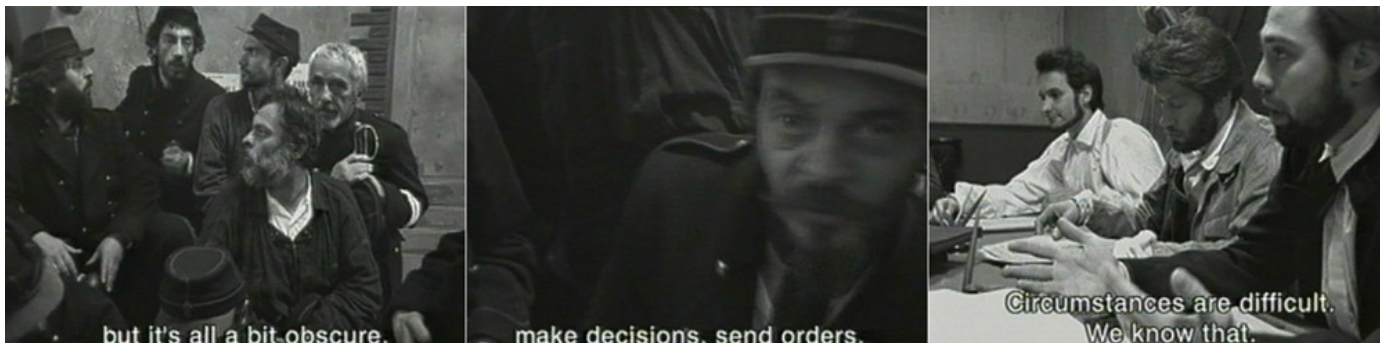


Från: FILMKLUBBEN <info@michelemasucci.com>
Ämne: LA COMMUNE - Peter Watkins - AK28 - 2007-04-03
Datum: onsdag 30 maj 2007 00.04.50 GMT+02:00
Till: <michele@michelemasucci.com>
3 bilagor, 343 K Spara Bildspel

F I L M K L U B B E N



La Commune

Peter Watkins, 2000, 345' (5 timmar 45 min)

3 April kl. 14 - 22

Ak28, Krukmakargatan 28, 1tr ned, porttelefon

Paris 1871: Adolphe Thiers, exekutiv chef för den provisoriska nationella styret, alarmeras av Paris Nationella Gardes revolutionära aktiviteter. Den sociala situationen i Paris är förödande, med en massiv arbetslöshet och folkets fortsatta lidande efter Preussiska ockupationen av Paris. Detta leder till en ökad socialism och militans följt av förbundet av flertalet 'röda klubbar', understödda av flera av det Nationella Gardets bataljoner.

Thies begär ett misstag eller en medveten provokation då han försöker vinna den kanon som Nationella Gardet besitter. Han förhindras av en grupp kvinnor från Montmartre som försöker toppar planen. Kvinnorna vädjar till Regerings soldaterna att inte skjuta, flera soldater ger efter och vänder muskötterna som en gest av solidaritet. Inom några timmar är Paris i upprorstillstånd och stadshuset i de flesta stadsdelarna är i händerna av det rebelliska Nationella Gardet...

Peter Watkins film La commune filmades 1999 under 13 dagar tillsammans med över 220 skådespelare och amatörskådespelare. Samtliga fick ta ställning till och sätta sig in i det omfattande material som samlats om Pariskommunen våren 1871. Att välja sin roll, sina åsikter och plats i återskapandet av den historiska händelsen innebar även ett ställningstagande i skådespelarnas samtid. Omfattande diskussioner med samtliga inblandade både innan, under och efter inspelningarna behandlade bland annat i frågor om representation och deltagande som resulterade i filmens ovanliga längd (5 timmar 45 minuter) eftersom flera aktörer som länge studerat och bearbetat sina roller krävde en rättvis plats i filmen, att få uttrycka sina åsikter, sin historia.

Filmklubben samlar till en fortsatt diskussion med La Commune som underlag. Vi bjuder på mat och mjuka soffor. Välkomna!

För mer information och inläsning inför visningen:

Hemsidor:

www.mnsi.net/~p Watkins/

www.lerebond.org/film.htm

sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pariskommunen

www.marxists.org/svenska/marx/1871/17-d016.htm

Bra texter:

Alain Dalotel

The Paris Commune 1871

Transcription of a video by O. Ressler in collaboration with
Rebond pour la Commune, recorded in Paris, France, 25 min., 2004

My name is Alain Dalotel. As a historian, I work in the field of social history with a special interest in all the questions related to ruptures: wars, revolutions, strikes, feminism, which also implies ruptures, and in particular The Commune. By the way, this is the latest book I've written on this subject, about André Léo, a manuscript which was used for the making of Peter Watkins' film "La Commune de Paris".

We are now in front of the Fédéré wall, where a number of Communards are buried.

The question of the origins of La Commune is always a subject of debate. Some think that it was born out of a set of circumstances: the war of 1870 opposing the 2nd Empire and Prussia, others find answers in the revolutionary movement which was very important since the 1st international had already been founded in 1864 in London, by Karl Marx and others. Also, a very strong revolutionary movement builds up in Paris during the last years of the Empire as this liberal Empire had authorized public meetings. Various revolutionary groups then managed to take control of this free public speech, well before the Commune since these thousands of public meetings took place from 1868 to 1870. Then the war broke

out, and this and this movement of democratic and free speech continued throughout the Paris Siege with the birth of the "Red Clubs" which were the direct descendants of the previous public meetings which had finally been banned. There was an extraordinary democratic outburst during the siege affecting all types of individual liberties. But what made this siege special was that the population was armed in the National Guard, alongside the regular troops. Approximately 300 000 men were enlisted and armed with Chassepot rifles, guns, and cannons. This quickly led to popular uprisings since the so called Government of National Defense was accused of treason and capitulation. So here are some other causes. Some causes are military, others are social... or revolutionary. The situation rapidly deteriorated under a very harsh siege which led to wide spread destitution... and especially to the humiliation of this capitulation which took place at the end of January 1871. That's when a new organization is created: the Federation of the National Guard which will lead to a new uprising, the 18th of March 1871.

The Commune starts on the 18th of March 1871, the day when the power is seized by the Fédérés (the National Guard) and Blanquist groups, and ends on the 28th of May 1871: 72 days for a revolution is a very short time indeed. The Commune passed a certain number of social measures which were all geared towards the same generous aim. Towards children, etc., measures taken in favor of wage increases, they were all in the same vein. The most interesting social measure and the one which most frightened the bourgeoisie was the decree taken on the 16th of April concerning the workshops abandoned by the employers. These workshops were supposed to be handed over to the workers' trade union committees. This really scared people, it is the truly socialist measure adopted by the Commune. It explains the strength of the repression which will follow, but we'll talk about the huge scale of this repression later. On the other hand, one must remember that this is a time of civil war. Some trade unionists who are fighting in the ranks of the Fédérés are against the establishment of socialism because they believe the time is not ripe. What matters for them is the fight against Versailles. Don't forget that the fighting is taking place to the West of Paris, just outside the ramparts. Against a Versailles army which is rapidly building up its strength with, after a while, the help of Prussia.

The Commune is associated with the idea of direct democracy. So what does that mean?

At the time, there were numerous elections, everywhere and all the time, almost too many. For all kind of reasons, inside the National Guard for example, to dismiss the leaders who are deemed unpopular, etc.

<http://www.republicart.net>

1

"... beyond the limitations of the rectangular frame"

<http://cipcp.net/transveral/1003/poeschl/en/print>

05 2003

"... beyond the limitations of the rectangular frame" La Commune, DV, 345 Min., Peter Watkins, 1999

Michaela Pöschl

Translated by Aileen Derieg

La Commune. Paris 1871 is described as an "UFO in the audiovisual landscape"[1], a film that "falls out of the frame". The subject matter: the workers' revolution of 1871 in Paris ending with a bloodbath – 30,000 Communards dead.[2] The title of my essay quotes the director Peter Watkins. He describes *La Commune* as a process moving outside the boundaries of the framework – in film language: the frame. How does *La Commune* show the actions of a crowd, how does the film give this crowd of workers a form, and how is taking action (reflection and action) possible beyond this representation? Watkins' question and mine as well is: Can the principles of collectivity and self-organization, but also the contradictoriness of the Commune be suitably represented? A film grew out of this question about suitable representation, which leaves behind the traditional framework of production and reception at three levels: at the level of form, at the level of the production process, and at the level of distribution and presentation.

I.

La Commune was supported by Arte and the Paris Musee d'Orsay. Although it was originally planned to produce a 35 mm version from the 16 mm negative for the cinema, there was not enough money to do so, because Arte did not uphold the agreement to release and distribute a video edition, and the film, being 345 minutes long, found neither producer nor distributor. The film was shot in an empty factory building in June 1999 over 13 days, following the chronological sequence of events. Neon lights were mounted on the ceiling of the building providing even lighting. This made lamps on the floor superfluous, camera and sound technicians could move freely through the crowd. The set, a series of interconnecting spaces, represents the 11th Arrondissement of Paris, a center of revolutionary activity during the Commune as a workers' district. On the one hand, it is very faithful to detail and "realistically" designed, but the boundaries of the illusion remain visible at the same time. Exterior spaces are declared interior spaces, the set switches constantly between "the illusion" of the film and "the reality" of the protagonists.[3]

Over 220 people from in and around Paris took part, 60% of them without acting experience, including unemployed people, Sans-Papiers from Algeria and Morocco, most of them from various leftist connection, but also people from the right-wing camp.[4] To begin with, the participants spent a year researching the history and their own roles – with support from the film's research team.[5] After this, there were further discussions in groups about the backgrounds and motives of the roles and about parallels between the political situation then and now. Debates were continued during the thirteen days of shooting: among the participants, with Watkins and the team, about what one would say, how one could feel, how to react to historical and current political events. The results of these exchanges were finally improvised in front of the camera.

Universal Clock[6], a documentary about the making of *La Commune*, shows Watkins instructing the right-wing historian Foucart: "You don't have to search for a position, I want you to be yourself." But who is he "himself"? I wonder how differently Watkins assesses so-called "learning from history"[7] for left and right-wing participants[8] (was it the case that the former found and changed their positions in

