

Identity and performance

An ethnographic approach to drag king performance through a corporal itinerary*

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The vital political processes of those who perform drag king acquire consciousness from historicity but they are also oriented towards the margins of the (hetero) normative construction of feminine subjectivity, independently from any self-definition in relation to gender identities and erotic-sexual desires. Drag king performance is not a linear process, whose practices are simply justified by feminisms and transfeminisms. Drag king performance becomes a site of movement where feminisms and transfeminisms support familiar and unfamiliar practices of resistance. This article draws from conversations with a person who performs drag king in Barcelona and aims to give an overview about how this resistance is not only discursive, but also somatic and corporal.

Keywords: drag king performance, BDSM, violence, public space & negotiation, corporal itinerary, political space

1. Introduction

This article is a close reading of conversations with a person who performs drag king in Barcelona. Its aim is to argue the drag king's imaginary is adapted and adopted in the individual's dailyness, that way becoming a space of continuity and not rupture. Becoming drag generates individual or collective expressive fields of different experiences (related with the "masculine word") that are conceptually and corporally operative. In this, the border between drama and the organic is disappearing. It critically re-inscribes in the bodies, the qualities, techniques, movements, corporal performances and strategies that are understood as signs of masculinity. Furthermore, the embodiment of drag king allows the conceptual and tangible re-structuring of reality, and its regulation. The embodiment expressed and lived in the drag king performance, in its interaction within the public space,

also brings on a complex set of tensions. Of interest here are narrations and reflections that arise when the criteria of identity of the “other” are vague or not understandable.

This research focuses on understanding where the encounter between the microstructures of meaning that constitute the reality of becoming drag kings — their speeches, their performances, their experiences — and the macrostructures of socio-sexual hegemonic order takes place. These structures create highly polarized sex-generic schemes and are based on “biological evidence” presented and embodied as “natural.” They are forced to scroll — or to negotiate their relationship — with the bodies and practices that question them permanently. A dialogue — between the ethnographer and Elena/Urko — allows us to look into the particular processes that have led to the embodiment of the drag king, and to determine how the drag king performance is reflected both in the daily life and in the gender identities of those who perform it. It also enables us to contrast the drag king experience and meaning with the speeches and stigmas that impregnate the social imaginary.

Understanding the body as a “microlandscape” (Gellner 2009) means considering it not only as a place for experimentation and hesitation in itself, but also as the place where knowledge is produced. Esteban (2004) calls this production of knowledge, “Corporal Itinerary.” For Bourdieu (1997), such constant reflexivity becomes a constitutive element of the ethnographic practice. Emotions, feelings and perceptions trace the ethnographic subjectivity; they cannot be detached from what has been created in the field, since they are also part of the field. As González (2006) has argued, there are no interpretative theories, only interpretative procedures, and interpretation often confronts the inside-outsider dilemma described by Del Valle (1993) and numerous scholars in feminist theories: however, I cannot help but wonder how this politically constituted “out” is nothing more than a vague and deliberate framework with weak borders.

The interpretative work described in this paper is not detached from the dialectic interaction between Elena/Urko — the central figure in this Corporal Itinerary —, the other areas and voices within the surrounding field, and me as researcher and co-producer of fields where drag king performances have been developed.

My research engages a sensitive register of experience within the underwater world of the drag king performances, where I situate myself for the understanding and the co-production of knowledge. It was the performance itself and the experimentation with the deconstruction of categories that prompted me, almost without previous reflection, to do this ethnographic research.

2. How society deals with the bodily unintelligible

The existence of two essentially distinct sexes seems to be in the order of reality in western societies (Nieto 2008). Based on biology and naturalistic criteria — irrefutable truths rooted in the scientific body and in the popular imaginary —, the “natural” division is presented and embodied¹ both in bodies and in different practices, working as systems of perceptions and feelings, thoughts and actions, highly profitable for the maintenance of a particular gender order. The modern western ontological separation between nature and culture allows the existence of naturalistic criteria as a foundational resource. However, our corporal experiences cannot be understood leaving aside some particular historical periods and contexts.

The assumption of biology and nature as something pre-discursive — far from what shaped its polarity and its culture — seemed to be the reason why the body was forgotten by the social sciences until well into the 20th century (Martí 2008).

The partial uncertainty, the ambiguity and the confusion of some subjects that project images with a logic that clashes with the traditionally constituted one, has been treated as a “deviation” to the natural acceptance of the social sciences through the majority of the 20th century (Becker 2009 [1963], Durkheim 1996 [1896], Goffman 2008 [1963], Lofland 2002 [1969]). The “abnormal” or “deviant”, unable to fit in the social order, represented a threat or a social risk. Therefore what was understood as “normal”, and as a “normal body”, was the result of the availability of some derivative narratives of the existent order. It is not a coincidence that some decades earlier, the term “teratology” had been coined by the zoologist Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, who classified unusual births, and looked into how research on “abnormal” variation might enlighten “natural” processes.²

These people violate, with their mere presence, the possibility of being apprehended by the “social” and “natural” laws that had been left voiceless. These people were immersed in the abnormal-normal duality. The effect of this duality is stigma, as has been widely studied by Goffman (2008 [1963]). As highlighted by him, people who lacked widely accepted social, cultural or physical skills, suffered the consequence of stigma. By doing so, they had an effect on the organizational logic of the social experience. They represented the political and social intersections of the period, the margins and the corporal and social borders of cultural coherence (Léon 2011).

Foucault (2005 [1976]) too explains that understanding identity as the result of a social interaction — as subjectively built in relation to “the other” or “the others” — takes on special significance in the social context of Western societies since the 19th century. There, the individual can only be called a normal body/person if he/she belongs to one of the two “legitimate” categories. Violations of

these “social” and “natural” laws become embedded in a normal-abnormal duality ordinarily associated with stigma (Benedict 1934).

According to Judith Butler, keeping this project of legitimation and regulation alive in space and time requires both continuity and coherence. And it is “gender” that allows us to assign unity to the subject experience through the continuum sex-gender-sexual practice-desire (Butler 2010 [1990], Preciado 2008). Following Foucault (2005 [1976]), Butler restates the need for an artificial coherence within each item in the binary relation, and through her reading of Monique Wittig and Adrienne Rich, Butler implies that, in order for the bodies to be coherent, there must be a stable sex through a stable gender (masculine expressing man, and feminine expressing woman), defined through history and by means of the compulsory practice of heterosexuality. This produces a coherence that is synthesized in the Heterosexual Matrix (MH), a complex network of classifying practices and symbols, a language that organizes the knowledge in categories and laws and that will become the social institution of reproduction (Soley-Beltrán 2009: 104–105) or what Butler calls a “grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders and desires are naturalized” (Butler 2010 [1990]: 292).

It is in the rooted frame of binary relationships and the regular associations of women and men, normal, abnormal, deviant, and such, where participatory places and displacement come out of these reifications. Actually, genders and hegemonic sexualities are seen as dependent on other genders and sexualities that question them constantly, and that, at the same time, are essential to keep their definition and existence.

3. Corporal itinerary

3.1 Context of the meeting

I’m in Salvador street, in the heart of the Raval of Barcelona, Catalonia. In the deep *barrio Xino*. I sit down on the step of an ancient and apparently badly kept front door, with broken glasses. Inside, darkness. I don’t ring the bell; it’s out of order. Elena has already warned me. She is at the market and will be here with her motorcycle in ten minutes. I take advantage of that and make some important calls. Chasing people to arrange appointments makes me feel a bit uncomfortable. It also gives me a feeling of illegitimacy in poking over their lives that turns out to be difficult to manage. Does ethnography always work like that? Is there an ethnographic method or attitude that can alter this kind of relationship? Or would it rather consist of changing one’s own perception towards a coherent and continuous axis regarding the person you are interacting with?

It's January 25th, a typically cold morning in this area. It's late evening. Urko blows the horn and gives me signs, with the motorcycle helmet still on. She asks me if I have already gone to buy some beers, with airs of familiarity. Her swinging place of enunciation — as Elena and as Urko —, allows me to get rid of certain inflexibilities regarding names that are present in our dailyness. This dual presentation also comes up in the ethnographic analysis of the current itinerary. I saw her for the first time three years ago in the *Stonewall contra-ataca* workshop, in her performance with *Perras del Apocalipsis*. And since then, we have bumped into each other in different feminist urban spaces. She is a member of Post-Op, a laboratory of gender and post-pornography research that make audio-visual productions. They are two, she and her partner Majo. I buy a bottle of San Miguel, four doors beyond. We go up to the fifth floor. The stairs are dark. She lives with Maria, whom I have interviewed on another occasion. The house is small, around about 30 square meters (323 square feet). At the entrance, a mini bath (tiny bathroom), with the glamour provided by a few glass tiles that connect with the dining room, where we do the interview. The aquarium issues a permanent electronic sound that gets stuck in my eardrums.

We begin, eating nuts from the family garden and drinking beer. I introduce her to what I need from him. And she turns it towards me, suggesting that it is better to start once and for all. Who places whom in the ethnographic process? She's quite nervous. I remember that she had already briefly told me about her anxiety, some time ago. And she repeats it again. That's why he doesn't take TestoGel 50mg hormone. While she gets some glasses of beer, I write some ethnographic details in my field diary. It is a kind of information you never know when to elaborate in depth. And I feel uncomfortable playing the role of an indiscrete voyeur, collecting intimate pieces of information from her.

First of all, I write down some cultural artifacts. Adidas trainers and black jeans together with a checked belt. An orange and black striped sweatshirt, and a dark waistcoat. His look, a bit pale filled with eye make-up. Penetrating. A toupee as if it was a comb delineated by a hair cut in the wings. Dyed as the night. Scars on his face. She warns me that she has multiple scars in his limbs, as a result of his sexual BDSM³ practices. The notion of body, of body and flesh. An inscription on the body, a corporal brand. And I ask myself in which way she relates herself to his body.

She is in unemployed, and looks for work. "Anything but waitress", since she worked at *Bata de Boatiné*, a "queer underground" bar in Raval and ended up being sick of it. Occasionally, she makes shifts working as a waitress or takes over for other waitresses, and combines it with the small amount of money that Post-Op generates. Beers served, she sits down on a chair. We start our interview with a lost look towards the floor. Later, she focuses on me with the clairvoyant premeditation of taking me over with her words. She moves her hands and arms widely, and

she remains crossed-legged most of the time, a delicate “body gloss”⁴ (Goffman 1971: 11) that tries to inform me. We are both so slow and exhausted that I put all my attention in following the thread of his story, and I omit some non-relevant paralinguistic and kinetic information. She feels uncomfortable with some of my questions. I have the feeling that I’m not professional enough so as to go through this research. I feel uncomfortable when digging into my own political fights.

We only meet a couple of times. The next time we met was in front of a cup of herbal tea that was meant to balance her “excesses” of the weekend. I have been lucky. In the two weeks that pass between our meetings, Urko has been performing the drag king in his intimacy on different occasions.

3.2 “And you, why are you like that?”⁵

She introduces herself. On June 9, 1975. Irún, Guipuzcoa. A few days after her birth, she’s baptized as María Elena. “*Elena simplemente es el nombre con el que me bautizaron, y bueno, el nombre cómodo. Pero en realidad, para mí no es nada cómodo*”.⁶ A transitory name that defines her in a familiar context. Urko as a name that appears later in the context of Barcelona. Clear statement that illustrates the possibility of being named from another perspective in an environment of critical discourse, facing the nominal inflexibility of an (hetero)normative order. Nevertheless, he feels especially “identified” with neither of them.

- (1) *Urko es un nombre, que empezó siendo un nombre de un... de un king, ¿no? Pero al final como que el king acaba apoderándose de mí, de alguna manera [Laughs]. Pues, mucha gente me conoce como Urko. Es un nombre que sí que me gusta, lo único que me parece demasiado masculino, ¿no?*

Urko is a name which started by being a name of a... of a king, right? But ultimately it is as if the king has taken hold of me, somehow [Laughs]. So, many people know me as Urko. It is a name that I like. The only thing is that seems to be too masculine to me, don't you think?

Thirty years ago her family, originally from León, migrated to the Basque Country, looking for some kind of work to help them “earn their daily bread”. It was kind of like the sitcom, “Growing pains”, Spanish version. “Catholic-Apostolic-Roman, Catholic-Apostolic-Roman”, she says at different times. Her mother and her father were born in a small village where the Church had a great influence. So, Elena grew up among practicing Catholics with a traditional education, where the authoritarian role was taken by the mother. A mother who is both a housekeeper and a tailor. A father, now retired, worked in different warehouses where trucks and tractors were kept at the French border. She has an older brother who used to

attend a priests' school. And she used to go to the school opposite to her brother's, "La Compañía de María", founded by Sister Juana de Lestonnac, the first woman who created an only girls school in France. A school of "liberal nuns". She does not keep memories of having had a particularly sexist education. Hers was the first boys also generation. "*En mi cole, o sea, las chicas jugaban a cromos, saltaban a la comba y poca cosa más. O sea, la cosa más, más a lo loco que había, a lo mejor era el escondite, ¿sabes?*"⁷

And Elena clearly remembers the desire for physical activity. And she hits it. Gender practices through different games, a construction of self-expressing rules. Routines connected to rules of behavior that are articulated regarding a normative-educational context. Memories seem to be generated either in symbolic places or in chronotopes related to sociocultural events where symbols simply come up (Del Valle 1999 [1997]: 12). A biography that takes place, during her first years of life, through different corporal techniques, practices and representations that break with the established (and establishing) rules of coexistence of the sociosexual hegemonic order. By doing this, she shows her resistance, embodied through the game and through different attitudes towards the different spaces, in an incessant attempt of transformation of her own contexts and moments. However, when she projects a definition of the social situation, her social environment asks her to resign any attempt of being what she does not seem to be (Goffman 2008 [1963]).

And then comes the stigma. "Corrective practices" (Goffman 1971), sanctions, that appear in scene in the social interaction. "*Casi siempre andaba con los chicos de clase (...) Lo llamaban un 'chicazo', un 'marimacho'*"⁸ "Marimacho" (tomboy), a person/body who is not (visibly) assigned to the sociosexual hegemonic order. And there was an identity beyond the stigma, since across the term/category a series of relations reconstructed a posteriori became detached, developing an identity continuum. Position that seems to express that if one does not believe a discourse in this space/category, this one will be defined by hegemonic spaces. A term that can describe. A relational term that only acquires meaning in a system of terms. And the interest comes through the complete network of decoded practices that support this system of relations. Butler names it Heterosexual Matrix (Butler 2010 [1990]).

And she continues, from and across information that is both reflexive and embodied. And there appears the notion of experience, of memory, of recollection.

- (2) *Y sí, recuerdo un tiempo de decirle a mi madre en plan, "quiero ser chico". Pero yo recuerdo que ese "quiero ser chico" no era por una cuestión corporal en ese momento, no era porque físicamente yo quisiese ser chico. Aunque iba como un chicazo, con pelo largo, pero bueno. Me gustaba vestir... No me gustaba llevar vestidos, lloraba cada vez que me ponían un vestido. Me parecía...*

Es que relacionaba feminidad con algo ridículo, ¿no? (...) La feminidad, la relacionaba con una incapacidad [Laugh] (...) ¡Jo! todas las niñas que eran femeninas, no podían hacer un montón de cosas que yo podía hacer o me gustaban hacer, como era subir a los árboles o saltar de un lado a otro.

Yes, I remember a time when I used to say to my mother things like, “I want to be a boy”. But I remember that this “I want to be a boy” was not a corporal issue at that moment, it was not because I physically wanted to be a boy. Even though I looked like a tomboy, with long hair, but anyway. I liked to wear... I didn’t like to wear dresses, I would cry whenever they put a dress on me. I looked like ... I think I associated femininity with something ridiculous, didn’t I? (...) I associated femininity with disability [Laughs] (...) Shit! All the girls who were feminine could not do a heap of things that I could do or I liked to do, such as going up the trees or jumping from place to place.

In this itinerary we observe constant thoughts over her identity, and the usefulness of the space of statement. And we observe how one of the strategies to deconstruct the concept of identity occurs due to the recognition of the alterity, the multiple forms that create it. These instants of recognition of the cultural codes of femininity, of its gestures, allow her to be conscious of the exploration, at the same time, of new technologies and corporal performances. Techniques that are incorporated in her daily life, corporal performances and social presentations of the body in spaces of particular representation.

I ask her for permission to see the photographs of carnival. A record that was shown in “TRAVESTI in the first person”, a conference that was held a few months ago, organized by the Association *EnFemme* and the GAG (Group of Friends LGTB). Photographs that allow her a second look at her biography in the introduction of this Goffmanian “self”.

- (3) *No hay un castigo porque sea algo masculino, porque sea algo histriónico, porque sea algo... En carnaval, tú puedes ser lo que quieras ser, ¿no? (...) Tengo aquí una foto de súper, súper, súper pequeña, que estoy vestida de princesa o de hada. O algo así. Este es un traje que me hizo mi madre. O sea, voy de rosa, rosa, rosa. O sea, más rosa no puedo ir (...) Ya con más edad ves que tú vas eligiendo los disfraces que quieres elegir, ¿no? Entonces, ya el siguiente fue de pirata. Pero de pirata malo con la súper barba, con la escopeta, con las botas (...) Es el típico día que podía hacer... Podía ser todo lo marimacho que quisiese, que nadie me iba a decir nada.*

There’s no punishment because it is somehow masculine, because it is somehow histrionic, because it is something ... You can be anything you want to be at a carnival celebration, can’t you? (...) I have a photo here. I was super, super, super young, and I was dressed up as a princess or a fairy, or something like

that. This one shows a suit that my mother made for me. I was in pink, pink, pink. I couldn't wear more pink (...) When you are older, you realize that you choose the costumes you want to choose, don't you? So, my following costume was a pirate. A really bad pirate with the super beard, with the shotgun, with the boots (...) It was the typical day where I could do ... I could act like a tomboy as much as I wanted to, nobody was going to say a word.

The relationship with her own image, and the relationship with the image that she creates of herself. A relationship where important revelations take place. Images that allow her to de-contextualize and re-contextualize herself and, at the same time, to enlarge her own imaginaries. The body as a particular place of production. A particular way of managing one's self-image while negotiating one's place in society.

- (4) *Princesa, princesa-payaso, payaso-pirata, pirata-zorro. Y ya, el siguiente disfraz que ya tengo como de quince años... Por ahí, creo que debe tener... Pues directamente voy y me disfrazo de hombre. O sea, tal cual, de hombre. Traje-chaqueta, bigote y gorro [risa]. O sea, yo creo que es un recorrido muy curioso... A parte, hombre así, como muy hombre, ¿no? Modelo de hombre ejecutivo, o no sé... Hombre elegante.*

Princess, princess-clown, clown-pirate, pirate-fox. Then, my next costume was when I was already like 15 years old...Something like that, I believe... And I just dressed up as a man. Just like that, a man. A suit, a moustache and a hat [laughs]. I believe it's been a very curious journey... Besides, it was something like, very masculine, right? Like a business man or I don't know... a Smart guy.

Urko allows me to read between the lines the imaginary of a "man" that he has, with his gender and sexual particularities. And it shows a liminality socially permitted, a certain space/time, which exists to reinforce the foundations and to read-just the gaps that shake the (hetero)normative order. A liminality that reminds us, however, where it is important to return. And the particular context of religiousness proves it.

- (5) *Yo sabía que ese día me tenía que vestir con... con vestido, aunque fuese un vestido sencillo (...) Nada más llegar a casa me lo quité y me puse el chándal para poder jugar al jardín con mis primos. Me echaron la súper bronca porque me tenía que volver a poner el vestido, porque estaba "guapísima, guapísima. ¡Qué guapa!" Es que esto es curioso, como te hacen el condicionamiento positivo y negativo (...) Cada vez que me vestía con algo femenino era como, "¡qué guapa estás, María Elena! ¡Estás increíble! ¿Pero, cómo no te pones más vestidos? Con lo bien que te quedan... (...) La niña que hacía la comunión casi no se podía mover de su vestido, tenía que estar todo el rato estupenda.*

I knew that on that particular day, I had to dress up in ... a dress, even if it was a plain dress (...) As soon as I got home, I took it off and put my tracksuit on, so that I could play in the garden with my cousins. They got mad at me saying that I had to put that dress on again since I was "so beautiful, so beautiful, amazingly beautiful". It is funny the way they give you the positive and negative conditioning (...) Every time I was dressed in something somehow feminine it was like, "You are so beautiful, Maria Elena! You look incredible! How come you don't wear dresses more often? They suit you so much..." (...) The girl who was doing the communion could hardly move in her dress. She was supposed to look wonderful all the time.

The contradictions and incoherences regarding the reproduction of the sexual and generic norm. The lack of balance with the parameters that it provides her with. The symbolic and material evidence, almost metaphorical if not because it was so real, of a gender performance. A specific management of the femininity/masculinity roles, to which both Foucault (2005 [1976]) and Butler (2010 [1990]) refer, that has a political efficiency in terms of power production. The incorporation of clothes that reduce mobility and generate a lack of control over the corporal efficiency.

And she goes on narrating a ritual. This transition of catholic instruction that will grant her with other kinds of meaning. "*Catacumenao es para hacer la confirmación (...) Siempre he sido un poco gafotas e iba solamente a dar la vara a la, a la... a la catequista, ¿no?*"⁹ A chosen deepening into Christianity. An intersection of the religiousness that crosses Elena's life and that allows me to observe an important axis. That intersection allows her to return the image towards herself, and to establish a few bases of comprehension of her contextual frame and of her experience. Later on, it will also allow her to get rid of those elements that are not useful for her.

- (6) *Era un momento que tenía mogollón de interés en la religión y en las religiones, pero con una visión bastante crítica (...) Me leía como cristiana. Me parecía válido lo que yo consideraba que era el mensaje cristiano, ¿vale? (...) Le pregunté si yo me podía confirmar en la fe cristiana, y me dijo que no, que era una confirmación en la fe católica. Y yo le dije que no me podía confirmar con la fe católica porque había demasiadas cosas con las que no estaba de acuerdo, ¿no? (...) Parecía un código de conducta, ¿no? De algún modo de comportarte con los demás, como te gustaría que... Comportarte conmigo, el mensaje de amor. Me parecía que era como una ética válida en un momento dado, ¿no?*

It was a moment when I was very interested in religion and religions in general, but from a critical perspective (...) I used to think of myself as a

Christian. It seemed fine to me what the Christian message was, alright? (...) I asked her if I could confirm myself in the Christian faith, and she said to me that I could not, that it was a confirmation in the Catholic faith. So I asked her if I could not be confirmed in the catholic faith because there were too many things I did not agree with, right? (...) It was kind of like a code of behaviour, right? A way of behaving with the others, the way you would like that ... They behave with me, the message of love. It seemed to me that it was like a valid ethics at a point in time, right?

“To be read like a Christian”, processual and contextual, as opposed to an idea of essence and immobility. Shown as a key item in Elena’s itinerary is the re-undertaking of control, since she was a child, on the different areas of the experience. And the resignificance. She goes from narrating in feminine, to a new situation of withdrawal of the Catholicism, which is narrated in masculine. A way to show that the linguistic use of feminine/masculine is built based on particular contexts and moments, practices and interactions. A spatial and temporal context of transit, where the linguistic practice has not yet been embodied through the repeated use of the masculine articles.

- (7) *Ya no creo en la iglesia católica, ya hace mucho tiempo. Imagínate, como... como... feminista, como bollera, como trans, o como lo que sea, vas a ser católico. Es como... tirarte piedras a tu propio tejado, ¿sabes? No, no... Cada vez me he sentido como más alejado.*

I haven’t believed in the Catholic Church for a long time. Imagine, as ... as ... a feminist, as a dyke, as trans, or as whatever, you can’t be a Catholic. It’s like... throwing stones at your own roof, you know? No, no ... I’ve drifted away from religion.

Elena returns to a situated narrative. And she describes what it is like to live in an urban context where the links of affinity and of affectivity develop independently. At the same time, her town provides her with spaces where to live her masculinity. Spaces of appropriation, of agency, of negotiation. The space-village as space of conviviality, inserted in dynamics more associated with the rural thing, not so separatist dynamics. Not a gender matter, not an age matter.

- (8) *En Irún no andaba con los chicos. O sea, andaba con los chicos en el colegio o así, pero luego tenía amigas, y así. Pero en el pueblo de León donde iba, como el pueblo es muy pequeño, pues tampoco tienes mucho donde elegir. Entonces, estaban mis primas que eran más pequeñas que yo, y yo consideraba que eran ñonas... Porque eran ñonas. Y entonces, iba con los chicos del pueblo que eran, pues, unos animales del pueblo.*

In Irún, I didn't hang out with the boys. I used to hang out with the boys in school or so, but I also had friends who were girls. But in the village of León where I used to go to, since the village was very small, you didn't really have much where to choose from. There were my cousins who were younger than me, and I used to think they were drippy...Because they were drippy. So then, I used to hang out with the boys of the village who were kind of like wild rednecks.

A place where she feels comfortable and where the daily practices do not mean a conflict. Nevertheless, her family generates resistance to living in these wished contexts, and that demonstrates a moral conservatism. Both a macro and a micro level appear. The relationship between an element of the social structure, in this case the social relation, and Elena's experience. One that is valid/allowed, and one that is not. And the story allows us to see those infractions that are compatible with the maintenance of the norm (Goffman 1971). Infractions that only appear under a certain control and regulation.

- (9) *“¿Qué haces con todos los chicos?” Porque yo qué sé, porque siempre tienen miedo que los chicos te vayan a hacer algo, aunque seas muy pequeña, ¿no? Pero en ese contexto, de repente me llevaban a cazar con mi padre. Entonces, es muy curioso que tuviesen tanto miedo que la niña andáse con los chicos del pueblo, y me daban una escopeta que era más grande que yo.*

“What are you doing hanging out with all the boys?” ‘Cause I don't know, 'cause they're kind of scared the boys are gonna do something to you, even if you're just a kid, you know what I mean? But in that same context, they would suddenly take me hunting with my father. So, it's kind of funny they were so scared I hung out with the kids in town, and then would give me a shotgun bigger than myself.

Even so, her perception starts changing.

- (10) *“Yo sé que llegó un momento, que de repente, no me sentí como aceptada-aceptado en los espacios de chicos y... Incluso me empezaron a parecer un poco imbéciles”.*

“I know it got to a point when, all of a sudden, I didn't feel I belonged to the groups of boys... They even started to seem like morons to me”.

She narrates the ease caused by looking at the silhouette of the representation. Identity: is it meant or experienced?

- (11) *“¿Y tú por qué eres así?” No entendía a qué venía. Entonces, sí que luego empecé a andar con chicas, aunque seguía siendo masculina. Luego intenté... intenté feminizarme. Bueno, sufrí una feminización obligatoria, más bien*

diría, porque... porque me dí cuenta que la vida era mucho más fácil si me feminizaba mínimamente.

“And you... Why are you like that?” I didn’t get what the point of the question was. Then, I started hanging out with girls, but I was still very masculine. Then I tried ... I tried to become more feminine. Well, I’d rather say it was more of an obligatory feminizing process, because... because I realized life was much easier if I was a bit more feminine.

Following Goffman’s theories (2009 [1959]:28), the story shows “protective” or “defensive” practices. Corporal techniques, social representations of the body and gender performances are activated to safeguard one’s own identity. An apprehended “body gloss”, an in-corporation of techniques that half-open the fissures to escape from categorizations that might be undesirable on any given moment in life. She actually shows the dailyness of the gestures associated with masculinity, and the difficulty of feminizing through “homeopathic magic”, trying to induce herself by means of imitation.

- (12) *Los gestos y así, pues es algo que, la verdad, nunca he conseguido feminizarme mucho... En cuanto a gestos, poses y posturas, y así. Pero sí por lo menos, en cuanto a vestuario. Minifaldas, aunque con botas. Una feminización dentro de lo que podía. Una feminización... Una persona que se ha criado en Euskadi que... Esta feminización como de montaña, un poco, ¿no? [Laughs] Feminización auto impuesta.*

My gestures and so is something that, to tell you the truth, I’ve never got to feminize very much... I mean gestures, poses and things like that. But I kind of feminized my closet, at least. Miniskirts, for example, (always wearing boots, though). A very limited feminization. A feminization ... A person who has grown up in the Basque Country... is not very “ladylike”, don’t you think? [Laughs] A self-imposed feminization.

Right then, when she was going through forced feminizing actions, of physical, aesthetic, motor skilled, sensory and emotional practices of gender, high school. In Irún there was only one. “*Aquello era como el Bronx*”.¹⁰ That is where she begins to understand the disconnection between herself and the space, with the inflexibility of an homogeneous regulation she flees away from. There was also the sexual awakening not (hetero)normative. Interactions based on affinities. Other areas of identification, of relationships, of sharing common interests. An awakening that leads her to reflections, wonderings and contradictions. An interruption of the continuum sexual sex-gender-sexual practice-wish that Butler (2010 [1990]) and Preciado (2008) recount.

- (13) *Ahí fue donde yo empecé ya, a... pues a darme cuenta, de alguna manera, que a mí me gustaban las chicas. En esa edad, a partir de los... Yo, bastante tarde, porque toda la vida pensé que era asexual o que me pasaba algo. Sí, no me gustaba nadie, ni chicos, ni chicas. O quizás confundía mis relaciones de amistad con chicas (...) Hasta los diecisiete, dieciocho, no empecé a tenerlo claro.*

It was then when I started to... to realize, somehow, that I liked girls. At that age I was... Personally, it happened quite late, because I used to think that I was asexual or that there was something wrong with me. Yeah, I didn't like anybody, neither boys, nor girls. Or maybe I had a confusing kind of friendship with girls (...) I wasn't sure until I was seventeen or eighteen.

An adjustment of the body to a historical-contextual idea.

3.3 I am not interested in the permanency, I am interested the process

Pontevedra, Valencia. First territorial migrations in order to study a degree in Fine Arts. Her interest on creativity and performances, together with her 'artistic' works, allow her to get in touch with feminist women all around the artistic world. Marina Núñez, her teacher, constitutes her first approach. De LaGrace Volcano, Claude Cahun, Catherine Opie, Nan Goldin and Pierre Moliner, are important models to look up to throughout her itinerary. An itinerary that cannot be understood without the tools provided by postmodernist feminisms and the Arts. A hybrid entailment that is understood through the complex debates that circulate around the gender theories, in the particular academic context of the late 20th century and early 21st century, in the Spanish State. These tools will later allow her to put together ideas within her own biography.

Then Barcelona. Relocating the different perspectives the feminisms constitute while dealing with its daily life — absolutely influenced by the arts, queer theories, transfeminisms, and the inheritance from the group O.R.G.I.A (Valencia¹¹) with which Urko had worked on an audio-visual production. A trajectory wherefrom to understand and to transmit his own biography, at the same time influenced by itself. A route where the inhabited religiousness comes across the performance and the BDSM. Urko, for years, had an "obsession" with the religious imagery, the life of the saints and the virgins. And it is through sexual pleasure that he gives new meanings to the constraints of the Judeo-Christian morality.

- (14) *Todo grabados antiguos de las torturas que se hacían durante la Inquisición, durante la Edad Media, intercalados con otros tipos de tortura que ya eran como de... Posteriores. Pero que eran torturas dentro de espacios de placer BDSM (...) En unos casos eran torturas que se infligían a santos y mártires para llegar a la reacción... a la redención, al éxtasis y la comunión con Dios.*

Y por otro lado, eran las torturas que se auto inflingían gente para llegar al éxtasis, ehm... El éxtasis físico y el placer sexual (...) Ponía este dos tipos de proyecciones y mientras yo... Por ejemplo, en una de ellas, pues me tumbaba en una camilla y me perforaban los pezones con agujas, y cosas así (...) Y luego todo era una música así como muy ruidosa, muy molesta, hasta que al final como que llegabas al éxtasis y era como una música, entre comillas, como celestial.

It was all ancient engravings of the tortures that were done during the Inquisition, during the Middle Ages, mingled with other types of torture that were kind of like ... subsequent. They were tortures inside spaces of BDSM pleasure (...) In a few cases they were tortures inflicted to saints and martyrs to come to the redemption, to the ecstasy and the communion with God. And on the other hand, there were the self-inflicted tortures used to come to an ecstasy, uhm ... The physical ecstasy and the sexual pleasure (...) I would show this kind of projection and in the meantime I... would for example, lie down on a stretcher and get my nipples pierced with needles and stuff like that (...) And then there was this music that was like very noisy, very annoying, until I would get to like the ecstasy and then it was a very "heavenly" kind of music.

Urko shows, on a narrated event, the facility in speaking about his body/flesh, and with his body/flesh. And I remember Foucault's reference (Foucault 1992 [1980]: 15), "the body: surface of inscription of the events".

- (15) *Yo tenía una colección, en mi casa, que se llamaba "Pueblos de la tierra" (...) Pues de repente, ver una imagen que era alguien con un pendiente en la ceja (...) Fui por todas las tiendas de Irún, de estas que te hacían con una pistolica el pendiente aquí en la oreja... Para que me hiciesen. Claro, nadie me quería hacer porque decían que era muy peligroso, que me podía quedar ciega, que no sé qué (...) Entonces llegué a casa y me cogí con una aguja, y me atravesé (...) Luego tuve, pues... En los pezones tuve, también.*

I had a collection, at home, which was called "Peoples of the Earth" (...) One day I saw a photo of somebody with an eyebrow pierced (...) So I stopped by all the stores in Irún that had ear piercing guns... so that I could get my eyebrow pierced. Of course, nobody wanted to do it because they said it was very dangerous, that I could turn blind, that (...) So I went home, grabbed a needle, and I pierced it (...) Later I also had my nipples pierced.

A body that expresses itself through its scars. He has access to it through images that refer to a long tradition in the African and American continents. Corporal modifications, perforations on an alive body that is given life through his own biographical experiences (Porzio 2010). A notion of body/flesh that clashes with

the notion of a normative body/flesh, with no scars. And he interprets his marked body, and establishes a parallelism between the static and the processual. A metaphor on the construction of a subjectification process.

- (16) *No tengo interés en la permanencia, o sea, me interesa el proceso. O sea, quiero decir, a mí lo que me interesa es que me pongan el piercing en los pezones. Me interesa el proceso de cuando me cortan, pero no me interesa la marca. Entonces, por ejemplo, yo tengo un montón de cortes en los brazos, pero podría tener marcas permanentes si yo simplemente me lo infectase o me lo... Si yo tuviese intención de que eso, quedarse marca, ¿no? No tienes más que frotártelo o infectártelo, o demás. Pero a mí me interesa el proceso de cuando yo me corto o cuando alguien me corta a mí. Me interesa el proceso de cuando alguien me atraviesa con las agujas. No me interesa la marca y no me interesa que después de esa sesión... No me interesa el piercing, no me interesa el... No me interesa... No me interesa, sin más.*

I'm not interested in the permanency, that is, I'm interested in the process. I mean, what I want is to get a piercing in my nipples. I'm interested in the cutting process, but I don't mind the scar. For instance, I've got a lot of cuts on my arms, but they could be permanent if I just infected them or... If I wanted it to be permanent, to leave a scar, I'd just scratch it or infect it, or whatever. But I'm interested in the process of cutting myself or somebody cutting me. I'm interested in the process of somebody going through my skin with the needles. I don't mind the scar or the fact that after that... I'm not interested in the piercing, I'm not interested in... I'm not interested... I'm simply not interested.

Urko shows, in the above extract, “the corporal reflexive experience” (Connell 2010 [1995], Esteban 2004), the body as a conscious, experimental and interpreting entity, in constant negotiation with the subject it interacts with. He speaks about communication. About scarification as a language of interaction, a particular way to establish social relations, beyond the tactile sensations that it can endure. A movement — that of the needle in one’s hands — that conveys certain embodied technical skills. An art that implies, at the same time, a kind of sympathy with the others’ pleasure and pain. A pain that acquires an important social significance in the erotic-sexual intercourse.

- (17) *O sea, el dolor que sientes en ese momento, unido a la comunicación que tienes con esta persona. Para mí ésa... ésa es la experiencia (...) Le estás dejando que te haga esto, porque te gusta o porque confías en ella, y porque te apetece que te lo haga esta persona, ¿no?*

It's the pain that you feel in that moment, together with the connection you have with that person. For me that... that is the experience (...) You are

allowing her to do this to you because you like her or because you trust her, and because you want this person to do this to you, don't you?

Elena/Urko inherits her artistic abilities from De LaGrace Volcano, Claude Cahun, and other artists. She also emphasizes her closeness to the artistic proposals of Juan Vicente Aliaga and Jose Michael Cortés and the influence they had on her. They organize exhibitions all around the Spanish State, “questioning the identities, questioning the binomial”. Theoretical-artistic models that will provide her with critical tools, and will allow them to know and to observe other images for new models of masculinities. She feels identified with them.

- (18) *De repente empecé a ver una serie de imágenes, que veía, ehm... gente masculina que a mí me parecía súper atractiva, o referentes masculinos que a mí me parecían estupendos. Masculinos, me refiero a trans masculinos o a marimachos, o a butch, ¿vale? Cosas que me parecían más cercanas a mí. No referentes masculinos, hombres-hombre, por así decirlo. Entonces, pues empecé a... a no ver la masculinidad como algo negativo.*

Suddenly, I started to see a series of images, which I saw as, uhm ... masculine guys that I thought of as being super attractive, or masculine models that seemed to me to be marvellous. Masculine, I mean trans men or dykes, or butches, ok? Stuff that was closer to me. Not masculine referents, “real men-men”, so as to say. Then I started to... stop seeing masculinity as something negative.

The space — Barcelona — as a turning point in his itinerary, as an important change in relation to his future. New models, alternative models, not only regarding the gender practices, but also as possible identity models. What until then were practices taken from reflections, conflicts or contradictions, allow him now to understand his own social being by realizing the collectivity lying behind it, his social body (Douglas 1978 [1971]), new ways of life in coherence with his own representations and desires.

- (19) *Barcelona es una ciudad que aglutina a un montón de gente que venimos buscando, de alguna manera, el paraíso de Barcelona, el sueño de Barcelona que no existe. Porque ya nos hemos encontrado una ciudad con un montón de... de imposiciones en el espacio público, una ciudad súper, ehm... restrictiva. Una ciudad en que está impostada la Ley del Civismo.*

Barcelona is a city that agglutinates tons of people somehow looking for the ‘Barcelona paradise’, the ‘Barcelona dream’ that does not exist. Because we have already encountered a heap of... restrictions in public spaces, a city very, uhm... restrictive. A city where a “Civic Law” has been imposed.

It leads us to spatial/temporal indexing. Bakhtin's (1989 [1981]) chronotope. A theoretical-methodological category that implies having a space where to focus what one is expressing. A place/instant that contemplates a whole sum of senses, affections, actions and actors or characters who become obvious, and that Urko updates with his life story. "*Civic Barcelona*". A new contemporary setting that conveys certain subjectivizing processes in the metropolis. A place where there is a strong collectivization of worries and experiences at an institutional level and at an alternative level, both at the same time.

- (20) *Yo llegué a Barcelona en un momento que, afortunadamente, estaban en plena eclosión todo el tema relacionado con, con... con lo queer, en ese momento. Que en ese momento se llamaba... Se utilizaba todavía el término queer, o bueno, o... ¿Qué otro término tenían para las cafetas? Desviado, o... Bueno, otros sinónimos, ¿no?*

I came to Barcelona in a moment where, luckily, the whole queer thing was blooming. Back then it was called... It was still called "queer" or, maybe, or... what other terms did they have? Deviated, or... well, there were other synonyms, right?

Big cities that create identities. And a territorial displacement tied to an instant of feminist ripeness. Ripeness that allows him to live his masculinity, showing a physical, sensory, aesthetic and emotional condition: "relax". Besides, it allows him to answer the classifying and autoreferencial practices of the HM. Queer, deviant... A series of terms and resources that get him to understand how the devices of power go through him, allowing him to penetrate into the dynamics of resistance that he can, or not, embody.

- (21) *El no ver la masculinidad como algo negativo, y por fin relajarse. Relajarme a nivel corporal, a nivel estético y a nivel todo. Y dar rienda suelta a masculinizarme todo lo que me diese la gana, sabiendo que no iba a haber un órgano represor por fuera, a nivel familiar o amistoso, que me iba a decir, "oye, no vayas por este camino". O que yo iba a ver cierto rechazo. Aquí sabía que tenía manga ancha para hacer todo lo que quisiese en este momento.*

Not to see masculinity as something negative, and to be able to relax at last. To relax at a corporal level, at an aesthetic level and at an "all-in-all" level. To become as masculine as I wanted to, knowing there wouldn't be an oppressor out there, a friend or a relative, who would tell me "hey, don't go that way." Knowing I wouldn't see a certain degree of rejection. I knew I had the chance to do everything I wanted to do at that moment.

3.4 And why the hell do I have to make a choice?

A question, the gender identity. Uneasiness. Fast reaction. Not a rhetorical interrogation but a push to get an answer. Halberstam and Volcano (1999) had already pointed it out in “The Drag King Book”.

- (22) *¿Cómo me identifico respecto a la identidad de género? Ehm, durante mucho tiempo... Bueno, mucho tiempo, si... Me genera incomodidad esa pregunta, porque es como que todo el mundo tiene que saber en el lugar en el que está, ¿no? Y a mí esto me ha generado mucha ansiedad, porque durante mucho tiempo, es como... A ver, ehm... Estamos hablando que yo he hecho un proceso de... de imponerme una feminidad, entre comillas. De ahí a liberarme completamente y dejarme ser todo lo masculino o masculina que quiera ser, a partir de... Bueno, eso fue a partir del king... Y ver lo cómoda que estaba en ese espacio, ¿sabes? Entonces, de repente paso de ahí, de ver lo cómoda o cómodo que me siento en el espacio king, a plantearme y cuestionarme... Porque yo sé que mucha gente ha pasado por el king, y después de pasar por el king, pues ha empezado un proceso trans, también.*

How do I see myself regarding the gender identity? Uhm, for a long time... Yes, a long time ... This question made me feel uncomfortable, 'cause it's as if everybody needs to know where he or she is, you know what I mean? And this has caused me a lot of anxiety, 'cause for a long time, it's like... let's see, uhm... we're talking about me going through a process of... of self-imposing a kind of "femininity". Real freedom and the self-allowance to be as masculine as I wanted to be... Well, that came with the king thing... after seeing how comfortable I felt when doing this, you know? Then, I suddenly went from there, from realizing how comfortable I felt in that king space, to wondering... Because I know a lot of people that have started a trans process after being a king, too.

Urko experiences gender as a fluctuation, and it is described across fluctuating terms. Terminology that refers to a non-consent with the gender rules, and to an abundance of related terms. He speaks about a quality of identity that is flexible, multidimensional and dynamic, that has variations and that is even open to modifications. Once the concept/category is known, he can observe it, to a higher or lower degree, in other subjects and in his own subjectivity. It is not a body that catches him, but the linguistic limits of the femininity/masculinity. He speaks about the continuity of the drag king in and out of the stage.

An identity that means a “space”. A space in itself that channels the conflict with the sociosexual order. Ahmed states that spaces are not external to our bodies, but rather “like a second skin that unfolds in the folds of the body” (Ahmed

2004:9). Subjectivity considered as a body in a few historically specific coordinates. And she shows the strategy of the agents. One of these strategies is the drag performance. Another one, a transgender process. Identity strategies that exist, coinciding with Bourdieu (1997), because the identity is the space where the social fights of classification are brought into play. Nevertheless, Urko shows that they also generate conflict and contradiction.

- (23) *El conflicto es que parece que tenga que tomar una decisión entre si soy una bollera-butch, o soy una marimacho, o si soy trans (...) Me parece que no soy ni una cosa ni otra. Soy un poco las dos cosas, no sé. ¿Y por qué coño tengo que tomar una decisión? ¿O por qué es necesario estar en un lado o en otro? ¿O por qué...? (...) Yo no quiero ser un hombre. Pero claro, que también hay otros modelos de trans. Y yo creo que precisamente, a lo mejor lo que me interesa, son estos modelos de trans. Pero a lo mejor estos otros modelos de trans, que yo puedo encarnar... Es que no soy trans, soy otra cosa que no sé lo que es, ¿sabes? Porque no tengo los estereotipos de trans. No tengo rechazo a mi cuerpo, no tengo necesidad de nombrarme todo el rato en masculino, ehm... Me gusta... Yo qué sé. Me puede gustar maquillarme los ojos, hay veces que me depilo completamente y hay veces que me dejo el pelo largo completamente.*

The conflict is that it seems I have to make a decision between whether I am a butch, or a dyke, or if I am trans (...) It seems to me that I am neither a thing nor another. I am a bit of both things, I don't know. And why the hell do I have to make a decision? Why are you supposed to be on one side or the other? Or why...? (...) I don't want to be a man. But there are other trans prototypes. There might be one of those that I can adopt... The thing is that I'm not trans, I'm something else but I don't know what it is, you know? Because I don't have the typical trans stereotypes. I don't reject my body, I don't have the urge to name myself in masculine all the time, uhm... I like... I don't know. I may enjoy putting on some make up, sometimes I wax and sometimes I let my hair grow.

Frameworks for understanding disable him, in this very moment, to categorize himself within the story of the experience (Goffman 2006 [1974]). Nevertheless, they orient the interpretation and the arrangement of the experience. Sex, gender and sexuality as restraining concepts that, at the same time, ease up on the linguistic prisons. Fact that is made evident in the experience and the narrative, in the belonging trans or drag king. It does not exist without the support of a political proposal, out of a socioemotional context, without certain codes and language categories whose access is facilitated by the feminisms.

Urko's partial indetermination, the ambiguity and the non-classification — wished and claimed — allow a few interpretations that offer him a possibility of

resistance against the symbolic imposition, a visual and epistemic break. A break that turns into being part of its own definition. Urko, in the last extract, refers to “trans stereotypes”.

It is a body, as Foucault indicates, prisoner of a device of domination, but free at the same time of the same one; an identified but free body of bounding identities, a body that probably they are many bodies, many bodies that discuss between them. (Esteban 2004: 24)

A body free of bounding identities and that seems to hit, again, with the embodied inheritance of the devices of domination. A rhizome, as Deleuze and Guattari (1997 [1976]) recount, which has two directions. The reserve and the habitat, and the way to escape as that of a displacement corridor. He names corporal self-experiences placed in transdiscourses/processes, from which it is not possible to name things within certain social fields, a difference of the frame of statement in heteronormative contexts, or in non- heteronormative contexts. And he seems to show, by doing so, that exclusions are generated in the definition of the parameters of trans identity. An embodiment of ideological and emotional conflicts. Again, he is proving that some reproductive dynamics and some resisting dynamics always go always hand in hand.

- (24) *A veces, cuando estoy en un espacio trans, según en que espacio trans siento como si fuese una persona... De hecho, en un espacio trans-trans, pocas veces me nombro en masculino. Me siento como si fuese una impostura, en comparación a otra gente trans que hay por ahí.*

Sometimes, when I am in a trans space, in some specific trans space... Actually, in a real trans space, I hardly ever name myself in masculine. I feel as if I were a fake in comparison to other trans people there.

A way of categorization that is constructed and reconstructed in the interactions and social exchanges. A negotiation between one's own identity and the heteronormative identity established from the outside. An emotion, however, that is not possible without a social group behind.

- (25) *Yo, en este momento, me cuestioné un montón de cosas, ¿no? Era como, “¡jjo, pues a lo mejor soy trans! ¿Quiero ser trans? ¿Qué significa ser trans? ¿Qué clase de trans quiero ser? ¿El modelo de trans tiene que ver conmigo?” (...) Me gustaría que desde fuera se me leyera como algo confuso, pero no quiero que se me lea como un hombre. Entonces, veo que mucha gente trans quiere ser leída como hombre, pero yo no quiero ser leída como hombre. En todo caso quiero ser leído como una persona trans, una persona transgénero. O, o... o estar en un punto de confusión, pero porque es en el punto en que yo me*

siento. Ehm... Y luego, por otro lado, si quiero que se me lea... O sea, si te leen como hombre, ¿qué tipo de hombre, o qué tipo de trans quiero ser? O sea, ¿que yo no puedo ser un hombre que se pinta los ojos? Antes era una mujer que no me depilaba, ni me maquillaba. ¿Ahora voy a tener que estar afianzando este binomio porque quiero encajar también en un espacio trans? ¿O en un espacio de... de ser un chico? (...) Es como, “ah, pues a lo mejor es que no me atrevo a... a acabar de nombrarme todo el rato en masculino, o no me atrevo a hormonarme”.

At that moment I questioned a bunch of things, ok? It was kind of like “shit, I might be trans! Do I wanna be trans? What does that mean? What kind of trans do I want to be? What kind of trans do I feel identified with?” (...) I’d like to be seen as somebody who is confused, but not as a man. So, I see a lot of trans people willing to be read as men, but I don’t want to be read as a man. If any, I want to be read as a transgender person. Or, or... or as in a moment of confusion, ‘cause that is where I feel I am. Uhm... and then, on the other hand, if I want to be read... that is, if they read you as a man, what kind of man, or what kind of trans do I want to be? That is, can’t I be a guy who puts on make-up? I used to be a woman who wouldn’t wax or put on make-up. Do I have to reinforce this binomial just because I want to fit in a trans space? Or in a “being-a-boy” space? (...) It’s like “alright, it might just be that I don’t dare to... to name myself in masculine all the time, or to take hormones.”

A desire to keep the body and the gender within the area of the intelligibility, though the process of corporal/social construction conveys one’s own identification. The non-identification as a positioning in a political space within a social macro-field that can be hostile towards him. He actually talks about gender prosthesis and corporal techniques that facilitate corporal modifications: shaving, putting on makeup. And it shows a conflict, the reproduction/embodiment of a scientific discourse in order to experience the trans space, the need for a corporal modification.

- (26) “Vale, pues si no tengo yo esa necesidad tan imperativa de cambiar mi cuerpo, a lo mejor es que no soy tan trans”. Quiero decir... Me estoy liando, ¿eh? Quiero decir que... Que no quiero tener una sensación de rechazo a mi cuerpo. Quiero decir, por ejemplo, está claro que a mí me gusta más parecer que no tenga tetas, casi siempre llevo la venda. Pero si algún día no la llevo, no quiero que sea un problema. No quiero que acabe siendo como una gorda que no lleva falda porque no encaja con los roles establecidos, ¿sabes?

“Ok, so if I don’t have this urge to change my body, it’s probably because I’m not so trans”. I mean... I’m getting caught up in this, huh? I mean that... that I don’t want to have a feeling of rejection towards my body. I mean, obviously,

I like pretending I don't have breasts, that's why I usually hide them in a bandage. But if I don't wear the bandage once, I don't want it to be a problem. I don't want to end up being like a fat girl who doesn't wear skirts because she doesn't fit in.

The key is the adjustment of one's own body to a collective identity. And it proves the sociopolitical function of the type of categorization. A contextually adapted strategy: as a woman or as trans. A way of facing the discursive power with a discursive act that is possible due to the direct relationship between the social structures and the individual discursive structures (Van Dijk 1999).

- (27) *Ahora, casi siempre me trato en femenino. Pero por una cuestión que, políticamente, prefiero tratarme yo en femenino, incluso individualmente como grupalmente. También depende del contexto. En algunos contextos, a lo mejor me trato en masculino simplemente para joder. O sea, para joder, para... Para joder, no. Para que la gente se cuestione un poco más, ¿no? Más allá de... Más allá de lo que ve, ¿no?*

Now, I almost always name myself in feminine. It's kind of a political thing, naming myself in feminine, both individually and as part of a group. It also depends on the context. In some contexts, I might name myself in masculine, simply to fuck around. That is, not to fuck around. To get other people to question things, you know what I mean? Beyond what they can actually see, ok?

And he answers my questions. And he speaks about the right to speak when one does not possess a name.

- (28) *Creo que también las personas que estamos ahí en... en conflicto continuo, también tenemos derecho a hablar, ¿no? (...) Quienes no nos sentimos identificados ni con ser hombres ni con mujeres, ni tampoco nos sentimos trans en cuanto que queremos llegar a ser algo que no somos, pues también somos alguien, ¿no? Por así decirlo. Pero claro, no tenemos nombre. ¿Qué nombre? ¿Pues el travesti, o qué soy? Es que ni me... Es que no sé si soy una bollera-butch, si soy marimacho, si soy un trans amariconao, o si... O si simplemente no encajo en ningún lado, y tampoco... No sé. Lo de genderfucker, jode-géneros. O sea, me siento en este lado como que estás jodiendo a... un poco a todas las categorías, ¿no? Pero no desde algo político, sino des de algo que me... que me siento así. I que es una... En realidad es un poco incómodo y es una putada, porque no sabes nunca quiénes son tus aliados.*

I believe that also the people who are in ... in constant conflict, we also have the right to speak, don't you think? (...) Those of us who don't feel identified

either with men nor with women, and we don't even feel trans in the sense that we want to manage to be something that we are not, 'cause we are somebody too, right? So as to speak. But, of course, we don't have a name. What name? So the travesti, or what am I? It's just that... I don't even know if I am a butch, if I am a dyke, if I am a sissy trans, or if ... Or if I simply don't fit anywhere, and ... I don't know.

That thing about being a "genderfucker"... I somehow feel as if I were fucking... all categories here, right? But not from a political perspective but from something... that makes me feel like that. It actually is a bit uncomfortable and shitty, 'cause you never know who your allies are.

Urko refers back to the concept of post-identity: multiple aspects entwined to articulate someone's experience. This lack of will for binarization, stability and identity continuity. A polarization of fixed spaces. He uses the concept of "genderfucker" to generate some ambivalence about having to be situated. "*No quiero sentirlo como una línea, ¿no? Un lado y el otro. Entonces, supongo que ya me habría quedado en un lado o en otro. Y hay gente que me lee en un lado, y hay gente que me lee en otro*".¹²

3.5 I introduce the king in my private life all the time

June 2003. "Pornography, post-pornography: Aesthetics and Politics of sexual representation". A workshop directed by Beatriz Preciado at MACBA, Barcelona. Post-Op is generated there with the intention to take into the streets the concerns of post-pornography in artistic spaces. Something that goes beyond both the academic and the underground spaces of the city. "*Había gente que ya nos conocíamos de espacios como la Bata, de espacios así como queers-undergrounds, o de los encuentros en las okupas, o los encuentros queer. Y que nos conocíamos también de espacios más institucionales como el CCCB o el MACBA*".¹³

She even shows the wider community she is in. A community related to the symbolic universes of audiovisual production, where body experiences, desires, and sexuality are not tied to the generic-sexual rule. "*Ajuntar todos estos cuerpos, ehm... no normativos, estas identidades que dejan de estar clasificadas dentro de los binomios y que crean otro tipo de prácticas mucho más amplias, ¿no? (...) Dinamitar el binomio al máximo posible*".¹⁴

The desire to produce, to exhibit and to spread. A critic to the historical role of porn, that of perpetuating and naturalizing a single way of representing the gender, the sexuality and the desire, a role that ends up by being crucial in the production of the subjectivity. And a visibility of the character and ideological smuggling of these productions. "*Intentar generar otro discurso para hablar de otras... de otras identidades y otras prácticas*".¹⁵ Other bodies, other practices, other sexualities, other identities that aren't classified within the hegemonic model.

A denaturalization of the causes of excitement that homogenizes and regularizes them. A change in the pornographic ellipsis that avoids the psychic space and the feelings of the subjects, that reduces relationships to a mere shock of corporal masses and internal rhythms. Post-porn as a place where one can try to put into practice a series of theoretical postulates of the contemporary feminisms, while at the same time trying to make these postulates visible and turning them into cultural production. Post-porn as a political strategy that develops itself as a spore. “Y utilizo la pornografía porque me parece una estrategia... Me parece una estrategia y una herramienta útil”¹⁶

A first performance, “Sex Toys”. A rhythm that is repeated again and again, showing the performative reiteration of sexual heteronormative techniques, which are consolidated with time.

- (29) *Jugábamos mucho con todo el tema de la repetición, con todo el tema de... de acciones como contra-sexuales, repetitivas. Sexualizábamos movimientos que no tuviesen que ver con... que no tuviesen que ver exactamente con órganos genitales como órganos reproductores. Vamos, sexualizamos cualquier parte del cuerpo, y mecanizábamos como... imitando ese ritmo de la pornografía tradicional.*

We used to play a lot with all repetition, all that thing about... counter-sexual and repetitive actions. We would sexualize movements that were not related to... that were not related to genital organs as breeding organs. That is, we would sexualize any part of the body and we would mechanize as... imitating the rhythm of traditional pornography.

Working through videos, generating body experiences. She uses the term “counter-sexual” that leads us to Preciado’s (2002) concept of “counter-sexuality,” which simultaneously leads us to Foucault’s (2005 [1976]) concept of “counter-productivity.” The creation of new forms of pleasure to find alternatives to modern sexuality.

The counter-sexuality affirms that the desire, the sexual excitation and the orgasm are not but the retrospective products of certain sexual technology that identifies the reproductive organs as sexual organs, to the detriment of a sexualization of the totality of the body. (Preciado 2002: 20)

A movement that blurs the organic centers of production of the pleasure, of production of heterosexual power. Elena takes it from an analysis that turns into repetitive corporal actions or what Butler (2010 [1990]) terms a performativity that obtains its naturalization in the context of a body. Elena takes advantage of the means available in order to generate a different discourse.

- (30) *Ser consciente del... de las estrategias que utiliza la pornografía dominante para legitimar unos cuerpos, unas prácticas (...) La estrategia del post-porno es coger estos medios... (...) Ahora la gente que hace post-porno, la hace en primera persona. Generalmente la misma gente que está detrás de la cámara es la misma gente que pone su cuerpo, ¿sabes? Ehm... Es quien hasta ahora no había estado representado, o era representado por otros (...) quienes producimos nuestra propia pornografía, ¿no?*

To be aware of... of the strategies that the dominant pornography uses in order to legitimize a few bodies, a few practices (...) The strategy of post-porn is to take all these means... (...) Now people who perform post-porn do it in the first person. Normally the people who are behind the camera are the same people who show their bodies, you know? Uhm... It's the people who haven't been represented up to now, or who have been represented by others (...) it's us now producing our own pornography, right?

From invisibility to embodiment. The audiovisual production. Problematizing on a policy about the creation of desire, a production of desire and gender that has crossed along his path.

- (31) *A nosotros ya nos estaba atravesando esta propuesta sin saber ni siquiera qué era post-porno, porque no existía ni siquiera el término en español. Ya estábamos de alguna manera, viviendo o... o sufriendo, o... Bueno, sufriendo no. Estábamos experimentando ya todo este tipo de cosas, ¿no? Todas estas identidades mutantes, todas estas prácticas que no salían a las películas porno (...) Es que esto me ha atravesado mi vida desde el principio. Fue todo construyéndose a la vez, no puedo separar. No puedo separar, lo que te he dicho antes, a nivel político de a nivel personal.*

This offer was already going through us without us even knowing what post-porn was, because there wasn't even a term in Spanish. We were somehow already experiencing or... or suffering, or... well, not suffering. We were experiencing all those things, right? All those mutant identities, all those practices that couldn't be seen in porn movies (...) This has gone through my life from the very beginning. It was all simultaneously constructed and I can't separate it. As I told you before, I can't separate its political meaning from its personal meaning.

An aesthetics as a useful approach to politics where to understand the intimacy. And other spaces/supports of corporal representation, beyond the audio-visual production, that lead to the meeting of looks.

- (32) *Intentaba imitar a la revista Piratte, que es la revista porno más antigua del Estado Español (...) La idea era introducir estas revistas dentro de los quioscos*

o dentro de los Sex Shops, ¿no?, de tal manera que el espectador cuando ve esa portada... Si eres marica y consumes porno habitualmente, esto es una revista porno de jo... de chavalines relacionados con el deporte (...) Y como gran parte de las revistas porno no las puedes abrir antes, la idea era que el espectador se llevase esto en casa, y... (...) no se encontrase con la corporalidad que se esperaba. Y que se plantease, a partir de entonces, hasta qué punto le están poniendo estos cuerpos, o no le están poniendo estos cuerpos.

I was trying to imitate Piratte magazine, which is the oldest porn magazine in the Spanish State (...) The idea was to introduce these magazines in newsagent's or Sex Shops, right?, so that when the spectator sees its front page... If you are a fag and you consume porn habitually, this is a porn magazine of... of young kids into the sports world (...) And since you can't open most porn magazines before, the idea was that the spectator would take this home, and ... (...) wouldn't find the corporality he was expecting. So he would wonder to what extent these bodies were turning him on, or not.

And while he narrates his story, Urko approaches his drag king performance. And he reports his “entry”. His first experience was the Post porn Marathon, after having already heard that name. One single character. A safety zone where to explore new subjectivities that will turn into the epicenter of a continuum of characters, of a field of interpretive possibilities inside his field of corporal modifications. A significant fact, a “corporal milestone” (Del Valle 1997) that repeats itself along the story.

- (33) *Había de buscar unos personajes dentro de la pornografía. Y yo decidí buscarme un personaje que era un policía (...) Era un personaje que me resultaba fácil, porque a mí los movimientos masculinos me resultan muy fáciles. Porque más bien he hecho lo contrario toda la vida, que es como reprimirlos [Laugh]. Pero no había detrás todo lo que hubiese sido un taller king, o una interiorización. Aunque por supuesto, ya para cuando hice el taller post-porno, ya había oído hablar del king (...) “Hay que buscar un personaje”. Vi ropa de policía, empecé a buscarla, y hice el king de... Y fue en ese king cuando me sentí súper a gusto performando masculinidad, de alguna manera, o... o dejándome llevar cuando... Cuando empecé, luego a partir de ahí, a hacer muchos más kings.*

I had to search for characters within pornography. And I decided to get a character who was a police officer (...) It was an easy character for me cause masculine movements were easy for me. Because I've done quite the opposite for all my life, to restrain them [Laugh]. But there wasn't something like a king workshop or an internalization behind it. Though, certainly, I had already heard about the king by the time I did the post-porn workshop (...) “You need

to search for a character". I saw some police officer clothes, I started to look for it, and I did my king... and it was performing that king when I felt great performing masculinity somehow, or... or... just letting myself go when... when I started, from there, to perform many other kings.

Context, moment, interaction. And with all this wealth of experience and all the resources, to shuffle the possibilities and make your choices. An ascending technique, a search of the character. An acquisition of the identity as it is projected when premeditated or experienced. And he narrates a few connections with sensory and emotional experiences. The embodiment of a new physical appearance, of an amplification of the movement and of a few corporal techniques with which he feels comfortable. By doing so, he observes the construction of an alterity familiarized with his body/flesh.

- (34) *'Hijo Puta' simplemente era un policía. Un... Era un policía que era un cabrón (...) Se dedicaba a ir por ahí... Pues a ir liándola con su pistola y todo lo demás.*

'Son of a Bitch' was simply a policeman. A... He was a policeman-asshole (...) He would spend time just hanging around... messing up with his gun and everything.

Continuum. Police officer, police officer-pistol, pistol-dildo. Technologies able to facilitate certain meanings. There's the game of confusion, the will to break down categories. Segments of coexistent meanings — the breasts and the beard — that alter the oneness of a system. An affectation claimed to the logics of the organization of the sensory experience in those with whom he interacts. And he speaks about the evolution of the characters.

- (35) *Algunos sí que son unos kings más... ¿ortodoxos, por así decirlo? (...) O sea, intentaba que pareciese lo más masculino y lo más fiel posible, ¿vale? Pero luego rápidamente, ya empiezo a generar otros... otros personajes, ¿no? Por ejemplo, ese mismo personaje, luego ya en las perfos de Post-Op, ya deriva... Ya ha derivado... Sigue siendo Hijo Puta, pero ya, por ejemplo, no va con las tetas vendadas. Se ha convertido en una especie de mezcla entre policía hijo puta, y... y también marica gay, ¿no?*

Some of the kings are more ... orthodox, so as to say? (...) That is, I tried it to be as masculine and faithful as possible, alright? But then, quickly, I started to create other... other characters, ok? For example, this character, in the PostOp performances, had derived... He still is a Son of a Bitch but he is not wrapping his breasts. He's turned into a mix of son of a bitch police officer and... and a gay fag, right?

Leather, in English. A close relationship with the gay fetishism that Urko knows well. A corporality that sails diffuse and confused in adrift, between two seas. Is it because it is not possible to become someone new within his own amalgam?

- (36) *El Hard Gay, la estética del marica letherón (...) O no sé si empiezo el espectáculo con una camisa, y luego al final me lo quito y estoy con las tetas al aire, ¿no?*

The Hard Gay, the aesthetics of the leather fag (...) I don't remember if I began the show in a shirt and then at the end I took it off and ended up showing my breasts, right?

Unlike Goffmanian “action” or “performance”, the spectator is not asked to believe that the subject possesses the attributes that he/she pretends to possess. On the contrary, he claims the confusion with full conscience. It might be that confusion is the attribute that he pretends to possess and expects the subject to embody it into his space of possibilities. Throughout his story, we can see how Urko is sure about the reality that he puts into the scene — the nonexistence of generic categories that represent the multiplicity of existing bodies.

- (37) *Era un marica letherón. Era un marica de cuero, con una estética BDSM. Entonces, llevaba unas patillorras de estas así, muy grandes. Iba también con un arnés aquí en, en el... en el pecho. Con una gorra así de estas de cuero, rollo BDSM. Iba con látigo, con unos pantalones, con unas botas altas, ¿vale? Era un king que lo que también era... Estaba jugando con todas las categorías, ¿no? Por un lado, era un... era un marica, ¿no? Por otro lado, era un marica con barba pero a la vez tenía tetas.*

He was leathery fag. He was a leathery fag with BDSM aesthetics. Then, he also had huge sideburns. He also wore a harness here on, on the... on the chest. With one of those leather caps, kind of BDSM. He had a whip, pants, high leg boots, ok? He was a king who was also... he was playing around with all the different categories, right? On the one hand, he was a... he was a fag, wasn't he? On the other, he was a fag with a beard and tits.

Technologies of communication, paralinguistic ambiguity in the strategic crossings of representation, and a message without reporting verbally. And other one, that person that looks at him, interprets. Or not. And he does not take care that the public attributes him the no claimed significances.

Later, Carlos appears.

- (38) *Era el king este, como de Pimpinela, que era el que cantaba con la Itzi. Que es un king, así, como muy elegante, así como un poquito flamenco él (...) Ése era bastante ortodoxo, por ejemplo. Sí. Con su camisa, con su chaqueta, con su*

pelo, con sus gafas. Era como un... Era como un king así como... Pues sí, era un rol así, como gitano, como rumbero.

He was that king, similar to the Pimpinela guy, the one who sang with Itzi. He is like a very smart king, a bit "flamenco" (...) He was quite orthodox, for example. Yes. With his shirt, his jacket, his hair, his glasses. He was a king kind of like... kind of like gypsy, kind of like "rumbero".

An offer, the orthodoxy. An apparent ascription to a hegemonic model of masculinity. And he speaks to denaturalize the oppression that is exercised on the corporal image. In the present itinerary, we observe the reappropriation of segments of meaning's chain of the (hetero)normative order in different fields of his experience — the post-porn, the BDSM and the drag king. The drag, a reappropriation of the power devices of the masculinity, to generate another discourse.

Play. He continues reporting me in audio-visual support. And a clairvoyant exemplification of technologies that generates gender, appears. A prosthetic gender, that is not placed originally in the materiality of the bodies. That it's constructed and in-corporated in the organism, at the same time (Preciado 2002). One of the devices across which it is possible, is the medicine.

- (39) *En este caso yo me estoy poniendo barba y me estoy tapando las... las tetas, ¿no? Pero luego a Majo se le ve, por ejemplo, pues depilándose, pintándose las uñas, ehm... pintándose los ojos... Los gestos. Nos ponemos a bailar. Yo me pongo a bailar de una manera masculina y Majo de una manera femenina. Con el fondo de... Este fondo verde era un fondo... Un verde como de hospital. Para hablar un poco de cómo la medicina también genera cuerpos.*

In this case I am growing a beard and I'm wrapping my breasts up, right? But then one sees Majo, for example, waxing, polishing his nails, uhm ... putting on make up... The gestures. We start dancing. I dance in a masculine way and Majo in a feminine way. With a background... this green background was a background... the kind of green you can see in hospitals. Just some small talk on how medicine can also generate bodies.

In the performance, he reveals the exaggeration of the cultural codes of masculinity. Constraints and rigidity in the new context of enunciation. A fact related to self awareness, which I will address later on.

- (40) *Es más fácil... Es más fácil copiar algo que es 'exagerao'. Una masculinidad... Sería, por ejemplo, mucho más difícil hacer un king con pluma y que te salga bien, ¿no? O un king... Bueno, un king con pluma, todavía, pero... Una masculinidad menos exagerada es más difícil de interpretar, a no ser que te salga de una manera muy natural. Todo entrecomillado.*

It's easier ... It's easier to copy something that is exaggerated. A masculinity ... For example, it would be harder to be a camp king and get to do that well, right? Or a king... well, a camp king is not so bad, but... a less exaggerated masculinity is harder to perform unless it comes in a very natural way. Everything in inverted comas.

Elena, with this story, reveals certain limits of the performance, showing the difficulty of incorporating non-hegemonic masculinities, as they do not seem to inundate the imaginary of an everyday life that is lived collectively. An example of this can be found in the following words referring to the collective expression of drag in the public space, after a workshop.

- (41) *Se acaba convirtiendo, simplemente, en una salida al espacio público de una serie de personajes que generalmente están parodiando modelos extremos de masculinidad (...) No estamos generando unas masculinidades que nos gustaría ver, no estamos hablando de otras masculinidades (...) La salida al espacio público es, "¡eh, guapa! ¡Eh, no sé qué!" Que al final es, "a ver, ¡parecemos una panda de garrulos de verdad!"*

It ends up by simply turning into an exit to the public space of a series of characters that are generally parodying extreme models of masculinity (...) We are not generating masculinities that we would like to see, we are not talking about other masculinities (...) The exit to the public space is, "hey, beautiful! Hey, whatever!" That ultimately is, "well, we look like a bunch of rednecks, really!"

And, at the same time, the diffuse border between identity and alterity that it represents does not signal the transition from the self to the other, but the movement of the self towards itself, through the other. Following Augé (2006 [1994]), the performance, simultaneously, seems to bring together the notions of identity and alterity. And we can see how Urko refers to a transition. From performance for the public eye to the public expression of his masculinity.

- (42) *El nombre de Urko sale de un king (...) Urko era un marica vasco, ravelo (...) que le gustaban las revistas porno, que... Era como el más cercano a mí, en cuanto a que era un chavalín, como fiestero, como vasco... Por la estética se parecía también bastante a mí. Por eso al final acabó, como apropiándose un poco de mí, ¿no? Y la gente acabó... acabó llamándome Urko.*

The name of Urko comes from a king (...) Urko was a Basque fag (...) who liked porn magazines, who... was kind of like the closest to me, 'cause he was a kid, a party animal, from the Basque country... His outfit was also very me. That's why, in the end, he took over me, right? And people ended up calling me Urko.

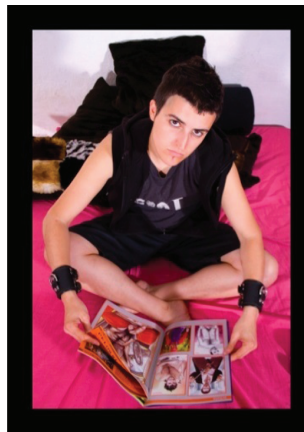
An appropriation. A descent, a possession where the act seems to be imposed from outside. An unknown and unexpected identity, though with full self awareness. And I wonder if there is a conflict between using the term drag king, if the incorporation is already in the everyday life of the subject and is defined already through him. Urko continues narrating as the imaginary drag adapts and is adopted by his everyday life. And it turns out to be slightly new.

- (43) *Creo que Urko, llega un momento, que ya no era un king. O sea, todos los demás eran, eran... eran una impostura, una exageración, una teatralización, ¿vale? Pero llega un momento con Urko, que es que Urko y yo... Es que... Urko no era exageración. Las veces que salía con el personaje de Urko, pocas... Llegaba un momento que ya no era un personaje, era prácticamente yo (...) Pasó de ser un king a ser un trans o algo así, por así decirlo. Quizás por eso Urko, al final, acabó absorbiéndome.*

I believe that Urko, at some point, wasn't a king anymore. I mean, the others were... a deceit, an exaggeration, a dramatization, ok? But it came to a moment with Urko... where Urko and I... Urko wasn't an exaggeration. The few times I would go out in that character... At some point it wasn't a character anymore, it was basically me (...) It went from being a king to being trans or something like that. That might be the reason why he took over me.

A narrated continuum. Marimacho-Drag-Trans, with the corresponding temporary identifications. And Urko's name, an important support in his everyday life. A social identity, nevertheless, that is not constant and durable, as Bourdieu (1997) posits. Nor does it grant him a continuity across the different spaces.

In the present itinerary, we observe how Urko refers, especially, to the term "drag". A category that is not possible to use without being self-aware. Behind lies



Photography by Post-Op

a necessary political and performative stance. A reflection that reveals the lack of impregnation of a language that facilitates the understanding of the concept of drag and that questions the possibility of speaking about drag performance, although similar practices can be observed in other bodies/subjects.

- (44) *El término en sí, drag king, creo que tiene mucho que ver con esa toma de conciencia, ¿no? O sea, no creo que sea simplemente un... un "me disfrazo de chico", y ya está, ¿no? (...) De hecho, los primeros kings siempre son personajes muy exagerados, siempre... O sea, sí que creo que tiene que ver con... con esa toma de... Es que no sé si un king que te sale de una manera así como, entre comillas, natural... O un king que ejercitas en tu día a día, no sé hasta qué punto se puede llamar a esto un drag king, o qué sería esto. Claro, entonces ya empezaríamos a hablar de términos, y así. Yo creo que sí que tiene que haber una... una consciencia política detrás de un drag king. Si hay otra persona que en su vida diaria tiene comportamientos masculinos o que le gusta travestirse pero sin ningún tipo de consciencia política detrás, no lo llamaría un drag king.*

I believe that the term itself, 'drag king', is very related to that raising of awareness, right? That is, I don't think it's just "I'm gonna dress up as a boy" and that's it, right? (...) Actually, the first kings are always very exaggerated characters, always... I mean, I believe it has to do with this... this raising of... I don't know if a king pops up in a very "natural" way... Or a king you perform daily can be called a king. We are starting to talk about terminology here. I believe there must be a political awareness behind a drag king. If there's a person with masculine behaviours in her daily life or that likes cross-dressing but without any kind of political consciousness, I wouldn't call that a drag king.

And he continues.

- (45) *Es que casi todos los kings que he hecho, excepto... excepto quizás los kings que yo he hecho a nivel privado y así, que también puedo utilizar para quedar con alguien, o lo que sea... Que a lo mejor hago unos kings como más, más... más ortodoxos, ¿no? Porque son kings para el espacio público, y a lo mejor no quiero ir sin camiseta, o... Bueno, en el espacio público, quiero decir, voy a cenar. Ir sin camiseta en el espacio público es algo que... que he hecho muchas veces, ¿no? Pero si es a nivel privado, que quedas para cenar con alguien y te apetece, pues suelo hacer un king un poco más ortodoxo, ¿no?*

Almost all the kings I've performed, except... except for maybe those I've performed privately, those I can also use when meeting up with somebody, or whatever. Maybe I do kings like more, more... more orthodox, right? Because they are kings for the public space, so maybe I don't wanna be there without a t-shirt, or... When I say public space, I mean going out for dinner. To be

*shirtless in public is something... something I've done a bunch of times, right?
But on a private level, when you're meeting somebody for dinner and you feel
like, I tend to do a more orthodox type of king.*

Elena speaks about two types of background. An informal language to express herself — ordinary — and a different language used in the performances. In parallel, different stemming ideas. On the one hand, regarding the aforementioned dinner — with a person with whom she has a sexual and affective relation — the challenge of the traditionally sexualized image. A destabilization of the monopoly of masculinity, and the power of the eroticism of the drag. A corporal possession of the night. An access/exploration of spaces that he does not know, that there is no possibility of crossing. A street/a night that cannot be understood without Teresa del Valle's concept of "generic chronotope" (del Valle 1993). On the other hand, as we have observed in the previous extract, a drag king deforming himself before someone else makes him unrecognizable and intolerable (León 2011). And I intuit that Urko is responding to the processes of perception, production and deformation of individuals and groups, based on certain criteria that inform the entity of the "monster".

Using the analysis of Viveiros de Castro, of which the narrated performance reminds me, the human body is seen as the place of confrontation of animality versus humanity.

The body is the subject's fundamental expressive instrument and at the same time the object 'par excellence', that which is presented to the sight of the other. It is no coincidence, then, that the maximum social objectification of bodies, their maximal particularization expressed in decoration and ritual exhibition is at the same time the moment of maximum animalization. (Viveiros de Castro 1998: 480)

A continuum, and at the same time, a space of confrontation. Animality and humanity, both addressed by Haraway's (1995 [1991]) analysis in "*Cyborg Manifesto*". Human body — Cyborg body. Bodies without gender, a mix of machines and organisms. New anatomies of possible bodies in a post-generic world. Hybridization between nature and technology, establishing a strong parallelism between animality — humanity. Beings that become flexible, mutable, transformable.

- (46) *El king lo introduzco un montón en mi vida privada. De hecho, últimamente lo introduzco más en mi vida privada que en las perfos, porque posiblemente ya no estamos haciendo tantas perfos, ¿no? O los kings que hay son tan locos ya, que ya no sé si se podrían leer como kings, ¿no? Por ejemplo, ya a partir de 'Fantasía post-nuclear', o yo qué sé, de la perfo de la Virreina, o así, ya son kings que... A ver, llevo una cabeza de caballo, llevo a lo mejor ocho tetas, llevo un... Ya... Ya no sé pueden leer bajo parámetros de king, porque ya son*

totalmente mutantes, ¿no? (...) A nivel privado, pues sí me interesa porque... Bueno, me amplía un montón todo el tema de juego de roles y todo lo que es el imaginario sexual. A nivel privado, me amplía un montón, ¿no? Entonces, puedo utilizarlo tanto como para... Pues el otro día quedé para cenar y me fuí con uno... uno de mis kings. Es como... El King elegante (...) Me divierte mucho salir con el king al espacio público a hacer una cosa tan sencilla como ir a cenar. O sea, no al espacio público en plan "voy a quemar las calles", en plan dentro de una perfo o dentro de una... de un interés de generar mucho... mucha expectativa. Sino, simplemente, coger e irme a cenar tranquilamente a un restaurante, y haber reservado mesa con el nombre de mi king. Y sentarme a cenar tan tranquilamente.

I use the king a lot in my private life. Actually, I've been using it more in my private life than in performances, maybe because we are not doing so many performances now, right? Or maybe 'cause kings now are so nuts that I don't know if they can still be read as kings, right? For example, from 'Post-nuclear fantasy' or that performance in Virreina, the kings are... like "I wear a horse head", "I have 8 tits", "I have..." They can't be read under the king parameters because they are complete mutants, aren't they? (...) Privately, I'm interested because it broadens my roles and my sexual imaginary. So, I can use it as much as... the other day I went out for dinner and I used one of my... one of my kings. It's like... the Smart king (...) I really enjoy going out into a public space as a king and doing such a simple thing as having dinner. I mean, not a public space in the sense "I'm gonna burn the city", in a performance or within... an interest to generate... a lot of expectations. Simply going out for dinner and booking a table with my king's name. And having a nice and quiet dinner.

Role-plays. The widening of margins. Experimentation with the whole spectrum of desires and possibilities of his everyday life.

And a public world. Different stages of representation and interaction. The cruising zone of Montjuïc. A cartography that has to be complemented with the discourses and practices of the subjects. A claimed territory that is codified in, from and for the masculine look, despite being a place where the marginal/abject bodies of homosexual interactions circulate. Elena shows us, again, a place where the incursion, the intrusion, the invasion, the pollution and the infraction is severely punished.

Montjuïc, a place where familiar faces and strange faces come to be accessible for each other. However, she cannot be accessible, she cannot show the identity in which her naked body would be read. And as the interactions demonstrate, if what is perceived comes from a source identified with the own context of reference, then it is allowed. However, if a body/subject inserts itself in the territory of

the Other, marked by the lack of identification and belonging — catalogued as a potential opponent or an enemy — the perception enters the field of the offense, aggression, threat and risk (León 2011). And Elena is aware of the violence that is produced as a result of unintelligibility, processes that are put in motion, the context's emotional reactions as a result of the situation.

(47) *El otro día, por ejemplo, quedé en la zona de cruising de Montjuïc (...) No suelo ir en plan voyeur, a no ser que haya quedado ya con alguien. Entonces, si he quedado con alguien, utilizamos la zona porque nos mola la zona, y... Pero no suelo intentar ligar con alguien que no conozco porque... porque no quiero buscarme un problema. O sea, el tema es muy sencillo, la gente está buscando un cuerpo de tío. O sea, si yo ligo con alguien ahí, me puedo acabar ganando un par de ostias porque la gente está buscando otro tipo de cuerpo. Si hubiese una zona de crusing, pues... genderfucker... [Laugh]*

For example, the other day, I had an appointment at the cruising area in Montjuïc (...) I don't usually go there as a voyeur unless I'm meeting somebody. If I'm meeting somebody, we use the area because we like it... But I don't usually try to hook on somebody I don't know 'cause... 'cause I don't wanna get in trouble. It's actually very easy, people are looking for a male body. So, if I hook on somebody there, I can end up beaten up 'cause people are looking for a different type of body. If there was a cruising area, then... genderfucker...[Laugh]

A margin of risk in which one is subjugated. Once again, the vulnerability of a fixed territory. The combination of suspicion and the perception of threats, makes Urko activate mechanisms in front of an Othis that can catch him by surprise and can demand from him an alertness to possible reactions that can arise by his mere presence (Goffman 1971). Given that he is placed out of the mechanisms of “normalization” (he “isn't” a “man”, he doesn't have a “trans body” that can be “normalized”). These actions will force Urko to keep his dramaturgic discipline in preparation for any unforeseen circumstance, and at the same time, they constitute a necessary element that will reinforce his identity.

In the present story, we observe the affirmative dimension of power. He also gives form to the silence, to the opposition of fear — not fear, to invisibility. The “Law of Silence”, a particular way of communication. A constitutive element through which cruising zones are defined (Langarita 2010). And he shows the mastery of a language, of expression and movement. But not the voice, for he is to remain silent. A variety of information, of data, that he hopes to control while in the presence of others.

- (48) *Si estás viendo a alguien de un poco de lejos, con la estética que suelo llevar yo... Llevo la barbita, un poquito, y todo. Generalmente me confunden con un chapero jovencito. Porque hay un montón de chaperos, ¿no? Generalmente cuando hay un chavalín tan jovencito, es que estará chapeando (...). Sí que me leen como chico, porque... porque veo como que me siguen o me piden fuego, o no sé qué.*

If you see someone in the distance with my outfit... I even have a small beard. I am usually taken for a young rent boy. Because there is a heap of rent boys, you know? Generally when there is a youngster, it means he is a rent boy (...). Yes, they read me as boy, because ... because I see it in the way they follow me or ask me for a lighter, or whatever.

The different transitions and situations of ritual interaction provoke that the bodies experience intensity at a sensory/emotional level.

- (49) *Quedo con alguien, que a lo mejor... que conozco. Nos pone follar en el espacio público y nos parece guay ir ahí. Porque a mí de alguna manera me gusta que me miren (...). Y ahí, pues sí que saco los kings porque a mí los kings maricas me encantan (...). Y, y... y encima, le pedí a Diego, ropa. Porque claro, el problema del king y del rol-playing y todo, es que llegas a un agotamiento mental ya, que es como en plan, “¡por favor!” (...). Un king que tiene de skin, que es muy bueno, que me gusta mucho como... como me queda. Y nada. Pues... pues nos fuimos a Montjuïc con... (...). Está muy de moda en las pelis porno y dentro del ambiente marica, la estética skin. Skin, skin... skin de toda la vida (...). El de las botas, rapao, y no sé qué.*

I'm meeting somebody I might... not even know. Having sex on a public space turns us on and we agree on going there. I kind of like having people looking at me (...). So I use my kings there because I love fag kings (...). Besides, I borrowed some clothes from Diego. Cause the thing with the king and the role-play and everything is that you end up mentally exhausted, kind of like “Please!” (...). A skin king that he has, very cool, I really like the way it... it fits me. And that's it. We... went to Montjuïc with... (...). Skin outfits are very fancy now in porn movies and gay circles. Skin, skin... the old school skin (...). Wearing boots, shaven headed, whatever.

And he continues after demonstrating, too, the social network and the personal exchanges that appear along with the practices in which he is immersed.

- (50) *O sea, para mí el king es muy importante dentro del rol-play. Dentro del rol-play, dentro del BDSM, o del rol-play dentro de... De follar y de darle un poco de aliño al polvo, ¿no? (...). El juego era, evidentemente, que el skin me iba a meter una paliza [Laugh]. O sea, el juego era que, vale, él estaba de*

ligoteo y así, pero él era quien iba a tener una posición. O sea, él es quien me iba a dominar a mí. Aunque él no estaba llevando una estética de skin, skin-matamaricas, ¿eh? Era una estética skin dentro del ambiente marica.

For me, the king is very important within the role-play. Within the role-play, within the BDSM, or within the role-play of ... of having sex and spicing it up a little bit, right? (...) The role-play was, obviously, that the skin was going to beat the shit out of me [Laugh]. So, the role-play was kind of like, he was flirting or so, but he was the one who would have a position. He was the one who was going to dominate me. Though he didn't wear a 'kill-the-fags-skin' outfit, huh? It was a skin outfit, but a skin from the gay world.

A corporal communicative act. A corporal movement as a cultural exercise. It is intended, directed and organized from self awareness. A ritual language — to lick boots — that indicates the rules that the participants have to follow during the interaction. A ritualized indication that breaks with the possible rules that regulate everyday life interactions with sexual purpose. And a corporal masculine attitude that is rendered more extreme than in other areas of the social sphere.

- (51) *¿Estos personajes que te generan? Pues, es que rápidamente hay un rol, ¿no? O sea, su personaje es mucho más potente que el mío, ¿no? Entre un... un... La ropa, las botas... Todo, ¿sabes? O sea, ya el personaje en sí te genera una actitud. Entonces, rápidamente, en esta relación es obvio que yo voy a acabar chupando botas, con su bota en la cabeza. Y que el juego va a ser un juego de rol-play, de amo-sumiso, lo que quieras. Y que esa persona va a estar en el... en el lado top, ¿no?*

What do these characters give you? Well, there's an immediate role, isn't it? I mean, his character was way more powerful than mine, right? With that... that... the clothes, the boots... Everything, you know? I mean, the character itself generates an attitude in you. So, a minute later, it was obvious that I was going to end up licking boots, with his boot on my head. And that the game was going to be a role-play, master-submissive, whatever. And that person was going to be on the... "top" side, right?

A game of domination/submission. And kings that incorporate a different position while interacting with other bodies. The current narrative shows how a stance, a series of gestures, changes meaning according to the context in which it is inserted (Viñuales & Sáez 2004 [1996]). A change in the semiotic meaning that takes place within the re-contextualizing process, within the production and interpretation of meaningful objects, languages, meaning providing systems and related processes.

A fact that is complemented, too, when Urko continues narrating a trajectory inscribed in his own skin, and that shows his limits when establishing the game.

Despite being able to change the context and the meaning, the weight of a history is patent.

- (52) *La posición, yo king y la otra persona haciendo femme... y yo dominación, no existe porque no me pone nada. Tengo demasiados años de... de feminismo detrás y de, de... Hay prejuicios que no me puedo quitar. O sea, me sigue costando ver alguien que tiene una posición de dominación, y que es un personaje masculino, sin que sea una práctica marica (...). Generalmente, mis prácticas king, generalmente suelen ser con otra persona que generalmente suele tener prácticas king. O sea, suelen ser prácticas maricas king (...). Y cuando no es así, cuando la otra persona no ha estado de king, ha estado de femme o llámalo 'x', ehm... mi personaje es sumiso. Siempre.*

That position, me as a king and the other person as a femme... and me as the dominant one doesn't exist because it doesn't turn me on at all. I've got too many years of... of feminism on my shoulders and I, I... I can't get rid of some of my prejudices. I mean, it's hard for me to see someone in a dominant position, someone who is a male character, without seeing it as a gay practice (...). Generally, my king performances, usually take place with another person who usually does king performances. That is, they are usually gay king practices (...). And whenever it's not like that, when the other person hasn't performed any king, has performed a femme or 'whatever'... then my character is submissive. Always.

A reorganization of a small social system based on a methodical and organized action. And a new one is created. And I wonder: does the role play/in-corporation lead him to the situations, or are the situations that lead him to the in-corporation/role play?

- (53) *El otro día aquí en casa, yo tenía... Yo iba de king... O sea, yo iba de skin. Entonces, yo estaba llevando las riendas del juego, ¿no? Entonces pues... Es que muchas veces improvisas, ¿no? Por ejemplo, la vez de... La vez de aquí en casa, fue de repente... Pues, la otra persona había salido y dijo que volvía en unas horas. Dije "ah, va, cuando vuelva le voy a hacer un king", ¿no? (...) Te inventas una historia en plan, "¿de dónde vienes? ¡Vienes del parque! ¿Qué has estado, chupándosela a alguno? ¡Me tienes harto!". Y pam, pam, pam. Y a partir de ahí vas generando... Entonces claro, el king te da mucho juego a generar otras situaciones y otras prácticas.*

The other day at home, I had... I was performing as a drag king... I mean, I was dressed as a skin. Then, I was the one in charge of the game, wasn't I? So then... the thing is that sometimes you improvise, right? For example, that one particular time... here at home, it was suddenly... Well, the other person was

out and had told me he'd be back in a couple of hours. I told myself "oh, c'mon, I'll perform as a king for him when he's back, right? (...) You make up a story kind of like "where were you? You were in the park! What've you been doing, giving somebody a blowjob? I'm sick of you!" And bang, bang, bang. And you start creating from there... and then, of course, the king helps you to create other situations and practices.

A manner of speaking. A direction of the voice. Throughout this narrative, we can observe how not all kings are created from a same place. "*Yo tengo súper... en la cabeza presente, la estética del porno... del porno marica. Incluso la estética del porno mainstream marica, que me encanta, ¿no?*"¹⁷ And the aesthetics associated with the definition of drag. "*Otras veces, es que de repente te encuentras algo que automáticamente dices, 'esto para un king'*".¹⁸ The representation of masculinity in a plastic way, a corporal way, through symbols of condensation, saturated with qualities and emotions that are capable of impregnating themselves all kinds of behaviors and situations that will come to life on stage (Turner 1999 [1967]).

(54) *Íbamos a cenar y fue como... Yo sabía que a la otra persona le gustaba... (...) Y dijo "¡ay qué guapo estás con el traje-chaqueta, no sé qué! ¡A ver si te veo algún día!" Pues ya está, el día que vaya a cenar, voy de king con el traje-chaqueta. Entonces me busqué... Éste ya no la tenía, me busqué otro traje-chaqueta. Y por ejemplo, era como el personaje ideal para una cena, ¿no? Para una cena, que era una cena en un sitio elegante.*

We were going to have dinner and it was like ... I knew that the other person liked me... (...) And he said "you look great in that suit, blahblahblah! I'd like to see you one day!" There we go, I'll perform as a king in a suit the day we meet for dinner. So then I got myself... I got myself a new suit. And that was like the perfect character for a dinner, right? For a smart dinner.

In the previous extract, we find what Goffman (2009 [1959]) terms as "fake spectator," who cooperates intimately, and offers the visible model of response that the performers are expecting during their interactions. Or rather, a type of necessary response to ensure the development of their performance, so that the acted make-believe does not stray away from reality. Each one of them knows the other one's piece of information. They become, in this way, a "unit of interaction" (Goffman 2009 [1959]: 93).

And she continues narrating. A first step of the ritual operation. "*Empiezo, siempre, eligiendo los gallumbos adecuados para el personaje, que es muy importante [Laugh] (...) Es que a mí me gustan mucho los gallumbos. Entonces, cada uno tiene su historia*".¹⁹ A skin that covers the body, and an outfit that covers the skin. An object of fetish. An incorporation of ritual objects that allow Urko to represent a

reality, a movement and a corporal technique. And a physical image, his image, which is summoned by the aesthetics and the corporality constructed by the dominant gender-sexual model. A chest that signifies “femininity” and whose structure Urko, day after day, seeks to deconstruct. “*Te cambia la manera de caminar, te cambia todo. Es que el vendaje, yo lo llevo prácticamente todos los días. Entonces, lo noto en cuanto que me gusta más como me construye el cuerpo, y me gusta más como me queda la ropa*”.²⁰

Objects that, necessarily, imply a subject. Objects of desire. I agree with Viveiros de Castro (2010:43), “material incarnations of non-material intentions”. And which influence our thinking, temporarily. Or rather, they remind you what you become. A symbol that will have a projection of ritual efficiency, beyond the context of the act.

(55) *Eres consciente, todo el rato, que llevas algo (...) Llevas algo porque lo notas y te roza. Entonces, ya te cambia la manera... Hasta te cambia la manera de andar y todo, ¿no? Y a parte, ya estás pensando todo lo que vas a hacer con el paquetito que llevas allí. Estás, ¡ta, ta, ta...! Maquinando. O sea, no puedes llevarlo y no estar pensando en ello (...) Como lo estás notando todo el rato, estoy todo el rato tomando consciencia de que estoy. De que voy a jugar o que estoy jugando, o lo que sea.*

You are aware, all the time, that you're wearing something (...) You're wearing something because you can feel it and it rubs your skin. So the way you walk changes... Even the way you walk and everything, right? Besides, you keep on thinking about all the things you're gonna do with the little packet you're carrying. You're ban, ban, ban...! Plotting in your mind. That is, you can't wear it and not to think about it (...) Since you can feel it all the time, you're aware all the time. Aware that I'm gonna play or that I'm already playing, or whatever.

The innocence will not characterize the action, for there is an absolute awareness of why the object is used and played with it. The phallus — a prosthetic phallus — does not exist in isolation, but it takes its meaning in relation to another opposite symbol, making very important to analyse everything that hides beneath its “natural” appearance — the semiotic infrastructure studied by Sperber (1978). And he is opposed to the term “dick” that I use when we speak about it. Urko uses the term “dildo”, demonstrating a striking relation to Preciado’s analysis.

The fact of having ‘extracted’ from the body, in the shape of a dildo, the organ that institutes the body as ‘naturally masculine’, must be considered to be a structural and historical decisive act between the processes of deconstruction of heterosexuality as nature. (Preciado 2002: 64)

And the last thing.

- (56) *Lo último es la barba o... Sí, sí, porque el paquete me lo pongo prácticamente cuando me pongo el pantalón, ya. Depende el paquete, también, qué paquete lleva. Porque claro, si sé que voy a... Si... Si sé que voy a... Si ya sé que voy a tener un rol-playing que yo, lo más seguro, que acabe teniendo una posición sumisa, pues no llevo el arnés duro, no llevo el arnés de cuero. Pero si sé que voy a hacer un rol-playing... Yo voy por ejemplo de skin en el rol-play, pues ya me voy con el arnés. Con el arnés de cuero y con la polla... Con la polla, no. Con el dildo... Con el dildo-dildo. Sino, pues, simplemente me meto algo que me haga paquete y ya está. Porque como son esos dildos duros, es muy incómodo si no lo voy a utilizar.*

The last thing is the beard... Yes, yes, 'cause the "little packet" goes once I'm wearing my pants. It depends on the kind of packet, too. 'Cause obviously if I know I'm gonna... If... If I know I'm gonna... If I already know I'm gonna do a role-play, I'll very likely end up in a submissive position, so I don't grab the rough harness, I don't grab the leather one. But if I know I'm gonna do a role-play... where I'm a skin, then I grab the harness. With the leather harness and the dick... Not the dick, no. The dildo. With the dildo-dildo. If not, I simply use something that works as a packet and that's it. Those rough harnesses are very uncomfortable to wear if you're not gonna use them.

The content of knowing one's own phallus possesses a high degree of consistency and perseverance across the total symbolic system (Turner 1999 [1967]). And its form — through a harness or any another material²¹ — can remain open to a multiplicity of meanings — as a center of power, as an object of desire, as an element of play, etc. An extension of the anatomy, mutable and migratory. An aesthetic-technological possibility within a context full of restrictions.

And he narrates the processes that characterize the in-corporation of the drag. A complex sequence of playful, studied episodes. Sometimes, very detailed.

- (57) *Más elaborados, por ejemplo, cuando tú ya tienes en la cabeza lo que vas a hacer, tienes el personaje y lo tienes todo, ¿no? Es decir, vas a hacer una sesión. Y te vas a una mazmorra, o conviertes tu habitación en una mazmorra, o tu terraza, o lo que sea, ¿no? O te vas a hacer cruising. O sea, ya tienes en la cabeza el personaje que tú vas a llevar, el que va a llevar la otra persona... O por lo menos el tuyo lo tienes súper claro. Ya tienes la maleta con todos tus juguetes. Y ya tienes en la cabeza, más o menos, el guión de la historia que tú quieres, ¿vale?*

More developed, for example, when you already know what you're going to do, you have the character and you have everything, right? That is, you are going to have a session. And you go to a dungeon, or you turn your room

into a dungeon, or your terrace, or whatever it is, right? Or you go cruising. I mean, you already know the role you are playing, the role the other person is playing... At least you know yours pretty well. You already have a suitcase ready with all your toys. In your mind, you kind of know the script of the story you want, alright?

Is it the drag king performance what generates these practices, or are these practices what generate the king performance?

- (58) *Mi king me genera un tipo de práctica. Porque mi king es un rol, y según el rol que tenga... Es como si vas de... No vas a tener las mismas prácticas si tienes un personaje de enfermera, ¿no?, que si tienes un personaje de domadora de caballos, ¿sabes? Entonces, no tiene nada que ver si tengo un king que, por ejemplo, es un adolescente, que un king que es, por ejemplo, un carnicero. O un king... El king te genera las prácticas (...) Quiero decir, hay diferentes prácticas que se repiten, pero claro, según el personaje, a lo mejor ya te olvidas de unas prácticas y te centras solamente en unas en concretar.*

My king inspires me a specific kind of practice. Because my king is a role, and according to his role... It's the same when you are... You are not having the same kind of practices if your character is a nurse, are you?, or a horse breaker, you know? So, it's not the same having a king who is, for example, a teenager, than a king who is, for example, a butcher. Or a king... the king inspires you the practices (...) I mean, some practices are repeated but, of course, according to the character you might decide to forget about some practices and to focus on others.

Urko shows us, at the same time, a conception of the role that is an integral part of his definition of drag. And an interpretive representation of the experience and of the cultural codes. He speaks about it, too, informed by the senses.

- (59) *Según qué personaje... Según que botas tenga, ¿no?, pues voy a generar unas prácticas de un tipo, u otro tipo de prácticas con estas botas, ¿no? No es lo mismo llevar unas botas de skin, ¿no?, que llevar unas zapas. O sea, el tipo de códigos y el tipo de prácticas que hay dentro de esos personajes, no tiene nada que ver, ¿no? (...) No tiene nada que ver ese fetichismo con el fetichismo de las botas. De las botas de cuero, del olor a cuero.*

Depending on the character... depending on the boots he wears, right? I'm going to generate different types of practices with different types of boots, right? Wearing a pair of skin boots or a pair of sneakers is not quite the same, is it? I mean, the codes and the practices within those characters are completely different, aren't they? (...) That fetishism has nothing to do with the fetishism over the boots. The leather boots, the smell of leather.

We can see how Urko speaks to us about the transit between the inside and outside of the stage. The possibility of transition is easy. And the “façade of consensus” (Goffman 2009 [1959]), the appearance of agreement that remains when he abandons the character. Thus, it is evident that the initial projection does not commit him to be what he intends to be, in the context of interaction that he is narrating. Within the interaction, there are no facts that contradict or raise doubts about the projection, there is no anomie in this little social system, contrary to a public space that can appear hostile (as we have observed regarding the cruising zones).

- (60) *Por ejemplo, el otro día que me fuí a cenar. Pues vale, pues estuve haciendo el king al principio. Luego ya, volví a ser... ¿Sabes? No estuve con ese personaje todo el rato como sí lo estoy si estoy en una sesión, o algo así, ¿sabes? La mayoría de los kings sí que son, para mí, personajes. Pero ya te digo, que ahí yo... Pero el otro día no sería un king. Sí, para mí, la mayoría de los kings son personajes. La otra cosa es lo que te comentaba antes, que llega un momento en que los kings me ocuparon tanto en mi vida, que hay muchas cosas de mis kings que lo tengo tan apropiado, ¿no?*

For example, the other day I went out for dinner. Well, I was performing as a king at the beginning. Later, I went back to being... you know? I didn't stick to my character as if I were in a session, or something like that, you know? Most of the kings are characters for me. There's also what I was telling you before, it got to a moment in time where the kings meant so much in my life, that I have apprehended many things from my kings, right?

4. Conclusion

I believe it is important to highlight that, on the one hand, sex, gender and sexuality are confining concepts but, on the other hand, they relieve us from linguistic pressures. Experiencing and narrating the becoming of drag king does not exist without the support of a political proposal, without some language codes and categories facilitated by feminisms. It is a process of adaptation and survival of the bodies to the environment from one's self-awareness of how corporal performance is established. This is how an intertwined double dimension comes up: on the one hand, the statement of the “I”; on the other hand, the positioning taken towards the interpretation of one's own identity as provided by the environment. Thus, an identity-building process emerges that is based on contexts and moments, interactions and practices.

Becoming drag king implies dissociating the body/bodies from biomedical categorizations. The corporal surface is shown as “natural” but at the same time

turned into a variable limit, a surface of regulated (and regulating) permeability. Here, there is a display of corporal displacement, which then highlights the performing features of what is presented as “natural”. This represents the destabilization of the monopoly of the masculinity and its subsequent denaturalization process.

The vital and political processes of those who perform drag king acquire consciousness from historicity and are also oriented towards the margins of the (hetero) normative construction of feminine subjectivity, independently from their self-definition in relation to gender identities and sexual desires. A place and a movement that becomes fundamental for the individuals in order to carry out and to regenerate resistant practices. In other words, it is not a lineal process (practices justified by feminisms and transfeminisms) but as a circular process (feminisms and transfeminisms will justify the resistant practices and, at the same time, will nourish the appearance of new ones). This resistance is not only discursive, but also somatic and corporal.

Notes

* This article was translated by Vanesa Toquero.

1. Esteban's concept of “in-corporation” or “embodiment” (Esteban 2004) will be used throughout the text when referring to imprinting experiences, facts and cultural creations into one's own body, one's own physicality. Embodiments that often show up in the shape of natural axioms and that always refer to a community.
2. The classification of anomalies first appeared as *Variedades, Vicios de Conformación, Heterotaxias y Monstruosidades*. Canguilhem (1978 [1966]) reviews Saint-Hilaire's concept of anomaly.
3. B&D (bondage and discipline) with S&M (sadosomochism or sadism and masochism, or as a compound initialism from B&D, D&S (dominance and submission), and S&M.
4. Goffman defines ‘body gloss’ as “the process whereby an individual pointedly uses overall body gesture to make otherwise unavailable facts about his situation gleanable” (Goffman 1971:11).
5. The article presents the dialogical encounter between Elena/Urko and the ethnographer. Following Esteban (2011), I will use italics for my comments, keeping Elena/Urko's words in regular typeface to structure the continuity and coherence of the article. A translation of Elena/Urko's comments appears at the end of every paragraph. Any of Elena/Urko's comments that are included in my remarks as the ethnographer are translated in a footnote.
6. “Elena is simply the name I was baptized with, and well, the comfortable name. But actually, it isn't comfortable for me at all”.
7. “In my school, the girls would trade cards, would jump rope and a few other things. Probably, the most, the craziest thing that they would do, was to play hide and seek, you know what I mean?”

8. "I used to hang out with the boys (...) They would call me a 'tomboy', a 'butch'"
9. "*Catacumenao* is used in the confirmation service (...) I have always been some what 'gafotas' (nerd) and I used to go there just to poke the... the catechist, right?"
10. "It was like the Bronx".
11. Reversible Organization of Intermediate and Artistic Genders.
12. "I don't want to see it as if there was a line, right? One side and another side. In that case, I would have stayed on one side or the other. Some people believe I belong to one side, others believe I belong to the other one".
13. "There were people we already knew from places such as "La Bata", queer-underground places, squatting gatherings, or queer gatherings. We already knew them from more institutionalized spaces such as the CCCB or MACBA".
14. "Putting all these bodies together, uhm... bodies who are not normative, these identities that are not classified within the binomials anymore and that constitute a different and much wider type of practices, right? (...) To blow up the binomial at the maximum possible level".
15. "To try to generate a different kind of discourse in order to talk about the others ... about other identities and other practices".
16. "I use pornography because it looks like a strategy to me... It looks like a strategy and a useful tool for me".
17. "I have very... present in my mind, the aesthetics of porn ... of gay porn. Even the aesthetics of mainstream gay porn, which fascinates me, right?"
18. "Some other times, you suddenly come across something that you say right away, 'this is for a king'".
19. "I always start by choosing the underpants that best fit the character, which is something very important [Laugh] (...) I like underpants very much. So, each pair has its own story".
20. "It changes the way you walk, it changes everything. I wear the bandage almost everyday. I'm aware that I'm wearing it because I like the way it shapes my body, and I like the way my clothes fit me".
21. In the interview, Urko explains that he used to utilize a sock. Although during the fieldwork the ethnographer observed that the material that they use more frequently is a condom stuffed with cotton.

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