Documentary Scenes from Barcelona:

Urban Renewal and Social Rights in a Modernizing City (1963-2014)

By

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INTRODUCTION

This investigation approaches the modern and contemporary Barcelona as physical, lived, and imagined construct. It centers on photographic and documentary works that, in foregrounding key visions of urban renewal that have shaped Barcelona since the second half of the twentieth century, bring into question the sociocultural dimension of the "neighborhood," the status of its residents, and their right to the city. In particular, I address how these urban renovations and the sociopolitical changes that they catalyzed have dealt with social actors that, at different times, were perceived as an obstacle or a challenge to an increasingly neoliberal model of the city. Documentary photography and film have been essential in the formation of a collective memory of the city's physical and cultural transformations, and have been key in representing the less visible repercussions of the modernization of Barcelona by reflecting on the social, political, and ethical questions that the urban renovations raised in relation to the integration of marginalized sectors of the population.

Studying the modernization of Barcelona brings into focus general considerations that extend to how the city has been conceptualized since the early twentieth century from the perspective of urbanism, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies, among other fields. The modern metropolis has been the object of much critical reflection, from the utopian plans envisioned by Le Corbusier in the early twentieth century, to the attention paid by theorists such as Lefebvre and Jameson to the city's vulnerability to postmodernist thinking and late capitalist practices, down to the influence of information technology on urban planning as considered, for example, by Catalan globalization theorist Manuel Castells's reflections on the informational city. From a sociological perspective, the attention given to the city as a theatre of social action (Lewis Mumford), to the relation between space and place (Yi-Fu Tuan), to its spatial practices

(Michel de Certeau), to urban spaces as spaces of transit (Giuliana Bruno), and to urban space in relation to equal opportunity and social justice (David Harvey) has brought to the fore the complexity of the city as a form of modern experience and as a lived and practiced space. Increasingly, issues of globalization, hybridization and multiculturalism have been at the center of debates on contemporary changes in the urban environment (Edward Soja, Saskia Sassen, Néstor García Canclini), and so too has urban space been studied in relation to how collective memory is inscribed and negotiated (Pierre Nora, Andreas Huyssen).

Within the Iberian context, professionals and literary critics have addressed the dissonance between architectural design and the needs of urban residents as well as the effects of unchecked neoliberal policies on accessibility. In particular, Germán Labrador Mendez has called attention to the impact of the national economic crisis on the price of space, and on the disastrous effects of *hiperdesarrollo* (hyper-development) and the "housing bubble" which have marked the Spanish landscape with what he calls "modern ruins," halfway- or newly-built buildings that remained unoccupied and that identify a sort of architectural aesthetics of the 2011 crisis (232). Although Barcelona has often served as an international icon for urban planning, the city's urban policies have also been the subject of much debate, even prior to the crisis. While the "modelo Barcelona," based on the ideas of Manuel Castells and urban geographer Jordi Borja, has been praised by many (among them by architect and urban planner Joan Busquets, director of the Departament de Planificació de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona between 1983 and 1989 and again in preparation for the Olympic Games) as a model for comprehensive urban planning, the plan has also received significant criticism from a number of professionals and scholars. Most notably, critic Donald McNeill has traced the economic interests and ideological investments that have shaped Barcelona which, in some cases, rather than building on popular

demands of neighborhood movements, coopted and neutralized them. Catalan anthropologist Manuel Delgado has devoted several studies to examining the effects of rapid urban transformation on Barcelona's residents, stressing in particular the significant gaps between the planned and the projected city, as well as the spontaneous and conflictive nature of public space. Addressing some of the ramifications of the "modelo Barcelona" in his *Thinking Barcelona: Ideologies of a Global City*, Edgar Illas calls attention to how the policies passed during the 1980s in view of the Olympic Games accentuated the vulnerability of the city's public space to privatization and commercialization. Many of these observations anticipate the more recent evolution from a "modelo Barcelona" to a "marca Barcelona," a branding project which Delgado (2017) and Mari Paz Balibrea identify as an increasingly commercial and privatized design that seeks to promote Barcelona as a global city within an international economy. This branding of the city has made more visible to some critics how postmodernist architectural design has failed to take into account the cohesiveness of the urban fabric and the needs of the residents (Muxí and Montaner 2002, Compitello 1999).[1]

Not unlike what has happened to other cities, the neoliberal logic that has informed Barcelona's urban policies in recent decades has led to rampant gentrification, ever-increasing privatization, and a massification of tourism that has in some cases made the city virtually unlivable for many of its residents. Given Barcelona's unique situation as a highly globalized yet relatively small city (in comparison with other international capitals), I believe that a study on Barcelona's urban transformations and modernization can contribute to the larger debate

[1] Malcolm Alan Compitello has addressed postmodernist architecture and the relationship between cultural production and economic and political transformations in Madrid during the crucial period of the 1980s and 90s.

inaugurated by the spatial turn within academic discourse.[2] Barcelona, I maintain, is a productive stage for examining how global and local phenomena intersect, and for examining the delicate balance that contemporary cities ought to find between economic interests and citizens' rights to the city, a balance that should also take into account the increased demands of immigration, multiculturalism and mass tourism on the contemporary urban environment. Although my study does not address the intersection between urban renewal and topics such as nationalism and Catalan identity, something that critics such as Brad Epps and Joan Ramón Resina have explored in depth, I believe that this investigation can offer corollary insights into Catalonia's historical, cultural, and political heritage vis à vis the institutional context of the Spanish State and the current developments in Catalan politics. As an increasingly diverse and multicultural city, yet one with a strong sense of localism, Barcelona lends itself to a discussion of the coexistence and negotiation of political and cultural identities. Of particular interest for this investigation then is the negotiation of these diverse identities of the city's population in relation to the physical and symbolic dimension of its urban space.

This study bridges two distinct but connected chronologies of Barcelona's urban renewal: the first half focuses on the years spanning between the 1960s and the transition to democracy while the second half centers on these past two decades of the twenty-first century. Within the context of Spain's opening to international capitalism and democratic demands, the first period saw the early implementation and expansion of social policies that would address problems of revitalization, rising urban populations, and housing; the second has been a period marked first

[2] In "El precio del espacio: los desarrollos últimos del *giro especial* en los estudios peninsulares y la producción del espacio en la España actual," Germán Labrador Méndez reviews recent contributions to spatial studies on Spain, but points to the need for further studies addressing the specificity of the Iberian context and what it can offer to the discussion around the so-called spatial turn. In particular, he reviews Ann Davis' *Spanish Spaces: Landscape, Space and Place in Contemporary Spanish Culture (2012)* and Nathan Richardson's *Constructing Spain: The Re-Imagination of Space and Place in Fiction and Film, 1953-2003 (2011)*.

by real estate speculation and then by the economic crisis and citizens' rights movements focused on the housing problem and the right to public space. This means that the chronology of this study roughly spans the creation and the crisis of the Spanish welfare state. While Barcelona's modernization began in the mid nineteenth century with the implementation of the rationalist Pla Cerdà and the World Fairs of 1888, the 1960s was a key moment since it generated a new consciousness surrounding the city's inevitable transformation from an industrial center to a service-based, tourism-driven model that laid the basis for much subsequent urban, social, and political development (Delgado 2010). Even though the "modelo Barcelona" and the more recent "marca Barcelona" reflect broader national trends of neoliberal economic and urban development that are closely tied to the severe 2011 crisis, they have both been highly influenced by the guidelines for urban development established in the 1960s.

As I suggest above, in the background of this study there is the emergence and the crisis of the Spanish welfare state, one of the pillars of twentieth-century Western democracies. The growth of urban populations during the 1950s paired with the reality of a country struggling to recover from the war and in need of adequate and affordable housing had fueled in 1957 the implementation by the Ministerio de la Vivienda of the "Planes de Urgencia Social," which sought to increase affordable housing. Expanding upon this basis, in 1961 Spain implemented a mandatory unemployment insurance followed by the "Ley de Bases de la Seguridad Social," and in 1963 the establishment of a minimum wage (Moreno and Sarasa 1993). Undoubtedly important in protecting the general population as well as marginalized groups such as women (Brooksbank Jones 1997) and Gitanos (Ovalle and Mirga 2014), the welfare state grew through the 1980s to include policies such as universal health care coverage, compulsory basic education, and increased social housing (Ovalle and Mirga 2014). The 1978 Constitution additionally

guarantees with Article 41 the right to social security, which has perhaps been the most significant of these welfare advances (Brooksbank Jones 1997). However, the 2011 economic crisis and the devastating implications for Spain's middle class have shown the extent to which the welfare state has come under attack from many angles. The austerity measures sought by the European Union severely impacted Spain's ability to continue with certain welfare benefits and in 2010 the Spanish government announced the largest cuts in public spending since the beginning of the democratic period (Pavolini et al. 2015). Perhaps most notably, it is the promise of adequate and dignified housing established in Article 47 of the Constitution that has been ignored with the rise of neoliberal politics. Evictions and rising costs of rent continue to plague Barcelona and other major Spanish cities even after a purportedly recent return to economic stability.

The modernization of Barcelona initiated in the 1960s has thus gone hand in hand with increasing privatization, economic instability, weakened public spending, a housing crisis, and a crumbling welfare state. The visions, plans, and interventions that have transformed Barcelona into the city it is today have often been at odds with the democratic ideals, values, and social pacts that we have grown accustomed to viewing as part of a democratic State. Barcelona's pursuit of modernity as well as the country's attempt to "catch up" with other democratic European countries since the *aperturismo* and more so with the Transition have been filled with contradictions of this kind.[3] The renovation or rehabilitation of certain neighborhoods of Barcelona, and particularly of areas that had historically maintained a contradictory relationship with the city's political and urban aspirations, has more often been motivated by the desire to create a profitable image of the city than by a concern for the residents' needs.

[3] *Aperturismo* in Spain occurred in the late 1950s and was a politics of opening up the country to foreign economic interests and socio-ideological influences after the earlier, autarkic period of the dictatorship.

As the corpus of this study shows, urban plans rarely focus on vulnerable sectors of the population and, in some cases, are partially designed to drive these sectors out of areas deemed to be commercially valuable. Many of the contradictions that have emerged since the 1960s have not disappeared, but rather, have been displaced or have taken on new forms during the twenty-first century. Although the social groups adversely affected by Barcelona's modernization have changed in relation to differing political, economic, and social circumstances, I show that what unites these groups, in spite of their historical and sociological differences, is that they are all similarly perceived as a challenge to an image of modernity that the city has wished to project at different times.

The ways in which institutional discourse has represented these inconvenient sectors is central to my study. The rhetoric deployed by governing forces has changed over time according to an evolving idea of modernity and has relied on distinct metaphorical constructions that would aid in justifying the control or exclusion of certain individuals from the city to come. In the 1960s, a militaristic or hygienist discourse prevailed which identified the many residents living in Barcelona's *barraques*, or shantytowns, as either an army that needed to be conquered or a dangerous pathogen invading the social body of the city. A new, more modern rhetoric has emerged in the 1990s and 2000s around the idea of "civility." Uncivil or "incívico" is adopted to refer to those individuals who live on, or in some way from, the street and who, from the perspective of power, are perceived as disrupting the public space (Fernández González 2014). While most of the social groups discussed within this investigation do fall within this shifting rhetoric from public enemy to public health and safety concern, attempts have been made at various times to integrate the city's Gitanos into an official and sometimes romanticized

narrative that to an extent has tamed, civilized or objectified these individuals in the service of an official discourse promoting an image of the city abroad.

While relying on sociological and anthropological sources to explain the social consequences of urbanizing forces, my study centers on artistic and literary works in order to widen the array of ways one can look at and interrogate the effects of these forces. The historical preoccupation of documentary photography and film with the immediate social and political concerns lends itself to this discussion on the oftentimes overshadowed social effects of Barcelona's modernization. Additionally, as art forms reliant on new and transforming technologies, documentary photography and film are media that have developed in close association with the city and have, conversely, been fascinated with representing the urban and the modern. Within the Iberian context in particular, documentary photography was particularly innovative and often sought to break with established aesthetic traditions while addressing the social realities and pressing concerns of the time, as documentary film has also done particularly within recent years.

Documentary photography in the 1960s sought a more direct representation of social reality and moved away from the manipulated and controlled aesthetic of pictorialism in order to embrace a more spontaneous aesthetic, a shift which was permitted in part by new technology and lightweight cameras. Catalan photographers Joan Colom, Ignasi Marroyo, and Isabel Steva i Hernández (known as "Colita") were in dialogue with social photography and neorealism, but as part of the Nova Vanguardia, also sought aesthetic experimentation. Colom in particular became known for his 'clandestine' style of street photography that allowed him to capture urban life by photographing Barcelona's residents without their knowledge and without looking through the viewfinder of his camera, thus often producing images with skewed or unusual angles and a

spontaneous quality. All three photographers visualized Barcelona's marginalized sectors in ways that differed significantly from official rhetoric and representations. As we will see, the collaborative work of Colom and Marroyo would also appear in prominent newspapers, while Colom would co-author with Camilo José Cela a photobook, a popular genre in the 1960s and 1970s. Both photojournalism and the photobook provide insight into how the city and urban transformations were discussed in the public sphere. The encounter between text and image created the possibility for new, layered meanings, but it also made artistic forms and their subject matter more accessible for a broader audience.

In a way we could say that thanks to digital technology and the Internet, twenty-first-century documentary film, compared to its earlier forms, has similarly succeeded in widening the representational possibilities and in reaching growing audiences. In 2001, digital technology allowed Catalan filmmaker José Luis Guerín to document an entire construction project over the course of three years, as he patiently followed from up close the social repercussions of urban interventions in an increasingly gentrified area of Barcelona. A decade later, the 2011 crisis gave impulse to a virtually unprecedented boom of documentary film in Spain. Video activism has sought to unveil large-scale institutional corruption in Barcelona that had targeted so-called "incívic" sectors of the population. The release of *Ciutat morta* (2013) by Catalan filmmakers Xapo Ortega and Xavier Artigas, first in an occupied cinema in the center of Barcelona, then on the Internet, and finally on television, has given the film a national and even international audience beyond the limited exposure provided by film festivals. The film has generated a widespread reaction in Barcelona, inciting social protests and other initiatives that denounced the city's governance and urban policies. Indeed, the documentary genre, both internationally and within Spain, seems to be closely tied to sociopolitical concerns and social movements, as

Michael Chanan, Ana Rodríguez Granell, Concha Mateos, and Carmen Gaona, among many others, have examined.

As I will argue, Barcelona's process of modernization is shown through these filmic and photographic works to be at odds with democratic values and with government's responsibilities toward more vulnerable citizens. The changes envisioned for Barcelona beginning in the 1960s have targeted these vulnerable individuals in an effort to clean, sanitize, or civilize certain areas of interest throughout the city. My argument is that this corpus of works opens up a unique space for representation, and therefore for reflection, that by mediating between technocratic discourse and the more opaque, day-to-day reality of the lived city also allows for new conversations surrounding the relationship between the city and those who claim a right to it.

In Chapter One, I focus on the Somorrostro and Montjuïc, peripheral areas of Barcelona in the 1960s that would experience dramatic urban renovations. I examine these areas through the documentary photography of three widely recognized Catalan photographers who were fundamental in renovating Catalonia's photographic scene: Joan Colom, Ignasi Marroyo, and Colita. The first section of the chapter focuses on Colom's and Marroyo's photographic reportage of the last of the *barraques* of the Somorrostro for a 1964 issue of *El Correo Catalán*. As part of an urban planning project developed in the 1960s favoring the up-and-coming middle class, the shantytown was eradicated in order to make room for the construction of the Passeig Marítim, a promenade located along what is now Barcelona's tourist-filled beach.[4] Although Colom's and Marroyo's work appears to be framed by the conservative rhetoric of the article, I show how their photography in fact challenges this rhetoric as well as the regime's centralized

[4] The transformation of the Somorrostro can be seen through Nathan Richardson's concept of the "creative destruction" of space necessary for accumulation and growth. However, this concept has been criticized by Germán Labrador Méndez as not only positive but rather in need of further consideration regarding the value these spaces hold for their communities.

ideology imprinted in the urban plans. The photographs simultaneously invite reflection on the role of social photography in relation to documenting the erasure of a historical collective memory rooted in the urban landscape. The second half of the chapter is then devoted to examining Colita's photographs of the Gitanos of Montjuïc, another area of the city previously inhabited by *barraquistes* but ultimately reappropriated in view of the Olympics and used to promote the "modelo Barcelona." In documenting the making of Rovira-Beleta's 1964 film *Los tarantos*, Colita, similarly to Colom and Marroyo, challenges the urban transformations to the mountain of Montjuïc. In line with Rovira-Beleta's thoughtful portrayal of the social (and paid) actors in his film, I argue that Colita's photos of the Gitanos challenge previous modes of representing this ethnic group, specifically those used in the tourist promotions of those years. The photos bring to light the physical and social marginalization of this population as Spain simultaneously profited from their culture and image.

Chapter Two centers on another marginalized area of Barcelona that long presented a challenge to the city's attempts at modernization: the Barri Xino, now more commonly known as the Raval. This neighborhood becomes a space for representing the women of Barcelona who, during the 1960s and 70s, appear as new social actors demanding social and political equality in a country headed towards democracy. I begin the chapter with Colom's portrayal of the sex workers of the Barri Xino in the context of his collaboration with José Camilo Cela for the photobook *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* (1964). By refusing to comply with previous trends of vilifying, romanticizing, or treating the Barri Xino with nostalgia, *Izas* is critical not only of the exoticization of the neighborhood, but also of the image of Spain promoted abroad. At the same time, the photobook pushes the boundaries of the representation of women during the dictatorship and criticizes the hypocritical relationship that the city and Spanish society at large

maintained with the sex workers. While this photobook serves as a critical reflection on Spain's modernity and on the role of the Xino sex workers within this context, its representation of these social actors does not yet reflect the strong feminist influence present within *Antifémina* (1977), another photobook of Barcelona's women. Co-written by Colita and Maria Aurèlia Capmany, *Antifémina* works to present an "anti" feminine ideal with the objective of defying the image of women popularized by the Francoist regime. While the photobook covers many types of "antifémina" women, I focus on two sections in particular that showcase the Barri Xino and the adjacent area of Paral·lel as spaces that championed a popular, resilient culture. As Spanish society debated the coordinates of its democratic transition, the photobook betrays the blending of deeply-rooted patriarchal values with those promoted by international capitalism.

In Chapter Three I focus on José Luís Guerín's 2001 documentary film *En construcción*, that, in chronicling the razing of an old apartment complex in the Raval, invites reflection on how this neighborhood has changed between the 1960s and the early 2000s and on the fate of these so-called "incívic" sectors in areas subjected to gentrification. It is the way the camera follows these marginal characters and the spaces they occupy throughout the film that I examine up close. The vision of the camera decentralizes the viewer and creates a fragmented cinematic space that critically reflects on the experience of the marginalized subjects in the documentary, including sex workers, immigrants, construction workers, and homeless.[5] Throughout the documentary, I conclude, Guerín stresses the importance of the periphery and of those unacknowledged characters who occupy it through a filming process that directly participates in the decentralized nature of their experience. By so doing, the film ultimately criticizes Barcelona's processes of urban renewal that serve more to displace certain populations than to

[5]Anthony Vidler and Patrick Keiller are valuable references here to consider the ways in which film recreates architectural space.

provide needed housing and which demonstrate the city's turn towards privatization of urban space.

Connecting the process of gentrification with the housing crisis and neoliberal government policies**,** in Chapter Four I analyze the documentary *Ciutat morta* (2014), which identifies the deep-rooted institutional corruption behind current housing policy and urban planning. The documentary follows the process of a judicial set-up known as "4F" that held innocent citizens accountable for the injury to a police officer on February 4, 2006 during the eviction of a large group of *okupas* who had been occupying an abandoned theater. The institutionalized xenophobia and police brutality, exemplified in the detainment and torture of several young "antisistema" or alternative individuals, is ultimately defended by the court. The documentary explores how behind the events leading to this judicial set-up there is an interest on the part of the city to drive current lower-class residents out of certain neighborhoods in order to build new high-end apartments. As David Harvey would put it, while we live in an age of increased attention to human rights, "for the most part the concepts circulating do not fundamentally challenge hegemonic liberal and neoliberal market logics, or the dominant modes of legality and state action. We live… in a world in which the rights of private property and profit trump all other notions of rights" (23). In my reading of *Ciutat morta* I show how, through the juxtaposition of testimonies with images of Barcelona's urban spaces, the filmic montage takes apart the logic and motives behind recent interventions by City Hall in neighborhoods such as El Born and the barri de la Ribera, as well as the deep-rooted corruption that invisibly works to undermine citizens' rights to a democratic city.

My conclusion connects the civic resonance of the screening of *Ciutat morta* with a developing social consciousness of how recent events in Spain, especially since the 2011

economic crisis, have foregrounded issues of social justice as related to urban space. At the same time, I call attention to how citizens' participation has become a fundamental aspect of a more democratic and sustainable urban planning, and this especially in the wake of the innumerable evictions that followed the housing crisis. Phenomena such as the occupation of banks and institutionally-owned property, the occupation of public and private spaces by neighborhood residents to resist mass tourism, and the creation of sustainable and culturally responsible tourist routes are just few of the many ways in which citizens are using the city as a forum for their democratic demands, and how Barcelona is being reimagined through these new grassroots projects and collaborations.[6]

[6] James Holston's notion of "insurgent citizenship" is relevant here to examine this time of citizen movements. See his *Insurgent Citizenship: Disjunctions of Democracy and Modernity in Brazil* (2008).

PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE MARGINS: BARRAQUISME AND MODERNIZATION IN THE WORKS OF COLOM, MARROYO, AND COLITA

Historical Memory and Documentarism: The *barraques* of Somorrostro and Montjuïc

2016 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the demolition of Barcelona's seaside *barraques* (shantytowns) in the area known as el Somorrostro. Among the exhibitions was a retrospective of the work of Catalan photographer Ignasi Marroyo, titled "Ignasi Marroyo: Somorrostro, imatges d'una època," on display at the Galeria Fotogràfica ilmondo. Marroyo, who passed away the following summer, was present at the event to sign copies of the catalogue and talk with the public in attendance. While several of Marroyo's projects were shown at the gallery, the primary focus was his work on the Somorrostro from 1964 for the newspaper *El Correo Catalán*. This collaborative project was commissioned to both Marroyo and colleague Joan Colom, whose own photos were exhibited in 2013 at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC) under the title "Jo faig el carrer."

For the inauguration at ilmondo, the Barcelona-based collective "Memòria dels barris de Barraques de Barcelona" organized a colloquium to commemorate the *barraques* of the Somorrostro as documented by Marroyo just over fifty years before. Among the invited speakers were geographer and historian Mercè Tatjer, reporters Alonso Canicer and Sara Grimal, and former *barraquista* Julia Aceituno, who lived in the Somorrostro during the 1950s and 60s. Tatjer has conducted the extensive archival research behind the recuperation of the historical memory of *barraquisme* in Barcelona, research that became the springboard for a TV3 reportage in 2009 and the documentary, *Barraques. La ciutat oblidada* (2010), directed by Alonso Carnicer and Sara Grimal and produced by Tona Julià and Sandra Rierola. The documentary shows interviews with former *barraquistes* (among them Julia Aceituno) and previously unseen photos

of the many *barraques* that existed in Barcelona during the first half of the twentieth century, including those taken by Marroyo and Colom for *El Correo Catalán* in 1964.[7]

Barraques, La ciutat oblidada addresses both the specificity and historicity of Barcelona's *barraquisme*. And while it documents the urban politics connected to *barraquisme*, most importantly, the documentary reactivates this past since, through the interviews with the former *barraquistes*, it interrogates the underlying urban processes that lead to the eradication of the shantytowns. In their testimonies, the *barraquistes*, including Julia Aceituno, convey intense feelings of injustice that speak to both the conflicts behind Barcelona's urban renewals as well as to the hidden costs that these renewals had for the inhabitants. The interviewees point out that not only did they feel forgotten while living in the *barraques*, but that the purposeful forgetfulness of their experience on the part of the responsible municipal agencies continues into the present. But institutional recognition, I believe, demands the revision of the official narratives that were deployed in dealing with the phenomenon of *barraquisme*. The intense urbanization that occurred in view of the 1992 Olympics and the crafting of an image of Barcelona as affluent and desirable to investors and tourists alike kept the erasure of the *barraques* in the institutions' best interest. But whereas the shantytowns disappeared from the landscape of Barcelona, the larger problems of which *barraquisme* was only a symptom continued and, as I will argue, persist even today.

Many of the 2016 photographic exhibits and museum exhibitions frame *barraquisme* within the discourse of the recuperation of historical memory, a major topic of political and

[7] While Carnicer's and Grimal's journalistic work is arguably the key force behind the popularization of the phenomenon of *barraquisme* in Barcelona, another significant step in this direction was the 2011 inauguration of the Museu d'Historia de Barcelona (MUHBA) Turó de la Rovira. This MUHBA satellite museum chronicles the occupation of Turó de la Rovira's hilltop by the Spanish military during the civil war and the subsequent *barraquistes* settlements until the 1970s in this and other areas of the city.

cultural discussion in Spain since 2000 and particularly during the so-called "década de la memoria," which foregrounded the fundamental gaps in the historic collective memory inherited from the dictatorship. The case of *barraquisme*, however, was a forgotten or ignored history of the city that began in the late 19th century, hence long before the dictatorship, and supposedly ended in the 1990s, well after Franco's death. Although connected to the Francoist processes of modernization, the timeframe of *barraquisme* begs for a different set of considerations and a closer examination of Barcelona's urban politics that allowed for the phenomenon to persist for over a century and that, until recently, also managed to erase all traces of its existence in the cultural imaginary.

The object of Colom's and Marroyo's photos for *El Correo Catalán* was the Somorrostro, one of the city's earliest *barraquista* settlements which, by the 1950s, had also grown to be one of the largest. The Somorrostro's strategic coastal position made the settlement an eyesore for those who planned to turn an industrial Barcelona into the center of a powerful tertiary sector following the *aperturismo*. According to Manuel Delgado, the transformation of the Somorrostro area reflects this move to simultaneously deindustrialize, rehabilitate, and gentrify more peripheral areas of Barcelona as Spain opened to international capitalism:

> Enormes lotes de territorio que había sido industrial o habitado por sectores populares, que se extendía cerca del mar, entre la Barceloneta y la desembocadura del Besòs, han sido inmolados en aras de la nueva economía y para actividades asociadas a los negocios de la información y las tecnologías punta, o bien reconvertidos en barrios para estratos medios y altos, como la Vila Olímpica o Diagonal Mar… ese proceso arranca con el Plan Parcial de la Ordenación Urbana de la Ribera – Plan de la Ribera – y se inicia ya en la década de los sesenta. (*La ciudad mentirosa* 22)

The Somorrostro in particular was to become the construction site of the Passeig Marítim, a project that, although included in prior city plans, was finally completed following the Pla de La Ribera (1965). Conceived by a former GATCPAC architect, Pere Duran i Farell, the Pla de la

Ribera "responded more to real estate interests of several Catalan companies that owned a large portion of land than to the council's desire to improve housing conditions. It envisioned the transformation of the coastline into a zone for apartments, offices, and hotels" (Casellas 827). Mercè Tatjer frames this point within a larger problem of social inequality that directly addresses the social status of the *barraquistes*:

> El Plan de la Ribera, cuya finalidad esencial es la remodelación del sector y su conversión en residencial y comercial, ha sido promovido por iniciativa de los grandes industriales que poseen instalaciones en este sector, apoyado por diversos grupos económicos del país y protegido por la administración municipal. Trasciende del marco geográfico barcelonés y constituye un buen ejemplo de cómo, quién y para quién se remodela la ciudad en nuestro país. (*La Barceloneta* 81)

The institutional decision to favor the wealthier upper middle class over the lower classes becomes particularly evident if one considers that the concurrent demolition of the Somorrostro and construction of the Passeig took place without planning for the relocation of the *barraquistes*. As Tatjer states, "en l'aprovació del Pla del sector marítim oriental de Barcelona (transformació del Pla de la Ribera de 1965), es platejava la remodelació del litoral sense tenir en compte cap reallotjament dels habitants de les barraques que encara restaven en alguns indrets de la platja" ("Barracas y proyectos" 52).

Barcelona's failure to provide dignified housing for the *barraquistes* is corroborated by many of the testimonies in the documentary *Barraques. La ciutat oblidada*. As the former residents put it, the housing that was eventually provided for them was often constructed in an untimely manner, poorly built, or far from the city center. Many of the Somorrostro residents were relocated to the stadium of Montjuïc after a particularly devastating flood and stayed there until new housing was eventually provided. Julia Aceituno and many other Somorrostro residents had to suffer particularly poor living conditions before they were provided with dignified housing, which was ultimately located in even more peripheral areas of the city than

the *barraques* had been. It was indeed the uncomfortable reality of the *barraquistes* that would provide the setting for the photographs commissioned in 1964 by *El Correo Catalán* to Colom and Marroyo for a piece on the incumbent modernization of the Somorrostro.

Colom, Marroyo, and Documentary Photography in Catalonia

The photos that Joan Colom and Ignasi Marroyo took of the Somorrostro for *El Correo Catalán* reflected both thematically and aesthetically the innovative quality of their work. Both photographers belonged to an artistic group that was largely responsible for renovating Spanish photography during the dictatorship. In the 1950s and 1960s, Spanish photographers still cultivated the aesthetic tradition of "pictorialismo" which, as López Mondéjar attests, "constituía la tendencia fotográfica más acorde con el espíritu triunfalista y mitificador de las nuevas autoridades, y con la miseria moral y artística de la dictadura" (178). Contrary to what happened in other countries, the impulse to innovate Spanish photography originated from within established photographic associations, among them the Agrupació Fotogràfica de Catalunya, to which both Colom and Marroyo belonged. This new generation of photographers, however, soon began to transcend these ambits showing their work in the Galerias Layetanas or the Sala Aixelà (López Mondéjar 178). Figures like Francesc Català Roca, who became "un puente decisivo entre la vanguardia de la anteguerra y la nueva vanguardia documental de los años cuarenta y cincuenta" (200) would undoubtedly influence the "realismo documental" (230) of the new generation, as would international photographers whose work was much closer to a humanist aesthetic and whose style was most famously represented in the 1955 exhibition *The Family of Man* at the New York MoMA (226). Jorge Ribalta explains how between the mid 1950s and the mid 1960s, humanism became the dominant photographic aesthetic and "la vanguardia

fotográfica del periodo, iniciada con Català Roca y clausurada con Colom, hizo su versión particular de tal modernidad humanista" (79).

The Nova Vanguardia, as critic Josep Maria Casademont would call this new aesthetic to which Marroyo and Colom belonged, was closely aligned with the independent artistic group *El Mussol* (the owl), formed by Colom, Marroyo, and six other photographers from Barcelona and Terrassa in 1960 in reaction to the artistic constraints imposed by the regime. In an interview with Jorge Ribalta, Colom comments that "buscàvem una fotografia directa, sense esteticismes, realista i amb un tema, no simplement imatges boniques i aïllades. Volíem una fotografia que copsés la vida, viure el carrer" ("Entrevista a Joan Colom" 37). This "direct" style of documentary photography is already visible in the photographs that Colom and Marroyo took of the Somorrostro. According to a piece by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia on Spanish documentary photography, the Nova Vanguardia, "was not openly concerned with making art, a worn-out concept for its creators, but searched for functional photography that would go beyond it, that could approach the complex social reality in the middle years of the Franco regime ("Humanism and Subjectivity" n.p.) While the piece acknowledges the influence of humanist and social photography on the Nova Vanguardia, it also acknowledges that "its aspirations were not a political attempt at social transformation; the photographers at the time made do with portraying reality that was both diverse and imperfect" (n.p.). Although it did not share the progressiveness of European humanism or the political focus of humanist photography (Ribalta 84), the Nova Vanguardia was still generally perceived as "liberal."

Because of these considerations, I will not assume that Colom's and Marroyo's photography attempted to enact social change in the same manner as earlier social photography,

another genre with which their images have been identified.[8] Colom himself has expressed doubt over the frequent categorization of his photographs as social photography by stating, "Jo no sabia que estava fent fotografia social en aquell moment. Jo només feia fotografia I buscava imatges que m'emocionessin. A vegades jo he emprat aquest terme per definir el meu treball, però per a mi vol dir simplement que no faig paisatges o bodegons" ("Entrevista a Joan Colom" 41). And yet, despite Colom's desire to separate from the connotations of both social and humanist photography, I assert that Colom and Marroyo's work on the Somorrostro was, indeed, political, and challenged the highly conservative rhetoric of the journalistic piece that accompanied the photographs. I suggest that the political ambiguity of this new documentary style criticized by Ribalta may actually have *allowed* for political criticism where any more overt critique would have been censored.

In an interview from 2016, Marroyo recalls being wary of entering the Somorrostro since the area had appeared in the newspapers as one of delinquency (Merino n.p.). His surprise to find the residents to be friendly and amiable confirms the stigmatization of the *barraquistes* operated by the media at the time. More intriguing still is Marroyo's claim that he was better able to fit in with the *barraquistes* because, unlike Colom who was dressed professionally for his work at the bank, he instead wore factory work clothes. Marroyo's thematization of the *barraquistes*'s wariness of someone identifiable as belonging to a higher socioeconomic class foregrounds important questions about the ethics of representation that ensue from the power differentials that denote documentary photography in general. For some critics, documentary photography can

[8] In this photographic style, which originated in the late nineteenth century in the U.S. and London to denounce the poor conditions of factory workers, the camera was an instrument to be used against social injustices while the photographs, often clearly posed, were intended to generate empathy in the viewers by showing laborers as they stopped their work to look directly at the camera. Colom and Marroyo's images differ significantly from those of social photography since their photographic subjects are not often posed and rarely look at the camera.

never enact an ethical interaction between photographers and photographic subjects. Abigail Solomon-Godeau specifically posits the risk of further victimizing and dominating the subject:

> We must ask whether the *place* of the documentary subject as it is constructed for the more powerful spectator is not always, in some sense, given in advance. We must ask, in other words, whether the documentary act does not involve a double act of subjugation: first, in the social world that has produced its victim; and second, in the regime of the image produced within and for the same system that engenders the conditions it then re-presents. (*Photography at the Dock* 176)

I would argue that Marroyo's and Colom's representation of the Somorrostro points indeed toward the kind of self-reflectivity advocated by Solomon-Godeau for documentary photography; furthermore, their images also bring into view the possible constraints imposed by a strong historical referent, another aspect of documentary photography that has received criticism. I agree with Lee Fontanella that a strong historical referent may indeed be a productive element and, as we are about to see, the reportage for *El Correo Catalán* proves an interesting case study to examine how such constraints work.[9]

Regarding the potential of these historical referents to provide photographs with new readings and critical value, Fontanella in fact argues that:

> because a documentary image has the capacity to shift the basis of its value over time, the strong referential, 'occasional,' or historic quality of these photographs does not diminish their worth; on the contrary, they *acquire different values* (40).

Following Fontanella, then, I propose reading the photographs of the Somorrostro and their historical context through the lenses of more recent historical events and phenomena in order to grasp the relevance of these pictures in the present. Reframed within the current historical context, these photos not only expose the political and economic forces behind the construction

[9] Lee Fontanella cites his argument in contrast to Susan Sontag who, as he explains, argues that the referent is simply a substitute for what the photo would recall thus denying the photograph's mnemonic potential.

of the Passeig and demolition of the Somorrostro, but also challenge the urban politics that continue to guide Barelona's development.

As Judith Butler explains in relation to the power of photography to collapse distinct temporalities, "The photograph is a kind of promise that the event will continue, it is that very continuation of the event, producing an equivocation at the level of the temporality of the event; did those actions happen then; do they continue to happen? Does the photograph continue the event in the present?" (959). The accrued historical significance of Colom's and Marroyo's photographs, I contend, reactivate a complex and multilayered past of Barcelona: that of the first major urbanizations connected to the two World Fairs of 1888 and 1929, which directly lead to the phenomenon of *barraquisme*, but also, from today's perspective, the memory of the equally ideologically-laden modernizations that have shaped Barcelona's landscape since the 1960s. The productive contradiction that becomes legible in my analysis of the reportage by *El Correo Catalán* invites bringing unresolved urban issues to bear upon current policies and questioning whether the problems underlying Barcelona's *barraquisme* ever truly disappeared or whether, over time, they have simply been displaced.

Collective Imaginary and Image as Subversion: el Somorrostro in *El Correo Catalán*

It was not until the late 1950s, almost two decades after the end of the civil war, that major reconstructions and renovations were planned for the city of Barcelona in line with an institutional effort to reorganize the city according to a centralist ideology. As Manuel Delgado points out, the local government was closely tied to the central government at the time (*La ciudad mentirosa* 26). The same conservative logic that permeated the city plans also set the patronizing tone and the often hygienic rhetoric used by the media to report on the eradication of

barraquisme in Catalonia during the 50s and 60s.[10] There is no surprise, then, that on January 26, 1964, when the photos of the Somorrostro by Colom and Marroyo first appeared in an article by *El Correo Catalán,* they did so under the caption "La liberación de Barcelona continúa." Although the Catholic, carlista publication had taken during the 60s a more moderate turn under director Andreu Roselló i Pàmies, its conservative outlook was still clearly reflected in the presentation of the demolition of the *barraques* as a military conquest:

> Es evidente que pueden más contra ellas las obras de urbanización y saneamiento que avanzan hacia sus reductos hasta hace unos años inconquistables, que las simples medidas draconianas de su demolición por las buenas, tantas veces llevado a cabo, otras tantas ineficaz porque ha visto levantarse, con la misma rapidez de su destrucción, nuevas chabolas en los mismos lugares de las derruidas. Todo lo que no sea 'ocupación' permanente del terreno enemigo – como en una operación militar – al mismo tiempo que se levantan hogares dignos, es dar facilidades de reconquista a los ejércitos del chabolismo. (n.p.)

The portrayal of the *barraquistes,* or shantytown residents, as an enemy army that must be defeated in order to re-conquer the land for more dignified purposes works to legitimize the militaristic defeat of the *chabolismo* since it effectively erases the individuality of the *barraquistes* along with their status of (second-rate) citizens.[11] The exhortation to erect dignified housing is not intended to achieve the integration of this marginalized population into the urban fabric, but rather to carry through the new housing policies (cf. *Plan de vivienda*) devised to

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[10] A particularly notable example of this conservative, patronizing and often hygienic tone toward *barraquisme* is evident in an article from *La Vanguardia* published December 12, 1961, titled "La lepra del barraquismo". The body of the text includes the following excerpt:

> Hay lugar de Barcelona —Montjuich— en que nos invade, inevitablemente, un sentimiento de mortificación y de sonrojo cada vez que allí subimos. Otro lugar hay en la provincia —San Vicente dels Horts—, en que nos sentimos también entristecidos y acongojados. El motivo es, en los dos casos, el mismo: las barracas, el chozismo, los tugurios infectos en donde viven hacinadas las gentes. Al lado de la radiante Barcelona de las avenidas, de los ensanches residenciales, de las plazas y los paseos, el espectáculo de algunas laderas de Montjuich equivale al que ofrecería el cuerpo clásico de una mujer muy bella tocado de un punto de lepra.

[11] Many *barraquistes* did not in fact have rights as citizens. As I explore further in the second half of the chapter, the Gitano population, who were often housed in *barrios de barraques*, were not granted citizenship until after the dictatorship.

accommodate Barcelona's up-and-coming middle class. At the same time, the medical undertones used to describe social problems as ills reinforce the claim that modernization can only be effectively achieved through the definitive eradication of *chabolismo* and an unwavering endeavor to urbanize and sanitize the space from dangerous presences.

The pathogenization of 'deviant' or 'undesirable' social phenomena and bodies had indeed been a common practice under the regime, as exemplified, for instance, by state-sponsored eugenics discourses. In a similar fashion, *barraques* and *barraquistes* are here implicitly likened to viruses or bacteria silently waiting to reinvade the (national) body as soon as its defenses are lowered. In the face of this regressive threat, urban development is therefore presented as a modern tactic that, by physically preventing the rebuilding of the *barraques*, effectively eliminates a social illness responsible for slowing Spain's modernization.

Although the photos of Colom and Marroyo merit analysis outside of the context of *El Correo Catalán*, their journalistic focus should not be overlooked; on the contrary, I argue that the juxtaposition between these images and the written text that accompanies them reveals a conflict between the representations disseminated by the government and the reality of *barraquistes* as second-class citizens without access to dignified housing. In "The Photographic Message," Roland Barthes addresses specifically the relationship between text and photographs in the press, stating that whereas historically the image served to illustrate the text, now "the text constitutes a parasitic message designed to connote the image, to 'quicken' it with one or more second-order signifieds. In other words, and this is an important historical reversal, the image no longer *illustrates* the words; it is now the words which, structurally, are parasitic on the image… [and the text] comes to sublimate, patheticize or rationalize the image" (25). Following Barthes's argument, the text in *El Correo Catalán* ought to be read as providing a code for quickly reading

the images of the Somorrostro in a political key. The figures shown in the photographs are to be seen as the enemies that must be conquered, as the professional slummers that must be eradicated in order for Barcelona to liberate itself from misery. As Barthes goes on to explain, "formerly, the image illustrated the text (made it clearer); today, the text loads the image, burdening it with a culture, a moral, an imagination" (26). The photos of the Somorrostro then must be read separately from the text if we wish to free them from the text's cultural and moral encoding, if we want to grasp their potential as counternarratives.

As for the image itself, the content or denotative element of photography is relatively powerless to alter political opinions; ideology, Barthes contends, is rather inscribed or encoded in the photograph's *connotative* element:

> The photographic paradox can then be seen as the co-existence of two messages, the one without a code (the photographic analogue), the other with a code (the 'art', or the treatment, or the 'writing', or the rhetoric, of the photograph); structurally, the paradox is clearly not the collusion of a denoted message and a connoted message (which is the – probably inevitable – status of all the forms of mass communication), it is that here the connoted (or coded) message develops on the basis of a message *without a code.* This structural paradox coincides with an ethical paradox: when one wants to be 'neutral', 'objective', one strives to copy reality meticulously, as though the analogical were a factor of resistance against the investment of values (such at least is the definition of aesthetic 'realism'); how then can the photograph be at once 'objective' and 'invested', natural and cultural? (19-20).

While Colom and Marroyo document the seemingly objective reality of the Somorrostro through their images, the "rhetoric" of the photograph (the aesthetic treatment, the framing, the artistic choices present within the image itself) appears upon further examination as socially and politically invested in the representation. Thus, following Barthes, we could approach Colom's and Marroyo's photographs taking as a point of departure both the primacy of the image over the text and the productive tension that Barthes notes between the denotative and connotative elements of photography. Ironically, the text of the article inadvertently undermines its own

thesis since it encourages the reader to use the photos as primary evidence of the value of the construction of the Passeig Marítim by claiming that "mejor que las palabras, las fotografías que ilustran estas páginas darán idea de la eficacia real de esta gran obra urbanística" (n.p.). These words signal a trust in the capacity of documentary photography to present something with an objectivity that would extend to the text connoting it. But while the assumption here is that reality is being presented "as is," I argue that the connotative element in the photos under examination both works within and against the ideological content of the text which frames them.

Four of the nine photos that appear in *El Correo Catalán* are the visual corpus that I use to attempt to answer the following questions: How does the connotative element described by Barthes appear in the photographs of Marroyo and Colom and how does it conflict with the textual rhetoric intended to encode it? And, returning to Lee Fontanella, how does the meaning constructed through the images (which is in tension with the textual rhetoric) continue to question the political agenda of Barcelona's urban planning viewed from today's perspective? The two photos I have chosen by Colom allow me to focus on the new structure of the Passeig as an invading and inevitable force. The two photos by Marroyo display instead a very distinct technique of centering the *barraquistes*, more specifically the children, as a way of reversing the power structures legible in the pictures. I argue that all eight photographs that frame the article (four by Marroyo and four by Colom) as well as Colom's photo chosen for the front page of *El Correo* use a similar visual language to challenge the verbal rhetoric that supposedly codes them and that represents the *barraquistes* as an army of evil and a social ill.

Counter-images of Modernity: Architecture as Predator and as Playground Through the Lenses of Joan Colom and Ignasi Marroyo

Joan Colom's photos chosen for the article focus on the construction of the Passeig but challenge the rhetoric of the article that identifies the promenade as an "obra de urbanización y saneamiento" by framing the construction as a destructive force rather than as an instrument of modernization. The photo by Colom chosen for the front cover of the *suplemento gráfico* of *El Correo Catalán* appears to pose few problems for the identification of the article's intended message at first glance, but ultimately challenges the conservative rhetoric of the newspaper in subtle and creative ways. Captured from a distance, the *barraques* occupy the bottom half of the photo. Garbage and other discarded objects are strewn about the ground just beyond these tattered and makeshift constructions. The edge of the Passeig Marítim, the tangible sign of modernization, is shown in the upper part of the photo with the figure of a well-dressed man leaning over its railing. The sharp contrast between the rubble of the *barraques* and the clean lines of the imposing construction implies a physical and ideological separation between the concrete structure protruding in a pre-modern space that is in the process of being 'cleaned up.'

But the Somorrostro shown by Colom is not an empty space. The many figures standing outside of their houses, engaged in various activities and displaying a variety of poses, suggest the complexity and diversity of this living place. In stark contrast, the clean, strong lines of the concrete construction suggest the incumbent irruption into this composite space of a new efficient, slick reality—a reality that, on account of the ideological encoding of the caption, "La liberación de Barcelona continua," provides a simplified conceptualization of the shantytowns: they are a trash dump to be bulldozed, the remnant of a reality that must be eradicated in order to be overcome. In this scenario, what is the viewer to make of the people captured in the photo? What is their destiny as their physical space is swallowed by concrete? Without the caption, the

ideological connotation of the visual representation becomes significantly more opaque and the narrative of liberation begins to show its seams. What is immediately obvious is the visual dissonance between the chaotic and lively *barraques* occupying the bottom half of the photo and the stark and immobile concrete slab of the top. Formally, the heavy continuous line of the promenade cuts through the many subtle lines drawn by the lopsided houses, the clothing, and the wagon in the foreground. From the position he occupies, Colom manages to visualize the complexity of the space and the conflict between the very different conceptualizations of the Somorrostro as seen through the opposing lenses of urban renewal and of the lived reality of the inhabitants.

The gaze of the man leaning over the promenade provides another crucial element to grasp the complexity of this photo since he is not looking at the *barraques* but at the photographer behind the camera. To this onlooker, what appears to be surprising and out of place is not the *barraques* behind him (which are probably part of the familiar landscape), but rather the man who is photographing them. The presence of the photographer, I argue, interrupts or *estranges* the familiar urban landscape for the historical onlooker as much as for the contemporary viewer, thus opening up the landscape to reinterpretation. More specifically, both onlooker and viewer are challenged to consider the issue of belonging and, perhaps most importantly in this case, the issue of the ownership of space. As geographer Doreen Massey aptly argues, the question begging to be answered is not "do you belong to this landscape" but rather "does this landscape belong to you?" (91). Displacing the focus from belonging to owning effectively visualizes a series of more cogent concerns with respect to the Somorrostro and its transformation. If the *barraquistes* appear to belong to the landscape in spite of their rather precarious dwellings, it is not at all clear to whom the landscape belongs. Who owns this

seashore, if not the *barraquistes*? And what kind of erasure of landmarks and inhabitants does this 'invisible' ownership permit? Much of this land was owned by several Catalan companies who had an interest in transforming the coastline into a commercial and affluent residential zone (Casellas 827). This is in fact the landscape that will turn into the Vila Olímpica, an urban icon 'sold' to the millions of tourists that currently visit Barcelona every year. But since the *barraquistes* do not own the landscape in which they live, they are easily displaced to more peripheral and less profitable areas of the city by powerful yet invisible economic interests.[12]

The second photograph of the Somorrostro by Colom is among those that frame the inside article and shows the same *barraques* taken this time from under the Passeig Marítim. While the *barraques* in this shot are centered and brightly lit, it is difficult to say whether they are the true subject of the photo. And yet, after an initial glance, the way the Passeig Marítim frames the houses *within* the photo becomes almost visibly overwhelming. The top third of the photo in the foreground is in fact occupied entirely by the concrete promenade whose black bulk contrasts starkly with the whitewashed houses in the background. From a point of view tucked far beneath the Passeig, Colom makes the concrete structure emerge from an invisible space behind and reach into the foreground, as if it were extending itself toward the *barraques*. The heavy structure looming overhead is mirrored in the bottom of the photo by its own shadow,

[12] Mercè Tatjer identifies these economic interests in *La Barceloneta del siglo XXI al Plan de la Ribera.* As I cited earlier, she stated the following regarding the plan: "El Plan de la Ribera, cuya finalidad esencial es la remodelación del sector y su conversión en residencial y comercial, ha sido promovido por iniciativa de los grandes industriales que poseen instalaciones en este sector, apoyado por diversos grupos económicos del país y protegido por la administración municipal" (81). She goes on to explain: "El primer proyecto del Plan surge en 1965 por iniciativa de Catalana de Gas y Electricidad y Maquinista Terrestre y Marítima que, debían reconvertir sus instalaciones industriales obsoletas. Esta última tenía desmantelados sus talleres desde 1963, habiéndose trasladado a San Andrés, mientras que Catalana estaba reestructurando su antigua factoría de la Barceloneta" (81). These two entities "serán la base, junto a otras grandes empresas del sector, de RIBERA S.A., sociedad creada en 1966 para llevar a cabo el proyecto. La organización de éste corresponde a una verdadera organización capitalista y a una obra de prestigio. Se intenta asociar a los restantes industriales del barrio, facilitándoles el traslado a los polígonos industriales – uno en Barcelona y dos fuera de ella – que la misma RIBERA S.A. ha promocionado. Se amplía la sociedad mediante la entrada de entidades bancarias y de RENFE. El proyecto está realizado por A. Bonet, uno de los arquitectos urbanistas más prestigiosos y se encarga la Información sociológico-urbanística a CSDEC en 1966" (83).

almost equally as dark. Like gigantic open jaws, the two shadows take up more than half of the photo; between them, in the distance, the shantytown appears as vulnerable prey. It will not be long before the concrete structure crushes what is left of the neighborhood.

This photo is situated left of the article next to the sub-caption titled: "El mundo de miseria que retrocede de año en año: El Paseo Marítimo, una gran obra urbanística con proyección social." The contrast between the imminent destruction of the *barraques* projected in the photo and the sub-caption compels the viewer to consider the power relations involved in the composition. The photo seems to contend that it is less the "mundo de miseria" that recedes than the Paseo Marítimo that advances like a hungry mouth about to devour its powerless prey. The "gran obra urbanística con proyección social" is clearly not intended to benefit this particular subset of society. The militaristic rhetoric of the article is unexpectedly problematized by the visual composition of the photo, now that the virtuous side is no longer easily identifiable: the relation between aggressor and defender is suddenly reversed. The position of the photographer further compels such a reading. Although at a distance, Colom has positioned himself at the same ground level as the photographic subjects, thus humanizing their existence. The simplicity of the lines of the Passeig Marítim become the incarnation of a politics that, in Manichean fashion, is simply 'devouring' the *barraques*, thus failing to consider them as the sign of a larger and more complex structural problem that is evidently being ignored.

Similarly to Colom's photos, Marroyo's images challenge the textual rhetoric that describes the promenade as a modernizing force, but, more so than Colom, Marroyo prefers to portray the *barraquistes* from up close, thus drawing attention to their activities and experiences. His primary focus appears to be the *barraquista* children who, I argue, are doubly outside of the symbolic order and thus are figures that further hinder the logic of a modernizing Spain. Their

existence as *barraquistes*, or immigrants without legal homes, is in fact further complicated by the fact that children, as Marina Warner agues, stand "in an oblique relation to human society, not entirely part of it, not yet incorporated into history" (47). Marroyo's images that focus on children destabilize the picture of an urban transformation that will modernize the city by subverting the codes of this project though moments of play.

Like Colom's last two photos, the two photos I examine by Marroyo are also taken at eye level with the photographic subjects. In the first of these photos, a young girl occupies the foreground and is almost perfectly centered. The absence of the *barraques* in this shot turns all attention to the human subject whose fate is unknown and seemingly unimportant for the future of the upcoming commercial and touristic area. The girl, dressed in tattered clothing, holds a water jug in the crook of one arm and in the other hand what is presumably a plastic item found on the beach. The girl and the donkeys that occupy the bottom of the photo are contrasted with the impressive length of the Passeig which occupies the top half. The straight line provided by the wall behind the donkeys divides not only these two planes of space but also two life worlds. The girl is presumably gathering water for her family and appears otherwise occupied playing with a balloon. The occupation, the evident business of her body, is contrasted with that of the bodies perched watchfully over her at the edge of the Passeig. Dressed in elegant coats and suits, these bodies are impressively still. While one would assume that the ongoing construction would imply activity and movement, what is captured in this photo seems to be the opposite effect. The Passeig Marítim, growing forth from a point in the distance, is halted before the camera while the inert bodies presiding over it emphasize its abrupt end. In contrast, the movements of the girl and the objects surrounding her suggest the presence of activity and of a self-sufficient life at the edge of the construction zone.

If the composition of the photo reiterates the Passeig as an invading force, it is the gazes that draw critical attention. The girl, centered in the foreground of the scene, looks down presumably at the ground and away from the photographer while simultaneously fully turning her back on the four men standing on the promenade. Her refusal to meet the gaze of an audience that likely views her as part of a spectacle of the social ill of *barraquisme*, is certainly a gesture of empowerment. She refuses to become the object of anyone's gaze while she actively looks at the objects around her in search of materials presumably for play.

While the men standing on the uncompleted Passeig are positioned at a higher level than the girl, the eye-level perspective of Marroyo makes their figures look small and immobile in comparison to the active figure of the child in the foreground. The power differential embodied by the construction project is thus ultimately undermined by the humanizing lens through which Marroyo presents the ground level, an aesthetic choice that, by shifting the focus from the modern structure to the young girl, also clearly empowers her. Although the viewer may appear mirrored in the men looking out upon the *barraquista*, our position is eye-level with the young girl rather than the men. Although the placement of the camera does not erase the relations of power between photographer and *barraquista*, it does however complicate the viewer's position in relation to her and serves to identify the distant figures on the promenade as part of the politics of the construction project that will ultimately displace the young girl and her home. Speaking to the genre of documentary photography, art historian Abigail Solomon-Godeau criticizes "The photographer's desire to build pathos or sympathy into the image, to invest the subject with either an emblematic or an archetypal importance, to visually dignify labor or poverty," since, she argues, "such strategies eclipse or obscure the political sphere whose determinations, actions, and instrumentalities are not in themselves visual" (*Photography at the Dock* 179). While

Marroyo does attempt to show the photographic subject through a dignified lens, the "political sphere" that Solomon-Godeau references is, I would argue, at the very forefront of this image and is made visible by the photographer's choices in both framing and subject matter. Once again, this image raises Massey's question of landscape ownership by focalizing the *barraquista* against the transforming background whose uninhabitable appearance shows the marks of the economic interests that motivate the true owners of this land.

If the ludic dimension of the first photograph can be guessed through the movements of the girl and the unusual interest she takes in ordinary objects, the second photo by Marroyo frames several other *barraquista* children in a more obvious moment of play which, as we are about to see, factually subverts the economic and political power relations embodied in the promenade. Here the photographer has moved to the top of the construction site to find the young *barraquistes* invading the space of the invaders. Occupying the entire foreground of the frame is a large pile of dirt or sand, the line of distinction between the construction site and the Somorrostro, and thus a liminal zone. A light pole rises out of the middle, cutting the photo neatly into quarters and pulling all attention towards the child seated in the dirt at its base. One child's face is revealed to us as he turns to look at his companion, crouched next to him and facing away from the camera. In the top two quarters of the photo we can see the newly built portion of the walkway, outlined with lampposts along the length of both of its sides. A string of meandering pedestrians fills the left side of the paseo, mirrored on the other side by several more isolated walkers, heads tilted upward as if the level of the walkway had given them a new perspective on their city.

As was the case with Colom's first photo, the passersby are not looking at the *barraquistes* who, despite their apparent invisibility, have symbolically risen to the same

physical level as the walkway and occupy the entire bottom half of the frame. This shot grants a degree of agency to the children who have claimed as their playground the very territory that threatens their lifestyle. In the hands of the children, the material presumably to be used in the construction of the Passeig has become a toy. In his essay "Toys and Play," from 1928, Walter Benjamin explores how children are capable of resignifying objects through a use different from the one for which they were intended, and how they can re-establish a more harmonious and non-dominating relationship with nature in using primary materials as toys. Benjamin argues that construction sites are particularly attractive to children for the creative possibilities offered by what adults often see only as "waste" materials that their small hands mold or 'work' into new possibilities:

> For children are particularly fond of haunting any site where things are being visibly worked on. They are irresistibly drawn by the detritus generated by building, gardening, housework, tailoring, or carpentry. In waste products they recognize the face that the world of things turns directly and solely to them. In using these things, they do not so much imitate the works of adults as bring together, in the artifact produced in play, materials of widely differing kinds in a new, intuitive relationship. Children thus produce their own small world of things within the greater one. (450)

The young *barraquistes* are captured by Marroyo in a moment of ludic creation which reframes the spatial and ideological relations at the construction site, destabilizes its (in)visible power structures, and enables the viewer to reconsider the possibility of a lay subversion of the economic and political resonances that the Passeig Marítim continues to hold to this day.

These last two photos taken by Marroyo present a pointed counterargument to several segments of the text that discuss *barraquisme* as a "miseria profesional" that has plagued the nation. The text highlights the Somorrostro as a particularly folkloric example of professional laziness: "Y así, Barcelona prosigue su marcha adelante desde el año 1939, en constante lucha contra la miseria. De una miseria que tiene, en algunos casos, como el de Somorrostro, mucho de

tópico, de folklore, de desidia voluntaria, a veces profesional" (n.p.) And yet, the photos show even children in the Somorrostro performing some kind of physical labor for sustenance. What the article denounces as "miseria profesional" appears instead in the photos as the expression of play and childhood creativity, while the predominance of children subjects in this collaborative reportage becomes itself a potent counterimage to the negative reputation of the Somorrostro as a site of delinquency. Colom's and Marroyo's photographs thus work together as a visual counter-narrative that questions the cultural clichés surrounding *barraquisme* that are encoded in the text of the article for *El Correo Catalán*.

Colita's Beginning: *Los Tarantos, Barraquisme,* and Flamenco in Montjuïc

The Somorrostro was not the only *barraquista* area in Barcelona, nor were Colom and Marroyo the only photographers who presented this reality in a critical light. The mountain of Montjuïc is another historical site of *barraquista* settlements and one where larger groups of Gitanos resided.[13] It is in this area that Catalan photographer Isabel Steva i Hernández, known as "Colita," began her professional career taking photographs of the making of *Los Tarantos* (1963), a film written and directed by Francisco Rovira Beleta. The movie received significant international acclaim upon its release and was nominated for an Oscar in 1964. From today's perspective, Colita's images from *Los Tarantos* question not only the politics behind the eradication of the shantytowns and the transformation of Montjuïc, but also the ways in which

[13] In choosing to use the term "Gitano" in this chapter, I follow María Sierra's work on Gitanos. As she has explained, she uses Gitano as opposed to Gypsy since it is a term accepted positively and recognized by the Gitano community, as opposed to its translation into other languages. Additionally, she uses Romani to refer to this group at an international level rather than the population within Spain. Thus in this chapter I will also be using the term Gitano since my work is focused on the Romani population within Spain exclusively.

flamenco was showcased in national tourism campaigns in order to promote Spain's cultural exceptionality or its "difference."

The *barraques* settlements of Montjuïc had a distinct history from that of the Somorrostro and the rest of the littoral. Montjuïc had been an early site of redevelopment around the time of the 1929 World Fair, on which occasion the entire side of the mountain was carved out and turned into the city's stage for international recognition. As Eduardo Mendoza famously puts in his 1986 novel *La ciudad de los prodigios,* Barcelona's second World Fair came with a new flood of *barraquisme*:

> En estas obras y en las de la Exposición trabajaban muchos millares de obreros; peones y albañiles venidos de todas partes de la península, sobre todo del sur. Llegaban en trenes abarrotados a los andenes de la estación de Francia, recientemente ampliada y renovada. Como siempre la ciudad no tenía capacidad para absorber este aluvión. Los inmigrantes se alojaban en chamizos, por falta de casa. A estos chamizos se les llamó "barracas." Los barrios de barracas brotaban de la noche a la mañana en las afueras de la ciudad, en las laderas de Montjuich, en la ribera del Besós, barrios infames llamados "La Mina", el "Campo de la Bota" y "Pekín." (489)

In one of the historically accurate passages of this historically playful novel, Mendoza recounts how the *barraques* continued to engross the older settlements along the seashore just north of the Somorrostro. Together with the Carmel and areas of Diagonal, these peripheral areas of the city were consistently occupied by *barraquistes* during the first half of the twentieth century.

And while it is true that the Olympic Games in 1992 proved to be the pivotal event linking the development of Montjuïc with that of the coast, both areas had already been targeted together in earlier city plans. Indeed, in *Barraquisme: la ciutat (im)possible* (2010), Mercè Tatjer cites research done in 1966 by Marcial Echinique on the rezoning planned for Montjuïc and the littoral as part of a larger project by private and public investors:

> es plantejava per iniciativa privada una nova ordenació (Pla Especial d'Ordenació de la Zona Sud-Oest de Montjuïc) que, juntament amb el Pla de la Ribera (1965), pretenia transformar el litoral barceloní i la muntanya de Montjuïc en una àrea d'oci i de

> construccions residencials d'alt nivell, aprofitant les vistes i la proximitat al mar, sense avaluar-ne ni resoldre els efectes negatius d'aquesta intervenció sobre els veïns i l'activitat econòmica i, molt especialment, fent desaparèixer, sense cap proposta alternativa seriosa, els nuclis barraquistes i l'àmplia zona industrial existents en tots dos indrets. (59)

Although this master plan never came to pass, Colita, Colom, and Marroyo captured the two peripheral sites of interest right when these plans were being envisioned, thus productively framing the often invisible ways in which economic interests and urban development intersected.

The Gitanos living in the *barrios de barraques* of Somorrostro and Montjuïc and their flamenco tradition were Colita's earliest subject of interest as a professional photographer (Tudela n.p.). It was Paco Revés, who also discovered the internationally acclaimed flamenco dancers La Chunga and La Singla, that gave Colita her first important job: photographing the Gitanos starring in *Los Tarantos*:

> Rebés was location hunting and casting gypsies for Rovira Beleta's film *Los Tarantos* (1963), and he often went to the shanty towns of Somorrostro and Montjuïc with Colita. For every photo, he would pay her 50 pesetas. When Rovira Beleta and Carmen Amaya saw the images, they were astonished at the flair and force of Colita's gaze in comparison with other photographs of flamenco that they had previously seen. Colita says her professional career began at that point. (Colita 37)

I would argue that *Los Tarantos* provided Colita with a representational model that challenged the portrayals of Gitanos common during the 1950s and 60s, including those flamenco images used to promote Spain as "different."

Similar to the resurfacing of Colom's and Marroyo's photos for the 50th anniversary of the demolition of the *barraques* of the Somorrostro, the 1963 film *Los Tarantos* had its own revival in 2013, which marked the 50th anniversary of both its premiere and the death of the protagonist, Carmen Amaya. Written and directed by Francisco Rovira Beleta, who based the storyline off the play *La historia de los Tarantos* (1962) by Alfredo Mañas, *Los Tarantos* is a

Spanish version of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and follows the classic tale of two young lovers from warring families, in this case Gitanos. Rovira Beleta sets the story in Barcelona, where he was born and where he continued to live and shoot his films. Author and film critic Joaquín Vallet Rodrigo identifies in the combination of the classic tale with Spanish flamenco culture a useful tool for social critique, along the lines of Luis Buñuel's documentarism:

> La habilidad de Rovira Beleta para combinar estos aspectos claramente antitéticos adquiere auténtica razón de ser cuando se observa, dentro del subtexto del film, una amarga denuncia a la penosa situación del barrio de Somorrostro (actual Villa Olímpica), al inclemente abandono de una zona marginal (por momentos, su puesta en escena hace pensar en Las Hurdes -1932-, de Luis Buñuel) por parte de las instituciones y a cómo ello afecta a la vida diaria de todos sus habitantes. (n.p.)

In reality, two different neighborhoods of *barraques* appear in the movie: the Somorrostro and Montjuïc. At the time of the filming, the *barraques* of the Somorrostro had not yet been demolished to make room for the construction of the Passeig Martítim. It is here that the young lovers, Juana and Rafael, first meet and where they subsequently return in search of each other. The *barraques* of Montjuïc take on a larger role in the film as the home of Rafael's family, los Tarantos. The scenes in these hilltop *barraques* were filmed at Damunt la Fossa, commonly known as "la ciutat sense llei," an area located just above the public cemetery where the protagonist, Carmen Amaya (who plays la Taranta), would be buried after her death in 1963, less than a month after the film's release (Blanchar n.p.). In the movie, these *barraques* were the setting for many of Amaya's dance scenes as well as for the large group flamenco scenes, with the exception of the flamenco dance set in the Somorrostro.

Diverging from the popular rhetoric used to frame *barraquisme* as a social ill or invading force, the film presents the *barraques* of the Somorrostro and Montjuïc as economically poor yet socially joyful spaces that house a dignified population with a vibrant culture. And while, as Vallet Rodrigo argues, the film denounces the institutional abandonment of these peripheral

areas and portrays the *barraques* as unfit housing for their residents, the spaces of *barraquisme* are simultaneously perceived as providing a secluded and almost protected environment from the rest of the city. Juana's comment upon reaching the top of Montjuïc and seeing the barrio of *barraques* unfold before her eyes is especially telling of the representation of Damunt la Fossa as a vital and joyful community despite the physical and economic hardship:

> Ahora lo comprendo. Aquí a este barrio venían las golondrinas. Yo las veía cómo bajaban el vuelo al pasar por aquí. Y decía yo, ¿Por qué será? Ahora lo comprendo. Los pájaros venían aquí a ser felices. Qué lejos de la ciudad. Es como si estuviéramos en un mundo distinto, donde cada uno trabaja sin prisa lo que más le gusta, sin importarle el tiempo, cómo si éste hubiese detenido hace muchos años. (00:27:48)

Traditionally associated with love, happiness, rebirth and release, swallows suggest here not only that has Juana found love in these hillside *barraques* but that the space itself is one of joy and freedom.[14] Time appears to hold a different weight among the *barraquistes* who are free to do the labor they enjoy at a comfortable pace. Uttered against the setting of the *barraques*, Juana's words would foreground the contradictions of an uneven economic development under *desarrollismo*. Yet, for the city girl whose Gitano father climbed the socio-economic ladder, this place holds a particular fascination without ever being exoticized. Indeed, I argue that Rovira Beleta's critique manages to retain the dignity of the *barraquistes* by showing their miserable living conditions while refraining from dwelling on their personal suffering. Rather than eliciting an empathetic response from the viewer, thus relegating the *barraquistes* to the same condition of subalternity from which the movie attempts to rescue them, the director inserts lively moments of music and dance, thereby contrasting the poverty of the surroundings with the rich culture and joyous attitude of the inhabitants. While this representational choice may risk

[14] Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer's "Rima LIII" here comes to mind. In *Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, precursor del simbolismo en España*, Félix Bello Vázquez states that the golondrinas were used to express the essence of love and, due to their unpredictable and enchanting flight, would grant happiness.

idealizing an impoverished lifestyle, the irony palpable in scenes portraying the *barraques*, specifically those scenes involving the arrival of foreign tourists, ultimately prevents any such interpretive move.

The film insists on the marginalized condition of the Gitanos who faced many of the same economic difficulties of other indigent sectors of the population that were the protagonists of the large-scale internal migrations to Spain's cities:

> Durante los años 50 y los años 60, debido a las dificultades económicas y la modernización de la agricultura, un número creciente de Gitanos abandonaron el campo en dirección a las grandes ciudades. Mucho de ellos tuvieron que vivir en los barrios pobres de Madrid, Barcelona o Valencia. La mayoría de los Gitanos vivían en la miseria y la mayoría de ellos eran parte de la clase social más pobre de la sociedad, que habitaba en *'chabolas'* o cuevas, sobre todo en Andalucía, sin agua ni electricidad. (Rothea 9)

While *barraquistes* were generally ignored or negatively portrayed during the dictatorship and until the late 60s, the Gitanos had long been the object of additional marginalization that lead to special legislative measures allowing for racial discrimination.[15]

Xavier Rothea argues that the criminalization of the Gitano population under the Francoist regime was "institucionalizada sobre la base de una 'diferencia' esencialista…*afirmada* por una supuesta especificidad de la delincuencia Gitana" (14). For Rothea, the identification of Gitanos as an "other" within the Spanish State allowed the dictatorship to achieve a greater unity after the civil war:

> Podemos suponer que: 1) el régimen franquista, como régimen nacionalista, no pudo prescindir de una representación racista de los Gitanos como unos 'otros internos', 2) Al igual que otros países de Europa, antes y durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, España utilizó la justificación biológica para la criminalización de los Gitanos; 3) Los Gitanos fueron esgrimidos como un contra-ejemplo social y la representación folclórica se

[15] Gitanos were not granted rights as citizens until the Transition and subsequent implementation of Spain's democratic constitution in 1978. Until that year, regulations for the Guardia Civil contained articles specifically geared toward the control of the Gitano population. Gitanos were in fact required to carry additional documentation and the Guardia was to pay special attention to the attire, possessions, and movements of this group in order to catch them at robbery, which the police viewed as an inevitable occurrence.

> construyó únicamente para su uso promocional respecto a los turistas; 4) Este contra-ejemplo contribuía a aglutinar una sociedad desgarrada por una guerra civil: los Gitanos como un nuevo enemigo social para olvidar al enemigo político. (10)

The accent on race echoes the emergence of eugenic discourses in Spain which contributed to present the Gitanos as a social and political enemy, in a move that paradoxically incorporated them into the social order precisely by not pertaining to it. Discrimination does not seem to have wavered. At a conference in Valencia in 2005 for the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Asociación de Enseñantes con Gitanos, Teresa San Román has stressed that,

> la mala imagen social y mediática parece que se ha recrudecido…En el siglo XXI, en España, como sucedía en los tiempos más oscuros, se está volviendo a identificar *lo Gitano* sólo con lo miserable y con lo marginal. El Gitano, pues, que no pertenece a ese estrato social, o que sale de él para mejorar, deja de ser percibido por la sociedad mayoritaria – y a veces también por la gente de su entorno directo – como miembro del colectivo. (in Oleaque 20-21)

Historically, resistance to the Gitanos' social mobility has also been defended on account of their alleged wild and emotional nature, which made them unable to assimilate. In the early twentieth century, even American writer Irving Brown, who was considered a "fan" of the Gitanos, still maintained the following:

> Extreme mobility of temperament is a prominent trait. Though they bow to the inevitable, they are very passionate, and have quick tempers. I have seen two Gypsies ready to spring at each other like wolves – and an instant later the arms that were extended to strangle would be about each other's neck in an embrace. Their keen sensibility and complete self-expression is that of the child and the artist. (21)

As Maria Sierra explains:

> Towards the beginning of the twentieth century, the emotive discourse on gypsies attained a wide currency throughout Western Europe, largely due to nineteenth-century Romanticism that fostered curiosity towards marginalized peoples. The discourse represented Gitanos as having peculiar passions, anxieties, a fearlessness and a sense of freedom that was reflective of their barbarism and the inability to adapt to Western modernity, thus making them an unassimilable community. (43)

Gitanos were not only considered thieves, but their supposed natural emotional capacities further excluded them from the rest of Spain's modernized society.

Given that favorable and nuanced views of Gitanos continue to be rare even in present day discourse, their portrayal in *Los Tarantos* was especially significant. Indeed, a critical introduction to Francesc Rovira Beleta's work by the Filmoteca de Catalunya frames the film as revolutionary for its deliberate presentation of the Gitanos as a dignified community with a strong cultural identity:

> L'univers Gitano ha estat abordat rarament amb dignitat pel cinema espanyol. Per això, l'atenció prestada per Rovira Beleta a aquesta comunitat marginada avala l'interès antropològic i social de Los Tarantos. El film reivindica, en efecte, la identitat i la dignitat gitanes....Però, alhora, Los Tarantos presenta un conflicte atàvic de clans – inspirat en el tema de Romeu i Julieta- però associat a més a un conflicte econòmic i estamental, amb els pròspers tractants de cavalls oposats als humils balladors. (Rovira Beleta n.p.)

The film constitutes a valuable sociological document that reflects critically on the popular imagery surrounding the Gitano population while attempting a faithful and dignified portrayal of an ethnic group that was harshly targeted by processes of homogenization.

In countering the general perception of this social group as dangerous and emotionally compulsive, the film also reframes violence as familial protectiveness. Thus the bloody conflict when Rafael (the Romeo of the story) severely wounds Juana's brother is presented as a defense of his mother and other family members who had been publicly battered and humiliated by the rival family of los Zorongo. Most importantly, to resist the cultural cliché, Rovira Beleta connects the violent act to the issue of economic disparity, a broader social phenomenon that the film interestingly portrays as being replicated also within the Gitano community. The atavistic familial dispute becomes a class conflict between two Gitano families of different socio-economic status: the poor flamenco dancers (los Tarantos) appear in opposition to the wealthier

horse traders who worked their way up the socioeconomic ladder (los Zorongo). The economic ascent of Zorongo, Juana's father, becomes the cause of his disdain for the Gitanos living in the *barraques* (one of the characters mentions that Zorongo would never step foot in the Somorrostro). What would otherwise be only a sentimental rift between families allegorically suggests that the greed and corruption of those of higher standing is intricately bound up with ideas of economic, cultural, and racial superiority.

The film also addresses the topic of the double identity created for the Gitanos by the regime. The promotion of Barcelona during the *aperturismo* and *desarrollismo* coincided with a national campaign intended to market Spain as a desirable tourist destination. The so-called Spanish "difference" was expected to transform the foreign perception of Spain as a scientifically and culturally belated country with a rather primitive and emotional character into a marketable difference: Spain was the perfect alternative to the chaotic life of the developed countries. Annabel Martín points out that in the context of *desarrollismo*,

> tourism becomes a trope for the commercialization of national identity, a formulation the Franco regime was to carefully stage abroad as a pastiche version of the romanticized 'Carmenesque' backwardness of Spain in its quest for foreign capital. The strategy of putting Spain up for sale through a folkloric depiction of authenticity for foreign visitors to consume on its beaches and newly built tourist resorts was a clever political and economic ploy abroad. (219)

Under the banner of "Spain is different" (España es diferente), a slogan attributed to the then Ministro de Información y Turismo, Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the regime promoted an image of Spain that centered around the Southern culture from Andalucía, with its flamenco and bullfighting. Thus, for instance, the more Northern European infamous version of Carmen, portrayed in Georges Bizet's well-known opera as a thieving and exotic gypsy woman and the first "femme fatale," was re-used by Spain to promote itself to an even more extended international audience.

While perhaps a successful marketing strategy, Martín points out that this new tourist campaign "could only reify at home the legitimate political and cultural aspirations of those Spaniards dissatisfied with their historical lot. Among the more critical sectors of Spanish society, the slogan quickly became a code for what was really missing in the Spain of the 1960s (its difference) and underscored the collective feeling that the grass was really much greener on the other side of the Pyrenees" (220). The Gitano culture was coopted in this commercial ploy despite suffering sociopolitical discrimination. Baltasar Fra-Molinero outlines the ironic instrumentalization of the Gitano population:

> During the Franco years (1939-75), Spain sold its Gypsy image outside its borders to promote its tourism industry while fiercely excluding Gypsies from the national agenda. Gypsies were at the core of the famous slogan from the Spanish Ministry of Tourism: *Spain is different.* Nevertheless, Gypsies were and still are the most racialized minority of Spanish society, the most marginalized and rejected ethnic group in Spain. (149-50)

Not only did "Spain is different" take advantage of that which was "típicamente español" in the Gitano culture by making flamenco a prestigious art, but, according to Rafael Buhigas Jiménez, Gitanos were in fact often excluded from the campaign since white individuals were often asked to play their part (n.p.).

I would argue that *Los Tarantos* turns the imagery surrounding the Gitanos on its head. The "Spain is different" campaign decontextualized flamenco and glamorously depicted Gitana flamenco dancers (who were often not Gitana at all) on stages or even in lush gardens, which differed significantly from the *barraques* in which many of these dancers actually lived. These images were then used in posters and postcards to promote Spain to an international audience, some of which appear in *Los Tarantos* and are directly contrasted with the cinematic presentation of the Gitanos. At various points in the film, the actors pass in front of posters that depict *toreros*, and Antonio Gades dances along las Ramblas weaving in and out of postcards of

bullfighting and flamenco as well other tourist paraphernalia. In another scene of biting irony, Gades shows several foreign women a good time by taking them to the *barraques* of the Somorrostro to see an authentic gypsy wedding and woos them with what they surely see as an exotic flamenco dance.

Los Tarantos presents an image of the Gitanos which both overtly and covertly challenges the simultaneous criminalizing and exoticizing of this group as well as the popular whitewashing of Gitanos in cinema during this time. Just like Gitanos were often absent from the tourist campaign surrounding flamenco, for Gitanos to be cast in leading roles was particularly rare in Spanish cinema since most filmmakers preferred white actors to play these roles. Rovira Beleta's decision to cast Carmen Amaya, a Gitana from the *barraques* of Barcelona, to represent La Taranta was in fact quite revolutionary, even in spite of her international fame. Addressing the racial politics of Spanish cinema in the years leading up to *Los Tarantos*, Eva Woods Peiró states the following:

> Folklóricas who were glamourous, triumphant, and – outside their fictional roles – white contrasted with racialized characters played by real Roma like Carmen Amaya in *La hija de Juan Simón* (1934) or *María de la O* (1936). Carmen Amaya's firmly established racial identity did not project a fluid persona, resulting perhaps in her failure to project a glamourous star narrative. Her decision to transfer her career to Latin America during the Spanish Civil War would also wipe her off the Spanish charts and might explain her abbreviated relationship with film. Additionally, her Barcelonese, as opposed to Andalusian, heritage clashed with the demands for Andalusian locations, themes, and characters. Those who were lighter in skin color and qualified as white through their performance of ethnicity found it easier to assimilate with nonracialized Spanish identity formations. This racial rhetoric of color transcended politics and religion, and in a stroke it annulled the task of resolving race in any realistic way. (*White Gypsies* 27)

Rovira Beleta nonetheless maintained that he wanted no one else to play what he had imagined as a central character of the film, La Taranta ("La mitad invisible" 00:05:47).

Although Rovira Beleta chose to cast Carmen Amaya, la Singla, la Gordi and other Gitanas and Gitanos from the same *barraques* where he shot his film, he has been criticized for

failing to achieve a stronger social denouncement and for surrendering to the expectations of foreign audiences. According to Carlos Benpar, a fellow film director who helped Rovira Beleta write his biography, Rovira Beleta would occasionally sacrifice other elements in his work in order to please his audience ("La mitad invisible" 00:17:02). This included using Sara Lezana instead of la Chunga, a Gitana flamenco dancer, when the latter refused to kiss any man who was not her boyfriend, thereby, as the director himself admitted, making her a less convincing Juliet regardless of her racial and cultural identity ("La mitad invisible" 00:06:39). But these commercial compromises do not prevent *Los Tarantos* from successfully challenging the conventional image of flamenco, since the film still reflects on the extreme poverty and difficult living conditions in the *barraques*, thus breaking with the romanticized folklorism and Spanish exoticism that had made the Gitano culture so marketable. In Sara Lezana's words, "*Los Tarantos* tiene el gran impacto porque rompe con el folklorismo de pandereta y todo el andalucismo que se había hecho durante toda la historia del cine español" ("La mitad invisible" 00:27:15). By making Barcelona's Somorrostro and Montjuïc the immediately recognizable setting of the film and by including in subversive ways what were popular Gitano representations at home and abroad (including posters, postcards, and flamenco dance), *Los Tarantos* draws attention to the institutional instrumentalization of this ethnic group while showing, through the reality of the *barraques*, the intricate web of economic, cultural and racial contradictions that underlined the dominant narratives of national progress.

Colita's Critical Space: Between Performance and Social Documentary

The reworking of clichés concerning the Gitano culture addressed in *Los Tarantos* serves also as the springboard for a closer examination of the photos Colita took during the shooting of

the film. As a self-taught artist, Colita learned much from an older generation of renowned photographers such as Oriol Maspons, Julio Ubiña, and Xavier Miserachs, and worked as Miserach's assistant for one year in 1961. Also versed in the genres of the portrait, photo essay, and advertising, Colita is easily Barcelona's most renowned female photographer, although only most recently has she gained particular fame. In 2014, just a year after the exhibition on Colom's life's work at the MNAC, a collection of Colita's most renowned works was shown at la Pedrera with the title of "Colita, perquè sí!" while in the summer of 2016 she was invited for a public interview at l'Ateneu Barcelonès to discuss her life's work and her approach to photography. Colita's notorious defiance of ideological norms especially in relation to gender and sexuality during the dictatorship lead to at least one of her exhibits being censored and immediately removed from the Sala Aixelà, the same space where Colom had exhibited his polemical "El carrer" in 1961. Ventura Pons's 2015 documentary, *Cola, Colita, Colassa,* reflects on Colita's fruitful career and her contribution to the history of photography in Barcelona and Spain, both during and after the dictatorship.

Unlike most photographers who had a "gypsy phase," Colita was heavily invested in documenting the flamenco culture through a closer and more nuanced lens. Indeed,

> Colita was the only [photographer] who took a systematic approach to her work in order to create a document on flamenco…Colita's contribution, her innovation, was that she stayed and kept returning till she gained their trust. Colita lived with the gypsies. She went with La Singla to buy shoes and spent a good while watching how the gypsy women did their hair. Sometimes she would take photographs, sometimes not. (Colita and Terre 38)

Although Colita belonged, like Colom and Marroyo, to a white upper middle class, the Gitanos seemed to welcome her presence and willingly posed for her. Colita's investment in gaining the Gitanos' trust and their permission to be photographed does not guarantee the erasure of the power differential noted by critics such as Solomon-Godeau, nor does it guarantee the

authenticity of her representations, but it does contribute to inoculating her portrayal of the Gitanos from the cultural clichés of the time. More specifically, because her photos represent the Gitanos as professional performers (and actors for the film), they do not allow for an easy consumption of the images. Furthermore, Colita is particularly careful in constructing the position of the viewer as a space of critical awareness rather than comfort. Rather than making the viewers feel like an "insider," Colita's photos, I argue, force them to occupy a position external to the group, from where they must question the representations crafted and circulated at the time as much as their own relationship to these representations.

The value of Colita's work on *Los Tarantos* also rests significantly with the fact that she is documenting the Gitanos while they perform their own identity for the camera. Colita captures a type of mirroring or a mise-en-abîme that problematizes the relation that the Gitanos have with the *barraquista* and Gitano lifestyles presented in the film. In the distance opened between life role and movie role in Colita's images, I contend, there exists the possibility for the Gitanos to achieve some control over the representation. Through this complex performance, these subjects show and reaffirm their cultural identity. By capturing the interplay staged between lived experience and re-presentation, the photographs generate a subtler reflection on the relationship between photography and social reality, between performance and authenticity.

The particular attention that Colita paid to the Gitanillos (more often Gitanillas) in the film contributes to differentiate her photographs from much of documentary photography as well as the typical representations of Gitanos and flamenco dance. Despite their young age, these children are also professional performers in the film, whose representation here works against the infantilizing of this population by descriptions such as Brown's of their emotional characteristics. In Colita's photos, even the youngest of the Gitanos is represented through a

professional lens by allowing them to perform as actors interpreting roles close to their own lives. Capturing the children in moments of performance allows them the ability to treat the camera as a spectator rather than an invasive or controlling presence. While descriptions of Gitano children dancing flamenco were not rare in nineteenth-century literature, what makes Colita's photos exceptional is the fact that they portray these children as paid performing actors, something new also for documentary photography.

One such photo shows a little girl, "La Gordi," dancing for Colita's camera.[16] The camera appears to facilitate the girl taking on the active role of a performer, while the children and adults gathered around her act as either spectators of the performance or pose for Colita's lens. In both cases, the performative quality of the scene sets itself apart from the most typical posed pictures of social photography as well as the more spontaneous takes of Colom's and Marroyo's documentary photography. The fact that the Gitanos are photographed while performing allows them a greater range of possibilities for displaying their identity because they are neither being purposefully positioned nor "captured" in the photographic "pounce" of Cartier Bresson's terms. Furthermore, because of the complex mixture of gazes generated in the performance, Colita's own gaze is neither an insider's nor is it voyeuristic, but is rather closer to that of a complicit spectator. If viewers are *not* the 'clandestine' or uninvited observers of social photography, neither are they ever fully one of the group. The fact that the photograph was likely for documenting already hired actors places the Gitanos in the position of being 'paid actors' in the movie and further offsets the power differential between the child and Colita.

[16] The photo belongs to the collection of el Museo de la Reina Sofia and is titled *"La Gordi." Barracas de Montjuich.* While I have not been able to find La Gordi's full name nor her inclusion in a cast list, I can say with relative certainty that she was a member of the cast for *Los Tarantos* and plays the little girl of the Taranto family ("la niña" as Carmen Amaya's character refers to her) in the beginning of the film.

The visual dynamics in this photo of la Gordi are particularly interesting since la Gordi's gaze and her pose, as well as the poses of other children, seem to welcome the photographer into the space. In her study on street photography, concerning the relation between pose and gaze, Susanne Holschbach stresses how the pose becomes a screen that reveals as much as it contests societal and individual norms and behavioral encodings:

> The pose allows a person to reveal something about his self-perception and his social status; the pose is at once a conscious attitude and an involuntary expression of psychic dispositions and social norms. It can intimate the conditions under which the portrait was created, and it can bear signs of agreement as well as resistance. The pose is at the interface between the individual and society, between inside and outside, the conscious and the unconscious. (172)

Indeed, in Colita's photo of la Gordi the children enthusiastically invite the camera's gaze, demonstrating their "agreement" to being photographed—although not all of Colita's performers welcome the photographer with their pose. This difference is particularly visible in one of Colita's photos of la Singla, a young flamenco dancer from Barcelona's *barraques* who, like Carmen Amaya, later rose to international fame. La Singla looks away from the camera while performing in front of the photographer. Colita captures a moment in which the subject's pose demonstrates her status as both a performer and as a member of the collective around her as she distances the photographer with her gaze. Returning to Holschbach, La Singla's empowerment comes from belonging to this social group. Her pose, as well as those of the Gitanos surrounding her, acts as the interface between the Gitanos and the photographer. None of the Gitanos affirm the gaze of the camera, and Colita, while allowed to spectate and to take photographs, remains exterior to the performance, as does the viewer.

While with the photo of la Gordi the innovative depiction rests with the child's pose and her status as a paid performer, in many other instances it is the use of the camera that establishes the innovative element of the photograph. Odd angles and shadow effects created around the

position of the camera draw attention to the act of framing and compel the viewer to feel as an external observer. The shot of la Singla, for instance, is taken from somewhere around hip height but angled upwards, making the dancer the tallest and most imposing figure in the frame. In my view, this perspective serves two purposes: first, it acknowledges the young woman as the most significant subject in the frame and therefore empowers her already-captivating presence in front of the male figures relegated to the background; second, the tilted perspective denaturalizes the presence of the camera. Although no one acknowledges our gaze and our presence, which may therefore feel unimposing and even unnoticed, the height from which we view the scene in this second photo is not at eye level. This strange tension created between the location from which we look and our clear view of La Singla, between our feeling of inclusion and our feeling of spectatorship, allows the photographic subjects to remain outside of stereotypical representations of flamenco and challenges viewers to consider their own position in relation to the image.

Colita's photos of Carmen Amaya in her role as La Taranta are often the most interesting in their framing and with regard to the position of the viewer. Although several of these photos are taken from the same point of view as the video camera, many are taken instead from more distant and off-center positions, which, as I argue above, suggests a less authoritative relationship between the photographer and the subjects than the one enacted, for instance, through Rovira Beleta's camera. As Colita puts it:

> I shot my photographs from a great distance, with my 50-mm lens, I didn't have anything else, because the stills photographer took against me and I had to hide behind him. He was piqued because the film director said, "Oh, what lovely photos Colita takes!" Till one day he said to the director, 'This girl's in the way. It's me or her!' His photographs have never been seen again, but mine have. So you see, that's life…" (Colita and Terré 37).[17]

[17] As an anecdote, I will add that in my own research Colita has proved to be right: while she is not listed in any of the credits for the film and still photographer Rafael Pérez de Rozas consistently is, I was not able to find a single photo that he took for the movie. Additionally, all the photos that I found when I searched for his name in relation to *Los Tarantos* were (appropriately and ironically) Colita's.

I would venture to say that Colita's odd angles are partially responsible for making her photographs particularly memorable. The best illustration of this skewed gaze is undoubtedly the photograph depicting Carmen Amaya, la Singla, and another male actor, all dancing flamenco on the hilltop overlooking the industrial area of the city. Although the figure farthest away from the lens, Carmen Amaya nevertheless occupies the center of the photograph and faces the camera, thus capturing the attention of the viewer. The location from which we view the scene is partially obscured by a blurry object in the lower right corner of the frame. The lack of a clear view finds a parallel in the lack of acknowledgement of the spectator's gaze on the part of the actors whose performance, more likely directed to the video camera, remains outside of Colita's frame. If there is certain voyeuristic gaze in this particular case, the visual pleasure is nonetheless thwarted by the circumstances in which the photo is taken. The Gitanos are already knowingly performing a choreographed scene for the video camera and are therefore *not* the object of a peeping viewer, which implies that there is no reason for our gaze to be surreptitious.

The setting of the picture further complicates the performance since it brings into focus the tension between Amaya's international fame and her humble *barraquista* background. While La Gordi and La Singla were still connected to the reality of the *barraques* at the time of the film, the distance between lived reality and performed role in the case of Amaya was much greater. Originally from the Somorrostro and therefore herself a *barraquista*, Carmen Amaya had become a world-renowned figure and returned to her hometown of Barcelona specifically for the filming of *Los Tarantos.* She had left Spain at the onset of the Civil War to live in Latin America and the United States. When she briefly visited Spain in 1947, she was already an international star, although she received more mixed reviews from her homeland than abroad. Regarding the

coverage surrounding Amaya's performances in Spain that same year, Montse Madridejos notices how more conservative newspapers, attuned to conventional performances, had failed to appreciate the modernity of Amaya's choreography. For instance, an article in *Ritmo* titled "Carmen Amaya y sus gitanos" reported the following:

> We went to see the outstanding artist, and frankly we were disappointed. We conceive of Spanishness – and Andalusianness – in a completely different way. Carmen Amaya returns 'Americanized.' There were moments in which we saw her do tap dance. And those brusque moves, those vertiginous turns may have a great deal of merit as gymnastics, but we are far from believing they have anything to do with the rite, the reverie that everything Andalusian holds within. Carmen Amaya speaks to us of music made movement, of the gesture, the angry grimace made music. Everything about this show is speed, frenzy, whirlwind, hyperesthesia, in sum, abnormal. We are convinced that Carmen Amaya and her Gypsies – faithful disciples of their maestra – use and abuse a tic that perhaps in America electrifies the crowd, but that, at least upon us, has the opposite effect: it is the barrier that impedes our view into the emotional pulse of any of our most typical dances. (Madridejos 183-184)

The accusation that Amaya was "Americanized" shows the delicate balance of maintaining what the Spanish conceived of as a traditional cultural identity (already coopted from the Gitanos) and marketing that identity abroad. And while flamenco is generally assumed to have originated from the Gitanos in Andalucía, the article also demonstrates the simplifying effect of the oftentimes false assumption of geographical ties by expecting a very specific and "normal" portrayal of "Andalusianness" from a Gitana from Catalonia even before considering her supposed Americanization.[18]

Although a conservative publication, *El Correo Catalán* in fact published a favorable piece by theater critique Josep Maria Junyent titled "Carmen Amaya en Embrujo Español":

> In Amaya, Spanish dance is not a symbol enclosed within the borders of our nation. It projects abroad, because it possesses the spirit of near genius. Possibly, the secret, the

[18] In response to a question from del Arco as to whether her style had changed, Amaya replied "Since I started here, (and I am from the Barceloneta) when I was four years old, and at the Teatro Español, performing at the Catalan company of Santpere, until today, I dance the same. The only difference is that now I dance with common sense, knowing what I do" (Madridejos 182).

> formula, consists in simply regulating, compressing the ardor, the delirium, calculating its explosive force, building tension and letting shattering moments escape in a climate of emotional exasperation. It is something that only Latins can do, and more still when they are of the Gypsy race, because then the paroxysm beats through their very veins. (Madridejos 182)

Amaya is thus a purveyor of flamenco to an international audience precisely because she is "of the Gypsy race" and thus capable of, or even unable to prevent, this emotional intensity in her performance. Here flamenco is in a sense returned to the Gitano culture, but in a manner that continues to stereotype and marginalize it by identifying the Gitano race as one that is biologically determined to experience wild emotional outbursts.

As both a contested international icon that promotes Spain abroad and an actor playing the role she essentially lived as a child, the Carmen Amaya portrayed by Colita opens up the interpretive possibilities of Colita's photos by challenging the idea of her authentic "Spanishness" together with the identifying markers commonly used for the Gitanos. One photo in particular captures this productive tension in an exquisite image. Carmen Amaya is framed standing in front of a cart and a small boy visible in the immediate background while the industrial zone of Barcelona spreads out behind her. Although not fully centered in the photo, her recoiled pose projects a powerful presence and marks a stark contrast to the majority of Colita's images showing the dancer during a performance. Following again Holschbach's suggestion, through this hunched and inward-directed pose Amaya resists the camera's gaze and contests the norms surrounding her representation as a hot-blooded flamenco dancer. What appears to be almost a protective gesture contributes to the opacity of the photo and forces the viewer to further consider Amaya in relation to her identity as a Gitana *barraquista* from Barcelona. The choice of the Zona Franca (the industrial zone of Barcelona) as a photographic background for nearly all of Colita's photos of the Gitana dancer is a constant reminder that the most

internationally renowned flamenco dancer of the time (and arguably, in history) was not from Andalusia but came instead from a geographic and cultural reality that had little to do with the vision of Spain promoted abroad. As a Gitana and former *barraquista*, Amaya is at odds with the industrial background and yet an essential part of this landscape. Although Barcelona relied on the residents of Montjuïc for much of the labor force needed for the city's development, it also simultaneously ignored or even shunned this population when carrying out major urban transformations that would benefit other sectors of the city's population. The hill on which Amaya stands is a site of contradiction that, while incorporated into the rest of the city through the use of its workforce, remains a peripheral and highly marginalized area due to the presence of *barraquisme.*

The casting, setting and cultural affirmation presented in *Los Tarantos* make the film a significant sociological document that inserts itself into the collective imaginary of 1960s Spain as a complex and dignified portrayal of Barcelona's Gitano population, very different from the representations of flamenco used to market Spain to international tourism. Returning to Lee Fontanella's argument that the historical referent in documentary photographs does not diminish their worth but rather allows them to acquire different values over time, I contend that the challenges presented in Colita's photographs extend into the present to interrogate the contemporary imagery used to promote Spain and, more specifically, the city of Barcelona. Flamenco continues in fact to be a primary artistic expression used to promote the uniqueness of Spanish culture. Despite the fact that flamenco is more representative of Andalusia than Catalonia, tourist campaigns in Barcelona continue to use flamenco as a cultural production supposedly authentic to the city, while Gitanos continue to suffer from social prejudice and marginalization. While Colita's photos continue to interrogate this persisting contradiction

between the commercial use of flamenco and the discrimination against Gitanos, the setting for the photos also raises new questions when viewed in comparison to today's landscape. The site where Colita captured the filming of *Los Tarantos* has since undergone a drastic transformation after the last of the *barraques* on Montjuïc were demolished in preparation for Barcelona's 1992 Olympics. The images of divers in midair against the background of Barcelona's downtown and Gaudi's magnificent Sagrada Familia that were televised worldwide during the Olympics present a stark contrast with Carmen Amaya's figure framed against the industrial zone on the opposite side of the mountain. According to Joan Ramón Resina, the purpose of the Olympic Games was "to promote Barcelona not just as a fleeting center of consumption, but as an object of consumption in its own right. Wrapped in a sleek image, the city would sell" (*Vocation of Modernity* 217). Colita's photographs hardly work to "sell" an image of the city, but rather represent the contradictions within the landscape and in relation to its inhabitants.

Montjuïc and the Somorrostro constitute clear examples, as Mercè Tatjer reminds us, "de cómo, quién y para quién se remodela la ciudad en nuestro país" (*La Barceloneta* 81). Some of today's most attractive areas of the city aggressively promoted to tourists are often those that speak to a much different past of Barcelona, in this case that of the *barraquisme* of the first half of the twentieth century. The disparity between the landscape of the Somorrostro and Montjuïc during the 1960s and today is fully captured in the documentary introduced in the beginning of the chapter, *Barraques. La ciutat oblidada*, which shows how the ramifications of many of the urban changes initiated in the 1960s have not yet been resolved through numerous visual references to the Olympic Games. The Olympics, which required the "removal of human obstacles from the affected areas" (215) including the eradication of the very last *barraques* of

Montjuïc, would take up the very same plan that effectively eliminated the *barraques* of the Somorrostro, documented by Joan Colom and Ignasi Marroyo.

Colita's photos for *Los Tarantos,* as much as the movie itself, together with the photos taken by Colom and Marroyo for *El Correo Catalán* offer an invaluable documentation of a past characterized by deep political and economic transformations whose contradictions and ramifications did not end with the dictatorship. As socially marginalized subjects, the *barraquistes*, Gitanos, and children portrayed in these images challenge in different ways the logic behind Barcelona's modernization. The traces of the ideological tensions and sociocultural conflicts still legible in these photos continue to push the limits of their own frames, thus bringing the past to bear upon many of the processes that continue to shape the urban landscape of Barcelona. While with different objectives and different aesthetic concerns, these works continue to interrogate the present by foregrounding the inevitable and often troubling gaps between the projections of a model city and the lived reality of its inhabitants.

The Raval and its Representations: Modern Contradictions and Popular Culture

The Barri Xino, also known at different moments as the Raval or Disctricto V, has historically been both one of the most popular and polemic areas of Barcelona.[19] One of the earliest working-class and industrial neighborhoods in all of Europe, the Xino was both socially and physically marginalized until the medieval walls that separated it from the city were torn down in the mid-nineteenth century. But even then, the fact that the Pla Cerdà of 1860 headed urban expansion toward the newly built neighborhood of the Eixample, the new center of bourgeois business and activities, ended up reinforcing the neighborhood's social marginalization. Isolated in the very center of the city, with its narrow streets, dense occupied buildings, and the increasing fame of its sex workers and petty thieves, the Xino visibly contradicted the hygienist and rationalist imprint of Cerdà's plan (Villar 31), whose driving ideology understood a clean physical space as the premise for the eradication of both environmental filth and immoral behavior. When Le Corbusier visited Barcelona, he himself voiced the need to reform, open up, and sanitize the neighborhood in an effort to modernize the city.[20] But coexisting with this rationalist understanding of progress was another facet of modernity that found in the crowded and disorderly spaces of the Xino and in its marginalized lifestyles a necessary resistance to the bourgeois rationalist and hygienist order (Castellanos 93).

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[19] In this chapter I will be using the more popular Catalan name of "Barri Xino" for the area also known more formally in Catalan as Barri Xinès and in Castellano as Barrio Chino.

[20] "Exhibition: Le Corbusier and Jean Genet in the Raval" (n.p.). While le Corbusier's plans were never carried out (due in part to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War), the Barri Xino was effectively "opened up" through urban renovations in the post war period and, most especially, in preparation for the 1992 Olympic Games. Chapter 3 will look closely at the transformations of the Barri Xino in the twenty-first century and their social and cultural impact.

As Resina explains with respect to this odd coexistence, "Modernity, in this sense, was predicated on the Nietzchean idea that a puissant existence requires a complementary instinctual underside" (*Vocation of Modernity* 106). Thus, not only did the Barri Xino become the necessary complement to the modern bourgeois Barcelona exemplified by the Eixample, but, as Jordi Castellanos points out, it ultimately came to embody the conflictual identity of the modern city (89).[21]

In large part the literature on the Xino would reflect such polarized ideas of modernity and would disseminate the image of the neighborhood that then sedimented in local and foreign imaginaries. Gary McDonogh identifies several literary waves that shaped the image of the Xino, starting with the reformist writers of the turn of the twentieth century, such as Rafael Nogueres i Oller and Juli Vallmitjana, who represented the *barri* as a problem to be solved (178). The Xino stood "as a defiance of, as a challenge to bourgeois order, to the ordered city that wants the high culture of *Noucentisme*" (Castellanos 93). Opposing this view, the booming literature on the Xino of the 1920s and 1930s began to acknowledge the commercial and cultural value of the neighborhood, and in many ways glorified this underbelly of the modern city. Resina points out how, despite the fact that conditions in the Barri Xino were so bad that there were plans to demolish it altogether, the 1920s was a brief moment in which "the decayed neighborhood was upstaged as a topsy-turvy image of Barcelona's coveted modernity" since, he argues, "a city required a common bohemian territory" (99). Thus in the writing of foreign authors such as Francis Carco, Joseph Kessel, André Legru, Georges Bataille, Paul Morand, René Bizet or Jean

[21] Castellanos uses Walter Benjamin's idea of the city as a nomad to suggest how the Barri Xino exemplifies both the essence and the contradictions of Barcelona: "For Walter Benjamin the city is the 'monad', the essence, the unit that contains all the characteristics of totality. Perhaps to a certain extent, though not entirely, the *barri xino* (red-light district) is, at the same time, the monad of Barcelona, its essence; because the *barri xino* is the old Barcelona, whilst at the same time it brings together all of its modern contradictions" (89).

Genet, the Barri Xino became the equivalent of a Spanish Montmartre.[22] French literary portrayals in particular found in the district an exotic appeal of the Andalusian stereotypes mixed with the anarchism and illicit lifestyles for which the *barri* had become known (McDonogh 179). Like the Gitano population of Barcelona, the Xino too was sexualized, exoticized and, ultimately orientalized in this body of literature (Resina 100).

During the postwar period, however, this glorification of the *barri* would eventually take on a nostalgic tone as the conditions of the neighborhood declined. According to McDonogh, the move from reform to nostalgia "more accurately reflects the political situation of Barcelona within the national economy and polity" (182). Nostalgia was in fact the way in which Catalans could continue to discuss their life and values in a climate of extreme political and cultural repression, even though this caused the Barri Xino to be detached from its true historical identity and be defined more by its aura rather than any present reality (182). This was not only a theme in literature on the *Barri Xino* but also in postwar novels centered on Barcelona in general, such as Carmen Laforet's *Nada* (1945) which thematizes in productive ways the feeling of nostalgia.

It is in part against the background of this nostalgic literature that I will read the first of two photobooks comprising the focus of this chapter: a collaborative project between photographer Joan Colom and writer José Camilo Cela titled *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras: drama con acompañamiento de cachondeo y dolor de corazón.* Published in 1964, the photobook showcases Colom's late 1950s and early 1960s photos of the Barri Xino's sex workers. As McDonogh admits, *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* remains "the most difficult case to evaluate in this period" of literary nostalgia (181). The sexuality and marginality present in Genet's or in

[22] It is during this time of 'literary splendor' that the Raval or Disctricte V is renamed the Barri Xino—a name, as Resina explains, that deterritorializes the neighborhood so that it can be seen as more exotic and less connected to the rest of the city (*Vocation of Modernity* 104).

Pieyre de Mandiargues's descriptions of the Barri Xino take center stage in Colom's photos but through an unromantic lens that neither glorifies the barri nor yearns for its former identity.

Joan Fontcuberta, one of Spain's contemporary leading photographers and conceptual artist, offers a valuable interpretation of the photobook in relation to its cultural context. Spurred, perhaps, by Colom's 2002 Premi Nacional de Fotografía, Fontcuberta wrote an article in 2004 on *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras,* where he argues for reading the book as a kind of leftist bourgeois revindication of the Barri Xino's identity as the underbelly or riffraff of the modern city, an identity that is first somehow purified in this encounter with a high class culture and then sedimented into the postwar collective imaginary:[23]

> El llibre es pot llegir com l'apropiació 'gauchedivinista' del Barri Xino, com la reivindicació per un sector culte i progressista de la burgesia catalana d'una marginalitat *canalla* que així esdevé marginalitat castissa, i contribueix a construir, malgrat la distància social i ideològica, l'imaginari col·lectiu barceloní de postguerra. (187)

Joan de Sagarra coined the term *gauche divine* in 1969 to refer to a diverse group of artists and intellectuals who shared "l'extracció social benestant, un posicionament genèricament d'esquerres, l'esperit hedonista i lúdic que es corresponia a un cert aire de provocació contra el franquisme imperant, la vocació cosmopolita i l'exaltació de la desinhibició i la creativitat" ("Gauche Divine" n.p.). The group was most often defined by its opposition to the dictatorship and by its eagerness to "épater la bourgeoisie," the same class to which most of them belonged (Villamandos 20). Although neither Colom nor Cela were actually members of the *gauche divine,* Fontcuberta interestingly inserts their collaborative work within that same cultural and intellectual context. One may say that Colom and Cela anticipated that appropriation of popular

[23] According to the Institut d'Estudis Catalans's *Diccionari descriptiu de la llengua catalana*, when "castís" or "castissa" refers to a "cosa, costum, espressió, actitud, algú," it refers to something "que representa el que es considera més pur i autèntic d'un territory." Fontcuberta's text is clearly referring to a social group or "algú," and therefore these subjects are not only "purified" by way of appropriation by a higher, educated cultural group but are reestablished as essential to the city's identity and as an authentic face of popular culture.

culture that would distinguish the *gauche divine,* in line with the blurring between low and high-brow culture that characterized the neo-avantgarde movements.

Unlike Cela and Colom, Colita was fully immersed in the *gauche divine*. Undoubtedly the most widely recognized female Catalan photographer of her time, Colita is a complex artist interested in representing not only Barcelona's downtrodden but also its cultural elite. Colita collaborated with numerous artists and writers, and eventually published a photobook with Maria Aurèlia Capmany titled *Antifémina* (1977), which will form the focus of the second half of this chapter. Before *Antfémina,* Colita, like Colom, worked on two books of the series Palabra e Imagen by the editorial Lumen; *Una tumba* (1971), in collaboration with Juan Benet, and *Luces y sombras del flamenco* (1975), with José María Caballero Bonald.[24] Her early professional experience with the generation of photographers Oriol Maspons and Xavier Miserachs (also collaborators with the Palabra e Imagen project) secured her a front row seat in documenting new cultural movements.[25] As Belen Ginart concisely puts it in an article for *El País,* "Las fiestas, los viajes, los lugares de reunión y las musas de la *gauche divine* tuvieron como testigos de excepción a tres fotógrafos: Colita, Xavier Miserachs y Oriol Maspons" (n.p.). Yet, unlike most of the artists and intellectuals that she often portrayed, Colita came from a working-class background and many of her photographs illustrate her interest in representing other working class or socially marginalized individuals.

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[24] From 1960 to 2000, editorial Lumen was run by Esther Tusquets who, besides Palabra e Imagen, also created a series called "Palabra en el tiempo" which published translated works by authors and intellectuals such as Virginia Woolf and Susan Sontag (never before published in Spain) as well as a collection entitled "Femenino Singular" for women writers (Geli n.p.)

[25] Interesting to note is that the *gauche divine* regained attention in the cultural eye as recently as 2000: "La fama del grupo – efímera, pues apenas cubrió la segunda mitad de los años 60 y primeros de los 70 – excedió sus límites geográficos originales en el año 2000, cuando el Ministerio de Educación y Cultura auspició en Madrid una exposición de los irónicos retratos de Colita, Xavier Miserachs y Oriol Maspons. De esta manera, la *gauche divine* saltaba de nuevo, 30 años después, a las páginas de los periódicos" (Villamandos 10).

Colita's early work for *Los tarantos* and Carmen Amaya had set the bases for a lifelong interest in representing women of different socio-economic backgrounds. This interest developed alongside a growing feminist movement in Barcelona which the *gauche divine* found especially appealing, since the group understood sexual liberation to be both a powerful tool in rebelling against traditional family values under the dictatorship (Villamandos 30) as well as a path to social liberation for women (Gimpera n.p.). Colita's passion for representing women found a fully-fledged expression in *Antifémina*, the photobook produced in collaboration with acclaimed Catalan feminist writer Maria Aurèlia Capmany. The photobook reflects the influence of feminist discussions and movements that during the 1970s animated the city of Barcelona as "a response to the confiscation of Catalan women's political, social, civil, and cultural rights" (Nash 280), and foregrounds questions of gender inequality, access to economic and political spheres, and limitations in the public and private spheres.

Both *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* and *Antifémina* focus on women in Barcelona at a time when patriarchal society, a pillar of the Francoist regime, was increasingly called into question. *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* zeros in exclusively on the sex workers of the Barri Xino, who were a well-known but little discussed sector of the population during the regime. Over a decade later, Colita uses these same photographic subjects but expands her sphere of representation to include women from a variety of other social sectors that she considers "anti-feminine" in the sense that they defy the idealized image of women at the time. In what follows, I show how Colom's and Cela's work challenges Francoist imagery before exploring how Colita's and Capmany's project seeks to develop a new idea of femininity in order to challenge not only the Francoist ideals but also new capitalist influences on the city. I will first show how *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* challenges previous images of the Barri Xino and how its representation of the sex workers

brings to light contradictions in the modernization of Barcelona during the 1960s. Although lacking the feminist approach displayed by *Antifémina*, I argue that Colom and Cela nonetheless challenge in innovative ways the hegemonic representations of women produced during the Francoist period. Still within the climate of cultural censorship that had long targeted Catalonia, I suggest reading Colita's and Capmany's photobook as a political and social manifesto that demystifies the Francoist construction of woman as "fémina" and problematizes the confluence between capitalism and the cultural *destape* that ushered in the Transition. In different capacities, I conclude, both photobooks utilize the images of "anti" feminine women in order to question inherent contradictions in the process of modernization of Barcelona.

The settings chosen for the two photobooks are symbolic spaces of Barcelona's historical and modern cultural identity. The female subjects are captured in the traditionally working-class neighborhood of the Barri Xino and the adjacent entertainment district of the Avinguda del Paral·lel. The Barri Xino had been central in developing the underworldly, exotic reputation that Barcelona enjoyed during the 1920s and 30s while the burlesque performances and the numerous theatres opened during this same period in the Paral·lel contributed to this reputation and to branding the area as an entertainment district and a site/sight for male pleasure. Until the 1980s, both neighborhoods were largely marginalized areas that in many ways embodied the contradictory modernity of which Castellanos spoke, not unlike the feminine subjects portrayed. While Colom captured a marginalized and symbolically invisible feminine side of Barcelona during the dictatorship, Colita's images from the Barri Xino and the Paral·lel constitute both a validation of women's bodies and sexuality and a harsh criticism of the objectification of women in the popular imagery of the time.

Izas, rabizas y colipoterras: The Barri Xino as Counterimage to Francoist Spain

Prior to his work for *El Correo Catalán* on the barraquistes of the Somorrostro, Colom had already shown interest in representing marginalized sectors of Barcelona's population. The residents and workers of the Barri Xino provided the subject matter of most of Colom's photography from the late 1950s to the early 60s, which was first shown in a 1961 exhibition at the Sala Aixelà entitled "El carrer." Colom's subjects range from small children to old couples to sex workers, most often belonging to the lower classes. His interest in the diversity of the Barri Xino is exemplified in that provocative exhibition but is somewhat more limited in his collaboration with Cela, who chose to focus exclusively on the sex workers. And while the subject matter is not new, the photobook historicizes the neighborhood and its sex workers, challenging the imagery of women disseminated by the regime and simultaneously taking aim at Spain's allegedly modernized society.

Izas, rabizas y colipoterras was part of the editorial Lumen's photobook series Palabra e Imagen, which was the outcome of collaborations between renowned Catalan and Spanish writers and photographers of the time. Held to be the most ambitious photobook project in Spanish history, over the course of fifteen years the series included nineteen books in total, with more projected that never came to fruition (Fernández 53). Cela had already written *Toreo de Salón* (1961) for the series, with photos by Julio Ubiña and Oriol Maspons. It was Maspons who convinced friend and colleague Colom to collaborate with Cela on another editorial project on the Barri Xino. The Palabra e Imagen series included works with a variety of narrative styles, and in this case Colom's documentary photography would serve as the starting point for Cela's fictional, rather than expository, narration. The book was designed by architects Cristian Cirici

and Óscar Tusquets who selected the sequence of the photos according to the graphic template of Palabra e Imagen (Fontcuberta 187).

The photobook opens with an anonymous *cancionero general* from 1555 that, in short, is a lamenting yet humorous account of a man who has slept with more prostitutes than he can count. The poem contains the three words for prostitute that form the title of the book and offers numerous other names for sex workers, several of which are also found in the *Carajicomedia*, one of the lewdest poems from the medieval period and a scathing critique of that society, as well as a satire of a well-known poem by Juan de la Mena. This *cancionero* itself is likely referencing the *Carajicomedia* and its content is similarly lewd and provocative (Ramón Palerm 189). Framing the rest of the photobook, this *cancionero* becomes not only a commentary on the timeless nature of prostitution and the deep-rooted association between women, sex, and deviation, but also an invitation to receive the work as an indirect satirical critique of Spanish society. By extension, the photobook would also invite reflection on previous representations of the Barri Xino that romanticized and exoticized sexuality. By immediately setting themselves apart from this literary tradition, Cela and Colom transform the *barri* into a space that challenges the 1960s dominant *desarrollista* narrative of a modernizing Spanish society.

After the *cancionero*, we find a provocative photo of a woman who smiles flirtatiously while peering out of an open door. Only her head is visible while the rest of her body and the unlit interior of the cafe are clouded behind the textured glass doors. The scene is suggestive, but it is Cela's words which quickly inflect it with the unseen political context. The woman ushers the reader into the book as would a ring master at a circus and announces the spectacle of female corporality and sexuality that lies ahead: "¡Pasen, señores, pasen y vayan pasando! ¡Aquí podrán ver la auténtica Venus Callipigia, con la vergüenza a punto, con una teta al aire y el culo fuera!

¡Entre usted, caballero, a gozar de los antiguos placeres del amor! ¡Espectáculo permitido por la policía!" (7). The biting irony of the text is evident from the very beginning: these women are engaged in an age-old practice and a show allegedly permitted by the police when, in fact, in 1956 prostitution had been declared "tráfico ilícito" and was punishable by law (Guereña 436). While legally and symbolically banned, sex work was simply carried out in less safe and secure conditions and continued to serve an important economic function within a Francoist society that, entrenched in long-standing patriarchal values, arguably sustained the very problem it wished to ignore.[26]

The irony displayed in the introduction continues with the following brief section titled "Lavajes Preventitivos: de los cueros, del aparato genital, del cerebro." In this new section men of mostly educated professions (the Philosopher, the Historian, the Grammarian, the Philologist, and the 'less prestigious' Vender of douches and Clown) define terms and practices surrounding prostitution and hygiene. Their dialogues are accompanied by several of Colom's photos of women standing in the street framed by signs for "clínicos," "gomas" and "lavajes." According to David William Foster, this blending of the "sacred" and the "profane" is essential to Cela's project of "both demystifying the taboo and propagating a socially responsible image of contemporary Spanish social life as seen from the perspective of the streets" (57). I would add that Cela's approach to the mixing of high and low culture often results in a social commentary that is also humorous and which, I argue, contributes to demystifying the taboo by demonstrating some of the illogical and superstitious discourses surrounding sexual health. The Historiador, for example, comments on the classes of women identified by the Kama Sutra and points to twelve

[26] In her 1992 article "What's Wrong with Prostitution? Evaluating Sex Work," Christine Overall identifies the role of patriarchal culture in sex work and underlines how prostitution is constructed by and epitomizes male supremacy (724).

that should not be trusted and with whom men should use preventative washes. Among them are "la que mira siempre de reojo," "la que es viuda de actor," and "la que huele mal" (13). Cela's typical humor then serves to make these seemingly historical observations appear comical. The juxtaposition of the text with the image additionally anchors these comments to the photographs' social and historic context in a gesture that seeks to reveal how the continued taboo of sex and prostitution propagates outdated, uninformed, and superstitious social discourses.

This ironic tone leads into the main section of the photobook, titled "Aquí empiezan los ejercicios espirituales llamados los cinco trancos," which, one-by-one, describe the types of prostitutes listed in the *canción general*, each of them illustrated with one or more photos and organized into various subcategories.[27] The spiritual exercises, or five "strides," continue to play with the juxtaposition of the sacred and the profane by equating these exercises with the walk of a prostitute. Introducing the entire section is Colom's photograph of the back of a man following a woman through an entryway, and this followed by a stanza from the well-known poem by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Hombres necios": "¿O cuál es más de culpar, aunque cualquiera mal haga: la que peca por la paga o el que paga por pecar?" The text inflects the surreptitious activity portrayed in the image with a moral and arguably social critique that shifts the blame from the woman (where blame traditionally falls) to the man who follows her. Thus, interjected into Cela's humorous attack of a moral and religious high ground, Sor Juana's poem once again reminds readers of the timelessness of patriarchal society and, specifically in the context of the photobook, of the hypocritical moralism of Francoist society. As a frame within a frame, the poem inflects the entire main section, whose categories of sex workers are organized in

[27] This organization is likely a reference to the "Ejercicios espirituales" written in 1548 by San Ignacio de Loyola, which were divided into various stages and intended to help those engaging in the exercises to discern the will of God in their lives.

increasing order of age and decreasing order of aesthetic and sexual desirability: beginning with the "izas" who are the youngest and "todavía de buen ver" (28), Cela then moves from "Tranco de las rabizas" to "Tranco de las colipoterras" and "Tranco de las hurgamanderas, where Cela comments that "sigamos cayendo" (64), until the final "Tranco de las putarazanas," which Cela describes as "el principio del fin" (74). The book ends with the admonition to the (male) readers that "no culpemos a nadie, que el pecado es de todos… el que esté limpio de pecado que tire la primera piedra sobre la mujer" (86), a biblical reference which, together with the opening poem by Sor Juana, frames the cinco trancos by reminding men that women sex workers are not to be blamed more than the men (and the patriarchal society) who use their services. Cela's use of the words of Sor Juana and Christ further works to criticize the moral and religious high-ground of the regime and unveils for the reader the deep-rooted hypocrisy of a modernizing country.

The photos that Cela's text is allegedly illustrating arguably provide their own social critique that the text, with the addition of fictional detail, then works to elaborate. Colom's photos accompanying Cela's "trancos" begin with images of relatively slender, attractive, younger women and then portray increasingly older women whose bodies no longer conform to the same social expectations for their profession, as Cela is quick to point out. Colom's images, taken at hip-height and sometimes from the back, accentuate the bodies more than the faces of the women and, paired with Cela's text, illustrate the toughness of these bodies that is paired with a sense of fatigue, weariness, or even tediousness from the demands of the profession and the oftentimes harsh conditions of the street. Catalan photography during the 1950s and 60s was occupied with portraying harsh social realities in the emergent capitalist environment of *desarollismo.* Fontcuberta identifies in particular the tendency of Catalan photographers of the time to "utilitzar la càmara com un estilet visual que havia de permetre denunciar els aspectos

foscos de la vida" with a gaze that, more critical than their Castillian counterparts, "perfilava els dominis d'un realisme critic" (183). Colom's clandestine gaze was certainly attracted to those darker or less glamourous aspects of Barcelona society and his photos of the Barri Xino. So too does his work on the Somorrostro show a clear intent to problematize the pervasive rhetoric surrounding these subjects and places.

This focus on less glamourous aspects of the sex workers' profession paired with Colom's unique documentary style, with his intent focus on 'life caught unaware,' makes him a sort of "notary of an age" committed to producing a realist aesthetic. Colom's photos of the Xino share more aesthetic ground with street photography than social photography because Colom represents the sex workers in clandestine fashion, shooting from the hip without looking through the viewfinder. Additionally, he was able to frequent the area virtually unnoticed and thus could more easily photograph the subjects without their knowledge. Solomon-Godeau affirms the realist aspect of street photography when she explains how even in its earliest forms, capturing subjects without their knowledge served two interconnected purposes: to augment the impression of 'life caught unaware,' so that these social actors "could serve unwittingly as representative of the photographer's 'vision' of urban life," and to allow the photographer to hold a privileged and separate position from the subjects being photographed, a position "analogous to that of the omniscient narrator common in fiction" (*Photography After Photography* 86). This omniscient narrator of realist literature would resurface in postwar literature to reflect on the difficult realities of the lower and middle classes, as seen in Cela's own novels.

It is the juxtaposition of Colom's documentary photography, imbued with this characteristically Catalan "critical realism," with Cela's own (fictional) realist text that gives the photobook a truly critical gaze. Cela invents names and life stories for the women captured in

these images, with great attention to details of everyday aspects of the women's lives which would otherwise remain unknown to us only looking at the photograph. Cela's fictional narrative strikes a startling contrast with the almost journalistic nature of the photos but, at the same time, contextualizes the images and further explores the specificities of their political and social reality. The photobook is thus able to play within the rules of fiction while relying on the documentary quality and critical realism of the images to ground the book in the reality of the Spain of those years, thereby finding an effective style to critique the moral rigidity and hypocrisy of the regime. *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras,* with this realist critique or tension, also denounces the political failure of neorealism whose aesthetic had been effectively coopted by the regime to spread its own political propaganda (Rodríguez Granell and Piñol Lloret 598). Jo Labanyi also points out how the "greater latitude given to the press after Fraga's appointment to the Ministry of Information and Tourism in 1962 made it increasingly pointless for fiction to simulate reportage" (296), and arguably Colom and Cela's project veered away from this journalistic aesthetic while still relying on Colom's documentary photos to provide the basis for a new, more critical realism. If in blending reality and fiction *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* critiques a dominant realism, it also anticipates in a way the more experimental literature of the 1970s. Postmodern international literature would provide Spanish writers with new spaces and forms of resistance since its range of narrative voices and more fragmented nature was seen as more democratically pluralist (Puértolas 268).

The genre of the photobook, and its coupling of text and image, was particularly suitable for the kind of realist critique made in *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras,* as well as for reaching a wider popular audience than with a novel or a photo exhibition alone. As Manuel Borja-Villel and Rosario Perió have pointed out in relation to Lumen's series Palabra e Imagen, "Cabe insistir

en el fotolibro como formato híbrido que permitió a los fotógrafos el acceso al público" (14). Colom certainly gained recognition thanks to the book (not all of which was in his favor). [28] More importantly, the enormous popularity of the Palabra e Imagen series signaled how the genre of the photobook had succeeded in becoming a rigorous form of high art in Spain but was also a format appreciable by the masses, who, thanks to their frequent exposure to film and television media, were more readily attracted to the visual element of the composition (Fernández 54).

The photographic subjects of *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* responded also to an emerging interest in low and popular culture. Colom's photos of the sex workers of the Barri Xino are iconic images of this working-class neighborhood during the years of the dictatorship. Returning to Fontcuberta's argument, this "marginalitat *canalla*" becomes in the photobook "una marginalitat castissa" that displays an authentic connection to the city's essence and identity. This new iconic version of the Barri Xino promoted by a liberal sector often attached to the *gauche divine* would mark a shift away from a romantic and exotic representation of the neighborhood (largely portrayed from an outsider's viewpoint) towards a reappropriation of these marginalized sectors from within by using them as a counter discourse to Francoist ideology.

Focusing on the sex workers of the Xino provided both artists the opportunity to veer slightly away from expected norms under Francoism, specifically those surrounding women and prostitution. The 1951 film *Surcos* provides a useful insight into the regime's representation of

[28] Famously, the woman whose image appears in the book under the "Tranco de las izas" attempted to sue the two artists for representing her in an unfavorable and untruthful manner and for ruining her reputation, since Cela's text alongside Colom's photos implied that she was a sex worker when she was not. Although the lawsuit was eventually dropped, Colom was apparently so deeply affected by the whole event that he stopped taking photographs altogether until the 1990s (Balsells and Ribalta 31).

sexual deviation and the ideological coopting of realism by the right. Corrupted by urban life, the daughter of the migrant family portrayed in the film becomes the mistress of her brother's employer. The original ending that showed her choosing to stay in Madrid was censored to stress a moral viewpoint and ultimately showed her returning dutifully and shamefully back to the countryside. True to a Falangist ideological thesis (Kinder 49), *Surcos* shows urban life as almost inherently immoral and destructive to the regime's values of decency and honest labor. As Helen Graham points out, the regime was careful to promote the ideal versions of womanhood and reproduction, alongside manhood and the patriarchal family, as keys to social, economic and political stability (182-84). The figure of the prostitute was morally damaging both to the family and to Christian values under the dictatorship (Guereña 436). She was made to fit back within the frame of morally upstanding society and to comply with the ideal model of the housewife poignantly captured in Carmen Martín Gaite's seminal novel *El cuarto de atras* (1978): "la sonrisa estereotipada del ama de casa, elaborada con esfuerzo y pericia sobre modelos televisivos, esa mujer a quien la propaganda obliga a hacer una meta y un triunfo del mero 'organizarse bien'" (70).

Colom's and Cela's representations of the sex workers in the Barri Xino disrupt both the regime's representation of the ideal Spanish woman as well as the ideas circulated around prostitution or sexual deviation by way of their unapologetic presentation of their subjects. By capturing the sex workers in unexpectant expressions of boredom or unhappiness, or while occupied with trivial tasks such as readjusting their underwear or spitting out the shells of sunflower seeds, *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* provides a counter image to the Francoist "woman," namely the loyal, dedicated, and *happy* housewife and mother (Gil 860). If Colom's clandestine shots could be critiqued, as Balselles and Ribalta argue, for not centering the disadvantaged

social actors they pretend to faithfully portray, they were also a reaction against these more picture-perfect feminine ideals of the time.[29] Colom's photographic subjects did not work at home but rather in the street, and were not always smiling but flirting, frowning, arguing, and negotiating with men. Additionally, the photobook's range of subjects (Izas, Rabizas, etc.) is in itself a gesture that challenges the homogeneity of the hegemonic discourse around women and prostitutes. Furthermore, Cela's language when referring to the various categories and practices of sex workers is hardly tiptoeing around objectionable vocabulary, as, for instance, with his definition of *ramera* as a "mujer que fornica por interés" (15). Jacqueline Phaeton points out how the word "fornicar" evokes the Catholic association of sex with sin (174), and I would add that "por interés" blatantly disrupts the motherly, nearly asexual and non-desiring condition assigned to women in the regime by suggesting that women have sex (or as the Church and Francoist society would claim, sin) for economic or personal interest or benefit.

The approach of Colom and Cela to the topic of prostitution must also be viewed in relation to the then current policies regarding sex work in Barcelona in order to understand their critical stance. As Balsell and Ribalta point out, "La representació de la prostitució al carrer al final dels anys 1950 [when Colom started photographing the Barri Xino] s'ha de vincular amb la promulgació, per part del règim de Franco, del decret abolicionista l'any 1956, que va comportar el final dels bordells i l'aparició dels *meublés* o els bars de cambreres, i un increment de la prostitució al carrer" (35). If the extreme poverty of the postwar period had pushed more women

[29] Balselles and Ribalta argue that "l'interès de Colom per l'entorn de la prostitució respondria així tant a la intuïció d'una veritat profunda sobre la condició humana que solament és accessible en aquest entorn, com a la comprensió dels imperatius culturals del gènere documental, indissociable històricament de la representació dels desfavorits" (33). Nevertheless, they point out how this project and the photographer's supposed connection and concern for representing this population is clearly in contradiction with his clandestine method since, "en l'àmbit del Barri Xino, Colom no deixa de ser un observador i que la seva observació no és aliena als valors de gènere i de classe dominants a la dictadura" (33).

into this line of work, particularly in the Barri Xino (Villar 224), the closing of brothels also meant that sex workers were displaced from semi-protected spaces to the more exposed and riskier space of the streets. It is in this context that Colom's and Cela's choice of topic constitutes a more radical gesture than it may have previously been since the status and perception of sex work at the time was wrapped up in Spain's economic development. Spain's *desarrollismo*, as Jean-Louis Guereña points out, promoted a generalized tolerance toward sex workers: "El tan celebrado 'desarrollo' económico a partir de los años sesenta, la cada vez más masiva oleada turística extranjera y desde luego una mayor tolerancia moral, contribuyeron posteriormente, y ya antes del famoso y generalizado *destape* del final del franquismo, a la evolución de las autoridades hacia una tolerancia generalizada de hecho de la prostitución" (443). The double standard created by the closing of the brothels, to keep with the dictatorship's ideals of morality, while promoting a greater tolerance toward prostitution based on profit and the marketability of Spain abroad was perhaps a cornerstone for the singular scandal and yet enormous popularity of *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras*. And while the Francoist morality condemned these women and effectively ignored them as citizens, the photobook acknowledges their status as *workers* even through Cela's painful references, for example, to the family selling out their daughter to make some money, and Colom's photos of sex workers framed by the store fronts selling "gomas," "lavajes preventativos" and "habitaciones" from which the city likely profited.

The now long-held reputation of the Xino as the space that resisted rationalist, hygienist visions for the city emerges from the pages of *Izas, rabizas y colipoterrs* to challenge not only ideals of women, but also the popular imagery that marketed the county abroad. According to Foster, this Lumen volume "presented exemplary work by early demythifiers of the Francoist cultural image of Spain, accompanied by strategically eloquent black-and-white photographs that

are the negatives, so to speak, of the glossy, colorful tourist propaganda that sought to sell the 'new' Spain abroad" (56). This "new Spain" is the one that became the subject of the highly successful tourist campaign "Spain is Different," with women dressed in traditional regional costumes, picturesque rural Spanish villages, and romanticized flamenco culture. As I explained in Chapter One, Annabel Martín affirms how this "strategy of putting Spain up for sale through a folkloric depiction of authenticity for foreign visitors to consume on its beaches and newly built tourist resorts was a clever political and economic ploy abroad" (219). But this strategy also served at home as a "code for what was really missing in the Spain of the 1960s (its difference)" since the romanticized and homogenized representations were hardly reflecting the reality of much of Spain's population (220). It is this new, "different" Spain that *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* critiques with its images of poor, scowling sex workers in a rundown and neglected urban neighborhood. Ultimately, the photobook brought the Barri Xino's sex workers, *symbolically* erased during the regime, into the public eye, and located the Xino once again as a contradictory site of modernity that, marginalized and resistant to certain modernization efforts, also offered the possibility of a revindication of popular culture and a deterrent to the tourism propaganda imbedded in the regime's feminine ideals.

The Barcelona of Colita and Capmany: *Antifémina* as a New Notion of Femininity

The Barcelona of the 1960s portrayed in *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* was a site for crucial urban and cultural transformations that would set the stage for the transition to a democratic nation after the death of Franco in 1975. On the one hand, Barcelona became the model for the modern city envisioned by the architects of the *gauche divine*, who embraced the Catalan capital as the counter image of a centralized and not yet modernized Madrid (Villamandos 11). Against

the destruction of the urban fabric promoted by Porcioles's policies, *gauche divinista* architects looked in particular to restore historic buildings and develop a community-centered architecture that would contrast sharply with the unimaginative and isolating "bloques de viviendas" built to relieve the housing crisis under *porciolismo*. In particular, architect Oriol Bohigas would rise to notable fame during the 1970s, and in 1980 became head of urbanism for the Ajuntament, a position he would hold during the monumental 1992 Olympic Games. The involvement of Bohigas in the *gauche divine* and the group's focus on Barcelona as an attractive, cosmopolitan, *modern* city undoubtedly laid the bases for subsequent highly acclaimed (and highly contested) urban projects that helped propel the city onto an international stage.[30] While some of these transformations were viewed positively by residents and took their concerns into account, the 1970s marked the increasing role of neoliberalism in the shaping of the city.

At the same time, Barcelona would become the co-constitutive setting for emancipatory movements and the occupation of public spaces that called for political change and a revindication of social rights. Already a historical stage for cultural resistance, Barcelona became the earliest and strongest base for a growing feminist movement in the late years of the dictatorship. After several decades of Francoism that would limit the woman's role to that of wife and mother, and her spatial and social sphere to the home, the influence of an international feminism would bring about significant social change to the city. Anny Brooksbank Jones cites 1975 as the first major milestone for contemporary feminism, with the International Women's Year acting as the impetus for the Primeras Jornadas Nacionales por la Liberación de la Mujer

[30] Designs such as Bohigas' *plaçes dures*, which monumentalized public spaces at the cost of greenery, have since received both acclaim and also considerable criticism especially from urban sociologists such as Manuel Delgado who holds that the newly created spaces are effectively sterilized and are simply a continuation of earlier hygienist efforts ("Limpiar la calle" n.p.)

(7). According to Mary Nash, the historical landmark for the emergence of this second wave feminism in Barcelona would come a year later in 1976, with the Jornades Catalanes de la Dona (281). But women's activism in Spain and especially in Barcelona was already present across various groups and social classes even before this date. Alongside *gauche divine* feminists, who were largely from educated and higher-classes, working-class women also increasingly took on an active role in feminist-oriented protests of neighborhood associations, and "occupied the streets and marched to demand basic public services such as schools, markets, health services, paved streets, street and traffic lights, adequate sewage systems, and appropriate housing conditions" (Nash 284).[31] Barcelona's streets thus became the stage for the new demands of women as citizens in a modernizing city, and especially for working-class women.

This concern for women and their struggle for a new idea of femininity, oftentimes in relation to the surrounding urban space, is the central theme of Colita's and Capmany's project *Antifémina*. Born in 1918 in Barcelona, Maria Aurélia Capmany had received a progressive education that would become impossible after the Civil War since "el franquisme tornà a situar les dones en un paper de submissió davant l'home a partir de la reinstauració del Codi Civil de 1889, que establia que 'el primer deber de la mujer casada es el de la obediencia al marido'" (Segura Soriano 51-52). Along with such figures such as Carmen Alcalde, Mireia Bofill, Charo Ema, Lidia Falcón, Lola Ferreira, Eva Forest, Elisa Lamas, Julia León, Carmen Rodríguez, and Natacha Seseña, Capmany was one of the most prominent feminist figures in Catalonia and had a significant influence on the generation of the 1970s. Prior to *Antifémina*, she had already published a long line of literary work centered on the condition of Catalan women during a time

[31] Teresa Gimpera, one of the icons of the group, affirms that, "d'aquella època, si puc dir alguna cosa més positiva, va ser per a les dones…perquè les dones vam aprendre a ser lliures de sobte" (Gimpera n.p.).

when abortion, divorce and adultery were punishable, and when women, lacking political subjectivity, were not even allowed to testify in court.[32]

Colita's interest in representing Barcelona's women evolved instead from her contact with the *gauche divine*, whose spaces and people (oftentimes friends) she would photograph as an example of cultural resistance to the dictatorship. Models and actresses such as Elsa Peretti and Teresa Gimpera, who frequently posed for her, were highly influential in producing a new cultural scene in Barcelona that embraced women's contributions.[33] Unlike many of her *gauche divine* peers (with the exception of Maruja Torres), however, Colita came from a humbler, working-class background and was a self-taught artist. And while she often photographed actors, artists, writers and intellectuals with connections to the *gauche divine*, her work often extended to capture those residents of Barcelona that were less famous and less photographed, as when she documented the making of *Los tarantos*. Her photographs from the 1970s in particular show an interest in documenting new social movements and social justice issues, including protests against the punishment of women for adultery, gay rights and gay pride parades, and the conditions of prisoners in the Modelo, the prison that had become a symbol of Francoist repression in Catalonia.[34]

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[32] *La dona a Catalunya* (1966) marked the beginning of her revindications for women's rights, at a time when abortion, divorce and adultery were punishable and women, lacking political subjectivity, were not even allowed to testify in court. This first book was followed by *La dona catalana* (1968), *El feminismo ibérico* (1970), *De profesión mujer* (1971), *El feminisme a Catalunya* (1973), *Carta abierta al macho ibérico* (1973), *La dona* (1976), *La dona i la Segona República* (1977), and finally *Antifémina* with Colita (1978). In 1979 she collaborated with another artist, Avel-lí Artís-Gener, to write a comic titled *Dona, doneta, donota.*

[33] In Ventura Pons's recent documentary *Cola, Colita, Colassa* (2015), many of Colita's colleagues belonging to the *gauche divine*, all of them women, discuss the interrelatedness of their social, professional, and artistic projects toward the end of the dictatorship. Among them are actress Teresa Gimpera, editor Beatriz de Moura, and writer Rosa Regàs and journalist Maruja Torres, who was raised in the Barri Xino and with whom Colita would often meet in that neighborhood along with other members of the *gauche divine*.

[34] The Modelo, opened in 1904 and closed recently in 2017, was meant to serve as a model for the new penitentiary reform. It held many political dissidents during the dictatorships of Primo de Rivera and Franco, and also was an internment center for homosexuals under Franco. It hence became a symbol of francoist repression in Catalunya and

Antifémina (1977) has not received the critical attention it deserves and remains a little-known work even today. Its life on the press was cut short when the conservative Editora Nacional realized the real nature of the project and halted publication. At a time when, as Capmany and Maria Campo Alange pointed out, feminist writing had to be more apologetic and timid (Threlfall 17), *Antifémina* was a full-blown political manifesto, engaging directly with the immediate sociopolitical reality by questioning dominant representations of women. As Colita and Capmany attested in a 1978 interview, "Nuestra tesis para hacer el libro fue que el noventa por ciento de las mujeres ni tienen veintiún años, ni miden metro sesenta y cinco, ni son casaderas. Es decir, que no responden al estereotipo femenino que ha prefabricado el macho en el último tercio del siglo XX. Abominamos de la palabra *feminidad.* Es un rasgo accidental" ("La Nova Cançó" n.p.). Thus, their use of "antifémina" signifies but also celebrates all those women whose appearance and behavior reveal the seams of an ideological construction of femininity, one that continued to hold its footing in Spanish society even during the Transition.

According to María Rosón Villena, this moment in Spain's and Catalonia's history was especially ripe for a serious discussion of women's role in society. As she puts it, "esa pregunta que resonaba en *Antifémina* sobre quién es el sujeto tanto del patriarcado como del feminismo y cuáles son las normas que aparecen como invisibles pero que son esenciales en la constitución del régimen heteropatriarcal se tornaba en 1977 de rabiosa actualidad y venía a discutir un tema central y que tuvo enorme repercusión en las décadas posteriores" (64). The book thematized the unbridgeable gap between the expectations imposed on women by patriarchy and capitalism on the one hand, and biological and social reality on the other. Patriarchy and dictatorship are

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Colita's photos capturing the self-inflicted injuries of the prisoners there, like many of her other photos, form a critique of Francoist society.

shown to be inseparable, which presents the newly developing democratic Spain with the challenge of reconsidering the role of women as political subjects.

The introductory section of *Antifémina*, titled "Unas cuantas palabras, unas cuantas imágenes," declares the documentary intention of the photobook and projects a vision of women as a modern social category, thus setting the stage for the rest of the photobook. As Capmany explains, "Hemos pensado que valía la pena pensar en el reverso de la imagen de la Fémina al uso. Lo más opuesto de la muchacha-bonita-de-un-metro-sesenta-y-cinco-que-nos-adora, como diría el varón semiculto. Las mujeres que se mueven, gesticulan, viven a través de estas imágenes 'tan veraces como la vida misma' son mujeres, pero no son en absoluto femeninas" (10). The photobook mirrors the intent of the black and white photos of *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* to the extent that, as Foster argues, these were "the negatives" for Spain's tourist propaganda, the other side of reality. *Antifémina*, however, stresses from the start the irrational nature of the Francoist gender politics since, it turns out, "la mujer es un ser marginado tanto si se hace monja como si se hace prostituta" (13).

The physical, biological body as represented in the photobook foregrounds the ideological limits of the dominant idea of "feminidad" that, as Capmany points out, is largely constructed by men. Capmany contends that, "Las mujeres que circulan por las páginas de nuestro libro son biológica y culturalmente mujeres. ¿En dónde las dejó pues la historia de la feminidad? Cuando se acuñó este específico concepto de Feminidad, ¿alguien se acordó de ellas?" (11). Both text and images present the body as a site of resistance to social constructions and constraints such as "la muchacha-bonita-de-un-metro-sesenta-y-cinco-que-nos-adora." The argument echoes with emerging theories proposed, for example, by Gayle Rubin in 1975 that distinguished between gender and sex, and identified gender (and "feminindad" as understood in

this photobook) as a social construct (Rosón Villena 63). Third wave feminist theorists, most notably Judith Butler, have since questioned this distinction arguing that sex is *also* a construct, but during the mid 1970s, this differentiation allowed Capmany and Colita to begin identifying and articulating a critique of women's roles in Spanish society and the marginalization that women faced both within and outside of particular designations of femininity.

While the book's focus is on anti-feminine women, the role of the city and the space of the street becomes vital in challenging the deeply-rooted patriarchal system and in unveiling women outside of the culturally constructed and socially accepted categories. In particular, the significance of the space of the street as the setting in which the photographer can find and unveil "the real" in modern life is thematized at the very beginning of the photobook:

> Las imágenes que vamos a ofrecer son, ni más ni menos, que el reflejo en el ojo de la cámara, de lo que está allí. El reflejo en el ojo de la cámara, he dicho, y pongo el acento en este hecho concreto, porque no se trata de una realidad previamente ordenada, pero tampoco de lo que suelen ver los ojos distraídos del viandante. Los ojos de la cámara existen en función de los ojos del fotógrafo qué duda cabe, pero yo me atrevería a decir que el fotógrafo adivina y la cámara desvela. La realidad está allí, con pocas modificaciones. ¿Qué es pues lo que el fotógrafo, ese ser poderoso, se lleva de calle? Pues precisamente esto que se halle en el sustrato de la realidad, lo que se nos ofrece para que veamos y no vemos, porque estamos distraídos con el movimiento, el nuestro y el de las cosas, con las urgencias, con la decisión de ver lo que no está ahí y hemos decidido que estuviera. (7)

The city has held central stage in the visual arts when trying to capture the essence of modern life. Like Colom and other street photographers before, Colita finds in these urban spaces those glimpses of the "real" of modern life; however, Capmany's text is quick to point out how this reality is not easily seen by all. The "movimiento" that distracts the viewer is not just that of people and things, but refers also to the circulation of capital in a society that in the 1970s is fully immersing itself in a late capitalist economy. The photographs, then, bring the viewer out of this

otherwise distracted state and allow them to see what they otherwise do not: namely, a new conception of femininity in Spain's emerging democratic society.

The ten sections which follow this first introduction may remind the reader of the divisions that Cela makes of the *izas*, *rabizas*, and *colipoterras* but in Campany's and Colita's work women are far more diverse and divided into broader social categories that are either socially unacceptable but necessary within the patriarchal order, or socially acceptable but still oppressed and controlled. Related to the second classification are two sections that focus on common roles of women that, during the dictatorship, granted some form of social security: "Carrera femenina con seguro de vejez" presents married women (specifically young brides) who are promised happiness and lifelong security through their attachment to men, while "La religión como refugio" introduces nuns who, similarly to young brides, take an oath as a means to security and for lack of better options. Both of these categories are presented through an ironic lens that harshly criticizes the societal limitations that would lead women to marry or enter the church, and the false or fleeting promises of freedom in a life otherwise in the shadows. Illustrating the unpaid "carrera" of married women, Colita's photos of joyful brides on their wedding day are framed by Capmany's dark humor regarding the singularity of the event and the short-lived attention paid to the bride. The spaces Colita connects to religious and married women are primarily the church and the street, spaces that often serve to legitimize the patriarchy and therefore the status quo; the street and public space at large were essentially men's domain while women were more often relegated to private spaces, and the Church has historically reinforced male dominance or superiority over women.

Several sections of the photobook focus on generally "acceptable" female types while criticizing the explicit objectification of women in these roles. "Descuartizar un cuerpo" is a

chapter on pinups, posters and mannequins that portrays either nearly naked women or distinct feminine body parts as a form of advertisement in the streets of the city; "El arte de llegar a ser cosa" is a section dedicated to modeling and the pressures on women to become, essentially, things or commodities; "El disfraz" shows the "majorettes" who parade in the street dressed as soldiers and displaying their long legs for the primarily male audience; and, finally, "El piropo" shows a short sequence of a single woman being catcalled by several men while she sits at a café. In nearly all of these sections, women are seen as objects and their body is conceptualized only in terms of male desire. Here, the street and public space reappear as reinforcements of male dominance and authoritarianism. Hence the majorettes parade down the street surrounded by almost exclusively male gazes; the larger-than-life posters of sexualized female figures are highly visible on the sides of buildings; the woman sitting alone at an outdoor table is suddenly surrounded by whistling and winking and is left without the possibility of any real response since "la mujer capaz de piropear al hombre queda calificada por la sociedad como una mujer no decente" (188). This final section on catcalling reaffirms the street as a space primarily for men: "El hombre es el único protagonista de la calle. Sabe bien que la mujer no va a protestar. ¿Por qué va a protestar? En todo caso debe sonreir humildemente y esperar que se aleje el piropeador" (188). The street and public space are here powerful reinforcements of a patriarchal society that constantly reaffirm the subjugated role of women.

The remaining sections of the book are focused on unacceptable, or inconvenient, categories of women: "Historia de una soledad" focuses on older women who appear purposeless and out of place in an evolving society; "Trabajo o faena" portrays working women both in the fields and in the factories; "Una profesión arriesgada" addresses sex workers in the Barri Xino; finally, "La mujer marginada en la sociedad" focuses on Barcelona's Gitanas, from young girls

to older women. In these chapters, the street is still presented as a reinforcement of male dominance, but also in fact as a space where these women challenge this male dominance. As I will show in the following section, the chapter on sex workers in particular frames the day-to-day objectification experienced by these women but centers them in the urban space while capturing them in moments of resistance to the male gazes surrounding them.

Colita's photographs of the Barri Xino and Paral·lel, which I analyze in the following section, add another layer to the discussion by inviting reflection on the contradictory relation that exists between gender and certain marginalized urban spaces. On the one hand, these photos suggest that neighborhoods such as the Xino and Paral·lel have the potential to resist the kind of rationalist ideals that had marked prior urban renovations and that were reinvigorated during this period; on the other, Colita's images show how these spaces are slowly invaded by new forms of oppression created under late capitalism which continue to objectify and marginalize women. The photobook, and Colita's photos in general, thus present Barcelona's modernization and recent democratization through a critical lens that questions the socially outdated or, conversely, economically-driven models for women as hindering their incorporation into a new and modern Spanish society. The Barri Xino and Paral·lel return as key spaces where Colita foregrounds the ambivalent nature of the street in order to make legible both the patriarchal construction of the visual field and the potential for its subversion.

Looking At, Looking With: Sex Workers of the Barri Xino and Pin-ups and Posterboards in Paral·lel

As neighboring marginalized areas within the city center, the Barri Xino and Paral·lel also showed signs of the influence of new forms of a modernization closely linked to capitalism**.** Two sections of *Antifémina* in particular, "Una profesión arriesgada" and **"**Descuartizar un

cuerpo**,"** invite reflection on how these neighborhoods both permit a certain liberation and yet still constrain the feminine figures that Colita represents through the influence of patriarchal society as well as an increasingly capitalist and consumer-driven culture. In "Una profesión arriesgada" text and images work together to represent the women of the Barri Xino in a way that resists their objectification and the neighborhood as a space that, although still dominated by patriarchal order, presented a potential for resistance to "fémina" norms. Colita's use of framing in this section is reminiscent of her photos of the Gitanos in *Los Tarantos*, and I would argue that, similarly to those photos, her images of the Xino too achieve the objective of challenging thus far dominant representations of these marginalized individuals. Colita's photos of sex workers in the Xino, by the nature of their execution, appear carefully framed and timed. The women do not look at the camera, but Colita is often in close proximity to her photographic subjects who, at times, appear as though they were posing for the photographer. Similarly to many of Colom's photographs of the Xino, several of Colita's images capture the sex workers from the back and include in the frame male figures intent on observing the sex workers. Unlike Colom, however, Colita often centers the women within the photos and captures them from a close distance. As a result, the men that appear in Colita's images are more often peripheral figures within the frame. The women appear centered not only within the frame of Colita's photographs but within the space of the street, and confidently occupy this public space, thereby challenging any assumption that their activity should be hidden or surreptitious. Additionally, Colita more often aligns her camera to share a similar point of view with the sex workers rather than with the onlooking men, who might otherwise work as substitutes within the photo for the spectator's own gaze. Colita's gaze is not clandestine but forthright and her angles are not

skewed but instead direct. Consequently, rather than transmitting a sense of fascination, the images project a sense of solidarity with the women represented.

In Colita's most famous photo of the sex workers, the viewer is positioned at eye-level and directly behind four women with linked arms walking down the middle of a street in the Xino. In aligning the spectator with the sex workers, Colita's framing does not easily reflect the gaze of the pictured male spectators. Instead of leering at them from the sidewalk, we gaze at the backs of the sex workers, as if we were walking down the street behind them. It is not a stealthy or voyeuristic gaze because Colita's camera is positioned at eye level and in relatively close proximity to the women, who are fully centered in the frame. Additionally, Colita chooses to capture a moment in which the sex workers do not return the men's gaze, but confidently look straight ahead. The women's gaze resists their position as simply objects of desire. I would argue that this resistance is not only created through a web of gazes, but also through their position in the frame. The space that they occupy are the same streets that, during the late 1960s and the 1970s, feminism transformed into a stage for women's demand for emancipation. It is this complex web of visual and socio-historical relations that the women of the Xino of *Antifémina* make visible for the reader.

The text by Capmany following the photograph functions as a caption that signals the reader to interpret this image as a moment of subversion of the dynamics of power:

> La calle es suya. Llenan la calle. Unas calles concretas en un gheto establecido con precisión. Las callejeras tienen poco prestigio, pero son la perfección del género. La prostitución tiene que ser callejera, porque es el antihogar. Sólo por error sus componentes se encierran en la norma conventural. El hombre la sigue, la aborda en la calle y ella establece el precio. O es ella quien aborda al hombre, quien le empuja, quien decide. ¿Cómo puede llamarse a esto mujer? (105)

The "callejeras" are here presented as the antithesis to the "fémina" celebrated by the regime. They are the ones in charge, not of just any streets, but of those in the "gheto" of the

Barri Xino. Capmany hints here at another modern contradiction; while feminism during this time is concerned with the objectification of women, more attention was being placed on women as sexual, desiring beings (with sexual bodies), which Colita, in her own words, would engage with to the shock of her audience. Citing an interview with Colita, María Rosón Villena explains how "su manera de concebir el erotismo provocaba mucho…pues desafiaba una idea que era esencial en la manera de concebirlo en la época: 'el hombre piensa que la mujer se desnuda para él, pero la mujer se desnuda para mirarse ella misma en un espejo'" (69). Colita's photo and Capmany's text work to present female sexuality and the female body as existing independently of male desire, even when the livelihood of the sex workers depends on that very desire. Hence in framing the four women actively ignoring the leering gaze of the men on the sidewalk, Colita captures Capmany's conviction that women can be in control of sexual pursuits (in pursuit of money). Capmany further challenges the idea of the "fémina" when she asks how we could possibly call this behavior of pursuing, pushing and negotiating with men that of a woman, when "fémina" women were seen as passive. A woman actively desiring or actively negotiating and controlling a sexual relationship could not possibly fit within the strict bounds of this concept of femininity. Colita's following photo of a woman actively negotiating and gesturing towards one of the men in the group surrounding her illustrates Capmany's ironic comment. While composition of this particular photo is not in fact dissimilar to that of many of Colom's, the text of Capmany intervenes here to guide the interpretation of this behavior to go beyond its capacity to challenge Francoist conceptions of women and to signify, at a more fundamental level, a feminist subversion of the very figure of sex workers.

And while Capmany affirms the women's self-confidence, she does not miss the opportunity to point out the ultimate marginalization, as well as the dangers, of working the

street: “La calle, con los adoquines en la calzada, con las aceras hostiles, en su mundo, porque su mundo es la intemperie. La intemperie moral además de física. ¿No se han situado al margen de la ley para hacer posible la vigencia de la ley? La calle no es solo la incomodidad, la humedad, la lluvia, es además el riesgo” (105). For the sex workers, the space of the street is their world, the “outside” – the moral, physical, and legal marginalization from society. The only way for the law to exist, as Capmany points out, is to place these women at its very margins. Civil, and “civilized” society (as Cela joked) cannot accept this behavior from women, and laws governing this society must relegate them (symbolically and physically) to the margins of society and of the city, and this in spite of their desirable or even necessary roles in the patriarchal order. By this time, the “Ley de peligrosidad y rehabilitación social,” established in 1970 and not abolished fully until 1995, contemplated fines and jail time for sex workers and other sectors of the populations that were identified as a disturbance to the social order, while critics acknowledged that sex work was still largely tolerated since it was economically profitable (Guereña 440).

Numerous photos within the section “Una profesión arriesgada” further remind the viewers/readers of the more invisible dangers of the work, and the relationship between the city and these women. Signs reading “Consultas, Gomas, Lavajes, Curas preventitivas,” and “Cruz de Malta” clinics providing “análisis medico,” “analisis fimosis,” and cures for “enfermedades genito-urinarias y de la sangre” proliferate in Colita’s images. The Cruz de Malta indicates a certain religious institutional presence in the Barri Xino that represents a somewhat twisted idea of charity, since it condemns the sex workers at the same time that it fulfills a moral obligation to give to those in need. Colom’s photos of the Barri Xino had captured the very same signs while Cela’s criticism of societal hypocrisy continued to echo nearly a decade later as Capmany points out with irony how, at night, “el barrio reluce el cartel PROHIBIDO” while “La Cruz de Malta

protege la noche" (110). The city's contradictory role in controlling these women – legally prohibiting their work but providing (and perhaps even profiting), through religious institutions, a means to stay somewhat healthy – is a part of the very fabric of the streets of the Barri Xino. The Barri Xino nevertheless remains a space for these "antifémina" women, and a space officially ignored by much of the city for both its benefit and its injury.

While the Xino continued to resist (or was directly excluded from) modernizing forces until the 1980s, another similarly marginalized area of Barcelona – the Paral·lel – was perhaps the city's most significant stage for the insurgent "destape" brought on by the death of Franco and the unleashing of decades of cultural repression. "Descuartizar un cuerpo" focuses on the pinups and window displays primarily in the area of Paral·lel as a challenge to the influence of international capitalism that took root in the late stages of the dictatorship and continued into the Transition. But this section is also a challenge to the modern contradictions of the Paral·lel. I contend that the area, while host to a bohemian and alternative culture at the turn of the century whose influence extended into the dictatorship, is nonetheless an area still entrenched in patriarchal values and increasingly influenced by capitalist society. Like the Barri Xino, the Paral·lel was a space associated with female sexuality and male pleasure, but it was also a space that put into questions notions such as 'acceptability' and 'properness' while embracing in many ways a patriarchal society that continued to objectify and sexualize female bodies.

The Avinguda del Paral·lel was designed in the Cerdà Plan and opened in 1894. Like the Barri Xino, Paral·lel saw the peak of its fame in the years prior to the Civil War and was one of the most modern areas of the city, with the newest lighting and other advanced technologies, and stores and cafes exhibiting the latest fashionable trends ("El Paral·lel, una avenida canalla y racionalista" 00:02:00). Known more for popular burlesque shows than sex work, the street and

surrounding area were also frequently referred to as the Montmartre of Barcelona and attracted both local and foreign audiences. Because of state censorship, the 1940s and post-war period saw a significant decline of the area as theaters and related establishments were gradually closed. But it was the growing capitalist speculation of the 1980s that effectively destroyed the Paral·lel (Jobani 00:04:45).

The Paral·lel maintained a certain popularity as a principal site for entertainment during the so-called *destape* of the mid to late 1970s, a period following the suppression of censorship and characterized by a proliferation of images of sex or nudity within cinema and visual media at large. The types of poster and pin-ups advertising the theatrical performances that Colita captures in her photos provide a critical reflection of the strange commixture of consumerism and patriarchy that was highly visible in this area of Barcelona. All of the images in this section offer *other* representations of women. Of the sixteen images, eight are billboards of women, seven are mannequins, and one is a deflated sex doll. The photos of mannequins are primarily from the Barri Xino, which bordered the Paral·lel, while others show posters or advertisements for theatrical shows at the many theaters of Paral·lel, most famously the Apolo theater. The photos of the posters were taken just prior to the publication of the book (1976) and the emphasis on images of the exposed female body proliferating the neighborhood's streets reflects the recent influence of the *destape*. Unlike her images of the sex workers in the Xino, which represent the women confidently filling the space of the street and ignoring the gazes of the men, these images frame the women's figures in such a way as to estrange the presence of these posters in the street through an attempt to shock the viewer.

At a time when the dictatorship was slowly loosening its hold on enforcing a strict moral code for women, the capitalist society that poured in did not necessarily liberate or empower

women in their civil and sexual identity, and this in spite of the fact that women's bodies were more openly eroticized, and that what would have been scandalous in earlier years of Franco's regime was now barely noticed, as evidenced by the oblivious passersby captured in the first photo. While this freer society was in many ways liberating for women, Colita's images challenge the machista qualities of the *destape* and work to make visible the connection between women's erotized bodies and a capitalist economy in a modern, capitalist city.

In the very first photo of the section, two older women are standing in front of a large image of the lower-half of a woman in heels and a leotard. The woman in the image is depicted with one leg raised and resting on a suitcase. Colita has framed the image to capture the two women just under these legs. The women disregard the highly provocative image directly behind them, an attitude which is contrasted and essentially critiqued by the text that accompanies the photo: "Si a alguien se le ocurre reprocharnos a Colita y a mí que tratamos mal el género femenino, que ponemos el acento, demasiado aviesas, en el hecho de su cosificación, le recordaremos que lo único que hemos hecho ha sido sorprendernos de lo acostumbrado" (113). Although the women standing below the image seem accustomed or at least unreactive to this provocative imagery, Colita's photograph, along with the others in this section, seeks to surprise the viewer as to the frequency with which women's bodies are objectified on the very walls of the city. The authors remind the viewer/reader what Aristotle and Brecht ("dos sesudos varones" (113)) have said about surprise: Aristotle recommends surprise because, he says, it is the beginning of knowledge and "aquel que de nada se asombra nunca aprende nada" (113), while Brecht "predicaba que no se aceptaran como normales las insistentes injusticias de los hombres, que lo injusto no por lo habitual deja de ser injusto, y el insulto a la dignidad humana no por lo corriente tiene que dejar de asombrarnos" (115). The contrast within Colita's photo between the

oversized, exposed and elongated feminine legs and the two simply dressed and unpreoccupied women standing just beneath them serves as an attempt to surprise the viewer and thereby oblige us to reflect on this normalized fragmentation of women's bodies within the urban imagery.

Capmany's text further emphasizes the fragmented nature of these representations of the female body: "Así que hemos salido a la calle y nos hemos asombrado al ver tanto muslo suelto, tanto pecho agrandado, tanta pantorrilla pegada a las paredes y a los faroles. No hemos visto mujeres, fíjense ustedes, sino trozos de mujeres" (115). Colita's interest in capturing images of disparate, desirable parts of a distinctly feminine body effectively estranges the images from a context in which we have become habituated to seeing them. In the case of the legs of the woman in the photo above, Colita has framed her image so as to cut off the upper half of the woman's body, and thus accentuate the legs in contrast to the women standing beneath them; in most cases, however, Colita's images are representations of already fragmented body parts: the hands or busts of mannequins in shop windows, and large, open mouths, "pero no una boca que habla, una boca que se muestra simplemente, pintada al rojo vivo, espresiva del sexo no de la mente" (115). The authors reframe this repetition of fragments found on the city's walls within the context of the photobook to problematize the portrayal of the inutility of the female body that does not serve for work or for activity, but rather for passivity, immobility, and as a symbol of sex. This overt illustration of how culture effectively controls and cuts apart women's bodies engages with what feminist writer Sandra Lee Bartky would call the "false needs" that a male-dominated society has indoctrinated in women to aspire to a certain model (42). Colita's images and Capmany's text allude to the fact that these false needs are in fact advertised throughout the city, for example by an image of "uñas largas que entorpecen el trabajo, que muestran, como signo distintivo, la aspiración a la immobilidad que es la máxima aspiración de la mujer

perfecta" (122). These images, prompted by the *destape*, of fragmented, eroticized women on the city streets serve as a new, controlling form of a continuing patriarchal system that maintains power through this image of the female body, while, as I will explain, also profiting from it.

While many critics argue how the destape was in some respects a moment of (sexual) liberation from the Francoist models of housewife and mother, Rosón Villena points out how it was also based on the "hipervisibilización y objetificación del cuerpo de las mujeres" (67). The *destape* coincided with second wave feminism's growing concern for the objectification of women and, as Carmen Peña Ardid identifies, had the unfortunate side-effect of making feminist concerns seem puritan and moralizing. She clarifies that, since during the dictatorship, "la libertad de expresión y de información padece tran gravísimas cortapisas," in the years following Franco's death, "nadie tiene derecho…a levantar la voz contra el mal llamado *boom* pornográfico" (112). Peña Ardid cites an article from *Vindicación feminista* effectively summarizing the problem with this situation: "Nuestra sociedad machista está empeñada hoy en la protesta contra la actitud radical de las feministas que no tolera que se confundan la libertad sexual con la libertad de los hombres de ver, colocar, y degradar el cuerpo de la mujer a su antojo" (112).[35] Colita and Capmany were early and particularly fearless in their criticism of the extent to which the *destape* was in fact designed for a male-oriented pleasure and how the supposed democratizing power that this movement held was reduced to the fact that now *all* men, and not just an elite few, would have access to these "mercancías sexuales" (Peña Ardid 110).

Colita's photos of fragmented, sexualized female bodies also illustrate how sexuality has been turned into a "moda" under the pressure of political and capitalist forces (Peña Ardid 107).

[35] "Primer proceso al sexismo." *Vindicación feminista*, vol. 3, Sep. 1978, 26-27.

The capitalist society and international trends that the gauche divine embraced as a way out of the repressive confines of the dictatorship are indirectly criticized by Capmany, who affirms that fashion confirms the objectification of women: "La moda subraya la realidad de la mujer como objeto erótico. La verdad es que nuestro contexto cultural no nos permite separar sexo y dinero" (126). Here Capmany illustrates another certain duality of modernity easily seen on the walls of the Paral·lel: fashion is modernity, and thus positive for a country emerging from a dictatorship, but fashion also exemplifies the commodification of women in modern society. In this contradictory modernity, fueled increasingly by consumerism, sexiness is money, and money is sexy. In tracing a long history of "libidinal economy," David Bennett explains how while (internationally) in the early twentieth century, extramarital sex (sex for sex's sake and not for reproduction, of the kind embodied in the figure of the prostitute) was seen as unproductive spending (spending for spending's sake) and therefore as a *subversion* of capitalism, by the 1960s, sex is redefined as the very currency of capitalism and is synonymous with the very logic of money itself (110-12). Capmany shows how this market logic is applied to female bodies in 1970s Spain: "¿Cómo vamos a sorprendernos de que los atributos sexuales de las mujeres sean tan importantes para la iconografía publicitaria? Pechos, nalgas, muslos…son esenciales para la venta de neveras, calcetines, televisores…Porque los pechos y las nalgas y los muslos no son lo que demuestran ser, sino lo que significan como objeto comprado" (128). Like Capmany reminds us in the section on brides, women are still conceptualized as objects and their sexual bodies are inextricably tied up with money and capitalism.

Women's connection to advertising and consumer culture has a lengthy history, but Mercedes Montero points out in particular the ironic dynamic between the significant role of women in consumer culture in Spain during the early twentieth century and the minimal

consideration they received within Spanish society, as they were often uneducated and unable to vote. She cites Jaime Vicens as having written in 1954 that "con medios tan expresivos…sobre todo, la fotografía, se comprende que la mujer, por sí misma, haya bastado para ser la cúspide del anuncio" (89).[36] That women became not only the target of consumer culture but its very content is evidenced in Colita's photo accompanying Capmany's above text and illustrating an image of a woman in a bathing suit next to signs that say "Locales comerciales en venta." The image of the woman is in fact part of a distinct advertisement, but Colita's framing shows a clear intent to connect the woman's image with the advertisements for housing and to problematize this relationship as well as to surprise the viewer with that which has become so commonplace. In this photo more than any other, the commercial relationship specifically between women and the city is challenged; the relationship between the attractive woman and the available real estate goes beyond the woman as necessary for "la venta de neveras, calcetines, televisores" and extends to a commentary of the development of the city itself. The very fabric of the city is not only plastered with these *destape*-influenced images of women, but is constructed thanks to their visual exploitation.

This contrast not only illustrates the influence of capitalism on Barcelona but also brings to mind the new tourism slogans produced by the Ministerio de Turismo from the 1970s that shifted the focus from promoting Spain's cultural difference ("Spain is Different") to a campaign centered around the access of Spain to the international financial world. Thus, one of the posters of "Spain: Your Meeting Place" pictures a conference room surrounded by the sun and sea and, of course, an attractive woman in a bathing suit. Tapping into business audiences, Spain learned how to take advantage of its fame for sun, waves and fun (all of which are suggestions of sex)

[36] Vicens, Jaime. *Cómo debe anunciarse en los periódicos*. Edited by Juan Bruguer, 1954, 183.

and actively combine it with business. Colita's photo juxtaposing "oficinas en venta" with the barely dressed, larger-than-life poster woman documents this new attempt at selling Barcelona, not only to its tourists but to its own residents as well. In this section of *Antifémina*, the city of Barcelona, and more specifically the Paral·lel, are the sites of a new popular culture that has done away with the prudence of the dictatorship but still clings to patriarchal forms. Ironically, the tourist campaigns two years prior to the publication of *Antifémina* capitalized on the 1975 "año de la mujer" and represented "typical" Spanish women dressed in folkloric outfits on tourism posters to recognize the event. The appropriation of this feminist celebration by tourist campaigns illustrates the extent to which not only women's bodies but even women as a social category were used for commercial purposes. Colita's photos engage with this situation and critique this modern yet still machista use of women's sexuality through the sense of estrangement the photographer produces by way of framing individual, eroticized female body parts plastered on the city's walls.

Colita's photos of the Paral·lel together with her images taken in the Barri Xino work to challenge prevalent patriarchal influences on women, including the popular yet arguably male-oriented *destape,* at the same time as they revindicate women's sexuality as distinct and independent from male desire. Colita's approach to photographing sex workers in the Barri Xino shows her concern to represent these women respectfully as strong and confident individuals in a risky and even dangerous job, either by centering them in the public spaces of the streets of the Xino or by capturing them in moments of rejection of the male gazes surrounding them. The Barri Xino's long-established reputation for sex work provides an inevitable backdrop against which Colita imposes a new vision of these women that, while undoubtedly influenced by Colom's work, is striking in its contrast. On the other hand, Colita's photos of the advertisements

in the area of Paral·lel take on a different tone and instead criticize the normalized objectification of women's bodies. Going back to Capmany's initial statement that the photographer finds "lo que se nos ofrece para que veamos y no vemos," Colita here asks the viewer to view critically the objectification and commodification of women and the "descuartización" of their bodies that has become part of Barcelona's modernization. Through her images of sex workers and poster models, Colita unveils the evolving but continual patriarchal pressures on Barcelona's women while revindicating their sexuality.

The areas Colita photographs are neighborhoods of Barcelona that, ignored or censored during the dictatorship, maintained a popular character and exhibited certain dualities of modernity that demonstrate the entrenched patriarchal order and objectification of women's bodies while also offering the possibility of resistance to this patriarchal society and to the image of the "fémina." Both Colita and Colom's photos recall the historic importance of the Barri Xino and Paral·lel as central yet marginalized neighborhoods and enclaves of popular culture during and following the dictatorship**.** Colom's concern with capturing the reality of women in the streets of the Barri Xino was taken up a decade later by Colita who found in the women of this neighborhood not only "antiféminas" but also women whose sexuality illustrated central debates of the feminist movement. Viewed today, Colita and Capmany's photobook engages with a unique moment in Barcelona's modernization in which the streets of the Barri Xino, still filled with sex workers, began to see feminist protests demanding equal rights and new consideration as a social and political force in an emerging democratic society. Barcelona's women have undoubtedly made gains in the years following the 1970s, but Colita's photos still resonate with contemporary struggles for gender equality and the disparity between lived experience and the

idealization of women in capitalist, consumerist culture that soon came to be synonymous with Barcelona's modernization.

WATCHING FROM THE SIDELINES: MODERNITY AND MARGINALIZED PERSPECTIVES IN JOSÉ LUIS GUERÍN'S *EN CONSTRUCCIÓN*

From Colom to Guerín: Historic Doubles and Urban Transformations

In 2001, Catalan filmmaker José Luis Guerín released his most successful film, *En construcción,* chronicling the construction of a new building in the neighborhood of the Raval. The film suggestively opens, not with Guerín's own footage, but instead with several minutes of black and white analogue footage showing the neighborhood as a bustling center of activity. After several panoramic shots of the city, the camera descends to ground level in pursuit of a drunken American sailor stumbling through the streets in the early morning after a night presumably spent in the Raval. This emblematic segment belongs to Joan Colom's 30-minute, 8mm short film from 1960 titled *El carrer,* in which Colom's camera follows the sailor in several long and disjointed traveling shots. Similar to Colom's daring and innovative photographic work on the Barri Xino, the camera works in a clandestine fashion. Colom's filming seems to mirror the experience of the filmic subject: his jolty, handheld camera reflects the stumbling and uncoordinated movements of the transient, displaced, and unstable sailor.

Colom's unsettled vagabond soon acquires an unlikely double in Guerín's film. Following the black and white sequence, the camera stabilizes in the color images of the present. After several shots of city planning signs and graffitied walls, our gaze comes to focus on a cross street of the Raval, presumably next to the construction site. As pedestrians cross in front of the camera, ex-*marinero* Antonio Atar makes the first of many appearances throughout the film, exchanging a simple "Buenos días" with a fellow passerby. As we later learn, Antonio is homeless and wanders the streets of the Raval nearly as aimlessly as Colom's drunken American sailor. Yet, while the American sailor was a transient visitor in a geographical sense, Guerín's

counterpart is transient in his own neighborhood, as he walks around seemingly without a destination.

This mirroring instance connects as much as it historicizes Colom's black and white analogue documentary film and Guerín's color digital film, cuing both their aesthetic differences as well as the continuity between these two moments in the history of Barcelona's modernization. Guerín's long and static takes through the lens of the stationary cameras provide a sharp contrast with the jolty, highly mobile footage shot by Colom forty years earlier. Joan Ramón Resina argues that Guerín's incorporation of the black and white images aptly recalls the visual tradition of the Barri Xino without falling into the trap of expressing a sense of loss for a perceived authenticity in documenting, since Guerín "manages to suggest authenticity in the realm of the present and in the province of color… by mimicking the passage of time with the film's slow rhythm and a generous helping of nearly static images" ("Cinematic Image" 261). Where Colom reacted to his historical moment and the artistic and cultural confines of the dictatorship through a spontaneous and clandestine documenting style permitted by new, lightweight equipment, Guerín's slow transitions and long takes are similarly experimental and reactive to a historical context in which change happens at an increasingly fast pace.[37] His use of digital technology signifies a capacity for new temporal possibilities within cinema; he and his crew worked on the project over the course of three years and, through the cameras positioned around the construction site, accumulated 120 hours of digitally filmed material. The film

[37] In a talk titled "The State of Cinema" in 2003, French film critic Michel Ciment noted how digital technology had enabled an increasing tendency in the Hollywood industry to produce fragmented, fast-paced film akin to videogames that, Ciment argues, desensitized the viewer to the reality surrounding them. In reaction to this tendency, a number of directors began to develop what he calls "a cinema of slowness." Matthew Flanagan, in his 2008 essay titled "Towards an Aesthetic of Slow in Contemporary Cinema", cites Ciment's observation and describes the formal characteristics of the films that partake in this recent "cinema of slowness" as "the employment of (often extremely) long takes, de-centered and understated modes of storytelling, and a pronounced emphasis on quietude and the everyday" (n.p.). These characteristics are undoubtedly present in Guerín's film and I would therefore argue that the director shows a certain approximation to this tendency.

manages to record and condense the entire duration of the construction project into the two hours that constitute the film while still obliging the viewer to experience time as drawn-out and slow.

While the film certainly offers a wealth of valuable reflections on the passage of time, it equally reflects on the space "en construcción" during this three-year period, and it is this discussion that interests me for the purposes of this chapter. The rapid changes taking place in the Raval are a visible effect of the speed of transformation of the city in the post-Olympic period. As Cristina Martínez-Carazo points out, "la superposición de este 'found footage' al texto matriz traza una línea continua entre el presente y el pasado y contrapone esta repetición de la historia al proceso de transformación que afecta al barrio" (6). The continuity of the vagabond figure between Colom's and Guerín's footage accentuates the drastic changes not only to the cultural context but to the physical neighborhood itself, and emphasizes how the city is what it is moving *towards* as much as what it comes *from*. As I explored in the previous chapter, the Raval was already a marginalized space in the 1960s but tolerated in part because its nightlife appealed to an international tourism that, with the *aperturismo*, brought money into the city (Guereña 443). The 1980s and 90s saw the creation of tourist friendly spaces and upscale living and the consequent erasure of less aesthetically attractive and less economically affluent areas of Barcelona, as clearly illustrated throughout *En construcción*. If the *aperturismo* had meant, among other things, the possibility to profit from marketing certain areas of the city while pushing out some of its residents, the neoliberal politics of the post-Olympics converted the city into an international model for modernization and managed to fully transform working-class areas like the Raval through a slow, metastasis-like process that culminated in gentrification.

The gentrification that Guerín captures in the Raval pushes already precarious individuals even farther to the periphery. Guerín's ex-*marinero*, Antonio, is not an exceptional character in

the film. Not unlike the *barraquistes* (many of them immigrants or Gitanos) and the women of the Raval and Paral·lel, whose political invisibility depended as well upon urban policies and transformations discussed in my previous chapters, Antonio, too, belongs to a group of marginalized individuals that comprise the residents and immigrant workers of the Raval. Yet new, we may say more modern, rhetoric has come to aid mainstream discourse in labeling and controlling these individuals according to the idea of civility. Thus, those individuals who interrupt the peaceful, public space are identified as "incívicos." Following this new logic, then, certain urban transformations become socially justified insofar as they create a more civilized space by removing unwanted residents. Guerín's film problematizes this concept of civility through the representation of those unwanted characters that populate the Raval and the marginalized spaces that are targeted for renovation. More specifically, *En construcción* takes place during the transformations following the creation of the new Rambla del Raval. Urban planner Oriol Bohigas astutely described this project as working like a "mancha de aceite" because, at the same time that it opened up an undesirable area of the neighborhood making way for the new Rambla, it would also be the center from which the revitalization of surrounding areas would spread, and this thanks to the construction of new apartments and the arrival of new wealthier (and more civil) residents (Fernández González 128).

The continual problem of *where* to put Barcelona's undesirable population or how to address its fate carries new weight during the democratic period, since Article 47 of the 1977 Constitution promised as a type of moral horizon that all Spaniards would have the right to "disfrutar de una vivienda digna y adecuada," and, additionally, that "los poderes públicos promoverán las condiciones necesarias y establecerán las normas pertinentes para hacer efectivo este derecho, regulando la utilización del suelo de acuerdo con el interés general para impedir la

especulación" (Constitución Española, Tit. 1, Cap. 3, Art. 47). Guerín's film confronts the results of the urban renewal by showing how the project has effectively ended in gentrification and not, as promised, in the provision of better housing for its prior residents. As Guerín himself stated in an interview in 2005, in contrast to the "grandes arquitectos" of modernism such as Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies Van der Rohe, whose work was centered around "*la vivienda del hombre, la casa del hombre*," architecture is now spoken of in terms of inaugurations of "el Auditorio, la Mediateca, la Torre de Jean Nouvel ahora en Barcelona…Es decir, *la casa del funcionario, la casa del turista, la casa del espectador*, pero en ningún caso *la casa del hombre*" (Guerín 174).[38] Contemporary architecture, Guerín argues, is not prioritizing the most elemental and necessary constructions for its citizens and is instead focused on designing spaces for profit.

Taking as my point of departure anthropologist Manuel Delgado's observation that "Raras veces reconocen [those in charge of carrying out urban plans] que *reformar* quiere decir siempre *expulsar*, y que *rehabilitar* un barrio suele implicar inhabilitar a quienes allí vivían" (*Ciudad mentirosa* 74), I will begin by situating the housing project documented in *En construcción* within the larger context of Barcelona's twenty-first-century modernization, in order to show how the film denounces the post-Olympic urban renovation projects designed to "inhabilitar" the residents. Guerín achieves this critique by focusing nearly exclusively on the Raval's marginalized residents and by formally recreating their peripheral position within the cinematic space created through the camera, thus foregrounding their social and political invisibility and ultimately confronting the local, tangible effects of an internationally acclaimed

[38] Modernist architecture often proved to be less utopic in practice than design, as attested by some of le Corbusier's or his followers' implemented designs, perhaps most famously in Brasilia. Lewis Mumford has identified le Corbusier's "ville radieuse" model as a sterile and ineffective hybrid of the skyscraper city and the romantic organic environment, calling it "yesterday's city of tomorrow" (116).

urban model. Throughout the film, the Raval's unwanted residents take center stage, and their diverse yet interconnected stories and experiences narrate the rich cultural fabric of the neighborhood in *de-construcción.*

From the Barri Xino to the Rambla: New Faces of the Raval

During the time spanning between Colom's photos and short film and Guerín's documentary, the Raval became one of the principal targets of renovation in Barcelona. The 1970s, which saw protests and civil demonstrations (documented, among others, by Colita), Spain's transition to democracy in 1975, and Barcelona's 1979 elections resulting in a shift of power to leftist politics, would set the stage for a new "coherent and carefully rationalized urban policy" (McNeil 246). The Left had hoped this urban policy would be radical, strongly participatory and non-marketized. But as Donald McNeil points out, this vision was never carried out because of the changes in the political climate in Spain as well as the world economy, changes which reflected a growing concern with market reforms (246). As Manuel Delgado and fellow anthropologist Miquel Fernández González have further attested, this new policy did not always, or even often, prioritize the city's residents. The 1980s were the beginning of the most drastic urban reforms to the Raval and the city at large, reforms that came in preparation for the Olympic Games in 1992 and headed for the most part by the then Consejero de Urbanismo del Ayuntamiento and former *gauche divinista,* Oriol Bohigas. Bohigas worked with other well-known architects on projects designed to create new public spaces and revitalize deteriorated urban areas. Fernández González stresses the problematic continuity between the Francoist regime's urbanistic policy and the new democratic interventions. As he points out, Bohigas, urbanist Jordi Borja, and mayor Pasqual Maragall (all principal figures in Barcelona's 1980s

urban reforms) were all municipal technicians under former mayor Porcioles, and, after the Transition, they virtually recuperated urban plans that they had been charged with designing during the dictatorship (125). These plans would also resort to some of the same rationalist and hygienist discourses (125) that had characterized, for example, the policy and politics identifiable in the article by *El Correo Catalan* on the Somorrostro analyzed in the first chapter.

As Guerín himself notices, "el plan que han aplicado, en el barrio chino, que ellos llaman el Raval, se parece mucho al higienismo de Hausmann…" (Guerín 184).[39] The plan was part of the "Planes Especiales de Reforma Interior" (PERI), reformist plans which were an essential element of urban development in the Barcelona of the 1980s and which gave a concrete form to the legal guidelines established in the comprehensive Pla General Metropolità (still to date the master plan for Barcelona's urban planning and policies) for certain areas of Ciutat Vella (Fernández Gonzáles 128). Fernández Gonzalez thus summarizes the ruinous effects that the PERI had on the architecture and cultural patrimony of the Raval:

> El PERI debía provocar lo que Bohigas llamó 'manchas de aceite' o 'metástasis benignas', de forma que allí donde se interviniera, se produciría una 'contaminación' a su alrededor, que aceleraría la rehabilitación de todo el sector…Con estos planes sobre la mesa se iba a desencadenar la mayor destrucción de patrimonio arquitectónico, habitacional, cultural, económico y político que jamás hubiese sufrido el Raval. Los arrasamientos más importantes vendrían, como ya había anunciado Porcioles, con motivo de la organización de un gran macroacontecimiento: los Juegos Olímpicos de verano de 1992. Barcelona será designada, en 1986, como organizadora, lo que significará el mayor impulso para la 'reforma' del Raval. (128)

[39] As Guerín notes, the Raval has known various moments of renaming and consequent resignifications. While it was historically known as the Raval, or occasionally the "Distrito V," the neighborhood was popularly renamed the "Barrio Chino" or "Barri Xino" in the 1920s during a time when it gained particular fame for its nightlife. It kept this name during the dictatorship, but in the 1980s, "la Administración impulsó una política decidida de reformas y rehabilitación de viviendas, de apertura de espacios y creación de equipamientos para la comunidad, que fue dejando en segundo plano el nombre de Barrio Chino, y se recuperó la denominación histórica del Raval" ("Historia del Raval" n.p.). Although Resina has identified the attempt to deterritorialize the area with the name of the "Barri Xino" in the 1920s (*Vocation of Modernity* 104), Guerín nevertheless suggests here that this recent return to the historical name of the Raval is also a move away from the popular identity of the neighborhood and, in fact, goes hand in hand with the hygienic plans designed to open and clean up the area.

Barcelona's modern history of urban development has been marked by "macroacontecimientos" that spurred major transformations to the city. Starting with the two World Fairs of 1888 and 1929, the latter of which would develop areas previously inhabited by *barraquistes* on Montjuïc, smaller events would continue to change the urban landscape during the dictatorship. Thus the 35th Eucharistic Congress in 1952 and Franco's visit to the city in 1966 would respectively eliminate the *barraques* of Diagonal and the Somorrostro. The Olympics would eliminate the very last of the city's *barraques* and provide the official excuse to initiate urban projects aimed at cleaning up certain neighborhoods – most drastically, the Raval. The PERI would unleash a process of gentrification and effectively change the identity of the Raval from a working-class *barri* to an area of ever-increasing luxury housing and cultural attraction. The installation of the MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona) planned for the Olympics but opened in 1995, would further gentrify the neighborhood in the name of culture.[40] Barcelona's modernization, which once again seemed to turn towards hygienist discourse, effectively worked to cleanse and revive areas like the Raval, but that also meant to slowly push out those who lived there.

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[40] In his article "La artistización de las políticas urbanas. El lugar de la cultura en las dinámicas de reapropiación capitalista de la ciudad," Manuel Delgado explains how the MACBA has spurred a series of changes to the Raval that negatively impact its previous residents, and how the museum itself has become a symbol of the unjust policies that work to renovate popular and working-class neighborhoods: "El MACBA se erigía así en símbolo de las dinámicas de tematización cultural de barrios a promocionar, que se convierten, de la mano de este tipo de intervenciones "purificadoras", en polos de atracción de un público constituido por turistas, snobs y usuarios "de calidad". Al lado o alrededor del MACBA –como en tantos otros casos en tantas ciudades– se empiezan a abrir librerías, talleres de artistas o arquitectos, bares y restaurantes "de diseño", tiendas de moda... Lo que sigue es igual en todos sitios: como consecuencia de todo ello y de manera inevitable, el precio del suelo sube rápidamente y se prevé que ello acabe acarreando el paulatino exilio de los vecinos de rentas bajas, sobre todo personas mayores, al tiempo que se frena el asentamiento de inmigrantes. Esa vinculación simbólica y al tiempo material del MACBA con las políticas de reforma-redención de barrios que habían sido populares es lo que le ha valido una creciente antipatía por parte de los movimientos sociales contrarios a la especulación inmobiliaria, que lo han convertido en emblema de la perversidad de las instituciones-empresa y sus políticas de promoción "cultural" de sus actuaciones inmobiliarias" (n.p.)

The most emblematic consequence of the PERI for the Raval is undoubtedly the creation of the Rambla del Raval, one of the most polemic interventions in the fabric of the neighborhood which would prioritize opening up the Raval by razing run-down housing over the rehabilitation of the neighborhood for the residents who already lived there. In an article for *El País* published September 21, 2000 (the same day as the inauguration of the Rambla del Raval), Blanca Cia noted how "la mayor operación urbanística de Ciutat Vella, de trascendencia histórica para este barrio, ya ha tenido un efecto: el alza de los precios de locales y viviendas, signo evidente de la revalorización de la zona" (n.p.). Not only did the Rambla del Raval cause a near immediate spike in housing prices, quickly leading to gentrification of the area, but it also cleared away sixty-two apartment buildings, among which were several historic buildings by renowned Catalan architect Puig i Cadafalch (Sargatal Bataller n.p.). Fernández González refers to recent scholarly studies attesting to the unnecessarily destructive design of this plan and to the discontent of neighborhood associations that suffered directly from its implementation:

> Varios estudios realizados en años recientes, como trabajos de fin de licenciatura de la Escola Superior d'Arquitectura de la Universitat de Barcelona, destacan las ejecuciones de la Rambla del Raval y de la posterior Illa Robador como 'exageradas' e 'innecesarias'. Las asociaciones de vecinos coinciden en que, si bien son ciertas las exigencias de abrir espacios para que entre la luz y el aire en el barrio, éstas no requerían la destrucción mayúscula que se llevó a cabo en nombre de la Rambla del Raval. (136)[41]

[41] Nico Calavita and Amador Ferrer have explained how the citizens movements which were relatively powerful during the 1960s and 1970s lost much of their influence after the transition to democracy:

> It is at this time that the urban social movement in Barcelona – and other Spanish cities as well – lost much of its momentum, power and membership. There are several reasons for this sudden change. First, the urban social movement lost its most important *raison d'être* with the completion of many of the needed projects. Second, it should be remembered that the demands of the *Vecinos* had been part of a larger political opposition to the Franco regime. Now, with the democratization of the political system in general and a socialist administration in particular – composed to a large extent of former members or sympathizers of the *Asociaciones de Vecinos* – opposition withered. It is not surprising then that throughout Spain urban political movements came practically to a standstill, and the Asociaciones were decimated. One of their hopes, that the new administration would install a more participatory form of democracy, remains unfulfilled. (59)

The neighborhood associations of the Raval did protest elements of the Pla Central del Raval, but were ultimately unsuccessful in altering the established course of action, and continue to struggle with similar issues even today.

While it was generally agreed that the Raval needed rehabilitation and improved sanitation, both the degree of destruction and the lack of concern for the residents need further analysis. That the PERI in general, and especially the design and objective of the Rambla, had little to do with the needs of the *barri*'s inhabitants is a point perfectly illustrated in *En construcción.*

In the very beginning of his film, Guerín focuses precisely on the contrast between the planning of space and the use or practice of space by those who live there. The very first images in color begin with the title of the documentary projected against the background of a soon-to-be-demolished building in the Raval. A text then fades into its place that reads "Cosas vistas y oídas durante la construcción de un nuevo inmueble en 'el Chino', un barrio popular de Barcelona que nace y muere con el siglo." On the one hand we have the caption pointing to the observational method and philosophy of Guerín's filmmaking; on the other, the visual construction of the shot metonomically connects the announced death of the neighborhood with the image of a billboard illustrating the Pla central del Raval carried out by the Ajuntament de Barcelona.[42] Through of these images, Guerín uses a metonymic logic to connect the caption announcing the death of the neighborhood with the shot showing the city plans (including the clear lettering of the plan's backer, Ajuntament de Barcelona, on the billboard) which, presumably, are responsible for that death. [43] As Guerín's film progresses, the viewer continues

[42] Guerín's film is, according to Bill Nichols's modes of documentary, an observational documentary *sui generis.* Guerín has spoken particularly of his goal in *En construcción* to interfere with the surrounding reality as little as possible: "Yo he querido no inventarme las cosas, sino hacer un pacto con la realidad, irme nutriendo de lo que me daba al acontecer de una obra que existía, con independencia de lo que yo me pudiera inventar" (Guerín 180).

[43] For a different reading on the impact of the Rambla del Raval see William Viestenz's "Cinematic Ethics within the Picnopeltic Moment in José Luis Guerín's *En construcción,*" where he argues that Guerín's apparent criticism of capitalist housing trends is exaggerated and somewhat unfair, since the project is a private one and the Generalitat did in fact intervene in the neighborhood to create public spaces, where he cites precisely the Rambla del Raval as a key example. McNeil has identified the post-Olympic period as one in which Barcelona increasingly relied on both private funds and foreign capital after the central government cut its substantial funding upon cessation of the Games.

to connect the city's urban plans with the increasing gentrification of the neighborhood and the market logic that is destroying the historic character of the Raval and its social fabric.

Delgado aptly identifies the 'undesirable' residents of the Raval as an aspect of these urban changes that deserves particular attention (*La ciudad mentirosa* 74). Although the residents of the Raval were historically targeted by projects of modernization, the pre-Olympic period would seemingly provide the social justification for razing much of the neighborhood. Historian Paco Villar points to the "incidencia…devastadora" of heroin in the 1970s as a pivotal moment for disciplinary action against the Raval (294). Managing space became an essential part of the response to drug-related incidents, and in some cases entire blocks of the neighborhood were eliminated. Sex workers (many of them gradually converted to "yonkis," according to Villar) and residents involved in drug trafficking or petty crime had become, by the 1980s, the target of urban reforms. Such an attitude did not spare other lower-class residents of the neighborhood. Guerín perceptively notes that whereas "higienizar en el siglo XIX tenia también la conotación de protegerse de epidemias, de focos de suciedad… a mí me pareció que en el fondo de esto – analizando qué quiere decir hoy sobre las grandes avenidas *higienizar* – verdaderamente la suciedad estaba en los personaje que yo filmaba en *En construcción"* (Guerín 184). The shift from physical health to *social* health would mark a switch in the official rhetoric regarding these undesirable citizens as well.

These pre-Olympic "yonkis" would eventually fit into a broader, and in many ways more *modern* category of socially disruptive individuals that the government would attempt to manage through internventions in the urban fabric. As Fernández Gonzáles explains, more recent changes (in the twenty-first century) in the strategies for social control have latched on to an idea of "civismo" as a uniting factor against which to pit these marginalized populations: "Se trata de

una nueva ordenanza municipal que tiene el objetivo explícito de 'fomentar y garantizar la convivencia en la ciudad de Barcelona' y que es conocida como la 'ordenanza cívica'. El presupuesto de la ordenanza es que el espacio público, idealmente desconflictivizado, ha sido alterado por 'l'augment de conductes incíviques que posen en perill la convivencia'" (153). Within this new logic, an individual whose livelihood depended in some capacity on the street was identified as "incívico" and, therefore, as a public enemy to be eliminated, while social order became the new matrix for the management of urban space:

> …la normativa hace aparecer una nueva figura que amenaza el orden social en la ciudad. Esta figura es el incívico que, a grandes rasgos, queda definido como toda aquella persona que, de un modo u otro, viven en o de la calle. Tal y como recoge la ordenanza, se considera comportamiento incívico y contrario a la convivencia toda acción en el espacio público no prescrita por el consistorio que consista en: vender o comprar objetos, vender o comprar sexo, hacer música u otros espectáculos, patinar, dormir, lavarse, ir visiblemente (¡sic!) indocumentado, beber alcohol, repartir octavillas o pegar carteles, pintar o dibujar las paredes. (154-155)

While the dictatorship either conveniently ignored or brutally demonized these transient or homeless sectors of the population, the new democratic models of modernization in Barcelona were arguably achieving similar objectives by categorizing these individuals instead on the basis of a notion of civic virtue and their ability, or lack thereof, to participate in civil society.

Many of the social actors Guerín presents largely fall under the category of "incívicos," since in some way or another they live on (or off) the street. The residents he films include homeless individuals and *okupas*, one of which is a Gitana and sex worker. Some of these characters are modern-day versions of the very same subjects that Colom, Marroyo and Colita photographed in the 1960s. The Gitanos and sex workers are still present, as are the immigrant workers and the *barraquistes*, now simply turned homeless or soon to be homeless. Furthermore, *En construcción* shows that the spaces for prostitution have been increasingly reduced because of intense urban interventions. The construction of the Rambla del Raval significantly altered the

situation, but so did the destruction of large parts of the urban fabric and the closing of *mueblés* (houses of prostitution) in and around the Carrer Tàpiez, as did the more recent creation of the Filmoteca, which opened a large, supposedly public space at the end of the Carrer d'en Robador, one of the last streets well known for sex work.

Although many of Guerín's characters appear to be historically familiar figures of the Xino, discussing their significance requires identifying the traits of a new social and physical landscape. A new immigrant component began to appear near the end of the dictatorship. If the immigrants of the 1960s described by Francesc Candel in his seminal *Els altres catalans* (1965) were quick to adapt to Catalan society and culture, with *Els altres catalans del segle XXI* (2001), Candel identifies a new immigrant wave, "l''estrangera', la 'no comunitària', la dels 'novíssims'" (11). Although immigration is an integral part of the Raval, Candel rejects any essentialist reading of the neighborhood's conflictive character: "El Raval de Barcelona és un barri popular amb una notable presència d'altres catalans del segle XXI; un barri amb dificultats i problemes, però no pas, com de vegades s'ha pogut projectar mediàticament, un barri conflictiu: al Raval no hi ha conflictes perquè el barri sigui innatament conflictiu; al Raval hi ha conflictes perquè hi ha dificultats i problemes" (193). In what amounts to a refusal of any moral argument, Candel argues against essentializing the Raval as an inherently conflictive area of the city in order to instead invite reflection on the concrete causes of the Raval's difficult situation. His point is productive and leads to further discussion on the city's interventions and treatment of the area, but, additionally, and returning to Fernández González, it is necessary to recognize that public, community space *is* inherently a space of conflict. The Raval is a neighborhood that experiences conflict because of socioeconomic difficulties, but also because it is a diverse community with a plurality of voices that express potentially productive heterogenous views and

dissent. Ironically, in the case of the Raval specifically, the misplaced institutional efforts to quell conflict caused increased dissent in reaction to the city's policies and to the perceived lack of concern for lower-class residents. The individuals that populate the film are a testament to the continued diversity of this neighborhood and the failure of the rationalist view of the city that at different times attempted to create a clean, sanitized and orderly space.

Guerín's documentary problematizes the idea of "civismo" deployed in current institutional discourse in order to legitimize drastic urban interventions, and does so by capturing the plurality of voices in the neighborhood, voices that often express a common knowledge of the urban and economic policies affecting them. The vagabonds, prostitutes, and other marginal characters in the film do not cause conflict other than occupying and using public space in ways that were neither contemplated nor permitted by government plans. Formally, Guerín's unique filmic style prioritizes the neighborhood's marginal spaces and residents and challenges the official discourse surrounding *civismo* by destabilizing the conventional position of the spectator and by anchoring our gaze in the marginal, decentered spaces created through the construction project.

Decentered Perspectives in José Luis Guerín's *En construcción*

In cinema, the visual narrative is conventionally constructed to allow spectators the most privileged and central position from which to view it. Nick Browne explains that the classic positioning of the spectator is such that everything the spectator sees is from the best possible viewpoint, and follows the natural course of attention, thereby rendering the positioning essentially invisible (211). This classic convention continues to be transgressed often with productive results. When we, as spectators, begin to ask ourselves why we see images in the way

that we do, we are no longer identifying with the ideal spectator's position. This estrangement denaturalizes the relationship between camera and spectator and immediately renders our positioning visible. Of the many shots that constitute Guerín's film, almost none can be associated with the perspective of any human subject, be it the privileged one of the ideal spectator or that of any of the human subjects present on the screen. Additionally, these almost impossible positions from which we view the scene are oftentimes shown to be vacant in the following shot, leading us as viewers to question our central subjectivity. As a result, the cinematic space created through our vision is disjointed and fragmented in a process that constantly pushes the spectator to the outside and thwarts any attempt to reconstruct the space into a logical whole.

It is particularly effective the way the decentralized position of the viewer in *En construcción* reflects the experience of the human subjects of the documentary, who for various reasons are also stripped of their authority and turned themselves into spectators as they watch the transforming site of de-construction. Many of the film's characters lead particularly precarious lives. Steven Marsh points out that many "are, for the most part, living provisionally; that is, they are unsettled, displaced and nostalgic" (n.p.). In addition to being displaced, precarious outsiders, many of these social actors are, as I previously discussed, "incívicos," in some sense living in or from the street. With regard to their status in the film, Martínez-Carazo further points out how these outsiders are granted a certain textual centrality that presents a stark contrast to their real-life marginalization: "prostitutas, gitanas drogadictos, dementes, inmigrantes, vagabundos, excluidos tradicionalmente de los diversos proyectos nacionales que marcan la historia de España pasan a ocupar una posición central en el texto y en el espacio urbano que habitan, El Raval, estableciendo con ello un claro contraste entre su centralidad

textual y su marginalidad real" (5). But rather than centering the characters, Guerín achieves this revalorization precisely by cinematically mirroring the experience of the cinematic subjects and preventing any feeling of centrality on the part of the spectator. By placing us in the position of decentralized spectators, the director forces the viewer to experience reality from an estranged position and thereby to in fact appreciate non-central realities (human and spatial), for what they preserve of the anthropological memory of a place, as well as for what they have to offer for that place's future design.

The way Guerín constructs his cinematic subjects becomes particularly relevant if, following Stuart Hall, we consider how subjectivities are fashioned in and through representation. Rejecting a realist understanding of film as "a second-order mirror" of reality, Hall arrives at a new understanding of film "as that form of representation which is able to constitute us as new kinds of subjects and thereby enable us to discover who we are" (80).[44] Rather than re-present his social actors as they exist in the phenomenological reality outside of the film, I argue that Guerín creates new cinematically-central subjects whose intricate and meaningful relationship with the neighborhood is developed both through their conversations as well as through the visual narrative established by the camera. From our decentered position as viewers, we are now forced to visually experience the marginalization that these social actors face in everyday life, and thus establish a new and unique relationship with them within the cinematic reality of the film.

[44] In this piece, "Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation," Stuart Hall speaks specifically of Caribbean cinema and of the potential for a resignification or exploration of the relationship with the colonial past. While his effort to understand cinema is grounded in the particular context from which he is speaking, the intent to reframe cinema as a form that does not merely copy reality but which instead has the ability to constitute new subjectivities is, I believe, a powerful tool in understanding the representation of a variety of social actors.

The focus of this section will therefore be to show how the gaze of the camera creates a decentralized filmic subject and a fragmented cinematic space that mirrors the real-life subjects and physical spaces that are the protagonists of the documentary. Guerín uses this filmic decentralization to shift the viewer's focus to Barcelona's peripheral and marginalized population, who, despite being labeled as *incívicos,* often demonstrate an acute perception of the practices and politics of urban space. Guerín's filmic gesture of decentralizing the spectator and aligning us with the Raval's residents foregrounds otherwise invisible and unquestioned dynamics of power and ultimately destabilizes hegemonic discourses of the city.

The opening scene with Antonio Atar, the homeless ex-*marinero* who wanders the streets of the Raval, is the first of four moments in the documentary I have selected out of many more when Guerín's filming techniques decenter the spectator and, in turn, reflect (on) the marginalized experience of the cinematic subject. As mentioned above, when we first see the ex-*marinero*, he appears to be exchanging a "Buenos días" with a fellow resident. Yet, we see him continuing his speech even after his original receiver has disappeared from view. While talking, Antonio walks toward the camera and continues right past our field of vision, requiring us to wait several seconds before we are able to see him again. This disregard for our position immediately destabilizes the spectator as we discover that our place is not a privileged one. Not only does our subject of interest seem to lack any interest in us, but we are also paralyzed in a static gaze that prevents us from following him. Additionally, the voice of Antonio fails to coincide with the last moments of his physical presence in the frame. This audio-visual rupture occurs when we hear the beginning of Antonio's monologue from the following shot before switching over to the corresponding visual. When we finally change frames and establish coherence between the audio and visual elements, we notice with surprise that we have not

followed Antonio's trajectory since we find him in the same place that he occupied at the beginning of the first shot. Aside from this initial disorientation, we again question our position as Antonio gestures to objects outside of the frame and therefore outside of our visual reach. The series of shots that follow continue to disorient the spectator given that we see distinct images that lack a coherent spatial narrative. Thus, for instance, when the ex-*marinero* refers with an "allí" to a building invisible to the spectator, we are never sure that the object of his gaze is actually the same as the image that follows. We continue to hear Antonio's monologue while choppily moving between shots of the small plaza and begin to feel as if we have lost any autonomy, unable to choose the subject of our gaze and spinning between images that disorient rather than stabilize us.

This decentralized status, however, is not unique to us, as the human subject of our gaze also presents himself as both socially and spatially marginalized. At first Antonio appears to be directing his monologue at another human subject just out of our limited line of vision. As other pedestrians cross through the frame, however, we see them look back over their shoulders at the quasi-philosopher as if he were crazy. This reaction would suggest that, in spite of these subjects possessing a more mobile gaze than us viewers, they too are unable to see the receiver of this conversation. This one-sided conversation already suggests Antonio's eccentricity and consequent social isolation within a society that is unwilling to engage with him. This scene presents us with our first taste of this character, who is later developed in several other scenes throughout the documentary that serve to underscore his marginality, as, for instance, when we see him looking through trash from the demolished buildings or carrying around his cart of collected objects through the streets of the Raval. His relationship with the space in question is doubly peripheral since, although arguably a figure of the neighborhood, he is not the typical

resident but rather someone who navigates *around* the buildings. As he carries his belongings from place to place using the construction site as a temporary resting place, Antonio is an "incívico," one of those undesirable individuals identified by the institutional discourse.

Despite his social marginalization, Antonio's one-sided dialogue demonstrates an exceptional awareness of the spatial character of the city as he compares the "antiquated" urban layout of Barcelona with that of other cities he has seen during his time as a sailor. The primary difference that he understands between a modern London and an outdated Barcelona is the lack of plazas and trees, or, in other words, a lack of those green community spaces that during the 1980s were largely eliminated on the blueprint of Oriol Bohiga's "plaçes dures," which played a key role in the architect's modernizing vision for the city. Resina identifies a gap between Bohigas's claim to want to regenerate a city that had greatly suffered under "Porciolismo" and the actual outcome of such efforts, criticizing the lack of consideration for the community and true green space:

> Although his watchword was 'regeneration,' little in the execution of reforms did justice to the term's organic overtones. Bohigas favored monumentalization of open spaces through architectural design of a markedly avant-garde character. With his blessing, his disciples inflicted the unpopular *plaçes dures* on a city that was starved for green space. Bohigas's 'Mediterranean' predilection for the street as 'living space' underpinned a politics of 'urbanization' of open spaces turning over potential park sites to the architectural establishment. Whether in Albert Viaplana and Helio Piñón's Plaça dels Països Catalans, which someone has described as 'a garden of ideas in which no concession to greenery is made' (Barril 16); in the Moll de la Fusta; in the space newly opened in front of the MACBA (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona); or in the many squares reformed during this period, architects have studiously avoided any 'regression' to nature. Instead they have indulged in conceptual virtuosity, which unfortunately does little to relive the oppressiveness of an overbuilt city. (*Vocation of Modernity* 209)

Resina here critiques Bohiga's (and his generation's) idea of modernization and his avant-garde priorities of ideas over practice, or design of space over use. His privileging the Mediterranean

plaza fails to account, in the case of Barcelona, for the density of the city. This overlook and his view of nature as a regression to a premodern state rather than a necessary component for the physical and mental health of modern urban dwellers, ultimately resulted in large expanses of concrete that serve little purpose in the everyday life of Barcelona's residents. While the Rambla del Raval comes closer to an open green space than those examples cited by Resina, its implementation required the destruction of living space that worked to expel residents rather than to regenerate the preexisting neighborhood. The lack of Barcelona's greenery is illustrated by the film's consistent grey and beige tones and in scenes where Antonio or other homeless residents sit atop a pile of debris or within the remnants of the old apartment building rather than resting in a park. The construction of a new apartment complex that neither creates green community space nor provides the residents with more affordable and dignified housing strikes an ironic cord when considered alongside Antonio's monologue or the many graffitied signs shown in the film calling for rehabilitation rather than demolition.

Antonio's efforts to understand the physical and symbolic space of the neighborhood are soon echoed by a number of other Raval residents in a second moment of filmic decentralization in Guerín's documentary. While digging, the construction workers find human bones in the ground beneath the construction site and are forced to stop the project while archeologists finish uncovering the remains. During this time, the construction site (now archeological site) remains blocked off from the public, who, undeterred, gather around to peer through the barriers that separate them from the historical spectacle. As viewers of the scene, we are afforded an even less privileged view of the site than the neighbors who crowd around the barricades. The discovery of the bones continues to create a decentralized viewer through the static placement of the camera. While the spectator is allowed a view of the uncovered remains at the beginning of this segment,

these archeological discoveries are soon left behind to focus on the neighbors gathered around in curiosity. Guerín sets up his camera in the middle of the (now) archeological site and captures the neighbors as they gather around the closed-off area for a better glimpse of the spectacle. Moving from shot to shot, the camera remains fixed in its gaze, creating an effect similar to that of the previous scene by questioning the spectator's positioning and our authority over our own field of vision. Even though out position is within the construction site, the viewer is once again placed just off-center and given a perspective that is neither privileged nor shared with any of the human subjects in the film. All of the neighbors-turned-spectators are looking down and past us, directing their focus to the bones we know to be there but that we are now unable to see. On one occasion, the gaze of the camera is directly acknowledged as a woman points out "la televisión" to her son. While temporarily centering the filmic subject, the identification of our gaze with "la televisión," spoken in sequence with various other objects such as the metal fence holding the neighbors at bay, effectively destabilizes our position and questions our classical subjectivity. As Resina affirms, the reliance on the fixed camera enhances our impression that we are "no longer secure in the pre-empirical categories of time and space" and he further attests that the dominant effect of this insecurity "is to alter the traditional relation between the subject's stability and the mutability of appearances. Immersed in the experience of visual dispersion, the subject is unable to restore coherence to the world. Henceforth it is technology's disembodied vision that organizes the image, however blind or insensitive to the human need for harmony" ("Cinematic Image" 257). True to his observation, the technological gaze with which our position has been identified continues to organize the series of images with little regard for spatial or temporal coherence. Every shot of the onlookers is spatially distinct from the next: as spectators, we

assume that the space must be circular, but the filmic space created through the camera images remains fragmented and we are unable to put the pieces together into a cohesive whole.

By focusing on the neighbors peering over the barrier, our gaze abandons the protagonists of the scene, the human remains, to turn instead the living and breathing inhabitants of the Raval into the central subjects. Despite constituting the focus of our gaze, however, these individuals who surround the site are relegated to the periphery of the space and consequently turned into spectators themselves. Their visible leaning and gentle pushing underline their (at least temporarily) peripheral status, while at the same time demonstrating their strong curiosity for the history of the space, and this despite their being forbidden any direct interaction with it. As two women of distinct appearance and presumably different backgrounds discuss, "Todos caben en el mismo agujero", to which the other replies, "menos mal, porque si no…" (00:24:07). Guerín captures a rare moment in which the characters realize they are only temporarily protagonists in the course of history, and through this decentralized status come to see each other as peers, unmarked by their physical and social differences and connected precisely by their ultimate unimportance in a space that continues to bury their remains beneath layers of time. The urban planning taking place will undoubtedly push them farther and farther to the periphery with the construction of a new, remodeled apartment building intended to replace the unsightly older buildings that are presently housing many of these same inhabitants.

As they create a humorously wide range of hypotheses as to the potential story behind the remains, the residents of the Raval show a desire to understand the space of their neighborhood in its full significance and express surprise and awe at having lived over the bones of the dead without ever knowing it. Some believe that the bones are from Roman times, others that they are from an ethnic cleansing, others still that they are remains of the dictatorship. This cacophony of

simultaneous sounds and opposing hypotheses works alongside the gaze of the camera to decentralize the spectator and to thwart our search for understanding, while playing an important role in prioritizing the voice of the social actors and contributing to the "retablo humano" that José Ignacio Arane and Alejandro Quintana have identified in the film (169). The critics argue that this "documento coral" reflects "el sentido *arqueológico* de Guerín por recuperar espacios y tiempos que hasta su intervención desveladora resultaban opacos, sepultados por la *realidad* o próximos a desaparecer" (169). By permitting them the opportunity to participate in the construction of meaning of the cemetery site, Guerín gives the residents a leading role in the film and allows the plurality of voices within the neighborhood to be democratically expressed. In this capacity, his documentary becomes more than observational and instead permits the residents to construct meaning for the site without ever giving the viewer a conclusion from the multiplicity of opinions.

If the residents are marginalized within their own neighborhood, the construction workers who interact directly with and over the site are marginalized by the nature of their work. Two of the film's primary protagonists are bricklayers Santiago Segade, from Andalusia, and Abdel Aziz El Mountassir, from Morocco. As viewers, Guerín places us not in the position of either of these workers but rather in a position that reflects their marginalization. In one particularly notable scene and a third moment of decentralization in the film, the two workers continue their labor late into the night, illuminated only by several small lamps. If we examine first the cinematic spectator, this gaze is once again decentralized through the positioning of the camera. The first shot is of the two workers together, but taken from behind Abdel, as if looking over his shoulder. We then have an individual side shot of Abdel where we watch him setting up the lighting to illuminate Santiago's work, followed by a shot of Santiago where we seem to be positioned

between him and Abdel, but just off to the side. When we return to the perspective of the two men from behind Abdel, we can see that no one occupies the place where we were previously positioned. It is relevant here what Brown, citing Oudart, has to say about the "absent one": "Oudart's account (Film Quarterly, Fall 1974) proposes that imagery is paradigmatically referred to the authority of the glance of the 'absent one,' the offscreen character within the story who in the countershot is depicted within the frame; the spectator 'identifies' with the visual field of the 'owner' of the glance" (211). This absent character is assumed to be responsible for viewpoints not held by one of the characters onscreen. When the absent character is revealed to be in fact absent, the spectator experiences a disconcerting shock. We cannot explain the view between Santiago and Abdel once we see in the following shot that nothing is there. Similarly, as Santiago moves along in his work, we watch him through various shots close up and directly from the side, a position that, again, is shown to be vacant when we change perspectives and watch both workers over the other shoulder of the Moroccan.

This empty space that constitutes a jarring vision for the spectator is perhaps the most effective tool used by Guerín in decentralizing the viewer and is a primary component in many of the scenes involving conversations between various workers, including the scenes between Abdel and Santiago. Additionally, in this two-person conversation are various moments where we would expect a "shot reverse-shot" sequence, which Brown explains as the identification of the spectator's gaze with one of the two characters as they watch the other character, followed by a shot that reveals this first character with whom we shared our viewpoint. These sequences are *almost* achieved in between the construction workers, yet the camera refuses to place itself in the same position as one of its human subjects. While steering away from a more technical analysis

of Guerín's filmic techniques, Martínez-Carazo nevertheless offers an insightful view regarding the rational behind this filming choice:

> En el caso que nos ocupa parece existir una voluntad de plasmar en imágenes la dificultad que encierra hablar por el otro, de usurparle su propia representación. Para ello la cámara se sitúa detrás de los personajes, no por encima de ellos los muestra de espaldas y ve con ellos el espectáculo de lo cotidiano…El director renuncia a una posición privilegiada y se instala a la altura de los personajes, se transforma en su cómplice, creando así un texto a partir de la afinidad, desprovisto de condescendencia, que ni ensalza ni degrada. (9)

Martinez-Carazo refers to this filming technique on a symbolic level, but in fact her analogy also supports my view that the camera *physically* occupies the space just behind, or just beside, the filmic subjects. By watching over their shoulders and not through their eyes, Guerín makes a gesture to renounce a more privileged position and instead lends a degree of agency to characters who are otherwise granted very little consideration by the rest of society.

The resulting filmic space, although still disjointed, provides us with some degree of orientation given the fact that the space in which the workers are located is relatively limited in size. Despite this small area, however, the camera angles and zoom ins and outs construct a spatial experience that continues to deny us any certainty of its full nature but gives us instead disorienting blocks of space. The night scene also disorients us through obscuring boundaries and by further preventing any full awareness of the spatial form. The artificial lights positioned and held by Abdel add to the disorientation through the illumination of select sides or angles of both the people and objects present. In the final series of shots within this nighttime sequence, we watch not the workers, but rather the shadows of their bodies cast onto the neighboring buildings as they continue their conversation. These images create a ghostly feeling of non-belonging, of the ultimate decentralization of the subject in space as the physical building, with

its living, three-dimensional workers, disappears beneath our feet to be replaced by two-dimensional, disproportionate shadows and bodiless voices from a place we can no longer see.

The owners of these shadows have their own stories of marginalization to tell. Santiago, while Spanish, is not from Catalonia and Abdel is a Moroccan immigrant worker. Santiago seems to practice a form of self-marginalization by emphasizing that all he needs is to be left "tranquilo" with a few bottles of wine. However, it becomes clear as the scene develops that while he complains about Abdel's philosophical questions and musings, he does not reject the company of the latter. Abdel, who in turn occupies a decentralized position as an immigrant with a different social and religious background, continues to make efforts towards communicating with his coworker and demonstrates a concern for "la gente misma," as he says, the people who, under capitalism, have become marginalized voices in the story of their own lives. This concern for marginalized individuals, expressed by another marginalized voice, echoes the "storytelling" of the documentary that adopts a decentralized position to present, rather than *re-present*, its liminal characters.

Much like Antonio, Abdel shows his acute awareness and even his obsession with governing powers and pushes his companion Santiago to consider a system outside of capitalism, one in which the building they are working on (destined to much wealthier residents than the surrounding buildings) would not exist. In his conversation with another Arabic-speaking worker, Abdel clearly sees the process of gentrification in the neighborhood and points out the disparity between the amount of money given to those who were kicked out of the old building and the money they would charge for the new apartments. In contrast to Santiago, the figure of Abdel provides a reflection on the degree to which newer immigration might challenge the status quo. As Candel pointed out, "la immigració no peninsular i no comunitària parla diferent, viu

força diferent i és percebuda pels autòctons com a molt i molt aliena a 'el que és propi d'aquí'" (16). Candel reminds us that these differences must be not only recognized but respectfully embraced, adding that our neoliberal society largely prevents a truly equitable integration. He points out several of the failures of a democratic society that promises fundamental rights, for instance, the right to housing and dignified work, with which it subsequently fails to comply (23-24). He implicitly argues that a democratic government married to a capitalist society has little ability to guarantee these rights, as the framework of capitalism fosters unequal distribution of wealth and "deixa perpètuament ajornada la possibilitat d'una integració social raonable" (24). In terms of integration within the Raval, Resina further reminds us that, "City Hall's surgical interventions and sustained efforts to import new architecture and public buildings into this area did not lead to a more integrated district. On the contrary, despite the good intentions and questionable architecture, the neighborhood's marginality has augmented" ("Cinematic Image" 270). Already a particularly diverse and marginalized area, the urban plans designed to essentially clean up but also integrate the neighborhood into the rest of Ciutat Vella in fact worked to marginalize it further.

Foreign immigration as presented through the figure of Abdel challenges more than the neoliberal status quo since it also brings attention to the types of citizens the city is creating, and the type of city Barcelona hopes to be. Matías Martínez Abejón has astutely pointed out that "Guerín subvierte las expectativas respecto a quienes es lícito que vivan en la polis, implicando que cierta conciencia del lugar que se ocupa en el tejido urbano es un criterio más útil que la nacionalidad" (104). Based on Edward Soja's explanation of being urbanized as "to be made an adherent, a believer in a specified collective ideology rooted in extensions of *polis* (politics, policy, polity, police) and *civitas* (civil, civic, civilian, civilization)" (qtd. in Martínez Abejón

105), Martínez Abejón argues that "se podría establecer que sus [Guerín's] interlocutores de origen africano, a pesar de haber llegado a Barcelona más tarde, entienden mejor qué supone ser miembro de la comunidad urbana, lo que implicaría una actitud a un tiempo cívica y política" (105).[45] Guerín provides an argument, through the social actors themselves, that those who are most marginalized and seen as unable to fit into current society may in fact better understand what a healthy urban community should look like and are able and willing to point out Barcelona's own failings. Even though Guerín's filmic subjects all have their own blind spots or flaws (Antonio, for example, sees the value in green space but also advocates for the opening of boulevards rather than the rehabilitation or creation of affordable housing from which he himself could profit), it is precisely through the constellation of characters and opinions that we spectators learn what a diverse and healthy community could look like. And yet, it is this diversity and productive conflict that the urban renovation seeks to either homogenize or eliminate. Even though Abdel and the other construction workers are directly responsible for the shaping of the space and the construction of the new building, ultimately, they will have no contact with the finished product, as its new renters begin to flood the empty apartments by the end of the documentary. As Antonio Gómez L-Quiñonez has pointed out, Guerín's film illustrates how "la modernización material del espacio en la democracia española viene acompañada por el fracaso de una modernidad político-cultural de carácter emancipador" (364). Despite the strong relationship developed with the space, the workers will never have the economic means to be renters of the apartments they build in this city that has failed in its emancipatory project.

[45] The original work that Martínez Abejón cites is Edward Soja's *Postmodern Geographies. The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, 234-235.

This socio-economic discrepancy between construction workers and renters is fully visible in the sequence of scenes in which the potential tenants are given tours of the newly built apartment complex. In the fourth and final moment of cinematic decentralization, the camera shots continue to decentralize the spectator through static, separated images and rely once again upon the empty spaces created where the viewer expects themselves to be positioned. The building under construction and its half-finished rooms are utilized to further decentralize the viewer's position by opposing our limited and unmoving visions of the space to the panoramic and three-dimensional experience of the human subjects as they tour the apartment. We watch them through open doors and unfinished walls without ever gaining an understanding of how the separated fragments come together. We move around the buyers much as the workers do, attempting to continue their work as the potential new tenants begin to flood their space. Several of the shots from this final sequence are from outside the building looking in on the exposed rooms that remain without walls. This distancing effect contrasts starkly with the frequent close-ups through which we see the construction workers and other protagonists up to this point and suggests a will to view these newcomers with less compassion and identification than we view the previous characters.

It is thus through this peripheral positioning of the camera that we come to see these new tenants as invaders. By showing them alongside the workers, Guerín underlines the invisibility of the latter as they attempt to finish their project while actively ignored by the very people for whom the final project is intended. In addition to the evident disregard for the workers, the tenants' disapproving comments regarding the unsightly surrounding buildings and their inhabitants immediately demonstrate the hierarchy of the newcomers in relation to the current residents of the *barri* who, unlike their socio-economically privileged counterparts, have strong

ties with the Raval. As Martínez Abejón points out, "Sus nuevos habitantes se muestran disgustados en el filme de Guerín cuando se dan cuenta de que tendrán que mirar a sus antiguos moradores, es decir, obreros, inmigrantes, drogadictos, prostitutas, vagabundos y, en general, cualquier vecino que no se integre en cierta economía de lo visual" (104). One of the new tenants, after his wife comments on the ugly view, even suggests that they could run curtains around the balcony window, "sistema teatro antiguo," to hide that which they wish not to see. His gesture mimicking the opening and closing of the curtain further indicates a certain center staging of themselves, in which the fellow neighbors will be allowed by the newcomers to witness the spectacle of their lives much like a theatrical performance. Martínez-Carazo affirms how "estos nuevos habitantes se instalan en un espacio deseado por su posición central, pero habitado por ciudadanos no deseados. De ahí su voluntad de hacerlos invisibles, de ignorar su presencia, de construir un muro delante de su ventana que oculte la miseria que tanto les incomoda" (9). The critic further adds that the film, "lejos de legitimar la presencia de estos recien llegados, subraya su no pertenencia, su papel de intrusos en un espacio que no les pertenece" (9). The new building and its inhabitants will not participate in the dynamic of the current neighborhood but will rather declare itself the center of attention and relegate its surroundings to the status of peripheral observers, a relationship which Guerín clearly condemns through his cinematic technique.

While distancing the viewer from the newcomers, Guerín is still careful to maintain visible that which has already become marginalized, showing us not the finished building but rather the workers still busy at their job while the newcomers navigate around them. As Isabel Estrada notes,

> Se trata de dos mundos completamente separados, pero Guerín proporciona visibilidad al que está siendo relegado a la invisibilidad. Evita, mediante la superposición técnica, que

> el tercer estrato, el presente, entierre a aquellos que habitaban este mismo espacio, el pasado. Después de casi dos horas de documental, los espectadores nos hemos identificado con los habitantes del barrio y con nuestra mirada evitamos que se conviertan en víctimas del presente. (38)

Again, the construction workers and the neighborhood's previous inhabitants are marginalized in a space in which they should belong, a phenomenon that Guerín counteracts to maintain their peripheral status visible to the spectator and to remind us of the experiences we have shared with them. The renters' identity as "invaders" is developed in part through our familiarity with Abdel. As we watch him moving around the newcomers in order to complete his work and witness his invisibility to the "colonizadores," as Guerín and his team supposedly referred to them, we cannot help but see the injustice present in the scene, albeit an injustice socially normalized and fully expected.[46] Our temporally dense cinematic experience has allowed us glimpses of the stories behind the surface, the "alma" of the people and objects who gradually became the subjects of the film.

Instead of continuing to document the building in its finished stages, Guerín makes a powerful statement with the closing scene of his film. The camera abandons the site it occupied over the course of two full years and choses instead to follow Juani and Iván, a couple that by the end of the movie is established perhaps as the lead protagonists of the myriad of marginalized characters. Juani is a sex worker and supports both herself and her boyfriend, Iván. While perhaps a popular occupation in the history of the Barri Xino, this is precisely the demographic that the urban renovation projects are now seeking to remove from the neighborhood. Two more "incívicos," Juani and Iván are unable to pay their bills and find temporary refuge in the abandoned buildings subsequently torn down to make way for newer constructions that will

[46] The reference to "colonizadores" was found in Martínez-Carazo's article "Deconstrucción/Reconstrucción: *En Construcción* De José Luis Guerín (2001)."

house wealthier occupants. The two social actors are shown moving to increasingly marginalized spaces throughout the film since they start in one of the apartments in the old building, then move to other spaces within it, and finally sleep on the ground in the shelter of the new structure before the final scene in which they walk away from the site entirely.

After the stream of static viewpoints, which served in large part to create the effect of a decentralized spectator, the camera now travels down the streets of the Raval ahead of its subjects. To the spectator who has grown accustomed to viewing the space and the objects within it through an immobile lens, this simple change in filming is immediately striking and nearly as disorienting as the earlier decentering techniques used throughout the documentary. The space we traverse is consequently seen in sequence, each image flowing into the next to create a comprehensive whole. The cinematic spectator thus appears to have finally found solid ground, ironically, through movement and autonomy in the creation and active use of space.

With the last stages of construction under way, we can assume that the couple's journey down the street is symbolic of a very real expulsion from the space in question and a journey to find somewhere else to live. As the camera moves with them, we are endowed with a new sense of comradery, as we too choose to abandon the space that can no longer be home to these marginalized characters we have come to know. Héctor Pérez and Fernando Canet have argued that Guerín takes the side of the victims through the use of this single traveling shot (226), and Martínez-Carazo cites Guerín as having explicitly verbalized this scene as demonstrating a moral choice to walk away from the site with his characters (9). If the creation of a decentralized cinematic subject aided in the representation of the many decentralized real-life subjects of the documentary, this final scene serves not to undermine, but rather to strengthen this relationship by finally rendering the spectator mobile and choosing to follow along with the young couple.

Even if they continue to be marginalized in the space and story of their neighborhood, Guerín makes these characters into protagonists through the humanizing gaze of the camera.

Guerín has appropriately called *En construcción* "una película de personas" and explains that "[le] ha salido una película desde una perspectiva humanista, por lo menos en la medida en que el centro es el ser humano" (Guerín 179-180). While many critics have identified the protagonist of the film to be the architecture itself and while the construction site was certainly the space that all human subjects used and gravitated around, Guerín's concern was for those humans who were the real debris of this urban transformation. Nearly all of them "incívicos," many of the socially marginalized cinematic subjects demonstrate a rather nuanced understanding of the nature of urban planning while displaying a rare ability to coinhabit the space peacefully, yet resiliently. Guerín's unintrusive filming technique thus continues to ask piercing questions regarding the logic of "civil" society embedded in the ideology of Barcelona's recent projects of modernization.

TAKING ON BY TAKING APART: HOUSING SPECULATION, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND PUBLIC SPACE IN *CIUTAT MORTA* (2014)

Ciutat morta, Video Activism, and Social Movements

The opening sequence of Xavier Artigas's and Xapo Ortega's 2014 documentary film *Ciutat morta* shows a diverse crowd gathering outside an abandoned cinema on the Vía Layetana in Barcelona. Several organizers plaster a sign above the entrance reading "Cinema Patricia Heras" as another explains to the crowd that since they have no permit to use the space everyone involved must assume the potential risks of participating in this illegal activity. The camera then follows the crowd into the building and watches as everyone settles into their seats while a film is projected onto the large screen. The opening shot of the film is a quote by Montesquieu that sets the tone for the rest of the film: "Il n'y a point de plus cruelle tyrannie que celle que l'on exerce à l'ombre des lois et avec les couleurs de la justice" (There is no crueler tyranny than that which is exercised in the shadow of the law and under color of justice) (00:02:44). Within seconds, we realize that *Ciutat morta* begins with the very circumstances of its own initial showing; with a digital blurt of sound and a visible shift in clarity, the quote is transposed into the realm of the documentary we are about to watch and comes to occupy our entire field of vision.

The beginning announces the purpose of the film to construct a counter-narrative and to open a public dialogue, which is paradoxically, but necessarily, carried out as an act of civil disobedience. The film's initial reflexivity regarding its purpose and the political and social context of its showing, not to mention its incorporation of "hacker" aesthetics portrayed, as Eva Woods Peiró has noted, by the visual glitch and synthetic noises accompanying the captions,

situates it as a clear example of video activism.[47] Concha Mateos and Carmen Gaona define video activism as "an audiovisual discursive practice that sets out to counter a discursive abuse or gap and is carried out by actors outside the dominant power structures" (1). Ana Rodríguez Granell additionally argues that most of these nonfiction activist films "no sólo proponen contradiscursos, sino plataformas y redes de colaboración ciudadana en movimientos sociales" (48). The screening of *Ciutat morta* itself was an act of political defiance of dominant power structures intended to expose the institutional collusion behind 4F, a highly controversial criminal proceeding in Barcelona. The documentary was produced by Metromuster using crowd-funding and a Creative Commons License in order to reduce legal barriers for distribution (Vialette 102). A well-known activist producer, Metromuster describes itself on its own website as "una productora independent que porta experimentant amb l'art, la comunicació i la política des del 2010" (Metromuster n.p.). Among their objectives they list "contribuir al canvi social a través de l'empoderament de tot tipus de comunitats i col·lectius en lluita, formes alternatives d'entendre els espais de convivència i la recuperació de la memòria històrica" (n.p.). Metromuster has produced numerous other documentaries that can easily be categorized as social activism, including their two most recent productions, *Tarajal* (2016) and *Idrissa* (2018), both focused on immigration in Spain. The goal of *Ciutat morta* as well as their other films is to inform the public of the fissures in institutional hegemonic discourses and, ultimately, to spur new social justice movements.

Ciutat morta and Metromuster's efforts at large follow a global trend in recent years in which the development of social movements and protests has been closely linked with digital

[47] Eva Woods Peiró has identified how the visual glitch and the synthetic noises emulating an electronic glitch are "a central aesthetic motif in the documentary" and reads them as a suspenseful addition to the building up of evidence as well as a purposeful reflection on the importance of knowledge of technology in "dismantling the system" ("Subveillant narration" 253).

media shared through online platforms. At the international level, as Michael Chanan has shown, most protests and social movements of the first decade of the twenty-first century maintained a "symbiotic and dialectical relationship" with social as well as "small" media, which Chanan describes as media "which flourish in the margins and interstices of the public sphere" and "are opposed to the big media that represent power and authority" (52). Metromuster clearly positions itself within this framework, as a producer that encourages and is shaped by community-oriented counter-discourses. In the case of Spain in particular, Francisco Sierra Caballero and David Montero Sánchez have examined how video activism and the use of the Internet as an emancipatory tool were prefigured by the severe 2011 housing and economic crisis, whose effects were already felt even before Metromuster was launched.[48] The two critics confirm how the 15M or Indignados movement, which was spurred by the economic crisis, privileged video activism as a tool for the collectivization of social action online and as a way to promote transparency ("Apropriación de las tecnologías" 264).

Although aligned with the 15M movement and with the video activism legacy that it inspired (Peiró 249), *Ciutat morta* harkens back to an event that occurred in the years prior to the crisis and whose circumstances are connected to the institutional corruption and widespread real estate speculation that would lead up to the culmination of the national economic disaster in 2011. More specifically, *Ciutat morta* fits among a surge of activist documentaries that reflect on the politics and practices of the urban space. Sierra Caballero and Montero Sánchez speak of recent video activism, particularly in the context of Spain, as being strongly connected to new

[48] One example of early effects of the 2011 crisis was increased problems in housing. La PAH (Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca), although it gained particular attention in conjunction with the *Indignados* movement, was created between 2008 and 2009 in Barcelona in response to the alarming housing situation that was already taking place within the city well before 2011. The PAH in Barcelona is the subject of another activist documentary film associated with the 15M movement, *SÍ SE PUEDE. 7 dias en PAH Barcelona* (2015).

urban movements (many arising from the crisis) that include "la reivindicación de memorias espaciales amenazadas por las nuevas lógicas culturales" as well as "la irrupción de la ciudad como espacio en constante conflicto" and "la ocupación de espacios de producción de cara a instaurar circuitos culturales alternativos" ("Nuevos movimientos" 163). Other recent activist films concerned with urban issues connected to the crisis—some of which were already present in a film like *En construcción* (2001)—include *[No res] Vida i mort d'un espai en tres actes* (Metromuster, 2012), *Poblenou: la lluita per l'espai urbà* (Jacobo Sucari, 2006), and *El Forat (1998-2004)* (Falconetti Peña, 2004), just to name a few. Sierra Caballero and Montero Sánchez argue that the practice of video activism as evidenced by these and other activist non-fiction films is "radicalmente democrática no sólo en tanto que dispositivo de reconstrucción de la ciudad como escenario de intercambio, sino también como ejercicio de creación y resistencia que recurre a nuevas herramientas de auto-organización social" (163). In an era when democratic values have largely been undermined by neoliberal politics and policies, *Ciutat morta* reframes the city of Barcelona as a stage for contesting the official voice of the city's governing powers and for opening up closed-circuit processes to the public. For Sierra Caballero and Montero Sánchez, *Ciutat morta* is indeed the first case of video activism that had significant success and social repercussion in Spain (172). Not only did this film spark an uproar but it was so effective at mobilizing the public that the judicial system was forced to respond to their critiques.[49]

In labeling *Ciutat morta* a "liberatory form of free culture activism, distributed both transmedially and geographically," Eva Woods Peiró has stressed how its specific mission is to

[49] As Aurélie Vialette argues, "the statement from the Barcelona Superior Court of Justice itself elevates *Ciutat Morta's* significance by acknowledging that its broadcast on television produced serious social unrest" (103). The fact that the court felt obliged to respond to the airing of the film demonstrates how incredibly effective the documentary was at spurring perhaps unrest but more importantly, social mobilization that questioned the judicial process.

"witness, or 'subveil,' abuse by states, their agents or corporations" ("Subveillant narration" 249). Subveillance is a term Peiró and others use to posit the need for anti-surveillance, that is to say, the need to watch those who watch us. In what follows, I show that *Ciutat morta* goes beyond performing an act of subveillance, or, to put it differently, the film proposes that in specific ways of watching and representing there exists the possibility of concretely intervening in the surrounding world. Centering on events in the popular neighborhood of the Ribera, *Ciutat morta* uses cinematic montage to take apart, or "desmontar," the judicial and police montage behind the famous 4F case. By dismantling the case, the documentary exposes the broad institutional collusion involved not only in the judicial proceedings but in the speculation of the urban space and the violation of the social rights of Barcelona's citizens.

Housing Speculation and Xenophobia in the Barri de la Ribera: The Case of 4F

The events related in *Ciutat morta* take place in and around Barcelona's historically working-class and immigrant-populated barri de la Ribera. Although often referred to as simply "la Ribera," this area within the Ciutat Vella district is in fact composed of Sant Pere, Santa Caterina, and la Ribera to form a single neighborhood. Following Catalonia's loss in the War of Succession in 1714, a large part of la Ribera was razed to make way for the Ciutadella, a fortified, military citadel that became a symbol of Catalan repression. Like el Raval, la Ribera remained largely marginalized within the center of the city until more recent efforts sought to change the profile of the neighborhood. The pre-Olympic urban policies of the 1980s began an intense process of gentrification in the neighborhood. Such policies, Manuel Delgado ironically emphasizes, occur "en la época en la que según algunos Barcelona todavía era una ciudad entregada a los ideales democráticos y sociales que habían orientado —dicen— la transición

postfascista" ("Algunos referentes" n.p.). As I discussed in Chapter Three, the urban policies that came out of the 1992 Olympic Games targeted certain working-class areas of the city in order to begin a renewal process which undeniably resulted in gentrification. Akin to what occurred in the Raval, certain areas within the Ribera neighborhood have been targeted for renovation and have witnessed the installation or monumentalizing of cultural and historic sites as part of this process. The lower part of the Ribera, el Born, is now a popular tourist destination and boasts not only the Catedral del Mar, internationally famous due to its prominence in numerous novels and even a television series in the past years, but also el Born Centre Cultural, which has become an integral part of Barcelona's tourist routes. Already in 2006, Manuel Delgado describes the area around the Born, the Museo Picasso, and Santa Maria del Mar as "ya debidamente desinfectada" and attests to the "colosal mutación urbanística que había empezado a restaurar edificios para dedicarlos al comercio de alto nivel, a la venta de lofts para profesionales con éxito o al alquiler de apartamentos para esa pequeña multitude de extranjeros con dinero que los están convirtiendo en residencias de vacaciones o de fin de semana" ("El forat" n.p.).

The Ribera's identity in most recent years has been divided between references to these more glamourous cultural points of interest and a reputation for crime and "incivility."[50] As I discussed in Chapter Three, Miquel Fernández González identified this official rhetoric centered on civism as the new and modern justification for certain interventions in the urban fabric and explained how this new logic identified those whose livelihood, in some capacity, depended on the street as "incívicos" (154-155). In an effort to address this "incivil" aspect of the neighborhood and the larger district of the Ciutat Vella, El Proyecto de Intervención Integral was

[50] Some titles relating to the Barri de la Ribera from *La Vanguardia* from the last decade include, "Nuevo robo violento a un turista de un reloj de 18.000 euros en Barcelona" (2019), "El comercio del Born alerta sobre el abandono del barrio (2018), "Detingut el presumpte aurot del doble apunyalament al barri de la Ribera" (2014), and "Un detenido y decenas de identificados en una redada en el barrio de la Ribera" (2012).

established in 2004 to open up the crowded and self-contained area to the rest of the city. As a 2005 article in *El País* explained regarding the neighborhood's need for reform, "El Proyecto de Intervención Integral…servirá, a juicio del consistorio, para recuperar económicamente, social y urbanísticamente el barrio" (Marimon n.p.). The article cites particular concern regarding the rise in the immigrant population, which made up 27.4% of the neighborhood's population compared to the 8% that constituted the municipal average (n.p.). According to the same article, the coordinator of the plan, Manel Arbiol, explained how funds for the project would be directed towards ending "el aislamiento del barrio" through urban interventions and combatting the "falta de civismo" (n.p.). While these plans purportedly took into consideration the desires of neighborhood groups (Blanco, Castro, and Grau 8), the rhetoric around civism and the hygienist discourse (which characterized also the plans to revive the Raval, as we saw) that were at the fore of these discussions nevertheless signal an unspoken desire to reform by excluding certain members of the Ribera population.

The high citizen participation in the design of new urban plans for the area of Sant Pere-Santa Catarina observed by Blanco, Castro, and Grau, is also noted by Marc Parés, Marc Martí-Costa, and Ismael Blanco; however, Parés, Martí-Costa, and Blanco also point out how this high participation contradictorily resulted in a lower level of influence compared to what had happened in other areas of the city. Among the possible reasons for this phenomenon, the authors include "the poor quality of participation mechanisms and the polarisation between some community organisms that are very close to the local government and some social movements that are very critical of the urban policy carried out" (3258). *Ciutat morta* confronts these specific concerns through the incorporation of the polemic debate around the Forat de la vergonya, the site of "a strong confrontation between part of the neighborhood's community

fabric and the municipal government" (3264), that has been the focal point of much of the tension between residents and the city's governing forces. The space was already the object of an earlier, aforementioned documentary titled *El forat* (2006), which chronicled the neighbors' efforts and ensuing confrontations with city officials. *Ciutat morta* summarizes the ongoing conflict through a series of captions and interviews with several experts and some of the neighbors. Working with a semi-private company PROCVESA (Promoció Ciutat Vella, SA), the city had expropriated and torn down various housing blocks in the Ribera neighborhood without communicating to the residents what they planned to do with the space. In response, a small group of neighbors reclaimed one of the opened areas and converted it into a public, green zone, in an action that began a long battle for the right to decide the use of the public space. Over the course of several years, the neighbors put up a formidable fight to claim this area as a green space and a garden, the same area which the city, without public admission, had already designated as a future parking garage. Ultimately the intent on the part of the government officials and city planners to speculate on urban space affected not only the small piece of land and surrounding apartments, but the social rights of those who lived there. As I will show, *Ciutat morta*'s interest in representing the conflicts over the right to decide the use of the space, as well the right to rehabilitated housing versus new and more expensive lofts and apartments, is intricately connected to the judicial case that the film attempts to disassemble.

Ciutat morta takes on the real estate speculation surrounding the Forat de la vergonya prior to the crisis through the specific case of 4F, which arose from a tragic event on February 4th of 2006 in la Ribera. After opening with the circumstances of its own illegal showing, the film begins to tell the story of 4F through found footage (presumably filmed by a neighbor) and a series of captions. In the first segment of found footage, we see a street illuminated with lights

and filled with police vehicles. As we discern from the audio and the accompanying captions, the police attempted to evacuate a party in an occupied theater and the event. The situation quickly turned violent and resulted in the life-threatening injury of one of the officers who was hit on the head by a large object thrown from the roof of the theater. The captions then inform the viewer that, despite the fact that the objects were indeed being thrown from the roof of the building, the police began arresting people on the street immediately after the injury. The video then turns to a series of interviews with either those who were arrested or those who speak on their behalf. The objective is to prove that these individuals were innocent either because they were not on the rooftop from where the object was thrown or, in two cases, because they were never present at the site of the conflict at all. Throughout the recorded interviews, these five individuals, most of them either queer or of Latin American origin, testify that they or their friends were insulted with racist slurs, were homophobically profiled, and experienced torture at the hands of the police before they were even put on trial. Once they did in fact go to trial, the judge purportedly failed to take into account their testimonies regarding the torture, and also failed to consider evidence provided by an outside party (not the police) that confirmed that the officer had been struck with an object thrown from above and not from the level of the street. As several lawyers testify throughout the documentary, the reasons behind this decision seem evident when taking into account the fact that the city owned the property in question, and thus would have been legally responsible for the injuries if unable to identify another responsible party. The five individuals were found guilty and sentenced to several years of prison.[51] One of these individuals, Patricia Heras (under whose name the abandoned cinema was rebaptized), tragically committed suicide

[51] Seven individuals were detained at the site of the theater, three of which were Rodrigo, Álex and Juan. The documentary does not say whether the other four individuals were also sentenced to jail time.

after her release. Her death was largely what sparked the making of the documentary as well as other efforts at social mobilization, which only increased after the film's airing.

As the film begins to peel back the layers of police lies and judicial injustice, a greater, even more terrifying background is revealed. In exploring the interests connected to the specific location of the occupied theater, Artigas and Ortega interview a number of neighbors in the area, many of them involved with the Forat de la vergonya, who bring to light some concerning issues. We learn that the abandoned theater had become a site of increasingly frequent partying for young alternative youth, as well as for some *okupas*, a fact that had nevertheless been largely ignored by law enforcement until that time. The neighbors, many of them also *okupas*, explain how their so-far successful bid to turn the public space of the Forat de la vergonya into a community-centered, green space had clashed heavily with the city's speculative plans. Their persistence and continual success in pursuing both legal and other more visible and direct means of protest in order to protect their otherwise peaceful and communal green space had not sat well with city officials, who had then looked for another course of action. According to Metello Alonge and Rafaello Manacorda, two residents of the neighborhood involved with the Forat, the administration had turned a blind eye to the increasingly rowdy events occurring in the occupied theater in order to build up an excuse within the rest of the community to intervene more drastically and thus pursue their speculative ventures in the name of security and public health. In his interview in the documentary, Manuel Delgado points out that the city's desire to expand on the idea of the "parc thematic," which had already imprinted the area around Santa Maria del Mar and the transformation of working-class housing into lofts for professionals and wealthy foreigners, meant that everything (and everyone) who was already there needed to go. Not only the okupas, but also the neighborhood's residents "sobraven" in the city's speculative plans

(01:15:54). Not unlike the marginal sectors analyzed in the previous chapters, also in the case of the Ribera specific fringes of the population who are considered inconvenient for a certain vision of modernization are either strategically targeted or conveniently overlooked in the urban plans. The premise of the documentary is that the events of the 4F targeted *okupas* and *antisistemas* as part of a larger plan of emptying the barri de la Ribera of its historical residents so to make room for more desirable ones.

The focus on "civismo" and on public health is here again instrumental (as in previous times) to justify targeting alternative-looking individuals and their activities. And this even though several of the detainees did not associate themselves with the *okupa* or *antisistema* movements, and also despite the fact that the *okupa* movement in Barcelona had often been a positive and collaborative force in the community, as demonstrated by their role in the Forat de la vergonya. As the documentary attempts to prove, the victims were seemingly detained primarily for looking "antisistema," a fact that nearly all the interviewees deem deeply troubling when judicial objectivity and democratic values and governance are at stake. Helena Torres, a close friend of the young woman who committed suicide, explains how the victims were detained "per les pintes" which, independently of the truth, marked them for the police as "part d'un grup que es considera marginal" (01:03:01). This kind of profiling, she continues, may be expected in a dictatorship but is especially unsettling "en un Estat de Dret" (01:05:48). The inclusion in judicial statements given by the officers of subjective descriptions such as "iban tres jóvenes de estética okupa," referred to by another detainee, speaks to the sort of discursive short circuit that operated at a judicial level (01:07:54).

In foregrounding this kind of discursive fallacies together with the xenophobic, racist and homophobic attitude of police and judiciary systems toward those who do not conform to

cultural norms, the documentary seeks not only to restore justice to those wrongly convicted, but perhaps, more importantly, to dismantle the elaborate institutional montage invisibly at work. Aurélie Vialette has indeed argued for a reading of the film as "an on-screen trial" which seeks to present an alternative trial to the official one which ended in the conviction of the *antisistema* youth. Importantly, if *Ciutat morta* does mimic the format of a trial, it is not a simple repetition of the same trial that already failed, but rather a crucial shifting of framework from an institutional, courtroom setting to a filmic one that is ultimately more democratic. The film thus provides an opportunity for the convicted to testify in a realm that, although lacking the judicial authority of the courtroom, is also crucially outside of the framework of institutional corruption that these individuals have faced. Not only does the realm of film, and specifically video activism, allow the testimonies to be heard by a much larger online public who do not hold the same power differential with the individuals as the law enforcement and judges, but additionally it provides the possibility of both presenting information that might not be permitted within a courtroom, and of developing a visual narrative with that information that establishes connections between the case and powerful but invisible forces within the city. In order to present an alternative to the official story of the 4F, the film takes apart or *desmonta* the judicial wrongdoings, the lies of the law enforcement, and the speculation of the city's governing body, ultimately revealing an elaborate web of hidden interests and self-protection. Formally, *Ciutat morta* uses the testimonies of the victims within sequences of montage to suggest dialectically new relationships between the images shown, therefore guiding the audience to new conclusions regarding the judicial case and its relationship with the city. These conclusions question the idea of a civil society and work to break down this carefully constructed institutional lie, which falls to pieces at the film's end.

"Desmontar el montaje": Filmic Dialectic and Civil Society in *Ciutat morta*

Ciutat morta's central focus is the 4F case and, in particular, the vicissitudes of five individuals wrongfully arrested and jailed. Rodrigo Lanza, Juan Pintos and Álex Cisternas were all detained and tortured by police on the night of February 4th of 2006, despite the many testimonies alleging that the object in question had been thrown from the rooftop and not from the street where they were detained. The three young men were all of Latin American origin but had European identification. The other two individuals addressed in the film are Patricia Heras and Alfredo Pestana. Both of them were at the Hospital del Mar when they were arrested and claimed that they had never been present at all at the site of the incident. The premise of the film is therefore to provide the evidence, largely omitted in the trial, that these individuals were innocent of the crime and were falsely accused based on aesthetic profiling. One of the central problems that *Ciutat morta* seeks to confront, therefore, is how to take apart a judicial discourse, which pretends to be objective. The documentary seeks therefore to identify the many stories that intersect and the various levels of collusion and corruption that intervened in weaving the official version of the 4F case. Several sequences connect the various hidden interests with the workings of the case through a technique of cinematic montage that, as I suggest, effectively takes apart the judicial montage by connecting it with a wider effort on the part of city governance to privatize and speculate on urban land.

Sergi Eisenstein famously described montage as "an idea that arises from the collision of independent shots – shots even opposite to one another" (140). In his view, montage did not simply produce a certain cinematic rhythm, but allowed the viewer to arrive at new ideas or conclusions regarding shots that conveyed singular, separate meanings. In particular, the

association between two distinct subjects by way of overlapping their distinct images produced what Eisenstein referred to as a "dynamization of the subject," not in a spatial sense but rather in an emotional or even intellectual one (147). Thus, for example, an image of war, followed by images of a slaughterhouse, creates an emotional connection associating the unglorified effects of war as human slaughter. While conventional films, as he explains, direct the *emotions* of the spectator, this convention can also become an opportunity to develop a filmic reasoning with more *intellectual* aims that encourages and directs the entire thought process of the viewer (154). The sequence that I will examine in this section is akin to the intellectual dynamization described by Eisenstein and often simultaneously seeks to evoke an emotional response on the part of the viewer. The documentary purposefully juxtaposes images representing distinct subjects and distinct temporalities in order to guide the viewer to connect otherwise seemingly unrelated events or forces.

An essential component of the montage in *Ciutat morta* is the testimony. The format of the testimony is particularly relevant when representing the victims of 4F, or those who were close to them and thus speak on their behalf. As Shoshana Felman explains regarding the act of testifying,

> To bear witness is to take responsibility for the truth: to speak, implicitly, from within the legal pledge and the juridical imperative of the witness's oath…To testify is thus not merely to narrate but to commit oneself, and to commit the narrative, to others: to take *responsibility* – in speech – for history or for the truth of an occurrence, for something which, by definition, goes beyond the personal, in having general (nonpersonal) validity and consequences. (103-104)

As an act of commitment, the testimony carries a certain judicial weight even outside of the courtroom, and *Ciutat morta* allows for those testimonies that should have been heard in the trial to be presented instead in a more freely and democratically accessible cinematic format. The institutional power to torture civilians, and then to silence the victims and to ignore both their

innocence and the abuse that they suffered at the hands of law enforcement, creates the need for the victims to vocalize "the truth of the occurrence" and to be heard by a public outside of that institutional framework. What is more, it is precisely the fact that these events occurred, as Manuel Delgado reminds us, under a democratic government and not during the dictatorship that makes this case all the more incredible compared to other notable civil rights abuses.[52] The problem, then, in *Ciutat morta* is that mechanisms for denouncing corruption and torture *do* exist, but they are short-circuited by more powerful logics of finance and profit. The fact that the 4F case did go to trial produces the semblance of justice that, in this case, is only a farce and, in some ways, even more unjust than a regime in which these mechanisms are lacking entirely. The testimonies the individuals were allowed to give, and which should carry a significant judicial weight, are in this case insufficient because the judicial system itself is swayed by financial logic.

The documentary makes use of the victims' testimonies in several particularly effective sequences, which I will more closely analyze below, by juxtaposing them with footage representing objects and panoramas distinctively associated with Barcelona's urban policies following the 1992 Olympic Games. The film's use of montage, in line with what soviet directors such as Eisenstein proposed, serves as a dialectical aesthetic strategy in which the juxtaposition of images ultimately creates new meanings that the images would not carry by themselves. But instead of the lengthier shots and the clear focus on class struggle and, one may say, on the grand narratives of emancipation of the early twentieth century, *Ciutat morta* focuses

[52] The format of the testimony has perhaps most famously and effectively been used as a tool with which to fight injustice following the Argentine dictatorship and the atrocities committed during the country's Dirty Wars. Other notable instances of the use of testimony to counter human rights abuses and cases of systemic torture are Rigoberta Manchu's notable work, and a long history of the recuperation of memory following the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps as addressed by Felman in the article cited above. In these cases, institutional powers silenced the victims and created an atmosphere of normalcy surrounding the abuses.

instead on the experiences and feelings of individuals as relayed through their testimonies. The emotional weight of the testimonies is juxtaposed, as I mentioned above, with images associated with Olympic urban policies that are now widely known for having generally prioritized profit over the needs or wellbeing of the citizens. Without considering the formal construction of *Ciutat morta,* Vialette argues that one of the central techniques of the film is "exposing the tensions between the visible (those who are both present in the public sphere and attributed with a transgressor's knowledge and attitude) and the invisible (the clandestine police abuse of power)" (105). I would add that the invisible forces that the documentary works to reveal are not only police abuse of power, but also the abuse of power by the city's administration through the implementation of certain urban policies. By juxtaposing the testimonies with images of certain urban landscapes, the four montage sequences I will examine all clearly expose the connection between the police and judicial collusion evidenced through the victims' testimonies and these more powerful, invisible forces that stem from the neoliberal logic behind Barcelona's development. This connection makes visible the influence that neoliberal, profit-oriented logics have at the highest levels of Barcelona's administration and ultimately ruptures hegemonic discourses of the city's modernization by suggesting how these logics permeate not only the trial but the city's governance and urban plans at large.

All four sequences I have chosen use montage in a similarly productive way to suggest how the biases and corruption behind the 4F case are connected to these broader neoliberal forces controlling the city. However, each sequence also focuses on the testimonies of distinct individuals and provides new crucial information for ultimately disassembling the police, judicial, and political montage behind the case. In the first of these four sequences I will analyze, Rodrigo Lanza, one of the three young men of Latin American descent who were arrested at the

site of the crime, testifies regarding the brutal beating that he received upon being transferred to the police station located on the Rambla. He describes how the police asked who the "sudacas" were out of the seven people detained, thus immediately revealing the racist subtext that would continue to fuel the following events. He further describes how he was transferred to a cell, then struck repeatedly by one of the policemen who had been present at the site of the abandoned theater. As he recalls, the policeman was beating him for "un buen rato," but then clarifies his lack of perception of time under such circumstances by adding "Puede que haya sido un minuto, pero a mí se me hizo eterno. Ese minuto fue atroz" (00:09:40).[53]

Rodrigo's last statement is reiterated in the same white-on-black, hacked-looking captions that signaled the switch in the very beginning of the film between the abandoned cinema and the documentary that we as viewers are watching. The captions enable the viewer to reflect on the trauma communicated by Rodrigo's statement while, as I will show, serving as a bridge to the next sequence of images which constitute this montage sequence. The sequence opens with a shot of a policeman standing guard outside of the station on the Rambla while the audio includes the surrounding noises of the invisible but undoubtedly tourist-filled street. Superimposed on the shot of the police officer is a stopwatch that begins to tick for one minute. As viewers, we immediately connect this time on the stopwatch with the minute that Rodrigo was being tortured inside the building. The police officer serves as a reminder of the atrocities being committed inside, as the camera soon strays to other objects within sight. Our gaze rotates to focus on the crowd that before we could only hear, made up of laughing and smiling tourists

[53] Elaine Scarry, in her seminal work *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (1985), has critically explored how individuals lose the capacity to speak and perform otherwise normal functions when being tortured. Rodrigo's confusion regarding the length of the incident is easily understood when considering the extreme effects of significant physical and mental suffering. Later in the documentary, one of the lawyers also discusses the psychological trauma suffered by those tortured while in police custody since some of them believed that they may even die.

and perhaps some residents strolling along the well-known street. The next shot shows an advertisement for paella and beer, the next another advertisement for paella, this time with tapas included. Finally, our gaze comes to rest on a rotating rack of postcards with images of the modernist architecture and other iconic monuments for which Barcelona has become all too-well known. All the while the stopwatch continues to tick until it finally reaches the end of the minute and the symbolic end of Rodrigo's torture at the hands of the police. We then return to Rodrigo's testimony regarding the shock he experienced at seeing a pool of blood underneath him that was larger than himself.

The sequence beginning with Rodrigo's testimony of his torture followed by the superimposed clock over the images of the Rambla juxtaposes seemingly unrelated images to connect Rodrigo's horrific experience to the governing logics that rule the city of Barcelona. During the minute that is too terrible to remember clearly, our focus leaves Rodrigo and we gaze instead upon the happy tourists, the advertisements, and the postcards that literally sell an image of the city to foreigners. *Bye Bye Barcelona* (2014), another activist film produced in the same year as *Ciutat morta*, stresses how the Rambla have been converted into one of the most crowded and tourist-oriented spaces in the city. In an interview, Enric Vila Delclòs, professor at the Universitat Ramon Llull and author of *Breu història de la Rambla* (2012), explains how, historically, the Rambla came to represent progress, commerce, and culture during the modernist period, and was a more democratic site of protests and dissent during the dictatorship (00:05:10). The cafés, which hosted intellectual roundtables, the flower stands, and the diverse stores which characterized the space in earlier historical moments have turned into souvenir shops and restaurants which sell the same, microwavable and overpriced paella d'or and large pints of beer. The juxtaposition in *Ciutat morta* of Rodrigo's testimony with the images of the Rambla suggest

a connection between the police's actions and that larger system for which the law enforcement works, therefore positing that Barcelona and its governance are the ones who should be called to the stand to testify.

The second montage sequence of interest focuses on the transfer of Rodrigo, Juan and Álex to the Hospital del Mar and, like the first, works to unveil the connection between the experiences of those arrested and the neoliberal logic governing the city. Following a caption explaining how "los tres detenidos de origen latinoamericano son trasladados al Hospital del Mar para recibir atención médica" (00:12:37), a map is shown. The map in fact reoccurs throughout the film and, in this instance, highlights first the police station on the Rambla, where the individuals were tortured, then the Hospital del Mar where they were taken for their injuries. The movement across the extremely simple, two-toned digital map is signaled by a spotlight that travels from the police station to the hospital, accompanied by the sound of the truck that carries the accused. The map itself is worth additional attention. The streets of Barcelona are black against a grey background. There are almost no names of streets or places on the map besides the ones of particular interest: the abandoned theater on Sant Pere més Baix, the Comisaría Guàrdia Urbana Ciutat Vella, and now the Hospital del Mar. The map shows the city as a grid: as a planned, lifeless space. The lack of color, except for some green and blue spaces of parks and the sea, and the general lack of names presents the city almost as a blank slate to be filled. However, as we learn from the neighbors of the Forat de la vergonya later in the film, these spaces have already been the target of speculative designs, which means that the governing bodies view the

city itself as profit. If we were to interpret the map in de Certeau's terms, we could say that what surfaces here in these maps is the planned, lifeless city and not the practiced, lived city.[54]

The next frame in this montage sequence then returns to another testimony, of Juan Pintos this time, who speaks of his experience upon arriving at the hospital. He recalls how the police officer who accompanied him to see the doctor made it clear to Juan that he was not to speak of any abuse. Juan's hand had been forcefully stepped on by one of the officers during his arrest outside of the theater. Without giving details, Juan told the doctor that the officers had broken his hand. According to Juan, the doctor told both him and the officer that an operation was needed to fix the hand, but the officer refused, telling the doctor to put just a cast on it so they could leave. The doctor's agreement to yield to the authority of the police points to a larger, systemic problem of the city's dynamics of power. While the doctors' primary concern should be to attend to the needs of the patients and even to report incidents of abuse and police violence, they are instead silenced which, as the documentary appears to argue, is part of the city's attempt to protect itself.

Following Juan's testimony regarding the lack of appropriate medical care is a continuous series of images showing the hospital itself. The camera is stationed outside of the building and frames the sign for *urgències* at the end of a long line of shiny windows reflecting the trees and the sea just out of our view. The camera suddenly swerves towards the coast and catches a view of a double decker tourist bus passing in front of the hospital. Our gaze follows the bus for a moment before resting on the sea in the background. The camera then begins to zoom in on a cruise ship in the distance and follows with another zoomed-out shot showing the

[54] Michel de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) has extensively explored the distinction between space as planned, as in the case of the map shown in *Ciutat morta*, and space as practiced, which is exemplified in the film's inclusion of the conflict surrounding the *Forat de la vergonya*.

cruise ship on the horizon and the waves of the beach in the foreground. Woods Peiró argues that "although it is unclear why the ship is important, the sudden action of the camera simulates a highly vigilant, preemptive mode of viewing, in which an ordinarily unsuspicious object must be made legible so as to reveal its potential threat" ("Subveillant narration" 256). I agree that the filmic techniques indeed focus our attention on the bus and the cruise ship, objects of Barcelona's urbanscape that nowadays have been become absolutely common and, for that very reason, might otherwise pass unnoticed. Yet I would argue that neither bus nor ship is as unimportant or as "unsuspicious" as one may think. On the contrary, both objects are charged referents in the story that *Ciutat morta* attempts to tell, and the way the montage connects them with the Hospital del Mar pictured in the beginning of this sequence, where Juan did not receive proper care, proves just that. Founded in 1905, the Hospital del Mar was chosen as the primary care facility for the 1992 Olympic games, which permitted an extensive architectural renewal of the structure ("Hospital del Mar: Historia" n.p.) so to fit in with the rest of the renovated seafront and neighboring buildings such as the Torre Mapfre. As it turns out then, the hospital itself is closely connected with the same urban plans that worked to turn the city into a perfected and profitable image.

Like with the sequence of the Rambla, with the Hospital del Mar the directors have chosen to focus on yet another symbol of Barcelona's massified tourism. The montage sequence composed of Juan's testimony and footage of the urban landscape leads the viewer to new conclusions regarding the deeper and less visible forces behind the 4F set-up. Indeed, as Woods Peiró noted, these systemic forces symbolized in the tourist bus, the cruise ship, and even the hospital itself are largely invisible in part because of their saturation of the urban landscape. By zeroing in on particular objects capable of signaling these forces and effectively extracting them

from their naturalized context, the documentary successfully foregrounds elements that remained invisible yet operative in the background of the judicial case.

The third montage sequence that I will examine in the film focuses on the testimony of yet another individual, Patricia, and follows a slightly different format specifically in juxtaposing visual and audio. The sequence begins with a close friend of Patricia's and practicing lawyer, Silvia Villillas, as she begins to read parts of the diary that Patricia wrote while in jail regarding the events of February 4th, 2006.[55] As we learn earlier in the film, Patricia and her friend Alfredo had gone out that night to a party (not the one in the theater) and upon returning home had fallen from their bicycle and had been taken to the Hospital del Mar to treat their wounds.[56] Their trip to the hospital had coincided with the arrival of the police escorting Rodrigo, Juan and Àlex. When one of the officers saw Patricia looking at the three young men in custody, he asked her to see her phone and found a text message he believed confirmed her presence at the party in the abandoned theater. Her friends explain the facts as a terrible coincidence. As the diary entry reads, before Patricia knew what was happening, the police were yelling that she was the one "con los cuadros en la cabeza" and began handcuffing her.[57] They told her that she was being arrested for murder.

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[55] In a not so ironic twist of events, Silvia was fired from her job at Segur Ibérica, "una de las principals empresas en el pregmio de la seguridad privada de España siendo cliente habitual del Gobierno español, y concretamente Ministerio de Defensa," for participating in *Ciutat morta* ("Despiden a la abogada" n.p.).

[56] Patricia's diary that she kept while in jail recounts how she and Alfredo had gone to a party which was also in the barri de la Ribera, but the party was quickly shut down by the police at which point they headed home on the bike. Her account also supports the claim of the neighbors that smaller parties or events held in the neighborhood were often targeted by the police while the larger parties in the abandoned theater essentially went ignored (until this very same night.)

[57] Both of Patricia's condemning factors were, according to both her written accounts and the accounts of her friends, tragic coincidences. The message on her phone was related to going out to a particular bar in the Raval and was misinterpreted by the police as proof that she was involved in a violent incident, likely that involving the injured officer. The "cuadros en la cabeza" was a haircut that she had received that same day and was then used by the police as an identifying factor to condemn her. It is unclear whether someone else at the scene had a similar haircut and was confused with Patri or whether the police targeted this identifying trait out of convenience; regardless, it

Silvia's reading is interrupted by a shot of the hospital doors. Like the rest of the building, the doors are made of glass with small blue and orange squares painted across them that move in a grid-like pattern as the doors slide open and closed. Silvia's words recounting Patricia's confusing and traumatic experience at the hospital hang in the silence of this new shot. After the previous montage sequence that visually connects the hospital building to the bus and the ship (and by extension the tourist industry and neoliberal economy that they symbolize), the viewer now has a sense of what the spaces signify for those victims as well as for the city as a whole. More significant yet are the squares on the hospital doors, which instantly remind the viewer of Patricia's haircut. We know that the identification of Patricia as *antisistema* was based almost solely on her appearance, which demonstrates, as Manuel Delgado and others identify in the film, the officials' need to categorize and punish nonconforming individuals. The squares on the hospital doors thus illustrate the problem in the direct or one-to-one connection the officers try to make between Patricia's alternative aesthetic and an *antisistema* movement, since the very same checks encountered on the hospital doors, and therefore *within* a system, are completely arbitrary signs.

Having pointed out this fault in the official system of identification and classification of individuals, the montage sequence returns to Silvia's reading of Patricia's journal where she describes her terror and confusion as she is being forced into the police van. Patricia is separated from her friend Alfredo and recalls how she was placed instead next to a young man with dreads and a beard. The next shot switches over to Rodrigo again, whom we understand to be the one Patricia's was describing. Rodrigo explains how terrified and confused Patricia looked and how much he empathized with her since he saw his terrified face in her own. These short testimonies

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demonstrates the identification of alternative-looking youth at large with the types of more violent behaviors carried out in the theater and reveals the xenophobic tendencies of the law enforcement.

by Rodrigo and Silvia (on behalf of Patricia) regarding their fear and confusion for what happened at the hospital are juxtaposed with undoubtedly the most poetic montage sequence in the film. Elvira Prado (who is not featured in the film) reads one of Patricia's poems which describes how, after the events of 4F, her innocence and her hope have died.[58] Vialette has argued that Patricia's poetry throughout the film "underscores the division between two worlds, the affective on the one hand, and the corrupted and abusive to non-normative lifestyles on the other" (107). The poem is filled with violent and emotional imagery and is read over a series of disparate, one might say depressing, images of the city. As Anxo Abuín González has stated regarding this particular sequence, the images show the forgotten, ugly and undesirable elements of an inhospitable Barcelona, the "dead city" for which the film has been named (116). Some of the images include dirty, misplaced mannequins, rivers filled with waste, or trash caught on barbed wire. One of the images, a doll buried in a pile of construction debris, appears to signal the connection between the unmoving, abandoned doll treated as urban waste or debris, and Patricia and the other victims of 4F who were similarly treated as the debris of a speculative project in which they were tragically caught in the middle.

Juxtaposed with Silvia's reading and with Rodrigo's testimony, the series of images signals the harsh and inhuman realities of Barcelona these youth now face. The sequence ends with a black and white photo of Patricia wearing a hooded black coat and with the Torre Glòries (formerly the Torre Agbar) in the background. The picture then changes to a video image in

[58] Patricia's poem was posted in her blog, *Poeta muerta:*
He ahorcado a mi inocencia./Su orgullo adolecido aún voraz no impide que se mee encima,/su belleza efímera,/expira con los últimos latidos suplicantes./Perdida entre flujos corporales viscosos y detritos./La he visto patalear rabiosa e indefensa hasta morir,/parecía más humana que yo,/en su rostro desfigurado leo un pánico sumiso y crudo/que me arde entre las piernas.../Le he cortado el cuello a mi ilusión,/la colgué de un semáforo ciego/y vi cómo se desangraba incrédula,/borboteando nerviosa,/vi el dolor brillar muy cerca,/se fue apagando velado tras su mísero destino./Abro la caja y está vacía.

color depicting the tower jutting out of the surrounding skyline, encased in smog. The smog signals a concrete problem of a city faced with rising levels of air pollution and increased public health concerns, and this in opposition to the virtual or mediatic health crisis created by the city around the *okupa* movement.[59] The Torre de les Glòries is yet another object closely linked to Barcelona's neoliberal policies. It is among Barcelona's most prominent architectural features and is one of many buildings across Spain which have been designed by foreign, internationally renowned architects to boost the surrounding economy following a phenomenon called the "Bilbao effect."[60] As architects Josep Maria Montaner and Zaida Muxí point out, the Torre, designed by French architect Jean Nouvel, is also one of the most salient examples of an architecture that is *not* conceived keeping in mind the surrounding urban fabric but rather functions as a "prótesis" injected into the landscape in an effort to resolve the urban planning failure of the Plaça de la Glòries, which Montaner and Muxí call an "auténtico museo de los horrores" in view of its failed utopic design (265). Opened to the public the year prior to the 4F events, the tower is yet another constant reminder in Barcelona's skyline of urban politics that prioritize the city's image over its population and give little consideration to the complex urban fabric surrounding these projects.

These last three sequences involving the testimonies of Rodrigo, Juan and Patricia lead up to the fourth and final sequence which, more complex in its visual layering, in fact returns to visual aspects of the earlier sequences in order to build on prior conclusions and to effectively

[59] In one of his interviews in the film, Delgado explains how the city understands *okupas* not in terms of enemies but in terms of filth, and that the troubling reaction of the local governments is one that corresponds to the maintenance of public health since the okupas are *understood* as a problem of public health (01:08:59) and are framed as such within the city plans.

[60] The Bilbao effect is named after Gehry's Guggenheim museum in the city of Bilbao, which, until that point, was a post-industrial area with a struggling economy. James Russell attests to how, in the first two years after the museum opened, the wave of visitors added 433 million euros to the local economy and the pace of urban revitalization consistently quickened (63).

take apart the last pieces of institutional montage. The sequence is within the second to last section of the film, titled "Racismo," which begins by explaining (through both found footage and testimonies) how the very same police agents that had tortured the victims of 4F were later found guilty of torturing a young man from Trinidad and Tobago, Yuri Jardine, and of falsifying information regarding the case. Two of the agents, Víctor Bayona and Bakari Samyang, were sentenced to over two years in prison for the offenses. Testimonies from Yuri's lawyer and Silvia provide both the specifics of the case and the evidence that this racist and xenophobic behavior was in fact habitual. Following this contextual information, then, a series of captions open the montage sequence that is here the object of analysis. The captions explain that both agents (Bayona and Samyang) appeared in Patricia's written accounts of the psychological and physical torture she had suffered and that these were the very same agents that Rodrigo, Juan and Álex had denounced during their trial for the physical and mental abuse they had received, including the insults of "sudacas de mierda." The captions further explain that the judge, Carmen García Martínez, refused to consider the accusations and archived the case. At this point another caption emblematically adds that, "Paradójicamente, uno de los dos policías torturadores es de origen africano" (01:41:43). Rodrigo, then shown in the following shot, affirms how the agents who were torturing him called him "immigrante" and "sudaca de mierda," which seemed "tragicómico" to him since one of these officers was a person of color.

The captions and the short testimony from Rodrigo regarding the irony of the racist treatment he received at the hands of an agent of color is followed by another caption which announces that the footage to follow is part of a video uploaded on Youtube by the agent in question, Bakari Samyang, of his activities at the Gimnasio de Sabadell. Upon seeing this video, we are transported back to the beginning of the documentary where Rodrigo describes that

never-ending minute during which he was tortured. The ticking stopwatch that had appeared superimposed during his first testimony returns here and is transposed over the video of the agent Samyang. The video shows the agent kicking, punching, kneeing, and battering several punching bags which now metaphorically stand for Rodrigo, Álex, Juan, and Yuri, and undoubtedly for the countless other citizens similarly mistreated by the *guardia urbana*. As the clock counts down a full minute, it becomes increasingly unbearable to watch the scene as we imagine the physical harm the agent caused to these victims. This minute connects Rodrigo's torture with the brutal force of the agent, but also, now, with the systemic racism and abuse perpetrated by the police force and instilled by even larger systems of classification and oppression that rule the city.

The viewer then experiences a visual and audial shock when the torturous minute of violent beating is suddenly replaced with footage of the same officer testifying in a trial, presumably for Yuri Jardine's case. Standing in front of the judges in the middle of the courtroom, the officer relates how he comes from a humble, religious and morally upstanding background, how he is of African origin, and how he would never commit the acts of which he has been accused. Proof of his moral character, he adds, is the fact that he is still acting in the first line of duty and maintains a position of particular authority as one of the trainers of new agents and, additionally, a member of the committee that selects new officers. After knowing the outcome of the trial and hearing the testimonies of the attorneys, the agent's testimony rings painfully false to the viewer and is a shocking contradiction to the evidence provided by the documentary thus far. The false testimony is further unsettling when taking into account the authoritative and influential position that this individual occupies at the state level and the power differential between him and the civilians he has tortured.

Another caption connects this last sequence with the following and, picking up on the unsettling irony of the scenes we have just witnessed, fixes in visual form the last words of Samyang: "Formo parte del proceso selectivo de nuevos agentes en Barcelona" (01:44:30). This caption is then followed with footage from the 15M protests in Barcelona in which a crowd that had peacefully occupied the Plaça Catalunya chants "Fora violència!" while police officers violently destroy their possessions, which included not only their signs and other protest materials but also their mattresses, chairs, and other belongings in the attempt to evacuate the occupied space. The video is interrupted by yet another caption that explains how Bakari Samyang was spotted during this event. The following shot effectively captures Samyang in his police attire overseeing the evacuation. At least 120 protestors were injured by the police in the evacuation of the plaza ("Así 'limpiaron'" n.p.). As stated above, 15M was a popular, public reaction to the workings of a neoliberal economy whose failures had created an unprecedented crisis in Spain. The significance of this event and of the sequence as a whole is thus twofold; Samyang, after testifying that he would never perpetrate the types of abuses of which he was accused, is here witnessed overseeing an event of particular police brutality against civilians, and, ironically, the event itself was an occupation of the public space in order to protest those neoliberal policies that the distinct montage of *Ciutat morta* presents as the force truly driving the violations of rights.

These four sequences examined in this section are clear examples of how montage can work to bring about a particular desired thinking process and lead the viewer to new conclusions regarding the significance and relationship of what might otherwise be perceived as distinct images. Whereas I here focused on four particular sequences, I believe the same logic is at play in the structure of the sections that organize the entire film. Although the events in the film are

more or less chronological, the internal sections that organize its logical progression are not. The very first section, "Venganza," is followed by "Patri" then "Tortura," "Juicio," "Estigma," "Ciudad muerta," "Poeta muerta," "Racismo" and, finally, "Desmontaje."[61] Of these, it is the beginning and the end that most interest me since their sequence, besides non-chronological, is almost counterintuitive since one would expect them to be reversed. The beginning section, "Venganza," features the very first testimony by Rodrigo who cynically but also regretfully expresses his exasperation with the idea of "justice." Already clear is that prior to this film, the execution of justice for Rodrigo (and others) failed. The documentary thus in fact begins with a judicial system that has already failed, and Rodrigo's regretful and painful admission that what he now seeks instead is vengeance is certainly a result of this failure. *Ciutat morta* can be seen as a form of this vengeance that Rodrigo seeks – the film does not search for justice since this channel has been closed, and thus must present a different type of argument that seeks not official recognition by institutions but a recognition on the part of the public of the lies and corruption at the heart of the 4F case.

While the film seeks to achieve this goal through the dismantling of the institutional montage, the ultimate taking apart of the judicial case is in fact left for last. This gesture of leaving the "Desmontaje" last – leaving the very last piece till the end and then watching as the whole montage falls to the ground – is a gesture that allows the film to continue beyond its own conclusion. In his interview within this "Desmontaje" section, Juan Pintos very clearly identifies how the police montage goes much further than even the police or judicial level and is instead sustained by an entire social and political structure. According to Juan, if anyone involved in the

[61] Despite the fact that the film is shot and produced in Barcelona by two Catalan directors, and the title of the film itself is in Catalan, the titles of the sections within the film are all in Castilian. This choice on the part of the directors clearly identifies the targeted audience of *Ciutat morta* and signals how the case is not one that is particular to Barcelona but is rather a problem of the state.

process, down to the person who signed his papers admitting him into prison, had denounced the blatant inconsistencies in the evidence for the case, the montage would have fallen apart. No one, however, was willing to do that, and even those who remained silent have become accomplices of the injustices. If, as an example of video activism, *Ciutat morta* seeks to build platforms and social networks and to spur new social movents, this ending incites the audience to speak out and disrupt this powerful police, judicial, and political system. As Xapo Ortega has said regarding the film, the objective "no es que se hable del documental, sino que se reabra el caso [y] que se haga justicia" (López n.p.) The beginning as much as the end demonstrate the film's mission as an artistic act of civil disobedience that is unafraid to expose the speculation and corruption practiced by Barcelona's governing bodies in their designs for a civil, clean and newly modernized city.

Conclusion:
Citizen Participation, Institutional Projects, and the Arts in Barcelona

The various works of documentary photography and film that I have explored throughout this investigation have challenged hegemonic discourses surrounding Barcelona's modernization by foregrounding the marginalized sectors that were overlooked in the urban plans to promote the city. Since the 1960s urban policies have consistently leaned toward an increasingly neoliberal model of the city, which has led to rampant gentrification and to the privatization of public land. In recent decades, the massification of tourism has significantly contributed to the commodification of the urban space to the detriment of the city's residents. It is the city aggressively promoted in official discourse, tourist campaigns, and in promotions for private investments that is contested within the representational spaces that these documentary works create. Within these representational spaces the city's marginalized and disregarded sectors also find an opportunity to be seen in capacities not generally granted by the society at large and, as I have shown, can perform their identity outside of the boundaries set by their often limited social and political roles.

Spanning the 1960s to the most recent decade, this project has focused on documentary works that foreground distinct but not dissimilar sectors of the population that at various times have been perceived as difficult to integrate into subsequent visions of a modernizing Barcelona. In their 1964 photographic reportage on the Somorrostro for *El Correo Catalán,* Joan Colom and Ignasi Marroyo problematize the negative rhetoric that institutional discourses applied to the *barraquistes* and that is utilized also in the written the article that accompanies the images. By portraying the impending Passeig Marítim as an almost predatory force, and by focusing on the *barraquista* children and the ways in which they resignify the construction site through play, the photographers offset the official portrayal of the *barraquistes* as a military force, or alternatively,

as a kind of social ill. Colita's photographs of the Gitanos of Montjuïc similarly portray paid Gitano actors in such a way as to challenge the cultural stereotypes but also the images disseminated through popular tourist campaigns that would profit from the Gitano culture while Gitanos, who were often also barraquistes, continued to be socially and politically marginalized. The 1960s and 1970s was also a time in which the social category of women, and specifically sex workers, gained particular attention. Employing a kind of critical realism, *Izas, rabizas y colipoterras* (1964), by Joan Colom and Camilo José Cela, engages with the contradictory relationship that the regime had established with sex work, while inviting reflection on the image of the ideal Spanish woman during the time. While Colom and Cela are somewhat more ambiguious toward mainstream representations, *Antifémina* (1977), by Colita and Maria Aurèlia Capmany, goes much further in challenging ideals surrounding femininity at a time when Spain was transitioning to democracy. Images and text in this photobook empower the sex workers of the Barri Xino while denouncing the commodification of the female body in the advertising posters plastered throughout the neighborhood of the Paral·lel. The cultural construction of the female body is shown to be the product of both patriarchy and the values of a late capitalist society.

While these marginalized social sectors of the 1960s and 1970s were often viewed within hygienist discourses as pathogens or social ills, or were alternatively militarized and presented as social enemies, a new twenty-first-century discourse centered on civility would label those who, in some capacity, disrupted public space as "incívicos." From different angles, both José Luis Guerín and the team of Xavier Artigas and Xapo Ortega will focus their lens on these "incívicos." *En construcción* (2001) chronicles the razing of an apartment building in the Raval as an example of the wave of gentrification that took place in the working-class neighborhood

following the 1992 Olympic Games. The immigrants, sex workers and homeless who previously occupied the space are slowly pushed farther and farther to the periphery throughout the course of the film. Guerín's filming techniques decenter the spectator in a gesture that almost replicates in filmic space the social and even physical marginalization experienced by many of the film's protagonists, thereby foregrounding these social actors as they are ignored or even targeted by city plans. While I do argue that Guerín's film offers a social critique, *Ciutat morta* (2014) is a clear example of video activism which also focuses on "incívicos" that are targeted by Barcelona's processes of urban renewal and modernization. The film works to take apart the 4F case through a series of filmic montages that reveal the close relationships between the injustices against these youth of *antisistema* appearance and the larger mechanisms behind the gestation and promotion of an increasingly neoliberal and globalized city. These documentary works together serve to trace the evolving, yet consistently problematic, relationship between the city's modernization and its most vulnerable social sectors.

This relationship between Barcelona's urban development and its population has recently become a core concern of a growing number of artists, intellectuals and activists who value the need to rethink the principles and values that inform these physical and ideological transformations in order to guarantee the citizens' right to a democratic city. The 2011 economic crisis has certainly foregrounded serious issues of social justice as related to urban space and the right to housing, while the response to the crisis has successfully framed citizens' participation as a fundamental aspect of a more democratic and sustainable urban planning. As a sort of epilogue to this investigation, I would like to touch upon just some of the current institutional and citizens' initiatives that aim at transforming the relations between urban space, culture, politics, and social justice in a variety of contexts, including the evictions following the housing crisis and

the related occupation of banks and institutionally owned property as a response to this crisis, the occupation of public spaces by neighborhood residents to resist mass tourism, the use of urban rooftops for cultural activities, and the creation of sustainable and culturally responsible tourist routes. Many of these initiatives, similarly to documentary film and photography, have provided and continue to provide a physical and symbolic space of reflection that allows institutions, citizens, and visitors alike to understand and live the city in ways that counteract the visions aggressively promoted by the so-called "modelo Barcelona" first, and currently by the "marca Barcelona."

In line with what happened with the documentary *Ciutat Morta*, which recorded the very act of civil disobedience organized to protest the death of Patricia Heras following the events of 4F, other citizens' organizations have resorted to documentary film or to viral videos as a vehicle for raising awareness of the problematic conditions of vulnerable sectors of Barcelona in relation to housing. Thus, the Plataforma de los Afectados por la Hipoteca (PAH, Platform of those Affected by Mortgages) filmed the documentary *SÍ SE PUEDE: 7 días en PAH Barcelona* (2014) in order to denounce the tragedy of the forced evictions generated by the burst of the housing bubble. Created and produced by members of the PAH, the documentary chronicles seven consecutive days with this organization that provides critical legal support to the victims but also helps them to emotionally cope with the situation. One of its founding members and most prominent spokespeople, Ada Colau, became Barcelona's first female mayor the year after the release of the documentary, and thus further propelled la PAH's fame. Since then, the Barcelona branch of the PAH has also focused on the problem of raising renting costs, insisting on that ethical horizon established in the Article 47 of the Constitution. One other example of an organized, housing-related effort that used video in order to spread its cause was the eviction of

the Banc Expropiat in the summer of 2016. Previously owned by Caixa Tarragona, the Ban Expropiat was taken over in 2011 by a group of *okupas* who turned it into a living space for the homeless and a community space that offered English and Catalan classes, sewing classes, and theater, as well as food and clothing exchange. The goal was reclaiming an increasingly gentrified neighborhood for its residents and protecting it from the commodification produced by mass tourism. Upon eviction, the *okupas* staged various peaceful protests along with members of the community. Videos of the mistreatment of the *okupas* and other protestors at the hands of the city's riot police went viral and inspired more people to participate in the protests, and to continue the protest in other forms by setting up language tables as well as food and clothing exchanges in front of the building.[62]

Other visual representations are contributing to present alternative visions of the city and its relation to its residents, and are especially interested in challenging and transforming the use of urban spaces. Fem plaça is an initiative that has become particularly active within the tourist-filled Ciutat Vella and the Barceloneta. The group chooses a location and designates a particular day to occupy the space, then fills the *plaça* with activities for children, food for the neighbors, art, and informational flyers regarding their objectives. Aside from building a stronger community in the Ciutat Vella district, the presence in the space and the highly visual aspect of the protest concretely dissuade tourists from entering the space or compel them to deal with the neighborhood under very different parameters. Although temporary, the visual interruption effectively creates an alternative space of representation, one that foregrounds the needs of the residents against the normalized image of the tourist-filled city. Terrats en Cultura (Rooftop

[62] Much of this information is from my interviews and interactions at the time of the eviction with those who were part of the Banc Expropiat, but further information can be found on their blog at https://bancexpropiatgracia.wordpress.com/qui-som/

Culture) is a collaborative project that utilizes the city's rooftops in order to foster public cultural events, such as theater productions, poetry readings, and musical performances, both as a response to the effects of the economic crisis and also as a way of re-appropriating urban spaces for cultural and civic expression. In using the rooftops to stage low-cost artistic performances that utilize the city as scenery, this initiative also allows the cityscape to be resignified as a framework for cooperative and resident-oriented action rather than as a visual commodity. Finally, I would like to mention Androna Cultura, an organization that rather than avoiding tourism seems to redefine it. Run by a historian, an art historian, and a humanist, Androna Cultura designs and leads alternative tourist routes that foster culturally-responsible tourism in Barcelona and provides visitors and residents with an in-depth historical, political, and cultural experience of the city. Covering the city center, the city's underground bomb shelters left over from the civil war, and more peripheral areas that served as both military bases and sites of *barraquisme*, the tours are mostly given in Catalan and Castillian, which is indicative of an effort to incorporate Barcelonians and Spaniards into an alternative or counter-tourism in which they are able to re-inscribe the city with the meaning that mass tourism tends to delete. New spatial relationships are then sought between residents or interested visitors and the urban environment, and hence new ways of mapping and ultimately living the city.

To conclude, against the city's tourist problem, its gentrification, and its lack of public spaces, the documentary works that comprise the corpus of my investigation as well as the initiatives that I have just outlined propose new ways of envisioning urban spaces in relation to established political and cultural imaginaries of the city. As David Harvey would put it, they show us that "the right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city," a transformation, he would add,

that “inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization” (23). In the face of a powerful neoliberal and capitalist machinery that conceptualizes and transforms the city into what is essentially a brand, the “marca Barcelona,” the works that I have examined invite us to collectively reexamine and reimagine the city in ways that problematize the often uncritical manner in which processes of modernization are presented and social configurations are normalized. These works ultimately invite us to reflect on how our right to public space and dignified housing should not remain an ethical horizon.

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