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News on Film: Cinematic Historiography in Cuba and Brazil

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News on Film: Cinematic Historiography in Cuba and Brazil

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News on Film: Cinematic Historiography in Cuba and Brazil

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This dissertation is a comparative project that traces the co-evolution of film realism and communications media in Cuba and Brazil. Beginning with the end of Italian Neorealist-inspired movements in both countries in the late 1950s, I examine the ways in which filmmakers from each tradition incorporate radio, print, and televisual journalism into their cinematic narratives. Foundational directors whose bodies of work span and connect the popular filmmaking booms of the 1960s and 1990s—such as Santiago Álvarez, Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, Nelson Pereira dos Santos and Eduardo Coutinho—expose the political and technological systems that form public knowledge and guide civic debate. My research dilates on two internationally celebrated periods of film production concurrent with two shifts in news media paradigms: from radio and print journalism to television and from television to the internet. I argue that the renewed interest in news technologies within Cuban and Brazilian films at the beginning of the twenty-first century orients the viewer not to material fact as it is captured on film or coded by digital cameras, but by laying bare the systems of power that control news media content.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Overview

This comparative dissertation examines the evolution of the emplotment of news media—such as radio, television, and print journalism—within the national cinematic traditions of Cuba and Brazil. I divide my analysis into two distinct but mutually informative periods corresponding with two moments of considerable advancements in media technologies: from radio and print journalism to television in the 1960s and from television to the internet in the 2000s. In the former, principally spanning the decade of the 1960s, I theorize the impact of the news media as they appear with increasing regularity in the national cinemas of both countries. Cuban films such as Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's *Memorias del subdesarrollo* (1968), Santiago Álvarez's newsreels, and Nicolás Guillén Landrián's documentary shorts and the Brazilian *Cidade ameaçada* (1960, Roberto Farias), *Pagador de promessas* (1962, Anselmo Duarte), and *Terra em transe* (1967, Glauber Rocha) create cinematic narratives in which the presence of the news media problematizes the notion of truth in representation—especially as it pertains to national identity in the face of official, vertically organized state media. The Cold War political turmoil in both countries coincided with the advent and popularization of television and raised this admixture to a level of tremendous factographical importance.

In the post-Cold War period spanning the late 1990s and early 2000s, cinematic revivals in both countries carry on the issues of mass communication put forth by their predecessors in the 1960s. In Cuba, Álvarez's Noticiero ICAIC archive provides a vast record of photographic material which provides for a network of renewed cinematic historiography for filmmakers such as Rebeca Chávez (*Ciudad en rojo* (2009), *El día más largo*(2011)), Manuel Zayas (*Café con leche* (2003)), and Alice de Andrade (*Memoria*

cubana(2010)). In Brazil, the movement is less archival but no less bound to the multi-media impulse that would seek to determine a set of historical meanings to a series of violent outbursts indicative of a nation in crisis: João Moreira Salles and Katia Lund (*Noticias de uma guerra particular* (1999)), Lund and Fernando Mereilles (*Cidade de Deus* (2002)), and José Padilha (*Ônibus 174* (2002), *Tropa de elite* (2007)) tightly bind their films within communicative news media networks and, in so doing, carry the concerns of their tradition into the new millennium.

The filmmakers from both countries operate within an arena that has pit the simplistic material/phenomenological mediatic claims to truth against a view of truth as an ongoing, dialectical process. And they do so at a time when their respective national histories demonstrate the futility, even the impossibility, of severing ties from their former, more ideologically univocal political regimes. In Cuba, the post-Soviet era called for an economic restructuring that impacted all areas of life—including national cinema. Young directors studying at the Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión de San Antonio de los Baños, for instance, were left to literally and figuratively double-back on the works of their 1960s predecessors by again making films with whatever sparse material they could find. In some cases this led to a reimagining of former films through the repurposing of their film stock and thus re-writing a certain kind of cinematic history that was already over-reliant on photojournalistic pretenses.

At roughly the same time in Brazil, during a slow return to democracy and slower return to financial stability in the 1990s, the theme of journalism retained a central place within national films that sought to expose the remnant violence against marginalized and voiceless communities. In these films the news media come under attack once again for condoning and/or misrepresenting the behavior of repressive governmental strategies to

wage war against its own people. In the face of overwhelming injustice perpetrated against the poor, and the criminals that all too often are taken to be their spokesmen, *Noticias de uma guerra particular, Cidade de Deus*, *Ônibus 174*, and *Tropa de elite* redraw the relationship between news media and national imaginary as a stark continuity dating back to the most censorial of the military dictatorship years following the coup of 1968.

My analysis seeks to contribute to the ongoing debate within Latin American film studies concerning cinematic realism vis-à-vis national identity. My central argument is that the Cuban and Brazilian film traditions uphold a dialectical, critical, and progressive notion of the "real" as instantiated across various journalistic media. Thus conceptualized, a view of their respective national socio-political self-images emerges and re-emerges within cinematic narratives that are in turn safeguarded by the film medium itself via its archival capacity to store information. This position has implications for film and visual studies in Cuba and Brazil, as well as for film studies in general. In the Cuban and Brazilian cases, film comingles with journalism not only to comment on the facts of the day—which in time shift from the journalistic to the historiographic—but to contextualize those facts within an overtly politicized arena of knowledge production. Extending from the premise that Cuban films from the 1960s provide an indexico-historical archive from which future generations may construct opposing national narratives, I argue that the archival film stock carries with it the discursive framework into which it was first written. This leads to a view of the post-Soviet era Cuban films that reconstruct the past using its own photographic indices as the re-initiation of a trans-media trial of public opinion—a circumstance that entails inconsistencies and paradoxes.

The Cuban and Brazilian national film archives provide a rich ground for comparison from which broader considerations of film historiography emerge. The three most salient motivations for this comparison are 1) geopolitical situatedness, 2) advanced and interrelated television and film production systems, and 3) increasing governmental oversight. First, their shared place in the Western Hemisphere during a time of geopolitical crisis required each nation to align itself in accordance with either the Soviet communist camp or the U.S. capitalist system. This proximity provides a fruitful contrast when Cuba swerves toward communism and Brazil doubles down on its stake in the national economy. The divergence is evident in the Cuban films that depict news and film sectors fully integrated into and in support of the political program and, contrarily, in the Brazilian films that betray the government's attempts to drive the media narrative toward politico-economic ends. Secondly, Cuba and Brazil each had uniquely advanced television networks concurrent with their respective booms in film production. This fact separates them from neighboring Western Hemispheric countries such as Argentina, Chile, and Mexico that also boasted impressive national film industries but whose relationship to other news media does not present itself as reflexively or as repeatedly. Lastly, the concurrent intensification of governmental oversight in Cuban and Brazilian knowledge production—including but not limited to journalism and film—gave rise to two distinct but related modes of reflexive cinematography whose narrative emplotment of news media came to undermine the legitimacy of officialized and univocal national imageries. Combined, these three circumstances present a litmus test for the study of film's capacity to intervene in the news media's national discourse in both positive (through reinforcement) and negative (critical) ways.

THEORY AND LIT REVIEW

The vast temporal and geopolitical framework I have laid out for my study naturally avails itself to an equally expansive body of scholarly texts to consider. This review addresses only the most relevant and pertinent aspects of the extant scholarship on the following topics: the photographic index, Alvin Gouldner's theory of ideology in news media, and the relevance of those subjects within the Cuban and Brazilian cinema traditions. These categories pave the way for a conceptualization of film's potential to record and store information in the manner of an historical archive, a view that will allow us to think about the historiographical potential of the films as they leave behind the journalistic present; the contentious ideological battleground situated at the point of contact between film and traditional news media; and the specific Cuban and Brazilian national contexts in which each unfolds.

C.S. Peirce's Photographic Index

One persistent notion within discussions of photography and film is the photographic image's dubiously ontological relationship with the photographed object. This proves an unwieldy topic, one that resists facile metaphors of mirroring or platonic reductions of mimesis or representation because there is, as Charles Sanders Peirce and his proponents would argue, a tangible, chemical relationship between the two that is unlike any other artistic or representational medium. It is, in a word from Peirce, *indexical.*[1] Electromagnetic energy physically transforms silver-halide crystals within the

[1] The term "indexical" fits into Peirce's semiotic as a second level sign (the first is an icon which represents the object as a result of a likeness or similarity; the third is a symbol which has no discernible connection or likeness but is used to represent another object purely by mental association). Peirce offers other examples of this type of sign: a footprint representing a foot or the person/animal that walked there; smoke signaling fire (*Essential*, 8). It is worth noting that Peirce sees each of these relationships as fluid. Any given sign can act either as an icon, an index, or a symbol, depending on their position within a linguistic or representational structure. As a triad, Peirce views these three levels of signification necessary in *all* thought and communication, an observation that is often overlooked with respect to film and photography

film frame to correspond with the light reflecting off the surfaces in front of the camera's lens. This verifiable, chemical bond has led many photography and film theorists—considered summarily in the following paragraph—to champion the medium's scientific legitimacy. It is from the notion of objectivity associated—correctly or incorrectly, naively or knowingly—with the hard sciences that film critics either adopt or reject Peirce's notion of the index and the truth claims associated with it.

Brian Winston's study of documentary film *Claiming the Real* is one of many book length studies concerned with the "real" as constituted within film. In the chapter titled "Science as Inscription," Winston sets up a veritable battalion of film-as-scientific-evidence straw men: James Agee, Andre Bazin (to whose *Ontology of the Photographic Image* we will return below), Susan Sontag, Maria Morris Hambourg, and even the *Encyclopédie française*. He quotes Agee's assumption that cameras "like scientific instruments and unlike any other leverage of art are incapable of recording anything but the truth, absolute truth"; Bazin's impulse toward memory, where "light moulded the photographic image as a face moulds a death mask"; the encyclopedia's insistence that "the photographic plate does not interpret. It records…"; Sontag's view that photographs "furnish evidence"; and Hambourg's stating that "A good photograph is, above all, a good document" (qtd in Winston, 137). These quotes provide a broad cross-section of the important issues I will be taking up in my analysis. Inasmuch as they are based on the assumptions of Peirce's notion of the index, however, Winston downgrades them to "technological naivety" (270). Incorrectly, he interprets the photograph as merely an

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theory. As we will see, an oversimplification of his semiotic system (as in Brian Winston's *Claiming the Real: The Documentary Film Revisited*), especially where critics deconextualize the *index* from Peirce's philosophical pragmatism, renders the term useless.

icon within Peirce's system and not (also and/or potentially) an index. A more thorough understanding of the Peircean semiotic system instructs us that

> a sign can be in varying degrees iconic, indexical, and symbolic, all at the same time. A sign's evincing one sign type does not preclude its manifesting some other sign type as well. There are no all-or-nothing categories with respect to [Peircean] signs. As one sign type is, another sign type can become, and what that sign was may become of the nature of the first sign that the second sign now is. Putting things into neat pigeon-holes might allow us some security, but it is a tenuous game, since signs simply cannot stand still (Merrell 37).

Here Floyd Merrell emphasizes the fluctuating positions of signs within Peircean semiotics. For example, a photograph is indexical inasmuch as it is an effect of the light reflected off an object, but it can also be an icon in the sense that it is "like that thing and used as a sign of it" (Winston, 270). When teaching a language, we use a picture of an apple to teach the word "apple," we are engaged in the use of a photograph as an icon (it *looks like* an apple). A photograph can also be a symbol, as when a print of a famous photograph is placed on the wall of a museum to represent an individual photographer's body of work or a set of general photographic principles: this is an example of chiaroscuro, that an example of double exposure. The Peircean system thus offers much more than an explanation or justification of scientific objectivity in photography. Winston is correct in his rejection of the view of documentary film as purely rational or objective because, of course, the camera, scientific though it *can* be, does not in and of itself constitute a film narrative or documentary argument/thesis. But to deny the indexical nature of the photograph-as-sign is to throw the baby out with the bathwater. After all, and Winston eventually comes back to this point,[2] the physical link between the

[2]"Transformation of science (that is, 'raw material' with which 'no one has tampered') into subjectivities… is the key" (161). This view of moving from the scientific to the subjective will prove particularly relevant in our examination of the many socially, mediatically constructed criminal subjects within Brazilian films,

photograph and the object does provide certain quantifiable data sets that can—indeed must—then be interpreted.

Not all knowledge is scientific knowledge. The analysis that follows assumes a film audience of individual viewers/interpreters, some of whom we can assume to be scientifically minded, all of whom participate in a process of meaning making that extends beyond the realm of science and into the realm of history. History can be personal or communal, national or trans-national. As Winston's analysis of filmic evidence vis-à-vis the law elaborates, the so-called raw material of film avails itself to realms of meaning that are always already embedded within historically contingent social structures. My consideration of the indexical quality of film is premised upon a definition of filmic evidence as something imbued with historicity, a social construct more in line with the kind of evidence held up in a courtroom than in a laboratory. As a social marker, then, indices provide evidence of a physical presence (as trace) as well as a temporal presence (as deixis) (Malitsky 246).

Documentary films, the fictional films that borrow from their style, and television news broadcasts share a lineage with the newsreel. In the newsreel's conception and evolution we find an essential combination of the indexical with the rhetorical, a showing with a telling that carries through to the films taken up in the present study. The dovetailing of these two qualities returns us to the considerations of film's capacity to construct a dialectical-historical, as opposed to a purely rational-scientific, system of knowledge. Philosophically, then, the newsreel and its kin (the documentary proper, the television news broadcast, and fictional films that play with documental technique)

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such as in *Cidade Ameacada*, *Lúcio Flavio: O passageiro da agonia*, *Cidade de Deus*, *Ônibus 174*, and *Tropa de elite*.

advance questions of legitimacy and authority in ideological mass communication that began with the Enlightenment's rejection of traditionalism for rationalism. "Characteristically, [post-Enlightenment] ideologies justify assertions without relying on tradition, revelation, faith, or the speaker's authority, but place distinctive emphasis on the importance of recourse to 'evidence' and reason" (Gouldner 32). Film in general and newsreels in particular, coming into maturity as they did within the post-war period of existential angst, in the post-modern[3] age of questioning all ontologies and teleologies, occupy a strategic position from which they can either critically participate in or contradict the dominant ideology.

Gouldner's Theory of Ideology and Mass Media

Film is not only an informative medium, but it is *also* an informative medium. As such, it fits within a long history of mass communication and communication technologies that is fraught with ideological concerns. In *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology*, Alvin Gouldner outlines a history of mass communication from the Enlightenment to the televisual age which suggests a transition from a print-news system participating in and productive of rational discourse to one whose aims are more broadly entertainment based—and therefore potentially less rational.[4] Thus television news extends an already corrupted source of information that had devolved—at least in part—

[3] Here I align the end of WWII with the beginning of the post-modern, which will naturally reach its zenith in different parts of the world and according to different scholars at different times. This is unavoidably asynchronic, due to the fact that both Cuba and Brazil could be said to extend their modernities—indeed their modernizing *raisons d'être*—into the 1960s until the very point when the news and communications media combine to show the artificiality of their political modernizing rhetoric. Thus the split between modernism and post-modernism roughly coincides with the rupture of the material/evidential on film taken up in this study.

[4] I qualify this as potentially less rational because, in Gouldner's view, the televisual news media discourages action and rational dialogue between members of a community.

into human interest stories and polemics as a way of insuring its own profitability.[5] For our purposes, these stories are in turn pre-packaged for filmmakers that take the popularity of the story to the silver screen—such as, in Brazil, Roberto Farias's *Cidade ameaçada*, Rogério Sganzerla's *Bandido da luz vermelha*, Padilha's *Ônibus 174* and, in Cuba, Alea's *Historias de la revolución*, the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano,[6] and Chávez's *El día más largo.* In terms of ideology, television news also extends the print-news's ideological bent toward protecting not only its immediate interests, but also the socio-political structures that defend those interests. Gouldner's overarching thesis rejects the assumed distinctions between social sciences and ideology in favor of a Hegelian/Marxist, dialectical view of rationality. Social science and ideology err on the side of the irrational, he contends, they inhibit rational discourse by claiming a scientific determinacy—in other words, their insistence on fact refutes further analysis or reflection. "Ideology thus lacks reflexivity...the reason for ideology's objectivism is that it is grounded in an interest that does not wish to make itself problematic and refuses to put itself in question, and hence it generates silence about itself and about the limits on its rationality" (Gouldner 46).[7] This becomes particularly problematic when, as a result of an ideological position, an individual assumes a similarly stagnant, resolute posture.

[5]See also Robert N. Pierce's *Keeping the Flame: Media and Government in Latin America* and Juanita Darling's *Latin America, Media, and Revolution: Communication in Modern Mesoamerica*.

[6]The newsreel and its offshoots fit into a different category than these other listed films, but nevertheless take current events as their starting point and as the basis for audience appeal.

[7] For Gouldner, as for the position I take in this analysis, an ideology as well as the interests he describes as always already concealed within it can be taken to represent either political, material, or economic purposes, both personal and shared. By leaving this definition open-ended we allow for the confluence, or comingling, of these ends. This will be particularly relevant for the case of Rede Globo in Brazil as seen in the films *Terra em transe* and *A lei de imprensa*, and *O homem que comprou o mundo*, where political and financial matters dovetail into a complicit media structure that upholds the official state ideology without surrendering completely its financial/corporate management.

> To the extent that ideology becomes the grounding of identity, a person's being becomes contingent on the maintenance of that ideology and thus sets limits on the capacity to change that ideology rationally…insofar as it is self-constituting, ideological discourse generates an identity that, like an interest, is taken or takes itself as given, and thereby also constitutes a limit on rationality (47).

News media can thereby constitute either a rational discourse or an anti-rational (based on authority, not argument) discourse, depending on its level of reflexivity and its capacity to see itself merely as an element within an epistemological-discursive fabric. So, somewhat paradoxically, where a documentary film—like Gouldner's social science—refuses to engage with counterexamples in its attempt to formulate an argument, regardless of the evidence it accumulates, it can be said to depart from the very rationality it seeks to espouse.

My position vis-à-vis the historical/dialectical potential of news media aligns with and, eventually, extends Gouldner's hypotheses into the realm of film. By picking up where he leaves off, we can better understand the ideological implications of the films which critically adapt to and adopt characteristics from the news media forms dominant in their time. Like the films I analyze in Chapters 1 and 2 from the 1960s (e.g. the newsreels *Muerte al invasor* and *Cerro Pelado* in Cuba; Andrade's *Liberdade de imprensa* and Eduardo Coutinho's *O homem que comprou o mundo* in Brazil), the context from which Gouldner writes is laden with Cold War anxieties related to freedom of speech and censorship. Gouldner (in the U.S.) and the Cuban and Brazilian filmmakers, however, worked under national political apparatuses that directly opposed each other concerning matters of press freedom. The films analyzed in the first two chapters were created within increasingly strict censorial institutions (state and industrial, neither understood to be mutually exclusive) and, as such, offer a backdrop of censorial state institutions against which we may project Gouldner's communication theory. Doing

so will grant us the opportunity to understand the rational, epistemological potential of news media within and despite an authoritarian state.

The filmmakers I have chosen turn the news media to their advantage in a dialectical maneuver which rationally synthesizes various perspectives and sources of information—some authorized by their indexical appeals to the real, others by their interpretive logic. As we will see in greater detail below, the filmmakers do not limit themselves in their rationality to the visible, material world. They often play with ideology itself as a subject. And if we borrow Gouldner's evocation that ideology, from its inception, has sought to become an "epistemology of the everyday" (36), we can begin to understand the work being done to reintroduce discursive and critical rationality into the otherwise overly determined truth-claims of visual news. This requires a way of representing and of seeing—or making (meta)visible—the immaterial realm of discourse that cannibalizes the realist aesthetic of the newsreel, transmogrifying it to reveal its rational pretensions. Gouldner points us in this direction but he himself does not quite arrive there. He writes:

> Ideologies weaken traditional structures by refocusing the vision of everyday life and, specifically, by calling to mind things that are not in normal evidence, not directly viewable by the senses, not in the circumference of the immediate—they make reference to things not 'at hand.' One cannot, for example, *see* a 'class,' or a 'nation,' or a 'free market,' but the ideologies of socialism, nationalism, and liberalism bring these structures to *mind* (24).

This observation brings us a long way toward an understanding of the limits of the indexical: the unseen, in fact, becomes as important to the understanding of the narrative as the visible evidence itself. Just as one cannot see a class, a nation, or a free market, one cannot see the political system that controls and organizes discourse. This will prove essential to the developing interest in and emplotment of news media among filmmakers

in both Cuba and Brazil in the 1960s, as well as the continued interest for the filmmakers at the turn of the millennium. The following will demonstrate that, by emploting news media within themselves, telejournalistic films can make those structures known and thereby facilitate a continued rational dialogue despite—and in a few cases, however paradoxically, due to—efforts to thwart it.

Cuban and Brazilian Cinematic Historiography

Much has been written about the importance of film, photography, and iconography in Cuban Revolutionary history.[8] In *Visions of Power in Cuba*, Lillian Guerra maps what she refers to as the "radicalization of discourse and political options" in Cuba in the 1960s via the study of a variety of visual materials, including but not limited to the type of filmic and journalistic media I include in my analysis (Guerra 12). Guerra's work also paves the way for my research's interest in the exclusionary practices inherent in the fashioning of national identity, specifically the definition of Cubanness as it evolved over the course of the Revolution's first decade. Additionally, Guerra's conceptualization of the grand narratival notion of redemption aligns with my interest in the recycling of film stock by Cuban filmmakers in the 1990s and early 2000s, whose work seeks to redeem the archived material embedded within the film stock from the 1960s.

My analysis broadens the scope of Cuban visual studies to encompass the mass media systems that produced and proliferated the images that came to define the country. Michael Chanan's work on Cuban film in particular considers the dovetailing of film and journalism in early and post-revolutionary Cuban film history. This was in part due to the

[8] See José Quiroga's *Cuban Palimpsests*, Lilian Guerra's *Visions of Power in Cuba*; and Tim Wride's *Shifting Tides Cuban photography after the revolution*.

uniquely advanced national television network in Cuba—the first of its kind in the region—and the complete overhaul of the film industry post-1958, which led to a somewhat chaotic co-mingling of talents and expertise across radio, television, and film production teams. My project will extend from his broad-stroke historical contextualization into the theoretical implications of the media themselves when they enter into and effect film plots. Despite the ubiquity of a self-reflexive mediating force in contemporary film scholarship concerning Cuban and Brazilian film and, furthermore, despite the grave political implications of the many contentious claims to historical factography maintained by both filmmakers and their critics, very little has been written about the centrality of news media within these films.

Other recent scholarship has analyzed Cuban film production of the 1990s and beyond, including Anne Marie Stock in her *On Location in Cuba: Street Filmmaking During Times of Transition* and Enrique García in *Cuban Cinema After the Cold War*. Stock's work is primarily concerned with the proliferation of unofficial—that is, non-ICAIC—film's at and after the advent of videotape. Her reading of "street filmmaking" depicts the renegotiation of Cubanness from multiple fronts and within a burgeoning landscape of film festivals and online platforms. My analysis of the post-Soviet films supports her reading of the new, decentered film culture on the island and extends it to include the recycled newsreel films as constituting an integral part of that moment. García's work considers a broad swath of films and themes from the Special Period, including a controversial assertion that the aesthetics employed by the filmmakers generally heralded as the creators of a new Cuban cinematography are, in fact,

derivative.[9] While I disagree with this as a blanket statement covering the impressively diverse field of current filmmakers in Cuba, my own analysis considers the *intentional* carry-over of the Noticiero ICAIC aesthetic and imagery into the New Millennium, where the juxtaposition of old and new footage belies an discrepant account of a complex and multi-vocal historiography from the 1960s.

In the case of Brazilian film studies, my research enters a long-standing debate concerning the various realisms present in New Millennial Brazilian cultural production.[10] Arguably, the debate began in 1998 at the Conferência Internacional de Docomentário É Tudo Verdade-Cinusp, well before the films that would come to characterize the first decade of the twenty-first century were conceived or created. Select conference proceedings from 1998-2002, which included essays, interviews, and debates between influential Brazilian filmmakers and film scholars, presciently foretold a decade of cultural interest that unfolded across Brazil and around the globe in the form of *O Cinema do Real*. The volume includes a speech given by João Moreira Salles in which he decries the news for, on the one hand, sensationalizing violence in periodicals of low esteem and, on the other, omitting violence in the more visible and respectable sources. He says,

> Esse então é o problema: em geral, as imagens de violência não são produzidas; quando são, acabam restritas aos jornais mais populares, onde perdem toda forca crítica, pois são oferecidas apenas como espectáculo brutal; além disso, a producão intellectual sobre o fenômeno da violência ainda é escassa. Esse é o beco em que nos encontramos, mas do qual talvez estejamos comecando a sair (Salles 88).

[9] "Even though contemporary Cuban filmmakers have tried to update the visual language and contents of today's Cuban cinema, their style follows many of the formulas established earlier by the ICAIC" (24).
[10] For a broad consideration of the many realisms at play across Brazilian cinema, see Lúcia Nagib's *The New Brazilian Cinema* and, for cinema beyond Brazil, *World Cinema and the Ethics of Realism*.

Nearly a decade and a half later, violence has become inestimably important, the very unifying thread across Brazilian national and international news coverage, as well as in the formal university sectors of Brazilian studies.[11] My analysis extends precisely from this point of convergence of national and international perception, popular and scholastic thought, and cinematic and journalistic interest.

Soon after the above publication was released, Beatriz Jaguaribe's *O choque do real* fueled the flames of the discussion by considering the extents to which reality as an aesthetic could inform and/or mislead national and international publics. This conversation persisted as the films depicting intense violence began to pile up, including Jens Andermann and Álvaro Fernández Bravo's more recently published anthology, *New Argentine and Brazilian Cinema: Reality Effects*. The editors begin by asking us "in what ways can the resurgence of national cinemas in Latin America, from the mid-1990s onward, be related to the 'returns of the real,' which, all over the world, have been among the most interesting effects of the digitalization of the filmic image that overshadowed the centenary of cinema?" (Andermann 1). Essential to both this question and my project are their use of the terms "resurgence" and "return." Many of the anthology's contributors dealing with Brazil, including Andréa França, Edgardo Dieleke, Joanna Page, Ivana Bentes, Tom Cohen, and Robert Stam, refer back to the realist impulse of the early 1960s and Cinema Novo, encouraging a comparison of the two periods. My analysis extends this comparison by considering the various subjects—the marginal, criminalized, and transversal—at the intersection of the cinematic and the journalistic in both moments. The films of the 1960s show a news media increasingly complicit with the

[11]Evidence of this last, scholarly sector can be found with a simple JSTOR search for "Brazil" [AND] "Violence," demonstrating a steady rise of 7,474 hits/year in 1999 to 11,533 in 2008 (the pinnacle)—a 54% increase.

military dictatorship, especially in their concern for dissenting views and/or personalities, and their New Millennial analogues have much the same to say vis-à-vis a new generation of outsiders making headlines.

With respect to film studies more broadly, my position sidesteps the well-documented, if arduously categorical task of distinguishing documentary from fiction as laid out in Bill Nichols's foundational *Representing Reality* and instead considers the evocative efforts filmmakers have made to combine the factual with the fictitious by integrating news media on both formal and thematic levels. It is worth noting, however, that an essential distinction arises between the Cuban and Brazilian films I analyze in this study: the majority of the Cuban films that incorporate news media into their narratives are documentaries, docudramas, or newsreels, whereas the majority of Brazilian films most thoroughly invested in the news are fictional narratives built upon recognizable stories already made popular in newspapers, over the radio, and on television. By holding at arm's length the distinction between documentary and fiction, I promote an understanding of narrative historiography in the vein of Hayden White and emphasize the essentiality of fiction (via omission, selection, emphasis, extrapolation, summation, interpretation, and so on) in all historical writing. In keeping with my stated interest in realism, the documentary and fictional films alike make concerted efforts to depict the shared world of the filmmakers and their audiences, take an interest in political and social issues, and explore the limits and legitimacy of news media representation—in most cases, national representation.

PRAXIS: *CITIZEN KANE* AS PRECEDENT

By way of adjoining the evolving trend of realism vis-à-vis news media in Cuban and Brazilian film with the theoretical premises that I have accounted for thus far, I offer

here a brief explication of the "News on the March" sequence which opens the film *Citizen Kane* (Welles 1941). This introductory analysis affords us an opportunity to look at an historical precedent for the aspects of realism, historiography, archive, and artifact that we will interrogate in the following chapters. This is not an incidental choice of films. The impact of Welles on Latin American filmmakers (and intellectuals in general, especially boom novelists) is well documented, particularly in Brazil where he attempted his first film endeavor to follow *Kane.*[12] We will see specific allusions to *Kane* and resonances with Welles's journalistic propensity in my analysis of Rocha's *Terra em transe*, Rogério Sganzerla's *O bandido da luz vermelha,* and Pereira dos Santos's *Tenda dos Milagres*.

The famous "News on the March" newsreel in *Citizen Kane* tells the story of its protagonist's life and death as the opening sequence of the film. Here the newsreel functions as a cinematic jest toward the real (and toward its real life protagonist William Randolph Hearst) by playing with the structure of the cinematic experience of the day which included a newsreel before the screening of the feature. It also introduces the viewer to the diegetic world with fictional newspaper headlines, archival footage (some real, as is the footage of American soldiers, some fabricated for the film) and a voice-of-god narrator that summarizes the sequence's visual images. Furthermore, the newsreel spurs the plot into action by instigating a journalistic search to understand the remaining mystery of Kane's last spoken word ("Rosebud").

The intermingling of fact with fiction that springs the plot into action explicitly rejects the legitimacy of the news media as purveyors of truth. Within "News on the March"—which is a fictional documentary within a film—the 'yellow journalist' Kane,

[12] See Catherine Benamou's *Its All True: Welles's Pan-American Odyssey*.

himself the head of a news empire, responds to a question from another journalist by jokingly chiding him: “Don’t believe everything you hear on the radio…read the Inquirer.” His response conveys an ironic, reflexive, self-effacing play on "truth" couched within a radio interview within a mock-newsreel within a film detailing a corrupted news empire—all this to preempt the pursuit of another journalist, Thompson, whose futile search for the meaning of “Rosebud” guides the narrative biography of Kane. Form and content here, as always, are inseparable but between newsreel, film, print and radio journalism they are interwoven in such a way as to render them identical: the film’s plot is also its narrative device and vice versa.

Concerning truth, though, *Citizen Kane* exposes the corruptibility and illegitimacy of journalists and ultimately the journalism industry as a whole. Much like the Cuban and Brazilian films I analyze below, the film implicates itself as a part of the news media industry by including the newsreel and other forms of journalistic evidence—i.e., the newspaper headlines that function as intertitles and the radio announcers that serve as film narrators—within the diegesis. As narrative details, these newsy elements function as a part of the film’s world. As narrative devices, however, they inform the development of the film’s plot. Hence, *Kane* depends on Thompson’s investigation for his own newspaper article as an organizing principle for its plot.

One element of truth within this fiction film about a somewhat fictitious, certainly dubious journalistic practice is its relationship to the political discourse of the time. That is, the film is based on the real world figure of William Randolph Hearst but where we might have expected to find the real-life figure we instead encounter a filmic, fictionalized caricature of him. Inasmuch as *Citizen Kane* resembles the life of Hearst it can be said to infringe on a territory of truth. I will not go as far as to suggest it is a *true*

story, although Hearst himself evidently thought it was slanderous enough to have it censored, but it should suffice to point out that the film, like many we will look at below, was regarded as truthful enough to be dangerous (Azevedo). This censorial impetus triggered by such self-reflexive tropes will find its many echoes within the newsy films from Cuba and Brazil during the 1960s. So while theorists may eventually come to a consensus about the precise distinctions between documentary and fiction films, they will be at a loss to explain away the real-world impact a fictional film can have when its audience understands it to bare meaning.

Here we return to questions of indexicality, opening a space to consider momentarily the widely discussed documentary/fiction division. As I have been teasing out over the last few paragraphs, the newsreel (documentary) within the feature film *Citizen Kane* (fiction) performs a unification of the two forms of filmmaking whose boundaries were, at that point in film history as much as today, anything but clearly defined.[13] More often theories asserting a distinction between the two begin with the premise that they are distinct and move forward to prove why and/or how. This is flawed logic: it begins with the conclusion as a premise (*A* is not *B*; all *A*s share these essential qualities; all *B*s do not: *A* is not *B*).[14] This then leads to a thorough categorization of the types of documentary, including those that border on the fictional—those that utilize reenactments (historical or contemporaneous), those that include or exclude personal

[13] In the case of *Kane*, both the newsreel within the film and the film itself are fictional. Some of the films I analyze will also use fake newsreel footage (*Terra em transe*, *Tenda dos milagres*) but the majority will use actual archival footage of—regardless of the fictional or non-fictional framework of the rest of the film.

[14] Bill Nichols, for instance, posits that the principle and undisputable distinction between fiction and documentary is that a documentary makes an argument and supports it with evidence. An easy example to deny this position would be the so-called *mockumentary*. Yes, one pertains to the real world and one to a fictional world, but an observer that isn't in on the joke would not necessarily be able to distinguish between the two. See Julie Grossman's *Fictions of Power: "My Movie is not a Movie"*.

(subjective) testimony, as well as those that engage with other creative elements common in fictional films (editing, suspense, musical accompaniment or score, special effects, and so on).[15] By beginning with a fiction like *Citizen Kane*, however, we can instead initiate a conceptual schema that takes fiction as the starting point and proceed to delineate the ways in which it and films like it—including but in no way limited to the films I analyze in this dissertation—work against any attempt to differentiate the fictional from the documentary. What follows, then, is an analysis of both fictional and documentary films that attempts to ignore their position on either side of the line—regardless of who draws it—and instead will focus on the issues of truth and reality as a dialectic continuously instantiated across and through media forms.

The newsreel in *Citizen Kane*'s 1941 sits at a historical crux of two very important, intertwined industries. On the one hand, as noted above, it is a play on the expectations of the moviegoer of the time who was accustomed to viewing cinematographic news prior to films. In this vein the newsreel participates in the early film industry's use of moving images to provide visual access to things, places, and people otherwise distant from the viewer geographically—a "pointing to," or deictic index as discussed above. On the other hand, the newsreel is also a precursor to television news broadcasts, which combined the informative power of moving images with that of the radio broadcaster whose now-iconic, ever-authoritative voice-of-god narration shares its heritage with early sound documentaries. Essential for both industries were the technological advancements that would avail wartime journalists the opportunity to capture their footage in the field of battle without being weighed down by hitherto

[15] See Bill Nichols' *Representing Reality*; Stella Bruzzi's *New Documentary*; Noël Carroll's *Theorizing the Moving Image*; and Carl R. Plantinga's *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*.

immobile camera equipment. The mobility of the camera and its resultant aesthetic, as well as the imperfect nature of the film shot outdoors, led to tremendous changes (and challenges) for post-World War II filmmakers.[16] Importantly, as television gained popularity in the United States—and it really took off during the two decades following the war[17]—further advances in microwave and satellite technology made visual news possible on a grand scale. This marked the quintessential moment of transition from strictly verbal news (either written, as in print journalism, or spoken, as with radio) to the dynamic combination of visual, aural, and verbal news of the television age.[18]

Kane thus considered in light of its newsy elements lays out the key concepts that organize each of this dissertation's four chapters. In Chapter 1, foundational films such as *Historias de la revolución* and *Memorias del subdesarrollo* and the newsreels of the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano combine documentary evidence and journalistic media to cinematically delineate a multimedia debate in 1960s Cuba. Like *Kane*, this debate will borrow journalistic pretenses to simultaneously defend and reject certain notions of truth in news media representation. Chapter 2 looks at Brazilian films from roughly the same time period. While the military dictatorship that took power in 1964 intensified and strengthened, the birth of a news media hegemon that would come to be known as Rede Globo shaped the televisual landscape—generally in favor of its political constituents. Leading up to the 1968 laws restricting press freedom, laws that would change the

[16] Key among them, and to whom we will refer below, are the Italian Neorealists.

[17] Black and white television sets in the U.S. increased from 8,000 to over 81,000,000 between 1946 and 1967. By this time there were also an additional and increasing 12,700,000 color TVs. See DeFleur.

[18] The documentary and the newsreel have their own local/national histories in both Cuba and Brazil, not to mention in other Latin American countires such as Mexico and Argentina where amature filmmakers and film clubs popped up as early as the mid 1890s (See John King's *Magical Reels: A History of Cinema in Latin America*). These histories offer their own insights into the impact newsreels would have within their national film cultures. For more on the newsreel and the television network with which it worked in tandem, see Yeidy Rivero's *Broadcasting Modernity*.

meaning of criminality all together, popular crime dramas depicted the plight of an underrepresented people at the margin of society. Newsreels, newspapers, and newsrooms function within films such as *Cidade ameaçada*, *Terra em transe*, *O bandido da luz vermelha*, and *O homem que comprou o mundo*, as well as other lesser known experimental shorts (*Bla bla bla* and *Liberdade de imprensa*), to critically examine the role of the news media in national iconography. Far from mere ornaments decorating these films, the news media consistently influence the direction of the narrative action, dovetailing form and content to reveal varying levels of corruption, censorship, and misinformation authored by the various power structures that legitimize them. Chapter 3 follows this trend in Brazil across the decades circumscribed within a repressive dictatorship before arriving at another critical boom in Brazilian filmmaking at the turn of the millennium. *Noticias de uma guerra particular*, *Cidade de Deus*, and *Ônibus 174* as well as their successors extend into the Twenty-first Century the reflexive news media trend that began in the 1960s, revealing in the process a few technological advances that further problematize the notion of indexical evidence. The criminality and public perception at play in these New Millennial films repeatedly challenge the journalist's attempts to contain complex social issues within simplistic narratives of poverty, drugs, and violence. Lastly, Chapter 4 returns to Cuba to consider the impact of the photographic aspiration toward truth as it has been re-appropriated by filmmakers working with archival film material following the economic crisis of the 1990s. Like the journalist digging through Kane's past to create a clear picture of the man's life, Cuban filmmakers working with the Noticiero ICAIC archive compose their own narratives using materials that were inherently journalistic in their original usage. In so doing, the discourse made visible in those now officially sanctified frames re-emerges as well and,

consequently, both critiques and redeems the historiographical potential of the film medium in the digital age.

Chapter 1: Cuba, Media, Revolution

Figure 1: Fidel Castro on set in *Diez millones* newsreel

OVERVIEW

This chapter examines the relationship between the news media and Cuban cinema between 1959 and 1971. During this twelve year time period the Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematográficos (ICAIC) produced some of the most iconic films hosting the most important political events of the century, creating a lasting visual chronicle of the intensification of the Cold War. This long decade, termed the *década gloriosa*,[19] also bore witness to an evolution of news media broadcast technology. The nascent film industry and the mass communication media co-evolved during these years, both adapting to the increasing complexity of the political moment. As the Cuban economy began to falter in the face of the U.S. blockade and the country became more tied to the Soviet Union's communist program, films began to shift away from a realist

[19] The term comes from Ambrosio Fornet, a Cuban cultural critic and essayist that also worked on few films: *Retrato de Teresa* (1979), *Habanera* (1984).

aesthetic toward a more experimental, reflexive mode of filmmaking that included itself and other representational media within its diegetic framework.

This chapter begins with a brief analysis of a newsreel from the end of that period, Santiago Álvarez's *Diez millones* (1970). This short newsreel from the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano, a branch of the ICAIC responsible for producing weekly newsreels which ran under Álvarez's direction from 1960 through 1989, provides a highly reflexive mise en scene which combines and overlaps the cinematic and the tele-journalistic just prior to the collapse of Revolutionary Cuba's early economic efforts at self-reliance. The historic moment of the now infamous "Zafra de los Diez Millones" (Ten Million Ton Harvesr) which ultimately failed and led to Cuba's near complete reliance on the Soviet bloc, called for an equally complex representational strategy. Álvarez's newsreels had already evolved to do just that. Beginning with *Diez Millones*, then, I examine the ways in which the film and news media combine to visualize and record not only a moment in time and its historic events, but also the very representational apparatuses that, together, organize the historical data.

The rest of the chapter looks to elucidate the trend of emploting news media within film as it developed from the comparatively simple inclusion of radio and print journalism in such films as *Historias de la revolución* and *Soy Cuba*, and then to consider the impact of television beginning with *Pasado meridiano* (or *PM*), and progressing through the experimental newsreels of the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano. Juxtaposing the filmed news broadcast that constitutes *Diez millones* and the use of radio in the Sierra Maestra, thus contrasting the first and final moments of the decade, emphasizes the tremendous distance bridged by the filmmakers that sought to historiographically record the social and political turmoil of the 1960s. *Diez Millones* and

the films leading to it address the central questions of this research: what role do the news media play within national film historiography? How does news on film inform the way we understand a moment in time? Answering these questions requires an understanding of the didactic and propagandistic nature of the ICAIC; its assumptions concerning truth and authority (which are made known through the institute's official print journal *Cine Cubano*); as well as the contrasting positions of rationality and the irrational, the latter bordering on clinically defined madness, which differentiated between the officially sanctioned experimentalism of Álvarez and the officially condemned madness of Nicolás Guillén Landrián, whose experimentalism landed him in an insane asylum.

This chapter examines the development of these issues from the foundation of the ICAIC and the first instantiations of communications media within its films through the period of heightened censorship and limited film production beginning with the Quinquenio Gris.[20] Over the course of the twelve years, the films increasingly attempt to make visible something otherwise impossible to capture on film: the manner in which public discourse is constructed across multiple media sources. In so doing, they challenge the legitimacy of truth claims in visual media when unbound from their discursive contexts. What began as a cinematic attempt to capture the ecstatic public energy of the early revolutionary years, a journalistic showing and recording of the facts of the day, passes through an introspective communion of film and news media before finally breaking down in the face of an inflexible, centrally organized system of representation that established limits on the communicable.

[20] The term "quinquenio gris," also coined by Ambrosio Fornet, describes the five-year period between 1971-1975 in which an intense ideological debate and extreme political circumstances lead to a pervasive censorship of public discourse.

OLD FIDEL'S ALMANAC: MEDIATION AT ITS RATIONAL LIMIT

In February 1970, a national news broadcast featuring Fidel Castro as the host appeared on television screens all across Cuba. The program of fewer than eight minutes in length detailed the country's current progress toward its goal of harvesting ten million tons of sugar cane in one year. The problem as Castro described it was due in part to the unprecedented amounts of rain in key areas of Cuba's agricultural production. Unforeseeable excesses of precipitation in the Oriente, Las Villas, and Camaguey provinces—effectively two thirds of the island[21]—had brought production to a halt, casting further doubt on the possibility of achieving the exceedingly lofty goal which was intended to save the country's faltering economy.

In the opening statement that Castro delivers to his home audience, he sits calmly behind three microphones and explains the motivations for the format and design of the message he is about to share. "En anteriores ocasiones," he begins,

> se ha estado informando o hemos informado sobre la marcha de la zafra a través de algunas ocasionales entrevistas periodísticas y a la vez también mediante algún comunicado. También se ha estado brindando una amplia información diaria acerca de la molida, la producción de azúcar y los rendimientos que están apareciendo en la prensa. Pero en esta ocasión, al objeto de poder brindar una idea muy precisa sobre la situación general de la zafra, hemos querido hacerlo a través de la televisión …auxiliado con algunos mapas y algunos gráficos que permitan ayudar a comprender o, si siquiera, ayudar a explicar el problema (*Diez millones* 00:02:35).

These introductory remarks delineate a media landscape of journalistic interviews and print news, as well as other unspecified communiqué ("algún comunicado"), which had failed to properly address the state of the sugarcane harvest. The daily count to be found in the newspapers, this broadcast presupposes, cannot adequately account for the *reasons*

[21] Cuba at the time was divided into six provinces.

or causes of the agricultural shortcomings. Thus the televised explanation sets out to provide the very reason, the rational explanation for, and grounds for comprehension of the failing national project. The maps and graphics, he says, will help to understand as well as to explain. In this we find an essential assumption held by the Cuban political body about the power of televisual news media that exceeds the illustrative capacities of its journalist predecessors and compatriots. Comprehension and explanation here go hand in hand, but the work of the speaker and his visual materials does not end with the closing of the broadcast. Indeed, the broadcast explicitly offers itself as a rallying cry to increase the labor force—something that requires action and further persuasion on the part of the program's viewers. Comprehension, then, prepares the viewing subject to explain the situation to others as well.

We cannot re-visit or watch Castro's February 1970 television broadcast. Nor can we listen to it. The physical material that remains for us to examine is something of a very different sort. What remains for our analysis is owed to the film cameras operated by Santiago Álvarez's newsreel crew that were also present in the studio that evening. From the raw material of a newsroom, as well as some additional footage edited in, emerged a newsreel consisting of two overlapping narratives: the story of Castro and his rationalizing visual aids and the story of the news broadcast itself as an event. In unifying these two stories, Álvarez's (*El año de los*) *Diez Millones*[22] exemplifies the complexities of an embattled news media discourse against which the previous decade of Cuban film production had struggled.

[22] The only title card of the newsreel reads: *El año de los diez millones: ni una libra menos*. Placed as it is at the end of the film, it is unclear if it is intended to be the newsreel's title or simply a time stamp. Unlike many of Álvarez's noticieros, there is no title in the opening sequence. Having found the video online under the title "Diez Millones" and in lieu of any indication of an alternative title, I will refer to the film hereafter by that name.

Something changes when a film crew sets out to make a film about a news broadcast. The differences between a film and a news presentation become immediately perceptible—especially in the context of the sterile format of early news programs. The mobility of the handheld film camera in the studio electrifies the space, follows news anchors not yet anchored to their desks, turns its gaze around to explore the depths of shadowy corners and heights otherwise invisible to the static news camera. By contrast, the relative immobility of the news cameras lends them the appearance of statues burdened by their own bulk. Unlike those weighty devices whose purpose is not to document but to disseminate, Álvarez's cameras in *Diez Millones* zoom in for close-ups on objects—in this case papers, presentation notes—that exclude human subjects from the frame, giving them their own sense of significance. In the opening sequence we also see long shots that pan across the room, including the anchor as he introduces the guest host, the guest himself, the stage, the microphones, the cameramen and the cameras: in short, we see the production of meaning as a telejournalistic mis en scene, as a staged play with many moving parts. As I mentioned above, however, we also bear witness to the original line of argumentation as it was originally conceived. We see the argument *in* its context; we see the argument *and* its context. The result—one which this chapter will trace from a broad variety of sources throughout the preceding decade and whose legacy will eventually turn out to be nothing less than a token within the UNESCO Memory of the World Register—is a reflexive continuation, a complexification worthy of both immediate and historical discourse. I doubt that Castro's presence within the newsreel was convincing enough to validate the bald simplicity of the message (we're behind schedule because of all this rain!) and that the maps showing rain over most of the island were sufficiently dazzling to put at ease the befuddled newspaper reader or radio listener.

However, regardless of the veracity or credibility of the evidence on display within the newsreel, when the newscast metamorphoses into a documentary it presents us with a sort of immaterial material: the multiple cameras together encourage both a discussion of the material conditions as well as the social systems which place those conditions at the forefront of public discourse.

Diez Millones did not emerge from a vacuum, nor do its implications limit themselves to newsreels about televised political theater. True to the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano's foundations ("actualidades cubanas e internacionales"), *Diez Millones* arose from within a dialogue that had hemispheric—if not global—dimensions. The editions of *Cine Cubano* published the same year, as well as the following (1970 and 1971), broker an apparently multi-faceted but, in the end, single-sided debate concerning news media in the face of imperialism. Titles such as "El imperio de la television," "El cine y la educación," and "Hacer de la TV instrumento de elevación moral y liberación humana" paint a picture of the perceived stakes of the communications game, while contributions from Chilean intellectuals at the outset of Allende's ill-fated term as president point to the debate's far-reaching implications[23]. The following quotation taken from Manuel Pérez and Julio García Espinosa's presentation to the first Congreso Nacional de Educación, included in its entirety in *Cine Cubano* (no.69-70), summarily represents the concerns present across Latin America as it developed over the course of the previous decade:

> Si nos remontamos a la situación existente hasta 1959 en nuestro país, podemos ver como la presencia deformadora del imperialismo norteamericano en todas las esferas de la vida nacional, se hacía sentir con particular fuerza y eficacia en el plano ideológico. *La prensa informativa o especializada, las editoriales, la*

[23] Castro visited Allende in Chile in November, 1971.

> *distribución de publicaciones extranjeras, las plantas de radio y televisión y hasta la escuela*, respondían, salvo excepciones, a los intereses imperialistas o estaban marcados por su influencia. El cine se insertaba en esta fusión de instrumentos de colonización destinados a llevar adelante *una política global de distorsión de nuestra historia*, de nuestra personalidad y del mundo en que vivíamos" ("El cine y la educación" 5; *my italics*)[24]

Here Pérez and García Espinosa incline us to consider the intertwined condition of the various news media and public information sites that had conspired against the Cuban public at the level of historical discourse. The aggressor is the ubiquitous *imperialismo yanqui*. The arms of this soft-diplomacy—as it was subtly and strategically known in the United States—are here outlined as the news media themselves. Their concern is simultaneously historiographical and historical: there is a sense in which the writing of history via news outlets is self-fulfillingly prophetic, that it can distort not only history as it is written but also the world in which it will be written in the future. Hence in order to contextualize Álvarez's *Diez Millones* as well as the host of other films that employ news media within their filmic narratives we must first consider the media themselves.

IMPENETRABLE FASTNESSES: RADIO AND PRINT MEDIA FROM CUBA'S SIERRA

On 24 February, 1958, Radio Rebelde completed its first successful broadcast from deep within rebel territory in the Sierra Maestra. Castro and Guevara's decision to make the costly investment, diverting already scarce funds away from munitions and other necessities came at a decisive moment in the revolutionary struggle against

[24] At the same congress, Castro echoed these concerns in his address: "Cuba lleva adelante una Revolución que tiene en el marxismo-leninismo y en las tradiciones de lucha que conforman nuestra historia sus bases de sustentación y enriquecimiento ideológico-cultural. El estudio y profundización de las raíces de nuestra cultura, de nuestra personalidad como nación, de los elementos que la integran y de sus líneas de desarrollo, a lo largo de más de cien años de lucha, es actividad imprescindible por traer aparejadas las posibilidades de superación constante del nivel ideológico-cultural de las masas. […] Esto demanda un trabajo sistemático y coherente en el que *los medios de comunicación de masas y las manifestaciones artísticas de la cultura, a partir de esas especificidades, deben promover en nuestro pueblo la inquietud y el conocimiento de nuestra historia*" (F. Castro).

Batista's forces. "Each night, eager to hear something not censored by the incumbent government of Fulgencio Batista, a growing number of Cubans would listen to a barrage of bulletins recounting the military victories of the guerillas, manifestos, and patriotic poems and music" (J. Nichols "Cuba" 80). Castro's revolutionary media empire thus established itself from its humble origin as a voice opposed to the previously univocal media sphere of the state. In this vein, Castro's first speech over the rebel radio waves included the following reproach: "Odiosa como es la tiranía en todos sus aspectos, en ninguno resulta tan irritante y groseramente cínica como en el control absoluto que impone a todos los medios de divulgación de noticias impresas, radiales y televisivas" (Marrero 74). Thereafter Radio Rebelde, along with a few informal mimeographed newsprints,[25] promulgated a poignant antithesis to the closely guarded official position.

While antithetical, the rebels' ambition was not a reconciliation of their position with that of the ruling party. Far from it: Castro's Sierra Maestra Manifesto, set in counterpoint to the Manifiesto de los Cinco that was organized by a group of politicians seeking a middle road to resolve the country's struggles, denied any chance of a compromise. These manifestos were published in dueling newspapers—the Cinco compromise was offered in the *Diario de la Marina* on 11 June 1957 and its rejection arrived in print a month later in *Bohemia* on 28 July 1957. Alongside such stipulations as agrarian and educational reform, the Sierra Manifesto mandated that "El gobierno provisional deberá ajustar su misión, al siguiente programa…garantía absoluta a la

[25] Some of which were edited by Carlos Franqui, who, as we will see in further detail below, would ultimately become an important figure in the first major clash between the Revolutionary government, the film industry, and public intellectuals three years later in 1961.

libertad de información, a la prensa radial y escrita y de todos los derechos individuales y políticos garantizados por la Constitución" (Chibás). As we will return to in further detail below, the "with us or against us" stance taken here will find an ironic echo in the infamous "Palabras a los intelectuales" speech given several years later when the limits of this proposed freedom of information are tested within the burgeoning revolutionary program.

The Sierra Maestra Manifesto was not the first appearance of Castro's ambitions for media freedom in Cuban newspapers. Several months earlier, on 3 March 1957, *Bohemia* printed Herbert Matthews' *New York Times* interview with Castro in which the reporter boasted about how "[his] account…will break the tightest censorship in the history of the Cuban republic" (Matthews 1).[26] This reportage was also illustrative of the heights to which a different sort of malicious editorial practice had reached in Cuba. Misinformation regarding Castro's death was also common, as this headline from *Diario de la Marina* suggests: "Reitera la United Press que Fidel Castro pereció junto con su Estado Mayor poco después de desembarcar cerca de Niquero" ("Reitera"). Matthews' report discredits this and other such untruths with a simple photograph taken during his visit and a signature of the young commander, signed and dated 17 February 1957. The media's function here begins to reflect the importance of visible evidence for the Revolution's ends, specifically where it confronts and challenges the legitimacy of spurious news reportage from antagonistic sources. For that moment at least, the

[26] This is also the source from which the title of this section was exerpted. Matthews refers to the Sierra Maestra as an "almost impenetrable fastness".

international consequences of the exchange in question seemed to be fairly balanced: the *New York Times* could be said to have offset the falsity of the United Press cable published in *Diario de la Marina.* By 1962, though, during the filming of an elaborate film exposé by the name of *Soy Cuba* (Kalatozov 1964), Radio Rebelde and the above fraudulent headline would take on controversial and epic proportions.

Mikhail Kalatozov's *Soy Cuba* provides a problematic point of departure for any discussion of early Revolutionary film on a number of levels, but it does so in a way consistent with my overriding emphasis on films that employed news media to challenge conventions concerning truth and historiography. Of particular relevance here is the condemnation against *Soy Cuba* for departing from the realist trend of its cohort. After an unheard of two years of filming and production, it was screened in Cuba for only a week, rejected by critics and audiences alike (Nagib 89). In contrast to early ICAIC filmmakers whose ties to Italian Neorealism characterized much of the early 1960s film production, Kalatozov's operatic, baroque style stands in stark contrast to the historical, material realism of its Cuban contemporaries. Its shots often approach hallucinatory visual complexity and its convoluted sound track provides even further distortion. The dramatic cinematic experimentalism of the film went further to create an image of the recent revolution as a myth than as historical fact—a position incompatible with the historical materialist expectations placed on filmmakers at that time.[27]

[27] Prior to filming *Soy Cuba*, Kalatozov made a similarly operatic and gorgeous post-war film, *The Cranes are Flyinig*, which told a story of a young couple in the Soviet Union after WWII. The film was received in the Soviet Union as a welcome, human, and warm replacement for the cold, harsh agitprop that had come to typify Soviet war cinema.

Soy Cuba's plot consists of four separate but interrelated stories taking place in Havana leading up to the Revolution's defeat of Batista's forces on 1 January 1959. In this sense it follows the episodic structure and premise of another foundational film that could be said to fit better into the mold of the early revolutionary films: *Historias de la revolución* (Alea 1960). Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that *Historias* had a part in forming the mold itself. Both *Historias* and *Soy Cuba* contain 1) an episode in which an everyman type heads for the hills to join ranks with the revolutionary forces; 2) an episode set in the Sierra Maestra; and 3) the triumphant return to the city of the rebels after much warfare and devastation.

In the second of three segments of *Historias*, titled "Sierra Maestra: 1958," we follow a small band of rebels as they engage in a few small skirmishes. They carry with them shortwave radios that connect them with other guerrillas presently set up in a large base camp. Somewhat clumsily, the young Alea cuts from the small troop of four or five to a rebel large base without an establishing shot: the men in the jungle talking into the radio receiver are replaced on screen by several others in line for food. After a brief scan of the camp, the filmic bridge connecting the two scenes finally arrives running from off screen with the orders to prepare a company and retrieve their beleaguered comrades. This humble, invisible strand of communication is the first of its kind within Revolutionary Cuban film. It would not be entirely wrong to consider this an inconsequential moment in the film, let alone in Cuban film history. What this maneuver provides is a baseline from which to compare the lengths films will go in the following

decade to incorporate communications technologies into their narrative schema. Rather than person-to-person networks like this one, person-to-nation networks will emerge. Beyond that, nation-to-nation communications media talk through films as we will see here in Kalatozov's film and later in the newsreels of Álvarez and his disciples in the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano.

Figure 2: "Muerto Fidel Castro" Headline, *Soy Cuba*

Soy Cuba takes from what is essentially the same historical material as *Historias*—here I want to emphasize the materiality of this shared foundation—and makes of it something entirely different. Among the four subplots that comprise *Soy Cuba*, the narrative beginning and tragic end of a young student activist named Enrique is set in motion by a newspaper headline that reads: "MUERTO FIDEL CASTRO PROXIMO A NIQUERO" (01:14:48). This headline is a clear reduction of the abovementioned headline from *Diario de la Marina* ("Reitera la United Press que Fidel Castro pereció junto con su Estado Mayor poco después de desembarcar cerca de Niquero"). The longer version from the real newspaper would have been far too small in the frame for the audience to read. Nevertheless, this abbreviated headline sends Enrique

headlong into a debate with other student activists about assassinating a police officer responsible for the murder of several innocent civilians. In the ensuing dialogue, truth and rationality are pitted against impassioned activity. A student leader played by Sergio Corrieri contradicts Enrique, telling him that the headline is a lie: "Batista hace correr bolas de que Fidel ha muerto para confundir al pueblo. Fidel está en la Sierra Maestra agrupando a todos los hombres dignos bajo la bandera de la revolución" (01:15:30). Important here is the student's insistence that the misleading information is set to confuse the population so that they are unable to proceed rationally—the assumption here being that a rationally minded person would be susceptible to the logic of joining Fidel and his revolutionary forces. Absent Fidel, the equation breaks down and results in confusion.

The students in this plot are keenly aware of the implications of an information war. They align themselves with the revolutionary forces in the mountains not by rashly taking revenge on individuals that commit crimes against them, but by contradiction—speaking against in the literal sense of the term—so as to make possible continued support of the rebels. Enrique frantically encourages swift vengeance on their local enemies but is put in his place by his more patient companions. What they are faced with instead is "...una nueva lucha" wherein information rules supreme. "Nosotros tememos que ayudar a eso hasta el pueblo lo entienda y lo sepa" (01:16:48). Here again we find with respect to the combative mediascape the terms "to understand" and "to know." Without alternative news sources to set the record straight there is no possibility of rational, informed discourse among Cuban citizens. Enrique, not yet ready to quell his

appetite for reprisal, begs to know when they will decide to take action. “Eso no lo vamos a decidir ahora. Ya lo discutiremos,” he is told. Still unsatisfied, he is again reproached for his impusiveness: “Mira, si quieres, plantéala en una reunión ante el grupo. Pero entiende, que ahora eso nosotros no lo vamos a decidir. Entiéndelo de una vez" (01:17:02). Enrique’s figure evokes a petulance that stands in stark contrast to the solid, determined rationality of the others. The group’s spokesperson, Alberto (played by Sergio Corrieri of *Memorias del Subdesarrollo* fame), firmly holds his ground while positioned in the frame above the wavering Enrique. The correct path is clear: decisions must be made through group consensus following a reasoned debate. And the only way this is possible is with a patient, clear-headed rationalism unclouded by emotion. It is difficult to imagine a position more indebted to Enlightenment thinking than this one.

Unfortunately, Enrique does not concede to reason. Instead he sets out to get revenge with the assistance of another group of activists that remain unidentified within the film. Kalatozov’s dizzying camera work follows him up a stairwell, swirling as it goes among a kaleidoscope of sharp angles that reflect Enrique’s inner instability and confusion. As he is set up to shoot his target, the police brutal chief of police, with a sniper rifle from the top of an adjacent building he waivers and decides against it—not because he came to his senses but because he is racked with guilt upon seeing the man with his adoring children. It could be said that, at this moment, he turns to the conclusion of his colleagues that this was merely a man within a system and that the system would replace him if he were killed. Given the tension and disagreement when encountered by

Alberto in the street, it seems more plausible that he had not come to terms with the position of the others and that he continued to follow irrational impulses.

Meanwhile, a group of three students actively engaged in printing fliers proclaiming "FIDEL VIVE" is discovered by the police. Their efforts to inform the public are not undone: one of the students takes to the window to shower the pamphlets down onto the crowded plaza below. In the process, he is shot from behind by one of the officers and falls into the square. Lying dead on the ground amid a growing crowd of onlookers—leaflets still floating through the air—his body becomes a part of the message to the people. In a sense, the violence perpetrated against the student and his resultant death validates the information they were sending to the populace. The senseless killing of the student must therefore seem all the more irrational in the face of the rationalizing impulse of the message the students sought to convey. This connection with the public is punished once more when another of the three students is shot for calling to the crowd "Vive la libertad! Abajo la tiranía!" By killing these agitators the policemen undid their own attempts at censorship, a consequence the film suggests is imminent vis-à-vis the corrective power of truth and public knowledge.

Despite their having acted according to the terms agreed upon through rational, communal debate, the above two deaths are ultimately overshadowed by Enrique's martyric metamorphosis. Enrique stands above the crowd and delivers what *looks like* a rousing speech. In his only attempt to connect to and inform the public we do not hear his words. He is denied communicative rationality. His words here are less significant than

the fact that he is speaking them. So, in a moment of political theater where he might have actually been able to promote reasoned discourse, he can be seen to overflow with the very passion that initially and continually inhibited his rational behavior. After leading the crowd down the steps via an inversion of the *Battleship Potemkin* stair sequence—the crowd here has the power and moves to impress it upon the repressive forces below—Enrique raises a brick over his head while advancing toward the police and is shot dead.

As an overly emotional, reactionary individual, Enrique's unquestioned status as the protagonist of this sequence demands careful consideration. In the end it becomes all too easy to overlook the two murders preceding Enrique's death, especially as we are dazzled by what is arguably the most complex single sequence in Cuban film history: in one long take, the ambitious cinematographer leads a camera first through a crowded street, then up the side of a building, across the street, through a rooftop tobacco factory, and finally out over the street again following Enrique's funeral procession and punctuating the chapter with epic aplomb. Enrique's body, not the bodies of the other students that died while spreading their truth via pamphlets from the window, is paraded through the streets. I argue that Enrique's martyrdom, if we can even call it that, is effected ironically neither by his actions nor his principles, but by the process in which his irrational motivations were silenced so that he, reduced to mere physical material, could embody the communicative rationality he refused to endorse in his life as an activist.

According to the logic espoused by the characters, Alberto's consistency throughout this episode better suits him to the position of protagonist or hero. This not being the case, we return to the film's epic/poetic construction on the level of form as it opposes the rationalizing principles of the content. Defending himself against attacks from critics that *Soy Cuba'*s form obstructed the narrative content, the cinematographer, Sergey Urusevsky, explained that "they chose to approach it poetically rather than rationally…the film was to be seen as a visual poem, in which case the content had to yield to the imagery." In direct contrast to Alea's early film philosophy[28] as instantiated in our above outline of *Historias de la revolución*, Urusevsky reiterates that "it has never interested me, as a cameraman, to just register what was going on in front of the camera" (Iordanova 125). Kalatozov and Urusevsky disconnect *Soy Cuba*'s content and form on the literal level as well. While Alberto and an anonymous mass carry the body-turned-symbol, appropriately cloaked in a Cuban flag, through the streets to convey its truth to the populace, they remove the camera from the crowd using an elaborate system of pulleys and cranes—a technique for which Kalatozov is known. The removal of the camera results in a literal and metaphorical transcendence of the scene from the street level of historical actuality to the poetic level of the epic. It should come as no surprise

[28] "When we began to make films in a post-revolutionary situation the neorealist mode of approaching reality was very useful to us because in that early stage we needed little more. First of all, we were not developed enough as film-makers to posit other approaches. Secondly, our own national situation at that juncture was…very clear. All we had to do was to set up a camera in the street and we were able to capture a reality that was spectacular in and of itself...That kind of film-making was perfectly valid for that particular historical moment" (*Cuban Cinema* 159). Also, Alfredo Guevarra delineated the party line: "Estamos ante un reportaje cinematográfico. Bastaría imitar a los periodistas y anotar cuanto sucede. Lo que sucede se explicara por sí mismo"…"este diálogo interno hace del reportaje un documental" (Guevara 15).

that, when interviewed about his role in this famous scene more than three decades later, the actor playing Alberto (Corrieri) did not recall being a part of it.[29] His role as message bearer and truth conveyer is subsumed by the greater force of the cinematic magic at play in the film.

Figure 3: Radio Rebelde in *Soy Cuba*

Before leaving *Soy Cuba* it is worth considering the film's use of a second news medium, one also utilized by the rebels prior to their defeat of Batista's forces: Radio Rebelde. Whereas *Historias de la revolución* simply bridged two distinct geographic locations with the two-way radio in its Sierra Maestra episode, Kalatozov stretches the limits of the medium's potential with another long take[30] accompanied by the following speech:

> Aquí Radio Rebelde. Transmitiendo desde las montañas de oriente en la Sierra Maestra, territorio libre de Cuba. Cubano, ¡incorpórate a la lucha! ¡Tú que has sido víctima del abuso, la maldad y el crimen! ¡Tú que has sufrido en carne propia la injusticia, la miseria, el robo de todos tus derechos, escucha este llamado

[29] Interview with the actor in *Soy Cuba: O mamute Siberiano* (Vicente Ferraz 2005)

[30] To be clear, this shot is a long take by cinema industry standards but not necessarily within the context of the film. Some definitions of "long take" refer to the average duration of a given film's takes rather than a universal minimum.

> vibrante: ¡Revolución! ¡Revolución! Frente al odio del enemigo, tú campesino, tú obrero, tú estudiante, tú cubano: ¡levanta el brazo armado! La revolución lucha por la plena y absoluta soberanía nacional de nuestra patria. ¡La revolución lucha para que la educación no sea un privilegio de minorías, y todos tengan las oportunidades para estudiar, por defender el derecho a la vida que todos tenemos, por defender la salud al pueblo, peleamos! Cada familia tiene derecho a una vivienda decorosa. Cada cubano tiene derecho al trabajo. Miles de padres de familias y de jóvenes se ven sin empleo, sin porvenir. ¡La revolución hará la industrialización del país, liquidando el desempleo y rescatando todas las riquezas secuestradas al pueblo! Tú campesino, tú obrero, tú estudiante: ¡Ocupa tu puesto en la lucha! ¡Esta es tu revolución! ¡Libertad o muerte!" (02:11:45-02:14:00)

This speech plays over a long take of one minute and fifty-two seconds that walks Mariano, a new recruit, into and through a camp in the Sierra Maestra. The "tú" here is visually connected to Mariano while the guerillas in the camp, staged in various tableaus, embody the ideals echoing over the radio waves. We see in their activity the preparation for battle with men sewing uniforms and assembling rifles; the education of men as one sharpens a pencil with his machete and others sit in a circle writing what a central figure dictates; and yet another group preparing to defend, as the announcer says, their rights to health and work by practicing their gun handling skills. All the while Mariano walks around and through them with the camera keeping step in the rugged mountain terrain. The radio announcement ties together present and past, individual with community, guerillas with supporters, and ideals with actions. It represents a praxis by taking the rational dialectic born in the print material and discussion in the city from the realm of theory into that of activity. This is confirmed as the scene closes with the return of Alberto, smiling grandly in a close-up and fully evolved into a revolutionary soldier—obligatory beard and all. Alberto functions yet again as a standard against which the

outsider is to be measured. He represents the culmination of his rational theory into action, now a veteran of the cause initiating Mariano into the fold.

As a whole, *Soy Cuba*'s portrayal of the communicative networks at play in the early stages of the Revolution corresponds to the new state's ideology though, unfortunately, its poetic/epic components rendered it incompatible with the early 1960s film industry's historiographical aspirations. In the end, the film "was not Cuban"—not only because it was made primarily by a team of foreigners, but also because its *cubanness* was inauthentic. The problem here ties in to our consideration of filmic historiography as dependent upon verifiable fact. As Michel de Certeau summarily puts it,

> Fiction is accused, finally, of not being a "univocal" discourse or…of lacking scientific "univocity." In effect, fiction plays on the stratification of meaning: it narrates one thing in order to tell something else; it delineates itself in a language from which it continuously draws effects of meaning that cannot be circumscribed or checked… (fiction) is a discourse that "informs" the "real" without pretending either to represent it or to credit itself with the capacity for such a representation. In this way, it is fundamentally opposed to a historiography that is always attached to an ambition to speak the "real" ("History" 202).

To be sure, *Soy Cuba* privileges an *un*-circumscribed, *un*checked, and multi-vocal view of the events leading up to the Revolution's victory. Its language is inherently non-scientific and the resultant "stratification of meaning" in that moment of contentious historical turmoil—fought over and through the news media—did not comply with the official position. Cuban history and, as a result, Cuban cinema were to be rationally, materially founded and not mythically formulated by (primarily foreign) poets. By the year of the film's release (1964), the political situation and the media that reported on it

had become complicated to the degree that clear, direct messages in strict compliance with officially authorized views were sought to educate the public. As we will explore in the following section, it was no longer sufficient to do away with tradition—a new tradition would soon be established to provide a uniquely Cuban film experimentalism, one that maintained an investment in the indexical while simultaneously exploring its limits.

NOTICIERO ICAIC LATINOAMERICANO: NEWS MARCHING TOWARD HISTORY

Having expressed their presence and their goals via Radio Rebelde, pamphlets, and journalistic interviews prior to the revolution's victory on 1 January 1959, Castro's forces wasted little time dominating the extant media landscapes thereafter. The new governing body stayed true to the aims stated in the Sierra Maestra Manifesto by championing press freedom. Within the first twelve months, however, the infamous coletillas (perfunctory statements following news items denigrating a story for misinformation or unethical reporting) would surface in print media as an apocryphal sign of things to come.[31] Another subtle measure utilized early was the strangling of Batista era subsidies.32 John Lent notes that "of 58 Cuban newspapers in 1959, only six

[31] An example of a coletilla: "Esta información se publica en uso legítimo de la libertad de prensa existente en Cuba, pero los periodistas y obreros gráficos (o locutores, en el caso de la radio y la televisión) de este centro de trabajo expresan también en uso de ese derecho que el contenido de la misma no se ajusta a la verdad ni a la más elemental ética periodística" (Marrero 95).

[32] Censorship takes on many forms, one of which of particular relevance to this project is government subsidization. This issue arises again and again in the histories of film industries whose products depend almost entirely on governmental subsidies to counter the impact of asymmetrical markets. This will be seen at length in the following chapter on Brazil.

did not have government subsidies or advertising" (Lent 4). Eliminating these subsidies proved an efficient method of removing a certain degree of opposition and, in the process, narrowed the field of discourse in favor of the new government. After three years, a mere six newspapers were left standing and by 1968 these six had either been eliminated or merged to form the remaining two: Granma and Juventud Rebelde.

Radio, a similarly competitive market in Cuba in 1958, went the way of Cuban print media as well. John Lent informs us that "by August 1960, the government controlled 43 of the 88 independent and 75 network-affiliated AM stations, 18 of the 24 FM stations, and 23 of 24 television outlets. All stations were incorporated into a new network (Independent Federation of Free Radios, FIEL), for the purpose of consolidating the Revolution and orienting the public" (Lent 10). The operative terms here are "to consolidate" and "to orient." But the media opposition from abroad wouldn't be so easily corralled, and their message would have to be negated by other means. Famously, 1961 would prove to be a watershed year for the fledgling nation, for its news media, and for its purveyors of culture.

In the six months between the U.S. blockade in October 1960 and the Bay of Pigs invasion on 17 April 1961, the United States and its ousted Cuban allies besieged the island with radio waves from, among other sources, a United Fruit Company relay station under the name Radio Swan.[33] Cuba responded in kind by establishing its own Radio

[33]For more on this and the history of U.S. media propaganda forces against Cuba, including but not limited to radio (Radio Martí) and television (TV Martí), see Lawrence Soley and John Nichols' *Clandestine radio broadcasting: a study of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary electronic communication*. New York: Praeger. 1987.

Havana Cuba two weeks after the failed invasion (1 May 1961). The station was to function in much the same way as Radio Rebelde functioned from the Sierra Maestra: to provide a counter perspective that would balance the informational slant of oppositional ideology, be that internal or external. With mounting pressure from abroad in the form of not only financial and psychological but now also physical warfare, Cuba's position on press freedom had arrived at its breaking point. No less than an essentially televisual spectacle would push the situation beyond that point to its rupture.

In the immediate wake of the above crisis, the now infamous free cinema experiment of fourteen minutes in duration known as *Pasado Meridiano*, or simply *PM*, premiered on 22 May 1961. Much has been written about this film and its significance as a turning point for the cultural politics of the Revolution. It has been reviewed, censored, essayed, dismissed, championed, short-storied,[34] and even novelized.[35] Problematically, and almost universally, *PM* has been classified as a documentary film composed in the style of free cinema. On its face this seems to be an accurate classification—the handheld camera passing inconspicuously to, through, and eventually away from a few crowded night clubs is true to free cinema form of relatively passive observation. However, inasmuch as the film can be said to have emerged from and ultimately condemned for its relationship with the contentious mediascape of the TV program Lunes en televisión, conjoined as it was with Carlos Franqui's periodical Revolución and its literary

[34] See Antonio José Ponte's "De *La Fiesta Vigilada*." Ed. Orlando Jiménez-Leal and Manuel Zayas. *El Caso PM: Cine, Poder Y Censura*.

[35] Guillermo Cabrera Infante has been quoted as saying that his novel, *Tres Tristes Tigres*, was a novelization of the film. (Herrero-Olaizola)

supplement Lunes de Revolución, *PM* must be understood first and foremost as news reportage.

Various polemical points of contact between the directors of the Lunes group (Carlos Franqui, Jiménez Leal, and Guillermo Cabrera Infante) and the ICAIC (Alfredo Guevara) have been heavily documented,[36] but the fact remains that the institutions permitting the prohibition and confiscation of the film existed prior to the clash of personalities and ideologies that typify most discussion of its history. If we think of *PM* as news reportage first and a film second—which is true chronologically as well as conceptually—we arrive at a clearer understanding of just what the so-called *PM* affair (or "el caso *PM*") was all about. According to Orlando Jiménez Leal, who together with Sabá Cabrera Infante directed *PM*, their project began as news reportage to show the Cuban people preparing for the impending invasion. He explains,

> Yo trabajaba como camarógrafo y dirigía el departamento fílmico de *Lunes en Televisión*, cuando La Habana se preparaba para recibir a cañonazos la invasión militar a Cuba. Todas las estaciones de televisión estaban en cadena. Entonces, en ese estado de alerta a mí *me mandaron a hacer un reportaje* sobre cómo se preparaba la ciudad y su gente ante esa invasión tan anunciada. Cargado con mi camarita Bolex, tomé una decisión arriesgada en esa época: filmaría sin luces ni equipos adicionales, para no llamar la atención. ¿Y qué descubrí? Que La Habana rumbeaba. Esa era la manera en que se preparaba para la invasión (C. Espinosa *my italics*).[37]

Jiménez Leal also mentions editing film footage that had originally been intended for a news report into the short documentary. This much, together with the fact that the *Lunes*

[36]See *El caso PM: Cine, poder y censura* eds. Orlando Jiménez Leal and Manuel Zayas

[37] Jiménez Leal seems to have been repeating anecdotes and commentary of this stripe in interviews on the subject of *PM* for some forty years or more but, to his credit, interviewers continue asking him the same questions.

en televisión program successfully broadcast *PM* without any backlash whatsoever from the state cultural institutions, leads to the conclusion that the ensuing debate was as much the result of an incompatible dovetailing of the state's creative and journalistic factions as anything else. As a piece of filmmaking that blurred the boundaries between creative expression and journalistic reporting, it was up to the ICAIC to decide where it would better fit. Their decision determined whether it would remain a one-time television report of the surprisingly festive atmosphere leading up to an invasion or fall into rank among other state authorized newsreels to be played in theaters. The decision to prohibit the screening of the film, regardless of the circus of talks, justifications, rebuttals and so on that occurred thereafter, clearly demonstrate the authority's disdain for its message: one the eve of impending invasion, Cubans rumba. The discussions in the conference that ensued detail a cultural politics for the future wherein everything would be available to the scrutiny of a certain journalistic ethics of truth in representation—especially those cultural forms such as film, in general, and *PM*, in particular, that so closely resembled the increasingly dominant form of public information: television. The ICAIC at that point had already defined itself as a primarily historiographical and didactic enterprise. And yes, as many have noted, by the end of the year *Lunes* and its subsidiaries would be closed down but so, too, was *all* privately owned press. The following year radio and television would also be officially organized under the control of a state directed institute, the ICRT (Instituto Cubano de Radio y Televisión). By 1962, then, virtually all cultural

production was relegated to a type of communications medium, all housed within a top-down system of authorization.[38]

The newsreel *¡Muerte al invasor!* (Alea and Álvarez, 1961) epitomizes the above moment both in terms of its historical content and of its place at the center of the emergent, consolidated news media network. The film's title sequence shares the attention grabbing character of a newspaper headline, in all caps, with the following subheading: "REPORTAJE ESPECIAL SOBRE LA AGRESION IMPERIALISTA AL PUEBLO DE CUBA." In much the same way that Alea's *Historias de la Revolución* won a representational battle against *Soy Cuba*, this special reportage detailing the Bay of Pigs invasion wins out over *PM* as the ICAIC's officially authorized story. In contrast to Cabrera Infante and Jimenez Leal's tongue-in-cheek reportage showing the Cuban people dancing and drinking, Alea and Álvarez paint a stoic portrait of the emboldened nation's preparation for and victory over their imperialist invaders, complete with marching band soundtrack and militaristic hymn. Though there is some confusion about the authorship of the project, it is believed that Alea was responsible for directing the cameramen in the field—a feat actually prepared for in advance of the invasion and carried out as true battlefield documentary journalism—and assumed that Álvarez assisted in the editing room. None other than Alfredo Guevara is believed to have written the narrator's script, giving further credit to the comparison of this film and *PM*.

[38] At this point there was still considerable room for debate concerning policy and even foreign affairs, but the Revolution as a political program was no longer fair game for criticism.

¡Muerte al invasor! was among the first Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano films to receive any considerable attention outside the theaters for its aesthetic characteristics.[39] While the film's montage is a far cry from the inestimably important developments both Alea and Álvarez would have in the following years, it offers a kernel from which each would depart to pursue their own individual styles. In this light it is fitting that Alea would become Cuba's most celebrated feature fiction director while Álvarez would become a world renowned documentarian. The film also provides a micro-level initiative in which the creative (read artistic) and the communicative (newsy) overlap. This is the sense in which, as I mentioned above, the film embodies the highly contested mediascape of the moment. It is at once a primitive example of Álvarez's frenzied editing, Alea's mise-en-scène, and Alfredo Guevara's overtly propagandistic didacticism. Therein, as would later be exaggerated to manic extremes in Álvarez's iconic *Now!*, *LBJ*, and *Hanoi, martes 13*, we find the combination of the dominant media forms: television/cinema (documentary journalism), radio (as the announcer and patriotic music), and periodicals (the title sequence, and real newspaper headlines from *Revolución* and *Hoy*—the last of these completes the mediatic triangle as it draws us back to television with the legible byline, "Serán presentados hoy en televisión los mercenarios" (00:08:10).[40]

The mediatization of *¡Muerte al invasor!* also generated a rare amalgamation of film, journalism, and the plastic arts—further evincing the confluence of Cuba's creative

[39] *Muerte* won the "Premio al Mejor Pograma en el IV Festival Internacional Cinematográfico de Documentales y Cortometrajes de Leipzig in 1961 and was elected the "Filme Notable del Año en el V Festival de Cine de Londres, Inglaterra, 1961" [http://www.cubacine.cult.cu/sitios/realizad/titon.html]

[40] This image also reappears in the *De America soy hijo…Y a ella me debo* (Álvarez, 1972)

and communicative institutions. This came in the form of a film poster created by Rafael Morante Boyerizo and Eladio Rivadulla for the one year anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Lacking traditional materials on which to print the posters, they opted instead for newspapers donated from the archive of *El mundo* (Fig. 4). The poster features a paper-chain of human figures along the left side, in relief, which creates the illusion that the newsprint is actually cut out and superimposed on a blue field. Here the material shortages that began to make themselves known in the third year of the Revolution led to a literal repurposing of news matter that parallels the repurposing of various news agencies and cultural institutions into organs of the state. The print begs its viewer to question the importance of the news media within the film, aligning the film experience with the visual effect of the poster: is the film art with news showing through, art made from or with news? Is the news in relief or is it superimposed onto the painting? In either case circumstance inextricably conjoins art and information on metaphorical and figurative levels. Although *¡Muerte al invasor!* does not yet employ the trans-mediative self-awareness or introspection common in Álvarez's and Alea's later films, it evinces between 1961 and 1962 the emergence of an already entangled mediascape that would eventually require critical reconsideration.

[41]

Figure 4: *Muerte al invasor* poster printed on newspaper

Meanwhile, as the Revolution celebrated the first anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion, complete with newspaper movie posters, April 1962 also spawned the Departamento de Divulgación Cinematográfica—an arm of the ICAIC—and its Cine-Móvil. *Cine Cubano* described the aims of the project as a conversion of "toda la isla en un inmenso salón cinematográfico."[42] In the first year, Cine-Móvil provided 7,722 screenings before an estimated two million viewers[43]. These numbers would climb considerably over the next decade. The work of the Cines-Móviles formed part of what was considered a "reeducación y formación del público" which would, "al hacer llegar el cine a las áreas rurales, y en general a los lugares de más difícil acceso, incorporan a los habitantes de esas zonas a la condición de público cinematográfico, dando así un primer

[41] Image credit: Morales "El Cartel"
[42] *Cine Cubano*. Año 3, No. 13. 1962.
[43] These numbers are reported differently in a later publication as 4,603 projections to 1.2 million viewers (*Cine Cubano* Nos. 60-62. Page 108). The same article evinces an increase to 74,980 projections and 7.2 million viewers in 1969.

paso hacia la liquidación…de las diferencias de posibilidades entre la ciudad y el campo."[44] The Departmento de Divulgación's ambitions (the formation and expansion of a mass public, the erasure of differences—of possibilities, but also, we may assume, in general—and the education of that newly formed mass to be *cinematic*) thusly stated envision a communicative network to shorten the distances between disparate zones so as to unify the previously divided nation. Just as the state consolidated the news media and organized it under a single banner, so too would the state seek to consolidate the hitherto disjointed audiences into one cohesive body, or mass.

The idea of "massification" in communications theory has its footing firmly grounded in assumptions of commodities markets and generalizable *private* interests —a large audience must be assumed to share some basic interests for advertising revenue to continue to keep the industry afloat. As the Cuban Revolutionary government rallied its public around socialism in the early 1960s, though, the "interests" of the media industry were necessarily national economic interests, not ad revenue driven by private spending. Castro cautiously outlined his understanding by forcing the distinction of journalism as business and journalism as an intellectual endeavor:

> periodismo no quiere decir empresa, sino periodismo, porque empresa quiere decir negocio y periodismo quiere decir esfuerzo intelectual, quiere decir pensamiento, y si por algún sector la libertad de prensa ha de ser apreciada es, precisamente, no por el que hace negocio con la libertad de prensa, sino para que el que gracias a la libertad de prensa escribe, orienta y trabaja con el pensamiento y por vocación, haciendo uso de ese derecho que la revolución reconquistó para el país, aun en medio de todas las campañas tendenciosas que tienden a concitar

[44] Perez, Manuel and Julio García Espinosa. "El cine y la educación" Ponencia presentada al primer congreso nacional de educación y cultura. *Cine Cubano*.

> cuantos enemigos sea posible contra la obra revolucionaria que estamos realizando (F. Castro 86).

These words, spoken on 7 July 1959 ("Día de la libertad de Prensa"), found their echo in the Sierra Maestra with the Cine-Móvil project in the sense that both privilege information and education as a unifying force against "tendentious," deceptive or manipulative misinformation of those enemies desirous of a more easily divisible—and thereby more profitable—Cuba. The interests of the nationalized Cuban media at the time do not correspond with the assumptions of many theories that place profit at the center of news media but, as the following introduction to Jesús Martín-Barbero's work and return to Gouldner will demonstrate, the economic and social principles of said theories still apply.

Martín-Barbero's *Communication, Culture and Hegemony: From the Media to Mediations* argues for a re-conceptualization of media in Latin America as a process that, like the ICAIC, does not fit so neatly within a capitalist/commercial configuration. This work provides a history of communications media that leads not toward an imperialist flattening of the world's national audiences but into a patchwork of distinct niche markets in which individuals reappropriate media content and adapt it to their own purposes. In many ways it is an optimistic theory ahead of its time. Published in 1987, it predicts the irritatingly termed "glocalization" that would become popular in the age of Neoliberalism when television and other media find their equivalent to the local spin on certain menu

items at McDonald's, heralding the telenovela as an unbridled decentering of power.[45] This is also the point at which Martín-Barbero's history diverges from the situation as it stood in Cuba in 1962. García Espinosa eventually returns to the importance of individual production of media content a decade later in the representative manifesto "Por un cine imperfecto," but for the moment the impetus rested in the hands of official organizations to fortify a public to be capable of understanding cinema—a cinematic public—so that it could be brought to terms with or toward a consciousness of their historic age.

By wrestling power away from international media organizations (with emphasis on but not limited to film) the ICAIC as a whole performed a re-centralization of power[46]—not the decentralization indicated by Martín-Barbero. For the moment at least the impulse was to form a mass audience of cinematic spectators, a hermeneutic enterprise wherein film and its newsy constituents would essentially educate its audience to see the present within its (official, rational, truthful, authentic…) historical framework. Note the similarities between Alfredo Guevara's statement reiterating the above goals of the Cine-Móvil Project[47] ("promover un cine, formar un público. Ese público es el pueblo. Se trata de que el simple espectador se convierta en público" (qtd in del Valle 11)) and Martín-Barbero's comment on the American model of television as instantiated in Latin American countries: "the heart of the model lies in the tendency to constitute,

[45] See Roland Robertson's "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity".

[46] Here in the sense of power as "production of truth, intelligibility, and legitimacy" (Foucault via Martín-Barbero 57)

[47] "reeducación y formación del público" which would, "al hacer llegar el cine a las areas rurales, y en general a los lugares de más difícil acceso, incorporan a los habitantes de esas zonas a la condición de público cinematográfico, dando así un primer paso hacia la liquidación…de las diferencias de posibilidades entre la ciudad y el campo" (qtd above, Perez 9)

through television, a single public, and to reabsorb the sociocultural differences of a country to the point that one can confuse a higher degree of communicability with a higher degree of economic profitability" (Martín-Barbero 181). He goes on to iterate that televisual discourse, "in order to speak to the largest number of people, had to reduce the differences to the minimum." In Cuba's case, having nationalized all forms of communication and cultural production, we can replace the goal of "economic profitability" with national profitability without challenging the reductive implications of the dominant American model. The ICAIC was overtly engaging in this project of massification not via television—though this was happening contemporaneously with the establishment of the Instituto Cubano de Radio y Televisión—but by making the cinematic experience more televisual in its distributive structure. Since not all campesinos owned or had access to television sets, a fact that undermined the nationwide broadcast potential in place when the Revolution took power, the Cines-Móviles constituted a national public by taking content to the people.

Octavio Cortázar's 1967 documentary *Por primera vez* provides a day-in-the-life narrative structure of one Cine-Móvil as it brings its magical apparatus to a remote region in the mountains of Baracoa for the first time. The film asks the question "¿Qué labor realiza un cine móvil?" in the opening sequence, including the text on screen. The font is markedly softer than the imposing and authoritative newspaper headline feel of early documentaries in the style of *Muerte al invasor*. The rest of the film maintains that softness as well. Cortázar emphasizes the human element of the project with smiling

children's faces. We hear them respond to the director's questions about movies (What is a movie? Have you ever seen one?); we watch them laugh at a scene from Chaplin's *Modern Times*; we delight in the innocence of their playful behavior and, ultimately, their tired, yawning faces as the evening's event comes to a close. These are the individuals the Cine-Móvil project brings to the mass. One can only imagine how these precocious children would have responded to a screening of *Muerte al invasor*, complete with its bombs, guns, and corpses. I include this not simply as a provocation: *Por primera vez* shows us that there remained even after five years of the program a populace that had yet to experience film, let alone learn to interpret something beyond an easily digestible slapstick. Nor do I include this to condemn the efforts themselves, as I consider them admirable, but to note that, in order to flatten individuals and subsets of communities into a national mass, it was necessary to work incrementally from the lowest common denominator. Especially in light of the infinitely more aesthetically and rhetorically challenging films to be produced shortly after *Por primera vez* (*Memorias del Subdesarrollo* (Alea 1968), *Lucía* (Solás 1968), *La primera carga al machete* (Gómez 1969), to name a representative few) it is evident that the differences between the film-viewing public of the city and of the countryside had not yet been liquidated. Indeed, other filmmakers would *increase* the gap by evolving beyond the naïve faith in the visible as truthful before the roughly eight million inhabitants of the island nation could be said to have been integrated in its so-called cinematic populace.

There are two problematic premises to take away and one important direction to proceed from the above espousal of the ICAIC and Martín-Barbero. The first assumes that journalism, as a truth-telling enterprise, must be devoid of any private interests in order to communicate objectively. An objective reportage of facts would lead to an educated, informed populous capable of rational interpretations and rationalizing dialogue. The second idea suggests that the formation of a national public audience—televisual and/or cinematic—requires the simplification of ideas and an erasure of differences on the level of content. The latter justified itself on the view that the flattening of content would lead to the erasure of social asymmetry between rural and urban populations. Gouldner paves the way to proceed from these thorny premises. Concerning television and, by extension, televisual cinematic experience of the early ICAIC variety, he writes:

> Television is a 'you-are-there' participatory and consummatory activity. One is not commonly left with a sense that one needs to do something actively after a viewing. The viewing is an end in itself. As a participatory experience, the viewers' sense of critical distance, one basis for the rationality premised by normal ideology, has been diminished (Gouldner 169).

Recall from my introduction Gouldner's postulation that ideology can be rational or irrational, depending on the extent to which its purveyor avails itself to criticism, analysis, and debate—in short, on the extent to which diction (thesis) permits contradiction (antithesis). Gouldner estimates that the 'you-are-there'-nes—the realism which is also foundational for the Italian Neorealist tradition and the camera-in-hand sense of objective observation (including the free cinema style of *PM* as well as the war

correspondence documentary journalism of *Muerte al invasor*)—conceals the efforts and interests of those promulgating their ideology. Rather than a mere echo of Brecht's dramaturgical theory, though the two clearly overlap, Gouldner prioritizes an idealized journalistic reporting of facts that can contribute disinterestedly to public debate. He sees the inclusion of realistic images—first plainly photographic, as in print media, later filmic, as in documentary and television—as further degradation of an always already subjective enterprise. Objectivity serving as a mere pretense, then, could only be overthrown by a self-critical and self-aware journalism. So intimately invested in these questions, so dependent on the resolution of public opposition, and so tightly bound to the communicative technologies creating and informing its public, the Noticiero ICAIC in late 1962 begins to collapse the various media by which it is itself constituted and, in doing so, finds truth in unexpected, un-indexical places.

It should be clear at this point that things will become very complicated very quickly when questions of censorship (overt or covert, official or self) re-enter the discussion. It may prove pertinent here to intrude and reiterate that the purpose of this historical and theoretical discussion is not to premise yet another abstruse condemnation of Cuba's policies pertaining to press freedom but to analyze the impact of those policies on the films themselves. This is, after all, first and foremost an endeavor to understand the emplotment of news media within film and not a treatise on or history of press freedom.

Álvarez and the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano composed a newsreel in October 1962 that portrayed the events surrounding the U.S. naval blockade of Cuba. True to form, the ten minute piece unabashedly recalls the wartime newsreels of World War II by opening with a brief clip of Hitler giving a speech on, as the subtitle informs us, 1 September 1939. Álvarez then masterfully cuts to Fidel Castro—or, better, to a newsroom stage that envelops the tiny Castro amidst cameras, lighting apparatuses, technicians, and onlookers (Fig. 5)—giving a speech that compares Hitler's justification for attacking Poland with Kennedy's justification for military action against Cuba. The audio of Castro's speech then functions as a sound-bridge over a sequence of clips first showing Hitler's bombing of Poland, then of Kennedy and of U.S. airplanes flying low over Cuba. An authoritative narrative voice extends and reiterates Castro's speech as the clips continue to roll. In addition to the archived newsreel footage, the television newsroom, and the contemporary documentary footage, still images of newspaper headlines substantiate the radiographic voiceover (Fig. 6). A similar bricolage of materials continues throughout the film, including our final piece of the communications media puzzle: a singularly self-aware appearance of the documentary cameraman and his camera shooting in the field (Fig. 7).

By including the television set and the cameraman within the diegetic world of the newsreel, Álvarez ushers in a new, news age of documentary film production in Cuba. The Noticiero ICAIC itself had existed for several years prior to this moment, and it is possible that others newsreels included any or all of the above news media as well,

but in light of the above communications media framework it could never *mean* the same, or in the same way. Together with other officialized cultural institutions (such as the UNEAC), the top-down organization of news media (ICAIC, ICRT, Departamento de Divulvación) that followed the "*PM* affair" necessarily reconstituted the media themselves both as political entities and as signifiers within a new discursive network. Álvarez delineates this network in the *Bloqueo naval* newsreel[48] by drawing connections between both historical moments and the media that record and define them; he creates a visual as well as an aural dialogue of political speeches, sometimes clashing (as with Castro's rebuttal of Hitler's and Kennedy's militaristic pretexts and the contrasting news headlines from two papers) and sometimes coalescing (as the juxtaposition of German bombers with the American reconnaissance planes); he augments a television news broadcast speech with a radio-filmic voiceover; and he uses local documentary "evidence" of a ballistic-torn brick wall to disprove claims in international media stating that U.S. planes had not fired on Cuba. When we see the film cameraman and his camera three quarters of the way through the film, we know for certain that there is a filmmaker here and that he, Santiago Álvarez, has a voice of his own. Metacritically, Álvarez orchestrates the network. As with all discourse, though, he can only do so from within its parameters.

[48] I was unable to find an official name or title for this newsreel. I refer to it hereafter as *Bloqueo naval*.

Figures 5, 6, 7: Media imagery in *Bloqueo naval*

Álvarez was not coy about the intimate connection between his films and other mass media. He published and spoke openly about the essential dovetailing of the media at his disposal and, by doing so, affirmed the self-awareness of the films. In an article written for *Cine Cubano* on 11 June 1964, appropriately titled "La noticia a través del cine," Álvarez condemns the capitalistic sensationalism characteristic of pre-Revolutionary Cuban newsreels. Much like the abovementioned break of *periodismo* from *negocio* heralded by Castro in his Día de la Prensa Libre speech, Álvarez insists on a return to the Gouldnerian rationalism long dormant in journalism. He also evokes the imagined community, the mass *pueblo* as he writes of the "ingente y obligada necesidad de brindar a nuestro pueblo una información veraz y eficaz a los objetivos de nuestra Revolución" (Álvarez 41). Four years later Álvarez echoes this sentiment in a related presentation before the Havana Cultural Congress under the title "Cinema as One of the Mass Communications Media" (Chanan "*BFI*"). Therein he summarily outlines the ramifications of film as a mass medium, spouting the by-then timeworn objectives of information, divulgation, and education. He also appends to that list an item of utmost

significance: the rationalizing instrumentality of aiding "the technical-scientific development of underdeveloped countries" (*BFI* 28). "We need film maker-scientists (sic) or scientist-film makers," he writes, concluding, "it is…necessary to establish a communications network that co-ordinates the different elements rationally and is based in concrete reality, in order to accelerate as much as possible the development of our people. For this is a fundamental requirement in confronting the intense and prodigious task of shaping our new society" (*BFI* 29, 30). The different elements Álvarez calls to coordinate here are the various mass communications media. In this we see the same impetus toward material physicality/reality that separated *Historias de la Revolución* from the mythic/poetic *Soy Cuba*. This is not to say that Álvarez's notions of filmmaking diverge from the poetic as such. He makes clear that he understands his work as a documentarian to be simultaneously journalistic and poetic—both scientific (objective) and creative (subjective).

The myriad expressions of "truth" found in Álvarez's films that bridge the above two quotations (from 1964 to 1968) evince the progression of a cinematic rationalism that is both dialogical and self-aware in the vein of Gouldner. Three distinctly mediatic films exemplify this trend: *Now!* (1965), *Cerro Pelado* (1966), and *LBJ* (1968). The first famously combines pirated music—Lena Horne's song of the same name was used without permission—found materials from magazines and newspapers demonstrating violence against African Americans in the U.S., animation, and archival footage. At first glance this film more closely approximates a music video than part of a rational dialogue.

Nevertheless, with its Eisensteinian dialectical montage and its organization of evidence from distinct credible sources (including Horne's lyrics as testimony) this film puts its subject on public trial. Like the already discussed examples that set the journalistic/historic record straight—from denouncing the published misinformation pertaining to Castro's death to the proof of air attack in *Muerte al invasor*—Álvarez uses the U.S. media to testify against itself. Internally, this forms a cogent position: race relations in 1960s U.S. are abhorrent. Externally, in the form of a rebuttal this reveals the true hypocrisy of U.S.'s claims (in national and international media) concerning the limits of certain freedoms in Cuba. In spite of its innovative compositional complexity, *Now!* can be seen to continue the argumentative series of films in which Álvarez weaves together various media.

The second film, *Cerro Pelado*, provides an additional rationalizing, dialectical position that stands against a specific instance of U.S. international political pressure. The case here is overtly related to international politics and, so, requires of Álvarez a level of argumentation equal in complexity to its subject. The film responds to the United States' attempt to deny Cuba participation in the Tenth Central American and Caribbean Games so as to further isolate the country politically. Despite having been banned from the competition, Cuba prepares a boat to send its athletes as a show of direct defiance of the international, very public sanction. The film opens with its first piece of evidence, full frame, in the title sequence: "Articulo I del Reglamento del Comité Olímpico Internacional: No se permite ninguna discriminación contra cualquier país o persona por

razones de raza, religión, o afiliación política." Having thus established its basis for action, the film proceeds to introduce its primary characters with onscreen text in five languages[49] ("This is the boat…the delegation…the enemy"). The multilingual text implies not only a local, Caribbean context but also, with the inclusion of German and Russian, a global audience. Álvarez splits the frame into two segments for the final introduction ("the enemy"). The right third superimposes text onto the front pages of various newspapers while the left two-thirds display archival footage of U.S. warfare and civil rights abuses. If the impact and audience of this film are global, then the film medium must "co-ordinate its elements rationally," as Álvarez put it, so as to counter the various media through which its opponents promulgate their own perspectives.

The majority of *Cerro Pelado* focuses on the activities of the athletes in preparation for their hoped-for contests—jogging, stretching, practicing, and so on. It is a lively, cheerful energy reminiscent of the leisure-time sequence in Vertov's *Man With a Movie Camera*—a sort of physical commotion that is easily documented. Political coercion, the driving force of the film, is not so easily rendered as the boat, the athletes, and the enemy—provided to us as indexical evidence ("this is the boat," it exists, here—deixis—is proof). In order to evoke the less than tangible pressure of U.S. hegemony looming large over the event, Álvarez returns to his battle-tested toolbox of news media. He uses recorded radio broadcast as narration, for example, to announce the arrival and implications of the Cuban boat in U.S. protected waters. The broadcast plays as a sound-

[49] Spanish, French, English, German, and Russian

bridge between cuts of men listening to and recording the radio, Castillo de San Cristóbal through a porthole, the boat, planes flying overhead, and armed Coastguard ships. The broadcast connects the audience and the individuals onscreen to the news delivered by the Coastguard to a press conference held to proclaim that the boat would not be permitted to enter the Bay of San Juan. Thus the actual radio newscast supplies key information to the film's plot, builds suspense (Will the ship and its passengers be safe? Will they be allowed to participate in the games?), and authenticates the real power relations at play (the announcer confirms that the Coastguard's actions were mandated by the U.S. Department of State). By weaving these elements together Álvarez gives cinematic shape to the discourse in which his film thrusts itself and from which it advocates its own view of history.

A later example of Álvarez's layering of media within *Cerro Pelado* exhibits an awareness of the film's place within a war of information or perspective—a psychological war. Eventually the Cuban athletes are allowed to enter Puerto Rico by shuttle boats. Awaiting them on the shore is a throng of photographers, cameramen, and journalists to bear witness to the defiant act. Soon thereafter, an airplane flies overhead and literally drops thousands of pamphlets over an unseen portion of the island. Álvarez responds to this desperate, laughable attempt to propagandize by asking the question—again textually, in five languages—"Guerra psicológica…?" (00:24:17). He then cuts back to the pamphlets fluttering through the air, an image reminiscent of the *Soy Cuba* student protest, then to a television set wherein a newspaper headline reading "Pidan

Asilo, Atletas Cubanos" scrolls across the screen. A second question punctuates this brilliant sequence, asking "Para qué…?" (00:24:27). To be sure, the second question applies to the first (as in, why the psychological warfare?), but it also questions the point of the whole charade. The press conference, the radio broadcast, the television, the newspapers, and the pamphlets all attempt to make clear a position of authority that the film proves to be a fraud. On the narrative level there is little resolution in *Cerro Pelado* because the mounting conflict failed *to materialize*—it was only ever a power bluff made real through media discourse. In the end what might have been a climax limped toward resolution as the Cuban athletes proceeded to participate in the games and make their way home. This, of course, is meant as less a judgment of the narrative's strengths than of the injurious diplomacy it represents.

LBJ, the third film that demonstrates Álvarez's progression from filmmaker to "film maker-scientist," goes a step further, maybe even a step too far, by exploring the boundaries of the scientific rationality he champions. *LBJ* is a haunting monstrosity of a film: it is to Santiago Álvarez what the monster is to Dr. Frankenstein. And I do not make this comparison offhandedly: if the Enlightenment's rejection of traditional authority for rational, scientific progress met its match in Mary Shelly's novel, Álvarez's horrific patchwork of abrasive sounds, skulls, assassinations, starving children, riots, guns, and flaming human bodies, all intensified by Carl Orff's "Catulli Carmina," constitutes a monster to rival any conception of truth untarnished by the medium that purveys it. Like many of his films, Álvarez composed *LBJ* with an amalgamation of found materials from

magazines, films, newspapers, animations, and the like. One key difference is the utter lack of local documentary footage to establish a ground for comparison. It does not respond to the questions Álvarez himself posed in *Cerro Pelado*: "psychological warfare…what for?" Álvarez dislodges a criticism as brutal as it is vague of the U.S. president from any recognizable context, which reduces the film to slander. Evidentiary material abounds but the argument, the rational requirement for the evidence to lead to something, *anything* is nowhere to be found. This is, in a way, officially sanctioned madness and, as such, it is permissible. In what follows we will examine several sources of localized, internally critical rationality—the less fortunate of which will be delegated to the asylum.

In an essay titled "Nuestro Cine Documental," dated 4 October 1964, Julio García Espinosa contrasts the current of experimentalism running through the documentary school at that time with the previous five years of ICAIC film production. Therein García Espinosa responds to an international criticism that Cuban film had lost its connection with the revolutionary project (García Espinosa "Nuestro").[50] The essay also sounds off against a backdrop of another dispute between the ICAIC and other cultural sectors—here in the form of Edith García Buchaca and the Consejo Nacional de Cultura. He sees the various political and ideological crises that came to a head in 1961-62 as leading into a period of corresponding disorientation in Cuban culture at large and, consequently, in cinema as well. The confusion—which he refers to as "una cierta confusión espiritual"—

[50] Without quoting the criticism directly, the author mentions its source as the French publication "Cinema 63"

reduced some filmmakers to "volver los ojos con nostalgia hacia sensibilidades definitivamente vencidas" ("Nuestro" 16). He poses the solution for the confusing nostalgia: "tenemos que encontrar la razón de nuestro propio desarrollo. No somos los mismos en el 64 que en el año 59, desde luego." Of course this is not very clear-cut advice. However, the criticism he employs to elaborate his point is much more surgical.

García Espinosa's position within the broader cultural debate had its share of supporters and benefactors—Nicolás Guillén Landrián was not one of them. It would be an understatement to say that *En un barrio viejo* (Guillén Landrián 1963) typifies the film that finds itself in the wrong review at the wrong time. Ironically, place and time are two key elements of this and other of Guillén Landrián's films that suffered similar critical fate over almost exactly the same period of time that *Soy Cuba* did ('60s-'90s). The reasons for this filmmaker's relative obscurity were much different than Kalatozov's Cuban gem but certainly neither fit the mold of Cubanness desired at the time of their production. García Espinosa had the following to say about Guillén Landrián's film:

> El documental, alejado de todo didactismo simple, refleja con precisión y no poca poesía la atmosfera detenida de los barrio viejos, rota al final por un montaje cuya dialéctica muestra la lucha, o mejor la coexistencia, entre el pasado y el presente. El documental, sin embargo, pierde fuerza al aferrarse a ese especie de *óptica nostálgica* por los barrios viejos, *similar al de aquellos turistas* de antaño que alimentaban su sensibilidad disfrutando del rostro desvencijado, pobre, y, sobre todo, estático, de los bohíos rurales ("Nuestro" 17, *my italics*).

García Espinosa reduces the film to an irrational and poetic synthesis of the past and the present and, what's worse, a form of touristic voyeurism of poverty in one's own country. In this light the film strays far from the aspirations of the ICAIC's Departamento de

Divulgación and the view of the Cine-Móvil project eventually documented in Cortázar's *Por primera vez*.

There is something else going on in *En un barrio viejo* to which García Espinosa of all people might have been more receptive had the timing gone differently. In his brief and dismissive rejection of the film's optics, the Cuban filmmaker famous for bringing Neo-Realism to the Americas with *El mégano* (1955) and *El joven rebelde* (1962) neglected to acknowledge the inclusion of a clip from Neo-Realist master Vittorio de Sica's *Umberto D.* (1952). The moment is subtle but unmistakable: Guillén Landrián's cameraman, Livio Delgado, walks aimlessly around an Italian style café where people are standing at a counter sipping espresso before cutting to a couple reading an illegible poster or ledger on what turns out to be the outer wall of a movie theater. He cuts to another establishing shot, now a pan of the theater's interior and finally takes us into the darkened projection room where de Sica's film is playing. We are allowed only about six seconds inside but in that brief time we witness something far more subversive than nostalgia or spiritual confusion, something that will unravel any simple analysis of the film that ignores its presence: an old acquaintance of the protagonist, Umberto D., an elderly pensioner down on his luck after WWII in Rome, looks down on him from a bus window and asks "do you think there's going to be a war?" Umberto responds uninterestedly with a shrug, "Ma!"—an Italian interjection translated as "Who knows?" but, given the tone and body language might better be "who cares?" With this sequence in mind we can no longer think of the camera's lingering on the poor, elderly street

walkers as an optic of nostalgia. It must be understood as a comparative optic, a bi-optic that conjoins visually the worlds of post-war Italy and post-revolution Cuba. When an elderly beggar asks for money from an apparently affluent couple we recall Umberto's distress and shame when he himself first decides to beg. Most importantly, *En un barrio nuevo*'s inclusion of *Umberto D.* raises some of the same questions as de Sica's film. For example: who is left out or behind in the planning that takes place in the wake of a devastating war? Why and to what effect? Following de Sica's lead, Guillén Landrián did not attempt to answer these questions with his film.

Another of García Espinosa's oversights pulls the above back into the discussion of dialectical rationality and its role in historiography. He comments on Guillén Landrián's fusion of the past and the present but leaves the future out of the equation. As many films in the ICAIC's future will hold, a reconciliation of the present with the past is, in itself, not something to be avoided. The problem seems to arise when the past disrupts the present and thereby inhibits progress (as he puts it, when the eyes turn toward definitively defeated sensitivities). In this he ignores two crucial elements of the film. Firstly, the opening shot of the title sequence informs us that *En un barrio nuevo* is a newsreel produced by the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano. This plants us firmly in the present—that is, the present of 1963. The film's original audience was not dealing with archival footage or historical data here. The newsreel is news despite its creative editing and, as such, it shows us that *Umberto D.* was playing on movie screens in Cuba twelve years after its release while certain elderly Cubans begged for spare change in the streets.

In a way, the film hits García Espinosa first by accusing the Neo-realist aesthetic of being retrograde or nostalgic before he takes the chance to return the favor—and it does so both through its aesthetic contrast to the realist norm and its incorporation of a twelve year old film into the news. Secondly, García Espinosa ignores the final shot of the film which boasts the tagline "Fin-pero no es el fin." This tagline points to the future from the film's perspective. It also points to future films wherein Guillén Landrián will utilize the same closing line. The line suggests a dialogue, too, by acknowledging its limits as a medium. It does not pretend to be the end of the discussion but as part and parcel of a rational debate. It does not orchestrate the dialogue directly within the film as did Álvarez, his teacher and undeniable inspiration. Instead it generates questions in a way, as García Espinosa put it—and he got this right—"alejado de todo didactismo simple." In Chapter 4 of this work we will arrive at yet another manner in which *En un barrio viejo* and the rest of Guillén Landrián's oeuvre extends its reach into the future as we consider its rediscovery and its reappropriation in the late 1990s and 2000s.

Looking back at Guillén Landrián's films after their rediscovery, Dean Luis Reyes and Julio Ramos affirm the young Cuban filmmaker's problematic position on the border between the realistic from the poetic. Ramos notes that Guillén Landrián's films "nos permiten apreciar (y problematizar) la complejidad de esa crisis y del 'paso' do lo representacional a lo poético en el contexto del cine de la Revolución Cubana" (Ramos). While I agree with this observation as it situates Guillén Landrián within the precise moment of instability and change in Cuban film history, I urge a reconsideration of his

work as a forging a lasting link between the poetic and the realistic instead of passing from one to the other. The use of and relation to the journalistic/mediatic montage—this to be elaborated further in consideration of his other films below—and the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano production apparatus firmly bridge the two (ideological and aesthetic) dimensions. In terms most intimately associated with my analysis, Reyes adds that Guillén Landrián's work

> acaba siendo una obra que desactiva la creencia férrea en las evidencias materiales como expresiones confiables de la realidad moral, del universo subjetivo. De ahí que el diálogo de su cine con el material testimonial sea complejo, dando lugar a estructuras mayormente abiertas, cercanas al caos de lo ilegible (Reyes 94).

Again, I do not see a need to locate the exact position of Guillén Landrián's films on a binary scale between the chaotic and the materially realistic. His connections, as we will see, continue to participate in the shared media discourse of Álvarez and, eventually, with Titón's *Memorias del subdesarrollo* (1968). These connections beg not for a differentiation between the two realms but for their unity. As part and parcel of the discursive fabric woven together between filmmakers and the rest of the communications media community, Guillén Landrián's films—anti-realist though they may appear—do not *lose touch* with reality. Rather, they affirm its contingency on discourse.

García Espinosa concludes his above diatribe with the following advice for future filmmakers: "Es necesario que los propios realizadores se planten como tarea primordial la de rescatar para sí una relación más directa con la realidad" (García Espinosa "Nuestro"). Guillén Landrián's films were interpreted as moving in the opposite direction

and, as a result, he was condemned to a term in an asylum on Isla de Pinos at some point between 1965 and 1968[51]. Gretel Alfonso, Guillén Landrián's widow, states that he was accused of "diversionismo ideológico."[52] The term effectively cleaves into equal parts entertainment and distraction as a way of thinking or, in filmic terms, showing/seeing—it is understood more specifically as a misappropriation of Marxist or Leninist thought as a means to anti-Revolutionary ends. The true limits to which this notion will be taken will only become clear when Guillén Landrián's films reemerge as yet another counter example to the official cinematic telling of history in the 2000s. There his work will prove to have its own "direct relationship to [a] reality" that includes, indeed is itself part and parcel of, a discursive reality that evades the simplified indexical/deictic position re-emerging with Rebeca Chávez's and Alice de Andrade's archival documentaries and docudramas.

The communicative technologies in play across Landrián's films evince the same issue of national/mass connectedness seen above in Cortázar's *Por primera vez*. Rather than the self-laudatory tone that sees success in specific instances of unity or unification, films such as *Ociel del Toa* (1965) and *Retornar a Baracoa* (1966) further emphasize the enduring *dis*connection present in *En un barrio viejo*. Each of these three films depicts a

[51] The dates remain unclear and problematic as his film production does not seem to slow down in this period. In 1965 he screened *Ociel del Toa* and *Los del baile*; in 1966, *Retornar a Baracoa*, followed by a two year hiatus until *Coffea Arábiga* in 1968. Given this filmography, he was most likely incarcerated between 1966-68.

[52] The dates here are a little foggy as well since it is uncertain when exactly the neologism "diversionismo" was coined. Common consensus places it in the early 1970s and in print from a transcription of Ruy Castro's speech on 6 June 1972. Publication available online at http://archivodeconnie.annaillustration.com/?p=369 under the title "Diversionismo Ideológico: Arma sutil que esgrimen los enemigos contra la Revolución"

community that seems to be dislodged from a pre-Revolutionary past and placed in the present.[53] *Ociel del Toa* and *Retornar a Baracoa* add to the temporal confusion of *En un barrio viejo* a disjointed national geography that governmental programs and mass communication media had not rectified. In the first of these two, Landrián paints a portrait of life in a peripheral town along the Rio Toa, a river 81 miles long that flows through the Guantanamo Province into the Bahia de Miel near Baracoa. The narrative conjoins the two distinct spaces (Ociel, the protagonist's village and Baracoa) that are themselves cut off from the rest of the country in two ways: via the difficult waterway through which Ociel labors to transport his canoe and via radio broadcast. The sound of the radio fades in as Ociel arrives in a village barely visible from the bank of the river and plays as a sound bridge over several shots of local people in mundane poses: one of a family awaiting a group portrait, two exhausted faces above a modest wooden table, another two, and finally an intertitle offering more specific information about the people on screen. The radio announcement states its location and time, "...el minuto cubano de radiodifusión, transmitiendo desde Baracoa, ciuidad primada de Cuba, territorio libre de América…(light music playing)…once treinta y cuatro minutos" (00:01:24). This triangularization, to borrow a term from Antonio José Ponte, connects us to a group of people, at a precise time but within an imprecise place. From the information presented to us on screen we do not know exactly where the filmed people live but we know it must be within range of—and therefore radiographically linked to—Baracoa.

[53] Once more, the present as the time it was shown on screens originally as documentary journalism. In a later chapter I examine the ways in which this interplay of time and place becomes more complex from a historical distance the moment Landrián's films resurface in the late 1990s.

The radio recording adds to a sense of authenticity provided by the indexical nature of the film medium, showing how the two media combined can reinforce one another as historical material. The use of the radio alone, in 1966, also signals the lack of technological and economic advancements that would have connected the townspeople televisually with their government's widely televised proceedings. Landrían offers the people on screen and the radio sound bridge to effect a sense of community that is otherwise imperceptible, un-documentable, anti-photographic. With *Ociel del Toa* the director had not yet arrived at the zenith of his personal experimentalism but he had anchored his work to a version of media discursivity in the vein of Álvarez, a security to which he would tether his increasingly frenzied narratives in the future.

The radiographic link from Ociel's village to Baracoa weaves itself through several of Landrián's subsequent films. *Retornar a Baracoa*, a film that returns as much to the themes of *Ociel del Toa* as to the town's geographical location, opens with the following ripe intertitle worthy of full quotation:

> Baracoa descubierta o encontrada por Colón a 473 años (por lo tanto "la primada")
> Después la republica, el olvido, la incomunicación.
> Al extremo oeste de la provincia de Oriente cercada por el mar y las montañas siempre fue un lugar distante y de difícil acceso. Así Baracoa seguía estando detenida, inmutable.
> Luego la Revolución.
> Una emisora de radio, un parque, la JUCEI municipal, y algo más. Los aviones son aún el asombro, la fuga, pero también la prolongación de Cuba, del mundo.
> Se siguen fabricando difíciles carreteras, la lucha contra el fango es dura; por mar la comunicación plantea un viaje largo, accidentado y esporádico.

This opening text situates the film historically as extending from Baracoa's European "discovery" to the present, all along the way remaining communicatively alienated from the rest of Cuba and from the world. Timeless earthy materials such as mud, mountain, and sea water inhibit all flows in and out of Baracoa—all, that is, except by way of the ethereal radio transmitter.

Landrían extends the theme of communication into the heart of *Retornar a Baracoa* with a broadcast nearly identical to that found in *Ociel del Toa*. The same voice proclaims, "De Baracoa, Cuba, territorio libre de América, transmite CMTX--Radio Baracoa, 1965, año de agricultura, nueve treinta minutos" (00:06:52). The director again augments the radio information with an intertitle that introduces the program's Sunday evening poetry reading. The host recites José Ángel Buesa's "Envío," sentimental love poem, over the radio waves while several still images of a young woman, alone curling her hair in front of a radio, fade in and out. With this Landrían weaves together three distinct elements: 1) a poem, 2) a delicate, elegant photomontage (index), and 3) a radio broadcast (journalistic immediacy). These elements complicate the distinction between the abovementioned "chaotic" and the "materially realistic" precisely by their unification within a single filmic scene. This scene promotes both a critical, provocative a view of material reality and a poetic sentimentalism. Furthermore, to Landrian's physical, psychical detriment, it does so within a filmic register that belies the presumed advancements of a political system that remained disconnected from certain peripheral communities. As a collection of evidence that is not merely didactic, *Retornar a Baracoa*

argues that very little, if anything, has changed in certain areas of Cuba, despite the progressive rhetoric we hear in the radio broadcast of Castro's speech at the closing of the film. Radio and now film, through Landrián and the ICAIC, connect the distant region with the rest of the country so as to demand its inclusion in the discursive rationale of the Revolution. The young director in his prime does not make another film for two years due to his own personal, bodily displacement in a psychiatric hospital on the Isla de Pinos.

Returning after his officially imposed hiatus, after purportedly receiving electric shock therapy to correct his mind so that he might see the world and, in turn, show the world in a more rational way, Landrián projects the above discursive framework into the future by reintroducing the entire radiographic-poetic sequence in the critically celebrated *Coffea Arábiga* (1968). In the midst of a film industry that had, since his departure, embraced the radical experimentalism of Alvarez's *Now!* and that was simultaneously producing *LBJ*, *Memorias del Subdesarrollo*, and *Lucía*, *Coffea Arábiga* would come to be thought of as "la película más insólita e irreverente jamás realizada en la isla" (Paranaguá 316). In broad strokes, the film outlines the government's plan to plant and harvest coffee in the vicinity surrounding the capital strategically named "El cordón de la Habana."[54] It opens with a spoken stanza the poem "Un lagarto verde" by Nicolás Guillén, the director's uncle, and ends where we left off with Santiago Álvarez's

[54] This is Cuba's first foray with a sugar harvest that would set the expectation far too high, the second coming the following year (1969), and the third ending in political and economic disaster, returning us to the *Diez Millones* newsreel where we began.

conception of the "film maker-scientist" (*Paranaguá* 318).[55] Between the bookends of poetry and science, we find in *Coffea Arábiga* an onslaught of narrative materials ranging from indexical images and photographs shot inside a museum, to government posters, interviews, radio broadcasts, Noticiero ICAIC archive footage, music from "Los Beatles," and, importantly, the self-plagiarizing use of clips from *Reportaje* (Landrián 1966). The director also features a brilliant animation of text on the screen that overlies the reading of a public service announcement and the sound of frantic typewriters. Cumulatively, these images and sounds are held together by nothing less than the viewer's recognition that all of the present communicative forms are, by this point, indivisible from the film medium itself. Despite the apparent contradictions between the poetic and the scientific or the mythic and the evidentiary that we have seen from the beginning of ICAIC film production, *Coffea Arábiga*'s very intelligibility proves that the Revolution's attempts to merge communicative and cultural production succeeded. But Landrián's recurring use of the radio in particular perpetuates the theme of spatial and temporal disconnection that undermines the all inclusive rhetoric epitomized the same year by *Por primera vez*.

There is a sense in which Landrián's films reject the very modes of production upon which they are themselves contingent. By thrice replaying, for instance, archival footage of a soldier carrying a severed arm before of a camera—in a style echoed various times in *Memorias del subdesarrollo*—Landrián challenges the newsreel's capacity to

[55]An intertitle with the name of the series for which the film was produced: "Documentales Científico-Populares". This last text was not available on the digitized copy of the film to which I had access, but is commented on by Paranaguá in his explication of the film, presumably the 35mm original.

convey meaning beyond its specific time and place. The repetition is doubly repetitive in the sense that it arises within another documentary at a different time, making different claims, possibly even denying the original claims of the newsreel in which it was first used. Similarly, by including his own footage from previous documentaries the director establishes connections between two distinct moments—either to demonstrate progress ("look how far we've come") or stagnation ("we're still in the same place"). Regardless of how we choose to interpret it, the result must be understood in terms of either a connection or a disconnection. The radio broadcast of the José Ángel Buesa poem sequence from *Retornar a Baracoa* reiterates this point. On its face it may appear to have little to do with the parallel inclusion of "Radio Cordón de La Habana" in *Coffea Arábiga*, but their juxtaposition reminds us of the distance between the two geographically and, now in 1968, temporally. The interconnection of the various media that constitute this and Landrián's other films insist that, in order to make sense or rationalize these disjunctures, stock must be taken of the multiform sites of information/truth production within Cuba's politico-cultural sphere. His film synthesizes these elements in a paradoxical syllogism that proves a theory by rejecting the validity of its own premises. As we will see in Chapter 4, this anti-rationalism proves to be the very dynamite that will implode the Cuban film history archive from the inside once rediscovered three decades later.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS: FOUNDING MEMORIAS

Finally I offer, by way of conclusion, a brief reflection on the most celebrated Cuban film of all time: *Memorias del subdesarrollo.* This is in no measure intended to synthesize or summarize the vast body of commentary available on the film. By dilating the news media lens that we have fashioned over the course of this chapter on Alea's indisputable masterpiece, we will find its indebtedness to the news media milieu from which it emerged. We will also detect as a consequence of its retrospective gaze a communicative shift from the journalistic present to an archival search for meaning in the past. In this final sense, the self-same news media that have comprised many of the above discussed films become, through the indexical nature of film, raw material from which histories will be written and re-written. This will in turn lead to the following chapter on Cuba in which we will find a variety of efforts to follow Gutierrez Alea's lead in unearthing archival news and film material to carry a rationalizing historiography through to ever renewing future moments—including but not limited to the documentary re-renderings of the Noticiero archives in the Twenty-first Millennium. As the pinnacle of self-reflexive Cuban film, it will also set a standard against which future films that engage with the shared dynamics of news, history, and cinema can be measured.

Memorias is indeed a far cry from the films of Álvarez or Landrián. Yet there are several important similarities between this film and those above that also emplot news media. To start, we find in Alea's film a host of the same narrative features that recall his and Álvarez's experience working together on *Muerte al invasor*. There are moments of

free cinematic experimentalism, exemplified by the opening sequence of music and dancing—a scene that, given the film's setting of 1961-62 Havana, cannot be disassociated from the *PM* affair and its politico-cultural underpinnings; archival news footage; radio broadcasts that connect otherwise unrelated scenes to the specific historical moment; and a meta-filmic moment concerning censorship within a film screening room. Chanan describes the film as an "exercise in the fragmentation and dissociation of imagery and representation" (*Cuban* 289). Given their shared emplotment of media sources, we should not be surprised to find an echo in the following statement from Paulo Antonio Paranaguá concerning Álvarez's and Landrián's experience in the field of radio broadcasting: "[Álvarez y Landrián] tenían por lo menos algo en común, haber trabajado en la radio. La disociación del imagen y el sonido, así como la edición de la banda sonora con una versatilidad generalmente reservada al montaje de la imagen, tienen seguramente origen en la experiencia radiofónica anterior" (Paranaguá 318). Paranaguá's *radiophonic* linkage of Álvarez and Landrián dovetails with Chanan's incisive comment. All three directors utilize certain dissociative editing techniques, to be sure, but they also utilize the radio and other media as a means to further emphasize this dissociation across various levels and forms of communicative media.

The term *radiophonic* and its dissociative connotations also implicate the realist films dominant the year of its setting: 1961. Alea took the liberty of including the date when adapting the script from the novel on which it was based—and he did so in a manner consistent with the periodical headline font, in all caps superimposed on an image

of the city from above. As I mentioned earlier, this setting puts the film in conversation with the milieu surrounding *PM*, "Palabras a los intelectuales," the Bay of Pigs invasion, and leading up to the Missile Crisis. He even includes footage from the newsreel *Bloqueo Naval* playing on the TV in Sergio, the protagonist's apartment (Fig. 9). This returns us to Álvarez's insistence that Cuba establishes "a communications network that co-ordinates the different [media] elements rationally and is based in concrete reality, in order to accelerate as much as possible the development of our people" (*BFI* 29, 30). The film's purported underdevelopment rejects Álvarez's and, we recall, García-Espinosa's assertions that films must be founded in material "coherency." Now in another film at another time, the *Bloqueo Naval* footage (seen broadcast on TV within a film) reveals itself to be merely a simulacrum. As a TV broadcast it has lost its indexical link to the original image and as a de-contextualized or re-contextualized broadcast within a film it becomes part of another, purely representational narrative instrument. At this point *Bloqueo Naval*'s original modality of "proving" by showing has become inverted: now it disproves, now it negates, now it unveils the oversimplification that made it palatable for a mass/national audience it would never reach.

Like Landrián's disconnections that evince a populace left at a distance (geographic) and/or left behind (temporal), Alea looks back to 1961, at the very films being produced at the time, and sees something beyond the material at play in the newsy films. In a way reminiscent of *PM*'s journalistic tongue-in-cheek documentation of the Cuban people preparing for an invasion that showed them *rumbeando* in bars, Sergio

responds to the public's reaction to the Missile Crisis by declaiming, "Nada tiene sentido. La gente se mueve y habla como si la guerra fuera un juego" (01:27:26). Filming in the streets did not produce evidence of a culture deeply entrenched in critical-rational debates. The raw material of the film footage showed the opposite. This observation raises doubts about the validity of a communication system set upon instigating public discourse within an apparently uninterested populace. The roundtable scene restates this concern from a different point of view when the American, Jack Gilbert, asks "why is it that if the Cuban revolution is a total revolution they have to resort to an archaic form of discussion such as a roundtable and treat us to an impotent discussion of issues that I'm well informed about and most of the public here is well informed about when there could be another more revolutionary way to reach a whole audience like this" (01:05:48)? Here we return to the issue of ideological simplification that would be amenable to a broad audience but, when brought before a group of intelligentsia, reveals its own impotence. The film suggests that these two instances representing high and low culture are equally futile. Nevertheless the irony is that film—a "more revolutionary way to reach an audience"—puts both of these concerns in a new context, reshapes them, and brings them at last into dialogue. So, while this poses a challenge to accepted notions of discursive epistemology within Cuban political culture, it also reproduces a similar logic.

 [56]

Figures 8 and 9: Race relations in America in *Now!* and *Memorias*

In another dissociation through television, Alea anachronistically includes a short clip from Álvarez's *Now!*—released in 1965, on screen here in 1961 or 1962 (Figs 8 and 9). This temporal confusion further alienates Sergio from the world around him. It ties together the 1961-62 in which the film takes place, the 1965 of *Now!*, and the 1968 of *Memorias*. The protagonist seems oblivious to the fact that much of humanity was in the throes of chaos in the 1960s, including but by no means limited to the intensified race relations in the United States portrayed in *Now!*. Sergio's attention to the police aggression lasts moments and is only on in the first place to distract him from the young woman knocking on his door. His dispassion belies a sense of hypocrisy vis-à-vis the above criticism he makes about the people that were acting as if war was a game. Similarly, the woman at the door also deafens him to yet another radio broadcast of Radio Rebelde, barely audible except for the time (8:30) and a few key words: *fuerzas armadas, Mar Caribe, Estados Unidos, guerra, Yanqui*…(00:45:00). Together with the *Bloqueo Naval* footage, Alea pulls these news media from their original, officially authorized positions or filmic archives and through *Memorias* conducts a retrial. The indexical truth

[56] (*Fig 8:* Now! [00:03:34]) (*Fig 9:* Memorias [01:12:00])

of the footage testifies not to the validity of the events themselves but to the ways in which it inhabits political discourse. The television set, its three-dimensionality within the room, its weight, dials, and speaker, literally and figuratively re-frames the original material so as to draw attention to its socio-political constructedness.

The rest of the film is littered with similar questions concerning memorial evidence in various forms. We witness again the recorded testimony of the infidels captured during the Bay of Pigs invasion; Castro's speech to the United Nations concerning Cuba's sovereignty (also included in the *Bloqueo Naval* newsreel); and a recording of a speech by JFK during the Missile Crisis that plays over images of atomic bomb blasts and other wartime archive footage. In every case Alea constructs memory with the physical materials originally constitutive of news media. *Memorias* thus provides a glimpse of the historiographic potential the journalistic film stock will have in the future. The film signals a shift from an investment in the present to reinvestment of the past, a reconfiguration of meaning through reappropriation.

The ICAIC's turn to *cine rescate* in the late 1960s and 1970s, the films that would liberate Cuban history from its imperial chains by rewriting its past, would focus broadly on the 19th century heritage. Alea's *Memorias* would be an anomaly for its time. Moviegoers in Cuba would have to wait some three decades for a similar treatment of the Revolution's early film as archival evidence. Several factors trailing immediately on the heels of *Memorias* explain this postponement: 1968 marked the one-hundred year anniversary of Cuba's struggle for independence, which fed into the *cine rescate*; the

economic failures of the sugar harvests from 1968-1970 put enormous strain on the nation, resulting in the Cuban political body's embrace of Soviet style orthodoxy—in the anti-pluralist sense of the Greek "right, correct in opinion"; while, lastly, the Padilla Affair and subsequent censorship that defined the Quinquenio Gris (1971-1976) stifled any attempts to question the state's rationale—present or past.

Looking back to *Diez millones* as situated at the beginning of the chapter and ahead chronologically from *Memorias del subdesarrollo*, the picture of news media self-referentially located within Cuban cinema begins to fade to gray. Over the course of this chapter I have schematically reviewed films that emplot news media so as to challenge the supremacy, if not the legitimacy, of the photographic and radiophonic news image's place in cinematic historiography. A line appeared connecting early engagements with radio and print news media through the Noticiero newsreels and television, all the way to *Diez millones* and, with the unfulfilled economic projections of a failed sugar harvest, a total severance of the rational news media from the reality of the national situation brought the decade and many of its pretenses to a close. The fictionality of the *Diez millones* newsreel, where we are presumed to be persuaded ondce again by authority rather than rationality, set the Cuban public back a decade and put an end to the progressive historiographical debate. What we find with the filmmakers in the following chapter, those that, like *Memorias*, look back at archival film and news footage to rethink important historical moments, then, must either take up the faith in images or return to

the rationalizing impetus that included discourse within its archivisitic, photographic index.

Chapter 2: News and its Interloping Subjects in 1960s Brazilian Cinema

OVERVIEW

This chapter follows a similar temporal trajectory to that of the previous one: I begin toward the end of an otherwise generally open era of creative freedom with Andrea Tonacci's *Bla bla bla* (1968) to reflect on a moment that stands in stark contrast to both its predecessors and its Cuban doppelganger, *Diez millones*. I then return to trace the film's geneology within the Brazilian cinema tradition. Like the Cuban tradition, Brazilian film evolves away from a faith in the image toward a more complex rendering of a national narrative across multiple news media. Only in the Brazilian case, unlike the rationalizing discourse first made visible on screen and then ultimately truncated in Cuba, we find a series of films whose emplotments of news media explore the exclusionary consequences inherent to nationalist rhetoric.

The experimental film movement in 1960s Brazil that came to be known as Cinema Novo has generally entrenched itself against historiographical interpretation, presenting viewers with polemical landmines concerning truth in representation. Each of the traditionally categorized three phases of the movement offers their own unique set of complications for a historically minded audience. The first phase (1960-1964) substantiates a contrast between lived, personal histories and the top-down modernizing teleology of the political sphere. It comprises films that uphold underrepresented and disconnected Brazilians as narrative subjects—such as the migrant workers in the Northeast in *Aruanda* (dir. Linduarte Noronha, 1960) and a film adaptation of Graciliano

Ramos's novel *Vidas Secas* (dir. Nelson Pereira dos Santos, 1963) or Afro-Brazilians in Bahia in *Barravento* (dir. Glauber Rocha, 1962). The protagonists of these and other first-phase films struggle with their own communicative/representative agency within stark economic, social, and agricultural conditions. The second and third phases (1964-1968, 1968-1972) evince a growing sense of alienation from the political and social centers of knowledge production vis-à-vis the increasingly censorial state after the military coups of 1964 and 1968.[57] Films that sit on the cusp of the second and third phases, such as *Terra em transe* (dir. Rocha, 1967), *O homem que comprou o mundo* (dir. Eduardo Coutinho, 1968), *Liberdade de imprensa* (dir. João Batista de Andrade, 1968), and *Bandido da luz vermelha* (dir. Rogerio Sganzerla, 1968), reveal anxieties concerning the budding relationship between the state and news media. Not least among their concerns, the emergent medium of television received its share of skepticism. Filmmakers in each phase challenge the veracity of the claims to journalistic truth that buttress the news media by incorporating them into their own form of critico-visual discourse.

In the following analysis I argue that the abundance of references to and emplotments of news media within Cinema Novo films found a tradition of dialectical historiography still present in contemporary Brazilian cinema.[58] The films discussed do not merely reject the news media's claims to truth. They incorporate real world news media materials into their diegetic worlds so as to engage in and encourage a rational dialogue between diverse sectors of the population and divergent ideologies. As I demonstrate below, the hotbed of journalistic debate concerning state influence,

[57] As I discuss in detail below, the AI-5 (Ato Institucional Número 5—Institutional Act Number 5) severed many civic freedoms, including the habeas corpos and freedom of speech in 1968.

[58] The films that carry this trend from the early 1970s to the 1990s provide the first section of the following chapter, leading toward a discussion of the New Millennial films that maintain a critico-indexical approach to cinematic narrative.

censorship, and coercion in 1960s Brazil proves fertile ground to analyze the dovetailing of news media and cinematic narratives.

An amorphous sense of criminality permeates nearly every Brazilian film in which news media play a determinate role in the central action of the plot. Clear products of an age of transition in which national identity was a common source of public debate,[59] the films examined in this chapter alternatingly uphold and tear down their interloping, transgressing, marginal, and criminal protagonists, none of whom conform to any elusive notion of Brazilianness. The many outsiders, from poor children in *Rio, quarenta graus* to Zé do Burro in *O pagador de promessas*, and from Passarinho in *Cidade Ameaçada* to the *Bandido da luz vermelha*, constantly find themselves at odds with the media that circumscribe them within ill-fit biographies. To be sure, the news media prove to be particularly problematic biographers when they become complicit with the demands of the military dictatorship. Thus the second half of the 1960s offers a sequence of images that depict an ambiguous criminality, where the line previously separating the transgressor from the law abiding community is shown, via the suspension of habeas corpus and limitations on freedom of speech, to cross into that community where and when it sees fit. Anything but a purely rationalistic parade of visual evidence, these films instead show how the deliberately hidden and unseen inform individual and national identities.

[59] For more on Brazilian nationalism and its frustrated attempts, in the words of Roberto Schwarz "to find [Brazilian identity] by eliminating anything that was not indigenous," see his "Brazilian Culture: Nationalism by elimination". Therein he concludes that the argument for an "authentic" national culture "obscures the essential point, since it concentrates its fire on the relationship between elite and model whereas the real crux is the exclusion of the poor from the universe of contemporary culture." *New Left Review* I/167, January-February 1988.

CONTRASTING CUBA AND BRAZIL: *DIEZ MILLONES* MEETS *BLA BLA BLA*

Tonacci's short film experiment *Bla bla bla* opens with the visual and aural flickering of a television set as various hands turn dials to tune the film and its audience into an imminent broadcast. An unsteady, tremulous camera approaches a pool of light wherein a triad of microphones awaits the figure of a well dressed man also entering the space opposite the camera. As the man pronounces the ironic first words of the film, "chegou ao fim,"[60] we see nothing of the room in which he stands. The high-pitch sound of feedback plays loudly over his words until the visual frame is again interrupted by a flash of television static. Thereafter the figure begins his speech again from the beginning and continues, accompanied by a variety of visual sources and recordings—here overlaid, there intercut and placed on hold—for the remainder of the twenty-six minute film.

Like Álvarez's newsreel *Diez millones* with which I began the previous chapter, Tonacci's film narrative is comprised of a powerful political personality giving a televised speech to a national audience in response to a mounting public debate. Both films welcome their viewers into a newsroom and show the multitude of moving parts necessary for the broadcast; they both address the collective rationale as their motivating force; both films repeatedly include the television cameras and broadcast apparatus in frame; and, among other less substantial similarities, they both rely on sound bridges to connect the speech with forms of visual evidence that build an argument.[61] By examining the stark contrasts between the two films, though, we can begin to establish a framework for a comparative analysis of the two very distinct national film traditions of Cuba and

[60] *The end has come.*

[61] In the case of *Bla bla bla*, as we will see below, the evidence works against the speaker but it remains evidential.

Brazil without losing sight of their respective, vastly divergent political and film industrial contexts.

The first and most striking difference between *Diez Millones* and *Bla bla bla* is the lighting of the newsroom sets (Figs. 10 and 11). Tonacci's spotlighting essentially erases from the frame everything except the man, a few microphones, and the television camera, whereas the lighting in Álvarez's film evenly illuminates the entire tableaux. Tonacci's president and his media link to the public thus become the sole focus of the shots that include him in the frame. Unlike Álvarez's Castro he does not offer evidence to support his dialogue in the form of visual representations or maps. On the contrary: Tonacci denies the necessity or value of indexicality within the newsroom by creating a retrograde, radiophonic broadcast where the spoken word reigns supreme. First visually—and eventually, as we will see below, rhetorically—his words and the personal authority he physically embodies suggest self-evidence. The speech as a whole proceeds less like an argument than like a string of edicts which, when spoken, become true through the mere authority of the speaker himself. Similarly the lighting conceals more than it reveals: it flirts with censorship and sight, with traditional authority and rational, reasoned dialogue.

Figures 10 and 11: *Bla bla bla* meets *Diez millones*

Tonacci affirms the above equation of light with reason and darkness with tradition various times in the president's speech. This marks the second distinction between the two films: although *Diez millones* is not very convincing, it does aspire to provide grounding evidence for a reasoned debate[62] while *Bla bla bla* confronts the political rhetoric of 1968 that called for, indeed demanded, silence and the passive acceptance of authority. With his voice modulating from calm, controlled near-whispers to enraged shouting, Tonacci's president proclaims that "Cada suspeito vai ser perseguido. Cada ideia vai ser invertida. Não darei a oportunidade de ser compreendida,"[63] and that he will "suprimir todas as publicações, disolver todas as organizações, deportar todos os suspeitos...acabar com a anarquia do moral, dos idealismos. Quem são voces? Um povo feito para obedecer" (00:22:09).[64] This rhetoric of silence and obedience stands in direct opposition to the advocacy for openness and public discourse in *Diez millones*. So, too, would this come to represent the face of political power and media control throughout many of the films made in Brazil during the dictatorship, especially in and after 1968 when direct media censorship was at its most severe.

Of course, the above two points of departure have everything to do with the third: *Bla bla bla*'s president is merely an actor portraying a political figure in a film that amounts to political satire. Tonacci's film, while comparable to *Diez millones*, is not a

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62 See quote from Chapter One: "al objeto de poder brindar una idea muy precisa sobre la situación general de la zafra, hemos querido hacerlo a través de la televisión en auxiliado con algunos mapas y algunos gráficos que permitan ayudar a comprender o, si siquiera, ayudar a explicar el problema" (*Diez millones*, 00:02:35)

63 *Every suspect will be persecuted. Every idea will be inverted. I will not give [them] the opportunity to be understood.*

64 *Suppress all publications, dissolve all oganizations, deport all of the suspects...bring and end to the anarchy of morality, of idealism. Who are you? A people made to obey.*

newsreel about a real television broadcast. It is a short film in much the same style as *Diez millones* with many of the same organizing principles, but even the analogous cut-aways to documentary footage Tonacci employs are to settings (such as Vietnam) and events (riots, warfare) that have little or no connection to Brazil. Furthermore, unlike Álvarez's supplemental footage of rain storms that supported Castro's speech, Tonacci's evidence seems to disagree with, to disprove, and even mock the president's position. One exemplary cut-away leaves the newsroom behind, flashes an entire frame filled with typed "BLABLABLA…," before taking us to witness an interview with a soldier, medium close-up, talking into a microphone. The president's speech continues in the background while a voice-over interviewer and interviewee hold a conversation of literal "bla bla bla…" (00:06:07). To be sure, the humor at the expense of the president in this sequence is worlds away from Castro's dignity and reverence in *Diez millones*. In a move that will prove essential to the Brazilian film tradition developing in tandem with the communications revolution, Tonacci makes use of the fictional as a weapon against the similarly foundationless political rhetoric that sought to write into existence its own history through omission, evasion, and coercion.

The above three observations regarding *Diez millones* and *Bla bla bla* resonate through the film traditions from which they emerged and in which they participated. As we saw in Chapter 1, *Diez millones* must be understood in terms of the decade that preceded it which sought to foster public debate and to approach truth through its coordination of media, through its relentless urgency to avoid and/or condemn the irrational,[65] and through film's indexical, historiographical capacity. As this chapter will

[65] As we have seen, in many cases this may have served only as a pretense but it was, in any case, presented as an orchestration of evidence and interpretation in favor of a reasoned and public discourse.

elucidate, the Brazilian film tradition will wrestle with many of the same issues and will utilize many of the same narratological devices of its Cuban contemporaries—or near contemporaries—but it will repeatedly find meaning precisely in the shadows, in the emptiness, and in the dark spaces where, through varying degrees of intentionality, information is concealed. Brazilian filmmakers such as Nelson Pereira dos Santos, Roberto Farias, Eduardo Coutinho, and Rogério Sganzerla, all of whom are simultaneously invested in and suspicious of the communicative power of their medium and the other news media that converge with it, will seek to criticize and contextualize the asynchrony of traditional authority in a politico-social arena hell-bent on progress and development.

The decision to mirror the trajectory of this chapter with the chapter on 1960s Cuba is not to impose upon either tradition any assertion of direct equivalence—especially political—but to further emphasize the ways in which the evolution of communicative media technology that would have been available more or less simultaneously in each country presented itself as both opportunity and obstacle for the filmmakers employing news media in their film narratives. I began the first chapter by looking at early instantiations of radio and print media as discursive forms within a few important early Cuban revolutionary films. While Brazil's film industry was more developed in the mid- to late 1950s than Cuba's, Cuba's television network (which, we recall, was the first truly national microwave television broadcast network) had outpaced Brazil's in terms of the percentage of population with broadcast access until later in the 1960s.[66] In both countries, though, as we saw with Cuba's attempts to spread cinema and

[66] The sale of television sets in Brazil increased from 78,000 in 1958 to 3,000,000 in 1965 (Mattos "A Brief History of Brazilian Television").

incorporate the entire population into its cinematic audience, access to both television and film would not be easily guaranteed for either country. Issues of access and exclusion pertaining to communications media begin to intersect with increasing regularity in the period concurrent with the second and third stages of Cinema Novo (1964-1968, 1968-1972) in foundational films like Glauber Rocha's *Terra em transe* (1967) and Coutinho's *O homem que comprou o mundo*.

Despite the near simultaneous increase of censorship and financial restrictions in Cuba and Brazil in the last years of the sixties and into the seventies, Brazilian film production did not decrease as severely as it did in Cuba—where it came to a near halt. Several Brazilian filmmakers, such as Pereira dos Santos, Coutinho, and Hector Babenco, produced films that effectively propel media themes in a clear trajectory through the 1970s and 1980s, uniting the issues as they evolved toward the boom of the late 1990s and 2000s. This distinction has two significant impacts on my analysis and on the understanding of each country's film traditions that will become more evident in Chapters 3 and 4 where I deal with these filmic media legacies as either a return (in Cuba) or as a continuation (in Brazil). I include this note here to anticipate an important distinction between my treatment of the Cuban and Brazilian traditions: namely, that while the majority of this section pertains to films made in the 1960s, my analysis will not come to an abrupt close in the early 1970s as it did in the first chapter. Instead, I will show in Chapter 3 how the emplotment of news media evolved primarily in response to official state censorship in the 1970s before mapping their course toward the present.

AUTHENTICITY IN THE AIRWAVES: INVISIBILITY AS ESSENTIAL TO THE NATIONAL SELF IMAGE

In 1951, Nelson Pereira dos Santos wrote a critical review of the film *Caiçara* (Cavalcanti, 1950) in the film journal *Fundamentos III* that epitomized a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the imported aesthetic typical of contemporary Hollywood studio films. Therein he expresses a nationalistic attitude calling for a "Brazilian Cinema" that respects its own history and traditions, anticipating by about a decade the nationalistic motivations of film schools all across Latin America and the world. He writes,

> Cinema Brasileiro será aquele que respeitar, ainda que falho inicialmente de técnica e de forma, a verdade e a realidade de nossa vida e de nossos hábitos, sem preocupacão maliciosamente evidente de pôr em relevo costumes que não são nossos e cacoetes que nos estão sendo impingidos pelas múltiplas manifestações desse cosmopolitismo desmoralizante que quer aprofundar entre nós a confusão, a perversão e o espírito de derrota (dos Santos 45).[67]

This excerpt does three things familiar to anyone that has read a post-World War II film manifesto: 1) it rejects Hollywood in favor of a nationalist (read: authentic) project; 2) it does so by advocating for the real and truthful; and 3) it embraces the unavoidability of technical imperfection. More importantly, though, Pereira dos Santos states that to disregard his advice would lead to demoralization, confusion, perversion, and a sense of defeat. Here again we find truthful and authentic films representing a certain antidote to nationalistic malady. Pereira dos Santos goes on to say that realism in fiction film is more than simply showing people in their lived environs—a characteristic Calvalcanti adopted in the name of Italian Neorealism. The young Pereira dos Santos encouraged his fellow filmmakers instead to seek out the humanism he believed to be a necessary component of

[67] [Brazilian Cinema will be that which respects, despite initial errors of technique and form, the truth and the reality of our life and our habits, without the malitiously evident preocupation of highlighting conventions that aren't ours and behaviors that are being imposed upon us by the multiple manifestations of this demoralizing cosmopolitanism that wants to deepen between us confusion, perversion and a spirit of defeat]

realist film not only in cinematic form, but "no assunto e no seu tratamento."[68] In other words, for Brazilian filmmakers to create authentic records of their worlds they must prove capable of organizing the raw materials they collect into a cohesive narrative. They must compassionately curate the images they register rather than merely put them on display. Well before Cinema Novo turns toward the avant garde expressionism of the French New Wave or the so-called critical realism of the 1960s, then, Pereira dos Santos detects a characteristic absence, or lack, where the uniquely Brazilian should be perceptible. The figure of the dictator in *Bla bla bla* portrays this phenomenon appropriately while standing in the spotlight in the middle of a black frame. So, too, will the below iterations of the radiophonic in Pereira dos Santos's films come to represent a characteristically invisible element—only their erasure is to their detriment rather than to their empowerment.

A few years after publishing the above review, Pereira dos Santos begins his own search for humanism in film to fill in the void created by aping other national film trends. With his first feature film, *Rio, quarenta graus* (1955), he uncovers what will be a central tenet of his epic directorial career: the communications media by which his fellow countrymen in the booming cities and the developing countryside connect to one another can functionally organize and connect film narratives as well. Generally accepted as an homage to Rosselini's *Roma, città aperta* (1945)—an echo perceptible even in the title—*Rio, quarenta graus* manifestly explores the materiality of the city in much the same way a documentary would.[69] The young boys, politicians, and foreign visitors traverse the spatially and functionally disjointed touristic areas of Pão de Azucar, Copa Cabana,

[68] [*in the subject and in its treatment*]
[69] According to the director, early viewers of the film actually mistook it for a documentary (Fabris 147).

Jardim Botánico, and Maracanã, as well as the favelas where the children protagonists live. These contact zones—borrowing from Mary Louise Pratt—wherein various cultures (both foreign and domestic) intermingle offer us two valuable points of departure: the first details the film's initial federal censorship and the ensuant public, multi-mediated debate and the second pertains to a specific radiophonic link between two of the film's non-contiguous zones. Together these two issues point toward the simultaneously inter-mediatic and inter-spatial possibilities made available through the co-presence of film and other mass media.

The Censura Federal banned *Rio, quarenta graus* from playing in national theaters due to its alleged incendiary content, its portrayal of "delinqüentes, viciosos e marginais"[70] and national character, and the lack of moral order (Fabris 140). After a heated debate staged in various newspapers across the country, featuring figures of no less importance than Jorge Amado—who warned in the pages of *Imprensa Popular* that the censorship would ultimately "transformar nossa pátria num cárcere" (Amado)[71]—the chief of the Departamento Federal de Segurança Pública justified the ban under the pretense of protecting Brazil's image abroad. In his own news-print rebuttal, he explains that "não é o problema de natureza estética, e sim um fato que poderá contribuir para o nosso descrédito onde quer que se venha no futuro a exibir o filme..." (qtd. in Fabris 142).[72] The matter of national identity in the face of political and economic interests abroad will weigh heavily on many Brazilian filmmakers, an issue we will return to in greater detail below. For the present it will suffice to provide us with an early link

[70] [delinquents, the vicious and the marginal]
[71] [*transform our country into a prison*]
[72] [*it is not a problem of an aesthetic nature, but the fact that it could contribute to our discredit wherever the film is exhibited in the future*]

between film, media, and censorship—one that sketches the power relationships at play in the contact zones within a film as well those constituted by a given film's diverse (national and international) audiences.

In addition to the real-world dialogue concerning censorship instigated by the censoring of *Rio, quarenta graus*, Pereira dos Santos utilizes an invisible yet auditorily perceptible and indexically recorded radio broadcast at a critical moment to tie together distinct spaces and plot lines. Mariarosaria Fabris and Jean-Claude Bernadet have closely examined the many editing techniques Pereira dos Santos employed to contrast various parallel but otherwise disconnected scenes in the film. Among them (dialogical, situational, locational), the unexpected and jarring radio announcer sound-bridge linking an aging footballer's climatic goal to the traumatic death of a child in the street stands out as the freshmen director's most daring montage. The two scenes unfold as one thanks to masterful parallel editing that juxtaposes the following actions: two young boys begging for money run around a street corner, find themselves in a crowd [here the radio announcer of the soccer match begins to build suspense with his intensifying play-by-play—the word "atacante" (attacker, or forward) stands out for the first time], another group of boys spots the original two and proceeds to chase and skirmish with them [enter again the radio announcer, again "ataque" is audible], then the group is off and running again (01:14:27); here the director cuts to the stadium, its cheering fans, and an advancing offensive attack [announcer silent]; another cut finds one of the boys hiding with his back against a wall [announcer returns, heightening emotion in his voice], the group finds the hidden boy, a brief skirmish, and he runs away down the street—a breakaway—toward a trolley-car he cannot catch, [radio silent], he falls, and is struck in the street by a truck's fender; the sequence closes back in Maracanã with the screeching

tires of the truck blending into the roar of the crowd cheering and the radio announcers—now on screen—describing the final play (01:15:53). Clearly a complicated scene both in terms of its editing and its portrait of Rio's social milieus, its successful union of disparate spaces and the activities that make both meaningful within the film—a simulation of conflict and resolution within the stadium and a life-and-death territorial struggle between the young boys—evinces a problematic relationship between entertainment, news, and the diverse groups of people that constitute its audience. The radio waves bridge and translate the simulation to the real, which is precisely what is at stake in the nationalisitic, identity forming interplay of fiction and fact that imposes singular identities on a pluralist populace. But, as the immense body of Pereira dos Santos's films that follow up on this classic will attest, the parameters of the game are never so clearly defined as in this soccer match.

The boy's death is not narrated on the radio, nor is the death of the protagonist in Pereira dos Santos's next film, *Rio, Zona Norte* (1957), which follows close on the heels of *Rio, quarenta graus* and extends the use of radio as a narrative trope. In this endeavor, the radio ascends from an editing mechanism connecting cross-cut scenes simultaneously unfolding to the level of plot motivator. The main character is a down-on-his-luck sambista called Espírito, played by Grande Otelo, whose songs are celebrated across diverse urban geographies—from the poor Zona Norte where the character resides to the affluent Zona Sul. Set in contrast to the train as an age old metaphor for modernity, the radio waves effortlessly and non-threateningly traverse Rio's various districts.

Rio, zona norte opens with series of shots that trace the bustling transit routes of Rio, first by panning across a street trafficked heavily by cars, busses, and pedestrians, then by a tracking shot through a crowded terminal, and finally from the side of a moving

train. The sequence takes us from a commercial center outward into a less developed urban space, presumably the north. The last train shot ends abruptly with a still camera looking across the tracks to an approaching man on foot coming to inspect what turns out to be the still body of a man on the tracks. This sequence returns us to the similarly violent use of public transportation in *Rio, quarenta graus*. In both cases the physical mortality of the characters stands against the ethereality of the radio waves. Both films foreground the tragic death of a poor black citizen associated with the city's periphery, their corporality destroyed by the mechanisms that make urban life possible. *Rio, Zona Norte* pursues the issue of corporality further by drawing our attention to the exploitative radio entertainment industry whose successes, both financial and political, depend on the people whose lives are merely counted as profits and/or votes. This marks a crucial dovetailing of the connecting devices of the radio and urban transit: from here forward communications media will run alongside and eventually outrun transit as the modernist/modernizing/developmental signifier par excellence.

What remains to be seen in our analysis of these two films is the relationship between Pereira dos Santos's stated investment in the humanism of his subjects—those that are meant, in his view, to represent *braziliannes*s—and their tragic relationship to the urban spaces as well as the public transportation and radio waves that unify them. The missing pieces of this puzzle are found in the populist political rhetoric and media censorship leading up to and coincident with Pereira dos Santos's early career. Seen as foundational to an understanding of news media as part and parcel of Brazilian cinema, together these elements prefigure a film tradition fraught with issues of power, subjectivity, and public discourse.

The emergence of a national news radio broadcasting network in Brazil coincided with the populist political juggernaut of Getulio Vargas's first tenure as president from 1930-45 and his administration's propagandistic use of the medium continued in his second term, from 1951-54—the four years preceding the opening of *Rio, quarenta graus.* Vargas was known to communicate to his preponderantly illiterate public through radio speeches in the vein of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Recognizing the potential political influence of the communications media, Vargas also established the Departamento de Imprena e Propaganda (DIP) in 1939 and implemented a tactic that would find its equivalent in the film industry in the 1960s: censorship via governmental permits, taxes or exemptions, and subsidization[73]. The attempted murder of Carlos Lacerda, a journalist fiercely opposed to Vargas, represents the final and failed censorship of the media by the aging administration. Subsequently, after being deposed by a military coup, the embattled politician committed suicide on 24 August 1954, leaving behind a legacy of populism and media control.

Beyond but not unrelated to the political speeches over the radio and its manipulation as a means of mass communication, populism in the Vargas era was also manifest in the validation of Afro-Brazilian music—most notably the samba. Without straying too far into a history of Brazilian musicology or the spiny race relations associated with it, it is worth commenting on the problematic position of blackness with respect to the communications media present in Pereira dos Santos's first two feature films. Jesús Martín Barbero locates the samba and its Afro-Brazilian origins at the center of the intersection of populism and urbanization in Brazil in the mid-20th century. In his estimation, radio served as a source of reciprocal validation for the purveyors of populist

[73] Burns, E. Bradford. *History of Brazil*. New York: Columbia UP, 1993. Print. 365

ideology and the underrepresented, oft-ignored black populous. Quoting Enio Squeff and José Miguel Wisnik, he explains, "the state sought legitimation in the image of the popular masses and the popular masses sought citizenship in the official recognition of the state" (qtd. in Martín-Barbero 173). He continues,

> this limited legitimation of popular music proved to be equally disconcerting to the two opposed vanguards of cultural nationalism. For those in the elitist, more rationalistic Enlightenment tradition, it was a degrading remnant of the illiterate, superstitious and indolent masses. For the purists of the Romantic tradition, it awakened political aspirations, caused strikes and incited dirty tastes. The appeal to a unifying national sentiment was not able to cover over all of these tensions and social wounds that were brought into the open (173).

At this critical juncture, Barbero returns us to the contending issues associated with the Enlightenment and rationalism as presented in the previous chapter. To understand this sentiment, we must recall that the government controlled the content played over the radio through financial restrictions. Playing so-called *black music* through an official, state-sanctioned medium meant an official nod of acceptance of its place within national culture. The official stamp of recognition *authorizes* the content as legitimate and therefore representative of Brazilianness, it writes blackness into national memory.

As *Rio, Zona Norte* attests, blackness has a way of moving through the airwaves more effortlessly, more imperceptibly than it does on screen and in the lived urban spaces of Rio de Janeiro. Espírito's sambas may write the black gesture—in Barbero's terminology—into popular memory, but they cannot *show* blackness in the indexical/deictic sense. Film steps in to elaborate on the impossibility of Espírito's race to be successfully transmitted around the city. His death by the train—an outdated metaphor for modernity—extends this point further: while his songs on the radio suggest the developing nation's populist aspirations of the modernizing 20th century, his death is a

19th century death. As for the radio audience within the film's diegetic frame, Espírito dies invisibly. For the film's extra-diegetic audience, though, his death constitutes the very narrative frame in which the story of his radio career is told. Thus, the film visualizes—makes perceivable—the human being that is otherwise erased through the medium of radio.

If Espirito represents a convergence of the popular, the urban, the mass, and the mass-mediated, his filmic presence stands against the anti-humanism for which Pereira dos Santos denounced his cinematic predecessors. It aligns a criticism of the radio industry and its politically and economically alienating practices with the similarly alienating filmmakers that aped foreign styles at the expense of their national heritage. Importantly for Pereira dos Santos, though, his portrayal of the plight of the young boy in *Rio, quarenta graus* and of Espirito in *Rio, Zona Norte* suggests that the showing of the tragedy does not sufficiently define the sought-after national character of Brazil. What is beginning to take shape in these two films is a sense of Brazilianness as composed across multiple media: neither Espirito's life nor his death makes up the whole story. Meaning is found somewhere in the fabric of representations that seek to incorporate the individual into the nation—an impulse simultaneously carried out within political rhetoric, communications media like the radio, and in film.

While overt and covert censorship of communications media will intensify over the next two decades, the curtain will fall on populist political theater in 1964. Pre- and early Cinema Novo films evince a well documented drive to explore populist themes that were, for the moment at least, shared by their political counterparts. This is by no means to say that the filmmakers were uncritical of their government's policies or attitudes toward the nation, but that they tended to place a shared emphasis on the role of the

people in representing themselves and actively linking themselves to the nationalizing project. In the first stage of Cinema Novo, underrepresented and disconnected Brazilians as narrative subjects—such as the migrant workers in the Northeast in *Aruanda* (Linduarte Noronha 1960) and Pereira dos Santos's film adaptation of Gracilian Ramos's novel *Vidas Secas* (1963) or Afro-Brazilians in Bahia in *Barravento* (Rocha 1962)—variously expressed or struggled with their own agency within stark economic, social, and agricultural conditions. If Pereira dos Santos's first two films brought awareness to the marginalized urban population, these films challenged the populist rhetoric further by promulgating images of a non-urban, non-cosmopolitan Brazilians alienated from the socio-political structures that would seek to speak to/for them.

In a moment not unlike the Cuban attempt to create a "cinematic public" by taking film into the Sierra, Brazilian filmmakers in the early 1960s sought to give voice or at least provide communicative potential to the rural poor. Communication seemed to have stalled due to the technological or geographical detachment from media forms that constitute the Benedict Anderson's *meanwhile*, the imagined Brazilian community. Filmmakers stepped in to forge an urban-rural connection that was not yet present in other media. On the level of the diegesis, though, the physical bodies of the characters slowly moving through the desert (as in *Aruanda* and *Vidas Secas*) or from rural to urban spaces (the malandro figure Firmino in *Barravento*) prove ineffective and incompatible with the fast-paced, instantaneous connections of the modern city. The theme of migration thus echoes the communication/transportation dilemma represented in *Rio, quarenta graus* and *Rio, Zona Norte*.

When a character does traverse the boundary separating the unmediated space of the sertão from the city, corporally mediating the two spaces, he becomes susceptible to

the power of the media forms that had hitherto disregarded him. He physically and figuratively embodies the relative dissonance between folklore and modernity. This is exemplified in *O pagador de promessas* (Anselmo Duarte, 1962) when the protagonist, Zé do Burro, enters Salvador da Bahia from the countryside. The following analysis will consider the implications of yet another martyred outsider whose demise is precipitated by news media. Duarte's film expands the above consideration of radio to include print journalism and television, returning us to questions concerning subjectivity, narrativity, fact, and fiction. The protagonist interloper's sudden visibility within the city that does not coincide with his worldview makes him anathema to the urban—particularly the Christian orthodox—community's self-identification. It is a story whose lineage can be traced through Brazil's history of sensationalist journalism and serial fiction to *literatura de cordel*. As such, *O pagador* offers a glimpse of a discourse-in-the-making which privileges new forms of communication over the old, the modern (urban, wealthy, elite) over the folk (rural, poor, illiterate).

Zé do Burro's story begins as an epic *in medias res*. The physically exhausted figure arrives in Salvador da Bahia after a long journey by foot carrying a hand-made cross he had promised to deliver to the nearest altar of Santa Bárbara. He reveals to the priest overseeing the church he had traveled so far to find that he made his promise in prayer to the syncretic figure of Santa Bárbara/Iansã to save the life of his mule, Nicolau, who had been injured during a storm. The incensed priest accuses Zé of succumbing to the fetishistic temptation of Candomblé and of fashioning himself as a Christ figure. He ultimately denies Zé entrance under the pretext that he made his original promise to pacify the vengeance of Iansã, the Orisha of winds and storms that he presumed

responsible for Nicolau's injury. The scene ends with the priest and several members of his parish close the doors on an advancing Zé.

Duarte connects the above storyline with its soon-to-be sensationalized journalistic counterpart with a match-cut to an opening door within a news room. In one sense, the match implies continuity between the unfolding of Zé's narrative and an alternative, fictional one that was already in the process by the time we arrive in the newsroom. In another sense, though, the cut proves disconnected from or dissonant with the temporal linearity of Zé's narrative: despite the instantaneous nature of the match cut we arrive in the newsroom after enough time has passed that the paper's editor already has information regarding Zé's curious presence in town. This temporal dis/connection echoes in the unfolding conversation between the editor and one of his reporters.[74] The editor tells him, "Você precisa integrar a nova orientação do jornal. Não queremos reportagem bem feito. Queremos reportagem que venda, entendeu?...Invente. Um bom reporter precisa ter imaginação" (00:30:38)[75]. The "new orientation" disconnects from the old by privileging sales over veracity, sensationalism over stuffy truth-telling. The editor also returns us to the question of subjectivity in journalism. In response to the reporter's question, "e essa historia do beato, 'tá dentro da nova orientação do jornal?," the editor replies, "Quem sabe? Talvez dependa mais de você do que ele" (00:31:05).[76] The reporter's job becomes to connect his outdated journalistic practices with those of the new order specifically by connecting his paper to Zé's story of personal redemption. The

[74] The unnamed reporter is played by Othon Bastos, an actor who comes to characterize several important figures within this trajectory of filmic mediation—principally as the tragic hero Corrisco in Rocha's *Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol* which we will return to below.

[75] [You need to integrate the paper's new orientation. We don't want good reportage. We want reportage that sells, understand?...Invent. A good reporter needs to have imagination]

[76] [and this story about the blessed, its within the paper's new orientation?]; [Who knows? Maybe it depends more on you than on him]

dis/connections here also forewarn the tragic consequences of Zé's figurative ties to folk-communication—to use Luiz Beltrão's term—which relies on the corporal limits of the voice and the close proximity of crowds when pitted against the readily disseminated news media that flow freely across broad spaces.

In the process of constituting their respective publics, the various media within the film's diegetic frame trace a loose historical trajectory from print—legitimate then sensational—to cordel literature, to radio, and television. First, the abovementioned reporter interviews Zé, twisting his words into a stock narrative of agrarian reform and human exploitation. He asks several questions concerning Zé's motives and fills in the blanks, after his editor's suggestion, with his own imagination: "É a favor da reforma agrária" (00:40:17); "É contra a exploracão do homem contra o homem" (00:40:30); and finally, "Agora a causa não é somente sua [Zé]. É também do jornal. E, sendo do jornal, é do povo!" (00:47:00)[77]. These satirical insuations bring humor to the screen in their capacity to connect with the viewing audience's own experience with sensationalist journalism. The resultant crowd of protestors and reformist activists thereafter evolves into its own event worthy of media attention. A cordel poet hocks his bombastic stories on the steps and offers to write Zé's story into poetic verse to be distributed and sung to the illiterate populous that cannot read the traditional news. This, the poet believes, will push the public enough in his favor to grant his entrance to the church since even the priest is known to read cordel literature. Lastly, radio and television broadcasters enter the tableau to report on the story as it develops (fig. 12). Having successfully united all varieties of media and their audiences—largely illiterate popular (cordel, radio) and elite

[77] [He's in favor of agrarian reform; He's against the exploitation of man against man; Now the cause is not yours alone. It's also the paper's. And, as belonging to the paper, it is also of the people!]

(newspaper, television)—the reporter's proclamation that Zé's cause has, through the paper's mediatory role, ceased to be his own turns out to be self-fulfilled prophesy. The ultimate irony is that Zé, to whom it had never occurred to play the role of a Christ figure, became one as a result of a combination of the priest's fears and the public's susceptibility to easily recognizable narratives in the news.

Figure 12: News camera and satellite "Itapoan" in *Pagador de promessas* (01:08:54)

Together, the interrelated concerns of sensationalism, subjectivity, truth, and sales value in the above conversation between the newspaper editor and the reporter evince a point of transition for the film's newspaper. The micro-level synthesis of fact and fiction of the local Bahian publication represents Brazilian journalism on the macro-level. It is not coincidental that this takes place at the moment an outsider trespasses the realm of urban space, when contending belief systems inherited from Africa and Europe collide once more on modern ground, and when an individual instantiation of the popular confronts the leaders of the mass (here fortuitously signifying both the religious and nationalistic implications of the term *mass*). This intricate knot of intersecting ideologies has been unpacked by Jean-Claude Bernadet as the building of a class struggle that finds its catharsis in Zé's ultimate martyrdom at the end of the film when the gathered crowd

carries his body across the church's threshold (Bernadet 67). However, by purchasing the news story and carrying it to its tragic climax, the people representing their class struggles appear more as pawns in a new, apparently unperceived game of manipulation where fiction (Zé's messianic ambitions, misinterpreted by the priest and propagated by the media) becomes fact (his dead body is carried on a cross into a church) through its impact on the collective conscience of the public.

The media manipulated the people into believing that Zé's arrival in the city was somehow messianic, yet the film's only redemption seems to be in the power of the media itself to manufacture truth.[78] We can only say that Zé achieved his promise of bringing the cross to Santa Bárbara if we deny that the very idea of sacrificing his life to pay tribute to the saved life of his mule is anything but parody. Similarly, it would not suffice to say that the people of the film have found their savior unless we ignore that his role as one was a direct consequence of mediated theatrics. In this sense Zé's death is akin to Enrique's in *Soy Cuba*. Their martyrdoms re-signify their bodies within a rhetoric of fulfillment that had little or nothing to do with their own actions or behavior. However, the film does undeniably redeem the news media as a source of public influence. It shows how one trumped up story *could* pass through the entire mass communication spectrum, from the folkloric cordel to the audio-visuality of the new television networks popping up in Brazil's urban centers. It could but in this case it does not.

Although the cordel poet is included within the film's diegetic world he never truly participates in the propagation of Zé's myth. Duarte presents the cordel poet as an unrealized opportunity for Zé, a media at once outdated and technologically out-matched. Thus, the presence of the cordel poet here offers something of a Möbius strip or a snake

[78] I use the term "manufacture" here advisedly, alluding to Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent*.

eating its tail: inasmuch as it paved the way for sensationalist journalism in Brazil, it folds back onto itself in this instance when sensationalist journalism beats the cordel poet at his own game. I mentioned above that the poet offered his services to Zé and his wife for a fee but, since he was denied payment, he was not moved to help the wayfaring couple through his art. This interaction exposes at least three points of related conflict: between 1) new media and old; 2) the literate and the illiterate; and 3) the urban (mass) and the rural (popular) cultures. Zé's decision not to pay the poet effectively silenced his own voice to the populous that would have most identified with him, the migrant communities that had recently moved to the city. Instead, the news media used its ample financial resources to exploit the situation. The result was a media frenzy that ushered in disparate groups from within the city that had their own, here metaphorical, crosses to bear.

The urban and rural divide evident above returns us to the problem of connection and disconnection because, within the film at least, the disconnection is made known when Zé-the-rural-peasant enters and thereby connects his rural life with the city's. Brazilian sociologist Marilena Chauí theorizes on the importance of popular cultural expressions such as the cordel in their capacity to underscore the inherent contradictions between the popular and the mass:

> A expressão Cultura Popular tem a vantagem de assimilar aquilo que a ideologia dominante tem por finalidade ocultar, isto é, a existência das divisões sociais, pois referir-se a uma prática cultural como popular significa admitir a existência de algo não-popular que permite distinguir formas de manifestação cultural numa mesma sociedade. A noção de massa, ao contrário, tende a ocultar as diferenças sociais, conflitos e contradições (Chauí 28).[79]

[79] [The expression Popular Culture has the advantage of assimilating that which the dominant ideology has determined to hide, that is, the existence of social divisions, since to refer to a cultural practice as popular is to admit to the existence of something non-popular that allows us to differentiate forms of cultural

This quote underscores the importance of the various power centers at play in media discourse, specifically within discourse that organizes large groups under one umbrella category: the mass. The media relationships within *O pagador* hinge on the fact that the cordel poet's attempts to speak for and to the migrant class within the city—and thus against the mediated mass—failed to materialize. Thus, despite the apparent vindication of the people at the film's conclusion, what typifies the character of the people here representing Brazilianness is, again, a certain lack or absence. As we will see below, direct film and news media censorship under a military government will only intensify this practice as the media themselves become increasingly complicit.

MEDIA ←→ DISCOURSE ←→ STATE

Crime dramas were particularly popular with Brazilian cinemagoers of the 1950s and '60s. They claimed the vast majority of national ticket sales and were thus among the few financially viable options for directors of the old guard who still worked within the Hollywood studio-system paradigm at the turn of the decade. The titles alone of such films as *Cidade ameaçada* (dir Roberto Farias, 1960), *Assassinato em Copacabana* (dir Euripides Ramos, 1962), *Os cafajestes* (dir Ruy Guerra, 1962), *O assalto ao trem pagador* (Farias, 1962), and *Os fuzis* (Guerra, 1964) betray various criminal threats to the already unsteady way of life within the urban metropoles of Rio and São Paulo. Narrative frameworks commonly either reverberated with or directly plagiarized popular sensationalist news stories of the day that were already proven commodities among their potential audiences. The films thus benefited from a veritable ratings pre-approval system: if a story or story-archetype could sell newspapers it could also sell movie

manifestations within one society. The notion of mass, on the contrary, tends to hide social differences, conflicts and contradictions.]

tickets.[80] This evinces an easily discernible narrative connection between the news media and the film industry on an extra-diegetic level that would find its diegetic analogue with the parallel inclusion of the communications media as essential components of the narratives themselves. And when the mediation of the plot begins to dissonate with the state's capacity to govern its subjects, it is always and obviously the citizens that suffer and not the centers of power.[81]

Reading the many evocations of media and criminality within the Brazilian films of the 1960s and beyond re-cast the questions of evidence and indexicality central to this project. The term "evidence" again requires us to differentiate between the evidentiary nature of film-as-index and the evidence available on screen that would either condemn or absolve a film's criminal protagonist. The same is true, of course, in other narrative instantiations of criminality. Creators of crime narratives—be them fictional of factual, literary, filmic, or journalistic—utilize certain tropes to attract and string along a readership (in the case of print media) or viewership (in the case of television news and film). These tropes include, but are not limited to, withholding and/or masking key information, misdirection, and elaboration on the stakes or the possibility of a danger inherent to the given criminal activity. A quick glance at any newsstand in Brazil on any day will confirm that the visual evidence of a violent crime or accident plays an undeniable role in the sale of newspapers. Crime, media, and evidence coalesce as an interplay of showing and concealing, enlightening and obscuring. The films in this section look beyond the simple material evidence and indices giving credence to crime

[80] This will become increasingly common when news stories become films, as in the below analysis of Coutinho, Babenco, and ultimately Padilha.

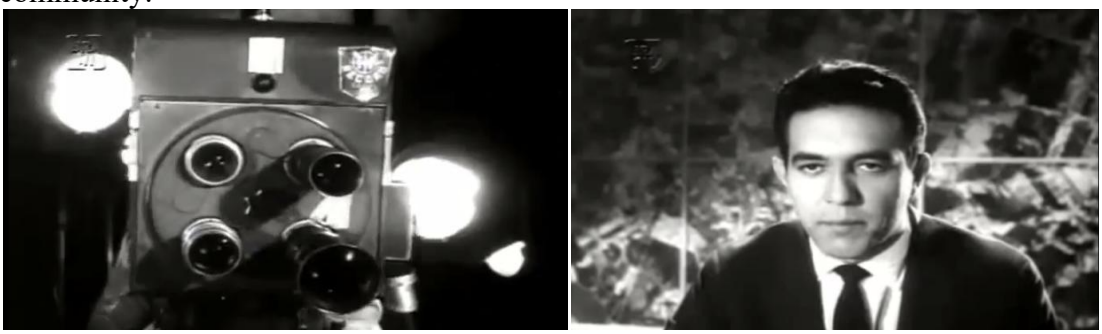
[81] The power centers evolve and change, depending on the film, but are generally represented in the form of the police, the politicians, the oligarchy, and/or the purveyors of news.

narratives by beginning to explore the motivations of the state in determining the parameters of media discourse, first by responding to the media narratives and later by direct systems of authorization and censorship.

Roberto Farias's *Cidade ameaçada* opened what would be the most popular decade for Brazilian film in the second half of the century with a narrative heavily laden with mediatic imagery. He tells the story of a man called Passarinho whose life of petty theft the news media exaggerate to place him at the center of a homicidal crime syndicate. The film opens with a shot of printing presses spooling hundreds of newspapers through their mechanized reels, laborers stacking the compiled papers with headlines to the tune of "A policia dá caça aos marginais,"[82] and a newsroom television camera honing in on an eager broadcaster. In the process, Farias constructs a directorial first from which Brazilian film will never recover: he stages a face-off between film camera and television camera that sets up an establishing shot-counter-shot sequence, resulting in a perspectival fusion of film-viewer (real world) and television audience (diegetic world) [illustrated in Figs. 13 and 14]. Farias shows a nearly full-framed TV camera as it pushes toward the film camera and then cuts to the broadcaster sitting directly in the place of the film camera from the previous shot. Here the frame of the film is also the news frame: the two superimposed perspectives are not to be understood as overlapping but to have merged to become one and the same. The film viewer is for this instant also the viewer of a fictional television news broadcast, viewing the very same news that is at that moment being viewed by the fictional Brazilians assumed by the film's narrative. Here Benedict Anderson's notion of the *imagined community* is doubly

[82] [Police hunt down the marginal/criminals]

imaginary: we are, by viewing the newscast, members of an imaginary imagined community.



Figures 13 and 14: News and film convergence via shot-countershot in *Cidade ameaçada*

Farias's ingenious synthesis of film and news audiences in the opening sequence of *Cidade ameaçada* also implicates the film's foundation in a real news story. After the credit sequence, which plays over a police car siren, the director returns us to the recurring problem of truth in representation common to many newsy films:

> A história dêste filme foi tirada da vida real. Suas personagems e situacões, porém, ganharam feicão própria, ao sabor da ficcão, libertando-se das pessoas e dos fatos verdadeiros.
> Os incidentes e os tipos aqui expostos, portanto, não retratam ou refletem determinados acontecimentos ou pessoas reais, mas sim uma realidade genérica por demais conhecida para ser negada por quem quer que seja." (00:04:59)[83]

The wording in this directorial caveat marks a provocative distinction between the filmic aspirations of the Cuban filmmakers at work in the same year: by proclaiming that the presumably real (as in documentary) film, with its tedious fact-checking component, is somehow less important than a readily recognizable "generic" reality. The term "libertando-se" takes on even greater significance within the soon-to-unfold plot whose

[83] "The story of this film was taken from real life. Its characters and situations, nevertheless, took on their own shape, to the style of fiction, freeing itself from the real people and facts.
The incidents and the people here exposed, therefore, do not depict or reflect specific occurrences or real people, but do retain a generic reality too well known to be denied by anyone"

protagonist struggles perpetually for freedom. Inasmuch as the anti-hero Passarinho suffers the consequences of an errant and untruthful media narrative,[84] the film itself also attempts to flee from the journalistic assumptions of truth. Also, the terms "retratar" (to depict) and "refleter" (to reflect) reintroduce the notion of indexicality and, as we will see shortly, Farias is on to something here in first evoking the communications media to establish a recognizable "realidade genérica."

We begin to ascertain in the opening sequence of *Cidade ameaçada* that Passarinho's story is not his own. The television broadcaster returns to the screen following the credit sequence to supply the doubly positioned audience with more information concerning the individual assumed to be responsible for another wave of violent crimes. It is only after the broadcaster shows a photograph of the suspect's face that the film introduces us to the character in the flesh. We may choose to read the fade from the photograph to the living character in two not necessarily mutually exclusive ways: 1) as a narrative frame within which the entire film's action unfolds, or 2) as a filmic extension of the journalistic print and televisual accounts. In the first case, the narrated world of Passarinho cannot be anything more than exploitative journalism that misrepresents his actions for the purpose of its ratings. The second case validates the film's capacity to fill in missing details of Passarinho's life, providing a more humanistic account than its print counterpart, very much consistent with Pereira dos Santos's proposal concerning humanism and Brazilianness in film. The narrative similarities between the film and its journalistic co-conspirator affirm the first reading. For example, after a smarmy journalist publishes a photograph of Passarinho's lover Terezinha on the

[84] A similar fate as Zé do Burro in Duarte's *Pagador de promessas*—they each are reduced to suffering the consequences of a trumped up news story with real and ultimately tragic consequences for them

front page of Diario Paulistano, he explains that he did so because it was necessary for the storyline: “Não fiz por mal. Você era o elemento romântico que estava faltando…” (01:08:20). [85] At this moment the film seems to condemn the journalist’s motivations, portraying him in the light of a villainous seducer, and in the next perpetrating the same melodramatic crime by impregnating Terezinha for dramatic effect ("eu estou esperando um filho desse homem" [01:34:30]). However, by not pulling back to reveal the frame again at the plot’s conclusion Farias favors the second interpretation. Prison bars separate Passarinho from Terezinha and their child but the television broadcaster does not return to confirm that we, the imagined Paulistas, are no longer in danger. Farias lingers on the love story so as to deny the narrative simplicity of the journalists whose story failed to deliver on its promise of fear and retribution.

Cidade ameaçada smartly hedges itself against accusations of hypocrisy by establishing a dichotomy between what it views as ethical and unethical journalism. Of the two journalists vying for public attention in the form of column inches, Farias clearly favors the principled man in search of truth over the abovementioned groveling sensationalist that cares not for the lives he damages by printing misinformation. The same binary plays itself out through Passarinho and Terezinha: when she encourages him to come clean and turn himself in before he is killed by the police whom his celebrity has publicly made to look foolish, he rationalizes that "O jornal vem dizendo que eu sou perigoso e a policia acredita...muita coisa que dizem de mim é mentira. Inventam coisas que nunca fiz nem sonhei fazer. Mas agora é tarde desmentir, é tarde de ser gente outra

[85] [I didn’t do it to hurt you. You were the romantic element that was missing…]

vez"[86] (00:59:35). By in the end proving Terezinha right and upholding the power of legitimate journalism, the film seems to imply that the characterized, fictionalized Passarinho can indeed become a person again, that the media's lies can be "desmentidos." Yet there remains one contradiction to this that harkens back to the film's disclaimer: Passarinho *is* a fictional character acted out on screen and, so, is correct in saying that he cannot again be a person in any real sense beyond his diegetic world. Despite the similarities between his story and true stories unfolding in the dregs and in the headlines of São Paulo, the truth of the film lies not in his humanity, but in the ways in which his humanity is constructed, either positively or negatively, by the narrational forces of public discourse. This realization encourages the audience to interrogate the constructedness of meaning negotiated between the film and its filial communications media.

The public discourse that *Cidade ameaçada* projects also challenges the legitimacy of the state in its capacity to protect and, inversely, to control its subjects. The police chief, forcefully played by the same actor whose dictatorial diatribe in Tonacci's *Bla bla bla* opened this chapter, speaks to the power of media in effecting police action multiple times. In order to preserve the integrity of his force, he asserts, "Agora o remedio é satisfazer a imprensa...preciso fazer os jornais calarem os mais depressa possivel" (00:15:28).[87] Their action, and thus the action of the plot, follows only indirectly from the need to maintain order or to bring justice to a criminal. Their aim is above all to redirect in their favor a narrative that had questioned their capacity to control

[86] "The papers are saying that I'm dangerous and the police belives it...much of what they're saying about me is a lie. They invent things that I never did nor ever dreamed of doing. But now it's too late to deny it, it's too late to be a person again"

[87] "Now the remedy is to satisfy the press…I need to shut up the newspapers as quickly as possible"

the burgeoning populous from marginal threats. Like Passarinho, the police—as representatives of the state—believe that the lies cannot be undone, and therefore that the real fears and doubts of the people supersede the validity of the news reports.

After *Cidade ameaçada*, Roberto Farias directed a second film detailing the exploits of another criminal gang that had been previously celebrated journalistically: *O assalto ao trem pagador* (1962). This film does not share with its predecessor an overt attention to news media but it does present an opportunity to consider the changing tide of censorial pressure that would define a new degree of absence/lack in Brazilian filmmaking, extending in spite of its shift our consideration of absence as we saw it in Pereira dos Santos's writing and in the above group of films. Censors deemed the film unfit for minors for three years after its release, citing the favorable portrayal of the villains as conflicting with their ultimate capture and punishment. Only after arguing that the film's very premises had already been detailed extensively in the press was the restriction lowered from persons eighteen and older to ten (Schiff 476). This partially anecdotal observation recalls the initial prohibition of *Rio, quarenta graus* and the subsequent public debate that took place within newspapers across the nation—both instances of censorship were resolved through an appeal to public journalistic knowledge. More importantly, though, the restrictions placed on *O assalto ao trem pagador* portend a massive overhaul of governmental policy that would seek to centralize control over both film production and communications media—especially newsprint and television. No longer would film and journalism fall under divergent means of regulation, as they did here. Political and economic upheaval would soon lead to a top-down, state organized institutional structure to prevent further dissonance between the various modes of public discourse.

The same year as *O assalto*'s release, 1962, the National Telecommunications Code was voted into law. [88] This would effectively differentiate the state's management of television from its more regionally minded counterparts of radio and print journalism by extending its potential reach to a national audience. The vast majority of the nation's television sets were located in Rio and São Paulo at this point so much of the national audience was merely hypothetical. But when the military overthrew João Goulart after a period marked by high inflation and stagnant wages, the new dictatorial government saw the development of telecommunications systems as necessary for increased economic and commercial viability. The new government responded to the interventionist economics for which it blamed the country's stagflation by promoting free-market capitalism yet, somewhat ironically, was not willing to wait for the country's communications systems to advance with demand. In addition to the top-down structure of organization—which controlled content through licensing—the communicatively astute government facilitated national television production and purchase by issuing tax incentives and even consumer loans for nationally made TVs (Guedes-Bailey 55). The goal: to create a stable national consumer goods market to drive local industry. Not accidentally, the government presumed that keeping themselves in power was vital to Brazil's economic stability and control of their image was central to their maintenance of power.

Also in 1962, the nascent Grupo Executivo da Indústria Cinematográfica (GEICINE) put into effect a financial program for Brazilian films that had a similarly censorial impact via subsidization. GEICINE, which was created the previous year by

[88] Cuba's principle cultural organizations came into being the same year, also in response, on the one hand, to political turmoil and the need to unify public opinion and, on the other, the emergence of television as a communicative force to be reckoned with (i.e. the *PM* affair and its initial release on television and subsequent ban from theaters).

decree of then president Jânio Quadros, consisted of an executive council of political figures and a consultative council of filmmakers and film scholars. Randal Johnson elaborates on this union of state and cinema as a paradigm shift that would lead to a more stringent official policy regarding filmmaking and national ideology.[89] Further financial subsidies were created the following year through an additional governmental decree that established the CAIC (Comissão de Auxílio à Indústria Cinematográfica).[90] CAIC provided monetary rewards and financing opportunities for Brazilian films held up to its loosely defined criteria for success—criteria which we will consider in detail shortly.

The government went on to institute a slew of filial commissions to promote a unified, developmentalist ideology in the two and a half decades following the creation of the National Telecommunications Code and GEICINE. Among them, the following groups and acts share in the above politics of representation that sought to monetize public discourse in various forms:

News Media	Film/other cultural enterprises
Embratel (telecommunications)	Federal Council for Culture
Broadcasting Services Regulatory Act[91]	Instituto Nacional de Cinema (Film)
Ministry of Communications	Embrafilme (Film)
Radiobrás	National Council for Tourism
National Information Service	Funarte (Arts)
	Concine (Film)
	Embratur (Tourism)

These formations help us to understand what would become, already by the watershed year spanning 1967 and 1968, a flood of films exploring the increasingly problematic

[89]See Randal Johnson's *The Film Industry in Brazil: Culture and the State*, Chapter 4.

[90] The decree was signed into law by none other than Carlos Lacerda, the journalist mentioned above in relation to Vargas's denoucement and suicide who eventually became governor of Guanabara.

[91]While not precisely a commission, below we will see how this act informed the politics of televisual representation during the years of the dictatorship.

presence of news media in Brazilian society, especially as the forms relate to legality, finance, and public discourse. Recall that these and future interventionist programs were put into place under the pretext of stabilizing the economy. In this light we can read the onscreen implications of financial distress as symptomatic not only of the struggling economy but also as indicative of the complex relationship between state power, national economics, and public discourse.

The changing laws and decrees of the various programs that sought to authorize officially all realms of public discourse reconnect us with this section's theme of criminality. In a way that recalls the simultaneously diegetic and extra-diegetic double perspective created by the synthesis of movie and television cameras in *Cidade ameaçada*, in 1963 the former journalist-turned-governor Carlos Lacerda founded the CAIC by a decree which deemed unlawful the subversion of certain social orders in film: on screen material had real-world criminality inscribed upon it through legislature that would, in the case of a denied script, determine if it could even be filmed. As Randal Johnson writes, "The decree founding CAIC stated that the benefits of the law would be denied to any script or film that advocated, among other things, the use of violence to subvert the political and social order, racial or class prejudice, or propaganda against the democratic system" (R. Johnson 100). It is difficult to comprehend the incongruity between this pronouncement and the botched murder of its author, Lacerda, when he was a journalist speaking against the government during the final days of the Vargas era. Nevertheless, the law conflates what is financially viable with its ideological positioning and not its truth value. The state as embodied by the police force in *Cidade ameaçada* which sought to control its media representation by retaliatory action has here opted instead to the control its image preemptively via coercion.

Before proceeding to see how the above institutions came to be represented on screen, a word on censorship. There exists an extensive body of writing on film and other cultural censorship during the military government's reign, including within its scope instances of direct prohibition and erasure, fiscal issues such as those touched on briefly above, institutional pressure, arrests and threats of violence, and self-censorship—all of which are worthy, illustrative considerations necessary to account for that frighteningly complex system. Consistent with my project's emphasis on the immaterial discursive fabric constituted through film and communications media, the component of censorship central to my position has less to do with the explicit and documented proof of erasure—such as the lasting archives of censorial prohibitions and pronouncements—and more to do with the immaterial power relations that predetermine the realm of possible speech. Together, the above cluster of cultural institutions constitutes what Jean Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis have termed a "foreclosure," an idiom Judith Butler uproots from its Lacanian-psychoanalytic foundation and plants within the fertile ground of censorship. My analysis will follow Butler's lead in conceptualizing the force of censorship as foreclosure where it "permits speech by enforcing the very distinction between permissible and impermissible speech…[and] produces discursive regimes through the production of a domain of the unspeakable" (Butler 255). As a productive force, then, the above institutions set limits on images of violence, subversion, and anti-democratic propaganda, but these limits are, again in Butler's words, "open to further and unexpected delimitation" (256). The televisually saturated films arriving on the scene in 1967 and after redraw the boundaries set before them by challenging the challengeable: not the state but its media mouthpiece.

Glauber Rocha's *Terra em transe* explodes the above dynamic relationship between power, representation, and public discourse. In it we find the poetico-operatic (in its aesthetic grandiosity, score, and rhymed verse), a filmic reflexivity (with its film-within-a-film moment of agitprop), and the mediatic (contesting national and international media conglomerates). Historiographically, on the film's fourth level of representation, Rocha organizes these three titanic forces within the individual memory of dying protagonist Paulo Martins after he is shot in the film's opening moments. The rest of the film traces a narrative arc that swings from the present to the not-so-distant past, through Paulo's troublesome affiliation with opposing political factions, and back to the protracted moment of his death.[92] Inasmuch as the film's *materia prima* consists of this memorializing summation of Paulo's life, it is a personal history. Viewed as allegory, though, his memory may be understood to represent Memory as such—an object fittingly cryptic for so challenging a film. It would be an understatement to say that any reading of the film that denies the figurative would be incomplete. Rocha goes a long way to encourage an allegorical reading of his film by locating the drama within a geographical non-place (*utopos*) known as Eldorado and including references indicating a sense of trans-historic pan-Latin Americanism, famously and to comedic effect naming a central political character after Mexican president "Porfirio Diaz." We would be remiss to deduce from this observation a conclusion conflating Paulo's memory with public or inter/national memory. He participates, after all, in the manipulation of public consciousness through his poetry, journalism, film, and political propaganda. His privileged position as a participating member of these institutions grants him a view from

[92] This narrative framework recalls that of *Rio, Zona Norte*—here in a televisual rather than radiographic mode.

above, a meta-level perspective of the institutions that authorize public discourse. He is thus more closely allied with the dictator in *Bla bla bla* than with the various outsider protagonists such as Espírito, Zé do Burro, and Passarinho, and therefore more responsible for the concealing than victim of a concealment.

Understanding Paulo's characteristic deviation from one representative mode to another and between divergent political factions will help us untie the knotted discourse to which he contributes, as well as the ways in which the media construct memory within the film. The first time Paulo changes course comes immediately after the successful election of his political mentor Diaz to the position of governor, a fact that they predict will ensure Paulo's path to becoming a deputado. He decides instead to return to his writing to take up more serious matters than those he had written about previously. Shortly thereafter we find Paulo working as a journalist inside the offices of Aurora Livre, Jornal Independente e Noticioso. He stops working when a woman, Sara, enters and shows him photographs of destitute people living in abject poverty. This scene, which follows immediately on the heels of his first deviation from Diaz, instigates a return to politics. Sara and Paulo proclaim that the dire situation requires more than words and images—it needs action and a political leader to inspire it[93]. Here material evidence, proof of the persisting conditions of inequality and poverty, propels the protagonist to return to politics and abandon his journalistic endeavors.

After a time working for Felipe Viera, a politician directly opposed to his former mentor Diaz, Paulo deviates again from his chosen path due to Viera's broken campaign promises, only to be brought back into the fold as director of the campaign's newspaper

[93] This moment recalls the moment of news rhetoric turned praxis evident in *Soy Cuba* when the guerrillas in the hills enact the radio-broadcasted ideology of the revolutionaries.

and television activity. This entails a direct face-off between Paulo and Diaz: Paulo's campaign's benefactor owns the largest national media conglomerate whereas Diaz is backed by the multinational Explint. Paulo's current position evokes a nationalist versus international/imperialist dichotomy where the elected politicians merely broker advantageous economic positions for their campaign financiers—the former favoring the landowning oligarchy and the latter a neocolonialist dependency. Through this, his final role as media director, Paulo makes a film and thus completes a trajectory that runs parallel with our above consideration of Barbero's and Gouldner's genealogy of communications media: he meanders from 1) **poet** to political protégé (an element implicit in the beginning of the film but not included therein), protégé to 2) **journalist**, journalist back to politics (now as media-head), and finally to 3) **filmmaker**. Each change leads to greater influence despite his increasing disillusionment.

Terra em transe also includes media as a setting piece whose implications go beyond the ken of the characters' development. One scene in particular attempts to make visible the media/power dynamic by literally putting it on a pedestal—atop a mountain, as it were. The scene opens with shot of a television tower from underneath (Fig. 15). The camera zooms out slowly for about ten seconds to reveal more of the structure's base. We then see the metal structure in the background while Paulo, Fuentes, and Alvaro discuss the new "aparelhos" they imported and how they will be of benefit to their campaign against Diaz. The next shot leaves the three men below, looking down on them from a vertiginous perspective high up the tower (Fig. 16). This sequence visually contrasts the enormity of the tower against the chatter of the men that exercise control over it. The men and their ideas seem small and inconsequential beneath the tower looming large in the misty air. Since the film unfolds as a memorial recounting of the

details of Paulo's life, these shots challenge the knowledge Paulo himself had of his influence. We may very well trust his recollection of the conversation he had on top of that hill but the images are not from his perspective. There is more to his memory as a site of knowledge than met his eyes, just as there is in the films considered above. Once more, the power of discourse *appears* despite its immateriality and proves to be more far-reaching and substantial than mere substance.


Figures 15 and 16: Explint Broadcast tower in *Terra em transe*

With *Terra em transe* Rocha has come a long way indeed from the comparatively simplistic influence of the news media on the narratives of *Cidade ameaçada* and *Pagador de promessas*. The young director effectively bridges the gap between on-screen news media and the reflexivity of a film-within-a-film that was becoming so commonplace in Cuba around the same time.[94] Robert Stam addresses this issue and, in the process, reconnects us with my introductory comments on *Citizen Kane*. Stam compares both *Terra em transe* to *Citizen Kane* and Paulo's televised film-*reportagem*—titled "Biografia de um aventureiro"—to *Kane*'s "News on the March" newsreel sequence. He notes that *Terra* shares with *Kane* "its flashback structure, its journalistic subject, its verbal and visual exuberance, and its baroque density" (Stam "Land" 155). On

[94] E.g., *Cerro pelado*, *Reportagem*, *Memorias del subdesarrollo...*

the level of the film-within-a-film, he goes on to note that Paulo's "Biografia" also "exposes the duplicity and treachery of people in power"; he compares Diaz to Hearst, "both are wealthy, arrogant, and demagogic"; and points out that in both newsreels "the metallic staccato voice of a news-reporter hammers home points with heavy-handed irony" (155). Taking Stam's observations a step further, the film-within-a-film coalesces newspaper headlines (the narrator tells the story of Diaz's rise to power through a chronologic reading of headlines relevant to his career and influence), radio and newsreel (the narrator in off, as well as cinematic precedent), and television (the piece airs on TV Eldorado). The noted linearity and simplicity of the "Biografia" contrasts with the complexity of *Terra em transe*, as Stam also indicates, allowing each film to comment on the other's limitations. Together the films also belie a contradiction in politically and financially contingent media discourse, to wit, an attempt to foster belief and/or confidence in lieu of knowledge or reasoned debate.

Paulo and, by default, Rocha, the two directors of the Diaz biopic, attempt to commandeer rational dialogue by using newspaper headlines to construct a chronological parade of facts. This most basic form of historiographical narrative seems irrefutable in the face of the slanderous claim that follows which suggests that Diaz utilizes any and all possible means to aspire to power, "afirmando hoje as mentiras de ontem, negando amanhã as verdades de hoje."[95] This rhetorical and temporal figure-eight deliberately disorients the viewer concerning Diaz's integrity without actually offering any evidence—effective agitprop if only as parody, quite harrowing in its resemblance to real-world defamatory political rhetoric. However, returning to the level of memory creation, this mediated event figures in the dying Paulo's mind as the turning point that

[95](01:18:19) ["affirming today the lies of yesterday, denying tomorrow the truths of today"]

ultimately leads to his death (symbolic/professional and literal/corporal). The multinational media corporation (Explint) wins the battle against Viera's national media conglomerate, Diaz wins the election, and Paulo dies. Neither Paulo's many deviations nor his disloyalties ended in his demise. Not until his betrayal led to a multi-media collision of national and international media empires, until his defeat excluded him indefinitely from the side of the sovereign could Diaz exact his death sentence. Now like the poor landless worker whose voice was ignored and silenced, Paulo's marginalized position reduces him to the status of Agamben's *homo sacer*: beyond the limits of the law, "he can be killed but not sacrificed." His death can only take on meaning in a world exterior to his own, our world, because, as the film's protagonist and via allegory, Rocha remediates Paulo's death on film.[96] Paulo ultimately falls in line with the lawless insignificance of the dead or imprisoned protagonists in *Rio, quarenta graus*, *Rio, Zona Norte*, *Pagador de promessas*, and *Cidade ameaçada*—all of whose victimhood resides at the intersection of media discourse and power.

Descending from the levels of pan-Latin American allegory and Memory configuration, we can see through Rocha's thinly veiled evocation of media imperialism (Explint) to the American corporation then known simply as Time-Life. Having already established media outlets in Venezuela and Argentina, Time-Life sought expansion in Brazil and, in 1965, found it in the form of Roberto Marinho's nascent Rede Globo. Marinho was at that time the owner of a successful print and radio network also looking to expand. He required from Time-Life both financial and informational/logistical

[96] Achille Mbembe takes Agamben's sentiment a step further where he argues against "the belief that the subject is the master and the controlling author of his or her own meaning"(13), insisting that instead of considering "reason as the truth of the subject, we can look to other foundational categories that are less abstract and more tactile, such as life and death" (14).

assistance. Before they joined forces, though, Marinho had to side-step Constitutional Article 160, which prohibited international investment in the national communications sector—a problem easily evaded thanks to the cotemporaneous dictatorial developmentalist strategies in that arena. The military government under Castello Branco did not stop at permitting the joint venture: it went as far as becoming a silent partner by co-funding it[97]. The exceedingly influential triumvirate of Marinho/Time-Life/Branco finds its parallels clearly established within the narrative diegesis of *Terra em transe*. Despite there being no one-to-one analogue for the real world Marinho[98], Fuentes and Diaz both personify elements of the politicized debate his Rede Globo inspired. In the same vein, Castello Branco's analogue could be said to be either Diaz, Fuentes, or Vieira, depending on when in Castello Branco's life we draw the comparison—for example, Castello Branco's pre-presidential career might be compared to Diaz whereas his position as president at the time of the film's release would align him more with Eldorado's sitting head of state Vieira. Regardless, Rocha's masterful deployment of these themes reach at least as far back as *Citizen Kane* and project into the future in such unlikely times and places as 1993 Great Britain with Simon Hartog's documentary *Beyond Citizen Kane*, which details the sinister ascendance of Marinho's network.

A by-now familiar figure within this story of news media in Brazilian film, Carlos Lacerda, voiced his discontent with Rede Globo's dealings in 1966, stating that "Não se trata de uma nação—os Estados Unidos—tomar conta de outra—o Brasil. Mas sim de um grupo americano, através de outro grupo brasileiro, controlar a economia nacional. Para

[97] It is also rumored, though unsubstantiated, that Catello Branco enacted a decree/amendment to Law 5,240 that stipulated a form of legal partnership under certain circumstances. See Sérgio Mattos's *The Impact of the 1964 Revolution on Brazilian Television*.

[98] Least of all in the film's character by that very name, Marinho, whose role is relatively insignificant but whose namesake is evident.

isso, precisam de dois instrumentos: a influência no governo e o controle da opinião pública" (Qtd. in Priolli 48).[99] Lacerda's remarks concerning the economy, the government, and public opinion resonate with Paulo and Julio's heated discussion in *Terra em transe*:

> Paulo: É perigoso concorrer com inimigos fortes
> Júlio: Eu posso concorrer com qualquer empresa nacional ou estrangeira!
> Paulo: Pode enfrentar a Explint?
> Júlio: Eu é que lhe pergunto: eles me podem enfrentar?
> Paulo: Já começaram há muito tempo. Começam assim, cortando os anúncios.
> Júlio: Meu jornal e minha televisão são independentes. Continuarei fazendo uma política nacional.(00:58:24 – 00:59:00)[100]

As we know by now, Júlio's national news campaign loses to the Explint financed Diaz campaign. However, Marinho's Rede Globo would have a far different fate: through its alignment with the Brazilian government it was ultimately able to benefit from the initial backing of Time-Life (in the neighborhood of $6,000,000 and the expertise of its management) before freeing itself from the American company as the result of a parliamentary investigation in 1969 which concluded that the partnership was unlawful. Time-Life's early financial assistance towered over competing national networks whose operating budget was effectively 1/5th that of Rede Globo—around $300,000 (Mello 27). Globo was thus able to survive its infancy despite hemorrhaging cash losses for several years while it stumbled toward the so-called economic miracle of 1969. That year federal

[99][Its not about a nation—the United States—taking account of another—Brazil. But it is about an American group, by way of a Brazilian group, controlling the national economy. For this, they require two instruments: the influence of the government and the control of public opinion]

[100] [Paulo: Its dangerous to compete with strong enemies.
Júlio: I can compete with any national or international corporation.
Paulo: Can you confront Explint?
Júlio: I'm the one to ask you. Can they confront me?
Paulo: They already began a long time ago. They began by cutting your advertisements.
Júlio: My newspaper and my television are independent. I will continue to make a national campaign.]

loans for television purchases—mentioned above—and the installation of national microwave and satellite systems created a unique opportunity for Rede Globo to shed itself of both its international partner and its national competition.

On 15 March 1967 the military government instituted a new constitution, Constituição de 1967, which legally validated the centralized power structure of the military regime. Along with the new constitution came the Lei de Imprensa—a document that explicitly defined the limits of acceptable journalism (be that radio, print, television and even film).[101] The edict lays bare an all-encompassing censorial program whose principal interests revolve around foreign media investment and situations of slander or incitement against the government and its financial systems. Of particular relevance to this section of my argument, the document also outlines the penal procedures associated with infractions of the laws stated therein. Returning to the above notion of censorship as foreclosure associated with the government's official cultural and journalistic institutions, Chapter III of the law ("Dos Abusos no exercício da liberdade de manifestação do pensamento e informação") prohibits journalists of any variety from "publicar ou divulgar notícias falsas ou fatos verdadeiros truncados ou deturpados" that would detract from public confidence in the state or its projects (Article 16).[102] How the foreign investment and the legal issues correlate is not mentioned, but the new laws provide sufficient cause to consider the ways in which the border separating legality (the sayable) and criminality (as silence or lack) was becoming more firm leading up to the Institutional Act 5 in 1968.

[101] Film is not dealt with at length in the document, but it is included in paragraph 4 of article 3, which condemns the ownership of journalistic entities by foreigners.
[102] [publishing or divulging false news or truncated or distorted facts]

The short documentary called *Liberdade de imprensa*, funded by a CAIC grant given to a group of philosophy doctoral students at the University of São Paulo and led by director João Batista de Andrade, addresses head-on the above Time-Life/Rede Globo infraction vis-à-vis the Lei de Imprensa. In the title sequence we find that Andrade's film was also sponsored by the periodical Amanhã. As a film, then, it emerges from the collaboration of an official state institution, a university, and a newspaper—three institutions with unique stakes in truth and information. Andrade delicately carries these influences along with him in organizing the narrative argument but he also allows the film to test the edges of the very laws that he treats as his subject.

After a brief introductory segment, the film opens with images of industrial printing presses pumping out newspapers much in the same manner as Farias's *Cidade ameaçada*. Here Carlos Lacerda returns once again as a name in the list of film's interviewed journalists, substantiating the assumption that his role as intermediary between the world of the press, politics, and film goes beyond mere happenstance. His interview more or less summarizes the film's principle argument:

> Os crimes...cometidos atravéz da imprensa estão todos previstos no código penal. A lei de imprensa feita pela semi-ditadura que tivemos ultimamente é uma lei contra a imprensa. Alguns jornais comportam-se corajosamente e fazem de conta que a liberdade de imprensa ainda existe no Brasil. Na realidade não existe por enquanto. Porque o governo tem na mão todos os meios para instantaneamente coagir e controlar a imprensa, o radio, e a televisão. (00:04:27-00:05:03)[103]

In this statement Lacerda articulates three critical elements that tie together the representative capacities or incapacities of news media and/in film: 1) the notion of the

[103] [The crimes...committed through the press are all foretold in the penal code. The press law made by the semi-dictatorship that we've had recently is a law against the press. Some papers behave courageously and pretend that press freedom still exists in Brazil. In reality it does not exist for the time being. Because the government has at hand all means to coerce and control instantly the press, radio, and television.]

foreseen or foretold; 2) criminality; and 3) coercion. Inasmuch as the foretelling of crime is inherent in the writing of a law, it is tautological to say that the penal code foretells press crime. Nevertheless, the observation points to the law's capacity to control preemptively media content. It forces the editors of the news to consider a potential censor. Criminality is thus always on the horizon not only because of what was *already* said or written but because of what *can* be said or written without fear of punishment. Coercion is not a possibility instantiated by the new law as Lacerda puts it; the new law is the coercive force already in the government's hands.


Figures 17 and 18: Lacerda and Time Life in *A liberdade de imprensa*

The scene following Lacerda's interview takes place in front of a newsstand with a variety of hanging newspapers serving as a backdrop. The words TIME-LIFE are easily legible in the upper right-hand corner of the frame as another interviewee responds to a set of questions related broadly to the Lei de Imprensa. The on-screen interviewer asks the man why he thinks Lacerda spoke against the new law. His response is understandably cagey:

> Eu não acredito que ele tenha manifestado contra a Lei de Imprensa...se ele houvesse, ele terá feito por motivo de que a Lei de Imprensa [é] contra os intereses dele. Ele é uma das poucas pessoas no Brasil que poderia falar contra a

> Lei de Imprensa porque ele foi um dos artifices da revolução que derrubou o regime que tinhamos aí" (00:05:40).[104]

This response suggests a level of caution and deliberation concerning what can be said and who can say it. The man's initial inclination to speak in hypotheticals, guessing at why Lacerda would have spoken against the law instead of addressing the fact that he did—as evinced above—and stating the reasons why Lacerda could have done so (e.g. his "interests") establishes a safe zone from which he can speak. In terms of rational dialogue, this response also points to an uneasy yet clear relationship between state and public discourse through its sanctions against the news media. The film draws these relationships out by questioning the issues in the street and in public and then fleshing them out on screen as a cinematic dialogue between Lacerda and other experts and the public. This defense of Lacerda also demonstrates the public's own capacity to negotiate the limits of censorial foreclosure. The interviewee does not address the law. Rather, he sidesteps it by speaking of hypotheticals and explaining Lacerda's position of authority as derived from his previous work against what must *then*— presumably in the Vargas era but also conceivably that of Goulart—have been a different kind, a worse regime.

Recalling that the Lei de Imprensa addressed foreign investment in communications media as well as parameters for speaking against the government, *Liberdade de imprensa* shifts gears to discuss the monopolizing impetus of Rede Globo and Time-Life. The film's myriad voices echo a general sentiment of unease with the censorial implications of the new laws but they promote its anti-imperialistic stance. Their fear defines a media monopoly sponsored by Time-Life that would impose a

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[104] [I don't beleive that he has spoken out against the Press Law...if he had, he would have done it because the Press Law is against his interests. He is one of the few people in Brazil that could speak against the Press Law because he was one of the architects of the revolution that broke down the regime we had previously.]

general sentiment of anti-communism in Brazil, one related visually on screen with the image of a protest banner stating that "Brasil não será uma nova Cuba" from the pages of an American publication (00:18:10). Through its interviews the film provides only vague assumptions about how foreign influence in the media impacts public opinion. It does not set out to resolve the issue of media imperialism or, for that matter, censorship. However, by including in nearly every scene—if not in every frame—an image of a newspaper or other print material, Batista de Andrade creates a gestalt of public opinion formed by or in spite of governmental restrictions.

The plethora of print material viewed as a whole reveals a filmic narrative true to its form, indicating through material evidence a specific moment in time punctuated in the final frame with "Brasil, 1967." On both fronts the film would prove its astuteness: press freedoms limited by the new laws would indeed become increasingly problematic and Rede Globo would cut ties with Time-Life. What the film could not have foreseen, however, was the ease with which Marinho's monopoly could come into being despite its independence from Time-Life once it had already benefitted from the company's initial presence. Nor could it have foreseen the intensification of government censorship brought about as a consequence of the regime change and the Institutional Act 5 (hereafter referred to as AI-5) which would come the following December, 1968.

1968: From Crime in the Media to Media Criminality

The films discussed thus far in this chapter demonstrate a propensity toward the Venn diagrammatic issues of marginality, criminality, and discourse. They provide the foundation for an understanding of the emplotment of news media in transition from the material to the immaterial, attempting to instantiate on screen the complex codependence of power and representation. We have seen how the imperceptible has formed a filmic

double-bind: on the one hand, where narratives exclude a certain—perhaps popular—sense of the Brazilian (as in Pereira dos Santos's early admonishment to filmmakers and in his *Rio, quarenta graus* and *Rio, Zona Norte*) and, on the other, how information can be intentionally or unintentionally withheld to manipulate public opinion (as in *Pagador de promessas*, *Cidade ameaçada*, and *Terra em transe*). The following section examines a new stage along this trajectory, extending from the tenuous press freedoms of pre-AI-5 1968 toward the decade long wake of extreme press restriction and censorship. Several films that arise in these years delineate a fraught relationship with mass communications media and the state institutions that uphold them. Together, they return us to the problematically unseen and imperceptible forces that hold together the official Brazilian narrative (read: that which state censors authorize and permit to circulate)—now as a distrust in the media not only to sell sensational crime stories but to abscond its own criminal complicity.

Eduardo Coutinho's *O homem que comprou o mundo* (1968), released in the year between the Lei de Imprensa and AI-5, treats many of the same themes as *Terra em transe* and *Liberdade de imprensa*, though in a fashion bordering on the absurd. This highly satiric comedy, Coutinho's second completed directorial feature,[105] depicts the strife of an everyman living in the fictional country known as Pais Reserva 17 after he becomes the unexpected inheritor of a fortune large enough to disrupt the global economy (one hundred thousand "strykmans," or ten trillion dollars). Though distinctly insincere in its silly, sometimes even clownish details within what boils down to a

[105] At this point Coutinho had already suffered the censorial ban of the documentary that he would ultimately resurrect many years later under the title *Cabra marcado para morrer*, to which we return in Chapter Three to see how it would come to represent an archetypical historiographic film whose modus operandi is principally journalistic.

narrative of Cold War anxiety, illegal arrests, censorship, and international surveillance, Coutinho's film uses satire to draw out these issues in a way neither overtly critical of the government nor inaccessibly challenging for the viewer.

Following *Cidade ameaçada*'s lead, Coutinho showcases in *O homem que comprou o mundo* a cautious distrust of televisual news—both national and international. When the government of Pais Reserva 17 (Brazil) has successfully sequestered protagonist José Guerra for what is presumed to be his own security as well as the security of global finance, a high-ranking military official enters a room of political leaders to assert that "Do ponto de vista militar, não há nada a temer. O civil José Guerra está detido e incomunicável. Reina completa calma no pais, e o sigilo absoluto" (00:18:32)[106]. Detained and silenced despite having committed no crime, the protagonist and his good fortune have been cut off from public knowledge—nationally, at least. The questionable motives and methods of his sequester resonate clearly with the suspension of habeas corpus the same year. This statement then cuts directly to an urgent television newscast in a country known as Potência Anterior (the U.S.) where somehow the information supposedly kept secret with Pais Reserva 17 has fallen into the hands of the foreign press. The newscaster delivers the information regarding José's sudden wealth, adding little more than that the economic influx would not be detrimental to Potência Anterior's economy because Reserva 17 has been and continues to be an ally. Figures 19 and 20 below offer a look at the television broadcast studio from what will by now seem like a stock image without any significant development beyond, for instance, the ornamental placement of new/s technologies on screen. What separates this from the

[106] "From the military point of view, there is nothing to fear. Civilian José Guerra is detained and incommunicable. Complete calm and absolute secrecy reign in the country"

similar emplotment of televisual apparatuses in *Cidade ameaçada* and the soon to be discussed *Linguagem de persuasão, Tenda dos milagres*, and *Lúcio Flavio* is the foreign location of the broadcast and its disconnection from the presumed Brazilian audience of the film. Here the filmgoer views information that would be omitted from his own national public discourse, inviting thoughts of contrasting and/or asymmetrical information in global news. As an additional nod to real world Cold War politics, another television news broadcast situates the audience in Potência Posterior (Soviet Union) where the newscaster notifies his comrades of petit-bourgeois "Josef" Guerra's 10 trillion "rublos"—here in terms of a potential security risk associated with a nuclear arms race if the money falls into the hands of Potência Anterior (U.S.).

Figures 19, 20, and 21: News media and "ars gratia politicae" [art for the sake of politics] in *O homem que comprou o mundo*

Coutinho extends the issue of informational asymmetry and secrecy by reflexively connecting the narrative function of film with that of televisual infotainment. In another scene set in Potência Anterior, now in a secret government gathering instead of on national television, we see a short film-within-a-film that plays like a docudrama reenactment of José Guerra's sudden rise to international fame and affluence. The film camera zooms in on the screen, creating that familiar connection between fictional and

real world news-film audience found in *Terra em transe* and, to a strictly televisual degree, in *Cidade ameaç*ada. The docudrama, titled *Joe Guerra, O Strykman* is presented as number eighty-nine of the "Secret Archives Series," produced under the banner of "Ars gratia politicae," ("O serviço de intervenções confidenciais"[107], Fig. 21). *Joe Guerra, O Strykman* reveals impossible footage of the infant Joe being dropped off at an orphanage, playing at school, and coming of age to receive a diploma. All of this leads to an evidently humdrum life until he comes across a dying man that writes him a check (another piece of footage obviously impossible to have filmed yet inexplicably containing the "real" José in the reenacted role of himself). This segment contains a series of still frames duplicated from the footage already included in the opening of *O homem*—a certain self-citation that borrows some authority from its own fictitious film archive. The stills suggest photographic evidence that breaks from the reenactment to favor something more tangible and credible. Photography returns when *Joe Guerra, O Strykman* comes to a close: a shot-counter-shot of the prison guard taking a photograph of José and his new bride becomes the last image of the film while the narrator relates the telenovela-esque cliffhanging details of the plot ("violencia, sexo, politica—inmediatamente neste cinema") in what he refers to as a "folhetim de espionagem."[108]

The use of televisual news media formatting, documentary editing, voiceover narration, and melodramatic sensationalism in the above scene departs from the trajectory of analysis thus far established precisely where it evinces direct and conspicuous complicity to political power. Unlike *Terra em transe*, where transnational economic forces impact national politics via abstract motivations and dithering personages, here

[107] ["Service of confidential interventions"]
[108] ["violence, sex, politics—right here in this cinema"; "espionage news serial"]

Coutinho portrays a variety of news narrative that is at once secretive and informative, foreign and familiar. The form of an eyeball at the center of the production logographic—almost identical to that of a future Rede Globo icon—emphasizes the importance of seeing, what can be seen, or visibility, yet the subtext of "secret archives" underscores the fact that this footage would not be seen by just anyone were it not part of the fictional film's diegesis. Together with the inexplicable presence of certain images such as José's childhood, the eye represents a Foucauldian pan-optics where behavior is preemptively controlled via structures of visibility. In keeping with Foucault's theorization of modern life as an extension of Bentham's prison system, the transition from freedom to imprisonment seems all too natural when José's fiancée visits him in his cell and excitedly plans to decorate their new living quarters. Ultimately foreign spies undermine the relative control over local information, figuratively and literally seeing through the clumsy attempts to secret away the protagonist within a guarded fortress. Coutinho thus constructs a multilayered system of seeing and hiding that functions on the national level but which is itself made visible internationally.[109] He plays with the power roles of legitimate global politics to show the ways in which news media can conceal as well as reveal and, in so doing, affirms the Latinate "Art for Politics" slogan on the production emblem.[110] Many of the films Coutinho would make over the next four decades of his prolific career extend these considerations of personal-memorial/communal-historical constructedness vis-à-vis journalism, politics, and/or representation.

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[109] We witness, for example, a press conference replete with photographers and journalists where Rosinha, José's fiancée, fields questions pre-approved or censored outright by a man dressed in military garb sitting beside her. Before the conference begins, the journalists are warned against asking questions related to money and are instead limited to queries concerning Rosinha's personal life. One question stricken from the record: "Já foram provadas as providências para a libertação de Zé Guerra"? (01:03:31)

[110] As seen in Fig. 21, the emblem's banner is itself a strip of film that encircles the image's "eye".

Another newsy film emerged in the 1968 interim between the Lei de Imprensa and AI-5: Rogério Sganzerla's *Bandido da luz vermelha*. Sganzerla, an avid cinephile and journalist with strong aesthetic ties to Jean-Luc Godard[111] and Orson Welles, effectively translates Farias's *Cidade ameaçada* across the tumultuous eight-year gap separating the two films. Both films' protagonists are villainous anti-heroes whose actions are narrated within sensationalist media programs, both films project anxiety about the safety of urban life in the face of criminality, and both offer self-interested state representatives as mediators. The below image pair taken from the two films further corroborates the comparison—considering Sganzerla's knowledge of film and the importance of *Cidade ameaçada* for Brazilian filmmakers in the 1960s, this directorial quotation could hardly be dismissed as coincidence.

Figures 22 and 23: *Bandido da luz vermelha* quoting *Cidade ameaçada*

As with the above consideration of the similarities between Tonacci's *Bla bla bla* and Álvarez's *Diez millones*, the differences between *Cidade ameaçada* and *Bandido da luz vermelha* outline a compelling position with respect to the ways in which the representational power structures at play in the films diverge. Given the complexity of *Bandido* and the enormous political and representational rift separating the two films,

[111] See Stam's comparison of *Bandido* with Godard's *À bout de souffle* [*Breathless*] in "On the Margins: Brazilian Avant-Garde Cinema"

unpacking this comparison in its entirety would require an entire chapter of its own. For the sake of my argument it will suffice to consider Sganzerla's distinctive exploration of televisual news media. Among additional, lesser details that suggest a view of *Cidade* through a psychedelic lens, this analysis will hold at arm's length the following meta-medial tropes resonant with those already discussed in this and the previous chapters: the repetitive use of radio announcers throughout the film; the baroque radiophonic soundtrack—which includes in its final moment a Jimi Hendrix song, reminiscent of the Beatles' Fool on the Hill in Guillén Landrián's films; the Bandit's stashing away of his stolen goods inside a radio that he carries around with him; the familiar but exaggerated newspaper office wherein the walls are papered with headlines; multiple full-frame newspaper images detailing recent developments; the inclusion of foreign film clips; the electronic news ticker—another quotation, this one from *Citizen Kane*'s scrolling "CHARLES FOSTER KANE IS DEAD"; as well as the meta-filmic referentiality of the character inside a movie theater at various moments. All told, these communicative instruments function to confuse any linear narrative much in the same vein as the mad or maddening narratives of 1968 Cuban film. Here, however, madness emerges less as a breakdown of communicative rationality and more as an irrational criminality—the Bandit's behavior is, in fact, as maniacal as the media suggests, perhaps even more so.

Dilating on the issue of televisual news, especially as it contrasts with that of the news program with which Farias opens *Cidade ameaçada* (a straight-forward looking newscaster, unaffectedly delivering the news), we see in Sganzerla's newsrooms a prediction of the cinematic dynamism in Álvarez's *Diez millones*. Sganzerla avoids the shot-counter-shot that would combine the news audience with the film audience and instead explores the space to provide a sense of the constructedness of the televised

moment. He keeps the news camera in frame, looks up at the lights that illuminate the room (rather than enshrouding the figure in darkness as in the *Bla bla bla* studio), and moves around fluidly while seemingly extraneous people wander around the room. The balletic sense of movement and activity recalls various scenes in *Terra em transe*, including the one set beneath the skyscraping TV antenna. Unlike *Cidade*, the authority figure is not a newscaster. He is a politician. Like the unnamed dictator in *Bla bla bla* and Castro in *Diez millones*, this suggests a return to a conception of truth from authority rather than through rationality. By showering the room with light and including within several frames the lighting apparatus, Sganzerla contrasts the televisual spectacle with un-illuminated radio discourse, resulting in a confluential view of media and politics. The journalists present attempt to confront the politician with hard hitting questions but his arrogant, nonsensical responses (e.g. suggesting to give gum to starving children so that they may have something to chew on day and night) undermine any attempt at legitimate dialogue. Nor does the politician's speech have any bearing on the film narrative—it merely introduces the character as a figure of some political ambition. This aligns with the present section's assertion that the confluence of news media with state power has the effect of erasing or eliminating relative information from public discourse. By this time radio and print journalism have ceded tremendous influence to televisual news and will continue to do so over the next few decades. In retrospect, then, Sganzerla's film reads like a foreboding sign of media and power as it extends forward from the comparatively simplistic view of state-influenced media in *Cidade ameaçada* toward the era of AI-5.

Bandido also speaks to the national versus international news media concerns present in *Terra em transe*, *Lei de imprensa*, and *O homem que comprou o mundo*. Inasmuch as the film surveys the popular modes of representation listed above, it can be

understood to embody a sense of the longstanding imperialist presence of foreign film and both the older and more recently imported communications technologies of radio and television. The film's gritty urbanity emerges from a cacophony of mediated voices and images in an attempt to reconfigure once more the notion of Brazilianness in the face of international pressures. Returning to the criticism Pereira dos Santos lobbed at Cavalcanti's *Caiçara*, Robert Stam reads *Bandido*—representing the nascent Udigrudi ("Underground") aesthetic—as a rejection of the position that Brazilian culture is somehow detached from foreign influence.

> [Udigrudi] is more interested in urban popular culture and especially in the mass media…*Bandido* draws on the degraded material of the Third World mass-media, both in its local forms (the sensationalist press, the radio) and in its imported forms (American B-films and TV shows). The subproducts of an imperialized mass culture, the film suggests, now form part of popular culture in Brazil and these subproducts are more real to most Brazilians than the blind singers and folk dancers that peopled many Cinema Novo films (Stam "Margins" 319).

The terms "degraded material" and "subproducts," while reeking of a guarded elitism we would do well to avoid, succeed in offering a sense of *Bandido*'s position concerning truth in representation. The material versus immaterial divide is, after all, omnipresent in this project—especially where it relates to the filmic indexicality of material evidence. Rather than "draw[ing] upon the degraded material," *Bandido* exalts the already powerful material as culturally formative, raising it to—if not maintaining it at—a level of worthy discourse. No doubt, Sganzerla re-signifies the material within his film to create a gestalt or compound image of mass media representation. But he does so with a certain amalgamation of reverence and fear that highlights the importance of mass media as a discursive force. Without sliding down the slope into a discussion of comparative realities ("more real to most Brazilians"), it is safe to conclude from *Bandido* that

many—certainly not all—Cinema Novo films and their predecessors omitted the combinatory logic of the mass media which was all the while weaving itself through and into the Brazilian national imagination.

In conclusion, much like the Padilla Affair and the Quinqenio Gris in Cuba created an ostensibly hermetic break from one moment of cultural production to another, momentarily snuffing out a period of creative flourishing so as to limit and thereby control public opinion in the face of national turmoil, the AI-5 dramatically curtailed the above dialogue instantiated across communicative media forms.

> In what amounted to a coup d'état on December 13, 1968, Costa e Silva promulgated the Fifth Institutional Act, which conferred on the president dictatorial powers in 'defense of the necessary interests of the nation.' The act disbanded Congress, closed down the state legislatures, suspended the constitution, imposed censorship, cancelled the political rights of many, and suspended writs of habeas corpus. During a wave of arrests, the military police took into custody Juscelino Kubitschek, Carlos Lacerda, and a host of newspapermen, among others…none of the news media could report those December events (Burns 460-61).

The Brazilian film industry suffered a tremendous defeat as consequence of this dictatorial action, with several prominent cinematic leaders going into exile for their own protection—including among them Glauber Rocha and Carlos Diegues. The following year, on 9 September 1969, official Decree 862 gave rise to the Empresa Brasileira de Filmes, commonly known as Embrafilme, which led to a "form of state capitalism in which the government became an active agent and productive force in the industry" and which would thus prefigure film production for the next decade (Johnson 138). But the production of films, particularly those that emplotted news media, did not cease entirely. This is precisely where the following chapter begins. Therein we will consider the films that functioned across the 1970s and 1980s as thematic bridges between the Cinema

Novo and the boom beginning at the turn of the millennium, elaborating the various mechanisms—political, technological, and narratival—that justify a comparative reading of a new era's interloping, transgressing, and criminal subjects. The New Millennial filmmakers carry the questions of absence, censorship, and visibility in news media narratives into the domain of a more highly technologized and digitized media moment.

Chapter 3 – Figurative Factography in New Millennial Brazilian Cinema

OVERVIEW

The previous chapter considered a variety of cinematic modes in the 1960s that found meaning at the boundaries of silence, absence, and lack during a time of televisual media transformation. This chapter will proceed along a mostly chronological trajectory, beginning with a brief analysis of a select few films that emerged in the wake of the AI-5 during the 1970s and '80s, before continuing to consider in greater depth the resonance of the news media as emploted in New Millennial Brazilian cinema. Having conceptualized the newsy films of the Cinema Novo moment as proceeding from the material toward the discursive, what follows will consider the limits of that trajectory as well as its reinvestment with figurative—as opposed to literal/epistemological—renderings of Brazilian subjects within films fraught with journalistic underpinnings. The obscurantist representational strategies found in the newsy films of the 1960s flow into the narratives in the following decades as well, and ultimately culminate in another sort of imperceptibility, or immateriality, in the films of the New Millennium: that of the strictly anti-real realm of the literary tropes of metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche. These tropes are, like the absconded data predetermining the lives of the outsiders from the previous decades, not shown on film in any indexical sense, but operate on a hermeneutic level necessary to derive meaning from a given event and/or to ascribe meaning to the lives of individuals that come to represent broader communities. This will entail a redirection of the dominant discussion of cinematic realism in Brazilian New Millennial film toward a less tactile realm of narratological tropes that organize information (here photographic, their statistical, etc.) rather than merely record it. In a sense this remains a

discussion of visibility, connecting my analysis with the previous chapter as well as a more broad consideration of realism and the sociology it often entails. But the visibility to which this analysis points is not one residing in the realm of the material world. It is precisely the intellectualistic quality prevalent in the Brazilian film tradition, and not its physicalistic quality, ushered from the 1960s to the 2000s, that characterizes the uniquely Brazilian humanism that Pereira dos Santos championed so early in his career.

While the majority of this chapter will consider the implications of a resurgence of contentious realisms in the face of another media revolution—that of the digital media moment characterizing the late 1990s and 2000s— , we would be remiss to treat the years that separated the two most celebrated and polemical filmic booms as merely another characteristic void in the trajectory of Brazilian film history. Without question, the AI-5's impact on cultural production is evident during the '70s and '80s and even after the nominal return to democracy in 1985.[112] In keeping with the notion of censorship as foreclosure from Chapter 2, this chapter will first examine a few of the ways in which certain filmmakers advanced the questions of mediated discourse after the AI-5. The films and filmmakers in this section evince a continuity between the '70s and the '90s—a period relatively under-theorized—that goes beyond the purely thematic in two mutually significant ways: firstly, the directorial careers of all the directors from this section (Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, Pereira dos Santos, Coutinho, Diegues, and Hector Babenco) span the time period demarcating the beginning and end of this chapter (1970s-2000s); secondly, they speak to the enduring suspicion or distrust in the complicity of news media and other power structures that came together in the 1960s.

[112]There is some contention as to when Brazil truly became a representative democracy again after the end of the military dictatorship. Public elections were held again in 1989, but some see the election of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2002 as the first successful demonstration of a free democratic process.

1970S -1990S: A TRAIL OF THEMATIC CONTINUITIES

The 1970s

Within only two years of the AI-5, in the middle of the so-called Economic Miracle in Brazil spanning 1967-73, an anomaly of a public education film by the name of *Linguagem de persuasão* (1970) surfaced under the direction of Joaquim Pedro de Andrade. The Serviço Nacional de Aprendizagem Comercial (SENAC) funded film reads like a public service announcement with an aggressively authoritative narrator. A catchy intro jingle from a coffee commercial overlaying a series of billboards and street advertisements leads the nine minute film into a comically abrupt opening line informs us: "Mesmo sem perceber, você pode ser dominado" (00:00:30).[113] This caustic, suspicious tone continues throughout the piece, interrupted occasionally by the voices of radio and television actors pitching their products. Together the narrator and the voice actors offer a dialogue that echoes the advisory documentaries of Santiago Álvarez, providing on the one hand various vocal and visual indexes of persuasive, dominating forces and, on the other, a resolute authority figure offering a hermeneutic strategy to decipher them. Figures 24, 25, and 26 below provide a sense of how the film visualizes the public threat through image proliferation with a strong emphasis on the ubiquity of TV screens. Recalling the governmental push for a national television broadcast network and the subsidies put in place to facilitate the state goals mentioned in the previous chapter, Pedro de Andrade here shows the economic engine driving mass communications media. The film also offers an assault of television cameras, one of which films a telenovela for Marinho's TV Globo. Though brief, *Linguagem de*

[113] [Even without realizing it, you can be dominated]

persuasão provides a biting, Barthesian critique of the emergent media powers that casts a long shadow over the economies of popular representation in the decades to come.

Figures 24, 25, and 26: Screen proliferation and persuation in *Linguagem de persuasão*

Consistent with the financial mindedness in media representation Pedro de Andrade forewarned, the years between *Linguagem de persuasão* and the next films to be discussed are typified by the production of moneymaking pornochanchadas. With Embrafilme's coproduction subsidies and loan programs the industry succeeded in doubling its number of spectators and quadrupling its box-office income between 1971 and 1978. Brazil's share of the total national film spectatorship during the same interval increased from 13.8% to 29.2% (Johnson 168). Without giving too much credit to Embrafilme—Johnson notes that only four of the twenty top-grossing films of the decade were backed by the state-run institution (169)—and without ignoring the censorial implications discussed above, the 1970s signaled a shift in the direction that any and all minor national film industries up against foreign (read: Hollywood) hegemonic competitors would have celebrated. Instead of bringing film production to a halt, the oppressive military government flooded cinemas, radio airwaves, and television sets with politically insipid content. There were, of course, some key exceptions to this condition, some of which utilized historical and/or journalistic measures to explore the boundaries

of the AI-5 censorship (the foreclosure) in productive ways. Two examples emerged in 1977 whose critical content did not infringe on their commercial successes: Pereira dos Santos's *Tenda dos milagres*, a film that brings broader historical and historiographical perspective to the question of mass-mediation within Brazilian film, and Hector Babenco's *Lúcio Flávio, o passageiro da agonia*, which revisits the sibling issues of sensationalism and criminality from the previous chapter.

Nearly a decade after the AI-5, *Tenda dos milagres* offers a retrospective of how issues of national representation had unraveled during the relative critical silence of the preceding years. Another film with strong though not immediately apparent ties to *Citizen Kane,* the plot of *Tenda dos milagres* is a historiographical search for information. In broad strokes, the plot revolves around the life of a since-forgotten Brazilian intellectual, Pedro Arcanjo, whose rediscovery was initiated by an American anthropologist visiting the country. The Nobel Prize winning foreigner is appalled to learn that the locals know nothing about the man he deems the most important intellectual in Brazil's history. Following a press conference, the Brazilian public—both intellectual/elite and popular— begin to piece together the fragments of the deceased Archanjo's life. Inasmuch as the film is organized around the memory and memorializing of a man's life, the film's logic follows that of *Kane*. Marsha Kinder summarizes the comparison:

> The first scene with Archanjo, set in the forties, shows us how he dies. The rest of the film tries to explain who he was, incorporating multiple contradictory perspectives. The search is lead by a man working for a newspaper, who eventually makes a movie about the 'great man'. At the end we are left with the sense that the full truth about him lies far beyond the consciousness of both his friends and his biographers (Kinder 226).

The searches for Kane and Archanjo are comparable but the technologies of mass communication have evolved considerably since Orson Welles's 1941. The news media in *Tenda dos milagres* are multiform and emerge variously throughout the film. For example, the opening sequence and initial moments of the film introduce the viewer to what Pereira dos Santos called the film's "television spectacle": a newscaster tells us that the weather is nice in Bahia (television news—immediately a strike at the censored news's simplicity and ambiguity); next the credit sequence overlies archival photographs of Afro-Brazilians in the 19th century and Salvador da Bahia (archival photography); then a cut to a Moviola with two men editing a film (cinema); followed by a media circus surrounding a press conference (where radio, television, and newspaper come together).

Pereira dos Santos uses the press conference as a springboard into the narrative search for details for Archanjo's life. It is also a crucial moment of inclusion and recognition for the audience. When the press conference ends, the director cuts to an image of a newscaster framed between two cameras—the film camera thus occupies the central position within the diegetic newsroom, as if observing the broadcast itself. Shortly, the camera zooms in on the newscaster, excluding the two cameras on the left and right side of the frame and thereby replaces them both visually and functionally. Reminiscent of Roberto Farias's doubly-imagined community in *Cidade ameaçada* established via shot-counter-shot, this movement between the two television cameras suggests a more intimate relationship between news and film cameras. The steady zoom is much less visually shocking than the shot-counter-shot but it has the same effect of creating a film/news bifocal point of view. The audience is once again brought into the imagined community of a diegetic world, a world more directly satirical and fictitious than that of *Cidade ameaçada* yet no less recognizable as the lived Brazil of the 1970s.

This community also extends beyond television in the various moments that Pereira dos Santos interweaves the filmic and the televisual with other modes of mass communication. In the scene following the television news report, a sensationalist radio announcer responds to the question posed by the TV newscaster, setting in motion a multimedia dialogue across the city of Salvador da Bahia. His enthusiastic rant serves as a sound-bridge through a montage of various people going about their lives while listening to the radio. Pereira dos Santos's use of the radio here is much more playful than in his early films *Rio, quarenta graus* and *Rio, Zona Norte* yet they adeptly and efficiently connect disparate spaces and groups of people in much the same way. Once again the radio mediates between the affluent and the poor. The remainder of the narrative is a tapestry of journalism, historiography, and filmmaking about the life of Pedro Archanjo. The film reality connects with the national reality inasmuch as it participates in a nationalizing discursive formation. The reality of the audience and the characters of the film is discourse itself and thus, as Marshall Mcluhan famously put it, "the medium is the message" in *Tenda dos milagres*.

As a journalist/filmmaker/poet/intellectual, the film's protagonist, Fausto Pena, recalls *Terra em transe*'s Paulo—both of whom sit at the intersection of various narrative modes. Fausto participates in the developing media circus from the ground level, rooting out archival materials to form a legitimate, evidence-based foundation for Arcanjo's biographical narrative. Ultimately, the pluriform narrative Fausto seeks to create fails: he provides the indexical photocopy evidence he finds to one of two competing newspapers, only to see that paper instead develop a complex ad campaign which dismissively

replaces any specific information with another televised ceremony;[114] he talks on a radio show only to have his informed position drowned out by the bickering of the round table participants; his play falls to pieces; and, most importantly, the film he helps produce is not backed by Embrafilme or its leader, Roberto Farias—who fails to return Fausto's calls.

Fausto expresses his dissatisfaction while in a bar overhearing a group of people uninformedly talking about Arcanjo. Returning us to the issue of commercial viability in *Linguagem de persuasão*, he explains, "Essa sociedade de consumo, a sociedade dos homens aí tá querendo a verdade, quer vender um outro Pedro Arcanjo. Não é o verdadeiro Pedro Arcanjo" (34:35). Here Pereira dos Santos cuts to a scene from the film Fausto is making while he is talking in the bar. His voiceover leads into the narrative already in progress, the scene plays out, and when we cut back to the frame Fausto is no longer in the bar. He is now again in front of the moviola, editing. This moment is central to the interrelationship of the two films (the frame narrative and the film-within-a-film that is a historical reenactment), Brazilian historiography, and journalism. Fausto in the bar is something like an inverse cordel poet: he can clarify the sensational journalistic confusion but only to a small group of people that are present to hear him talk. The film could have provided a similar function—hence the cut back to the film scene and him in the editing room—were it not for the commercial pressures and prohibitions implicit in the state-run Embrafilme. As in *Pagador de promessas* where Zé do Burro cannot pay the poet to compete with the news agencies, financial backing again proves a necessary

[114] This line of the narrative also features the cleverly biting critical reductionism of what began as a discussion among scholars, to one of secondary school students, to one of elementary students competing for a prize (sponsored by a cachaça brand)—and finally televised: the "winner" is a little girl reading her two or three line biography in the same seat as the newscaster from other scenes in the film. Dos Santos thus renders the televised news literally infantile in its investigative rigor.

element in the production of truth in Salvador da Bahia, only now the truth in question has risen from the level of personal allegory to that of national historiography.

Tenda dos milagres additionally embodies a vital development within Pereira dos Santos's filmic imagination between the 1950s and 1970s: that is, the shift of his version of realism from the primarily phenomenological to the discursive/rhetorical. This shift accommodates for the mythico-poetic versions of Brazilian reality promoted by Rocha and other Cinema Novo filmmakers of the 1960s while also accepting the gritty cannibalistic amalgamation of transnational media influences in Sganzerla's *Bandido da luz vermelha*. *Tenda dos milagres* splices diverse media sources to create a gestalt view not of true events but of the system that establishes historical truth in representation. The realism proposed by *Tenda dos milagres* thus acknowledges the complicity of historiography vis-à-vis power and ideology. It also engages with those forces by revealing that it is itself one more medium among the many complicit. In this admission, though, there remains a sense of resistance through its clear admonition against an uncritical acceptance of news media in particular and materialist historiography in general.[115]

One last film to consider from the late 1970s reiterates the pervasiveness of news media and film's combinatory capacities in the face of a new sort of criminality, one that succinctly and simultaneously harkens back to the sensationalist narratives of the early 1960s and projects forward to the new/s realism boom of the 1990s and early 2000s. Hector Babenco's *Lúcio Flávio: o passageiro da agonia*, like *Cidade ameaçada*, tells the

[115] The scholars in the film do not exactly escape dos Santos's critical eye either. They, too, are shown to be corruptible: Livingston is a mockery of elitism, chauvinism, and academic imperialism; Fausto accepts payment from the news mogul and from Livingston—the latter case actually putting him in the position of a pimp when Livingston sleeps with Fausto's fiancée.

story-of-a-news-story about a criminal whose persecution is the result of an official organ of the state—again the police—trying to maintain its public visage. In this case, the police are not merely inept as they were in Farias's 1960 film, they are themselves engaged in criminal payoffs from the bank robbers, torture, and murder. Since much of the film's thematic details align with those of other films already analyzed, I will consider only briefly this new criminality as a shift in the implications of evidential narratives. The result of the narratival shift has one major consequence within this and future films: the relationship between the real, lived world of the film spectator and the diegetic film world have been inverted to the effect that the film (as a discursive formation) belies the fiction of the news media (real world)—not merely as an element among many within a constructed narrative, as we have seen already, but as a perjured form of counterfactual evidence.

As a film based on a creative non-fiction novel of the same name by José Louzeiro, *Lúcio Flávio* is a reflexive pastiche of fact and fiction. It could be argued that this is true of all reenactments due to their dependence on the ever-failing and imperfect nature of memory, the impossibility of direct analogy between fiction and documentary, and so on. And yet, while we might agree with these statements, we can also find within this film and others like it a condemnation of the authorial powers that, on the one hand, determine the parameters of fact and fiction while, on the other, they appropriate their power to do so to their own advantage. So, when the opening full-screen qualification acknowledges the film's indebtedness to the real world Lúcio's tell-all exposition with a news reporter, Babenco informs us that his narrative is both testimonial and journalistic. It puts judiciary power itself on trial by showing the criminality (both real and potential) of the police and the system they represent. Contrarily, the closing shot confirms the

precise cause, date, and location of the criminal's death: "19 facadas no peito, na cela no: 7 do presídio hélio gomes, no rio de janeiro, na madrugada de 29 de janeiro 1975."[116] These bookending notes offer contrasting levels of fact and fiction that are essential to the Capote-esque nature of Louzeiro's novel and its film adaptation. The first person testimony of the criminal in the beginning and the mortuarial time/date stamp at the end suggest that fact and fiction are always at play in the formation of truth and truth-telling narratives. This becomes increasingly problematic in the below consideration of José Padilha's films, especially where they evoke similar images of police torture—a form of testimony under duress that will also require its own analysis as a vehicle for truth.

The 1980s

The upward trend of Brazilian feature film releases characterizing the 1970s curtailed and slumped in the 1980s when the bottom fell out of the industry's loan system. This was due in part to a shift in economic policy and trade regulations on foreign goods required for film production that depleted the already slim profit margins for national films. Pornochanchadas occupied over seventy percent of the roughly eighty films released annually (Johnson 171-73). Additionally, total box office sales decreased during this decade as television became increasingly more popular. Carlos Diegues's *Bye bye Brasil* (1980) addresses the issue of cultural production vis-à-vis television's dominance. Diegues sends a band of circus misfits through remote parts of Brazil's northeastern and Amazon regions in search of communities most likely to pay to see their show—those without access to television—only to find the dreaded television antennae

[116] (1:58:58) [19 stab wounds to the chest, in cell number 7 of presidio Hélio Gomes, in Rio de Janeiro, at dawn on 29 January 1975]

around every corner and communities gathered around public television sets instead of movie screens (Fig. 27).

Figure 27: Public television screening in *Bye bye Brasil*

The themes of poverty and criminality common to the journalistic films of the 1960s and 1970s continued in some of the more popular films of the 1980s. For example, Babenco's *Pixote: a lei do mais fraco* (1980) received national and international acclaim the same year with a harrowing account of orphaned children resorting to drugs and crime while trying to survive on the street. The treatment of favelas and children in *Pixote* predicts the central issues to be found in Fernando Meirelles's *Cidade de deus* (2002), José Padilha's *Ônibus 174* (2002), and *Tropa de elite* (Padilha, 2007), among others which will be considered later in this chapter. *Pixote* also weaves into another journalistic mélange of fact and fiction with its noted alienation of real-world slum children who play the film's main characters—one of whom has his own filmic reincarnation in the reenactment tragedy *Quem matou Pixote* (José Joffily, 1996)[117]. These two films project the issue of the human body as index, or signifier of the real, that began with the poor children in *Rio, quarenta graus* and continues through the tragic incarnations of Sandro in *Ônibus 174* and *Última parada 174*. When Fernando Ramos da

[117]José Louzeiro also wrote the book on which this film was based, connecting it at least authorially if not also thematically to *Lúcio Flávio*.

Silva, the actor that played Pixote in Babenco's film, suffers an untimely death by the hands of the police under questionable circumstances in 1987, he portends a murky history of child actors or documentary subjects whose habitus permits them a cinematic life yet cannot protect them from a very real death.[118]

In 1985, the production and release of Eduardo Coutinho's *Cabra marcado para morrer* coincided with Brazil's first democratically elected president since Quadros in 1960. Among other topics associated with cinematic memory, Coutinho's *magnum opus* engages critically with notions of truth in representation, politics and economies of film realism, censorship, and archival historiography. The film is a documentary exploration of its own beginnings in 1962 with the death of peasant activist João Pedro Teixeira, its prohibition during filming in 1964, and its recovery after twenty years of military rule. Since the film was interrupted early in its filming there is very little of the original 1960s film stock with which to compose the new film. Coutinho supplements this material with images of real newspaper headlines, photographs, images of the original script, and new footage that returns to the town and the people that were scripted to play themselves in the original. The new 1985 project had a televisual tincture as well: Johnson and Stam note Coutinho's aesthetic in *Cabra* as evocative of his tele-journalistic work for "Globo Reporter," including in-frame crewmembers and recording apparatus, direct-cinema stylization, and documentary voice-of-god narrator. *Cabra* picks up from where the previous film left off neither to finish it nor to remake it, but to discover what became of the lives of the individuals that would have made it and that lived the historic moments intended for the original piece. Thus Coutinho provides an account of historiography that

[118] Stories of this sort abound in Brazil as in elsewhere—most notably and to horrendous effect with the non-professional cast of Colombia's *La vendedora de rosas* (Gabiria, 1989).

is self-awarely constructed by and through various media (cinematic/archival and journalistic) which is definitively antithetical to the films seen thus far: the material/phenomenological world and the human beings that inhabit it are shown to be indomitable in the face of what has proven to be an historically limited project of knowledge production and preservation. If the many other Brazilian films we have analyzed within this project have cast doubt on the legitimacy of officialized media narratives, belying a different sort of reality as constructed across and through mass media, Coutinho's *Cabra* fights to reappropriate the discourse as well as the materials that it comprises from the authorities that sought to control them. Coutinho cleaves the cinematic trajectory of news media emplotments into two new branches that will become increasingly relevant in the 2000s: one will call into question the limits of the individual's capacity to self-synecdochize, to represent and/or interpret their position *for his or herself*; the other will address the contingency of the individual's personal narrative upon the community through which it is ultimately written.[119]

The 1990s

The years leading up to the New Millennium and its celebrated film boom are marked by major economic reforms that are generally written off in an abstract and boiled down language of neoliberalism and globalization, but the fiscal complexity of these years could stand to benefit from a more nuanced language. After a decade and a half of rampant inflation in Brazil where, between 1980 and 1994, inflation devalued currency by 13.3 *trillion* percent, an economic policy was instated that would reduce the rate to a total 200 percent over the subsequent 19 years (Reid 129). The plan that would

[119] This can refer to either the national or the local/regional, and will increasingly include the global in the below films that respond to international media pressures (namely *Tropa de Elite* and its sequel, but also *Cidade de Deus* as a globally consumed product).

replace the *cruzeiro* and the trend of currency indexation came to be known as the *Plano Real*. A lexical happenstance, perhaps, but this defeat of indexation-related[120] financial stress by the "symbol of the Real" (Reid 129) bares far too ripe a fruit for the present study to dismiss outright as coincidental. Hyperinflation had driven vast swaths of the nation into poverty and maintained others there since before the return of democracy. The *real* (R$) would soon return consumer confidence and provide the country with the stability it had lacked. In a sense, the *real* (R$) legitimated the value of currency so that it could be understood to correspond consistently with material consumables despite the virtualization of global capital flows. This prompted then president Fernando Henrique Cardoso to defend the new currency in the face of the computerized sundering of money from its former materiality, stating that "the virtual has taken command of the real" (qtd. in Reid 134). We are left to wonder if he was referring to the currency or something more profoundly philosophical. Regardless, the real (as cinematic referent) and the *real* (R$) coming into being at the turn of the millennium treat the same themes and concern the same victims: the impoverished and the marginalized communities that remain after decades of political and economic chaos.

FACT AND FIGURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

As we have seen, by the late 1990s and early 2000s the constructedness of media narratives is no longer new—nor is it yet history. What remains to be seen are the ways in which discourse woven across multiple media has evolved, again, with new technologies, and how that informs our reading of New Millennial films. This line of inquiry will bring the weight of the Brazilian journalistic film tradition to bear on our interpretation of more

[120] That is, linking wages to inflation rates—not the deictic "pointing" of photography but not altogether distinct.

recent film production without ignoring the political and social realities separating the Cold War era and the era of the *real* (R $). Whereas the films of the 1960s and '70s engaged with the relatively new handheld cameras, direct sound recording mechanisms, and nationalizing communication networks, the films of the early 2000s will take on digital cameras, public surveillance, and global communication networks. Photography, print journalism, radio, and television will all return to play their part as creative instruments of imagined communities.

The present analysis assumes a theoretico-historiographic stance in line with Hayden White, specifically where he defends the value, indeed the necessity, of literary tropes within narrative historiography.[121] The celebrated films of the early 2000s, like the best historiographies, present "a kind of writing that, instead of pacifying our will to know, stimulates us to ever more research, ever more discourse, ever more writing" (White 7).[122] In lieu of producing new knowledge of the past, the films evince an awareness of what White describes as the historiographer's obligation to produce new interpretations of the past given the already existing elements from which interpretations can be made. For the field of cinema studies, this will mean that, even when a filmmaker utilizes archival materials within a film, the materials effectively symbolize something beyond what they signify indexically. While this *can* be said of almost any piece of film, it *must* be said of film that reflexively treats its own material as both fact and figure. This returns us also to the triad of Peircean semiotics that structured the analysis of the

[121] My interest in White in this chapter has less to do with film realism and more to do with the ways we derive meaning from a historiographical text in general. It pertains to realism as a narrative mode responsible for the conveyance of something more closely approximating reality and thus something more truthful, credible, and/or authoritative—and thus more broadly historiographic.

[122] White's use of the term 'discourse' does not convey the same sense of the sum total of language produced pertaining to an idea or concept as I, following Foucault, have been using it in my writing.

preceding chapters, which includes the index as a second level signifier and the symbol as the third level. The first level pertains to the "icon" representing its referent via resemblance, the third through mental association. Key to this discussion is the fluidity of these categories, as an index can also be a symbol and vice versa. In the films of the early 2000s, the confluence of factual and figurative images most patently makes itself known in the presence of news media.[123]

Cultural anthropologist Esther Hamburger sites *Notícias de uma guerra particular* (João Moreira Salles and Kátia Lund, 1999) as a critical point of departure for the films that would follow early in the new millennium. Within an argument concerning the essential role of visibility and politics of representation in New Millennial films, Hamburger acknowledges *Noticias*'s conspicuous grounding in telejournalism. The straight-forwardly didactic documentary first aired on national television as an extended news piece detailing the increasingly violent conditions within a few of the Rio de Janeiro favelas[124] where drug-trafficking gangs had forged strongholds. Hamburger notes that, unlike many of the films that would follow it, "A mídia não é problematizada em *Notícias*...O uso de imagens de tiroteios captadas e exibidas por telejornais sensacionalistas permite que se pense sobre as maneiras pelas quais a situação é veiculada. Mas o filme em si não discute o problema" (Hamburger 562). This phrasing turns out to be problematic on a variety of levels. Firstly, while the media may not be

[123] Not fact and fiction, a problematic assumption also common within the discussion of the following films. Again following White, figurative language must be understood as necessary within a narrative. Both factual and fictitious narratives depend on figural tropes. "Figurative descriptions of real events are not less factual than literalist descriptions; they are factual-or, as I would put it, 'factological'-only in a different way. Tropological theory implies that we must not confuse facts with events" (White 18). In keeping with White and with the films themselves, my goal is not to undermine the distinctions between the real and the fictitious, the figurative and the literal, and so on, but to reconceptualize them.

[124] Principally but not exclusively Santa Marta

problematized *within* the film, it most certainly is problematized *by* the film. From the title itself we begin to consider the film not as a documentary film but as a news piece and its TV launch doubly implicates the news stations that, by contrast, had created a vacuum on the topic of this "particular war" or those particular wars. In other words, the film's material presents itself as news that is by some means capable of filling a void in the regularly scheduled news programs.

It will become clear that *Noticias* does not blatantly put the news media in the stocks in the fashion of its successors. Nevertheless, it succeeds in historicizing the issue of journalism vis-à-vis urban space, poverty, drugs, and violence at the turn of the millennium. And it does so, not coincidentally, by looking back to where we began our analysis of Brazilian film in Chapter 2 with the black and white panoramic shots of Rio's Zona Norte in the 1950s. In *Noticias*'s first chapter ("O início: 1950-1980"), Paulo Lins, author of the book that would become the mega-sensation film *Cidade de Deus* three years later, discusses the history of drug trafficking in Rio's favelas. In an interview played over a variety of archival footage of Zona Norte in the '50s, Lins notes the relative calm of the years prior to cocaine's arrival in the favelas, the assumptions of economic status associated with cocaine as contrasted with marijuana, and the issue of territorialization and violence that followed in cocaine's wake. During the early years, he mentions, "sempre morreu gente na favela e não saía na imprensa…a imprensa, a mídia…[só] descubriu a violencia quando ela saiu, quando pegou, com os sequestres, e esas coisas" (00:09:30). This comment is consistent with the early instantiations of journalism in Brazilian film where outside threats to an urban populace emerged as a common trope both in real-world news and its filmic counterparts. Journalism connected the distinct groups of insiders and outsiders only when a figure transverses the two

territories, and often when the figure represents or can be made to represent a threat to established society. Transversality will prove a central tenet of New Millennial Brazilian films as well—most notably with Sandro in *Ônibus 174*.

A third issue arising from the above quotation is that of sensationalism in televisual news. The clips to which Hamburger refers are not themselves sensational*ist*; they are definitively sensational. Lund and Moreira Salles chose pieces of archived news footage from various sources[125] that depict civic pandemonium in no uncertain terms: police shoot outs with presumed criminals, panicked and screaming citizens running through the streets, funeral processions in which the face of a young corpse is visible through the glass top of a coffin, and even historical footage of police on horseback during the 1960s coup. These clips are sensational not due to some exaggerated journalistic framework designed to sell copy like those we find in *O pagador de promessas* or *Cidade ameaçada*. They evince legitimate threats to the security and livelihood of the citizens of the city. Furthermore, the film proposes a view that goes beyond a mere rejection of the term sensationalist as employed by Hamburger to arrive at the problem of underrepresentation.

Another element related to the issue of media and visibility in *Noticias* that predicts a central theme of the New Millennial Brazilian cinema emerges as the double edged sword of recognition and incrimination. Community leader Itamar Silva considers that importance of respect for the individuals participating in drug trafficking in the favelas. “Ele abre o jornal e lê que ‘na favela...um jovem enfrentou a polícia, armado...’Isso alimenta e merece o orgulho; esse poder que ele acha que tem sobre uma

[125] TV Manchete, "Uma avenida chamada Brasil,” Cinematica do MAM, Agencia o Dia, and Agencia o Globo

sociedade que não reconhece seu real valor" (00:19:34).[126] While this calls into question the importance of the news media as reinforcing rather than condemning criminal activity, one cannot help but ponder the likelihood of a given criminal to appear in a newspaper or, put another way, the overwhelming percentage of criminals that must be denied such validation. Meanwhile the film/news-report masks the individuals it upholds as criminals for their safety, thereby denying them recognition so as to protect them from notoriety, incrimination, police, and/or their rivals.

If we conceptualize *Notícias de uma guerra particular* as looking, Janus-faced, back to the tradition of Brazilian films that polemicize news media's obscurantism as well as forward to the films of the following decade, we can begin to derail the dominant trend that has upheld the Real—here as visibility, there as materiality—as the organizing principle of the New Millienial Brazilian cinema. Hamburger's analysis is representative of a broad swath of scholarship that identifies the importance of the news media within the films while holding them at a safe distance, considering them secondary to a now *hyper*realist cinematic index. Concerning the films *Notícias*, *Cidade de Deus*, and *Falcão, meninos de tráfico* she grants that, "vistos em perspectiva comparativa, esses filmes chamam a atenção para a relatividade, para o caráter de construção cultural - ao invés do caráter 'real' que a aparência ontológica da imagem cinematográfica e televisiva poderia sugerir" (Hamburger 567). The following analysis will take this issue of constructedness as its center, a position the above analysis of mediated discourse within film will uphold, and instead hold at our own distance the always cagey notion of capital "R" Reality.

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[126] He opens the paper and reads that 'in the favela...young person opposed the police, armed...' this nourishes and garners respect; this power that he thinks he has over a society that does not recognize his real value"

My analysis of *Ônibus 174* will lay the groundwork for a new interpretation of New Millennial Brazilian cinema by redirecting the dominant discussion of visibility vis-à-vis realist film aesthetics toward a more figural, tropological rendering of the real. This position extends the analysis of filmic realism in Chapter 2, which followed an interest in the indexical-deictic nature of the medium to its conclusion in a more discursive rendering of reality across multiple mediative sites, by demonstrating a further progression toward a realism that now non-dismissively acknowledges the constructedness of historical narratives, narrative truth, narrative ontologies, and so on. Beginning with *Ônibus 174*, we find a series of films that not only accept the necessity of representational tropes such as metaphor, synecdoche, and metonymy, but that rely upon them for their conveyance of information.

In Chapter 2 I considered Nelson Pereira dos Santos's parallel employment of two modes of public transportation, the trolley-car in *Rio, Zona Norte* and the train in *Rio, quarenta graus*. I contrasted the by then outdated metaphors of modernity against the radio waves that concurrently and effortlessly moved through the urban space of 1950s Rio de Janeiro so as to demonstrate a budding tension between the material and the immaterial in the films of the coming decades. On the afternoon of 12 June 2000, a botched robbery on a different form of public transportation—a city bus—began to set in motion another contentious encounter between communications media, urban space, and the national imaginary that would eventually take cinematic shape in *Ônibus 174* (Padilha, 2002). Again, the encounter would lead to the untimely, unnecessary death of the film's poor, socially marginalized protagonist, Sandro. Sandro revitalizes *Rio, Zona Norte*'s Espirito in the sense that his death coincides with a public transmission of his mediatized self. Recall that Espirito's death on the train tracks went unperceived by the

populace tuning in as his songs played on the radio. Sandro's death and the police's disastrous mismanagement that caused it, however, were transmitted across the country on live television. Visibility is thus a distinguishing element separating the two films (*RZN* and *O174*), though not in the sense that what is presented on screen "says it all." The visible, as we will see below, is better understood as a point of access to a discursive web, a point from which historical and sociological thought splinter outward from the screen.

Padilha organizes *Ônibus 174* by dividing it into two separate plotlines: the first he strings together with the archival footage reluctantly made available to him by various television broadcast networks that were on the scene for the roughly five hours of the event. This plot is fairly straightforward. The film opens with a dynamic flyover establishing shot—a central tenet of Padilha's aesthetic—that visually introduces the diverse parts of the city, from the favelas of the empoverished North to the affluent South. Already we find common ground with Pereira dos Santos's films in terms of their treatment of urban space as a limitation explored by the cinematic form. The action of plot one begins *in medias res* after the bus had stopped in the central neighborhood known as Jardim Botânico. Our first shots of the crime scene come from the traffic cameras installed around the area. These are eventually superseded by footage from the first Rede Globo cameramen on the ground. In broad strokes, the rest of this plot unfolds as a series of missteps by the police leading to the hijacker's demise. The second plot emerges to offer the protagonist's backstory, explaining through various means some of the things Sandro proclaims to his audience on scene and across Brazil. The director utilizes various archives to substantiate this plot: video archives of news sources from the Candelaria Massacre of 1993, official state documents from Sandro's various terms in

juvenile detention, even a newspaper report detailing the murder of Sandro's mother when he was a young child.

Ônibus 174 introduces a new technology to the growing list established previously in the Brazilian film tradition: an off-screen narrator informs us that the first images to appear on the television news were captured by traffic cameras. Padilha includes several shots from closed circuit cameras within the film but none offers a clear vantage on the scene of the action. Unlike the first shots which we are told became available to the television audience, the traffic camera views we see show only ambiguously chaotic traffic patterns and cluttered activity in the street. They succeed in establishing the precise moment in time (see Figs. 28 and 29) but there is no indication that their emplotment within the film has a temporal proximity with the scenes unfolding around them. Thus, their use is more or less arbitrary as far as the film narrative is concerned. The traffic cameras do, however, offer an insight into the evolved conditions of surveillance since the earlier films of the 1960s and 1970s, and they foretell of Foucauldian things to come in Padilha's *Tropa de elite* enterprise. The disorder and randomness of the images here taken of the street do little to clarify the complex set of circumstances unfolding on the street. Despite their evidential/indexical claims to the phenomenological world, they prove nothing. Instead, they belie the futility of the systems in place to establish or impose a rational order on the city and thereby point to the essentiality of our interpretive roles in meaning making—even within aesthetically realist films.

Figures 28 and 29: Traffic cameras set the scene for live news coverage in *Ônibus 174*

It is all too easy to see that both plots depend on various archives for their primary visual material. Journalistic and judicial archives dovetail here in a way that contributes to the structuring of the narratives as well. An important inconsistency arises when we talk about the visibility of Sandro and his appearance on the news as a kind of validation or recognition for him as an individual and as a synecdochic representative of others like him. This is problematic on a number of levels. Firstly, it implies a gross stereotype that fits all people struggling within an asymmetric social system into the figure of the criminal. Regardless of how difficult Sandro's life was—and by all evidence presented within the film it was truly horrific—he must not be taken to represent the whole of a population around 480,000 estimated to be under the extreme poverty line of in Rio at the time[127]. The sheer number of impoverished people in the city and its periphery points to the second issue at stake when we assume Sandro suddenly made visible a previously unseen, unknown circumstance: several moments in the film attest to the fact, both visually and through the commentary of the interviewees, that the rampant poverty of the city is publicly visible at all times. The film mentions the police having to constantly grapple with children panhandling, selling goods, stealing, or loitering. Favelas can be

[127]See http://www.indexmundi.com/g/g.aspx?c=br&v=69. This estimate is a mere 4% of the population of the Rio metro area. The levels of poverty (not "extreme poverty") at the same time were upwards of 25-30% or between 3-4 million people. See also: http://data.worldbank.org/country/brazil.

seen on the face of the hills surrounding the city. Children juggle in the streets at traffic lights. And, most importantly, as the above analysis of *Noticias de uma guerra particular* informs us, criminals appear frequently in the news and often embrace their media moment as a sign of status. Rather than affirm the perception that visibility constitutes the identities of a criminal underclass, it may be more accurate to say that criminality stereotypically affirms the identity of an underclass that is over-represented by its more dangerous and therefore more newsworthy contingent. This, after all, is why the news teams rush to the scene in the first place—to transmit an easily recognizable story of an outsider whose presence threatens a community. The observation that he might not be an outsider in a traditional geographic sense does not impact the narrative in the least, though it has certainly held some sway over its interpretation.

On the level of plot one, where Sandro's failed-robbery-turned-hostage-situation leads to his death, the news media's presence reveals the police's ineptitude. Their inability to cordon off the area from cameramen and other bystanders vices them in a double-bind of media presence and public pressure. According to the commentary from the police interviewed in the film, the live newsfeed inhibits them from acting according to their own protocol. As one officer puts it,

> Un tiro de um sniper teria sido…ideal. E, lógicamente, ao vivo, pra todo Brasil, iría resultar na, talvez ali, num meio kilo de masa cefálica sendo projetado nos vidros do onibus. Eu não gostaria de ver iso. Meus parentes em casa também não gostariam de ver uma escena dessa. Mas, tecnicamente falando, seria mais viavel pra ser feito. Seria o mais certo a ser feito (00:55:05).

Here the officer connects our discussion of visibility with a disruption in normal protocol, a certain breakdown in the rationality of the police force. He ironically evokes a disturbing image and a disturbingly specific quantity of brain matter splattered against the side of a bus, in an interview for a film surely to be seen by his family, to describe the

rationale of not shooting Sandro in the face on live television. This anomaly reveals an incongruity resulting from the news media as an agent within the real-world: the urgency of the news media to get to the scene and its maintained presence over the four to five hour duration of the event suggests that many, perhaps even millions of people in fact did want to see something traumatic happen. The police's rationale for not showing them what they wanted to see, Sandro's death and the symbolic-cathartic reestablishment of security within their community, is further confused by another official police explanation at the end of the film that, had Sandro taken his hostage outside of the bus, he could have been "lynched."[128] The incensed bystanders substantiate this anxiety when they eventually rush the scene to take vengeance into their own hands. Suffice it to say that there is a palpable tension between what the spectators and participants of the event admit to wanting to see and what they would prefer to conceal.

The contradiction established by the simultaneous efforts to show and to conceal call back to the films of the 1960s. It connects the film thematically with *Cidade ameaçada*, for instance, where the police respond to Pasarinho's crime not out of a sense of justice but to save face publicly in the newspapers. We can see Tonacci's staging of the dictator in *Bla bla bla*, where the character is key lit in front of a dark background, in Padilha's positioning of his own sources of authority. More significantly, if we compare the narratival impact of the news media in *Ônibus 174* with that of *Pagador de promessas*, we find an inversion of the self-fulfilling prophesy that made a martyr of Duarte's protagonist Zé do Burro. The sensationalist newspaper in Duarte's film provoked community action by misrepresenting and exaggerating the motivations of that particular outsider so as to sell copy. After twisting Zé do Burro's words into the canned

[128] (01:42:30)

logic of agrarian reform and exploitation, the reporter of *Pagador de promessas* proclaims triumphantly that Zé's story now belongs to the newspaper and, therefore, to the people. This situation could be said to encounter its analogue in *Ônibus 174*, but here we must be careful not to confuse the impact of the media on the actual event on 12 June 2000 with Padilha's emplotment and treatment of the media for their cinematic return two years later. The media on the scene that day functioned inversely to the prophetic martyr narrative of *Pagador*, issuing a self-defeating prophesy by attempting to show its audience a street theater of crime and punishment that its presence directly inhibited. The film makes this clear as well but in the process of doing so it also silences the media by excluding any of the interpretive commentary of the newscasters reporting live that day. This use of archival material is not unlike the use of newspaper images and headlines that we have seen abundantly in earlier films. Padilha stripped the journalistic narrative of its voice so as to again emphasize the media's interpretive role. Nevertheless, despite Padilha's best efforts and in part due to his documentary subject's near-public execution, Sandro's narrative ultimately must belong to the media and to the people that consume it—including the film within the media and the film audience within the community of consumers. Like Zé do Burro, the significance derived from both real life Sandro and cinematic Sandro is now necessarily pegged to the contentious journalistic practices that have narrativized and publicized (read: published, made public) his life.[129]

The question of narrative ownership returns us to the archival pastiche constitutive of *Ônibus 174.* Padilha extrapolates Sandro's narrative by entering into specific comments he makes to his rapt public and expanding them with various analyses, testimonies, and documents. This decision results in a Deleuzean rhizomatic narrative

[129]Cinematic representation here, again, included in the category of journalistic practices.

structure diametrically opposed to the slew of simplistic, binary narrative antitheses (such as insider versus outsider, visible versus invisible, safe versus threatening, legal versus illegal, and so on). It also de-centers the production of meaning/truth away from the sources of power represented by the media and the police. Inasmuch as the visible can generate discourse—be that of such diverse content as anti-realism (Cohen), realism and spectatorship (Chan and Vitali), sociology (Vasconcelos e Valadares), or collective mourning (Lorraine Leu)—it functions as a motor. The visible thus conceived propels rationalizing debate rather than establishing the subject of its own ontological inquiry. In other words, the archival index on display within the film functions theoretically, or as an essay—not historiographically. This is why the film is so polemical and generative. Were it merely a biographical account of Sandro's life, like the dramatized and insipid *Última parada 174* (Barreto 2008),[130] and not of his life as refracted through and across multiple perspectives—some mediated and some personal—it would cease to be an instantiation and generator of public discourse. The relative critical silence concerning Barreto's film bolsters this claim but, as we will see below, Sandro's persistence as a cinematic figure has further to say about news media in films of the New Millennium.

As we have seen, the multimedia montage that is *Ônibus 174* readily avails itself to discussions of visibility. This has been taken in two distinct directions relevant to the present analysis: that of the theoretical/philosophical/cinematographic variety and that of the sociological/criminological variety. These positions overlap to a degree but are, for the most part, independent despite their shared assumptions concerning truth and representation. For example, of a moment when Sandro defiantly proclaims through an opened window that "this is no fucking movie," Tom Cohen writes, "this is to ask where

[130] Which, as shown below, can also be read as a participant in the dialogues generated by Padilha's film.

the performance is an intervention in the real *real*…not that it represents for us a real problem…but that it intervene at the archival site from which 'visibility' and the 'real' are as if produced" (Cohen). Cohen considers Sandro's self insertion into the media milieu preceding and within the film as "disrupting…the archive of the visible." Cohen's highly theoretical observations pertain primarily to the cinematic form taking shape in plot one through Padilha's media pastiche, holding at a distance—as we will, too, for the moment—sociological implications brought out through Sandro's biography with the aside "not that it represents for us a real problem." While I disagree whole-heartedly with this simplistic position, that the performativity at play within this or any film might compromise somehow the integrity of its truth claims, Cohen's analysis sets out the parameters of a discussion of the archival imagery's simultaneously factual and figurative promise. Cohen argues that the performativity, referentiality, and self-conscious constructedness of the film results in a degradation of the real—taken here to represent the factual—or, at the very least, a sundering of the real from the knowable. However, keeping in mind Peirce's triadic sign system, the news footage archive that constitutes over half of the film can be freely interpreted as sign, index, and symbol. The "produced" visible material of the event maintains its indexical status even if we choose not to interpret it as such: we can just as readily describe Sandro physically as we can synecdochize him to represent a (subaltern) community.[131] Generally speaking, considerations of visibility in the New Millennial films tend to ignore the interpretive, figurative work taking place between the filmic image, the act of seeing, and the knowledge transmitted and/or acquired in the process.

[131] For a discussion of the ethics of such figuration, see Spivak consideration of the subaltern's incapacity to self-synecdochize. See , Gayatri Spivak's *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*.

Clearly, and as many viewers of the film have noted, Sandro represents a "real problem" in sociological terms for Rio and Brazil as well as in theoretical discussions of film ontology. Pedro Henrique Vasconcelos e Valadares writes, "Sandro deixava de ser invisível e expunha as consequências da violência social, personificando...o choque entre a sociedade ideal e a real. A presença da mídia no local ampliou a visibilidade e pôs em xeque não só a responsabilidade do Estado na questão da invisibilidade social, mas de todos os espectadores" (Vasconcelos 168).[132] The sociologists Padilha interviews in the film predetermine this perspective. One of which, Luis Eduardo Soares, pedantically enlightens us: "[Sandro] impõe a sua visibilidade. Ele era personagem de uma outra narrativa. Ele redifiniu de uma maneira o relato social…"[133] Together these two observations demarcate a somewhat contradictory attempt to attribute agency to Sandro while ignoring what or how he supposedly achieves it. To say that he gains agency because of or through the presence of the news media incorrectly assumes that this was his intention, that his robbery was not a failure but was deliberately botched so as to draw the public gaze upon him and those like him—to self-synecdochize, in Spivak's terms. As we saw above, the media's presence stalls Sandro's activity and postpones but does not deter his execution. If we go on to interpret what he says—which is in part what the film attempts to do by providing background to various statements he makes to his audience—for instance, the retrospectively ironic "this is not a fucking movie," we have to add "yet." The irony undermines the control he attempts but fails to assert in the

[132] [Sandro ceased to be invisible and exposed the consequences of social violence, personifying…the shock between the ideal society and the real one. The presence of the media on location amplified the visibility and put in check not only the responsibility of the state in terms of social invisibility, but all spectators"]

[133] (00:25:20)- ["Sandro imposes his visibility. He became the character of another narrative. He redefined in a way the social story…"]

moment of speaking. We would be remiss to accept Soares's account when he tells us that Sandro redefined *the* social narrative—not only his own, but representatively the social narrative of those deemed like him. Vasconcelos e Valadares brings us closer to the point where he tropifies Sandro as a personification while attributing the event's amplification to the media. Despite the grammatical inference of agency in the sentence "Sandro personifies *x* or *y*," personification is obviously an active imposition of a narrative trope onto a person and not an expression of an individual's agentic potential.

If we shift our terms from personification to embodiment, from the realm of narrative theory to the more obliquely philosophical domain of critical realism, Padilha's representation of Sandro further implicates the film's viewer in his/her interpretive role in the process of knowledge formation. This move also signals a return to the nature of the material body as fact/figure, as second and third order signs: index/symbol. We can understand Sandro as embodying a type of knowledge, then, only as an emergent relationship between the viewer, the archival footage, the cinematic index Padilha creates, and the various on-screen interpreters.[134] As in Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodiment, Sandro redirects the course of Brazilian cinematic realism by demonstrating how "ontology and epistemology are inseparable because knowledge and reality, mind and body, meaning and matter, are irreducibly interwoven. Perceiver and perceived are not identical here but nor are they separable" (Coole 125). To ignore this would signal a faith in the absolute and uniquely phenomenological position that only the visible/perceivable can be known. This point was already dismissed by the Brazilian films shown to underscore the social constructedness of media and the ideologies

[134] Also, for certain viewers we can add to this list the secondary and critical writing responding to the film.

responsible for knowledge production. However, *Ônibus 174* and its commentators demonstrate that not only is the real susceptible to ideological manipulation, but that the ideal itself is an integral part of the real. Diana Coole obvserves that "what Merleau-Ponty's theory of embodiment achieves…is to make the opposition between realism and idealism much less clear…since the ideal has been shifted into the real as one of its dimensions" (125). Merleau-Ponty thus resounds as well the above observations of White and Gouldner, summarily stating that "dialectical thought," like White's historiography and Gouldner's communications technology, "is always in the process of extracting from each phenomenon a truth which goes beyond it" (qtd in Coole 132).

Ônibus 174 encourages the viewer to reconsider the tradition of films that have engaged with news media to show how the media has been getting it wrong and interfering in the real world narratives all along, regardless of a given film's position on the sliding scale between fiction and documentary. Rather than suggesting a breach of the boundaries that typically constitute realism as an aesthetic or a limit to the utility of the term realist to describe the films of the New Millennium, the film warns against conflating realism as aesthetic, as style, and as a cultural politics.[135] The films of the New Millennium engage with all three of these aspects of realism variously and to varying degrees. Like the films of Cinema Novo, the twenty-first century films resist a single defining aesthetic practice. Without exception, though, the news media present themselves within the films when and wherever questions of truth in representation arise.

Before moving to examine another indispensable film released the same year as *Ônibus 174—Cidade de Deus* (dirs. Lund and Mereiles, 2002)—I offer a look forward to

[135] On the distinction between fiction and documentary vis-à-vis film realism in Latin America, see: Michael Chanan's "Space between".

Sandro's cinematic legacy in Bruno Barreto's *Última parada 174* (2008). Now eight years after the original event that captivated a mass media audience, Barreto recasts Sandro's story within a more overtly fictional melodrama—or, perhaps more true to the already melodramatic treatment of Sandro's life within Padilha's documentary, Barreto makes explicit the melodrama of *Ônibus 174* in part by eliminating both the excessive burden of real footage and the direct interview commentary[136]. The dramatic reenactment of Sandro's life story remains with precious little detail added (embellished?) that was not already included in Padilha's telling. The death of Sandro's mother, the Candelaria Massacre, the reformatory known as Instituto Padre Severino (IPS), and Sandro's informally adopted mother-figure appear to guide us through the by-now familiar narrative. Yet the real footage and/of the real Sandro linger somewhere behind the twice reframed images (framed first in the news, second by Padilha, third by Barreto). Sandro's material body is gone. So, too, are most all real-world indexes from the documentary. Inasmuch as *Ônibus 174* tropifies Sandro and his situation with an end to establish a discursive historiography, *Última parada 174* flatly rejects discourse. It does so first by repeating the simplistic life story—and thus committing the logical fallacy of attempting proof through repetition (*argumentum ad nauseam*)—and second by further stripping the narrative of dissenting opinions which, by 2008, had blossomed into a full-scale socio-political debate.[137] The film is, in this sense, anti-historical despite its reference to the real world.

[136] Barreto does include the briefest of archival clips from TV Globo within the film but does not differentiate them from the reenactment footage. More on this below.

[137] This debate will be considered in more detail with respect to Padilha's *Tropa de elite* (2008) and *Tropa de elite 2: Agora o enemigo é outro* (2010).

Última parada 174's anti-history offers two distinct points of departure for the present analysis: 1) by reaffirming the authoritative role of the filmic index in memory formation and 2) by setting up a debate surrounding the ethical implications of entertainment when paired with representations of real world violence. The former observation arises from *Última parada*'s narrative dependence on prior knowledge, much of which can be traced back through visual proximity to the very news images Padilha used in his film (see Figs. 30 and 31 for one illustration among many). When we see Candelaria for the first time we are assumed to know about the massacre and Sandro's role in it. When we meet the social worker and see her camera crew, Barreto takes us back through Padilha's research process to construct Sandro's biography. Additionally, Barreto's camera lingers on busses passing through the streets of Rio at several moments during the telling of Sandro's tribulations. As viewers familiar with the story's ending we are inclined to see these busses as somber reminders of things to come, of things that already came to be. In this sense, the city busses passing innocently through the streets create a temporal disjuncture in the narrative that points forward to the film's conclusion while drawing on our knowledge of how it has already ended, and that it had ended before the film began. This could be said of most films whose subject matter is taken from the real world, especially documentaries. When said of this film in particular or any other fiction film based on a mass-mediated event, though, it brings us face to face with the news media's capacity to organize visual information into lasting narrative elements within a collective memory. By contrast, to show Barreto's film to an audience without any prior knowledge of the event would be to mute the busses' symbolic potential. Thus, though Barreto's film does not engage directly with archival material or spontaneously

captured documentary footage, its images refer back to the authenticity of those original indices and exploit their recognizability to anchor it in the real world.

Figures 30 and 31: *Última parada 174* remakes *Ônibus 174*

Not all of the images in the two films so neatly align. When we contrast the depiction of the Instituto Padre Severino in *Ônibus 174* with that of *Última parada 174*, for instance, we see how Barreto's film deceptively flattens the sociological questions Padilha raises with respect to the state. Barreto replaces the brutal obscurity and hideousness of the real reformatory, the Dantesque recesses of confinement with a playground bathed in sunlight. Padilha shows how the prison space itself is too small for the numbers of children held captive therein. This places the emphasis on the state agencies that have failed to adequately provide a safe environment for the children—which also points to its parallel outside of the prison in the lack of safety provided for the children living on the streets. In Barreto's film we see the pathetically clichéd threat of a schoolyard bully replacing the main threat to Sandro's well being. Yes, the guards mistreat the children. But by emphasizing the bully's threat and the guards, and thus ignoring the brutality of the space itself, Barreto reduces the problem as presented in *Ônibus 174* from the level of state institutions to that of personal transgressions between individuals. Sandro's experiences outside of Padre Severino mirror this reductionist view.

The character motivations are base and/or underdeveloped. Even in the presence of the media and the social worker, where there are ample opportunities for critical discourse, Sandro's illiteracy or his unwillingness to learn to read are instead presented as a consequence of his stubbornness. Education—the state's responsibility—escapes unscathed.

The term escapism does not adequately describe the above dilemma. After all, the film includes most all of the key pieces of the puzzle assembled previously and superiorly by Padilha. The problem pertains to the film's refusal to participate in the discourse surrounding the event that gave Sandro's life meaning. In a sense, the film rejects my above position concerning the media's synecdochization of Sandro—without which his life could not have meant anything except for him and for those that knew him personally. It thus ignores its own role in the mediation of Sandro-as-icon[138]. Unlike Padilha, Barreto presents us with the media on screen superficially as if to suggest that it merely coincided with Sandro's life at certain times and in certain places. Gouldner returns us to the issue of ideology and technology here:

> To conduct a study of social objects or worlds without simultaneous reflection on some social theory is to generate a false consciousness that believes that all that it is doing is mirroring passively an out-there world, and which fails to understand how it itself has participated in constructing the very object it takes to be problematic (Gouldner 10, 11).

Rather than escapist, then, the film generates a false consciousness, a certain lazy sociology that cannot come to terms with the force of media and state power that have dominated the film tradition on whose margin it sits and upon whose legitimacy it depends. Regardless of the grounds on which we may choose to condemn *Última parada*

[138] Here most definitely not an index, but rather a first order sign that signifies through resemblance to another object or, in this case, individual.

174 in its narrative treatment of Sandro, it upholds via contrast the strengths of the films that *do* include within their diegesis the combative presence of discursive news media and their roles as players among them.

CIDADE DE DEUS AS A PHOTOJOURNALISTIC HERMENEUTIC

Having provided a detailed look at what is undoubtedly the New Millennial Brazilian cinema's most characteristically mediatic event as presented in *Ônibus 174* and *Última parada 174*, I turn now to consider the implications of the figural and the synecdochic vis-à-vis news media within Kátia Lund and Fernando Meirelles's *Cidade de Deus*. Lund and Meirelles's use of communications media situates the film somewhere toward the middle of the scale established between Padilha's and Barreto's films: while it foregrounds photojournalism as the career aspiration of its protagonist Buscapé, and though his activities implicate the news media's tendency to err—intentionally or otherwise—the film has been criticized sharply for its popularized, reductionist view of a highly problematic, controversial, and complicated set of socio-cultural issues. Of the vast body of scholarship dedicated to *Cidade de Deus*, the branch most closely aligned with the present analysis is that which reduces the film to either escapism, on the one hand, or its presumed opposite on the other—be that informative, generative, or similar. The former presents such extremes as voyeurism and poverty tourism that take on especially spiny dimensions in light of the film's international success. The latter is readily verifiable by the film's ever expanding bibliography. My analysis of this dilemma will subsequently reunite us in the next and final section of this chapter with the global implications of news media in Padilha's *Tropa de elite* franchise, as well as signal a return to the trans-national media milieu of Rocha's *Terra em transe* and Coutinho's *O homem que comprou o mundo*. Therefore despite *Cidade de Deus*'s position at the apex

of a new millennial turn in filmmaking aesthetics and film distribution economics, we may be justified in affirming the old adage that the more things change the more they stay the same.

Many of the themes central to the present project have already been taken up in the extant scholarship concerning *Cidade de Deus.* Russell Kilbourn's analysis of the film as a source of "prosthetic memory," for example, ties into my discussion of the filmic archive and its indexical connotations. Felicia Chan and Valentina Vitali's oft cited "Revisiting the 'Realism' of the Cosmetics of Hunger: *Cidade de Deus* and *Ônibus 174*" also touches on the notion of the index and refers back to the Neorealist underpinnings present in this film and its predecessors. Chan and Vitali also offer a scathing criticism of the film that fits in with my above derisive remarks about *Última parada 174*, marking out the parameters for a discussion of *Cidade de Deus* as either escapist or critically engaging:

> the camera's extremely narrow field of vision, the fast pace of editing and a condescending narrative structure never quite grant the spectator sufficient space, time and information to see and consider [the film's] historical reality. This and any other slum, anywhere, at any time, would have looked just the same. Reality – understood as a cluster of social and economic, historically specific dynamics – is never allowed to break through. We are offered a story suitable for universal consumption, a proverbial universal story (Chan 19).

Sophia McClennen responds to Chan and Vitali as well as those that similarly condemn the film for its pop-aesthetic and its simplistic, all too easily digestible storyline. She argues that "the superficial features of the film are only part of its larger aesthetic project—that, in fact, the commercially oriented features of the film are used strategically to expose a large audience to a film experience that combines pleasure with social critique through a very specific mode of montage and shot construction" (McClennen

100). McClennen bolsters her position by reframing hunger, represented by the film's impoverished communities, as one of a politically engaged cinema no longer dependent upon nor necessarily respondent to the national market paradigm of Rocha's *estética da fome*. At the heart of this debate lie questions concerning national versus international communities and audiences, mass media and sovereignty, and international influence considered above with respect to Cinema Novo in Chapter 2.[139]

The dovetailing issues of popularity and general accessibility brought about by the critics of the film return us to the heart of mass culture theory and its historical indebtedness to communications media. In agreement with McClennen's position concerning the film's critical politics, we can read Buscapé's photojournalistic endeavors as a microcosm of the film itself. Moreover, I argue that the film is in its entirety a critical explication of a newspaper photograph—one that happens to take the shape of a micro-history of social marginalization and crime. Buscapé's camera frames the film narrative and, to the extent that the film's flashback plotline develops to explain the importance of the photograph taken in the opening sequence when frozen in-between the police and a gang, re-signifies that initial tension by contextualizing it within a twenty year history of poverty and violence.

The film's frame narrative is not unlike those already analyzed in the media-saturated *Rio, quarenta graus* and *Terra em transe*. Unlike protagonists Espirito and Paulo, however, Buscapé's flashback is not a dying delirium of personal tragedy. His is one of personal success in the face of a string of societal failures. A common criticism of the film notes the simplicity of the characters and the clear distinction between good and

[139] In particular,*Terra em transe* and *Liberdade de imprensa* but also *O homem que comprou o mundo*. More on this in the following section.

evil as represented by Buscapé and Lil Zé. As his narrative voiceover guides us through the series of events that led to the moment of the photograph, it is only natural that his life and the complexity of his character are minimized. As an explication of a photograph, what becomes relevant are the moments across those twenty years—a vast amount of time to describe any one character's development, not to mention *many* characters and, as the above film history can attest, a highly complex social and political situation—that culminate in an instantaneous flicker of a camera's shutter. The key moments for Buscapé seem trite: a group of friends on the beach, a love interest, and so on. But we must not leave out the murder of his brother and of his friend, Bené, and how those moments also lead to the camera ending up in his hands and him ending up in the right place at the right time to take the picture. The film's narrative trajectory shows so much more than a single photographic index can. It contextualizes, however rudimentarily, the life of the photographer, the lives of his subjects, their communal relations, and the social mélange of drugs and violence, all of which are shown to revolve around a failed urban plan. Far from a mere success story of a marginalized citizen, the film encourages a careful understanding of the conditions of possibility requisite for a presumed journalistic photo/fact.

Buscapé's work as a photojournalist raises him to a unique position within the history of Brazilian cinema. His status as an insider within the Cidade de Deus community grants him access to information that would be dangerous, if not impossible, to acquire for the typical media professional. Unlike the smarmy sensationalist news men of *Pagador de promessas* and *Cidade ameaçada*, the politically disoriented newsreel of Paulo in *Terra em transe*, or the questionable motivations held by the reporters in *Lúcio Flavio*, Buscapé confronts the bodily risk of the journalist and the role violence plays in

mitigating journalistic/historical narratives. He explains that his decision to get a job selling newspapers was motivated by the increasing violence in the favela due to drug trafficking. He fears the reaction Zé Pequeno will have when he finds his picture in the paper, unaware of the vain importance Zé gives to his own recognition. In this we recall the tension between notoriety and anonymity with the masked or hooded figures in *Noticias de uma guerra particular* and *Ônibus 174* that divides the safe from the dangerous. Buscapé's fear also organizes the plot in much the same way that the photograph does: in the opening scene in he describes this angst with a colorful Brazilian expression, stating that "uma fotografia podia mudar minha vida. Mas na Cidade de Deus, se correr o bicho pega. E se ficar o bicho come"[140]. Thus the film as an explication of a photograph is at the same time an explication of the potential bodily harm that could come to him as a result of taking it.

The ultimate risk for Buscapé exposes an underlying theme present in many, if not all, of the films that weave news media into their narratives: that is, the risk of exposing the culpability of the state, here again represented by a corrupt police force. When Buscapé decides to omit the photograph he took of the police receiving payment from Zé Pequeno he acknowledges the danger they represent for him as a purveyor of public information. He concludes that he has rid himself of Zé as a threat and determines not to make any new enemies in the mean time. Thus the story run in the newspapers, the one around which the whole film revolves, is delimited by Buscapé's sense of self-preservation. Like the other films mentioned above, the media narratives are here shown to coalesce through a complex system of motivations that, in this sense, rejects the

[140] "A photograph could change my life. But in the City of God, you're damned if you do and damned if you don't"

indexical value of the photographic image. However, here for the first time we are witness to the creation of a sensationalistic story from the perspective of a marginalized insider that coincides with a pattern of (self-)censorship in the face of power that hitherto took the shape of institutional complicity. With Buscapé, the media-as-institution is seen to comprise individuals that have relatable, comprehensible motivations that extend beyond profit margins to the realm of personal safety. Fear, thus characterized, must be included within the pantheon of forces that determine the structure and truth value of a given narrative. As we will see in the following section with Padilha's *Tropa de elite* franchise, fear and security influence narrative production on a number of levels.

Cidade de Deus conceptualized as an exegetic film also sheds light on the notion of figural realism introduced above in my discussion of Sandro. With respect to their positions on opposite sides of the photojournalist's camera, Sandro and Buscapé evince a relationship with their respective communities in directly oppositional ways. Whereas I read Sandro as a synecdochic figure to be interpreted, Buscapé's life—especially as delimited by the fear surrounding the climatic event he photographs—*is* an explication of the bullet-ridden body of Zé Pequeno. Put another way: to the extent to which we can conceive of Sandro's body as a symbolic representation of the homeless children living on the streets of Rio, Buscapé's biography functions inversely in explaining, as it were, another body murdered by the police and put into another news story. Essential to this observation is the obvious fact that it is not Buscapé's body that appears on the cover of the newspaper. Like Sandro, though, Zé Pequeno cannot self-synechdochize. *Cidade de Deus* exemplifies the impossibility of this act even for the villain that desires to be photographed and acknowledged for his criminal prowess because, in the end, his story belongs to Buscapé and the public.

TROPA DE ELITE: PADILHA'S DIALECTIC CONCLUSION

In the previous section, *Cidade de Deus* demonstrated how fear can guide the formation of a journalistic narrative and thereby demonstrate the extent to which censorhip can act *through* an individual. This harkens back to the legalistic, evidentiary modus operandi of the newsy films discussed in Chapter 2, where criminality was offered up to the kangaroo court of public opinion, only now emphasizing the personal histories developing in tandem with the collective, communal histories of the news media. With José Padilha's *Tropa de Elite* (2007), we see how this process plays extra-diegetically as well. Padilha initially conceived the film as a documentary accompaniment to the book released under the title *Elite da Tropa*, written by Luis Eduardo Soares, André Batista, and Rodrigo Pimentel.[141] After some initial filming in the favelas where the film was to be set, they decided that a documentary would be too dangerous. We can imagine the various sources of violence holding sway over this decision as akin to those that guided Buscapé's mentality when deciding which photographs to submit to his editor: both gang violence and the divided police force comprising the Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais (BOPE, special forces), the Polícia Militar (PM), and the Polícia Civil.

Without the news footage with which to build his narrative as he had with *Ônibus 174*, where the presence of cameras had the effect of providing temporary safety, Padilha finds the favela known as Turano inaccessible. The favela provides a different set of complications than the infinitely safer Jardim Botânico district where the previous event unfolded. Thus Padilha and his crew in setting out to make their film are more like the other journalists in *Cidade de Deus*, those that rely on Buscapé's access to restricted information for the big story around which the film revolves. This observation aligns with

[141] All three writers were interviewed in *Ônibus 174*—Soares was the sociologist that set up the far-reaching debate concerning Sandro's capacity to represent (by making visible) all Brazilian street children.

the film's perspective, which is diametrically opposed to the sympathetic portrayal of Sandro in the earlier film. The view from the other side of the story as represented by the police offers another related distinction to note between the source materials of *Tropa de Elite* and the majority of other films considered in this project. The book upon which the film is based is clearly not journalism, but an autobiographical account from the perspective of the policemen that had already become famous in the wake of *Ônibus 174.* They published the book in 2006 when the celebrity status that began four years earlier was still on its upswing internationally. As a tell-all from the perspective of the police, the book presumes to offer something not available to the news media. This presents us with a second level of privilege that contests the insider info of the gangs and therefore offers a rationalizing dialectic that, as we will see, Padilha upholds as essential to his historiographical triumvirate of films. The news media appear again culpable despite the perspectival switch.

In a moment reminiscent of *Rio, quarenta graus*, representatives of Rio de Janeiro's police force sought to prohibit *Tropa de elite*'s release and, when those efforts failed, attempted legal maneuvers to inhibit its distribution. They purportedly even summoned Padilha for questioning and attempted to prosecute everyone that worked on the film—including the officers that helped write the novel and the screenplay (Barrionuevo 3A). Predictably, their attempts to ban the film only fanned the flames and the resultant notoriety led to an estimated 11.5 million pirated copies before its premier in Rio de Janeiro on 12 October 2007. Unlike Pereira dos Santos's free publicity that ended in public disappointment at its documentary qualities, Padilha's film was very well received. This, in turn, sparked derision from a new direction: it was criticized for

glorifying police brutality and, along with *Cidade de Deus*, for its entertainment value. Padilha addresses these issues in an interview during Sundance Film Festival in 2011:

> When I released *Ônibus 174*, a lot of people…labeled me a radical communist because they thought I was taking a left-wing approach and defending a street kid who was very violent…when I released *Elite Squad*, people thought 'now he's becoming a right-wing extremist defending a cop who is violent' but I was doing none of those things. I was trying to explain the behavior of the violent criminal and also explain the behavior of the violent cop and tell people that this behavior is the result of institutions disguised in culture ("Sundance").

Fortunately the films are conducive to more thoughtful dialogue than the vague sociology he employs to explain behavior through some anonymous cultural institutions. This perspective, despite its apologetic tone, affirms at the very least an awareness on the part of the director of the dialectic he is engaging in by changing perspectives to view Rio's socio-political ills from the side of the police. It must be noted, though, that representatives of the police were not exactly silenced by *Ônibus 174*. On the contrary: they were *the* voices of authority. At issue is their ability to represent the official police point of view since they were, as they are here and in their book, speaking for themselves and not in any official capacity for their judiciary institution. This signals a clear contrast with their treatment of Sandro-as-all-street-children in *Ônibus 174*. As writers and as agents of the state they have the capacity to deny their own status as synecdoche or representatives of the institutions through which they labor. Somewhat ironically, their figures within the film attempt the same distinction despite their necessarily fictitious dramatization. As we will see, this will render their work meaningless. Whereas Buscapé's life story gives meaning to the photographs he shoots, the life story of the film's protagonist, Captain Nascimento, reduces his work to petty personal victories.

The film and the book on which it was based portray the complexity of political and juridical corruption in Brazil on their own terms. The book documents at length a corrupt plot to relocate the BOPE from one neighborhood to another in order to facilitate a corrupt politician's desire to skim money from an already economically devastated community. The film, on the other hand, removes the rampant corruption from the foreground, without eliminating it entirely, and instead focuses on the individual struggles of the BOPE team members. This recalls the personalization of the struggle within Padre Severino sheepishly on display in Barreto's rendition of Sandro's life in *Última parada 174*: instead of implicating the state it directs attention to the individual or individuals responsible for a given issue. This is more than a little ironic, considering another slight change made in transition from the book to the screenplay: the film's title, *Tropa de Elite*, grammatically inverts the book's title, *Elite da Tropa*, seemingly transferring the emphasis from the individual to the group (from the elite within the squad to the squad comprised of elites). The film's emphasis on the individual, though, contrasts with the titular inversion and thereby further conceals the political ramifications of the narrative, obscuring them with personal dramas and violence.

Tropa de elite tells the story of Captain Nascimento, an aging military police commander fed up with the stresses of his job and looking for a replacement. As he begins to select his successor from the group of new trainees, he and his battalion receive orders to pacify—their term—certain favela neighborhoods surrounding the location the Pope has chosen to stay during his visit to Brazil. As the commander of the militaristic BOPE shells out the primary mission's details we, along with the uneasy Elite, learn that the Pope will be staying in the Archbishop's home during his visit to Rio de Janeiro.[142]

[142] This operation was based on a true story that corresponded with the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1997

Unfortunately for everyone involved, the Archbishop resides within the periphery of Turano, a favela the group considers to be potentially hostile. The persistent narrator sets up this operation in terms of international perception, noting that the Pope

> ja tinha vindo ao Rio de Janeiro duas vezes. Será que não dava para ele saber como a banda toca por aqui? É claro que político nenhum quer ver a papa baleada na sua cidade. Se o Papa quer ficar perto de uma favela, o que voces acham que o governador vai fazer? Correr o risgo de uma bala perdida acertar a cabeza de Sua Santidade? É claro que não parceiro. Ele vai ligar pro BOPE (*Tropa*, 00:17:30).[143]

This monologue follows a close-up of a pamphlet advertising the Pope's arrival and accompanies real news footage of the Pope kissing the ground in Brazil, surrounded by representatives of the media with cameras, and standing before a cheering crowd in an impoverished neighborhood. This well-crafted set-up urges an understanding of the situation as necessary to protect the national reputation of the governor vis-à-vis the international perception of Brazil. Thus the media's presence in the film is essential to its plot to the extent that the efforts of the police are aimed at protecting the state official's reputation during a highly mediatized event. This re-imagines the drama of Farias's *Cidade ameaçada*, where the police's stated goal was to redirect the news media narrative by capturing and punishing Passarinho. In *Tropa de elite* the implications of police action are first considered globally—more in line with the epic scope of *Terra em transe* and the ambiguous international economies of *O homem que comprou o mundo*.

In order to carry out the so-called "Operation Holiness" and maintain a respectable media-image of the city, Captain Nascimento and his crew are permitted to use extreme violence—including both physical and psychological torture and murder.

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[143] [had already visited Rio de Janeiro two times. Could it be that he hadn't figured out how things work around here? Obviously no politician wants to see the Pope shot in his city. If the Pope wants to stay close to a favela, what do you think the governor's going to do? Run the risk of a stray bullet connecting with the head of His Holiness? Obviously not, partner. He's gonna call on the BOPE]

Herein we find the foundation for the criticism Padilha simplifies in the above interview as a right-wing protectionist view of the police force. James Craine and Giorgio Hadi Curti offer a salient analysis of the *Tropa de elite*'s celebration of state sponsored violence by way of a more appropriately complex web of Deleuzian-Guattarian desire, law, and geography. They note how the filmed Turano functions as a reflection of "the desires of Rio's political culture, which in turn regenerates and legitimizes class structures through marginalization and repression, and it serves as an example of how city spaces and their inhabitants can be made visible or invisible in order to accentuate or mask an image it does or does not seek to project" (Craine 9). Craine and Curti aptly describe the arena in which this film plays out, almost as if the mediating processes were themselves made explicit as the setting rather than as a theme. The theme of visibility is as palpable here as it is in the entirety of the tradition of news media narratives discussed thus far. Yet the individualistic Nascimento derails the plot's initial driving force to control public perception by ultimately revealing his own personal goals to avenge the murder of a would-be replacement.

Following the death of Neto, André Matias's partner and potential candidate to replace Captain Nascimento, Padilha's BOPE terrorizes, tortures, and murders the inhabitants of the favela in order to locate the man who killed Neto, a character named Baiano. In what follows André Matias does not appear in a single scene without physically attacking someone with his bare hands (man, woman, or innocent bystander), grabbing someone's neck in a threatening fashion, pointing his gun in someone's face, shouting with unrestrained rage, and even preparing to sodomize an informant with a broom handle during a torture session. This last atrocity is reminiscent of the homoerotic torture scene in which members of the Comando Vermelho force Lúcio Flávio to fellate

an accomplice as punishment for not divulging the information they sought. Beyond its grotesque display of emasculation, this moment raises questions related to this project's central concerns of evidence, truth and testimony—especially that which is given under duress. Truth's relationship to an individual's experience of fear as discussed in *Cidade de Deus* is further complicated here in light of the fact that the impetus of the police has ceased to be an issue of public opinion—and that it is far from any conception of public safety since the public itself is under attack.

No longer defending Brazil's (self- or international) image but their own private egos, Nascimento and Matias operate under the secrecy of broad daylight with the ironic knowledge that their actions will not be mediatized. In one instance Neto effectively hides from a photojournalist and in the next inhibits a cameraman from taking pictures while his crew carries corpses from the favela. There is, by contrast, no effort to conceal the carnage from the favela community, suggesting that *this* public's knowledge of the perpetual warfare bears no consequence. After all, the locals' communicative technologies are as primitive as the fiery beacon they burn atop a hill overlooking the city or the various auditory signals—such as fireworks and gunshots—they use to alert the arrival of police in their community. These geographically and materially circumscribed technologies vis-à-vis the global communications networks presumed to have an interest in the Pope's visit expose an asymmetry of access to the same dominant media forms that (pre)determined Zé do Burro's demise in *Pagador de promessas*. The cordel that might have been used to contradict the sensationalist press lacked the capacity to extend beyond the realm of the immediate, contiguous physical space in much the same way that the beacon and the gunshots failed to derail the infinitely superior PR war-machine that is the BOPE.

TROPA 2

> …so I felt compelled to do a third movie…the right wing guy and the left wing guy are both wrong in the end in the sense that they put their ideology in front of reality.
> -José Padilha

The above quotation comes at the end of the interview response included in the previous section concerning the criticisms the director received after releasing his first two films. Though seemingly straightforward, this line identifies the force of his project within the news media film trajectory spanning the last half century. The right and the left fail to take concrete material form here. We can assume a generic "right" associated with the police apologists on Captain Nascimento's side and a similarly amorphous "left" aligned with the street children represented by Sandro, yet the emphasis is on the contrast between ideology and reality—also drawn here in imprecise terms. The right and the left, the ideological and the real appear as mere functions of an economy of information elaborated across a triptych of films. *Tropa de elite 2: O inimigo agora é outro* thus envisioned as a dialectical synthesis of the previous two attempts to show discordant individual perspectives, a union which Padilha contends to relocate the real in its proper place *in front of* ideology, stages the very cinematic history in which it participates. And it does so in an easily digestible, popular fashion. It is full of action movie clichés of the "this-time-its-personal" variety, a line the protagonist actually speaks in the opening minutes of the film, and of canned violence and suspense. Yet the mass-appeal proven by its record-breaking national box office sales[144] attests to the film's capacity to have it both ways: like the films of the 1970s with which I opened this chapter that broke from the more cryptic and generally commercially stunted films of Cinema Novo, Padilha

[144] Despite its release late in 2010, *Tropa 2* quickly became the highest grossing national box office success in Brazilian film history, even selling more tickets than its biggest international rival, *Avatar*.

takes news media to its narratival limits within a film that is both politically critical and popular. By engaging with the real and the ideal vis-à-vis limited personal perspectives, *Tropa 2* advances the present analysis of synecdochic personal histories to encompass an overarching discursive history played out across the polis, or politicized community.

Tropa 2 exponentially expands the role of the news media from the first film. Whereas the preceding film's news media functioned primarily as a plot motivator, in the sequel Padilha foregrounds them in nearly thirty of fifty scenes. This estimate places the media—in the form of journalists, Rush Limbaugh-like shock-jocks (Fig. 32), televised news broadcasts, satellites (Fig. 33), interviews, photographers, videographers (Fig. 34), newspapers, discussion of media impacts by main characters, as well as references to other newsy films, such as *Carandiru*—in nearly sixty percent of the film. To these numbers we may add an overarching awareness of the media that weighs on each character's opinions and consequently guides his/her behavior. Figures 32-34 show the variety of images Padilha employs that extensively quote the aforementioned films. The satellite image updates the local pressure of the *Pagador de promessas* television camera and satellite with a 21st century global optic. Similarly, the studio space, the viewfinder images, and the in-frame news cameras explore the dissonance and resonance between cinema and news in the manner of Tonacci's *Bla bla bla*, Coutinho's *O homem que comprou o mundo*, Sganzerla's *Bandido da luz vermelha*, and Pedro de Andrade's *Linguagem de persuasão*. Suffice it to say that Padilha thoroughly invests *Tropa 2* with an awareness of its national film and mass media heritage. From this point, then, we can read his dialectic as more than merely a synthesis of his two previous efforts but also as a synthesis of the Brazilian cinematic tradition.



Figures 32, 33, and 34: Media milieu in *Tropa 2*

Tropa 2 begins several years after its predecessor left off. As the returning narrative voice of Captain Nascimento informs us, he had to continue to work for the Elite Squad—it was too much a part of him to quit. His family thus falls apart, his wife marries a leftist political activist named Diogo Fraga, and together they raise Nascimento's son Rafa. With Rafa growing up under the influence of his new, pacifist father-figure, Nascimento's promotion to coronel and eventual relocation to work as the sub-secretary of defense continues to cause friction in his family life. After a brief opening sequence in which Nascimento walks out of a hospital, enters his car, and finds himself directly in the middle of a barrage of gunfire. His place between two as-yet unidentified, armed groups plays the same opening gambit as *Cidade de Deus*. Though the sequence also serves as a frame in which the majority of the film narrative unfolds, Nascimento's role as police captain turned political figure functionally opposes his position from that of Buscapé's photojournalism. His personal narrative with respect to the media, in other words, more closely approximates that of the police in *Cidade de Deus* that Buscapé feared in the final moments and left un-accused. Buscapé's omission proves astute when, later in *Tropa 2*, an investigative journalist commits the error that Buscapé avoided by trying to expose a corrupt police force and is consequently killed[145].

[145] Nascimento narrates, "As fotos eram mais do que suficientes pra matéria de capa. Mais journalista, amigo, é curioso" (01:25:05). ["The photos were more than sufficient to get the cover. But journalists,

But Nascimento, like Buscapé in the slum, is an insider in the official world of law enforcement and, so, has access to another level of information that constitutes its own version of truth—a version generally inaccessible to the media as well. Nascimento's status not only allows him access to a world invisible to the journalist—as was the case with Buscapé in the slum—but as sub-secretary of security he is privy to wiretapped cell phones, surveillance cameras, and otherwise classified documents. These ultramodern apparatus poses yet another problem for the journalist seeking to bolster her narrative with photographic evidence, an issue at the center of the representational paradox that goes back to the discursive web present in the films of the late 1960s and early 1970s: how to index or image a relationship between news media, the police, and politicians?

Padilha builds up an idea of the importance of visibility and privileged information with the framed flashback. He begins to contextualize Nascimento's unfortunate place in the middle of a gunfight with a prison uprising in Bangú, one of Rio's notorious penal institutions. In this instance the perspective of the film camera occupies two uniquely privileged perspectives: first, via the high-angle establishing shot of the penitentiary from a helicopter and, second, from within the prison's video surveillance room. Once inside we witness an obstruction of view as the prisoners paint over the security cameras. One-by-one, spray paint occludes our views of what's happening in the prison cells. As the scene advances, Padilha cuts back and forth between Fraga—coincidentally delivering a speech about the problems of Brazil's prison system—and the developing hostage situation executed by the Bangú inmates. Herein Padilha introduces the films opposing factions: the extreme left, personified by Fraga,

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friend, are very curious."] Unlike Buscapé, the journalist did not have the presence of mind to protect herself or to value her life above the truth she was trying to unearth.

cries out against the injustices of violence, poverty, and the state's reformatory establishments and the extreme right, personified by the prison guards, the police, and the politicians, work to maintain the current system. Padilha masterfully weavs together various layers of mediation and public knowledge while continuing to build the suspense of the hostage situation. He shows us the bureaucratic feedback loop responsible for making decisions, the public intellectual condemning the state, the prisoners awaiting retaliatory action, and the police force's awareness of these pressures as they attempt to resolve the conflict. Coronel Nascimento receives orders from the governor, who nervously proclaims that he does not want another "Carandiru" on his hands, and then relays the commands to his crew. Nascimento has his men in position to take action against the inmates when Fraga is flown in via helicopter. Ultimately the BOPE follow Fraga into the occupied prison space and murder the head-captor. The scene ends with the following media frenzy surrounding Fraga who still wears the blood-stained human rights t-shirt. Various still, extreme close-ups of the bloody shirt emulate cameras taking pictures of Fraga as he is interviewed. Simultaneously we hear Nascimento narrating, "só teve um detalhe que estragou tudo: aquela porra daquela camiseta. 'Direitos humanos,' escrito em inglês--aquela merda virou manchete no mundo inteiro."[146] The camera's low-angle from inside the group of reporters validates Nascimento's observation by pitching up and pausing on the enormous satellite dish affixed to the news van. Padilha thus draws our attention to the range and immediacy of the images beamed around the globe while also signaling their complete inadequacy to convey the complexity of the events in question.

[146] ["There was only one detail that messed everything up: that fucking t-shirt. 'Human Rights,' written in English—that shit became a headline all over the world"](*Tropa 2*, 19:30)

As a media stunt to quiet opposition from the left, Coronel Nascimento is taken out of his position as the leader of the BOPE and given the post of sub-secretary of security. This move provides him higher status and a new office: a de Certeauian perch and intelligence-center where he and his staff have access to what seems an infinite amount of information. Nascimento becomes panoptic—he physically embodies something unprecedented in Brazilian cinema by representing a central perspective around which all pertinent information revolves. He knows what the news media knows, what the politicians know, what the criminals know, and what the police know. So, when he helps eradicate drug trafficking throughout the city and thereby makes visible the rampant corruption and gangsterism of the police force, his struggle becomes a communicative struggle. He must figure out how to make the public aware of his knowledge without endangering himself or his family. Beyond his personal narrative, though, and given the dubious triangular relationship between various elected political figures, the news media, and the corrupt policemen, the stakes are no less than the institution of democracy itself. Nascimento's personal struggle reaches a boiling point when his efforts to expose the corruption results in a stray bullet, intended for him, hitting his son. While initially reading like melodrama, especially in light of the comparatively bare minimal attention given to the slew of favelados remorselessly gunned down in both this film and its precursor, the son's injury proves to be far more provocative in terms of its figurative capacity to intertwine the personal and the communal. Rafa's importance can only be understood in terms of his filial relationship to the two previously oppositional father figures in his life: Nascimento and Fraga. As a representative of a future in which the individual is aware of and informed about a multiplicity of perspectives, Rafa embodies the synthesis articulated across Brazilian cinematic

history—hence the injury's source in the battle between two factions, one which sought to inform and one that attempted to conceal.

The private, individual life as made intelligible through its participation in a community brought together by communications media touches at last upon the humanism championed by Nelson Pereira dos Santos in the years preceding Cinema Novo. It is no coincidence that the asymmetrical socio-political geographies of Rio de Janeiro still play a part in narratives that attempt to humanize the sprawling city's citizens. Turano, the favela in which the Pope intended to visit in *Tropa 1*, is fittingly located in Rio's Zona Norte. While Padilha's films and Pereira dos Santos's *Rio, Zona Norte* and *Rio, quarenta graus* could not be more dissimilar in their styles, their shared interest in the persisting difficulties associated with poverty and urban space, as well as their positions at opposite ends of a cinematic trajectory that spans five decades, reflect how far news media have advanced in their capacities to organize our understanding of the present. Pereira dos Santos's career heralded the beginning of this trend and signaled with its radical televisual historiography in *Tenda dos milagres* a trajectory that would withstand the advances of new media technologies and the disruptive, yet ultimately fruitful, shift from national to global cinematic markets. The now familiar images of television studios and on-screen cameras may no longer maintain their charms as modern trinkets at which the spectator can marvel, yet they nevertheless endure to challenge the assumptions of truth espoused therein. And their implications for our understanding of the real world endure as well. In the years leading up to the World Cup in 2014 and now looking ahead to the Olympics in 2016, Padilha's conflation of his figurative fictions foresee, as he predicted, the violence committed against the favela communities. "We are now seeing the first 40 minutes of my film, where the police break the back of drug

traffickers…But if we don't reform the police we run the risk of substituting drug lords with corrupt police" (Margolis). Implicit in this remark is the very same driving force that we saw in *Tropa 1*, where order is established via literal warfare between the state and its impoverished citizens so as to defend an image of Brazil during two unequaled global media events. In light of the recent barrage of political corruption scandals in the news,[147] we may indeed have already moved into the film's second act, where information regarding corrupt politicians comes to light to better inform the public. Fact and figure have finally coalesced into this discursive mélange of the news mediatic, the cinematic, and the real, which now includes the real not as a representational kernel captured indexically on film but, at last, as one of many ideological possibilities, so that we can correctively re-state Padilha's comment concerning the real's place in front of the ideal as only temporary, as wound within a series of corrections where each takes its turn on top and both, together, form a historical thread.

[147]This section was written in spring 2015 amidst the fallout of the so-called *pertrolão* money laundering scandal that indicted nearly thirty high-ranking public officials as well as executives from Petrobras—a leading financier of the Brazilian film industry and many of the films discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 – Photojournalistic Retrospection in Recent Cuban Film[148]

OVERVIEW

In Chapter 1 I drew a trajectory of Cuban films that co-opted various news media in the first ten years of the Revolution to entrench their narratives within a rationalistic discursive schema. As a collective enterprise, these films advanced a materialist conceptualization of a historical moment into a contentious debate concerning official and unofficial positions, authority, and technology. Over the course of the decade circumscribed by the most palpable of Cold War ideological rhetoric, the conceptualization of truth as rationally determined gave way to a re-newed image of charismatic authority sundered once again from reasoned debate, as seen in the moment of failed economic and communications policies that would culminate with the newsreel *Diez millones*. Yet, while the contestatory representational strategies that would vie alternatingly between the realistic aesthetics of films like *Historias de la revolución* and the mytho-poetic visual operas of *Soy Cuba*, *Lucía*, and *La primera carga al machete* continued into the subsequent decades, their fervor within the political and social arena could no longer hope to keep the vertiginous pace of the early years. Yes, beautiful and poignant films would emerge from time to time during and after the Quinquenio Gris (1971-1976), but only one filmic enterprise bore the argument all the way to the end of the Cold War: the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano.

For scholars of political history and, for that matter, any student of artistic expression in the face of a government with a monopoly on communication, it will come as no surprise that the official mouthpiece of the ICAIC proved to have the most

[148] A portion of this chapter has been previously published under the title "Nicolás Guillén Landrián: An Historical Paradox within the ICAIC". *Avanca Cinema* (2015): 1181-1186.

endurance of any single cinematic project in Cuba. The Noticiero ICAIC continued to produce its weekly newsreel for the duration and consequently created the most comprehensive historiographical news archive on film in the history of the medium. Santiago Álvarez remained at the helm through the 1970s and 1980s, a fact which added to the consistency of the quality and integrity of the project as a unified whole. With this there is no question that, for the time period at least, within the cinematic realm the official won out over the unofficial, the rational over the irrational, and the scientific over the mytho-poetic. But not even thirty years of momentum could keep that train moving after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the resultant end to the Cuban economic subsidies from the Soviet Union. The subsequent economic crisis that brought about the Special Period (in times of peace) brought film production to a near standstill:

> The crisis affected all levels of the industrial filmmaking infrastructure. Between 1991 and 2001, only 31 feature films were made through the ICAIC (none in 1996), as compared with 10 a year before then. The production of newsreels…simply ceased. Documentaries were mostly made by the International School of Film and Television (EICTV). The National Cinematheque, part of the ICAIC, saw its operating budget reduced, and an administrative reorganization led to an institutional battle for control of both the international commercialization of archival materials and video concessions of ICAIC productions—both of which could generate hard currency revenues (Hernandez-Reguant 35).

What's more, the budget reductions to the Cinemateca de Cuba not only required capitalization to remain viable but lacked the means to even maintain the expansive archive it had fostered over the previous thirty years within its now dilapidating physical structure. It would seem that the physical world so thoroughly indexed on the film held within the archive was coming back to haunt those that sought to protect it from the elements: nothing lasts forever and, indeed, nothing so precious as film-stock lasts for long when up against tropical heat, humidity, and hurricanes.

Other forces returned during the Special Period and in its aftermath that also shook the foundations of the archive as a purveyor of an official version of historical facts. Long forgotten and ostracized filmmakers emerged from their sleepy confines to once more direct light and shadow across screens both on and off the island. Guillén Landrián, Chapter 1's antithesis to Álvarez's official sort of madness, long since in exile in Miami, has his cinematic cake (as rebellious *enfant terrible*) and eats it, too (rejoiced by a new generation of archivisitic film school students). Guillén Landrián's return was facilitated by a new sort of screen as well. His messianic revival, I will show, butts heads once again with officialdom where its unofficial dissemination via YouTube challenges the legitimacy of UNESCO's parallel release of Álvarez's opus, digitally re-mastered and re-released online through the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA.fr). The battleground for these two points of opposition now takes place on a digital field whose communicative controls are far more difficult—if not impossible—to exercise.

New (web)sites of truth production emerge at the turn of the 21st century that borrow and repurpose once again the materials that were already second-hand in their first cinematic emplotments. It is easy to see how these materials reach new audiences in the digital age. Less so, however, to conceptualize the historiographical impact of these once insular materials when they are unbound from the discursive news media fabric into which they were woven. When set against the decentered nature of the online forum, Rebeca Chávez's *Ciudad en rojo* (2009) and *El día más largo* (2011) exemplify the journalistic pretenses and, if you will, post-tenses of the ICAIC heritage which again foment public debate after several decades of relative univocality. Where Chávez's officiality as a director of ICAIC sponsored films confronts the Nicolás Guillén Landrián saga there emerges a *para-doxa* running counter to the *ortho-doxa* that solidified in the

Quinquenio Gris: the sources of rational/material debate prove their dynamism by offering grounds for an evidently self-perpetuating discussion which can deny the very material premises that brought them into being and safe-guarded them within its archive in the first place.

This chapter will consider the above thematically, emphasizing in turn three fundamental and unmistakable iterations within the Cuban films that transplant the newsy material of the ICAIC heritage into a new era: memory (both personal and communal), nostalgia, and fulfillment. These interrelated yet distinct themes carry with them the problems discussed in the previous chapter that arose in tandem with the popularization of televisual news media in the 1960s, specifically those revolving around mass media, reasoned debate, and truth. I argue that the discourse rekindled by the various returns to the journalistic-cinematic archive updates Gouldner's communication theory as laid out in the Introduction and Chapter 1 of the present study. With the new millennial Cuban films we can see at long last how Gouldner's observations regarding the inelasticity of identities based in authoritarian ideological schema[149] themselves have something new to offer rational debate. They leave their traces to be rediscovered and rewritten within ever developing dialectics that re-pose and repurpose its theses and antitheses in subsequent historical epochs. In short: they betray the breakdown of rationality and thereby offer the material means (film stock) by which it may be brought back to center stage. These articulations, as I will show, continue to depend as much on both new and old communications media as on the indexical relationships to the real world they first inhabited.

[149] "insofar as it is self-constituting, ideological discourse generates an identity that, like an interest, is taken or takes itself as given, and thereby also constitutes a limit on rationality," [Gouldner 47; qtd in introduction]

FILMOGRAPHY UNBOUND AND DIGITIZED: MEMORIAS DE MEMORIAS DE MEMORIAS…

In the concluding section of Chapter 1 I analyzed the ways in which *Memorias del subdesarrollo* turned toward its own recent past to churn up new meaning from the then nascent news media archive. In a well known scene, that film's protagonist, Sergio, looks down on his 1962 Havana through a telescope. He casually spies an amorous couple on a pool deck, glances at the cars passing through the streets, and comments on various landmark monuments. The effect is one of a noted spatial dislocation, as well as fragmentation of sound and representation that Paulo Antonio Paranaguá associates with Gutiérrez Alea's work in radio broadcasting. The radio held sway over many films of the 1960s Cuban cinema, as noted above, thanks also in part to its capacity to stamp a film with a specific moment in time shared by communities broadly separated by often vast and difficult to navigate geographies. So when the music of Pello el Afrokán and its lively drum circle reappear in the opening sequence of *Subdesarrollo en las memorias* (2013, dir. Tomás Köster), we are faced with an immediately recognizable historical moment. But the moment is now self-awarely protracted, itself telescoping temporally as well as spatially. Köster's five minute long experiment in editing wastes no time jarring the viewer familiar with the original film from the expected by superimposing his inverted title on the lively image. He then jumps to the above scene of Sergio's de Certeauian moment looking down on the city from his high-rise, replacing the original black and white footage with an updated, fully digital and in-color panorama. The voiceover sound-bridge connects the old with the new, sardonically noting that "aquí todo sigue igual" and "sin embargo hoy todo parece tan distinto," and reads as a eulogy to the crumbling ruins on screen (Figs. 35, 36 and 37) .

Figures 35, 36, and 37: Sergio looks forward in time via *Subdesarrollo en las memorias*

By returning to Gutiérrez Alea's archival reconstitutive impulse, S*ubdesarrollo en las memorias* translates the original material into the digital and transnational language of the 21st century. This raises at least three important issues relevant to all re-purposing of the ICAIC's archival material in this chapter: transnational co-authorship, transnational digital dissemination, and trans-temporality. The authorship of *Subdesarrollo en las memorias* is simultaneously Spanish (Köster) and Cuban (Gutiérrez Alea); thanks to its publication on YouTube, its reach is global and decentered; and its temporality is triptych—2013 folded over 1968 (original release), 1968 folded over 1962 (original setting). Each panel of this cinematic triptych has its various audiences as well. Unlike the televisual cinematic apparatus of the 1960s, however, the tri-fold set of audiences can no longer aspire to build on the model that sought to "constitute, through television, a single public, and to reabsorb the sociocultural differences" of its prior, primarily national community (Martín-Barbero 181).[150] At first glance this seems to multiply the views and voices that were previously reduced to one, thereby also destabilizing the insular official versus unofficial ("contra la Revolución, ningún derecho") binary. Problematically, however, we find instead that the same asymmetries of information access that set the stage for Octavio Cortázar's *Por primera vez* are at play here, only now in the form of a

[150] I write "primarily" here because the films, of course, always had their international audiences but the television and radio audience was limited to the island. The same could be said about the newsreels, too, until their digitization—more on this below.

new communication technology. The restricted internet access on the island in the first decade and a half of the new millennium, especially in light of the primarily cybernetic exposure of many Cuban and Cubanist filmmakers, parallels the limited access of such communications media as television and film in the 1960s. Like *Por primera vez*, the digitization of Cuban film points to both the adoption of new technologies and their unequal distribution.

Antonio José Ponte provides an anecdote that pulls my theoretical comparison of new millennial digital media, 1960s communications media, film, and their relationship to rational dialogue down to the more tangible realm of lived experience. He narrates the details of a debate hosted by the journal *Temas* on 30 October 2009 in the Centro Cultural Fresa y Chocolate, noting its location across the street from Cine Chaplin. Ponte mires this essayistic narrative in the themes of film and journalism from the outset, including now the personage of the *bloguero* as the digital go-between that connects the official with the unofficial, the communal news with the personal account or testimony. The cinematic setting for this exchange of ideas is crucial: when a group of independent journalists and bloggers are denied entrance to the event, the guards justify their denial by deflecting responsibility from *Temas* to "el instituto official de cine quien organizaba la presentación" (Ponte 198). If we read the debate and its censorial denials of entrance as a continuation of the ICAIC's policies, the link between the bloggers and the filmmakers that disseminate their digital work online is undeniable. As if to predict this point, Ponte quotes writer and debate participant José Miguel Sánchez Gómez advocating for the internet's capacity to de-center official discourse—represented, not coincidentally, by

periodicals and newsreels—in terms of an appeal to the real, a move that corresponds to the same impulses of the early ICAIC filmmakers[151]:

> Internet nos permite el hombre de a pie, el hombre de a pie que tiene ciertas posibilidades…pueda oponerse al monopolio de la información que tiene un periódico, que tiene un noticiero, que tiene un gobierno que pretende imponer su punto de vista a la realidad ya que es incapaz de imponer la realidad (Ponte 202).

This statement upholds the belief that such an online presence as bloggers and, by association, digital filmmakers have can "oppose" the official discourse of the state and its media mouthpieces. However, not all present held this opinion. Opposition requires a certain contact between would-be opposing parties.

In a response akin to the question made by the foreigner Jack Gilbert in the public debate in *Memorias del subdesarrollo*—which lambasted the anachronism of the public forum in the face of the Revolution's various crises[152]— Rosa Miriam Elizalde, director of the internet platform *cubadebate*[153], laments that the online activists are "rehenes en el ámbito internacional de la visibilidad de un proyecto que no tiene realmente un impacto y un conocimiento dentro de la sociedad cubana" (Ponte 201). And what is a more outdated mode to discuss the cultural implications of the internet than a public forum hosted by a print journal? If this seemed an appropriate criticism to *Memorias del subdesarrollo*'s protagonist Sergio in 1962, it certainly resonates in 2009 as well. Here again relating back to *Por primera vez*, the debate betrays its own asynchronicity as well as its own failed premise—and doubly so with respect to the notion of exclusion, deliberate or otherwise, of certain people from an as yet to be realized national community. In this

151 And, before them, Castro in his Día de la Prensa Libre speech.

152 As qtd in chapter 1: "why is it that if the Cuban revolution is a total revolution they have to resort to an archaic form of discussion such as a roundtable and treat us to an impotent discussion of issues that I'm well informed about and most of the public here is well informed about when there could be another more revolutionary way to reach a whole audience like this?" (01:05:48).

153 Cubadebate's official slogan is, fittingly, "contra el terrorismo mediático"

light it should come as no surprise that, as Ponte notes, two filmed versions of the debate's proceedings ended up online yet, as Elizalde's comment suggests, neither would be seen by most Cuban's living on the island.

FACTS REMAIN: PHOTOJOURNALISTIC MEMORIA(S) IN THE 21ST CENTURY

If the train that was the Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano came to a crashing stop along with the Soviet subsidies post-1989, filmmaker Rebeca Chávez was ejected from the wreckage into the following decades to continue the journalistic cinematic tradition of her mentor, Santiago Álvarez. Her filmography begins with a co-director credit on *Noticiero ICAIC No. 808*, a series of documentary and docudrama accounts of the Revolutionary past, and culminates most recently in two films that run the gamut of the those treated in this project: the first, *Ciudad en rojo* (2009), which recycles and catalyzes both archival footage and reenactments made to resemble the dated film matter of the originals; the second, *El día más largo* (2011), essentially compiles a digitization of a filmed interview of Fidel Castro taken on 4 January 1959, photographs, and radio broadcast voiceover. These two films closely approximate the aesthetic, form, and content of the ICAIC's early years and, so, serve as an ideal starting point for the following analysis. As a card-carrying mentee of Álvarez and as a student of the Noticiero school, Rebeca Chávez's work exemplifies the durability of the early composite modality of Cuban cinematic historiography. Inasmuch as her directorial roles consistently refuse to confront the complexity of the news media discursive networks within which the Noticiero *materia prima* emerged, she must, despite her talents, be viewed as a straw-man Atlas figure with the weight of a fifty-year cinematic tradition hoisted upon her shoulders.

A brief analysis of the 1984 documentary *Imágenes en la memoria* provides ample context for Chávez's recent work as it relates back to her days with Álvarez and the Noticiero ICAIC. In this, her directorial debut, Chávez evinces an affinity for the photojournalistic that is present in much of her future endeavors. *Imágenes en la memoria* was conceived under the name "Constancia Gráfica". This originary title is as telling as it is ironically inconsistent with the film it might have labeled: were the graphic, imagistic *constancia*[154] capable of speaking for themselves they would not have required Chávez's film for explication. In a manner unlikely yet directly analogous to my Chapter 3 reading of *Cidade de Deus*, where the film narrative revolves around and contextualizes a set of photojournalistic images, *Imágenes en la memoria* narrativizes the by then historical images some twenty-two years after their first appearance on the pages of Cuban newspapers. The director takes three photographers that captured famous images of the Bay of Pigs invasion back to the battlegrounds where they took the photographs so that they could enliven the images on film with undeniably emotive retellings of how they came to experience the events of the attack. The concept of returning to life will become more important later on in our discussion of the messianic implications of Nicolás Guillén Landrián's work, but for the present it holds the theological at bay and remains an historiographical endeavor.

Imágenes en la memoria upholds the notion that a photojournalistic image's meaning, though it may be insufficient on its own terms, is not open for any and all interpretation. By "consulting the oracle" rather than relying on the work itself, as Wimsatt and Beardsly famously put it, Chávez acknowledges the photograph's evidential

[154] Here appealing to the multivalent Spanish term meaning firmness or constancy but also evident or certain.

limitations and seeks to extend them with the photographers' oral accounts. Yet the contextualization of the images by the storytellers results in a similarly isolated snap-shot of a moment and disregards all that is not immediately present at the locus of the photographs. The men neither relate the broader details of the battles nor the invasion's implications for Cuban foreign relations—nor, presumably, did Chávez ask them to attempt such a history. Instead we have a story about how images came to exist within the private experience of each photographer. One, emotionally worked up to the point of nearly shouting, relates: "(Yo) tiraba fotografías de los tanques moviéndose y eso, y los rebeldes arriba de los tanques. Y entonces: ¡Sorpresa! En el tanque delante iba Fidel." (6:57). Another, also visibly and audibly energized, relates his experience photographing a sinking ship: "Tengo lo que no tenía nadie…Yo no veía ningún fotógrafo allí en ese momento. Tengo lo que no tenía nadie...Entonces Ernesto me dice 'dale pa' La Habana, que eso es noticia'" (10:10). The film thus privileges the personal testimony of the men on the ground at the battle over a reading of the complex journalistic structures that took their images and propelled them toward the future by publishing them in the official newspapers. This is not simply a reading of the film against what it could have been—it suggests a reversal of the trend that headed away from a naïve faith in the material realism during the 1960s toward a discursive/dialogic amalgamation of the real, back toward a simplified and univocal dialogue.

Extensive use of video footage in *Imágenes en la memoria* goes further to elaborate the idea that the photographs and, by extension, the men's stories about how they came to be were somehow incomplete. The journalistic elements at play seem to struggle against one another, especially for the audience familiar with the other films that utilized the original film footage: namely, *Muerte al invasor*. As I elaborated in Chapter

1, the *Muerte al invasor* footage was widely included in other films and, as a pastiche of various news media to begin with, embodied the complexity of the 1960s mass media moment. Together with the energetic yet claustrophobic perspectives of the photographers in *Imágenes*, this observation provides a frame of reference for Chávez's future films that overlap again with journalistic pretense and, again, preference the individual, limited perspective of personal testimony over the top-down news media system that privilege some narratives while silencing others. While the filmmaking trend that developed over the course of the Revolution's first decade demonstrates an increasing sophistication with respect to the constructedness of narrative discourse across communications media, Chávez's work demonstrates how such nuanced depictions fell to the way side following the Quinquenio Gris. When Chávez made the film in 1984 she was well entrenched within the Noticiero production apparatus. Her films during the Special Period and after nevertheless evince a continued refusal to acknowledge the complexity, contingency, and interconnectedness of communications media discourse. This will ultimately provide an official standard against which unofficial narratives are measured in the post-Special Period.

Despite the apparent historical and political gulf of more than thirty years separating the Quinquenio Gris and Chávez's *Ciudad en rojo*, the return of two highly controversial figures onto the national televisual stage in December of 2006 and January 2007 prompted a trans-media debate whose implications extended into all subsequent discussions of memory, history, and artistic production. The figures were none other than two of the architects of the Quinquenio Gris's censorial apparatus, Luis Pavón—president of the Consejo Nacional de Cultura from 1971 to 1976 and from whose name is derived an alternative appellation for the time period, *el pavonato*—and Jorge Serguera, formerly

a military commander and director of the Instituto Cubano de Radiodifusión. These two men oversaw cultural production in areas as diverse as radio, television, cinema, and theater, and their combined detriment to the freedom of expression within the Cuban cultural arena during the seventies and after cannot be overestimated.

> Memories of Pavón and his damaging edicts remained etched in the minds of Cubans in general and intellectuals in particular. That is why they deemed it unconscionable for the ICRT to have invited him to be a guest … and audacious that no mention whatsoever was made of the 'witch hunt' he had instigated in Cuba some thirty years earlier (Stock 272).

In this excerpt from Anne Marie Stock's thorough examination of the filmic fallout of Pavón's and Serguera's polemical TV appearances on contemporary Cuban film culture, the phrase "etched in the minds of Cubans" stands out as an image worthy of elaboration. Given the present interest in the indexical nature of film and its capacity to show not only what was in front of the camera but also to weave together various media narratives, the idea that the omission of certain significant details on a tele-journalistic platform could call back to the time when those silences were compelled against the Cuban people only further strengthens the conviction that those discursive tapestries were not undone by the censorship but were reinforced by them. Stock goes on to analyze the impact of this phenomenon within the context of the yearly Muestra Nacional de Nuevos Realizadores that began in 2000. There are also those films whose connective tissue comprises a similar variety of news media and whose silences concerning certain censorial omissions dovetail with this attempt at historical mis-memorializing. Chávez's *Ciudad en rojo* is a representative example of just such a film.

The following analysis of Chávez's *Ciudad en rojo* and *El día más largo* takes as its starting point the assumption that what is excluded can be as or more significant than what is included. Unlike but related to Stock's analysis of the young and experimental

filmmakers responding to the event, what follows is something of a negative hermeneutics.[155] What is missing from *Ciudad en rojo* is perhaps not as blatant as the above example, but the implications are no less consequential.

Like *Memorias del subdesarrollo*, Chávez's *Ciudad en rojo* is an adaptation of a 1960s Cuban novel that borrows from the Noticiero heritage to look back on the Revolution's early years. Unlike Gutiérrez Alea's film, however, *Ciudad en rojo* exhibits a certain faith in appearances by uncritically planting José Soler Puig's *Bertillón 166* between, as Enrique González Conty puts it, "two archival pillars: the documentaries of the early sixties and the *noticieros*, both Noticiero ICAIC and NotiCuba" (Conty 25). In Chávez's use of these materials there are at least three problematic issues of anachronism whose importance is indispensable: the first pertains to the linkage of past and present in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the ICAIC. This is the most obvious and—perhaps due to its obviousness—the least worrisome. The second problem pertains to the use of post-1959 footage to establish the "present" of the film, whose setting is 1958 Santiago. This is troublesome because it presumes an audience that is either unaware of the anachronism or that does not care, and therefore leads us to conclude that the trope of the newsreel has lost all power to encourage public debate. Worse yet, this could lead one to view the Revolution's 1960s is indistinguishable from the pre-Revolutionary 1950s—an unlikely critical view since it is nowhere else present in Chávez's work. The third and

[155] As in Jameson: "A negative hermeneutic, then, would … wish to use the narrative raw material shared by myth and 'historical' literatures to sharpen our sense of historical difference, and to stimulate an increasingly vivid apprehension of what happens when plot falls into history, so to speak, and enters the force fields of the modern societies. (Jameson, *The Political Unconscious*, 130); Also, Iser: "Blanks and negations increase the density of fictional texts, for the omissions and cancellation indicate that practically all the formulations of the text refer to an unformulated background, and so the formulated text has a kind of unformulated double. This 'double' we shall call negativity . . . . Unlike negation, negativity is not formulated by the text, but forms the unwritten base; it does not negate the formulation of the text, but–via blanks and negations–conditions them (225–26). [Iser, Wolfgang. *The Act of Reading* . Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1980.]

most limiting temporal disjuncture is that which erases the terms of the debate that those media put forth over the course of the 1960s.[156]

To examine the repercussions of this last concern, the films *Historias de la Revolución* and *Soy Cuba* (as considered in Chapter 1) provide a more apt point of contact than *Memorias del subdesarrollo*. In tandem with the documentarians of the day and in direct opposition to Kalatozov's epic rendition of what was essentially the same story, Gutiérrez Alea's early work established a firm, easily digestible journalistic narrative that he eventually looked back on critically with *Memorias*. *Ciudad en rojo* ignores that crucial process of maturation. It instead reenters the realist versus mytho-poetic debate as played out in the early 1960s—clearly aligning with the realist camp and, thus, ignoring the increasing dynamism of the years that separated *Historias* and *Memorias*, not to mention the intervening years that began with the Quinquenio Gris. *Ciudad en rojo* roughly treats the same issues during the same time period as *Historias* and *Soy Cuba*. The plot follows several dissidents attempting to undermine the local government officials, mostly police. As with its predecessors, there are a variety of spoken and visual cues alluding to newspapers—primarily referring to obituaries—and photographs of the deceased appear in the closing credits to affirm a continued faith in the pictorial index. There are even a few sightings of film journalists with handheld Bolex cameras trying to record moments of protest. These moments resemble the all too familiar referentiality of the more ambitious films of the mid- to late 1960s but ultimately fail to engage critically with the complex politics of trans-media representation in which those films participated.

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[156] Unlike the films considered below that engage with the newsreels nostalgically—critically or otherwise—Chávez's treatment of the past is, fit to the occasion, celebratory.

The play between the rational and the irrational found in *Soy Cuba* and won out officially by *Historias* presents itself in *Ciudad en rojo* as well. In a moment comparable to the debate in *Soy Cuba* where the rational and the emotional verbally clashed, Waldino, one among the handful of protagonists, accuses the younger, apparently more reactionary revolutionaries of hotheadedness: "Por suerte ni usted ni yo decidimos las estrategias de esta lucha… Una cosa es la lucha revolucionaria y otra el anarquismo y la improvisación" (17:33). His opponent consequently reduces him with racist derision, suggesting that "these people"[157] simply divert themselves with protests and "discursitos." Chávez leaves the dispute unresolved by sending Waldino inexplicably away and thereby inhibits any meaningful dialogue between them. What began as a potentially meaningful clash of ideas results not in a synthesis but in a delayed or evaded resolution. Like Gertrude Stein's Oakland, there is no *here* here. This is in part due to the film's overriding flat affect. As one critic puts it: "la gente merece llorar con estas cosas. Un filme como este venía pintado para ello, para despertar grandes emociones. Pero no vi a nadie llorando" (Salas "CIUDAD"). Other moments in the film are similarly ungratifying: Chávez cuts away from the more grotesque scenes of torture and murder and leaves us instead with the obligatory sound of a gun fired off screen as heard by characters somewhere conveniently within earshot; important decisions and responsibilities are passed up a hierarchical ladder—as in the quote above regarding those unnamed strategists; a Revolutionary's guilt from having committed a murder is also passed on and reduced to "cumpliendo órdenes del movimiento"; even several characters shown to become martyrs for their cause are denied their on-screen deaths and the details of their heroic departures go uncommented. In each of these instances there is an

[157] This could refer to the communist party in Cuba or Afro-Cubans.

overwhelming sense of omission, or incompleteness, as if, like the anachronistic erasure of the passage of time between 1958 and the newsreel footage that bookends the film or like the failure to mention the *pavonato* in the televised interviews of Pavón and Serguera, such details could be omitted without notice or effect. These moments, together with the uni-dimensional and uncritical adoption of the newsreel and documentary footage evinces a *new-old* Cuban cinema, a retrograde and decaffeinated Gutiérrez Alea or Álvarez. In this light *Ciudad en rojo* presents a view of an argument long since abandoned and whose premises it upholds without reference to its opposition. In other words, it assumes that by 2009 the official is the only voice in the discussion.[158] Filmmakers such as Koster, Zayaz, and Egusquiza Zorrilla prove otherwise.

Before turning to consider the ways unofficial narratives counter the official ICAIC archivisitic historiography here represented by Rebeca Chávez, a brief study of the short documentary *El día más largo* will summarize the underlying issues at stake when the journalistic stands in for—as opposed to augmenting or leading to—the historical as opposed to augmenting or leading to it. As discussed in Chapter 1, many of the filmmakers that employed news media within their films evinced a clear understanding of their work as part of a dialogue or progression of ideas. This progression implies a movement forward but does not, as Gutiérrez Alea demonstrates with *Memorias*, deny the possibility of looking back to rehash certain argumentative positions once the premises on which they are based have proven insufficient. If the fiction film *Ciudad en rojo* rejects the advancement of a certain strand of debate

[158] For more on *Ciudad en rojo*'s official status, see González Conty's analysis in *Archiving the Revolution: Claiming History in Cuban Literature and Film*

unfolding during the 1960s within journalistic-cinematic narratives, *El día más largo* rejects the notion of history as dialogue in the first place.

Like Chávez's early *Imágenes en la memoria*, *El día más largo* has a charismatic and disarming vitality. The frenetic energy of its pacing and its aural and visual montage of radio and photojournalistic images carry with them the excitement of the final days of the insurrection against the Batista government. The celebratory mood of the announcer of Radio Rebelde that Chávez employs to connect a string of photographs recalls the early Noticieros, Kalatozov's long-take traipsing through the Sierra camp in *Soy Cuba*, and Guillén Landrián's various radiophonic links in *Ociel del Toa* and *Retornar a Baracoa*. The emotion leads into the similarly passionate speech given by young, triumphant Fidel Castro in the televised interview occupying the center of the roughly eighteen minute piece. Inasmuch as the film incites the viewer toward a heightened emotional state akin to that of those experiencing the celebration firsthand, it succeeds in transplanting us to the time and place of the event—an undeniable and laudable accomplishment in cinematography. In doing so it raises important questions concerning the memorial function of cinematic historiography: When does journalism become history? Must it? What does it *mean* to create a journalistic account of an event more than fifty years later? Would such a case be an example of history rejected or historiography perfected? Inasmuch as *El día más largo* utilizes personal testimony to dynamize a series of photographic images it can be said to replicate the organizational force of *Imágenes en la memoria*. The crucial difference, of course, is that the dynamism provided by the speaker—who is for obvious reasons unaware of his role within a film to be produced a half century in the future—stems from the actual lived experience for which he provides testimonial commentary. That is why, according to the below distinction between

historiography and journalism, *Imágenes* can be considered historiographical but *El día más largo* fits instead into a problematic sub-category of journalism.

Given the time elapsed between the original footage and the release of the documentary it would be misleading to say that *El día más largo* is journalism, yet that seems to be all it is and its composite materials concur: aside from the digital editing evident in the horizontal wipes that transition from photograph to film and back there is virtually no substantive difference between this documentary and a one of Álvarez's early newsreels. Even its length of under twenty minutes conforms to one of the longer special editions—something Batista's abandoning of the country would certainly have merited had the Noticiero already been established. We could point out the lack of didactic narrator, the missing Noticiero ICAIC stamp in the opening credits, or other minutiae but there is nothing here that indicates a backward looking perspective. With this recognizable amalgamation of news media materials, Chávez has created not a retrospective but an *anachro*spective unlike any of the other films considered in this study. The overwhelming majority of films from both Cuba and Brazil that emplot news media have done so to frame specific events or historical moments for re-consideration. Having found this footage in a news station film archive, Chávez shows us the news as if it were still new.

The distinction between historiography and journalism is not insignificant for our understanding of this and similar cinematic-archival revivals. Nevertheless the imaginary line that divides one from the other temporally is less clear than the conceptual distinctions between them. We can dismissively note that fifty years would suffice to forge such a distinction in most cases, but the treatment of the materials in *El día más largo* problematizes this assumption. Matilde Eiroa clarifies this problem in terms very

much in line with my argumentation by raising the question to the level of opposing modalities:

> (La historia) no puede quedarse en la mera reproducción de las fuentes encontradas en los archivos, sino que debe ofrecer contextos, pautas y razonamientos para que la sociedad encuentre el sentido y la significación del pasado que nos llega. El sueño positivista de capturar el pasado en su plenitud evidencial no ha podido cumplirse en su totalidad en gran parte por problemas de grabación y transmisión de la información, aunque cada vez más es posible recuperar el pasado con herramientas y tecnologías del presente. En cuanto al (periodismo), tiene una fundamental faceta interpretativa y opinativa, además de la informativa, porque el periodismo descifra la realidad a fin de que los receptores puedan entenderla y actuar en consecuencia (Eiroa 257).

According to this definition, Chávez's treatment of *El día más largo* cannot be considered historiographical because it merely reproduces the found materials and in no way offers context or connects the material with the moment of its re-production as a documentary. As a personal testimony, the reproduced content offers the interpretive and opinionative elements requisite of journalism yet the final kernel in this definition evades us somewhat, leaving us to question what we are to do with the presented information. Unlike the developing discourse of the 1960s, the film—like Chávez's *Ciudad en rojo*—isolates itself from contending perspectives of any kind or, for that matter, of any time.

Figures 38 and 39: New old journalism in *El día más largo*

Following this dramatic build up I have no intention of tearing down the film or dissecting it for some hidden ideological trace. It is more useful as a contrast to the films that follow for the questions it raises than for the many possible interpretations it can foster. *El día más largo* provides a look at one extreme on a scale between what we can consider objective reporting and subjective interpretation of facts, the opposite end of which most unofficial, non-ICAIC produced films will take. In this sense, *El día más largo* most closely approximates the ideal of journalism commonly criticized by opponents of the Cuban version of journalism since at least the Quinquenio Gris. But it also does the opposite: it fails to report on the facts of the present and opts instead to ignore the contemporary moment, its facts, its occurrences, and its voices. I turn now to consider a select few examples of films that borrow from the archive to formulate a history of the present that forces a dialogue between past and present—diachronically rather than anachronically—and consequently encourages further reflection on the relationship between historiographical and journalistic, unofficial and official discourse.

MEMORY OF THE WORLD: NOTICIERO ICAIC IN THE DIGITAL AGE

In terms of mass media and communication systems, the issue of asymmetric access brought to light in the above encounter also portends a broader polemic vis-à-vis the recent project of preserving and digitizing the Noticiero ICAIC archive. Leading up to the celebration of the ICAIC's fiftieth anniversary in 2009, the institute applied to UNESCO to have the entirety of the newsreel collection included in its Memory of the World Register. Its acceptance did not come in time for the anniversary festivities but its eventual inclusion in August 2009 has since raised a number of issues concerning access and politics of preservation. As Mariana Johnson summarily puts it,

> The 1,493 editions of the Noticieros represent 249 hours of footage. The question of how ICAIC will facilitate "universal access"--one objective of the Memory of the World program--to such an expansive collection looms large. Even if complete digitization were possible, the uneven distribution of the internet within Cuba complicates any ideas about total accessibility (M. Johnson 14).

The attempt to provide universal or total access is similarly problematic if we extend the conversation to include the rest of the world. To the list of quandaries Johnson provides we can add the significance of the language barrier erected in the nearly 250 hours of footage. Subtitling or translating this amount of material into one, let alone to *all* languages included in the ambitious claim toward universality, would be a tremendous undertaking to say the least. Thus through the logistical impasse of total access we must arrive at the ever-present decision of omitting not only the countless billions yet to have internet access but also those that do not speak Spanish. Presently we can access some of the newsreels produced between 1960-66 in fragmentary form online via France's Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (www.ina.fr) and there is, as yet, no subtitle or attempt to linguistically broaden access to the material.

The language barrier is correlated in at least two ways to the present discussion of memory operant within and across journalistic film, as the filmed fact moves from the journalistic toward the historiographical: the first is that the films were originally intended not for a universal audience but for a Latin American one; the second is that they were intended to dialectically "unfold along a consistent and expanding argumentative line" which assumes that the newsreels' spoken commentary is as pertinent as its images (qtd in M. Johnson 14). As Mariana Johnson notes, part of the newsreel's appeal is its capacity to present a counter-history to that of the official, hegemonic U.S. position. She writes, "the irony…is that, in working to ensure the preservation of their militantly anti-imperialist newsreel collection, ICAIC must

transform its own cultural practices to conform to the international standards, the procedures, and, indeed, the enterprise of the heritage business"—that is, the heritage business as represented by the interests of the UNESCO and its myriad constituents (M. Johnson 11). The language barrier may be one factor that resists the assimilation of the newsreels into a mummified museum piece. That the images are, for the large part of the world that does not speak Spanish, left to stand for themselves is no minor detail. It simultaneously raises the stakes of interpretation of the original images while also availing the images to the world at large to interpret. The fifty year anniversary and Fidel Castro's recent place on the sideline of the Cuban political field further raises these stakes. As the following analysis of the many iterations of the Noticiero footage in multiple, decentered domains demonstrates, the need to confine meaning within a controlled, official space will be constantly at odds with a contentious desire on the part of filmmakers outside the ICAIC to reformulate Cuban history according to evolving paradigms.

One outspoken proponent for the preservation of the Noticiero ICAIC film archive has been Brazilian filmmaker and scholar Alice de Andrade. The daughter of Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, director of the Cinema Novo classic *Macunaíma* and the lesser known public education film *Linguagem de persuasão* discussed in Chapter 3, Alice de Andrade studied in the Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión in San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba. Not surprisingly, a school that was established by three former students of Cesare Zavattini from the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome during the early 1950s—Julio García Espinosa, Fernando Birri, and Gabriel García Márquez—fostered minimalist, neorealist approaches to filmmaking. That modus operandi was especially useful, if not necessary, for a generation of filmmakers working

under unprecedented material and financial limitations. Like their 1960s predecessors, the new school made use of new technologies to reduce costs—video now replacing film for many experimental and ambitious cinematographers in the early years of the Special Period. But even video was difficult to acquire and costly to reproduce on a scale that could reach a broad audience. Found materials again became the norm and pastiche returned as an aesthetic current.[159] Due to the same constrictions, Alice de Andrade and many of her colleagues in the EICTV took up film restoration as a project long before the fiftieth anniversary push to officially memorialize the ICAIC archive via the UNESCO register.

Alice de Andrade's restorative work began with her father's oeuvre of fourteen films, all of which she restored and digitized. Prior to beginning work on *Memoria cubana* with footage from the Noticiero, she directed *Historias cruzadas* (2008). *Historias cruzadas* preempts *Memoria cubana* both thematically and aesthetically. In the former, Alice de Andrade retells the story of her father's career as both an intimate family portrait and as an artist's clash against a repressive political system. In the latter, she tells the story of another family—the family of filmmakers working together in the Noticiero under the sympathetic, genial patriarch Álvarez—and the world political system it confronted as a leftist cinematic news source. In both cases the director employs archival footage of the restored films and person-to-person interviews with the surviving members of each "lineage." The idea of the family unit connects the present with the past in a personal-emotional way more subtly treated than comparable historical attempts to forge a purely indexical-material bind between time periods (e.g. the blatant *Subdesarrollo en*

[159] For more on the school and its influence on the Special Period and new millennium filmmakers, see Anne Marie Stock's *On Location in Cuba* (2009).

las memorias). Without opening a line of inquiry regarding the various genealogies—familial and figurative—that connect films with their future generations, suffice it to say that Alice de Andrade explores with these family ties the personal connection to communal historiography and, in the process, binds the restored image to its personal contexts as well as its historical ones.

The question of accessibility and language regarding both *Historias cruzadas* and *Memoria cubana* tells its own story. The story is familiar to anyone doing research on/with digital filmmaking and dissemination in the age of Youtube and Vimeo: anonymity reigns supreme while those responsible for uploading are often identified with a blank avatar and an assumed alias; authorship and copyright often go ignored or evaded—for example, breaking the film into parts to avoid detection in the vein of "such-and-such, filme completo [part 1/7]," or adding underscores and/or numbers to throw off digital search algorithms from distribution companies ("such_and_such, fi1me c0mp1et0"); and there are no guarantees that the material will be available from one day to the next. Consequently, finding the films can be its own adventure and access becomes complicated from the outset.

Language adds another level of complication to the quest. My personal experience with *Memoria cubana* is indicative of the issues associated with language and dissemination that is more than merely anecdotal. I found the film online in the same way and for the same reasons that I was able to access *Linguagem de persuasão*: Alice de Andrade's restorative retrospective films have been uploaded through French websites, complete with French language dubbing in some cases and subtitles in others. Thus, one cannot directly access *Memoria cubana* but can view *Mémoire Cubaine* if willing and able to suffer the French voiceover narration. This linguistic anomaly has its origins in

the multi-national character of film financing for Cubans during and after the Special Period. It also advances my point about accessibility in the digital age where digital dissemination has opened some paths toward broader, global viewership but has by no means availed the world to a free flow of cinematic content. In the same vein, it is no less significant that the actual location of the material *Memoria Cubana* cannot be found via Google search whereas the digitized French language version can be with little difficulty.

The idea of the archive as a climate controlled space somewhere an airplane's distance away is inverted when working with films uploaded on the internet. Linguistic and accessorial limitations in the digital age stand in for international customs, passport agencies, and official overseers. Authority is thus undermined and the notion of officialdom is decentered in the process of relocating content from a material to a digital archive. Yet the film *Memoria cubana* itself still fits within an officialized framework of Cuban cinematic historiography, thanks in part to the permissions granted to Alice de Andrade, her co-director Iván Napolés—one of Álvarez's cameramen—and the support of the ICAIC. The film also benefited from the backing of the EICTV, the Fundación Internacional de Archivo Fílmico (FIAF), Ibermedia, and UNESCO. In line with the above argumentation concerning the necessary process of selection and its de facto opposite (omission), Alice de Andrade refers in an interview to a paltry nine hours of duplicated film from the archive of nearly 250 hours of footage—which is then reduced again and combined with new footage to total just over an hour. The film evinces a clear preference for major geo-political moments of the time period.[160] The result, as I discuss in greater detail below, is one of ovation. As Mariana Johnson concedes, there are many

[160] She specifically uses the term duplicate instead of restore in order to emphasize the physical process of copying onto new film stock, a process which carries with it the original's impurities rather than polishing them away, and thereby emphasizes the fidelity to and maintenance of the original photographic index.

possible stories to be told with the Notciero footage, some of which have already appeared on Youtube in the form of a critical curation of pieces that deride the Cuban government (M. Johnson 14). Where, how, and in what languages the noticieros appear will determine the possibilities for future curators of the Noticiero ICAIC material.

As an official document with a foundation in journalistic cinematography, *Memoria cubana*'s relationship to the ICAIC reveals an improbable genealogy tracing back to one polemical film in particular that tugs at the very thread of the photographic index as it connects the historic images of the 1960s with the economic and ideological crisis of the Special Period: *Madagascar* (1993). Fernando Pérez's controversial classic threw the ICAIC into turmoil in the highly sensitive time of the early years of the Special Period when the Cuban Revolutionary project was most vulnerable. It paints a picture of destitution and anxiety, one described by Cuban intellectual Ambrosio Fornet as an "x-ray exposure of the prevailing state of our soul" (qtd. in Stock 2). Yet the film also avails itself to notions of traditional photographic exposure that preclude the x-ray, and it is in this domain that this association of *Madagascar* and *Memoria cubana* takes shape. The two films are separated by the length of just about all imaginable binaries, including that pesky hyphen between "non" and "fiction," yet they are nevertheless unified by one crucial scene. Pérez hauntingly depicts an elderly woman sitting alone in a dimly lit room, examining an old newspaper photograph with a magnifying glass. She struggles to locate herself within a crowd. She asks, "¿Dónde estoy yo?" The question brilliantly resonates between two times of ideological rupture. It simultaneously links what she remembers of her location within that celebratory moment with the more abstract question of *where am I* (as "where have I come to be?") as well as the forward-looking *where am I* ("where do I go from here?"). The blurred, pointillist image of a magnified

newspaper photograph abstracts the historic moment in a way that problematizes the photojournalistic index and, in doing so, portends a crisis in representation within the various Noticiero ICAIC spinoffs.

In *Memoria cubana* we find a similar scene of geriatric reminiscence wherein an elderly woman with a film camera pointed at her looks at old photographs, struggling in vain to place herself among those forgotten days (*Fig.*40).[161] The woman is Rosalina Saavedra, a former film stock developer and processer for the Noticiero ICAIC team. When co-director Iván Napolés arrives to visit her in her home she does not immediately recognize him. As she describes how attractive Ivan was in his youth (sans beard), we are shown full-frame black and white photographs of the young man working on various projects. Alice de Andrade also plays with the photographic index and its relationship to memory by presenting printed photographs for the consideration of the former Noticiero workers she interviews. In the process the film assumes that the photographs provide something, minute detail perhaps, which has been lost in the memories of the individuals that look upon them. On the one hand, these images function as brief visual flashbacks that affirm Rosalina's memory of a handsome young coworker. On the other, they suggest that those memories are incomplete somehow. Rosalina is visibly confused; she rambles somewhat when given the opportunity to speak; and her facial expression is daunted and sorrowful when she responds to a question about going to see the newsreels in a theater nearby, despite the thrill she mentions arising from the memories (Fig.41). The interplay of private and shared memories that unfolds within Rosalina's scene mirrors the film's overarching action: it uses the Noticiero ICAIC footage to

[161] Note the French subtitles. This image was taken from the *Mémoire Cubaine* online accessible version of the film.

simultaneously provide evidence for a given perspective—that of the Noticiero family that provides personal testimony—on the host of events covered over its thirty year tenure while also refreshing those stale memories by re-viewing the footage.

The film comprises several other instances and other media to reminisce with additional interviewed members of the Noticiero ICAIC family. In addition to the printed photographs passed around, *Memoria cubana* upholds the process of restoration and digitization by including laptop presentations of a few of the newsreels relevant to the interviewed participants. The film shows us *Muerte al invasor* footage in a film-with-a-film moment of reflexivity, now on a laptop instead of a television as Sergio found it in *Memorias del subdesarrollo*. Alice de Andrade does not stop there with the cinematic-journalistic references. The *Muerte al invasor* newspaper printed movie poster discussed in Chapter 1 punctuates a parade of advertisements for well-known Cuban films. The verifiable time-stamps of the news reels and the fiction films in dialogue with them thereby tie in with the films that host them, even fifty years into the future. Unlike the character in search of herself in *Madagascar*, the time-stamps of these news materials so tightly-woven together in their original milieu show us precisely when and where they are.

Figures 40, 41, and 42: Photography, mismemory, and deictic redundancy in *Imágenes en la memoria*

Given the sheer abundance of references to the news media across the Cuban filmscape of the 1960s, it should come as no surprise that they return here and there in historical reflections on the times. But their role as news—as it stands for a certain myopic historiography—undermines their capacity to speak historically without the need for further elaboration. Much like Rebeca Chávez's *Imágenes en la memoria*, *El día más largo*, and *Ciudad en rojo*, the lack of context that goes beyond the personal/anecdotal dissonates with any formalized conception of historiography.[162] In these cases, leaving the facts to speak for themselves, as it were, results not in a view of the history of Cuba and/in the world as unfolding over time, now more clearly visible thanks to historical hindsight, but instead emphasizes the individual experience as part and parcel in the recording of those data. As fascinating as many of those stories are—and here I refer to the electric dynamism of the photographers telling their stories in *Imágenes en la memoria* as well as to the description of war correspondence in *Memoria cubana* from cinematographers that went to Vietnam, Bolivia, and Angola—they pertain at least as much, if not more, to a concern for personal safety than to historical consciousness.

The various filmmaker testimonies, the photographic and journalistic moving images, and the sets and subsets of indices on display in *Memoria cubana* sin against the Noticiero ICAIC archive's distrust of the simple verifiability of photographic realism. If, as I argue in Chapter 1, the emplotment of news media in 1960s Cuban cinema holds argumentation and trans-media discourse above a naïve faith in images, then this and similar attempts to memorialize the Noticiero ICAIC while omitting the complex discourse present within them does not give us the whole picture. Yet that seems to be the

[162] Rebeca Chávez appears in *Memoria cubana* as well. In one instance she can be seen in front of a digital editing apparatus working on *Ciudad en rojo*.

basis for the decision to digitize and put online the contents of the archive without hitherto confronting the language barrier issue. One moment in *Memoria cubana* even flattens the irony of this reflexivity without context: an extreme close-up of a photograph of a group of men has a circle penned around a camera that we are told was the very camera used to film "Girón" (Fig.42). In case the circle is not clear enough, a man's finger points to the camera for further clarification. This mirrored deictic pointing of camera to camera and finger to camera undermines the deserved merit of the original ICAIC films that tackled the issue of mediated indexicality, that threw asunder realism as soon as they recognized it was incompatible with the complexity of their lived experience, and that incorporated the photographic and journalistic apparatuses to cast reasonable doubt on—rather than to affirm—the facticity of images.

INA.FR AS MODERN FILM PASTICHE

Figure 44: INA.fr banner

Three years after the fiftieth anniversary celebration and the UNESCO's decision to include the Noticiero ICAIC archive in its Memory of the World Registry, the ICAIC and the Institut national de l'audiovisuel signed "un accord de collaboration portant sur la restauration, la numérisation et la valorisation des images d'actualités latino-américaines de l'ICAIC."[163] As I mentioned above, this agreement included the possibility of

[163] [a collaboration agreement for the restoration, digitization and enhancement of the images of Noticiero ICAIC]

releasing online the archive material. The wording taken from the website expresses the combined effort to not only restore and digitize, but to enhance or "valorize" ("la valorization") the images as well. Aside from the monetary issues that preempted the initial call for help that eventually led to partnering with UNESCO and INA, the notion of value here may raise eyebrows for the internet user discomforted by how their browser search history leads to advertisements on the INA.fr page. So called interest-based advertisements can be found in three separate locations on the otherwise sleek homepage. International copyright law and photography has its own unique history in Cuba and can be better understood by watching the independent film *Chevolution* (2010) than by looking to this website. Yet the advertisements, together with INA.fr's "boutique" where one can purchase items related to the videos, raise questions akin to those surrounding the notorious, limitless manufacture and marketing of Alberto Korda's photograph of Che Guevara. The website's banner (Fig. 44, above) substantiates this comparison with Korda: a red star in the center divides the bookending photographs of Che and Fidel in black and white to match the seductively aggressive color combination in the popularized, pop-art image of Che. This is what monetized Cuban memory looks like. It is sleek, it is shiny, and most problematically it is condensed into de-contextualized fragments.

The site currently offers not the full ten minute montages as they would have run in their original showing but only the briefest of extracts. If the ten minute newsreel represented something of a weekly newspaper from cover to cover, these excerpts are more like the front-page headlines and bylines. Abbreviated clips revisit the questions raised above concerning selection and omission, as well as the problematic ambiguity of authorship. For example, nowhere on the page can we find an indication of the editors or

the committee that decided which of these clips to upload. Nor does the site include any reference to the omitted material that would have run with the presently available clips. What we find instead is a list of short videos that we can choose to arrange according to various criteria: length, publish date, views, and so on. This criteria, layout, and advertising system is all too familiar for the frequenter of sites like Youtube and Vimeo, and this familiarity has the unfortunate side-effect of flattening the content to the degree that forces a comparison to the average claptrap found on those sites. There are innumerable directions to go when considering the implications of such a comparison. So as to avoid straying too far into this murky water, suffice it to note the lack of a comment section beneath the videos that would at least pay homage to the discursive impulse these films put forth in their original moments. The language barrier, unequal and limited access, unclear authorship, fragmentation, and disabled discussion fully annihilate the rationalizing apparatus of the Noticiero—particularly as it evolved in the 1960s.

The INA.fr memorial "register," or list, extends a different sort of rationalizing impulse that we have seen before, one that has jumped tracks from the discursive/dialogic toward the scientific and insane. Like the break between the official and unofficial experimentalism of Álvarez and Guillén Landrián—where the former's monstrous *LBJ* thematically and aesthetically broke for the figurative mad house while the latter's films left him in a literal one—the INA.fr site shows a digital, categorical ordering run amok. What possible benefit could we gain, for instance, by ordering the pieces, cut to arbitrary lengths, according to their duration? In terms of the clips' historiographical potential, such an order would scatter them into a completely random and therefore even further confused context, providing a semblance of order in lieu of the natural chronological order typically employed in historiography to structure meaning across time.

Yet we need not be dismayed by the ambiguities of the Noticiero's new online home. What remains after the various dislocations is, after all, consistent with the many other news media related dislocations that began with the disparate geographies transversed first by newspaper, then by radio, and subsequently television. The internet clearly follows this trend and in the process adds a new spin on an old problem. What began as Guillén Landrián's criticism in *Ociel del Toa* and *Retornar a Baracoa,* can now be brought to bear on this new set of journalistic disorganization. If we conceive of the INA.fr website as one more pastiche of found film material among the host of Cuban films already subscribed to that practice then we get a clearer picture of the role of the online digital archive as yet another medium through which news media operate. No longer an archive to replace the physical building, INA.fr functions more like the earlier pastiche films themselves—saving the news material by copying it and carrying it forward. As Alice de Andrade emphasizes, the process of preserving involves duplicating the original as well as conserving it. Figures 45-47 below show the process of duplication/preservation at work in different journalistic/cinematic modes and at different historical moments, including—from left to right—Álvarez's *Now!*, Alea's *Memorias del subdesarrollo*, and finally again INA.fr. Another temporal triptych in tune with Köster's *Subdesarrollo en las memorias*, this set of images offers, in order, Álvarez's re-use of the U.S. news material, its revival in *Memorias*, and now a third return—complete with the hyperlinked option to "share" via Facebook, Twitter, or elsewhere and the possessive INA.fr stamp in the bottom right corner. All three cases re-shelve the original material and thereby preserve it within their respective archivistic shelving.

Figures 45, 46, 47: *Now!*, *Memorias del subdesarrollo*, and *INA.fr*

The three figures above also materialize the discourse in which they participate and, thanks to their journalistic heritage, mutually inform one another. By this I mean to emphasize that an awareness of the material's place in different media at different moments has something to offer students of Cuban cinematic history despite the scholastic shortcomings of the INA.fr website. For example, Fig.45 can be found in the newsreel clip "Represión racial en los Estados Unidos" (10 August 1964), which predates the release of *Now!* by a year, revealing the source from which the material likely arose. This kernel also expands outward further into the history of cinema in light of the original newsreel. Therein Fidel Castro cites the ideological indoctrination of race relations in the United States through film via a reading of the American Tarzan films he saw as a child. The newsreel opens with images of a white Tarzan unthinkingly spearing first black men in loin cloths then lions before juxtaposing this slaughter against the police violence constituting the second of the clip's two minutes. With this insight we might also revisit the footage's place on Sergio's apartment television to further substantiate critical readings of race within *Memorias del subdesarrollo* in particular and Cuban cinema in general.[164] Writing from a moment when tension about race relations in the United States is escalating during a different fifty year anniversary—this one of the Selma to

[164]For more on race in Cuban cinema, see Ana Serra's "Conspicuous Absences. Representations of Race in Post–1959 Cuban Film".

Montgomery Marches of 1965—and while U.S./Cuban political relations are simultaneously and finally thawing, these historic images also resonate with current trends in news coverage. With these observations I mean to offer a mere glimpse of the discursive potential housed within this cinematic hall of mirrors, not to draw clear-cut conclusions from them but, in accordance with what I see as their most salient feature, to encourage a view of their capacity to perpetuate a rationalizing discussion even now (*Now!*), in spite of the inherent hurdles presented by the new digital medium.

THE REDEMPTION OF THE IRRATIONAL: NICOLÁS GUILLÉN LANDRIÁN

The sheer quantity of filmic data from the Noticiero ICAIC to be digitized and uploaded makes it difficult to determine what has been omitted so far from the newly minted online archive of INA.fr. At the same time, given the communal nature of the process, it would seem impossible to identify the authors of those omissions. One controversial figure nevertheless casts a shadow over the current (official) digital archive: Nicolás Guillén Landrián. Searching his name on INA.fr is met with an inexplicably exclamatory "Pas de données!"—no data! Coincidentally, neither he nor his work appear in Alice de Andrade's *Memoria cubana* or any of Chávez's films to date. His death in 2003 would have made an interview difficult to say the least but the total absence of his films from *Memoria cubana* and the INA.fr archive speak more to the powers of omission still casting its own shadow in the manner of the abovementioned revivification of Pavón, Serguera, and the like around the same time. Had his films been completely forgotten we might also overlook the omission as one of convenience rather than contrivance. But Guillén Landrián's archive had already experienced its own return prior to the fifty year anniversary that sparked the UNESCO World Memory Register project. What follows will consider Guillén Landrián's place in contemporary Cuban cinema as a

messianic fulfillment of not only the figure and his works, but also as a vindication of the oppositional discursive strategies he employed.

Shortly before his death in 2003, Nicolás Guillén Landrián was resurrected. His revivified body of films was un-entombed from the ICAIC archives by a group of young directors and film students, projected for the first time in over three decades during a *Muestra de jóvenes realizadores* session aptly titled "Premios a la sombra," and eventually digitized and disseminated online. In Chapter 1 I analyzed various disconnections present in Guillén Landrián's films and their relationship to the cinematic news media milieu of 1960s Cuba. Rather than incorporating journalistic tropes to bolster the veracity of his projects, I maintain that the intertextual play of cinematic and communicative media references in Guillén Landrián's films dissonates with the then popular use of such devices by challenging their legitimacy. This perspective ultimately complicates the repurposing of Guillén Landrián's films as raw historical material following his death in the posthumously released homage films *Café con leche* (2003, dir. Manuel Zayas) and *Nicolás, El fin pero no es el fin* (2005, dir. Jorge Egusquiza Zorilla). Despite his uplifted status and the revisionary historiography through which his work now operates, I contend that Guillén Landrián represents a paradox by simultaneously condemning and vindicating the ideological forces that first sentenced him to death professionally in the early 1970s.[165]

The censorship and eventual return to light of Guillén Landrián's films ultimately elevated their creator to the status of a messiah for a new generation of filmmakers—his return gave new meaning and reframed an essential period of Cuban history. The

[165] See Dean Luis Reyes's "Exhumaciones de Nicolás Guillén Landrián" and Anne Marie Stock's *Street filmmaking in Cuba* for more analysis on NGL's impact on recent Cuban cinema.

following will examine this messianic return within the context of the above Noticiero ICAIC Latinoamericano revival. As noted in Dean Luis Reyes's "Exhumaciones de Nicolás Guillén Landrián" and Anne Marie Stock's *Street Filmmaking in Cuba*, several influential offshoots of Guillén Landrián's work have emerged since 2003. In keeping with the present line of argument, what follows considers *Café con leche* and *Nicolás, el fin pero no es el fin* because they not only evince Guillén Landrián's influence on their filmmaking style and aesthetic sensibilities, but because they utilize actual footage from his films as found in the ICAIC archives.

The final aphorism of Adorno's *Minima Moralia* provides a theoretical point of departure for the following discussion of Zayas' and Egusquiza Zorilla's work as they relate messianically to Guillén Landrian's films. Adorno describes what he views as philosophy's ethical obligation to render meaning from an event—particularly a disparaging one—through a process of future retrospection. He writes,

> The only philosophy that can be practiced responsibly in the face of despair would be the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the standpoint of redemption. Knowledge has no light but that shed on the world by redemption (Adorno 2005).

Here Adorno postpones the possibility of a complete or total understanding of an event in a way that follows Auerbach's analysis of figure and fulfillment: a given event may take on figurative meaning only through its analogous instantiations in the future. One contradiction that we have already seen to arise within the ICAIC, particularly within the Noticiero newsreels, is that they sought to and arguably succeeded in establishing a history of the present, *in the present*, collapsing figure and fulfillment into one journalistic *now*—or into Walter Benjamin's image of the "present as that of the here-

and-now, in which splinters of messianic time are shot through" (Benjamin 2009).[166] Due to his prior banishment from the official ICAIC film historiography, Guillén Landrián's return via Zayas's and Eguzquiza Zorrilla's films present a moment of renewed opposition that diverges from the comparatively straightforward returns of the Noticiero seen above. In their most basic form those returns were capable of representing themselves as journalism revisited or even, as was the case with *El día más largo*, made new. The newness of Guillén Landrián's work, quite on the contrary, is not due to its treatment as ahistorical or decontexualized found material, but to the fact that it was intentionally and systematically forgotten. His return is thus "shot through" with the potential to reestablish the previously severed ties to historical discourse, both that of the 1960s and that of today.

Manuel Zayas chronologically composes *Café con leche* as a sequence of found footage from the ICAIC archive along a historical trajectory from 1963 to 1972. He intermingles within the clips his own additional footage from some four decades later to demonstrate the passage of time. In one example, Zayas recreates a scene from *Ociel del Toa* in color and with two fully grown men to contrast with the original image of Guillén Landrián's two young boys rowing up stream. Another example from Zayas's rendering of *Ociel del Toa* juxtaposes original footage of a young woman with that of an elderly woman presumed to be the same person. Both updated images resemble the locations from Guillén Landrián's films, resulting in a sense of spatial as well as temporal continuity. Meanwhile, an audio sound track of an interview with Guillén Landrián

[166] In this light the "figure" as I am conceptualizing it vis-à-vis Cuban cinema diverges from the essentially narratological conception employed in Chapter Three. Auerbach's treatment of the term figure considers its development from within religious contexts through literary exegetical contexts. The conceptualization here maintains more of a religious dimension than the Brazilian case.

accompanies Zayas's montage to provide an additional layer of retrospection. The commentary offers primarily autobiographical information concerning Guillén Landrián's experience with each of his films. Neither the juxtaposition of new and old film nor the voiceover narration attempts to establish a rigorous interpretation of the earlier works. Rather, *Café con leche* succeeds in redeeming the original material by re-positioning Guillén Landrián within contemporary Cuban cinematic history. Thus, an opposition to the treatment of time in Rebeca Chávez's films and the INA.fr register emerges immediately: place and time as well as place *in* time are essential to the understanding of Zayas's fulfillment of Guillén Landrián's historical promise.

There are other specters that emerge along with Guillén Landrián that set the discursive loom in motion. The *Umberto D.* footage discussed in Chapter 1 resurfaces within *En un barrio viejo* within Zayas's *Café con leche*, resulting in something approaching a Borgesian infinite regress that shuffles reflectively outward. The poor Italian pensioner becomes a post-modern simulacrum, a fiction embedded at the center of a historiographic film determined to tell the truth about a documentarian's work and life. Looking back we see the character of Umberto D. as a fictive figure to be fulfilled hermeneutically at some distant point or points in the future. He is not only a cinematic analogue for the Cubans shown wandering the streets looking for alms during the filming of *En un barrio viejo*. As figure, he finds fulfillment in any and all instantiations of the destitute and forgotten persons, be them de Certeau's *wandersmanner* "whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of an urban 'text' they write without being able to read" (De Certeau 93) or Agamben's *homines sacri*. *Café con leche* signals a return to these figures within Cuban cinematic historiography that cannot yet vindicate their struggles retrospectively but calls for their redemption by showing that they remain, today, to be

filmed and given meaning. In this vein the film also calls for the redemption of the filmic index itself as a conveyor of knowledge across time and space: by redeeming the filmmaker, Zayas also redeems the ICAIC archive that held his films captive—and herein lies the paradoxical contradiction.

Zayas's use of the found footage from Guillén Landrián's films exemplifies a contradiction inasmuch as it draws from an official source to refute the official story put forth by the operators of that force. Put another way, the film *Café con leche* could not have been made without the films kept within the very archive that hid them and excluded them from public view for more than thirty years. For reasons unknown, the ICAIC archivists maintained the inflammatory footage of Guillén Landrián's films within its protective facilities instead of destroying them. The archive could thus serve as its own defeating force: it became a paradox of historiography in the sense that it allowed for its own self-refutation, whereby such an allowance also and simultaneously served as a self-validation. This was made possible by the permissions granted to Zayas to be able to work within the ICAIC, both in the sense that he physically entered into the space of the archive and in the sense that his film was permitted by the institute. Being thus authorized engendered Guillén Landrián's return but the return itself was not commissioned in any way by the ICAIC. As Deal Luis Reyes points out, the film students responsible for disseminating the long-forgotten director's view of 1960s Cuba did so on their own—hence the poor quality of the copy. This is indeed a far cry from the internationally funded programs affiliated with the UNESCO World Memory Register and the *Memoria cubana* film a few years later.

The figure of Umberto D. as an unlikely representative of Cubanness in the 1960s also returns and is fulfilled once more by Guillén Landrián himself as a visibly destitute

viejo in the early 2000s. Again re-figuring Umberto D., the films that emerge at and after the end of Guillén Landrián's life, including his final cinematic work *Inside Downtown* (dir. Guillén Landrián, 2001) and Egusquiza Zorilla's *Nicolás, El fin pero no es el fin*, demonstrate an interest in old age and poverty within urban spaces that have ceased to account for or accommodate their well being. In *Nicolás, el fin pero no es el fin*, Guillén Landrián fulfills the promise of his earlier work and vindicates the position of his works within the film archive by essentially embodying the liminal figures he observed in his earlier works. The film's soundtrack borrows from several of Guillén Landrián's pieces, including *En un barrio viejo*, as it wanders along with the aged and exiled director through his quotidian Miami life. Like the frames of the time-worn personages from *Ociel del Toa* in *Café con leche*, the film upholds Guillén Landrián before the camera as if to simply prove his sustained place among the living. It displays his paintings, his home, his loved ones, and his cat. Even the paintings offer their own sort of fulfillment: several are named after as his films, similarly calling back to their moment in the 1960s in their pursuit of historical meaning. In short: the film, like the thought of its protagonist, meanders. It is an exposé which participates in a messianic moment, as Benjamin puts it, splintered and shot through with historical nexus that keep it from devolving into a simple parade of images.

To conceptualize Guillén Landrián in the above terms is to emphasize the signifying potential inherent to the indexical-historiographical nature of the film medium, especially and paradoxically in spite of the mechanisms that have sought to control it. The presence of the radio in his early films once again attests to the distances communicative media can cover and the differences they attempt to erase when flattening differences across disparate communities—now communities separated by time in a

second way, no longer simply left behind and occupying a different epoch but also within the same place but at a different historical moment. The beauty of this revelation brings us full circle to Gouldner's position regarding news media, ideology, and rational dialogue: whereas the INA.fr (official) site presently offers no space for comment, the YouTube videos featuring Guillén Landrian's films as well as the more recent film projects in which his films reemerge are littered with commentary. Furthermore, the contrast between these two sites emphasizes their opposing degrees of authority. Where the crowd-sourced/community-based nature of YouTube complies with the twenty-first century paradigm of online news media, INA.fr, as well as films such as *Memoria cubana* and the sum total of Rebeca Chávez's work, prioritize an outdated paradigm of center-periphery, passive media consumption that proves itself anathema to the popular emphasis on information distribution once championed by the ICAIC as futuristic and forward-looking. As a fulfillment of the ICAIC archive's historiographical promise, then, Guillén Landrián reinitiates a rationalizing dialogue in its own right and against ideology proper, against ideology as a limit on rational discourse. And as a fulfillment of film's indexical potential as a source of truth, Zayas and Egusguiza Zorrilla invert the rational/irrational pretexts that excluded Guillén Landrián, paving the way for a renewed vitality in historiographical cinematography. Film, in the end and fortuitously, does not offer a conclusive finality for historians but, together with its news media compatriots, provides a basis for continued dialogue.

Conclusion

The emplotment of news media in the film traditions of Cuba and Brazil have proceeded along two divergent paths since the 1960s. The Cuban tradition, as we have seen, has repeatedly returned to the photographic indexical material film stock to repurpose the conserved imagery within a new developing historiography. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the devastating economic situation of the 1990s, the material became again a primary concern for filmmakers whose means were broadly insufficient for commercial full-length features. Thus the term *material* was again split to signal a connection between the financial and the factual. A photojournalistic hermeneutics became necessary as a means of organizing and re-organizing historical data (in the form of film stock) into narrative histories for the post-Soviet generation of filmmakers. The present of the 1990s and early 2000s as its own unique journalistic/historical moment thus partially went undocumented except as it concerned its oft messianic reconfiguration of the past.

In Cuba, the digitization process that accompanied the Noticiero ICAIC archive's restoration also lead to the re-instantiation of a debate between the official and unofficial poles wrestling for control of Cuban historiography. The tragic exclusion of Nicolás Guillén Landrián from the ICAIC in the early 1970s set the stage for his return in the early 2000s—a return celebrated nationally with his inclusion in local film festivals, but made astounding by its dissemination online via YouTube. Digital film technology afforded filmmakers of the post-Soviet era the opportunity to inexpensively make films and, perhaps more importantly, to make them available to an unlimited audience. Alongside Guillén Landrián's rebirth we saw the establishment of the Noticiero ICAIC archive online via UNESCO's Memory of the World project. The digital expansion of the

Cuban film market allowed for side-by-side viewing of the officially sanctioned works of the ICAIC—represented in this project by Rebecca Chávez and Alice de Andrade—with the unofficial, experimental efforts of Jorge Egusquiza Zorrilla and Manuel Zayas. While this renewed debate over Cuban history and its dialectical underpinnings signal a new direction for an old argument, it also has made visible an apparently permanent problem of asymmetrical access to information.

In Brazil, the financial boom at the end of the 1990s, the 'Real (R$)' miracle that stabilized the economy and paved the way for a decade of relative political stability left filmmakers to investigate the remnants of the thirty plus years of material crisis and media control (both political and corporate, often both). Their films connect contemporary sociological studies of criminal and transversal figures to their previous national film instantiations. The marginalized subjects at times quite literally stuck or trapped within the journalistic crossfire in New Millennial Brazilian films were upheld within a multimedia debate set to challenge the national self-image. What we find in comparing the two periods of international film recognition is, in no uncertain terms, a criminological study wherein the news media puts the figure of the outsider on public trial. Zé do Burro, as a representative of the non-urban, folksy outsider struggling against the relatively cosmopolitan and modern image of Salvador da Bahia in Duartes's *Pagador de promessas*, finds his New Millennial echo in another spiritually syncretic Zé (Pequeno) in *Cidade de Deus*. The reflexive superimposition of television news camera and film camera in Farias's *Cidade ameaçada* resounds in Padilha's *Ônibus 174*: Sandro is as much a product of the media and its bloodlust as his cinematic precursor Passarinho—both real-world personages are first eulogized in mass media then on film and both die when their misconstrued crimes lead to an irrational public outcry.

Consequently, what arose in Cuba as a recycling of material imagery via film stock finds its Brazilian counterpart in the recycled stock imagery of criminal stereotypes.

Whereas the Brazilian filmmakers of the 1960s had two clear targets at which they could aim their various critiques, in the intertwined but distinct entities of the news media and the government, Padilha's *Tropa de elite* films depict a world of representational complexity that surpasses its predecessors. As the closing lyric of *Tropa 2* states, the source of violence remains an unknown.[167] High intensity dramas centered on poverty, drug warfare, and police corruption have been shown in New Millennial Brazilian cinema to displace the relatively simplistic versions of judiciary and journalistic ineptitudes in films from the 1960s. Yet the myriad problems these stark issues present are by no means resolved by publicly denouncing the culpable profiteers. As Padilha shows us in *Tropa 2* and as we saw also in *Cidade de deus*, the system remains when its figureheads are ousted from power. Thus the recent financial and political quagmire in which Brazil has found itself —incidentally couched between two global media events in 2014 (the World Cup) and 2016 (the Summer Olympics)—will inevitably lead us to consider the inefficacy of treating Brazil's symptomatic drug violence as if it were the disease of poverty itself. It will be the responsibility of the news media, of filmmakers, and of other purveyors of public information to take to task the self-perpetuating system which expiates itself all too frequently with public executions of the disenfranchised. This is, after all, the "real" at the heart of so much debate concerning Brazil's violent present: the synecdochic transmutation of a social crisis onto an individual by the society itself.

[167] "Não sei de onde vem o tiro" [I don't know from where the shot is fired]

Hanging in the balance for both Cuba and Brazil is nothing short of a limit on the information that would otherwise inform public discourse concurrent with another important transitional moment. As Cuba enters a new geo-political stage in its Revolutionary history and as Brazil attempts to work its way out of another financial crisis, both countries will be playing out their debates in front of a global audience. These debates will unfold online, will be told online as well, and, most importantly, will be indexed photographically. We shall soon see to what extent these new media technologies attempt to disguise the power structures that inform them and to what degree they can remain reflexively aware of those structures. It may take film to remind us that these new technologies have not emerged from a vacuum, that they have clear connections to the technologies that first liberated filmmakers from the studios in the middle of the Cold War, and that they, too, have the capacity to disclose information as well as to conceal it.

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