

## *NE CHANGE RIEN* (2009):

### TIME IS POLITICAL

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This article engages with a close analysis of a sequence from Pedro Costa's *Ne Change Rien* (2009) to argue that in this film, temporality expresses a political gesture that emerges from the opening of signification and the positing of an interpretative contingency. Despite less socially engaged than Costa's previous films, *Ne Change Rien* is capable of expressing a political gesture insofar as art can be political without addressing directly social representation.<sup>1</sup>

The article employs Deleuzian terminology such as "becoming," "time-image" and "the virtual" to argue how time, as an intrinsically aesthetic element of the filmic image, is thus capable of both disturbing and contributing to signification. It also finds useful the Marxist concept of "commodity fetishism" and Hannah Arendt's distinction between labor and work in order to discuss how the sequence in *Ne Change Rien* is a direct expression of labour-time to further suggest that in this sequence, image and sound are divested from a signifying outcome.

*Ne Change Rien* (2009) is a documentary film that follows singer and actress Jeanne Balibar through gigs, rehearsals, and singing lessons by means of long shots and sequences. Music is the true material object of the film. More than a film to watch, *Ne Change Rien* is a film to listen to. I would like to demonstrate this through a close study of a sequence that registers the "making" of a song. Here, the protagonist, Jeanne Balibar, struggles to find a melody, accompanied by a band member playing bass guitar outside the shot. The melody changes slightly every time she sings, allowing the viewer to witness the process through which the song is being made, despite the fact that little seems to be happening, at least in the visual field.

At the beginning of the sequence (23'08"), the guitar player is already in the shot when Balibar enters the frame and sits on the couch holding some notes on her lap. The camera is positioned quietly and still, framing Balibar in the foreground. She gets comfortable in her seat and lights up a cigarette. Then, she begins to sing, trying to find a melody with the

support of the guitar player in the background of the shot and accompanied by a bass guitar playing outside the frame. At some point (28'08"), there is a slight cut to show the bass player but the camera rapidly returns to Balibar, sitting on the couch.

Rhythm is expressed in the duration of the sequence through Balibar's murmur, which allows for sound to appear as the active element within the image, the element that exposes change. In this sense, sound works as a Deleuzian "becoming": it exposes change in an apparent sameness. Deleuze describes "becoming" by mentioning the controversial scene of the vase in Yasujiro Ozu's *Late Spring* (1949). Following a conversation between daughter and father, the scene ends with an ambiguous shot of a vase in the room where both characters are sleeping. Here, according to Deleuze, the vase is "interposed" between the daughter's smile and her tears, and that "the form of what changes does not itself change, does not pass on." It is "time itself, 'a little time in its pure state': a direct time image, which gives what changes the unchanging form in which the change is produced."<sup>2</sup>

In this sequence, time is expressed through the minimal change of Balibar's singing. Because Balibar continuously repeats the lyrics in search of a melody, it can be said that sound constitutes a direct expression of time through repetition. Sound acts as the virtual element within the visual space of the image. According to Patricia Pisters, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari "consider sound in its potential to engender all kinds of molecular becomings' because sound has the capacity to 'create territories' as much as 'deterritorialize', while also having a greater capacity to '(de)territorialize than sight'."<sup>3</sup>

Sound seems to "(de)territorialize" the static visual field which may suggest that sound is the active element for signification. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari attribute three characteristics to the musical refrain: a) to create a "calm and stable center in the heart of chaos"; b) "to draw a circle around that uncertain and fragile center, to organize a limited space"; and c) "to join with the forces of the future."<sup>4</sup> The ability to "join with the forces of the future" seems to suggest that sound, just like the out-of-field, can also contribute to leave the interpretation of the cinematic image open.

The sequence also conveys a moment of stasis. Here, the camera remains still throughout the shot, registering only Balibar's singing of the lyrics for a long period of time. The stillness of the shot supports time thus generating a moment of stasis in which signification is allowed to come forth from the recognition of sound through repetition. According to Deleuze, "the mind has a memory or acquires habits, it is capable of forming

concepts in general and of drawing something new, of subtracting something new from the repetition that it contemplates.”<sup>5</sup> Drawing from Deleuze to analyze Costa’s sequence, it could be said that memory is what determines our perception of what is being changed insofar as it enables the viewer to add new elements to every image. Consequently, the audience is able to recognize the invisible but audible transformation of the song pushing the melody to a gradual crescendo.<sup>6</sup>

Time enables the viewer to recognize how the song initially was. In these circumstances, the narrative is constituted through the actual experience of time. Time as duration opens the possibility of meaning to emerge. But meaning is still contingent. While signification remains open, never being completely disclosed, it is up to the viewer to choose to participate, or not, in the production of meaning. The entire film seems to be based upon this procedure: the scenes and sequences registering the rehearsals and the gigs lack a coherent and conclusive progression. In other words, the audience’s hope to identify a progressive narrative is always frustrated in *Ne Change Rien*, as the film is shown as a collection of fragments with no linear temporality.<sup>7</sup>

The combination of the static position of the camera with the 15 minutes duration of our initial sequence thus exposes the slow-moving but ongoing flowing of the melody. The duration of the shot is extended to the limit as if time was stretched, almost frozen. This is what creates a moment of suspension. But suspension creates another problem; it challenges the viewer’s ability to follow the film. In other words, the audience has to rely on the audible elements in order to compensate for the fixity of the image where nothing seems to be happening and no meaning seems to be given. This is what allows a mental image to emerge.

Cinema always suggests mental images. However, this procedure seems to be particularly forceful in this sequence, as the mental image emerges from a conceptual break between the visual and audible, triggered by the exposure of the passage of time through the combination of active sound and static framing. So, the flowing of the song’s melody exposes the passage of time within the stillness of the frame in which characters remain seated and nothing within the visual field seems to happen.

The viewer is allowed to transcend the visual field by means of the persistence of a virtual element, posited within the relationship between the visual and sound elements of the filmic image, and from which a mental image can emerge. The sequence in turn plays

with the disjunction between those same visual and the sound elements of the image, where we can recognize what Deleuze understands as the “part of inexhaustible possibility that constitutes the unbearable, the intolerable, the visionary’s part”<sup>8</sup> — or, as I understand, the encounter with thought that grants the opportunity for an active construction of meaning.

What seems to be intolerable is the encounter with thought, or with what cannot be thought, as they appear to be intrinsic. Therefore, the intolerable is nothing less than the frustration felt through the encounter with an image that seems to adjourn a conclusive and meaningful outcome. Meaning seems to be absent. Yet, rather than absent, meaning is non-actualized, as it was left open and inconclusive. In this sense, the virtual is the element that remains undisclosed. However, if the viewer is willing to engage with the interpretation of the image, then, a mental image may emerge from this encounter through which the virtual image is, in turn, actualized.

According to Deleuze, the virtual image is implicit within the duration of the shot, and / or within the temporal dimension of the image. Moreover, it is from the articulation between the virtual and the actual image that the mental image arises to regulate the narrative. This image is not visible but thought of in an attempt at signification thus, it is actualized in the mind of the viewer.

In the case of the sequence, sound is repeated within the duration of the shot to carry the difference that serves to deploy meaning. As a result, Costa’s film seems to deploy an intrinsic constituent of cinema — time — in order to assert meaning through the opening and constant becoming of the image, something which is expressed in the constitutive changing of the song. Time offers the opening of a system of interpretation through which we can attempt to make sense of what we see. Moreover, the passage of time is not only expressed in the duration of the shot but also in the evolving creation of the song.

In the film, the audible change that indicates time is expressed in Balibar’s repetitive murmur. The viewer is aware of the passage of time but not in the same way as when seeing an expanded time/overlapped frame in a film sequence.<sup>9</sup> In the latter, a cinematic gimmick attempts to represent the passage of time through an “indirect representation of time.”<sup>10</sup> In Balibar’s sequence, by contrast, time is experienced and felt *through the actual duration of the scene and through the repetition of her singing*, something that constitutes a “direct time-image.”<sup>11</sup>

Time is an intrinsic constituent of cinema, unarguably a *raw material* through which meaning comes forth as an ongoing “becoming” insofar as the duration of the shot/scene/

sequence regulates the narrative. Moreover, through repetition, time seems to offer a very peculiar way of producing meaning as, by not providing it in the form of information, it frustrates and challenges understanding. This procedure underpins a co-operation between the audience and the director in the production of meaning itself, but only insofar as the audience is willing to participate, something which already expresses a contingency.

In *Ne Change Rien*, repetition asserts a difference in the melody each time Balibar murmurs the song. In other words, difference is established by the repetition of sound. On the other hand, as the different scenes in the film seem disconnected and randomly related with no sense of a “before” and “after,” one gets the impression that montage is circular. In this sense, both past and present are juxtaposed and the film appears to have no beginning or end. And yet, repetition introduces difference into this circularity, which avoids a feeling of sameness because in the sequence, there is always something new that can be added, which suggests that signification is not closed. In this sense, what seems to occur is not an attempt to ‘represent’ repetition but to set in motion an operation through which meaning is deployed through the recognition of repetitive structural elements. Hence, it is through repetition that a new element is introduced in the crescendo of the song. Balibar’s murmuring of the melody delivers this new element that is added to the last in an attempt to avoid the closure of signification and at the same time, to pose its constant formulation.

In addition to the previously analysed sequence, *Ne Change Rien* is composed of several other rehearsals in which we can see Balibar in opera lessons, rehearsing a play on stage, playing songs with her band in the backstage between gigs, and recording songs in the studio. The performance of the gig is not presented as the outcome of the rehearsal as montage refuses to propose a causal relationship between scenes and/or sequences. On the other hand, the equivalence between performance and rehearsal shows Costa’s ongoing concerns with artistic production. For that reason, this section will analyse the rehearsal in order to argue that this is a crucial element through which the film seems to put a critique of artistic production forward. My analysis uses Belgian artist Francis Alÿs’s *Politics of Rehearsal* (2005) to start arguing that the problematization of production may be seen as a key element of Costa’s *Ne Change Rien*.

Francis Alÿs frequently uses a repetitive structure within his work which, again, exposes the creative procedure and cancels the presentation of a pre-determined artistic outcome. In this way, his work not only seems to accept but indeed actively deploys the failure of the

artistic outcome. In his film, *Politics of Rehearsal*, we are shown an exhaustive rehearsing of a stripper taking off her clothes on a stage, while we hear the performance of a soprano and a pianist in the background. The film also comprises a voiceover reading of a text written by Aljés's frequent collaborator Rafael Ortega in which he relates the stripper's rehearsing to "Latin America's ambiguous affair with Modernity."

The film opens with found footage of Harry S. Truman's presidential inauguration speech in 1949, in which Truman highlights the necessity for capital investment in underdeveloped nations so as to promote continuous and prosperous economical growth in all nations of the world. For Ortega, Truman's speech signals the beginning of the Cold War. Moreover, the found footage serves to introduce the discourse of a pseudo-economic recovery in Latin American history. By contrast, the rehearsed performance of the stripper stands as a metaphor for modern progress insofar as the stripper teases the viewer with the promise of taking her clothes off while at the same time, always adjourning a conclusive outcome.

In this sense, Ortega claims that "modernity is pornographic" because it aims to maintain a source of excitement without providing a real and prosperous economic outcome.<sup>12</sup> As a result, the promise of progress is always adjourned. Thus, in Aljés's film, the rehearsal is a metaphorical expression of a history that is repeated without ever coming into being. The problem, for Ortega, is that progress is highly deceptive because it divides the economic structure of the world into developed and underdeveloped countries without questioning the social system.

The function of the rehearsal, in Aljés's film as much as in Costa's, is related to temporality because it expresses the constant deferral of an outcome. In this way, according to Ortega, the rehearsal exposes the process of creative production, distinguishing the "time of production" from the "time of the product."<sup>13</sup> It thus seems that the rehearsal uncovers the intrinsic relationship between labor and time. This is why Ortega uses Hannah Arendt's distinction between work and labour us, in *Politics of Rehearsal* to highlight the meaning of the rehearsal as an expression of labour rather than work.

In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt proposes an analysis of three forms of human activity — labor, work, and action. For Arendt, "the human condition of labor" is equivalent to "life itself"; while work "provides an 'artificial' world of things" in contrast with natural surroundings; and action "corresponds to the human condition of plurality," being the "only

activity that goes directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter."<sup>14</sup> Labor assures "the life of species' through necessity, while work relates to the permanence and durability of the 'fleeting character of human life,' and action corresponds to 'the condition of remembrance and history'."<sup>15</sup>

Arendt thus sees labor as being related to the biological cycle of human life, and this distinguishes from work insofar as it is not dependent on its outcome, on its result. Arendt argues that the "'word' labor, understood as a noun, never designates the finished product, the result of labouring."<sup>16</sup> Only work is related to an outcome, and to the final result that is materialized in the product. On the other hand, because labour is conceived within the biological cycle of human life, it is also related to consumption. Arendt contends that labour and consumption "are devouring processes that seize and destroy matter, and the 'work' done by labor upon its material is only the preparation for its eventual destruction," adding that more specifically the "destructive, devouring aspect of the labouring activity, to be sure, is visible only from the standpoint of the world and in distinction from work."<sup>17</sup>

Still following Arendt's words close, labor, according to her, is a "constant, unending fight against the processes of growth and decay."<sup>18</sup> Labor endures "and what makes the effort painful is not danger but its relentless repetition."<sup>19</sup> Arendt's distinction between labour and work is radically different from that of Karl Marx, as she reminds us: "Marx insists that the labor process comes to an end in the product." However, she argues that Marx "forgets his own definition of this process as the 'metabolism between man and nature' into which the product is immediately 'incorporated,' consumed, and annihilated by the body's life process."<sup>20</sup> So, if the product of labour becomes immediately "incorporated," it is not materialized. Hence, it is not work — the outcome of labour.

In accordance with Arendt's argument, Ortega contends that the rehearsal stands for "the aesthetic of labour,"<sup>21</sup> which leads him to conclude that temporality is made evident in the process of the rehearsal. In other words, the effort and time both of both the rehearsal and labour cannot be reduced to their final product. In this sense, in *Politics of Rehearsal*, the figure of the stripper could be said to suggest the teasing of an outcome. It stands as a metaphor for modern progress and its frustrated accomplishment of what had been envisioned as a result of its processes of labour.

In Costa's *Ne Change Rien*, the rehearsal sequence is a direct expression of artistic labouring, and one which infinitely postpones and frustrates the outcome of the melody.

Thus, through Arendt's definition of labour, we can argue that the sequence seems to endure a "relentless repetition" expressed in Balibar's attempt to reach a melody without ever delivering the result of a song. In this sense, her labour never becomes work.

As we have seen in *Ne Change Rien*, the passage of time is expressed through the repetitive process through which the melody of the song is looked for. Time exposes not only the slight change of the melody but also the failure of a final outcome as Balibar never manages to complete the song. She is incapable of reaching the final form of the song. A tension is created by the fact that the scene is over before the song is completed; and for that reason, the tension is never dissolved.

Because the film is made of several rehearsals, Costa seems more interested in the process of "making" music rather than in final results, such as concert performs. However, when interviewed, Costa has argued that the concert is always the goal of the musician, in the same way the film director always wants to exhibit the film.<sup>22</sup> However, I argue that Costa enjoys a reflexive use of the formal procedures of the image, thus it is not surprising that *Ne Change Rien* dedicates so much time to the labouring of music. After all, Costa seems to be permanently dwelling with the labouring of filmmaking himself.

As we have seen, the rehearsal exposes the time necessary to produce something, refusing the outcome of a pre-determined artistic object. In this sense, it is always an inconclusive practice, and the decision to show it shows a preference for production rather than the final product. Despite Balibar's attempt to find the melody of the song, this will never be completed. The exhaustive repetition of her singing reveals time and the continuous working-through of artistic production. It thus seems clear that what allows for the rehearsal sequence to expose creative is to be found in the reflexive procedures of filmmaking. But in order to highlight further the relationship between time and production, the following section engages with the Marxist theory of "commodity fetishism."

As David Harvey puts it, through his reading of Marx's *Capital*, human labour is objectified, which makes the value of human labour abstract. We cannot find, for instance, the value of a table internally but only in relation to something else insofar as the commodity disavows the labour time necessary to produce an object. Due to the dimension of the market, it is impossible to expose the social relations implied in the production of things.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, there is nothing hidden behind the surface of appearance — as they appear, or as they really are. According to Harvey, we just need to look closely to the underlying structure



that produces these appearances insofar as they are composed of social relations. In Harvey's reading of Marx, value is abstract but that it nevertheless objectifies social relations. Social relations are then understood as immaterial but they exist and subsist and despite being invisible in the commodity form, their labour is nonetheless objectified in that same commodity form.<sup>24</sup>

Through the reading of Marx, we can return to the analysis of the rehearsal sequence. As was suggested previously, if we follow Arendt's distinction between labour and work, the sequence seems to expose the process of labouring. This process is expressed in Balibar's murmuring, where the passage of time is exposed. On one hand, according to Arendt's argument, we can argue that because it depicts the incomplete process of song making, the sequence evokes the process of labour rather than work. In this sense, Costa seems to grasp the "making" of the song rather than its result. On the other hand, if we look at the sequence through Marx's theory, then we can also claim that by exposing the process of labour, Costa manages to reject the objectification of social relations and the reduction of labour time to its final product.

In this context, it can be argued that the scene's political gesture does not depend on any particular social representation as its subject matter. By showing the necessary time to produce a song, Costa seems to refute the objectification of human labour when exposing the labouring of the artistic object, rather than its outcome — the completed song. In this sense, Costa exposes the time of production rather than the result of labour, or in Arendt's terms, of work, also rejecting the possibility of an interpretative outcome.

In order to further develop the argument that the duration of the sequence seems to suggest an interpretative contingency that is political, I will engage with Franco Berardi Bifo's theory on immaterial labour where he correlates Marx's theory with the accumulation of time. Bifo argues that in labour it is not only social relations that are materialized in "things and/or goods," but that time is also objectified.<sup>25</sup> However, as Bifo argues, the artistic object seems to pose a different problem. This is because while before it was easier to determine the value of material labour according to the time needed to produce it; it is far more difficult to "decide how much time is needed to produce an idea, a project, a style, a creation."<sup>26</sup> According to Bifo, artistic production becomes semiotic and "the relationship between time, work and value" evaporates, "melting into air."<sup>27</sup> In this sense, determining the necessary time to produce immaterial creative labour is a far more complex process.

The sequence in *Ne Change Rien* seems to be a good example of the argument proposed above, since Costa appears to cancel the delivery of the result by preferring to emphasize the duration and the repetitive and exhaustive process required in order to produce a song, an idea and/or a semiotic good.

Moreover, according to Bifo, nowadays we seem to be overloaded by a production of semiotic goods, of signs and words that produce less and less meaning. Because the “brain functions in time,” it seems that more time is needed to fully give attention to the overloaded and accelerated circulation of information.<sup>28</sup> Thus, if more information is required to circulate while also providing “less meaning,” Bifo concludes that an “inflation of meaning” seems to occur.<sup>29</sup> According to his argument, if you are incapable of “keeping up” with the overloaded information that is provided, you will need “someone who makes things easy for you.”<sup>30</sup> As a result, meaning becomes a problem of time.

If more information seems to be circulating in a faster pace of time, while our brains are less capable of consuming all the information provided, this means we cannot grasp the meaning of all semiotic goods in circulation. Costa’s film can thus be seen as an overt reaction against this state of things. Costa seems to articulate duration in order to restrain the excessive delivery of overloaded information, while in the same move he refuses to provide meaning as such; instead, exposes the process of how meaning comes to being.

Put differently, access to and circulation of information requires time, but time does not seem to be sufficient once information is overloaded and distributed at a rapid pace. In this sense, the emergence of the “time-image” within modern cinema can be seen as a repudiation of not only linear time but also the inflation of meaning. The time-image calls for contemplation rather than action, it provides seers not agents, and in doing so it disrupts the sensory-motor schema which regulates “homogenous space and time.”<sup>31</sup> It presupposes the opening of meaning insofar as images and scenes are not connected through a cause and effect quality, refusing a greater outcome. In this sense, the use of duration and temporality in modern cinema should be seen as a counteraction of the easy, fast and excessive circulation of semiotic goods.

Costa seems to frustrate signification but he also invites the viewer to either “enter or close the door of the film.”<sup>32</sup> Accordingly, the viewer is confronted with a difficult choice because in order to enter the film, he or she is required to invest time: nothing is going to be delivered “on a platter” as information is not easily facilitated. Pedro Costa’s long rarefied

shots and sequences thus de-accelerate the delivery of information, which at first seems to prevent the circulation of meaning. Because of this, to consumers of fast and overload information, his cinema may offer a rather difficult experience.

In *Ne Change Rien*, Costa shows the labouring of the song, exposing the time invested in artistic production but also the process through which film signification itself comes to being. If meaning is the “surplus value of art,”<sup>33</sup> the artistic object is that specific kind of commodity that is capable of exposing the process of its own production through reflexivity. As we have seen, Balibar’s singing expresses labour time and because the sequence never presents the complete song, implying that meaning is restrained and impossible to freely circulate at a fast pace.

The impossibility of the circulation of meaning is reflected in the reception of Costa’s films. For instance, *Colossal Youth* (2006) was once described as “anti-cinema.”<sup>34</sup> Yet Costa’s reflexivity transforms cinema into both the subject and object of his films. For that reason, it can be said that this “anti-cinema” label stems from the difficulties of engagement that viewers may endure in the context of a work that resists commodification by rejecting the closure of signification. In other words, Costa’s cinema requires the viewer to endure long scenes and sequences that provide little information. Thus, if meaning is a commodity and appears to be fleeting, and not materialized, the film turns into an object of difficult consumption.

Reflexive as it may be, Costa’s films deploy the medium’s formal procedures to suggest an interpretative contingency rather than just attempting to expose a reality behind the camera. Reflexivity, according to Deleuze, is introduced through the crises of the action-image, and found, for instance, in the film within the film, expressing “this infernal circuit between image and money, this inflation which time puts into exchange, this overwhelming rise.”<sup>35</sup> If, according to Marx, exchange value is always in constant motion and value is generated through the relationship between two commodities; then to prevent an equivalence and/or a correspondence between the two, is to reject the logic of the commodity. Moreover, it is in this sense that Deleuze contends that “if it is true that movement maintains a set of exchanges or an equivalence, a symmetry as an invariant, time is by nature the conspiracy of unequal change or the impossibility of an equivalence.”<sup>36</sup> Hence, by following Deleuze’s argument, while also returning to “Bifo”’s notion of inflation of meaning, my idea is to argue that in *Ne Change Rien*, time seems to frustrate this inflation

by challenging semiotic consumption, highlighting that time, as an intrinsic element of the cinematic medium, is capable of simultaneously frustrating and deploying meaning. It can be further argued that Costa's articulation of time and duration suggests a non-equivalence that aims to slow down the constant relational movement from one scene to the other and between the elements of the image and their meaning.

In relation to Costa's film, I would like to conclude by suggesting that when it becomes independent of the movement of montage — and its tendency to organize scenes according to contiguity and/or antagonism — the filmic image is able to produce moments of stasis that reject the constant flux of signification. In this case, temporality refuses continuity in order to frustrate meaning. If information is not provided, meaning is stopped from circulating, implying a counter-movement to what "Bifo" describes as the inflation of meaning. Instead of presenting a sequence or scene in which the audience is capable of having full access to meaning, Costa provides more time for the audience to engage with speculative thoughts about what they see.

In this sense, *Ne Change Rien's* sequence exposes the moment of production and the required labour time by keeping the song incomplete. The viewer thus remains incapable of determining value as far as unable to determine the outcome of artistic production. More specifically, time is extended within the image in order to stop the circulation and the equivalent exchange of meaning. For that reason, the viewer is required to participate actively in the construction of meaning as the latter is never fully provided.

To conclude, *Ne Change Rien* expresses a critical thinking upon artistic production. On one hand, its critique is expressed in the labouring of the artistic production of the song through Balibar's melody. As we know, however, the song (the object of meaning) is never completed, which is what makes it impossible to circulate. And on the other hand, this critique is also expressed in the way in which Costa uses the formal procedures of the image in a reflexive gesture that exposes time as the matter of film.

Although lacking any kind of reference to social representation, the film implies a political gesture that is put forward through the problematization of the relation between time and production, when the "making" of the creative process is exposed. The artistic object is able to uncover the process of labour through reflexivity. In the sequence I have been analysing, this takes place by exposing the necessary time to produce a song in particular and meaning in general. This is what makes time political: if the time of

production is exposed, human labour cannot be objectified, and if meaning is not entirely disclosed it is also stopped from circulating as any other commodity. In this respect, I conclude that *Ne Change Rien* expresses a political gesture without addressing the issue of social representation but rather by deploying time and duration in order to suggest the non-equivalence of images and their meaning.

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1. Among other films, Costa filmed a trilogy dedicated to the slums of Fontainhas in the periphery of Lisbon, *Bones (Ossos, 1997)*, *In Vanda's Room (No Quarto de Vanda, 2000)* and *Colossal Youth (Juventude em Marcha, 2006)* and three short films also shot in the slums of Fontainhas — *Tarrafal (Tarrafal, 2007)*, *The Rabbit Hunters (A Caça ao Coelho, 2007)* and *Our Man (O Nosso Homem, 2010)*. Due to the subject of these films, his work can be understood as addressing social representation.

2. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: The Athlone Press, 1989), 16.

3. Patricia Pisters, *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 188.

4. Deleuze and Guattari Félix, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (2004), 343.

5. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (London: Continuum, 1994), 16.

6. The viewer recognizes the changing of the song as a witness to the loss of what was once and thus recover from it with something new. Watching the moving image partly consists of a process of loss and recovery as it unfolds through the shifting movement from one frame to the other. In this sense, memory provides for recognition in repetition.

7. Montage connects scenes and sequences of gigs, rehearsals and/or musicians playing a song backstage without articulating a progressive narrative. The film opens with a scene of Balibar on stage; and throughout the film, we return to performances during gigs, rehearsals, recording sessions and jamming sessions without a gradual progression of the narrative or a cause and effect relation between these different scenes/sequences.

8. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 19.

9. The expansion of time can be accomplished by intercutting a series of shots, or by filming the action from different angles and editing them together. This technique may also be used to stretch time, and to exaggerate the passage of time when combined with slow motion.

10. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 34.

11. *Ibid.*, 16.

12. Alÿs, *The Politics of Rehearsal*.

13. Alÿs, *The Politics of Rehearsal*.

14. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd edn. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 7.

15. *Ibid.*, 8.

16. *Ibid.*, 80.

17. *Ibid.*, 100.

18. *Ibid.*, 100.

19. *Ibid.*, 101.

20. *Ibid.*, 103.

21. Alÿs, *The Politics of Rehearsal*.

22. Pedro Costa, personal interview, London, 7 Oct. 2012.

23. David Harvey, "Reading Marx's *Capital* Vol. I - Class 1, Introduction," *Reading Marx's "Capital" Volume I with David Harvey*, <http://davidharvey.org/reading-capital/> (accessed Jun. 2011).

24. *Ibid.*

25. Franco Berardi Bifo, "Time, Acceleration, and Violence," *E-Flux* 27 (2011): 1, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/time-acceleration-and-violence/> (accessed Aug. 2012).

26. *Ibid.*, 2.

27. *Ibid.*, 2.

28. Ibid., 6.

29. Ibid., 6.

30. Ibid., 7.

31. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson e Barbara Habberjam, (London: The Anthlone Press, 1986), 17.

32. Pedro Costa, "Seminar at The Film School of Tokyo," trans. M. Downing Roberts, in *Pedro Costa Film Retrospective in Sendai 2005*, ed. Ogama Naoto (Sendai: Sendai Mediatheque, 2005), 134 .

33. In his book, *On (Surplus) Value in Art* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008), Diedrich Diederichsen engages with Marx's theory in order to come up with a proposition concerning the 'surplus-value' of art. Diederichsen, however, does not recognize meaning as the surplus value of art. Instead, he argues that indexicality is in relation to the aura of the art work, which in turn, is related to value. Nevertheless, he proposes that "value is always (at least partly) thematically embedded as content in a specifically concealed manner, since artworks offer themselves as fetishes" (45). Thus, I offer a distinct re-interpretation of what Diederichsen understands by "surplus-value of ar" in order to further develop my argument in relation to Costa's films.

34. James Quandt, "Still Lives," in *Cem Mil Cigarros – Os Filmes de Pedro Costa*, ed. Ricardo Matos Cabo (Lisboa: Orfeu Negro, 2009), 39.

35. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 76.

36. Ibid., 75.