TCOET: Queer theory, pornography, science fiction
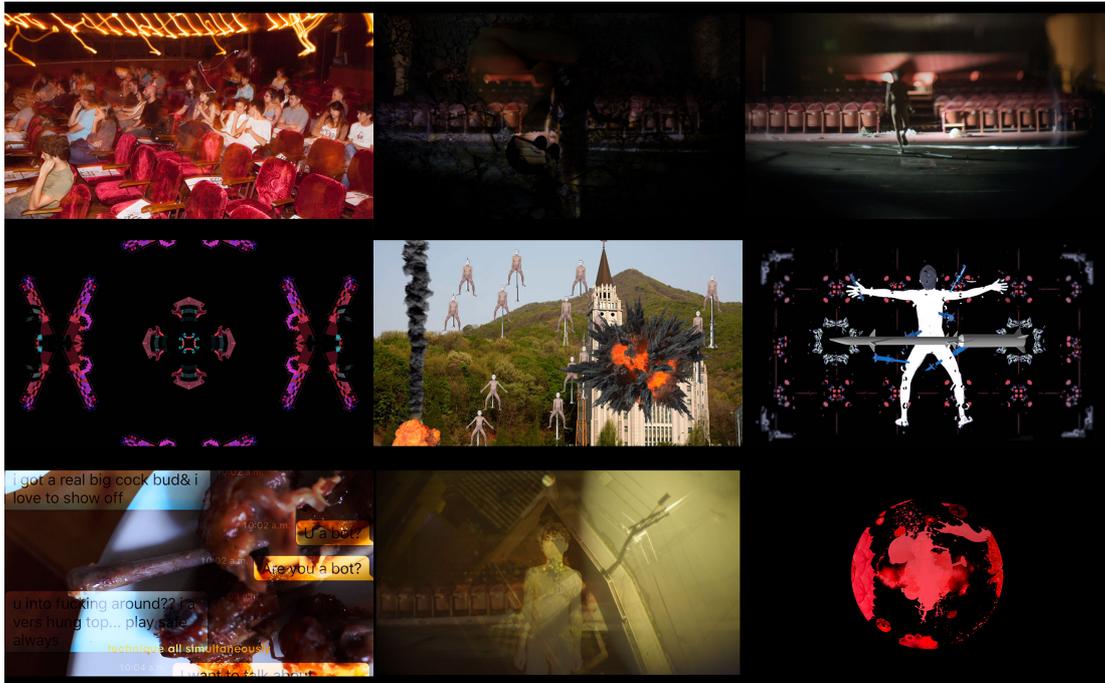
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TCOET audiovisual works, illustration, Zubillaga 2019

Contents

I confirm that this is definitively my own work.

Luciano Zubillaga 03.07.20

Acknowledgements

in loving memory of my father composer Luis Zubillaga

Abstract

This thesis examines the encounter between experimental film, queer theory, pornography and science fiction, through my practice-as-research films collectively known as The Church of Expanded Telepathy (TCOET). These films are *Kokakolachickenwings* (2015), *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016), *Me gustas tú* (2016), *Take Me To Church* (2016), *TCOET # 7* (2017) and *Succulent humans # 3* (2019). I conceived TCOET and the term *expanded telepathy* on the occasion of the conference "From Humanism to Post and Transhumanism" held at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, South Korea, 2015.

The tendencies of the world to seek completion and order are expressed as a force of oppression in TCOET. This research begins with the proposition that the destabilisation of binary, gendered, logocentric thought in the enactments of queer theory requires new critical attention to the notion of telepathy, one which defines telepathy not as the transmission of information from one person to another without using any known human sensory channels or physical interaction, but as a transformative relation between bodies.

Following this direction, one of the main focuses of my research lies in arguing that TCOET audiovisual works have a refractive telepathic capacity to articulate forms of queer theory and politics that go beyond the oppressive heteronormal regime of the body enframed by individualist metaphysics. The central question about the efficacy of the films comprising TCOET as a platform for queer theory and politics required re-examining and reformulating the notion of *expanded telepathy* in relation to pornography and science fiction with the aim to fabricate a queer body and set in motion new forms of envisaging audiovisual practices.

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Introduction

Figure 1

This research begins with the proposition that the destabilisation of binary, gendered, logocentric thought in the enactments of queer theory requires new critical attention to the notion of telepathy, one which defines telepathy not as the transmission of information from one person to another without using any known human sensory channels or physical interaction, but as a transformative relation between bodies conceived as *meta-body* (Val d, 2002). This practice-as-research project understands experimental film as embodied telepathy in this sense and as a key enabler of queer theory and its relational potential. As the central axis of my research practice, the *telepathic* moving image explored in this thesis offers a set of ambitious methods for the enactment of queer theory. The production and dissemination of these *telepathic* experimental film objects is an avenue for realising queer politics in the world. This Ph.D. thesis thus stages a new encounter between the fields of experimental film, queer theory, pornography and science fiction and its multiple outputs are audiovisual works collectively known as *The Church of Expanded Telepathy* (TCOET).

The seven films that make up TCOET research project are the following: *kokakolachickenwings* (2015), *Me gustas tú* (2016), *Take Me To Church* (2016), *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016), *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *TCOET # 7* (2017) and *Succulent humans # 3* (2019). These enactments of expanded telepathy designate a queer posthumanist

field of experiential knowledge, where the ironic use of "church" in the title repositions the individualist mind of the humanist body towards the *posthumanist* connectivity proposed by TCOET. Therefore, a central question posed by TCOET research is how experimental moving image and sound can redefine telepathy as a queer theoretical and political platform. Furthermore, how can audiovisual objects be harnessed to address the complexity of an expanded notion of queer theory, in its multiple posthuman dimensions?

In this research context, my PhD proposes three fundamental aims. First, to further destabilise the binary, gendered, logocentric thought by actualising the proposition of *film as theory* within current theoretical queer debates. *Film as queer theory* is made available through filmmaking's technologies, practices, and aesthetic forms, which together animate mental spaces, affective registers, temporalities, pleasures, and instabilities as unique and innovative forms of being in the world. Nevertheless, thinking queerness demand not only an effort to discover different ways of being in the world but, more importantly, to create different worlds. The point here is that the form of queer thinking and sensing proposed in this thesis need to be made available not only through key categories such as, embodiment, temporality and desire but also imaginatively reworked by moving away from the linguistic, semiotic, and representational tendencies of earlier approaches to theory.

Second, this process of onto-epistemological destabilisation will be performed by shifting from the discursive side of queer theory to the form of sensibility that relates to what I have called *expanded telepathy*[1]. This process requires a new critical attention to the notion of telepathy, one which defines telepathy not as the transmission of information from one person to another without using any known human sensory channels or physical interaction, but as a transformative relation between bodies. Thus TCOET research aim to implement a very specific reconceptualisation of performativity and meaning, following feminist science scholar Karen Barad (2007). My aim here is to explore how experimental audiovisual objects produce *direct* relational meaning through the entanglement of words, pictures, music and motion, all at once.

Third, TCOET films rely on creative strategies of knowledge production that relationally act on the fields of pornography and science fiction. These two fields are not

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[1] I presented the first idea of **expanded telepathy** on the occasion of the conference "From Humanism to Post and Transhumanism" held at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, South Korea, 2015. The concept of **expanded telepathy** should be initially understood in terms of an (in)material form that prepares audiovisual sensations and impressions for matching with philosophical entangled categories, while at the same time, resisting reduction to concepts in the mind (Zubillaga, L, 2015).

considered as *genre* but as a deterritorialised space for the production of antagonist queer knowledge. For a queer posthumanist epistemology to emerge, it is necessary to review the modes by which to communicate and collaborate in order to expand alliances that can effect change and produce imaginative ways of understanding relations between lives.

The research method contained in these pages was conducted initially through the practice of experimental film and sound composition as the starting point for further articulating knowledge production through critical theoretical research. It is difficult to categorically delineate the ways in which my practice informs the theoretical verbal concerns presented here. In some sense the individual elements of practice are the research 'lived' before being articulated as theoretical positions. I would like to emphasize the practice-as-research method not to place greater attribution to the audiovisual work but in order to argue for performative practice as a form of knowledge production, in the sense that the foundation of my research could be described as a form of *practising theory* instead of theorising practice. The seven audiovisual works that form TCOET and the writing practice are intertwined and mutually informing, with each being motivated by the desire to critically examine the possibilities of queer theory beyond the traditional domain of natural language and information as the dominant practices of rationality. Therefore, the intention here is not to add to the existing broad range of debates on queer theory, pornography or science fiction but rather to explain how queer *expanded telepathy* transforms these debates, creating relational space, rather than reflective rationality and therefore functioning as a way of building connections that exceed the containment of information.

As *practising theory*, this research project seeks to show that *direct theory* (a central initial concept to connect experimental film and theory) can also be *queer theory*. *Direct theory* is a term coined by Edward Small in his claim that experimental film practice can bypass written language-based theory (Small, 1997). TCOET's experimental filmmaking can foreground the sensory disruption of normative assignations of binary and temporal taxonomies given in conventional linguistic codes, producing a specific mode of theory, which is queer and performs telepathically, circumventing the foundations of both humanism and individualist metaphysics (Barad, 2007). TCOET films as *expanded telepathy* extend and problematise the discussion around three specific areas of knowledge formation: *queer theory*, *pornography* and *science fiction*. Furthermore, the central question about the efficacy of the films

comprising TCOET as a platform for queer theory and politics required re-examining and reformulating the notion of expanded telepathy in relation to pornography and science fiction; both necessary aspects for a strategy to fabricate a queer body and set in motion new forms of entanglement between thinking, sensing and moving image practice. It is important to state that, in my view, each film in this research practice articulates, combines, disposes and relates in different ways to these areas, arousing novel creative possibilities.

Each chapter explores a different relation to the research questions posed above. Chapter I contextualises my initial research questions about telepathy and *direct theory*, as both simultaneously explain the intra-active genealogies of *expanded telepathy*. Chapters II will focus on the specific challenges posed by queer theory and pornography and Chapter III on the critical use of science fiction as an audiovisual strategy of cognitive emancipation implemented within TCOET research.

In chapter I, the research traces the genealogies of telepathy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and generally identified with the transmission of information and sensations at a distance (Luckhurst 2002, Thurschwell 2004); thereafter it reviews a set of more recent reflections on telepathy, such as those analysing telecommunications, ether, wireless or internet connections (Peters 1999, Gabrys 2009). Then, I conjoin this new understanding of telepathy with the notion of experimental film as theory which may extend beyond the logic of written or spoken words, approaches envisioned by Gene Youngblood (1970), Edward Small (1994), Pauleit (2012) and Panteburg (2015), all of whom, provide tools to clarify how these experimental films can deploy theoretical-critical ambitions. Finally, moving in the realm of contemporary art, I incorporate the research of Catherine Drinkall (2005), focusing on artistic practices that utilised or experimented with telepathy but were centered mostly on affective or blood ties. In this chapter, two audiovisual works will be crucial to understand the proposed direction of the initial concerns about telepathy: *Kokakolachickenwings* (2015) and *Superhomosexuals* (2016).

In chapter II, I explore how TCOET films transition from written to immaterial critical configurations, with specific debates posed by queer theory and politics. This chapter includes ways of knowing in which agents interact under a queer joint programme: friendly relations, erotic links, SM pacts, eroticism, all the strategies of being together that produce

unstable and fragile forms of collaboration. As forms of *queer* telepathic exchanges, these unstable strategies of working together can be conceptualised only by *border thinking* (Anzaldúa, 1987), enacting *intra-actions* (Barad, 2014), and forms of relationality that promote *queer multitudes* (Preciado, 2003) and fabricate a *meta-body* (Val, J. d, 2002). These queer forms of thinking and relationality are mostly embodied in *Me gustas tú* (2016), *Take Me to Church* (2016) and *Paradise Lost + David Sling* (2016). These works aim to produce sexual emancipatory technologies within new strategic configuration of posthuman power and knowledge. The theoretical path of my presumed contribution to this transdisciplinary context gravitates on three fields of speculative and creative engagement: *queer theory*, *pornography* and *science fiction*.

In chapter III, the idea of agency, traditionally connected to the conscious decision-making human, is further problematised. How the artistic practice of telepathy developed in *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *TCOET #7* (2017) and *Succulent Humans #3* (2019) contributes to the formulation of new political spaces and queer meta-bodies. Drawing on the alien and the "superhomosexual" as a starting point to the modes of discourse by which the *other* body is fictionalized to set in motion new forms of critical audiovisual resistance. In particular, the ways in which the *monster*, the *alien* and the *cyborg* enrich the alliance between science fiction and queer theory as speculative forms of communication and knowledge production.

Queer theory and practices inform the entire set of TCOET films and provide reflections on sexuality, temporality and spatiality that radically challenge the dominant heterocentrist paradigm. Questions are reviewed related to industrial pornography (Williams 1989, Dyer 1985, Hunt 1994), cyberporn (Patterson, 2004), and the ways in which the use of SM pornography in TCOET films allows us to account for expanded experiences of desire, sexuality and the bodily plane. On the other hand, reflections are incorporated around the ways in which these films place the notion of *borders* in crisis (sexual, gender, desire, bodily, between human and non-human) and, finally, problems around the uses of science fiction as a way of fostering discussions in the field of *queer politics* (Russ 1971; Haraway 1992, 1997, 2016; Braidotti 2001; Crawford 2003; Gay Pearson 2008). Finally, the monster, cyborg and alien are positioned (Haraway 1992, 1997, 2016; Halberstam 1994; Benshoff 1997; Anzaldúa 1987; Foucault 2003) as audiovisual strategies of cognitive emancipation, articulating new platforms for *posthuman* speculation.

In chapter IV, I conclude by exploring the trajectories generated by this research, what the process has manifested other than this written exegesis, and its future direction both in terms of new emerging perspectives and research projects.

Chapter 1: Telepathy, direct theory and expanded cinema

The central aim of this first chapter is to make a first map of ideas concerning the notions of telepathy, of film as direct theory, and expanded cinema; underlying concepts and debates which support the work of TCOET. First, I will work to define the transformations in the notion of telepathy from the nineteenth century to the latest theories linked to communication through wireless devices. Second, two central notions related to experimental cinema will be analysed. The first is that of *direct theory* (Small, 1994) since the main hypothesis is about the ways in which experimental cinema can be constituted as a place for the transmission of ideas (theoretical or not) through images and sounds, an objective aim that leads to these films through the exercise of telepathy. The second idea is *Expanded Cinema* (Youngblood, 1970), a concept that emerged with experimental electronic media technologies. I will examine its difference from narrative cinema, and its formal implications. Then, I shall draw up a genealogy of contemporary artistic experiences that make use of telepathy and also films that engage with the experimental film platform as a way of transmitting ideas. At the end of the chapter, I will analyse the first two films in TCOET series *kokakolachickenwings* (2015) and *Superhomosexuals* (2016), since both films articulate the problems brought up throughout the entire chapter.

The first questions that guide this work are: How is it possible to experience telepathy in the audiovisual medium? To what extent is it feasible to consider TCOET film practice a queer potentially telepathic experience? What are the fundamentals of a queer telepathic practice through images and sounds?

What I shall try to prove through this work is that a set of collaborative audiovisual practices between different agents (human and nonhuman) can articulate forms of telepathy that link the territories of queer politics with posthuman debate. My thesis is that the practice of expanded and queer telepathy differs from orthodox telepathic practices (such as those most widely developed in the artistic field since the 1960s) since, in addition to modulating forms of distance communication, it aims to put into crisis not only the subject, but also the normative orders that compose it, such as gender, sexuality, humanity, codifications of pleasure marking a clearly defined body. In addition, the telepathic practices presented in these films are not only listed as remote contact strategies for transmitting images,

information, conditions, but also as queer forms of relationality. The set of problems identified here and the intentions that constitute them are to function as a form of direct theory, which I have called expanded telepathy.

Therefore, I begin by working on the fundamental concept from which this thesis emerges: an expanded notion of telepathy.

1.1. Telepathy: origins, development and first expansion of the concept

In this first section, the origins of the term "telepathy" are reviewed in the context of the nineteenth century, its links with the field of esotericism, and the deployment of the term during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries into other areas. My intention is to point out the multiple uses and the versatility of its sphere of action, as well as the successive interventions that telepathy has afforded between the areas of pseudo-science, science and esotericism. Finally, I go over a series of problems that expands the notion of telepathy and connects to the modes under which TCOET films operate.

The notion of telepathy was coined in 1882 by the poet, classicist and amateur psychologist Frederic Myers, who established the Society for Psychical Research in London in 1882. Telepathy designates an oxymoron, as Robert Luckhurst notes (2002), since it implies, to some extent, a certain type of hidden and even secret communication between people at a distance, (tele-), that brings intimacy to the touch (pathos) (ibid,. pp.1-3). It is necessary to locate its emergence within the framework of Victorian culture. As Luckhurst indicates, the field of emergence of telepathy in that period was, in effect, a shifting terrain between esoteric speculation and scientific knowledge. Although the process that inaugurated modernity was an effect of the disintegration of traditional hierarchies both social and epistemic, it also brought a strong crisis in personal faith, and England therefore became a fertile territory for practices of fanciful speculation (such as the spectra photographs of William H. Mumler or the phantasmagoria functions of Étienne Gaspard-Robertson).

Luckhurst points out that, since telepathy is a hybrid concept, it not only theorizes itself, as knowing, about modes of intimate distance between two beings, but also displays that same distance from the knotting of resources and theories for its deepening as an area of knowledge because it requires experts from the most diverse fields of knowledge. Francis Galton, one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, pointed this out in a letter addressed to Frederick Myers because the scientific inquiry of telepathy, he said, supposed the union of disciplines to delineate a map of a comprehensive unconscious mind (Galton, 11 Feb. 1889 cited in Luckhurst 2002, p.3).

As a result of the emergence of a secularized and strongly positivist scientific culture, a set of strange, unexpected, hybrid knowledge and ephemeral notions emerged as a way to bind together previously dispersed knowledge. In this era, the oxymoronic notion of "distant touch", as Luckhurst indicates, was the conjunction of a set of highly heterogeneous social knowledge and practices: cable telegraphy, physiology, illusionism, energy physics, psychology, bestselling ghost stories, anthropology, neurology and politics of the imperial age (ibid., p.3). As indicated by authors such as Linda Dalrymple Henderson (2016), there is an ongoing project of rethinking the intimate relation between modern art, science and occultism. Several paradigms about new material realities emerged between the late 19th and the early 20th century. Theories such as X-ray vision, the vibrational ether and the fourth dimension, elaborated by P.D. Ouspensky, had a strong influence on artists from Kandinsky and Boccioni to Malevich[2].

In her important work, Jacqueline Drinkall (2005) acknowledges that the Surrealists devised research situations based on ideas related to telepathy during the 1920s but she clearly traces the current development of telepathy as a collaborative art practice to its impact on conceptual art and performance after 1968. Her work begins by explaining that telepathy works as a space for poetic inquiry and chooses to oppose it to ideas of collaboration and of language as a quantifiable material.

Pamela Thurschwell (2001) understands the history of telepathy to be the unfolding of a fantasy of total communication, mind to mind and without any interference, where love, intimacy, emotional ties must also be understood as beyond language, where even two people are no longer necessary (ibid., p.93). The point is central to this project, since the telepathic practices proposed by TCOET connectivity seek to unmake such configurations and instead propose a series of ways of relationality that put the subject and even the logic of emotional intimacy associated with the heteronormative regime in crisis. In this sense, and following Thurschwell, telepathy generates forms of transference that arise thanks to the existence of a common fantasy structure, which is why Lacan, for example, was so interested in this

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[2] See Henderson, L D. "Rethinking Modern Art, Science, and Occultism in Light of the Ether of Space: Wassily Kandinsky, Umberto Boccioni, and Kazimir Malevich"; keynote lecture for conference "The History of Art and 'Rejected Knowledge': From the Hermetic Tradition to the 21st Century," The State Institute of Art Studies, Moscow, October 2016.

phenomenon to be analysed in psychoanalytic therapy and in conjunction with other technologies linked to remote transmission such as the telephone (2004, p.2).

Another understanding of telepathy closer to the TCOET research project and beyond inter-subjective forms of communication is one that understands telepathy more as an atmosphere, a network of interconnections (in TCOET, those interconnections could involve the film, its production, and its viewers at every different moment). This latter approach based on the atmospheric mode of telepathy relates to an older form based on wireless communication. Following Durham Peters (1999), it is important to note that the field of telepathy development was historically very close to the search that promoted devices such as radio, telegraph or Morse code, which operate as other forms of communication at a distance. The semantic field coined by the communication devices of the late nineteenth century anchored part of the desire for "perfect communication" in a territory of meanings that resumed the dream of telepathy, that is, the encounter between two minds at a distance, where communication would work in the manner of a bridge over the abyss (ibid., p.16).

In this sense, Peters points out that telepathy was always figured as an experience that transcended the capacities of the environment. Besides the research around telepathy other areas of enquiry were added at the end of the nineteenth century, such as, "telesthesia" (1892), which consisted in the transmission of impressions at a distance, and "telekinesis" (1890), the ability to influence a physical system without physical interaction; by the last decade of the 19th century, the notion of telepathy had expanded throughout the Anglo-American world, which transferred a whole field of metaphorical resonances from the transphysical to the research on wireless communication. If "induction" is the technical term that defines the act of sending signals in the air, in that context the method developed by spiritualism and radio worked together. This is why Durham Peters points out that there are cases where the practice of "poetic induction", or "pulling signals out of the air", initially even surpassed the actual capacities of wireless technology (1999, p.106).

Roger Luckhurst characterizes the ether as an "expansive matrix with unknown limits" (2002, p. 90). This imagined but unmapped space of transmissions enabled technological speculation, just as it was eventually rendered obsolete through the development of the same technologies to which it gave rise. In this sense, it is possible to affirm that the deployment of nineteenth-century telepathy functioned as an antecedent and even as a field of metaphorical

resonances of the imaginary, and was later absorbed by the development of telecommunications. The worldview of communication pursued the dream of spirit-to-spirit contact, once mediated by the body (and including animal magnetism, electric telegraph, spiritism, wireless technology, telepathy and even other forms of more exotic remote mind control), now articulated by a single paradigm (Peters 1999, p.178).

Since the time of the telegraph, it can be said that wireless signals have permeated the urban environment, and this type of communication quickly moved to a type of duality that replaced communication from person to person into one from machine to machine. According to Jennifer Gabrys (2009), in the urban ether a multitude of invisible particles navigate a residual matter (composed of ashes, aerosols, signals and light). The industrial waste made from dust also circulates through that environment. In it, thanks to urban technological imagination, the signals that shape wireless communication have been described as "smart dust" with the purpose of pointing out its ubiquity and its small size. Gabrys refers to the "wireless city" to name that imaginary on which signal clouds, intelligent particles and cryptic forms of communication between machines occur; it is, in effect, a way of conceiving the city that is telepathically urban and our primary access to that telepathic exchange is through dust (ibid., p.49). Telepathy is, according to Gabrys, a form of invisible communication that describes the ways in which the wireless city speaks to itself, circulating messages and programming urban ecologies. The atmosphere of a city flooded with wireless sensors suggests a more expanded dimension of machine telepathy, since they themselves establish permanent connections, articulate dialogues, send and receive information continuously and autonomously. With autonomous machines connected to other autonomous machines, it might be possible to say that the world is in all-encompassing telepathic communication. The urban space, increasingly, says the author, is becoming instantaneous and automated, the inhabitants circulate through circuits monitored by cameras, traffic monitors, surveillance systems, parts that constitute a city that speaks and looks to itself. Gabrys coined the term "network mind" to account for the intelligence that can be continuously consulted for information about the movements, circulations and surveillance that are operated in the city environment. (ibid, pp. 55-59).

This other notion of telepathy, concerning the forms of wireless communication provided by the development of telecommunications and, more specifically, by the development of the

Internet, comes close to the TCOET idea by trying to unite the notions of "telepathy" and "expansion". Expanded telepathy includes the idea of the exchange not only of information, but also of affect, desire, imagination, all aspects linked to the limits of the body, gender, sexuality and sex. The films produced by TCOET, precisely, allow the assemblage of a series of ideas, information, theoretical-critical problems in a way similar to a multi-directional exchange of an atmosphere that produces "smart dust". The concept that makes TCOET films work as a platform for the deployment of theoretical materials follows from the idea of experimental film as direct theory, Edward Small's notion (1994), which I shall summarize in the subsequent section.

1.2. Cinema as direct theory

If we consider the problem of experimental film as a form of theory, or transmission of critical reflections, it is necessary to review the central propositions on this matter. Edward Small (1994) proposed the notion of *direct theory* as a set of ideas postulated to link experimental film and video with theory. One of the foundations of his theoretical approaches lies precisely in trying to unravel in what ways experimental films can manage theoretical reflections, that is, make use of formal resources (images and sounds) to transmit ideas, without the exclusive use of spoken or written language.

Small set himself the project of conceiving and thinking about experimental film as a philosophical theory, a form by which it would be possible to transmit knowledge in addition to states of imagination, notes about the world, excerpts from the nature of the universe, in synthesis, a *dispositif* for encountering the territory of reality. *"Art is thinking in images"* is the epigraph from Viktor Shklovsky that opens Small's book, in which he formulates the principles of direct theory (ibid., p.7). Viktor Shklovsky was a Russian and Soviet literary theorist and one of the major figures associated with Russian formalism. In his classic 1917 essay *Art as Technique*, Shklovsky, termed *"ostranenie"* (defamiliarisation), the key strategy for producing the unreality of cosmic horror (Spiegel, S., 2010, p. 18). Defamiliarisation cancels the habituated meanings of the human world, and allows appearances to float free. TCOET films recover in part the use of this technique as commented in a recent interview[3]. This avant-garde notion was later developed through more sophisticated epistemologies, such as Karen Barad's intra-action (see section 1.4 and Chapter II).

Small's contribution consisted of writing an essay, almost at the end of the twentieth century, that posited the viewing of cinema as a theory of knowledge, an ontology of the world. He compared philosophy and direct theory. One of his arguments was to explain that the theory of cinema has not always relied exclusively on philosophical exposition and argument; the writings of Sergei Eisenstein, for example, reveal these exceptions[4]. The Russian filmmaker and theorist combined free verse, diagrams, photographic illustrations and a battery of theoretical concepts to assert this potential. There is a set of semiotic strategies and systems

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[3] 2018 'Green/Gonzalez & The Church of Expanded Telepathy', Interview, *Art Berlin* https://www.artberlin.de/green-i-gonzalez-the-church-of-expanded-telepathy retrieved on 1 January 2020
[4] Eisenstein, Sergei: *Film Form and the Film Sense* (New York: Meridian Books, 1969).

that speak for themselves. Indeed, Small argues, the etymology of the word theory itself, from the Greek *theoria*, means "to take a look at", highlights that the image is a central platform on which theoretical systems are built (ibid., p.6).

Three main theses organize Small's work: the first is that direct theory, as he understands it, is closely linked to experimental film and video, considered as a genre unto itself (separate from fiction and documentary). The second is the explicit link of direct theory to experimental film and video, since many parallels can be found between the two registers (brevity, economic independence, the link with technological developments, its relationship with mental images and its reluctance to use verbal language, the exploration of non-narrative structures). The third thesis is that both experimental film and video have a remarkable reflexivity that makes experimental film and video work as a kind of theory that goes beyond separate semiotic systems (especially those of written and spoken language) (ibid., p. xv). This thesis is central to the enquiries proposed by TCOET, that is, the interest in the transmission of ideas, sensations and affects through the resources afforded by the experimental moving image.

According to Small, experimental cinema avoids narrative constructions through having decidedly theoretical objectives (unlike fiction or documentary feature films) and when dealing with narratives it presents them in a fragmented way that tends to confuse the conventions of classical continuity[5]. In this sense, the interest of experimental film is widely reflective, which constitutes, to a large extent, its most complex characteristic (ibid., p. 21). To a certain extent, Small examines the productions of the European cinematographic avant-garde to point out that the ways in which direct theory works depend on explorations that extend formal problems to the territory of cinema, such as linking it to painting (in films such as Hans Richter's *Rhythmus 21* (1921); on the other hand, he also indicates those works associated with music by using visual elements, tones and movements with synthetic constructions (as in the case of Fernand Léger's *Ballet Mécanique*, 1924). Thus, Small points out, both experimental film and video look for constructions that are "medium-specific", that is, independent of the narrative forms inherited from the Aristotelian model and which have dominated both the modern and contemporary novel (ibid., p.37).

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[5] All the films that make up the analysis of this project, to different degrees, unmake the conventions of classical continuity.

Another of the foundations on which the author works to develop his notion of direct theory, and which we are particularly interested in, is the use of intellectual montage as a fundamental tool that links audiovisual productions with theoretical reflection. Intellectual montage can be defined as "the juxtaposition of a series or images to create an abstract idea not suggested by any one image". (Bordwell and Tomphson, 1994: 734). Coined by Eisenstein, the concept of intellectual montage involves collaboration between different fragments from which an idea or set of ideas can be extracted. Eisenstein points, for example, to the sequence of the gods in his film *October* (1927) where he carries out the montage, in a series of takes, of statues of gods and churches of different cultures, and military medals. (ibid, 1949: 82). Intellectual montage constructs meaning through contrast of images, juxtaposing planes that have no apparent causal connection though the filmmaker leads the audience to create a general concept that ends up linking them together (Bordwell and Thompson, 1994: 135).

According to Small (1994), montage is a tool for the production of meaning; he points, in this regard to the example of Kenneth Anger in *Scorpio Rising* (1969) and the editing of Hitler footage interspersed with images of Jesus Christ and homosexual orgies. In the same direction, Small recovers the work of Bruce Conner through films such as *A Movie* (1958), *Cosmic Ray* (1961) or *Crossroads* (1976), whose formal reflexivity is deeply anchored in the uses of montage. Small observes that Conner's films produce what Eisenstein's theories prescribed for montage, since they are, to some extent, direct theory exercises that addressed the reflection on montage by montage itself. *A Movie* (1958) literally provides evidence of what Eisenstein tries to explain verbally in his writings. (ibid., pp. 54-55). Small points out that even what Youngblood recuperates as "Expanded Cinema" emerges in a strong confluence of the mechanic-chemical properties of film with those of electronics that depended on video and computers; which further reveals the search for constructions beyond the trappings of traditional narrative (ibid., p.61). In this way those features of experimental cinema in film get transferred to experimental cinema produced by electronic means and are cited by Youngblood (1970) as alternative forms of communication[6]

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[6] Although coming from a different direction to mine, R. Buckminster Fuller perfectly interprets the anticipatory mood of Gene Youngblood's Expanded Cinema: "The neurological and physiological explorers do not find it extravagant to speculate that we may learn that what humanity has thus far spoken of mystified as telepathy, science will have discovered, within decades, to be ultra-high frequency electro-magnetic wave propagations." (Youngblood, p.15)

The notion of moving image as direct theory was recently (2012) the focus of discussions at the International Experimental Cinema Congress organized by Arsenal - Institute for Film and Video Art[7]. I was particularly interested in the section curated by Winfried Pauleit who returned to the exercise of associating cinema and theory when he indicated that cinema, and especially experimental cinema, can be considered a kind of theory, although exceeding the limits of a theory based on language. Pauleit recovers a set of antecedents that have investigated this problem and points out that they can be divided into three specific zones.

In relation to experimental cinema, Pauleit points out that a first model of analysis is the one provided by the work of Edward Small (1994), and the best known in the development of a theory connecting theory and film. In relation to the work of directors such as Godard and Farocki, who delved into the genre of essay film, he also recovers the work of Pantenburg (2006), who explores this form of crossing between critical speculation and moving image. In a sense, the author points out that the rhetoric underlying this type of analysis of films (Small and Pantenburg) operates as a form of "translation" of what the films display with words.

The second model correlating cinema and theory contrasts with the previous one. He posits that cinema can be theory if it makes the necessary arguments without the need for any translation. The author indicates that these problems can be found in writings such as *Totally, Tenderly, Tragically In Search of the Centaur: The Essay-Film* by Philip Lopate (1998) who concludes that a film can be considered theory if it is built on language. Films such as *Mothlight* by Stan Brakhage (1963) cannot be considered as essay or theory, since they don't construct arguments.

Pauleit points out that if the first and second models are built on the distinction between two areas - word and image, art and theory - it is because that distinction is taken for granted from the beginning; Pauleit's third position puts these two paradigms in crisis. An example of that would be, for example, the notion of "image-text" elaborated by W.J.T. Mitchell, which seeks to cross two terrains, those of image and text.

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[7] This was a panel comprising Madeleine Bernstorff, Olga Moskativa, Laurence A.Rickels and Winfried Pauleit. Pauleit, W. 2010, "Film as theory", paper presented at Think:Film – the International Experimental Cinema Congress, 10-14 October, Berlin, viewed 12 December 2019, http://www.thinkfilm.de/panel/film-theory-winfried-pauleit

Finally, Pauleit develops a fourth model. The case he studies is the *Encyclopaedia Cinematographica,* an experiment where verbal arguments are not used, which does not directly equate to theory. His method is closer to deconstruction and his source of work, instead of texts, are the archives themselves. To explain it, Pauleit takes up Christoph Keller's project and his presentation of the *Encyclopaedia Cinematographica* (2001). There, Keller took a set of images produced by a German post-war scientific project that sought to experience and record the movement of both living beings and inanimate things, and to decompose the series of movements into minimum units. The project ran between 1950 and 1990 and came to produce thousands of films. In 2001 Christoph Keller took forty exemplary films and placed them as an installation in video loops through forty monitors. The installation took the images from a scientific context to an artistic one. The installation shows animals, in addition to a series of specific experiments. It also makes visible the implicit cinematographic evidence of natural laws, from which our understanding of certain animals and their behaviour for a long time derived. Pauleit points out that from these films emerge certain ideologies, such as social Darwinism, including the Nazi interpretation of "racial hygiene". Pauleit ensures that the ideology of the original images can be read by the new images through processes of discovery, study, staging, and work, while viewing them. It is, in effect, a model for cinema as a theory that works in two ways: on the viewer's side, since the reading of these images can evoke theories of collective memory and it is through the reading process that these theories can be deconstructed almost automatically; on the production side, this kind of installation reframes the films altering the circuit of those theories connected with these cultural practices. It is, in Pauleit's terms, a "counter-strike" to representation and as such, deconstructive theory.

To go back to Volken Patenburg (2015), I am interested in highlighting the research component in the development of the film essays made by Harun Farocki and Jean-Luc Godard. For Patenburg, to think about the idea of "film as theory" in the work of both filmmakers goes even further than ascribing them to "author's cinema" (in the sense that it transcends the problem of author cinema and positions the work of both directors as true philosophers). Many of the procedures that could help to consider these audiovisual practices as theories, he says, can be found in conventional films, in which certain visual elements or reflective loops activate a thought process about the medium itself. These audiovisual productions can be considered as a theory because both works emphatically activate a large

number of problems around "cinematic thinking", that is, guided by questions such as, how can concrete and abstract visible material be perceived? To what place does the film's medium bring new ways of thinking? Few directors have shown a continuing interest in making use of film while refusing to make it a means of entertainment, transforming the format, whether through film, installations, short films or feature films or in television programs, into a research tool that can make visible what would otherwise have remained invisible (ibid., p.23). Panteburg also introduces the notion of "metapicture" from W.J.T Mitchell, who defines it as an image capable of reflecting on itself. On the other hand, he notes, a metapicture is not necessarily restricted to the field of art, but, on the contrary, may include illustrations, magazines, cartoons, etc. (ibid., pp. 48-49). In this regard, Mitchell notes "Metapictures are pictures that show themselves in order to know themselves: they stage the 'self-knowledge' of pictures" (Mitchell, 1995, p.48 cited in Patenburg 2015, p.49). In this sense, Patenburg points out that the metapicture is considered a "self-conscious image", to which it is possible to grant autonomy and agency. On the other hand, he points out that the theoretical is not something that needs to be added to the image from the outside but that it exists in the references, ambivalences and internal discontinuities (which we could approach through the notion of "intellectual montage" described above).

As we have noted, cinema as a direct theory can be thought of from several points of view. Below, I list the different approaches that can be culled from these reflections, and which are a constitutive part of the idea of film as a direct theory. Small's perspective (1994), perhaps the most widespread, allows me to draw a coordinate map to investigate the ways in which experimental cinema can function as a mode of circulation of specific theories. The central elements provided by this theory involve the following resources: use of the screen as a painting canvas, use of synaesthesia to link visual elements, sounds and movements, intellectual montage, constitution of the film as medium-specific, that is, independent of the narrative forms inherited from the Aristotelian model up to the contemporary novel. From Pauleit (2012), we can recover the idea of a model of cinema that elaborates complex deconstructive mechanisms that reflect the framework of the representation and that affect both the level of production as well as reception. The tool that Pauleit provides could be referred to as reframing, since it is about replacing materials produced for other purposes (found footage) to open a new meaning, appealing to the order of reception and its deconstruction.

Panteburg (2015), finally, translates the cross between cinema and theory to the analysis of essay films, to point out that many processes lead us to think of audiovisual practices as theories where certain visual elements or reflexive loops activate a thought process around the middle. This is reconstituted in the concept, in addition to what we could call cinematic thinking.

Many possibilities of cinema as a platform for theoretical development that were previously examined can be thought of in light of a vast film experiment between the 20th and 21st centuries. In their totality, these films utilize alternative theories, philosophical or theoretical questions that directly affect the ways in which they display their formal logic (intellectual montage, reflexivity, animation and motion technique, colour and lighting effects, props and staging). Note that none of these works takes the problem of telepathy in express or literal terms. I am interested, however, in how they convey critical concerns within audiovisual operations to account for a set of antecedents to what we understand as forms of direct theory.

In the film *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) by Maya Deren, for example, you can see the problem of transfiguration carried out by a fragmentation of time and space with temporal and spatial relationships that challenge our waking phenomenology. In any case, the film retains a poetic narrative structure that often deconstructs our waking state by pointing to a classic continuity it rebels against as arbitrary (ibid., pp. 43-44). In Larry Jordan's *Visions of a City* (1978), we also find some clues to how the problem of reflexivity displayed by an experimental film piece moves critical concerns to the moving image. Jordan's work, according to Deming (2012), is deeply meditative. Many of its animated collage resources aim bring formal reflection to our perceptual habits. Jordan Belson's work established strong links with inquiries around the physical and the metaphysical[8]. In Belson's *Allures* (1961) the atmosphere goes from abstraction to figuration, from the spatial environment to cellular structures, from light beams to stellar luminaries. Each form that emerges on the screen dissolves into others, makes new combinations of light appear. *Allures* can also be described as a piece that addresses, with almost mathematical precision, the problem of cosmogenesis, that term with which, according to Youngblood, Teilhard de Chardin sought to replace

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[8] Although his concern lies primarily with form, Youngblood warns that these animated collages are not just abstract images but, on the contrary, as in the cases of the works of Len Lye, Hans Richter, or Oskar Fischinger, are concrete significations. These are objective experiences of kinesthetic and optical dynamism. And, most relevantly, I think, as the author indicates, it is the definitive method for using visual imagery to communicate abstract concepts (1970, p.157).

cosmology to indicate that the universe is not a static phenomenon but rather a process of becoming, of reaching new levels of existence and organization (ibid., P.160). In Kenneth Anger's *Scorpio Rising* (1969), on the other hand, we find a set of ideas and beliefs linked to occult worship practices. For Steven Dillon (2004), Anger's filmmaking is an almost literal approach to the magical or alchemical possibilities offered by cinema, where science, occultism, underground experience and knowledge combined with strong doses of counterculture[9]. The narrative of *Scorpio Rising* is deeply fragmented. The film shows motorcycle gangs in both New York and California, linked to homosexual activities. Anger dialogues with the "biker" of the late fifties and early sixties and his relationship as typical cult image for homosexuals. Those images are interspersed with others of a homosexual orgy, footage of Jesus Christ from a TV series and the Nazi regime. A confluence, therefore, of obscenity, sacrilege and fascism. As Small indicates, it is a very clear example of direct theory, a use of experimental cinema and video as a space for experimentation, corroborating Bazin's (1964) ideal of montage as a creator of meaning (Small 1994 p. 54). The use of pre-existing material in Anger's work, from diverse sources and produced for different purposes, reveals, for Small, the ways in which Eisenstein predicted "shock" as one of the powers of intellectual montage. For Small, Anger intuitively follows Shklovsky's idea of *ostranenie* by baring the device and revealing the interleaving of materials to the attention of the audience (ibid., pp. 54-55). The work of Nick Zedd, author of the 1985 manifesto known as "Cinema of Transgression", brings to the formal plane a series of recursive ideas about cinema and society. Zedd was strongly linked to a group of filmmakers between the 1970s and 1980s (including Richard Kern, Tessa Hughes Freeland or Lung Leg) whose audiovisual projects relied, above all, on how to reconsider shock value, violence, horror and black humour. His films manifest a very specific desire to challenge the limits of the demonstrable, by articulating images of explicit sex, physical violence, SM and punk imagery. It is, then, an audiovisual production - low budget - where abundant use of shocking images, sudden camera movements, explicit images, real locations (in many cases, linked to sex work, subculture punk) constitute an action directly articulated by the moving image[10]. In Barbara

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[9] In this sense, the effort to transform a corpus of knowledge into a laboratory for making moving images is clear. For Dillon, the camera, in many of Anger's films, is, in itself, an object that articulates the rituals, beyond capturing the objects, as if making films were in itself an act of magic. One of the greatest sources of initiation and inspiration of Anger's cinema was Aleister Crowley (1875-1947), an English occultist who titled himself "The Great Beast 666" (Dillon, 2004 p. 55)

[10] In another film by Zedd, *Whoregasm* (1988), produced almost entirely with overprinting effects, the images are a repertoire of excessive records: hardcore pornography, including fellatio practiced upon a trans woman, found

Hammer's *History Lessons* (2000), the filmmaker uses foreign footage to build a lesbian stock archive outside the official history of cinema. This case is paradigmatic, since Hammer's work delves from its beginnings, in films such as *Dyketactics* (1974), *The Lesbos Film* (1981), *Nitrate Kisses* (1992), or even in interviews or theoretical materials, into the problem of the absence or eradication of lesbians in the history of cinema. The peculiarity of *History Lessons*, however, is that it is almost exclusively a work of manipulating pre-existing files (except for a series of fictional recreations). Its juxtaposition of heterogeneous audiovisual materials (educational medical images, newsreels, sexed pics, nudies, etc.) takes place through montage but also generates relationships that allow us to read those materials outside the rule. The work reflects specifically on the virtues of intellectual montage as well as direct intervention, as a critical response to the lack of proof of lesbian stock in audiovisual culture. These strategies are closely related to those Pauleit mentions (2012) in the *Encyclopaedia Cinematographica* when describing the cross between cinema and theory where a re-placement of pre-existing materials is carried out.

As I have pointed out, following Small, if the idea of film as direct theory is my starting point for the transmission of ideas, expanded cinema functions as a creative laboratory for the TCOET. For this, it is necessary to give an account of its origin in the hands of Gene Youngblood (1970) who described in detail a theory that tried to adapt the audiovisual form to the specific times that the last stretch of the twentieth century inaugurated, a time of accelerated transformations at the level of culture on the one hand and of information and communication technologies on the other.

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footage of policemen carrying out a raid, abstract images. Such are, expressed through the resources of audiovisual rhetoric, the ideas carried out by the "Cinema of Transgression"
Available from: https://film-makerscoop.com/catalogue/nick-zedd-whoregasm [Accessed 14 December 2019]

1.3. Expanded cinema: origins of the term and expansion to electronic technology

If the films that make up what I call TCOET adopt an experimental logic, it is because they are, first of all, works that dialogue with the notions Youngblood developed around what he calls *expanded cinema*. Next, I review some of his central points, for both its scope and theoretical developments, and its application to a set of audiovisual productions. It is important to note that to describe and grant its complexity to the terrain of what he calls *expanded cinema*, Youngblood incorporates a wide range of formats and styles (special effects, video art, computer-generated images, multi-media environments and holography).

At the time of developing this concept, the 1970s, Youngblood was indicating that the world was in a transition from the Industrial Age to the Cybernetic Age (characterized by many as a post-industrial Age). It is central to point out here the growing pre-eminence of electronic and digital technologies in the production of audiovisual images and the transformation of information and communication technologies, accelerated in the post-WWII world. Youngblood prefers to coin the term Paleocybernetic to define that context: a certain primitive potential that associates the Palaeolithic with a certain utopian substrate linked to the cybernetic field. Youngblood argues that what he calls *Expanded Cinema* does not imply a film in itself, but rather part of a process of becoming, linked to the impulse of humans to manifest their consciousness outside their mind, outside their eyes. What he is diagnosing, to some extent, is how electronic technologies constituted what he calls an "intermediate network" which, he points out, works as if it were a human being's central nervous system. A central aspect for the development of this thesis is that the purpose of his work, then, was the exploration of the "new" messages of the cinema and the examination of imaging technologies that, to some extent and at that time, he considered, promised to extend those communication skills of humans to unthinkable places (ibid., p.41).

To characterise that "intermediate network", Youngblood uses the notion of "enviromnent" since, he argues, society is more conditioned (subjectively) by cinema and television than by nature; that enviromnent, then, is integrated by an intermediate network of cinema, television, radio, magazines, books and newspapers. In this sense, it will put special emphasis on understanding the logic that underlies the extension of popular cinema as a collective entertainment. If that communication environment is responsible for producing, controlling

and circulating myriad messages, it is important to understand all these cultural phenomena as inscribed in a very concrete network of mediation between the world and its human subjects, between subject and subject and even between the subject and society. Similarly, he points out that if the transformations of society occurred so rapidly, it is also necessary to apply a new thought scheme to the notion of "cinema" and cinematographic language according to a new thinking scheme. If popular films speak a language that derives from early-century cinema (which refined devices, he says, by figures like D.W. Griffith), it is important to imagine other modes of production and consumption of audiovisual images, that is, those adapting to the present (ibid., p.54).

The television image is, in Youngblood's terms, central to the subjective formation of the society of this constellation. In the electronic image, he finds the source to imagine other ways to work with the image in motion, so much so that he even points out it entails the possibility of freeing cinema from its "umbilical" connection to theatre and literature, forcing films to expand into much more complex areas of language and experience. For Youngblood, then, the need for an expanded kinematic language prevails as a novel form of vision that can align with the questions of the time linked to authority, justice, love, sex, freedom, etc.; the equivalent in the area of cinema would, then, be the review of extended and consumed forms of entertainment on a large scale, that is, commercial entertainment. According to this idea, he says, repeating formulas leads to audiences' alienation and boredom. In addition, he adds, it destroys the audience's ability to appreciate and participate in the creative process. The production of these commercial films derives almost exclusively from the need of producers to generate profit, so they insistently repeat the same formula (ibid., pp. 59-60).

One of Youngblood's central points of contention is traditional cinema's dependence on drama, that is, the Aristotelian tradition inherited from theatre and literature which inevitably involves the figure of conflict. By this logic, he argues, nearly all film has rested on a plot that leads the viewer to move from a point A to a B to a C, that is, a structure in which these problems are also marked as forms of challenge on which even a large part of experimental cinema is founded when Small (1994) indicates that experimental film and video look for constructions that are "medium-specific", that is, independent of the narrative forms inherited from the Aristotelian model and going up until the contemporary novel (ibid.p.37). For

Youngblood, the viewer remains passive through the whole experience of cinema[11]. For Youngblood the human condition has expanded considerably but mainstream art is not telling the same story. That is why he insists that these transformations and experiences have been considered only in the synaesthetic research of the films he regards as *expanded cinema*. (ibid., pp. 64-65)

Youngblood declares that *expanded cinema* has been deployed since the emergence of underground cinema, and became popular in the avant-garde of the late 1950s as a technical exercise and a development of cinematic language allowing human communicative powers, in addition to consciousness, to expand. This new language is, he argues, the result of a fusion of aesthetic sensibilities and technological innovations. This phenomenon is called *Synaesthetic Cinema*. This new modality transcends the restrictions of drama, history and the plot and cannot, in this sense, be called, a genre (ibid., p.77). Among several characteristics attributed to this type of cinema, I am interested in highlighting that for Youngblood this is a type of cinema that transcends the notion of "reality", that is, that does not cut its vision of the world into fragments, a function which Bazin attributes to montage, because it is not worried about the world in the first place but, rather, about the filmmaker's own feelings. In synaesthetic films, one image is continually transformed into another by what he calls "metamorphosis". In this regard, Youngblood analyses the movie *Dog Star Man* (1959-1960) by Stan Brakhage to account for some ideas of this form of cinema which, centrally, disregards the logics that organize the drama and turn to the field of perceptual experiences, mainly around the use of what Eisenstein calls "intellectual montage" (ibid., p.88). In addition to Synaesthetic Cinema, Youngblood incorporates other forms of expanded cinema: Videographic Cinema, Intermediate Theater, Cybernetic Cinema, Holographic Cinema. On the other hand, and throughout his study, he also revisits films produced by Jordan Belson, John Whitney, Nam June Paik, Carolee Schneemann, Michael Snow, Paul Morrissey, among many others.

In this section I have recovered the central elements of what Gene Youngblood calls expanded cinema and which are a constituent part of what I work with in the TCOET experiment: the search for strategies, formulations, inquiries that go beyond the limits

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[11] Numerous studies, however, have contested the "passive" position regarding the figure of the cinematographic spectator. One of the studies that I consider most interesting to review this place is that of Janet Staiger. Staiger, J., 2000, *Perverse Spectators: The Practice of Film Reception*. New York University Press, New York.

imposed by narrative cinema and allow to transfer, in turn, a set of theoretical problems, debates, ideas, notes, which I have indicated as partaking more specifically in what Small (1994) calls direct theory. In order to untangle the notion of experimental moving image as theory, it is important to revisit a concept that traverses the field of contemporary artistic practice, and helps to articulate a more complex understanding of TCOET's research processes.

1.4. TCOET's antecedents: telepathy in contemporary art

I am interested in focusing on a series of very widespread works of contemporary art, which can be read through the lens of telepathy. Telepathy was a widespread resource for post-World War II artistic practices. In many cases, the transmission of ideas was not necessarily stated previously by the artists involved as "telepathic" but, in a way, what prevails is a certain transmission of affects, emotions, perspectives, intentions towards the public or, in any case, a deep connection among those involved in the production of the piece.

Jacquelene Drinkall (2005) theorised extensively around the problem of telepathy in the framework of contemporary artistic practices from 1968 to the present. In this sense, she declares that telepathy and collaboration are tools that artists incorporate simultaneously when they pursue a certain search within the framework of a subjective transformation. Telepathy, says Drinkall (2011), "names a distant (tele) feeling (pathos) or ideas (thesia) found in all cultures" (ibid., p.139). It is a set of tools arranged to affect, share or transform the subjectivity of others. One of its main questions lies in trying to settle the difference between oneself and the other. Collaborative telepathy can be defined, as a creative practice, as work, information exchange and involvement in a field that we might call exchange and/or collaboration. As we shall see, the exchanges may be varied: with fictional characters, with non-humans, ghosts, animals, virtual avatars, among other possible interactive entities (ibid, p.139). As with the developments of telepathy during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in these experiences telepathy implies a state of alienation, trance, dispossession, or contact with an adjacent reality: many artists are under hypnosis, in a trance state, unconscious or in sessions of mind control.

These variations in the uses and exercises of telepathy in the framework of collaborative artistic practices are to be found in the works I will be surveying. For Drinkall (2015, 2011), in addition to those uses telepathy had between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was a concept that returned with the psychedelic experiences of the hippie era, the science fiction boom and the anxieties that World War Two brought with its parapsychology laboratories. More recently, Drinkall says, telepathy gained strength in telecommunication developments: for example, NASA's development of speech artefacts. From Marcel Duchamp and Emma Kunz to Marina Abramoviç and Ulay, the uses and sources of the problem of telepathy are

very heterogeneous. Drinkall argues that couples and twins – as later seen in Gilbert & George, the Wilson or the Mangano twin sisters – provide particular exchange models, accentuated by the blood tie loop.

A vital element to consider around these artistic practices is the centrality of collaboration, a feature also meaningful to my practice in TCOET's development of audiovisual works. According to Charles Green (2001), collaboration in art became a nodal element in the transition from modernism to postmodernism and particularly in the course of the 1960s. In this sense, he adds, these practices put into crisis not only the ways in which artistic identity was conceived but also the framework, the discursive border, between the inside and outside of the work of art. He further adds that artistic collaboration in the passage between the 1960s and 1970s occupies a central place in the reworking of what art on the one hand and collaboration on the other imply. An important feature to keep in mind is that, in Drinkall's terms, collaborations that carry out performative practices of telepathy involve forms of exchange that can be, directly or indirectly, visible or intimate, where agents can be aware or unconscious of participating in them. The most traditional way, she says, is the collaboration between small units or agents. In this sense, Green points out that such collaborations constitute what he calls a ghostly and telepathic limbo known as "Third Hand" (ibid., p.X).

According to Drinkall (2011), one of the most notable sets of experiences in the uses of telepathy is found in the Fluxus group during the 1960s and 1970s. In that context, it is worth highlighting the production of the artists Gilbert & George, with their performance entitled *The Singing Sculpture* (1970)[12]. As Green points out, at that time the body language of both was read as a strongly resembling that of the French mime Marcel Marceau. In their expressionless faces, devoid of any artificial theatrical feature, both posed on the platforms that had been installed in the gallery and were seen as a pair of puppets devoid of humanity (Green 2001, p.153). Drinkall takes up an interview conducted by David Sylvester, where the artists declare that, rather than a collaboration, it is a "telepathic nebula connection between the two" (1997 cited in 2011, p.145).

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[12] On that occasion they displayed themselves standing on pedestals six feet high, their faces covered in metallic paint, as if they were statues. Meanwhile, they sang and moved like robots to the rhythm of the song *Underneath the Arches* by Flanagan and Allen, a musical success of the 1930s. It is necessary to highlight that in their performances they resemble semi-automatons, almost as if they were puppets, or robotic forms (Drinkall 2011, p.151)

Another of the experiences that Drinkall recovers as foundational to this current in the framework of the Fluxus group is that of Larry Miller. In this case, the artist 'collaborated' with his deceased mother through hypnosis in a piece entitled *Mom-me* (1973), which centred upon a series of hypnosis sessions with a psychotherapist, since the artist wanted to enter into his mother's psyche. According to the author, telepathy would work here as a "hidden affect" that accompanies hypnosis and invokes transformation. Miller's work would involve both. In his trance, Miller while hypnotised drew a series of portraits of himself and his dead mother. The psychic medium functions as a kind of platform for artistic production. In another vein, the work of Joseph Beuys, widely known, interests me especially for his contact with animals, such as the case of the well-known *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (1965), where telepathic contact seems to materialize between him and a corpse of that animal. These types of practices allow us to articulate the idea that telepathic contacts can occur between a human and various agents, such as other once-living beings. As Drinkall indicates, it is also relevant to recover the work *I like America and America Likes Me* (1974). In this regard, Rochstroh declares that Beuys symbolically unites his psyche with the coyote, which appears as a sort of conspirator / co-creator and thus opens up to an animal that lives off carrion, to gain creativity and renounce the drunk spirit of Death of the United States Empire (ibid., 2011 cited in Drinkall 2015). Links can also occur with a conspirator, but even that conspiracy may not always be friendly – the conflictive link also comes from Beuys' adamant refusal to collaborate with the United States given its role in the Vietnam war (ibid, p.142).

Yoko Ono's work, says Drinkall, incorporated the uses of consciousness, telepathy and psychic vibrations very early[13]. Beyond the performances organized around instructions, she produced works with her partner John Lennon. In a performance known as *Bed-ins* (1969) they put together a sort of staging of their honeymoon in a hotel. Instead of bringing explicit sex to the cameras, they invited the press and sat down in bed to talk about peace and other problems related to their link to civil rights movements. The experience fell to transmitting thoughts, feelings and ideas such as peace, empathy, love, generosity and telepathy to journalists. The construction of the environment in the room became a central aspect of the type of state they sought to transmit. It was a love performance against the Vietnam war that had a strong impact on mainstream media (ibid, pp. 146-147).

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[13] Ono made use of emotions, physical vibrations and telepathy, all manifestations that had been rejected by the reigning aesthetics of the moment, strongly affected by the chance operations the composer John Cage popularized (ibid, pp. 146).

In the same direction, I am interested in recovering some experiments carried out by Susan Hiller in the 1970s. It was the artist's interest to find forms of language that oppose or expand those that tend toward the dominant culture and that include subjects that historically were excluded from society, such as women. This is how she founded and carried out a set of Group Investigation works throughout that period. As Lucy Lippard (1996) points out, *Draw Together* (1972) investigated the transmission of images telepathically to friends in other countries. The artist sought to combine automatic writing with telepathy, the transmission of ideas and images. What she was looking for, to some extent, was erasure of the boundaries between rationality and irrationality. This experience recovered, in Hiller's terms, the tradition of automatism linked to gender differences: in these differences lie the basic modes in which culture assigns the character of medium or madness to women and science and art to men. In *Sisters of Menon* (1972-1979), the artist delved into collaborative work and incorporated a set of inquiries around female solidarity with psychic strength. In Lippard's terms, (1996) it was Hiller's first experience of enquiring into the field of automatic writing and tried to translate the idea of individual identity to collective identity. She gathered different voices, the singular (I), the plural (we) and the collective (everyone). Texts written collaboratively, in Lippard's terms, function as a metaphor for women's inarticulate or unintelligible discourse (ibid, p. xiv). *Sisters of Menon* is part of what is known as Hiller's "Dream Works", a series that investigates different aspects of telepathy and collaboration, as well as a book about dreams she edited with her partner, David Coxhead.

Another performance experience I wish to highlight is *Meat Joy* (1964), in which Carolee Schneemann worked with a group whose trance state (psychological and physical) reached instances that could be considered telepathic collaboration. Hence, its title *Meat Joy* manages to synthesize that amalgam of bodies and affections the camera recorded. The performance used pieces of meat (raw fish, chicken), pieces of paper, fresh paint, ropes, transparent plastic. All these materials merge with the bodies in ecstasy and movement. The accomplices were taken to a trance state in which individual subjectivities merged into a single flesh and spirit. The individual corporealities, the collective erotic bond, the living and the dead flesh merged into a collaborative ritual marked by enjoyment (ibid., p. 44). According to Drinkall, artists such as Beuys, Miller, Schneeman, use collaboration and telepathy simultaneously while going beyond their known world to develop a special connection with another creative entity (ibid., p. 145). These works, clearly, give pride to the absence of direct (nonverbal)

communication. Whether or not it is manifestly about uses of telepathy, I believe that all share the will to transmit specific states of affection, in addition to designing particular ways to collaborate and exchange information either between those involved – who may be two or more, humans or animals, and who can go from synchrony to mere transcendental connection – or to and with the public.

A central experience in the cross between contemporary art and telepathy is found in the work of Marina Abramoviç and the duo Abramoviç/Ulay. The two artists referred to their experience of collaborative work as an *energy dialogue*. Beyond some important coincidences, like their sharing their date of birth, it may be said (as they themselves have) that their telepathy began to be cultivated from a series of shared traits. Their performances investigate areas linked to exploring the limits of the body, subjectivity, and mind. As Drinkall indicates, they collaborated not only as physical bodies, but on the psychic and emotional level too, since they worked to develop extrasensory perception, hallucinations and telepathic communication (ibid. p.54) In the performance *Point of Contact* (1980), the performers stood for an hour looking at each other with their fingers separated by a distance of millimeters. Both previously took training in hypnosis, in addition to investigating the link between material and psychic knowledge and energy in *Talking About Similarity* (1976), in which they performed on their birthday, with Ulay's lips sewn. Abamoviç answered the questions from the audience as if she were Ulay, reading his mind and thoughts.

Regarding this duo, Green (2007) points out that they re-created themselves as if they were a third identity. In this case, says the author, his teamwork was part of a sort of redefinition of the limits of the self through a complex process of disappearance (ibid. P.157). *Relation Works* was created during the first years of their collaboration; in 1979, Abramovic and Ulay worked to deepen the actions in scenes of stillness and deep bonding. In the work *Expansion in Space* (1977) the artists make use of a kind of telepathy that can be recorded in the accuracy of the coordination of the movements they make while pushing the columns that join the floor and ceiling of a space. In *Nightsea Crossing* (1981-1986) both artists used different modes of energy transfer and contact forms. On the one hand, they used nonverbal communication strategies derived from alchemical symbols; they also used meditation and

forms of communication with the audience[14]. In 1983, the duo made a new version of *Nightsea Crossing* called *Conjunction* (1983). In that instance, they collaborated with a Tibetan monk and an indigenous shaman and painter, all four involved in a collective meditation. Abramovic and Ulay both pointed out that empathy facilitated the work and the connection among all (ibid., p.156). Green claims (2011), their total immersion in a prized, shared absorption confirms and at the same time obliterates the fullness of the self-sufficient romantic couple. Their collaborative works, he says, including *Nightsea Crossings*, articulate both spheres (as both artists point out in many of their statements). In this case, Green says, they anticipate the work of deconstructive body art, preceding the work of artists such as Jane and Louise Wilson, since they stress the boundaries of gender and individual subjectivity (ibid., p 158).

As Drinkall points out, the contact between brothers or sisters seems to be a more causal and obvious way to assuming their blood tie for the deployment of telepathic techniques in artistic collaboration. The Wilson sisters (twins Jane and Louise, born in Newcastle in 1967) and the Mangano sisters (twins Gabriella and Silvana) can serve as paradigmatic cases of blood filiation as a tool which, apparently, offers a deeper nexus for distance contact. In these cases, authorship, subjectivity, process is shared at indiscernible instances among those who participate in producing the works. In Drinkall's terms, these forms of telepathic collaboration challenge the boundaries of artistic practfice as well as authorship and artistic subjectivity. The Wilson twins' *Hypnotic Suggestion 505* is a 1993 project that consisted of a video projection, a photographic series and an installation. Both were hypnotized in both their native English and in Portuguese, a language that neither spoke. Viewing the record of that performance, you can see both young women reclining in leather seats with their eyes shut, submitting to the translation patterns of a monotonous voice that guides them in their trance. The space they are in resembles a stage or convention hall with a blue backdrop. As Greg Hilty (1994) assures us in a review of the sisters' performances, the responses of both to the stimuli of those who hypnotised them were almost choreographic. The sisters, in addition, worked to a profound degree to link specific architecture to its phantasmatic power; nonetheless, works like *Hypnotic Suggestion 505* were linked with the telepathic collaboration anchored in the notion of the "third hand", in which collaboration falls back on

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[14] The performance consists of a man and a woman sitting in front of each other in two different chairs and with a table between them. The center of the exercise is to remain silent, motionless and without producing any type of productive activity, looking into each other's eyes.

monstrous bodies, as well as with psychoactive and hypnotic phenomena, fields of resonance linked to Surrealism. Gabriella and Silvana Mangano are identical twins largely focused on collaborative video practice. Their work lies in drawings and videos that use telepathic performance. In many of their works they make use of unrehearsed, improvised choreographies. In one of their best-known works, called *Drawing 1* (2001), the artists appear looking in the mirror as one draws the other. In the video recording we can see one facing the other, in profile, and the image that the other produces, which generates a kind of choreographic symmetry in the representation they carry out, in addition to the set of movements they produce with the body in the act of drawing each other.

During 2015, the filmmakers Brittany Gravely & Ken Linehan carried out a series of audiovisual live cinema experiments titled "The Magical Approach". As the two were in separate cities (one in Providence and the other in Boston) they promoted a psychic communication project seeking to translate a series of astral messages into lights and sounds. In the series of audiovisual productions the project produced over the year you can see hypnotized women, colourful images in film where the bodies appear covered with veils, flowers, lamps, in enclosed or strange spaces. In many cases, the iconography refers to esoteric imagery of the 1960s. Their works greatly resemble films of the experimental avant-garde of the 1960s, such as Kenneth Anger, Jack Smith, Curt Jacobs or Ron Rice. The project, a film series, was named "The Telepathy Sessions". The common visions led them to develop a series of 16mm short films they then showed in a live performance accompanied by transformations and manipulations made with filters, mirrors or prisms, with sounds and alteration of audio spatialisation. All these interventions, in most cases, occurred spontaneously. In many of the films they include themes such as hypnotism, astral travel, tarot or I Ching. Some of the films they produced are *First Hypnotic Suggestion*, *Willa*, *Glenna* and *Melissa* (all from 2014). Brittany Gravely and Ken Linehan define their work as "expanded cinema" where each of the screenings involves some kind of ritual mingling ceremony and play. These films could also be classified as "live cinema", where the telepathic experience occurs exclusively on the production plane.

Having collected statements from those who consider the most significant cases of the intersection of contemporary art, performance, video, installation and telepathy, we can say that they have had a broad and sustained development within performance and only a limited

deployment in audiovisual experimentation, expanded cinema or video art (video, rather, was limited to a documentary record of the telepathy process). In Benedict Drew's recent installation, *The Bad Feel Loops* (2019), which was exhibited at King's College London's Science Gallery, it is possible to encounter some of the problems identified in the present thesis. As part of a sample called "On Edge: Living in an Age of Anxiety", the artist elaborated on some problems he had already investigated in early films such as *The Persuaders* (2012). His interest lies in making use of the editing of images and sounds, as Robert Barry points out, not so much to represent certain states of anxiety as to induce them in spectators.[15] From a series of readings of the Italian philosopher Franco "Bifo" Beraldi, the idea emerges that in the context of the production of subjectivity under postindustial capitalism, power is no longer built from silencing the multitudes, but is based on unlimited noise production. For the connection with those affects, the film assumes that long-distance contact becomes a crucial battlefield. The gallery's web page states: "*The Bad Feel Loops* uses the language of noise – feedback, rhythm and repetition – to invoke the feeling of anxiety, and invites the viewer to stay with the difficult feeling until it becomes an almost ecstatic experience."[16]

In industrial cinema, moreover, telepathy has also been used mostly as it linked to horror or science fiction, for instance: *Village of the Damned* (1960), *The Shining* (1980), *Scanners* (1981), *Dark City* (1998) or in special episodes of the television series *The Twilight Zone* (1959-1964). Within industrial cinema, telepathy has been rather linked to fiction than to an experience incorporated into collaboration in audiovisual production or in the relationship with viewers. In this sense, in addition, the ideas of telepathy that historically prevailed in mainstream industrial cinema have to do with the more traditional notion of the phenomenon, as described by Luckhurst (2002): as a certain type of hidden and even secret communication between people at a distance, bringing intimacy to the touch (ibid., pp.1-3).

How is it possible to consider the transmission of ideas, reflections or theories through experimental film? How is it possible to transfer to the spectators specific feminist, queer or posthumanist notions, ideas and questions? How would TCOET's "expanded telepathy"

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[15] Barry, R. 2019, "Benedict Drew's new film gives form to the anxiety of modern life", *Apollo Magazine*, https://www.apollo-magazine.com/benedict-drew-bad-feel-loops-science-gallery/ [12 December 2019]

[16] Drew, B. 2019, "The Bad Feel Loops", https://london.sciencegallery.com/seasons/on-edge/exhibition/bad-feel-loops [12 December 2019]

operate? When I speak of "expanded telepathy" I mean the ways in which these films conceive telepathy not as a type of connection or transmission of information between two spatially distant agents producing an artistic piece, but more as a complex contextual structure underpinning agents and the plane of the production of a film, agglutinating ideas, theories or debates that also reach viewers. This expanded function of context is inseparable from TCOET films and I need to describe it in detail.

The notion of telepathy that is set out here, then, moves on an intermediate plane between those described by Luckhurst (2005), which implies a certain type of communication without the use of written or spoken words between people at a distance, and that described by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009), associated mostly with the ways in which the "wireless city" incessantly transmits information, a type of telepathy involving from the beginning of the practice-based project I called "expanded", not only to humans, but also other agents, such as software or algorithms, that is, wider non-human formations. In this respect, the inter-subjective connotation of telepathy undermines the possibility of actualizing its potential as a concept that serves to explore the territory of queer and posthumanist politics. This thesis seeks to work on the possibility of an audiovisual practice geared to moving between images that go beyond the mere illustration or documentation of telepathy, or even performative staging of telepathy (such as the work of the Wilson Sisters, the Mangano Sisters, or the duo Abramovic/Ulay). TCOET films are, instead, more intimately related to the collective and trance production Carole Schneemann described in *Meat Joy* (1964).

In terms of production, it is important to highlight that these films are collaborative exercises that expand from and return to different media (writing, speaking, performance, radio, chat, webcam, a cappella song, dance, erotic show, SM session). As I develop in Chapter II, Expanded Telepathy is, fundamentally, queer telepathy. The collaboration structuring these films does not occur at the level of an *inter-action* between intentional subjects; rather, what is explored in all these experiences is the concept of *intra-action* (Barad, 2007), where identities are performed in contact and simultaneously put in crisis. I am determined to recover Karen Barad's notion, since the term "interaction" implies the existence of independent individuals a priori but comes about through specific intra-actions carried out by agents creating their particularities at borders. In these films *intra-actions* describe the emergence of the creative forces involved and the crisis of their constitutive identities,

disarticulating modern Cartesian identities. I will suggest that these films start or are founded where such *intra-actions* take place. According to Barad:

> The usual notion of interaction assumes that there are individual independently existent entities or agents that preexist their acting upon another. By contrast, the notion of 'intra-action' queers the familiar sense of casuality (where one or more casual agents precede and produce an effect), and more generally unsettles the metaphysics of individualism (the belief that there are individually constituted agents or entities, as well as times and places)[17] (2012, pp.76-81).

In Barad's ethico-onto-epistemology, "individuals" do not pre-exist but rather, materialize in intra-actions. An intra-action performs an "agential cut" making a separation between "subject" and "object". In this sense, Barad adds that the notion of intra-action charts a turn in many foundational philosophical notions such as chance, agency, space, time, matter, meaning, being, accountability and justice (ibid, p. 77). Her thesis of *Agential Realism* does not start from a series of pre-established differences, but points out the ways in which differences have been made and are made, stabilized and destabilized, just as the effects of materialization constitute exclusions. Barad points out that feminist, postcolonial, queer and race studies theories have long been questioning the figure of the subject deployed by liberal humanism. In this regard, we can include the example of Judith Butler, who points out in *Bodies That Matter* (1993) that the I neither precedes nor follows the gendering process, but emerges only within the matrix of gender relations itself. Butler insists that these theories are also forms of intra-active co-constitution. For this reason, I indicate that there are no fixed anchors or descriptors in the way the work is articulated. The agential cuts are perhaps more similar to touchstones, like something solid and tangible in their particularity, rather than something immobile or immobilizing (ibid., p.80). Barad argues that the term "queer" is of political importance, since it is not a determining concept and does not have a stable meaning or a referential context. What constitutes queerness "is itself a lively, mutating organism, a desiring radical openness, and edgy protean differentiating multiplicity, an agential dis/continuity, an enfolded reiteratively materializing promiscuously inventive spatiotemporality" (ibid, p.81). In this regard, the idea of Expanded Telepathy emerges strongly articulated within the imagination of a Queer Telepathy.

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[17] Kleinman, Adam, "Intra-actions". Interview with Karen Barad. *Mousse* 34, 4 December 2019,. Available from: http://moussemagazine.it/product/mousse-34 [Accessed 28 December 2019]

Collaborative practices vary from one movie to the other. For example, *Kokakolachickenwings* (2015) came about through my collaborative work with queer decolonial scholar Zairong Xiang. In it we worked on the problem of telepathy from the preparation and sharing together of a common meal that affects the body, the digestive system and the brain equally. The ideas, the dialogue, the communication were performed in different languages, but also the automatic interpretation of an algorithm, all the elements construct a piece that is the fruit of those fortuitous interactions that modulate the practice of communication at a distance. *Superhomosexuals* (2016) combined multiple ways of collaborative working: from the meetings with the co-director Daniel Böhm, to the errant and even spectral presence of the sexual performer Alan; going through the series of conversations in a chat room and the territorial relocation that propels a radio declaring that homosexuals are allied with aliens. The film transcends the space-time boundaries when the images of the historic center of Montevideo are intertwined with those of an apartment in Beijing, with interruptions similar to phantom rides, which seek to disconnect the relations between time and space. In *Me gustas tú* (2016), coproduced with the performer HorneyHoneyDew, the collaborative work is linked to the SM world, with the singing of and listening to an a cappella song, and the alliance between multiple forms of authorship, the SM contract, through the figures of one who films and one who acts, and the intermediate space that is reproduced, like a continuous spiral, opening many dimensions all at once and inhabiting them.

It should be noted that the links between agents can be momentary, precarious, mobile, seeking to dismantle or put modern identity into crises, unmaking gender and sexual orders, genital pleasure, the limits of the human/animal and the human/posthuman. These are connections that, in all cases, aim to dismantle modes of naturalization of identities but also of territorializations of pleasure (through, for example, the implementation of SM relationships or anal sex) and even of the recodification of time and space (through the tracing of heterotopies (Foucault, 1986) or forms of invention of queer temporalities (Freeman, 2010). It is about the assemblage of precarious associations, which articulate questions about gender norms, pleasure, sex, sexual identities, retrace their specific fixations in the manner of "queer multitudes" (Preciado, 2005), and reach the plane of cyberspace. Many of the references that underlie these relationships explore the link between observer and observed, but also between master and slave inscribed in the territory of SM

relationships, performing a spatial review of the uses of pleasure in the body. These telepathic links are related to what Halberstam (2005) points out as *queerness*, not as an exclusive matter of a sexual identity but as a way of life, a link, queer networks or queer friendships, where modes of sexual and subcultural practices are articulated. In these films, we work deeply with the notion of *border thinking* (Anzaldúa, 1987) since the gestation of the work is moving from and with the question of borders (sexual, gender, geographical, temporal and spatial). Anzaldúa develops the notion of border thinking as a framework of enunciation that inhabits an epistemological and ontological border between nationalities, racial identities, genders, sexualities, a queer enunciative space (ibid, p. 176). This work can also be considered in terms of expansion of the language of the audiovisual, understood as sound, visual and performance composition (hence I choose expanded cinema as the platform for action and the space to deploy these ideas).

Similarly, Jaime del Val (2002) proposes a radical approach where *metaformance* instead of performance activates a transition from the borders of perception. Del Val argues that his concept of *meta-body*[18] is crucial to understand this sensorial capacity, always corporeal, and the associations that can be made from this point go beyond syntax, interacting in that excess of the body mentioned by Butler in *Excitable Speech* (Val, J.D, 2002, p. 33). If the disciplinary division of the arts is articulated in a discursive cut of the body and the well-defined models of sensory capacity between them, the same analysis of intermediate capacities could also be made where the division between the senses is questioned and it is the association between them that matters, informing a transformation of the body itself. It is interesting to observe the different and subtle relationship of corporeality within the different types of language: music, image, verbal language, the gestural language of the body; and, therefore, it is interesting to observe how that body becomes an unstable border for multiple

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[18] Del Val's concept of *meta-body* is intimately associated with his *Metahumanist Manifesto*. As a mode of further contextualising the use of the term *meta-body* in this research, I have selected an important aspect of the *Metahumanist* manifesto which is relevant to the current discussion and ultimately to the fabrication of a queer political body to channeled expanded telepathy.
 'The metahuman as postanatomical body: We propose to challenge the anatomies, forms, cartographies or identities that constitute the humanist concept of the anthropos, and the technologies that allow for such representations to take form. Anatomy, as a map of human and social bodies, can only be articulated from an external perspective to the body. We challenge the cartesian split that situates us as subjects external to an objective reality and to other subjects. Through reappropriating and subverting technologies of perception we may dissolve the condition of exteriority and therewith anatomy and the destiny of the body, not for the sake of a new anatomy, but of a postanatomical body. Metahumanism thus proposes an aesthetics of the amorphous, by considering metamedia, metaformance and metaformativity as possibilities to permanently redefine sensory organs'
Available from: https://metabody.eu/metahumanism [Accessed 14 December 2019]

translations, but for new sedimentation processes, for border languages. Del Val makes a strong point about synaesthesia as a technology of the border:

> If all communication is an act of translation of the meta-body, it can be understood as a complex system of translation between different bodies, disciplines, languages, where translation is synonymous with hybridization, communication, contamination, meaning. The body is metaphorical in synaesthesia (Val, J. d., 2002, p37).

This act of translation within the *meta-body* problematises the plane of the spectator, that is to say, telepathy as transmission should be understood as a transformative relation between bodies conceived as meta-body, where information circulates as both material and discursive intra-action. The reflexive strategy with which TCOET films work reconceptualises what Edward Small (1994) defined and grouped under the general category of *direct theory*, and what Panteburg (2015) defined as "cinematic thinking". As stated in section 1.2, the creative resources used by these films to activate theoretical meaning are: use of synaesthesia to link diverse elements, the screen as a painting canvas, sound and motion design, intellectual montage, forms of appropriation and deconstruction of pre-existing material.

TCOET's "cinematic thinking" explores three central areas: queer theory, pornography, and connection of both to SM practices and the science fiction genre. These films investigate the three problems in different ways, through a combination of creative strategies, and transfer them to the plane formed through the use of images and sounds. The films redevelop the itinerary of expanded cinema into an experimental laboratory, to carry out queer telepathic exercises. In what follows I hope to show the workings of that laboratory through analysis of two TCOET films that raise a series of initial critical concerns.

1.5. Kokakolachickenwings (2015) and Superhomosexuals (2016)

In the first TCOET films, *Kokakolachickenwings* and *Superhomosexuals* I hope to show how some of the formal strategies amalgamate the idea of experimental film as direct theory (Small, 1994), and the critical media platform that emerged in the context of expanded cinema (Youngblood, 1970).

Kokakolachickenwings is a film strongly associated with the idea of assembling dissimilar elements transversely, alluding directly to its inscription in experimental cinema. If we start from its title, the commingling of two foods is explicit: a drink commercialized globally and the wings of an animal. As can be heard in Xiang's words at the beginning of the recipe preparation: Coca Cola responds to a Western consumer product model, soy sauce responds to a product highly consumed in Asia, and chicken is the universal. The starting point, then, is a recipe that works as a touchstone in a metaphorical sense of the basic principle of assembly that amalgamates all images, the idea of intellectual montage of Eisenstein (1969) that juxtaposes heterogeneous elements to pursue a sense.

It is also a collaborative piece between two people: decolonial queer thinker Zairong Xiang and myself who, on the other hand, articulate varied forms of exchange, unlike the unique telepathic experiences, I have described above. The connection between both participants occurs in the conversation, in a theoretical exchange, at moments informal, in the preparation and intake of a meal, in the video recording of Zubillaga and Xiang's performance, in reading and listening to poetry. All these forms constitute collaborative modes of special exchange; however, it is central to note, in addition, the inclusion of software responsible for interpreting what is said on camera. The words that the software translates produces new senses and associations, and it dislocates grammar, as if words and syntax were only a small part of the big matrix of information. The "digital noise" produced has special connections with the interpretation of "distance" offered by telepathic practices, since the babbling of the text can be understood as glossolalia.

The film prepares and combines a large number of records in the exchange between those two that interact, which is central to the plane of transmission of ideas through images and sounds to viewers. The film begins in an interview for a Q&A, passes to a recipe, shows us

records in super8, images taken in Shanghai, in Dubai, images of participants in a conversation in a living room. Meanwhile, words, expressions or phrases appear on the screen. On the images of the boiling chicken wings in Coca Cola, a text is printed that reads: "Changed to telepathy… this terrestrial friend of mine first expatiated on the kind of structure the head-brain has" followed by "Impressions / brains: guts / heart / non objective". This association allows us to point out that one of the interactions between the two occurs in the preparation of the food and its ingestion. The form of telepathic communication acquires a first sense in this ingestion, between two brains, one lodged in the skull and the other in the intestine – an exchange which as such becomes digestive.

If the suture and the assembly of images and sounds generate interruptions, phase shifts, they also produce new senses, one of the key elements of the piece is that moment when Xiang reads a text aloud and finishes enunciating one of the central ideas of the movie; while we see a long shot in the room, on the soundtrack we hear Xiang reading a text in French (the poem from 1872, "L'Éternité" by Arthur Rimbaud), while the camera heads to the window. Then Xiang is shown below reading the verses of Haroldo de Campos:

> And here I begin I spin here the beguine I respin and begin to release and realize life begins not arrives at the end of a trip which is why I begin to respin to write-in thousand pages write thousand one pages to end write begin write begin end with writing and so I begin to respin to retrace to rewrite write on writing the future of writings the tracing the slaving a thousand one nights in a thousand one pages or a page in one night the same night the same pages same semblance resemblance reassemblance where the end is begin[19]

On the screen, while Xiang reads, some expressions of the specific poem can be read on the screen (Figure 2). The idea of lacking a beginning and an end becomes a characteristic of TCOET films; even more so, when the problem they mobilise lies in the crisis of identity, in bodily, generic, sexual, erotic borders. It is the film itself that blurs the temporal and spatial boundaries and draws an ontological point of view that puts the borders in crisis, which is

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[19] In this section of the film the reading is in the original Portuguese. Haroldo de Camposs's *Galáxias*, translated by Suzanne Jill Levine. http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/authors/perloff/perloff_decampos.html retrieved on 1 May 2017. It should be noted that Haroldo de Campos, together with Decio Pignataro and Augusto de Campos, belongs to the Brazilian avant-garde movement known as Brazilian Concrete Poetry, started from the first half of the twentieth century under the influence of writers such as Ezra Pound, Stéphane Mallarmé, Guillaume Apollinaire and James Joyce. This movement aimed at denaturing the instituted senses of language, where the visual, the spatial, rhyme and the rhythm acquire the same level of importance and expand literature, turn it over to other territories (such as image or music).

why one of the basic foundations of this approach lies in the notion of *border thinking* (Anzaldúa, 1987). The borders of the film also transcend the level of its registered material (conversation, interview, recipe, experimental film, poetry, performance), and venture into the problem of the convergence or untranslatability of terms from one language to another (or software, which misunderstands what is said).

The statement that can be heard in the poem extends to the entire production of TCOET, that is, to procure another logic, fragile, multiple and incomplete, outside the cinematographic language of classic causal narrative, or with self-reflection, all of them characteristics attributed to experimental cinema involved in direct theory (Small, 1995). These ideas seem to encourage what Panteburg calls "cinematic thinking". The idea of expanded telepathy supposes here a relational plot between the producer and the thinker in a framework where the conversation is made not only of verbal exchanges, and of a shared meal, but also of the exchange of images that open between one and the other, of the infinite translations (and betrayals) that language difference entails. *Kokakolachickenwings*, then, works as a first manifesto to open the TCOET series.

Superhomosexuals (2016) is a different exercise because of the ways in which telepathy is worked on – both in terms of production methodology and of the formal resources for the transmission of ideas, such as in the set of issues addressed throughout its development. This film, in addition to the problem of telepathy, incorporates and develops some of the central problems of TCOET's theoretical space: *queer theory, pornography* and *science fiction*.

It is important to note that the collaborative practice on which *Superhomosexuals* is based assumes several important differences from its predecessor. On the one hand, the production work of the film was set up as a collaboration between myself, Argentine filmmaker Daniel Böhm and international webcam performer Alan. The interactions between Alan and the viewers (mostly anonymous) in cyberspace also led to the filming of several pornographic scenes, some included in the final cut.

The film begins with a shot of the open sea, between Argentina and Uruguay. Then the camera falls, as if it were a performative documentary – where the first person emerges with a strong preponderance – immediately to reveal the person who records while walking on the ferry that connects Buenos Aires with Montevideo. A series of musical tones are introduced

to evoke the presence of the gay monster figure and the cyborg followed by a voice over: "Over the last two decades, carnal degenerates have reinvented themselves as a new breed of sexual animal" and then, "Super Elite Homosexuals Are Now Recruiting Extra-terrestrials Into Their Ungodly Lifestyle". While the centre of the analysis goes through the link between this film and science fiction as a critical tool, aspects that I developed in depth in Chapter III, I am interested in retracing a series of theoretical problems that the piece develops around the crossing between these two areas, a problem central to the idea of experimental film as direct theory and expanded telepathy as border thinking.

One of the strongest sense constructions of the film is linked to the queer modes of existence outside the temporal paths governed by heteronormality. The whole movie, it could be said, lies in the appropriation of an insult (a provocation intended to relate homosexuals to space aliens), the one that slides the text along the sound chain. The idea of the superhomosexual appears figuratively in various ways. This gesture, that of making use of the insult to become a subject of otherness, returns to the political power of appropriation of the insult that queer movements have used since their foundation (Halperin, 1995). After portraying some scenes in Alan's trip – the webcam performer who crosses from one country to another – we hear a voice-over announcing the supposed threat of an alliance between aliens and homosexuals to dominate the world. The voice (with a robotic cadence, read by automatic software, that is, devoid of human traits) announces that homosexuals are colonizing the world through various strategies, agendas, ways of imagining a new world, a new atmosphere, and adds that they have "unusual changes in their bodies and hormones".

The figure of the superhomosexual who looms over the entire piece as if he were a science fiction character, becomes even more relevant. Thinking about the link between monstrosity and homosexuality makes the understanding of the threatening ubiquity of the film's central character, as if it were a sliding body, a subjectivity or a spectrum that can move between one stage and another and distort the spatial and temporal limits established by heterosexual normativity, and then be forced to live under parameters of a *queer temporality* (Freeman, 2010). Here it is possible to be at sea or on land, on top of a building in the historic center of Montevideo (figure 3) or in a tower in Beijing, on an electric train or in a car, in the immaterial space of a webcam portal or in a closed room (I will examine more specifically queer politics in chapter II, and its links with science fiction and with aliens in Chapter III).

All these ideas can be elaborated thanks to the juxtaposition of times, spaces (cities, the sea, virtual space) and the use of the soundtrack, following the framework projected by experimental cinema. It is a resource of what Small calls self-reflexivity and it constitutes one of the nodal bases of cinema as direct theory (ibid., p.21) – an aspect analysed in section 1.2 of this chapter.

Important theoretical disquisitions that the film unfolds are linked to pornography. The question that guides the uses of explicit images would appear to pertain also to investigating this genre. To do this, again, the film uses the figure of Alan, in continual displacement.

If we take up the notion of *pharmacopornography* (Preciado, 2008), it should be noted that it is a post-World War II process dominated by an arsenal of new body technologies (biological, endocrinological, surgical) and representation (photography, cinema, television, cybernetics) that penetrate everyday life in an unprecedented fashion. Preciado notes that these are biomolecular but also digital technologies and data transmission at high speeds, in which light, soft, injectable technological substances reign, which can be ingested or administered (such as male or female hormones, acquired in pharmacies). If Preciado considers out-of-date Deleuze's notion (1990) of a Control Society regarding the ways in which power has infiltrated and rapidly transformed to such a capillary level, in the pharmacopornography society it is necessary to think of its microprosthetic modes of action, that is, the miniaturization of surveillance devices inside the body to have become indistinguishable from it (ibid., p.66-67).

When Alan transcends the cyberspace barrier, the self-representation of the naked body can also become ubiquitous thanks to the speed of the transmission of information from the Internet. As such, what makes the homosexual "super" is precisely his post anatomic condition. His handling of pornographic codes is total, and he uses them in his favour. If in *Superhomosexuals* the dialogue with pornography is, in a sense, delocalised, it is because it is inherent in the semiotic-technical flow of the pharmacopornographic society: we see Alan's multiple clients through chat screen, we see the ubiquity of these images on different screens that are reproduced around the world. If the pornographic narration supposes a traditional structure that appears crowned by orgasm/climax as proof that pleasure has taken place (Preciado 2003, Williams 1989), here that is not revealed to us; on the contrary, we are denied a climax. In the end, the empty bed with a room in darkness cancels the possibility of narrative pleasure. The transformations and the lack of suture to the classical continuity in the

raccord, or in the narrative mechanisms organized by classic fiction (Burch 1969; Bordwell, Staiger & Thompson 1987) appear unadjusted, leading viewers to experience a rhizomatic, relocated time adjacent to heteronormal paths that organize life: a queer temporality (Freeman, 2010).

Through the centrality of a cyberspace Alan occupies, posthuman concerns arise. As Hayles (1999) indicates, Alan's avatar on the cyberspace plane may or may not be present, and the same will have happened to his audience, who in turn is not on the screen, so that those sexual relations that follow on the screen present the tension between absence/presence of the posthuman body, whose prostheses are constituted by the chain of objects that reproduce his image (ibid., p.28).

Finally, it can be noted that the ideas that the film itself projects about telepathy are more explicitly related to what Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009) indicate as the most contemporary developments in the transmission of images, knowledge, affections, in the framework of contemporary cities. That ubiquity of the superhomosexual, even, I might point out, is a theatricalisation of the mode of operation of urban "Smart Dust".

1.6. Chapter conclusion

I have worked around two sets of central thematic contexts for the development of TCOET: that of telepathy on the one hand, and that of direct theory and expanded cinema on the other. I explored the ways in which films can become telepathic exercises for the transmission of ideas through images and sounds, that is, through uses of direct theory (Small, 1994) within expanded experimental cinema as a platform for inquiry (Youngblood, 1970).

First, the notion of telepathy was surveyed based on theoretical inquiries such as those of Lackhurst (2002), which works around its origins in the nineteenth century (its scientific and esoteric origins), art practices of the 1960s, and finally what Durham Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009) articulated with the problem of wireless communications. On the other hand, I began to examine a genealogy of the crossings between telepathy and artistic practices developed from the 1960s to the present from Drinkall's investigations (2005). A set of scaffoldings were put in place to commence exploring the form of telepathy triggered by TCOET films.

Next, I coupled two central ideas for this project: the notion of direct theory on the one hand and that of expanded cinema on the other. In relation to the problem of cinema as a direct theory, I revisited the notion of Small (1994) regarding the uses of experimental cinema as a platform for thought, and incorporated the ideas of Pauleit (2012), who investigates a set of experiments that cross cinema and theory, but provides a way of thinking about cinema and theory from deconstructive practices and puts the very ideas of "cinema" and "theory" in check. In that section, I also incorporated the perspective of Patenburg (2015) who invokes the concept of "cinematic thinking" to account for the ways in which different audiovisual formats (such as video-essays) converse with theory. In the next section, I also researched the origins and the different characteristics concerning Youngblood's *expanded cinema* to introduce a specific theoretical platform on which the films of this research operate in relation to the information age.

Finally, in the analysis of *Kokakolachickenwings* (2015) and *Superhomosexuals* (2016), I catalogued a set of central problems for TCOET. As we could see, both works were the result of collaborative works. These exchanges can be found both in the place of production and co-

direction with the performers (Zairong, Alan), the clients (in the case of *Superhomosexuals*), and the robotic software that automatically translates words (in *Kokakolachickenwings*). These experiences are part of a type of collaborative practice described as *intra-actions* (Barad, 2007), which positions expanded telepathy as a radical communication device. The articulation of *expanded telepathy* with queer theory and practices will be investigated in the next chapter as another iteration, *expanded telepathy* as *queer telepathy,* aimed at further problematising the notion of normative identity underpinned by individualist metaphysics.

In both of the films selected for this chapter, it can be registered that the form, the montage of images and sounds, and the structure of the film are the fundamental pillars on which the logic of expansion is based in order to allow the articulation of the ideas that constitute forms of direct theory*,* which has the potential to make internal changes in different levels (physical, bodily), but it is not intended to be used as a form of argumentation or prescriptive action. At the beginning it was the idea of the *fusion* recipe, the problem of ingestion, the concrete poetry of Haroldo de Campos's *Galaxies*, that contributed to a set of unexpected connections. The imagination of multiple brains (the intestine and the brain both housed and entangled in the human body) are a sample of the ways in which ideas may expand the visible and the speakable.

In *Superhomosexuals* (2016) we can observe two central axes on which the film runs: the ubiquity of the superhomosexual (embodied by webcam sex star Alan) and the crossover with the codes of the pornographic genre. If the ubiquity that supposed a sort of idealization of homosexuals, indicated by the voice-over, were allied with the aliens to control the world, this allowed us to question a series of formal visual codes that organize the look of cinema as a modern vision technology. The marginality of the homosexual allows him, in this sense, the opening of a *queer temporality* (Freeman, 2010). Therefore, the problem of pornography, its transition to cyberspace and its registration in the transformations of the pharmaco-pornographic society, become the multiple spatiotemporalities of the performance. The deployment of pornographic images ranges from questioning the logic underlying pornographic codes to their ubiquity in the contemporary world (Preciado, 2003; Williams 1989).

These films combine and suture genres, records and audiovisual narratives (documentary, interview, travel diary). They elaborate discontinuities in the assemblage –intellectual montage – for the production of meaning.

If in the first film, the idea of telepathy aims to dismantle classical notions of contact and causality (hacking the dialogues and even a failed translation to text on the part of a software), in the second film, the idea of expanded telepathy emerges with more force, more participants are incorporated, humanist worldviews collapse and, even, other conceptions of telepathy are moved to the plane of ideas in the atmosphere, such as the one devised by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009), around telepathic communications in a design that fully incorporates the complex network of relationships present in the production of these films.

At this stage, it is important to point out that expanded telepathy depends upon the existence of collaborators other than humans, both in an ontological and epistemological sense. As I will explain in the next chapter, the TCOET network of collaborators are not the kind that show up in an ontologically humanistic view of the world, which is limited by the metaphysics of individualism, based on the dualism between matter and meaning. In order to continue exploring the concept of telepathy used in this thesis, I have therefore determined that it is necessary to look at alternative theoretical approaches to humanistic heteronormative assumptions behind telepathy, and this objective will be accomplished by incorporating important concepts from queer politics, pornography and science fiction.

Both film exercises analysed in this chapter build forms of expansion and experimentation that transfer theoretical debates (pornographic codes, queer practices of space and time, etc.) to a repertoire of strategies that are part of TCOET's capacity to work with image and sound as multiple and convergent forms of a direct theory termed expanded telepathy. Finally, both films actively contribute to connect the central themes of this thesis: queer onto-epistemology on the one hand, pornography and science fiction on the other. The meeting of these elements will be the topic of the subsequent chapter.
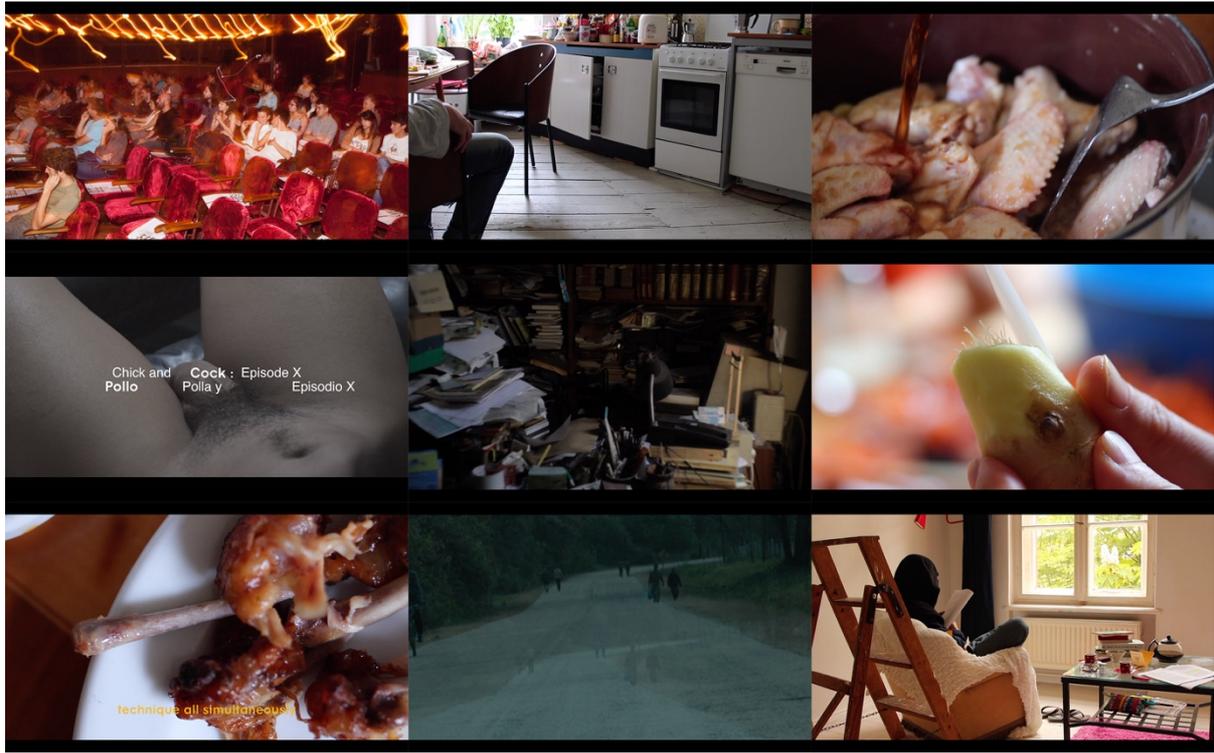
Figure 2

Figure 3

Chapter 2: Pornography, queer politics and SM

As I expounded in the previous chapter, TCOET films seek to display, through images and sounds, a series of specific theoretical-critical problems adjacent to the exclusive use of spoken or written words. Reviewing a series of readings that combine cinema and certain deployments of theory (Small 1994; Pauleit 2012; Pantenburg 2015), I elaborated on the ways in which TCOET films could transfer theoretical problems to the plane of the audiovisual. And as mentioned, I called this phenomenon expanded telepathy, which is, then, a form of direct theory (Small 1994) whose platform of action is *expanded cinema* (Youngblood 1970) because of its operation with video technologies that aim to test the limits of cinema's traditional dynamics.

Two main theoretical areas are explored by this set of films: *queer theory* and *science fiction*. In this chapter I will deal with developing the link that can be drawn between a set of queer problems and the idea of *expanded telepathy*, which give rise to *queer expanded telepathy*, a nodal concept to this project. The idea of *queer expanded telepathy* is essential to understanding how telepathy works in this research. To a certain extent it constitutes a differentiated practice with respect to modes I examined earlier, and which Luckhurst (2002) develops when he indicates that telepathy is a type of communication between people at a distance, (tele-) implying a degree of intimacy in the contact (pathos) (ibid., pp. 1-3). This section investigates other modes of telepathy, which also exceed the genealogy developed by Drinkall (2005) in contemporary artistic practice (and which I reviewed in Chapter I). Queer expanded telepathy builds provisional, unexpected links between different agents. The enclaves it disputes are aimed at disarming orders such as gender, desire, pleasure and the sexual identity of its subjects, in the process making them posthuman. One of my central points is that, unlike many antecedents in the artistic field (the work of Abramovic/Ulay, for example), the foundation of these links is not covered by a heteronormative romantic bond. The collaborative practices articulated by TCOET are linked intimately with queer politics to sustain affective, erotic, friendly alliances that decentralise the logic of straight thinking; they are provisional and precarious temporalities, and summon the invention of *queer multitudes* (Preciado, 2003). It is a multiplicity of abnormalities, whose body, as indicated by Preciado, works to deterritorialise heterosexuality on different planes. One of the effects that emerge from this deployment is the appearance of *queer temporalities* (Freeman, 2010): nonadjacent,

disparate and incommensurable experiences of time with respect to modern paths that make up the straight experience and the regulation of human time under capitalism.

The three works that will be analysed in this part of the thesis have special articulations between collaborative telepathic practices, direct theory, pornography and queer politics. Throughout this section, I will incorporate theoretical sources (Dyer 1985; Williams 1989; Hunt 1996; Patterson 2004) that address these problems, as well as a subset of reflections that emerge from the crossover between queer theory and pornography such as eroticism, pleasure, power and SM practices. Finally, I will discuss three films, all from 2016, in the TCOET corpus: *Paradise Lost + David's Sling, Me gustas tú* and *Take Me to Church*.

2.1. Challenges to the visual: pornography, from the modern eye to cyberspace

To address the ways in which pornography works as an audiovisual narrative for TCOET, I will start with some definitions of pornography, such as those provided by Lynn Hunt (1996), Linda Williams (1989) and Richard Dyer (1985), in their relationship with modern visual apparatuses in the sense described by Comolli (1980). I will incorporate some notions developed by Patterson (2004) around cyberporn to approach a particular consumption of images mediated by the Internet. This will be followed by Preciado's (2008) argument to account for the plot and meaning in which it is necessary to situate pornography as part of a set of transformations within the contemporary semiotic-technical regime.

For Linda Williams (1989) it is important to inscribe the birth of audiovisual pornography within the framework and proliferation of medical, psychological, legal sexuality discourses that functioned as modes of knowledge transfer, knowledge and power. In this sense, the optical inventions of the late nineteenth century (the cameras, the magic lanterns, the zoetropes, the Kinetographs, Kinetocsopes) can be seen, she claims, as a manifestation of surveillance mechanisms described by Foucault and what she calls *scientia sexualis*. In this sense, the sexuality discourses elaborated by modernity acquired increasing prominence thanks to what Comollí (1980) called "machines of the visible"[20]. Williams calls 'hardcore' pornography a form of knowledge-pleasure produced by *scientia sexualis,* a "frenzy of the visible", where a series of discourses on sexuality converge and help produce technologies of what could become visible (ibid., p.7). It is a complex network of artefacts that observe, record and manage not only the landscape, cities and the world, but also, and mainly, bodies. The invention of cinema also allows us to locate the timed and measured bodies under these machines in narratives that naturalize their movements; hence in the first inquiries, such as

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[20] It is important to note that for Comolli (1980), cinema is born and immediately constitutes a social machine, derived not only from its invention as an apparatus, but rather as an experimental assumption and verification, of the anticipation and confirmation of its "social profitability" – economic, ideological and symbolic. The second half of the nineteenth century is immersed in what he calls a kind of "frenzy of the visible", a large-scale multiplication of social images pushed by the growth of illustrated newspapers together with an exponential circulation of the graphic press. It is also necessary to consider an extension of the field of the visible and representable articulated by various devices as part of the development of modernity (from telescopes to microscopes, lenses, the photographic camera, the film camera). The entire world becomes visible and appropriable, just as a strong expansion of industrialism, landscape transformations, towns and cities comes into evidence. The multiplication of scopic instruments begins a shift in confidence in the eye, and photography becomes the final triumph at the expense of the organ of vision. In this sense, it should be noted that it is a violent decentralization of the place of privilege in which, since the Renaissance, vision had come to reign and regiment the world (*ibid*., p.122-123).

those of Muybridge or Marey, the centrality of naked bodies is unavoidable (ibid., p.36). For Williams, pornography was a strong contributor to the production of knowledge about modern sexuality (for example, in the hands of disciplines such as sexology). This is why, says the author, its rhetoric is intimately associated with a series of clinical-documentary qualities at the expense of others (which, certainly, are dismissed) such as those pertaining to realism or artistry. This is called the principle of *maximum visibility*. The author points out that in hardcore pornography, this principle has had various uses and has constituted a series of specific strategies throughout history, such as the privileging of certain parts of the body seen through close shots (which developed what in silent films of the first era were called the "meat shot" (the one that ensures genital contact), overexposure, the selection of certain sexual positions that show as many body parts and organs as possible, and, at the time of its constitution as an industrial genre, the invention of "sexual numbers" (or scenes necessary for the profitability of a porn movie), the ejaculation of the penis, which for the narrative syntax of the hardcore industrial pornographic feature film, became the central moment. If one of the difficulties that this representational regime had to overcome was the image or documentation of pleasure and genital sex, for Williams, the history of hardcore pornography can be in part summarized as the history of the myriad strategies deployed to overcome the problem of invisibility in a regime that is linked to an "erotic organization of the visible" (1981 cited in Williams, 1989, pp. 48-49). When, after encountering all kinds of censorship restrictions, towards the beginning of the 1970s, pornographic cinema only then becomes industrial, a set of highly regulated codifications emerge that end up constituting it in an industrial genre: the use of sound to heighten the sense of the actor's pleasure, the introduction of more complex fiction, the exclusive need to show ejaculation of the penis as a form of narrative conclusion to the scenes, the use of the close-up to account for genital penetrative contact, the division into "sexual acts" or mandatory scenes for the films to include, etc. The paradigmatic case of the first films that follow this logic is, says Williams, *Deep Throat* (dir., Damiano, 1971). It should be noted that, far from its being a "transparent" subgenre, which allows access to the representation of sex without mediation, gay porn, Richard Dyer (1985) points out, establishes and explores a very ambiguous relationship with male power and privilege. If pornography is part of the education of the body's experience, it has also contributed to legitimate models of gay sexuality (regarding the types of bodies that it puts on the scene, the forms of genital sexual contact, etc.). In this sense, he calls for work

to produce pornography that moves in another direction, against those narratives, and operating for them with and within pornography (ibid., pp. 27-29).

How can one question, from the practices of expanded telepathy, the power that cements and organizes pornography through practices that decentralize its place as an audiovisual device girded by specific, closed, intelligible, readings and codification of sexual movement and pleasure? In what ways can queer practices of telepathy intervene in pornographic codes and point to other forms of bodily experiences, pleasure, sexuality and gender?

The TCOET films that I examine in this chapter dialogue specifically with the question of power in SM practices as a way to open up some of those questions. This can be seen where domination and submission pacts, slings, fuck machines or harnesses appear and some sex scenes take place in enclosed spaces, almost in the dark, barely illuminated by a red light – seeking to put in crisis that model of hardcore mainstream porn through collaborative queer practices, that is, other modes of sexual contact (not necessarily genital), disarming the narratives under which the industrial pornographic narration is founded. That is, the idea of ejaculation is cancelled as a climax, elements of experimental cinema are incorporated, such as intellectual montage, use of cyberporn-related affective states such as delay, waiting, image navigation and, one of the most important, a myriad of unfolding SM experiences. All these films, as I will point out throughout the chapter, constitute network strategies that their agents devise as queer forms of telepathic contact.

According to Williams (1989), SM practices represented in pornographic films and videos put into action those Bazinian ideas of the cinematic ontological status of the representation of extreme things. The violence of what is called *bondage and discipline* can be real, really affect a body, give pain, pleasure, or both. The practice can be ritualized and acted by individuals who consent to perform those predetermined roles. It is in gay pornography that submissive masculinity proliferates (ibid., p.195). In relation to the ontological status of this violence, she says, gay producers seek to create in the viewer's mind an impression of reality, a pain that transcends speech and acquires a nuance similar to the reality effect that documentary pursues, in hardcore violence. The violence in these films, she says, is opposite in its effect, for example, to that which emerges from the special effects in horror *slasher*

films, where we know that the actor has not been hurt but the narrative asks us to believe it anyway. Here knowledge and belief converge (ibid., p. 201).

Williams points out that the "gaze" organized by the film narration is based on male voyeuristic and sadistic desires that treat women as objects of exhibition, fetishizing their difference. In this sense, she insists, it is problematic that assets/liabilities have been rigorously aligned with gendered spectatorial positions without taking into account the mutability of the spectatorial places adopted by either subject in the participation in the perverse pleasures of both (ibid., pp. 204-205).

It is central, then, to consider that the imagery of SM fantasies offers, according to Williams, an important path by which groups and individuals whose wishes the patriarchate has not recognized as legitimate can explore the mysterious conjunction of power and pleasure in intersubjective relationships (ibid., p 217).

As can be seen in the films of TCOET, in addition to the display of clear rhetoric that refers to the audiovisual pornographic genre (the exhibition of sex as a form of spectacle inscribed in the narrative, the use of close-up shots to indicate genital contact), in *Paradise Lost + David's Sling*, *Me gustas tú* and *Take Me to Church*, there are notable marks of access to these explicit images by means of a computer connected to the Internet. Cyberporn, in Zabet Patterson's terms (2004), offers a new alignment of sex and body, constituted through a technology connected to Internet networks. Explicit pornographic images, in this regard, appear under other forms of availability, and the relationship to them is much more immediate than in the forms of consumption prior to the existence of the Web. In this sense, she says, what cyberporn tends to offer is an environment in which desire and the subject are rapidly reconstituted within the framework of a deeply mediated market, an environment in which desire and subjective position occur as truths of oneself through a discourse of categorization and classification that is tailor-made. The images are available to viewers only by negotiating an elaborate scheme. The physical habits of looking, pointing, clicking, or pressing the update button on the webcams, or even the delays and frustrations of opening and closing the windows, prod the viewer to a particular type of interaction with the Internet, one that not only reflects but also re-registers and reinforces established social relationships, particularly those linked to the order of images you are looking for, for which you start browsing and around which your search pauses or continues. It should be noted that the

problem of the body for posthumanism appears here: as a body that transcends the material frontier. According to Hayles (1999), from this perspective the informational plane of the body is privileged over the material one.

We must consider these material habits, following Judith Butler and her reading of Pierre Bourdieu, as a type of tacit performativity, a chain of quotations lived and believed at the level of the body (Butler 1997, cited in Patterson, p. 108). Zabet Patterson indicates that Web surfing itself offers its own particular pleasures in addition to the frustration that the pornographic sites themselves cause. In this sense, she indicates that the very structure of many explicit image websites makes use of frustration, delay or deviation as forms of manipulation of image presentation and even as forms of pleasure (2004, pp. 106-108).

One of the most recent theories that review and analyse the current circulation of pornography can be found in Preciado (2008), who describes the pornography industry as one of the engines underlying today's computer economy. If the extension of pornography thanks to the Internet has reached an unprecedented scale, Preciado notes that any user who has a computer with a video camera or webcam and a bank account can enter the cyberpornographic market industry as both consumer and producer. In a broader framework, and as I alluded to in the previous chapter, Preciado argues that we are facing what he calls the *pharmacopornographic era*, given that the leading industries of post-Fordist capitalism are pharmaceutical and pornographic: his hypothesis is that premiums of the current productive process in the development of this stage of capital are linked to excitement, erection, ejaculation, pleasure, and feelings of complacency and omnipotent control; ultimately leading to the pharmacopornographic control of subjectivity (ibid., p.39). By plotting the coordinates of this regime and its implications within subjective production, Preciado updates the notions that Foucault raised by naming the previous disciplinary regime (which the philosopher charted from the *sovereign society* to the *disciplinary society*), in the wake of a series of profound transformations in the technologies of subjectivity production since the Second World War, yielding a third regime of subjectivation, a system of knowledge-power, neither sovereign nor disciplinary, but which takes up the new technologies of the body in the construction of subjectivity: the "pharmaco-pornographic society" (ibid., p.72). For Preciado, the mutation of capitalism accelerates during this postwar period, in the context of the Cold War, in efforts that put sex at the center of power control

through new dynamics of advanced technocapitalism. The transformation is made by, among an infinite number of other phenomena, milestones such as the visible emergence of homosexuality, the exaltation of family values, the extension of sexology research, the appearance of *Playboy* magazine, the clinical use of hormonal molecules, their synthetic production and subsequent commercialization, the invention of the contraceptive pill, the first gender reassignments, the popularisation of plastic surgeries or analgesics. The two lines of force of this regime, then, are the biomolecular (pharmo-) and the semiotic-technical (-porno) governing all processes of sexual subjectivity. That is what makes the contraceptive pill and *Playboy* paradigmatic (ibid., pp. 28-30).

It is necessary, then, to register what relation TCOET films bear within the strong circulation of visual regimes of which pornography is a part, to a semiotic-technical articulation of production and management of subjectivities and bodies in post-Fordist capitalism. In this sense, the importance of the Internet (its speed, its disposition of images), social networks, digital image, buying/selling and trafficking of pornographic images emerge as a central element in films like *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016). TCOET films make use of pornography and place its codes in crisis at the same time. As we saw in *Superhomosexuals* (see section 1.8 of chapter I) if TCOET films tend to link up with the pornographic genre, it is to assail its formal logics and formulate a series of problems regarding its uses. In the films we analyse below, however, pornography appears among what we consider the flickers of experimentation. The pornographic does not necessarily emerge as the exercise – exclusive – of the image of explicit sex; rather, it focuses on areas of contact with the SM image; the wait, the delay, and work with the soundtrack play a fundamental role, as does its articulation in a network of relationships linked to cyberspace. Resources are also used that are tied heterogeneously to the cyberpornographic capture: from the use of animated GIFs, database images, anonymous stories and images, the pixelated record of a webcam or the documentary of an SM session, to the story read in first person. These links with pornography, moreover, are strongly embedded in the queer collaborative practices each of these films deploys. In the following section these relationships are reviewed in depth.

2.2. Queer theory and politics of SM pleasure

In this section I am interested in investigating the ways in which the TCOET film series displays a series of problems related to queer identity practices and politics. This will allow us to determine with greater clarity how queer telepathy works in connection with the pornographic genre. On the one hand, I am interested in realizing how these films put the gender or sexual identity plane in crisis and postulate some posthuman problems by promoting the opening of the corporeal plane. On the other hand, I am interested in incorporating the problem of the body and pleasure, for which I am questioning the political power and the uses of SM practices in these images. How do the experiments proposed by these films serve to decentralize sexual and gender identities? To what extent is it possible to transfer a set of queer problems to the plane of telepathic collaborations? How do we transmit telepathically, that is, through audiovisual resources, these ideas within experimental cinema? To what extent can these collaborations become queer to those who produce them? In what way, through what resources and through what collaborative practices, do these films stage other forms of sexuality and corporeality outside straight paths? In what way do they undermine the matrix of individual metaphysics that articulates the politics of the subject and pleasure?

If we start from considering the political and critical postulates of queer actions and theory as a platform that decentralizes and conducts sexual and gender, race or class identities (Anzaldúa 1987; Rubin 1989; Butler 1990; Warner 1993; Wittig 1992; Preciado 2008) it is necessary to draw some coordinates from which TCOET works on these issues. As noted in Chapter 1, the collaborative practice of TCOET is based on Karen Barad concept of intra-action as opposed to interaction, which presumes the a priori existence of independent entities. In this sense, intra-actions carry out agential cuts, "which do not produce absolute separations, but rather cut together-apart (one move)" (Kleinman 2014, p. 168). The notion of intra-action queers the familiar sense of causality (where one or more causal agents precede and produce an effect) and problematises the metaphysics of individualism (the problem of the agent or the individually constituted entity, as well as its specific *real* time and space). In this onto-epistemological perspective, individuals do not pre-exist but rather materialize in intra-action. Many theories, such as feminist, postcolonial or queer, question the humanist and liberal notion of the individual subject. Gender, for example, in Butler, is no longer

understood as an inherent attribute of the individual subject, but a repetitive task through which the subject is constituted[21].

The ways of conceptualizing the interrelationships as they are conceived by Barad, between human and nonhuman, allow us to rethink the categories of subjectivity, agency and chance. In this sense, Barad's work points to a new understanding of ontology, epistemology, ethics or politics, achieved by an overcoming of anthropocentrism and humanism, the division between nature and culture, positivism and naturalism. Barad's work, on the other hand, displays a series of critical reflections on Foucault's theories about the idea of power as a form of production of the subject, the challenge of which lay in the way he analyses the interplay of history and biology to demonstrate how bodies, in their materiality, are affected and modified by power relations. In this sense, Barad points out that Foucault restricts agency to human subjects without considering the properties of nonhuman forces, as if matter serves merely as a passive resource or raw material for social relations (Barad 2007, p .235). Barad notes that by privileging the "social", Foucault failed to understand the complex intra-actions between human and nonhuman forces. What is necessary, in Barad's terms, is a posthumanistic concept of performativity that serves to materialize all bodies and that ultimately allows an investigation of the practices through which the boundaries between human and nonhuman emerge and become stabilized. A central element in which matter really matters emerges in Barad's point of view in her reformulation of causality as an intra-activity: "Subjects do not preexist relations but rather are intra-actively produced. What is a 'cause' and what is an 'effect' are intra-actively demarcated through the specific production of marks and bodies" (ibid., p.236).

The collaborations that are presented throughout the films can be both precarious and provisional: automatic software, a set of users of a social network, a stranger (or groups of strangers) contacted via the Internet, an SM session partner or a sexual partner, a friend, a sex worker with his camera, a myriad of anonymous viewers connected through a web. It is also useful to think about these alliances in the terms suggested by Halberstam (2005), who points out the idea of queerness as the result of strange temporalities, imaginative forms and life schemes, thinking of queerness not as an exclusive matter of sexual identity but as what Foucault understands as a way of life, in links, queer networks or queer friendships,

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[21] Kleinman, A 2012, 'Intra-Actions', *Mousse* 34, Summer 2012, pp. 76-81, viewed 5 February 2020, http://moussemagazine.it/product/mousse-34/

articulating modes of alliance, sexual and subcultural practices (ibid., p. 3). Hence, the collaboration between the parts involved in TCOET films are radically different from those listed as experiences of crossover between telepathy and contemporary art (such as those carried out by Abramoviç and Ulay, which consist of one-to-one links, strong emotional connection, but in any case, do not incorporate these dimensions around the crisis in the problems linked to identity). The collaborations between different agents change from one movie to the other, be it in an intellectual, affective, erotic or casual sense. They may be communities (such as those enabled by social networks) or sex pages transmitted via webcam. Human or nonhuman agents may intervene (such as software that interprets spoken language, as occurs in *Kokakolachickenwings*).

To a certain extent, I can say that the TCOET series of films form precarious, momentary communities, which, through intra-action, manage modes of erotic, sexual, creative, affective, theoretical relationality. Each of the films frames a particular mode of association with both human and nonhuman agents. These contacts escape the pre-figured link imposed by straight contacts. In this sense, it is important to think that these films are committed to, following Deleuze and Guattari, a "deterritorialization" of the heterosexuality that goes from urban space to body space, as a resistance strategy against normalization (Deleuze and Guattari, 1972). Following Preciado (2003) we can argue that these films approach what the author calls *queer multitudes*, since they carry out a work of criticism of the technologies of the body, the logics of the normalization of the body and of sexual and gender identities (ibid., p.20). They appropriate, for critical purposes, discourses such as the religious, traced by the pedagogies that underlie pornographic images. In this same sense, I am interested in affirming that these films critically appropriate the knowledge/power regimes on the sexes and that they put in crisis, for example, the ways in which images modulate visual pleasure (Mulvey, 1975). What is captured in the films is not the active/passive link articulated under the subject-looking/subject-being-watched logic[22].

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[22] For Laura Mulvey (1999 [1975]), narrative cinema (mostly Hollywood's) was founded on an economy in which visual pleasure is divided between the subject that is watching/active and, on the other hand, the subject being watched/passive; for the author, these positions are associated, respectively, with a male and female subject, positions which have long been reviewed and do not interest my analysis. Mainstream cinema, she says, combines spectacle and narration, since it has episodes that stop the flow of the plot to give rise to moments of erotic contemplation. In this direction, it should be noted that the division of labor in narrative structure, for the author, is a heteronormative asset/liability division: the male part is the one that advances the plot and the female part stops it to articulate moments of the erotic show (the author points especially to musical acts where actresses sing or dance to the rhythm of a song while showing their bodies for the camera). In fact, she adds, the exhibition of women has worked on two different levels: as an erotic object for the characters in the story that takes place in

Films that deal with the field of resonance of queer politics necessarily delve deeply into the denaturalization of pre-fixed identities and, conversely, investigate their limits and boundaries. If for Barad (2014), in order to dismantle the paths inherited by modernist identity, it is necessary to rethink the notion of difference; her proposal for articulating the feminist critical apparatus is the incorporation of the notion of *diffraction*[23]. In several of her writings she indicates that according to classical optics, this definition is used to name a behaviour of light that involves a beam breaking into a set of smaller parts that manage to expand in many different directions. Diffraction is not a singular event that happens in time and space; rather, it is an integral dynamism, one that underlies the spacetimemattering dimension. Diffractions are timeless; the time in them is out of order, not contemporary with itself, "out of joint", by virtue of the way in which a spectrum creates it. In this sense, Barad invokes *chicana* theorist Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), who develops the notion of *border thinking* as a space for enunciating the identity halfway between nationalities, racial identities, gender and sexual identities, making her an alien, a queer subject. For Barad, the notion of self as a unit must be disregarded to make it legible in terms of multiplicity, as overlapping beings, becoming, here and there, now and then, overlays and not oppositions. Barad considers that entanglements are not units, they do not erase differences; on the contrary, entanglements imply differentiations (2014, p. 176)

We can say that TCOET films constantly introduce experimental approaches, among them, *freelensing*[24], to capture and produce diffractive optical perspectives and create a visual

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the screen and as an erotic object for the viewer who stands for the audience. Mulvey, L. (1999) [1975], 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' in L. Baudry & M. Cohen (eds.) *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, Oxford University Press, New York, 833-844.

[23] To illustrate how diffraction works, Barad refers to the inquiries carried out by Francesco Grimaldi during the second half of the seventeenth century, a set of essays in the field of optics that allowed him to examine those moments when light pushed or bordered limits. In those experiments, Grimaldi arranged the conditions so that, in principle, sunlight was forced to enter a dark room through a small hole, and where that narrow luminous flux was found with a thin rod in its course, printing its shadow on a surface. In this experiment Grimaldi noticed that the shadow border was not delineated but instead a series of colored bands appeared in the place beside it. From this, he noted that these observations could not be explained under the known laws of lighting propagation, that is, reflection and refraction. When replacing the thin rod with a rectangular blade, he observed the diffraction edge: bands of light within the edge of the shadow, that is, over that region of possible total darkness, along with bands of darkness that appeared outside the region of shadow. It is from these inquiries that he manages to affirm that there is no definite limit that separates light from darkness: the light appears within the darkness. Watching light's behavior as a certain fluid that encounters an obstacle breaks and moves in many directions, Grimaldi chose to call this phenomenon *diffraction* Barad, K 2007, *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning.* Durham [USA] & London: Duke University Press, pp. 170-171.

[24] *Freelensing* is a photography technique used with interchangeable lens cameras in both film-based and digital photography. The lens is detached from the camera and held in front of the lens mount by hand during exposure.

space of friction. They disarm yet make productive three border territories: space-time, body (sexual, erotic, identity) and what divides the human from the nonhuman. It should also be added that the works that make up the entire TCOET project do not find stable limits and even reuse scenes from previous ones in order to give them a new meaning in new locations[25]. Although all the films have a beginning and an end, their quality of fragmentary assemblage or intellectual montage allowed us to use scenes from within TCOET films with a high degree of interchangeability; for example, the scene of the apartment in Shanghai, with its screen of images, appears in *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) and *TCOET # 7* (2017) and in each of these subsequent works, it acquires different meanings. This is why I could claim, in chapter 1 in reference to expanded cinema, that these films also produce meta-reflexive forms of communication.

If we start from tensioning spatial and temporal boundaries, we can point out that these films do not set precise limits, but rather, aim to disarm or question them, either in formal terms (the limits themselves of the films are unstable, since different fragments appear in one or another piece, so they do not construct an idea of beginning or end), or in terms of the expansion of identity, be it geographical or bodily. If, for Elizabeth Freeman (2010), *queer temporality* is that which dislodges, puts into crisis and dismantles, the temporal paths drawn by obligatory heterosexuality, then it is necessary to think about these temporal (and spatial) disorders as an effect of queer disarticulations proposed by these films as collaborative practices. It is, in a way, a time that functions in counterpoint to modern temporality, outside of *chrononormativity*, that is, the use of time to regulate human bodies towards maximum productivity (ibid., p.3). In *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) time becomes denser, passes faster or slower according to the effects of observing a voyeur over a landscape of Beijing and over the body of HorneyHoneyDew. I am interested in thinking, in addition, of the spatiality that these films display also as part of the foundation of *heterotopies* (Foucault, 1986), that is, not only time, but also alternative spaces to urban paths that regulate and regiment daily life from the foundation of other places. Both *Me gustas tú* and *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* or *Take Me To Church* adopt these modes of spatiality in permanent transformation, to the point of

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[25] For the Post-Cyber Feminist International, TCOET films were screened as a single long uninterrupted feature film. Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, November 2017. Retrieved 14/02/20 https://archive.ica.art/whats-on/screening-church-expanded-telepathy

disorienting the viewer regarding the space in which the action occurs: Cyberspace, the United States, a church, a dungeon for SM sessions, an apartment in China or a 3D interface crossed by a glitch. From urban landscapes, the portrait of underground rooms where the SM sessions take place, from cyberspace fostered by social networks such as Tumblr to the brutalist architecture of a church. In *Me gustas tú*, the use of the overprinting of one image over another even achieves the coexistence of different space-times on the same plane, as in the tricks of Méliès's cinema, which promoted the filmic apparatus as a magical device. In the film *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) the transition between an urban and a natural order is given by acceleration of time and estrangement of perspective – the presence of a being that exists at the border between monster, animal, the order of queer plants, and the heteronormative body. For example, during the chase scene in a bucolic space where the boundaries between the animal and the human become porous, with diverse experimental in-camera (capturing) effects such as *freelensing*, which reinforce the destabilization of space and its underpinning *orthogonal grid* [26].

Another of the directions in which TCOET films intervene critically on space has to do with the ways in which they move along territorial and power paths over body, sex and pleasure. In the TCOET films, the place of explicit images (erect penises, ejaculations, webcam sessions, use of dildo machines for anal pleasure) and, above all, the staging of SM sessions, is central. In many of these films, in addition, one can observe practices such as fist-fucking, spanking, role play, crucifixion, the use of whips, penis cages, harnesses, slings, fuck machines, jaws, wristbands, locks, among other pleasure production and pleasure management devices typical of queer SM imagery and practices. We can affirm that all these images aim to decentralize the ways in which pleasure and sex are regulated by modern sexopolitics. In this regard, Paul B. Preciado (2008) indicates that the straight norm displays a structural link between the management of gender identities and the production of pleasure, privileging certain organs over others, such as sexual and reproductive organs, so we can affirm that modern bodies are produced according to the reproduction of certain functions to

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[26] Peggy Reynolds examines in detail the informational matrix of space. Tracing a genealogy through a series of novel technologies, she explores what it might mean that we are becoming aware of how the 'grid' (and therefore the enframing of space as an *orthogonal grid*) and the (particularly Western) human have remediated each other over a 30-millennia span; how the arrival of the grid's apotheosis – digital forms of capture and the networks to which it gives rise – seems to indicate the completion of a technological circuit from Neolithic loom to gridded planet; and how a new, incipient figure/ground distinction is being brought into being by the computational revolution (Reynolds, 2012, pp 34-94).

the detriment of others. In this sense, Preciado (2009) calls *sexopolitics* a dominant form within the biopolitical action that emerges in disciplinary capitalism. It is sexopolitics that is responsible for managing sex, its truth, its visibility, its forms of externalization, sexuality (pathological and normal), race and its purity or degeneration. In this way, it is possible to point out, for example, that the anus is extracted from the pleasure-producing circuits in the body coded as masculine (and inevitably heteronormative). According to Deleuze and Guattari (1972) this body is placed outside the social field and, therefore, privatized. Following Guy Hocquenghem, Preciado (2009) proposes that the anus functions as a mode of pleasure production that decentralizes and delocalizes the territorialisation of pleasures in the body, historically codified by the heterosexual regime. For the author, castration of the anus in the body of heteronormative masculinity is the foundation of the private body. The production of heteronormative masculinity at the end of the nineteenth century lies, then, in the management of the anus understood as an excretory orifice, not as an organ of pleasure production. Part of this reasoning is linked to what Foucault (1976) indicates as the process of control, regulation and management. In this sense, sexuality emerges as a project of modern societies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the heat of the regimentation of identities through its institutions. In this way, sex will be produced by a complex network of discourses, practices and technologies of knowledge and power. For modernity, the "sexual *dispositif*" by which subjects are organized becomes vitally important.

If we go back to the SM images that circulate in TCOET films, I was interested in drawing on what Larry Townsend points out in *The Leatherman's Handsbook II* (1983) when he explains that everything that happens in an SM exchange or SM session is done with the aim of producing physical or emotional pleasure (ibid., p.19). In Foucault's terms (1984), SM practices are the real creation of new possibilities of pleasure with foreign parts of the body (that is, under certain modes of body eroticization) such as spanking practices in *Me gustas tú* (2016) or the kidnapping in *Take Me to Church* (2016). By the same token, Foucault thinks that it is a type of creative work that he calls "desexualisation of pleasure", since the process is to move from the sexual organs as a source of erotic pleasure to other bodily territories (ibid. p. 165). By this logic, Foucault calls upon us to understand SM practices as an innovative form of pleasure that denaturalises the modern mandates around sexuality, sex and pleasure. The SM game articulates strategic relationships that are fluid, since, although there are roles, they can be reversible, interchangeable. In this way, he points out that strategic play

as a form of bodily pleasure is interesting because insofar as it can result in a kind of acting outside of power structures. Specifically, the SM practice is a pleasure creation, which is why it is a process of inventing a subculture. A strategic relationship to obtain sex. (1984, pp. 169-170).

For David Halperin (1995), SM eroticism makes use of discipline strategically, not only to produce intense pleasure but also to dismantle identity and to put in crisis the order of the self on which the subject's normalization depends. Halperin notes that there is an analogy between Foucault's thinking and his way of aligning it with Baudelaire's dandyism, and Bataille's "limits of experience" (ibid., P. 111). Later, he highlights the way in which the practice of fist-fucking, framed in sadomasochism, appears in this light as a utopian political practice, since it produces a short circuit in normative sexual identities and generates modes of resistance to the disciplines of sexuality, a path of counter-discipline. The intense bodily pleasure that emerges from these practices, off-centre in relation to the exclusively genital area, puts the subject in crisis, and undoes the physical and bodily integrity of the subject for whom a sexual identity has been assigned. In this way, queer sex opens up the possibility of another self, one that can function as the substance of an ongoing ethical elaboration and as a space for future transformation (ibid., p. 97). In the films analysed in this chapter, collaborative intra-action practices emerge, each in their own way, also as SM erotic linking practices, where other kinds of pacts take place, those of master/slave, dominator/submissive. In films like *Take Me to Church* (2018), the preponderance of anal penetration with the use of dildo machines and war missiles becomes the centre of erotic operations around which the piece gravitates.

Recovering the idea that TCOET films put borders into crisis, in the case of gender, I am interested in calling attention to the ways in which, under certain circumstances, they can be put into crisis through some of the strategies that are carried out mainly by the performer of almost all TCOET films: HorneyHoneyDew. The scenes sung a cappella aim to destabilize the causal chains between sex-gender and sexual identity. In many cases, the parody of genre goes through K-pop songs, originally composed to be sung by women in a romantic mood, while here they appear adapted to more unfamiliar contexts. In *Me gustas tú* and *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* the performer appears in a studio, in a mirrored room, or in front of a Chroma to sing K-Pop songs. If in the original version of "Me gustas tú" and "Paradise Lost"

they function as romantic messages that reinforce a heteronormative link, in the appropriated and re-located version sung by HorneyHoneyDew new senses are produced that intercept the messages of the SM link and dissenting sexualities framed in the films. The causality between sex-gender and sexual desire falls into a short circuit thanks to these ways of exhibiting gender performativity. Judith Butler (1990) considers that gender is not an expression of a natural sex essence but an effect of social division between genders. In this way, she dismantles the causal logic that certain anatomies naturally have a gender. The same discourse that establishes causality between sex, gender and sexual orientation, is now considered part of this heteronormative politics prescribing technology. For Butler, gender is a kind of staging that works as a "copy of a copy", that is, without an original. TCOET films dismiss altogether that original in favour of a stage where a non-binary man's body sings a song intended for a woman and transformed by a queer utterance where it takes on a new meaning (and even leads to refer to SM queer relationships in *Me gustas tú* (2016). In this sense, and following the guidelines of the theory of speech acts of Austin (1962), gender is constituted under a series of performative acts. For this, she argues, there is a heterosexual matrix of intelligibility as a normative framework from which sexual identities are produced and managed. TCOET films would come to account for that, in the ways in which the norms of the genre can be parodied by mechanisms pursued by the making of these films. In this sense, I also believe it is important to incorporate one of the contributions of Preciado (2013), for whom gender, within the framework of the pharmacopornographic society, has a flexible character. Gender is now malleable, synthetic and susceptible to being transferred, produced or reproduced (ibid, pp. 105-106). In this sense, a short circuit is produced in what corresponds to what Preciado refers to as "semiotechnical codes of white heterosexual femininity and masculinity", since he indicates that since the post-war period and in the pharmacopornographic society they are subjected to a specific political ecology (James Bond, soccer, wearing pants, for example, in the case of masculinity, versus *Little Women*, the pill, virginity, in the case of femininity). (ibid, pp. 120-121).

According to Jaime del Val (2002) if material corporeality is an effect of the articulation of a structured reality that corresponds to heteronormative masculinity (del Val's terminology here is *phallogocentrism*), the representation of a *queer border* challenges the concept of body by proposing instead the *meta-body*: a concept of process and fluidity opposed to the heteronormative mandate of materiality (Val, J. d., 2002, p. 38). The *phallogocentric* gaze,

which disarticulates the visual language of the media, is an instrument of contamination that resignifies the material reality that surrounds us, that objective gaze without which logos and its structures would not be possible. This dominant gaze rejects other gazes that are not structured: sensations that act on the border of representation, impressions that question whether what we are seeing is "really" a body. My concept of *expanded telepathy* should be included as part of the unstructured sensations and impressions of the *meta-body*. The *phallogocentric* gaze takes matter for granted and therefore *expanded telepathy* remains closed to this sense materiality. For del Val (2002), the *meta-body* performs a reinterpretation of abstraction as a border of language, not just visual. TCOET narratives are an example of positing non-bodies, almost-bodies, anti-bodies on the border with abstraction. If we are on this side of the border, we don't leave the existing morphologies, even if we can play with them; if we stray too far across the border, then we are unintelligible. But if we are looking for an intermediate point, that disturbing point where things start not to be *phallogocentric*, but we can still recognize them to a certain extent, then the morphological game becomes very rich, even the transformed parody, such as the voice-over narrative used in both *Superhomosexuals* (2016) and *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) comes out as a source of metapoetry, without becoming completely abstract or unintelligible.

Finally, and in relation to the border tension between the human and the non-human, we can say that TCOET also resets the boundaries between the human and the non-human, the human and the animal, and even the use of life forms coming from science fiction like posthumans and aliens (I will expand on this point in chapter III). One of the questions that appears in several of these films is the construction of monstrosity and what it implies. In *Succulent humans # 3* (2019), we move from an urban environment to a natural setting in which a spatiotemporal dimension opening up to strange voices (sexual monsters and aliens) breaks in. If we reflect on contributions from Foucault (1975) concerning the modern figurations of the monstrous, then we must emphasize the conditions they set for what was intelligible as an anomaly throughout the nineteenth century. Under this hypothesis, the monster disturbs and therefore concerns, both biological and legal orders, becoming a phenomenon that equally overflows the territories of law, science and social norms. The monster works, then, as a reading frame for difference, a model of otherness, the result of a true technology that in each era determines what the limits of the normal are. In this sense we can talk about a "technology of monstrosity" that emerges in many Victorian productions that

make literary the notion of difference (Halberstam, 1995). Thus, the monstrous produces an excess of sense beyond all limits while embodying the same overflow between the human and the animal. In *TCOET # 7* (2017), what is shown is a world in ruins: the imagination lies in the invention of a science fiction world in which the productive circuits of the heteronormative body have been transgressed.

As I investigated in this section, TCOET films generate a decentralization and crisis of sex and gender identities. If the aim of this chapter is to investigate just how these films promote "queer telepathy", the purpose of this section specifically expands upon a set of theorizations that the films project regarding the normative orders underpinning bodies, identities, gender, sexuality. The starting point was the signalling of queer practices as an essential basis for the production of these films. On the one hand, through collaborative intra-action practices, collaborations were transformed into forms of connectivity that escape heteronormative paths, typical of queer multitudes (Preciado, 2003). I also described the ways in which the works disarm the border and make it productive in three directions: space-time, body (sexual, erotic and identity) and the divide between the human and the nonhuman. In the temporal order, the films achieved queer temporalities (Freeman, 2014) that unmake the heteronormative economies of capitalism around time and promote "heterotopic spatialities" (Foucault, 1984); in the corporeal order, the films recovered the pornographic SM image in a way that allowed the exploration of the body as forms of deterritorialisation of genital pleasure (Townsend 1983; Foucault 1984; Halperin 1995). Gender frontiers are also put into crisis from an articulation that distorts performative acts (Butler, 1990) and reveals their plastic, malleable, prosthetic character linked to a specific political ecology (Preciado, 2013). Finally, and regarding the barriers between the order of the human and the non-human, the films repositioned the figure of monstrosity as a political engagement with forms of otherness (Foucault 1975; Halberstam 1995). Thus, in the next section, I will investigate the ways in which the problems discussed above (queer politics, pornography, and SM links), emerge in TCOET films, the formal strategies used to take them to the audiovisual plane and the cooperative logics that underlie them.

2.3. Me gustas tú (2016), Take Me to Church (2016), Paradise Lost + David's Sling (2016)

In the three films I analyse below, *Me gustas tú* (2016), *Take Me To Church* (2016), *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016), I traced three specific experiences of what I call "queer telepathy", a facet of expanded telepathy that works by articulating queer politics through the resources offered by audiovisual works. In each of them, specific production relations with precarious queer links are drawn up, but so too are a set of concerns linked to the boundaries between genders, sexualities, forms of territorialisation of pleasure and the uses of SM in connection with the pornographic code. Finally, I will analyse those aspects that account for a special articulation between expanded telepathy and queer politics.

The three films have, to begin with, the common denominator that they are work produced in collaboration with HorneyHoneyDew, drawing on forms of queer interaction that aim to give tension, each in its own way, to a set of problems linked to the body, pleasure, gender and sexuality. The three, on the other hand, have a strong engagement with the pornographic genre and the staging of SM relationships, so in this sense they are clearly separated from heterosexual romantic affective relationships that linked traditional telepathic practices staged in contemporary art (Abramovic / Ulay) or by blood ties (the Wilson or Mangano sisters). To begin the analysis, we can point out that both *Me gustas tú* (2016) and *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016) start from the use of the same resource: a cappella versions of K-POP songs. The relationship between soundtrack and image band is central to the three films for the production of meaning. The development of the song constitutes a central element for organizing the entire piece. In each case, the song is interfered in by certain sound effects that produce specific sensorial cuts. In *Me gustas tú* (2016) (in English, "I Like You") by the K-POP group GFRIEND, a version is presented with no other melody than that of the voice of the performer. The chorus repeats again and again: *"Me gustas tú / me gustas tú / Me gustas tú / Me gustas tú"*. In this sense, a song that was intended to support a romantic heteronormative story is moved to another terrain, different from the original, just as it passes from a female to a male voice. The song resonates in several spaces (a recording studio, a 3D landscape) but more fundamentally in an off-duty Royal Navy submarine, located in a former British shipyard, previously the location of the former University of Kent School of Music and Fine Art.

In *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* the effect of the song is similar. In this case, it is also the use of a track by a female K-POP group called Gain, the song, "Paradise Lost" (2015) undergoes a similar displacement. The chorus repeats: *"Anyone looking for the Paradise Lost / Something good like sweet honey / maybe I'm your diamond Lost / something good you want crazily / I feel / I'm real / where are you now / now I'm almost Paradise / I'm here / I'm yours / "you and I / another Paradise"*. As you can read later, this song produces a strange feedback between two spaces and times – a mirrored room, where the song is sung and a space where an SM session takes place – so it also allows the articulation of new forms of meaning in the collision of these two spheres (figure 4).

Unlike the other two, *Take Me to Church* is a film that happens almost entirely in the cyberspace environment, where Internet browsing is done almost entirely within hyperlinks hosted by the social media network Tumblr. Its title embodies a double meaning: it refers to the popular expression linked to the marital union in a monogamous relationship, associated with the heterosexual ritual and the religious institution in charge of it. The other aspect implies the SM connection with the imaginary of religious martyrdom and sacrifice, a meaning to which the film speaks more directly. As in the previous films, however, the soundtrack in *Take Me to Church* plays a different role. It is a first-person voice-over that tells, in the manner of auto fiction, of an encounter with a stranger as part of a session of kidnapping and SM domination. The senses that aim to produce the piece emerge under the use of intellectual montage, and the collision that both streams build towards, that of image and sound (figure 5). The virtual space, on the other hand, allows for development and deployment of the paradox that the physical body is and is not there, since it is possible to assume an identity (racial, gender, sexual) that differs from that assumed offline (Jordan 1999, p.66). A social media network such as Tumblr, says Dame (2016), allows not only for posts, but also for the construction of queer circuits for information traffic, pornography, free translations, etc. This paradox enables us to reconstruct the body of the one who navigates, on the one hand, and on the other hand to understand that it is he who narrates the sexual encounter.

In relation to the ways in which SM practices appear and are figured in each film, through pornography, it should be noted that each one elaborates particular mechanisms. *Me gustas tú*

(2016) brings together a set of spatialities (both virtual and concrete) that allow the action to take place only in the suture of all of them. On the one hand, from the beginning, three-dimensional designs of a ship and a red-toned port extracted from Google Earth are used. One of the first interventions at the graphic level lies in the overlap of a circular image of HorneyHoneyDew spinning suspended with bare hands and legs during an SM session, over the image of the ship's interior. The coexistence of these spaces is linked to another close link, it could be said: that between cinema and illusionism, articulated in what could be traced to the overprinting strategies of Georges Méliès.

In the characterization of HorneyHoneyDew as Sailor Fuku, the Japanese school uniform, also associated with the anime tradition, allows us to think of a set of ideas displayed in the piece that will *queer* the space of the film, a problem that is reinforced with the repetition of the song that gives the piece its title.[27] If the song repeats "*Me gustas tú / Me gustas tú/ Me gustas tú*" this allows us to account not only for the foundation of the homosexual pact that organizes the SM relationship, but it also allows us to reflect on the ways in which these spaces of virility production can be articulated and thought under the logic of "homosocial desire", where camaraderie, rivalry, relations between heterosexual men emerge, but rather are held under a logic of homosexual desire (Sedgwick, 1985). These films seem to display the question of how it is possible to eroticize or return to a space designed for other purposes.[28] The song is essential for the production of meaning. As I pointed out in the previous section, this correlation between homosexual desire and performance of a female song produces an alteration in gender performativity and sex-gender-desire correspondence (Butler, 1990).

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[27] To a large extent, we can indicate that the imagery of sailors is strongly present in most queer cultural traditions of the twentieth century: from the photographs in numerous 'beefcake' magazines between the 1930s and 1960s to the iconic figure of the killer sailor of *Querelle De Brest* (1947) both in Jean Genet's novel and in its film adaptation by Rainer Werner Fassbinder as *Querelle* (1982). The sailor was also strongly popularized as an erotic icon by cartoonists such as Tom of Finland and, more recently, the tradition re-emerged in photographs of Pierre et Gilles such as "Les Deux Marins" (1993), "Vive La marine" (1997) or "O le Matelot" (2001)

[28] The works of Samuel Delany (1999) and José Esteban Muñóz (2009) also investigate the ways of reappropriation of certain spaces that Queer culture has made forms of resistance to the imperatives of heterosexual normalcy. On the one hand, Delany investigates pornographic cinemas as forms of encounter and exchange between whites, blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and middle, upper or lower classes. That is, the foundation of an allied erotic community in a sexual pact that disarmed sexual, economic, age hierarchies, etc. On the other hand, Muñoz defines a set of queer historical sites whose experience has special resonance in the author's life. He gathers experiences such as those crossed by a set of spaces such as pre-Stonewall gay bars or the Andy Warhol Factory located in New York in the fifties and sixties. In Delany, S. 1999, *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, New York, New York University Press; Muñoz, J. E. 2009, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, New York, New York University Press.

In this chain of meanings, pornographic images that reveal SM practices are central; if the virile naval imagery appears in several instances, it is to be appropriated from the ways in which these practices relate to spatiality and are deployed (figure 6). The a cappella song is interfered with by sounds of bombardment and explosions on the one hand, and with images of HorneyHoneyDew submitted to a (literally) suspended master/slave relationship, with handcuffs. The images construct meanings, in addition, by means of the montage and juxtaposition with sounds when they formulate the correspondence between destruction and violence as forms of pleasure (Bataille, 1962) and the principle of pain in the SM performance points to forms of desexualized pleasure, occupying the body with new territories of eroticism (Foucault, 1984).

The imaginative power of SM emerges strongly in *Take Me to Church* (2016) where Web browsing is accompanied by a soundtrack where an encounter with a stranger in New York is narrated by a first-person voice-over. The story told is one of domination and kidnapping; the core of the story emerges in the phrase: "I don't know if this is a fantastic sex game or I am really in danger". The experience of time in the SM practice allows queer temporalities to be articulated, as Halberstam (2005) points out, as the experiences linked to risk, death, disease, rethinking the conventional emphasis on longevity and the future (ibid., p. 4). The masochistic fantasy operates according to a heterotopic logic as it pushes the contact between past and present, between Web browsing and the session with a stranger that culminates with a crucifixion in a basement. Heterotopia is complemented by a heterochronic dimension (Foucault, 1986), and that is where the centrality of waiting takes place, waiting as paralysis, loss of perception, what Ricco (2002) defines as a kind of *queer space*. In this regard, Freeman (2010) points out that the SM game reorganizes the body's microtemporalities: the disorientation of the narrator, the excitement and the fear, the delay of knowing where the story is even directed. Pornographic images, on the other hand, appear in the Web browsing log in fragmentary form, in video fragments, anonymous GIFs, intervened photographs, animations and SM paraphernalia from an image bank: dildos, fuck machines, slings, harnesses, cock locks, among other artefacts, it can be said, after which *Take Me to Church* (2016) centralizes Web browsing to articulate it around the queer ecosystem of Tumblr.[29]

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[29] As Alexander Cho (2015) indicates, Tumblr hosts a true queer ecosystem, and not only for pornography trafficking, but also as a way of socializing people's personal or other images, artistic or explicit, putting into circulation, information against homophobia, organization of meetings in real life, etc. The central feature of this social network is that its exchange is almost exclusively visual, unlike, for example, the logic of blogs in HTML.

This navigation through cyberspace erases the boundaries between words, concepts, amateur pornography, abstract images and colour backdrop effects. In this direction Patterson (2004), regarding cyberporn, points out that it is based on an environment in which desire and the subject are consolidated by a mediated market, produced ad libitum, to the extent of desire. The spectatoriality of navigating through these interfaces is strongly linked to the habits of looking, pointing, clicking, updating the webcam, etc. (ibid, p. 108). According to del Val (2018) we can say that it is a type of navigation and sensitive construction linked to the adjacent modes of perception of the landscapes of the digital ecologies as an intra-action, that is, that the conditions of the relational field are not established a priori but emerge from a fluctuating point of vision (ibid, pp. 65-67)[30].

In *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* the centrality of song once again affects the meaning of the work. If the idea of a "shared paradise" is mentioned insistently in the chorus, the meaning is repositioned once the SM images appear. For this to occur, the film moves between different registers and spatialities: among the images outside the Basilica of St. Peter in the Vatican, a set of missiles (which allude to the David's Sling, a war missile designed by Israel, again, the factor of destruction linked to pleasure or, in its other sense, the sling as an object for SM sex), a mirrored camera where HorneyHoneyDew sings and a camera for an SM session bathed in red light. From the song, then, the senses are sutured between all these elements. We can infer that the idea of a paradise of one's own (contrary to that of Adam and Eve), is a spatiotemporal type that excludes heterosexuality, materialised here in the link of master/slave. As in *Take Me to Church* (2016), the idea of paradise becomes literal through the figure of the basement crucifixion linking religious ecstasy and pain as forms of SM

Cho, A. 2018, "Default Publicness: Queer Youth of Color, Social Media, and Being Outed by the Machine", *New Media And Society*, vol. 20, no. 9.

[30] *Take Me to Church* proposes a type of navigation that undermines the logos as linear mode of thinking and a fluctuating point of vision that is close to what Jaime Del Val (2018) proposes when he calls for establishing other ways of perceiving digital ecosystems. In this sense, it is important to refer to his work, since it proposes adjacent modes of adaptation to changing landscapes in digital ecologies. Del Val indicates that current interfaces reduce the sensory spectrum, following the model initiated six hundred years ago with Renaissance perspective, as in the case of smartphones, which articulate modes of spatiality that owe their design to those imagined from Alberti's linear perspective. I believe the relational field proposed by Del Val goes beyond *geometric ecologies*, now diagrammed by algorithms (which he calls Algoriceno). Other ecologies, the author indicates, as in certain indigenous communities, or in non-human or bacterial ecosystems, show less organized structures of sensibility ratios, with more open properties in the way in which the modalities of sensitivity cooperate to relate one to the other. For this, Del Val indicates, it is necessary to relate reflexivity to a conservative paradigm of interaction, in which relations are established under an imposed schema - perspective - while plasticity is related to what Karen Barad (2007) points out as *intra-action,* whereby the conditions of the relational field are not established in advance but co-emerge in the process of relations between agencies (ibid., p. 65-67).

pleasure. The figure of the martyr emerges as suffering is followed by ecstasy, à la Saint Sebastian. Instead of showing ejaculation, the so-called money shot of industrial pornography, orgasm is figured in crucifixion, in close correspondence with the outcome of the previous film.

Finally, we may add that, if for Williams (1989), the ejaculatory 'money shot' in pornography, constitutes the central plane that crowns the narrative of the classic pornographic paradigm to affirm bodily pleasure, these three films have no such instance. Their forms of pleasure don't necessarily yield that outcome. The strongest mark of bodily "ecstasy" and masochistic pleasure appears in *Take Me to Church* through the soundtrack, in the story, and in the image with a series of abstract circles distorting the image. In *David's Sling + Paradise Lost*, we see HorneyHoneyDew crucified against an urban setting, and *Me gustas tú* ends with the song fade-out and noise of explosions.

The three films from 2016 examined in this section, *Me gustas tú*, *Take Me to Church*, *Paradise Lost + David's Sling*, produce special articulations between soundtrack and image. In the first two, the a cappella song is the main resource for broaching a set of problems linked to sexual SM relations, domination pacts, queer identities, sexual identities and gender. On the image plane, all of them, suggest problems with image consumption in cyberspace, and how the form of pornography can be transformed to engage a queer agenda. It should be stressed that the three films transfer to the audiovisual plane a set of ideas linked to the expansion of pornography, not as a clear, categorisable genre but as a *fluctuating point of vision.*

2.4 . Chapter conclusions

I have tried here to make clear two of the central areas of practice for TCOET: queer politics and pornography. From their intersection, an immense potential related to SM connections, sexual identities and pleasure materialises within the moving image practice itself. In relation to the territory of pornography, I investigated the theories of its origins (Williams, 1989 and Hunt, 1994), its connection to modern vision devices (Comolli, 1980), its gay development (Dyer, 1985), and how it has functioned as a device for narrating and structuring pleasure, sex, and genital contact. I also incorporated the cyberporn perspective (Patterson, 2004) through its production of contemporary subjectivity in the *pharmapornographic society* (Preciado 2008). In relation to queer politics, I intended to examine how these films investigate the crisis in the boundaries between genders, sexual and bodily identities. Similarly, I contributed to this conversation by producing telepathic collaborative practices of film production intimately related to queer politics: they were defined as intra-actions (Barad, 2004) articulated around TCOET sexual performativity as forms of associations, queer multitudes (Preciado, 2005), raising questions through complex film exercises of resistance to the heteronormative regime of the subject. Many aspects underlying these relationships explore the connection between observer and observed, but also between master and slave as inscriptions in the dynamics of SM relationships. They are joined by other queer collaboration networks such as the Tumblr-based social media. I have worked around what Halberstam (2005) points out as *queerness*, not as the preserve of sexual identity but as a form of existence, a meta-body (Val, J. d., 2002) of cognitive emancipation, and a link to queer networks or friendships, where modes of alliance are articulated as practices both sexual and subcultural.

By examining three films from 2016, *Me gustas tú*, *Take Me To Church* and *Paradise Lost + David's Sling*, I established the formal resources used to transfer the conversation to the audiovisual plane as a first step in the implementation of expanded telepathy as a queer political device. Therefore, the exercises accounted for in this chapter do not intend to create traditional arguments in clear articulations of cause and effect; instead they enact a multiplicity of spatiotemporalities, including sexual and affective performativity corresponding to an expanded notion of queerness at the heart of this work. On the level of queer politics these films, as noted, investigate the crisis in its limits in three directions: the

notion of space-time, from the opening of queer temporalities; desire, by unmaking sexual, erotic and identity boundaries; and the monster, the borders dividing the human and the nonhuman, which we will discuss next, in Chapter III.
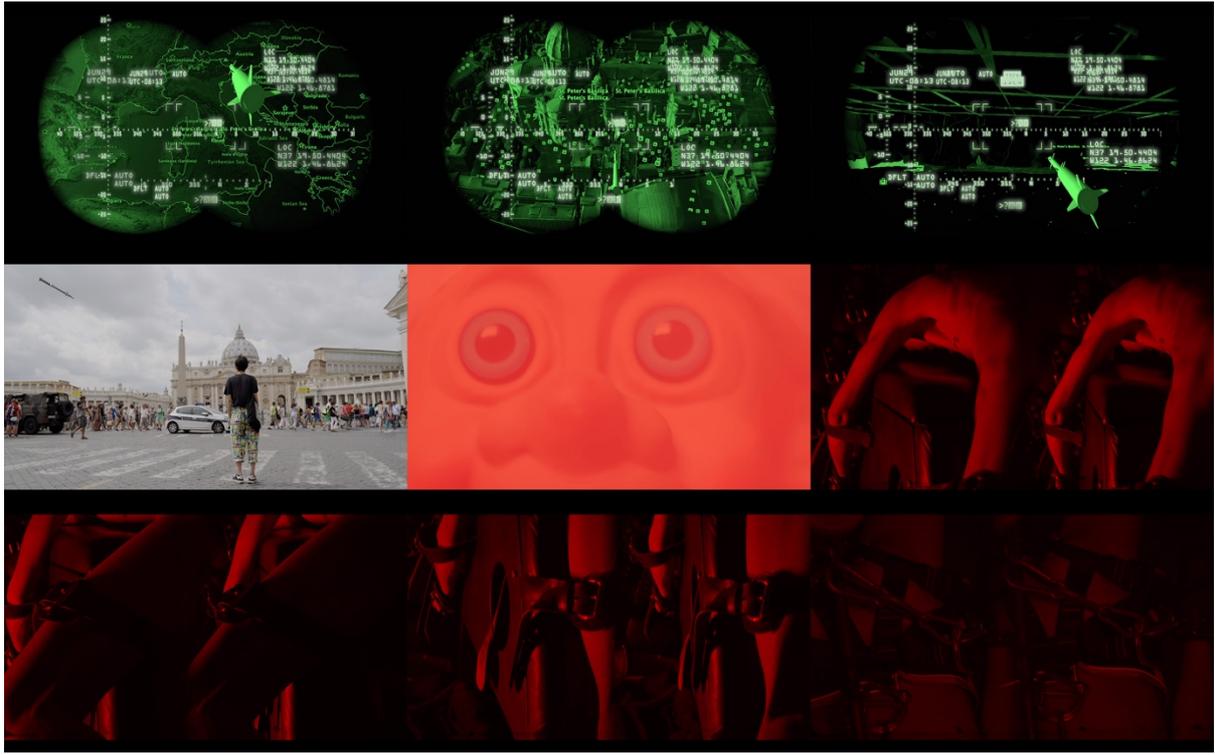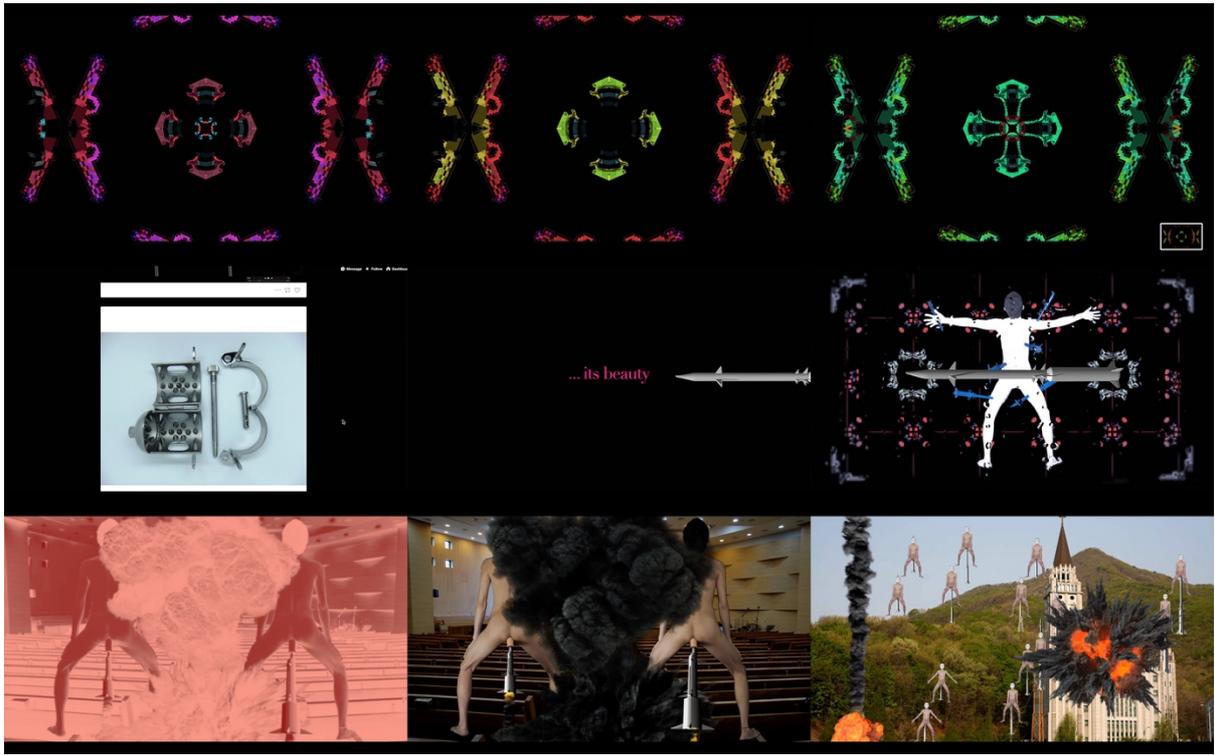
Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

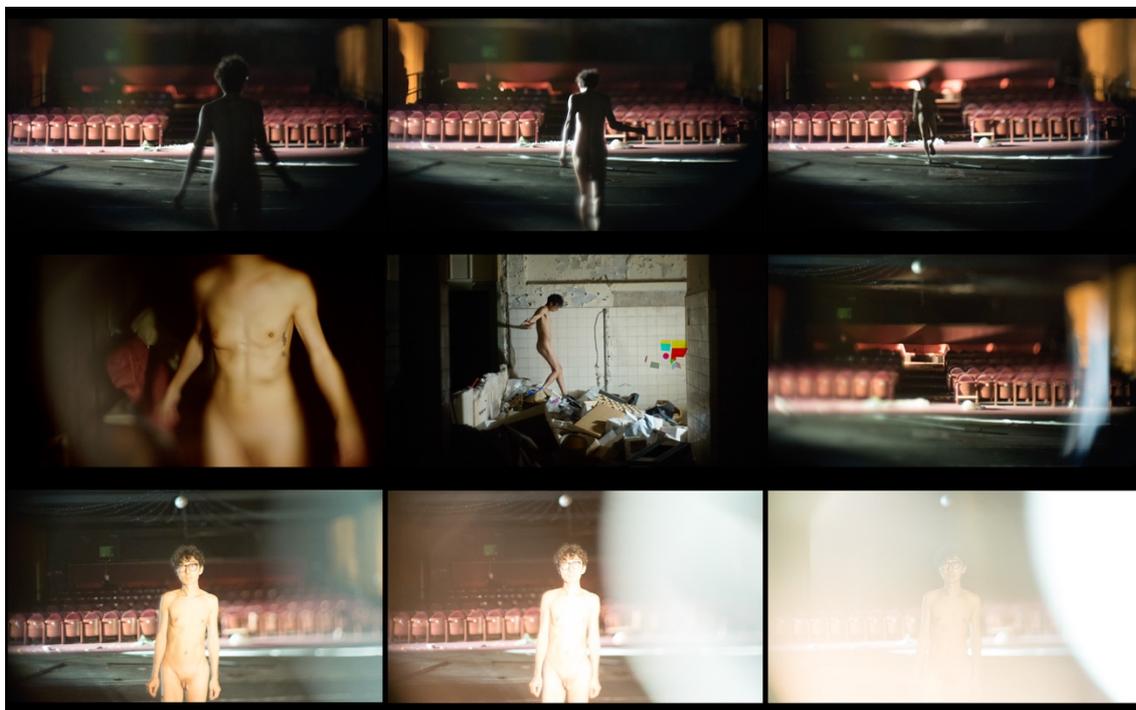# Chapter 3: Aliens, science fiction and *superhomosexuals*

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

3.1. From the development of queer telepathy to the uses of science fiction as a critical device. Border thinking, monsters and sexual deviants

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate a set of problems addressed by this research in the exploration of science fiction as a form of knowledge production and transmission between the audiovisual object and natural language-based theory. Unlike science fiction as genre, TCOET films do not function as a mere repertoire of narratives, scenarios, images or aesthetics. Science fiction is used by TCOET as a device to deploy critical concerns raised by queer telepathy in the previous sections. As such, the aim of this chapter is to provide an account of how queer expanded telepathy operates and develops alliances within science fiction imagination, the ideas that arise from this exchange, the theoretical problems that ensue, and the formal work, images and sounds that finally generate the films' assemblages and transfer to the plane of experimental film.

The appeal to science fiction entails two central aspects for TCOET: the collaborative and experiential element and the capture mechanism of moving image as a tool to open up to queer possible worlds. According to Simon O'Sullivan (2018)*,* the production of theory-fictions works "might have more than just an aesthetic function today. Indeed, it seems to me that in our post-fact and post-truth world it is crucial not only to counteract the fictions and myths presented to us but to also to produce other, and better ones by which to orientate ourselves within our world" (O'Sullivan, p. 64, 2018).

The potential for the emergence of queer worlds through the production of science fiction as a form of telepathic knowledge is what is at stake here. Like in Gloria Anzaldua's (1987) mestiza, we need to heal the split developing a new form of relationality between and in excess of dualist categories, and in continual motion, holding together contradictions, of moving across borders and thinking beyond binaries. This form of relationality allows us to display a set of strategic figures linked to the refraction of queer identities and platforms. Finally, through analysis of *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *TCOET # 7* (2017) and *Succulent humans # 3* (2019), a series of explorations connect the two spheres this chapter tries to unite: queer telepathy and science fiction.

This triad of films incorporates imaginations beyond representation that activate expanded telepathy in the context of science fiction as knowledge production: a network of exchanges and circulation of ideas; they propose circuits of images, affects, information, without the exclusive use of spoken or written words. The considerations contributed and

described by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009) that I integrated into the design of expanded telepathy provided a very precise background to delineate its nature. For Gabrys, traditional ideas of telepathy extend and expand to the urban environment in the form of clouds or intelligent particle signals, towards the wireless city charged with, and crossed by, invisible, instantaneous, cryptic, immediate communications that occur (primarily) among machines (ibid., p.55). Ether appears as an imagined space of conductivity and transmission, a means to observe wireless technologies (ibid.p.52). For Gabrys, the ubiquitous wireless communication network, is powered by sensors and smart dust, allowing it to be separated from person-to-person telepathy, since instead, it adopts machine-to-machine transmission and a form of broader exchange. In this sense, she adds, the atmosphere of wireless communication sensors suggests a more widespread dimension of telepathy (ibid., P.55). The notions of "ubiquity" and "expansion", and of a network of collaborations or the contact between machines and humans, constitute a critical field in line with the development of the notions of telepathy explored in these films. The idea of agents that transmit instantaneous information transcending spatial and temporal limits, that even reach the plane of cyberspace, nurtures, and links up with, the imaginary proper to science fiction.

The notion of expanded telepathy as a queer device also serves to locate specifically the type of exchanges that take place between the agents and the emerging codes the films project, as a set of ideas and visions questioning identity limits, decentralizing genres, putting in crisis sexualities, pleasure or desire between heterogeneous agents (human or nonhuman). The identities of the participants are not taken for granted; rather, they are articulated in contact, in the intra-action I have found so well described in the theoretical work of Barad. For Barad, the queer "is itself a lively, mutating organism, a desiring radical openness, an edgy protean differentiating multiplicity, an agential dis/continuity, an enfolded reiteratively materializing promiscuously inventive spatiotemporality" (2012, p. 81). Contact, then, between TCOET agents takes the form of an intra- rather than traditional interaction (Barad 2007, 2011). In this sense, TCOET telepathy not only suppose differential contact in the relational framework of the films' production, but functions as a conversion apparatus from critical debates to the plane of images and sounds, that is, to the experimental films that result from these intra-actions.

In this sense, and unlike Drinkall's research on telepathy and art (2005), these transfers are distinct from a set of experiences that preceded them in the field of performance or video-performance and whose telepathic exchange were based – mostly – on heterosexual ties or under those protected by blood ties (see Chapter I, section 1.3). This research, then, proposes a queer telepathy that opens provisional, precarious, momentary, erotic relational circuits; that moves on different planes (even reaching cyberspace), that investigates and fosters other temporalities – adjacent to the traces of reproductive temporality, incorporating other modes of sexuality and pleasure. Adopting a term from Preciado (2005), I called the group of agents that produce TCOET films queer multitudes, since they produce and manage transfers that point to the crisis in heteronormative regimes of life, propose alternative forms of existence, affectivity, relationality or friendship, and aim to formulate divergent experiences regarding space and time. The work with images and sounds that result in the films are the last link in the TCOET chain of operations and, as this research tries to prove, they can be read as direct theory (Small 1994), as forms of telepathic transmission through experimental film – a transfer of complex audiovisual codes into an expanded space of physical, sexual and cultural possibilities that alter the dominant narrative structures not only in their content but also in their context. In this section the central problem revolves around the genre of science fiction because the dialogue with this genre allows us to articulate and even deepen this whole set of problems encompassed by an expanded telepathy as a new manifestation of queer politics.

The concept that allows us to draw a first link between queer telepathy, decolonial epistemology and science fiction is *border thinking* (Anzaldúa, 1987). The border problem for her becomes complete and constitutes a point of enunciation from which to put into crisis a set of ideas that, in addition, allow a set of questions around the issue of otherness. Anzaldúa points out that those who inhabit that border are, then, perceived as a set of wicked, queer, malformed, mestizo, problematic entities. These minimal in/determined characters are the opposite to science fiction clearly defined superheroes or antiheroes. She uses this reasoning to consider the ways in which the border between the United States and Mexico articulates forms of expulsion of those Mexican citizens who inhabit the land that separates them from foreign territory (ibid., p.42). The notion of frontier also allows us to delineate a series of problems that articulate the figures that populate these three films: legal boundaries, those drawn by the rule of law; biological boundaries, which determine the normal sexualities from those who do otherwise; modern boundaries between the human and the non-human –

all debates very close to those that structure science fiction stories. Expanded telepathy falls into a form of collaboration that inhabits a *decolonial option* (Mignolo, 2012). As Mignolo (2012) points out, *border thinking* operates by thinking from dichotomous concepts rather than ordering the world into dichotomies, that is, a dichotomous locus of enunciation at the edges (ibid., p.86); and it is precisely from those limits that the union deepens between science fiction and notions of expanded telepathy. Strategically central to this project, then, is a set of liminal figures that articulate these problems: the monster, the alien and the cyborg as zones that let us point out and question a series of ontological limits of identity (in the orders in which they are constituted as human, posthuman, gendered, sexuated), limits which further affirm the relevance of science fiction not in terms of genre but as a form of knowledge production closely linked to the problem of otherness and identity construction. These films lay out theoretical problems linked to the idea of queer identities such as those which, due to their rejected, marginalized, fragile, *in/determinancy* (Barad, 2014) develop a special capacity for *border thinking*. TCOET's science fiction approach also traverses a border territory rather than a defined, firm space, a wandering, undefined geography created by residue, remains, detritus.

The very idea of enunciation from a mobile, porous, permeable frontier is closely associated with the plasticity of spatial and temporal limits developed by the conception of telepathy that I took from the notions of telepathic ubiquity in Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009) and which, as we shall see, materializes not only in the figures of the monstrous, but also transcends the montage plane, the work with space, the frame rate, the use of visual effects, the experimentation with perspective that the films themselves as ghostly objects conduct. The alien, in particular, becomes important as a figure inhabiting the stories of Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), woman, *chicana*, lesbian and feminist, who chooses to speak from an edge, and characterises herself as an open wound where Latin America meets the United States, a space where heterosexuality confronts the queer and the colonizer meets the colonized. Those who inhabit the border, for Anzaldúa, are hybrid, fluid, plural subject positions that put into crisis the processes of both land colonization and the body of capitalism, homophobia, patriarchy and Christianity. The conditions of existence of these subject positions generate what Anzaldúa calls mestizo consciousness, alien consciousness or woman consciousness. In this sense, and following Maria Lugones (1999), *mestizaje* challenges control by affirming what is born from the impure. As queer mestiza, Anzadúa questions heterosexuality as an

epistemological category. The alien is also an eccentric figure, as Haraway (1997) points out, as it escapes from the confinement of the globalised to an anti-ecosystem called "space". Space, moreover, is encoded not so much as the origins of man (as nature is) but rather as 'his' future in the Western utopian imaginary (ibid., p.315). As Ramirez (2002) points out, according to Anzaldúa, queer subjects transgress the borders not only of gender and sexuality, but also of space and time: "We queers come in all colors, all classes, all races, all time periods. Our role is to link people with each other – the Blacks with Jews with Indians with Asians with whites" and finally adds "with extraterrestrials" (ibid., pp. 84-85, cited in Ramirez 2002, p. 393). Ramírez argues that few readings have accounted for that connection established by Anzaldúa between aliens and queer, racial and national identities. It is, for the author, a literal as well as a metaphorical, idea. The alien functions as an embodiment of difference and deviation, transforming it from object to subject (ibid, p. 393). Concerning these ideas of Anzaldúa, Barad argues: "Living between worlds, crossing (out) taxonomic differences, tunneling through boundaries (which is not a bloodless but a necessary revolutionary political action), Anzaldúa understood the material multiplicity of the self, the way it is diffracted across spaces, times, realities, imaginaries" (2015, p.175). In this sense, and, as I have pointed out, this is one of the central axes that underlie the TCOET experience, directly linked to Anzaldía's epistemological approach to the intra-actions proposed by Karen Barad (2007, 2012, 2015): these identities created in contact produce sexual, physical and cultural filaments that are the subject of TCOET films. The context of relationality and agents that populate these films aim to disarticulate problems linked to modern Cartesian identities. The notion of queer intra-action questions the familiar sense of causality and also disarticulates the metaphysics of individualism, that is, the belief that there are agents individually constituted, as well as specific separated times and spaces (2012, pp. 76-81). In this sense, through TCOET's science fiction exploration, a queer political identity emerges and gives the monster a type of refractory nature that contributes to deepening the scope that queer telepathy initiates.

If we return to the science fiction and the monster as a platform for the concerns developed by expanded telepathy as queer telepathy, it is necessary to point out its connection with the field of issues raised by feminist and queer theories. Regarding science fiction as a critical theory, it is necessary to follow Freedman (2000), who claims that the genre works as a paradigm for critical theory in general and adds that among the forms of fiction available

today, it is one that has more affinity with the rigors of dialectical thinking. It is not a question of applying critical theory to science fiction, but rather of understanding that these two modes of discourse converse with one another and of understanding what this reading operation can reveal to us (ibid., pp. xv-xvi). If science fiction can help us approach critical theory, I am particularly interested in working around a set of feminist and queer problems that converge on the genre. According to Joana Russ (1971) science fiction is

> the perfect literary mode in which to explore (and explode) our assumptions about "innate" values and "natural" social arrangements…. about differences between men and women, about family structure, about sex, about gender roles. (1972, p.94)

Science fiction is used in my films as a platform for engaging in critical, theoretical and political debates linked to the territories of queer identities and its epistemological frontiers between the human and the non-human, the animal, the monstrous. In this sense, I follow Donna Haraway's direction, for whom the border between science fiction and social reality constitutes an "optical illusion" (2016, p.6). Science fiction, for Haraway, can operate as a "wormhole" to transform the space-time of transnational capitalism, technoscience, subjects and objects, the boundaries between the natural and the artificial (1997, p. 4). We can also add that Haraway points out that large part of her ideas was based especially on a set of science fiction writers such as Joana Russ, Samuel Delany, John Varley, James Tiptree Jr., Octavia Butler, Monique Wittig and Vonda McIntyre, who explored, she notes, the implications of embodying high-tech worlds and what had contributed to a very large extent to her reflections on the character of the *cyborg* (2016, p.52). Wendy Gay Pearson (2008) has noted that queer science fiction narratives work to exceed those requirements that produce and reproduce a structured common sense. Working with science fiction from this perspective supposes deploying critical perspectives on the world that decentralize its underlying heteronormative logics. Linking science fiction and queer politics involves revising those parameters that imply a structure, for example, of what is conceived as natural or a logic according to which sexualities are organized, in their relationship with sex, gender, space, and finally, with socio-cultural institutions (ibid., pp. 15-16). In this vein, for Neta Crawford (2003), utopian feminist science fiction explores how politics is gendered and how gender roles (whether on the side, for example, of colonizer or colonized) articulate strong constrictions. It also allows us to point out how certain forms of politics lead to exploitation or war. Science fiction, she adds, can open up fresh perspectives on pre-existing scientific

theories or arrive at new points of view on certain geopolitical issues. Its aims can often be analytical and emancipatory (ibid, p. 158). In this sense, for Pearson, science fiction provides the potential to work, delineate and imagine forms of alternative subjectivity, modes of experience that disregard those that regulate heteronormative logic. If queer theory works to denature the majority narratives that underlie bodies, identities, genders, and sexes, science fiction operates in a very similar sense with respect to those categories, incorporating, in addition, problems around the human, the animal, the socio-economic organization of the world. According to Pearson, what is registered in a science fiction story can work in interrogative or in political terms. When gender is questioned, we also question the ways in which people live, exist in the world, and how that world becomes sustainable and part of a wider structure. In large part, science fiction tries to answer these questions or, at least, understands them in the form of problems by articulating alternatives located in future times – in societies and cultures intersected by other modes of technology and science (2008, p.6-7). Rosi Braidoti (1996) points out that the logic of the posthuman in science fiction may even imply a disintegration of gender barriers. From this standpoint, she adds that many feminists have written and read science fiction in order to have an impact upon a new technological world in the context of the representation of sexual difference. Much of science fiction has to do with the development of fantasies about the body, especially the reproductive body, as well as representing alternative systems and forms of procreation and birth.

As for the present research, and as I have examined in previous sections, the problem of "queer temporality" (Freeman 2010) is a central idea to link queer politics and a set of forms of temporal experience adjacent to the times of heteronormativity, since it deploys other vital narratives, reflects on futurity from a deviant point of view, and depicts other experiences of time and space. The monstrous figures that roam these films and inhabit the border move within these limits, in affinity with the "deviant chronopolitics" Freeman has posited, a way for her to name queer subjects who experience and use time outside straight mandates (ibid., pp. 58-63). In this same direction, it is important to point out with Halberstam (2005) that reproductive time or family time is a spatiotemporal construction and in this sense, queer people who move in territories opposed to the heterosexual rule and on the outside of the logic of capital accumulation (the author points to ravers, club kids, people who practice unprotected/ high-risk sex, sex workers, drug dealers, the unemployed, etc.). Furthermore,

they are people who can be called "queer subjects" for living during the hours when others sleep, or inhabiting physical and economic places that others have abandoned (ibid., p.10). In TCOET films, the monster, the cyborg and the alien all experience and traverse time and space in ways that diverge from those determined by the straight norm. The monster emerges from the beginning as a deviant from modern temporalities; the alien, for its part, may come from the future or claim a future based on a "queer time", outside of reproductive futures, where it is possible to appropriate places like sterility, death or negativity from a queer projection of the future (Edelman 2004, p.4). The cyborg, on the other hand, is part of a network of instantaneous interrelations typical of the wireless city and articulates its body in a global network of communication technologies, a techno-living system (Preciado 2008); as Hayles (1999) points out, in this case the avatar is and is not present, the body is on one side and the other, and that tension between absence and presence indicates a set of concerns of a posthuman nature (ibid.p.28). Kevin Concannon (1998) reads Anzaldúa from the vantage point of science fiction, more specifically tracing a series of correspondences between *Borderlands* and William Gibson's novel *Neuromancer* (1988), to indicate the series of equivalences that can be drawn between the identity paradoxes that Anzaldúa raises regarding the inhabitants of the border and the particularities that appear with the emergence of cyberspace in the science fiction novel: it is a terrain where the boundaries between presence and absence, between life and death, appearance and disappearance take on essential importance (ibid., pp. 433-439).

Following Donna Haraway (1992), the three science fiction figures that emerge in TCOET films (the monster, the alien and the cyborg) introduce thematic references of difference and hyper-production. The Enlightenment as period has been directly linked to the sacred image of the same, of the true copy, mediated by the luminous technologies of compulsive heterosexuality and the *self-birthing masculine*; in this sense, her work delineates an artefact of difference that clings to different logics. To do this, she recovers the notion of *diffraction* as a metaphorical tool in the face of reflection; reflection is the deviation from the same (because a reflection occurs when a light beam hits an obstacle, returning an image to the reflected object). Reflective thinking is representational; *diffraction* (Barad,2014), on the other hand, is the result of interference: when the waves overlap, they can either reinforce or cancel each other, so they do not produce angular or definite or self-identical shadows. TCOET science fiction captures the passage of diffraction, mapping relations beyond

differences or replication, reflection or reproduction. Diffraction rays build interference patterns instead of clear images they reflect from theory. The tendencies of the world to seek completion and order is expressed as a force of oppression in TCOET work. Being an "inappropriate/d other" means being in a critical, deconstructive, relational space, rather than a reflective rationality, and functions as a way of building a connection that exceeds domination. In this sense, the term, taken from the ideas of the feminist filmmaker and theorist Trinh Minh-ha, serves both to think about human groups, as Haraway points out, and for organic and technological non-humans. Haraway adopts the term "inappropriate/d others" to rethink the relationship with the artefactual, global nature. The term is also a metaphor that suggests other forms of contact between people and humans, organisms and machines outside hierarchical domination, the incorporation of parts in all, paternal and colonial protection, symbiotic fusion, antagonistic opposition or instrumental relations of production. A diffraction pattern does not map where the difference appears, but rather the effects of the difference. TCOET science fiction is generically concerned with the interpenetration of boundaries between problematic and unexpected beings and with the exploration of possible worlds in a context structured by transnational techno science. I consider that these ideas can be extended to the points of view of the monster and the alien, privileged figures of the science fiction genre, who appear, then, as incarnations of otherness, figures of diffraction, as they afford special articulations with the discourse of difference presented in these films.

Considering it as a site of otherness, it could be argued that the monster figure taken from the science fiction genre works as a rhetorical space, a bridge to articulate queer politics. I am thinking of the monster (which, as can be seen below, may also assume the figure of the cyborg or the alien) as a productive space. As Halberstam viewed it (1995), monsters are constituted in a space where it is possible to undo innumerable senses, metaphorise, in addition, modern subjectivity as a balancing act between the binaries inside/outside, male/female, body/ mind, native/foreigner, proletarian/aristocrat; and the idea of monstrosity within a postmodern cultural framework finds a place in what Baudrillard calls the obscenity of "immediate visibility" and of what Comolli termed the "frenzy of the visible" (ibid., p.1). In this same sense, as Harry Benshoff (1997) points out, in much of the cinema that explores the universes of monsters, or in science fiction, the narrative elements also manifest a demand to represent "otherness", the alien in a framework of coding at the place of production and/or reception as a lesbian, gay or queer. Cultural objects linked to monstrosity,

he argues, perhaps more than in any other genre, invite queer readings due to the ways in which the disruption of the heterosexual status quo appears in many cases metaphorically (ibid., p.6).

In this sense, I will analyse in depth these three figures that, in the context of science fiction, allow us an understanding of queer telepathy as queer politics within the context of science fiction. I will also review the particular directions these figures bring to the idea of diffraction and the ways in which the problems articulated by border thinking unfold. The monster, the alien and the cyborg, as three queer political figures, are destined to move in a border territory. These characters allow the unfolding of ideas around queer debates such as time, circulation, space, the borders between the human, the nonhuman or the posthuman, the boundary with the animal and plant order, the future, or cyberspace, all concerns that have just completed the repertoire of refractions proposed by TCOET audiovisual works in the form of *expanded telepathy*.

3.2. Aliens, monsters, sexual deviants in queer telepathy

Each of these figures frames a network of concepts and problems that draw on the ideas of expanded queer telepathy laid out in the previous section. These three entities, historically recovered by science fiction literature and cinema allow, therefore, as we saw in the previous section, special articulations with the problems raised by feminist and queer theories. In each of the pieces analysed in this chapter, then, concrete links are drawn between these figures of the monstrous and the problems raised by expanded telepathy as a re-conceptualisation of the queer body in the production of a specific form of *direct* knowledge.

In Chapters I and II, I worked on problems related to the ways in which TOCET films developed critical turning points on gender, identity, sexual and corporeal borders through a series of strategies linked to audiovisual forms. In those sections, I was able to point out how both desire and pleasure, gender norms or sex were areas that could be discussed or productively occupied and interrogated from within queer debates (such as SM sexual practices) but expanded in audiovisual forms. In this corpus, the present chapter focuses on the films' capacity to enquire into another set of theoretical debates linked to the notion of *queer bodies* such as those that, due to their condition as rejected, marginalized, expelled or disconnected from a regimen of normality, inhabit a border territory and even are able to transgress spatial and temporal norms. The analysis of the scope of expanded telepathy as a device for queer politics employs a set of strategies such as non-reproductive, sterile futures, temporalities adjacent to the heterosexual norm, the limits between the human and the posthuman or the intersections with the animal and vegetal world.

As I pointed out in the first section, following Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), it is possible to consider the three entities – monster, cyborg, alien – as if they moved within a boundary, rather than a defined place, an undefined and counter-geography that has been created by the residue, the remainder, detritus (ibid., p. 42). This concern is intimately linked with the considerations and conceptions of telepathy put forward by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009), who describe telepathic information exchange networks in the framework of the development of urban telecommunications, as atmospheres that drift between spaces and times (Gabrys 2009, p.55). What contributions have been made interlacing the queer monster to the forms derived from expanded telepathy as queer politics? To what extent do the networks of

management, exchange, circulation of information in the urban territory, between spaces and times, help to consolidate the figure of the monster as a figure of an eccentric order, a place of diffraction, a subject of the border?

One starting point that lets us reflect on the monster and its border capacities can be found in Foucault (2003) who describes it as a figure originating within legal limits. What defines it is, in short, not only the violation of the laws of society, but also those of nature. It doubly violates the laws of its existence, and its emergence may be described as legal-biological. The monster is a locus for the collapse of the law and, in addition, an exception. It combines the impossible and the forbidden. Regarding the figure of abnormality, Foucault points out that there is a second set of ideas linked to the "individual to be corrected", clearly emergent in the eighteenth century. This differs from the monster in appearing more frequently. If the monster is the exception, this type of individual emerges as an everyday phenomenon (ibid., p.56-68). In his extensive analysis of the nineteenth-century Gothic novel, Halberstam (1995) points out that the monster is linked to a set of "technologies of monstrosity", meaning it condenses a set of senses implying very concrete modes of extension of the knowledge/power regimes Foucault described. Those technologies are always, he says, "technologies of sexuality". For Halberstam, the Gothic novel represents a privileged field in the network of sexuality, a discursive arena for the production of sexual identity where metaphors for otherness are transformed into technologies of sexuality, into machinic texts that manage perverse identities (ibid., p.89). According to Benshoff (1997), the link between monstrosity and homosexuality has had a strong development in cinema: the association between bestiality, incest or necrophilia linked to this sexual identity corresponds to a strong compendium of ideas forged by Hollywood. The concepts of "monster" and "homosexual" share the same semantic charge and produce the same fears about sex and death (ibid., p.3). In the same vein, Benshoff points out that monsters (especially those in the movies) should be understood as a certain emergent form of essentially queer sexuality in a dominant heterosexual territory. *Queerness*, then, arises in these films as a narrative moment or as a performance that denies oppressive binarisms. In this way, Benshoff points out that the irruption of the monstrous linked to the queer is analogous to what should be differentiated from the fantastic, Todorov or Freud's theorizing around the Uncanny, since *queerness* puts the narrative balance in crisis and dismantles the status quo, in many cases within a fantastic territory or the *naturalisation* of reality itself (ibid., p.5). Once again, the figure of the

monster emerges as the one that trips up a set of orders and categories sustaining an apparently well-defined world, to set in motion new forms of antagonism. In *Succulent humans # 3* (2019), for example, the figure of HorneyHoneyDew appears almost inseparably linked to the environment of plant and animal nature, and is even the object of observation of a camera at the top of a skyscraper. On being placed as an observed object figure, HorneyHoneyDew's body constitutes a projection field of what a voice-over declares: that homosexuals and extraterrestrials are part of a strategic alliance to degenerate the world[31]. Although the voice-over used in both films is the same (*Superhomosexuals* and *Succulent humans # 3*), unlike the previous one, the monster in *Succulent humans # 3* acquires the image of an alien more clearly than in *Superhomosexuals* (2016). In the last TCOET film, the axis is centred on what its title indicates: a seemingly superior version of homosexuals, a race that would enter into a strong connection and alliance with aliens, to the point of merging. Hence, as we noted earlier (in Chapter 1, section 1.8) the idea of homosexual ubiquity is central, since, among its abilities, it seems to inhabit queer ways of disintegrating and mastering temporality and spatiality; in this way, it can glide through the streets of Dubai, Beijing, La Paz or Montevideo, by sea, by train or watch from the height of a skyscraper, even through the infinite networks offered by Internet connection. That ubiquity gives the Succulent Human the ability to appear or move without being seen. Here appears the idea of a flow of bodies, visions, images that move, along with the marginal embodiment capacity of the monster, in the same way that messages and information move within the framework of the wireless city infused by telepathic correspondences (Gabrys 2009, p.57). However, this ubiquity is definitely that of a set of marginals who continually exceed their assigned space-time limits. The alliances that are forged between these spaces and between these communities, which aim to dispute the normalized order of sexual bodies and identities to make them queer, have their correspondence in the logic of queer multitudes, forging affective, erotic, sexual links to distort heteronormativity. Their bodies reappropriate and reconvert discourses such as those of biology or pornography (as can be seen in the codes of filming with the webcam or the re-appropriation of the superhomosexual's narrative).

The figure of the monster, in addition, can forge links, cross borders, move between territories unnoticed, a capacity which has strong similarities with the fantasy of perfect and

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[31] This is a parody published on the site www.hardawn.com. Stephenson Billings, "Super Elite Homosexuals Are Now Recruiting Extraterrestials into Their Ungodly Lifestyle", retrieved 14/02/20 http://harddawn.com/homosexuals-recruit-extraterrestrials

imperceptible communication that inaugurated the concept of telepathy in the nineteenth century. Gay Pearson points out that the idea of the "infiltrator", of the "rare", of the "traitor" are characteristics that can be shared both by the figure of a being from another planet and by a queer character. In this way, Pearson points out the proliferation of literature that, for example, works with the idea of an alien that can assume human form and travel without being seen among citizens and even make use of powers (such as telepathy) to communicate with those of their own species (2008, p. 21). He argues that in many of the science fiction stories that thematise the idea of the alien as an infiltrator, what is being worked on is the problem of the conversion from human to alien, which can be figured in bodily terms in parallel with the sexual act: men, captivated by the monsters' eyes, are passive victims of an alien's seductions. In this sense, the alien seduces men to submit to his will then uses their appropriated bodies to assimilate what remains of them (ibid., p.23).

The figure of the cyborg, meanwhile, also puts in crisis a set of traditions linked to science, politics, male-dominated capitalism, in particular the traditions that underlie the idea of teleological progress. For Haraway (2016) a cyborg represents a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a fictional creature (ibid., p.5). The world that is presented in *TCOET # 7* (2017), is a territory in ruins; the point of view of the one who walks it, investigates it, surveys its waste, is that of someone decidedly eccentric and whose body is presented as naked, fragile and strongly androgynous. This figure could be considered an extraterrestrial borrowed from the other two TCOET films, but also, by its way of moving, a subject halfway between human and machine, between the organic and the nonorganic, inhabiting the limit of these categories. Its movements, its experience of time and space differ from the logics that cement and organize the daily life of heterosexual normality; we could even argue that it is outside them in a time flow, as previously noted, enrolled in a queer temporality that works against the dominant arrangements of time (Halberstam 2005, Freeman 2010). As Haraway (2016) notes, science fiction shows an abundance of cyborgs – at once creatures and machines – which populate natural worlds as technicians. Alan's displacements in *Superhomosexuals* may also be linked to a series of machining devices that articulate and interface his relationships and *sexual* existence. Certain prosthetic devices, too, allow him to contact the series of viewers who watch him through webcams. Alan's ubiquity and connection with cyberspace, the urban environment, the wireless information transfer networks that circulate in the ether and

navigate in a multitude of invisible particles, establish other forms of telepathic contact in the wireless city (Gabrys, 2009). This way of thinking runs parallel with the understanding of the body as an expanded prosthesis and something beyond the organic. Following Preciado (2008), the individual body functions as a global extension of communication technologies. Through Haraway, Preciado notes that in the 21st century, the body is understood as a techno-living system, that is, the result of an irreversible implosion of the modern binaries that organized it (woman-man, animal-human, nature-culture). Even the term "life", he adds, has become archaic to identify the actors of these new technologies and indicates that the Foucaultian notion of "biopower" has been replaced by that of "techno-power" (ibid., p.44). Alan's figure becomes posthuman since, according to Hayles (1999), posthumanism privileges the informational plane over matter; the biological body appears as a prolonged substrate of life. From this perspective, the body is an original prosthesis that humans manipulate but that can be replaced by other prostheses, and it is connected with intelligent machines. In posthuman bodies there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulations, cybernetic mechanisms and biological organisms, robotic teleology and human achievements (ibid., p.3).

The cyborg figure aims to question a series of traditions linked to science and Western politics, but also to the dominant male capitalism, a tradition inscribed in a teleological topos that accompanies the idea of progress; it also, Haraway says, dismantles that tradition of appropriation of nature as a resource for the production of culture (ibid. 7). HorneyHoneyDew in *TCOET # 7* (2017) emerges in a destroyed, dystopian territory, where the hyper-productive chain of capitalism has been cut and, instead, what is found is the ruin, the remainder, the undoing of that chain. His point of view is focused on a perspective that accounts for life in a post-apocalyptic territory that links queerness with a certain form of negativity that claims, affirms, rather than rejects, concepts such as emptiness, limitation or unproductiveness. According to Halberstam (2011), this direction, of vindicating failure, may be thought of as a way to establish queerness as a form of critical positioning and political action to fabricate a different body. It is necessary to inscribe the manifestations of this as a way of articulating the *queer fault* as a strategy of escape from the threatening norms organized by disciplined behavior related to the human. The idea of failure, moreover, is accompanied by a set of negative affects such as disappointment or despair (ibid., p.3). Edelman (2004) understands queerness as the place of the death impulse of the social order,

that is, it appropriates the places of sterility, death and negativity, which straight culture has projected onto those who refuse the heteronormative codes, declaring that the condition of the queer comes to undo realization of the future, and even to undermine the ideas of social structure that underpin the projection of the future (ibid., p.4): all problems very close to those developed in the field of negative projections of science fiction such as *dystopia* or *anti-utopia*.

One of the central points about the cyborg is that, as a borderline figure, it breaks the boundaries between culture and nature to redesign them (Haraway 2016, p. 9). In this way, HorneyHoneyDew, for instance in *Succulent humans # 3* (2019), appears in connection with the natural world, where there is no distinction between living forms (nature, the animal, the human, in general, life on earth). His androgynous body, with marks of clear animality, naked, appears linked to those other forms of the living. In this sense, and to take the question to the field of life management and control from a power perspective, that is, from biopolitical logics (Foucault, 1975), I want to point out that Agamben (1998) takes up these problems by thinking about death from the representation of the *homo sacer* (a Roman legal figure that embodies the lives that can be killed without committing homicide: removable, disposable lives). The figure of *homo sacer* expands in modernity and becomes, as the author points out, an instrument of biopolitics, the "make live" of Foucault, that is, the field of decisions about the lives to be protected, the recognizable lives (*bios*) and the lives to abandon, whose deaths do not constitute crime and which Agamben relates to *zoé*, life without qualifications, without form, which is animal and plant life – place assumed by the body of HorneyHoneyDew that becomes a body to be chased, hunted and trapped in the midst of a natural environment. This figure once more upsets the boundaries between the orders of the living.

From these reflections, I have worked to account for the ways in which we can position ourselves at a border territory from which we can feasibly formulate a series of problems linked to the area of queer politics: the place of the monstrous as a fruitful place to reflect on differences and otherness, the borders between the organic and inorganic body in the figure of the cyborg, the unfolding of a queer temporality (together with sterile, dissident, twisted or failed projections of the future), the links with cyberspace, the constitution of post-subjects – humans, relationships with non-human orders of the living (animals and plants) and the

monster's removable, disposable body. Next, I will analyse the aforementioned aspects and how they operate as audiovisual political devices in three of the films that make up TCOET corpus: *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *TCOET # 7* (2017), *Succulent humans # 3* (2017).

3.3 . Superhomosexuals (2016), TCOET #7 (2017), Succulent humans # 3 (2019)

The film *Superhomosexuals* (2016), as I noted previously, is completely traversed by a complex soundtrack design that links extraterrestrials with homosexuals – a political alliance which will reappear in the film *Succulent humans # 3* (2019), exploring telepathy as a queer science fiction exercise. While we see travelling images from a car in Montevideo or a drone hovering over La Paz, we hear: "Over the last two decades, carnal degenerates have reinvented themselves as a new breed of sexual animal." And then the voice-over continues: "Super-elite homosexuals are now recruiting extraterrestrials into their ungodly lifestyle". Later, the same voice, says: "Alien contact is no longer a question of if and when, but of how much" and "The future is literally breathing down our necks and some of the most dangerous people in human history are taking advantage of that brave new world". One of the key sentences that gives rise to both the title and the direction the film takes is: "Known simply as the Super-Homosexuals, these apex predators are driven by a criminal lust to control every aspect of normal people's lives". The use of a strange text as voice-over displays what Pauleit (2012) associates with the ways in which the use of a material produced for other ends may take on deconstructive purpose. That voice-over articulates a set of ideas that embody a double effect. On the one hand, there is a parodic effect linked to its implausibility. That parodic effect intervenes directly in the configuration of the homosexual-monster-extraterrestrial that runs through the film and allows us to establish firmer bonds with the field of science fiction that resonates throughout.

The territory that is delineated in correspondence with the idea that inaugurates the sound chain is that of a superhomosexual, a being above the rest of society, one of those eccentric *queer* beings whose contact – privileged – with extraterrestrials would grant them a series of supra-human attributes. If the extraterrestrial may be thought of as a border subject, that is, inhabiting a border – at the beginning of the film, even – it is the crossing from Argentina to Uruguay[32] and this translates into a subject that is hybrid, fluid (Anzaldúa, 1987), inhabiting a liminal territory. In this way, the link between being gay and being extraterrestrial appears reinforced. The link between monstrosity and abnormality, as Foucault (2003) points out, is a

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[32] The space between Argentina and Uruguay was considered by TCOET collaborators as the liminal territory where the capacity for expanded telepathy may have been originally discovered. This hypothetical crossing was discussed by the production team during the production of *Superhomosexuals* (2016) and named "El Tragadero" (The Slot).

position that seeks disarticulation of laws (biological, legal), inhabiting the limits, which allows the fluidity of movement between time and space. As I noted before, Alan's erotic and sexual ubiquity in different places (a ship, a train, Montevideo, Dubai, La Paz or Beijing, a skyscraper, cyberspace) is directly linked to the eccentric position that permits him to belong and take part in a legion of monsters, as the voice-over points out; this relationship posits the homosexual as an infiltrator, a being capable of personifying different figures. Among its superhuman capacities are also those of moving within different spatialities and temporalities, constructed through intellectual montage of different spaces and times. Such is the case, for example, where the images come together thanks to a sound similar to that of a radio tuning of a signal: the ship – a street in Montevideo – the screen of an Internet chat – the ship – Internet – the boat – a terrace. This idea of being in many different places and times follows from what Gay Pearson (2008) points to in the idea of the homosexual and the alien as "infiltrators" (ibid., p.21), brought together under the same semantic field, that is, the use of strategies and even powers, which in this case we will relate to telepathy, to communicating and even moving from one entangled identity to another.

The uses of intellectual montage in TCOET films, whether in *diffractive* narrative structures juxtaposing different times and spaces or *freelensing* capture techniques that 'Tilt-Shift' the space of representation, figure and ground, interior and exterior, allow for the construction of a specific temporality that differs from the heteronormative temporal order. Again, the idea of the superhomosexual allows us to analyse its ubiquity as an effect of inhabiting the border, and now as a mode of defiance of modern temporal and spatial norms. This temporality, like those that appear (in different ways and styles in the other two films of this chapter) can be conceived as *queer temporality*, a non-sequential, overlapping time, articulated around gay erotic enjoyment, similar to gay *cruising*, to the play connected to sexual exchange, rather than to the heterosexual imperatives linked to the idea of reproduction and useful time (Freeman, 2010). Remote communication is highlighted, on the one hand, through the *hissing* sound that would come to figure movement through the ether. The idea of telepathy that this film displays is linked to the ideas Gabrys (2009) investigates: wireless communications, that is, the transmission of data at high speed, through "smart dust". The connections Alan makes, as the last place of his materialization, occur in a webpage where he links up with those viewers who watch his sexual spectacle. Telepathy here is an invisible form of communication that articulates the wireless city, where messages move freely through urban

ecology, an atmosphere crossed by intercommunicating machines and bodies. Here Alan moves between monster and cyborg, halfway between the human and the mechanical, the organic and the inorganic (figure 7). As Haraway points out, the cyborg, in addition to stressing the logic that articulates gender, also by its very existence questions the polarities of the public/private, so it also revolutionizes social relations (2016, p.8). Halfway through the film, the voice on the soundtrack points out: "For now, we must feel distress at the fact that we are being drowned in their abominable technologies", underscoring that the quality of these monsters is to be linked to the use of technologies promoting a *queer* posthuman order. The male voice adds: "Our civilization can feel so chaotic, contradictory and cruel. Earth's atmosphere may have even triggered unusual changes in their bodies and hormones". In this sense, Alan's body can also be understood as one that has entered a chain of prosthetic modifications through bio-technological flows. Here, Preciado's points (2008) regarding the bodily transformations that occur in the framework of the pharmacopornographic disciplinary regime are relevant. It is a body where those regimes of subjective sexual transformation, the biomolecular process (pharmaco) and the semio-technical (pornographic), coexist. Alan's corporeality (which responds to a series of modifications linked to fitness, personal care, and beauty ideals modelled in the gym), also uses cybernetic prostheses for the production of self-pornography: the webcam and the page through which it provides its services for customers are a clear example of that (ibid., pp. 34-35)[33]. It is a posthuman body, which foregrounds the order of information on the subject, and its biological substrate has been interfered with by different prosthetic devices and interfaces. *Virtuality* at times certainly houses Alan's body, something we can understand by the assemblages of images on the screen. As Hayles (1999) points out, the avatar is and is not present, just as the (Internet) user is and is not on the screen. Hayles proposes that subjectivity should be considered a multiple guarantee by the body rather than contained within it. The sexual relations that follow one another through on screen are proof of this tension between absence and presence posed by the posthuman body (ibid.p.28).

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[33] In this sense, David Halperin points out that what distinguishes a gay gym body from a heterosexual one is, in addition to its beauty, the way it is constructed as an object of desire. In this sense, it highlights that gay muscles do not mean power and are not linked to physical work; on the contrary, their elaboration, definition derives from a gym, 'job', without a goal or a practical function: they are the kind of muscles that can be generated only by the gym. Their purpose is clearly associated with an erotic transaction. In their bid for desire, they deliberately defy the visual norms of straight masculinity, which impose discretion and force them to go unnoticed. Halperin, D., (1995). *Saint Foucault: Towards A Gay Hagiography*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 116-117.

TCOET # 7 (2017) has as a post-apocalyptic atmosphere. It begins in a destroyed theatre – the real location that was used was, in fact, a theatre in the city of Leipzig. The figure that crosses the space, as a monster, might well be the figure of a cyborg or an alien (figure 8). At first, we can sense that it is an eccentric being, that is, that it comes from a territory different from the one it enters. The figure that appears on stage and scouts the abandoned space is a naked body, markedly androgynous. The space appears lit by flashes from both front and back, and the body casts its shadows on the rear of the stage, accentuating the flicker effect produced by the reduced frame rate, seven frames per second. Besides the theatre, the performer enters an office space with files, shelves, a desk, and a floor full of books, boxes, documents, magazines, etc.

As in many science fiction stories, the construction of the post-apocalyptic space steers the queer monster from heteronormative narratives of the future it is, as Edelman puts it, a way of interpreting the challenge produced by the queer to the modes of existence regimented by reproductive futurism (2004: 4). How is it possible to imagine a heteronormative world of the future seen through the eyes of a queer subject? To what extent is it possible to consider a queer world that disregards the narratives of economic success, futurity, prosperity based on the logic of capitalism, and what are the perspectives that emerge from this radical critique? It is important to think that, if it is a subject that surveys that world from a queer point of view, what it would claim is the possibility of inhabiting a territory with a repertoire of negative affects. As Halbertsam (2011) points out, the problem of failure can become a productive place to extend forms of queerness that challenge regimentation by straight life. The temporal aspect is also important for the presence of the monster, which further deepens the idea of imperfection and failure. The technical decision to record the image at 7 fps (frames per second) is part of this emphasis, deviating from normal cinema's realist standard of illusion requiring 24 fps (Elsaesser, 1990: 284). Digital hyper-real films are produced at even higher speeds (48fps, and up). The use of a lower speed than normal, indeed, much lower even than that used in the development of silent cinema (which oscillated around 16fps per second) points in the direction of the "imperfect" moving image. These images assume the technical imperfection at the time of realism's codification of the illusion of reality. This feature of reflexivity accompanies the development of experimental film (Small, 1994), since it is another formal resource placed in service to the transmission of ideas.

On the other hand, as in *TCOET # 7*, in *Succulent humans # 3* the use of motion effects queers the experience of time. The use of a few images for every second generates a sensation of temporary expansion yet, simultaneously, of a time failure (by blinking). In *Me gustas tú* as in the aerial images of *Succulent humans # 3* the passage of time is central to sharpen the feeling of unfamiliarity, estrangement. Darko Suvin (1978) has stated the crucial insight that one of the central requirements for science fiction is to maintain a balance between cognition and estrangement; its making strange of space and time are characteristic facets of the genre (Suvin 1978: 8-9 cited in Roberts 2000: 7). This effect also draws attention to the naturalization codes that the audiovisual image handles with respect to the representation of the body in motion developed, especially, by the chronophotographic studies of Marey and Muybridge[34].

As Schoonover and Galt (2016) point out, queer temporalities have the capacity to resist the certainty of a neoliberal globalized future (ibid. p, 260). In this film, time appears to be drilled, perforated, that is, disjointed, and the use of the theatre (a space that functions as a heterotope postulating other modes to measure time and space), makes explicit the dramatization of an alternative future. The two textual operations put into practice here, then, are temporal expansion and ellipsis. Both pierce time or make it strange, disarm it, formulating the presence of "deviant chronopolitics" (Freeman, 2005: 58). It is possible to think of them as demonstrations that operate against the force of chrononormativity, that is, against the ways in which, through institutional techniques, a series of temporal regulations (linked to schemes, calendars, time zones) are implemented. In this sense, Freeman rescues "hidden rhythms", forms of temporal experience that appear natural to those who privilege them (ibid, p.4). Queerness must be thought of as an effective place from which we can read another type of failure, not that of the progression of revolutionary movements, but of Western modernity and the capitalist system (ibid, p.16). Schoonover and Galt (2016) indicate that one of the central nodes of queer articulation of time is linked to slowness, expanding the temporalities that pervert the relationship with kinematic time. In that sense, the authors point out that slow cinema wastes our time, asking us to spend it unproductively, outside the narrative economies of production and reproduction. In this way, slow films are

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[34] Although Marey and Muybridge are highly distinct from one another at the level of representations of the body, movement and abstraction.

interesting to consider in queer theory debates around negative aesthetics[35], above all, for the ways in which they refuse reproductive *straight* futures (ibid, pp.276-277).

The encounter with "archaic" waste, an archeology founded on the search and the encounter with garbage, useless objects, scrabbles from multiple past times but also claims, towards the future, that things have been or may be otherwise. Trash, urban detritus, links the nakedness of the monster/extraterrestrial/posthuman being with the idea of unrecognizable lives, which exceed the sovereignty regime, linked to *zoé*. It is about abandoned life, the "no life" associated with certain forms of animality or humanity (Agamben, 2002), so that the link between this figure and garbage is almost causal. Something similar happens in *Succulent humans # 3* (2019), where the starting point is a natural environment from a bird's-eye view. We see HorneyHoneyDew by the water, between the stones, naked again. Then, a set of aerial shots (where time seems to be maimed, to lighten or dilate) tumbles us into a hypertechnological landscape. Again, on the audio stream, the same text of *Superhomosexuals* (2016) is reproduced, declaring an alliance between aliens and homosexuals: "Over the last two decades, carnal degenerates have reinvented themselves as a new breed of sexual animal. Super elite homosexuals are now recruiting extraterrestrials into their ungodly lifestyle". Here, however, the interpretation of this text does not turn the piece into the exhibition only of an idea of the homosexual as a monster or cyborg whose ubiquity allows him to inhabit different spatial and temporal planes, but to the idea of an "animal" related to the order of the monstrous. HorneyHoneyDew's body is one that is in principle the object of an observing voyeur located in the skyscraper of an ultra-modern city, and, later, by a hunter dressed in a hijab who chases him through the forest. Animalization is present not only in the very strong relationship between that body, presented as wild (figure 9), with nature, but also in the persecution that constitutes it as a disposable life. Again, as *zoé*, closer to animal and plant worlds, it has a death that does not, in itself, constitute a crime, articulated under the category of Agamben's *homo sacer* (1998). The notion behind the title "Succulent Human" provides a series of coordinates that serve to think up this set of ideas,

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[35] The concept of "negative aesthetics" refers to the field of study that opened the "Anti-Social turn" of queer studies. It is a set of academic works and areas of interest that investigate, among other problems, issues such as punk negativity, death, negative affects such as depression, mourning, anguish. To explore this field of studies see: Cvetkovich, A (2003). An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality and Lesbian Public Cultures. Durham[, NC]: Duke University Press; Edelman, L. (2005). No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive. Durham[, NC]: Duke University Press; Love, H. (2007). Feeling Backward: Loss and The Politics of Queer History. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

though in relation to the plant kingdom, another frontier that becomes porous[36]. Succulent is a term extracted from botany, a species of plants able to store large amounts of liquid in their structure and whose reproduction is very simple, since asexual. HorneyHoneyDew's figuration as a "Succulent Human" takes him to the plane of Agamben's *zoé*. In this sense, it can belong to the vegetable or animal kingdom, male or female, so it is inevitably associated with the problem of border identities, those which, for Anzaldúa can be a set of queer, *mestizo*. As Pamela Annas (1978) points out, androgyny in science fiction may function as a metaphor that structures utopian visions that allude to the transcendence of certain contradictions; in this case, it would work as a way out of the gender identities expressed in the binomial man/woman. The use of aerial shots builds a point of view that also makes the perspective strange, another modality of spatial perception without the horizon as a center, an effect also accentuated by the acceleration of frame rate and a rearrangement of the planes accentuated by an accelerated montage. The speed, the illumination, the colour, the blinking that is generated from one shot to another, but also the blurring that runs through some shots and the curvature of the image generated by an angular lens, accentuate the formal relationship between the fragile and erasable body of HorneyHoneyDew and the queer engagement with time. When this section ends and we return to the forest, the image returns to a more current register, where we even see HorneyHoneyDew run through the forest, escaping. As in the film *TCOET # 7* (2017) the final sequences bring to the fore the technique of expanded temporalities that pervert the relationship with kinematic time. Temporary perversion, its queering, is linked to the production of boredom and leads to a loss of the notion of time and a consequent freedom of thought. Again, as a program that deliberately becomes unproductive, slow cinema refuses to work with pre-established linear progressions of time (Schoonover and Galt, 2016. p. 277).

As for the collaborative aspect of the production of each film, *Superhomosexuals* (2016), as I pointed out in Chapter 1, is a piece made with Daniel Böhm and Alan, who gave the main performance and communicated with anonymous Internet users, who interacted with him in the sessions of his erotic show in cyberspace. By using prosthetic devices for reproducing his image and engaging in coded exchanges with the spectators, the performance shares the idea

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[36] Succulent Humans, in addition, was an exhibition mounted in 2018 by Dew Kim, also known as HorneyHoneyDew, under his Dew Kim identity, at Art Space Grove, Seoul, South Korea. There he incorporated, among many elements, a set of artificial plants that simulated succulence.

of telepathy articulated by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009) and on the other hand brings it closer to the posthuman order, since it inhabits the tension of being and not being present on both sides of the screen (Hayles 1999. p. 28). As I pointed out in Chapter I and II, the community built from TCOET intra-action is a fabric of precarious, momentary, queer alliances, which, in Halberstam's terms (2005), lead to queerness through strange temporalities, alternative forms, conceiving of queerness not only as a matter of sexual identity but as what Foucault understands as a way of life, a creative mode of existence, linking queer networks or queer friendships, where sexual and subcultural practices may thrive (ibid. , p.3). The alliances forged in these three films expand the understanding of community with all living creatures: life on earth, the vegetal, the border, the monstrous; following Preciado (2005) we can point out that a link is formulated very closely to what the author terms queer multitude*:* new configurations of power and knowledge that promote criticism with respect to the technologies of the body and the logics of bodily normalization, therefore, the full potential of the capacity for unstable gender identities.

3.4. Chapter conclusions

Throughout this chapter I have attempted to draw productive links between the areas of expanded telepathy, queer politics, and science fiction. To do this, I started from a set of ideas that support the problems of expanded telepathy, such as those proposed by Gabrys (2009) and Peters (1999), and then revisited the notions of ubiquity, temporal expansion, and collaboration networks explored in TCOET films. I also investigated the emergence of expanded telepathy as a form of queer cognitive emancipation, specifically by addressing the question of normative heterosexuality and the fabrication of fictionalised strategies able to articulate transitory queer communities and implement queer multitudes (Preciado, 2005).

One of the points I signalled as fundamental for researching the link between queer politics, expanded telepathy and science fiction was the category of border thinking developed by Anzaldúa (1987), a critical platform for imagining the potential of difference and otherness as a new configuration of power and knowledge. There, expanded telepathy was proposed for thinking about how one can work at a viable point of enunciation to put in tension a series of problems linked to otherness and the crossing of legal, biological, sexual, and gender boundaries. In addition, a first approach to the fabrication of a queer meta-body was made with figures such as the alien or the monster, typical of both science fiction and queer theory, since both cross barriers, unmake taxonomies, borders, identities.

I then incorporated a series of definitions of the science fiction genre (Russ 1971; Haraway 1992, 1997, 2016; Braidoti 2001; Crawford 2003; Gay Pearson 2008) that allowed direct bridges to be created with feminist and queer theories, which reinforced the relevance of science fiction as a critical platform to expand and investigate problems that particularly concern queer politics as they are enacted by expanded telepathy. The figure of the monstrous was of central importance to reformulate the ways in which it is possible to create a productive space from which to test the limits between identities, bodies, and sexualities and between the human, the animal, the natural and the posthuman. The hypothetical generic sketch of 'El Tragadero' (The Slot) was an effort to imagine this sci-fi / porno space (Figure 10).

One of the central points in 'El Tragadero' was to link the ways in which expanded telepathy could serve queer politics in realizing multiple agential and spatial possibilities all

at once. From there, I investigated the problem of queer temporality (Freeman 2010), and related to such temporal politics, three figures intimately close to science fiction: *the monster, the alien and the cyborg*. All three were defined as diffractive figures (Barad 2007, 2011, 2012) and were analysed according to their ties to queer politics. From a set of reflections on how otherness can be approached (Haraway, 1992) and from arguments established by border thinking (Anzaldúa, 1987), I worked with the notion of technologies of the monster (Halberstam, 1995) while emphasising the monster character as a locus of productivity where it is possible to imagine a perspective that takes into account the radical transformative potential of gender and sexuality. In this way, I incorporated a set of reflexions concerning the monster, the cyborg and the extraterrestrial (Haraway 1992, 1997, 2016; Halberstam 1994; Benshoff 1997; Anzaldúa 1987; Foucault 2003), examining their characteristic features and distinguishing their connection with the plane of queer politics enacted through queer expanded telepathy.

Finally, I developed an analysis of the films *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *TCOET # 7* (2017), and *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) to point out how science fiction could give birth to a *monster*, directly enacting queer theory. In *Superhomosexuals* (2016), the figure of the monster oscillates between extraterrestrial (the soundtrack being a very important presence) and cyborg (something indicated mainly through its connection with the mechanical as a form of the posthuman order contained within the "pharmacopornographic" (Preciado, 2008). The central reflections of *TCOET # 7* (2017) involves the uses of temporal effects on the formal plane, leading to the more complex intra-action and the experience of queer temporality.

The queer meta-body can be situated in the same category as the extraterrestrial, the cyborg or the nonhuman, the most important aspect being that it is an external force that attests to a devastated present. *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) delivers a complex diffraction from the nature/culture divide, and HorneyHoneyDew's body articulates a strategy similar to *TCOET # 7* over time, immersing the viewer to experience queer temporality. It is important to note, then, that this set of reflections, framed initially in what we pointed out as direct theory (Small, 1994) and reviewed in the three films that make up the corpus analysed in this chapter, emerge with more intensity within the possibilities of science fiction (and the figures that emerge from it, related to the fields of queer theory and feminism) as spatiotemporal filaments agglutinating soundtrack, montage, the explorations of time and staging. All these

ideas and formal strategies, then, create the enframing of queer expanded telepathy which, together with the approaches developed in Chapters 1 and 2, articulate the complex political technologies binding together the entire work of TCOET.
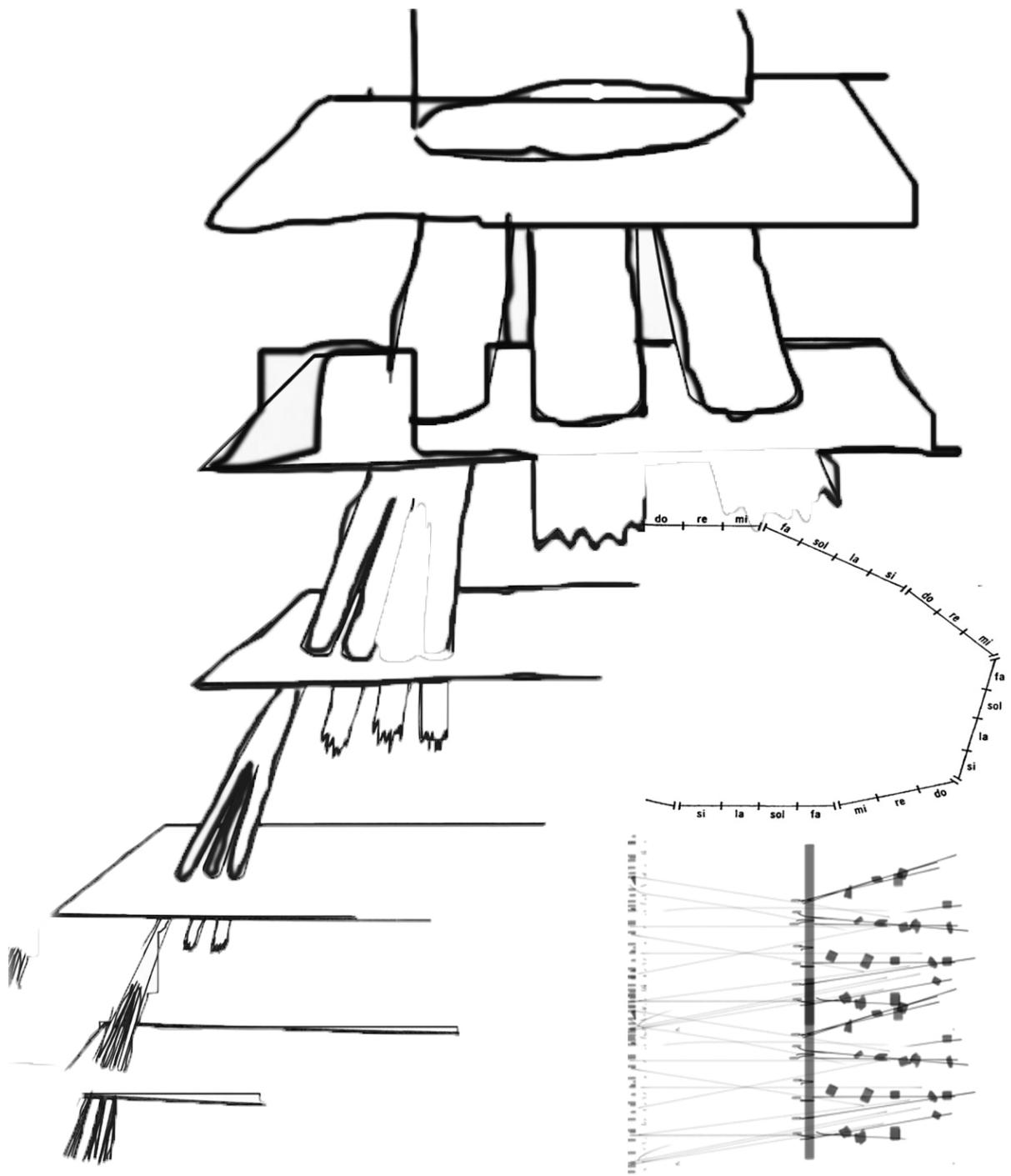
Figure 10

Chapter 4: Final conclusions: towards a theory of expanded telepathy

In this thesis, I set out to create a radical encounter between experimental film, telepathy and queer theory and politics through my filmmaking practice. The transmission of theoretical speculations, affects and critical approaches all at once, is possible at a distance, through the production and the assemblage of queer experimental audiovisual forms. I called this hypothesis *expanded telepathy*. The research of my thesis then described and analysed the corpus of my practice-as-research films with the title of TCOET. These audiovisual works are *Kokakolachickenwings* (2015), *Superhomosexuals* (2016), *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016), *Me gustas tú* (2016), *Take Me To Church* (2016), *TCOET # 7* (2017) *and Succulent humans # 3* (2019).

The central question about the efficacy of the films comprising TCOET as a platform for expanded telepathy required re-examining and reformulating the concept of telepathy. None of the definitions of telepathy offered by Thurschwell (2011), Luckhurst (2002), Peters (1999) or Gabrys (2009) questioned the notion of the human agent involved in the exchange of ideas at a distance. Nor do they incorporate specific critical dimensions such as gender, sexual identities, sexuality, pleasure, cyberspace or eroticism as relevant guidelines when investigating relationships or exchanges between different agents. They also fail to provide insight into the posthuman order. Similarly, contemporary artists associated with telepathy and working with telepathy in performance, video-performance, mail art or photography, have not thought the telepathic exchange outside bonds of blood or the intersubjective couple relationship. Nor have any of them incorporated dimensions addressed by queer politics and theory. The idea of telepathy developed in this thesis has problematised both its ontological and epistemological assumptions by directly engaging with a set of debates on the plane of sexual identities, gender and pleasure beyond borders of heterosexual normativity. Thus, the idea of *expanded telepathy* as necessarily queer telepathy has emerged more clearly throughout this research, and has amended a series of omissions and exclusions. TCOET films work in the manner of a atmosphere, as a non-binary libidinal strata that expansively articulates a particular idea of telepathy with a set of assumptions that are specific to the queer ontological turn addressed in this research.

As I developed in Chapter I, it was crucial to frame this thesis in the question of whether experimental films can work as direct theory (to actualise Edward Small's approach (1994)).

The *queer* critical potential of these films repositions the crossover between the fields of experimental film and theory proposed by Pauleit (2012) and Patenburg (2015). These approaches may help to understand the scope of the current theoretical debate. For Patenburg, the notion of "cinematic thinking" is crucial when considering audiovisual productions as theory, while Pauleit refines an experiment that allows him to think of cinema as a theory in two ways: from the viewer's perspective and from the plane of production. In relation to the potential of experimental film as a direct theory, I have delineated the ways in which resources such as intellectual montage, formal exploration of the screen, music design and experimentation, visual effects, or certain self-reflective constructs, allow experimental film to separate itself from narrative filmmaking and become a fully independent form. In addition, another central aspect of this thesis was the inscription of these experimental films in the framework of *expanded cinema*, a concept designed and explored exhaustively by Gene Youngblood (1970) and which provides a set of tools to indicate how film and video can move beyond, and disconnect from the entertainment industry, freeing cinema from its direct relationship with theatre and literature, to take it to uncharted areas of language and experience (ibid, p. 58). In Youngblood's terms, expanded cinema is a new form of moving image that embraces the communicative powers of the human in a context of the advancement of information and communication technologies. TCOET films are part of the tradition of expanded cinema, but their contribution to the debate presented here will take the notion of expansion to a specific form, one that enhances human communicative powers: a telepathic transmission of queer theoretical debates through audiovisual flows.

After moving beyond telepathy construed as a distant communication between two or more entities, guided by a *strong connection*, amorous, affective, or consanguinity, I was able to find a foundation for my work in another notion of telepathy developed by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009), and linked to a more extensive form, characteristic of intermittent and wireless connections between people or between machines. From this emerging understanding of telepathy, I have established an original approach that bypasses the strong connection link (Drinkall 2005) by engaging with telepathy as an embodied practice where messages circulate instantaneously propelled by immaterial networks, for my purposes queer ones, as envisioned in Jaime del Val's *meta-body* (2002) or Paul B. Preciado's queer multitudes (Preciado, 2005), and where a different approach to agency and causality becomes the measure (Barad, 2007; Anzaldúa, 1987; Preciado, 2003)

The concept of expanded telepathy as a necessarily queer political practice allows us to think transversally about a way of making use of telepathy beyond individual agents on the one hand, and a way of directly introducing a set of queer theoretical-critical models that are put into circulation by TCOET film practice, on the other. In this way, one of the core accomplishments of this research was to work with telepathy as an artistic device which incorporates queer politics within experimental film. Therefore, to define the politics of queer telepathy, as noted in Chapters I and II, I had to move beyond individualist metaphysics by introducing the concept of collaboration between agents that does not occur on the level of interaction, as in previous cases of art collaboration, but exerts *intra-action* (Barad, 2007). That is, the ghostly identities interfacing within TCOET films are produced in exchange and are constantly reconfigured in flow. This starting point allowed me to question the sense of causality characteristically invoked both in telepathy and in filmmaking, and in effect, to disarticulate the metaphysics of individualism that characterises film productions and a residual individualism in the case of art collaborations.

It is this onto-epistemological turn embedded in my practice-as-research that provides the basis for considering that the "individuals" involved in the production of these films materialize in intra-action (ibid.p.77), generating an expanded sense of vulnerability, knowledge and agency. In this sense, TCOET films induce a critical shift from orthodox notions such as agency, space-time, and the separation between matter and meaning: all considerations that profoundly question narrative assumptions about knowledge production and individuality. Individual intentionality, in the context of expanded telepathy, can be reworked as a dynamic feature of intra-action that does not necessarily require individual human participation. Moreover, since the dynamic features of intra-activity can be shown to include agency, knowledge and intentionality, these conditions should be construed available as a trans physical energy, on the order of, Jaime del Val's *meta-body,* as well as digital or physical forces, or more accurately, a queer *meta-body* as an iterative act of becoming (Barad 2007). The concept of spacetimemattering highlights the multiple spatiotemporalities of TCOET performativity, the continuous coming into being through entanglement and differentiation, of space, time, matter and meaning. TCOET is not an autonomous collaborative human agency but a resistance network acting as catalyst for queer relations,

yielding a sort of collectivised agency in which the organisms that are involved cannot be separated.

This mode of intra-action of momentary relational formations, has allowed me to call "queer multitudes" (Preciado 2005) all those precarious, vulnerable, unstable collective formations of momentary ties, which make this special enactment possible and are behind the production of each TCOET film. The collective formations present in TCOET films call into question constraining modern identity configurations from production roles to subjectivity, gender and sex. TCOET films seek to combat binary structures of information by liberating the capacity of the queer meta-body from these structures driven by completion and order. This process of destruction, in SM terms, is both pain and pleasure, and the resulting space of destruction is neither subject nor object. Rather, the resulting debris of this destruction is used to enframe other practices of theorizing, and these TCOET films become posthuman fragments in their trajectory.

The *crew* involved in making the films created affective pacts consubstantial with the creative process: they experimented with SM practices, in which the participants could assume the place of submission or domination and exchange those positions. The work ranged from a cappella singing to social networks of sex-dissident sociability, such as *tumblr* (the networks inhabiting the social media platform), with transmission of pornographic images in cyberspace to aliens or *bots* (as in *Superhomosexuals* (2016), with voice interpretation software, with digital platforms of geospatial visual representation such as Google earth. The films collected and presented audiovisual forms of the intentions of these intra-actions, where multiple borders such as gender, sexual identity, sexual and genital pleasure, the limits of the human, were also put into question by this particular modality of the posthuman, the alien and the monstrous.

As Halberstam (2005) posits, it is important to think about the existence of the concept of queer as a result of strange temporalities, imaginative forms and alternative life patterns, displaying queerness not as an exclusive matter of sexual identity but as what Foucault understands as a way of life and mode of existence, connecting queer networks or queer friendships, modes of alliance, sexual and subcultural practices (ibid, p.3). As I pointed out in Chapter I, these queer multitudes behind the production of TCOET films promote a heightened capacity for vulnerability, they circulate erotic links, SM pacts, relations of

anonymity, friendly complicity, they establish a particular form of sensitive exchange between agents that are provisional, frugal and articulated only for the exchange produced by the film. One of the central axes of queer expanded telepathy, in addition to refracting the field of queer politics, is linked with two specific forces these films channel: pornography and science fiction, forces I focused upon in Chapters II and III and which solidify the scaffolding of the energies that support the theoretical framework of this thesis.

The concept of border thinking (Anzaldúa, 1987) becomes central to unfold the potential of queer expanded telepathy that can resist the "mechanisms of pollution embedded in the media" (Val, J. d,, 2002). By positioning within a "ghostly causality" of a very different order[37], it is possible to invent new strategies of cognitive emancipation and resistance. Predetermined assumptions about sexuality, gender, geography, temporal, spatial and bodily borders are called into question through the porno-sci-fiction work of TCOET: gender definitions melt in the body of HorneyHoneyDew, a markedly androgynous body that is central for films like *Paradise Lost + David's Sling* (2016) or *Me gustas tú* (2016). In the case of *Superhomosexuals* (2016), national borders are diluted in the displacement of Alan (from Shanghai to Montevideo and La Paz in the same sequence), even transferred to cyberspace or run entirely in socio-sexual connections articulated on platforms like *tumblr* in *Take Me to Church* (2016). In addition to SM references, other forms in the use of the body's pleasures, decentring the genital area are also enunciated in this last film. The cyborg becomes a queer posthuman figure claiming other forms of future in *TCOET # 7* (2017). *Temporal Horizons* are also questioned as the film (through the combination of *freelensing* and a more complex and slow temporal construction) unfolds a strange time sequence that is adjacent but not parallel to those drawn by heteronormal temporality (Freeman 2010).

The practice that supports the flows of queer expanded telepathy postulates a large set of interrogations linked to the discursive framework of queer theory (Rubin 1989, Butler 1990, Warner 1993, Wittig 1992, Preciado 2008). The uses of intellectual montage, juxtaposition of images, careful sound design and modulation of the soundtrack (especially with the use of the voice-over), the repetition of images from one film to another, thematic connections, motion

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[37] The notion of ghostly causality is a reference to *Borderlands* by Barad, K. (2014). "Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart". *Parallax,* 11 July 2014, pp. 168-187. Available from: https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/tpar20/20/3?nav=tocList [Accessed 14 December 2019]

effects or the use of in-camera effects (i.e., *freelensing*), afforded the deployment and engagement, all at once, of questions, debates and *atmospheres* beyond identity and border politics but also beyond the reduction of life to cybernetic inter-action. The continuous flow of connections between the films and this queer border terrain, made up a form of resistance where these theoretical concerns could intermesh and are, in effect, one of the keys to understanding the work proposed by TCOET.

In Chapter II, I also developed a set of audiovisual strategies as pharmacopornographic devices (Preciado, 2008). The practice of pornography became a central source for problematizing the bio-political physicality of the body and its capacity for pleasure and resistance from a queer perspective. The audiovisual modes aimed to develop ways to use pornography as a strategy linked to re-designing the human body, its posthuman materiality and the norms that underlie sexual pleasure. The place that sex occupies in the chain of circulation of images in cyberspace and the bodies assembled in communication technologies underpin the repertoire of visual codes specific to the expansion of theoretical-critical questions (Comolli 1980, Dyer 1985, Williams 1989, Hunt 1996). A large part of the issues investigated in this chapter had their origin in the ways in which TCOET films could re-purpose the logic of mainstream industrial pornography through a critical re-appropriation of their formal strategies. Films that display explicit images such as *Take Me To Church* (2016) or *Me gustas tú* (2016) pointed out how a particular queer *assemblage* based on SM images open imaginative possibilities for pleasure with practices that are separated from strict genital contact (Foucault 1984, Halperin 1995). They pointed, in turn, to denaturing the strict norm that sexual pleasure be linked to genital physicality. In films like *Take Me To Church* (2016), the logic and codes of the genre were also put into crisis, for example, in the ways in which cyberspace is constituted as a navigation plane linked to the habits of looking, clicking, pointing, updating, while another navigation mode was offered, typical of an intra-action, located in another relational field (Val, J. d, 2018) less informational and predictable, which also reopened discussions about the link between the human body and the infosphere [38] and ultimately conflicting ideas about the posthuman. In this sense, we can mention the links

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[38] As philosopher of information Luciano Floridi indicates, 'infosphere is a neologism coined in the seventies. It is based on 'biosphere', a term referring to that limited region on our planet that supports life. It is also a concept that is quickly evolving' (Floridi, 2014, p. 40). It also opens a set of problematic discussions about the future of natural languages and theirs undermined position of ontological grounding within the all-encompassing emergent information framework.

between SM practices and the possibility of opening up to the radical possibility of *queer temporalities* and even loss of perception (Ricco 2002). In this thesis the uses of temporality are central to work with science fiction references (chapter III) and the queer body as a political positioning within the science fiction debate.

In Chapter III, I focused my research on science fiction and telepathy as a strategy to fabricate a queer body and set in motion new forms of radical antagonism: the monster, the cyborg and the alien. The notion of vulnerability and fluctuating border identities redefines the concept of telepathy contributed by Peters (1999) and Gabrys (2009) as extensions to the framework of the urban environment in the form of cyber-clouds, intelligent particles, signs in the framework of the wireless city traversed by instant, immediate communications that occur between audiovisual machines (ibid.p.55). Their ubiquity, the use of sensors and smart dust, allow me to imagine a more expanded form of communication at a distance where agents transmit information that transcends spatial and temporal limits; that not only conveys the planes of cyberspace but also encompasses the terrestrial, queer and fluid alien body capacities of the films. This aspect constitutes an important contribution to unmake and counteract current transhumanist approaches to *technological telepathy* that originate in corporate configuration of power and control [39].

TCOET's impact on the world derives from the potential of queer temporality (Freeman 2010) which transforms the field of queer politics. Figures of the monstrous work as a space for queer "deviant chronopolitics" by redesigning straight imperatives about temporality (ibid., pp. 58-63). These figures move in dissident territories from the heteronormative regime, outside the logic of capital accumulation and reproduction, maintaining eccentric life trajectories and existences (ibid., P.10). In this sense, the monster, the cyborg and the alien claim a cognitive space of resistance, where, sterility, death and negativity set in motion queer projections of the future (Edelman 2004). They join a network of wireless connections and put their body at the disposal of linked-up technologies (Preciado 2008), to become

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[39] In 2014 CEO Mark Zuckerberg posted in a Facebook page his vision of telepathy, where users would be able to transmit thoughts directly from one brain to another: "You're going to just be able to capture a thought, what you're thinking or feeling in kind of its ideal and perfect form in your head, and be able to share that with the world in a format where they can get instantly that meaning and thought. This embryonic technology referred by Zuckerberg was eventually included within the agenda of the F8 Lab under the brand name of *Silent Voice* (Zubillaga, L, 2015)

posthuman (Hayles 1999). Monster, cyborg and alien were understood as diffractive figures (Haraway 1992), that is, as "inappropiate/d others", which establish relational, deconstructive, nonreflective forms of otherness that formulate interference patterns: for TCOET films, diffraction allows mapping affects as in/determined impressions and not differences, replications or reproductions. In this regard, they functioned as highly condensed devices that allow for the transfer to the audiovisual plane of a set of theoretical-critical concerns specific to the field of queer theory. The three figures were thought at the same time in line with Foucault's approach (2003) who pointed out that the monster has its origin in legal limits, but also in natural ones; Halberstam (1995) related the monster to what he calls "technologies of the monstrous", which implies forms of condensation of meaning and a form of extension of modern power, reaching for knowledge. I turned to Benshoff (1997) to relate monstrosity and homosexuality and account for the ways in which they share the same semantic load and play into the same anxieties around sex and death (ibid.p.3). The figure of the monster aimed to disarrange a set of orders and categories of the world, cross borders, move invisibly between territories. Gay Pearson pointed out the relevance of thinking the idea of the alien as "infiltrator", "rare", "traitor", all characterizations that may well be paralleled with the figures of the superhomosexuals presented in the films. The borders between the forms of the living such as nature, the human and the animal are also present in films such as *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) where the body of HorneyHoneyDew appears animalized, an object of pursuit through a forest, turned into a removable body.

The figure of the alien was appropriated and clearly deployed in films such as *Succulent humans # 3* (2019) and *Superhomosexuals* (2016), where otherness emerged and was transfigured into a queer body. The soundtrack design, the juxtaposition of different spaces, scrolling through time and space at will (which can be seen in the image plane from the assembly strategies between spaces and times, between cities, territories, uses of motions effects), activates and expands the concept of information transfer developed by Gabrys (2009). One of the central features in *Superhomosexuals* is that it reaches new borders and problematises a body that is governed by modern micro-prostheses, a circuit where the pornographic image is another form of subjective control, where figurations of the posthuman order also emerge, and the body assumes a place in the semiotic-technical chain expanded and reconfigured by the pornographic image. Other TCOET films, such as TCOET # 7 (2017), create a very distinctive pornography context, where the queer performer, who could

be described as an alien, emerges into the ruins of a devastated future world within the confuted narratives of reproduction and progress. Thus, the question of queer futurity confronts the heteronormative reproductive future and the concept of futures emerges with a repertoire of negative affects (fault, failure, anguish, unease), which in turn become alternative demands in the face of advanced capitalism, a gesture to queer forms of life clearly pointed out and framed by Halberstam (2011).

The figure of the cyborg (Haraway, 2016) is the figure of a cybernetic organism, a hybrid between machine and organism that appeared in films such as *TCOET # 7* (2017). In *Superhomosexuals* (2016) the figure of Alan moves through time and space, relates to the interface of web cameras; his body navigates the terrain of the wireless city and constitutes a techno-organic body where communication technologies become body prostheses (Preciado 2008). The cyborg also afforded the deployment and recovery of theories of telepathy as forms of information transmission in the form of invisible particles projected in the urban environment (Peters 1999 and Gabrys 2009). In *Superhomosexuals*, prosthetic devices, webcams, their connectivity and relationality between sexual energy and the urban environment, return to question the body framed by advanced capitalism, where the individual anatomical body functions as a human prosthetic extension of communication technologies (Hayles 1999).

TCOET films take on a set of formal strategies (intellectual montage, motion effects, sound design, juxtaposition of agents and elements, performance, narratives, staging, *freelensing*, depth of field) to carry out what I have called *expanded telepathy* and which constitutes an expansion of the queer *meta-body* produced in the intersection of text-based language and audiovisual codes. I would like to complete this conclusion with a quote about TCOET's impact by Diego Trerotola, Director of the Buenos Aires LGBTIQ Film Festival Asterisco,

> If telepathy is a communicative property that goes beyond the senses and physical forms, the expansion they (TCOET) propose is another way of opening that intangible dimension that can only be inhabited at present by a video image which, like that which both propose, crosses the barriers of identity belonging and faces up the drift of the plural voice and body 40

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[40] The text was published in the catalogues of both the Buenos Aires Bienal de la Imagen en Movimiento (BIM) and Buenos Aires Asterisco LGBTIQ International Film Festival, year 2016.

All in all, the journey into the realm of expanded telepathy has produced unexpected collaborations, conversations and exposure to international audiences and institutions around the world, including screenings and exhibitions in South and North America, Europe and Asia[41]. TCOET has been presented among research projects at conferences and discussion panels internationally - including four editions of the Beyond Humanism Conferences and The World Congress of Philosophy in Beijing. A three-year international research project based on the posthumanist proposition of *expanded telepathy* has recently been approved by Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University in Suzhou, China. The new research project is set as a "moving image, media arts and philosophical observatory of cultural diversity that will highlight the importance of embodied expressions within a digital culture that tends to reduce them."[42].

During the process of this PhD, different questions have arisen, questions which could not be presented thoroughly in the current thesis. This was a conscious choice, so as to preserve the coherence of the main subject and to respect certain limits of time and space, while avoiding a detour into issues that do not relate so closely with TCOET research.

However, my curiosity as an artist and scholar leads me to take these questions a step further, exploring them in forms that have not been included in the body of this thesis. I hope my contribution of expanded telepathy through practice will inspire further interdisciplinary research in the new areas of immersive technology and interactive media.

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[41] For the second time TCOET has been invited to present new work at the Buenos Aires Biennial of the Moving Image (BIM) in November 2020.
[42] *The Posthuman in Translation, Transduction & Intra-action,* Research Development Fund (RDF), Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University, Suzhou, China, 2019.

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Zubillaga, L. (2015) *Approaching Telepathy from a Decolonial and Posthuman Perspective: Moving Image as Direct Theory*. Paper performance presented to the Conference "From Humanism to Post and Transhumanism" held at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, South Korea, September 2015

Appendix I Summary of work

Succulent humans # 3 - 多汁的人类 (2019), 10 mins
https://vimeo.com/272913888
password: tcoet

TCOET #7 (2017), 6 mins
https://vimeo.com/226668632
password: tcoet

Take Me To Church (2016), 8 mins
https://vimeo.com/178943013
password: tcoet

Me gustas tu (2016), 5mins
https://vimeo.com/185570587
password: tcoet

paradise lost + david's sling (2016), 5 mins
https://vimeo.com/178799349
password: tcoet

Superhomosexuals (2016), 17 mins
https://vimeo.com/181177943
password: tcoet

kokakolachickenwings (2015), 14 mins
https://vimeo.com/145719473
password: tcoet

Appendix II Articles about TCOET

2018 'Green/Gonzalez & The Church of Expanded Telepathy', Interview, Art Berlin (February)
https://www.artberlin.de/green-i-gonzalez-the-church-of-expanded-telepathy
2017 'Ungender, deprogram, urinate: improve your life with post-cyber international feminism!', Article, The Guardian (Nov)
https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/nov/24/ica-ungender-deprogram-urinate-how-post-cyber-international-feminism-can-improve-your-life
2017 'How can feminist & queer practices impact future technology?', Article, Dazed Digital (Nov)
https://www.dazeddigital.com/art-photography/gallery/24545/1/post-cyber-feminist-international
2017 Post-Cyber Feminist International: The Church of Expanded Telepathy (TCOET), audio Q&A, ICA, London (Nov)
https://archive.ica.art/whats-on/screening-church-expanded-telepathy

Appendix III TCOET Exhibitions / Screenings

2019 *Wonders Wander*, 57th Ann Arbor Film Festival, Michigan, USA
2018 *BEYOND THE MOON*, Studio Galerie, Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin, Germany
2018 *Where Does This Wood In My Hand Come From?*, CICA Museum, Gimpo, Korea
2017 *The Post-Cyber Feminist International*, ICA (Institute of Contemporary Arts), London, UK
2017 *OHNE PRICKELND SANFT*, Spike Art Quarterly, Berlin, Germany
2017 *PSi#23 "OverFlow"*, Kampnagel, Hamburg, Germany
2016 *Buenos Aires Biennial of the Moving Image (BIM)*, Centro Cultural Recoleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2016 *ASTERISCO (Festival Internacional de cine LGBTIQ)*, Cine Cosmos and Casa Brandon, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2016 *Cuerpos Proliferados, Ciclo Cuerpos*, Club Cultural Matienzo, Buenos Aires, Argentina
2016 *Playhouse (Open House London 2016),* The Residence of the Argentine Ambassador, London, UK

Appendix IV Lectures by Luciano Zubillaga on TCOET

The 24th World Congress of Philosophy, Peking University, 13-20 August 2018. Presentations: Expanded Telepathy and Intentionality in the Age of the Posthuman; Experimental Film as Philosophy

Conference on Ecology and Technology, Ewha Womens University, Seoul 15/11/17 Presentation: Sumak kawsay, ecologism and the post-capitalist society. Re-visiting Decolonial Feminism and Border Thinking trough Karen Barad's diffractive reading of Gloria Anzaldua's Borderlands, International

The 9th Beyond Humanism Conference, John Cabot University, Rome. 20-22nd July 2017

Presentation: *Homo Deus* vs ideas as hyperobjects: (re)reading mixed reality (MR) for the algoricene(1)

IV Congreso Internacional Artes En Cruce, Constelaciones Del Sentido. School of Arts, Faculty of Philosophy and Literature. University of Buenos Aires. form 06/04/16 to 09/04/16
Presentation: "Telepatia expandida y post-porno"

The 8th Beyond Humanism Conference. Universidad Complutense of Madrid, Faculty of Philosophy. 25-27th May 2016
Presentation: "Expanded telepathy revisited: teleportation, moving image and technologies of control"

The 7th Conference Beyond Humanism ("From Humanism to Post- and Transhumanism?") held at Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea, September 2015. Speaker / performer. Presentation: Approaching Telepathy from a Decolonial and Posthuman Perspective: Moving Image as Direct Theory (video documentation available upon request)

Appendix V Short Biography

Luciano Zubillaga is an international artist filmmaker based between Suzhou and Zhuhai, China. His work takes the form of cross-disciplinary research in the intersections of moving image, visual cultures and posthuman philosophy with publicly engaged practice.

He has exhibited work in museums —such as Musée du Louvre, London ICA, Whitechapel Art Gallery and the Museum of Modern Art, Buenos Aires— and film festivals — Ann Arbor, Oberhausen, BAFICI, Habana Film Festival among others.

In 2008, he was a recipient of the London Artists' Film and Video Awards (LAFVA) by Film London and the Arts Council of England and his work is part of the British Artists' Film and Video Study Collection (BAFVS).

Between 2000 and 2020, Luciano taught experimental film and art courses at several universities in the UK, including University of Kent, Goldsmiths College, University of London, University of West London, London Metropolitan University and Xi'an Jiaotong Liverpool University in Suzhou, where he was the founding Programme Director of Art, Technology and Entertainment.

The Church of Expanded Telepathy – TCOET
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