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Cinema and Education: a history of the discourses in favor of cinematography in schools

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ABSTRACT – Cinema and Education: a history of the discourses in favor of cinematography in schools. The cinema since its invention was quickly used to educate. Although it was also rejected, it has never stopped being used at school. Of course, this dynamic was not natural. It was the result of approaches and ideas that interpreted it as positive to achieve moral, aesthetic and cognitive objectives. Through a historical perspective, this text presents seven educational, technological, cultural and economic arguments that explain the continuity of this relationship, that is, the reasons, events and representations that throughout history have determined the use of cinema in the school.

Keywords: Film Education. History of Cinema. Education History. Pedagogy. Media Teaching.

RESUMEN – Cine y Educación: una historia de los discursos a favor del cinematógrafo en la escuela. El cine desde su invención fue rápidamente capitalizado para educar. Pese a que también se le tachó de perjudicial nunca ha dejado de usarse en la escuela. Por supuesto, esta dinámica no fue natural. Respondió a enfoques, ideas e intuiciones que lo leyeron como positivo, educativo y afín a objetivos moralistas, estéticos y cognitivos. Mediante una perspectiva histórica y una revisión documental, en este texto se plantean siete tramas educativas, tecnológicas, culturales y económicas que explican la continuidad de esta relación, es decir, las razones, saberes, fenómenos y representaciones que a lo largo de la historia han determinado la incorporación del cinematógrafo a la escolaridad.

Palabras clave: Educación Cinematográfica. Historia del Cine. Historia de la Educación. Pedagogía. Enseñanza en Medios.

Introduction

Cinema entered my world at the heart of a sad and anguished life and I realized very quickly that it would be my lifeline. Nothing and no one said this to me, I did not share it with anyone (neither adult nor my age), but I clung to it as a lifesaver (Bergala, 2007, p. 18).

At present, we are witnessing a boom in cinema and education, clearly heterogeneous in its reasons and effects, as it had already happened before in many places where the invention of the Lumière was used, suggested or integrated into schooling. This recent fact is traceable in the increasing promulgation of public policies, texts, articles, networks and congresses that can give the impression of a great consensus and understanding in relation to the implementation of films in schools. Nothing could be further from reality. The school promotion of celluloid is complex, it lacks clarity and is marked by a set of nuances and by different disciplinary and institutional points of view that sometimes become contradictory. In other words, the entry of cinema into school has been mediated by dissimilar and conflicting interests depending on the function, on the use, and on the reason of kinetic images for children and adolescents.

Therefore, this operation has never been spontaneous or unrelated to a political, educational, moral or aesthetic purpose. Every historical moment where there is evidence that cinema was implemented in school coincides with the occurrence and socialization of a way of thinking and of the punctual exploitation of filmographies in schooling. Whether in the immediacy of its birth, or in the 20's, during the postwar, or in the first decades of the 21st century, cinema entered the school thanks to a context that allowed it, or that endorsed its deployment to enjoy some interest: commercial, pedagogical, behavioral, etc. This process did not occur in a social, economic and cultural vacuum. In this regard, through a documentary investigation, we propose a series of events, discursivities and subjects that explain the arrival and use of films in school environments. All of them have extended beyond the time in which they were created and coexist in a single collegial environment or act separately from one classroom to another. Some discourses and facts are more recent, others are older and their beginnings lead to different knowledge, mobiles, institutions, disciplines, and actors that, in general, are exogenous to the place – the school and its operators – where the filmic is intended to be installed.

This research arises from several methodological decisions that helped to organize the findings: the starting point was to review by epoch – 1900-1950; 1950-2000; 2000 to the present – which were the most usual arguments for the punctual, sporadic or sustained apogee of the cinematograph in the educational and academic scene. The research was carried out in the databases of the *British Film Institute*, the *Centro Nazionale di Documentazione e Analisi per L'infanzia e L'adolescenza*

and in those specialized in academic journals such as Redalyc and Doaj. Eighty-four secondary sources – books, passages, and articles – were chosen from the vast amount of information found. Their selection was marked by two parameters: 1) that the ideas that they contain had certain relevance, continuity and institutional support in several of the periods studied; 2) that the arguments found were decentralized and had connections with the experiences of other places. Consequently, the aim of the document is to specify the origins and characteristics of some of the common denominators that have fostered the legitimacy of cinema in schools throughout history, taking as a reference a multiplicity of related discourses and practices in Latin America, Spain, France, Italy, England and the United States.

Explicitly, the text is divided into seven discursive plots that in certain periods of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries instituted – through publications, speeches, activisms and specialized agencies – that it was pertinent to introduce the cinema in school for a myriad of reasons: to take care of the gaze of the children of unwanted images, to summarize and emphasize written or oral information, to create audiences that are capable of interpreting audiovisual codes, to provoke aesthetic sensations in students, etc.

The cinema was understood as an object of modernity

Before cinema reached the legitimacy of an art, it was initially understood as a means for the study and for the scientific exposure; a “[...] very useful technique to bring distant objects into view and significantly expand the dimension of very small objects and beings” (Duarte; Tavares, 2010, p. 25). This is borne out by the French microbiologist Jean Comandon, who, associating the microscope with the cinematographic camera projected cells and bacilli on the screen in films such as *L’Ultra microscope et la cinématographie* of 1909 or *Le Microbe de la fièvre* de 1910 (Gaycken, 2015); not to mention the Italian filmmaker Roberto Omegna, who did the same by filming and revealing at full speed the growth of plants and butterflies in films such as *La vita delle farfalle* in 1911, and insects in *La mosca delle olive* in 1931 and in *La mosca* de 1935 (Romano, 2019).

For this recording capacity – which included the social customs of the peoples with anthropological filming (Burke, 2005) – the cinematographer was understood as a modern and propitious innovation for the transmission of knowledge that coincided with the function of the school. As Dussel (2014, p. 83) points out, in the universal exhibitions of the twentieth century “[...] it was usual that the pavilions of the countries placed together the school and the cinema because they were two unequivocal signs of the attempts to modernize culture and society”. That is why cinema was quickly welcomed by the authorities in charge of directing educational courses in several States to expand the processes of schooling and education among the masses, since illiteracy was still very high when it was invented; for example, in Latin America

the regional rate amounted to 68.1% in 1900 (Hunt, 2009). For this reason, in Brazil and Colombia between the twenties and thirties – added to the rise of the theory of racial degeneration – cinema was promoted as a tool to accelerate the civilizational process and the moral formation of the popular classes, those stigmatized as lazy, and of the illiterate based on films missionary to form habits of order, hygiene and certain knowledge aimed at the illiterate (Bácares, 2018; Duarte; Alegria, 2008).

It also happened in Italy, obviously under the influence and propaganda understanding of cinema by fascism to instruct according to patriotic and nationalist values. Mussolini promoted the first major milestone in favor of the internationalization of educational cinema with the patronage of the International Institute of Educational Cinematography (1927-1937), which from Rome opted for “[...] favoring the production, dissemination and exchange of educational films on teaching, art, industry, agriculture, commerce, hygiene, etc, between the various countries.” (Herrera León, 2008, p. 226). It even had a broadcasting organ, the International Journal of Educational Cinema which was published monthly in five languages – German, French, Spanish, English and Italian. In this sense, the fascist hierarchies were pioneers when it came to instrumentalizing cinema to empty their vision of the world in children and adults, arguing that it was a “[...] comprehensive language to all the peoples of the earth [...] a fun and simple visual language” (Herrera León, 2008, p. 232).

It should be said that this perception of the cinematograph agreed with a precedent in its favor. Images in general and those from the mechanical precedents of cinema – the stereoscope, the zootrope, the zoopraxiscope, the kinetoscope etc. - had been used in advance to educate in many contexts (Bak, 2012). Proof of this was the use of the chromotrope and the magic lantern in 1838 by the *Royal Polytechnic Institution* of London to teach scientific and historical facts under the premise that “[...] the education of the eye is, unquestionably, the most important means for elementary instruction” (Dussel, 2014, p. 86). Or the case of the Chilean Ministry of Public Instruction, which in 1911 endorsed the use of magic lanterns and light projections maintaining that they represented “[...] the most advanced form of teaching. It gives greater accuracy and precision to the presentation of the subjects, due to its breadth of application, it allows to carry out in all branches a more animated, intense and effective work” (Álvarez; Colleoni; Horta, 2014, p. 22). Emphasizing, for centuries, the school forged an iconic story within it that gave room to images to come. Pedagogy had consistently had a willingness to use visual methods and devices to reaffirm “[...] a certain privilege to the sense of sight over other sensitive registers” (Serra, 2012, p. 20). The list is long: plates, showcases, whiteboards, school museums, magnifying glasses, telescopes, microscopes, illustrated textbooks, portraits and hanging pictures, maps, photographic series, sculptures, statues, furniture, flags, among others, were used to delve into some theme or to present a message (Cuarterolo, 2021; Dussel, 2009; Orellana; Martínez, 2010). In fact, fixed and figurative images were always in schools, funda-

mentally, because some pedagogical paradigms, such as intuitionism and a little less the new school arranged it and promoted it (Feldman, 2004). It should also be remembered that Comenio (1996) in the seventeenth century urged that in order to achieve the truth of things it was necessary to carry out a sensitive assessment *in situ* of the phenomena – or with images that supplied them – in order to be able to explain them, abstract them and apprehend them:

If we want to beget in the disciples true and exact knowledge of things, we must ensure that the whole teaching would be done through our own intuition and sensual demonstration [...] Since the senses are the most faithful providers of memory, this sensual demonstration will result in perpetuating knowledge; that is, that the knowledge of each one is constant. Indeed, once I have tasted the sugar cane, or seen a camel, heard a nightingale sing, or been to Rome, and have walked it (if I am paying attention), these sensations will be so indelibly etched in my memory that they will never be erased. Hence the saying of Plautus: An eyewitness is better than ten witnesses of reference [...] If on any occasion the natural is lacking, models or representations may also be used. That is, models or images made for teaching, as for examples in botanists, zoographers, geometers, geodesists and geographers, who usually present their descriptions or demonstrations accompanied by figures (Comenio, 1996, p. 76).

Although in the nineteenth century Pestalozzi continued to promote contact with objects (Saldarriaga Vélez; Sáenz Obregón, 2007), the constraint and logistical strain of repeatedly guaranteeing intuitive teaching forced the school system to replace “[...] those functions in a more finished and simple way than direct contact with reality” (Feldman, 2004, p. 92). Of course, this procedure involved regulations and accompaniments. Any direct observation of the children was accompanied by a teacher to contextualize what was seen (Serra, 2012). It happened in a similar way with cinema and education. Moving images could teach if they were accompanied by a mediation, a guide, and a surveillance of what was projected. The fact that the cinematograph was conceived as a modern artifact, capable of exposing the world and bringing it to light without having to go looking for it (Fresquet, 2020a) facilitated the first wave of film screenings in the school, or if you like, of approaches, negotiations and meetings between the celluloid and the school institution. After all, at the dawn of the twentieth century confidence in the modernizing potential of cinema was semi-unanimous: celebrities such as Thomas Alba Edison or Filippo Marinetti believed that books were going to be things of the past (Ferro, 2008; Serra, 2011).

Cinematic Education serves to prevent the Bad Influx of Cinema

A very current trend that determined the acceptance of cinema in the educational field is the one that approves it to control the bad teachings that have historically been given to film material. This tutelary position accepted and promoted the organicity of cinema in schools from a pessimistic reading of it. The intention of schooling was based on preventing children from becoming criminals, apostates or mentally ill by grace of what they saw in movie theaters where, at the beginning of the twentieth century, there was still no age differentiation for viewers or classifications or infantilized films (Bácares, 2018). A tacit example of this understanding was the use of the cinematic device to address stereotypes of commercial cinema in the United States. In contrast to the rebelliousness of James Dean or the sexual freedom that was gradually appearing in Hollywood, between 1945 and 1970 about 3,000 short films designed to redirect or moralize student behavior by showing children images of sexual illnesses, people killed in car accidents by drinking, prison in case of committing a crime, or drug overdose were projected in classrooms (Smith, 1999).

Proponents of this view – recognizing cinema as a leisure option and a repeated interest of childhood and youth – rushed to socialize the urgency of subordinating it to education to counter its supposed harmful effects. Either way, the cinematograph enjoyed an educational recognition for its gift of making visible what it taught (Paladino, 2014). However, the concern and prevention of teachers resided in the content and in how to redirect what was exposed to the students. For this reason, throughout the twentieth century it was invested in promoting cinematographic education that lends itself to immunizing the children and adolescents against the superficiality and subsequent influences of cinema; the idea was to teach how to be able to defend from the affective suggestion that the imitation of the behaviors and characters that come out in the kinetic images could have as a derivation:

If the critical spirit of the spectator has to be cultivated it is, so to speak, to 'immunize' it. The audience should not be impressed by the tinsel of the presentation, the renown of the artists and the technical virtuosity of the filmmaker, and, in that sense, it is certainly true that people must 'learn to resist the suggestive power of cinema'. This affective participation mainly involves two interrelated processes that are ordinarily called 'projection' and 'identification'. On the one hand, the viewer attributes his own tendencies, feelings and character to the characters that he sees on the screen, he 'projects' himself on them and, on the other hand, the viewer is mentally placed in the place of the actor and identifies with him, shares his thoughts and ideas. In the first case, the viewer is mentally lost in the world presented to him by the screen; in the second he incorporates the world of the film into his own personality (Peters, 1961, p. 15-18).

The magisterial aspect that encouraged school cinema as a preventive measure was nourished above all by opinions outside education and pedagogy. It was the imported knowledge of medicine, psychology and Catholicism that determined the preventions of the teachers and their paternal and police actions. To be clearer, the discourses that bet on cinema and education came from abroad and from other disciplines to put a stop, to warn or to endorse the use of cinema in the school sphere. Three recurrent cases prove it: first, the medical discourse that already in 1913 stated with voices such as that of the Catalan psychiatrist Arturo Galcerán Gaspar that cinema was dangerous and anarchic for representing violence against people and private property, which in the children and adolescents brought as a corollary, convulsive neuroses, organopathies and an imitative instinct to suicides, homicides, fires, thefts, vices and all bad habits (López Martín, 2013). Even so, because of the power that it had to impress viewers, he recommended in unison redirecting it with free films to produce psychopathic setbacks to teach children geometry, biology, physics and general culture.

Secondly, developmentalism or evolutionary psychology placed thematic limits on the cinema to be used in school according to the ages of the children (Marks Greenfield, 1999). Inspired by Piagetian evolutionary stages, the most official film education – aroused in the sixties by UNESCO – endorsed the access of children and adolescents to films in accordance with four defining phases of their intellectual development: “[...] one from seven to nine years, the second from ten to twelve, the third from thirteen to fifteen and the fourth from sixteen to eighteen” (Peters, 1961, p. 79). For each of them, audiovisual contents accredited by this knowledge were drawn up and, in turn, learning results provided for the teacher’s evaluation corresponding to the assimilation of the scenes by their students, of time and narrative simultaneity, of the plot of the films, of the role of the protagonists, etc.

Finally, Catholicist preaching was a crucial factor in teaching film in school to reorient it and prevent the attempted moral degradation of consumers of moving images. As the International Catholic Film Bureau well justified in 1960, cinematography had to be put into circulation within school spaces in order for adults to provide children and young people with tools to “... react in a healthy way against its harmful elements” (Peters, 1961, p. 90). In a way, all these discourses aimed to promote a mental hygiene that led the children to appropriate a certain type of films accredited as benign, many of them associated with history and the natural sciences. Educators accepted the cinematograph as an invention if it committed to the observed disciplinary requirements, or to a production specifically endowed with educational messages without any hint of subversion. Cinema in all its splendour never took place in this becoming; only a sieve of filmographies related to an ideal, apolitical and moral world, as it is abundantly demonstrated by the genre of *social film guidance* that was widely used in American schools, that is, the films that “[...] were made deliberately to adjust the social behavior of the spectators [...] were used mainly to guide children towards behaviors that adults considered correct” (Smith, 1999, p. 28).

The Emergence of an Educational Film Supplier Market

The industrial hyperspecialization of a so-called educational film class is the third circumstance explaining the apogee that the celluloid had in school in certain episodes and contexts. Its most consolidated appearance dates from the 1930s when the International Institute of Educational Cinematography began to certify the films that were valid for teaching according to content criteria and to the design with which they were filmed. In doing so, one type of film began to stand out from the others, such as the assumption that teachers should only come to them for their classes. In Spain, to cite one case, this conception was strongly defended by the popular educator Julián Juez Vicente (1951a; 1951b; 1953) who in the course of the fifties devoted much of his energies to categorizing and institutionalizing educational cinema, to writing a state of the matter and to motivating the production of films for children. For him, educational films should facilitate the acquisition of habits and what he called didactic cinema: “[...] the acquisition of knowledge, framed within a teaching program” (López Martín, 2016, p. 141).

Usually, educational cinematography was consolidated from studies that took into account the psychopedagogical characteristics and the developmental stages of student audiences. Its outbreak was supported by research of a positivist nature interested in measuring the reactions of children and adolescents – gestures, shouts, comments, movements, positions – to henceforth establish laws that favored the planned learning (Juez Vicente, 1953). Certainly, this nomothetic search was not new, although its approach was. In the 1930s, in an effort to trace the negative traces of cinema in childhood, researchers from the Ohio State University placed sensors on the springs of selected children’s beds to measure their movements and the quality of their sleep after watching a movie (Black, 2012). In this opposite case, the idea was to know if with a certain type of light, speed, plane, image, sound, the children adhered what they saw to their memory and learned from the films. For this, among many other techniques, hidden cameras were installed to record the children during the projections and also microphones to further analyze the data obtained (Juez Vicente, 1953).

Now, the sixties were crucial for the promulgation of film education regarding its promotion from global governance. In that decade, UNESCO, in a collection entitled *Press, Film, Radio and Television in the World Today*, sponsored and published a book dedicated to the phenomenon, in which the author in charge suggested curricularizing it and, as far as possible, dispensing with making it a sporadic and extra-curricular activity. Peters (1961) proposed it as of vital preponderance supported by three arguments: That children who frequently go to the cinema choose films without discernment; that teachers who like cinema “[...] want to make their students share that taste and that pleasure” (Peters, 1961, p. 88); and because it would help the achievements of education in general, by stimulating active attitudes and critical sense in students (Peters, 1961).

It is worth clarifying, that educational cinema managed to be more than a pretense. Way back – as continues to happen with web portals and digital platforms of educational cinema – international production companies sold a package of devices and collections of didactic films. Among these are Kodak with its Cinemateca Kodascope program in the twenties (López Martín, 2013), or the French company Pathé with its Pathé Baby projector, a portable machine that was accompanied by a repertoire of school films that was marketed worldwide to materialize the augury of its creator – Charles Pathé: “Cinema is the newspaper, the school, the theater of tomorrow” (Gaycken, 2012, p. 68). Think that if from 1940 to 1960, with the Second World War in between, the *Society for Education in Film and Television* from England promoted film education in 700 schools, the audiovisual materials that were produced were many (Peters, 1961). And this also happened in Germany and France, countries that had specialized services for the production of hundreds of scientific films developed by the *Service du Film de Recherche Scientifique* or by the *Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique* (Tosi, 1993).

Consequently, much of the legitimacy that cinema has had in school over the years came from a set of statements that pontificated the need for a specialized, scientific film education, away from fiction, and from the type of films that were shown in movie theaters. Even to record them, a precise format was recommended: the one used in single-concept films, brief recordings that focus on “[...] a single phenomenon, a single experiment, a single concept” (Tosi, 1993, p. 61). The market and the companies dedicated to cinema did not turn a deaf ear to these requirements, and in the end they ended up amplifying the idea that the cinematograph should occupy a privileged place in the learning of the children, obviously, being spectators of their productions.

The Emergence of Media Education or Audiovisual Literacy

The fourth line of discourse that supports the use of cinema to educate is based on the preaching of critical education of the image. Its origin and sustenance lead to the review of three conceptual lines. Theoretically, film literacy found a starting point and support in French semiotic studies in the mid-1960s. At that time, photography and cinema were studied as a language: decipherable and fractionable. Whoever understood the parts of a film – the linguistic signs and meanings – could understand the whole cinematographic piece (Casetti, 1994). Embracing this logic, pedagogy made it its mission to educate in this language to prepare critical spirits, since the interpretation of cinema as a source of dangers to childhood continued to prevail. The school appeared as a preventive and confident establishment “[...] in believing that decipherment was the royal way to develop the critical spirit of children from short circuits of analysis” (Bergala, 2007, p. 43). Overall, if the cinematic language was divisible, for its analysts, the scenes, shots and sequences could be viewed separately.

Similarly, American communication studies considered that cinema possessed a grammar that did not make it completely universal, direct and accessible. Watching films and understanding their expressions required catching up on reading the symbolic codes of the film medium, namely deciphering visual punctuation marks and the meanings generated by techniques such as cutting and transitioning from one sequence to another, camera angle, chained fades or other auditory elements such as *voice-over*. Each of them is a form of symbolic representation, that is, each technique corresponds to something in the real world. Thus, for example, when a camera *zooms* in on a detail, it communicates a relationship between it and its wider context” (Marks Greenfield, 1999, p. 33). Knowing or not knowing it, means for the defenders of these ideas a worse understanding for a child or adolescent of what happens on the screen with any commercial film, and on the training level, a limited learning of the contents of strictly educational films:

In a high school class, which included a series of films, students with more film experience generally learned more physics from the films. It seems that the value of cinema as an educational medium depends on the level of cinematic reading ability that the student possesses (Marks Greenfield, 1999, p. 42).

The third trend that cemented this perspective comes from England. It is about the explicit media education that emerged in the seventies and that to this day has gone through various phases. The first one chose to take a defensive position; its goal was to strip or demystify the political and ideological representations that circulate in advertising, on television, in cinema. Bringing to light the occult in the media, the way in which media *mise-en-scène* socializes and reinforces the ideologies of the dominant groups (Buckingham, 2005). The subsequent ones occurred between the eighties and the nineties with an emphasis that was different from assuming the children and adolescents as mere passive recipients that were in the process of becoming iconographic dangers. Recognizing their own experience and knowledge in their pre-existing contact with information technologies, this approach has weighed “[...] a more reflective style of teaching and learning, in which students can reflect on their personal activity as readers and writers of media texts and understand the social and economic factors at play” (Buckingham, 2015, p. 82). In other words, it would begin to be understood that by developing creative productions in the media, children and young people could more reliably understand the language, rules and film and television clichés at play.

To date, critical image education continues to be in vogue, especially because complaints and distrust in the neutrality of photographic, kinetic and television images remained active with the rise of cultural studies and visual studies (Farocki, 2013; Fontcuberta, 1997; Giroux, 2001; 2003; Mirzoeff, 2016). For this reason, the marriage of cinema

and education to form audiences still finds ample legitimacy and has a considerable support. To the point that it may be one of the most accepted and most current entries in terms of the educational approval of the cinematograph (Lobos, 2013). Its resonance is lasting and the principle that underlies it consists in evidencing that the visual - including cinema - organizes and coerces “[...] the sensitive, the beautiful, which deserves attention, induces ways of looking and showing, promotes certain visibility and relegates others” (Hoffmann Fernandes; Benjamin Garcia, 2017, p. 385).

The Cinema serves to Punctuate, to Summarize or to Introduce Themes

The more established discourse regarding the interlocking of film and school dictates that kinetic images are useful for exemplifying, illustrating, reviewing, or capturing the attention of students. This position is very old and was forged at the moment of the awakening of the twentieth century, maintaining itself with great force in teaching expressions that make images and verbal explanations an analogy: “[...] a film, it sticks more, they watch the film and that’s it” (Benasayag, 2017, 92). Its greatest sign of existence and discursive consolidation are the manuals, which, without ignoring their importance, sponsor a purely mechanical work with cinema in the educational field. These visual breviaries have been edited even by ministries of education such as the Argentine minister and are accessible in books, theses and articles in Colombia, Spain, the United States, Italy, Peru, etc. The organizational pattern that coincides in its pages, offers the reader a list of films, synopsis, analysis and contextualizations about them, a planning of activities for students with some key questions and a guide for teachers with the scenes and themes to be worked on in primary and secondary classes (Acosta Valdeleón, 2007; Breu, 2012; Agosti; Guidorizzi, 2011; Ambrós; Breu, 2007; Maynard, 1971; Marzábal; Arocena, 2016; Eslava, 2020).

Although this reductionism of cinema to a resource or a strategy is often criticized, its circulation and compliance in school is very frequent. Mainly, for a series of utilitarian conceptions about the image and for the technological facilities that allowed its habitual use. The oldest is that of the authority of cinema to show natural and physical phenomena that at the height of the positivist boom in the twentieth century was magnified and extended as a bearer of truth to the present day (Serra, 2011). Recently, the recognition that the interests of children and adolescents converge in transmedia narratives, that is, in texts that take shape in different formats such as books, films, toys, video games, etc. (Rodríguez, 2012) has caused at the same time that cinema can be understood as an element of training and interdependence for “[...] the reading of films in association with texts” (Hoffmann Fernandes; Garcia, 2017, p. 386). Added to this, the invention of betamax and DVD that helped the programming of films in the classrooms and also a change in “[...] the viewing regime since, through these devices, the film can be

advanced, paused, retracted, selected, etc., for the taste of those who project it” (Lobos, 2013, p. 190).

For now, literature and history are the areas where cinema has found its biggest place as a tool to point out a certain knowledge or to help see it from a different prism. Regarding the literary, this link is understandable, given that when the cinematograph was created, literature already existed and over time it became its main narrative input (Cadavid Marulanda, 2006). As a result of this fruitful connection, teachers have turned to films to approach and encourage children and adolescents to read the classics of literature and contemporary authors, as well as to analyze the fidelity of the adaptations of literary works taking into account the dramatic structure, the presentation of the characters, the narrative technique, the veracity of the era, costumes, architecture, etc. (Martínez Salanova, 2002). From the intersection of cinema and history, the most repeated school reduction carried out by teachers is the one that requires films to stage or make visible a historical period, a biography of a relevant figure or simply what is described in the books (López Seco; Moreiras, 2012; Ekerman, 2014). Not without first warning that the directors evade scientific precision, that the films contain historical errors that are exploitable for students to find (Images of History Group, 1998), or that they include characters, data and resolutions of facts that are false and inaccurate for historiography (Bermúdez Briñez, 2008; Radetich, 2011).

The exception to the rule comes from the cultural history that years ago validated the still and moving image as sources for research and for the production of historical knowledge (Acosta Jiménez, 2018; Burke, 2005; Ferro, 2008). Without exaggeratedly having an impact on school curricula, this approach did impact and gave theoretical support to the practice of teachers who were interested in finding inputs to improve the didactics of their classes or to teach in a fresh and complementary way, different to the usual one, aspects of political violence, military dictatorships and state terrorism (Arias, 2016; Ekerman, 2014; Patierno; Martino Ermantraut, 2016). Among its advantages, discoveries and prepositions, there are data from exploratory research that say that children and adolescents are interested in cinema to learn history because they understand it easier, it excites them and attracts them (Catelotti; de Rosa, 2014). Apart from this, there are voices that rescue the collegial teaching of history through cinema because it expands the range of the predominant sources, since with “[...] the projection of films the school texts cease to be the center of information or the medium through which the themes to be developed are defined” (Acosta Jiménez, 2019).

Either way, this conception of kinetic images is the easiest one to link with the planning of a class. Countless are the thorny, complex, foreign, and ancient topics that with the mediation of cinema become entertaining, agile and enjoyable, provoking in the student less apathy, disinterest or boredom when studying them. That is the real intention of this discourse and its variants: to use films as entertainment to explore in a less cumbersome way a disciplinary or curricular knowledge.

Cinema is an Art and an Aesthetic and Sensitive Experience

The defense of cinema in the school that chooses to share it as an aesthetic experience is an upward discursive field in the adoption of celluloid in school and in some extracurricular ventures that strive to follow that criterion. Possibly, besides Bergala – the most latent forerunner of this current – activists and scholars such as the Chilean Alicia Vega (2018) and the Argentine Víctor Iturralde Rúa (1984) had already suggested this way of thinking and feeling the role of cinema in film and training practices with children and adolescents. It is worth noting that this is the first time that a discourse that tries to intersect films with education is born from the work and gaze of film workers. Nor were doctors, movie merchants, or educators pointing this path. The cinematograph's people, especially in France, were the ones who raised their voices and took the lead of this matter in order to protect and vindicate the artistic DNA of cinema in the face of the risk that school dynamics and regulations would take over or domesticate it (Benasayag, 2020).

The main thesis asserts that films give access to otherness, they know “[...] something of my enigmatic relationship with the world that I myself ignore and that it contains as a secret to be deciphered” (Bergala, 2007, p. 62). For such an intrinsic and ungraspable characteristic of the cinematograph is that there is a big resistance to schooling among the defenders of the unique, late and unintelligible reverberations that a film generates in a viewer (Masschelein, 2008). So to speak, the antipode of this discourse is the instrumentalization of cinema to promote that children are formed as critical audiences after having been taught fragments, sequences or scenes of a film. In its matrix it is clear that the vital thing for the educational system is to recognize and incorporate cinema as an art; to teach to love it through the “[...] patient and permanent formation of a taste, founded on beautiful things” (Bergala, 2007, p. 58). In the eyes of this side, normalizing it and turning it into a subject with schedules, specialized teachers and a series of competencies to be evaluated, takes away more than it gives. The curricular obligation to extract from a film projection an educatively accepted moral is in itself a fear that would tame and moderate the transgression, the shock, the forbidden, and all those edges that make cinema an art that deforms and exposes reality:

Art will necessarily be amputated from an essential dimension if it is only left in the hands of traditional teaching, that is a discipline inscribed in the program and in the schedule of the students [...] any form of enclosure in the disciplinary logic reduces the symbolic scope of art and its power of revelation, in the photographic sense of the term. Art, to remain art, must remain a germ of anarchy, scandal and disorder. Art, by definition, sows bewilderment in the institution [...] Art can only be that which resists, that which is unpredictable, that which, at first,

confuses. Art must continue to be, also in pedagogy, an encounter that disrupts all our cultural habits (Bergala, 2007, p. 33; p. 97).

The exit from the labyrinth comes from a separate, stable experience in a planned place for students that allows them to find and discover the cinematograph little by little without the haste of a note and a hierarchical treatment (Bergala, 2007, p. 34). An environment made for sensitive education, free of protectionist and commercial filmographies, and free of age limits that presume what children like or what they should see. It should be concluded that this discourse surprises by its rapid positioning and reception. Its relative novelty was never an impediment to gain ground. Perhaps this is because it was born with an official blessing and with a framework that allowed it to expand within the French educational public policy during Jack Lang's last ministerial adventure, namely with a certain official legitimacy. Next, the landing in Latin America was expedited. The school film clubs and educational experiences that are inspired by its relevance, categories and navigation map are verifiable (Bácares, 2021; Fresquet, 2020b; Migliorin, 2018). All for that call – almost unprecedented and so powerful – to invite to think of cinema in school as a relational event, capable of provoking aesthetic resonances in spectators and students.

Cinema Causes Unexpected Pedagogical Effects

New is the discourse that reflects what is crossed out by the antagonists of film curricularization, betting on the transformative capacity of celluloid in terms of traditional ways of learning, living and relating in school. It is important to remember that the rejection of the cinematograph's schooling exists because it would imply submitting its images to the knowledge, routines, mediators and school rules. However, the universality of these resentments in all cases, scenarios, and people seems to be an uncertain or impossible issue to replicate accurately. For this reason, the presupposition that underlines the curricular institutionalization of cinema as negative *per se*, is questionable as it reads all contexts and school agents as similar and harmful, or as it postpones effects and contingent educational repercussions – to be interested in a book, to investigate, to write, to share what was watched at home – following the fact that a child or an adolescent witnessed a film in a classroom:

Film schooling, then, should not be read, always and in every case, as an impoverishment of the aesthetic experience, but as a translation and recontextualization based on other strategies and functions that are no less important: contributing to an intellectual work discipline, proposing a certain regime of attention and raising certain questions about the languages of public conversation that are not available anywhere and everywhere. What remains of cinema as an aesthetic experience in this me-

diation? Most likely, it becomes something else. But this school translation has a value that should not be underestimated (Dussel, 2014, p. 82).

Proponents of this thesis argue that if cinema is methodically prepared, the pedagogical effects can be outstanding and unexpected. Its schematization and limiting use depends on the meaning given *to it a priori*: to project a film because a teacher did not prepare the class, defines cinema as a way of spending the dissenting time of those who come to it as the cultural product of a period, a fact or a provocation for the students to speak, to share concerns or to write about (Benasayag, 2017, p. 64). For example, Hoffmann Fernandes and Benjamin Garcia (2017, p. 397) found that between 2010-2013 in a high school in the State of Rio de Janeiro, adolescents who attended classes where cinema was an asset became “[...] the explainers for others, for those who did not have that practice and did not belong to this community of readers. They became ‘explainers’ for family and colleagues outside of school. “ The same thing happens, with what was found by research focused on analyzing the use of short films and videos by children and adolescents to present final class works. According to their conclusions, children and adolescents learn to negotiate and to agree on the use of personal time since filming often requires extracurricular hours and spaces; they take advantage of moving images to express generational, contextual and individual concerns; and among other pedagogical effects, they work hand in hand with neighbors, relatives or social organizations when their productions need information or support (Donizetti; Pereira Leite; Christofolletti, 2017; Plaza Schaefer, 2013; Fernández Batista, 2014).

Therefore, according to this perspective – especially in Argentina and Brazil – reactively underestimating the schooling of moving images is a mistake. Even more when, the institutionalized entry of cinema forces school certainties to face challenges -which films to program, why, how, in which spaces, should the schedules be modified or not, etc. (Serra, 2014). Keep in mind that filmographies were restricted at the dawn of the twentieth century for being capable of generating “[...] passions, emotions, enjoyment, that the school seemed not to mobilize in the same way” (Dussel, 2014, p. 283). Today that potential calls for a use to consolidate sensitive learning that allows students to express their needs and concerns. Therefore, in this approach an open question or the demand for another front of action also emerges: why should we exclude cinema from the school curriculum, instead of taking advantage of it?

Continuing along this line, there are numerous publications that opt to affirm that cinema – or a good portion of it – broadens the gaze, and that in the educational field, it boosts thought (Peñuela; Pulido, 2012; Cañizales; Pulido, 2015; Rodríguez Romero, 2010; Viafara Sandoval, 2012; Osorio; Rodríguez, 2010; Larrosa, 2007). Basically, this occurs due to its ability to involve the viewer emotionally, or, according to connoisseurs, by mixing logical rationality (*logos*) with the affective element (*pathos*) in the experience granted by a film (Rodríguez Murcia;

Osorio; Peñuela Contreras; Rodríguez, 2014). And it is that, “[...] knowing something consists not only in having information, but also in having opened up to a certain type of experience” (Cabrera, 1999, p. 18). Thus, the cinematograph stands as an act to feel, think, become uncomfortable, and ask questions without the security of grasping “satisfactory answers” (Cavell, 2003, p. 31).

Of course, all this philosophical and pedagogical production drags empirical difficulties to achieve a greater scope, such as the lack of consolidated data, significant samples, and a better historical reading of the structural tensions that prevent or give the green light to the anchoring of cinema in school. Despite this, the notion that emphasizes that the cinematograph reaps endless unpredictable and positive pedagogical effects has crescendo adherents. Even curricularization has not been understood as an inconvenience to deny the possibilities and educational manifestations that the moving images mean in the day-to-day life of a schooled child or adolescent.

A Mode of Final Reflections

In the current times, saying that cinema is an innovation in school is unsustainable and ahistorical. The truth is that more than a century ago the cinematograph was integrated into education, and from then on, with interruptions, stages, tensions, peaks and prohibitions, it managed to blend in and find the support of speeches that endorsed its stay and rebound. The issue is that this fact was never regular and massive. Indefinitely, it was marked by the alternation between the valuation, devaluation and revaluation of moving images according to a varied succession of intentions, actors, entities and reasoning. Hence, the current appearance of the cinematograph in any institute and school is neither a first nor a simple and spontaneous event. In the behind the scenes that governs it, a bouquet of cultural, educational and technological phenomena are hidden, together with disciplinary and institutional discourses that explain its uses and applications. At times they are complementary, although they mostly tend to repel each other. For example, the predominant vision of cinema as an instrument to show, evidence, verify, summarize, soften or introduce curricular themes ends up being the antithesis of the current that demands that cinematography can be presented and treated as an art in schooling.

As far as this article is concerned, there are at least seven discursive typologies that have indicated in different periods the relevance of the cinematograph in teaching. To each of them it is due that the films have been glimpsed as educational references in specific episodes of the story, or specifying, in the decisions of the teachers and in the few public policies implemented in the matter. They are all still active, sometimes they work separately, sometimes they are neighbors in the same place. Just as nothing unites the commercial and hyperspecialized preaching of educational cinema with the cinematographer in capital letters for estimating it as imprecise, sensory, artistic and lacking in science, dis-

courses such as media education, audiovisual literacy, the presentation of a film to provoke a discussion, or that of using videos and short films to deliver tasks and final works, coexist perfectly. It is unnecessary to repeat them one by one, but it is pertinent to emphasize that they are very varied. They range from those dedicated to installing film curricularization by the assumption that films influence and accelerate learning and memorization time (Halas; Martin Harris, 1978), to those that communicate that the arrival of cinema to school campuses was sealed by the *lobby* of companies that convince the educational system to show films that they supply in exchange for an economic transaction.

Finally, it remains to be noted that none of these speeches brings with them the educational success that it augurs. It is advisable to assimilate them as starting points, triggers, or propitiators, regardless of exact archetypes. Specifically, because any discourse that promotes cinema in school is condemned without an infrastructure that ensures it – equipment, video libraries, schedules, facilities to show a film and guarantee a good experience, curricula, contracts and salaries for teachers, etc. (De Castro Teixeira; Azevedo, 2017). Likewise, with any of them, controls on the gaze of childhood are the order of the day. The fact that it is adults, cinephiles and teachers who decide what children and adolescents should see in some way ratifies paternalism and the supervised visual content that have characterized the history of childhood as a spectator of celluloid (Bácares, 2018).

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