

producing films over two decades, notably *Thames* (1970). In the east, groups of film-makers around the Funnel and the Canadian Distribution Centre in Toronto have been working within a more personal context as in Phil Hoffman's *passing through/torn formations* (1990) about personal origin, or Midi Onodera's *Ten Cents a Dance* (1985) about sexual orientation. The latter theme is prevalent across all levels of film-making in Canada from mainstream features as in Léa Pool's *Anne Trister* (1986) through NFB documentaries like *Forbidden Love* (1992) by Lynne Fernie and Aerlyn Weisman, to the underground work of John Greyson, whose recent feature *Zero Patience* traces the origin of the AIDS virus in cult musical form.

THE FUTURE

In Canada today the Parti québécois has won another election victory and promises a second referendum on separation from the rest of Canada—*plus ça change...*—and world recession has bitten deeply into cultural programmes. But the policies have not changed as the Federal Government continues to maintain its public subsidies for film through its organs Telefilm Canada, the National Film Board, and the Canada Council. Support for film is strong at all levels: for film festivals, for film exhibition

visiting film-makers, and, through the commissions, for external film programmes and touring film packages in major cities throughout the world. The culture versus commerce debate, always a problem for protectionists where mass entertainment is concerned, has been resolved by hybridization—film is now part of a sector known as the cultural industries, its place in the political arena strengthened by the suggestion of an unquantifiable dollar value. As other national film industries collapse, as in the UK, or falter, as in France, the Canadian model, based on stubbornness of purpose and commitment, is one to watch.

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*The Oxford
History of
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New Cinemas in Latin America

MICHAEL CHANAN

In the late 1950s a new cinema began to appear in Latin America, carving out spaces for itself wherever it found the slightest chance, growing up even in the most inimical circumstances, indeed thriving upon them, for this was a cinema largely devoted to the denunciation of misery and the celebration of protest. In the space of ten or fifteen years, a movement developed which not only reached from one end of the continent to the other, but brought the cinema in Latin America to world-wide attention for the first time. It began with discrete and diverse initiatives in different countries, ranging from the Documentary Film School of Santa Fe in Argentina and the emergence of Cinema Novo in Brazil, to the creation of a new Film Institute in Havana. The dates and places are those of the recent history of Latin America. In Argentina and Brazil, growth and retrenchment have corresponded to the wax and wane of democracy. Cuban cinema is synonymous with the Cuban Revolution, Chilean cinema is another name for Popular Unity movement which elected Salvador Allende at the start of the 1970s. Ten years later came Nicaragua and El Salvador and the renaissance of the

idea of militant cinema which first developed in the 1960s, the decade of Che Guevara.

Some of the earliest initiatives occurred in out-of-the-way places, like Cuzco in Peru, where a film club was set up in 1955 and Manuel Chambi and others started making short documentaries on ethnographic and socio-cultural themes. The 1950s saw the spread of film societies throughout the continent, the proliferation of film-making courses and contests, and the publication of magazines. It was in the pages of titles like *Hablemos de cine* in Peru and *Cine al día* in Venezuela that in the 1960s and 1970s the movement debated its values and sense of identity.

Many of these groups were linked to social movements, like the cultural club *Nuestro Tiempo* run by the Young Communists in Havana in the early 1950s, which harboured several future Cuban directors. The first international meeting-place for the young film-makers was a film festival in Montevideo set up in 1954 by the SODRE, Uruguay's national radio station and a progressive cultural promoter. Among the film-makers attending in 1958,

when John Grierson was the guest of honour, were Chambi from Peru, Nelson Pereira dos Santos from Brazil, and Fernando Birri from Santa Fe. A film by Pereira dos Santos, *Rio zona norte* ('Rio, north zone', 1957), established a new paradigm of fictional narrative, in the form of a neo-realist tale of the *favelas* (shanty towns) of Rio de Janeiro; in the years that followed, Pereira dos Santos became the presiding spirit and 'conscience', as Glauber Rocha put it, of Brazil's Cinema Novo. The film exhibited by Birri and his students, *Tire die* ('Throw us a dime'), a collaborative social inquiry into the shanty towns around the city of Santa Fe, later came to be celebrated as the founding social documentary of the new film movement. Known simply as the New Latin American Cinema (Nuevo Cine latinoamericano), the term dates from a meeting in 1967 of film-makers from across the continent hosted by a film club in the Chilean seaside town of Viña del Mar, which had been running a festival of 8 and 16 mm. since 1963.

BRAZIL AND CINEMA NOVO

Several pioneers of the new Latin American cinema had studied film in Rome in the early 1950s, and, returning home, adopted the neo-realist principles of documentary-style location shooting with non-professional actors as the only practical solution for their situation. But they and others also took up neo-realism because they saw it as a critical aesthetic. As Birri explained, in Italy neo-realism was the cinema that discovered, amidst the rhetoric and outward show of development, another Italy, the Italy of underdevelopment. It was a cinema of the humble and the offended which Latin America cried out for.

In 1963, with *Vidas secas* ('Barren lives'), the Brazilian film-maker Nelson Pereira dos Santos carried the spirit of neo-realism deeper into new territory with a stark adaptation of a novel by Graciliano Ramos about the appalling conditions in rural north-east Brazil, a zone of underdevelopment within underdevelopment. The same aesthetic and the same locale served Ruy Guerra for *Os fuzis* ('The guns'), a drama of hunger in the *sertão* and violent confrontation between soldiers and peasants, while Carlos Diegues made *Ganga Zumba*, the story of the seventeenth-century maroon community of Palmares and thus the first film of Cinema Novo to tackle a historical theme.

These films, highly accomplished in themselves, were only a prelude. Wherever it was able to gain a niche, the new cinema quickly took off in new directions, creating new genres and exploring film language in radically new directions. *Ganga Zumba*, for example, initiates a genre of historical films about slavery in both Brazil and Cuba, where film-makers also explored the Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Cuban heritage both in the historical genre and in modern garb. Twentieth-century subjects included films like Joaquim Pedro de Andrade's *Macunaima* (1969), an

anarchic and picaresque comedy starring one of Brazil's most popular comedians, Grande Otelo, who also starred in *Rio zona norte* by Pereira dos Santos, where he plays an illiterate samba composer facing the corruption of the music business. Historical films included *Como era gostoso o meu francês* ('How tasty was my Frenchman', 1971) by Pereira dos Santos, a dark satire on the idyll of the noble savage, and T. G. Alea's dramatic *Una pelea cubana contra los demonios* ('A Cuban struggle against the demons', 1971). Both films explore the early centuries of the Conquest and adopt an experimental approach to the problem of historical truth. Alea also collaborated on the screenplay of *El otro Francisco* ('The other Francisco', 1973, directed by Sergio Giral) and then made a black comedy, *La última cena* ('The Last Supper', 1976); these two are slavery films set in the nineteenth century, the former an impressive piece of deconstruction of a nineteenth-century literary source.

All these films, whether comedy or tragedy, achieve an allegorical quality which becomes a distinctive trait of the entire movement: the ability to speak of subjects on more than one level at the same time, of the present while talking of the past, for example, or of politics while talking of religion. At the same time, the exploration of these themes quickly left the aesthetic of neo-realism behind, as directors and cinematographers sought to create a visual style which matched the legendary qualities of the subject-matter. Diegues himself made two more slavery films, *Xica de Silva* in 1976 and *Quilombo* in 1984, which show a striking progression from the sober black and white narrative of *Ganga Zumba* to the vivid colour, visual pyrotechnics, and powerful music of the style known as tropicalism, or at least one of its variants, which borrows directly from the carnivalesque at the heart of Brazilian popular culture. The first of these films recounts the rise and fall of an eighteenth-century slave possessed of magical and erotic powers who marries a colonial official, the second revisits the Palmares story, incorporating the results of new historical research. But Diegues is less concerned with objective narrative than with transposing to the screen the ritualistic forms through which Afro-Brazilian culture itself recounts its history, and the narrative form of these films is first cousin to the performances of the samba schools. Meanwhile Nelson Pereira dos Santos pursued his own highly original brand of allegory in films like *O amuleto de Ogum* ('The amulet of Ogum', 1974), where the invocation of Afro-Brazilian mythology effects a parody of the thriller. For other subjects, however, he retains a realist approach, as in the masterful *Memorias do carcere* ('Memories of prison'), an adaptation of the autobiographical novel by Craciliano Ramos about political repression, which won the Critics' Prize at Cannes in 1984.

While Diegues was the most popular of the Cinema Novo directors, the most notorious exponent of the

Glauber Rocha

(1938-1981)

Glauber Rocha was the shooting star of Brazilian cinema, and the *enfant terrible* of the Cinema Novo of the 1960s. Born in Bahia in north-east Brazil, he entered cinema through the film clubs when he was 16, studied law for two years, set up a production company, made a number of shorts, moved to Rio where he joined the group around Nelson Pereira dos Santos (whom he called the father of Cinema Novo), and directed his first feature in 1962.

Barravento ('The turning wind') was a basically realist portrait of religious mystification in a fishing community, but Rocha's treatment of the story gave it an allegorical dimension with a didactic political message in which the fundamental themes of his future work were already present, including his fascination with the social ambiguity of Brazil's popular semi-pagan religions. The film established its director's reputation as the leading figure of a new cinema that was made, as he himself put it, with 'an idea in the head and a camera in hand'.

In his 1965 manifesto 'The Aesthetics of Hunger', Rocha argued that the originality of Cinema Novo lay in its revelation that 'violence is normal behaviour for the starving' and 'the moment of violence is the moment when the colonizer becomes aware of the existence of the colonized'. Accordingly the aesthetics of hunger are directed against the values of the cinema of imperialism and in Rocha's hands the result is a style which eschews narrative clarity in favour of violent expressive imagery.

Combining the intellectual influence of the French *politique des auteurs* and the thinking of Che Guevara and Frantz Fanon, stylistically speaking Rocha's work bears strong relation to both Godard and Pasolini, with its jagged and abrupt montage, constant play of shifting oppositions, and often theatrical *mise-en-scène*; in Rocha's case this is partly Brechtian and partly ritualistic, inspired by Afro-Brazilian religion. These hallmarks are first found in *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* (*Black God, White Devil*, 1964), a densely metaphorical story of a peasant couple in the *sertão*, the wilderness of the interior of the Brazilian north-east, who become involved with both a messianic religious leader (the Black God) and then a *cangaço* or bandit (the White Devil).

With *Terra em transe* ('Land in anguish') three years later, Rocha shifted his ground to the city and the struggle for political power in a delirious allegory of the Latin American *coup d'état*, in particular that of Brazil in 1964, and the contradictions of a socially engaged artist forced to confront his own illusions. He then returned to the territory of the *sertão* for *Antonio das Mortes* of 1969 (which he originally called 'The Dragon of Evil against the Warrior Saint'). This was a kind of highly stylized inverted Western: the eponymous hero had already appeared in *Deus e o diabo* in his legendary role of killer of bandits and hireling of church and landlords. But here the symbol-



Antonio das Mortes (1969), Rocha's 'highly stylized, inverted western'.

ism of the earlier film is reversed, and Rocha extols the revolutionary zeal which blends social banditry with the ecstasy of messianic religion.

Following the second Brazilian coup in 1968, political repression intensified and in 1971 Rocha went into exile in protest. Most critics agree that the loss of contact with Brazilian reality weakened his work. He had already made two films outside Brazil, *Der leone have sept cabezas* ('The lion has seven heads') and *Cabezas cortadas* ('Heads cut off'). The former, inspired by Frantz Fanon's discussion of colonialism, was shot in Congo-Brazzaville in 1970 and explores the African roots of Brazilian culture, but imposes Rocha's own schematic allegorical structure. The latter, filmed in Spain immediately afterwards, casts Francisco Rabal as the dying ruler Diaz II but remains a piece of private mythology. The long documentary *Historia do Brasil* (1973) suggested for some critics a loss of ideological clarity, while a film for Italian television in 1975 called *Claro* failed to make any impression. Making his peace with the Generals and returning to Brazil in 1975, his last film was *A idade da terra* ('The age of the earth', 1980), a visually dazzling tapestry which preaches a utopian union of Catholicism, revolution and primitivism.

MICHAEL CHANAN

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Barravento (1962); *Deus e o diabo na terra do sol* (1964); *Terra em transe* (1967); *Antonio das Mortes / O dragão da maldade contra o santo guerreiro* (1969); *Cabezas cortadas* (1970); *Der leone have sept cabezas* (1970); *Historia do Brasil* (1973); *A idade da terra* (1980).

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tropicalist style was Glauber Rocha (who died young in 1981). Playing the equivalent role of *enfant terrible* to Godard in France, Rocha argued for a politics of authorship that allowed the film-maker to probe historical contradictions and placed the author at the centre of an oppositional practice—the politicization, so to speak, of the *politique des auteurs*. In a manifesto widely reprinted throughout Latin America and known by two titles, 'The Aesthetics of Hunger' and 'The Aesthetics of Violence', he protested that people for whom hunger is a normal condition are suffering violence—the violence of the social system that makes them go hungry. We know, he said, this hunger will not be cured by moderate reforms, and its tumours are not hidden, but only aggravated, by the cloak of Technicolor.

His masterpiece *Antonio das Mortes* (1969) is set in north-east Brazil, with emblematic characters performing stylized actions, in a peculiarly Brazilian amalgamation of fact and legend, epic and lyric. For Rocha the mysticism of popular religion, a syncretistic fusion of Catholicism and the motifs of African religion transplanted with the slave-trade, constituted a double paradigm. He took it both as the expression of a permanent spirit of rebellion against unceasing oppression, a rejection and refusal of the condition in which the common people had been condemned to live for centuries, and as a model for the syncretism of his own film language. In Rocha, as Peter Schumann (1987) puts it, the exuberant torrent of images and the mix of mysticism and legend, cult and ritual, were married to surrealistic symbolism and achieved a visionary force.

THE CUBAN EXAMPLE

Cuba was the first country in Latin America where it became possible to envisage a new film culture, both popular and critical, of the kind imagined by Birri, on a national scale. Cinema was second only to music as the country's most popular form of entertainment when the revolutionary government of 1959 decreed the creation of a film institute (ICAIC—the Cuban Institute of Film Art and Industry), to take control of the movie business and become responsible for production and distribution. Under the leadership of Alfredo Guevara (no relation to Che but a close political comrade of Fidel Castro) ICAIC would become the most successful venture of its kind, bar one, anywhere on the continent, a model of state intervention in the film industry. The exception, by historical irony, was Embrafilme, the bureau set up by the Brazilian generals in the 1960s, which went bankrupt after the return to democracy in the 1980s and was disbanded in 1990.

Embrafilme was a political contradiction: created to advertise the Brazilian military miracle abroad, it ended up funding film-makers who, as Pereira dos Santos expressed it, were 'viscerally opposed to such regimes'.

The Cuban regime, however, enjoyed widespread support amongst artists and intellectuals, to whom, with the creation of institutions like ICAIC, it offered conditions which the country had never before enjoyed. ICAIC succeeded first of all in economic terms: a studio with control over distribution and a staff of 1,000, producing each year (until the country's economic collapse at the end of the 1980s) up to half a dozen features, a regular newsreel, and as many as four dozen documentaries, all for an annual production budget of around \$10 million or less than half the price of a single Hollywood blockbuster. Communist egalitarianism and the absence of market competition combined to hold the costs of production down, enabling a cinema of poverty to flourish.

ICAIC also succeeded in artistic terms. The huge popularity of cinema in Cuba (television had been introduced in 1951 but reached only a limited audience until the 1970s) meant that ICAIC was rapidly catapulted to the very centre of Cuban cultural politics. As the Revolution took the road of Communism, Alfredo Guevara led the film-makers in arguing passionately against the narrow and restrictive orthodox ideology of Socialist Realism, and in favour of stylistic pluralism and artistic freedom. A few individuals, among them cinematographer Nestor Almendros, alienated from the national fervour, nevertheless called foul and departed; but they left behind a growing community of film-makers who began to feed off each other's enthusiasms. Aesthetically the most audacious was Santiago Alvarez, who headed ICAIC's newsreel unit, which he turned into a school for militant documentary. Progressing from short films like *Now* (1965), *Hanoi martes 13* ('Hanoi, Tuesday the 13th', shot in Vietnam in 1967), and *LBJ* (1968), to long documentaries like *Piedra sobre piedra* ('Stone upon stone') and *De América soy hijo . . .* ('I am a son of America')—shot in Peru in 1970 and Chile in 1972 respectively—he commandeered every different documentary genre, from the pamphlet to satire, by way of the reportage of war and peace. Employing every kind of visual imagery, from newsreel footage to stills, archive film to cuttings from magazines, combined with animated texts and emblematic musicalization, Alvarez amalgamated creative kleptomania with the skills of a *bricoleur* to reinvent Soviet montage in a Caribbean setting.

By the late 1960s, the experimental ethos had spread to fiction and produced an astonishing series of films which boldly transgressed the divisions between genres. Julio García Espinosa scored a great success with *Las aventuras de Juan Quin Quin* ('The adventures of Juan Quin Quin', 1967), which gives anarchic comedy a whole new dimension, while Humberto Solás reinvented the historical epic with *Lucía* in 1968, a portrait of three women in different historical periods—and different styles: Visconti-esque for 'Lucía 1895', the Hollywood of Elia Kazan for 'Lucía 1933', and Nouvelle Vague for 'Lucía 196-'; or rather, all of these

Tomás Gutiérrez Alea

(1928-)

Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's reputation as Cuba's leading director is inseparable from the story of the Cuban Revolution and the revolutionary cinema organization, ICAIC (Instituto Cubano de Arte y Industria Cinematográficos), set up at the time of the Revolution in 1959, of which he was a founder member.

Born in Havana, Alea graduated in law before going to Rome to study film directing at the Centro Sperimentale, where he met another Cuban film student, Julio García Espinosa. In common with other young Latin American film-makers, Italian neo-realism had fired their imagination as the aesthetic best fitted to the conditions in their own countries. Back in Cuba, the two collaborated on a clandestine documentary about charcoal workers in the Ciénaga swamp south of Havana called *El mégano* (1955), along with other members of a left-wing club called *Nuestro Tiempo* ('Our Times'); the film-makers were arrested by Batista's secret police and the film was banned. Four years later, the two would collaborate again, on the first documentary made after the triumph of the Revolution, *Esta tierra nuestra* ('This land of ours', 1959), about the need for agrarian reform. At the end of the 1960s García Espinosa was to argue the case for a committed form of film-making which made a strength of its economic limitations, in a polemic entitled 'For an imperfect cinema'. It was Alea who demonstrated in practice how accomplished such an 'imperfect cinema' could become.

His first four feature films alternated between neo-realist drama and comedy. After *Historias de la Revolución* (1960) came *Las doce sillas* ('The twelve chairs', 1962), a Cuban version of Ilf and Petrov's famous satire on the Soviet Revolution. This was followed by *Cumbite* (1964), a drama of underdevelopment set in Haiti and acted by Haitians living in Cuba, and by the black comedy *Muerte de un burócrata* ('Death of a bureaucrat'), which established Alea's name abroad when it took the Special Jury Prize at Karlovy Vary in 1966. Then in 1968 came the film whose originality both in form and content gave the idea of political cinema a completely new meaning: *Memories of Underdevelopment* (*Memorias del subdesarrollo*), in which the doubts and alienation of a bourgeois intellectual are thrown into relief at the same time that they serve to provide a subtle commentary on the social upheavals produced by the Revolution.

From this point on almost every one of Alea's films combined either an experimental attitude towards film language, or else a spirit of improvisation in technique, with an independent critical attitude towards reality. *Una pelea cubana contra los demonios* ('A Cuban struggle against the demons', 1971), the first of two historical dramas of religious fanaticism, is set in the mid-seventeenth century; the second, *La última cena* ('The Last Supper', 1976), at the end of the eighteenth century. Both are based on historical incidents, and constitute paradigms

of cinema's vocation for retelling history. The former becomes in the process an implicit critique of modern political dogma, and the most experimental of Alea's films, the first to be photographed by Mario García Joya, his collaborator ever since. The latter is a biting satire about hypocrisy and a celebration of Afro-Cubanism, with a brilliant performance by the Chilean actor Nelson Villagra. In *Los sobrevivientes* ('The survivors', 1978), another black comedy, the object of satire is both the mentality of those who oppose the Revolution and the politics of isolation. Five years later, in *Hasta cierto punto* ('Up to a point'), Alea turned his magnifying glass on the pretensions and contradictions of himself and his colleagues, in an ironic tale about Cuban film-makers.

In *Cartas del parque* ('Letters from the park', 1988), based on a story by Gabriel García Márquez, Alea allowed himself a romantic period piece without political overtones; a simple but curious love story set in the provincial town of Matanzas in the early years of the century. But critics who suggested that Cuba's political crisis had silenced even Alea's critical spirit stand corrected by *Fresa y chocolate* (1993), in which the story of a friendship between a gay photographer and member of the Communist Youth becomes a powerful and outspoken critique of political dogma and intolerance, the work of a film-maker at the height of his powers.

MICHAEL CHANAN

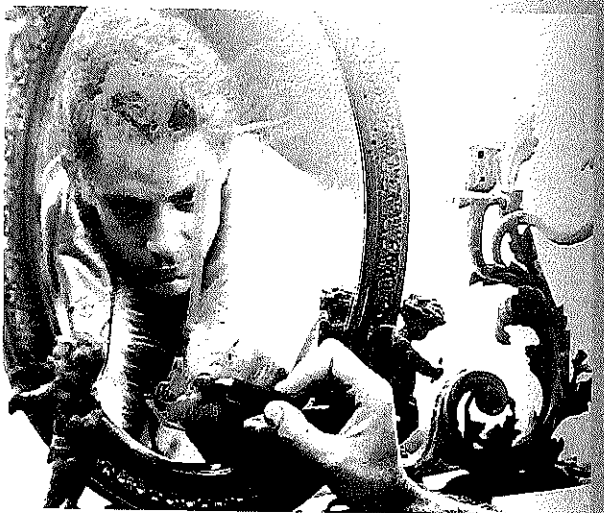
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Sergio Corrieri as the indecisive intellectual in Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's *Memories of Underdevelopment* (1968)



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crossed with Cinema Novo in a highly original synthesis.

In the same astonishing year, when international revolutionary fervour was at its height, Alea made *Memories of Underdevelopment* (*Memorias del subdesarrollo*, 1968), a subtle and complex study in the alienation of a bourgeois intellectual within the Revolution. The next year Manuel Octavio Gómez made *La primera carga al machete* ('The first machete charge'), and Manuel Herrera followed in 1972 with *Giron* ('Bay of Pigs'); the former reports an episode in Cuban revolutionary history dating from 1868 as if it were a contemporary documentary, the latter is a widescreen post-Brechtian dramatization of the defeat of the US invasion of 1961, with participants enacting their stories as they recount them in front of the camera. Then came *De cierta manera* ('One way or another'), a story of contemporary Havana by Sara Gomez (the release of the film in 1974 was delayed by her tragically early death) intermingling fictional characters with real people. All four films bring drama and documentary into powerful new relationships.

Julio García Espinosa summed up the trend which gave rise to these and other experiments in a polemic entitled 'For an Imperfect Cinema', widely reprinted and much misunderstood. Warning of the dangers of the technical accomplishment which after ten years now lay within the grasp of the Cuban film-makers, he argued that in the underdeveloped world technical and artistic perfection are false objectives. Not only is the attempt to match the production values of the big commercial movie a waste of resources, he said, but there is more to be gained by engaging the audience directly and with a sense of urgency, roughness included. The aim is what Umberto Eco, in another context, calls the open work, which refuses to fix its meanings and thus invites the active participation of the audience.

ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Cuban cinema was a major influence throughout the continent, although, because of the monopoly of the major distributors, less so with audiences than with film-makers, who were able to travel and encounter the films and each other at festivals and meetings. Cuban documentary, for example, animated a stream of films which attested to the conditions of life from Chihuahua to Tierra del Fuego. New paradigms of political documentary cinema appeared, combining the techniques of French *cinéma vérité* and North American direct cinema, from the Brazilian Geraldo Sarno's *Viramundo* of 1964 to *Chircales* by the Colombian documentarists Marta Rodríguez and Jorge Silva in 1972, Paul Leduc's *Etnocidio: notas sobre Mezquital* ('Ethnocide: notes on Mezquital', 1976), or Ciro Durán's *Gamin* (1978). The first, an investigation into the migration of peasants from the drought-stricken north-east of Brazil to São Paulo, set a new standard for socially engaged

reportage; the second is an analysis of the life of bricklayers on the outskirts of Bogotá, which achieves the fusion of politics, poetry, and visual anthropology; the film by Leduc, 'an A to Z of indictments against the modernising state' as John King (1990) calls it, confirmed its director as the foremost experimental film-maker in Mexico, while *Gamin* explores the world of the Bogotá street urchin in a provocative and interventionist version of direct cinema. At the same time, documentary realism also inspired films of fiction like Leon Hirszman's *São Bernardo* (1972), an allegory on the Brazilian miracle (and another adaptation of a novel by Ramos). Held back by the censorship board just long enough to bankrupt the production company, it must stand in here for the numerous films which have been banned for political offence in every country of the continent at one time or another.

In Argentina, where cinema in the 1960s was in retreat against political repression, the sense of political urgency was expressed with particular fervour by Grupo Cine Liberación, radical in both politics and film poetics, who in 1968 completed a mammoth three-part documentary running almost four and a half hours entitled *La hora de los hornos* (*The Hour of the Furnaces*). Constrained by the conditions of military rule after the coup of 1966, but bolstered by the growth of organized resistance, the film was shot clandestinely in conjunction with cadres of the Peronist movement. As Robert Stam (1990) puts it, it was made 'in the interstices of the system and against the system... independent in production, militant in politics, and experimental in language'.

Two of the film-makers, Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, followed up with a manifesto entitled *Towards a Third Cinema*, which they defined as a cinema of liberation 'whose moving force is to be found in the Third World countries'. In this scheme, however, First and Second Cinema do not correspond to the First and Second Worlds but constitute a virtual geography of their own. First Cinema is the model imposed by the American film industry, the Hollywood movie, wherever it is found—in Los Angeles, Mexico City, or Bombay; Second Cinema they identify with art or *auteur* cinema, which in turn is not just a European phenomenon, but is also found in places like Buenos Aires. Second Cinema is politically reformist but incapable of achieving any profound change. It is especially impotent in the face of the kind of repression unleashed by neo-Fascist forces like the Latin American military. The only alternative, they said, is a Third Cinema, films the system cannot assimilate, which 'directly and explicitly set out to fight the system'.

Several varieties of militant cinema appeared across the continent in the late 1960s, ironically, in some cases, as a result of support for film production on the part of reformist governments. In Bolivia, where Spanish was a minority language, Jorge Sanjinés and the Ukamau group were able



Blood of the Condor (Yawar Mallku, 1969), made in Bolivia by the Ukamau group, used the subject of the forced sterilization of Indian women as an example and metaphor for American imperialism

to make a number of indigenous-language films with non-professional actors. The group took their name, the Aymara word for 'the way it is', from the first of these in 1966, about the revenge of a man for the rape of his wife; they then went on to produce *Blood of the Condor* (Yawar Mallku, 1969), which recounts the response of a Quechua community to the sterilization of its women by an American Peace Corps maternity clinic. Hugely successful, the film forced the expulsion of the Peace Corps by the Bolivian government two years later. Nevertheless, the experience of exhibiting the film to peasant audiences prompted Sanjinés to question the efficacy of the style they were working in. *Ukamau* and *Blood of the Condor* still portrayed the protagonists as individuals. In *El coraje del pueblo* ('The courage of the people', 1971), the reconstruction of a massacre of miners in the town of Siglo XX in 1967, the protagonist is collective. The complex narrative built around flashbacks employed in *Blood of the Condor* is abandoned in favour of a linear structure and a tendency towards sequence shots. The style is thus adapted to the traditions of oral narrative: the players on the screen are the historical actors of the events portrayed, they are dramatizing their own experience; the use of long takes allows them

the greatest space to express their collective memory, and a new kind of popular cinema is born. A military coup while the film was being finished forced Sanjinés into exile, and his next productions along these lines were made in Peru and Ecuador.

In Chile, the new film-makers came together during the 1960s to support the coalition of left-wing parties known as Popular Unity. The years leading up to the electoral victory of Salvador Allende in 1970 saw a new wave in both fiction and documentary. The essays of the Experimental Film Group of the 1950s turned into a cinema of urgency, which combined political campaign films with innovation in filmic technique and language to denounce the marginalism inherent in underdevelopment. The same spirit fed a crop of features which appeared in the late 1960s, including *Tres tristes tigres* ('Three sad tigers', 1968) by Raúl Ruiz, an experimental socio-political comedy; *Valparaíso mi amor* ('Valparaíso my love', 1969) by Aldo Francia (the moving spirit behind the festival in Viña del Mar in 1967), a lyrical neo-realist drama of deprived children; and *The Jackal of Nahueltoro* (*El chacal de Nahueltoro*, 1969) by Miguel Littin, an agitated deconstruction of criminality; the last two are based on real incidents and characters.

Attempts to place this activity on a more secure footing were cut short by the infamous coup of 1973. The most extraordinary film to emerge from the latter part of this period is Patricio Guzmán's three-part documentary *The Battle of Chile* (*La batalla de Chile*, 1975), a record of the months leading up to the coup. A fertile mixture of direct cinema observation and investigative reportage, the footage was smuggled out immediately after Allende's fall and edited in Cuba at ICAIC. The result is a poignant work of historical testimony unique in the annals of cinema.

As in other countries which fell to the right, film-makers were among those who were forced into exile, or, if they did not escape, disappeared. Thanks to international solidarity, Chileans became the leading practitioners of a cinema of exile which grew up in the 1970s (according to one count, they made 176 films in the ten years 1973-83, 56 of them features). Some remained in Latin America, like Littin, who found a new base in Mexico. Here, amongst other films, he made *Actas de Marusia* ('Letters from Marusia', 1975), with the Italian actor Gian Maria Volonté and music by Mikis Theodorakis, in which the coup of 1973 is allegorized in the story of a massacre of miners in Chile in 1907. Nevertheless, the political imperatives of the Popular Unity period underwent a gradual transformation, as the overtly militant gave way to a more personal and ironic stance—especially in the impish work of Raúl Ruiz, now based in France, who became by the 1980s one of the leading figures of European avant-garde cinema. At the same time, the Chilean experience has contributed a new genre to the history of world cinema, as a number of films took the experience of exile as their subject-matter. The first of them, Ruiz's semi-documentary *Dialogo de exilados* ('Dialogue of exiles', 1974), was badly received in the exile community for its ironic, disrespectful portrait of life in exile. But later films, like Marilu Mallet's highly personal documentary *Journal inachevé* ('Unfinished diary', 1982) and Jorge Durán's dramatic feature *A cor de seu destino* ('The colour of his destiny', 1986), made in Canada and Brazil respectively, are remarkable expositions of the struggle to understand the exile's sense of identity. Perhaps the most extraordinary film of exile is *Tangos: el exilio de Gardel* ('Tangos: the exile of Gardel', 1985) by the Argentinian Fernando Solanas, an experimental musical set among the Argentine exile community in Paris.

INTO THE 1980s

The transformation of political thematics was not limited to the cinema of exile. Cuban directors during the 1970s developed a new brand of genre cinema, in films like *El hombre de Maisinicú* ('The man from Maisinicú') and *Río Negro* (Manuel Pérez, 1973 and 1977): macho adventure movies in which the good guys are revolutionaries and the bad guys counter-revolutionaries. A growing trend in the 1980s towards social comedy, marked by two films of

1984, *Los pájaros tirándole a la escopeta* ('Tables turned') by Rolando Díaz and *Se permuta* ('House swap') by Juan Carlos Tabío, represented a far more original development. Meanwhile the new cinema took root in several countries where state intervention for the first time created conditions for regular if limited levels of production, including Venezuela and Colombia.

In Venezuela, for example, Roman Chalbaud evolved new politically edged forms of old Latin American genres in films like *El pez que fuma* ('The smoking fish', 1977), which turns the world of the Mexican brothel film into a metaphor for power relations and corruption, or *Cangrejo* (1982), which turns the thriller into a denunciation of police corruption. Not always artistically successful, they nevertheless achieved top box-office ratings in their own countries, outgrossing all but the biggest Hollywood hits. Only US monopolization of international distribution prevented them reaching a wider audience. Nevertheless, by the time ICAIC launched the Havana Film Festival in 1979, it seemed at last as if a critical, national popular cinema was more than a dream in several countries.

The 1980s saw an assortment of developments including the renaissance of Argentinian cinema, the emergence of a women's cinema in a number of different countries (especially Mexico and Brazil), the revival of the Mexican film industry, and alternatives like the Super 8 movement in Venezuela. With the expanding variety of all these films, both aesthetically and politically, the idea of a movement generated in the 1960s, even one that was unified in its diversity, began to recede. But if the distinction between commercial cinema and committed cinema became blurred, it was mainly because of the recognition of different political realities. The tradition of a committed experimental cinema remained alive with directors like Mexico's Paul Leduc, in films like *Frida* (1984) and *Dollar Mambo* (1993). Discarding linear narrative in favour of mobile imagery, the former portrays the life and loves, painting and politics of Frida Kahlo as a series of interlocking and visually intoxicating *tableaux vivants*, while the latter tells the story of the US invasion of Panama in 1989 in the form of a wordless dance drama. *Frida* was produced by Manuel Barbachano Ponce, the producer of two of Buñuel's finest Mexican films (*Los olvidados* ('The forgotten') and *The Exterminating Angel*), and Jaime Humberto Hermosillo, better known as a director, and Mexico's leading exponent of gay cinema, with films like the banned *Las apariencias engañan* ('Appearances deceive', 1977) and *Doña Herlinda y su hijo* ('Doña Herlinda and her son', 1984).

Signs of a growing women's presence in Latin American cinema first appeared in Brazilian cinema in the late 1970s, with Ana Carolina's *Mar de rosas* ('Sea of roses', 1977), a carnivalesque deconstruction of the institution of marriage, and Tisuka Yamasaka's *Gaijin*, a story of

Japanese emigration to Brazil which places gender in relation to ethnicity and class. While the early 1980s saw the appearance of women's documentary groups in Brazil and Mexico, another strand is found in the feature work of the Argentinian María Luisa Bemberg (*Camila*, 1984) and the Venezuelan Fina Torres (*Oriana*, 1985), who both use feminist melodrama to tell the stories of individual women in different historical periods. The most extraordinary feature début of the time was *A hora da estrela* ('The hour of the star') by the 64-year-old Brazilian director Suzana Amaral, the gentle and penetrating portrait, moving and humorous, of a young woman from the north-east trying to survive in São Paulo.

In Argentina, as the grip of the military began to slacken, film-makers there too saw the opportunity for

revitalizing the genre movie. In 1981 Adolfo Aristarain came out with *Tiempo de revancha* ('Time for revenge'), which brilliantly adopts the format of a suspenseful thriller to tell a parable of power through the story of a worker taking revenge against his boss, or the exploiter exploited; a year later he made *Ultimos días del victima* ('Last days of the victim'), a *policia* and a parable of the death squads. When the military lost the Falklands/Malvinas War and fell, and cinema began to breathe the air of freedom, there followed films like *No habrá más penas ni olvido* (*A Funny, Dirty Little War*, 1983), Héctor Olivera's black comedy of Peronist militants in the early 1970s, and Luis Puenzo's powerful and harrowing 1986 Oscar winner *La historia oficial* ('The official version'), a character drama about the fate of the children of the Disappeared. That democracy

A woman who has cut her husband's throat flees with her daughter, in Ana Carolina Teixeira Soares's *Mar de rosas* ('Sea of roses', 1977)



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ristarainid not bring economic recovery, however, is revealed in
 evenge) another film of the same year, Carlos Sorín's wonderfully
 ful thri bathetic *La película del rey* ('A king and his movie'), which
 a worker recounts a young film-maker's desperate attempt to make
 exploited a costume drama while struggling against an inhospitable
 t days of location, the desertion of the cast, and no money. Despite
 squads winning an award at the Venice Film Festival, the film
 War and failed to cover its costs—an ironic reminder of the truth
 n, there of the comment by the Brazilian film critic Salles Gomes
 4 Funny (1980) that, while the cinemas of North America, Europe,
 ned y or Japan have never been underdeveloped, 'those of the
 uenzo's Third World have never ceased being so'. This is not a
 historia question of volume or quality of production: the Indian
 out the and Egyptian film industries are among the largest in any
 locracy continent, and Latin America since the 1950s has been
 pretty constantly in the vanguard of world cinema. But in
 cinema as in other regards, says Salles Gomes, under-
 development is not a stage or a step, but a state, a con-
 dition, and the films of the developed countries never
 went through this condition, while the others have a

tendency to remain stuck there. Hence the constant won-
 derment that, in Latin America, cinema refuses to die.

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