Images to Disarm Minds:

An Exploration of the “Pasolini en Medellín” Experience in Colombia

A thesis presented to

the faculty of

the Center for International Studies of Ohio University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts

Camilo E. Perez Quintero

May 2013

© 2013 Camilo E. Perez Quintero. All Rights Reserved.
This thesis titled
Images to Disarm Minds:
An Exploration of the “Pasolini en Medellín” Experience in Colombia

by

CAMILO E. PEREZ QUINTERO

has been approved for
the Center for International Studies by

Jenny Nelson
Professor of English

Lawrence Wood
Director, Communication and Development Studies

Ming Li
Interim Executive Director, Center for International Studies
ABSTRACT

PEREZ QUINTERO, CAMILO, E., M.A., May 2013, Communication and Development Studies

Images to Disarm Minds: An Exploration of the “Pasolini en Medellín” Experience in Colombia

Director of Thesis: Jenny Nelson

Citizen's media in Colombia face a great challenge as they aim to reconstitute the symbolic universes of communities by helping to re-appropriate public spheres, recodify the meanings of everyday life, reinvent their own narratives, and in sum, re-signify ‘realities’ in the midst of violence.

“Pasolini en Medellín” is a nonprofit organization located in Medellin, Colombia that works with young people from peripheral neighborhoods, offering a creative Lab to engage in processes of creative ethnography, collaborative creation and collective action that can strengthen individuals and local communities by allowing them to explore, narrate and re-signify their own realities.

This ethnographic research explores the case study of Pasolini en Medellin experience in Colombia in order to try to describe how they do what they do, and translate their methodological approach into shared knowledge. By doing so, this research explores directly and indirectly, the roles that citizen’s media practices may have in contexts of violence.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank to my family for being the flame that warm my existence, to my beloved mother Silvia Quintero, always kind and wise, for all her love and support, to my wife Erika Marken, my love, my confident and first critic, for her love and immense sacrifices, for understand me better than I do, to my daughters Isabella and Violeta always source of joy and hope. To my aunts: Elena, Cecilia and Patricia, to my uncles: Carlos and Javier (who planted the virus of cinema in my mind) and to my cousins: Claudia, Lucas, Manuela, Sara and Johana. And to Mauricio who found the wings of Colombia.

I want to thank as well to all the Pasolinis, the old ones and the new ones, for being such an inspiration, a support and a spark on my life, for their ability to trigger new ways of seeing. Many thanks and good frames to German Arango (Luckas Perro), Cesar Tapias (Salome Tales), Leonardo Catano, Ana Maria Munoz, Duvan Londoño, Diego Gomez (Diegostro), Diego Marin (B-zuka), Andres Garcia, Alexandra Barrera, Sandra Benitez, Eleison Figueroa, Elsy Galeano, David Medina, Carlos Santos, Erik baniz, Laura Rodriguez, Luis Eduardo Loaiza and to all the ones I miss or haven’t meet yet, because this Pasolini’s family keeps growing.

In Ohio University to all my classmates from whom I have learned so much; and many thanks for all their support and guidance to Jenny Nelson, Eric Williams, Marina Peterson, Karen Greiner, David Mould, Yusuf Kalyango, and Lawrence Wood.
Special thanks to Jair Vega, Rafael Obregon, Clemencia Rodriguez, Arvind Singhal, Mellissa Brough, Angela Garces, Vladimir Montoya, Natalia Quiceno, Taita Romualdo.

And why not, also to my recently found half-brothers and sisters; especially Maria Paulina with whom I expect to find a creative brotherhood someday.

And to all the cigarettes that fell during this research process, especially to the Pielroja in prose that Diego Gomez send me in times of crisis “that box painted with a redskin Indian, that dispenses cigarettes one by one, as suicide needles, weaving stitch by stitch, the sweet and slow suicide of always.”
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface: Notes From the Rewriting Process</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Read this Text: Map of Instructions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmography</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Formal Introduction</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Literature Review</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myself as a Source</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Sources</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Sources</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Analysis of Information</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Introduction in the Mirror</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Warning, This is a Footnote</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto-interview Exercise</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. 01/Again, The Violence (S)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine Yourself (1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Again, The Violence (S)</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec 02/The Need For Narratives</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine Yourself (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Need For Narratives</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. 03/The Citizens’ Media Approach</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagine Yourself (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Citizens’ Media Approach</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Need For Shared Knowledge</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>How to Read Hopscotch</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PEM logo</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Literature Review Map</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Left: PEM Members 2011, Right: PEM Members 2013</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Left: Pasolini Members Interviewed; Right: Pasolini’s Participants Interviewed</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Self portrait. Camilo perez, 2012</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S video “Recordar es Vivir”</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S video “Recordar es Vivir”</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S VIDEO “Juan Pepito”</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S VIDEO “Juan Pepito”</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Frames of PEM’S video-clip “Medellin”</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Polaroid series “Destierro” by Juan C. Estrada</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S VIDEO “reportando sucesos”</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S VIDEO “reportando sucesos”</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S VIDEO “reportando sucesos”</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>“Fear”. The Silent Screams Project (2013) by Maria Paulina Perez</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S video “El Baul”</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S video “El Baul”</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S video “El Baul”</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Frames from PEM’S video “El Baul”</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Vulture Flight, PEM, 2003</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Vulture Flight, PEM, 2003</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>“reframing my head” by camilo perez</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Participants visualizing a movie at PEM’s workshops, 2011</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Rediscovering the neighborhood, PEM workshop 2011</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Field diary example, 2003</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 27. Camilo Estrada, Rediscovering the family photo album. 82
Figure 28. The PEM’s Cardboard frame Exercises. 2003-2012. 85
Figure 29. Polaroid exercises. 87
Figure 30. Polaroid exercises, PEM 2009. 88
Figure 31. Drawing a map, in David Medina Field Diary. 2004. 92
Figure 32. Collective map of Santa Fe de Antioquia. PEM’s workshop 2012. 95
Figure 33. Collective map of the neighborhood “esfuerzos de paz n2”. 96
Figure 34. PEM’s Script Kitchen, 2011. 98
Figure 35. Pasolini en Medellín’s meeting. 2013. 99
Figure 36. Participants PEM’s workshop (2010-2011). 102
Figure 37. Production plan for the video “hunting tourists” (2012). 108
Figure 38: Left: behind the scenes “la real academia” Right: “tejidos de memoria” 109
Figure 39. Left Behind the scenes of “Sonson a Symphony” Right “el anillo”. 110
Figure 40. Left: Participants performing in the video clip “Juan Pepito” (2009); Right:
Participants performing in the documentary video “con la casa al hombro”. 111
Figure 41. Left: behind the scenes of “La Graba” (2009); Right: Behind the scenes of
“La entrega” (2009). 112
Figure 42. Behind the scenes of “Click, Click Obtura gallo” (Londoño, 2011). 113
Figure 43. Frames of “cinco pa las trece” (Baniz and Sanchez, 2005). 117
Figure 44. Socialization of videos produced in the community media lab. 119
Figure 45: Socialization of videos popular n1. 120
Figure 46. The co-creation of “La Real Academia” (2009). 122
Figure 47. el Tiempo newspaper, march 28th 2004. 123
Figure 48. Pasolini members. 126
PREFACE: NOTES FROM THE REWRITING PROCESS

“What the map cuts up, The story cuts across” (Michel de Certau)

Rewriting Pasolini en Medellin experience was a challenging process for many reasons. As a cofounder, former director and active member of the organization, this research has opened many layers of my own life experience. As in peeling an onion, it was a touching and demanding process, where I found myself doubled into researcher/practitioner, i.e., the academy and the experience.

As Dwight Conquergood says wisely, De Certau’s aphorism, more than proposing a discussion about space, “also points to transgressive travel between two different domains of knowledge: one official, objective, and abstract—‘the map’; the other one practical, embodied, and popular—‘the story’ (Conquergood, 2002, p. 145)

In this research, the epistemologies of the map and the story demanded shared spaces. Consequently, I have had to learn and unlearn many things in my quest to explore, analyze and rewrite the Pasolini en Medellin experience, trying not to fall from the cliffs of theory or to get lost in the forest of my lived experience.

I want to thank to Dr. Jenny Nelson for reading this a billion times, and for being a thoughtful guide during this process and helping me to find a balance [if there is any] and, to allow me to experiment combining the ‘dominant way of knowledge of academy’; i.e., empirical observation and critical analysis from a distance (Ibid), with the ‘subjugated knowledges’ of the experience (Ibid), i.e., the embodied, and multisensory experience of the practitioner grounded in my senses, memories and imagination.
So this text is nothing more than a product of that experiment to share my version of this journey

How to Read this Text: Map of Instructions

This text is an open work that invites you to read it at your will, according to your interests. Each section is proposed as both, unity and a sequence interconnected in different ways. In order to know in advance what can be found in each section, I present here a map of the text, so you can decide where to start.

Figure 1. How to Read Hopscotch, Map of Instructions (Cortazar, 2000, p. 135)
A Formal Introduction: Here you will find a formal presentation of the research process, its purpose statement and the methods implemented for conducting this research, as well as a description of the Pasolini en Medellin organization.

An Introduction in the mirror: Here you will find a reflexive exercise to explore the duality I mention above. This is a section you could skip and just go to the next part of the text. Here is where you can find the experimental technique implemented by the Argentinian writer Julio Cortazar: the auto interview; where the researcher and the practitioner meet for a dialogue.

Imagine yourself: This is not a section but a recurrent exercise in the text that serves as a prelude to each section.

“Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear alone on a tropical beach close to a native village, while the launch or dingy which has brought you sails away out of sight” (Malinowski, 1961, p. 4)

Inspired by Bronislaw Malinowski’s idea, of inviting the reader to imagine the situation that the researcher/practitioner is facing in the field; the Imagine Yourself section is an invitation to the reader to explore the multiple layers within the Pasolini en Medellin (PEM) process. It is an exercise of reinvention, a collage derived from the stories found in PEM archives, in the interviews with participants, members, and researchers and in the audiovisual products produced by PEM.

My intention is to bring about themes as they appear in the text, complementing the narration with photographs or frames from videos produced in PEM processes.
However, I must clarify in advance, that the stories I present in Imagine Yourself are not literal translations of the images that accompany them, but a reframing of what can be read in them, calling for the polysemy of the image and the possibility for constructing from the fragments. The invitation is also to explore the PEM videos; you will find a link to them at the end of each story. Thus, Imagine Yourself functions as a door to explore PEM products, and as an invitation to take a look at the audiovisual stories we have imagined and produced in Medellin, Colombia.

Sec 01/ Again the Violence(s): In this section I reflect on the need to speak out about violence in Medellin Colombia, and to explore some of the less visible effects of violence in our communities. It is not a section about the history of violence, nor an anthropological study of Colombian conflict, but just a portrait of the landscape in which our dreams of social transformation are taking place.

Sec 02/ The need for Narratives: This section explores how the effects of the Colombian conflict have normalized silence in Colombian communities. I propose that narratives can recover communities’ right to weave their memories with their present, and imagine a future.

Sec 03/ The Citizen’s Media Approach: This section explores the citizen’s media framework proposed by Clemencia Rodriguez, as the key to trigger narration, to reconstitute the symbolic fabric of the communities disrupted by war.

This section is also a call for further exploration on communication for social change practices in Colombia in order to construct shared knowledge.
Sec 04/ The Pasolini’s RE Model: Along with the need for shared knowledge, this section explores PEM ways of doing. As the main part of the text, this section describes the PEM’s RE model, in which I try to combine theory with the voices of the members, participants and researchers of PEM. This section is not a recipe, but an invitation to explore a particular practice, a particular way of using narratives for social change. And maybe an invitation to reuse it, and by doing so, to reinvent it.

Sec 05/ An Open Ending: I do not like final periods; instead, I love suspension periods and ellipses. In this section I bring the polyphony of voices of the PEM experience to draw some questions about the possibilities and limitations of their work; and I recommend suggestions for further research about the roles of citizen’s media in contexts of violence.

So, if after reading this you are still interested in continuing, WELCOME. We appreciate your company, and we appreciate even more your suggestions, critiques, and comments. So, don’t hesitate to write to us if you want, we have much to learn from each other (email to: corporacionpasolini@gmail.com or to camilomemoria@gmail.com).

Camilo Perez/Andre Kapoq

Athens, Ohio

March 2013
BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://www.teatroxlaidentidad.net/txt_LaMemoriaFunda.asp


FILMOGRAPHY


Arango, G., and Perez, C. (Directors). (2003). *Derecho por San Juan* [DocumentaryFilm], Medellin, Colombia

------------------------------------------------------ (Directors). (2011). *Reportando Sucesos* [Video-Clip]. Pasolini en Medellin, Medellin, Colombia


Hurtado, Cifuentes et all. (Director). (2011). *La Quinceañera* [Fiction Film]. Pasolini en Medellin, Medellin, Colombia.


INTERVIEWS


