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Comment Ca Va is a film about two workers in at a newspaper attempting to make a video-film about a newspaper and its printing plant. But it is also a film about the mass media, about the transmission of information in the press, on the radio, on T.V., in a film like this one. It is a film about finding out who is really 'looking', who is controlling the dissemination of information.

The woman, a former union representative is a typist; the man, a journalist. They had the idea of making this film to show in cell meetings in the Paris area so that their co-workers would begin to understand how a newspaper functions. They thought that it was important to make that kind of information available to workers at a time when several major newspapers were on strike and had to counter the violent attacks of the owners. They wanted to show how a newspaper run by communists would handle information.

In the process of making the film, the woman, Odette, convinces her co-worker that not only does he not understand what he is reporting, but also that he does not see that he is being controlled by someone else's 'look' in the very way in which he presents the information. After their initial disagreement, she tries to show him why he cannot really see what he is reporting, and that in effect, his refusal to see how things really are is an indication of his desire to keep his position. He finally understands what she is trying to do and decides to back her up in spite of the fact that he knows that the Political Bureau of the party is totally against their project. This is what happens, and their co-workers who had voted to give Odette their support get cold feet when they hear of the Bureau's decision. The man then says that Odette left and that he never saw her again.

The film can be broken down into four major sections, parts of which are repetition first, Odette and the journalist watching the video-film, arguing first about his decision to cut part of it because he did not want to show the argument between them when she objected to his reading too fast a text intended to illustrate a photograph of the Portuguese Revolution, then various discussions about the photograph and then another picture she used to contrast them. In that segment, shots of Odette and the man watching the film on the TV monitor alternate with shots of them and the film on the screen, and the video images seen on the monitor, images of the activities in the office. In order to explain to him what was wrong in the way he was dictating the text about Portugal she asks to re-enact the scene, and she shows him how the movement of her hands differs from that of the eyes because in effect they are prisoner of the shape of the sentence, prisoners of meaning. That is one thing which is not working right. She then objects to the text itself pointing out that it does not say what is his position, his point of view on the subject (the meaning of the photograph) and that by failing to let it show in his text, he is letting someone else's view control what he is saying.

The man then states that he began to understand what Odette wanted to do: "to start from an image, only one, in the same way science starts from particles in order to find out how they fit together." Objecting at first that she should have asked other members of the committee to participate instead of asking outsiders, he finally does agree with her, workers in a printing plant are in no better a position to judge the merit of what they are printing than workers in an arm factory to judge the arms they are making. The outsiders turn out to be Odette's neighbors whose voices are heard (but who are never seen) commenting on the photograph.

A second section begins with a long held shot of a couple who are seen periodically throughout the film: the very first shot of the film, the man is driving, then he is writing in a cafe, he is working in a factory, she is seen talking to him on the telephone, then, at the beginning of the second part, he reads a paper while she is hanging clothes on the balcony, then later on, there are shots of them watching television, walking in the street, then later walking in the snow, again in their apartment in front of the TV and kissing, on the TV monitor, and

at the end, he is writing (mostly repeat shots), and then sitting listening to the radio arguing with the woman. This series of images functions a little as a counterpoint to the main part of the narrative in the video-film, also a kind of mirror couple, as far apart as Odette and the journalist (presumably, the father of the young worker) at the end of the film when Catherine is heard complaining about the radio which is too loud as he is listening to the announcement of Franco's death, and then saying, nothing is right, "and that's what is wrong, you don't see that nothing is right."

Following the shot of the worker and Catherine sitting at the breakfast table, Odette explains the photograph and relates to a similar photograph taken in France 4 years earlier. This section of complex montage effects of the newspaper office seen earlier, and the two photographs while different voices and Odette comment on the image. These short segments combining many special effects, most of them only possible with video, are intercut with shots of the journalist listening to the soundtrack of the film, and Odette her face always hidden from the camera.

This is followed by another alternation of shots of the journalist facing the camera with Odette's head in the foreground listening to a discussion of their co-workers responding to Odette's idea. But soon, although he sees that she has shown them something in the picture, he sees that they still don't 'see', still don't understand, and he begins to look at a pile of pictures, photographs, advertisements, war pictures etc. which Odette had collected for her project. It is these pictures in close shot which alternate with shots of him listening.

The last section includes the shots of Odette and the man waiting for the decision of their co-workers in an adjacent office. But when the decision comes, she is not happy because she knows that the Political Bureau will overrule the workers' decision. And this is what happens. Aside from the shots of the two of them waiting, and the shots of the young couple, most of the images and sounds intercut with them are mostly repeat shots from earlier scenes in the film or from the video-film (in the film).

Explaining that he suddenly had decided to back up Odette, the man says:

In final analysis, what was she saying Odette with this little video-film? She was saying that Television and the Press were corrupt, and since we were looking at them, and reading them, our 'looking' was corrupt, and our mouths, our hands too, in short, we had the cancer, and us first of all, and we were not saying anything about it."

The film ends with the titles on the screen changing from:

A FILM BETWEEN THE ACTOR AND THE SPECTATOR to

A FILM BETWEEN ACTIVITY AND PASSIVITY.