Cultures of Anyone
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CHAPTER 5

Combining the Abilites of all the Anyones: The 15M Movement and its Mutations

5.1. Anyone’s Word and the Expert’s Word: An Alliance

5.1.1. Affected voices and technical voices: 15M, PAH, and Mareas

May 2011. A trembling voice; words heard over street noise—or perhaps cut off by a bad Internet connection in a YouTube video: ‘It’s just that you’re doing things I’ve always dreamed about being able to do … ’ A pause, the voice breaks, and applause explodes. ‘Excuse me, but I’m just … ’—more applause, and little by little the older woman speaking to the assembly, bending over the microphone, hands trembling, manages to go on: ‘What I meant to tell you all is that I think you are so much more creative than our generation, and so I’d like to ask you something, something I think we all need, and it’s that we not forget that … ’ She falters for a moment, and then continues. ‘There’s a part of the population that’s not here. There’s part of the population missing here. It’s the population that’s even lower than low, the people who don’t have something to eat every day, who live in slums, the barrios—’ Applause bursts out again, interrupting her, and a hand settles on the woman’s back to support her. ‘—where the average life expectancy is lower than in other barrios, where illiteracy is much higher, where people die, they’re sick and they suffer in horrible situations.’ Another supporting hand appears on her back, as if sharing the weight of the words she’s still trying to say. ‘And we have that in almost every town in the region, and in Murcia itself, and somehow they have to have this life, it has to fall on them. I don’t know how to do it, but you do, I believe you do … ’ Applause bursts out thunderously now, while the woman leaves the microphone and walks towards the people—who all stand up—and she loses herself among the crowd.

Shortly before or shortly after this, in May 2011, self-convened meetings in other plazas in cities and towns throughout Spain will see myriads of similar moments, at which so many other trembling voices will speak, often beginning with an apology. ‘I’m sorry, it’s hard for me to speak in
But at the same time, another style of words, completely different in their format, tone, and presentation would also shortly spring forth from those assemblies and acampadas. Let’s take, for example, some lines from point #14 in the document titled ‘Propuestas abiertas de la comisión de economía del 15-M (Sol)’ (2011):

Establishment of a moratorium on the payment of the Spanish state’s foreign public debt until a full audit (including economic, social, and environmental aspects) can be made, with the participation of social agents and independent experts, to determine its legitimacy or illegitimacy. Should a debt be declared illegitimate, its payment shall be denied, and civil or criminal penalties for both debtors and creditors shall be required.

This proposal appeared as part of a document drafted collectively by the Economics Working Group of the Acampadasol. It included 16 specific political measures for resolving the crisis and changing the model that had caused it. These proposals were compiled and approved by the subgroups on Political Economy, Finances, Housing, Employment, Dissemination, Action, and Global Relations.

As Pedro Martí (15M.cc – conversación con Pedro Martí 2012), one of its members, explains, the power of the Economics Working Group came from having pooled together many ‘creative minds’ in an open discussion space where anyone was welcome. Martí asserts, in this regard, that one of the most important characteristics of the 15M movement in general, to which this Working Group belongs, has been knowing how to combine the production of ‘collective thought’ (‘without that psychological process it would have been hard for us to move from such a competitive society to understanding and listening so much to others’) with the recognition that specialization is essential in a horizontal system; when there is no hierarchical system that unites us all, it’s efficiency [that unites us], and it’s much more efficient for those who know how to do something

1 As Amador Fernández-Savater says, ‘In the assemblies, the most personal contributions were applauded (in silence, with hands only), for example, those who stammered and struggled to find the right words. Arms crossed in rejection were raised immediately against any speeches that sounded more automatic, more rote, less affected by the situation’ (2014).
to dedicate themselves to that, regardless of the fact that all spaces are open to everyone so that anyone can participate in them.

This combination of fragile voices, that is, of ‘anyone’ with technical, specialized proposals and languages, no matter how strange it might be, doesn’t seem to have disappeared from the social arena since the 15M occupations of plazas ended. On the contrary, we can see it constantly reappearing throughout the cycle of mobilizations and social transformations that have taken place in the wake of this movement. It perhaps reached its most intense moments around the campaigns of the People Affected by Mortgages Platform (or PAH, the acronym for its Spanish name, Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca) and the so-called Mareas Ciudadanas (with particular emphasis on the Mareas in defense of public health and public education). I offer two brief examples.

March 2012. The documentary ‘La Plataforma’ is released, telling the PAH’s history. In it we see Matías González, a citizen affected by the real estate bubble who was evicted from his house—another of those ‘fragile’ voices—recounting how he made contact with the association:

I went to Obrador Street one Friday afternoon, to see what that thing was all about, and I saw what was happening: just like me, well, there was tons of people, thousands. So I told ’em about my case and they supported me ... and they gave me the strength to be where I am, and now I even support the people who support me. I mean, if we don’t support each other here, there’s no way to get nothin’ done. And I give thanks for the Platform, ’cause, well, it gave me the strength to be where I am, ’cause this’ll drive you crazy ... This’ll just drive you crazy.

Months later, Matías González had his mortgage debt reduced. His voice, along with many others, had influenced the production of legal documents like the resolution of the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg that prevented the eviction of people living in a block of apartments in the town of Salt that had been occupied by PAH’s ‘Social Work’ campaign. Based on that resolution, PAH itself (2013) produced a legal document to be presented to any Spanish court processing an eviction, which began with these words:

XXX, Solicitor of the Courts and of XXX, as I have duly verified in foreclosure proceeding n° XXX/// eviction for rent, before the Court and according to law I hereby SUBMIT:

That in accordance with articles 10.2, 47, and 96.1 of the Spanish Constitution, with international regulations on the right to decent housing and the prohibition of forced evacuations without prior
relocation, and in light of the recent ruling on the matter by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, I solicit postponement of eviction from my house, on the basis of the following allegations ...

In 2014, another legal decision marks what is perhaps one of the most important victories of the political cycle the 15M helped to initiate: preventing the privatization of six public hospitals in Madrid, as evidenced by the following decree from the Superior Court of Justice in Madrid:

The Court (Section 3) RESOLVES: ACCESS to the preventive measure requested by the claimant and consequently suspension is granted of the Resolution of April 30, 2013 from the Vice Ministry of Health Assistance of the Ministry of Health of the Community of Madrid, which publicized the call for bids on the contract of services known as 'Licensed Management of the public service of specialized health care of the university hospitals “Princess Sofia,” “Princess Leonor,” and “Princess Cristina” of the Southeastern Henares and el Tajo.’

This judicial decision led to one of the extremely rare resignations from a public position to be seen in Spanish politics since the crisis began—that of Javier Fernández-Lasquetty, the ex-Minister of Health in the Community of Madrid. It would not have been possible without the whole process of strikes, protests, and legal actions taken by what came to be called the Marea Blanca, a huge public mobilization that reacted rapidly and forcefully to the attempted privatization orchestrated by Lasquetty.

But again, one of the main characteristics of the Marea Blanca was precisely its open, nonhierarchical, and, given its connection with something as historically stratified and corporatist as the health sector, surprisingly un-corporate organization. In addition, the Marea Blanca, like the assemblies of the 15M movement and PAH, was conceived as a space with room for voices with different types of authority, ranging from that gained through the personal experience of being affected by common problems, to that obtained through having specialized, technical kinds of knowledge. In fact, in the Marea Blanca it has been common to hear voices recognized as professionals, but also as patients. As one woman said on the radio program ‘Dentro de La Marea Blanca’ (2012):

We are very alarmed, but not by fear of losing our jobs; nor are we fighting to earn more money. We simply see a threat to the rights we’ve gained during these thirty-odd years of having public health, and against all the patients, and that includes us professionals, the doctors and nurses.
Also recurring in the Marea Blanca’s mobilizations are references to the diversity of abilities necessary to maintain the public health system. There have been posters that say, ‘The kitchen is as important as medicine, let’s defend both,’ strikes by hospital janitorial staff supported by the entire medical sector, and, in general, a constant appreciation for those with the caregiving, logistics, and social skills so necessary to the practice of medicine and who have set aside the strongly hierarchical distribution of value imposed by the tradition of expertise that surrounds the medical field. This redistribution of values has had an almost playful echo in the sudden transformation of healthcare personnel, patients, and hospital neighbors into ‘activists’ who have been able to pull together huge strikes overnight, to spread their message to all of society, and, several times, to paralyze downtown Madrid. An article in a local newspaper said, ‘You can see doctors-cum-“community managers” compiling information and distributing it through social networks. You can see nurses giving press conferences and speaking in front of television cameras, aides designing posters and placards, technicians, physical therapists, all of them moving in the same direction’ (‘Desde Fuera …’ 2014).

The blog maintained by Hospital de la Princesa personnel (‘Salvemos la princesa’ 2014), who managed to avoid its shutdown after weeks of mobilization (in another remarkable victory for the Marea Blanca), evidenced the unity of the various hospital workers. They considered it not only a coordination of efforts to reach a goal, but also as something that is, in fact, quite distinctive: a victory over a world that proposes competition as the general form for relationships:

All the groups that have participated in this movement—doctors, nurses, aides, technicians, unions, watchmen, cleaning personnel, kitchen workers, maintenance staff, etc., etc., almost 3,000 people—have learned to reconcile their interests into one: our hospital.

Don’t you believe for a minute that that’s easy to do in a world dominated by ambition and ‘I want to be more than you.’ Every one of you guys knows that.2

Ultimately, if this characteristic combination of expert and everyday knowledge bases and abilities came together in these movements (15M, PAH, Mareas, and others), I think it’s not just because everyone had something they felt the need to protest against. They also had the will to find ways of collaborating that offered alternatives to a competitiveness and hierarchy

2 Some of the most illuminating texts about the Marea Blanca that I know can be found in the blog Al final de la asamblea, to which I will refer later.
that was perceived—even if often only tacitly—as part of the problem being protested.

5.1.2. A ‘protest style’ and a ‘climate’
The accelerated pace of today’s multiple narrations by the big mass media companies—and often also by digital networks, which usually follow the former in this regard more than in others—makes it difficult to draw analogies like the one I suggest. The constant need to report as news what happens in the social sphere, to which the majority of the media succumb, also permeates civic self-perception. However, that has not prevented the recognition, from multiple perspectives, of the continuities between movements like 15M, the PAH, and the Mareas. These are no longer seen only as timely responses to the government’s management of the economic crisis, but as moments in the same political and social cycle that involves a fundamental rupture in the tacit agreements that supported the foundations of Spanish coexistence. (This was particularly true of agreements about the democratic operation of the political party system, previously considered acceptable, if imperfect, and about the acceptability of the economic system itself.)

This brings us back to the idea of the ‘crisis of the system’ I spoke of at the beginning of the book: it’s not only a crisis of ‘the economy,’ it’s not only an economic situation caused by the poor management of particular individuals. It’s something deeper that has to do with the way the Spanish state has been organized since it was ‘democratically’ established after Franco’s dictatorship.

Beyond the fact that this perception has been proposed as an interpretive thesis by some of the investigators working on the notion of the CT, and beyond the fact that many sectors of social movements habitually maintain it, it seems to me that it’s a narrative that is pretty well accepted by the general population. There’s a feeling that something fundamental is broken, or at least being questioned. Along with that, there are unavoidable perceptions that now something different has been opened. These perceptions often include, consciously or subconsciously, that of protests in general—and the 15M movement in particular—as triggers of that opening.

Thus, Fernández-Savater’s proposal to view the 15M movement not only as a specific social movement limited to the experience in the plazas, but also as the opening moment of a different climate that is altering the limits of what is possible in Spanish society, seems to be in harmony with a certain ‘common sense’ shared by large sectors of the population. As early as January 2012, Fernández-Savater stated in the article ‘¿Cómo se organiza un clima?’:
The official reality is the map of what’s authorized as possible: what it’s possible to see, to think, to feel, and to do. We have opened that map. Now other things can be seen, thought, felt, and done. The party system is no longer taboo. We conspire to interfere in the elections, although we may not agree among ourselves on how to do it, because it’s the vox populi that they are a fraud. The relationship between democracy and capitalism is no longer so clear. The previously invisible reality of the evictions is now out in plain sight. It’s possible to think and make policy without being affiliated with a party, or even a member of a social movement. We use the Internet every day to collectively construct another point of view about the present. We’ve learned that the unknown other is not only an enemy or an irrelevant object, but that he or she can be a friend. We’ve discovered that we can do things we had never suspected. The map of the possible is different, the climate is different.

Perhaps one of the versions of this idea that has caught on in a big way, as the years pass, is that of a new ‘protest style.’ Even though these continuities may not be spoken of explicitly in media forums and among the general public, it is very difficult to deny that such massive mobilizations as those of the Mareas, PAH, or the Marches for Dignity in March 2014, share with the 15M movement the choice not to use the more usual (although hardly unique) organizational forms of social movements, unions, and other leftist organizations: those in which some type of strong identity—activist, worker, sectorial, ‘subordinate,’ gender, etc.—tends to play the role of protagonist, and to generate spaces for a ‘vanguard’ composed of those who represent that segment of the population to all the rest of the population.

This ‘inclusivity,’ as it is often called, of recent movements has been generated through a whole series of procedures, expressions, and we could even say ‘tics’ (none of which are exempt, at times, from a certain fetishization) that have become emblems of that ‘new style of protest,’ and which are often put into practice and recognized almost automatically. I am thinking mostly of assemblies, with their turn-taking, facilitators, codes of gestures to express agreement or disagreement, etc. But we cannot forget the posters of various sizes and styles that fill demonstrations, contrasting significantly with the uniformity of those distributed by political parties and unions. Then there is the broad repertoire of slogans and characteristically nonsectarian and nonsectorial chants (‘Yes, we can,’ ‘They don’t represent us,’ etc.) that accompany a use of public spaces that is hospitable and respectful of others (even—in general—of those who in principle would not expect that hospitality, like the riot police).
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Often the dizzying pace of ‘the present’ and the urgency imposed by increasing structural violence (unemployment, precarization, etc.) make it very difficult to look back, and a few years seem to be enough to blur past events. It seems to me, though—and this is difficult to prove, because it’s based on my own daily monitoring of the mass media, my participation in digital networks, and on personal conversations held during these years—that at least a certain feeling has been engraved into the recent collective memory that the 15M movement opened another type of political space that has been constructed more ‘by anyone’ than by a certain social group or ideology, with its corresponding ‘vanguard.’

‘We are everyone,’ was one of the more oft-repeated slogans of the movement. And the truth is that more than 80% of the population declared their support for it, in addition to the approximately 7 million people who participated directly, united by very general mottos like ‘Real Democracy Now!’ or ‘We’re not goods in the hands of politicians and bankers,’ but without necessarily identifying with any particular social group or ideology.

Likewise, one did not and does not have to be a member of anything, nor adopt any strong social or ideological identity—nor submit to any vanguard—to agree with the PAH or the Mareas, or to participate directly in their mobilizations. That is something that, I dare say, few people would doubt today. And in any case, the phenomenon has been thoroughly studied and theorized by social scientists, philosophers, and other scholars of such movements, especially those that have put the 15M movement in relation to its other ‘sister’ movements that arose around 2011 in the global wake of Tahrir Square and the Arab Spring. All of these movements have been characterized by their ‘absence of leaders,’ their ‘horizontality,’ and as already mentioned, their ‘inclusivity.’

On the other hand, the tacit or explicit notion of an inclusive, horizontal ‘style of protest’ keeps recurring when mass media and researchers represent these social processes. At the same time, and this is the nuance that I particularly want to introduce, along with that perception of its ‘open, nonmilitant style,’ an awareness—often silenced by the media—has also crystallized among the people who have lived it up close and personal that there are fundamental aspects of these processes that exceed ‘the protest’ as such; that is, the complaint or the demand for solutions from institutional powers.

I will propose shortly that these other aspects have to do with those two dimensions to which I have alluded: the appearance of the voice of ‘anyone,’ which expresses their shared vulnerability, and the construction of political alternatives by resorting to specialized, technical ways of knowing. I will emphasize primarily the feedback of these two dimensions and their equal importance within these processes, since—and this is my main thesis here—the value placed on the ‘unauthorized’ or vulnerable word, and the ability to combine this word with specialized, technical discourses is the main cultural tool of these social processes that, besides protesting, manage to simultaneously promote and support nonneoliberal ways of life. In other words, they are foreign to the principles of competition and corporatization of life (i.e., treating life as if it were a business) discussed in chapter 1. But before beginning to elaborate on this topic, I want to give a clearer idea of the space-time coordinates of the processes I am talking about.

5.1.3. Mapping ways of life in the face of dispersion

Despite the greater visibility of movements like the PAH and the Mareas, the political, social, and cultural transformations that have taken place in that new ‘climate’ are undoubtedly open to very heterogeneous possibilities surrounding the 15M movement. They also appear in different spaces: some more macro and others more micro, some openly political and formally organized, other more routine and almost invisible. Furthermore, as I noted above, it is especially difficult to perceive those transformations and give them value in a society that is not only forced by mass media to accelerate and scatter its self-representation in supposed ‘news stories,’ but which, in general, is articulated based on the neoliberal principles of widespread competition and the corporatization of life, which produce what the psychoanalyst Franco Inggrassia (2011) understood as an intense, pervasive tendency towards ‘dispersion.’ Inggrassia defines this tendency as ‘that which makes the social ties we establish ever more unstable, weak, and heterogeneous.’ Dispersion, therefore, is an ‘effect on the social aspect of market transactions there where the state weakens its regulating, structuring function of intersubjective relationships,’ given that ‘the market today is constantly assembling and disassembling bonds based on its incessant search for the maximization of profits. Disturbance becomes the norm and stability the exception.’

These conditions of dispersion caused by the neoliberal market hegemony strongly affect society’s self-perception. In this sense, it is easier to count the processes opened by the 15M movement, like the swell of always apparently novel protests, than to try to trace the continuities between processes that sometimes are indeed protests, but often, in fact, are much
more transformative in their propositional, affective, or subjective aspects—precisely those most capable of creating the social tie that neoliberalism tends to destroy.

In response to these difficulties of self-perception, agents of the movements have produced, among other things, instruments of rapid visualization like the ‘maps’ shown in Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 is the ‘Conceptual Map of Acampadasol,’ in its 3.0 version. It was produced by Acampadasol’s Thought

FIGURE 1. ‘Conceptual Map of Acampadasol,’ in its 3.0 version
FIGURE 2. ‘15M Mutations, Projections, Alternatives and Convergences’
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Commission in May 2011, and extended based on suggestions made by people 'on the ground' in the plaza itself and also online, through the blog of the radio program 'Una línea sobre el mar,' where it was originally published. Figure 2 is called '15M Mutations, Projections, Alternatives, and Convergences,' and was prepared by the Civic Self-Consultations Working Group at the beginning of 2014, as a tool to help in the process of 'updating' the 15M that was proposed by this group.

The first map was produced closer to the time when the plazas were occupied, and not for nothing does it appear to be a map of Acampadasol. But at the same time, it shows the camp's 'present day' in the light of a recent past of 'things that have happened before.' These range from very specific protests in the Spanish state—like the 'Acampadas por el 0.7%' that took place during the nineties, or the general strike of September 2010—to great historical political movements like the 'women's struggles and feminist struggles,' the labor movement, and indigenous struggles, moving through experiences related to emergent online cultures, like WikiLeaks or Anonymous, and to revolts of the new global wave, like those of Egypt, Iceland, or Greece.

The second map, on the other hand, focuses more on the post-15M period, when a climate of politicization or the 'new style of protest' develops. The explicit intention, as the Autoconsulta Ciudadana ('AutoConsulta Ciudadana' 2014) website says, is

to evaluate the experience of these three years of the 15M, to synthesize its proposals and thesis, to show and make a map of what is alive and working, to visualize our social support graphically, the social movements' successes in their forms of struggle (demonstrations, marches, 'Silent Shout,' Mareas, Civic Consultations, halting the privatization of healthcare, PAH, demonstrations in Gamonal, etc.).

This idea of showing the social movements' 'successes,' often also called 'victories,' has circulated widely among the '15M climate' networks. This is in line with their continued success at getting political, legislative, and judicial institutions to respond with concrete measures—though, it's true, these may be few and far between—to the pressure and specific proposals of the movements. From this motivation, which is central in the Civic Self-Consultation map, it's easy to tend to give more value to the specialized, technical aspect of political projects in the wake of the 15M movement—because it is the people with such skills who communicate directly with the institutions—than to their capacity to create spaces for everyday, experiential, or affective abilities and ways of knowing; in other words, spaces for 'anyone.' In this sense, it's almost inevitable to grant a
central value to mobilizations that obtain judicial victories because they have support from lawyers who play an essential role, as seen in both the PAH and the Marea Blanca.

Likewise, the thematic organization in ‘commissions’ or ‘working groups’ that was carried out even in the 15M camps, and which serves as a guide to this map for categorizing the ‘post-15M,’ always runs the risk of emphasizing the more instrumental aspects of these social processes, and of erasing their more expressive, affective, or relational aspects. In other words, those involved in the ‘construction of subjectivity,’ and who, despite being—it seems to me—essential for all areas, would be relegated quietly to the headings of ‘culture,’ ‘spirituality,’ or perhaps simply ‘thought.’

The map developed by Civic Self-Consultations is, in any case, an excellent tool to show the plethora of initiatives taking place in the wake of the 15M movement that have specific intentions, and often with the specialized, technical capacity to obtain small and large institutional victories. That plethora of initiatives is what is so difficult to reconstruct in the middle of the dispersion produced by mass media, and in general by the precarization of life under neoliberalism. The map shows, for example, the existence of initiatives that combine technical abilities related to the economy, law, or audiovisual media. Some examples include the Platform for the Civic Audit of the Debt— which emerges, in fact, from the aforementioned Economía Sol proposal number 14; the 15MpaRato project, which is lodging a civic complaint against Rodrigo Rato, the head of Bankia, the financial organization that received the most public money to avoid bankruptcy; the Record Your Meeting Platform, the Precarious Office, the Platform against the Privatization of the Isabel II Canal, the Offices of Economic Disobedience, and many more.

Just the possibility of mapping conceptually, beyond an organization around ‘subjects’ (politics, economy, justice, education, health, etc.) that came into the 15M world already preconceived, is what enables the conceptual Acampadasol Map. For reasons of chronology, it can’t include the post-15M, but it does allow an approach to its dimension of subjectivity construction. Thus, playing with the possible routes suggested by this other map, we can describe the 15M movement by creating phrases like the following from the proposed nodes: ‘people who want to be together and coexist by using collective intelligence, which creates collective enthusiasm’ or ‘in the plaza people listen to you and respect you, which promotes a good atmosphere.’

Regarding the organizational structures of Acampadasol, we can read in the map:

Acampadasol is disseminated and organized face-to-face in thematic working groups and commissions on nursing, food (arranging
provisions), legal (with 24 hour shifts of lawyers), infrastructures (providing the camps with blankets, showers, etc.), action (civil disobedience performances and activities), extension (dissemination through poster-making and art), cleaning, and communication.

Together with those commissions is also the more general idea that there are ‘caretakers who facilitate coexistence and facilitate the use of words and not violence’ (perhaps the most specific translation of this function in the field was the creation of the so-called ‘Respect Commission,’ which I’ll return to later).

What I find interesting about these conceptualizations developed by the Acampadasol Thought Group is precisely their capacity to show the importance of ways of life and meaning production, like collective intelligence, respect, mutual care, enthusiasm, coexistence, and listening, that are cross-sectional and essential for the explicit thematic and organizational orientations of both the 15M movement and those later ‘mutations, projections, alternatives, and confluences’ shown by the other map.

I want to return now to the nuance I want to contribute to these debates on the 15M movement and the social processes it has opened. I believe that, once again, as happened with the online cultures, the issue of this ‘subjective’ or ‘cultural’ aspect that moves beyond the protest and ‘institutional victories’ dimensions cannot be understood without relating it to the mechanisms that support it; that is, the mechanisms that allow all the work of production, circulation, and transformation of meanings that are the material substance—and there is no other—of this cultural dimension.

As I noted at the end of the previous chapter, what the 15M acampadas intended was precisely to create a space where not only culture—that is, the collective production of meaning—but also life as a whole, could be maintained. This would be accomplished through collaborative practices as far as possible from the neoliberal ‘way of the world’ that foregrounds competitiveness and the corporatization of life. This meant getting to work: if things couldn't be done with money—which was not accepted within Acampadasol—if certain words could not be imposed upon others by pre-established criteria of hierarchical authority—if we really ‘are everyone’—it would be necessary to produce materially and to maintain other mechanisms for valuing existing abilities and needs.

Thus, it seems to me, in the same way that it was essential for the camps to construct material infrastructures for the collective management of food, rest, or physical care, it was also fundamental to ensure a space to collaboratively manage everyone’s ‘cultural needs.’ This translated into the creation of spaces of respect, valuing, and listening for vulnerable voices,