analytical method in *Difference and Repetition*, conclusions cannot be sketched out by any scrutiny of resemblance and difference across these demonstrations, or their contexts and many contingencies, as though to measure the singularities and divergences of each one in the shadow of the others. The search for identity in relation to each other, warns Deleuze, will tend to reproduce sameness in a reading that indeed locates the similarities being sought; that is, this method redistributes identity across temporal moments in order to have the pieces fall within existing knowledge about them. As such, any search for equivalence or identity among the contexts of each demonstration, or specifically in comparison to those of 15M, cannot explain precisely *what* returns in difference to the others across time (1994, 91). Rather, as the protest conjures up a catalog of cognitive associations in history and recent memory, in different ways for different subjects, it returns to itself and other moments in series, in a resonance

of eternal return that "affirms difference, it affirms dissemblance and disparateness, chance, multiplicity, and becoming" in one moment from other moments (1994, 300).[13] Following Deleuze's problematic of method, the protest's strong evocation of repetition in history and memory can be understood, itself, as the cognitive activity of taking stock of the event's sensible magnitude, or its intensity.

This hopscotch of cognitive associations with past demonstrations provides its own map for the affective force of the 15M protests. Leaping from one moment and memory to another, the act of sense-making fails to locate specific referents and in failing to do so, instead draws out the immediacy of the demonstrations' intensity among some bodies desiring change. That these synchronized movements across multitudes stirred reflection in the search for comparable precedents in history and memory, strips away identity from the event as it is eclipsed by its sensible magnitude among protesters in the public square. What remains, in other words, is the sensed immensity of a present moment, or an *affective intensity*. Not the demonstration itself, but the affective potential implicit among bodies moved to action, is what Deleuze and Guattari call a *becoming* (1987, 283). And in Madrid this *becoming movement* proved to be forcefully evocative of return in difference to unprecedented demonstrations in recent collective memory. Its composite temporal dimension—having elicited many pasts within a present moment of *becoming* something else—confounds the logic of a linear timeline in which the past turns to the present to the future, in what Deleuze signaled before Derrida's reading of Hamlet in *Specters of Marx*, is a time of becoming that unfolds as out-of-joint, unequally distributed for measure along the empirical coordinates of a timeline (Deleuze, 1994, 88).

Here, it seems, affect is not a prepersonal intensity alone, but a corporal and cognitive activity that arises from a specific context. In *A Thousand Plateaus* the authors argue that the affective intensity that increases or decreases one's potential to act may "come from external parts or from the individual's own parts" in what is inherently made possible through assembly, in corporal and physical proximity in contact with others, here in the public square (1987, 283). The multitude in a given mass demonstration may lend itself to a certain affective potential in the proximity of assembled bodies, within the reach of others in a great crowd. But when reading the repetitions of demonstrators in protest—the reenactment of nonviolence in corporal blockade before the police, the nomadic movement of the swarm to occupy space, the mute scream and gesture of raised open palms—this affective force

acquires heightened intensity in the coordinated movements of bodies performing the same gestures together in the multitude.

V.

In *Rebel Cities*, David Harvey defines the "right to the city" as more than a question of equal access to the public, alone:

> The question of what kind of city we want cannot be divorced from the question of what kind of people we want to be, what kinds of social relations we seek, what relations to nature we cherish, what style of life we desire, what aesthetic values we hold. The right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our heart's desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the process of urbanization. (2005, 4)

For Harvey, the "right to the city" resides in how residents wish to imagine the city, to shape and reshape the urban milieu, collectively, amid the processes of urbanization that give priority to revenue and profits. It is, in the first instance, not only a question of counteracting efforts to privatize the public and common resources, as well as the restrictions to access that they produce or sustain over time (by socioeconomic status, citizenship, race, gender, or otherwise), but also of how to reinvent the city in different ways for it to become inclusively *desirable*. Such a right, notes Luis Moreno Caballud, is actively practiced in Spanish cities today among self-managed groups that organize in defense of inclusive access to common resources (*procomún*), which aim to forge a much-desired "sustainable imagination" for the future.[14] Considering Harvey's proposal, one might wonder if the forms of care produced in the Sol encampment were precisely the kind of collective labors concerned with imagining desirable alternatives to the current conjuncture. "If they won't let us dream, we won't let them sleep" read one prominent banner in Sol, in which the question of conceiving alternatives is also, like the right to the city, one that is motivated by collective desires to imagine other worlds. In what ways did the Sol encampment articulate desires for change?

If I have emphasized that synthesis in the assemblies and demonstrations takes the form of a polysyndeton (. . . and . . . and . . . and . . .), it is primarily because this construction can give readers a sense of the multiplicity of concerns among individuals and platforms in the

mobilizations: gender equality, protections for undocumented immigrants, renewable sources of energy, election law reform, debt-forgiveness on foreclosure, precarious employment, political corruption, and so on. Nevertheless, it would also seem that the specific demands from the assemblies articulated desirable changes amid these conjunctions, in the relationships between them, which move into the question of *desire*. Here, I am not pretending to speak of any collective desire for the demonstrations or among demonstrators, but a multiplicity of desirable changes enunciated from the assemblies, or per Deleuze and Guattari, implicit in assembly-work itself (the "desiring-machine"). I read this synthesis as a "molecular chain" that signifies as it synthesizes connections among various disjunctions, which for Deleuze and Guattari, comprise the very interstices in which desires are produced across assembled parts (1983, 322–39). What strings the parts together, in other words, may be understood as the driving "motor" for a plural platform of change—or, in the words of protesters who renamed the public square, actions toward collectively desirable "Sol-utions" against claims that there is no alternative.

On May 20, the popular assembly in Sol approved 16 points of its first demands. The articulation of these proposals and demands comprised a subsequent constituent act—the first, a declaration on its position of nonviolence—collected in a press release addressed to the Spanish state and the public at large (Acampada Sol, "Propuestas aprobadas," 2011).

1. Modify the Election Law to allow for open lists with a single constituency in which the number of elected seats is proportional to the number of votes.
2. Attend to the basic, fundamental rights in the Constitution of 1978, such as the right to decent housing by reforming the Law of Mortgages to allow for debt cancellation in cases of foreclosure; universal and free public healthcare; the free movement of persons; and support of a secular public education.
3. Abolish discriminatory and unjust laws and measures in the Bologna Plan and the European Space for Higher Education; the Immigration Law; and the "Sinde Law."
4. Fiscal reform favorable to persons with the lowest incomes, including a reform of property and inheritance tax laws. Implementation of the Tobin Tax on international financial transactions and the abolition of tax havens.
5. Reform the working conditions for the political class to eliminate salaries for life, as well as to make political programs and election promises binding.

6. Reject and condemn corruption. Make it a requirement by Election Law to present lists free of candidates charged or condemned in corruption cases.
7. Adopt plural measures regarding public savings banks and the financial markets in compliance with Art. 128 of the Constitution ("The entire wealth of the country in its different forms, irrespective of ownership, shall be subordinated to the general interest"). Reduce the IMF and ECB's power. Nationalize immediately all banking entities that have been rescued by the State. Harden controls on financial entities and operations to avoid any possible abuses.
8. True separation between the Catholic Church and State, as established in Art. 16 of the Constitution.
9. Direct, participatory democracy in which citizens have an active role. The people's access to the media must be ethical and true.
10. True regularization of labor conditions in compliance with the law, overseen by the powers of the State.
11. Close all nuclear power plants and promote free renewable energy sources.
12. Nationalize privatized public companies.
13. Effective separation of executive, legislative, and judicial powers.
14. Reduce spending on the military, the immediate closure of weapons factories, and greater control of the State's security forces and organizations.
15. Recuperation of Historical Memory and the founding principles of the struggle for Democracy in the State.
16. Total transparency of political parties' accounts and financing as a measure against corruption.

Within this extensive list, some statements propose specific measures ("modify the election law . . . , nationalize rescued banks . . . , promote free renewable energy sources . . . "), which range in content from specific proposed actions to rather vague effects ("reduce the IMF and ECB's power"). Notably, the other kind of statements in this list relates to the latter. This second type of statement does not outline specific measures, at least not at this stage, but the *desirable* outcomes for future lines of action ("true separation between Church and State . . . , effective separation of powers . . . , total transparency of political parties' financing . . . "). Once the demands were articulated, they became interpretable material on what plural actions to take.

One year after the first Sol encampment, protesters assembled again to reclaim the public square, as they documented accumulative desires for change written on notes, categorized by theme, and released for publication in the mainstream press (Comisión de Información, 2012; García de Blas, 2012). Aside from organizational recommendations on assembly procedure, the top 20 most-cited issues could be grouped into at least four main categories:

(1) State and partisan politics: the abolition of political privileges; open election lists and election law reform (opposed to the current d'Hondt Law); measures to prevent political corruption, including greater controls on donations and harsher criminal sentences; direct democratic participation of the citizenry, including constituent referendums and Popular Legislative Initiatives; measures to guarantee political responsibility for government officials; the separation of state powers; transparency in administration; the implementation of requirements for public office; and the elimination of the monarchy.
(2) Education and Social Rights: the right to a public secular education; the right to public healthcare; the right to accessible housing; and the improvement of labor conditions for workers.
(3) Regulations for the banking and financial sector: the regulation of nationalized banks and the adoption of debt forgiveness for homeowners after foreclosure; measures to favor public companies, including placing a halt to privatization and the nationalization of privatized businesses; the regulation of caps on the highest salaries.
(4) Strategies for sustainable public energy sources and transportation, the defense of free culture (opposed to the Sinde Law and copyright restrictions), and the protection of animal rights.

Although any summary of these points risks reductionism, which tends to collapse their series of conjunctions into a general schematic, one can also note a set of organizing principles shaped around these desirable outcomes. In the interstices between conjunctions, one can locate the desirable effects of future actions: to recuperate state decision making before economic and financial interests in a more equitable management and distribution of common resources and wealth; to guarantee egalitarian access to public services, common resources, and the uses of public space; and to secure the protection of residents from confluent interests of state powers among them and in concert

with external (largely, private) institutional arrangements. The alternatives proposed in the assemblies, and at once practiced in them, likewise demanded some form of direct democratic participation in the decision-making powers of the state. On the whole, these desirable outcomes and their effects tended to articulate, with oppositionality, the very conditions of political subjectification that had constituted the multitude in its multiplicity of refusals. Nevertheless, there exists a *productive drift* or becoming that moves beyond the latter to articulate (future) desirable outcomes imagined collectively from the cognitive process of democratic assembly.

Chambers reminds his readers that desire is a mediated affair, subject to change in the shifting power relations of its circumstance; conversely, desire can beget change (1991, 232). Whereas these desirable outcomes were articulated about, and in critical opposition to, the prevailing structures of power, they likewise partook in imagining the future effects of limitations placed on these powers wherever their relations worked (at present) to repress or police these material possibilities. One needs only to remember the protest banner in Sol ("If they won't let us dream . . . ") to understand that the demonstrators made this point themselves: the possibility of imagining futures (*soñar*) is articulated directly as one that is perceptibly conditioned by the prevailing structures of power (*si no nos dejan*). This temporal dimension, in relay between the current conjuncture and future actions imagined for their capability to *mitigate* these forms of repression at present, appears as a mediated space of desires that opens up radically to imagined possibilities. Within it, the articulation of desirable outcomes can be sensed as emancipatory, with affective force, ensuing from "the deflation of desire [that] results from a self-education, of the awareness of the damage done, to ourselves and to others, by the desires that are controlled by power" and their repressive limitations shaping the real (Chambers, 1991, 232).

It is this instance in which I would like to underscore that the critical practices and knowledges of opposition among demonstrators (their oppositional literacy) have been capable, in part, of calling attention to the ways in which power is necessarily mediated, despite and due to authoritative claims that there exists no alternative. It is what happens in-between, however, in the mediated scenario of imagining desirable outcomes capable of mitigating forms of repression, where the authoritative status of power is seemingly displaced, if only momentarily, that is, until it comes to bear again upon subjects in whatever the form (the eviction notice, the charge of the anti-riot brigade, the idle time of

unemployment, and so on). For Rancière, the partitioning of this space of mediation is precarious, "always on the shore of its own disappearance," threatened by being subsumed into the very logics, if not powers, that it opposes (2010, 39). However, in 15M, it is also this room for maneuver that works toward producing desirable changes, which, once articulated in speech, can be conceived as conscious changes in desire, in a productive movement from the perceived forms of domination to coordinated actions that pursue alternative futures. In this scenario, nevertheless, there is no emancipating line of flight, as Deleuze and Guattari would have it, which escapes repression completely as it mitigates the authoritative status of prevailing powers. Nor does it suppose an ideological fantasy, as it would for Žižek, in which revolutionary change requires the castration of power.[15] Rather, change can be hatched *within* the prevailing structures of domination, but it would presume in the first instance, as Harvey suggests, a collective critical questioning, "What is desirable and why?" And following Chambers, then, "In what ways are desires shaped by the prevailing relations of power?"

Any endeavor to describe the developments of Sol fails to grasp the reasons why it drew thousands of visitors, which had moved quickly from the supposed "outrage" that brought demonstrators together, to assemblies articulating desirable change. As Amador Fernández-Savater notes, "no estábamos allí para gritar nuestra indignación contra nadie, sino por la belleza y la potencia de estar juntos, ensayando modos de participación común en las cosas comunes. Por lo tanto, redefiniendo y reinventando lo político" [we weren't there to shout our outrage against anyone, but for the beauty and power of being together, practicing ways of common participation in common things, thereby redefining and reinventing the political] (2012, 677). Astonishment might best describe the Sol encampment's achievements in its seemingly unbelievable self-management. Like its computer hub, Sol's operations were staffed by volunteers, which included security teams and first-aid personnel, a day-care with activities for children, a portable library of donated books and educational materials, and programmed cultural events, theater, and concerts. The encampment received infrastructural support through donations of supplies like tarps, tents, hygiene products, portable water closets, and reported in the media, a solar-powered shower. Campers planted small gardens in the plaza's only green zones surrounding the fountains, christened "La Huerta del Sol" in a play-on-words for the square's proper name, and regulated waste disposal, recycling, and collective cleaning duties among occupants. Perhaps surprisingly, an unannounced health and safety inspection by the municipal government

reported that the site complied with standard regulations, including the open-air kitchen where food was prepared collectively (García Gallo, 2011). Presumably, these labors required expert knowledge on the legality of the encampment's operations coordinated among the protesters and likewise stands as one example, to my mind, of the suspension of disbelief about 15M's accomplishments.

Inseparable from the encampment's organizational practices and structure were its activist centers arranged along passageways through the plaza where visitors could be informed of an array of issues, sign petitions, and create signs for the demonstrations. Tents provided materials to create artwork assembled from scrap materials (often, recovered from trash bins), a telling expression of the movement's claims by protesters who vindicated their status as jettisoned expendables to political leadership. In this manner, the encampment served as an information point on the legal rights of protesters and undocumented immigrants; on actions developed in defense of equal rights and gender equality; and for the circulation of petitions for causes against privatization, international human rights offenses, business practices harmful to the environment (and . . . and . . . and). As the site outgrew its physical boundaries haphazardly, campers restructured Sol by redistributing its points and passageways to facilitate pedestrian traffic. Once redrawn, space was organized around the equestrian statue of "Enlightened King" Carlos III, which was reduced schematically (and synecdochically) on the encampment's maps to simply "the horse."

Because the large-scale cohabitation among strangers did not ensue without reported social tensions—and, for some, would mark a cleave among demonstrators who claimed that the encampment was not synonymous with the 15M "movement"—the campers restructured the stands and assemblies to include specific working groups on "respect" in defense of the norms of engagement, difference, and dialog in the popular assemblies.[16] Wherever language, attitudes, or practices were considered disrespectful or exclusionary to its participants, the assemblies addressed these issues by generating peer education initiatives in defense of the common values described earlier (nonviolence, no-machismo, no-discrimination, respect . . .). Montserrat Galcerán reports, for example, that some participants were reluctant at first to include feminist commissions, for a movement skeptical of identity positions as potentially divisive to collective aims; once reassessed, however, feminist commissions were successfully incorporated after peer education, outlined in Galcerán's proposals and excellent documentation (2012, 31–6). In electronic communications, attention was drawn to the use of the plural

masculine *indignados*, replaced by the gender-inclusive, *indignad@s* or *indignadxs*. Although the use of inclusive language alone cannot guarantee nondiscrimination, and indeed can give the false appearance of equality, the participants understood the forms of communication as vital to their practices, as inextricably bound together—that is, as *desirable* for the movement's aims.

Such a case is evident in the open invitation for a "bike criticism," an event to meet others and discuss common concerns, culminating in a performative parade of cyclists, banners, and flags through the city streets. The public invitation to the "Bici-crítica Trans-mari-bollo-bi-queer-feminista" takes derogatory slurs for LGBTQ identities (*trans, mari, bollo*) and in this well-established formula, reappropriates them to the empowerment of the collective by affirming them as one's own ("tranny," "fag," "dyke"). It provides an example of what Luis Martín Cabrera calls "queering the commons," that is, of deconstructing existing forms of oppression, whether racialized, gendered, or sexualized, so that they are prevented from "endangering the very same project of living in common," here, through the oppositional practice of reappropriation-as-empowerment itself (2012, 602–3). In the invitation to the bike criticism, the string of hyphenations tends to exceed naming difference in its many identitarian constructions of gender and sexuality, in an attempt not to leave anyone out. As it does so, the conjunctions among them (polysyndeton) replicates one of 15M's organizing principles in the assemblies and assemblage-work—the desire for inclusiveness, or the hospitable invitation to join the assembly, in the turn to others.

For Amador Fernández-Savater, "Una de las mayores potencias éticas y políticas del 15M es la pregunta y la preocupación constante por el otro, el que no está ya aquí, *entre nosotros*" [One of the greatest ethical and political potentials of 15M is the question and constant concern for the other, those who are not here and now *among us*] (2012, 677). Such a turn to alterity and concern for *those who are not present*, much like the invitation to join the open-air assemblies in the public square, is one of the defining oppositional politics of 15M. In this disposition to inclusiveness and to "Others," these forms of opposition and their reappropriating, resignifying practices tend to engage what Deleuze and Guattari called a minoritarian politics.

Minoritarian politics "is concerned less with the political status or rights of minority groups than with the degree to which minorities [as a segmented partition of the represented] embody a distinct power or capacity to transform majorities," writes Paul Patton. The minoritarian embodies a form of political engagement in *becoming*, for Deleuze and

Guattari, as it can work to secure "the general conditions that ensure the emergence of new forms and new systems of right" from the unrepresented and oppressed subjects who share in common their subjugation (Patton, 2005, 67). Following this line of thought, a majority is a form conceived for group decision making, and thereby a "majority" in this abstract form cannot be desired, per se, but is rather a means to arrive at desirable outcomes among decision makers. Minorities, in the plural, then, are segmented and partitioned by their subjugation to the rule of the majority without part in it (they are, after all, "represented"). Conceived abstractly as the determinate legitimacy of sovereignty in democratic procedure, the majority must be forged between decision makers and is never given.

> For Deleuze and Guattari, it is precisely those excluded from the majority as defined by a given set of axioms who are the potential bearers of the power to transform that set, whether in the direction of a new set of axioms or an altogether new axiomatic. These are the source of minoritarian becomings that carry the potential for new earths and peoples unlike those found in existing democracies. (Patton, 2005, 408)

Shadowing the definition of the "political" for Rancière, a minoritarian politics is practiced when subjects "inscribe, in the form of a supplement to every count of the parts of society, a specific figure of *the count of the uncounted* or of *the part of those without part*"—a "part of those without part" or the unrepresented, one might say, whose subjection to the prevailing system of "who counts" (the majority) irrupts with visibility and voice (2010, 35). Turning to alterity in 15M's practices of cognitive democracy is one in which the supplement ensues from the desire for inclusiveness, appearing in language as the string of conjunctions (polysyndeton), so as not to leave anyone uncounted.

The minoritarian politics of 15M do not suppose the celebratory ethos of multiculturalism or diversity given that, in practice, demonstrators actively problematize existing inequalities in ways that flee from any presumed ignorance about them, noted above by Martín Cabrera. Nor can the desires to inclusiveness that undergird these practices be construed as a form of "representation of the excluded" in the ways in which the standing partisan system can be said to "take up the interests" of its constituents or, say, "the poor." Finally, this turn to alterity cannot be claimed as any desire to surrender to, or to be swept up by the "Other" ("state" or "movement") that Rancière notes in the totalitarianisms of twentieth-century regimes, which to the contrary, constructed

minority others with culpability and squelched minoritarian politics altogether (2010, 45–61). What minoritarian politics involves in the practices of care in the assemblies and demonstrations is rather closer to what Rancière describes as "democracy" in the "infinite openness to that which comes [future possibilities]—which also means, an infinite openness to the Other or the newcomer" in the forms of hospitality that practice "many ways of inscribing the part of the other" in collective conversation (2010, 59–60). Or, as Patton explains, "the power of minoritarian becomings, whether borne by minorities excluded from the majority or by subjects of the majority who no longer coincide with its norms [. . .] carry the potential for new assemblages of affect, belief, and opinion that [. . .] thereby transform existing systems of governance, recognition, and rights" (2005, 71).

The Sol encampment was a self-managed "city within a city" (Lara, 2012, 652), described by the journalist Joseba Elola as a kind of utopian "mini-republic" ("El 15M sacude," 2011). Reporting from Sol throughout the week, Elola's news coverage attempted to portray, in his words, the unique "euphoria," "magic," and "feeling" of the plaza, far from the reported outrage that had presumably brought protesters together. In the peaceful communal nature of the encampment, Elola reports, some protesters wore flowers and hugged policemen, offering strangers water and food. It seemed to conjure up the "feeling of 1968" according to his article, in the encampment's "love" and "promise of hope" for change that had moved one interviewee to tears in Elola's interview.[17] Indeed, these sentimentalisms in retrospect, warns Jakob Tanner in his analysis of 1968, can have the events slip dangerously into a "nostalgic artifact" thereby ignoring the mechanics of how protesters came together and what they achieved (2008, 78). The affective intensity of common production in Sol found one form of expression through social networks, as visitors tagged public photographs and commented on their own presence in the encampment. On the evening of Election Day, Cadena Ser radio played selections from the late 1960s and early 1970s, including "Imagine" by John Lennon, interspersed with the radio announcer's narration of a "new dawn" in Sol, the so-called Spanish Revolution. Clearly, Sol conjured up associations with the return to a more peaceful 1968, given that there were no barricades being built in Sol or elsewhere in Spain, unlike Paris of 1968 (Townson, 2011). After all, demonstrators in 2011 had not only resisted police repression through civil disobedience, but there seemed to be no reasonable explanation to account for this suspension of disbelief, other than Sol's "look and feel" of change.

On the other hand, another sign of the "feel-good" happening in Sol was the criticism it drew for its "hippie utopianism," language circulating online in social networks and the conservative press, and by rightwing media commentators who criticized protesters as *perroflautas*, a derogatory term that describes dog-owning, street panhandlers who play the flute for money (Díaz Villanueva, 2011). When used pejoratively, the term marks a definitive class distinction as the very reason for which to ignore the encampment's proposals or activities, as it attempts to recast the heterogeneous makeup of the protesters in the public eye into a lumpen social category of "indigents and derelicts." True to the mechanics of oppositional readings that characterize 15M, however, its use was captured, reappropriated, and vindicated with irony by the protesters themselves, who would later coin terms such as *yayoflauta*, or the older grandparent generation of protesters, and *poliflauta*, or protesters and sympathizers who belong to the police corps.

On the other hand, throughout these weeks the news media emphasized almost exclusively the economic losses for businesses near Sol and the tourism sector at large (M. Serrano, 2011)—a sign that the encampment had indeed produced its own spatial arrangements that disrupted the usual rhythms of everyday traffic and commerce. Business was the priority, above all else. Yet, sensitive to the encampment's coexistence with local businesses, protesters in Sol voted to stay intact through the end of May and then to leave voluntarily in mid-June, turning the site into an information point and meeting space for organizational activities, while strengthening its online infrastructure and the network of neighborhood assemblies. Even though the encampment's durability was a contentious point among protesters, another of the movement's strengths resided in the awareness of and responsiveness to discrediting attempts to undermine support for its initiatives in the public eye, which developed in tandem with the decentralization of Sol into popular assemblies, working groups, and commissions in Madrid neighborhoods (Elola, "La silenciosa expansión," 2012).

But, the paradox of power in oppositional practice means that it is always precarious. On May 27, security forces in Barcelona charged and fired rubber bullets to disperse protesters from #acampadabcn in Plaça Catalunya, citing "hygienic reasons" to clean the plaza, in the event of a victory that evening by Barcelona Football Club and the ensuing celebrations in the streets. The images of police brutality circulating online outraged and further fueled massive protests across Spain in solidarity with the Barcelona 15M encampment. Protesters demanded the immediate resignation of Conseller of Interior Felipe Puig who insisted

that the police force was justified. Tens of thousands of protesters join the *indignadxs* in Madrid and Barcelona, as the Community of Madrid urged the Ministry of the Interior to clean Sol in the same manner, citing it as a *chabola* (shantytown) of unhygienic conditions. The following day, 15M hosted the first Popular Assemblies in over 40 neighborhood associations in Madrid, which since then, have shared a part in the many "mutations, effects, and convergences" to mobilize protesters since the first demonstrations of May 2011.[18]

Afterword

The election results from May 22, 2011 (for all municipal governments and 13 of Spain's 17 autonomous communities) showed only slightly higher rates of voter participation overall, with significant losses for the Socialist party (PSOE) and a boost in representation for minority parties, mainly for the United Left (IU) and the right-of-center Union, Progress, and Democracy (UPyD).[19] As Hardt and Negri observe in *Declaration*, following their conversations with 15M protesters:

> The *indignados* did not participate in the 2011 elections, then, in part because they refused to reward a socialist party that had continued neoliberal policies and betrayed them during its first years in office, but also and more importantly because they now have larger battles to fight, in particular one aimed at the structures of representation and the constitutional order itself—a fight whose Spanish roots reach back to the tradition of antifascist struggles and throw a new and critical light on the so-called transition to democracy that followed the end of the Franco regime. The *indignados* think of this as a *destituent* rather than a *constituent* process, a kind of exodus from the existing political structures, but it is necessary to prepare the bases for a new constituent power. (2012, n.p.)

Later that year, in the General Elections of November 2011, the conservative PP secured an absolute majority in Parliament, which consolidated its pursuit of sharpened austerity measures after PSOE's tenure. Mariano Rajoy, who had been the PP's presidential candidate in 2004 and 2008, lost both of these general elections and then was voted into office in 2011. The total number of abstentions and null or blank votes rounded out to some 10.4 million (31.0 percent) in 2011, or higher in comparison to over 9.6 million (27.9 percent) in 2008. The margin of difference for the PP, nevertheless, meant that it gained half a million votes from 2008 to 2011. How were these half a million votes (about 2.2 percent of the total ballots cast) enough to usher the party from the

minority opposition in 2008 to an absolute majority in 2011? In Raúl Sánchez Cedillo's assessment, "El PSOE ha encajado los peores resultados de su historia en unas elecciones generales: ha perdido 4 millones y medio de votos respecto a las generales de 2008" [The PSOE matched the worst results in its history of general elections: it lost 4.5 million votes with respect to the general elections in 2008]; while, on the other hand, the "PP tan solo ha recibido medio millón de votos más respecto a 2008. Así pues, su mayoría absoluta sólo se explica por el completo hundimiento de la base electoral del PSOE" [PP only received half a million more votes with respect to 2008. In this manner, then, its absolute majority can only be explained by the complete fallout of the PSOE's electoral base], coupled with an increase in the numbers of voters who refused to cast a ballot for any party, at all ("Las elecciones," 2012, 72). Barring the PSOE's fallout for the role it may have played to secure an absolute majority for its opposition, one should not underestimate the PP's general election campaign, crafted to convey positive emotions and attitudes toward "change," among them "hope."

"Súmate al cambio" [Join the Change], announces the PP's television spot, which begins with a close-up shot of a contemplative man looking upward at an unseen sky (Partido Popular, 2011). The profile of his upward-looking gaze transmits a sense of hope and observance in this establishing shot, which persists throughout the elevated mood of the music and the narrator's confident delivery of the script. "Saldremos adelante" [we will move forward], the narrator repeats throughout. A cinematic orchestra provides the score, which builds in intensity from the opening shot's soft piano melody of high notes and then swells dramatically into a full instrumental accompaniment by the final scene. The narrative arch of the audiovisuals follows this trajectory from the individual to the collective, from the first shot of the lone man (scored to the soft single keys on the piano) to the final panorama of a packed stadium where the party's members vigorously wave flags with the PP's logo (accentuated by the sounds of a full orchestra). The sense of strength and solidarity in numbers, then, is transmitted by recruiting viewers to "Join the Change" through inspirited feelings of belonging and its opposite, of not being alone. "Never give up hope," to paraphrase the narrator, and "think positively" are the initial messages that take shape in image, score, and narration. Some actors pictured in subsequent shots look up from their activities—whether sports or work—to smile at the camera directly in its appeal to positivity. However, the transmission of positivity in the audiovisual sequence is also constructed around emotions attached to specific values.

First, the sequence conveys perseverance in spite of all obstacles ("saldremos adelante"), as the camera shows a fit woman scaling a rock-climbing wall at the gym. As she falls to the padded mat below, the narrator states, "cada vez que un golpe nos tire a la lona, nos levantaremos" [for every time we get knocked down, we will get up again], an action reinforced by a camera-cut to a young man on a volley-ball court who reaches out to his game partner, lifting him up from the ground. The images, in this sense, tend to work with idioms on economic recovery, such as "getting back on one's feet" after a hard fall, which mix gestures of solidarity (helping one another to "get back up") with those of individual determination, particularly in sport. In this light, viewers see a shot of a mountain climber clinging to a sharp cliff; a surfer who falls mid-air from his board in the curl of a wave; a pole-vaulter seen from below, clearing the bar; and an amateur soccer team celebrating a goal, among others. These values of solidarity and self-determination, spoken in the first-person plural "we," are likewise associated with character traits such as the "resilience" of Spanish citizens who "never lose hope" despite difficult times: "Porque nunca perdemos la esperanza. Porque no nos resignamos fácilmente. Porque no somos de los que abandonan la tarea" [Because we never lose hope. Because we don't give up easily. Because we're not like those who abandon the task at hand].

As this brief narrative develops, repeating the confident "saldremos adelante" throughout, its positive appeal to voters constructs value in, and thereby recognition of, the many sacrifices made by Spanish citizens without needing to name them directly. They are conveyed, instead, through the emotions shaped around idioms and metaphors of perseverance, positivity, and the power to overcome challenges together ("porque si los españoles no se rinden, nosotros tampoco" [because if the Spanish don't give up, neither do we]). For, when it seems there is "no future," "we will find a way out" ("si el futuro se hace estrecho, haremos un agujero para ver el horizonte"), in what highlights the industrious character to create solutions and to adapt to difficult times. The announcement conveys an uplifting sense of agency and empowerment in this statement, in the possibility of shaping an undefined future, "a pesar de los fríos números, de las estadísticas y las cifras del paro" [despite the cold numbers of statistics and unemployment rates], as numeric figures race across the screen in an abstractly digital ("dehumanized") space. In contrast to the "cold" markets, the warm values and personable smiles in the announcement construct "hope" as a test of endurance against challenges and the overcoming of "fear" that may accompany them ("si la desconfianza nos invade, volaremos por encima

de los miedos"). Just "getting by" in difficult times, then, is compressed metonymically into the positive emotion "hope" for change, but it is also attached to a set of values in self-determination, perseverance, and industriousness. One might call them a work ethic or, returning to the establishing shot of the individual looking skyward, perhaps even a faith in economic recovery.

These are values in the whole of society, the narrative suggests, as the different camera shots depict women and men working in various labor segments: tailors, fishermen, construction workers, a welder, farmers, surgeons, a bartender, workmen loading a plane, and so on. Employed and visibly happy on the job, the camera shows some of these figures smiling directly at the viewing audience. In this idyllic image of work and happiness, one might read self-fulfillment, the advertisement shows a representative whole of the country's working population employed and productive, which constructs the only inferred campaign promise to viewers (employment), given that the advertisement lacks all mention of an electoral program or platform. Finally, the announcement draws to its close by revealing the stuff of determination—something "that no one has, but us," that is, "our will" ("contamos con algo con lo que nadie cuenta: nuestra voluntad"). Volition, or the autonomous power of control over action, returns viewers to agency as an uplifting sense of empowerment, at least for those who have the right stuff. Then, the camera cuts to the final panoramic shot of the stadium as the narrator invokes the present, the past under PP rule, and the future, defining itself by one specific attribute: "Porque sabemos hacerlo. Porque ya lo demostramos. Porque hicimos de España un país de oportunidades. Y lo volveremos a hacer" [Because we know how to do it. Because we've already shown it. Because we made Spain a country of opportunities. And we will do it again]. The campaign ad's emotive appeal to viewers tends to evoke feelings of hope for change and self-empowerment, and it does so around specific values of self-determination, perseverance, and industriousness despite all obstacles. In this manner, the "land of opportunity" attributed to the PP's former rule under Aznar's administration, tends to show itself comprising ideally productive, even enterprising individuals adaptable to change and resilient to hard times.

If I have paid great attention to the way in which this campaign constructs its electoral promises purely around "hope" and a specific work ethic, it is because election propaganda demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of how emotional appeals to viewing audiences (voters) are made even in the absence of an election platform, on the one hand,

and yet bear their own politics for the ways in which they associate emotions with certain values, on the other. In the context of the 2011 general elections, the campaign spot draws from the "great hope for change" that was already in currency some six months earlier during the mass demonstrations. The advertisement stands as an illustrative example, to my mind, of how an emotional appeal in a given address to viewers can be formed around a set of ideal values that the addresser (the party) deems to be desirable *for* the population. This point might be obvious and could be said to apply to almost any political campaign. However, what seems most striking to me is the campaign's ability to shape positive emotions—and thereby possibly generate votes—around values that are desirable, in this view, for greater economic autonomy (self-determination) and adaptability to market conditions (industriousness), among a population adjusting to austerity measures (perseverance). Neoliberalism, despite the "coldness" of market indicators recognized in the ad, might find its warm cultural values in the attachments that foster self-empowerment as a novel kind of hope.

City, Interrupted: Sierra and Galindo's Performance *Los encargados*

15M has drawn significant public attention to the pacts and consensual agreements from Spain's democratic *Transición* to its membership in the European Union. In the wake of the global crisis, so too have mobilizations called into question the undifferentiation between the fiscal and economic policies of Spain's main parties on the political left (PSOE) and right (PP). Consensus, however, is more than the consensual agreement among government officials on policy and law alone. The culture of consensus since the *Transición*, observes Víctor Sampedro, is made perceptible in its rupture, particularly, by the visible *appearance* of social mobilizations such as 15M, which challenge the institutional and media discourses prevalent since the *Transición*:

> [El 15M] significa pues una reapropiación discursiva, ya no de espacios públicos, de espacios de debate . . . Y esta reapropiación parte de la impugnación de la Cultura de la Transición, es decir, de los vetos y de los consensos que pesaban, de los vetos y de la correlación de fuerzas que imponían una serie de consensos de facto que bloquean una serie de debates, que bloquean una serie de políticas públicas, que bloquean una serie de políticas expresivas y simbólicas, y que está siendo impugnada en toda regla . . . No sólo el 15M es una impugnación a las tramas

> clientelares de práctica política—corrupción, cleptocracia, pseudocracia, es decir, el gobierno de la mentira, de la mentira institucionalizada, de los silencios mediáticos sobre realidades sociales, etc.—sino que es cuando [. . .] te das cuenta de que se está concretando en medidas políticas e institucionales que literalmente desarmarían el sistema de representación político e informativo tal y como lo conocemos ahora. ("Del 15M a la #acampadasol," 2011)
>
> [(15M) signifies a discursive reappropriation, no longer only in public space, in spaces for debate . . . And this reappropriation stems from its challenge to the Culture of the Transition, that is, the vetoes and consensuses hanging over it, the vetoes and the correlation of forces that imposed de facto a series of consensuses blocking a series of debates, blocking a series of public policies, blocking a series of expressive and symbolic politics, and that is being fully contested . . . 15M is not only a challenge to the cases of cronyism in political practice—corruption, kleptocracy, pseudocracy, that is, a government of lies, of institutionalized lying, of silences in the media about social realities, etc.—but it's when . . . you realize that it's taking specific political and institutional measures that would literally dismantle the system of political representation and information as we know it today.]

The abdication of King Juan Carlos I in June 2014 can illustrate Sampedro's claim on the series of vetoes exercised, which do not correspond exclusively to state powers. In the afternoon following the king's speech, protesters assembled in Spanish cities, demanding a constituent process to decide on the continuation of the monarchy, while many politicians, media analysts, and prominent figures from the culture industry closed rank and file in public support of the institution, if not directly opposed to consulting Spanish citizens by popular referendum. Leading government officials from the PP and PSOE agreed that an initiative for a referendum should be blocked from materializing in parliament, as PSOE Secretary-General Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba delayed his planned resignation in order to usher through the coronation of the king's successor Felipe VI. Rubalcaba expressed a debt of gratitude to the Crown in his parliamentary address, stating that socialism is compatible with the monarchy, while the PSOE invoked *disciplina de voto* with maximum fines for any Socialist representative who should vote against the party whip to ratify the succession, despite vocal opposition within the party ("Rubalcaba," 2014). The publishing group RBA Revistas censored the cover of its satirical magazine *El Jueves*, which was set to print a comic of Juan Carlos I holding a crown with flies swarming around it—a "rotten inheritance" was its inferred message—resulting in 18 resignations

by workers who denounced censorship ("Los dibujantes," 2014). Spain's news media, both television and the press, introduced the public to the future royal family before the succession was voted into law, while news coverage gave priority to commemorations attributing the consolidation of democracy to Juan Carlos's figure in the *Transición*—an "official" memory. Amid an ongoing judicial investigation into Juan Carlos's daughter Cristina de Borbón and son-in-law Iñaki Urdangarín on allegations of fraud, tax evasion, and embezzlement, the monarchy held the lowest approval ratings in democratic history at that time, and yet, media analysts construed favorable results from public opinion polls in creative ways. In sum, the discursive space on the continuation of the monarchy tended to monopolize the media, whereas, overall, the mass demonstrations in Spanish cities were relegated to a smaller corner of coverage and visibility that seemingly did not correspond to the popular clamor for a constituent process. None of these agents alone can be signaled as responsible for the tacit consensus forged across them, which rather has the effect of producing a blanket of silence and invisibility over the popular demand for a constituent process.

Consensus, in the notion approximated by Sampedro, relates to what issues *can be said* and *made visible* (in the media, in the state, in society at large), and by whom. To elaborate on Sampedro's observation, a sphere of consensus is shaped by the criteria that determine what debates, public policies, and symbolic expressions are regarded "properly" political, or in the case of the news media, worthy of coverage.[20] He calls these practices the "Culture of the Transition," sharing the views of Guillem Martínez and his contributors who define *Cultura de la Transición* (CT) as the predominant culture of consensus in Spain's democratic present, one that tends to depoliticize issues, practices, and thought from within rigid frameworks designating the limited terrain of proper questions to be asked, by whom, and about what issues. As Guillem Martínez notes, "En un sistema democrático, los límites a la libertad de expresión no son las leyes. Son límites culturales" [In a democratic system, the limits to the freedom of expression are not in law. They are cultural limits] of the permissibly sayable and the doable: "solo es posible escribir determinadas novelas, discursos, artículos, canciones, programas, películas, declaraciones, sin salirse de la página" [it is only possible to write certain novels, speeches, articles, songs, programs, films, declarations, without straying from the page], all of which bear restrictions that result in "que la cultura española realizara pocas formulaciones" [having Spanish culture create few formulations] (Acevedo et al., 2012, 14).[21] The operative mechanisms of consensus hinge upon a tacit axiomatic of selection,

according to which issues are considered legitimate or not; that is, consensus is a legitimating practice of distinction and selection based necessarily on veridiction. In institutional arrangements, the criteria of consensus can contribute to blocking certain discussions from taking place—such as a popular referendum on the monarchy—or they can halt certain proposals from consideration for decision, not only in state politics, but across the media and the culture industries (in publishing, literary criticism, film, music, art, and so on):

> [La CT] aseguró durante tres décadas el control de la realidad mediante el monopolio de las palabras, los temas y la memoria. Cómo debe circular la palabra y qué debe significar cada una. En torno a qué debemos pensar y en qué términos. Qué debemos recordar y en función *de qué presente* debemos hacerlo. Durante años, ese monopolio del sentido se ejerció sobre todo a través de un sistema de información centralizado y unidireccional al que solo las voces mediáticas tenían acceso, mientras que el público jugaba el papel de audiencia pasiva y existían temas intocables. (2012, 668)
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> [For three decades, the CT assured the control of reality through the monopoly of words, subject matters, and memory. How words should circulate and what each one should mean. Surrounding what we should think and on what terms. How we should remember and in function of *what present* we should do so. For years, that monopoly of meaning was exerted, above all, through a centralized, unilateral system of information to which only media voices had access, while the public played the role of a passive audience and there existed untouchable subject matters.]

Evidence of consensus is made conspicuous, in part, by its discursive absences, by its spaces of silence and invisibility. It is this point on silence and invisibility which I should like to emphasize here for the analysis to follow. Notably, for Sampedro, this consensus is *made visible* by the resignifying practices of protest, assembly, and digital media (reappropriated discourse, occupied space) that disrupt consensual silences and spaces of invisibility. His is a definition that resonates with Jacques Rancière's notion of *dissensus*, which is "not a conflict of interests, values, or opinions, [but a] dispute over what is given and about the frame within which we see something as given," that is, as a political act that makes visible at least "two worlds in one and the same world," each with its own organizing principles (2010, 69). The tacit presumptions and agreements working to secure consensus resemble a policing function, notes Rancière, as they have the effect of dispersing public attention as though to say, "Move along! There is nothing to see here!" (2010, 71–2; 37).

In August 2012, the artists Santiago Sierra and Jorge Galindo staged their performance *Los encargados* [The Ones in Charge] recorded in downtown Madrid, which simulates a presidential motorcade to denounce the complicity of state politics and capital interests in the production of Spain's recent crises as the very result of the *Transición* (Sierra and Galindo, 2012). The urban intervention stages a performance in city space—indeed interrupts everyday routine in it—that makes its political statement undeniably visible. Staged provocatively to command the attention of pedestrians in the city, the intervention equates Spain's history of democratic leaders, with great pageantry, to the authoritarian rule of dictatorship. Or, in the artists' words, due to the priorities of capital and political interests, "hay gente muriendo y otros miles robados y echados de sus casas" [there are people dying (amid the crisis) and thousands others robbed or thrown out of their homes], which they attribute to an origin, "el tocomocho de la Transición, dirigida por las élites políticas del franquismo para perdurar hasta nuestros días" [the scam of the *Transición*, directed by Francoist political elites to last until our time] (García, "Arte para denunciar," 2013). In this light, Sierra and Galindo's performance challenges the consensual "official" regard of the *Transición* as a model democratic achievement, and it does so by articulating this position, without nuance or subtlety, in urban space. The performance takes up the object of criticism, CT or the *Transición* writ large, and presents it as a kind of operative machine in relation to what is seen and goes unseen in the parade.

The video recording of the intervention situates viewers in Madrid's most emblematic boulevard, La Gran Vía. The black-and-white recording opens with an establishing shot of the Carrión Building in Plaza Callao, recognizable for its sleek architectural curves and neon Schweppes billboard. Then, the camera cuts to another shot of Gran Vía, framed above street level, providing the image of an abandoned, silent city. In the opening sequence, viewers are shown the monumental architectures along the capital's signature avenue, from the Press Building with its cinemas and dance hall, to the crowning statue of La Unión y el Fénix insurance company. These establishing shots set the urban stage of performance against the cultural icons of (the) Capital: the monumental grandeur of Gran Vía in its offices of investment and banking capital, its advertising images, its theaters and spaces for entertainment. Shown from the outset, in other words, are the representative pillars of advanced capitalism in the postindustrial era of services, consumerism, and financial services and securities. However,

Gran Vía also holds the cultural status of a colossal icon for early twentieth-century modernization, the time when these buildings were constructed.[22] The black-and-white video recording provides a split vision, at once, of its referents to the modern and to the contemporary, past and present folded within the same sequence of images. The video offers a double image, one of economic and financial activities in which material and monetary exchange (the era of industrial production) is eclipsed today by consumer culture, immaterial investments and securities, and the service industries of hospitality and entertainment (the era of the production of production itself), as two times folded into one image.

The camera cuts to a motorcade of black limousines, each one equipped with a large-scale portrait, displayed upside down, of every head of state from the *Transición* to the present. Appearing in order, viewers see King Juan Carlos I wearing a military hat, followed by Presidents Adolfo Suárez, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, Felipe González, José María Aznar, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, and the recently elected Mariano Rajoy. Their stateliness is augmented by the gray backdrop of Gran Vía's towering architectures. As this parade travels solemnly past bystanders on the streets of Madrid, who are now within view, its resemblance to a motorcade of official state vehicles conveys the public appearance of authority implicit in the protections of state security. Indeed, one might say that it *commands* its authority over viewers. The camera provides a traveling shot of the sky and towering buildings above as the score "Warszawianka" interpreted by the Alexandrov Ensemble (Red Army Choir, 1993), marks a snare drum beat to the military march. The musical score builds its narrative crescendo from the singing chorus, first softly and then in full volume, cueing to the viewer a musical climax accentuated by its cut to a spliced frame. The screen splits into two, then three, consecutive frames (figure 2.1). In some, the portraits are displayed at a 180 degree turn, right-side up, which shows the heads of state advance in several sequences of close-up and distant shots.

The measured cadence of the military march and the solemnity of the motorcade in moving image together contribute to the authoritarian prowess of the intervention's aesthetics, evocative of the spectacles of state power in twentieth-century regimes. The oversized scale of the portraits, the pageantry of their public display, and their marked separation from pedestrian traffic, configure the parade's spectacular character as a simulated demonstration of state power constructed relationally in sight and distance from onlookers.

Figure 2.1 Still image from the urban intervention *Los encargados* by Santiago Sierra and Jorge Galindo.

This is one feature of the parade's humor, residing in part in its interruption of the everyday occurrence (its surprise, perhaps) with a very serious political denouncement and, vital to this message, the lack of subtlety in its mediated delivery to viewers. Its humorous irreverence rests upon simulating the visible signs and symbols of "authentic" state authority (the iconic portraits of heads of state, motorcade security, the parade), to the extent that the performance surpasses its object of imitation while overturning it (literally, upside down like the portraits) in a comparison to their dictatorial character. Oversized and prominently displayed, the portraits of *Los encargados* invert the command of state authority, of course, by commanding public attention to their literal inversion, which is part of the irreverent character of the artists' critique. But they also do so with public visibility by detaining, even briefly, the everyday rhythms of traffic in downtown Madrid through an unusual interruption that bears a humorous element of surprise. As a device that defamiliarizes everyday routine in the city, the parade performs a similar task to that of divulging an open secret, one that is sensed as known but that goes unstated directly in public speech. That is, if the act of disclosing a generally accepted but unspoken secret may transgresses social proprieties (of the "properly" sayable in public speech), then the parade transgresses a form of political propriety (relating to "officialdom") by speaking the unsaid in public, with great visibility. In this manner, the performance is not only a representation, but it performs an interruption in the urban rhythms and flows of traffic and pedestrians, that is,

it articulates "a situation" in practice by staging visibly what should otherwise remain publicly unspoken and unseen.

That this public performance uses the street as its stage to interpellate bystanders with a political denouncement, certainly folds back onto a tradition of Situationist urban interventions in the 1960s. Participating in the events of 1968 in Paris, the members of the Situationist International, eventually led by Guy Debord, developed their critique of contemporary capitalism and its media culture, as they observed that spectacle and consumerism had increasingly become the organizing principle for social relations and urban planning.[23] It was from this basis that its members held that "a society organized as appearance can be disrupted on the field of appearance," particularly, through ephemeral actions that can resignify and make new meanings of urban space (Marcus, 2002, 8). The site for these actions was necessarily the city, according to one member, the Dutch architect Constant Nieuwenhuys, the locus where social atomization and alienation took root in the practices of everyday life vis-à-vis urbanism:

> The crisis of urbanism is worsening. [...] In old neighborhoods, the streets have degenerated into highways, and leisure is commercialized and adulterated by tourism. Newly built neighborhoods have only two themes, which govern everything: traffic circulation and household comfort. They are the meager expressions of bourgeois happiness and lack of any concern for play. [...] We opt first to create situations here, new situations. We intend to break the laws that prevent the development of meaningful activities in life and culture. (2002, 95)

Among the many experimental practices of the Situationists, the creation of "situations" in the urban milieu would have spectators reflect, in part, on their prescribed (passive) roles as potential (active) agents of action and change. In the words of Guy Debord in the Situationist critique, the spectacle of democracy is driven by "the dictatorial freedom of the Market, as tempered by the recognition of the rights of Homo Spectator" whose alienation calls into question the impetus of entwined economic and political powers that produce estrangement and social atomization writ large (1995, 9).

To create a situation, then, is also to situate viewers critically in relation to the performance at hand, one that commands viewer attention in Sierra and Galindo's parade. In the audiovisual sequence, a mix of street level, angled, and rooftop shots assemble composite viewpoints from which to observe the motorcade's journey down Gran Vía, whether

from the various perspectives of viewers traveling along with the motorcade or observing as a bystander from the sidewalk. Space is constructed in the visual sequence from the many camera angles that add depth to the urban setting, from different perspectives and frames. In this manner, the camera takes up a specific, established mode of looking: that of the multiple bystanders who observe the parade from different angles, and who do so from a distance. State security, here, marks a specific distance between spectators and the passageway of the motorcade through traffic. Not only does its slow pace disrupt the normal circulation for drivers and call attention to itself for pedestrians, but the sense of disruption that it creates also reiterates the motorcade's (security) distance from the onlookers traversing the city at that moment. Even as the video ends, while the screen fades to black, the final sound that can be heard is the siren from an emergency vehicle among the traffic. Keeping in mind the multiple perspectives filmed, here we are not dealing with one spectator but with composite viewpoints, one might say a viewing public. This spectatorship is folded within two defining characteristics at once, for onlookers who view the motorcade are situated as both the *represented* (by "the Ones in Charge") and the *securitized* (in the distance from its security apparatus) (Hardt and Negri, 2012). In this crafted situation, state leaders are conveyed as untouchable, unreachable, and indeed immune from the interests of pedestrians and drivers, as they parade along.

Now, at the musical climax, the split-frame sequence displays the heads of state upright, framing them in such a way that as they advance to the tempo of the military march, they give the impression that each one dangles in the air as though propelled from above by a mechanical conveyer belt just beyond the frame. Nevertheless, the mechanism of propulsion remains unseen. That is, the sequence resembles assembly-line production in the factory, a linear and mechanical process that, here, seems to produce each Head of State. It is a linear march of assembly-line production that reduces the portraits of these government officials into a mere industrial byproduct of processes unseen here, pictured against the backdrop of Madrid's emblematic symbols of (the) capital. Unseen beyond the frame is the mechanical ensemble of working parts that keep on producing the same product in succession (the portraits of political leaders), propelling them along this time- and assembly line as they scroll across the screen. In this manner, the video-editing work on the performance alludes to a field of possible associations with all that is modern in production: the punch-card temporality of the factory, measured and tightly regulated like the tempo of the audiovisual sequence;

the factory's linear mode of assembly by rhythmic measure to produce a given product; and, indeed, the over-determined conception of a linear historical time that regiments and orders, and as it orders, produces the self-same product along a timeline, *los encargados*. This situation again positions viewers within the double-vision of past and present crafted in the video's establishing shots. In Sierra and Galindo's performance, the modern mechanical time of the factory-state (the parade) lends itself to an open series of associations with regimes (past and present) assembled from "back stage" mechanisms that produce this linear military parade, or the heads of state in Spain's democratic history.

The parade calls attention to itself, indeed situates itself forcefully in its tightly organized and codified regimes of signs, as a kind of machine. The modern factory, the state, and the temporal cadence of history are collapsed into one and the same overstated gesture—and yet, paradoxically, they are propelled by operative parts excluded from view, beyond the camera's frame. This invisibility is precisely where the artists stake their claim that the *Transición* to democracy was hatched in continuation with the Franco dictatorship, and consistent with it, notably, the *Caudillo*'s portrait is nowhere to be seen among the other officials in the military parade. So too does the space created by the performance make reference to alternative spaces along Gran Vía that remain largely invisible to spectators.

In the opening sequence, the camera travels twice past the boarded-up Edificio España located in Plaza de España. Traces of graffiti are marked visibly on the wooden slats that cover the ground-floor windows. Although the camera does not show viewers much more, Madrid residents will recognize this square as replete with empty buildings today due to property speculation and investment losses, some of them occupied by squatters. Despite the monumental stateliness of the avenue's buildings, the shot of Plaza España serves as a subtle reminder that behind and along the façade of Gran Vía lie the ruins of property speculation. In them, the abstract calculus of invisible market forces is made material in Madrid's cityscape and the social effects of its economic downturn. If one returns to the split vision of the establishing sequence, this relay between two times situates viewers between Gran Vía's inception in the early twentieth century—the modern image of burgeoning financial capital, services, and consumerism—and one hundred years later in the wake of the global crisis, its decadence and decline in advanced capitalism. The product of what viewers see in the video, then, may be understood to both show and conceal what is only peripherally pictured in these shots. It is as if to say, following the

camera that travels along with the motorcade before the boarded-up building, "Move along, there is nothing to see here." By the artists' suggestion, the spectacle of democracy parades along the measured march of history, and as it does so, it positions itself as an empty product of mechanical processes and operations concealed from view that produce *Los encargados*. In other words, the portraits come to light as the sublimated byproduct within a mechanical configuration of (political, capital, historical) forces unseen.

It is worth noting here that the *encargados*, this self-same product in state leadership, are portrayed as constant, static, and unchanging, in a Benjaminian suggestion on the illusion of difference and novelty that provides the perpetual return of the same. Taken literally, these political leaders of different partisan colors are shown as substitutable, the one exchangeable for any other, regardless of their political leanings. Their equivalence, which erases political ideology from this association, might seem overstated for some viewers, if not problematic. After all, certainly not all of them can be construed to share the same political and economic agendas, can they? There exists here, in other words, a question of ideological contradiction that, at first sight, beckons clarification and yet remains unresolved in the parade itself. This apparent contradiction is at work, most notably, in the assemblage of the audiovisual narrative, particularly in the artists' choice to score the final recording to a Soviet march. As the military parade pairs these audiovisual components to address its viewers in the likeness of a regime, the regimented cadence of "Warszawianka" contributes to this perceptible totalitarianism of the *encargados*, in which the form and address of the parade are inseparable for viewers to decode its cultural and historical allusions to regimes past. For, even as the lyrics speak to proletarian empowerment and revolution ("Let's tear down the czars' crown . . . " "Today when the working people are starving / To indulge in luxury is a crime"), the choice of song, with its regimented cadence and chorus of voices, provides the visual sequence with coherent readability *as* a totalitarian construct, independently of its message. On the other hand, it seems not to bear a form of revolutionary nostalgia that Rancière observes in late Situationist performances, nor is it a call to insurrection as the Situationists upheld in some militant actions of 1968.[24] An ironic choice, the military march at once conveys this demonstration of power as a regime, as much as it contradicts its readable effect. Or, perhaps then, if viewers take up the split-vision noted earlier, this contradiction between the ideological position of the critique and its Soviet song can provide a reminder to viewers on the experience of twentieth-century history in which revolutionary

struggles, when successful at consolidating a position of power within the state, have also reproduced the (totalitarian) forms of subjugation and violence that propelled them to power from insurrection.

What is conveyed to viewers is not the ideological position of the march gathered in the lyrics on the proletarian struggle against an oppressive state. Rather, it is the steady, driving tempo of the parade and its augmenting chorus of voices that provide a totalitarian figuration independently of political ideology—as viewers are invited to read all *encargados as* an authoritarian construct. If I read the parade in terms of ideology, however, this contradiction, and the attempt to resolve it by differentiating between ideological partisan positions, takes precedence over any of intervention's other features—the linear production of state leaders, the icons of advanced capitalism along Gran Vía, the continuity it suggests between dictatorship and democracy, and so on—and thus privileges the question of ideology over them. Rather, it is this possibility of "neither and both" (ideological) positions that coexist at once in the address of its message and its form. Instead, the performance provides a critique of "democracy-as-dictatorship," leaving spectators with few guesses on the explicit aim of its criticism in which the invitation to read the parade ends up "dictating" its intentions to viewers. And, nevertheless, this straightforward critique is obscured if read through the lens of political ideology, which cannot reconcile easily the historical production of the political right and left in democracy, nor that of fascism and communism in the twentieth century, as "one and the same." Thinking about the performance along ideological lines requires falling back on critical operations that draw distinctions between these positions, in a form of partitioning that the parade itself rejects. Rather, the Grand Master Narratives of history, or the experience in twentieth-century history with ideological narratives, are rendered conceptually as producing a similar totalitarian effect—a machinic output, like that of the assembly line, that produces identity, similarity, and the ready-made head of state. If taken as a kind of machine, the ways of reading this address are only for viewers to recognize, in part, by interrogating the critical operations that would rather endow its address and delivery with interior unity.

Sierra and Galindo's "situation" portrays the security state, and indeed the history of the *Transición*, as a construct materializing from an ensemble of different unseen forces—taken up together, a certain consensual machinery—that work in concert to produce the Ones in Charge. The performance does not grapple with how this might be, of course, and rather interpellates viewers to have them perceive *Los*

encargados as marching forth from the factory assembly line. But viewers are situated before a spectacle that creates its own space, rhythm, and security in distance, inviting onlookers to take pause for a moment, whatever their interpretation, and contemplate the viewer's role before this authoritarian apparatus. In the recorded performance, as a device itself, what goes largely unseen is made conspicuous, not by its total absence, but by the marginal traces that disrupt its totality and in the assertion of authority by what can be, peripherally, seen. Given that the artists' intervention collapses the machine-factory-state-history into the same modernist gesture, thus making it readable in its exaggeration, the question that this configuration proposes in its reductive equivalence is also one of readability. Beyond the intervention, how might one approach reading the authoritarian configuration denounced in the performance, of the political and capital powers made largely visible and yet also obscured from view? How might one read the operative parts of manufactured consensuses, made legible and illegible at once?

Notes

Introduction Urban Multitudes: 15M and the Spontaneous "Spanish Revolution"

1. I use the term *indignadxs* to refer to 15M participants, from the protesters' own words, rather than the masculine plural *indignados* for the gender exclusions implied in the latter. Another gender-neutral choice, also used interchangeably among protesters, is *indignad@s*. In this light, Manuel Castells refers to the *indignadas* in his work in the feminine plural (2012). Here, readers will note that the masculine plural *indignados* appears in reference to published works bearing this name.
2. As Alex Thomson explains, "Traditionally, *poiesis* is distinguished from *praxis* or action, on the grounds that *poiesis* aims at, and is subsequently judged in terms of its success at, the production of a work, but *praxis* is consumed in the action" (2011, 212).
3. According to Sáenz de Santamaría, "Entiendo que en un país con un 45% paro juvenil la gente se indigne. En 1995 los jóvenes vivimos una situación similar. Había un 40% de paro y mucho malestar. Entiendo indignación frente a la inoperancia de las medidas que se han adoptado por parte del Gobierno socialista. La gente merece medidas serias, y las hará un gobierno del PP, ya en 1996 se cambiaron las cosas" [I understand why people are angry in a country with 45 per cent youth unemployment. In 1995, we young people experienced a similar situation. There was 40 per cent unemployment and great unease. I understand outrage before the ineffective measures adopted by the Socialist Government. People deserve serious measures, and the PP government will deliver them, given that things changed in 1996]. See Cué, "Rajoy delega" (2011).
4. For Mariano Rajoy, "Lo fácil es descalificar a la política y los políticos . . . Es verdad que a veces hay gente que no cumple con sus obligaciones, gobiernos que no están a la altura, es lo que está sucediendo ahora, pero yo he visto a mucha gente trabajando, estirando los presupuestos, atendiendo a sus vecinos, y cumpliendo con su deber que es servir" [It's easy to discredit politics and politicians . . . It's true that sometimes there are people who don't fulfill their obligations, governments that don't rise to the challenge, and that's

what's happening now, but I've seen many people working, stretching their budget, assisting their neighbors, and fulfilling their duty, which is to serve]. See Cué, "Rajoy contesta" (2011).

5. In reference to 15M, per Deleuze and Guattari, as a nomadic war machine, also see Gutiérrez (2012).
6. To temper Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical model, the authors conceive of the "line of flight" within the rhizome as capable of escaping "outside" the existing structures of power in this *becoming-other*, which is not necessarily substantiated beyond their conceptual model, a point addressed in chapter 2. Here, I refer to *becoming-other* never as a transformation that completely sheds its former properties, or the structures of power conditioning them, but rather, understood through Ross Chambers's re-reading of Deleuze and Guattari, as necessarily shaped within the prevailing relational powers that produce, in part, desire. See the Preface to Chambers (1991, xi–xx).

1 Lessons Felt, Then Learned

1. In an effort to prevent a further downturn in construction, the Socialist government financed public works through the Plan-E stimulus package. For a history and analysis of the housing bubble and construction boom from 1995 to 2007, see Observatorio Metropolitano (2013, 25–75). For information on the devaluation of property in Spain, see Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Fomento (2012).
2. In Redondo's photography Patricia Keller argues for waiting as a political gesture, one of decelerating time against the speed of events in the Spanish crisis (Keller, 2015). For artist Hans Haacke's exhibition on the abandoned suburb "Ensanche de Vallecas" in Madrid, see Borja-Villel et al. (2012).
3. For a history of corruption in democratic Spain and similar practices in Francoism, see Heywood (2005, 39–60).
4. From 2008 to 2011, Spain's unemployed rates sailed from 8.60 percent to 22.85 percent of the active workforce. See the Instituto Nacional de Estadística database, http://www.ine.es.
5. Among other polemical decisions made during the Socialist tenure of Felipe González, which contributed to the disenchantment of the political left, was the vote to grant Spain's entrance into the European Economic Community in 1985; the call for a national referendum approving Spain's permanent membership in NATO in 1986; and favorable relations with the United States under Reagan's administration (Vilar, 1986).
6. See Mayor Oreja (2009), and a replication to this assertion repeated in the media by Pastor Guzmán (2012).
7. The average monthly net income in Spain rounded out to 1,345 euros in 2010. The National Institute for Statistics observes that this figure is much higher than the most common salary in Spain, due to the wealthiest salaries that raise the average; see the Instituto Nacional de Estadística,

"Encuesta de Estructura Salarial" (2010) and Navarro's analysis "Por qué los salarios son tan bajos" (2012).

8. "Trabajar hoy –además de un privilegio– es un acto subversivo, reaccionario y, por lo tanto, perseguido por esas milicias gubernamentales que ahora se llaman sindicatos [. . .] lacayos del poder, estómagos agradecidos que sólo esperan que no se acabe ese chollo de buen marisco y viajes en barcos" [To work, aside from a privilege, is today a subversive, reactionary act, consequently persecuted by those governmental militias that are now called labor unions . . . lackeys to power, thankful stomachs that only hope their gravy train of good seafood and boat trips never ends] (Genoveva, 2010, 2).
9. This controversial article, for its outrage, quickly became a trending topic in Twitter, notably, with commentary from prominent journalists such as Juan Ramón Lucas and Jordi Évole, among others. See Millás (2012).
10. In reference to Millás's article, Spain's "soft" bailout from the ECB was granted under certain conditions. As Navarro summarizes, the possibility of future financial assistance from the ECB came with a directive, since made public from Chief Mario Draghi to Spain's President Mariano Rajoy: "In a recent press conference (August 9, 2012), Mr. Draghi was quite clear. The ECB will not buy Spanish public bonds unless the Spanish government takes tough, unpopular measures such as reforming the labor market, reducing pension benefits, and privatizing the welfare state" ("The Euro," 2012).
11. In this sense, "outrage" and "anger" are preferred in English over the more literal translation "indignation," given that the latter implies some form of contempt according to the OED, such as "an action of counting or treating (a person or thing) as unworthy of regard or notice," or an implicit victimization to some form of wrongdoing. The actions of the *indignadxs*, however, cannot be construed as seeking public validation or entrance into the political sphere through victimism, a performative and/or appropriated maneuver ubiquitous in political discourse that is not wholly unique to Spain, as Justin Crumbaugh has noted. See Crumbaugh (2007, 365–84).
12. For a comprehensive overview of current literature on affect and its intersections with sociology, psychology, political theory, and neuroscience, among other disciplinary approaches, see Neuman et al. (2007). For a Deleuzian-Guattaridian reading of political affect in contemporary issues in United States politics, see Protevi (2009), and specifically, on affect and the notion of the war-machine in Latin America, Beasley-Murray (2011).
13. On affect and emotion formed by thought, and thought attached to emotion and affect, see Brennan (2004). For an analysis of the emotions from antiquity to neuroscience, see Gross (2006).
14. For an excellent reading of the culture of fear, threat, and preemptive military action instrumentalized toward political ends, see Massumi (2010, 52–70).
15. See Berlant, particularly *Cruel Optimism* (2011), and Clough and Halley, and their contributors (2007).

16. Although I pay greater attention to *Explicaciones* than Apesteguía's other publications, readers will note that this section also draws from his literary fanzines *(Otras) Reglas para la dirección del espíritu* (2012) and *Manual para seres vivos* (2013).
17. See Foucault (1977) and on the notion of "dressage," Lefebvre's chapter by the same name in *Rhythmanalysis* (2004, 38–45).

2 On Affect, Action, Urban Intervention

1. On the practices of cognitive democracy and technology platforms before 15M, which aim to involve immigrants and residents without the right to vote by citizenship, see Moreo Jiménez (2006, 313–3). On the effectiveness of cognitive democracy to resolve complex problems, see Farrell and Shalizi (2012).
2. "Although the bodies on the street are vocalizing their opposition to the legitimacy of the state, they are also, by virtue of occupying that space, repeating that occupation of space, and persisting in that occupation of space, posing the challenge in corporeal terms, which means that when the body 'speaks' politically, it is not only in vocal or written language" (Butler, 2011, n.p.).
3. María Luz Congosto offers quantitative data analysis of the most frequently used hashtags on Twitter during the encampment to find that the volume of public "noise" about the movement created through this social medium (with nearly one million Tweets in six days) was produced from over 160,000 unique users, showing that these users were highly active when disseminating information repeatedly over the first few days of the Sol encampment ("Del 15M a la #acampadasol," 2011; "Evolución," 2011).
4. This refusal is what Hardt and Negri have called an *exodus*, defined in terms of "a process of *subtraction* from the relationship with capital by means of actualizing the potential autonomy of labor-power" (2009, 152). Hardt and Negri tend to argue for subtraction as a "line of flight" capable of escaping the predominant structures of power, at least as it is proposed by Deleuze and Guattari. I should like to temper this observation while holding to one of its claims in practice. I argued earlier that critical responses to the crisis—to one's own economic hardship or that of others, to the powerful instruments aimed at legitimizing the art of government for the governed—bear an affective intensity to move one to act from the immediacy of thought, which are here brought into practice.
5. A weblog of the first few days of the Sol encampment may be found at its original web address, at *Acampada Indefinida en Sol* (2011).
6. For information on the expansion of 15M into neighborhood and town assemblies, see Pérez-Lanzac (2011). For an account on the history of 15M, updated occasionally by its participants, see "15M" (*15MPedia*, n.d.).

7. For an analysis on the impact of this bill if passed into law, see Cortizo (2012). For information on the restriction of media access to demonstrations before parliament in 2012, see *El Público's* account of events reported live ("#29S en directo," 2012).
8. Teaching and learning from one another are contingent upon chance encounters and disconnects in mobilizing activities, observed by Alberto Corsín and Gabriel Estalella. The authors argue that these social practices produce space through action and temporal-spatial relations—or, urban rhythms, as Lefebvre understood them. Corsín and Estalella analyze the assembly's activities as a rhythmic arrangement, one that produces forms of care (the ambulatory), as the "assembly is an urban object of care—and an object of urban care" ("What Is a Neighbor?", 2013, 3). The construction of space and time as a spatial arrangement, which the authors view through Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis, is one that shapes and is shaped by the social practices of providing care for others.
9. For a discussion on consensus in activism and the "structuring" of an emotional hierarchy within queer activist groups (one that tends to repress "personal" emotions in favor of collective affects), see Wilkinson (2009, 36–43).
10. However, these hierarchies of emotion associated with collective decision should also be taken with precaution, notes Eleanor Wilkinson, given their ability to structure a social consensus of feeling around group decision driven by cooperation, determining which emotions are appropriate and which ones are not (2009, 39). Though I have no evidence of Wilkinson's observation in the case of 15M, this is not to discard this possibility.
11. For a list of commissions and working groups in Madrid, see Asamblea Popular de Madrid (n.d.).
12. According to the Election Board: "En los días de reflexión y votación nuestra legislación electoral prohíbe realizar acto alguno de propaganda o de campaña electoral. Asimismo, el día de la votación prohíbe formar grupos susceptibles de entorpecer, de cualquier manera que sea, el acceso a los locales electorales, así como la presencia en sus proximidades de quiénes puedan dificultar o coaccionar el libre ejercicio del derecho del voto. Todas estas medidas legales están destinadas a garantizar el ejercicio con plena libertad del derecho fundamental de sufragio reconocido en el artículo 23 de la Constitución" [On reflection and voting days, our election legislation prohibits the celebration of any act of propaganda or election campaigning. Moreover, on voting day it prohibits forming groups susceptible to obstructing, in whatever manner, the access to voting sites, as well as the presence in the proximities of those who could impede or coerce the free exercise of the right to vote. All of these legal measures aim to guarantee this exercise with total freedom of the fundamental right to vote, recognized in Art. 23 of the Constitution]; the Board writes in conclusion, "es un comportamiento no acorde a las previsiones de la

LOREG y que excede del derecho de manifestación garantizado constitucionalmente" [it (to assemble) is a conduct that is incompatible with the provisions of the LOREG (election law) and that exceeds the constitutionally guaranteed right to demonstrate]. See Gobierno de España, Junta Electroal Central (2011).

13. Deleuze argues: "However, the eternal return itself, in turning, gives rise to a certain illusion in which it delights and admires itself, and which it employs in order to double its affirmation of that which differs: it produces an image of identity as though this were the *end* of the different. It produces an image of resemblance as the external *effect* of 'the disparate.' It produces an image of the negative as the *consequence* of what it affirms, the consequence of its own affirmation" (1994, 301).
14. Luis Moreno-Caballud notes that practices of the commons have come to the foreground amid the crisis in Spain: "Junto a la desesperanza, la pasividad y la victimización (que sin duda han estado y están presentes), hemos visto cómo se han desarrollado y consolidado en estos últimos años importantes redes de solidaridad, auto-organización, colaboración, denuncia y protesta, que se han movilizado activamente ante la crisis, y cuyo estudio revela la emergencia de todo un caudal de 'imaginación sostenible' particularmente importante para comprender en qué se está convirtiendo la cultura española contemporánea" [Together with desperation, passivity, and victimization (which undoubtedly have been and are still present), in recent years we have seen how important networks of solidarity, self-organization, collaboration, denouncement and protest have developed and consolidated, which have actively mobilized faced with the crisis—a study of which reveals the emergence of an entire current of "sustainable imagination" particularly important to understanding what contemporary Spanish culture is turning into] (2012, 536–7).
15. Žižek writes, "even if we do not take things seriously, even if we keep an ironical distance, *we are still doing them*" (1989, 33). On the castration of power, see his work *First As Tragedy, Then As Farce* (2009, 6–7).
16. An independent news source reports the proceedings of the assembly on May 29, 2011: "Aludieron a importantes problemas de convivencia interna y con los vecinos y comerciantes de la zona y de infraestructura (eléctricos y de alimentación principalmente). Su propuesta fue 'reestructurarse', lo que podría implicar, según explicaron, reducir el campamento y reorganizar los puestos y los grupos de trabajo" [They alluded to important internal problems on living together and also with the neighbors and business owners in the area, as well as with infrastructure (electricity and food, primarily). They proposed "restructuring," which could mean, as they explained, reducing the encampment and reorganizing the information points and working groups] ("Última hora," 2011).
17. For an excellent reading on the concept of "love" and the turn to the "other" in resistance movements, particularly in 1968 Mexico City, see

Williams (2011, 117–52). On love and collective labor, also see Hardt and Negri (2009, 189).

18. My thanks to Megan Saltzman for sharing with me the "mind map" of 15M's transformations and confluences with existing platforms and activist groups; see "Mapa mental" (2014).
19. On the results of the regional and local elections in May 2011, see Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Interior ("Elecciones Locales," 2011). On the results of the general elections in November 2011, see Gobierno de España, Ministerio de Interior ("Elecciones Generales," 2011). All election statistics cited here come from these sources.
20. The terms "sphere of consensus" and beyond it, the "sphere of legitimate controversy," are attributed to Daniel C. Hallin's analysis on the role of the news media in the United States to have influenced public opinion about the Vietnam War. Hallin argues against this claim, noting that the news media continued to operate according to its reporting function in the late years of the war, to the extent that the shifting sphere of controversy (disagreements among government officials about the war) was reflected in this news coverage (1984, 2–24).
21. In a similar vein, writing before 15M, H. Rosi Song and Eloy E. Merino note that the general constituency's "proclivity to accept political measures without contestation has produced what [Juan Luis] Cebrián calls a 'fundamentalismo democrático' [democratic fundamentalism], which has converted democracy (and consensus) into the ideology practiced until recently by the governing conservative party Partido Popular" (2005, 14). The formulation of an oppositional discourse on CT in the wake of 15M would tend to challenge what Noël Valis noted as the "loss of oppositionality" which the author observes after the death of Franco in 1975 and the *Transición* era (2002, 295).
22. On Gran Vía as a symbol of early twentieth-century modernity, see Larson (2011). On the avenue's signature architectural *colosalismo,* I refer to Baker (2009).
23. For an extensive selection of the Situationist International's texts translated into English, see McDonough (2002). A comprehensive critique of the philosophical aims and origins of Situationism can be found in Plant (1992). For a review of Situationism's role in the events of 1968, see Hecken and Grzenia (2008, 23–30).
24. "The trajectory of Situationist discourse—stemming from an avant-garde artistic movement in the postwar period, developing into a radical critique of politics in the 1960s, and absorbed today into the routine of the disenchanted discourse that acts as the 'critical' stand-in for the existing order—is undoubtedly symptomatic of the contemporary ebb and flow of aesthetics and politics, and of the transformations of avant-garde thinking into nostalgia" (Rancière, 2004, 9).

3 The Biopolitics of Neoliberal Governance

1. In recent history, these reforms have proved "damaging [to] the welfare of the common people in those countries, causing enormous suffering," writes Vicenç Navarro. "[T]hese policies had consequences for the welfare and quality of life of ordinary people, creating death, disease, and social unrest" ("The IMF's Mea Culpa?", 2013, n.p.).
2. It would seem that, wherever the visible signs of poverty disturb neoliberal myth, such as Spain's reported 70 percent increase in extreme poverty since the crisis (Fundación Foessa, 2013), proof can be downplayed, discredited, or simply denied, to quote Finance Minister Cristóbal Montoro, as figures that "do not correspond to reality" ("Montoro critica," 2014).
3. Beyond the state, notes David Harvey, the advocates of neoliberalism "occupy positions of considerable influence in education (the universities and many 'think tanks'), in the media, in corporate boardrooms and financial institutions, in key state institutions (treasury departments, the central banks), and also in those international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) that regulate global finance and trade" (2005, 3).
4. Cristina Moreiras-Menor argues that desires "to be modern" in *Transición*-era Spain, which entailed producing and "selling" a new democratic image to an international market were economically and psychologically motivated: "emerge la imperiosa necesidad de integrarse activamente en el ámbito internacional, funadmentalmente en Europa, para así transformarse en un sistema político, social y culturalmente moderno que la haga partícipe de los avances económicos, tecnológicos e informáticos que caracterizan el mundo internacional" [there emerges the imperative need to integrate actively into the international arena, fundamentally in Europe, in order to transform into a politically, socially, and culturally modern system that can make (Spain) a participant in economic, technological, and informational advances characterizing the international world] (2002, 60). After nearly four decades of isolation under Francoism, Spain was eager to participate in international political and economic modernization, which Joan Ramon Resina argues, contributed to the political *Transición*'s illusion, its "sleight of hand": "[r]ather than an event, the Transition was the special effect [. . .] of a collective installation in a present that wished itself absolute: the present of the market" (2000, 93).
5. In his introduction to Albarracín et al., José María Zufiaur spells out four features of neoliberalism in 1990s Spain, summarized here for brevity: (1) political discourse aimed to situate the struggle against inflation at the center of public debates, positioning it as an antagonism to growth and job creation; (2) to overturn the incremented taxation scale thereby favoring the greatest fortunes; (3) to condemn all things public and broaden areas for private profits, socially and culturally, by casting public services and aid in a negative light while, conversely, identifying privatization and

market reach in a positive one; and (4) to force a change in the balance of social powers, weakening labor unions and social organizations in favor of market functions and influential financial interests (1994, 8).

6. The first wave of privatizations under Socialist rule involved two main methods, either the direct sale of the company to impartial corporations or the gradual, and often total, divestment of state shareholding in the company's stocks on a case-by-case basis. Regarding labor, during González's tenure the unions UGT and CCOO opposed the introduction of temporary employment and a plan to create 800,000 jobs for Spain's youth given its impact to foster flexibility and minimize job security, thus making workers vulnerable to subpar salaries and labor securities. The year 1988 marked a definitive rupture in the PSOE's relation with the union UGT (Encarnación, 2008, 119). Also, for a brief history of privatizations in Spain's democratic history, see the Sociedad Estatal de Participaciones Industriales (SEPI), an organization dependent upon Spain's Ministry of Finance ("Privatizaciones de 1984 a 1996"; "Privatizaciones de 1996 a actualidad," n.d.).
7. The authors continue, "Las subvenciones y el sistema de adjudicación de las ayudas está matando a las empresas y está destruyendo los incentivos a la creación de un cine que tenga mercado" [Subsidies and the system of allocating aid are killing companies and destroying incentives to create a cinema that has a market] (Albert and Biazzi, 2009, 8).
8. Chueca, Malasaña, La Latina, Lavapiés, and the Sol and Plaza Mayor historic district are but a few exemplary neighborhoods transformed by privatization efforts from Madrid City Hall and its urbanization plans. For an excellent reading of La Latina neighborhood's self-managed initiatives against the effects of gentrification and privatization in recent years, see Feinberg (2014).
9. See Amador Fernández-Savater's two-part interview with Begoña Santa-Cecilia, Luis Moreno-Caballud, Susana Draper and Vicente Rubio, participants in the Occupy movement. In it, Draper draws a contrast to the United States where "no hay el mismo ambiente de crisis que en España, la crisis no organiza la conversación cotidiana" [there isn't the same air of crisis as in Spain; the crisis doesn't organize everyday conversations] ("Occupy más allá de Occupy II," 2012). My agreement with Draper's observation is admittedly informed by my experience as a resident of Madrid.
10. The nine participating artists are Jonás Bel, Paco Gómez, Jorquera, Carlos Luján, Juan Millás, Eduardo Nave, Eva Sala, Juan Santos, and Juan Valbuena. I cite the photographs using the format for weblog entries, available online for interested readers (Nophoto, "El último verano," 2012).
11. In the photographers' words: "Tras los recortes anunciados por el Gobierno el pasado 11 de julio, NOPHOTO ha decidido documentar la evolución del verano más inhóspito y desalentador de nuestra historia reciente. Por si después de éste ya no hubiera otro. Por si desaparece de nuestras vidas el verano. Este blog narra por tanto un estado de inquietud. Sus contenidos son frágiles y discontinuos, asociados a la naturaleza precaria de los

tiempos que vivimos. Pretende describir y rememorar las emociones de esa experiencia en vías de extinción que llamamos verano" [After the cutbacks announced by the Government last July 11, NOPHOTO has decided to document the evolution of the most discouraging, inhospitable summer in our recent history. In case there would be no others after this one. In case summer disappears from our lives. Therefore, this blog narrates an unsettling state. Its contents are fragile and discontinuous, associated with the precarious nature of the times we live in. It aims to describe and recall the emotions of that experience on its way to extinction, which we call summer] (Nophoto, 2012).

4 House Rules

1. English translation by Ian Johnston (Kafka, 2008).
2. "Es misión de mi Gobierno liberar a España del peso de esa herencia [. . .] No disponemos de más ley ni de más criterio que el que la necesidad nos impone. Hacemos lo que no nos queda más remedio que hacer, tanto si nos gusta como si no nos gusta. [. . .] No pregunto si me gusta, aplico las medidas excepcionales que reclama un momento excepcional" ("Frases de Rajoy," 2012).
3. The same language—"herencia envenenada" and "facturas sin pagar"—was used prior to the campaign for the 2011 General Elections ("Cospedal," 2011; "Mentiras," 2011).
4. On Franco and sovereign exceptionalism, "Law is on Franco's side; he is the law precisely because he is the suspension of the same law that is applied to those around him but not to himself or to those who are like him. That is, he is the state of exception due to the fact that while he applies the law, he is excluded from its framework, from its territory of applicability," as a sovereign power that defines and is always already excluded from the law he mandates (Moreiras-Menor, 2008, 6).
5. Also see Castells's dedication to *Communication Power* (2009, 15).
6. For a review of Poulantzas's work in relation to a tradition of Marxist criticism, see Kalyvas (2002, 105–42).
7. Jessop has developed some of the hermetic conceptual terms in Poulantzas's work, bringing them into the question of practices and structures that Poulantzas referred to as the institutional materialism of the state, in which these structures, divisions, and practices create a separation of labor and production. On Poulantzas, he notes: "There is a continuing movement of state power upward, downward, and sideways as attempts are made by state managers on different scales to enhance their respective autonomies and strategic capacities. One aspect of this is the loss of the de jure sovereignty of national states in certain aspects of rule- and/or decision-making powers are transferred upward to supranational bodies and the resulting rules and decisions bind national states," such as in the European Union (2002, 206).

8. For Poulantzas, political and economic actors do not simply "control" the state to protect monopoly capital, but rather these ensembles work separately toward objectives that bear the image of coherence in their aims, despite their haphazard execution. On his notion of hegemony in the state and the alienation of labor: "Unity-centralization is written into the capitalist State's hierarchic-bureaucratized framework as the effect of the reproduction of social division of labor within the State (including the division of manual and intellectual labor) and of its specific separation from the relations of production. It also arises from the State's structure as the condensation of a relationship of forces, and from the predominance over other classes or fractions of the power bloc that is commanded within the State by the hegemonic class or fraction" (2000, 136). The diffuse operations of power are not exclusively a question of ideology, but of the inscriptions of power within the actions of the state, for example, in the division of labors in bureaucratization that favor certain reproductions of difference, exclusion, and influence.
9. In a most recent example of how Spain's international law has been steered by the priorities of financial interests and sovereign debt, in 2014, the People's Republic of China urged Rajoy's administration to cease judicial investigations into the genocide of the people of Tibet, following the Spanish Magistrate Ismael Moreno's warrant for Interpol to arrest five government officials, among them, the former President Jiang Zemin. Given that the separation of powers between the executive and judicial branches of government does not allow Rajoy's administration to intervene in the investigation, the PP-controlled legislature passed urgently into law a wholesale limitation of the competencies of the Spanish justice system to try crimes abroad, which effectively forced the Spanish judiciary to file its investigation into the Tibet case, while placing into doubt the future of some 15 other cases. According to *El País*, a reported 20 percent of Spain's sovereign debt is held by investors in China, which political opposition and human rights groups alike have claimed is the motivating factor behind the PP's express law ("China," 2014; Fernández, 2014; "Crímenes," 2014).
10. These journalists and executives are, respectively, José Luis Agudo, Xabier Fortes, Toni Garrido, Alicia G. Montano, Fran Llorente, Juan Ramón Lucas, and Ana Pastor, to name a few.
11. See Professor of Economics Gonzalo Bernardos (University of Barcelona) for his critique on the lack of autonomous decision for economists hired by private sectors and the state to act as independent advisors: "somos la voz de nuestro dueño, ya sea político, ya sea algún consejero de alguna empresa. Decimos lo que quieren oír, porque si no, sabemos perfectamente que peligra nuestra retribución económica o peligra nuestro puesto de trabajo" [we're the voice of our master, whether a politician or some advisor to a company. We say what they want to hear because if we don't we know perfectly well that we risk our salary or our job] (Bernardos, 2014).

12. If there is a case to be made today about how desires are produced, rather than formed around a lack, then a cultural investigation into the methodologies of marketing strategies taught to business students would provide significant material. In order to prolong the profits of a given product, some marketing strategies chart a linear sequence of events (say, a ten-step process) for a product to reach a consumer, and then target one of these steps in order to generate added value for the consumer in her access to and consumption/use of the product. This kind of method, in other words, does not hinge upon identifying and then exploiting an "existing lack" in the market, but rather aims to "manufacture consumer desire" in the language of Sturken and Cartwright (189–236), particularly by installing added value in the expectations or comforts of consumers for the future (one's next purchase).
13. Rancière's argument, elaborated from his earlier work in *Aesthetics and Its Discontents* (2009), finds its roots in the paradoxical notion that this concept of the (passive) spectator is inherited from a classical triangulation between *mimesis*, or the regime of artistic representation (its grammar, so to speak), *poiesis* or artistic creation, and their bridge of continuity in *aisthesis*, or the reception of the work, in the domain of affects and sensations (aesthetics) conveyed from the work to spectators.

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