L'ATALANTE
REVISTA DE ESTUDIOS CINEMATOGRÁFICOS

DIALOGUE
JUAN IGNACIO LAHOZ RODRIGO

(DIS)AGREEMENTS
FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO THE PRESENT: HISTORY AND MEMORY, A CENTURY FOR REFLECTION

POLICIES OF MEMORY RELATED TO IMAGES FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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JOURNAL TEAM (EQUIPO DE LA REVISTA)

TECHNICAL DETAILS (FICHA TÉCNICA)

Publisher(Edición): Asociación Cinefórum L'Atalante (CIF: G-97998355) y El camarote de Père Jules, con la colaboración de la Universitat de València (Servei d'Informació i Dinamització dels Estudiants [SeDI], Aula de Cinema y Departament de Teoria dels Llenguatges i Ciències de la Comunicació) y la Universitat Jaume I de Castelló (Departament de Ciències de la Comunicació). Este número ha sido posible gracias al apoyo del proyecto de investigación I+D+i «La construcción del imaginario bélico en las actualidades de la Primera Guerra Mundial» (HAR2012-34854), Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad, Gobierno de España.
Place of publication (Lugar de edición): Valencia (España).
E-mail (Dirección electrónica): info@revistaatalante.com.
Website (Página web): http://www.revistaatalante.com.
ISSN: 1885-3730 (edición impresa), 2340-6992 (edición digital).
Legal Deposit (Depósito Legal): V-5340-2003
Biannual journal (Publicación semestral).

ISSUE 21 (NÚMERO 21)

Issue Editors (Coordinadores del número): Àngel Quintana (Universitat de Girona) y Héctor Gómez Santa Olalla (Universitat de València).
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Collaborators (Colaboradores): Javier Lorente.
Aknowledgments (Agradecimientos): Olga García de Fez.
Original design and layout (Diseño y maquetación): Carlos Planes Cortell.
Cover (Portada): Designed by Carlos Planes Cortell using the picture *The Battle Of The Somme, July-November 1916*, by Lieutenant Castle William Ivor, reference CO 876 of the Canadian First World War Official Exchange Collection.

INTRODUCTION

NOTEBOOK

POLICIES OF MEMORY RELATED TO IMAGES FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR

DIALOGUE

(DIS)AGREEMENTS

FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO THE PRESENT: HISTORY AND MEMORY, A CENTURY FOR REFLECTION

VANISHING POINTS

POLICIES OF MEMORY RELATED TO IMAGES FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR

ÀNGEL QUINTANA
TRANSLATED BY MARTIN BOYD

History always offers individuals in any given present the opportunity to take a time journey into the past. To understand what happened in other times we need to travel, like Orpheus, into the shadowy world of the dead and rescue the traces of memory from its dark recesses. These traces are what help us to reconstruct the past in order to better understand the present and, thus, to better direct our future. In 1969, a posthumous work by the Frankfurt School theorist Siegfried Kracauer was published. Its original title was *History: The Last Things before the Last* (1994). The book was received with a certain degree of scepticism by generalist historians, who saw it as the last eccentricity of an old philosopher educated in the Germany of the interwar years who had ended up pursuing an academic career in the United States. Yet in his book, Kracauer raises some thought-provoking questions about the problems and constraints that historians can face in the course of the Orphean journey.

Kracauer asks whether history is anything more than an "intermediate area of knowledge" that certifies a set of truths about the past which can never really acquire the condition of objective truths because all historical discourse is conditioned by the subjectivity of the historian who develops it. He also reflects on whether the past should be understood as a coherent whole or as a flow of non-homogeneous layers.

To better understand its dimension of Orphean journey, Kracauer gives a prominent position to Marcel Proust, who in his magnum opus *In Search of Lost Time* sought to define the enigma of time and the constructions of memory. The key element of the Proustian conception of time involves the denial of chronology. The view of memory arising from his literary work is not that of a linear process but of a series of kaleidoscopic mutations. Memory acts not on the basis of a particular temporal flow, but as a discontinuous and non-causal succession of situations, worlds or pe-

riods. Kracauer uses a beautiful metaphor to explain the idea of time in Proust when he compares it to the physical phenomenon of clouds that connect in the sky to create forms that subsequently dissolve.

The figure of Marcel Proust was also a useful example for Siegfried Kracauer's film theory. In the introductory chapter to his book *Theory of Film* (1960), dedicated to photography, he offers the example of a passage in *The Guermantes Way*—the third volume of *In Search of Lost Time*—in which the narrator visits his grandmother. While he contemplates the places of the past, he has the sensation of assuming the role of a photographer visiting places that he will never see again. Although for Proust the photographer is someone who acts in a contrary manner to the lover, as he attempts to turn reality into a kind of neutral mirror, it is clear that the pictures taken reflect the photographer's struggle to assimilate that reality. Years later, this discourse on history and photography would form the discursive core of Kracauer's last book, *History: The Last Things before the Last*. At different moments in the book, Kracauer posits a relationship between the role that cinema and photography play in the forms of visibility of modern society and the methods used by history to explore the past. History and photography are both concerned with concrete worlds: history with the facts of the past and photography with the flows of the present. Both propose to conduct an analysis of these worlds with the aim of offering some kind of knowledge of reality. Their objective consists in reflecting the contingent and indeterminate lines of reality in order to transcend them and turn them into instruments for better understanding the physical world. History, photography and cinema preserve things in memory, but they confront a serious problem when the limits of their abilities to reflect objectivity have to be determined.[1]

In the quest to preserve reality, the photographer preserves the phenomena of time and space. Like history, photography and cinema, thanks to their power to record things, offer the possibility of gaining access to past lives, but they are also positioned in an intermediate area of knowledge because their approach to the world depends on the process of selection of reality carried out by the subject standing behind the camera. If the historian's subjectivity turns history into story, the photographer's or filmmaker's subjectivity transforms the world into an expressive image that moves it towards the realm of art. While the historian's challenge is to privilege the weight of his or her opinions, the photographer's challenge is to prevent the destruction of the raw material—reality—which must be given shape.

KRACAUER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF PHOTOGRAPHY/ CINEMATOGRAPHY AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WAYS OF WRITING HISTORY ARE STILL VALID IN A WORLD IN WHICH THE PROLIFERATION OF SCREENS AND ARCHIVES HAS RESULTED IN A WIDESPREAD DESIRE TO EXPLOIT POLICIES OF MEMORY

Kracauer's reflections on the specific aspects of photography/cinematography and their relationship with the ways of writing history are still valid in a world in which the proliferation of screens and archives has resulted in a widespread desire to exploit policies of memory. Kracauer's views on history and images have a clear bearing on the processes of reflection undertaken in the different articles included in this monograph issue of *L'Atalante* titled *Memory, Archive and Imaginary in Relation to the First World War*. In the different articles included here, questions of memory transmission and the development of historical discourse are always present, if only under the surface.

The monograph takes as a starting point the commemoration of a historical moment—the First World War—but does so through the images, both documentary and fictional, that have been created over more than one hundred years of history. The starting point for the different lines of research is the idea that the cinema has created a repository of collective memory related to the events of the Great War. The cinema has shown images of the past as documents of the first filmed war, but it has also established a series of discourses—in both documentary and fiction genres—that have evolved over time. All these discourses have been transformed with the occurrence of other historical events and with the new interpretations of the past facilitated by temporal distance. Most of the images of the Great War have disseminated the facts, focusing attention on specific events and creating an optical unconscious of Europe's wartime past. The occasion of the centenary of the war is a good moment to ask ourselves: how have all the discourses established by cinema served to better understand this part of the past? What have been the limitations of its approach to that past?

The acts and commemorations of the centenary of the First World War, like all actions related to the event memory, entail an implicit reflection on acts of memory and on the models generated by discourses. This reflection changes depending on the perspective adopted. At one point in the discussion among different theorists about memory and history published in the monograph, the question arises of why the commemoration of the First World War has been given so little attention in the Spanish cultural sphere. The general conclusions on this point go further than the supposed neutrality of Spain in the conflict. In the *(Dis)agreements* section, the different participants in a debate on the relationship between history and memory ultimately conclude that the problem is related to the difficulty of integrating the different historical discourses articulated in Spain within a more general idea of Europe. In an engaging discussion, Maximiliano Fuentes, Miguel Morey, Xavier Antich, Jordi Font, Mireia Llorens, Javier Cercas and Carmen Castillo tease out the contradictions arising between the idea that the memory of the past is established in each present and the idea of history as discourse around a particular past. It is a discussion that begins with a conceptual reflection and ultimately observes how cinema has been turned into a realm of collective transmission of the different debates over history. A discussion of the role of film archives in the preservation and documentation of the past also comes up in the interview with Juan Ignacio Lahoz, chief curator at the Filmoteca Valenciana film library.

In 1995, on the occasion of the centenary of cinema, Jean Luc Godard shot a film commissioned by the British Film Institute titled *Deux fois cinquante ans du cinema français*. In a certain sense this film could be considered an extension of his reflections on cinema and history in his *Histoire(s) du cinema* (1987-1997). The most notable characteristic of this 50-minute film is the fact that its central theme is commemoration. Godard himself assumes the role of a kind of Socrates, using the maieutic method to question the official discourse of the centenary that has been articulated around the figure of the president of the commission responsible for organising the commemoration, Michel Piccoli. At one point in the conversation, Godard asks Piccoli why we always feel such a strong desire to celebrate. The filmmaker stresses that he prefers continuities over commemorative celebrations; he prefers the idea that the recollection of past events can be celebrated every day, without having to be subject to the media pretexts that surround the notion of historical event. Godard prefers the idea of the images of the Lumières being present at the heart of society as a place of reflection on their origins. Conversely, he believes that the creation of different symbolic monuments that have celebrated the memory of cinema have in fact merely consigned it to oblivion.[3]

In a foundational work on the conceptualisation of memory, Paul Ricoeur (2000) reminds us that memory is invariably an inheritance that maintains a fragile balance between the different elements forming part of it and all those elements that become a shared public heritage. Memory is not the product of a spontaneous act of remembering; nor is it the result of the marks that the passage of time has left on us. Memory is always the result of a social action. There is no memory without the existence of certain specific policies of memory. To be able to make sense of the past we need to shape it in a way that can help us explain our present and our collective future.

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When addressing an event that has marked the legacy of European history, as is the case of the First World War, we need to ask what policies have been created to articulate the memory on which this commemoration is based. We also need to know the point to which such policies may be the result of the dialectic between erasure and abuse that so often hides behind the different official policies orchestrated around the memory. In a short but illustrative essay, Tsevan Todorov (2008: 36) reminds us that the existence of certain central stories can end up drowning out the existence of others that are automatically silenced or marginalised.

The problem of the abuses of memory described by Todorov is present in the multiple discourses articulated around the image of the First World War, from the commemorative monuments to the figure of the Unknown Soldier that proliferated in France in the 1920s, and even to the pacifist narratives developed in the same decade. If we focus on the realm of cinema, we will see how from 1908 the major European studios institutionalised the newsreel as a key genre in the definition of their screening programs. The outbreak of the Great War coincided with a key moment in the history of cinema. Thanks to the work of filmmakers like D. W. Griffith or Cecil B. DeMille, fiction found its institutional modes of narrative articulation in melodrama. The theme of the Great War soon began to appear in these narratives as an epic backdrop. In a text published on the occasion of the restoration of the classic French film on the war, Raymond Bernard's *Les croix de bois* (1932), French historian Laurent Véray suggests that "the cinema, together with literature, was without doubt the mode of representation that contributed most to forging and transmitting the images of that human catastrophe, many of which have played and continue to play an essential role in our understanding [of the War]. Fiction films participated in the establishment and dissemination of the myths and legends that populate the history of the Great War."[4] In his article "Filming the Great War: Information, Propaganda and Historical Documentation", Laurent Véray views the different debates over memory in terms of the "visual culture of war" that was established during the First World War. The overview he offers in his article is representative of how that culture was institutionalised. Beginning with newsreels, he goes onto explore the issue of censorship, the portrayal of the work of women during the war, the reconstruction of historic events, political propaganda and, finally, the question of film archives. In the middle of this debate appears the Battle of the Somme, one of the biggest tragedies of the war, which Véray identifies as the first major battle to be captured by the new media.

Of the research papers published in this issue of *L'Atalante*, there are three that offer an effective investigation into the role that Hollywood played in the creation of the symbolic imaginary of the Great War. In his article "Allegory, Redemptionism and Tragic Temptation in Hollywood Films in Response to the Great War", Xavier Pérez begins with the idea that in 1914, while the world drowned in a sea of self-destruction, D. W. Griffith turned the sights of the cinematic spectacle on the epic genre. Griffith serves as a point of departure for an observation of how classical cinema was born with a mission to serve as a collective allegorical expression of the tragedy of the century. This allegorical mission, along with the tragic temptation that imbues it, was perfectly represented by Griffith himself in his film *Hearts of the World* (1918), commissioned by the British army, and was also present in other charismatic films made during the war, like Thomas H. Ince's *Civilization* (1916). With the armistice, the tragic allegory was taken to the extreme in Rex Ingram's *The Four Horseman of the Apocalypse* (1921), in which the war "is not viewed as the moral saviour, but as the tragic agent that prevents moral transgression." The answer to this romantic/allegorical model would be established in the 1930s, in the context of talking pictures, by Lewis Milestone's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930), based on the novel by Eric Maria Remarque.

Albert Elduque and Alan Salvadó also explore the modes of representation of the images of Hollywood cinema, but their exploration focuses on one of the most characteristic visual motifs of the war: the trench. In their article "Aesthetic and Narrative Uses of the Trench in Hollywood Films from 1918 to 1930", they begin with the thought-provoking idea that during the First World War the classical forms of landscape depiction were profoundly altered, replaced by a mechanised and fragmented vision. A central role in this change to landscape depiction would be played by the trench, both in the way that this space established new forms of camera mobility, and in the way it established a dialogue between the interior space (melodramatic space) and the exterior space (space of danger). The canonical films discussed by the authors in this analysis include Charlie Chaplin's *Shoulder Arms* (1918), King Vidor's *The Big Parade* (1925), and Raoul Walsh's *What Price Glory* (1926).

While films are the essential primary sources for the analysis of the cinema of the period, for the purposes of studying the reception, impact and configuration of the imaginary of the Great War orchestrated by Hollywood there is another essential document: the film poster. Laura Gómez, Belén Puebla and Pablo R. Prieto have analysed posters preserved from the period on the basis of the idea that the "First World War represented the introduction of the poster as a means of consciousness raising", exploring motifs like the exaltation of the homeland and the combatant as hero. In their article "The Imaginary of War as Depicted in American Film Posters from 1914 to 1918", they identify three categories of analysis. The first category covers the period from 1914 to 1916, when the poster reflected a historical war film tradition. The second period covers the last years of the war (1917-1918), notable for government films. Finally, the third category of analysis, beginning in the same period, relates to commercial films, characterised by a more pacifist tone.

One of the major plot devices used in the cinema of this period to shape the imaginary of war of the viewing public was the motif of childhood. Children were the argument used to justify the mobilisation of the adults, who were fighting for their children and making sacrifices for their future. This idea was present in propaganda images, in advertising for children's toys (in which tin soldiers were especially prominent) and in some fictional narratives. Magdalena Brotons studies the question of the key role played by childhood in the unconscious of French cinema in her article, "Broken Toys: Childhood and War in French

Cinema (1908-1916)". This article turns to the pre-war years to identify a connection between two animated films by Émil Cohl made with tin soldiers: *Le petit soldat qui devient dieu* (1908) and *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux* (1910), along with other films of the period, like Pierre Bressol's *Les petits soldats de Plomb* (1914). Through its analysis of toys, this paper demonstrates how the theme of war was present not only in history and melodrama but also in animated films.

ONE OF THE MAJOR PLOT DEVICES USED IN THE CINEMA OF THIS PERIOD TO SHAPE THE IMAGINARY OF WAR OF THE VIEWING PUBLIC WAS THE MOTIF OF CHILDHOOD. CHILDREN WERE THE ARGUMENT USED TO JUSTIFY THE MOBILISATION OF THE ADULTS, WHO WERE FIGHTING FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND MAKING SACRIFICES FOR THEIR FUTURE

While all this was happening, newsreels provided the opportunity for the Great War to be used as a veritable laboratory for the creation of certain key models in the configuration of the news images. Camera operators with the different studios that produced newsreels filmed military parades, soldiers on the battlefield, prisoners of war captured by the two alliances, the long waits in the army camps before combat, and the effects of war on the bodies of the wounded. Once again, Laurent Véray, who has dedicated a significant part of his academic research to the study of images produced by the Allies, also notes that "the war that ravaged Europe from 1914 to 1918 was the first war captured by the new media. A significant proportion of the shots taken at the front were shown to the public at home in newspapers, weekly magazines and in documentaries made by the studios Pathé, Gaumont, Éclair and Elise, under the strict control of the cinematographic section of the armed forces" (1995: 15).

As Daniel Sánchez Salas notes in his article "Discipline and Punish: On Censorship of World War I Informative and Propaganda Films in Spain (1914-1918)", during the period of the Great War there was a shift from the traditional newsreel style towards the creation of the news report format. In Spain, which declared neutrality on 30 July 1914, news of the Great War reached the public from studios like Pathé, Gaumont and Eclair. However, a significant proportion of these films were subject to censorship by the civil governments of the different Spanish provinces. News on the war was filtered with the pretext of protecting children, but in reality the intention was to maintain a neutrality that was practically impossible in the face of the rising tensions between supporters of the Allies and supporters of Germany. The tensions generated by the censorship supports the author's hypothesis that although Spain did not participate militarily in the conflict, Spanish life was greatly affected by the war.

The awareness of the need to disseminate the images preserved in the newsreels made during the Great War has led to a process of digitalisation of the extant footage in some of the bigger European film archives. Although it is currently estimated that less than twenty percent of the cinematic production of this era has been preserved, the films that have survived constitute an extensive catalogue on the First World War. As much of this preserved footage has been stored in archives on photochemical film until now, it has not been widely available to the public or to generalist historians interested in the period. The need to facilitate access to these collections led to the creation of the EFG1914 project. This project was launched in February 2012 with the objective of digitalising the footage stored in different film archives to make it available for consultation. The EFG1914 project has benefited from the participation of 26 European partners, including 21 archives and film partners. In January 2014, when the first ceremonies commemorating the centenary

of the First World War began, some 661 hours of films and around 5600 pictures, censors' documents, posters and texts had been posted online. All of these can be consulted at the websites: www.europeanfilmgateway.eu and www.europenana.eu. The digitised films in the EFG1914 project cover a range of genres and subgenres related to the war, such as newsreels, documentaries, fictional narratives, propaganda films and anti-war films. Life in the trenches, in the rearguard, in the colonies occupied by the powers engaged in the war, and the description of everyday life in wartime in general are some of the most common themes dealt with in the films that have been preserved. As a complement to the work of preserving the archives on the European Film Gateway and Europeana websites, a virtual exhibition has been coordinated with the purpose of bringing to light a selection of exceptional documents related to the events of the First World War, but also to the film industry and its audience. This project has been carried out in coordination between the Deutsche Film Institut and the Association de Cinémathèques Européenes The content and function of this important archive that makes the First World War available online is the focus of attention in Mónica Barrientos' paper "The First World War in Digital Archives: An Overview of the Films of the EFG1914 Project".

This archive work represents an important step in the conservation and recovery of the images disseminated from the film footage taken during the First World War. However, the use of archives can entail certain conceptual and practical problems if we fail to reflect on what the archive is today and on how the notion of the archive has been transformed in an era of social networks. First of all, we need to be mindful of the fact that since Michel Foucault's analysis in his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, the concept of the archive has become rather complex. The archive is no longer merely the certification of the "totality of texts that have been preserved by a civilization, or the set of traces that could be salvaged from its downfall, but the series of rules which determine in a culture the appearance and disappearance of statements, their retention and destruction, their paradoxical existence as *events* and *things*." (1998: 309). The reflection noted by Foucault in his *Archaeology* took the problem of the establishment of statements as a key element and a point of departure. What is important is not the document, nor what is said, but the simple fact that it is being said, i.e., "statements as events" (1969: 69).

If we transfer the debate proposed by Michel Foucault to the question of visual archives, it becomes clear that it is no longer enough to think of archives as a mere repository of images. We need to consider archives in terms of the distance generated from the present. We need to establish new perspectives and points of view. In the case of the newsreels filmed during the First World War, we need always to bear in mind that the impression left by the statements is related to the modes of filming. Any filmed archive is an archive of different gazes on the world, on human beings and on conflict understood as an event. Any archive image, including the images from the early days of cinema like those filmed during the war, is above all an archive of modes of filming.

In most historical series and in the different compilations that have appeared in relation to the First World War, one of the key issues involves the analysis of how the ways of filming—the statements—are erased and diluted in the editing process in order to create new statements which, in some cases, may end up distorting the visual flows. In her studies of images from the Second World War, historian Silvie Lindeperg has identified a set of formulae that reflect the increasing standardisation of the writing of history. These formulae, which may be applied to the study of the way in which images from the First World War are being used today, are, according to Lindeperg, characterised by "an aesthetic of excessively full things, by a hypervisibility, by enjambment

and hybridisation between the eras and different realms of the visible, by an immersion in the image and the sound that can lead to the creation of a new approach to the concepts of truth and reality, by a pulverisation of the original durations to create a formatting of temporalities" (2013: 18). Many of these issues identified by Silvie Lindeperg are present in most of the educational television documentaries on the First World War. These productions exploring history through a montage of pre-existing archive images range from the BBC production *World War One Centenary* to the polemical French series *Appocalipse Première Guerre Mondiale*, where the original black and white images from the newsreels are reassembled and colourised. All these educational documentary series merely create standardising discourses, with no respect for the statements present in the many newsreels, and ultimately generate a didactic discourse in which information is transmitted through a dubious blend of knowledge, reason, didactics and the communication of information on the one hand, and spectacle, distraction and pseudo-artistic expression on the other.

In view of the economy of the historical memory of the visible that most television institutions have articulated, we need to return to a discussion of certain key questions, such as: what does it mean today to be spectators viewing images of the past, such as images of the First World War? How do we go about establishing a complex relationship between distance and proximity with respect to historical documents? How do we take stock of the different ways of filming and of the statements concealed within the heart of the images?

To answer these questions, in which the relationships between what is said and what is unsaid will be essential for the articulation of discourses, we may find interesting examples in the work created by Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi using archive images, and especially their films on the First World War. The films of these filmmakers are positioned at the half-way point between archaeological work (in the sense defined by Foucault, consisting in searching for, recovering and classifying images to determine their meaning) and the work of artists who believe in the dialectic image arising from found footage as a way of exploring and teasing out the statements in the images and bringing their discourses into the present.[4]

Paula Arantzazu Ruiz's article "Operating on the Frame: Appearances of Novecento and the First World War in the Medical Film Genre in *Oh! Uomo* by Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi" focuses on one of the three films that make up their so-called war trilogy to address the question of the devastating effects of the Great War on the social, scientific and technological ideologies that underpinned it. The article begins with a study of scientific footage and the way in which the filmmakers dissect the archive image with their analytic camera. This reflection on *Oh! Uomo* closes an interrelated series of studies that demonstrate that the history of modernity and its notions of the body cannot be separated from the hegemonic conceptions related to Western colonialism; a reflection that uses archive footage to question it and interrogate it, ultimately interrogating the official discourses that have been articulated around the First World War.■

NOTES

* This article forms part of the research project of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, *La construcción del imaginario bélico en las actualidades de la Primera Guerra Mundial* (HAR2012-34854).

1 A key critical study of Kracauer's last book can be found in Barnow, Dagmar (1994). *Critical Realism: History, Photography and the Work of Siegfried Kracauer*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

2 Véray, Laurent (2014). Filmer la Grande Guerre à hauteur d'homme. In *Les croix des bois*. Complementary booklet to the restored DVD edition. Paris: Pathé.

3 *Deux fois cinquante ans du cinema français* (1995) by Jean Luc Godard was included in the package: Jean

Luc Godard, *Histoire(s) du cinema*. Gaumont/Intermedio, 2006.

4 Christa Blümlinger, *Cinema de seconde main. Estétique du remploi dans l'art du film et des nouveux médias*. Paris: Klincksieck, 2013. pp. 20-21

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POLICIES OF MEMORY RELATED TO IMAGES FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Abstract

This article examines the political uses of memory aimed at preserving the memory of past events and rescuing them from oblivion. Based on the reflections of Siegfried Kracauer on the points of contact between history and photography as tools for preserving an event, the article asks what role cinema plays as a tool for transmitting historical memory. An answer to this question is sought in the specific case of the First World War, interrogating the role of the film archive, the function served by newsreels and the place that fiction films have occupied in the commemoration of a key moment in European history. This examination is framed by a reflection on the nature of commemoration on the occasion of the centenary of the war and a reflection on the main articles included in the monograph issue of the *L'Atalante* journal.

Key words

Memory; Archive; Cinema; Commemoration; Newsreels; First World War.

Author

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Article reference

Quintana, Àngel (2016). Policies of memory related to images from the First World War. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 7-16.

POLÍTICAS DE MEMORIA EN TORNO A LAS IMÁGENES DE LA PRIMERA GUERRA MUNDIAL

Resumen

El articulo parte de las llamadas políticas de memoria orientadas a conservar la memoria de los hechos del pasado y rescatarlos del olvido. A partir de las reflexiones de Siegfried Kracauer en torno a los puntos de contacto entre la historia y la fotografía como instrumentos para conservar lo acontecido, el artículo se pregunta cuál es el papel del cine como instrumento transmisor de memoria histórica. Para encontrar una respuesta, el artículo parte del caso específico de la Primera Guerra Mundial y se interroga sobre el papel del archivo cinematográfico, la función que desarrollaron las actualidades o el lugar que el cine de ficción ha ejercido para conmemorar un pasado clave para la historia europea. El texto se enmarca en la reflexión en torno al factor conmemorativo derivado del centenario de la contienda y en la reflexión en torno a los principales artículos que componen el número monográfico de la revista *L'Atalante*.

Palabras clave

Memoria; archivo; cine; conmemoración; actualidades; Primera Guerra Mundial.

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Referencia de este artículo

Quintana, Àngel (2016). Filmar la Gran Guerra: entre información, propaganda y documentación histórica. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 7-16.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

NOTEBOOK

POLICIES OF MEMORY RELATED TO IMAGES FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR

FILMING THE GREAT WAR: INFORMATION, PROPAGANDA AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

LAURENT VÉRAY

The First World War was the first major conflict to be widely represented in visual media. All sides involved made considerable use of photography and cinema, which since then have become cornerstones of what could be called "a visual culture of war". Indeed, these two media perform a twofold mission, as sources of both daily information and historical documentation. Hence the existence today, in France and elsewhere, of various centres of archives and private collections containing countless still images and moving pictures taken between 1914 and 1918. These diverse collections offer rich and exciting documentary material for researchers, and for filmmakers as well. However, as interesting or striking as they may be, these images—like all documents of another time—are bearers of the real, of the forgotten and of the spurious which we must be able to decode.

NEWSREELS AND WAR DOCUMENTARIES

When war broke out, cinema was still seen as a mechanical tool for recording real events. Created in 1908 in France, newsreels, or *les bandes d'actualité filmées*, opened a window onto the world and attracted curious crowds. Yet neither professionals of the image nor military and political authorities had any clear idea of what a cinema of information and propaganda could offer.[1] As they gradually became aware of the social power of images, both sought to use them. As with the illustrated press, images of the war were of great interest to commercial companies, which saw them as a way of appealing to the public at home, who were hungry for knowledge and insight as to what was happening at the front. Initially cameramen were not authorised to enter combat zones;

but finally, under pressure from cinema personalities like Léon Gaumont and Charles Pathé, who insisted that film constituted the most appropriate medium to reach a mass public, in early 1915 the French Minister for War, Alexandre Millerand, together with the military authorities, decided to establish two bodies: the *Section Photographique de l'Armée* (SPA), and the *Section Cinématographique de l'Armée* (SCA). An agreement was signed between the Ministry for War and the federation of film industry professionals to meet demands for information at home and propaganda abroad, and to create archival records of the war. Jean-Louis Croze, who had been a playwright, theatre critic and later a film critic for the magazine *Comoedia*, became Director of the SCA, which brought together numerous camera operators working for the four major companies of the time: Pathé, Gaumont, Éclair and Éclipse.

INITIALLY CAMERAMEN WERE NOT AUTHORISED TO ENTER COMBAT ZONES

When a camera operator was appointed by the SCA's Bureau for Military Information (*Bureau des informations militaires*, BIM) to film at a specific location at the front, he was met by a staff officer whose task was to *guide* him in the selection of his reports, as there were certain subjects that were better kept secret. But these officers, knowing that all the images would be inspected and sifted later, could be relatively accommodating, as they were aware of the need for archive footage for future posterity. This twofold mission was something that Pierre Marcel, who was in command of both sections, summarised in the following terms in September 1915: "The SPCA [*Section Photographique et cinématographique de l'Armée*] must ensure loyal propaganda when authenticating documents, and establish archives whose authenticity will be irrefutable by the scrupulous author of an impartial history."

The footage taken at the front was sent to one of the major film studios to be developed. The films were then edited, and titles, sub-titles and inter-titles (captions) were written and inserted between the images to comment on them. The final versions varied from five to fifteen minutes for newsreels,[2] and up to an hour for documentaries. For films to be put on sale, it was important that the images should give a "strong impression of the material or moral power of the French army and its discipline."[3] In the case of films for export to neutral countries, it was essential to create an effective counterbalance to enemy propaganda, and to "make known everywhere the effort exerted by France since the outbreak of the war."[4] To do this, it was deemed advisable to take shots of weapons, of soldiers parading and of artillery firing, and to include plenty of scenes showing the positive role played by officers, the good condition and organisation of the troops, the abundance of their equipment and munitions, and the efficient functioning of quartermaster and medical services.

In general, there had to be plenty of reassuring images that would reinforce the *Union Sacrée* that supported the French war effort. In the words of Georges Dureau, editor of the magazine *Ciné-Journal*, in June 1915, "cinema, precisely because it enjoys public popularity, is surely a wonderful way to support morale" (DUREAU, 1915). From that time on, in film after film all the scenes were alike. In this early phase of the war, all combatants used film images to prove the superiority of their soldiers and their equipment. Industrial weaponry, which caused total carnage on the battlefield, was shown in images that revealed only the collateral damage. Depictions on film screens in France and abroad of the ravages to French territory were seen regularly throughout the war. Shots of ruins, particularly of churches, represented as true tests of suffering for the French people, underscored the "savagery of German aggression". In

the words of the editor-in-chief of the magazine *Hebdo-Film*, these images were necessary to "sustain within us the healthy hatred of the barbaric killer." The finest example of the genre is undoubtedly *Les monuments historiques d'Arras victimes de la barbarie allemande* (Pathé, June 1915). Also noteworthy is the film *Éclipse*, devoted to the emblematic Reims Cathedral, which was regularly shelled by artillery or aircraft, shown in a clear silhouette in the final image of the film with the caption: "*Ils ne l'auront pas!*" ("They will not take it!").

CENSORSHIP

Whether newsreels, documentaries or fiction films, the cinema did not escape the censor's scrutiny. In France, censorship was first introduced—in the case of newsreels—by local authorities (governors and mayors). Then, between April 1915 and March 1917, it was the Press Bureau created at the beginning of the conflict by the Ministry for War to check all press articles and film images before their release. Every week the Bureau was given previews of all films made by Pathé, Gaumont, Éclair and Éclipse, and had the power not only to approve or deny the permit necessary to screen the films publicly, but also to cut out images and change the content of the films. The Bureau's decisions were based on two criteria: not to alarm the public, and not to give information to the enemy. To meet the first objective, all necessary precautions had to be taken to reassure families by considerably toning down any distressing scenes (almost all shots of dying wounded men and corpses were eliminated, especially if they were French). For the second criterion, care was taken to eliminate any military information that could be useful to the enemy (this applied especially to films that were to be distributed abroad that might be seen by German spies). The Bureau thus required the deletion from the intertitles of all regiment numbers and names of officers or locations. It was also forbidden to show certain equipment (the first tanks, for example) or, at least in the early stages of the war, to screen films depicting the use of flammable liquids or tear gas by French troops. Obviously, many of the corrections imposed by the censors, particularly those related to intertitles, aimed at tempering the often gratuitous sensationalism of the film studios. The films that were banned were not destroyed, but put in archives for distribution after the war. The authorities were convinced that they must not fear any indiscretion, as made evident in a letter, dating from 1917, from General Lyautey, then Minister for War: "I have taken the strictest measures to establish a meticulous selection between documents that could be shown to the public, both in France and abroad, and those that will be kept exclusively as archive pieces, to be preserved with the utmost secrecy."[5]

FROM MARCH 1917 ON, NEWSREELS WERE OVERSEEN BY A NEW COMMISSION MADE UP OF CIVILIANS AND MILITARY OFFICERS FROM THE SCA, AND THE MINISTRIES FOR WAR, FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND FINE ARTS. THESE NEW CENSORS WERE SOMEWHAT LESS SEVERE THAN THOSE OF THE PRESS BUREAU, AND AS A RESULT MANY BANS WERE LIFTED

From March 1917 on, newsreels were overseen by a new commission made up of civilians and military officers from the SCA, and the Ministries for War, Foreign Affairs and Fine Arts. These new censors were somewhat less severe than those of the Press Bureau, and as a result many bans were lifted. The agreement between the authorities and the filmmakers' federation remained in effect until January 1917, when the SCA distanced itself from the private studios. Following this separation (which was not a total break as the Chambre Syndicale continued to collaborate considerably

in the distribution of films), the SCA was merged with the SPA to create the SPCA. Placed under the joint supervision of the Ministries for War and Fine Arts, its objectives were similar to those of the two former services. However, its administrative approach was characterised by an extreme concern with production. From March 1917, various ambitious projects were developed, such as the full-length documentary *La puissance militaire de la France* by Henri Desfontaines. Structured in five parts ("La France en armes", "La France entière mobilisée", "Aviation et aerostation", "La bataille" and "Après la bataille") the film offers a highly didactic overview, through a statement by General Joffre addressed to General Pershing and the American people, of "what France has had to do, for three years, to improvise a war for which it had the honour not to prepare." The film had a considerable impact not only in France, but in the United States as well. In a letter to the filmmaker André Antoine, creator of Théâtre Libre (where Desfontaines was a student and later an assistant before making his own films), Desfontaines explained that the demands of producing propaganda abroad (specifically, in relation to a film targeting an American audience) had compelled him to make a film which was very simple, and not at all an artistic venture: "Our particular purpose must not be to consider cinema from a general point of view (…) It is a matter of sustaining morale, of exposing culpability, the crimes of the Germans (…) The future for our cinematographic art is not uncertain but, for the present, propaganda is and must be done with postcards and not with works of art (…) Otherwise it would not achieve the purpose, which is to reach the common people… We will educate them bit by bit, in small doses."[6]

In 1917 a new weekly newsreel appeared, around fifteen minutes long, named *Les annales de la guerre*. Around a hundred of them were screened from 1917 to January 1919. Worthy of special mention is Number 13 in the series, a report from June 1917 featuring an interesting visit to an army camp by General Pétain. This sequence is unique for various reasons, firstly because it is here we find the famous scene, cited by many authors, showing the general sampling soup and wine, during which, according to the authors, he deliberately made the expression of the "Lion of Verdun", thinking that the images would never reach the screen.[7] The suggestion is very probably a myth: the actual shots in question (not a single shot as commonly believed, but two, one for each liquid tasted) show no sign of Pétain contorting his face, and they were widely distributed at the time. But that is not the point: if we are to believe the statement made after the war by the former head of the SCA (Croze, 1927: 20), this footage would have been prepared by him in collaboration with the general's official assistant, and every move and gesture that Pétain had to make in front of the camera would have been meticulously prepared to establish a narrative that could best capture the attention of the audience. This claim is confirmed by the editing of the sequence into nine carefully composed shots in perfect continuity. The film was shot barely a month after the general's appointment as head of the French army, replacing Nivelle following the fatal Chemin des Dames offensive, and therefore at the very moment when serious acts of disobedience were occurring in some regiments (the infamous French Army Mutinies), which were kept secret by the High Command. From this perspective, it becomes clear why in these scenes the General is shown taking part in the conflict, deeply concerned over the fate of his soldiers. Indeed, it was important to show that the leader had re-established contact with his troops

THIS PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT REVEALS THE EXTENT TO WHICH PÉTAIN, MORE THAN ANY OTHER OFFICER, REALISED THE IMPORTANCE OF CINEMA AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

and had restored their confidence in him. This personal involvement reveals the extent to which Pétain, more than any other officer, realised the importance of cinema as a means of communication. This enabled him to enhance his image and to cultivate the myth of the national hero and saviour of the nation, which had already been established in the press since his decisive role in the Battle of Verdun.

CINEMA: A MODERN TOOL AT THE SERVICE OF THE MODERNITY OF WAR

It would seem logical that, in the context of a technological and industrial war, the use of the cinema as a modern piece of equipment would take many forms. As a writer for the newspaper *L'Excelsior* pointed out in 1915, "[t]he cinema occupies too great a place in modern society for it not to play a big role in modern warfare." Thus, films were used in the United Kingdom from the outbreak of the hostilities to encourage voluntary enlistment before conscription was introduced in 1916. Film was also used in the instruction of combatants, for medical studies, for the analysis of ballistics and for aerial observation. In France, since the creation of the SCA in 1915, animated images were used to create records of the conflict. This a new kind of documentation (indeed this was the first appearance of the concept of "archive images"), which, it was believed, would form the memory of this human catastrophe for future generations. Camera operators therefore had to film the sites and monuments that were damaged in order to document the different stages of their destruction, and thus to facilitate their reconstruction once the war was over.

Every government used films in the context of campaigns to secure domestic loans (national bonds) to support the war effort. These films were also shown to the general public to encourage spectators to buy war bonds. One such film, *Pour la victoire* (1916) offered an original blend of several cinematic forms, using fiction, documentary, animation, poster photography, engravings, and texts from official speeches. In two parts the film articulates a series of sentimental, moral and economic arguments to ensure the success of the national mobilisation needed to hasten the final victory. The first part, *"Par les armes"* [Under Arms], associates the soldier's actions with those of the bond purchaser by juxtaposing images of the front (with an animated map of the battlefield showing the movements of the armies and the changes in the front line to illustrate the strategic effects more clearly) with the (fictional) story of a schoolboy whose father is called up, who breaks open his piggy-bank to buy a war bond. The second part, *"La bataille à l'arrière"* [The Battle at the Home Front], compares buying bonds to the activity of the war industry that was supporting the country, while at the same time showing that it represented an excellent financial investment. It is clear that the intention behind this hybrid form of filmed propaganda was to reach as wide a public as possible. Any means were acceptable in the efforts to raise funds. In both Germany and France, diverse narrative forms were used to achieve this aim. In Germany such films were known as *Kriegsanleihe-Werbefilm, der Reichsbank*. Although in 1918 an appeal was made to the celebrated hero of national mythology *Jung Siegfried*, in most cases the films played on the fear of the invasion of Germany. For example, *Der Heimat Schikengrab* [The Trenches of Home], a blend of fiction and documentary, tells the story of Russian troops pillaging a village on the eastern front. Humour was also sometimes used: *Rentier Kulickes Flug zur Front* [Prosperous Mr. Kulicke is Flown to the Front] shows a businessman who refuses to invest a penny in war bonds until he dreams he is transported against his will in a plane to the Western Front. There he sees a stretch of French territory entirely destroyed (using authentic aerial views of the ruins of Péronne and Saint-Quentin). When he awakes, he recognises how grateful

the country should be to the army for having protected Germany in the war beyond the Rhine. He then hurries to a Berlin bank to buy some national defence bonds.

Stars of the silver screen were also in great demand. The actress Henny Porten, considered the leading star of the German cinema,[8] played herself in *Hann, Hein und Henny* (Rudolf Biebrach, 1917), a short film in which she meets with submariners to encourage the public to subscribe to the Seventh War Loan. In England, along with slogans like "Save your Money and Save the World!", films or newsreel sequences about war loans also showed personalities taking part in the war effort. For example, the well-known writer Hall Caine was filmed at his desk writing a script for the official services (*Pictorial News*, No. 327). We can also find comparable propaganda in the United States following its entry on the Allied side in April 1917, featuring Geraldine Farr, who had enjoyed huge success as Joan of Arc in *Joan the Woman* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1916), and Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford also acted in several films in support of Liberty Bonds.

IMAGES OF WOMEN'S WORK

In a long, deadly, total war, where the role of civilians was as important as that of combatants, women took on professional activities until then reserved for males. In both town and countryside, the *substitutes* for enlisted husbands or sons assumed new responsibilities. By 1916, filming women's work in factories and fields became commonplace. These were propaganda films that extolled the place of French women within the *Union Sacrée*. They also sought to glorify the work of women while blurring its harshness. Mainly aimed at neutral countries, these films were part of the prolific production of images ordered and controlled by the Bureau of Information, whose instructions to the press were very clear: to make known everywhere and by all means the extraordinary efforts of France to win the war. Commercial enterprises, as noted above, in disseminating propaganda abroad, sought to present an image of strength and power, notably by showing the imposing metallurgical factories where military equipment was manufactured, mainly the ones in Creusot and Saint-Chamond. This explains the interest in portraying the Frenchwomen whose everyday lives were being rocked by the war: active women who were fine specimens of patriotic feeling. The films about them portray them as modern women, reflecting their new place in society in the absence of men, their substantial contribution to every professional activity, their sense of sacrifice and their dedication. This intention is clear in *Fabrication des bombes Wanderen (torpilles) aux usines Niclausse* (undated) and *La main d'oeuvre féminine dans les usines de guerre* (1916), which show workshops almost entirely run by female workers. Regular exchanges of images between the Allied nations allowed the French public to see how English women were replacing the men who had been called up to fight. We can see an example of this in a scene from *Les Annales de la guerre n°29* (dated 27 September 1917), which shows women in the countryside driving tractors for harvesting or ploughing, in the factory doing welding work, and in the army marching through the streets of London as uniformed volunteers in the Women's Legion.

But the most characteristic example is without doubt the documentary *La femme française pendant la guerre* (Alexandre Devarenne, 1918), a montage film made up of news footage shot during the war, introduced by a simple story and re-organised in relation to each other. The film exemplifies the new place of women in the war, and their dedication to their country. In the city, they work as station cleaners, truck drivers or servants. In the factory, a worker assigned to different tasks stops only to breastfeed her baby. On the farm, she drives the plough, sows and reaps the harvest. The film also exalts the importance and heroism

of women, and shows the compensation given to widows, nurses or female workers wounded by enemy bombs. In all of these cases, whether peasant or *munitionette*,[9] mother, wife or nurse, the woman played an essential role. These images are extremely common in the propaganda, but historical research in the context of gender studies demonstrate that the emancipation of women through work was often seen by men as a threat.[10] It was feared that women would be defeminised, and there were claims that such blurring of gender roles was dangerous. From this perspective, the analysis of newsreels and documentaries is significant. Some appraise the important social changes associated with the activities of women, but at the same time, in each film the maternal metaphors proliferated, feminine qualities were emphasised and, even when women were dressed and working like men, an effort was made to feminise them and to remind the viewer that above all they were still women whose essential task, in the context of a deadly war, was to repopulate the nation. Indeed, it must not be forgotten that in a context of massive death, the birth rate was an absolute priority.

FROM REALITY TO RECONSTRUCTION

All images construct realities and produce meaning. One only needs to think of the fundamental notion of point of view on which the composition of any shot depends. The intention of the camera operator was not limited merely to the circumstances of the shot, or to the official instructions they received or the technical requirements; they were also linked to their professional training and the influence that the cinematic medium itself had on them. This explains the frequent detours taken in the interests of a certain staging of reality. From that point, the frontier between the "real" and the *mise en scène* is often blurred. *L'Aide des colonies à la France* (Henri Desfontaines, 1917) is a good example of this. In this documentary showing France receiving supplies of goods and troops from its colonial Empire (Morocco, Senegal, Indochina, etc.), we witness an imaginary exchange of correspondence between a father and his son, a Senegalese rifleman, intended to illustrate the devotion of the colonies to the "mother country". This story of a written testimony to the zeal and courage of the Africans is in reality in line with opinion in the French command concerning *la force noire* ("black force", according to General Magin's theory) and their supposed capacity to excel in the "*coups dours*", i.e., that harshest moments on the front.

SUCH SCENES WERE USED AS A SARCASTIC CRITICISM OF THE ALLIES' CLAIM TO BE DEFENDING CULTURE AND CIVILISATION WITH COLOURED TROOPS. THIS FORM OF OBVIOUS RACISM WOULD BE INTENSIFIED AFTER THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

These increasingly common images were also picked up by German counter-propaganda; indeed, newsreels and documentary films on the war often showed shots of French colonial troops taken as prisoners, assembled together to pose for the camera (for example, in a sequence in *Bei unseren Helden an der Somme*, 1917). Such scenes were used as a sarcastic criticism of the Allies' claim to be defending culture and civilisation with coloured troops. This form of obvious racism would be intensified after the Treaty of Versailles. At the time of the French occupation of the Rhineland, there arose the notion of the "black shame", with the dissemination of horrifying stories of rapes and murders committed by soldiers of the foreign legion. This conditioning of German public opinion during the Great War no doubt facilitated the acceptance, after 1933, of the Nazi propaganda that took up this kind of image to demonstrate the supremacy of the Aryan race in Europe.

The nature of the images filmed on the battlefield can be classified in three ways: "fictional images", "codified real images" and "barely codified real images". In the first case, the camera operator had considerable freedom of action to organise his subject, invent a story, or put it in a scene to make it clearer or give it more dramatic force. In the second case, he witnessed an event in which he could not intervene directly, except to choose a point of view through the frames. Finally, in the third category, the operator was faced with a dangerous situation which he could not control and had to be content with filming whatever he could see as best he could. The resulting image reflected the vagaries of the shoot. For both technical and safety reasons, there was no filming in the line of fire. We therefore see no battles, but only shelling and explosions in the distance, cannons firing, or the range of weapons used. The most common images were of the "sideshows" of the war: parades, visits by generals or politicians to the front, the daily life of the soldiers in the trenches and rest camps. Scenes showing men engaged in different leisure activities (handicrafts, gardening, games, etc.) can be seen in the Pathé film titled *Après 305 jours guerre, le moral du soldat français au front*. Away from the front line, it was said, "we rightly find the most vivid evidence of the army's excellent state of morale."[11] These situations are not false, as the soldiers did indeed spend a lot of time in the rest camps when they were not stationed on the front line. However, they did not rest often, as they were required to perform all kinds of duties. It could thus be said that such newsreels lied mainly by omission of certain images; there was a total ban on any image of the death of French soldiers, and the complete dehumanisation of the battlefield only appeared by implication. In short, there was what could be called a denial linked to a certain sense of obscenity associated with death. If images of corpses were unacceptable, it was because they would have permitted an unbearable process of identification, and in consequence they could "shock the families", not to mention the ethical concerns of certain camera operators, which would sometimes have functioned as a kind of self-censorship. Hence the multiplicity of shots of dead animals or devastated landscapes as a metaphor for human death.

It was at the Somme offensive that camera operators on both sides of the front were authorised to go up to the front line. Until then, in order to give a plausible appearance of the war they could not see up close, they had been compelled to resort to various forms of subterfuge. The most common was the use, with the complicity of the soldiers, of simulations of offensive or defensive actions. As an example, the Gaumont film *En Artois la défense de nos lignes* (1915), which reconstructs, in about thirty shots, the different stages between an alert raised by an observation point and the response by the anti-aircraft artillery. Similarly, an Éclair film[12] begins with a wide shot of a troop of *Chasseurs Alpins* lying on the ground along a path beside a forest, who are supposedly about to open fire on the German position. An intertitle announces: "The enemy responds with small-calibre shells. Two explode less than 40 metres from the French machine guns." And indeed, in the next shot, identical to the previous one, we see two small explosions in front of the soldiers, who have ceased fire in order to take cover. Considering the position of the camera (the operator is filming from a higher angle) and the attitude of the soldiers (one of them, as if by luck, takes cover at the moment of the explosions), this is no doubt a reconstruction during which, very probably, other soldiers positioned nearby threw the grenades. These images, shot in training areas or in relatively calm sectors, even if they are identifiable as staged scenes, could nevertheless appear believable because they portrayed a plausible reality. In this way, they establish a relationship of credibility accepted by a public already used to such practices, which had been used in reconstructed newsreels since 1897[13] as an extension of

the prints used widely in the nineteenth century portraying reconstructions of major events that were impossible to shoot on location, summarizing, embellishing or dramatising them. In the period 1914-18, although camera operators created reconstructions on location and with the participation of the real protagonists, without seeking to denaturalise the reality filmed (situations in which the soldiers were imitating, in some way, their own actions for the needs of the camera), none of these reproductions presented any actual combat.

THE SOMME: A BATTLE ON CAMERA

The great inadequacy of the documentary gaze lies in its inability to show the violence of the conflict, rendering the battle invisible. However, some genuine skirmishes were successfully filmed. It was on 1 July 1916, in the offensive on the Somme outside the village of Dompierre, that cameramen were permitted to move up to the lines of fire to film the beginning of an attack. The resulting film shows soldiers in a trench, fitting their bayonets to their rifles, then launching themselves in successive waves over the embankment, before disappearing at a run into no man's land. Other images of this kind were shot later, in April 1917, during the Chemin des Dames offensive in front of the Godat farm. But the technical conditions (the constant need to stand upright to film, the weight and encumbrance of the equipment, etc.) were a real handicap. It was therefore impossible for the operator to follow the soldiers after the beginning of the attack. Since that decisive date, it became evident that the battle itself would remain invisible.

For both the English and the French, the Somme was a key moment for battle filming. Because they had taken command of operations and expected the offensive would create a decisive breakthrough to move on from the war of attrition, the British took care to set up what would today be called exceptional "media coverage". In this context, as Nicholas Hiley notes, the cameramen, like their photographer colleagues, benefited from special authorisation to move (relatively) freely and were invited to take extensive footage (Hiley, 1994: 194). The films of Geoffrey Malins and John McDowell were used to create a full-length documentary entitled *The Battle of the Somme*, which showed the preparations for the British offensive, a very impressive explosion, on the first day of the attack, of a Hawthorn Ridge mine beneath the German lines at Beaumont Hamel, an attack (actually a reconstruction from some ten shots filmed in a training area, with two soldiers pretending to be killed) and especially the return of the wounded and the prisoners after the battle (including a horrific shot of a Tommy carrying the body of one of his comrades on his back) and, finally, the burial of the dead. This production was inspiring and patriotic, but at the same time harsh and realistic. For the first time, civilian audiences were witness to violent images of the war. The film was an immense success, its impact enormous. It has been estimated that nearly a million Londoners saw it during the first series of showings in the autumn of 1916, and that it was seen by 20 million people throughout the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. After attending a showing, the cameraman Geoffrey Malins made the following statement: "I really thought that some of the dead scenes would offend the British public. And yet why should they? It is only a very mild touch of what is happening day after day, week after

IT WAS ON 1 JULY 1916, IN THE OFFENSIVE ON THE SOMME OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE OF DOMPIERRE, THAT CAMERAMEN WERE PERMITTED TO MOVE UP TO THE LINES OF FIRE TO FILM THE BEGINNING OF AN ATTACK

week, on the bloody plains of France and Belgium" (Malins, 1920: 183). In response to the British documentary, which was shown in neutral countries, the Germans decided at the end of 1916 to produce a similar film. This montage of disparate elements, bringing together authentic images and reconstructions of assaults, was called *Bei unseren Helden an der Somme* [With our Heroes on the Somme]. Produced by the very new cinematic propaganda service Bild und Filmart (BUFA) (Rother, 1995: 525-542), it was structured in three parts: "The Situation behind the Front", "The Advance through the Forest of Saint-Pierre-Vaast", and "The Advance near Bouchavesnes". A critic for *Der Kinematograph* wrote: "We must acknowledge the immense victory that the filmmaker has achieved with this film. It records world history, fulfilling its greatest mission." A journalist for the *Berliner Tageblatt* gave a similar verdict, emphasising the sequence showing the beginning of the attack, which, he argues, succeeded in suggesting the intensity of the action:

> Finally, the attack, at the same time as the mine explosion. Black smoke everywhere, white clouds of steam, strips of earth, torn up sections: then, the assault troops go mad out of the trenches, German soldiers appear everywhere, in the red brilliance of the fire, until they disappear in the enemy trench. Even the weariest imagination is aroused and with the uproar of battle completes this description of reality. All the viewers are silent. No one thinks of applauding these scenes. But no one remains indifferent. Respect for the cinema, so disparaged previously. There, it is making History.

The fact that the Viennese polemicist-turned-playwright Karl Kraus recognized the importance of *Bei unseren Helden an der Somme* in *The Last Days of Mankind* (Act IV, Scene 14 of the stage version established by the author)[14] underlines the significance of this propaganda documentary, whose influence has clearly been considerable since its premiere in the film theatres of the Central Powers in 1917. On the other hand, in neutral countries it was not very successful compared to the productions by the Allies.

Although the choices made by camera operators were limited by the instructions they received, the use of the camera, within the frame of investigation authorised to them, allowed them on occasions to capture the unexpected, the unusual. Moreover, the suggestive power of certain shots was far from negligible. Some escaped the censors' scissors to show apocalyptic images of the front, of devastated villages, which gave clear glimpses of the horrors of war.[15] The presence of such visual references evokes events off-screen, in the space not visible to the viewers, the tragedy of war with its great chain of suffering. Furthermore, many images are vested with an incomparable expressive force and a genuine emotional dimension. This is particularly true of shots of wounded or maimed soldiers. Their faces, their bodies, their gaze inhabited by an unspeakable horror, are the most powerful visible indicators of the extreme violence suffered by the combatants. These images appear as the most evocative revelations of the war. Indeed, these bodies cannot be reduced merely to emblematic figures at the service of propaganda. They are men with a history that reaches far beyond the frame of the event for which they were filmed. The power of certain shots lies partly in the fact that they evoke sympathy and create a connection with the public. As the great film critic Émile Vuillermoz remarked in 1917 in his column for the newspaper *Le Temps*, it was thanks to newsreels that "the whole of France was able to crowd round the screen, as if the rectangular white cloth was the reflection of a mysterious periscope where the eye looked out on the battlefield. It was the true agent of connection between the people at the front and those back home" (Vuillermoz, 1917).

It is very difficult to judge the degree to which the newsreels influenced public opinion. But in view of the context, we may suppose that it was not far from what the viewers (most of whom

had a family member in conflict and felt a sense of anxious anticipation over a war they believed could only bring bad news) wanted to see. And it is clear that neither the authorities nor the production companies were interested, based on a political or commercial logic, in going beyond what the public could stomach.

PROPAGANDA THROUGH IMAGE: A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Even within the context of controlled propaganda, certain images can put off their users. In this respect, it is worth considering the question of the depiction of the enemy. On the map of military operations, the Germans were initially positioned as aggressors, while France was merely defending itself. The theme of the enemy's barbarity thus became ubiquitous in the press. There was a political use of anti-German discourse, but the authorities by no means held all the levers of propaganda. In newsreels and war documentaries, the intention behind showing prisoners was to demonstrate the effectiveness of the offensives. And yet, watching these images, the viewer is struck by their meaninglessness, as they have the effect of blurring the agreed view of the era, of exploding the established clichés. These Germans did not fit into the gallery of caricatures familiar to the audience. Clearly, these were defeated enemies being paraded before the camera like military trophies, but they did not resemble the "bloodthirsty monsters" that a certain type of propaganda presented throughout the war with a wealth of disturbing details. It is also worth noting that, except for the first films made in early 1915, the terminology chosen to refer to them was not pejorative. They are described as Germans, German prisoners, opponents, enemies. The usage, until then commonplace, of terms like *Fritz* or Huns or *Boches* were practically absent from the French newsreels (we do find them, however, in the British *Pictorial News*). The camera shows the Other in flesh and blood, without engaging in the cheap trick of disdaining him. There is even enough ambiguity to make an emotional reading possible. The recognisable expression of the faces filmed goes beyond the Germanophobic discourse of the era, and offers a disturbing piece of evidence: the enemy, in his physical appearance, is not so different.

Other emblematic examples of propaganda images could provoke the opposite effect, such as the scientific and medical films commissioned by the Health Service for surgical operations, experiments and special clinical cases. Some were intended for strictly internal use by specialists, while others were shown to the public. This last category, close to scientific dissemination, are along the lines of the famous films made by Doctor Doyen (from 1897) and Doctor Commandon (from 1904). Among the different examples, the most effective were those related to restorative therapy for maimed and traumatised men. One example is *Traitement des troubles nerveux fonctionnels dans le service du docteur Clovis Vincent* (probably dating from 1916), which was shown to the public under a more explicit title: *Progrès de la science française au profit des victimes de la guerre: une grande découverte du docteur Vincent*. [Progress of French Science for the Benefit of the Victims of War: A Great Discovery by Dr. Vincent]. It is worth noting that this film was characteristic of the polysemic ambiguity of certain works of propaganda. But what does it show? In the Descartes Hospital in Tours we see a succession of shell-shocked men in a corridor while a doctor applies an electrode to their spines. The patients writhe with pain under the effect of the electric shocks. The film, like all propaganda films, functions according to the logic of proof: seeing is believing; the truth of the image confirms the phenomenon and is intended to prove the efficacy of the therapeutic procedure. But at the same time these images of neurosis[16] associated with the traumas caused by combat reveal the mark of

war on the body. Their violence makes all of the monstrousness of modern conflict more convincing. From this perspective, there is no reluctance to show the consequences of the extreme brutality of war (it is undeniable that the films produced by the health service often approach the limits of the watchable) simply because they are related to the pretext of scientific study, of the medical document. "The wonderful electrophysiological method of Doctor Vincent", as one intertitle says, would be even capable of straightening up the maimed, healing the shell-shocked, the traumatised (or those who were pretending to be so, as was a common belief at the time) so that they can return to the fight on the front. In this respect, the final frame of the film could not be more significant: "The admirable results rewarded by the research of Doctor Vincent, and the efforts of his collaborators, give the nation healthy men capable of returning to war."

Although the content of certain images was not easy to control, the significance of a declaration could be enough to alter its meaning radically and skew its perception. An excellent example is one of the numerous propaganda films made by the Germans in 1917 on the submarine war they were waging in an effort to break the blockade that deprived the country of vital imports to feed its population.[17] The status of this film was effectively inverted. Initially viewed as proof of the heroism of the Reich's submariners, after the Armistice it became, according to the Allied version, a damning indictment of the crimes perpetrated by the Germans. Initially shown by the British Admiralty under the title *The Exploits of a German Submarine U-35*, the film was subsequently shown in the United States, while Gaumont acquired the rights for France in January 1920 and distributed it under the title *La croisière de l'U-35*. A publicity poster in the corporate magazine *Hebdo-Film* at the time of its premiere on Parisian screens reveals how easily the meaning of this propaganda film was altered:

> The self-confessed crime; the gratuitous attack, recounted in detail by its own perpetrator with the utmost cynicism (…) An archive item from that museum of horrors that makes up Teutonic history of the twentieth century (…) It is a duty for every Frenchman who possesses a screen to see this crushing evidence of the savagery of our former enemies, for it is a duty of every Frenchman with a heart never to forget, even at the moment when all hatred may cease.[17]

ESTABLISHING ARCHIVES OF THE WAR

One of the priorities of the main belligerent countries that we tend to forget is to establish visual archives of the war. It is worth clarifying, however, that this interest in collecting images of the war for their preservation, along with the methods used to do so, are inscribed in the line of photographic archive procedures employed in the previous century.

This project has a special dimension in modern war, where all matters concerning the conflict are systematically recorded for the purposes of registering the magnitude of the disaster. The most emblematic example is, without question, *En dirigeable sur les champs de bataille* (1919). The images, taken from a Zodiac air balloon flying at low altitude, were taken over the course of an hour by Lucien Le Saint,[19] a camera operator with the Photographic and Cinematographic section of the French Army. Positioned in the back of the balloon's basket, the operator filmed the terrain (in certain moments with the cables of the balloon in the foreground), the control panel and the pilot. As a result, we can see the front line as it was at the beginning of 1919, in a sort of almost uninterrupted movement of long sequence shots from the North Sea to Alsace, passing over Belgian or French villages that have been completely destroyed, where the gaze slips until we lose it. The objective was to establish an archive of the battlefield after the end of the war, a visual testimony before reconstruction began. The

result is a unique record, from a bird's eye view, of the annihilation caused by modern war. In this vast, gloomy expanse nothing has survived, except for ruins and shrapnel. It seems certain that for contemporary viewers this view was probably a shock, because what it shows is an immense cemetery. It is, in effect, a vast landscape that served as a grave (half of the fatalities in the First World War had no burial, and this film, a cinematographic symbol of an absent presence, is in a certain way the only trace of their disappearance). Here, over this bleak but now amazingly quiet terrain, is the sum of European history for those four long years. A material, total image of the emptiness of war that is represented here as no other form of expression known at the time could do.

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For their emotional charge, the images of the war have, since the end of the conflict, come to be considered relics, the only traces of all those loved ones, all those anonymous combatants who fell on the "field of honour", as it was called in those days. In 1919, the moment of the disappearance of the SPCA, the question arose of how all the images filmed were to be managed. To ensure their preservation, the government established a corporation: *les Archives photographiques d'Art et d'Histoire* (Photographic Archives of Art and History). Created with the approval of the Ministry for War and the Ministry for Public Instruction and for Fine Arts, they put at its disposal the facilities in the basement of the Royal Palace. This organisation was not really a commercial enterprise, although it could sell copies of the documents it preserved.[20] Successively directed by fine arts officials, it was the holder of a valuable collection of 2,000 films (i.e., almost 250,000 metres of film) and 120,000 photographs considered "an historical testimony of the greatest importance"[21] (hence the name of the corporation). On 26 February 1920, the journal *Sciences et Voyages* published an important dossier entitled "Cinema and History", where we can read: "In ten centuries, posterity will witness the great war that has just ended. It will see our soldiers and generals live and grow. Who does not understand that these moving pictures will always be worth more than any other history written by the most important historian?"[22] Turned in time into documents, the newsreel images will be used in every film about the Great War, as an indispensable historical endorsement. They will be edited regularly for memorials, to the point of becoming a regular piece of television recycling at times of commemoration. As if the look back to 1914-18 would not be possible without them. However, we can lament the fact that, beyond their illustrative capacity, we rarely ask ourselves about their real value as testimony or about their inherent characteristics. ■

NOTES

1 On the conditions of production, distribution and reception of newsreels in France, see Véray, Laurent (1995). *Les films d'actualité français de la Grande Guerre*. Paris: AFRHC/SIRPA.

2 In 1915, the SCA offered spectators 156 newsreels, and 400 in 1916, with an average in this second year of thirty newsreels per month.

3 Instruction relating to the choice of films and shots from the Press Information Bureau (Bureau des Informations á la Presse), 1 November 1915, Service Historique de la Défense, Vincennes, 5N 550.

4 Summary of a report on the creation and functioning of the SCA, October 1917, documentation of the Éta-

blissement de conception et de production audiovisuelles de la Défense (ECPAD), no catalogue number.

5 Letter from General Lyautey to General Nivelle, 6 February 1917, SHAT 5N 346.

6 Letter from Henri Desfontaines to André Antoine, 6 June 1918, BnF collection, Performing Arts archive.

7 Marcel Lapierre quoted by Georges Sadoul in Sadoul, Georges (1975). Le cinéma devient un art (1909-1920). In *Histoire générale du cinéma* (vol. 4, p. 40). Paris: Denoël.

8 The Danish actress Asta Nielsen was also very popular in Germany at this time.

9 Translator's Note: In France, female munitions workers were known as *munitionnettes*.

10 On this question, and on the role of women in the Great War in general see Morin-Rotureau, Évelyne (2004). *Combats de femmes 1914-1918. Les femmes piliers de l'effort de guerre*. Paris: Éditions Autrement.

11 Note relating to the selection of films by the Bureau des information à la presse; 1 November 1915, SHAT, Vincennes, 5N 550

12 *Devant Metzeral: un épisode de la guerre de montagne* (1915).

13 The first series of newsreel reconstructions made by Georges Méliès consists of four films on the Greco-Turkish War. See Malthète, Jacques (1989). Les actualités reconstituées de Georges Méliès. *Archives*, 21.

14 Kraus, Karl (2003). Les Derniers jours de l'humanité, p. 154. Marseille: Agone. For further details on this exceptional text, see Besson, Jean-Louis (2011). Les Derniers jours de l'humanité. Un théâtre martien. In David Lescot and Laurent Véray, *Les mises en scène de la guerre au XXe siècle. Théâtre et cinema*, pp. 39-46. Paris: Nouveau Monde.

15 Numerous photographs were also published in the illustrated press over the course of the conflict and include violent images due to the fact that the instructions of the censors were even less respected by French journalists than they were by filmmakers. See, for example, Beurier, Joëlle (2007). *Images et violence. 1914-1918. Quand le miroir racontait la Grande Guerre,* París: Nouveau Monde. Besides, there are also photographs taken by the soldiers and intended for private use, which effectively lift the veil on certain realities.

16 This was one of the most usual, yet less known pathologies of the war. On the general subject of war wounds, see Delaporte, Sophie (2003). *Les Médecins dans la Grande Guerre - 1914-1918*. Paris: Bayard-Centurion.

17 Made in May 1917 on board the submarine U-35, this film shows the action of the German U-boat operating in the Mediterranean for a week, beginning with its departure from the naval base at Kotor. The cameraman on board filmed the entire surface mission of this warship. We see it board and sink six British, Italian and American merchant ships.

18 Un document formidable: la croisière de l'U-35 (17 January 1920). *Hebdo-Film*.

19 Lucien Le Saint (1881-1931), photographer and operator, worked for Gaumont before 1914 (recording Émile Cohl's films). He subsequently worked for SPAC between May 1917 and March 1918. He participated in Albert Kahn's *Archives de la Planète* from 1918 to 1923. He ended his career at Pathé from 1925 to 1919.

20 It also offered service to members of the public, who could obtain the positives for 1.35 francs per metre.

21 Les films français de guerre. Nous avons interviewé les Archives photographiques d'Art et d'Histoire (10 December 1927). *La Cinématographie française*, 475.

22 Le cinématographe et l'histoire (26 February 1920). *Sciences et Voyages*, 26, 401.

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FILMING THE GREAT WAR: INFORMATION, PROPAGANDA AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

Abstract

The First World War was the first major conflict to be widely represented in visual media. All sides involved made considerable use of photography and cinema, which since then have become cornerstones of what could be called "a visual culture of war". Indeed, these two media perform a twofold mission, as sources of both daily information and historical documentation. Hence the existence today, in France and elsewhere, of various centres of archives and private collections containing countless still images and moving pictures taken between 1914 and 1918. These diverse collections offer rich and exciting documentary material for researchers, and for filmmakers as well. However, as interesting or striking as they may be, these images—like all documents of another time—are bearers of the real, of the forgotten and of the spurious which we must be able to decode. This paper analyses the key issues related to these images under various headings: newsreels and war documentaries, censorship, cinema as a modern tool at the service of the modernity of war, the image of the women's work, the process from reality to reconstruction, the Somme as an example of an on-screen battle, propaganda through image as a double-edged sword and the establishment of war archives.

Key words

First World War; Cinematograph; Historical documentation; Archive images; Censorship; Newsreels; Documentaries; Propaganda.

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FILMAR LA GRAN GUERRA: ENTRE INFORMACIÓN, PROPAGANDA Y DOCUMENTACIÓN HISTÓRICA

Resumen

La Primera Guerra Mundial es el primer conflicto ampliamente representado. Todas las partes beligerantes recurrieron notablemente a la fotografía y al cinematógrafo, que ocupan desde entonces un puesto central para constituir eso que podríamos llamar «una cultura visual de guerra». En efecto, los dos medios realizan una doble misión: la de información cotidiana y la de documentación histórica. De ahí la existencia hoy en día, en Francia y en el extranjero, en diversos centros de archivo o colecciones privadas, de innumerables imágenes fijas o en movimiento registradas entre 1914 y 1918. Este conjunto heterogéneo constituye para los investigadores, pero también para los realizadores, un material documental rico y apasionante. Sin embargo, aun siendo interesantes e impactantes, esas imágenes —como todos los documentos de época— son portadoras de lo real, de olvido y de mentiras que hace falta ser capaz de desencriptar. En este artículo se analizan los temas clave relacionados con dicho conjunto de imágenes a través de diversos epígrafes: los noticiarios y los documentales de guerra, la censura, el cine como una herramienta moderna al servicio de la modernidad de la guerra, la imagen del trabajo de las mujeres, el proceso de la realidad a la reconstrucción, El Somme como caso de batalla mediatizada, la propaganda a través de la imagen como un arma de doble filo y la constitución de los archivos del conflicto.

Palabras clave

Primera Guerra Mundial; cinematógrafo; documentación histórica; imágenes de archivo; censura; noticiarios; documentales; propaganda.

Autor

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Article reference

Véray, Laurent (2016). Filming the Great War: Information, propaganda and historical documentation. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 19-36.

Referencia de este artículo

Véray, Laurent (2016). Filmar la Gran Guerra: entre información, propaganda y documentación histórica. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 19-36.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

ALLEGORY, REDEMPTIONISM AND TRAGIC TEMPTATION IN HOLLYWOOD FILMS IN RESPONSE TO THE GREAT WAR (1915-1930)

XAVIER PÉREZ
TRANSLATED BY MARTIN BOYD

This article attempts to trace the intuitive uses of an allegorical and redemptionist[1] aesthetic – and the tragic temptation with which it was imbued – in a few major Hollywood productions made in the years during and after the First World War. The starting point for this analysis is a significant chronological coincidence: *The Birth of a Nation* (D. W. Griffith, 1915), the film that historiography naturally associates with the *birth* itself of cinema as a great narrative spectacle, began production during the same tragic days in 1914 when the First World War broke out. The feature film thus gave birth to the great epic at the same time that the world was drowning in a sea of self-destruction. An allegorical allusion to this coincidence is present in the film, and is the first link in an instinctive rhetorical gesture with a redemptionist tone that subsequent films would make explicit. The melodramatic nature of these cinematic operations is hybridised with a boldly tragic imperative which is sometimes subdued, but which on occasions transcends it.

BEFORE THE AMERICAN INTERVENTION: THE ALLEGORICAL TREND

The fact that when *The Birth of a Nation* was released Griffith already had a clear idea of what the cinema should represent as a communal expression of the tragedy of his century can be seen clearly in the ambitious intertitles that open and close his film. The first is programmatic: "If in this work we have conveyed to the mind the ravages of war to the end that war may be held in abhorrence, this effort will not have been in vain." The sheer immodesty with which he closes the film (accompanied by allegorical images of the Last Judgement) is even greater: "Dare we dream of a golden day when the bestial War shall rule no more. But instead – the gentle Prince in the Hall of Brotherly Love in the City of Peace. Liberty and union, one and inseparable, now and forever."

The intertitles that mark this foundational feature film of cinematic history unabashed-

THE *GRIFFITHIAN* CONTRADICTION (BETWEEN THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE COMMISSION AND HIS PASSION FOR PREACHING) BECOME EVIDENT IN THIS FILM: HOW COULD HE STIR UP A DESIRE FOR COMBAT IN THE AUDIENCE WHILE AT THE SAME TIME DEPICTING THE MISERABLE CONDITIONS OF WAR IN THE TRENCHES?

ly represent a perspective intended to be fully absorbed into the worldview of the masses. It is important to bear in mind that the filmic narrative resulting from Griffith's intuitive work is not merely an adaptation of nineteenth century melodrama to the cinema, but a passionate hybrid between those conventions and the need for a primitive epic register inherent to a relatively modern national community that would find, in the cinema, a privileged means of legitimating its origins. In this paradoxical blend of Dickens and Homer, the feature film channels a synthetic energy comparable to the model of the Wagnerian opera (Smith: 2008), and it is through this megalomaniacal syncretism that the poetics of the new narrative system proposed in *The Birth of a Nation* was forged.

In the director's next film, *Intolerance* (D. W. Griffith, 1916), this universalist consciousness is not merely a frame through which to tell the story, but the very foundation of its compositional fabric. Thus, although it is not apparently a film about the European War, its pacifist mentality is expressed through a bold attempt at a global survey of human history, in which the fates of individuals – the four episodes that tie together the film's variegated plot (Lenning, 2005) – are integrated into a historical logic with a tragic tone[2], although with the necessary redemptive ending. It is tragic because in his filmic discourse in support of tolerance, Griffith breaks the hierarchy of historical progress, and replaces what Michael Maffessoli has called the "linear nature of history" with the "cycle or spiral of fate" (2003: 14). Yet it is also redemptionist, because the rhetoric of the film will once again need to turn to Judeo-Christian religious allegory in its apotheotic finale.

Indeed, *Intolerance* concludes with an eschatological imaginary that transcends its four stories: the armies cease fire and drop their weapons, the prison walls collapse, and the freed prisoners enter an unreal heaven inhabited by angelic children, while an intertitle announces a redemptive divine intervention which, at the end of time, will bring down the pillars of *intolerance*.

If Griffith's film invokes apocalyptic imagery, it is of course because such imagery is the horizon of tragic expectations that marks the abyss of Western consciousness. The peace yearned for in the film was still a possibility in the year of its release, although the debate over US intervention in the war was beginning to tip the balance of public opinion towards a belligerent patriotism which is also opposed by the other great allegorical film of the day: *Civilization* (Thomas H. Ince *et al.*, 1916)[3]. Although the neutrality of the United States at that time required the action of this film to be set in an imaginary kingdom, the allusion to the real war is perfectly clear, as is its open redemptionism. In the second half of the film, Jesus Christ himself returns to Earth, reincarnated as a count who died disobeying orders in order to protect innocent civilians, and descended into a Purgatory which is depicted in the film with an iconography owing much to Gustave Doré. When Christ, like a Dickensian Christmas ghost, takes the monarch responsible for going to war to show him the catastrophes his crusade has wrought, until at last he repents, *Civilization* confirms the interest that such messianic allegories laid bare in a time when American neutrality allowed its creators to observe the self-destructive path chosen by Europe from the perspective of religious redemptionism.

AMERICA AT WAR: THE MELODRAMA OF ROMANTIC COMPENSATION

The entry of the United States into the conflict in April 1917 required the pleas to be turned into pure propaganda. This explains the absence of religious allegories in *Hearts of the World* (D. W. Griffith, 1918), a film which its director began preparing at the request of the British army, but which was actually shot after President Wilson had already declared war (Lenning, 2011). The *Griffithian* contradiction (between the obligations of the commission and his passion for preaching) become evident in this film: how could he stir up a desire for combat in the audience while at the same time depicting the miserable conditions of war in the trenches? According to different sources who had witnessed it, the visit that Griffith made to the battlefields before he started shooting the film upset all of his previous ideas about how to depict the action. Many years later, Paul Virilio's architectural view would capture it well by contrasting the panoramic view offered by the dynamic wide shot of the battle in *The Birth of a Nation* (a war that can still be grasped from the romantic perspective of a *plein air* depiction) with the discovery, *in situ*, of a war that "had become a static conflict in which the main action was for millions of men to hold fast to their piece of land, camouflaging themselves for months on end (years in cases like Verdun) amid a fearful proliferation of cemeteries and charnel-houses" (Virilio, 1984: 19).

Against this structural evidence, Griffith was forced to adopt a compromise solution: to express the general horror and, at the same time, to imagine plausible individual solutions for the protagonists of his film. The construction of a romantic plot that brings an American volunteer, Douglas (Robert Harron) into a relationship with a young French woman, May (Lillian Gish) pushes the chronological progression of the film towards the couple's happy reunion at the end, after a series of traumatic incidents that have split them apart when, right before their wedding, the town is bombed by the Germans, who have killed the girl's family. Misery, uncertainty, fear of his death, and a final rescue where Douglas comes back to save Mary from imminent execution, punctuate a film that swings between the far-from-comforting depiction of living conditions in times of war and a final triumph over any pessimistic imaginary through the melodramatic elevation of the individual hero. On the one hand, the sequences showing the destruction of a town under the impact of the bombing, or civilians dying among the rubble as the town is plundered by the invaders, are particularly significant. On the other, the salvation of the leading couple offers a promise of triumph free of any sense of tragedy.

It would thus only be with the arrival of peace, and leaving behind the view of the battlefield strewn with dead bodies, that American cinema, without the need to feed pointless patriotic urges, would be able to define a potentially tragic territory for dramatic reflection on the conflict.

AFTER THE ARMISTICE: THE TRAGIC ALLEGORY

The parents of the female protagonist of *Hearts of the World* die in the German invaders' attack in the first part of the film. Starting off from this initial hard knock, Griffith's script moves towards a plausible reconstruction of the children's happiness. As terrible as it may be, this is a natural cycle, which the human heart accepts, because the circular nature of generational change is explored from a point of view that is always forward-looking. If the parents die so that the children may take their place, the macabre episode of the war can find dramatic forms of compensation.

When the redemptionist organisation of narrative time is altered, we enter the realm of tragedy. This is what is suggested in the final sequence of the film adaptation of Blasco Ibáñez's novel *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (Rex Ingram,

1921), set in the immense graveyard of the French battlefield. Amidst the maze of tombstones, the patriarch Marcelo Desnoyers (Josef Swickard) and his wife Luisa (Bridgetta Clark) keep vigil at the grave of their only child, Julio (Rudolph Valentino), while, in neighbouring Germany, their German relatives, Karl von Hartrott (Alan Hale) and Elena (Mabel Van Buren), are mourning the loss of Otto (Stuart Holmes), their last surviving son. The two cousins, enlisted in opposing armies, died together in the explosion of a grenade that fell in the trench where the resolute hand of fate had brought them together.

In a plot in which everything is orchestrated around a geometry of disaster, History offers a contemporary image of Oedipus's sons Eteocles and Polynices killing one another at the city gates in *Seven against Thebes*. Marcelo and Karl, the two brothers-in-law who return to Europe after inheriting the fortune of an Argentine landholder, in a fatal decision that will lead to the deaths of their sons in the war, are also contemporary representatives of the old patriarchs destroyed by fate in the Greek tragedies. To reflect this feeling of final desperation is one of the challenges assumed by the director, Rex Ingram, when showing the battlefield strewn with dead bodies where Julio Desnoyers' parents are faced with the certainty of their son's death. The shot is taken at a slightly low angle, where the sky is not visible, as a mountain of crosses occupies the space of the shot. It is impossible to read this multiplicity of crosses optimistically. The result of this image is to eliminate the horizon, a visual motif which American iconography has generally associated with hope (Balló, 2000: 189-190). In a lucid intuition of the dark road that immediate history would have to take, the future outlined by this graveyard shot contains a premonition of new episodes of violence.

The fact that this destructive energy is visually embodied in the horsemen of the Apocalypse suggests an equivalence that links the archetypal depiction of the biblical riders to the allegorical magnificence of *Intolerance*, with its famous image of the Mother (Lillian Gish) rocking the cradle of Humanity, and the Fates weaving the threads of destiny into violent stories that repeat over and over.

This cosmogonic immersion is facilitated by the intrinsic capacities of the filmic material in the metaphorical use of meteorological disasters. One of the film's intertitles compares History to a swirling maelstrom, and another suggests that it "threatens to engulf all Europe" while turbulent images of fire and water are superimposed on the screen in the background. The effect of the superimposition is the same effect as the metaphor of the cyclical return of this hurricane. Its recurring use as an invocation of war accentuates a pessimistic awareness of dark forces that lead humanity time and again to catastrophe[4].

As did Griffith's allegorical endings, this desolate perspective projects the imagination towards the promise of a peace beyond History. The final intertitle in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* is explicit: "Peace has come. But the Four Horsemen will still ravage humanity, stirring unrest in the world, until all hatred is dead and only love reigns in the heart of mankind." In this extremely solemn conclusion, a view of the Judeo-Christian imperatives of redemption effectively crystallises that utopian energy which, in the words of Stéphane Mosès (1997: 15), "is wholly dedicated – as a kind of compensation – to eschatological dreams, to waiting for the final catastrophe, so that from its ruins a new humanity may arise."

This imperative is hinted at in the character of Tchernoff (Nigel de Brulier), a Russian mystic revolutionary who, in the aforementioned final sequence, when asked by the old Desnoyer whether he knew his son Julio, opens his arms in a cross as if embracing all the other graves and answers flatly: "I knew them all." But while the image of Tchernoff alludes to a hypothetical Christ, here he doesn't exhibit the serene quality of a leader who rekindles hope, as in *Civilization*; rather, he is the

defeated god, who must be content with keeping vigil at the grave of an endless line of dead sons.

What role does he play in a story so marked by the collective consciousness of catastrophe, the story of forbidden love between Julio Desnoyers and the married woman, Marguerite (Alice Terry), who, after all, was largely responsible for the film's success? When they begin their passionate affair in pre-war Paris, the two lovers do not display the slightest sense of guilt. Julio shows no signs of a guilty conscience for ignoring the call to arms, if doing so means that he can stay with his love. It is not patriotic duty that ultimately compels the hero to enlist, but emotional conflict with his father. It is to satisfy the latter that he finally joins up, and thus the tragic nature of the story is transferred to the old man, responsible for having led his son to a death that will never be depicted as a punishment for his erotic affair. In Ingram's film, it is not faith in the expiatory power of sacrifice but a useless death on the battlefield that forces Alice to accept a future with a husband who, to add insult to injury, has been left blind thanks to the war. In *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, the war is not viewed as the moral saviour, but as the tragic agent that prevents moral transgression.

THE "HAPPY TWENTIES": FROM PACIFIST ROMANTICISM TO TRIANGULAR MELODRAMA IN A WAR SETTING

Love-story plots would no longer be taken to tragic extremes in any of the war films produced in Hollywood in the 1920s. Nor would the allegorical discourse of *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* be repeated in subsequent films. The irrepressible tendency of film production towards the "amiable dramatism of the developed genres" (Del Amo, 1945: 204) guided plot endings towards a convenient stitching up of wounds. However many allusions there may be to catastrophe, films no longer ended with a view of a field of graves watched over by sterile old men. These were films that continued to offer explanations for the tragic drift of recent History. But they didn't shun any romantic refuge that could contrast the collective misfortune of the fallen against the individual salvation of those who make it back. By way of example we need only recall (to cite the most indisputable masterpiece in this series of films) *The Big Parade* (King Vidor, 1925), in which, following the model of *Hearts of the World*, an American volunteer and a French girl who meet in the film are ultimately reunited in a bitter-sweet ending. The amputated leg that casts a shadow over his return from the war serves as a reminder of the happiness that has been lost along the way, but the image that ends the film offers the slightest glimmer of hope.

IN *THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE*, THE WAR IS NOT VIEWED AS THE MORAL SAVIOUR, BUT AS THE TRAGIC AGENT THAT PREVENTS MORAL TRANSGRESSION

Other films from the end of the 1920s turn certain deaths in combat into cathartic devices for the happiness of the protagonists. In many romantic-idealist reconstructions of the war, the same effective plot structure is proposed: the rivalry between two soldiers in love with the same girl[5]. The historian Shlomo Sand identifies in this motif a kind of conflict inscribed with the inevitable final death of one of the rivals: "the redemptive death inherent to every war rehabilitates the eternal couple and undoes this far from holy trinity" (Sand, 2004: 88). Here we have a clear way of discerning the ultimate presence of death in its truly tragic essence.

To adapt the imagery of the war to this subtle romanticism, some films distance the spectator from the infernal vision of the trenches (an element that is still essential to the indisputable pa-

cifism of *The Big Parade*) by using a strategy that would see its first success in *Wings* (William A. Wellman, 1927): setting the story in the air force, with the conversion of the characters into winged heroes, for whom death (if it appears) provides the expiatory and sacrificial basis underlying all war propaganda films. Individual stories now prevail so clearly over the focus on the collective space that the need to give figurative form to the global catastrophe no longer appears as a dramatic foundation. The war is the context, but not the text.

Only one film, after the introduction of sound, would attempt to return to a tragic poetics with a collective perspective. But that film, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Lewis Milestone, 1930), could not make use of the old allegorical transcendentalism of *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* to show the darker side of the conflict. Instead, realism (a collateral requirement of the nascent talkie) would favour the descent, with no hope of return, into the chaos of blood, sweat and mud.

THE EXCEPTION OF 1930: A TRAGEDY IN THE TRENCHES

Films like *Intolerance*, *Civilization* or *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* had framed the image of war in a grandiloquent context where human history was wholly subject to an *axis mundi* governed by higher powers. With American cinema's shift towards love stories with war as a backdrop, the metaphysical transcendentalism disappeared, but the price paid was the loss of the old universalist dimension. The big challenge represented by *All Quiet on the Western Front* for the war film was to continue to avoid the old verticalising cosmogony of the *axis mundi*, without sacrificing the syncretistic spirit that could attempt to compress the collective experience of the war into a single story. This would mean, on the one hand, stripping down any romantic sub-plot that might introduce melodramatic peculiarities into a human story that aspired to represent all human stories; and, on the other, proposing a realist poetics of the *here* and *now* free of allusions to higher worlds. *All Quiet on the Western Front* consists of a relentless succession of traumatic scenes, constructed according to a carefully calculated idea of progress perverted, which positions the audience in the certainty that each situation for the protagonists will be worse than the last.

The fact that American cinema could produce such a despairing film might initially be explained by the fact that all its protagonists are German; the catastrophe is bearable because its victims belong to the now dimmed memory of what was once the enemy side. But this is a starting point that the illusion of the filmic narrative pushes well into the background. Introducing a convention that would soon be customary in the Hollywood talkie, these German soldiers speak all the while in perfect English, and the strategies to achieve emotive proximity between them and the audience are the same ones employed in Hollywood war films whose protagonists are Americans. The fact that both the author of the novel, Eric Marie Remarque, and the film's director, Lewis Milestone, had fought in the trenches, and on opposite sides, helps explain the anthropological universalism elicited by the film, its expressive capacity to turn the human type, beyond any national origin, into a single repository for the horrors of war. *All Quiet on the Western Front* does not attempt an accusation of an enemy nation (Ochling, 1973; Chambers II, 1994), but a critical acknowledgement of an awareness of the universal mourning caused by the hubris of all militarised nationalism.

Milestone's film follows the canonical plot developments of all war films created by Hollywood: the enlistment, the training, the wait and the battle, to conclude with a not-so-common private apocalypse in the trenches. *All Quiet on the Western Front* does not set up a contextual framework of victors and vanquished, or provide a historical documentation of the events. All of its attention

is focused on the claustrophobic plight of a small unit of soldiers on a progressive descent towards total extinction. This time, there is no coming back, and no sentimental palliative.

IN MILESTONE'S FILM, THE HOLLYWOOD INSTITUTION PRESENTS AN EXCEPTIONAL HUMANISATION OF THE MEMORY OF THE VANQUISHED, REVEALING THE FUTILITY OF THEIR DEATHS

The radical expressive economy with which the film recounts the tragedy makes up the figurative dimension of its symbols. Contrasting with the winged grandeur of Rex Ingram's apocalyptic horsemen, in the final scene of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, is the tiny flight of a butterfly which the soldier Paul (Lew Ayres) attempts unsuccessfully to catch in his hand, moments before an enemy bullet takes his life.

This minimalist representation of the fleetingness of time in the dynamic metaphor of the ungraspable insect, while Paul's body lies lifeless in the trench that has constituted the nuclear core of the film, gives his tragic fate a universal dimension. The same effect is achieved in the famous moment when a French combatant hides in Paul's trench, and Paul has no choice but to kill him. Sharing the trench with the corpse, Paul sees a projection of his own imminent future, and accepts a situation prototypical of the drama of war: the vigil over the enemy's dead body, the moment when the one still living identifies in his lifeless foe the fatal condition that unites them. Paul's remorse has no return, nor does it lead to salvation: he is not so much a living man who regrets having killed one of his fellow men, but a condemned man who knows that he is already a victim of an absurdity which, sooner or later, will take his life as well.

In the ending to *All Quiet on the Western Front*, the images of the army marching away towards the horizon, superimposed over images of a graveyard filled with crosses, are interrupted every now and then by the young faces of the soldiers whom the audience has seen die, turning around to face the camera, in a rhetorical device that cannot console us with the idea that their sacrifice served some purpose. In Milestone's film, the Hollywood institution presents an exceptional humanisation of the memory of the vanquished, revealing the futility of their deaths. In the uncertain interlude of peace of the 1930s, this remembrance constitutes one of the most radical examples of pure cinematic tragedy, stripped of redemptive idealism and religious allegory, which classical Hollywood has ever allowed in all of its history.

NOTES

1 In Christian theology, the term "redemptionism" is commonly employed to refer specifically to the doctrine that all humanity has been redeemed by Christ's resurrection; in this article, however, it is employed more broadly to refer to the Judeo-Christian concept of religious redemption in general.

2 The hypothesis of a "tragic" Griffith was boldly posited seventy years ago by Antonio del Amo, in his intuitive and extraordinarily unique *Historia universal del cine*: "But above all, Griffith was more than a maker of actors and a master among directors: he was the creator of the first great serious genre of the nascent art form: tragedy" (1945: 204). José Javier Marzal has also referred to *fatum* in Griffith's films, identifying war as one its manifestations (Marzal, 1998: 267).

3 Although it was technically attributed to a single director, Thomas H. Ince, *Civilization* was in fact shot by various filmmakers at the service of Ince's idea: Raymond B. West, Jay Hunt, Reginald Baker, J. Parker Red, Walter Edwards and David Hartford (Leutrat, 1997: 251).

4 On the chronosophical significance of superimposition in the earliest historical films, see Bosseno, 1995: 56-57.

5 This structure was already formulated in the French film *J'accuse!* (Abel Gance, 1918), which, although it

does not fall within my area of study here, had a significant influence on American post-war films.

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ALLEGORY, REDEMPTIONISM AND TRAGIC TEMPTATION IN HOLLYWOOD FILMS IN RESPONSE TO THE GREAT WAR (1915-1930)

Abstract

The article traces the intuitive uses of an allegorical aesthetic – and the tragic temptation with which it was imbued – in a few Hollywood productions made during the First World War and in the 1920s. Allegorical allusions to the war, with religious and pacifist overtones, can be found in the ending to *The Birth of a Nation* and in *Intolerance*, finding full expression in *Civilization*. The country's entry into the conflict led to the recourse to the romanticism of the love-story plot, albeit with tragic connotations (*Hearts of the World*), but it would not be until after the armistice that the tragic allegory would reach its peak, in *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. The recovery of the increasingly elusive romanticism of the love story in the twenties would be challenged in 1930, with a realist tragedy without a hint of allegorical transcendentalism: *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

Key words

First World War, Tragedy, Allegory, Griffith, Ince, *Hearts of the World*, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

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Article reference

Pérez, Xavier (2016). Allegory, Redemptionism and Tragic Temptation in the Great War Hollywood Films (1915-1930). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 37-45.

ALEGORÍA, REDENCIONISMO Y TENTACIÓN TRÁGICA EN EL CINE DE HOLLYWOOD ANTE LA GRAN GUERRA (1915-1930)

Resumen

El artículo rastrea los usos intuitivos de una estética alegórica –y la tentación trágica que la traspasó– en algunas producciones hollywoodienses nacidas durante la Primera Guerra Mundial y los inmediatos años veinte. La alusión alegórica a la guerra, en clave pacifista y religiosa, se produce ya en los finales de *El nacimiento de una nación* e *Intolerancia*, y se manifiesta plenamente en *Civilización*. La entrada del país en el conflicto revierte en un romanticismo de trama amorosa no exento de connotaciones trágicas (*Corazones del mundo*), aunque será con el armisticio cuando la alegoría trágica llegará a su extremo en *Los cuatro jinetes del apocalipsis*. La recuperación del romanticismo de trama amorosa cada vez más evasivo durante los años veinte será replicada, en 1930, con una tragedia realista, sin asomo de transcendentalismo alegórico: *Sin novedad en el frente*.

Palabras clave

Primera Guerra Mundial; tragedia; alegoría; Griffith; Ince; *Corazones del mundo*; *Los cuatro jinetes del Apocalipsis*; *Sin novedad en el frente*.

Autor

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Referencia de este artículo

Pérez, Xavier (2016). Alegoría, redencionismo y tentación trágica en el cine de Hollywood ante la Gran Guerra (1915-1930). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 37-45.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) DL V-5340-2003 WEB www.revistaatalante.com MAIL info@revistaatalante.com

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THE IMAGINARY OF WAR AS DEPICTED IN AMERICAN FILM POSTERS FROM 1914 TO 1918

LAURA GONZÁLEZ DÍEZ
BELÉN PUEBLA MARTÍNEZ
PABLO R. PRIETO DÁVILA
TRANSLATED BY MARTIN BOYD

1. INTRODUCTION

Prior to the outbreak of the First World War, the cinema was a mere two decades old and had entered a decisive stage of technical, industrial and aesthetic transformations. It was the first time that a war and its atrocities were filmed, whether for the purposes of propaganda, fiction, documentaries or newsreels, and this resulted in a considerable increase in film production. However, most of this film footage no longer exists, as it is estimated that around 80% of the movies made in the years from 1914 to 1918 have disappeared (EFG1914 Project: web). And the percentage of film posters that have survived to the present day is even lower.

The objective of this article is to offer an analysis of the posters for the most prominent movies filmed in the United States in this period that focus on war as a general theme, whether adopting a pro-war or a pacifist attitude. This analysis will make it possible to identify the existence of a particular graphic style associated with military conflict that contributed to the construction of an imaginary of war, expressed in a series of film posters that exemplify that style.

Since the birth of cinema in the late nineteenth century, the film poster has been one of its biggest allies, becoming an inseparable accessory essential for the promotion of films which, like any other product, are designed for consumption by a target audience. Film posters have thus always had a clearly commercial dimension as advertising.

The film poster fulfils two functions, since it is at once a means of communication and an instrument of persuasion, which "at the same time informs (title, actors, director, etc.) and persuades (the 'star system', genres, producers, etc.)" (GÓMEZ PÉREZ, 2002: 203). It can thus be subjected to two readings: a denotative (informative) reading, and a connotative (persuasive) reading. This is the view taken by Enel (1977: 16) when he suggests that

"the poster should not merely present the plot, but should above all be suggestive and provocative. Within a single configuration it combines intentional symbols that constitute a denotative statement: the representation of the product, its functions, its qualities [...] and interpretative symbols that constitute a connotative statement." Ruiz Melendreras (1985: 30) echoes this idea when he notes that the image contained on a poster operates on two levels: "one of a semantic, denotative nature, often made explicit with the help of text that facilitates appropriate interpretation of the other level, the aesthetic or connotative." While the semantic level provides information related to the film, the aesthetic level grabs the receiver's attention and, in the cases of the posters to be analysed here, contributes to the creation of an imaginary of war that has endured over time. In the film posters produced during the First World War, in general terms, efficacy of communication and propaganda prevailed over artistic quality.

IN THE FILM POSTERS PRODUCED DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR, EFFICACY OF COMMUNICATION AND PROPAGANDA PREVAILED OVER ARTISTIC QUALITY

This persuasive dimension was especially evident during the First World War, a historical moment when films were turned into veritable weapons of propaganda, along with the posters that promoted them. As noted by Vaccaro (2008: 920) "movie theatres were turned into shop windows for patriotism" par excellence; indeed, for screenings of the official war films produced by the Committee on Public Information (CPI), many theatres were adorned profusely with American flags. This committee made use of posters, among other methods, to secure public support for the war.

Film posters during this period could be considered "extremely valuable cultural artefacts, because they make it possible to reconstruct the image that one film or another offered of itself, and the context in which it was presented to its target audience" (SÁNCHEZ, 1997: 12). The poster, more than any other form of artistic expression, fulfils the dual role of having an impact on society while at the same time reflecting that society (TABUENCA, 2009: 28). In the analysis of a mass medium like the poster, its formal aspects cannot be separated from the political and social realities in which that medium is developed and expressed, and this was certainly true during the period of the Great War.

Enzensberger considers that the posters formed part of what he calls "the Consciousness Industry" (V.A., 2007: 17), as this type of graphic medium makes it possible to change the beliefs of viewers about the world around them. For Coronado and Hijón (2002: 21), "while the primordial function was to reinforce the advertising system itself, the poster would also contribute to changing the beliefs of the individual [...] producing the latent appearance of a second, equally important function, the social function, and the cultural contribution that its image has represented for society as a whole [...]. The poster can effectively change our perception not only of the product or the message announced, but also of the conception we form of our society and of ourselves."

The First World War represented the introduction of the poster as a means of consciousness raising, a trend which also affected film posters, many of which clearly reflect the exaltation of the homeland and of the combatant as a hero.

2. THE UNITED STATES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The United States initially distanced itself from the events of the First World War, to such an extreme that American newspapers referred to it as the "European War".

The first change in the US attitude towards the First World War would come with the sinking of the Lusitania on 7 May 1915. The Lusitania was a British trans-Atlantic passenger and cargo liner which travelled on a regular basis between the United States and the United Kingdom, but which had also been designed to be used as an armed merchant cruiser. When it was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine, resulting in the death of 1,198 people, including 123 Americans, public opinion in the United States turned against Germany and opened up the possibility of US entry into the war.

President Wilson tried to maintain US neutrality, but two German initiatives would bring an end to that neutrality and lead to the declaration of war by the United States against Germany on 6 April 1917. The first was Germany's decision in 1917 to resume unrestricted submarine warfare, attacking and sinking British and American merchant ships without prior warning. The second was the German offer to Mexico of an alliance and help in the event that the United States declared war on Germany, in the famous Zimmermann telegram. The telegram was intercepted and decoded by British intelligence and, when made public, swayed US public opinion in favour of a declaration of war against Germany.

As noted by Brunetta (2011: 234) "the United States declared war on Germany in April 1917, but the actual participation of its troops in the conflict would not begin until more than a year later. In the period from 1914 up until its actual intervention, the United States—in view of its multi-ethnic population and its declared neutrality—was the stage for a veritable media war between German and British propaganda, in which the cinema played a predominant role."

Conscious of the different ethnic origins of the US population, and of the different opinions with respect to intervention in the war among the different groups by reason of those origins, or by reason of their religion, political views, or even whether they lived in the North or the South, Wilson created the Committee on Public Information (CPI), also known as the Creel Committee, after its director, George Creel. The CPI would be the biggest propaganda machine ever established up to that time, its objective being to influence US public opinion in favour of intervention in what was now being called the World War. The CPI employed every means at its disposal, including the cinema. And it thus contributed, with three films, to the establishment of the language of the war propaganda film targeting the rearguard of public opinion.

3. DENOTATIVE ANALYSIS OF POSTERS FOR US WAR FILMS

As will be shown below, US war films produced in the years from 1914 to 1918 and the posters for them accompanied and sometimes formed part of the evolution of the American attitude towards the First World War.

Two different periods of films can be identified: the period prior to US entry into the war (1914-1916); and the films produced after the declaration of war on Germany (1917-1918). Within the second period, in turn, it is important to distinguish between the films produced by the CPI, which we will call government films, and commercial pictures.

3.1 Period 1 (1914-1916): historical and pacifist war films

The examples discussed below reveal a clear evolution in the attitude towards the First World War in the United States prior to its entry into the conflict.

The posters for the first two films, both from 1915, contribute to the construction of the image of the hero (or heroine), although they do so by employing a medieval European imaginary that has nothing to do with the First World War. How-

Figure 1

ever, the next two, from 1916 (subsequent to the sinking of the Lusitania), although not set in the First World War, present an opinion on it, and contribute to the creation of a different type of image of war, an image of the values being fought over; either the values being defended—peace, the home, the family—or being fought against, i.e., the atrocities committed by the enemy.

The poster for *The Birth of a Nation* (D.W. Griffith, 1915) portrays a Ku Klux Klan member as a liberating hero. The dynamic composition, diagonally oriented against a blue sky background, of a Klan member on a rampant horse viewed on an angle, dominates the poster. Symbolism completes the message: a cross in flames in the "liberator's" right hand and the symbol of the Klan appearing as many as four times on the vestments of the horse and rider. The film's title, and the director's name in a smaller text, all in serif typeface at the foot of the poster, complete the composition. The equestrian portrait is a recognisable icon for the depiction of liberators or founding fathers or for the exaltation of national leaders, and it is used here quite clearly in conjunction with the title of the film. The medieval templar inspiration of Ku Klux Klan imagery is reflected in the poster.

The plot of the film *Joan the Woman* (Cecil B. DeMille, 1915) does make reference to the First World War, but it is through a British soldier appearing in the film who, the night before a suicide mission, has a vision of the life of Joan of Arc. Thus, the references both in the narrative and in the poster itself once again evoke images of an idealised medieval Europe.

The poster, with a classical, quasi-symmetrical composition in which the sword forms the axis, shows the evolution of Joan of Arc from peasant girl to heroine. The foreground, on the right side of the composition, depicts the ghost of Joan of Arc who appears to the soldier in the film, vested with all the attributes of the warrior heroine: shining armour, cape and helmet, kneeling with her gaze lifted towards the hilt of the sword.

There is no reference to the horrors of war; only the exaltation of the figure of the heroine.

And also present is the exaltation of the leading actress: in the text at the bottom of the poster, the actress's name appears in text larger than that of the film title, both of which are larger than the names of the director and producer.

Civilization (Reginald Barker, Thomas H. Ince, Raymond B. West, 1916) is a pacifist picture that narrates the story of a submarine commander who refuses to carry out the order to sink a ci-

Figure 2

vilian ship supposedly carrying armaments for the enemy country of the imaginary kingdom of Wredpryd. The parallel with the sinking of the Lusitania is obvious.

The image that dominates the poster plays with contrasts for dramatic effect. A contrast in the composition is achieved through a narratively static scene showing a soldier kneeling who appears to be receiving a blessing from an old woman, but with a compositional dynamic introduced by the crossing of the main diagonal line (formed by the heads, the hand giving the blessing and the body of the soldier) with a secondary diagonal line (the gun with bayonet held by the soldier). There is also a contrast of colour and light, with a dominance of warm, brightly lit colours of human figures in the foreground, and a background that shows vague hints of a family home fading into black.

The text acquires significance on the poster not only due to the size and compositional dynamism of the title, but also due to the various subtitles, especially those highlighted in yellow, framing the film's intention with words like "Peace", "Epic", "Humanity", "Mothers" and "the Dead".

Intolerance (D.W. Griffith, 1916), while not directly addressing the topic of war, is nevertheless an especially significant film given its pacifist message in a year when the United States would enter into a global conflict. Through four stories set at different moments in history, alternated with the story of a woman unjustly separated from her husband and son, Griffith denounces the injustices of intolerance. The dramatic effect of the poster is a precursor to those of the commercial pictures produced after the United States entered the war, in terms of showing the atrocities committed by the enemy. A terrified woman holds her son in her arms in a protective posture as she stares at a threatening and grotesquely deformed hand. The use of colour and chiaroscuro contribute greatly to the dramatic effect of the scene: warm colours saturate the foreground, while cold dark and black tones flood the background. The superimposed text, with the director's name almost the same size as the film title, merely frame the dominant central image.

Figure 3

3.2 Period 2 (1917-1918): government films (CPI)

The Committee on Public Information produced three documentary films within a very short period of time. All three premièred in 1918: the first, *Pershing's Crusaders*, in May; *America's Answer* in July; and *Under Four Flags* in November.

There is a clear narrative evolution in the three posters. The first shows the arrival of the hero, the second the advance of the troops (still only Americans) and the third the exaltation of the attack alongside the Allies. These three could practically be shots from the same narration: the troops in rank and file before the battle, the advance and the battle itself.

Each of the three posters would establish a model for the war film poster.

The poster for *Pershing's Crusaders* is the exaltation of the hero, identified explicitly for the first time as a real person: General Pershing, who is shown in the foreground, on horseback in front of his troops, viewed from a slightly low angle to increase his dominance over the scene. The accompanying symbolism is at once obvious, explicit and effective: a large US flag and two crusaders appearing as spirits, enhancing the sense of liberation. The text on the poster leaves no doubt whatsoever: the title, Pershing's Crusaders, superimposed in large, pure white typeface. And smaller text makes the origin of the film explicit, referring to its product under the auspices of the US government as the first official American war picture.

The poster for *America's Answer* would also become a prototype image for war picture posters. The image presents a backlit side view of troops advancing and holding a large flag. The epic image is enhanced by the yellow background, an exhilarating colour suggestive of a dawn or dusk, and the forced advance of the troops over difficult terrain with explosions above. And dominating the space, in this case at the top, in large capital letters in red bordered with white and blue—the colours of the United States—is the word "America's" and the reason for the action: "Answer".

Finally, the poster for *Under Four Flags* combines elements of the first two, with a frontal, low-angle view of troops advancing, but with a new twist. Four soldiers, dressed in characteristic elements and uniforms that make their countries of origin recognisable, advance towards the viewer. In the background, the explosions of the battle they are leaving behind them, are ensuring victory. And at the bottom, as in the first poster, with white print over a black background and filling up a third of the composition, is the title that makes the message clear: "Under Four Flags". Curiously, the image does not show the flags; the only reference to these in the image is the small graphic flag symbol to the left of the letter "A" in the title. The rest of the supporting text identifies the official nature of the film as a CPI production.

3.3 Period 2 (1917-1918): commercial pictures

Within this third group we will analyse the posters of films released in 1917 and 1918 that featured the Great War as a backdrop, but with a markedly commercial nature. Films that encouraged men to enlist and women to contribute to the war effort were well received. Also popular were films in which the male lead turned into a heroic American citizen who demonstrated his loyalty to his homeland and to the flag.

The Pride of New York (R. Walsh, 1917) belongs to this category of heroic citizen films. The film's poster presents the protagonist in action, in a strong, sturdy and upright pose as he shoots at the enemy, and showing the weapon used in the battle rather than the destruction caused by the conflict or the defencelessness of its human victims. Once again the focus is on the illustration, while the text is relegated to the bottom of the poster, with capital letters in sans serif font indicating the name of the film, the production studio and the stars, the last of these appearing

Figure 4

in larger print. The dominant yellow tone reinforces the energetic nature of the action depicted and alludes to the strength and pride of the soldier.

Adopting a similar approach is the image used for *Over the Top* (W. North, 1918), notable for the warmth and energy of the colours used, which reflect the heat on the front caused by the gunpowder. The poster presents a heroic soldier at the front advancing with bayonet in hand, and its structure responds to the same pattern as the previous one: an absolute domination of the illustration over the text, which is located below, melting into the image so as not to distract attention from it.

The last few months of the First World War saw the release of two films that became the most popular pictures on the war: *Hearts of the World* by D.W. Griffith; and Charlie Chaplin's *Shoulder Arms!*, both made in 1918, and both representing a continuation of the direction taken in *To Hell with the Kaiser* (George Irving), whose poster had already reflected the identification of the Germans, represented in the figure of the Kaiser, with demons. Also observable in this poster is the tendency to depict the Prussian enemy with a moustache, and the combination of colours reinforces his aggressive nature.

Hearts of the World was considered the paradigm of propaganda films produced to support US intervention in the war. The film was exceptionally well received by audiences, who were highly receptive to patriotic stories. In the two posters that promoted the picture, both of which reproduce scenes from the film, the Germans are depicted as savages capable of the worst atrocities, annihilators of family, harmony and happiness. Both posters for the film show violent scenes featuring the German enemy, always represented with large moustaches and brutish faces. The illustration is the absolute focus of attention, while the text is relegated to the background at the bottom, centred in both cases and in light-coloured capital letters. Both posters make use of a recessive and subdued palette of colours that reinforces the gloomy nature of the scenes depicted.

THE GERMANS ARE DEPICTED AS SAVAGES CAPABLE OF THE WORST ATROCITIES, ANNIHILATORS OF FAMILY, HARMONY AND HAPPINESS

Shoulder Arms! was a film that was both critical of the war and at the same time moving, a mix of pacifism and exaltation of war. The film satirises the Prussian military stereotypes and, at the same time, accepts certain aspects of the military logic. Brunetta (2011: 246) suggests that "in the panorama of American war movies, *Shoulder Arms!* shows that, beyond the American's acceptance of the military duty on the basis of the social pyramid, there exists, above all, the hope for peace. In this sense, Chaplin triumphed where Griffith had failed and offers the best interpretation possible of the intention of the American government and nation which, even while it dons the uniform, has no sympathy for the military warrior spirit, and declares itself ready at

Figure 5

any time for a humanitarian solution to the conflicts between peoples."

In the two versions of the film poster we find Chaplin dressed as a soldier, clutching a gun and wearing an army helmet. Both are based on an illustration with the title of the film and the name of its star in red at the bottom, but without interfering with the iconic image, which will thus be easily remembered. The text is kept to a minimum so that the image carries the full impact. The result is a warm atmosphere in spite of the presence of the gun, which contrasts with the actor's smile and cheerful pose.

Also among these films is *Heart of Humanity*, a picture from 1918 directed by Allen Holubar, which tells the story of a family separated by the Great War. The protagonist is an American woman who is horrified by the ravages of war when

she becomes a nurse and is posted overseas. The film's poster contrasts with the harshness of the film. The featured image is a large red heart behind the silhouetted picture of the female protagonist, who in turn holds her hand over her heart. The illustration of the angel that flanks the title softens the tone of the graphic composition, which is further enhanced by the elegant, feminine typeface used, quite unusual for the period. The result is a very sweet, feminine poster that contrasts with the brutality of the war and which contains no elements that could be associated with conflict.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The posters for films produced in the United States from 1914 to 1918 reflect the nature of the film, either through the images (nearly always illustrations or drawings) or through the headings and advertising phrases they contain. Colours also became an important language for the creation of a particular atmosphere, along with the realistic or symbolic composition represented in them.

Posters for films on the war or with war themes used certain codes in which patriotic images exalting moral values predominated. Many resorted to common clichés about warfare, such as troops advancing, or the flag flying. They foreground the hero, represented in the figure of the soldier whose mission is to protect the weak. Posters for official films produced by the Committee on Public Information depict soldiers fighting to defend freedom and justice.

Posters for pictures that addressed the theme of the Great War but that were not actually war films made use of certain codes characterised more than anything by affection and compassion, with a conventional depiction that appealed to mainstream audiences, employing figures and compositions that were understandable to the masses. They presented stereotypes and emotions like family love, love of nation or personal affection.

In both cases figurative images were imposed, as these were more familiar to mainstream audiences, and reflected values indicative of the story told in the film. They were clearly recognisable, with flat colours and font types that were often designed by hand.

Posters that combined text and image were far more common than those based only on illustrations or words, as the interaction between the two elements made it possible to communicate the message more effectively because any potential ambiguity in the images was thus avoided. However, the image on the poster was the main element, and the title was the most obvious textual component. Textual content was very short, kept to a minimum, as all the work was left to the illustrations. In the first decades of cinema it was hard to find posters containing more textual information than the title of the film. Later, the names of the film stars, directors and producers began to be included, used as a way of "branding" the pictures. Little by little, tag-lines began being included on posters.

The text generally ran across the breadth of the poster. The title usually appeared in the bottom third of the poster, although in some cases it was placed in the top third. The film's title tended to be the largest text, although after the establishment of the "star system" it was not uncommon to see posters on which the actor's name was larger.

There was also a tendency to use capital rather than lower-case letters, block letters rather than cursive and sans-serif rather than Roman fonts. However, any font style might be used on a film poster provided that it responded to the persuasive and communicative needs pursued.

In terms of the use of colour, generally and with very few exceptions, the most common palette was recessive and subdued, in an effort to create a gloomy atmosphere that would evoke the brutality of the conflict. Warm colours were used for the purposes of contrast or dramatic exaltation.

The graphic design of these posters aimed above all to create an impact, using dominant images that would help viewers to remember the film much better in spite of their limited exposure to the poster. The main objective of the poster was thus to "leave an effective mark that would serve to remember the product easily, and instil in [the viewer] a series of unconscious values that would aid the persuasive function" (GÓMEZ, 2002: 214). In the case analysed here, these unconscious values were, on the one hand, affection, love of nation and love of family and, on the other, bravery, patriotism, heroism, rejection of the Germans, etc. All of this facilitated the creation of an imaginary of war that would be consolidated decades later with the Second World War. ■

NOTES

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THE IMAGINARY OF WAR AS DEPICTED IN AMERICAN FILM POSTERS FROM 1914 TO 1918

Abstract

The objective of this article is to offer an analysis of the posters for the most prominent movies filmed in the United States during the First World War (1914-1918) that have any kind of military conflict as their main theme. This analysis will make it possible to identify the existence of a particular graphic style associated with military conflict that contributed to the construction of an imaginary of war, expressed in a series of film posters that exemplify that style. The films produced and released in the United States during this period can be divided into three main categories: historical war films; government war films; and commercial pictures, generally characterised by a more pacifist message. For all three categories film posters played a key role, not only from a commercial point of view, but also in the creation of an intentional denotative discourse, whether social, political or even philosophical.

Key words

Film poster; First World War; Imaginary of war; CPI; Committee on Public Information; Pacifist films; Government films.

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EL IMAGINARIO BÉLICO A TRAVÉS DE LOS CARTELES DEL CINE NORTEAMERICANO ENTRE 1914 Y 1918

Resumen

El objetivo del presente artículo es ofrecer una aproximación a los carteles de las principales películas filmadas en Estados Unidos durante el período en el que transcurre la Primera Guerra Mundial (1914-1918) y que tienen como tema principal cualquier tipo de conflicto bélico. El estudio nos permite determinar la existencia de una gráfica específica de la guerra, la cual permitió la construcción de un imaginario bélico, manifestado a través de una serie de carteles cinematográficos seleccionados a modo de ejemplo. Durante este período el cine realizado y estrenado en Estados Unidos presenta una triple vertiente: de un lado tendríamos el cine bélico historicista, de otro el cine bélico oficialista y, finalmente, el cine comercial, que presenta un carácter más pacifista. En las tres corrientes el cartel cinematográfico desempeñó un papel esencial, no solo desde el punto de vista comercial, sino también en la creación de discurso intencionado, de carácter denotativo, ya fuera de índole social, política o incluso filosófica.

Palabras clave

Cartel cinematográfico; Primera Guerra Mundial; imaginario bélico; CPI; Comité de Información Pública; cine pacifista; cine oficialista.

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Article reference

González Díez, Laura, Puebla Martínez, Belén, Prieto Dávila, Pablo R. (2016). he Imaginary of War as Depicted in American Film Posters from 1914 to 1918. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 47-58.

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Referencia de este artículo

González Díez, Laura, Puebla Martínez, Belén, Prieto Dávila, Pablo R. (2016). El imaginario bélico a través de los carteles del cine norteamericano entre 1914 y 1918. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 47-58.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE

EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

BROKEN TOYS: CHILDHOOD AND WAR IN FRENCH CINEMA (1908-1916)

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TRANSLATED BY MARÍA MAGDALENA VÁZQUEZ AMER

The first international conflict, the first filmed war, a true step into the twentieth century... The First World War has been analysed from many points of view. One of the reasons why it was considered a new kind of war was the inclusion of children as active participants in the conflict, along with the rest of the civilian population. Children were the argument used to justify the mobilisation of adults: the fight is for them; sacrifices are being made for their future. From 1915 onwards, family played a predominant role in boosting soldier morale and a special sort of camaraderie was forged between child and soldier. On the front, the soldier was defending his home, his wife and his children, and with his victory, he would ensure a future free of wars. This relationship is clearly reflected in the propaganda images of the time, which made extensive and recurrent use of this idea (Pignot, 2012b: 130-131).

From the beginning of the war, children were the object of a genuine mobilisation project in all the countries involved, through education in the schools, sermons in the churches and also with a wide range of toys, picture books and recreational games. Books and toys spread the themes of Germanophobe and patriotic propaganda with great efficiency through the development of new shapes, colours and designs capable of seducing the youngest members of the public. The aim of this strategy was to justify the war, and thus children were drawn in through patriotic exaltation: they were inculcated with the idea that they belonged to a nation, that they were little soldiers and must therefore participate in its defence (Pignot: 2012b, 133). Drawings by schoolchildren reflect this clearly: images of the father leaving for war, soldiers on the battlefield, hatred towards the enemy, and the harsh conditions they were living in (Pignot: 2004).

Cinema was used during the war years as a tool to exalt national values that both soldiers and civilians had to defend with their efforts. Producers focused on making movies with a patriotic message, as a justification for their occupation in an industry considered frivolous in such a dramatic time (Véray: 2008).

Children and the war was one of the common plotlines used in fiction films produced during the First World War in France, both in comedies and in patriotic melodramas. Comedies were very successful and therefore abundant, most of them featuring famous actors on the French scene such as Max, Rigadin, Boireau or Onésime, who played dedicated patriots on the silver screen. The biggest child star was Bout-de-Zan, the young protagonist of the series directed by Louis Feuillade for Gaumont. René Poyen, who had been four years old when the series started in 1912, continued to play the same young troublemaker from 1914 to 1918 in titles like *Bout-de-Zan pacifiste* in 1914, followed in 1915 by *Bout-de-Zan est patriote*, *Bout-de-Zan et le poilu* and *Bout-de-zan va te'n guerre;* and in 1916 by *Bout-de-zan et le boche,* etc.

In patriotic melodramas children always added a note of melancholy. Frequent images included the resigned child watching his father leave home reluctantly for war, the child kissing his father's photograph, as in *Le Noël du Poilu* (Gaumont, 1916), or, from the other side, the soldier, the *poilu* in the trenches, gazing wistfully at a picture of his family (*Les Poilus de la revanche*, Gaumont, 1915). Manon Pignot speaks of a *"paternité de papier"*, a new concept of fatherhood that emerged during the war years, constructed on the basis of anxieties that had been unheard of previously (Pignot, 2012a: 19).

These melodramas integrated children into contemporary situations, like the films about the territories lost in the war of 1870 or about spies. In *Ce qu'ils ont fait* (directed by G. Honoré Lainé in 1917), two orphan children manage to expose a German spy who had mistreated them before the war.

Although most of these films tended to portray bourgeois environments, *Noël de guerre* (Pathé, 1916) is a sentimental melodrama telling the tragic story of a mother who cannot afford to buy her son toys for Christmas. Little André decides to write a letter to Jesus to ask him for the toys he wants. By chance, the letter reaches a retired military man who lost his son. With his wife, they decide to give André the toys which their own son will never be able to use again. At one point in the film we can see André showing his mother his old broken toys, which include a toy gun.

CHILDREN AND THE WAR WAS ONE OF THE COMMON PLOTLINES USED IN FICTION FILMS PRODUCED DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN FRANCE, BOTH IN COMEDIES AND IN PATRIOTIC MELODRAMAS

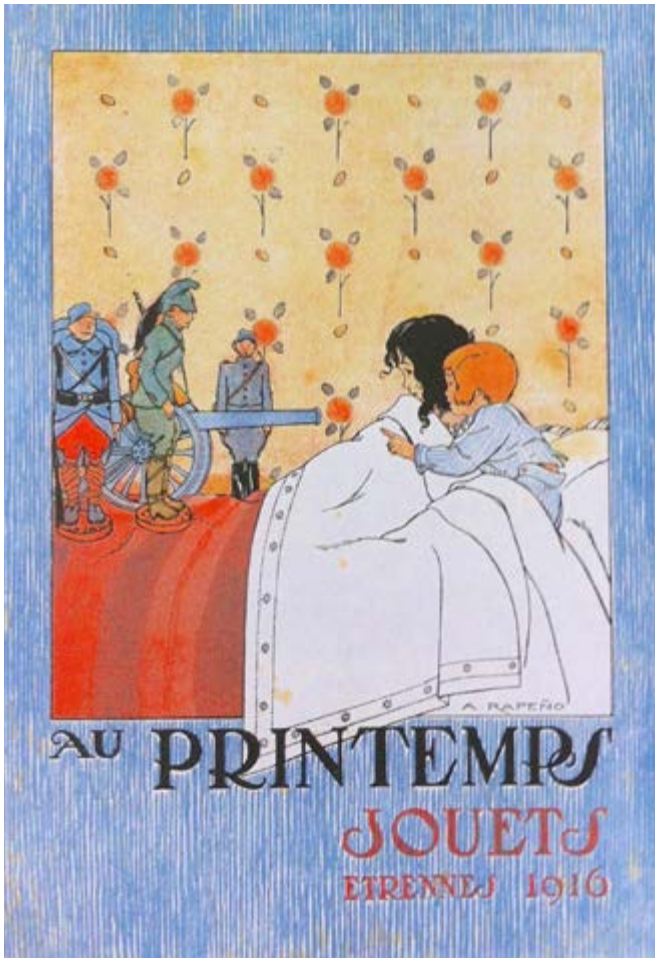
Along with papier-mâché guns, tin soldiers and other war toys were very common presents for children of the period, as war games and toys were used to convey a message of patriotism and courage to defend the nation.

With the industrialisation process in the late eighteenth century the toy industry developed significantly, resulting in a profound transformation which by the middle of the nineteenth century had turned childhood into an educational and political challenge. When the First World War broke out, German-French rivalry was also expressed in the creativity of toy makers. Games, leisure activities with fixed rules agreed on by all participants, are especially useful in the context of a traumatic situation where the everyday points of reference have been completely altered by mobilization, uncertainty and fear. Games

create a universe with a beginning and an end, a specific space and timeframe. If the participants in a game are not enjoying it, it can be changed, or begun again as if nothing had happened (Hadley, 2010: 70). Children play at being soldiers, building barricades, using toy guns and helmets, and imitating the war in which their parents are fighting. In their games, the brave *poilu* will fight bravely and will always emerge victorious.

From 1914 on, images advertising toys became full of references to the war, as can be seen in the advertisement reproduced here, from the 1916 *Au Printemps* catalogue, designed by Armand Rapeño, showing a group of children in bed who are watching (dreaming? imagining?) some toy soldiers with a cannon on top of their bed (Daeninckx, 2013; Vial Kayser and Chopin, 2014: 13). The cover of the 1917 Christmas catalogue, designed by L. Peltier, shows a group of children in the city, playing war. Toy makers and sellers took advantage of current events to sell war-themed toys, and department stores such as *Bon Marché, Printemps* or *Magasin du Louvre* filled their windows and catalogues with such toys. The conflict also helped bring the previous German monopoly over the toy industry to an end, as children and their parents were urged to throw out any toys made in the enemy nation. An example of this is the very direct message on the cover of the 1919 Christmas catalogue for the department store *Bon Marché*, designed by Poulbot, in which a girl congratulates a brave boy who, with his wooden sword, has defeated a German toy, a *boche*/soldier with a tag that reads "Made in Germany" (Audoin-Rouzeau, 2004).

Figure 1. Advertising image, Armand Rapeño, 1916.



Despite the ubiquity of war toys in advertising images, it is important to note that their high price tags made them affordable only to the urban bourgeoisie (Pignot, 2012aa: 62). This does not mean, however, that "playing war" was not a popular pastime among all social classes, as the photographs and pictures drawn by schoolchildren during these years make it clear that it was.

Among the toys that met with the greatest success in those years were toy soldiers. Made of lead, tin or polychrome wood, these little toys made up a small army equipped with cannons, tanks and other elements to recreate the action. These toys seem to have had a military origin, as they were used to simulate battle strategies in preparation for actual battles. The first figurines were made in the cities of Nuremberg and Furt in the mid-eighteenth century (Claretie, 1920: 44-45). They were made of tin and were two-dimensional. In France in the late eighteenth century, French metallurgist Lucotte made little three-dimensional men using an alloy of tin, lead and antimony, which became popularly known as *petits bons hommes de Lucotte*. In Paris in 1825,

Cuperly, Blondel and Gerbeau founded CBG Mignot, which became the most important manufacturer of tin soldiers and other war toys like miniature cannons and weapons.

TOY SOLDIERS ALSO APPEARED IN THE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE OF THE TIME. ONE OF THE MOST PROLIFIC AUTHORS WAS ANDRE HELLÉ, THE PENNAME OF ANDRÉ LACLÔTRE (1871–1945), AN ILLUSTRATOR AND MAKER OF TOYS AND FURNITURE FOR CHILDREN

Toy soldiers also appeared in the children's literature of the time. One of the most prolific authors was Andre Hellé, the penname of André Laclôtre (1871-1945), an illustrator and maker of toys and furniture for children. His illustrations for books and advertising designs feature wooden toys on great adventures. According to Olivier-Messonier, Hellé's art is characterised by the "use of the anthropomorphic and identifiable toy, which symbolically represents the body of the child. Its design clearly echoes the industrial development of toys in the second half of the nineteenth century, since it determines the child's cultural, social and emotional life" (Olivier-Messonier: 2013). A constant of Hellé's work is the toy soldier: he designed toys like *PioliPioli*, a jointed wooden soldier; the tin soldier is featured in illustrations for magazines, like a drawing in the *La vie parisiense*, in which countless tin soldiers fall from the sky as a Christmas present, with a caption reading: "A million soldiers to help us expel the Germans from France and Belgium!" They also illustrate a cover of *La joie des enfants* (No. 11, 9 February 1905), and advertising images like the poster for the furniture designed by Hellé for the department store *Le Printemps* in 1910.[1]

In Hellé's illustrations for books, the presence of military iconography is also a constant. His *Alphabet de la grande Guerre 1914-1916*, with the subtitle *pour les enfants de nos soldats*, was very successful. Published in 1916, each letter represents an element related to the conflict: A for *Alsace*, B for *Batterie*, C for *Charge*, etc. The war already appears on the cover, showing a group of soldiers getting ready to fire a cannon. Audoin-Rouzeau highlights the fact that children's literature during these years is permeated by images of and references to the war. Far from trying to shield children from the reality around them, both books and periodicals portrayed the political events of the time with the intention of integrating the child into the national conflict (Audoin-Rouzeau, 2004: 64). The presence of war iconography is notable, especially in works targeting younger ages, as is the case of Hellé's alphabet, full of violent images associating each letter with an element related to war.

The toy soldier is an omnipresent image in Hellé's illustrations for the book of poems by Georges Auriol (penname for Jean-Georges Huyot) *La geste heroïque des petits soldats de bois et plomb*, published in 1915; it is also one of the characters in *La boite à joujoux*, a ballet composed by Claude Debussy in collaboration with Hellé in 1913,[2] and Quillembois, the wooden soldier, is the protagonist of *Histoire de Quillembois Soldat*, a story written and illustrated by Hellé in 1919.

In 1915, Charlotte Schaller-Mouillot, a Swiss-born French author, painter and illustrator, published *Histoire d'un brave petit soldat* and *En guerre!*, both illustrated by the author. Both books take a clear anti-German stance. In the first, the protagonist of the story is a toy soldier who, together with his comrades and equipped with bayonets, cannons, planes, etc., fight against the evil Germans. The brave soldier defeats the enemy by throwing chestnuts at them. In another episode, the soldier is captured by the Germans, but he escapes by dressing up as a *boche*, and, with

the help of some English soldiers, he liberates his Belgian friends from the dreaded Germans and finally returns home victorious. In *En guerre!* the protagonist Boby is transformed into a "little soldier" in order to save his country. He burns his German tin soldiers and, at night, dreams that all the nations that are fighting for freedom are marching in front of him.

Books, games, illustrations for magazines, advertising... in the childhood imaginary of the years of the Great War, toy soldiers took up arms to become the protagonists of the stories. In his studies of the history of toys and children's literature, Michel Manson notes that in nineteenth-century children's literature the idea of toys coming to life appears frequently (MANSON:2011b). This is also true of the cinema of the time, where, as will be explored below, toys coming to life while children sleep is a recurring theme.

A few years before the war, tin soldiers coming to life had already appeared as protagonists in films. One of the pioneers of animation in France, Émil Cohl, directed *Le petit soldat qui devient dieu* in 1908 and *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux* in 1910, for the Gaumont film company. In both films, the tin soldiers are animated using the stop-motion technique. In *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux*, the animation appears and disappears on a white square over which a paintbrush, a quill and other objects such as nails, needles or matches paint paintings which transform into photographs, some of them of Paris landmarks. In one of the scenes, from which two stills are reproduced here, three toy soldiers move in different directions over the square with no movement of their joints. The film ends with the appearance of the image of a cuirassier (with a comically exaggerated helmet) framed in a circle of lightning.

Cohl, who had enjoyed a significant career as a caricaturist and cartoonist before going into cinema, had also illustrated magazines and children's books, and in 1907 he had invented a toy

Figure 2. *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux*, É. Cohl, 1910. Gaumont Pathé Archives.

for children, the *ABCD à la ficelle*. This toy consisted of a board on a wooden or thick carton holder with a series of nails; children had to follow the examples provided in the margins and, braiding a string around the nails, they would draw various letters of the alphabet and numbers. As Cécile Boulaire points out, this is the game that Cohl reproduces in *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux*, when the nails mark out the silhouette through which the string will mark the outline of the Arc de Triomphe (Boulaire: 2007:, 130).

Le petit soldat qui devient dieu starts with two girls who receive a box of tin soldiers. From this moment the animation starts: out of the box come three soldiers who perform against a background of childish drawings. Other soldiers appear with a cart, a stick and, finally, the armed battalion in formation. The camera is fixed the whole time on a wide shot and the toys are barely animated: only a few of them move their arms and the object they carry, such as a drum or a broom held like a gun. All of the soldiers go back into the box except for one, who gets distracted while the battalion is leaving. The soldier, left behind by his comrades, sails away on a paper boat and reaches a riverbank. At this moment in the film there are two wide shots of an actual river,

Figure 3. *Le petit soldat qui devient dieu,* É. Cohl, 1908. Gaumont Pathé Archives.

real filmed images that clash with the image of fantasy presented in the film up until this point.

The animation ends here and the film continues with live actors. A child, belonging to a tribe of "savages", finds the soldier and takes it home. At this point we see the film's only close-up, when the chief of the tribe licks the toy soldier and dies. His successor is then crowned and turns the soldier into a deity to adore. The film ends with a grand finale shot, following a tradition of many early films that highlights cinema's theatrical heritage.

Cécile Boulaire compares this film to *Mon ami Polichinelle*, a story by Abel Deparc illustrated by Cohl in 1897 (Boulaire: 2007: 130 et seq.) that bears several resemblances to the movie: a boy who owns a box of lead soldiers who come alive in a dream-like adventure which the protagonist embarks on with his toy Pulcinella, the encounter with a tribe, a journey on a boat... although the moralistic message of the story is subverted by a comic ending in the film.

Pathé also produced animated films with lead soldiers, which are identified in the Pathé catalogue compiled by Henri Bousquet (1994: 487; 1995: 696): *Les Soldats de Jack au Maroc* (1911) and *Les soldats du Petit Bob* (1913). Unfortunately, I have not been able to locate any copy of these films, and thus it is not possible to conduct a detailed analysis of the type of animation they use, or of any other cinematographic aspects. Nevertheless, it seems relevant to include them in this study as their plots are based on stories very similar to the movies analysed above. In *Les Soldats de Jack au Maroc*, young Jack plays war with the lead soldiers he has received as a birthday gift from his uncle. When it is time for bed, however, his mother makes him put away the soldiers in their box. In his dreams Jack imagines his brave soldiers fighting to conquer a faraway territory in the name of their beloved country. In *Les Soldats du Petit Bob* (1913) little Bob's godmother gives him some beautiful lead soldiers. While he sleeps, he dreams that his old wooden soldiers, jealous of the new intruders, decide to attack their rivals. They use a chair to build a trench. Seeing they cannot defeat them, the leader of the wooden soldiers decides to sacrifice himself and, burning like a flaming torch, he attacks their metal enemies. When Bob wakes up, he realises that it was all a dream and that his troops, old and new, are still intact.

The fact that Cohl's films pre-date the conflict is surely the reason why no direct historical

Figure 4. *Le petit soldat qui devient dieu,* É. Cohl, 1908. Gaumont Pathé Archives.

relation is established between his toy soldiers and war (although in the case of *Les Beaux-Arts Mystérieux* there is the image of the cuirassier at the end of the animation). Although there was certainly an atmosphere of impending war prior to 1914, the presence of the toy soldier in these two films seems more a pretext for the animation than a direct reference to war. The case of Pathé's films is different in that the toy is, in both cases, the leitmotiv which relates the presence of the child to the conflict which, in 1913, was about to break out. In both films, the toy soldiers come alive in the dreams of the child protagonists, a narrative element they share with the 1916 film *Les petits soldats de Plomb*.

Directed by Pierre Bressol[3] for Pathé, *Les petits soldats de Plomb* tells the story of young Bebé, who receives a box of lead soldiers from his uncle. They start playing war and the uncle explains battle and attack strategies to the boy. When Bebé goes to sleep, he dreams that the toy soldiers come alive and fight a war which the French win. He wakes up to find his sorely missed father, on leave from the war, in his bedroom and he goes to hug him. The news does not surprise little Bebé because in his dream he saw his father, as one of the soldiers, winning the battle. The film presents frame-by-frame animation of the lead soldiers coming out of the box and marching towards a toy set with houses, a bridge over which a train passes, and the field where the battle will take place, with special effects simulating fire. The images appear in a pan shot that covers the whole set and three wide shots showing the soldiers' battle in greater detail.

The animation of the lead soldiers in the boy's dream featured in the above mentioned French films inevitably recalls *La guerra e il sogno di Momi* made by Segundo de Chomón for the Itala Film in 1916. The connection between dream and war is a very common iconographic stereotype in the nineteenth century: we find it in images as diverse as advertising, popular illustrations or images for the magic lantern. In the case of France there are the examples cited of advertising images such as those by Armand Rapeño for *Au Printemps*, or Charlotte Schaller-Mouillot's work, *En guerre!*, in which the boy protagonist dreams a victorious battle.

In some of the French illustrations mentioned above there is a parallelism with *Les petits soldats de Plomb*. In one of the scenes in the film, the child is sitting on the bed, with the box of toy soldiers on his lap, as in Rapeño's advertisement. In another scene, he is playing with the soldiers on the table, recalling one of the illustrations by Hellé for *La geste heroïque des petits soldats de bois et plomb*; specifically, the image on page 17, reproduced here together with the still from the film.

THE FACT THAT COHL'S FILMS PRE-DATE THE CONFLICT IS SURELY THE REASON WHY NO DIRECT HISTORICAL RELATION IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN HIS TOY SOLDIERS AND WAR

In the early twentieth century, particularly as a result of the conflict, the relationship between dream and war was further consolidated by the dissemination of illustrated postcards. Silvio Alovisio and Luca Mazzei analyse the symbolism of dreams in several Italian movies produced during the war that feature children dreaming: *Il sogno del bimbo d'Italia* (Riccardo Cassano, 1915), *Umanità* (Elvira Giallanella, 1919), *Il sogno patriottico di Cinessino* (Gennaro Righelli, 1915) and *La guerra e il sogno di Momi* (1916). Based on the dream interpretation theories in vogue in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, led by Freud, these authors analyse the symbolism of the dreams in these films, an analysis which can be extrapolated to the French titles chosen here (Alovisio, Mazzei, 2015).

The thematic similarities between the films by Bressol and Chomón, made in the same year, are obvious: in both, the child thinks about his father in the war, and when he falls asleep, he dreams of his toys waging a battle. But Chomón's film is longer and its animation techniques are much more advanced than Pathé's. I have not been able to ascertain whether Chomón had the chance to watch Bressol's movie, or if Bressol knew about Chomón's work. It was common in those days for different production companies to release films with similar themes, especially if they made reference to contemporary events as significant as the war, which permeated the popular imaginary in every country involved in the conflict.

According to Simona Nonsenzo, the Aragonese director apparently adapted the script from an original story written by himself and Pastrone. With *La guerra e il sogno di Momi*, Chomón probably wanted to explore a theme of contemporary importance without having to worry about censorship and without ascribing to a particular ideological position. He thus produced a fable directed at a child audience and made use of the dream formula to be able to express himself freely (Nonsenzo, 2007: 63-65). In technical terms, his film is much more complex than Bressol's. The movements of the soldiers are not the product of a simple stop-motion technique, as in the French film; rather, in the Italian film, the jointed figurines perform fluid and complex movements. Moreover, the special effects in the two films are also different: while in Bressol's they are limited to a few explosions, in Chomón's there are battles, explosions, aeroplanes flying, and highly detailed scenery with miniatures, scaled models of cannons, a fire extinguisher, gas masks and various gadgets. All in all, it is a very complex film that combines real actors with animation in the same scene, and demonstrates Chomón's extraordinary technical skill. Despite its success with audiences and critics, the movie did not inspire further

Figure 5. ***La geste heroïque des petits soldats de bois et plomb,*** **A. Hellé, 1915, p. 17.**

animation films in Italy, but stands as an isolated example, and as a sign, as Nonsenzo suggests, that Chomón was a unique character with a technical prowess and creativity far superior to those of his contemporaries.

Although less technically advanced than Chomon's, the French films analysed show how the theme of the war was present not only in comedy and melodrama, but in animated movies as well. Using the toy soldier, the fashionable children's toy in the pre-war climate, there were numerous stories where the toy comes alive through the stop-motion technique, present in all the films discussed above. The staging, set dimensions and number of soldiers increased, but the animation did not improve significantly from the first film in 1908 to the last one in 1916, nor did other aspects of the film grammar. With the end of the conflict, war stories, though still present on French screens, would no longer convey the nationalist message that characterised the films of the previ-

ous period. War toys would disappear from children's catalogues and advertising messages would encourage children to stop playing war with the same energy they had previously devoted to advertising tanks, cannons and soldiers. ■

NOTES

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1 Hellé had made a toy catalogue for this department store the previous year, and he would continue to contribute to the design of toys and advertising during the war years (Hardy, 2014: 27-28).

2 This ballet arose from a proposal that André Hellé made to Debussy for him to compose a piece of music for children in four acts. Hellé had written the plot and built the sets. The result was *La Boite à joujoux*, a ballet that Debussy dedicated to his daughter. The libretto, illustrated by Hellé, was published in 1913.

3 I have not as yet been able to locate more information on this director, whose real name is Pierre Dubois (1874-1925) and who also worked as an actor. During the war, he made three films, including *Les petits soldats de plomb*. http://centenaire.org/fr/autour-de-la-grande-guerre/cinema-audiovisuel/les-petits-soldats-de-plomb.

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BROKEN TOYS: CHILDHOOD AND WAR IN FRENCH CINEMA (1908-1916)

Abstract

During the First World War many patriotic films were performed in order to keep the high moral of the population, magnifying patriotic symbols and repeating stereotypes. Among these films, *Le petit soldat qui devient dieu* (1908) and *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux* (1910) directed by Emil Cohl for Gaumont and Pathé productions such as *Les Soldats de Jack au Maroc* (1911), *Les soldats du Petit Bob* (1913) and *Les petits soldats de Plomb,* directed by Pierre Bressol in 1916. In all of them we can find animation toy soldiers. Bressol's film is contemporary to *La guerra e il sogno di Momi*, directed by Segundo de Chomón, where the director resorts to the crank step technique to give life to toy soldiers, the same technique used in French films. In the article, these films are linked to French culture and popular literature.

Key words

First World War; Fiction animated film; Toy soldiers.

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Article reference

Brotons Capó, M. Magdalena (2016). Broken Toys: Childhood and War in French cinema (1908-1916). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 59-69.

JUGUETES ROTOS: LA INFANCIA Y LA GUERRA EN EL CINE FRANCÉS (1908-1916)

Resumen

Durante la Primera Guerra Mundial se realizaron un gran número de ficciones patrióticas con la finalidad de mantener la moral alta de la población, magnificando símbolos y repitiendo estereotipos. Entre estas películas, *Le petit soldat qui devient dieu* (1908) y *Les Beaux-Arts mystérieux* (1910) dirigidas por Emil Cohl para Gaumont, y producciones de Pathé como *Les Soldats de Jack au Maroc* (1911), *Les soldats du Petit Bob* (1913) y *Les petits soldats de Plomb*, dirigida por Pierre Bressol en 1916. En todas ellas coincide la animación de soldaditos de plomo. La película de Bressol es contemporánea a *La guerra e il sogno di Momi* de Segundo de Chomón, en la que el director recurre a la técnica del paso de manivela para dar vida a los soldados de juguete, la misma técnica utilizada en los films franceses. En el artículo se analizan estas películas así como su vinculación con la cultura y literatura popular francesas.

Palabras clave

Primera Guerra Mundial; cine de animación; soldados de plomo.

Autora

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Referencia de este artículo

Brotons Capó, M. Magdalena (2016). Juguetes rotos: la infancia y la guerra en el cine francés (1908-1916). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 59-69.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) DL V-5340-2003 WEB www.revistaatalante.com MAIL info@revistaatalante.com

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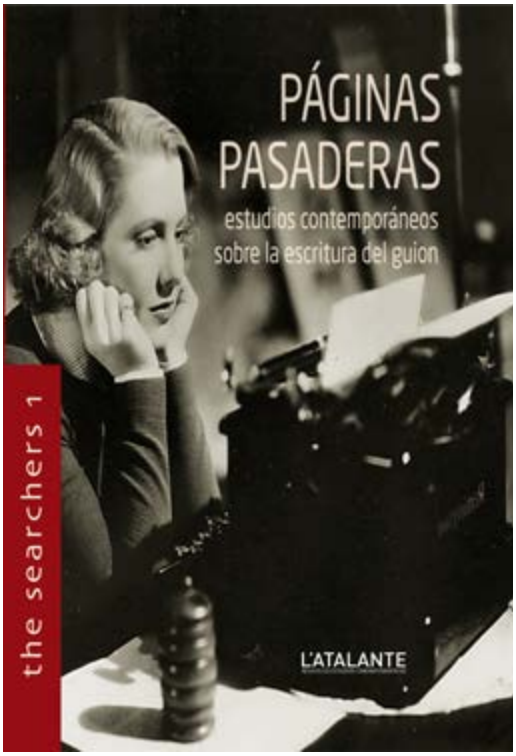
Coordinado por Rebeca Romero Escrivá y Miguel Machalski



Prólogo
Rebeca Romero Escrivá

Película soñada y espejismo-literatura: controversia sobre la ubicación del guion en los géneros literarios
Antonio Sánchez-Escalonilla

Las múltiples caras del guion
Miguel Machalski

La faceta multidisciplinar del guionista en el nuevo marco audiovisual
Michel Marx

El nuevo guion cinematográfico: vanguardias narrativas y rebelión creativa para el cine del siglo XXI
Jordi Revert

El guion de estructura narrativa no lineal en el cine de ficción
Ignacio Palau

Homero en el ciberespacio
Daniel Tubau

El guion en los videojuegos. De las *background stories* a las películas interactivas
Marta Martín Núñez / Carlos Planes Cortell / Violeta Martín Núñez

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Alicia Scherson Vicencio

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THE FIRST WORLD WAR THROUGH THE EFG 1914 PROJECT

MÓNICA BARRIENTOS-BUENO
TRANSLATED BY MARTIN BOYD

On the occasion of the centenary of the First World War, various initiatives have been launched to give 21st-century viewers online access to films made during the war that determined the view that the public had of the conflict. This view was not unaffected by different strategies that replaced information with propaganda, which achieved a high level of sophistication especially among the Allies, whose propaganda system was more refined (Guerra and Tajahuerce, 1995: 51). On the other hand, from very early on the filming of current events by Pathé Frères and Gaumont, which would subsequently give rise to *Pathé Journal* and *Actualités Gaumont* in 1909 and 1910, respectively, confirmed the importance of capturing reality on film, and began a process of expansion that would culminate with the "outbreak of the First World War, considered the first major war in which the media image would begin to play a major role" (Quintana, 2012: 29-30).

During the 1910s a considerable number of films focusing on the events of the war were made. However, it is now estimated that only around 20% of silent film production has been preserved, a fact that underscores the importance of the films that remain as valuable first-hand documentation on the war. To facilitate wider public access to images of the First World War, stored away until now in archives and film libraries in different parts of the world and ranging from documentaries and newsreels to propaganda films, from fiction to non-fiction, film digitisation and restoration projects have been launched to make these images available online; notable among these projects for its significance and magnitude is the European Film Gateway's EFG1914 project, whose "sheer abundance of available historical film documents provides a huge opportunity for comparative research" (Pitassio, 2014: 179), as some research projects have already undertaken to demonstrate (Amy, 2015).

THE EFG 1914 PROJECT

EFG1914 is a project to digitise audiovisual materials related directly or indirectly to the First World War. Established on the *European Film Gateway* website, the project provides access to thousands of digitised documents held in European film libraries and audiovisual archives, such as Deutsche Kinemathek, Cineteca di Bologna, the Imperial War Museum, Archives Françaises du Film and Filmoteca Española, among others. The result is more than 700 hours of digital video and around 7,100 document records with complete descriptions and metadata, as well as the possibility of viewing all of the films online. These films cover a wide range of genres and sub-genres: newsreels, documentaries, fiction and propaganda. EFG1914 also "gives access to anti-war films that were mainly produced after 1918 and which reflect the tragedies of the 1910s."[1]

EFG 1914 IS A PROJECT TO DIGITISE AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS RELATED TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A number of these films have been used to produce a virtual exhibition that explores different aspects of the Great War. The selection includes "exceptional material that provides a deeper insight into the events of the First World War, the film industry and its audience at that time" (Hertl, 2013: 287). Several of the films included in the exhibition will thus be used to offer a glimpse of the thousands of film documents contained in the EFG1914 project. The exhibition is organised in seven rooms with different types of material (films, photographs, posters and texts) to offer a kind of thematic tour. Due to space limitations, it will not be possible to give every section the focus it deserves; nevertheless, the film documents featured will offer a general idea of the multifaceted nature of the EFG1914 project, whose objective is to bring the people of our century closer to the background and the battleground, the use of propaganda, the innovations in the manufacture of war materials, the human suffering, the production of fiction films during the war years, the cinema of the neutral nations and the commemorations of the Great War.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

The first room takes us onto the battlefield, with material originally filmed on the frontline, along with reconstructions due to the restrictions imposed by the military Chiefs of Staff on reporter access to the front (Paz and Montero, 2002: 53-54). On the one hand, during the first years of the war and in view of the possibility that it would not last long, "the cinema did not mobilise its resources around the conflict, beyond sending cameramen to the front to obtain visual content for propaganda and newsreel programs" (Lorente, 2015: 132). On the other, the considerable size and weight of a film camera and tripod constituted another obstacle. For example, the *Präzisionskamera Modell XIV*, manufactured by Oskar Messter since 1914 and used extensively on the battlefields, weighed at least 14 kilos.[2] In 1915, Walter Filzinger, a cameraman on the German front, gave an account in *Lichtbild-Bühne* of the difficulties he faced in his work, commenting that "[t]he apparatus must always be completely assembled, equipped and adjusted, for it to work at any second. In order to shoot in a trench, you have to be familiar with the conditions therein. It is not easy to find a suitable spot in a trench. It is best to film through an embrasure or from an observation stand. The cranking of the camera is a dangerous business, as it can easily happen that one is hit by shrapnel when shells detonate nearby" (Welter, 2014). With difficulties like

these, cameramen in war time became important as documenters of the battle front, "acting as genuine government delegates entrusted with the production of a patriotic image favourable to the war effort" (Lorente, 2015: 132).

A result of this set of circumstances is a common aesthetic marked by the predominant use of open and wide shots, with a fixed point of view and shots of the action from a distance, without any camera movements. This was a choice of many cameramen in the field, who preferred to film with wider angles in order to capture all of the action and due to the unpredictable nature of the events unfolding in front of the camera. There was another more technical reason behind this choice: emulsions with low levels of sensitivity and poorly lit scenes resulted in a limited depth of field in wide shots, with a blurring of background details. A representative example of this is *Bei unseren Helden an der Somme* [Our Heroes of the Somme] (1917), a German documentary made in response to what has been considered the first war film in history, the British film *The Battle of the Somme* (1916). The Somme offensive was one of the foundational moments of First World War propaganda cinema, which is expressed "in contemporary terms, as the systematic use of the film medium for strategic purposes" (Nepoti, 1998: 226). This particular example is a production that combines images actually taken on the frontline with others that reconstruct it. The documentary begins with a wide shot of a wooded area where several soldiers are advancing, taking cover behind fallen branches and tree trunks. This shot continues for a few minutes, and then we see mines exploding and grenades being thrown, along with closer shots of German troops using portable walkways to cross the Somme. In contrast, the images in *Isonzói-csata* [Battle in the Isonzo] (1917) show the cameraman inside the trenches, accompanying the Kaiser's infantry as it advances its position and weaves through barbed wire, taking very close and vivid shots of everything happening on the battlefield, combined with pans and other wider shots when the soldiers disappear in the distance amid the smoke of the explosions. At the same time, *Isonzói-csata* is a compilation of different film shoots on the Isonzo front between the spring and autumn of 1917; compilations, archive footage and anthologies became a common practice to meet a series of commercial and cultural needs in the decades immediately after the war, especially for the purposes of celebrations and anniversaries (Faccioli, 2015: 42-43).

MANY CAMERAMEN IN THE FIELD PREFERRED TO FILM WITH WIDER ANGLES IN ORDER TO CAPTURE ALL OF THE ACTION AND DUE TO THE UNPREDICTABLE NATURE OF THE EVENTS

Either due to the restrictions imposed by the military high command or the difficulties associated with filming on the battlefield, or even the manipulation of the shots in the editing room, these productions distort and twist reality in ways that the viewers of their day were unaware of. In addition to the "high degree of falseness in the representation of the war, [...] a rather profitable business arose out of the falsification of war films, so that in many documentaries, especially in the first years of the war, what they show are really an assembly of staged scenes" (Guerra and Tajahuerce, 1995: 52), the kind of reality reconstructions that cinema has been known for since its birth (Tranche, 2012: 40-43). Falling into this category are two short documentaries that share the same aesthetic: *Sur la route de Cernay (près Reims)* [On the Road to Cernay (near Reims)] (1915); and *Dans le ajoncs du Vardar* [Among the Reeds of the Vardar] (1916). The production plan, far from the improvisation typical of real

war scenes, resulted in a number of substantial differences from the examples cited above, reflected in meticulous compositions with a predomination of full shots and medium shots; added to this effect is the advance of the squadron through trenches and ruins in *Sur la route de Cernay (près Reims)* which is presented in a series of shots and reverse shots. The soldiers are never shown in combat; rather, they are shown fixing a telephone line, for example, or engaging in more mundane actions like playing cards or keeping warm beside a fire. The camera is freed from a fixed point of view for filming and moves along the flow of the waters of the Vardar in *Dans le ajoncs du Vardar,* in a tracking shot taken from the boats of the convoy. The film has also been coloured using the *Pathé Color* system, making this documentary different and considerably more attractive than the others featured in this section.

PROPAGANDA IMAGES

Perhaps one of the more outstanding aspects of the First World War is that it was a war of images waged by all of the countries involved (Lasswell, 1971). In this context, it also becomes difficult to distinguish between information and propaganda, as "all media forms –especially the cinema due to its huge social impact– were absorbed into the different government propaganda networks" (Paz and Montero, 2002: 22). The capacity of cinema to mobilise public opinion and disseminate propaganda, which was already well-known by this time, now became a tool for raising awareness and persuading all levels of society to join in and support the war effort. The propaganda did not leave out neutral countries, which were targeted to counteract information from the enemy nations (Chatterjee, 2015). The collection of donations and the sale of war bonds became an important aim of propaganda films, with cases where fictitious images are alternated with allegories, as in the rhetorical device employed in the Italian film *Befana di guerra* [Epiphany of War] (1915). In this film, a child asks the Befana[3] not for gifts, but for her father's return from the war; the Befana wanders through different civilian environments like streets, factories, wealthy homes and farms, collecting money in a sock. The image of the sock filled with donations dissolves into an image of the Italian peninsula using a kind of match cut for metaphorical purposes. The film ends with the homecoming of the soldier and the embrace with his loved ones, while the allegorical figure of Italy guides the troops to victory, represented by insignia, signs and emblems of the Roman Empire. In this way, *Befana di guerra* takes a line adopted by other Italian films in which the war is shown through the eyes of children (Alovisio and Mazzei, 2015). Based on a similar premise, the German medium-length film *Der Feldgraue Groschen* [The Field-Grey Penny] (Georg Jacoby, 1917) promotes the idea of the nationwide importance of buying war bonds through the story of an old woman who sends a penny to her son at the front, believing that the coin will bring him good luck. After his squadron is attacked, the coin passes from one hand to another until it is returned to the old woman.

PERHAPS ONE OF THE MORE OUTSTANDING ASPECTS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR IS THAT IT WAS A WAR OF IMAGES WAGED BY ALL OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED (LASSWELL, 1971)

The propaganda strategies employed to promote the purchase of bonds were aimed at reviling the enemy, inspiring sympathy for the soldiers and lauding heroic deeds on the battlefield in order to convey a sense of assurance of victory to the public and also to encourage young men to

THE PROPAGANDA STRATEGIES EMPLOYED TO PROMOTE THE PURCHASE OF BONDS WERE AIMED AT REVILING THE ENEMY, INSPIRING SYMPATHY FOR THE SOLDIERS AND LAUDING HEROIC DEEDS ON THE BATTLEFIELD IN ORDER TO CONVEY A SENSE OF ASSURANCE OF VICTORY TO THE PUBLIC AND ALSO TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG MEN TO ENLIST

enlist. The first of these techniques can be found in the German animated film *Das Säugetier* [The Mammal] (1916), which uses caricature to ridicule British colonisation. The common personification of Great Britain in political comics, John Bull, is the central figure. This caricature, seated on the British Isles, peers through a telescope at different colonial territories like South Africa, Jamaica, Ceylon and Egypt, whose riches he extracts. John Bull progressively transforms into an octopus that spreads its tentacles over a map of the world, which are then broken by German submarines, planes and a zeppelin. The second of the strategies is perfectly depicted in *For the Empire* (1916), a short production by British Gaumont that persuades through the depiction of a twofold loss: human and material. The film focuses on an idea expressed in one of its initial intertitles: "what others are doing for us", the others being the French and the Belgians, who were suffering terrible losses at the front. To illustrate this, *For the Empire* makes use of real images taken at the front and in hospitals crowded with wounded soldiers, interspersed with scenes of different families facing the loss of a loved one: an elderly couple on a farm, a wealthy urban couple, and a young widow with three small children, among others. After this comes the material loss: French and Belgian cities destroyed, with images of bombed buildings in Arras, Amiens and Ypres. Meanwhile, London remains immune to such destruction thanks to the fleet of British battleships and soldiers, which represent significant costs that are reported in minute detail, before concluding with the images of a man buying war bonds in a post office. And the last of the aims of war propaganda mentioned above, the encouragement of enlistments, is reflected in *Resistere!* [Resist!] (Luca Comerio, 1918). This film invokes a patriotic duty to Italy as its argument with an array of images of marching soldiers, tanks on the battlefield and a direct appeal to old fighters for the nation (alluded to as "fathers"). In technical terms, it is worth noting the use of toning, on the one hand, and of masks on the other to create symbolic compositions.

ANTI-WAR STATEMENTS ON CELLULOID

Just as there are propaganda films that support the war and the actions associated with it, there are also films with the opposite intention, taking a staunch position against war, often underpinned by intellectual perspectives. The need to work for peace is at the heart of *Ned Med Vaabnene!* [Lay Down Your Arms] (1915), a Danish production with Carl Theodor Dreyer as script supervisor, in which a couple's quest to be reunited (a husband wounded on the front and his wife searching for him) ends with a cholera epidemic that also affects other members of their family. Collateral victims of war are the lovers in *Maudite soit la guerre* [War Be Damned] (Alfred Machin, 1914), in which the outbreak of the First World War places the protagonists on opposite sides, making their love impossible when the young German goes into battle and kills his Belgian friend, who is also his lover's brother. This film is highly representative of the patriotic productions made by Pathé Frères in these years (Paz and Montero, 2002: 53). The anti-war message stands out clearly in *Pax æterna* [Eternal Peace] (1917), whose protagonist is a king who dedicates

his life to keeping peace between nations; however, a neighbouring country thinks otherwise and promotes the benefits of a fast war. The idea is also explicit in *Himmelskibet* [A Trip to Mars] (1918), although in this case it is presented in the form of science fiction; the protagonists travel to Mars, where they find a civilisation that has done away with disease, sadness, violence and sexual desire, among other things. The captain of the expedition and his love interest, the Martian daughter of the prince of wisdom, decide to return to Earth together to spread the news of the Martian civilisation.

THE WAR INDUSTRY

Another room is dedicated to innovations in weaponry and technology, a key aspect of a global conflict like the First World War. Developments in this area were often kept secret for reasons of espionage; however, they were sometimes presented before the cameras for the purpose of publicising the innovative capacity of the nation in question. The collection at this virtual exhibition focuses on the manufacture of the shells for heavy weaponry, as can be seen in the documentary *Fabrik Poldihütte* [The Poldihütte Factory] (1914-1918) showing a steel factory in Vienna, and Austrian troops loading a cannon with mortar fire in an excerpt from the newsreel *Messter-Woche 1915, no. 15* [Messter Weekly 1915, No. 15] (1915). The images in French films are more innovative, with shots taken inside a workshop for the production of camouflage objects (false tree trunks and cannons, as well as hidden doors for trenches) in *Les surprises du camouflage* [The Surprises of Camouflage] (1916) made by the Section Cinématographique de l´Armée (SCA), or strength testing of manganese helmets, which are subjected to gunshots and hammering with nails in *Casques du Docteur Pollack en acier dur au manganèse* [Dr. Pollack's Manganese Steel Helmets] (1917).

THE FEMALE WORKFORCE EMPLOYED IN ARMAMENTS FACTORIES IS ALSO FEATURED IN SEVERAL DOCUMENTARIES

The female workforce employed in armaments factories is also featured in several documentaries, such as the German films *Herstellung von Granatzündern* [Grenade Production] (1918), which shows in detail, in two close shots, the work of a female operator on shift during the process of making the detonator head for a grenade, and *Der eiserne Film: Bilder aus Deutschlands Kriegsschmiede* [The Iron Film: Images from Germany's War Machine] (1917), which also presents the grenade manufacture process. The Allies also made films showing women working in their war factories. The facilities and the female workers at the British Vickers Ltd. factory are featured in *Fabrication des munitions et du matériel de guerre* [Manufacture of Munitions and War Material] (1916); using wide shots, the camera enters a calibration workshop with several workers at their machines, and then passes onto the assembly of pieces and the filling of the shells manufactured with gunpowder. *La Main d'œuvre féminine dans les usines de guerre* [The Female Hand in the War Factories] (1916) is another film in this category; here, the Gaumont film company shows how its own studio in Lyon has been turned into a munitions factory, with a series of shots presenting the assembly of plane engines by female workers.

WAR WOUNDS

With casualties totalling more than 31 million civilians and soldiers, the direct consequences of the war in terms of human suffering are also a major focus of many films of the period. Soldiers and the wounded at the front are the focus of

attention in a film whose source is unidentified, exhibited virtually under the title *Wounded and Prisoners Behind the Lines on the Western Front* (1917), which shows British soldiers wandering behind the lines, some injured, others carrying stretchers and still others leading German prisoners. Newsreel images tend to leave out pictures of human suffering, as is the case of *Vojenská nemocnice* [Military Hospital] (1917), filmed at the doors of an Austro-Hungarian hospital where we see a throng of nurses tending to the wounded and Red Cross volunteers giving presents to soldiers. The capacity for reintegrating wounded soldiers into the workforce is the theme of *Im Lazarett Assfeld in Sedan* [In the Assfeld Hospital in Sedan] (1917); different shots show us French soldiers, taken prisoner by the Germans, during their rehabilitation exercises on different equipment. War wounds are given a more direct focus in the form of maiming in two short documentaries. The first of these, *Reeducation professionelle des mutilés de la guerre en France* [Professional Re-education of Maimed Soldiers in France] (Edmond Dronsart, 1917), follows the reintegration into the workforce of soldiers who lost limbs on the battlefield, showing several of them in close-ups performing manual tasks in workshops and factories. The second, *La rééducation de nos grands blessés* [The Re-education of Our Wounded Heroes] (1916-1919), is a Belgian compilation of images of maimed soldiers performing different rehabilitation exercises with and without their prosthetic legs and hands, which help them to do carpentry work, play football or paint on a canvas.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

The selection and overview presented by the virtual exhibition makes it clear that the EFG1914 project offers a kaleidoscope of different images and stories of the First World War which, without attempting to be a comprehensive portrait, gives us an insight into the cinematic reality of the war through the preservation and digitisation of documents produced according to different ideologies and with different perspectives on the conflict even when they touch on the same themes. It is a vast repertoire of images of the Great War that contributed to the creation of an image of the front and its immediate consequences. ■

NOTES

1 *EFG1914 Project Website. Digitising Film From and About the First World War*. Retrieved from <http://project.efg1914.eu/> [10/02/2015].

2 *Messter´s Präzisionskamera Modell XIV*. Retrieved from <http://exhibition.europeanfilmgateway.eu/efg1914/theme?id=At-the-front-1#Messter-Pr%C3%A4zisions-kamera-Modell-XIV> [10/02/2015].

3 In Italian tradition, the Befana is the mythical figure who brings gifts to children at Epiphany.

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THE FIRST WORLD WAR THROUGH THE EFG 1914 PROJECT

Abstract

The First World War was a war of images. Its first century has given several projects to approach citizens of 21st century to them. Because of its magnitude EFG1914 stands out, an initiative by European Film Gateway to digitize audiovisual documents related to the war. The virtual exhibition has been the start point to be closer to over seven hundred hours in moving pictures, which explore many aspects of the Great War; from this huge group has been chosen the most relevant films shot at the front, others with propaganda purpose, anti-war concept, about technical innovation and the suffering in the war. The proposed journey doesn´t expect to be exhaustive but giving a caleidoscopic view of the preserved war film production, thoroughly unknown, and characteristic of the different ideologies that inspired them.

Key words

EFG1914; European Film Gateway; Noticiario; Propaganda; Documental; Archivos digitales; Primera Guerra Mundial; Cine bélico.

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Article reference

Barrientos-Bueno, Mónica (2016). The First World War through the EFG1914 Project. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 71-80.

LA PRIMERA GUERRA MUNDIAL A TRAVÉS DEL PROYECTO EFG 1914

Resumen

La Primera Guerra Mundial fue una guerra de imágenes. Su primer centenario ha propiciado varios proyectos de aproximación de las mismas a los ciudadanos del siglo XXI. Por su envergadura destaca EFG1914, iniciativa del portal European Film Gateway con la que se han digitalizado miles de documentos audiovisuales relacionados con la guerra. Para aproximarse a las más de setecientas horas de imágenes en movimiento, se ha partido de la exposición virtual que explora varios aspectos de la Gran Guerra, de cuyos films se han seleccionado los más significativos sobre las filmaciones en el campo de batalla, la propaganda, el antibelicismo, la innovación tecnológica y armamentística, así como el sufrimiento. El viaje propuesto no busca ser exhaustivo sino proporcionar una visión caleidoscópica de la producción bélica conservada, ampliamente desconocida, y representativa de las diferentes ideologías que las impulsaron.

Palabras clave

EFG1914; European Film Gateway; Noticiario; Propaganda; Documental; Archivos digitales; Primera Guerra Mundial; Cine bélico.

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Referencia de este artículo

Barrientos-Bueno, Mónica (2016). La Primera Guerra Mundial a través del proyecto EFG1914. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 71-80.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) DL V-5340-2003 WEB www.revistaatalante.com MAIL info@revistaatalante.com

OPERATING ON THE FRAME: INTERVENTIONS IN THE MEDICAL FILMS OF THE NOVECENTO AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN YERVANT GIANIKIAN AND ANGELA RICCI-LUCCHI'S *OH! UOMO*

PAULA ARANTZAZU RUIZ RODRÍGUEZ
TRANSLATED BY MARTIN BOYD

«La guerra è la grande esperienza, è la ferita mal cicatrizzata che riprene a sanguinare non appena la tocchi»

NUTO REVELLI

The "*Il corpi dei soldati*" section of *Oh! Uomo* (Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi, 2004), the final film in the Italian filmmakers' trilogy dedicated to the First World War, begins with the image of a seated man. This first image shows us only his legs, one of which is suffering constant spasms, accompanied by a soundtrack of a few short and dry but hair-raising drum rolls. Shortly thereafter, in a medium shot that lasts more than twenty seconds, we see the face of this sick body, a young man with a gaze as agitated as his leg. This is not the only startled looking soldier with symptoms of trauma to appear in the images of *Oh! Uomo*: throughout the film, Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi, piecing together archival documentary footage from the 1910s, show us the terrible physical and psychological consequences suffered by civilians and soldiers who fought in the Great War, with images of hunger, misery, death and, specifically in the fourth part of the documentary, amputations, injuries, withered skin, prosthetic limbs, neurosis, mutilated bodies and deranged minds. These are shots taken in medical institutions during and after the war, documenting what was left of these wounded bodies, filmed at the time as *objects of clinical study* (either for research into the new war neurosis which the medical world had given the name of "shell shock", for the purposes of diagnosis and determination of a procedure to cure it, or to document the processes of physical reconstruction of soldiers using prosthetic implants), but which now appear to take on new life after being rescued from the archives and pieced together by the directors for a different purpose in this documentary. It is clearly with this in mind that the Gianikians gave *Oh! Uomo* a subtitle as apt as provocative as: *An Anatomical Catalogue of the Deconstruction and Artificial Reconstruction of the Human Body*.

There are at least three theories that could be posited to explain why Gianikian and Ricci-Luc-

chi took an interest in medical documentaries and chose these archive images of wounded soldiers to include and manipulate in *Oh! Uomo* and to make them central images to the discourse of the film. One possible reason relates to a certain idea of chronological necessity, in spite of the fact that Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi do not generally consider the question of narration in their films.[1] Produced between the early 1990s and 2004 with the First World War in Italy's Trentino region as its thematic core, the trilogy that concludes with *Oh! Uomo* began with *Prigionieri della guerra* (Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi, 1995) and its images of deportations, of the experience in prisons and chilling mass deaths on the Eastern front in the historical province of Galicia (now in Ukraine); it continues with *Su tutte le vette é pace* (Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi, 1998), a hallucinatory vision, through the manipulation of the original frames, showing military operations in the Italian Alps in the so-called *Guerra Bianca* during the Great War; while the final film in the series recounts the events after the end of the war: the soldiers' return home, and the aftermath of four years of brutal conflict between the biggest European nation-states and their regions of colonial influence. *Oh! Uomo* thus responds to a logical need in the temporal arrangement of the events of the First World War, as it presents the consequences in human terms of a military experience like the Great War, i.e., the real meaning of the barbarism, whether by showing the mass deaths resulting from a war characterised by large-scale industrial and technological organisation, or by revealing the injuries, both physical and psychological, suffered by both civilians and soldiers. On this point, the Italian historian Antonio Gibelli explains that in Italy alone around 40,000 soldiers were hospitalised due to psychiatric problems over the course of the war (Gibelli, 1998: 123), but as Gibelli also notes, the mental paradigm shift which the First World War represented was not limited to patients diagnosed with shell shock, as these victims merely reflected the absolute transformation of the human psyche that would come to define the parameters of modernity.

IN *OH! UOMO* ALSO MOUNTS A FERVENT CRITICISM OF THE IDEOLOGY THAT DOMINATED THE NOVOCENTO ITALIANO, THE SCIENTIFIC POSITIVISM SUSTAINED BY THE GROWTH OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM AND TAYLORISM

A second reason for the Gianikians' choice of these images of wounded soldiers and military medical films can be found in the background story behind the creation of *Oh! Uomo*. With visual material taken from film libraries all over Europe (Moscow, Vienna, Paris, Madrid and Bologna), as well as images from the personal archives of Luca Comerio and letters and other written documents used by the Italian filmmakers for the film's soundtrack (documents of popular literature: letters written by soldiers, their wives and mothers, testimonies from the archives of the Museo Storico de Trento and the Museo Storico Italiano della Guerra de Rovereto), the *Oh! Uomo* project was supported by the same contributors who had taken part in the first two films in the war trilogy: the historian Diego Leoni, and the singer Giovanna Marini, who set the written documents to music and gave them her voice. Leoni's participation proved to be fundamental for the production of this final film, as Robert Lumley reveals in his book *Entering the Frame: Cinema and History in the Films of Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi*, as in the original project the film had a completely different objective: rather than travelling across Europe following the withdrawal of the troops and civilians after the armistice that brought the Great

War to an end, this project was supposed to return to the setting of the Trentino region to explore "the complex outcomes of the conflict [of the First World War], from the imposition of a nationalist agenda to the commemoration of the dead and the establishment of 'winter sports' out of the machinery of war" (Lumley, 2011: 85-86). Then in 2001, Leoni discovered a set of film reels at the Vienna film library showing the terrible famine that struck the Volga region (Ukraine) in 1921. This footage was decisive in Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi's decision to redefine the purpose of the project, leaving the Alps behind and focusing instead on making a film about the effects of war on the bodies of the survivors and, ultimately, on the human condition in the aftermath of war. In keeping with the usual work method of these two filmmakers, this footage taken both in the rearguard and on the margins of the battles and in the withdrawal from the front-line, found in the archives of European film libraries, underwent a process of deconstruction, re-filming and re-assembly using their so-called *analytical camera*, a viewing and filming device that works not only on the footage as a whole but on the individual frames in order to operate directly on the image. It is an artisanal procedure with discursive implications in aesthetic, ethical and political terms that will also be explored in this article.

Finally, *Oh! Uomo* (through this work of appropriation and reformulation of the images that typifies Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi's method) also mounts a fervent criticism of the ideology that dominated the Novecento Italiano, the scientific positivism sustained by the economic progress accompanying the growth of industrial capitalism, which posited, among other notions, an intimate metaphorical relationship between man and machine; the ultimate fusion of faith in technology and Taylorism that would find devastating expression in the Great War. Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi insist that their analytical camera, which comprises two components (one vertical rail and one horizontal rail), "accepts the perforated celluloid of Lumière" while the second rail would be "closer to the devices created by Muybridge or Marey" (Gianikian, Ricci-Lucchi, 2000: 53). Various pioneers of the moving picture contributed to the birth and development of scientific cinema, both in the audiovisual experiments featuring the human body conducted by Éttiene-Jules Marey, followed by his unorthodox group of disciples, Georges Demenÿ, Georges Marinesco, Vincenzo Neri and even Albert Londe; and also in the films of Eugène Louis Doyen, Camillo Negro and Roberto Omegna, whose work serves both to detail surgical procedures and to document neurological pathologies. And it is precisely the ideological legacy of these foundational films that the re-filmed and re-edited images that Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi include in *Oh! Uomo* examine, while also questioning our position as spectators of our past and as spectators of our present, as this exercise in appropriation carried out by the filmmakers has extracted these images from the medical context of their original viewing conditions and located them in a new context in which the brutality of the violence they reveal reverberates with much more force.

TECHNOLOGY, TRENCHES AND MADNESS

Without entering into debate about the circumstances that gave rise to the war or the specific historiographical details, I nevertheless believe it necessary, with a view to outlining the conditions in which the footage of patients with shell shock and the medical film images appropriated by Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi were produced, to nuance this study with the perspectives of the historians Eric J. Leed and Antonio Gibelli, who have studied this historical period with attention to the phenomenon of the trenches that characterised the First World War, analysing how these and other technological transformations, and the *modus operandi* of war itself, altered the

psychological condition of both soldiers and civilians. In addition to the more than 16 million casualties suffered by the nations involved in the conflict, the war machine produced massive numbers of wounded, amputees, cripples, paraplegics and mentally disabled people on a scale never seen before. The Great War, suggests Gibelli in *La grande guerra degli italiani 1915-1918*, "was above all a *biological event* in which, for four years in any part of the European continent, millions of men engaged systematically in killing their fellow human beings through the use of modern technologies; millions of bodies, most of them young and healthy, were turned into decaying corpses" (Gibelli, 1998: 7).

Eric J. Leed offers an examination of the new killing technologies put into use in the First World War in his book *No Man's Land: Combat and Identity in World War 1*, one of the seminal works in the new anthropological historiography of the Great War that emerged in the 1970s, based on multiple first-hand testimonies by old veterans. Leed argues that many

> welcomed the war as an escape from industrial society. But in war they learned that technology shaped the organization of men, machines and tools just as it had in peacetime. [...] But it was the dissociation of technology from its traditional associations that made it strange, frightening and demonic. Technology was removed from a context in which it was comprehensible as the instrument of production and distribution; functions which made life possible and European culture dominant. It was 'resituationed' into a context of destruction, work and terror, where it made human dignity inconceivable and survival problematical. [...] Its repositioning in a context of pure destruction made strange and monstrous that which was formerly familiar, a matter of pride and an engine of progress (Leed, 1981: 31).

Or, as Anton Kaes points out in the introduction to *Shell Shock Cinema: Weimar Culture and the Wounds of War*,

> although historians disagree as to whether the Great War was the primal shock of the modern age or the culmination of unbridled industrialization, no one would deny the unprecedented ferocity and destructiveness of the world's first technological war (Kaes; 2009: 2).

And added to the consequences of this rise of technology as a deadly force was the nightmare of the trenches, both a prison and a combat setting, a structure that protected the soldiers from enemy attacks and artillery while at the same time immersing them and paralysing them in a muddy tunnel where they had to struggle with a thick darkness and with the mounting pile of the corpses of their comrades. Leed notes that

> when the rules of trench warfare began to be recorded in tactical manuals, it was learned that artillery was both the cause and the solution of the immobilization of the war [...]. In description after description of the major battles of the war one perception always emerges: modern battle is the fragmentation of spatial and temporal unities. It is the creation of a system with no center and no periphery in which men, both attackers and defenders, are lost (Leed, 1981: 98).

It is hardly surprising that all these conditions of chaos and destruction should give rise to a new, dark and sinister vision of the act of war. According to Leed,

> neurosis was a psychic effect not of war in general but of industrialized war in particular. Prior to the thorough mechanization of war the most common psychic disability was homesickness, or what the French in the Napoleonic wars called *nostalgie*, a form of intense separation anxiety. The range of hysterical symptoms that the First World War brought forth on an enormous scale was unprecedented in combat (Leed, 1981: 164).

In February 1915, *The Lancet*, the leading British medical journal of the day, published the first article dedicated to a study of the new war neurosis:

> Contribution to the Study of Shell Shock" by Dr Charles S. Myers. The article describes the blindness and memory loss of three soldiers who had suffered constant shelling in the trenches (Myers, 1915: 316-330), and goes on to suggest that all three cases exhibited a clinical condition very similar to hysteria. The symptoms of shell shock, as Leed notes in *No Man's Land*, were exactly the same as those of hysterical disorders in peacetime, although "they often acquired new and more dramatic names in war: 'the burial-alive neurosis', 'gas neurosis', 'soldiers heart'. True, what had predominantly been a disease of women before the war became a disease of men in combat (Leed, 1981: 163).

It might seem bold to assert without the customary scientific rigour that there was little difference in the forms of diagnosis and treatment of one type of patient and another, but it is an irrefutable fact that in imitation of the women interned at Paris's famous Salpêtrière hospital directed by Jean-Martín Charcot, many soldiers diagnosed with shell shock or physiological and physical pathologies were subjected to confinement for the purposes of observation and analysis using the new viewing and recording devices as clinical study cases, and were thus turned into catalogues of abnormal bodies.

ORIGINS OF THE MEDICAL FILM

In the early years of the Novecento Italiano, the scientific landscape out of which psychiatry and neurology began to grow was still associated with the positivist criminology of Cesare Lombroso, and it was not until 1907 that the Italian Neurological Society was founded in Rome. One year later, *The New York Times* published the article "Moving Pictures of Clinics; Prof. Negro Successfully Uses Them in Demonstrating Nervous Diseases", announcing the first film documentary that *demonstrated* neurological disorders: *La neuropatologia* (1908), a collection of 24 neuropsychiatric cases (Parkinson's, ocular palsy, hysteria, and other pathologies suffered by patients at the Cottolengo in Turin), a film of two hours in length made by the neurologist Camillo Negro of the University of Turin, together with the cinematographer and *metteur en scéne* Roberto Omegna, who, as Francesco Paolo De Ceglia suggests in *From the Laboratory to the Factory, By Way of the Countryside: Fifty Years of Italian Scientific Cinema (1908-1958)*, would be one of the major figures in the development of Italian scientific cinema (De Ceglia, 2011: 949-967) and in the development of the Italian film industry thanks to his participation as a founding partner and director of the cinematographic division of the Ambrosio film company (Gianetto, Bertenelli, 2000: 240-249). Ambrosio himself had already made various films of a scientific nature, such as *Dottor Isnardi: amputazione*, also directed by Omegna (De Ceglia, 2011: 949-967). Meanwhile, Professor Negro would continue his scientific career working with neurological diseases, and during the First World War he dedicated his efforts to the study of shell shock, treating and filming clinical cases of wounded and traumatised soldiers admitted to the military hospital in Turin (Dagna; Gianetto, 2013: 117-120).

But rather than continuing along this chronological continuum in relation to my object of study, it is imperative at this point to turn back in time, following the line traced by Lisa Cartwright in *Screening The Body: Tracing Medicine's Visual Culture*, to identify the origins of the medical film according to the visual rhetorical devices – its mise en scène and its ideological implications – established by its pioneers, which leads us back to the chronophotography of Ettiene-Jules Marey and to the medical film genre that began with the films of the Lumière brothers, as "[t]he cinema's emergence cannot be properly conceived without acknowledging the fascination with visibility that marked the preceding decades of nineteenth-century Western science" (Cartwright, 1995: 7).

To understand the gaze and the device that sustains this visibility and records what is seen, we must also turn back to Michel Foucault, for whom the gaze is born when a body begins to be observed. The attentive eye makes the diagnosis: the gaze refers to seeing through the body to become an utterance and discourse. It also makes visible that which the illness conceals, signalling the tension between the two, transforming the symptom into a sign, establishing taxonomies and seeking economy in health. In the opening passages of *Le corps du cinéma*, Raymond Bellour has also reflected on this principle of normalising control, both in the clinic and in the psychiatric institution, in which the eye is transformed into a device according to the postulates of Foucault, and notes with no small degree of perplexity that "the clinical gaze has the paradoxical property of understanding a language in the moment when a spectacle is viewed" (Bellour, 2009: 25).

THE DEVICES THAT CAPTURED THE MOVEMENT SERVED NOT ONLY TO RECORD, DIAGNOSE AND CATEGORISE BASED ON GESTURES, POSTURES AND ATTITUDES, BUT ALSO TO "OFFER VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF THERAPEUTIC EFFECTS, THEREBY EXHIBITING A MEDICINE CAPABLE OF PERFORMING 'MIRACLES'"

There can be no doubt that the sight of the first moving bodies resulting from the experiments of Marey and his successor Georges Demenÿ at the physiological station in the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris was quite a spectacle. But in addition to offering the wondrous landscape of skin in motion, in the scientific field Marey would make a decisive contribution to the establishment of the parameters for how and why to film a body: the concept and the reading of the moving body, its kinetics, through the use of the new visual recording instruments form the core of his thinking and his research not only paved the way for the subsequent films of the Lumières, but would also contribute to the vision of the human body as an "energy producer" (Gleyse, 2012: 750-765) and, consequently, to understanding it as merely one more element in the assembly line and industrial productivity of Taylorism (Gleyse, Bui-Xuân, Pigeassou, 1999: 168-185), the hegemonic economic ideology during the Second Industrial Revolution.

And beyond the conception of the body as being at the service of *techne* (rationalisation of energy, of movement and its use according to the scientific paradigms of physical performance), the use of the moving picture as a tool for codifying the body reveals a twofold function in the images recorded. First of all, the moving picture very clearly sequences the physical transformations that a body undergoes while instituting the concept of the episodic against the idea of the complete and finite found in the still image; and, secondly, it suggests the possibility of intervening at some point in the sequence and in the action if there is a dysfunction in the body being filmed. The devices that captured movement (the chronophotographic apparatus, the nine- and twelve-lens cameras invented by Albert Londe, the photographer at Salpêtrière Hospital, or the film camera itself) thus served not only to record, diagnose and categorise based on gestures, postures and attitudes, but also to "offer visible evidence of therapeutic effects, thereby exhibiting a medicine capable of performing 'miracles'" (Panese, 2009: 40-66).

The images produced by Charcot and Londe in the Salpêtrière asylum, or in the films of successors like George Marinesco (considered the first scientist to make a medical film, in 1902) and also of the neurologist Vincenzo Neri, serve this dual function of diagnosis of the sick body (amputation, trauma, hysteria, disability) and of recording the process whereby the body is treat-

ed to be cured and/or returned to the standards of *normalcy*; similarly, we also find the dialectic of the medical procedure in the films by French surgeon Eugène Louis Doyen, to whom we owe the introduction of the camera for the first time into the operating room, and in the collaborative work between Camillo Negro and Roberto Omegna. With respect to the insistent presence of the rhetoric of the procedure in these types of films, and more specifically in the case of Doyen, Thierry Lefebvre notes their "choreographic" quality (Lefebvre, 1995: 72), both for their strictly delimited mise en scène and for the instructive function which these films presuppose. In the case of Doyen, the surgeon and his team would review the material filmed to identify erroneous surgical procedures and ineffective processes, but at the same time these types of films were conceived for circulation in European academic spheres of the era and only on very few occasions would they be shown in commercial theatres. Thus, before turning to Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi's analytical camera, the far from trivial question raised by this overview, paraphrasing a point raised by Pasi Väliaho in *Biopolitcs of Gesture: Cinema and the Neurological Body*, is: to what extent do films, and more specifically medical films as devices for control and normalisation of the body and the mind as Giorgio Agamben describes it, attempt to "capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions or discourses of living beings"? (Vähili, 2014: 112).

ARCHIVE AGAINST TECHNOLOGY: GIANIKIAN AND RICCI-LUCCI'S ANALYTICAL CAMERA

The bulk of Italian cinema filmed during the First World War was in the hands of private companies, as noted by Alessandro Faccioli in *Film/Cinema Italy* for the online publication "Encyclopedia:1914-1918", and Luca Comerio, a pioneer of Italian cinema from Milan, was without doubt the most important name among the non-military cinematographers of the war. Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi have studied and reformulated Comerio's cinematic legacy in most of their documentary films using found footage, including *Oh! Uomo*, both as archives and in view of the consideration of Comerio as a symbolic figure of Italy's imperial, proto-Fascist past. However, the huge influence of the legacy of medical and neurological films of Comerio's contemporaries mentioned earlier in this article has hardly been addressed in critical approaches to this film. This is a question that requires the relevant research, as it is precisely the images of the bodies of wounded and traumatised soldiers shown in *Oh! Uomo* that foster this metaphorical analogy that has been identified on different occasions by numerous critics in considerations of the methodology employed by the filmmakers with the material they work on, the use of the *analytical camera*, and the task of reconstruction of the image and of history. It is important to note once again that the reconstruction of the bodies of the soldiers that Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi show us bears symbolic similarities to their reconstruction of the archives, and is suggestive of a situation in which the wounded body and the damaged frame exchange gazes, as skin and celluloid recovered for posterity through the *analytical camera*.

Because the *analytical camera* operates in and as a tool – which at the same time is an operating room – and an instrument for cutting and suturing, a device that evokes the machinery and optical toys of the 19th century, through which the bodies appearing in the archive footage being worked on are viewed and manipulated. The intentions of their discourse, however, are completely different from those declared by the people responsible for the images being appropriated. In the early 1980s, in response to a need to view a large number of Pathé Baby 9.5mm silent film reels that the filmmakers had discovered

and had not been able to transfer to another format, Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi came up with the idea of the *analytical camera*, a device whose operation they explained in an article published in 1995 in the journal *Trafic*, titled "Notre camera analytique". On a technical level, it comprises two mechanisms: a vertical rail through which the archive celluloid is run manually (so as to avoid further deterioration of the already deteriorated original material) and illuminated by photographic lamps that vary the temperature of the negative; and a second, horizontal rail, holding another camera similar to Marey's chronophotographic device, which records the original frame and is used to operate on them, re-framing them, slowing them down or colouring them. But the analytical camera is not just a machine; it also constitutes a very strict ethical framework with respect to what is filmed with it and includes extensive work of research, cataloguing and intervention which Ricci-Lucchi has compared to "vivisection" (MacDonald, 2000: 24). At the heart of this labour of re-configuration and re-production of the image is a minimum work unit and a minimum conceptual unit: the frame, a "kind of tense body in the new text" (Farinotti 2009: 59), which Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi subject to extensive temporal variations, turning a moving picture into an almost still image, slowing it down, stopping it and allowing the frame to recover the time it lost in its previous condition and removing it from the "hysteria of velocity" (Gianikian, Ricci-Lucchi, 2000: 53)[2].

In the absence of exact knowledge of the origins of the images of the soldiers featured in *Il corpi dei soldati*, I will explore the process whereby Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi intervene in these images of men who have suffered physical mutilation and shell shock, based on the ethical premise of giving them back their status as individuals and humans, given the questioning of scientific positivism and the machine-man metaphor by subsequent generations. "When the bodies of mutilated soldiers were presented on screen, they were generally presented as being restorable by modern surgery and orthopaedics engineering," comments Andrea Meneghelli in *Suffering in and after the War* for the online publication "European Film and the First World War: A Virtual Exhibition by European Film Archives"; but in *Oh! Uomo*, these images of physical and mental reconstruction are stripped of the propagandistic rhetoric through deconstruction, re-editing, slowing down and re-filming in light of revisionist historiography on the Great War. The *modus operandi* is explained by Lumley in his monograph on the filmmakers, based on a talk given in April of 2009 at the Harvard Film Archive following a screening of *Oh! Uomo*:

> footage showing men suffering from shellshock and then of men who have undergone facial surgery has been re-filmed. In the original films, only the surgeons and doctors would have been named and the inter-titles would have outlined their achievements. The soldiers, who featured in the film, went unidentified, unless by military insignia. In *Oh! Uomo*, the medical professionals and the inter-titles are cut out, and the images are re-framed. The speed of the film is slowed down through step printing. Spectators find themselves, as a result, faced with men who look out from the screen at them for a length of time that requires us to acknowledge their presence and remember their faces (Lumley, 2011: 89).

Remembering faces with agitated gazes: archive images of detritus and wounds from the devastation resulting from the faith of the Novecento in the military and in scientific and technological progress. These are images, removed from the context of medical treatment and study for which they were filmed to be re-contextualised in a context of cinephilia, that shake us and point out to us, like a hallucinatory nightmare, the true power of reality. Even today, as we celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the Great War, these frames of bleeding

bodies and wild spasms disturb our senses and project our legacy towards an uncertain future. In *Vida secreta de las sombras*, the critic Gonzalo de Lucas concludes that "cinema records the passage of time and leaves a wake of past experiences that call up spectres" (De Lucas, 2001: 19), and in *Oh! Uomo* it is the work of Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi and their analytical camera that call up the ghosts of the First World War and Europe's distressing past, who say to us: "We are lost in a deep night; I do not know where we are going. And you?"[3] ■

NOTES

1 The concept of the catalogue is the most common rhetorical device in the films of Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi. The first of their cinematic works to include this concept in its title is *Catalogo della scomposizione* (1975), a ten-minute film describing a photo album of landscapes and people in Central Europe. Similarly, their first found-footage film, *Karagoez- Catalogo 9,5* (1981) also alludes to the concept of the catalogue, which they have since returned to repeatedly ("archive", "diary" and "inventory" are other recurring words in the titles of their films). As noted above, the idea of the catalogue is also included in the subtitle the filmmakers gave to *Oh! Uomo*.

2 The slowing down of the image until it is almost a still-frame is a recurrent device in Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi's films. Its use acts as a statement of opposition to another of the avant-garde trends of the Novecento which they also firmly, although subtly, criticize: the Futurism of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and its fascination with technology, violent speed and war as extreme displays of the expressive potential of its aesthetic theories. It is also worth noting here that Marinetti glorified war as "the only hygiene of the world" in his Futurist Manifesto.

3 These are the last words in *Pays Barbare* (Yervant Gianikian, Angela Ricci-Lucchi, 2013), a kind of epilogue to the filmmakers' war trilogy that explores the rise of Fascism and the colonial wars during the Fascist regime of Benito Mussolini. The original Italian is: "Siamo immersi in una notte profonda, non sappiamo dove stiamo andando. E voi? ".

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OPERATING ON THE FRAME: INTERVENTIONS IN THE MEDICAL FILMS OF THE NOVECENTO AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN YERVANT GIANIKIAN AND ANGELA RICCI-LUCCHI'S *OH! UOMO!*

Abstract

Working with archive footage, in their film *Oh! Uomo*, which closes a trilogy on the First World War that also included *Prigionieri della guerra* (1995) and *Su tutte le vette e Pace* (1998), the Italian filmmakers Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi recover the legacy of medical and neurological films of the Novecento with the aim of exposing the devastating effects of the Great War and the social, scientific and technological ideologies that sustained it. This paper traces the origins of the genre and identifies the main scientists, doctors and filmmakers in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century, in order to reveal, on the one hand, the rhetoric of its *mise en scène* and, on the other, the discursive strategies adopted by Gianikian and Ricci-Lucchi in their analysis of this footage and their deconstruction of the discourse on which the archive images are based through the use of the device they call the *analytical camera*.

Key words

Film, Medical films; Documentary; Found Footage; Yervant Gianikian; Angela Ricci-Lucchi; World War I; Novecento.

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Article reference

Ruiz Rodríguez, Paula Arantzazu (2016). Operating on the Frame: Interventions in the Medical Films of the Novecento and the First World War in Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci-Lucchi's *Oh! Uomo! L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 81-92.

OPERAR EL FOTOGRAMA: INTERVENCIONES EN EL GÉNERO DEL CINE MÉDICO DEL NOVECENTO Y LA PRIMERA GUERRA MUNDIAL EN *OH! UOMO*, DE YERVANT GIANIKIAN Y ANGELA RICCI-LUCCHI

Resumen

Mediante un trabajo con el archivo, en su película *Oh! Uomo* los cineastas italianos Yervant Gianikian y Angela Ricci-Lucchi, con la que clausuran la trilogía dedicada a la Primera Guerra Mundial, formada también por *Prigionieri della guerra* (1995) y *Su tutte le vette é pace* (1998), recuperan el legado del cine médico y del cine neurológico del Novecento con el objetivo de mostrar los efectos devastadores de la Gran Guerra y de las ideologías sociales, científicas y tecnológicas que la auspiciaron. En la propuesta presentamos una genealogía del género y señalamos a los principales científicos, doctores y cineastas de la Europa de principio del siglo XX para desvelar, por una parte, la retórica de su puesta en escena y, por la otra, apuntar cuáles son las estrategias discursivas de Gianikian y Ricci-Lucchi a la hora de analizar esos trabajos y desarticular el discurso sobre el que se apoyan esas imágenes de archivo a través del uso del dispositivo de la *cámara analítica*.

Palabras clave

Cine; Cine médico; Documental; Found Footage; Yervant Gianikian; Angela Ricci-Lucchi; Primera Guerra Mundial; Novecento.

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Referencia de este artículo

Ruiz Rodríguez, Paula Arantzazu (2016). Operar el fotograma: intervenciones en el género del cine médico del Novecento y la Primera Guerra Mundial en Oh! Uomo, de Yervant Gianikian y Angela Ricci-Lucchi. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 81-92.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

AESTHETIC AND NARRATIVE USES OF THE TRENCH IN HOLLYWOOD FILMS FROM 1918 TO 1930

ALBERT ELDUQUE
ALAN SALVADÓ
TRANSLATED BY MARTIN BOYD

INTRODUCTION

In the discipline of military science, the trench, as noted by Carl von Clausewitz in his classic book *On War* (1832), is one of the material elements that should form part of any military strategy to lay siege to the enemy. The appearance of trenches thus fed a need to view the battlefield as a theatre of operations in which to trace lines in space for the dual purpose of protection and advance. However, von Clausewitz himself did not consider trench construction to be part of the art of war itself, but as a separate, older activity; according to von Clausewitz, the knowledge and abilities necessary for this task needed to be possessed beforehand by a skilled force, as in the case of the construction of barracks or the erection of tents in military camps. The fact that the trench could be understood either in strategic terms (the exterior view) or in terms of intervention in the territory (the interior view) signals its unique nature in the context of artistic depictions of the battlefield, or war landscapes.

Conceiving of the battlefield as a landscape means reflecting on how we perceive and give meaning to territory. Beyond the relationship between man and nature, the landscape of the battle represents a particular way of being and viewing the world. In this sense, if we understand the tradition of landscape painting in the West as a way of learning how to frame reality,[1] as suggested by landscape scholars Augustin Berque (1994: 5) and Jean-Marc Besse (2006: 146) or thinkers like Jean-Luc Nancy (2003: 114), the battlefield should also be understood as a laboratory for experimenting with the gaze. War landscapes constitute a field of perception that influences our way of representing the world, in the sense that Kenneth Clark describes in his classic *Landscape into Art* (1949), where the landscape went from being used as a symbol to being depicted as a pure impression: each of its

mutations conceals a different perception of the world. It is worth adding to this proposition that the *landscapisation* of the battlefield reinforces the quality of invention/representation inherent to landscape, described by Anne Cauquelin as a construction on pre-existing forms in *L'invention du paysage* (1989) and by Eugenio Turri as a theatre with actors and spectators in *Il paesaggio come teatro* (1998). In a key text on landscape photography, Santos Zunzunegui highlights this idea, pointing out that the landscape is not a phenomenon existing prior to its depiction, but the result of a series of operations and, therefore, a human construction (1994: 142-143). From this perspective, the landscape painter would have something in common with the military strategist: both share a need to organise and re-interpret space.

Based on these premises, the central purpose of this article is to analyse the use of the trench in film reconstructions of the First World War, particularly in depictions of its battlefields. To this end, we will begin by reviewing the changes in battle depictions resulting from the war, followed by an analysis of how these specific features are articulated in the image of the trench, both in terms of its compositional value and its narrative implications. The corpus of films we will refer to covers the period from 1918 to 1930, a time when the language of classical cinema was systematised and consolidated with the aid of its explorations of the image of the trench.

A NEW WAY OF VIEWING

In terms of the evolution of depictions of the battlefield, the First World War represented a paradigm shift. On the one hand, in the realm of painting the battle scene became subject to abstraction or crude representation, as suggested in the works of Otto Dix, who fought in the war: his drawings made on the front, which are practically Cubist (as if refusing to accept the horror of which he was a witness), take on a wildly Dantean quality in *La Guerre*, a series of etchings from the 1920s, in which the temporal distance emboldened the memory, resulting in a depiction of the horror[2] that placed it in a different cultural tradition: that of Goya's *Disasters of War* (1810-1815). There would be no more celebratory depictions of the battlefield, as the deadly force of war had reached previously unimaginable dimensions.[3]

It was in this context that photography and cinema acquired greater importance. The First World War was not the first to be documented by the new media, but it was the war in which they found their *raison d'être*, not only because of their widespread use (many soldiers took snapshots and motion picture cameras were able to film the battlefield *in situ*), but also, and especially, because of their close relationship with the machinery of war. A mechanised war needed a mechanised depiction. This is the view adopted in *Guerre et Cinéma* (1984) by Paul Virilio, who suggests that the battlefield and the war machinery associated with it are instruments of representation comparable to the painter's paintbrush and palette. Virilio highlights how war reveals, especially to filmmakers, the connection between military and film technology, as the former could be used as an influence both on avant-garde movements and on the evolution of the cinematic language of Hollywood, in its *voyeuristic* dimension of isolation and fragmentation of bodies (Virilio, 1984: 29).

Obviously, this would have a key influence on the depiction of the landscape. In several articles, Vicente J. Benet (2006, 2007) has explored how the battlefield of the First World War represented the passage from a totalising depiction of the war landscape to a fragmentary and dynamic formalisation of it; this is what he calls the shift from the theatre of operations, a scenographic model using a wide shot in which the battle was the unit of perception, to the mechanical view of

war, whose paradigmatic image is the identification between camera and machine gun in *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Lewis Milestone, 1930). Contrary to its predecessor, this view is heavily fragmented. It is no longer possible to have a unitary vision; rather, the gaze is forcibly broken up into multiple images that must be re-articulated. This is something that D. W. Griffith, who visited the battlefields in preparation for filming *Hearts of the World* (1918), had already foreseen: "At the best, it is only possible to film snatches of a battle, and these could not be pieced together to give the public a sufficiently comprehensive idea of what a battle is like" (Mould and Berg, 1984: 54). As was the case in the evolution of the landscape genre of Western painting, the move from one extreme to the other of the dialectic between distance and proximity (the unitary gaze and the fragmentary gaze, respectively) set the course for the transformation of the battlefield and, consequently, the mutations in our visual culture. The new technologies generated new viewing mechanisms and thus new landscapes; this is a theory that underpins the work of Marc Desportes in *Paysages du mouvement* (2007), and explains the influence of the mechanisation of the war on the vehicles used in the depiction of the battle landscape: aerial views or machine gun sights contribute to a chaotic view of the conflict.

However, Benet identifies a territory where these fragmentations of the gaze were re-articulated so as to restore order: classical Hollywood cinema. Based on a melodramatic matrix that pivots around the hero, and a scenographic model where alternation between the wide shot and the detail shot did not undermine a homogeneous totality, Hollywood war films progressively diluted these models to introduce visual fragmentation, in terms of forms and of the traumatic experience of the victim on the battlefield. Films like *Hearts of the World*, *The Big Parade* (King Vidor, 1925) and *Wings* (William A. Wellman, 1927) depict battles that introduce semi-documentary images, abstract shots of explosions and aerial perspectives, respectively, calling the traditional space into question, although ultimately they are controlled and given a scenic logic.

THE APPEARANCE OF THE TRENCH IN THE SO-CALLED ART OF WAR RATIONALISES THE BATTLE SPACE

Within this logic of the staging of chaos, Benet assigns considerable importance to the development of the soldier's point of view, which not only makes it possible to explore the visual experience of the battlefield, but also its traumatic subjectivity; in this way, a visual correlation is established with the 1920s novels that constructed the figure of the victim. The gaze of the young Paul Bäumer (Lew Ayres) when he sees the death of a French soldier in *All Quiet on the Western Front* is probably the paradigmatic case in this respect, as he lowers his eyes to see that a bomb has literally wiped out his adversary, leaving his hands on the barbed wire as the only trace. In this way, visual fragmentation, a dimension of a potentially chaotic and dehumanised form of representation, could recover the humanity of the scene with this technique of focalisation through editing. For Benet, this is the tension present in Milestone's film and in G. W. Pabst's *Westfront 1918* (Vier von der Infanterie, 1930): the fight between the human and the technological, between the face and the machine gun, on the battlefield. The cinematic technique of shot-reverse shot became the allegorical representation of this dialectic tension.

Considering this shift towards the (cinematographic) fragmentation of the battlefield and its subsequent re-ordering, the motif of the trench assumes an important role in two senses: the geometrisation of space, on the one hand,

and the staging of an exterior/interior landscape dialectic, on the other. What we seek to argue in this article is that the trench, the paradigmatic geography of the First World War, constitutes a space for identification of and reflection on these formal questions. Below we will explore each one in an effort to understand its importance in cinematic depictions of the battlefield.

THE LINE THAT CONTAINS AND GUIDES

In *Le paysage envisagé* (2009), Robert Ireland notes that the representation of the battlefield contains a dialectic between smooth and striated space. These two types of space are defined by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaux: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*; smooth space as vectorial or projective and striated space as metric. According to this logic, in the first case "space is occupied without being counted, and in the second case space is counted in order to be occupied" (1987: 362). The conception of smooth space is associated with depictions of the battlefield that Benet defines as classical depictions, where the totalising (or panoramic) gaze turns it into a space of transit and connection through which the chaotic confrontation between the two sides unfolds. Conversely, the presence of the trench inverts these terms to give preponderance to striated logic: its appearance in the so-called art of war rationalises the battle space; the original terrain is domesticated by lines that organise it, an organisation confirmed in aerial views that accentuate the geometrical and Cubist face of the landscape. And at the same time, the trenches block fluid circulation over the terrain, at both narrative and visual levels: here, the war and the view of the attack become a war and a view that are contained, paralysed. The soldiers remain in excavated lines and their advance is halted.

However, for the camera that films it, the trench also represents an excuse for mobility, because by virtue of its form, it also offers a line along which the eye and the camera can move. In the compositional logic of classical landscape painting, motifs like the river or the road act to focus the gaze of the spectator, ordering the different elements present in the picture while at the same time guiding the eye. In his study of painting through the analysis of detail, Daniel Arasse identifies the importance of these trajectories in landscape depictions: "Landscape painting is a privileged place for the use of that gaze that momentarily encompasses the surface of the picture on its voyage across it. The word 'voyage' partly explains this privilege: the voyage of the gaze across the painting reproduces the physical journey which the fictitious horizon in the depiction proposes to the spectator" (2008: 242).

The line of the trench would play just this role. In the middle of one of the battles in *What Price Glory* (1926), Raoul Walsh's adaptation for Fox of the autobiographical story that had also given rise to *The Big Parade*, the platoon, after taking another trench, which the soldiers all fall into together, receive the order from the captain (played by Victor McLaglen) to prepare the bayonets. So that everyone can hear him, the captain walks quickly through the trench, marching past the others and giving orders. The camera follows him from above in a fluid tracking shot that aligns the hole in the ground with the trajectory of the character, the camera and the spectator, underscoring the compositional value of the trench. In the context analysed here, this movement is situated half-way between the scenographic model and the mechanised and fragmented gaze, between the ordering of the space and the loss of the spectator, as although the camera marks a clear compositional line, with its mechanical tracking it transgresses the notion of the immobile, all-powerful eye that commanded the action in traditional painting. In any case, it represents the introduction of a rational logic within the battle, similar to the shift that Erwin

Panofsky took from Ernst Cassirer in his essay on perspective as a symbolic form: the shift from a psycho-physiological space to a mathematical space (1995: 11).

The alignment between the trench and the camera's movement is taken up and reinforced in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, in which Lewis Milestone uses numerous tracking shots like those in Walsh's film. However, one of these shots, repeated several times, stands out with a voice of its own: it is a shot in which the camera pans along the row of faces of soldiers who, poised with their guns in the trench, await the arrival of the enemy. The function is thus more descriptive than narrative, and the gaze of the young men, fixed on the enemy horizon (contrary to Walsh's film, where the heat of the battle has already begun and a relative degree of disorder reigns), outlines the narrative, historical and political meaning of the trench: a row of faces looking ahead, towards a conquest to be made. This is the logic of the front; a line, a border, the Western Front that gives the film its title, which is tracked by our mobile eye. It is an articulation between the singular (a single rectilinear movement) and the multiple (the line of faces) that is present in the very idea of patriotism (different individuals who serve a single idea under the same flag) and in the narrative structure of the film itself, which at times is profoundly choral, often using a series of close-ups of the soldiers to capture the diversity of their expressions; this is what we see when the soldiers, besieged by falling shells, wheeze one after another in a chain of anxiety. Thus, in the 1920s and early 1930s, a period of consolidation of the language of classical Hollywood cinema, the trench became a potential space for learning, a place in which the camera could experiment with possible ways of guiding the spectator's view of the action.

Finally, this compositional function is reinforced in cases where the mobility is not exterior, but interior. In *Shoulder Arms* (Charles Chaplin, 1918), made during the war, Charlie's wanderings through the trenches are accompanied by fluid tracking shots back and forth, following his figure and thus underlining the compositional logic of the trench. Chaplin takes a complex approach here, working not only with forward or backward mobility, but also with the action that mobility reveals at different depths: in one case, the smoke from a falling bomb obscures his silhouette; in another, an aerial attack draws progressively closer from the background, with bombs falling closer and closer to the soldier in the foreground. The trench line thus sketches out a suspense story, in the same way that the boat in *The Immigrant* (1917) articulates the relationships and conflicts between characters. Chaplin, before Walsh or Milestone, had understood that the trench line could be used cinematically as the axis of the narrative.

THE INTERIOR/EXTERIOR DIALECTIC ON THE BATTLEFIELD

The traditional interior/exterior landscape dialectic described by Carl Gustav Carus in his celebrated letters on landscape painting (2002: 137) represents an effort to strike a balance between the totality of the landscape and the relationships between its different parts. In the specific case of battle landscapes, this dialectic would be expressed through the depth of field, as noted by Vicente J. Benet (2007: 42) in his exploration of battle depictions in the history of European painting. Benet points out that from the time of the Thirty Years War, classical depictions reflected an increasing interest in anecdotes and moments of *pathos* occurring in the foreground of the paintings in the form of victims or corpses, while in the distance we see the whole battle. In this respect, the trench would constitute an orographic representation of this idea: a personal story is placed in the foreground, while the battle of history is left to the background.

CONCEIVED OF AS A SPACE OF CLOSURE AND MELODRAMATIC INTIMACY, THE INTERIOR SPACE OF THE TRENCH ALSO BECOMES A DEVICE FOR OBSERVATION OF THE EXTERIOR LANDSCAPE THAT BREAKS WITH THE TRADITIONAL PARAMETERS OF COMPOSITIONAL BALANCE OF THE CLASSICAL SPACE

The separation implicit in the idea of the trench constitutes a boundary between the dimensions of story and history. While the war unfolds outside it, the trench, the hole in the ground, is the interior space that allows the recruits to live in a community, sharing a can of beef (*The Big Parade*) or watching over a corpse (*All Quiet on the Western Front*). It also operates as an interior space, where they can recognise and feel pity for the dead enemy; the Other is treated as an equal and is given a last puff on a cigarette or a final drink, as we see in *The Big Parade* and *All Quiet on the Western Front*. This intimate isolation of the trench is, in reality, an updating of earlier techniques, like those used by Griffith to depict the American Civil War in *The Birth of a Nation* (1915): in the midst of the conflict, the youngest children of the two families die in an embrace in the relative shelter of a tree on the edges of the battlefield; fleeing the Atlanta fire, the Camerons' second son dies, tended by an African American man, beside a fence that isolates them from the frenzy outside.

However, the most interesting cases from a cinematic perspective are those where the interior and the exterior are combined in specific actions that operate on the threshold between them. In other words, the cases where the boundary of the trench, which sets up a safe interior space in opposition against a threatening and abstract exterior space, becomes the main device for the *mise-en-scène*. The characters often play with what can and cannot be seen to confirm that they are clear of danger: in *The Big Parade*, for example, Slim (Karl Dane) first sticks two empty helmets above the trench to ensure that the enemy is not poised to open fire; for a moment, the spectator is fooled, as if it were a game of hide-and-seek. This playful dimension is accentuated in *Shoulder Arms* by Chaplin, who discerned the potential offered by the threshold and vested that potential with a comic dimension. Assuming a steady stream of crossfire directly above the trench, he unhesitatingly raises a bottle for the bullets to smash open the top, or a cigarette for the passing shots to light it, so that he can drink and smoke. After this, he plays once again with the imaginative potential of the space outside the trench when he grabs his gun and starts shooting through a crack: we cannot see whether his shots hit their mark, but what we can see is a blackboard where he keeps score of his hits, and from which he takes a point off when an enemy shot hits him. This almost *Lubitschean* version of the sniper experience confirms the creation of an invisible and abstract exterior space, left to the spectator's imagination, in opposition against the visible and safe interior space of the trench.

The trench can also mark the threshold through which to evoke a moment of humanity in a magnificent, almost unreal detail, even though it may have fatal results: in *The Big Parade*, James (John Gilbert) peeks out above the trench to pick a flower, while at the end of *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Paul (Lew Ayres) reaches outside to catch a butterfly, and it costs him his life. This outcome takes the underlying theme of the threshold to the extreme: while in Vidor's film we are shown the empty stretch of land outside the trench, in Milestone's film a detail shot reduces the space almost to nothing, showing only a butterfly, into which, from opposing trenches, enters Paul's hand and the gun that will take him down. In the end, the battlefield is stripped of its

spatial dimension and turned into a single hand that falls lifelessly to the ground. The fragmentation of the gaze and the abstract space, concepts intimately linked to the trench, are thus re-read to show the *pathos* of the battle, concentrated in the hand of the protagonist. This extreme case, like all the others mentioned above, presents us with a key idea: that the boundary constituted by the trench is established as a basic structure for reflection on the human dimension in the war.

Conceived of as a space of closure and melodramatic intimacy, the interior space of the trench also becomes a device for observation of the exterior landscape that breaks with the traditional parameters of compositional balance of the classical space. From the edge of the trench, or from inside it, the perception of the world changes: the very low horizon that can be seen in a ground-level view when the soldier peeks out expands the image of the sky and limits the section occupied by the land; this perspective is taken to its extreme in low-angle shots, where the sky is omnipresent. In this respect, the views of the battlefield from inside the trench that we see in several scenes of *All Quiet on the Western Front* resemble the series of photographs, baptised with the name *Equivalents*, taken by Alfred Stieglitz from 1923 to 1932. The weightlessness and abstraction of Stieglitz's skyward gaze are implicit in the mechanism of observation from the trench, especially when the soldier Paul, hiding in a hole in the graveyard, looks to the sky to glimpse soldiers leaping over the hole. Their bodies appear alone against an enveloping sky, as if they were flying. Through the editing, the dialogue between opening and closing is articulated in Paul's heaviness and the weightlessness of the soldiers leaping over him. The result is an exclusively cinematic landscape; a formal transformation that corresponds to what Stieglitz's clouds represented in the visual culture of the era: a shift from the photographic pictorialism of the nineteenth century towards the modern photography of the twentieth century, in terms of the loss of the formal referent.[4] Thus, in Lewis Milestone's film, the trench marks a tilting point away from the classical depiction of war and towards its abstraction through the edit; a metamorphosis that would institutionalise and systematise (cinematic) depictions of war from the time of the birth of sound films.

CONCLUSIONS

The First World War marked a turning point both in the nature of military conflicts and in the way they were depicted: the vast panoramas suffered a crisis and gave way to striated spaces in which soldiers, in constant danger, were limited to a furtive, fragmentary view. And just as machine guns replaced the traditional weapons, paving the way for technological warfare, painting yielded its place to the mechanical view offered by the photograph and its fleeting snapshots of the battle. In this context, the depiction of the landscape would undergo a profound transformation. At the same time, as the war raged on, D. W. Griffith, with his film *The Birth of a Nation*, consolidated the language of classical cinema, based equally on a mechanical apparatus and on fragmentation, both in its creation (deconstruction in frames) and its articulation (deconstruction in shots).

In the 1910s, both the war and the screen thus offered new ways of approaching reality through technology: the first with automatic weapons and the second with the film camera. These were two realities that developed in parallel, coinciding slightly when Griffith visited the battlefields, as they both operated in the same direction: with technology, the world could be viewed in a different way. In the years that followed, from 1918 to 1930, Hollywood would work on this new way of viewing in films like *Hearts of the World*, *Shoulder Arms*, *The Big Parade*, *What Price Glory*, and *All Quiet on the Western Front*.

At that time, when filmmakers turned to the battlefield, and particularly to the trenches, they found fertile terrain to work in. In the films of Chaplin, Vidor or Milestone, the trench is not a merely decorative or iconic element, but an element with full meaning on the visual and narrative levels. It may seem hard to believe, that the trench, a space of containment and potential abstraction of the battlefield, an element that geometrises the landscape, could have contradicted the clarity of representation advocated in Hollywood. And yet, it did not distort films, as it did in the paintings of Otto Dix; rather, it took on a fully structuring role.

On the one hand, the trench became a fundamental compositional element that facilitated the mobility of the camera, providing a guiding line. On the other, its organisation established dynamics between interior and exterior spaces of the battlefield that define the situations experienced by the characters, who are sheltered in their own melodramatic stories while outside the clamour of war rages on. In both cases, as guiding line and as interior space in opposition to the space outside it, the trench constitutes a device for what Tom Gunning (1986) called narrative integration: beyond the spectacular appearance of images, of violent fragmentation or the virtuosity of the filmmakers, the figure of the trench organises the elements of the battlefield in a way that vests them with visual, emotional and historical coherence.

Thus, through this line, the space of the battlefield, and specifically the trench, became a laboratory for ways of viewing, a testing ground for the techniques of classical cinema: as the resources of its language were established, the tracking shot, scene composition and the interior/exterior dialectic were put into practice in fictitious war landscapes. ■

NOTES

1 Jean-Marc Besse notes: "The historical invention of the landscape has been placed in relation with the invention of the picture in painting, but also with the invention of the 'window': the landscape would be the world as seen through a window, whether that window is only a part of the picture or blending together with the picture itself as a whole. The landscape would be a framed view and, in any case, an artistic invention. [...] Landscape painting has taught us to look at the world, but it has taught us to see it precisely as a landscape picture" (2006: 148). For a study of the holistic dimension of the landscape, see *Tutto è paesaggio*, by Lucien Kroll (1999).

2 Rochlitz, Rainer (2003). Otto Dix entre vérisme et allégorie (p. 31); Lorenz, Ulrike (2003). Otto Dix dessinateur (pp. 56-57). Both articles can be found in the anthology edited by Christian Derouet (2003).

3 In relation to an exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Christian Derouet notes that "military painting, which had known times of greatness in the official Salons to compensate for the defeat of 1870 (think, for example, of Detaille and Neuville), glories of the Musée du Luxembourg, disappeared without a fight in 1918. The intolerable nature of the suffering endured and the widespread grief distanced this heroism from the painter's brush, from the work of commemoration whose most beautiful song in France is still the cycle of the *Nymphéas* by Claude Monet. [...] The avant-garde, the amateurs, separated art and commemoration. In France, from that time on, war could no longer be considered beautiful" (Derouet, 2003: 22). Original quote in French: "*la peinture militaire, que avait connu des heures de bravoure dans les salons officiels français pour compenser la défaite de 1870, pensez à Detaille et à Neuville, gloires du musée du Luxembourg, disparaît sans coup férir en 1918. L'intolérable des souffrances endurées, du deuil généralisé écarte cet héroïsme du pinceau, du travail de mémoire dont le plus beau chant reste en France le cycle des Nymphéas de Claude Monet. [...] L'avant-garde, les amateurs, séparent art et commémoration. En France, de la guerre, il ne peut être désormais question dans le beau.*"

4 For more information on Alfred Stieglitz's contribution, with his *Equivalents* (1923-32), to the visual culture of the twentieth-century landscape see Philippe Dubois, *Le regard vertical ou: les transformations du paysage* (1999).

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AESTHETIC AND NARRATIVE USES OF THE TRENCH IN THE HOLLYWOOD FILMS FROM 1918 TO 1930

Abstract

Throughout the history of painting, landscape depiction has been considered a laboratory of the human gaze on the world. The First World War, with the new view of the battlefield that it introduced, profoundly altered the classical forms of depiction, replacing them with a mechanised and fragmented view closely associated with the development of photography and cinema. As Vicente J. Benet has suggested, Hollywood echoed these profound changes in their film versions of the war, although it organised them according to a narrative logic. In this paper we seek to analyse how the battlefield and, particularly, the trench, fit within this logic of the history of landscape painting, using several Hollywood films from the period from 1918 to 1930 as case studies. We consider the trench, first of all, as a compositional element, which can structure the image and orient the mobility of the camera. Secondly, we analyse the implications of the trench for the creation of a dialogue between its interior space, as a stage for melodrama, and the exterior space where the battle rages and danger lurks. In both cases, we propose that the trench as a form and as a narrative element plays a role in structuring and integrating the logic of the narrative.

Key words

Landscape; First World War; Hollywood.

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USOS ESTÉTICOS Y NARRATIVOS DE LA TRINCHERA EN EL CINE DE HOLLYWOOD DE 1918 A 1930

Resumen

A lo largo de la historia de la pintura, la representación del paisaje se ha considerado un laboratorio de la mirada humana sobre el mundo. La Primera Guerra Mundial, con el nuevo acercamiento que propuso al campo de batalla, alteró profundamente las formas clásicas de representación y las sustituyó por una visión mecanizada y fragmentaria estrechamente vinculada con el desarrollo de la fotografía y el cine. Como ha analizado Vicente J. Benet, el cine de Hollywood se hizo eco de estos profundos cambios en sus versiones fílmicas de la contienda, aunque las organizó según una lógica narrativa. En este texto queremos estudiar cómo el campo de batalla y, particularmente, la trinchera, se insertan en esta lógica de la historia de la pintura de paisaje a partir de algunas películas de Hollywood del periodo 1918-1930. La abordamos, en primer lugar, como valor compositivo, que puede estructurar la imagen y orientar la movilidad de la cámara. En segundo lugar, estudiamos las implicaciones que tiene para la creación de un diálogo entre su interior, escenario melodramático, y el exterior, espacio de batalla y peligro. En ambos casos, concluimos que la trinchera como forma y como elemento narrativo juega un papel estructurador e integrador con la lógica del relato.

Palabras clave

Paisaje; Primera Guerra Mundial; Hollywood.

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Article reference

Elduque, Albert, Salvadó, Alan (2016). Aesthetic and Narrative Uses of the Trench in the Hollywood Films from 1918 to 1930. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 93-103.

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Referencia de este artículo

Elduque, Albert, Salvadó, Alan (2016). Usos estéticos y narrativos de la trinchera en el cine de Hollywood de 1918 a 1930. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 93-103.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

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DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH. ON CENSORSHIP OF WORLD WAR I INFORMATIVE AND PROPAGANDA FILMS IN SPAIN (1914-1918)

DANIEL SÁNCHEZ SALAS
TRANSLATED BY TIMOTHY BARNARD

1. WINDS OF WAR

Throughout the First World War, Spain maintained official neutrality. Nevertheless, both traditional and more recent histories emphasise that life in Spain between 1914 and 1918 was completely determined by what was known at the time as the "European War". Spanish film in those years was not exempt from this situation. Of the many examples of this, I will focus on the censorship of newsreels and propaganda films imposed by the political authorities in a context of powerful tensions between the neutrality maintained by successive governments of the day and a society profoundly affected and divided by the war.

The Spanish government declared the country's neutrality at the very outset of the conflict, on 30 July 1914. From that moment, however, Spanish society began the process of aligning either with the Allies or with the faction of Central European empires led by Germany. Overall, restraint was the predominant note during the first months of the war.[1] In 1915, however, there began a gradual confrontation between those who supported the Allies and those who supported the German side, a confrontation which grew and became tied up with other conflicts, such as industrial and agricultural workers' protests because of the unstable political and economic situation. Over four years, various governments came and went, each with a different attitude towards the two sides of the conflict and each hampered in its actions by powerful swings in the economy. It was no accident that Spain, because of the war, became a refuge for European capital, witnessing the creation of large fortunes thanks to new business opportunities, both licit and illicit, at the same time as it suffered from dramatic shortages of basic necessities.

The Spanish film milieu of the day responded to this state of affairs, beginning with distribution and exhibition.[2] As is well known, the First World

War was decisive for the shift in power relations amongst the Western film powers. Hollywood succeeded in establishing itself as the main supplier of films in Europe after the logical decline in European production, particularly in France and Italy. In Spain, this process took the form of a serious distribution problem, because of both the drop in production, especially French and Italian, and the communication difficulties. This problem gave rise to others, such as the pirating of film prints, to which was added the problem of censorship.

The practice of censorship, specifically of informative and propaganda films, was not an exceptional circumstance limited to Spain, as it was a constant found in every country involved in some way in the war, beginning with the principal combatants: France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Russia until 1917 and, beginning that same year, the United States. Discussion of this topic in international publications on the war often connects it to the growth of the newsreel as a film genre and to the increased use of propaganda as a political tool. This is the case in the first studies of note to address the question, written in the 1970s and 80s,[3] and in our own day, when we find a greater number of studies centred on the relationship between the first global war and the cinema.[4]

From these sources there emerges a panorama of a historical period marked by the proliferation of informative content on movie screens, and especially of the aforementioned newsreel format, which arose in 1908 and, when the war began, was in the midst of a phase of gradual internal organisation: "programs became structured, news reports became more diverse, and coverage became broader" (Paz Rebollo and Montero Díaz, 2002: 20). The years of global conflict were precisely the time when film information gradually, and especially after 1917, began to co-exist with – when it did not merge with – propaganda. This was a tool used by both sides of the conflict, both abroad and at home, and its importance became so great that governments ended up establishing official services and institutions charged with carrying it out. The two sides in the conflict competed with each other in the organisation of their propaganda systems, and the cinema, beginning with supposedly informative content, was a key cog in the machine, operating in tandem with others such as photography, political literature and public spaces such as live entertainment venues, which were used for patriotic spectacles and speeches.

THE PRACTICE OF CENSORSHIP, SPECIFICALLY OF INFORMATIVE AND PROPAGANDA FILMS, WAS NOT AN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE LIMITED TO SPAIN, AS IT WAS A CONSTANT FOUND IN EVERY COUNTRY INVOLVED IN SOME WAY IN THE WAR

In this context, the enforcement of official censorship fluctuated in intensity according to the country, circumstance and period. In broad outlines, in the case of film production there was a total ban on filming on the battlefront, but not so much on the rearguard. With respect to exhibition, censorship was justified by the authorities responsible for implementing it by the need to avoid demoralising or aggrieving the population with the images shown in newsreels – above all "anything that might be painful for mothers", in the condescending expression of a French police prefect of the day (Brunetta, 1985: 46) – but also to prevent the spreading of political ideas contrary to national interests, or showing information that could end up being used by the enemy.

Where does the case of neutral Spain fit into this international panorama? From the outset, it should be noted that the vast majority of newsreels, by now well-established on Spanish film programs, were French, made in particular by the companies Pathé and Gaumont. At the time,

it would appear that Spanish manufacturers had made very few attempts to produce newsreels, with the exception of *Revista Español* and *Revista Estudio*, made by the Barcelona-based company Estudio Films in 1915 (Montero Díaz, Paz and Sánchez Aranda, 2001: 186; Pitarch Fernández, 2014: 186; González López, 1987). But newsreels were not the only films of a supposedly informative nature that were exhibited; there were also films of varying lengths from the combatant countries, shown independently. These were more clearly a part of the war propaganda machinery. Films of this sort, originating from both sides of the war, were shown on Spanish screens of the day, becoming yet another space for the ideological combat taking place in the country (Albes, 1995: 77-101; Montero Díaz, Paz and Sánchez Aranda, 2001: 184-88; Ponce, 2014: 292-321).

CENSORSHIP ACTIVITY CONSISTED NOT ONLY IN BANNING, BUT ALSO IN AUTHORISING AND, OCCASIONALLY, IN IMPOSING FINES IF THE FILM WAS DEEMED OFFENSIVE TOWARDS ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE OPPOSING CAMPS

But how was censorship organised? How was it carried out on the kinds of films under discussion here? Answering these questions is the main objective of this article. To do so, I will focus on Spanish press sources between 1914 and 1918 in order to delve deeper into a specific source which already began to be examined in work which is an obligatory reference point for my own: Montero Díaz, Paz and Sánchez Aranda (2001: 184-88), in which press sources are combined with book and film sources; and Albes (1995: 77-101), whose few references to press sources are part of the diplomatic documentation employed in a magnificent exploration of German propaganda films shown in Spain during the war. My use of the press is, however, conditioned by two historical circumstances: on the one hand, the censorship of Spanish periodicals during the four years of war, which was constant and at times fierce and was denounced by journalists of all stripes on numerous occasions; and on the other hand, the exploitation of these periodicals as instruments of propaganda, paid for by foreign money tied to one or the other of the two sides, which subsidised many very distinguished Spanish publications so that they would serve their cause (González Calleja, Aubert, 2014: 225-65, Ponce, 2014: 298-312). Both circumstances may result in a partiality in the news reports found that is not always easy to identify and work with.

When I began this research I posited two main hypotheses. The first: influenced by the example of Spanish film censorship under Franco on the one hand and on the other by censorship during the First World War, principally in countries such as France, Great Britain and the United States, I thought of Spanish censorship from 1914 to 1918 as a structure organised on a national scale. The second: given that neutrality was maintained through to the end of the conflict, I thought it likely that official censorship had contributed to this, succeeding at a minimum in controlling the exhibition of informative or propagandistic films from both sides. As my research advanced, both hypotheses were modified in different ways.

2. CENSOR IN ORDER NOT TO FIGHT

Neither the academic literature on the subject nor my own examination of press sources leave any doubt that, from the beginning of the war, media censorship was one of the main instruments the Spanish government used to maintain its official policy of neutrality. With respect to film exhibition, in the beginning the government applied the earliest regulations on film censorship in Spain, which had come into effect on 27 November 1912. The initial goal of these regulations had been to protect children from the supposed dangers posed

by cinema, requiring that before public screening every film be presented to the authorities in every province, or to the town council of every municipality, for authorisation or prohibition. Following various modifications in following years, the regulations focused on the provincial government as the censorship agency. This institution was behind the majority of decisions regarding the prohibition or authorisation of informative films on the war that are known to us to date.

It may thus appear that official censorship was organised from the outset on two levels, with legislation at the national level and implementation at the provincial level, and more precisely in the hands of the provincial governors. In practice, however, the latter ended up with more room to manoeuvre. At times the procedure for reviewing a film was not exactly an internal matter for the provincial government. We can see this in the case of the film *Los nueve países en guerra* (The Nine Countries at War), about the "nine countries which [were at that moment] in dispute, their customs and military and naval power" (*La Vanguardia*, 22/01/1915: 6). The film's owner, Lorenzo S. De Besa, rather than submitting it to the legally established bureaucratic procedure of going through a commission within the provincial government devoted specifically to censorship, organised a private screening for the provincial governor of Barcelona, accompanied by other authorities such as Sultan Muley Hafid, in the same cinema, the Salón Cataluña, in which the film opened to the public four days later, on 25 January 1915 (*La Vanguardia*, 26/01/1915: 16). This private screening was promptly reported by the press the following day and served as publicity for the film on the eve of its release. At the same time, there was no lack of governors who went beyond ruling case by case on requests for authorisation to screen a film, issuing orders to prohibit the exhibition of all films on the war. These include the governors of Tarrasa and San Sebastián in September 1914 (*La Vanguardia*, 01/09/1914: 9 and 30/09/1914: 12, respectively), Madrid in March 1915 – in this case, concerning the exhibition of German films (Albes, 1995: 81) – and Barcelona in April 1916 (*La Correspondencia de España*, 19/04/1916).

As can be seen, these events encompass the first two years of the war. This manner of proceeding on the part of certain governors appears to indicate an emphatic reaction to the orders of the central authorities, particularly in the earliest cases mentioned, soon after the war began. Perhaps it was a way of preventing a possible struggle with exhibitors. But did such a struggle exist? For whereas some sources state that during 1915-16 "the war was practically absent from Spanish movie screens" (Montero Díaz, Paz and Sánchez Aranda, 2001: 185-86), others argue that the screening of newsreels did not halt during those years (Pitarch Fernández, 2014), when activists for the German cause themselves deemed that the presence of French film propaganda was "extremely strong" compared to that of Germany (Albes, 1995: 83-84). Perhaps this is not a contradiction if we consider an approach to film exhibition that will be discussed below: a two-fold strategy, the first involving the commercial circuit and the second consisting in charity events and invited audiences (which sometimes involved trying to work with conventional screening venues and at other times did not). While the former strategy was clearly subject to censorship in order to exhibit a film publicly, the latter had a more ambiguous status given the supposedly private nature of the events, which in principle situated them outside the purview of the censorship regulations. It was thus a situation in which commercial movie theatres in Spain, despite not having ceased to screen newsreels during the war – particularly French, with Pathé and Gaumont in the lead, but also German films from the Messter company – had barely informed its patrons about the war in these early years of the combat because of a two-fold censorship process: Spanish censorship and that exercised from the beginning, when the film

was made, by the governments of the combatant nations. As a result, information on the war included in newsreels was, between 1914 and 1916, neither abundant nor as close to the front as one might suppose. At the same time, however, the circuit made up of charity events had informed its audiences, or better yet had become a profuse channel for exhibiting not so much newsreels as propaganda films of varying lengths. Both sides used this kind of exhibition in a number of Spanish cities (Albes, 1995: 77-101 and Montero Díaz, Paz and Sánchez Aranda, 2001: 184-188).

The Spanish government introduced new censorship legislation in December 1916. And this was not a chance moment. On the international front, it was now assumed by the combatant nations that the war would be much longer than originally expected. This brought about the realisation that both the armies and the civilian populations of the countries involved would have to bolster their morale to endure the burden of the war. With respect to cinema, this gave rise to greater cooperation between "civil and military authorities and the various information media" (Montero Díaz, Paz and Sánchez Aranda, 2001: 186) with the goal of stimulating war propaganda. In Spain, this increase in the flow of film propaganda came at a time when tensions between the pro-Allied and pro-German camps began to reach a critical point, even reaching into the government.[6] And on 6 December 1916, a Royal Order was passed requiring authorities in the Ministry of the Interior to inform the public prosecutor of any unauthorised exhibition of "cinematographic films or [...] paintings and drawings" related to the war which could offend "the sovereigns of friendly countries or their armies" (R.O., quoted in Folgar de la Calle, 1987: 127).

In reality, this edict was a re-enactment of another law dating from 1914, at the outset of the war, which referred specifically to the press and political speeches. Two years later, in view of the fact that the law was not being duly enforced, it was not only re-enacted but "henceforth became applicable to the case" of film exhibition (R.O., quoted in Folgar de la Calle, 1987: 127). This manner of legislating on the cinema by taking advantage of a law that was originally concerned with other fields suggests that the government was improvising with respect to a sector for which there may not have been adequate oversight, perhaps because of the amount of pressure being exerted to exhibit material about the war. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that the very existence of the Royal Order presumed as a fact that unauthorised films were being exhibited, given that this was the infraction the law sought to prosecute. In other words, prior censorship was not being imposed with the necessary regularity, either because the distributors and exhibitors themselves tried to avoid it or because the provincial authorities and the Ministry of the Interior itself lacked the will or the means to carry out the task. Doubt about the effectiveness of the Royal Order is cast by the fact that in early 1917 the government of Spain, at that time headed by the pro-Allied Count of Romanones, prohibited the exhibition of any kind of war-related film in the country (ALBES, 1995: 91).

3. CENSORSHIP ACTIVITY

Although prior censorship was not always applied, it was clearly present. Commercial film exhibitors and distributors were furtively leading the rise of professional associations that took place in Spain throughout the 1910s. The Asociación de Fabricantes, Representantes y Alquiladores de Películas, the Cámara Española de la Cinematografía, the Unión General Cinematográfica and the Mutua de Defensa Cinematográfica Española represented the first attempts at organising film professionals including, significantly, those working in distribution. From the beginning these groups shared a profound concern for the effects of prior censorship, such as "[the delay] in opening new film pro-

grams [...] additional cost for the impresario and a constant waste of time with decrees and meetings to discuss the various points and the topics to be censored" (Ribas Velázquez, 2010: 409). Their concern was so great that the Mutua de Defensa Cinematográfica Española, formed by distributors in 1915, took up censorship as one of the principal problems to address from its founding. Indeed, in 1919, just after the war was over, the Mutua adopted new statutes stipulating that the association would itself take on the task of carrying out the prior censorship of films (Anonymous, 1919: 29).

IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE TO SEE HOW THE AUTHORITIES' DISCOMFORT WITH THE EXHIBITION OF INFORMATIVE AND PROPAGANDA MATERIALS GREW ALONGSIDE THE INCREASING DIFFICULTY THEY EXPERIENCED IN ENFORCING THE OFFICIAL SPANISH POSITION OF NEUTRALITY

Beyond the principle of the authority of the Ministry of the Interior, the jurisdiction that each provincial government had over censorship only increased the possibility of greater arbitrariness or, at a minimum, partiality. It was a constant complaint of propagandists for each camp that the censors had not allowed the exhibition of its informative films while authorising those of the opposite camp (Albes, 1995: 81-82). News reports in the press of the day relate the repressive activities of the censorship bodies against venues which screened films showing events in the war. These reports, as mentioned above in the introduction to this article, were determined by a battle between two combatants: press censorship and the use made by both camps of numerous periodicals, to which they gave money in exchange for serving their propagandistic interests. The news reports I have come across are thus what remains of this intersection of factors. It would therefore appear likely that what was published does not reflect the true extent of the repression. In this way, the diplomatic documentation shows that the volume of informative and propaganda films exhibited, both Allied and German (Albes, 1995), was clearly higher than what the press reports consulted would lead one to believe.

With respect to the commercial exhibition circuit, most of the news reports on censorship I have uncovered to date are concentrated in the period between the autumn of 1914 and the autumn of 1916. Unfortunately, however, in few cases does the news report in question inform us of the title of the film or films so affected. Censorship activity consisted not only in banning, but also in authorising and, occasionally, in imposing fines if the film was deemed offensive towards one or the other of the opposing camps. The fact that the news reports are concentrated in the period indicated appears to stem from the fact that the legislation of December 1916 and the prohibition of early 1917 produced their desired coercive effect, whether with respect to exhibitors' intentions of programming informative and propaganda films on the war or the publication of reports in the press about repressive activities on the part of the authorities, or both. This possible coercion, if it did exist, was limited to conventional commercial screenings. For, as was already discussed in the previous section of this article and as we will see again in the following section, outside this mode of exhibition the flow of films and the censor's activity – or, better yet, inactivity – operated differently. The period prior to late 1916 thus seems to be one of greater absence of clarity, characterised by a tug of war between the political authorities and the film exhibition sector. In this sense, it was reported that in a few places in Spain, such as Tarrasa and San Sebastián mentioned above and others such as Tarragona (*La Vanguardia*, 11/10/1914: 7), the outbreak of war in Europe produced the immediate reaction of banning films referring to

the war in the interests of maintaining the country's neutrality. In the first two towns the ban was a general one affecting all films making reference to the war.

Nevertheless, the news reports hint at the fact that almost immediately there began a process whereby general prohibition was shelved in favour of censoring or authorising individual films. While authorisation was logically given by the censors prior to screening (*El Siglo Futuro*, 19/09/1914: n.p.), there were times when prohibition occurred after a film had been scheduled or even exhibited. This occurred in Barcelona, for example, with the film *Invasión de Serbia por los ejércitos de los Imperios centrales* in April 1916 (*La Correspondencia de España*, 19/04/1916: n.p.), and again in San Sebastián, where in July of that year the governor fined a cinema for showing "films vexatious to Germans" (*La Vanguardia*, 08/07/1916: 13-14). Cases such as these confirm that prior censorship, at least during the initial years of the war, was not always observed within the commercial circuit, as noted above. To this we might add that the very exercise of prior censorship made it more arbitrary, in that it was carried out independently by each province. Thus, whereas the governor of Barcelona began to authorise certain informative films on the war in mid-September 1914, the governor of Tarragon maintained a total ban on them until well into October. And when the latter lifted this prohibition, he did not use his own judgement to decide which to authorise but rather accepted "those which had been released in Barcelona and in which our neutrality is not called into question" (*La Vanguardia*, 11/10/1914: 7). There were thus both cases that reflected a disparity in the criteria for the decisions and other cases where one censor influenced another.

It is also possible to see how the authorities' discomfort with the exhibition of informative and propaganda materials grew alongside the increasing difficulty they experienced in enforcing the official Spanish position of neutrality. To return to the case of *Los nueve países en guerra*, for example, this film was shown in early 1915 in Barcelona (*La Vanguardia*, 22/01/1915: 9) and Zaragoza (*El Heraldo de Aragón*, 11/02/1915: n.p.), accompanied by an explanatory lecture by its owner, Lorenzo S. De Besa. A few months later, the company which had scheduled it in Gijón asked the public to abstain from "demonstrating any sort of opinion during the screening" (*El Noroeste*, 07/05/1915: n.p.). This means not only that the lecture had disappeared, but that there was even an attempt to prevent any kind of verbal utterance with respect to the films. This gradual disappearance of any inkling of orality during the screening demonstrates the eagerness on the part of distributors to avoid any possibility of interpreting informative films beyond the images themselves, such as the risk of exchanges between viewers, giving rise to clashes in the venue itself between the pro-Allied and pro-German camps, which was not at all infrequent during those years (Sánchez Salas, 2016: in press).

These years were also when statements began to appear in the advertisements for screenings with informative films, in response both to censorship and to a public that was becoming increasingly sensitive to the conflict, to the effect that these films presented "nothing that could be a reason for the supporters of one nation or the other to engage in protests to the contrary" (*Diario de Cádiz*, 13/02/1915: n.p., quoted in Garofano, 1986: 275). Calls of this type were part of a prevailing atmosphere in which the obstacles put in place by the authorities through censorship were clearly felt both by viewers of the film and by professionals working in the industry. Thus, in June 1915 a group representing Catalan distributors explained to the governor of Barcelona their distressing situation with respect to the problems censorship caused for them in their work (*El Heraldo de Madrid*, 16/06/1915: n.p.),[7] while nearly a year later, in April 1916, the popular commentator Ariel in *La Vanguardia* deplored the fact that the authorities

were overdoing it "in their zeal to achieve complete observance of neutrality and [...] suppress films about the war which, when all is said and done, are a valuable source of information and the best propaganda against the war itself" (*La Vanguardia*, 20/04/1916: 10). Two months later, the specialised publication *Arte y cinematografía* complained that prior censorship "kills the energies of the [film] industry, the [film] business and [film] exhibition" (nos. 134-5, 15-30/06/1916: 5-6, quoted in Folgar de la Calle, 1987: 130).

4. CENSORSHIP INACTIVITY

In light of this situation, we might interpret a kind of film program mentioned earlier as a defence mechanism against censorship: the private charity screening, often intended to raise funds for one side or the other and featuring informative or propaganda films more than newsreels properly speaking. This screening model was organised in one of two ways: by collaborating or not with the commercial circuit. In the former case, most often the promoters of the event reached an agreement with a commercial venue to screen films for one or more days which would be attended by an invited audience, although there was also the possibility of attendance by the general public. Whether invited or not, the audience normally paid for their ticket; the funds went towards the costs of acquiring the film and renting the exhibition venue, with the rest going to a charity connected to the organisers, such as the French or German Red Cross.

The data known to us to date indicate that there was a greater number of these screenings between 1914 and 1916 than later, as was the case with commercial exhibition. There was a very clear period when pro-German films were shown, between September and December 1916, in towns such as San Sebastián, Bilbao, Santander, Gijón, Oviedo, Pamplona, Zaragoza, Alicante, Valencia, Granada and Seville (Albes, 1995: 84-91). These kinds of screenings were less frequent after this period, although there were a few, especially during 1918, such as one held in La Coruña as a benefit for the German Red Cross (*La Voz de Galicia*, 30/04/1918, quoted in Folgar de la Calle, 1987: 57). There is also a noticeable upturn in these screenings with pro-Allied films, in particular from France, although there were occasionally others, such as Italian. Although such screenings can be identified as early as 1914, for example in Barcelona (*El Cine*, 05/12/1914: 10), there was a decisive period in which they occurred, in 1916, with screenings in Alicante (*El Luchador*, 12/04/1916, quoted in Narváez Torregrosa, 2000: 87) and Santander (*La Vanguardia*, 12/10/1916: 8), and also in the summer of that same year in places such as Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Cádiz and Jérez de la Frontera (Albes, 1995: 87-88).

From a contemporary perspective, this kind of screening brought together diverse interests under the status of "charity". On the one hand, obviously, there was the goal of raising money through the hoped-for support of a part of the public which, in Spain, wore its support for one side or the other on its sleeve. At the same time, and even over and above this goal, there was the goal of propagandising which, as we have seen, was prohibited by censorship in the public sphere. There thus existed an exhibition framework involving a screening which was, at least officially, private, given that it functioned by invitation, despite taking place at a commercial venue. This kind of exhibition brought together audiences with a "charitable" intent and served as a pretext to ensure that the censorship authorities would not prohibit these screenings or issue fines in the event they had already taken place. The inherent ambiguity of this model, which could not completely efface its resemblance to commercial and thus public exhibition, appears to have been transmitted to censorship activities, which, depending on the time and place, prohibited such events or not. In Zaragoza, for example,

in November and December 1916, the governor refused to authorise certain "charity" screenings of two feature-length German propaganda films, while at the same time authorising screenings of British and French materials. The sense of ambiguity and, it is fair to say, arbitrariness increases if we consider that the governor also prohibited the screening of two French films on American artillery manoeuvres in the Thermaic Gulf, and that when, in a clear expression of the tug of war that went on between the political authorities and the pressure groups on each side of the conflict, the promoters of the German film screenings decided to partly defy the prohibition by screening films that dealt directly with the war, they were not penalised after the fact by the governor in any way (Albes, 1995: 87).

Let us now look at the other way of organising "charity" screenings; these too were intended for an invited audience, away from the specific venues that had been established for conventional film exhibition. Within this model, informative films on the war often accompanied a lecture; these were unique events that were not repeated. Such screenings, apart from the question of the validity of their charitable status, include some presented as scientific, academic or religious events, always with a humanitarian dimension. Most of the data we possess at present on this kind of screening are from 1917 or later. The reason for this may lie in the prohibition against exhibiting any kind of war-related films in commercial venues, which had been in place since the beginning of that year. An exhibition model such as this one would appear to elude such prohibition by emphasising its humanitarian and above all non-commercial quality, as the screenings often occurred under the aegis of associations which answered to private interests – in the present case those represented by foreign embassies, pressure groups and sympathisers with one of the two sides in the war.

This may account for the screening in Barcelona in early 1917 of no fewer than six feature-length German propaganda films on the role of its navy in the war, backed by the German Fleet Association Abroad; or for the long-term propaganda activities of the "Cercle Interallié de Propagande Cinématographique", popularly known as the French Circle, which was formed in Madrid in late 1916 and rented the Teatro Benavente to show informative films daily promoting its cause (Albes, 1995: 92). The French Circle screened material not only from France, but also from other allied countries. In late 1916, for example, it screened the famous British film *The Battle of the Somme* (G. Malins and J. McDowell, 1916). There was also a highly representative example of the exhibition model under discussion here on 26 December 1916, when as part of the Circle's activities a lecture by a Mr Vercesi, an Italian journalist but also a priest, accompanied the screenings. Vercesi, "before the distinguished and select audience in the hall" (*La Época*, 27/12/1916: n.p.), justified the entrance of Italy into the war against the Central European empires alongside the "Sacred Union" made up of England, France, Belgium and Serbia. He went on to praise the military priests and their self-sacrificing work at the front, claiming that he did not know which he should esteem more, their patriotism or their loyalty to the Pope. Two informative films on the extremely difficult work of the Italian army on the front high in the mountains followed the talk. From the dates and description given by the newspaper reporter, it is possible that one of the films was the well-known *La guerra d'Italia a 3000 metri sull Ademello*, shot in 1916 by Luca Comerio (Brunetta, 1985: 47).

In the *La Época* article one senses the eagerness to demonstrate the importance of both religious values and the Allied propaganda message. The article thus expresses in words the event's dual intent in that it was not prohibited. We also find this dual intent in other cases in which, instead of the religious pretext there was a scientific one, the most common in the examples encountered. This is seen, for example, in the inauguration, also in

Madrid, of the screenings of the "Cinematógrafo Científico" on 6 December 1917. Before a hall full of medical authorities, various films on this theme were shown, including *Las operaciones del doctor Doyen* (*sic*), about the eminent French surgeon, enormously popular in the day because of his early work in film (Lefevre, 1994: 100-14; Baptista, 2005: 42-50). Amidst these films, however, a film was shown which the journalist did not justify as part of the evening's scientific program: *París después de tres años de guerra* (*sic*), which "also received a lot of interest" (*ABC*, 07/12/1917: 16). In this and other cases, this was the method used to try to conceal from the censor the propagandistic intention of the event.

SUCH SCREENINGS TOOK PLACE IN SOCIAL SURROUNDINGS THAT WERE MORE RESPECTABLE AND THUS POLITICALLY MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN COMMERCIAL EXHIBITION

Within this exhibition model there were also screenings without any pretext and with a clear propagandistic intent. The screenings at the British embassy in Madrid are one example. In late 1916 and March 1917 the ambassador hosted figures from the international diplomatic milieu and the aristocracy and showed them films on the war (*El Imparcial*, 16/12/1916: n.p.; *La Acción*, 29/03/1917: 5). In order to elude censorship, cases such as these rested entirely on the event's supposedly private nature. Significantly, in reporting on one of these sessions at which a film on the Battle of the Ancre was screened, the journalist pointed out the private nature of the event and remarked that he found the prohibition against screening films about the war in public inexplicable (*La Época*, 10/03/1917: n.p.). Given the date, the prohibition referred to is clearly that issued by the Ministry of the Interior in early 1917.

Nevertheless, with respect to this form of exhibition we cannot overlook another factor which accounts for the censor's inaction, especially if we consider that, as we have seen, numerous screenings of this sort continued to take place after the critical date of early 1917, when the authorities stepped up their censorial zeal. Such screenings took place in social surroundings that were more respectable and thus politically more influential than commercial exhibition. Among the people behind the screenings and in the audience were ambassadors, diplomats, renowned medical doctors, priests and, as in other examples not mentioned here, university professors (*La Vanguardia*, 20/04/1915: 12). All were participants in events often cloaked in the prestige of a lecturer, at times a guest speaker from abroad, such as the priest Vercesi, who spoke of the dramatic consequences of the war in his country, after or during which informative or propaganda films were shown. It is likely that the social class of those involved in these screenings was another reason for the censor's inhibitions with respect to this kind of screening, given that their influence over the political authorities – and even at times their being politically powerful themselves – was greater than that found in the commercial circuit.

5. THE FLU ON THE BATTLEFIELD: CONCLUSIONS

To be fair, the Spanish public's final great obstacle to seeing informative and propaganda films on the First World War, whatever their stripe, was not censorship, but rather the flu. The influenza known internationally as "Spanish flu" broke out at the end of the world war and spread wildly because of it. In September and October 1918, film exhibition venues were deserted because of fear of the pandemic, which killed tens of millions of people around the world and some 200,000 in Spain alone. When film exhibition returned to normal, the international political situation had

changed, giving rise to parallel changes in the concerns of Spanish censorship, which did not disappear but now no longer had to safeguard the country's official neutrality.

At this point, we can conclude that censorship, in an attempt to enforce compliance with the country's official neutrality, had great influence on the exhibition in Spain of informative and propaganda film materials on the war. But its actions were arbitrary with respect to their criteria and application at given times and in given places and situations. The panorama that takes shape begins with understanding that, contrary to my initial conception of the censorship system, it was a structure which, although its regulations came from a national institution (the Ministry of the Interior), its application was primarily the work of provincial governments. These, in turn, operated within a framework in which observance of the established channel co-existed with other less orthodox means, such as screening films in situations outside the norm or prohibiting or authorising films on the war in general and not on a case-by-case basis.

This way of operating developed in the course of a stream of film screenings which went beyond the image provided by the press of the day. On the one hand was the interest of distributors, exhibitors and the public in screening information about the war, but on the other was the pressure exerted by groups of sympathisers or people directly involved in the cause of one side or the other, through activities such as subsidising periodicals or the screening of propaganda films, which occurred more frequently than one might suppose. Given this situation, however, can it be said that film censorship contributed to maintaining the country's official neutrality, as was suggested above in the introduction to this article? The recurring complaints by both sides to the effect that the authorities were more permissive with respect to screenings of informative films by the other side might suggest an affirmative answer to this question. But it is clear that is difficult to state this with certainty given the context, in which the split between pro-Allied and pro-German positions gradually became wider, affecting both film audiences and the country's power structures at every level. This suggests that certain censors did not exercise their duties in an impartial manner. It is likely that the rhythm with which film censorship regulations were devised and applied throughout the war was a reflection of internal processes arising from the pressure noted above and from changes in the flow of informative and propaganda films in the struggle to get them on Spanish movie screens. But we must also take into account the effect of changes on the international scene, such as the growing collaboration between the military and film producers as the conflict dragged on and propaganda became more important as a tool for maintaining morale at home and for gaining supporters abroad. The increase in the number of films and in the attempts to get them on movie theatre programs may have led to the general ban passed by the Spanish government in early 1917.

In any event, there would appear to be a double standard in the country's censorship policies with respect to the different social settings in which informative and propaganda films on the war were screened: censorship was more restrictive in commercial cinemas, which were open to anyone buying a ticket and becoming a part of the anonymous and indiscriminate masses who went to the movies; and less restrictive in the case of the exhibition model usually involving supposedly private screenings intended for the most part to raise money for charities. Censorship was only occasionally present in the case of events of this sort, which took place at venues usually devoted to commercial screenings, although admission was by invitation only and the funds raised were donated to the Red Cross or to associations dedicated to the assistance of civilians or prisoners. It does not appear, however, that censorship was present when the event was organised by associations support-

ed by socially respectable groups at venues which were often not traditionally used for presenting films. In these cases the screening, although there was no lack of events which made no attempt to conceal the group's propagandistic intention, was almost always justified with charitable, scientific, scholarly and, in general, humanitarian motives. From the organisers to the invited guests, the audiences for these screenings came from the most respected sectors of society and those closest to the political authorities, and as such potentially more influential over those authorities.

To conclude, the degree to which censorship was applied between 1914 and 1918 clearly demonstrates how the political authorities had to view the cinema as a means of communication with a level of social penetration which, unlike the past, made its control necessary, in the same way it had been doing with older media such as the printed press. In this way, surveillance and the threat of sanction against informative and propaganda film screenings about the war gave to film exhibition the quality of being a new battleground as part of Spain's particular form of political, economic, social and cultural participation in the First World War. ■

NOTES

* This article was written under the aegis of the research project *La construcción del imaginario bélico en las actualidades de la Primera Guerra Mundial (1914-1918)*, funded by Spain's Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad, ref. HAR 2012-34854.

** For their help in preparing this text I must thank Rosa Cardona (Filmoteca de Cataluña), Xabier Meilán (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona), María Luisa Ortega Gálvez (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid), José Luis Rodríguez Jiménez (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos), Encarnación Rus (Filmoteca Española) and Bernardo Sánchez (Universidad de La Rioja).

1 On the situation of Spain in general during the First World War, see Romero Salvadó (2002). On more specific questions, see the following studies, published recently on the occasion of the centenary of the beginning of the First World War and relevant to the preparation of the present article: Fuentes Codera (2014) and González Calleja y Aubert (2014). See also García Sanz (2014).

2 . For an overview of film distribution and exhibition in Spain in the 1910s, see González López (1987) and Lahoz Rodrigo (2010). For a more specific view of the exhibition of newsreels in Cataluña during those years see Pitarch Fernández (2014: 181-92); on film distribution in Spain during the First World War see Alonso García (2010: 131-45) and Ribas Velázquez (2010: 408-14).

3 Notable among the earliest publications are Huret (1984) on the situation in France; the classic study by Fielding (1972) – an expanded edition was published in 2006 – and the first volume in the monumental series by Culbert (1990), on the United States; Robertson (1985), a very detailed study of film censorship from 1896 to 1950, and Reeves (1986) for the situation in Britain. Among the volumes published in the past twenty-five years, see the anthology edited by Dibbets and Hogenkamp (1995), especially the contributions on the situation in Germany: 171-78 and 188-97.

4 In the case of the United States, the monographs by Midkiff Debauche (1997) and Castellan, Van Dopperen, Graham (2014) are worthy of mention. While the former paints a very complete and integrated picture of official censorship from 1914 to 1918 and of war propaganda, in particular from 1917, the latter provides very valuable information on the role of censorship with respect to the American filmmakers who travelled to European countries at war. In addition, Hammond (2006) is notable for his integration of censorship into the process which led to the creation of a popular film culture worthy of note in Britain during the war. Special mention is due to Paddock (2014) for completely integrating the relationship between film and film censorship and the propaganda strategies developed during the war by the various countries discussed in the volume. See also the book by Paz and Montero (2002) in which, especially on pages 20 to 64, the authors take up the con-

fluence of newsreels, censorship and propaganda in their summary of the transformation during the war of what they call "informative cinema".

5 On early legislation concerning film censorship in Spain, see González Ballesteros (1981: 109-14.) The information in this book is rounded out by that found in Folgar de la Calle (1987: 121-27). See also Vallés Copeiro (1999: 7-8).

6 This is also something that happened from the beginning of the war. In any event there was constant conflict at the time between the very pro-Allied prime minister, the Count of Romanones, and influential pro-German sectors of society, the press, his own cabinet and Alfonso XIII himself. In September 1916, for example, the Count of Romanones prohibited King Alfonso XIII from attending the funeral of the Austrian monarch Franz Josef and to use the occasion to attempt to mediate between the two sides in the war (Romero Salvadó, 2002: 225).

7 Given the date, it is likely that this was a committee of the recently established Mutua de Defensa de la Cinematográfica Española. See Ribas Velázquez (2010: 409).

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DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH. ON CENSORSHIP OF WORLD WAR I INFORMATIVE AND PROPAGANDA FILMS IN SPAIN (1914-1918)

Abstract

Although Spain officially adopted a neutral position during World War I, life in the country from 1914 to 1918 was totally conditioned by the development of what was known at the time as the "European War". Films were no exception, particularly in the case of state censorship of informative and propaganda films about the war. Repressive actions in this area reveal strong tensions between successive neutral governments, on one side, and a society deeply divided between sympathisers of the Entente and Central Powers, on the other. How was censorship organized? What kinds of restrictions were imposed on informative materials? These questions are explored in this article.

Key words

Spain 1914-1918; World War I; Censorship; Informative films; Propaganda films; Film exhibition.

Author

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Article reference

Sánchez-Salas, Daniel (2016). Discipline and Punish. On Censorship of World War I Informative and Propaganda Films in Spain (1914-1918). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 105-120.

VIGILAR Y CASTIGAR. LA CENSURA EN ESPAÑA DE LA EXHIBICIÓN DE FILMS INFORMATIVOS Y DE PROPAGANDA SOBRE LA PRIMERA GUERRA MUNDIAL (1914-1918)

Resumen

Durante la Primera Guerra Mundial, España mantuvo la postura oficial de neutralidad. Sin embargo, la vida del país entre 1914 y 1918 estuvo totalmente condicionada por el desarrollo de la entonces llamada «guerra europea». El cine no se escapó de esta situación. En particular, llaman la atención los datos que nos hablan de la censura aplicada a la exhibición de las películas informativas y de propaganda sobre el conflicto bélico por parte del poder político. Su acción represiva en este terreno compone un cuadro que muestra las fuertes tensiones generadas por la colisión entre la postura neutral mantenida por los sucesivos gobiernos de la época y el estado de una sociedad profundamente dividida entre el apoyo al bando aliado o al alemán. Pero ¿cómo se organizó esa censura? ¿En qué consistió su acción sobre los materiales informativos? Estas preguntas guiarán el artículo.

Palabras clave

España 1914-1918; Primera Guerra Mundial; censura; películas informativas; películas de propaganda; exhibición cinematográfica.

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Referencia de este artículo

Sánchez-Salas, Daniel (2016). Vigilar y castigar. La censura en España de la exhibición de films informativos y de propaganda sobre la Primera Guerra Mundial (1914-1918). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 105-120.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) DL V-5340-2003 WEB www.revistaatalante.com MAIL info@revistaatalante.com

DIALOGUE

SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE EFG 1914 PROJECT

Interview with

JUAN IGNACIO LAHOZ RODRIGO

Chief Curator,
CulturArts-IVAC

SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE EFG 1914 PROJECT

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SANTIAGO BARRACHINA ASENSIO

After two years and with considerable effort and coordination on the part of various institutions, the European Union's EFG1914 Project (http://project.efg1914.eu/) culminated in February 2014 with the online exhibition of footage related to the First World War preserved in film archives across Europe. The project involved the compilation and digitisation of more than 700 hours of films that can now be found in a huge online inventory, available to anybody wishing to view them. The catalogue includes films of all kinds: fiction, documentaries, newsreels, etc., taken from more than twenty archives from different countries, as well as files in other formats, such as photographs and posters. The importance of a project like this one lies not only in the obvious need to promote the preservation and dissemination of this sort of material, but also in reminding us, on the centenary of one of the most infamous and horrific moments in the history of our continent, that perhaps the only way that historical memory can continue to exist is through collective effort.

The film archives of Spain's Filmoteca de CulturArts-IVAC was one of the participating institutions in the project (http://ivac.gva.es/efg1914/), under the direction of its chief curator, Juan Ignacio Lahoz. In this interview, Lahoz discusses some of the details of the project, and talks about the activities that it involved, highlighting the originality and importance of the footage contributed by Spain and reflecting on the results and possibilities arising from participation in a project like this.

How did the EFG1914 Project come about? What are its main objectives and how is this project linked to IVAC?

The project came to us through an invitation in early 2011 from the Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE), coordinated by the Deutsches Filminstitut. In the beginning the idea was just proposed to find out which institutions would be interested in participating. Taking advantage of the first centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, the basic objective was the digitisation and online dissemination – also linked to the Europeana initiative – of all preserved First World War footage, including films produced during the period, films referring to the conflict, and even fiction films made at that time, even if they had nothing to do with the war. The intention is to reflect how the context conditioned film production and consumption, as well as the boost that the war gave – or failed to give – to film production. Obviously, an important aspect is the use of cinema as an information and propaganda tool.

We did not have footage about the First World War, but we did have significant Spanish productions from that time, and that was IVAC's main contribution to the project. Once all the information about what each institution could contribute was compiled, a project and budget were submitted to the European Commission, which was the body that provided the grant to finance the project between 2012 and 2014.

For many years, Filmoteca has organized and participated in different conferences and seminars related to technologies used in film archives and issues associated with cataloguing. How does the EFG1914 Project affect the task of recovering, preserving and cataloguing films and materials and the use of digital technologies in film archives?

It represents a very important boost to the work dynamics, not only for our Filmoteca, but for

Figure 1. Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo during the course of this interview

film archives in general. The idea that underpins the whole project is that, after so many years of talking about digitisation and the incorporation of digital technologies into the archives, for the first time we have a large-scale project in which we are all digitising our films. Since everything is going to be on a shared platform, certain unified methods needed to be adopted. We also needed to use the same kind of digital files in order to disseminate the films and to create a single cataloguing system so that the information can be exchanged with Europeana and so that it is easy to find online. All this has helped to shape and promote the development of other programmes that have been implemented, many of which have also been funded by the European Union.

This has an impact not only on digitising the images but also on cataloguing and online accessibility. Basically it was a question of defining what we could call 'best practices', which simply means having shared standards and work patterns, what in digital environments is known as a shared workflow for the whole project. Within this dynamic we worked on methods for scanning and management of the digital images we generated, and, in parallel, the development of the cataloguing standards we had to use to provide our information to the Europeana environment. There was a pre-existing website linked to Europeana (Euro-

Figure 2. *Sanz y el secreto de su arte* (Maximiliano Thous y Francisco Sanz, 1918)

pean Film Gateway), which is where all the work we have done can be found.

Regarding the question of the dissemination of these films, do you believe that the EFG1914 Project serves to give visibility to the work of film archives, not only Filmoteca Valenciana, but all of the participating entities? After all, it is work that is not widely known and does not receive much public attention.

I believe so. It is very useful in terms of giving society access to such a valuable heritage. Moreover, the results have been spectacular in terms of the number of films digitised, the hours of footage accessible to the whole world on the website, and significant effort was also made to promote the project itself, to publicise what we were doing. We organised press conferences and tried to keep the media informed every step of the way. For example, a meeting of the participants in the project was held in Valencia, with two sessions presenting some of the films that would soon be available online. And once the project was completed, Filmoteca de CulturArts and Filmoteca Española designed a film series with two objectives: on the one hand, to show the films exactly as they were originally made, with digital projections in theatres in order to reclaim the notion of cinema as a collective spectacle and to encourage debate about what these images represent; and on the other hand, bearing in mind that the issue of the First World War has had much less significance in Spain than it has had in the countries that took part in the conflict, we sought to increase the intensity and reinforce the presence and the impact of this whole project in our own theatres. This film series has been on screens for more than a year in Spain. It has been offered to all the country's film libraries, to cultural entities, to universities, etc. In fact, it has been shown in various places and it has been relatively successful, as much as the screening of silent films can be in any film library.

In terms of the material itself, there is a lot of digitised film footage, as well as other types of materials, like images, but all the films from this period (which covers the First World War, and films made just before and after it) form part of an era from which a very high proportion of film footage has been lost – as high as 80% or 90% in the case of Spain. Why do you think so much footage has been lost? In general terms, what measures have film archives like Filmoteca Valenciana established to address this situation and recover material that has ultimately been found, which is a lot (although only a small proportion of the whole)?

The main problem for the preservation of our film heritage from this period basically relates to the physical and chemical properties of the medium itself. Until the 1950s, films were made of nitrocellulose, a material that is highly flammable and prone to decomposition, and this chemical degradation has resulted in the loss of many films over the medium or long term. To preserve them they need to be kept under controlled conditions of humidity, temperature and ventilation that will prevent such chemical degradation, as well as reducing the risk of fire.

Film archives began to be established in the 1930s, precisely in reaction to the carelessness with which producers (who were the holders of the rights to the films) handled them once they were no longer commercially exploitable. The attitude was focused entirely on profitability, and the films were practically forgotten and their physical and chemical components were recycled. From the 1920s, there was a growing appreciation of cinema as an art form, and this awareness led to initiatives aimed at the preservation of this cultural heritage. So this was also the time when the idea of cinema as cultural heritage first emerged.

In terms of cultural policy, cinema is recognised as cultural heritage and therefore the State and its public institutions have the obligation to preserve this heritage, with public funds in 95% of cases, while at the same time respecting the intellectual property and commercial rights to the films, which belong to their producers, directors, etc. In practice it is necessary to have suitable facilities for this preservation. The films need to be restored in order to prevent their deterioration and disappearance, and so they can be viewed just as they were in their day. These are key points related to handling the footage that any film archive has to keep in mind.

It is also necessary to have restoration strategies in place. This restoration involves trying to find as much footage as possible that we were unaware of or that we do not yet have preserved in the film archives. To this end, we need to develop strategic campaigns to get in touch with potential film owners, whether they are private owners, producers or distributors – basically, everybody involved in film use and exploitation in the industry – who might have copies or negatives of films that we might be interested in.

At the same time, we need to facilitate access to these films; in other words, we have to preserve them so that they can continue to be seen. As public institutions, we have an obligation to make these films known to the public. Currently, this is the most visible aspect of everything that we are doing, because digital media has come to our aid by greatly enhancing and facilitating such access.

This is where the question of respect for rights comes in. We cannot make every film instantly available on the internet because that would be giving public access to material whose rights belong to their owners. However, we need to offer these materials in conditions that allow rapid access to them. Nowadays it is easier to make video copies or to create an intranet. In short, there are a number of ways to better channel public access.

All of this was unimaginable twenty years ago. The only way we had to exhibit the archive's collection was by organising screenings at Filmoteca's theatre, or by inviting people interested to come to the archive to watch the films on a Moviola. There was some use of video, but it was not as flexible as information technology is today. For example, we can now send a very low quality file online via email to a previously authorised user who needs to watch it occasionally. In the past this was much more complicated, much slower, and, as a result, much less material was made available.

Let's talk now about the EFG1914 catalogue, which has also had its continuity in online film series, screenings in various theatres, etc.

In general terms, in the catalogue we can find documentaries, propaganda films and fiction films, we can see the development of the war, its effects, daily life, etc. What effect does this catalogue have in relation to what society had been able to see in films on the First World War, generally recreations or fiction films produced after the fact, or films from film history? What do you think this catalogue contributes to the image that society has of this historical period?

What it contributes is a huge wealth of information and documentation for any individual interested in what happened back then. It offers countless resources to study the war from every cinematic perspective. In this sense, I think it is consistent with the contemporary information society, which places a huge quantity of documentation within our reach. In this case, it is structured in a very clear way and there is plenty of information in every area.

Each one has a guide for interpreting everything and organising the information. There is thus a specific website on preserved First World War films, which also operates in parallel with other websites with documentation on the First World War (literature, artefacts, political documents, etc.). The European Union has supported a major effort in this area and the result is very interesting, and it has also had continuity in other activities such as educational initiatives.

In this sense, an initiative like this, a tool of this kind, is extremely positive. This initiative has established a model to use for other topics, though there will probably not be another one as huge as this one. It would be complicated to find a topic of this magnitude and propose a similar project.

However, it does point out a direction to take with projects involving collaborative work between the different film archives around Europe. It also includes a virtual exhibition that offers an overview of the content and main milestones of both film production during those years and the cinematic interpretation of the First World War, as well as the main reports on the crucial moments of the conflict.

This is everything that this virtual exhibition brings together, apart from the film series that we programmed. A project like this has established numerous guidelines for content and dynamics of action in a project of this magnitude, involving the participation of various entities from different countries.

Figure 3. *La reina joven* (Magín Murià, 1916)

What selection criteria did Filmoteca Valenciana adopt for the selection of the eight films for the EFG1914 Project?

The selection of content was one of the first stages of this project. The criteria were adapted to the topics determined by the project, limited to everything related to the conflict, to everything that cinema represented during the war and to the impact of the war on the evolution of the film industry. That is how we chose these films. We did have other footage such as film reports and newsreels, but since they were not Spanish productions and, in some cases, were already part of the collection of other film archives participating in the project, we decided that these films we chose were the best possible contribution to show the contrast between what was being produced

in Europe and what was being produced in Spain at that time. Our contribution included six full-length fiction films and two news reports. Of the two film reports, one (*Une reserve d'obusiers* [1914-1918]) is a very short fragment of unknown origin showing a full battery of cannons arranged on a battlefield in attack formation. The other report ([*Fourth Congress of the Third International: Burial of Vatslav Worowski in Berlin*], Germany, 1922 and 1923), related more to the political consequences of the war (another topic included in the project guidelines), shows the funeral of the Russian diplomat Vatslav Worowski, who was murdered in Switzerland in 1923. This footage was found in Valencia and we restored it and have it preserved here.

In the period that covers the production of these films there were several industrial and representational changes in cinema. In the case of fiction film the rise of melodrama is especially notable. The Filmoteca has recovered several titles of this genre: the Valencian adaptation of *Sangre y arena* (Vicente Blasco Ibáñez and Max André, 1916) and the series of films by Margarita Xirgu for Barcinógrafo (*Alma torturada*, 1916; *El beso de la muerte*, 1916 and *La reina joven*, 1916). We would like you to comment on the importance of melodrama and the mark that these films left on the genre.

The two works come from different contexts. On the one hand, *Sangre y arena*, Blasco Ibáñez's film, was produced in Paris by Prometheus Films with funds from the publishing house Prometeo. It was a very personal project by the author, who turned to Max André – a French producer with experience as a film director – to help him adapt his novel for the screen. In an interview for the Madrid newspaper *El Imparcial*, Blasco Ibáñez explained his conception of cinema as a visual format for the adaptation of literature. In *Sangre y arena* the articulation of the discourse is not really cinematic; rather, the cinema is placed at the service of rendering the details of the novel in images. Blasco's style is highly visual, which makes the adaptation process easy. Beyond that, the film is a melodrama and not a detail of the original work is left out. Consequently, the film is long and full of intertitles, which are also typical of the cinema of this period.

The films starring Margarita Xirgu were made in Barcelona and are clearly based on the Italian style predominant at the time. Xirgu is comparable in these melodramas with the great divas of Italian cinema – like Pina Menichelli or Lydia Borelli. The exaggerated performances reinforce a very theatrical image on screen, which, together with the outrageously unrealistic storylines, result in a total absence of naturalness. But it was the time when the genre was in vogue in Italy and also had a high enough profile in Spanish theatres for the style to be adopted as a result of its popularity and success. It was a decision that basically reflected the fragility of an industry which, even in the Spanish film capital of Barcelona, continued to suffer from funding problems.

***Sanz y el secreto de su arte* (Maximiliano Thous and Francisco Sanz, 1918) is a true rarity for the cinema of the time in terms of its approach and its mixture of documentary and fiction. How does this Valencian film fit into this period?**

It is a unique film to say the least. It is basically a news report about the work of ventriloquist Francisco Sanz with his dummies. Sanz produced the film himself and turned to Maximiliano Thous – a true personality of Valencian cultural life linked to the death throes of the Valencian Renaissance, who during the 1920s would become the great Valencian filmmaker – to film not only of his travelling show, but also what happened behind the scenes. The filmmaking stands out for its photographic precision throughout the different stages of the film: the show itself and the making and maintenance of the dummies. The final sequence featuring the dummies even offers a hint of some

intuitions more typical of animation films. There are, in any case, a series of cinematographic elements that are typical of the cinema of the time. On the one hand, we are given a melodramatic storyline, a drama about honour between the characters; an adventure of the main character's exploration of the world (which actually goes no further than Valencia and its vicinity), ranging from the sophisticated image of the horse races to the people's bullfighting festivities in a village with a very unique show, which also offers us images that do not appear in any other film; it is the only film testimony that we have of this celebration. The film has a lot of elements that make it extremely interesting and also very attractive. As Pilar Pedraza and Juan Miguel Company have pointed out, the film has a sinister quality. The decomposed, broken dummy, when we see a severed head or the mechanism exposed, has a very interesting sinister element. And there is also a very powerful image in the film which, in a morbid way, links it to the consequences of war. All the dummies are piled inside a van, ready to be transported to the theatre where the performance is going to take place, evoking the wartime image of a pile of corpses being transported to a mass grave. This image of the broken, dead body, even wrapped in a cloth with the head covered, is perfectly comparable to what we see repeatedly in the newsreels.

To conclude, Filmoteca Española is the other Spanish film archive participating in the EFG1914 Project, also with a selection of films of different kinds: fiction, newsreels, reports from the period, etc., and if I am not mistaken, Filmoteca Española and Filmoteca Valenciana have collaborated on this project, as they have also done on other projects such as the restoration of Luis García Berlanga's filmography. What was the nature of the collaboration in this case?

The two entities are partners in the project, which is a Europe-wide project. It was not a specific collaboration, but we did collaborate in the context

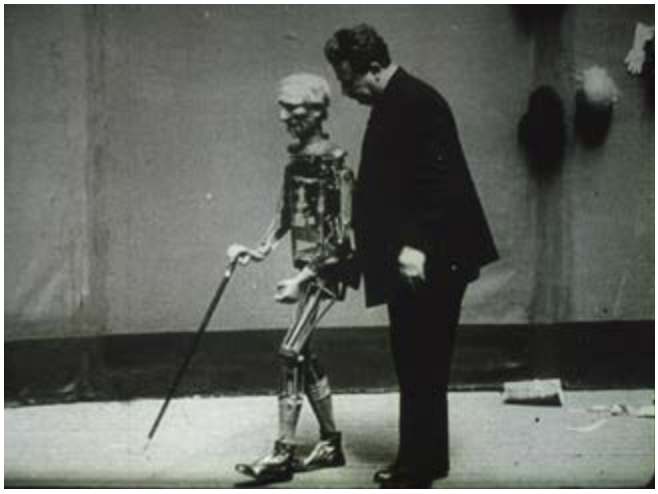

Figure 4. *Sanz y el secreto de su arte* (Maximiliano Thous y Francisco Sanz, 1918)

of the project when we digitised our films. We scanned our films in the facilities of Filmoteca Española because we do not have a scanner for digitising yet and we needed to do it somehow. The project organisers offered services outside Spain that were quite affordable, but transporting the films was problematic, so we contacted Filmoteca Española to sign a small partnership agreement, whereby they would provide their facilities and we would cover the expenses. This was much simpler and more economical, and we did it this way, as part of the project and using the project funding.

When the project was completed, we came together to discuss the need for additional promotion of the results, although this was not required by the organisation. We prepared a film series with the films that had been digitised and were already available on the website, as we thought that this topic had received much less attention in Spain due to having much less impact. As Spain did not take part in the war, the impact was notably limited. We believed it was important to do this, on the one hand, because of the historical importance of the First World War and, on the other, to disseminate the project and our own work. The idea was to publicise and attract attention to the

work that we are doing. It was the perfect opportunity as the two factors went hand in hand and we tried to take advantage of that. It was a lot of work to design it, because there are more than 3,000 films in the EFG1914 project and we had to reduce them to just a few sessions, which, as hard as we tried to avoid it, in the end were very long. It is hard to watch whole sessions on the consequences of the war, the casualties or the battles, as spectacular as some of them are.

We also organised a session to highlight Filmoteca Española's contribution and another session to highlight our contribution. This is how the series was put together.

By way of conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to stress the need for the authorities to make a real effort to furnish our film archives with the necessary tools (personnel, technology, etc.), because the preservation of our audiovisual heritage depends largely on this investment, which is public, not private. This is something that UNESCO, with its "Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images" in 1980,[1] and the European Union, with its 2005 recommendation,[2] have been pointing out for decades.

NOTES

1 Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images (http://portal.unesco.org/es/ev.php-URL_ID=13139&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

2 Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2005 on film heritage and the competitiveness of related industrial activities (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:323:0057:0061:EN:PDF).

SPANISH PARTICIPATION IN THE EFG 1914 PROJECT: INTERVIEW WITH JUAN IGNACIO LAHOZ RODRIGO, CHIEF CURATOR, CULTURARTS-IVAC

Abstract

Juan Ignacio Rodrigo Lahoz is interviewed about the European Union project EFG1914, involving the creation of an online exhibition of film materials related to the First World War preserved in film archives across Europe. The conversation focuses on explaining the initiative and the involvement of the Filmoteca de CulturArts of the Generalitat Valenciana, the institution to which Lahoz belongs.

Key words

Film archives; First World War; EFG1914 project; Online exhibition; Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo.

Author

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Article reference

Barrachina Asensio, Santiago (2016). Spanish participation in the EFG1914 Project: Interview with Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo, Chief Curator, CulturArts-IVAC. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 121-131.

LA PARTICIPACIÓN ESPAÑOLA EN EL PROYECTO EFG 1914. ENTREVISTA A JUAN IGNACIO LAHOZ RODRIGO, JEFE DE CONSERVACIÓN DE CULTURARTS-IVAC

Resumen

Entrevista a Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo en torno al proyecto de la Unión Europea EFG1914 destinado a la exhibición virtual de los materiales relacionados con la Primera Guerra Mundial conservados en los archivos fílmicos de toda Europa. La conversación se centra en explicar la iniciativa y la implicación de la Filmoteca de CulturArts-IVAC, institución a la cual pertenece el entrevistado.

Palabras clave

Archivos fílmicos; Primera Guerra Mundial; Proyecto EFG1914; exhibición en línea; Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo.

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Referencia de este artículo

Barrachina Asensio, Santiago (2016). La participación española en el proyecto EFG1914. Entrevista a Juan Ignacio Lahoz Rodrigo, Jefe de Conservación de CulturArts_IVAC. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 121-131.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

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FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO THE PRESENT: HISTORY AND MEMORY, A CENTURY FOR REFLECTION

introduction
THE PAST AND ITS USES: REPARATION, RESISTANCE, MANIPULATION, CONSENSUS, CONSUMPTION

RAMÓN GIRONA
IMMA MERINO

We live in a constant state of obsession with remembering the past; examples of this can be found all around us. However, it seems that there are some pasts that can be remembered with ease, or more peacefully and less controversially than others. In June 2015, the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo was celebrated with historical recreations, with soldiers re-enacting the event, and with visits to the historic sites by government representatives from the countries involved. In the United States, episodes from the War of Independence and the American Civil War are also recreated on a regular basis; however, the shooting—also in June 2015—by a white man of several black parishioners at a church in Charleston gave rise to a war of flags (the murderer had made racist proclamations on social networks while proudly posting images of the Confederate flag) until the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina passed a bill to take down the Confederate flag that was still flying in front of the State Capitol building. There are many more examples of this conflictive dependence on the past, including, of course, our own past: the past of a Spain still mired in its recent history, that of the Spanish Civil War, with the opposition and effective boycott by Spanish conservatives of the Historical Memory Law. This legislation could have been interpreted as an attempt, after reparations had been made to those families and institutions that had still not received them, to create a national agreement, a shared memory, a consensus that sought to leave reprisals behind and heal the shared wounds of the past once and for all. And the past can also come back in a more tangential way, as in the case of the economic and social crisis in Greece, which (in simplified terms) turned into a confrontation with Germany when, after Greece's capitulation and acquiescence to the negotiation of a third rescue package, reporters asked Chancellor Merkel whether the agreement had reminiscences of the Treaty of Versailles of

1919, whereby the Allies forced Germany to pay immensely severe reparations.

As Enzo Traverso suggests: "the past accompanies the present and settles in the collective imagination as 'memory', powerfully amplified by the media, often promoted by the public authorities [...] The past is transformed into collective memory after being chosen, filtered and reinterpreted according to the cultural sensitivities, ethical issues and political interests of the present" (Traverso, 2006: 12)[1]. And the past can also be transformed into a consumer product, susceptible to museumisation, used for tourism, turned into a spectacle, recreated in films...

We could also talk of a certain commemorative obsession that exists in our contemporary societies, and warn of the abuses of memory, as posited by Tzvetan Todorov (1996).

Although human societies have always possessed a collective memory, cultivated in every era through rites and ceremonies, it was in the nineteenth century that this collective memory, and its associated commemorations, would begin to undergo a process of secularisation that gave preference to the exaltation of such values as the fatherland, justice and freedom, and this phenomenon would intensify after the First World War. The first great military conflict of the twentieth century is viewed, again by Traverso, quoting Walter Benjamin (2008), as the point of no return for certain changes that had been prefigured over the course of the nineteenth century.

In the 1930s, Benjamin speculated on the decline of transmitted experience (Erfahrung) in favour of direct experience (Erlebnis). The German philosopher reflected on the transformation—over the course of the nineteenth century—of an agrarian, rurally based social model that had required the construction of individual identity in a markedly stable social and cultural space; an identity that entailed practical knowledge and certain ways of living and thinking that passed from one generation to the next with few alterations. Memory was intrinsic to everyday life. On this continuum, the process of industrialisation and the rise of modernity over the course of the nineteenth century acted as solvents, until the violent rupture caused by the Great War. Thus, the generation that perished in huge numbers in the trenches was the one that experienced this foundational trauma of the twentieth century in the first person. And, Traverso adds: "the great collective emotion that is evident in the commemorations of the dead of the First World War, already from the beginning of the 1920s, has undoubtedly been the first sign of the emergence of memory linked to a deep crisis in transmission" (2000)[2].

After the First World War, the tumultuous twentieth century—and the first decades of the twenty-first—have given more than sufficient reason, despite the possible abuses mentioned above, for the invocation of memory, for commemorations and acts of reparation.

The First World War and the current commemoration of its centenary also offer an excellent opportunity to consider—and to ask ourselves—a number of questions about the past, about history, memory and the ways in which society and the powers that be make use of them. ■

NOTES

1 Quote translated by the editor. In the original text: "el passat acompanya el present i s'instal·la al seu imaginari col·lectiu com una "memòria" amplificada poderosament pels mitjans de comunicació, promoguda sovint pels poders públics [...] El passat es transforma en memòria col·lectiva després d´haver estat triat i garbellat i reinterpretat segons les sensibilitats culturals, els qüestionaments ètics i les conveniències polítiques del present" (Traverso, 2006: 12).

2 Quote translated by the editor. In the original text: "la gran emoció col·lectiva que es fa present en les commemoracions dels morts de la Primera Guerra Mun-

dial, ja des de principi de la dècada de 1920, ha estat sens dubte la primera manifestació d'aquesta emergència de la memòria lligada a una crisi profunda de la transmissió" (Traverso, 2000).

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discussion

1. It has been suggested that the past is never really past, but also that it changes: the relationship that a society establishes with the facts of the past changes over time. Is the memory of the past, then, being constructed in every present? And if so, how is it constructed today? How is the present reflected in it?

Maximiliano Fuentes

The notion that the past is never past, or, more precisely, that does not want to be past, was given to us, in its original form, by the German historian Ernst Nolte, who in an essay published almost thirty years ago showed the enormous social and cultural attention that the way in which the past was remembered had in Germany. Obviously, in the context of the disputes concerning interpretations of Nazism, this assumed a primordial importance both in intellectual and political terms. Indeed, the debate over the construction of collective memories of the recent past, which in Germany focused on Nazism and on the responsibilities arising from its policies, has in recent decades become one of the focal points of academic analysis and, at the same time, a matter of great social relevance that has been reflected throughout Europe in the controversies surrounding the various issues arising from the misnamed concept of historical memory. As Walter Benjamin tried to explain in different essays, History—and memories as well— is always constructed from the perspective of the present, and, in this sense, the starting points and initial questions formulated by both the historians and the societies with whom these come into dialogue are modified constantly. This does not mean, however, that in every present everything begins all over again. History as an academic discipline develops in a combination of renewal and tradition: in a process of accumulation of knowledge and of tension—and sometimes rupture—with the dominant interpretations. These ruptures occur as the result of new questions that are often triggered by the present. In the case of memories the situation is more complex because many other factors are involved, ranging from psychological issues to public policy. It is therefore essential to distinguish analytically between memory (or memories) and history. Although both are closely connected and feed into each other, they also follow different lines of development. In the case of memories, the weight of the present, that is, of the dominant interpretations of history, of official public policy and of the construction of collective memories that sometimes even come to construct individual memories that have never really occurred, occupies an unquestionably larger place than it does in academic history. In the last few decades, the present—which as Eric Hobsbawm noted, seems to assume a condition of permanence, i.e., unconnected to the past—has acquired huge significance in the different processes of constructing public memories and in the battles between these memories to occupy the central stage in our views of past and present. The Spanish and Catalan cases demonstrate this. Something similar could be said of the Armenian genocide and the role of the Turkish government in the centenary celebrated this year. As some historians, including Enzo Traverso, have shown, in almost every case the Holocaust paradigm, in its most presentist version, operates as an omnipresent background.

Miguel Morey

Memory and history belong to different registers. Memory is the living recollection of the past in the present. It is basically oral, collective, strongly emotional and insensitive to the transformations it undergoes on being updated in every present.

History is an intellectual reconstruction of a dead past, a reconstruction that seeks to establish, according to scientific protocols and based on documentary evidence, the truth of the events that occurred in the past and the interpretation of the relationships between them. In its use as a vehicle for political legitimacy, history tends to be a form of memory supported by one part of the events that is considered the truly significant part and by one particular possible interpretation of their relationships. Of course, it is not a history consistent with the scientific reconstruction of the facts, although it is supported by a selection of those facts. To say that one's claims are irrefutable, then, merely means that one is not willing to have them challenged.

Jordi Font Agulló

There are certainly pasts that are never completely relegated to the past. This idea, which has caused furore, is normally related to traumatic events that are hard to digest or assimilate into the liberal and democratic canons, either politically or morally. An example of this is the French collaborationism, Vichy France, which clashes with and distorts the narrative constructed by Gaullism and the leftist resistance after the Second World War.

In societies where a system of freedoms more or less predominates, memory sometimes bursts out unexpectedly and undermines the monolithic visions and narratives of that past, which are usually the product of a convenient reconstruction made from the perspective of the present, whose main purpose is to expel controversy from the public sphere. However, what often happens, as it cannot be otherwise, is that there is not one, single collective or social memory, because memory is essentially conflictive by nature. Therefore, at least in societies governed by certain democratic values based on human rights and freedom of conscience, there cannot—and must not—be a single construction of memory from the perspective of the present. Obviously, the context of the present always determines our perception of the past, especially the most recent past, which is closely connected to the current time. What needs to exist are certain instruments, certain institutional mechanisms that would make it possible to rescue all of the memories and to put them on the table without sidestepping debate and conflict. Only in this way can there be a democratic process.

Attempts to impose a single memory have been taken to the extreme by totalitarian regimes such as fascism or Stalinism. The result has been the stifling and the erasure of the memories of whole sectors of society. In this case, in a move taken to feverish extremes, a certain selection of events of the past is manipulated through falsification, omission and an interpretative reading whose aim is to mask and legitimise a present social order governed by unjust political practices. In democracies, the reflection of the present in memory, rather than attempting to develop a convenient and non-conflictive narrative, should open up channels through which all memories can be expressed.

Javier Cercas

The idea that the past is never past was posited by Faulkner in *Requiem for a Nun* (what he actually said was that the past "is never dead", and he added: "It's not even past"). Of course, he was absolutely right, especially in relation to the recent past, of which there is still living memory: the past is a dimension of the present, without which the present is incomprehensible. The problem is that we live, more and more each day, in a kind of dictatorship or tyranny of the present, created largely by the increasingly overwhelming predominance of the media, which not only reflects reality, but creates it (proof of this is the fact that if something does not occur in the media it is almost as if it had not occurred at all); and for the media, what happened yesterday is already in the past, and what happened last

week is prehistory. We thus live in the illusion that the present is understood only through the present and the past is something foreign to us, accumulating dust in archives and libraries. But at the same time, and perhaps as a futile attempt to compensate for this dictatorship of the present, we live in a kind of permanent state of exaltation of memory (not of the past, but of our memory of the past). This paradox, this contradiction, defines our times, and there would be much to say about it, because it has a lot to do with what Benjamin called the crisis of the transmission, and what I, more simply, call the crisis of history, something that has at least been detectable since the seventies and that reached a climax at the turn of the millennium (in fact, perhaps this crisis of history is nothing more than a new manifestation of the crisis of the transmission). Moreover, it is obvious that the present changes the past; that is, our understanding or our interpretation of the past: the same way that, for example, Kafka changes our reading of Melville or Borges changes our reading of Don Quixote, or the fall of the Berlin Wall changes our interpretation or reading of the Russian Revolution. The past is not something static, given once and for all and forever; it is constantly mutating. That is why the past, like the present and the future, is constructed by all of us, with our books, with our films, with everything we do; with everything: not only with the things that speak of the past.

Xavier Antich

Martin Heidegger, drawing on Nietzsche, pointed out long ago (in one of his texts on Aristotle) that "the situation of interpretation, i.e., of the appropriation and understanding of the past, is always the living situation of the present." There is no approach to the past, with the intention of understanding it, either in any of the historical disciplines or in the experience of memory (individual or collective) that is not a crossing of various temporalities between the time (past) whose meaning we are attempting to understand and the time (present) in which the exercise of memory and recollection is being carried out. Indeed, Nietzsche was the first to point out the impossible naivety of an antiquarian history that sought to access the past as if it was an unchanging fossil whose meaning would not be affected by the gaze which, from a subsequent point in time, attempted to examine it. The antiquarian gaze on the past consists, to put it briefly, in considering the past as past, substantially disconnected from the present. From a perspective in opposition to this assumption, like that of Nietzsche and Benjamin, it can be considered that the gaze on the past is unequivocally and irrevocably present, given that the moment in time at which one intends to examine the past, and the mind-set that goes with it, is one of those prejudices of which Hans-Georg Gadamer spoke, of which no interpretation can be ignored because they all form a constituent part of the hermeneutical presuppositions based on which we attempt to analyse the past. There is therefore no memory of the past independent of the present, neutral or independent of the point in time, weighed down by what came after, from which that past is explored. Furthermore, the gaze on the past offers a way, perhaps the most radical, to question the present.

In contrast with the historicism that assumes a fossilised image of the past, Benjamin asserted long ago that history (and with it the memory that turns to the past to consider it and, if possible, understand it) is always a construction of meaning, that is, articulation. This means that history is not already made, nor should it be limited to collecting (or digging up) what has already been made; rather, we must make it or, perhaps more accurate, re-make it. In any case, it should not be with the intention of satiating the desire for knowledge (in the sense of mere curiosity or learning aimed at filling in gaps), nor with the purpose of accurately grasping the supposed truth of past events, since, for Benjamin, the reason for memory and history

lies not in the past, but in the present, and in the urgency with which the present always questions us. As might be expected, Benjamin's approach is directly opposed to a model of memory and history, like the one that underpins historicism and the various forms of positivism, which assumes a supposedly neutral notion of the past, inscribed in a linear, homogeneous, continuous, and yet precisely because of all this, empty time.

The memory of the past, by contrast, is constructed from the present and in the present, because the present supposes an anchoring of the hermeneutical point of view in the moment in time in which the memory is being exercised. There is no memory, nor can there be, oriented and determined only by the past to which it turns: memory, on the contrary, is determined, especially and first and foremost, by the present in which the past is examined. And this gaze upon the past is marked by the present and by all the decisions in the present that ultimately configure the act of remembering.

As suggested by Giorgio Agamben, one of the most illustrious Walter Benjamin scholars of our time, in an observation that develops Benjamin's intuition of the melancholy angel, "the interruption of tradition, which is for us now a fait accompli, opens an era in which no link is possible between old and new, if not the infinite accumulation of the old in a sort of monstrous archive or the alienation effected by the very means that that is supposed to help with the transmission of the old. Like the castle in Kafka's novel, which burdens the village with the obscurity of its decrees and the multiplicity of its offices, the accumulated culture has lost its living meaning and hangs over man like a threat in which he can in no way recognise himself. Suspended in the void between old and new, past and future, man is projected into time as into something alien that incessantly eludes him and that still drags him forward, but without allowing him to find his ground in it." Thus, in opposition to the phantasmagoria that would make of the past an immense sleeping legacy, in the face of which history and memory should be limited to a ceremony of transmission that is as neutral as possible, proceeding quietly so as not to awaken it, thus feeding the mythology of the present (according to the analysis, very close to Benjamin's, offered by Horkheimer and Adorno in Dialectic of Enlightenment), Benjamin advocates a gaze on the past that is aware that it is made up of fragments of ruins that do not make up a whole, whose meaning depends precisely on the capacity for thought to produce short circuits in the institutional apparatus of transmission and to make cracks that can reveal the essential discontinuity of this pile of ruins.

Carmen Castillo

I think memory is constructed in the present and the battle for memory is proof of that. It is a real war between the ones on the bottom, the oppressed (or defeated) classes, and the ones on top, the oppressors (or winners). This is palpable in Chile (and I think in Spain too). Until we, the defeated, acknowledge the need to reflect precisely on our present in that mirror which is our past, we will not be able to put up a fair and effective fight. Sometimes we get caught up in our symbols, our words, putting them in monuments or in museums. The statues do not speak and the photographs turn yellow. Memory must go on like a flowing river, nourishing our tomorrows and sometimes overflowing.

2. The establishment of an official memory, supposedly consensual and affirmed in commemorative events, is a way of drowning out other memories, especially those of the defeated. How is one particular historical memory imposed? What forms of resistance do *other* memories have?

Maximiliano Fuentes

The establishment of an official memory, constantly reaffirmed in commemorations, is both an attempt to drown out other memories and to reaffirm a set of national and supranational values. The process of imposing a particular official collective memory has occurred, particularly in several European cases, as part of a broader vision about the values that were supposed to take shape in Western democracies after the Second World War. Although this process began immediately after 1945, it was not until the eighties that it accelerated significantly through a number of mechanisms that have acted and continue to act simultaneously: the different educational levels, certain cultural manifestations (including cinema), the various devices for commemoration and construction of memories in the cities and other processes have been fundamental in this regard. This process, however, has not resulted in the disappearance of memories alternative to the official. In some cases, these alternative memories have succeeded in seeing some of their views on the past, in most cases closely related to certain unmet demands for justice, incorporated into official memory after a dispute with the State. In this respect, the case of Argentina is paradigmatic. The flipside of this process can surely be found in the Spanish case, where, after a few furtive processes initiated almost a decade ago at the official level, the status quo continues to be an evident anomaly compared to other European countries such as Germany, France or Italy.

Miguel Morey

It is often said that history is written by the winners, which means that the winners impose their own memory and their selection of ritually commemorated significant events, powerfully legitimising their victory. In the case of the defeated, the Second World War offers us a sobering example. On the one hand, Nazi Germany, defeated in the war, was forced to withdraw from public memory. For example, all its pioneering work on legislation for the protection of nature and public health had to be forgotten. Who today remembers that the notion of passive smoking was coined ahead of its time by Fritz Lickint, an influential Nazi doctor in 1939? Zygmunt Bauman, in *Modernity and Holocaust*, goes as far to say: "Considered as a complex purposeful operation, the Holocaust may serve as a paradigm of modern bureaucratic rationality ... Indeed, the story of the organization of the Holocaust could be made into a textbook on scientific management. Were not the moral and political condemnation of its purpose imposed on the world by the military defeat of its perpetrators it would have been made into a textbook. There would be no shortage of distinguished scholars vying to research and generalise its experience for the benefit of an advanced organization of human affairs."

On the other hand, it is not the defeated but the main victims of Nazi barbarism, the Jews, who have ultimately seen their memory turned into the only possible memory of what occurred in the Nazi concentration camps. The only thing that really counts about what happened there, then, is that Jews suffered and died there. This obviously involves a violent form of colonisation of the memories of other groups (like the Spanish republicans, for example) who also suffered and died in the camps. Everyone knows what Shoah means, but who knows the meaning of prorraimos, (lit. "devouring") the word that refers

to the Nazi extermination of Gypsies? But this prioritisation of the religious or ethnic element also carries a second consequence, even more serious if possible: the lack of attention given to the model of modern bureaucratic rationality implemented in Nazi camps, a model whose current use in the field of scientific management of populations should be an urgent object of all studies in this area.

Jordi Font Agulló

As already suggested, official memories are of little use from the standpoint of the moral flourishing of a society. The phrase "official memory" is a contradiction and by its nature an authoritarian concept. This would be one of the reasons why it fits so well in political systems that do not admit criticism; for example, fascism or Stalinist communism. However, this danger can also be detected, again, in liberal democratic systems. Something like this happened in the Spain of the Transition and the years that followed it. In the interests of consolidating democracy, from the highest echelons of power an effort was made to favour one narrative of the mutilated immediate past—the Civil War and the Franco regime—from which many felt that many different memories were excluded, especially the memories of the losers in the war. Completely consensual memory is an illusion, because memory is conflictive by nature and, therefore, a claim of this kind only leads to processes of mystification and simplification. Myths conceal the complexities that weave the past together and also tend to have a saturation effect, as Régine Robin suggests when he refers to "saturated memory". A good example is the sanctity of the witness and the victim, so characteristic of our time. In addition to having a bounce-back effect that leads broad swathes of society into a kind of historical half-wittedness (very in tune, incidentally, with the dominant media culture), this sanctity of the victim has meant a relegation of the resistant witness. Immediately after Second World War, the person resisting fascism or Nazism was the paradigm par excellence. Since the nineties, more or less, the subject-victim or survivor has occupied that place, because political commitment has lost its prestige, which is now given instead to an ecumenical view of suffering. These monolithic fixations on the past evidently meet the interests of the present resulting from political circumstances and cultural hegemonies. That is what we try to counteract. It is necessary, for example, to stress that under fascism not everyone was in the resistance, nor was everybody a victim. There were, obviously, all kinds of people. Moreover, there were also many people who were indifferent and more than a few collaborators on different levels that include informers, torturers and executioners.

In reality, commemorative acts are ambivalent. In many cases they still propose an overload of heroic epic and patriotic zeal. What enriches us democratically is the complexation of our gaze on the past by means of a critical apparatus based on different comparative historical studies. And the worst that could happen would be to succumb to the historical kitsch that the entertainment industry is so fond of.

As I outlined above, rather than impose a historical memory, what we must create is a framework that allows for peaceful confrontation—without rejecting reflection and criticism—of the diversity of memories that survive and coexist. This is where the honesty and rigour of scholars of the past (i.e., those working in the fields of history, humanities and social sciences) comes into play. These researchers—and we should also add the work of creators like artists, writers, etc. —provide the materials and data that we should use to dismiss the myths and stereotypes so characteristic of totalitarianism and exclusionary nationalisms, but which may also be present in democracies. Memory should not be imposed. Imposition is a synonym of failure.

The Spanish case of the second Bourbon restoration is undoubtedly paradigmatic for the resistance of silenced memories. In the early

eighties it entered a long period of resignation that gradually receded, thanks, in part, to the work of a nascent historiography which offered plentiful empirical reasons to that third generation of grandchildren of the war who wanted to uncover what had happened to their grandparents. This third generation felt far removed from the memorial limitations imposed—perhaps there had been no other way out—during the transitional process in the interests of reconciliation. At the same time in the late twentieth century, two situations occurred that favoured this awakening of other memories. On the one hand, a right-wing "without complexes", as José María Aznar described it, had seized power and began to disseminate a revisionist reading of the recent past based on a coarse neo-Francoism declaimed by pseudo-historians. This obviously caused a reaction from serious historiographers and, in turn, stimulated the creation of protest movements calling for moral—and in some cases economic—reparations for the damages that Francoism had done to their family members. On the other hand, internationally, in subsequent transitional processes like those of the Southern Cone or South Africa, the global paradigm of human rights was imposed. This new narrative of human rights has entailed the promotion, as a first step towards social peace, of the recognition of the victims in countries that suffered under dictatorships and the initiation of legal proceedings at which the perpetrators of crimes and human rights violations are required to appear. The Spanish context, in which tens of thousands of bodies, poorly buried on roadsides, are still unidentified, could not remain immune to the new possibilities opened up by the humanitarian way. Another thing has been the reaction of the Spanish government. Summing up, if we take the Spanish case as an example, with its regional and national peculiarities, we could say that the resistance of other memories is woven together through the confluence of various factors: scientific, generational, political and international.

Javier Cercas

I do not like the expression "historical memory", because it is an oxymoron: memory is individual, partial and subjective; history, on the other hand, is collective and aims to be total and objective. But, furthermore, in Spain and other countries it is also an euphemism: the so-called Movement for the Recovery of Historical Memory should have been called the Movement for the Recovery of Memory of Victims of Francoism, or of the Republican Memory. Having said this, it will be clear that I do not like neither the expression "official memory": it is another oxymoron, like "collective memory". In my view, all this conceptual confusion—the success of these expressions that serve more to confound than to clarify—is due in great part to the explosion of memory in recent years, and to the fact that much of it has invaded history. It goes without saying that memory is essential to everything, because without memory, we are nothing; but it is not the same thing as history. Previously, more or less up until the seventies, memory barely played a role in the construction of history, in the reconstruction of the past; now it plays an excessive role, to the point that it has colonised the territory of history. Both these extremes are bad: we need memory, but we also need history. There may be an official history—a minimum agreement in a country about its past—but there cannot be an official memory, because memory is by definition subjective, sentimental, individual, rebellious, resistant, and does not listen to reason, all of which leads, just as Benjamin said, to the opening up of cases that history had deemed closed. In short, there neither can nor should be an official memory; nor can nor should a memory ever be imposed on others. Separating the territory of history from the territory of memory, so that they can become allies rather than adversaries, and so that the

good relationship between them can facilitate an accurate reconstruction of the past and fruitful dialogue between it and the present, seems to me one of the essential tasks we face today.

Xavier Antich

In his Theses on the Philosophy of History, Benjamin wrote that "the chronicler who recounts events without distinguishing between the great and the small thereby accounts for the truth that nothing which has ever happened is to be given as lost to history." From this perspective, on which the notion of micro-history is based, it should be possible to rescue those memories expelled from the official or hegemonic version and sentenced to nurture a periphery of excluded memories.

Benjamin, in a premonitory way, intuited that the mutations in thought, in art and in the scientific practice of his time, as well as in society itself, necessitated a reformulation of the very meaning of the act of looking back on the past through memory. In a sense, all his works, more or less implicitly, attempt to "to brush history against the grain", in order to wake up sleeping events of history, not to consider those events as they really were, or as closed documents of a static past, but to discover in them a memory that "flashes in a moment of danger." The intention, in short, is to avoid the risk, present as a threat in every one of the images of the past, that they may vanish from any present that is not capable of recognising itself in them.

As Susan Buck-Morss has said of Benjamin, "his aim was to destroy the mythic immediacy of the present, not by inserting it into a cultural continuum that affirms the present as its culmination, but by discovering that constellation of historical origins which has the power to explode history's 'continuum'. [...] Benjamin makes us aware that the transmission of culture (high and low), which is central to this rescue operation, is a political act of the highest import."

It is not surprising that Benjamin should have conceived of historical thought itself in a similar manner similar to the process of editing and photomontage, nor should we be surprised by his fascination for the remains abandoned, as if they were a bothersome surplus, by the large systematic narratives of present and past, or the attention he always gave to those elements that we might call minimal, which can contain a revealing significance that goes beyond their miniscule appearance and the insignificance to which they were condemned by a history attentive only to the grand outlines and monumental blocks.

Carmen Castillo

As I said before, this is a real war. The winners know that history, despite the crisis of transmission that Benjamin spoke about, is the dispenser of legitimacy. In Chile today it is not honourable to have participated in the dictatorship (especially having been a torturer), but because the product of twenty years of impunity and amnesia was a narrative of suffering of the "victims", people cannot connect in their minds that what Pinochet imposed in Chile was neoliberalism (or ultra-liberalism) par excellence, and that therefore what they are suffering today, every day, with this model where inequality and injustice reigns, is the product of the ones who put Pinochet in power, enriched themselves and still rule today behind the mask of a democracy directed by socialists, communists and Christian Democrats. The pathetic, sentimental narrative work against the true memory of the defeated, the narrative of the struggle, of tomorrow. This is why we need to construct stories, fictions, in keeping with those who are struggling today, and that requires us to build bridges, gateways, to unsettle people and make them think. I am not saying that we have to join this or that party, only that when we Create we should be conscious of the need to Resist (as when we truly Resist the irresistible, we must be aware of the need to Create, to invent). There is no point in being a caricature of what we once were or constantly repeating worn-out or empty words: we have to invent in order to shake things up and break new ground.

3. And in line with the previous question, do you believe that it is legitimate to oppose the recovery of the past in the name of a supposed general will, a supposed common good? And if so, in what cases?

Maximiliano Fuentes

As numerous studies have claimed, it is not only legitimate but can also prove to be therapeutic to some extent in social terms. However, it is important, first of all, to delimit the scope of this supposed general will. It is also important to keep in mind the political use that has been made of the recovery of the past with certain specific political interests to various degrees by both democratic and dictatorial regimes. Finally, it is essential to take into account the need for respect for a justice linked to respect for human rights when seeking to challenge a supposed general will with respect to memory, if it can be put in such terms.

Miguel Morey

The common good also depends on the common memory: if one part of those entitled to the common good are not entitled to have their memory recognised, we have a serious problem, a problem that affects what we mean by common and to what good we are entitled to share. It is worth recalling here the ritual atonement conducted periodically in Germany, the biggest promoter of commemorative memory since the Second World War on. And that Auschwitz is, by decree, a "duty of memory" and that to deny the existence and use of gas chambers in the Nazi camps (that is, to deny the Shoah) is a criminal offence.

Jordi Font Agulló

The recovery of the past or of a particular interpretation of the immediate past always appears on political agendas, because its purpose is to legitimise the status quo of the present. The question is what is this past and how is it recovered. The choice to forget is, of course, one way of dealing with the past. It is also a form of memory. When addressing this issue, that is, the promotion of forgetting in the name of building a better future that will leave the strife of the past behind (in the case of civil wars), or tiptoeing around acts as appalling as crimes against humanity (for example, the case of Nazism), it is common to refer to the paradigmatic example of Classical Greece, so well analysed by Nicole Loraux in her book The Divided City. In that case, the ancient Greeks, in 403 B.C., after a long period of war and violence, decided to "eradicate the yoke of memory from their lives" and prescribed the civic virtues of forgetting as a future form of coexistence. In other words, they banned stirring up the past in order to prevent the instigation of new disputes that would be dangerous to the continued peace and prosperity of the community.

This possible path of reconciliation tends to neglect the heaviest burdens of the past, which often contain facts and behaviours that do not square with the discourses on which a forgetful present is founded. The journey into the future is more easily made with light baggage. However, the risk is that these kinds of operations leave a deep ethical vacuum in such societies. The act of "casting into oblivion" might work at first as a buffer that makes it possible to rebuild a society which, as in the case of the Germany of the Second World War, had hit an absolute low, or in the face of the risk of a new civil confrontation, as might have been the case of the Spain of the Transition, but it has dire consequences in the medium term, and it takes a lot of effort to recover. The biggest casualty is the quality of democracy. In our case, the appeal to forgetting could be understood in the complex years of the transitional process, although it is important to clarify that the inculcation of fear in society—and hence the invitation to forget—was related to the maintenance of a significant portion

of the privileges enjoyed by the sectors closest to the dictatorship. Unfortunately, this commitment to forgetting endured over time and became public policy for memory promoted by the social-democratic governments of the eighties and early nineties. It was the next generation—in this case the grandchildren of the Civil War—who broke down the blockade of oblivion. Actually, there is no single answer to your question. Perhaps the "non-recovery of the past" or forgetting at a given time is a necessity, although its dimensions and its significance depends on the correlation of forces in the transitional process towards democracy. What is not permissible, as the years pass, is its survival. The reluctance to embrace public policies of memory that make it possible to talk once and for all about all of our recent past has no logic. In a society that is supposed to be a mature democracy, it should be possible to deal with every complexity of the past, whether or not it fits in with our desires and preferences in the present. Although, of course, it should be taken into account that in the current parameters, characterised by the internationalisation of convictions of human rights violations and crimes against humanity, a process like the abolition of Francoism might not necessarily have been carried out with appeals to values like forgetting or the pseudo-reconciliation that amounted to saying "we are all to blame." And it is obvious that the levels of blame were not all the same. That is what people are entitled to know. In other words, it is important to encourage the promotion of memory, not as a duty, but as a right that offers keys for clarifying the past. A construction of the future on a foundation of forgetting at one point or another ends up showing its cracks.

Javier Cercas

Being opposed to the recovery of the past is like being opposed to understanding the present. The problem is what past is recovered, how and what for. Recovering the past is not necessarily good in itself; this is another of the intellectual superstitions of our time. Francoism, it could be said, lived permanently in the past, permanently remembering the war, which explains why the forty years of Francoism were not forty years of peace, as the regime claimed, or that the war lasted three years, as it is commonly believed: it lasted forty, because Francoism was merely the continuation of the war by other means. Key sectors of the current Israeli powers make an equally spurious and harmful use of the past by exploiting the memory of the extermination of Jews in Europe as an excuse or instrument or ideological justification for their brutal policies against the Palestinians. And so on. Furthermore, what needs to be recovered is not exactly the past, but the truth about the past, with all its nuances, frenzies and contradictions, in order to face the present with all its contradictions, nuances and frenzies. That is very hard to do, but at the same time it is necessary. It is what we Spaniards have not done, with the so-called Movement for the Recovery of Historical Memory as well. It is worth adding, to tell the whole truth, that hardly anyone has done it (except the Germans, who at least have done it better than anyone else). At least with respect to the harshest part of our past, we live permanently in a truth concealed behind a mask or make-up, because we do not like the truth: we like lies. Remember what General de Gaulle once said, when after the Second World War he managed to convince the French, or almost all of the French, that all or almost all of them had belonged to the resistance: "Les français n'on pas besoin de la vérité [The French do not need the truth]."

Xavier Antich

The recovery of the past in the name of a supposed general will can move dangerously close to a memory of consensus, articulated around unproblematic memories. Conversely, the act of remembering, whose purpose can only

be to revive the forgotten or repressed, has to do in the first instance precisely with the recovery and activation of those memories which, because of their problematic or even antagonistic nature, have been neglected in the name of a pacification of the present that dispenses with any memories that might disturb it. However, it is precisely this type of act of institutional memory, always implemented in the interests of a supposed pacification of antagonisms, which often favours the oppression of those other uncomfortable memories, which because they clash with the memory of consensus, trigger conflict and antagonism between conflicting accounts of the past. But there cannot be a common good or memories of institutional consensus without at the same time triggering those other conflicting memories, whose activation undoubtedly causes discomfort due to the recollection of unresolved conflicts.

Carmen Castillo
In the name of national reconciliation? Of forgiveness, of ending the war? Sheer lies. The battle for memory is without concessions, but today we have to fight it in the name of humanity, in the name of dignity, in the name of the need to share and of affection. Not of "ideologies", but with those who suffer, those who lose, "those on the bottom", the oppressed, as a compass.

4. Memory, particularly the memory of horror and of its victims, seems to us an inescapable duty. However, is there a right to forget? Moreover, has there been an abuse of memory? Or rather, as Primo Levi intuited about the Nazi death camps, has memory been trivialised? And if so, has the most terrible past also been turned into a commodity through a kind of memory tourism? Where are the places of memory and mourning?

Maximiliano Fuentes
There are many specialists who have been talking for years now about a certain abuse of memory, according to Levi, of a trivialisation of memory. This can be seen not only in the more mainstream cinema but also in some places of iconic memory associated with Nazism and the Holocaust (though not exclusively with them). To some extent, some museum displays on concentration camps—not all, fortunately—have lost a significant part of their explanatory power and capacity for critical commemoration and have turned into part of an almost obligatory point on certain habitual tourist routes which are not necessarily conceived in historical or memorialist terms. This has led to suggestions of a certain theme-parkisation of these sites. In reality, from my point of view, places of memory and mourning should be both spaces for explanation and reflection focused both on the past and towards the present. They should be places that question us in the present tense about the connections between the recent past and our lives as critical citizens. Locally, the experience of the Exile Memorial Museum in La Jonquera demonstrates the potential of these types of projects.

Miguel Morey
The trivialisation of places of memory as consumer products, designed for use as theme parks, goes hand-in-hand with an effective and widespread memory loss, as we are now immersed in a temporality of immediacy entirely organised by consumer addiction. Nowadays, the places where certain memorable events occurred are just as much ritual tourist pilgrimage sites as the places where cult films or television series were made, both equally memorable ...

Mireia Llorens

The right to forget differs depending on who claims it and for what purpose. In Literature or Life, Jorge Semprún mentions that soon after his return to the world of the living, deliberately and systematically forgetting the camp became the only possible option for survival. This cure of aphasia is prescribed as an existential condition in the task of returning to life. Similarly, if memory turns into memorial obsession, in the pejorative sense of the term, and abandons its capacity for criticism, reflection or even integration of other silenced or minority memories, then forgetting appears as the only possibility for regeneration of the same memory. Enzo Traverso offers an example of this with the case of Yehuda Elkana, an Auschwitz survivor and the director of the Institute for the History of Science at Tel Aviv University who, in 1982, in the face of the crimes committed in the wake of the Israeli occupation in Lebanon, invoked the right to forget in order to be freed from the burden of the memory. Consequently, when the sacredness of the official memory of the concentration camp in itself becomes a passport for evading any responsibility or condemnation for one's own acts of violence, this would constitute an abuse of memory.

The trivialisation of memory and its exploitation as a consumer product in the form of memory tourism both form part of a complex evolution of the process of reification of the past. In the case of the First World War, no doubt, it began with the Armistice in order to overcome the shock and initiate the process of community mourning. As Freud had described, based on this traumatic experience, grief and melancholy permeated a collective ethos in which the affliction involved the repression of critical thinking, the rage or condemnation that had inspired, for example, the direct and accusing poetry of certain British war poets during the conflict. In its place there spread an ecumenical vision of hope and a sense of national fraternity that facilitated the articulation of the memory of the fallen and the possibility of public mourning through processions to war monuments. The commemorative rituals, such as the cult to the Unknown Soldier or the Armistice Day ceremonies, are inseparable from the public spaces which, over time, have become genuine pilgrimage sites for tourists. Without a doubt, the cult of memory can succumb to trivialisation when it turns into rhetorical, complacent, mystifying and myth-generating formulation. This is why history (the history of the professional historians), along with other disciplines in the humanities and arts, has such an important role in building a critical discourse that does not give in to the illusions and perversions often produced by the entertainment industry with the aim of facilitating—or, more accurately, simplifying—understanding for the public by theming the spaces of memory.

Javier Cercas

Of course there is a right to forget: a victim who does not want to remember has every right in the world not to do so and to try to forget, or at least to live privately with his or her own experience of the horror. Who the hell are we, we who are not victims, to impose an obligation on this person to remember? Such an obligation seems to me absolutely immoral. Moreover, it is obvious that the inflation of memory has made us forget the obvious fact that, just as we need memory, we need to forget, simply because without forgetting there is no real memory, but above all there is no capacity for understanding: think of Borges' character Ireneo Funes, who remembered everything and was a perfect idiot (in the etymological sense of the word). As to the trivialisation of the memory and history of the darkest moments of our past, it seems to me to be a fact that only a man as lucid as Levi was able to foresee and this of course applies not only to tourism: I have called it the memory industry. What has happened in Spain in recent years is, in this sense, and with every variation imaginable, something that has happened all

over the Western world: the Movement for the Recovery of Historical Memory—a movement, it almost goes without saying, that is absolutely necessary—was born out of necessity but after a few years turned into a fashion and an industry. And in the same way that, as Adorno and Horkheimer pointed out, the fruit of the culture industry is a kitsch culture (a degraded and false culture that gives consumers the illusion of consuming real culture without demanding effort from them or subjecting them to frenzies and ironies and contradictions that true culture demands), the fruit of the memory industry was a memory and a kitsch history, a watered down, palatable, amiable, reassuring and sentimental vision of the past, a vision without what Levi called the "shadow areas" or "grey areas", those heinous places in which executioners are turned into victims and victims into executioners. It is hard and unpleasant to acknowledge this, but it would be cowardly and dishonest not to. The duty of writing and art in general is to do it: is not to submit to blackmail by the industry, or by the cultural industry or by the memory industry. To rebuild, with new artistic instruments, a truthful history and memory, without makeup or compromises.

Xavier Antich

A right to forget? For centuries we have wanted to remember what happened and to prevent oblivion from destroying those things that we believe need to be remembered. Because the most natural option, it is worth highlighting, is in fact forgetting: we forget an extraordinarily higher proportion of things than we remember. And that is why it pains us to forget certain things that we think should be remembered. Nowadays, however, we live immersed in a historical culture, characterised by what Paul Ricoeur has called documentary frenzy. And this is not just a matter debated by specialists: just think of the controversies surrounding memorial laws in the United States, the Lois Mémorielles in France or, here in Spain, the Law of Historical Memory or the Law of the Democratic Memorial. It is thus a fair conclusion that sometimes the compulsive desire to remember can become pathological and sometimes even counterproductive. In a way, we are forced to choose between two absolutes, both of which seem equally inhumane: to forget even though we are burying a past that deserves to be remembered, or to remember it even if the past, due to its sometimes traumatic weight, threatens the very possibility of the present and the articulation of a common future. Perhaps it is only possible to choose what has to be memorable because, in part, it defines us. Without this effort, humanity would perhaps be nothing but a shadow.

Luis Buñuel said that "you have to begin to lose your memory, if only in bits and pieces, to realise that memory is what makes our lives. Life without memory is no life ... Our memory is our coherence, our reason, our action, our feeling. Without it, we are nothing." And the reality is that memory makes us, not only in our individual dimension, but also collectively. And in many cases collective amnesia, which, unlike the individual form, may not be pathological, but is sometimes programmed and induced. However, its effects are devastating, as the us of a collective can also be lost when sections of the past are erased. What remains of us, then, but an amputated story?

We know that memory defines everything we are, individually and collectively. We are what we are because our memories establish a continuity over time that forms the foundation for the present in which we live. Without this memorable past, all that remains, as the neurologist A. R. Luria says, is "a shattered world."

On the other hand, a certain trivialisation of memory and the conversion of certain moments of the past into consumer products are fairly widespread phenomena, as is the transformation of places of memory and mourning into cultural tourism destinations. It is a relatively recent

worldwide phenomenon, and worthy of a distinct and specific analysis of its own.

Carmen Castillo
Yes, it is true. A product to shed tears for a moment and turn the page without guilt, with a clear conscience. There is an extraordinary author, Jean Amery, who also committed suicide like Primo Levi and Walter Benjamin; in his book Beyond Guilt and Atonement he points out the evasion of the real work of remembering the horror in Germany and in Europe since the end of the war. Without real justice, without explicit identification of the responsibility of States, without consideration for the Struggle of the vanquished (sentient beings, with great courage and imagination for the future), there can be no reparation and no creation of "a different world" of "something else", of "a different future". The fight for memory never ends. In Chile, Villa Grimaldi has an organisation of former fighters that manages the memorial, yet there is no guarantee that this space will not only be used to archive the memories of the survivors but also to build bridges with what is happening to these people and to their descendants in the present. And furthermore and more fundamental, to connect the tunnels of time: what is happening to us now, the harshness of a society's life, is related to the torture and disappearance of thousands of combatants and their families. What matters is for memory to keep moving towards the future of the whole society.

5. As we explained in the introduction, Enzo Traverso, quoting Benjamin, suggests that the emergence, in broad terms, of memory in the public space in our societies is part of a very general trend that is characteristic of modernity: the crisis of the transmission or of a particular mode of transmission, which could be called secular. Considering that this interview is for a film journal, we also thought it would be interesting to ask a question that attempts in some way to connect history and memory with cinema and, by extension, the audiovisual. What has been the role of cinema, and of audiovisual media in general, during the twentieth century, in the continued decline of transmitted experience? Could cinema, all differences considered, have made up in certain ways for the task of collective transmission? And at the risk of making our definition too vague or too ambitious, by cinema we mean everything from the Hollywood Western to a work like Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*, for example.

Maximiliano Fuentes
Indeed, cinema occupies a place of prime importance in the construction of common experiences. To a great extent, it has contributed to the creation of shared visions of the past which have often developed parallel, non-touching paths with academic historiographical reflections. This was already happening in the early years of the First World War—and even earlier—with the boom in films that focused on criticising the violence of war and advocating pacifist values. This focus became all the more intense in the Second World War, as is well known. Without a doubt, the dominant interpretations in social terms of Nazism and the memories constructed around it would be inexplicable without referring to cinema.

Miguel Morey
Audiovisual media constitute a privileged field for the presentation of different memories, with an influence that is highly uneven in proportion to the power and interests of the companies that promote and distribute them. Consequently, the

ethnocentric point of view seems inevitable. It is worth noting, however, the emergence of a good number of what could be called post-colonial products which, although at an obvious disadvantage, have come to correct these ethnocentric habits of our memory while at the same time opening a new market.

Mireia Llorens

I admit that I have difficulty in making sense of the concept Benjamin uses to refer to the crisis of transmitted experience that emerged symbolically as of the First World War. I understand it to refer to the trauma experienced by millions of people, especially young farmers who had inherited from their ancestors a way of living and thinking, forged in a stable cultural and social context. A highly industrialised warfare, which would launch the century of mega-death, burst onto the scene and literally tore apart this mechanism of vital transmission. However, in the British case, which is the case I have most experience with, the decline of this transmitted experience could be discerned much earlier, during the Industrial Revolution. The existential continuum between generations was broken in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by an unstoppable and relentless industrial process that would condemn men, women and children to subsistence in appalling conditions of poverty and slavery, with no chance of redirecting their own personal or family heritage. The countryside, as a metonym for rural society, ancestral knowledge or even the community that was replaced by the nation itself, England, then became, as Raymond Williams posited, a space for literary recreation, nostalgic reminiscing and panegyric. Consequently, the memory of the past tends to repeat the same elegiac evocation of Old England supported by a rural backdrop of beauty and serenity, and a stable social system, free of divisions and conflicts above the purely individual level. An example of this is Siegfried Sassoon's war memoirs, in which he limits the first part of his autobiographical account to narrating his childhood and youth, with the aim of constructing an Arcadia sentenced to disappear after 1914. Obviously, I believe it important to highlight the seminal and symbolic nature of the First World War, not as a moment of a rupture of values, but as the consummation and intensification of a much earlier process. After the war, literature and art in general would enjoy an extremely fruitful period in which different movements of literary and artistic renewal coexisted with the need to narrate the war experience in the first person, leading to a veritable boom in war stories. All this certainly had a decisive impact on the task of collective transmission, as the cinema would be, especially from the Second World War on.

Javier Cercas

I do not know; I have not thought about this issue. For me, cinema has done wonderful things in the twentieth century (for example, as Borges noted, preserving the epic, which the novel had abandoned), but I cannot see how it could do what you are suggesting, at least, not on its own. Perhaps it is because identity is not forged today like it was in the nineteenth century, in relatively small and isolated communities, but in a way that is much more open or, to use the buzzword, global, and also plural, and thus by means of many different instruments with many different origins, including cinema, at least in the era of its heyday in the mid-twentieth century, when it was the great form of entertainment and perhaps the great universal art form, or one of the greatest. So maybe now identity is forged through cinema and television and the Internet and social networks and literature and theatre and also, as always, through community and family. In any case, I do not think that ephemeral personal experience has completely replaced transmitted experience; indeed, I do not think, if he was alive, Benjamin would think so either.

Xavier Antich
There is no doubt that, indeed, cinema has contributed, as a privileged medium of visual culture in mass society, to the collective transmission of history, the awareness of certain traumatic events of the past and the knowledge of realities that are absent from the official narratives. And, certainly, this will continue to be so, due to the immense communication potential of cinema as a medium.

Carmen Castillo
In Chile, films have played a role, of course. But there is still a lot left to do. The films of Patricio Guzman, of course, his masterful La batalla de Chile (The Battle of Chile, 1975), chronicling the energy and the hopes of a generation at war is essential today to connect the past and the future. But our films should be accompanied by debates about the present. As long as the actors of the past, even the filmmakers, can make footprints, we will have contributed something. But we also need to fight to distribute these films, we need to go out and debate. We need to offer keys to understanding them with the words of our present experience, to bring these films out of the film libraries and into the streets. It is always essential to find the meeting point between then and now. The clash, the emotion that opens up a window in minds put to sleep by entertainment and consumption. It is a difficult task, but not impossible.

6. Finally, considering that this issue of *L'Atalante* is dedicated to the First World War, it also seems appropriate to ask a question directly related to the war and to the strategies to commemorate the anniversary, but focusing on our country. Although it is a well-known fact that Spain did not participate directly in the war, why do you think the First World War forms no part of any political memory in our country? Can the explanation be as simple as the obvious point made above, that it was not one of the belligerent nations?

Maximiliano Fuentes
The explanation for the absence of the Great War in our country is related to various factors. Spain's neutrality is an obvious and basic factor. However, it is essential to consider another element that I believe is central: the idea spread by numerous intellectuals that Spain was not part of Europe; that is, that it kept out of the debates and the consequences of everything that happened outside its borders. This is what explains, among other factors, why a country which, although it did not take part in the war, suffered most of its consequences—economic crisis, serious social tensions, authoritarian projects after the conflict—was and is still absent from the major commemorative processes that began on the centenary of the outbreak of the war.

Miguel Morey
I think that any attempt at an explanation must also take into account that we are separated from 1914 by the memory erasure that Spain was subjected to during the forty years of the Franco regime, and the imposition of a history of the victors, presented as the victory of (Western Christian) civilisation over barbarism; that the resistance to this identity theft was based on a memory of the vanquished; and the First World War was too distant and insufficiently malleable to be of interest to either side.

Mireia Llorens
I do not have in-depth knowledge of the impact that the First World War had on Spain. But although it may seem obvious, the fact that Spain

did not participate in the conflict directly and, therefore, did not have to overcome the traumatic effects discussed earlier in relation to the articulation of a collective mourning, influences how the First World War is perceived: possibly, as a distant historical fact, unrelated to the collective transmission. It is also true that Spain has not been exactly notable for its agility, after the Transition, in terms of dealing with the presentation of the memory of the vanquished, among other memories, which had been deliberately concealed. Therefore, given this less than swift response to its own recent history, it would be difficult for the First World War to occupy a prominent place in Spain's memory policy. The tragic magnitude of what was to happen after 1918 would be significant enough to reduce the Great War to a merely symbolic importance as an inaugural event.

Javier Cercas
Of course; we should not read more into it than there is. We might think it good or bad, but it is a fact: in our country there is neither memory nor history of the First World War, just as there is neither memory nor history of the Second or of the Holocaust, or if there is, their existence is only incidental. How can we commemorate something that was never in our memory? It is true that the First World War changed the world and therefore, for better or for worse, it changed Spain too, and there are many things that could be done about it; but the fact is that they are not done. These things are the result of sitting on the side lines of Europe for centuries. To quote General de Gaulle once again: "Ah, l'Espagne, c'est déjà l'Afrique".

Xavier Antich
Undoubtedly, that may be a decisive reason. But nevertheless, in my opinion, the most important reason is broader, affecting Spain's problem with memory and the public and institutional absence of a systematic policy of memory that can address the past in a way that is analogous and equivalent to that of neighbouring countries, due mainly, albeit partly, to the inability to critically address the immediate past of the Franco regime, which has yet to be condemned at the highest political levels in Spain. ■

conclusion
PAST AND PRESENT: HISTORY, MEMORY AND JUSTICE

RAMÓN GIRONA
IMMA MERINO

While we were working on (Dis)agreements for this issue of *L'Atalante*, the French (and, to a lesser extent, the Spanish) press reported on the opening of the Memorial of Rivesaltes, located at a camp in Roussillon occupied by a compound which, from 1940 until as recently as 2007, had housed a multitude of people displaced for political or economic reasons, and people outcast or persecuted by different regimes that imprisoned and repressed them. Thus, acquiring a symbolic dimension, this camp in Rivesaltes, covering a vast expanse of 640 hectares, is a site of a memory of the twentieth century that remains for us today, and a reflection of that century's history; it could be said, of a part of that history that is no stranger to silence, to culpable concealment and, therefore, to forgetting. At the opening ceremony for the Memorial, an austere, earth-coloured building that is practically invisible against the terrain into which it appears to have sunk, Prime Minister Manuel Valls stated, and was quoted by various media networks, that this was a space to remember one of the darkest episodes in the history of France; and not only France, but the forgetful Spain as well, as among the first people to be imprisoned in the Rivesaltes camp were Spanish Republicans.

The Rivesaltes camp is also called Camp Joffre in honour of Marshal Joffre, who was born in this town, located about fifteen kilometres from Perpignan. Joseph Joffre was considered a French hero in the First World War for having stopped the advance of the German troops in the Battle of the Marne. Camp Joffre, in fact, is one part of the Rivesaltes camp where, after the Great War, military exercises were carried out until the reduction of the French army under the Vichy government. Vichy, allied with the Third Reich, converted it in July 1940 into a concentration camp for enemies or those deemed undesirable: communists, socialists and anarchists; Jews, both French and Jews from Central Europe who had come to France to escape the Nazis and who, caught by the Nazis once again, passed through Rivesaltes before being deported to Auschwitz and other death camps; Gypsies, all kinds of métèques and other nomads; Spanish Republicans who, having passed through other refugee camps

that were turned into concentration camps in the south of France, had not yet found a destination since their retreat from Spain; also retreating were members of the International Brigades, some of whom were also held there; thousands of foreigners, coming from northern and eastern Europe, were left without resources within French territory.

It should also be noted that after the liberation of France and the end of the Second World War, German prisoners and Nazi and Vichy collaborators were held at the Rivesaltes camp, and later on, defectors from the First Indochina War and other conflicts with the colonies, such as the Algerian War; then, when the War of Independence was over, the so-called Harkis (Algerians of Arab and Berber origin who had been trained to fight against the independence movement in their country) were transferred to the camp: corps exploited by the French state which, once they ceased to be useful, were hidden away temporarily in that confinement until most of them were given work in mining regions of the north. The Rivesaltes camp, where soldiers from Guinea and Indochina were also confined, was officially closed in 1966, but subsequently, from 1986 to 2007, the compound was used as an administrative detention centre, an equivalent of any deplorable immigration detention centre, for the imprisonment of "illegal immigrants", the so-called sans papiers, many of whom were held there before being expelled from France.

The detention centre in Rivesaltes has not been shut down, but was moved to another location so that, in a bitter irony, the Memorial could be erected here. The Memorial consists of a 220-metre long building designed by Rudy Ricciotti, extending to the compound which, at the request of the architect himself, has not been pulled down, but stands in its ruinous state as the last vestige of those spaces of confinement. It was not in this compound that the sans papiers were held for twenty years, but in prefabricated buildings in which they lived in subhuman conditions.

We thus visited the Rivesaltes Memorial on a sunny November day on which not even a light north wind was blowing. There was the compound in ruins, the desolate expanse of the camp we passed through, and yet, how difficult it was on that beautiful day, and perhaps even on a day with less sunshine, to imagine what had happened there.

The Memorial building, which offers no views of the landscape outside it, contains a large hall where different screens show images that document the historic events that led to the establishment of the Rivesaltes camp: the Spanish Civil War and the Republican defeat; the Second World War and the deportation of victims to the death camps; and the wars of independence in the colonies. The history of the Rivesaltes camp was therefore framed by a series of different historical contexts. The Memorial, which will host temporary exhibitions and seminars, is presented as a place for the organisation of educational projects. In any case, it is a "space to not forget", as Manuel Valls said at the opening, which was created in a climate of controversy surrounding the policies of memory and their alleged manipulation. We can say that some voices linked to France's National Front vindicated the Harkis as fighters for France who were not recognised and who were supposedly relegated to the background at the Memorial. These may have been the same voices who claimed that it must have been part of a plot against the National Front that some of the camp's files, related mainly to the period 1941-1942, were found in November 1996 in a municipal dump in Perpignan. They were found by a municipal employee, Jacques Chamoux, who rescued them from the garbage and reported the fact to the journalist Joël Mettay, who then wrote an article in L'Indépendant and who, on the basis that "these 'waste papers' are the history of the everyday injustices and suffering endured by thousands of

human beings"[1], undertook an investigation that led him to write the book L'archipel du mépris (2001), published by the Trabucaire publishing house with the subtitle Histoire du camp de Rivesaltes 1939 à nos jours.

As he explained in the epilogue to his book, Jöel Mettay was accused of airing the case to promote the electoral interests of the Socialist Party in Perpignan. One such accuser was the prefect Bernard Bonnet, who also spoke of an "outrage à la mémoire" comparable to the desecration of Jewish graves in Perpignan's Haut-Vernet cemetery in 1993, on the night before the first round of municipal elections. Nevertheless, the controversy raised awareness about the history of the Rivesaltes camp and its significance. Hence the research by journalists and historians, such as Mettay or Nicolas Lebourg and Abderahmen Moumen, the last two being the authors of Rivesaltes, Le camp de la France (Trabucaire, 2015). In a recent interview, published by Libération on October 16, 2015, Moumen asserted that "the history of the Rivesaltes camp brings to light the technocratic management of human flows on the part of the State. This camp is the sign of the State's desire to control migrant communities on its territory"[2]. The recovery of this history began with the act of a municipal employee who saved the files from destruction. This act, so real but also containing such extraordinary symbolic force, laid the foundations for the Rivesaltes Memorial fought for by citizens and groups who understand that for memory to survive, we must work for it and reflect on the ways to transmit it.

And remnants of that memory are in the big hall, on the screens showing, in a loop, fragments of the retreat from Spain, images of deported Jews, of Algerian soldiers... And there are also audio testimonies by survivors, turned into stories that visitors can listen to on headphones; and other testimonies, like fragments of letters, of drawings, of identity documents, of items used for daily existence in the camp, of suitcases, pieces of wire and of walls... Vestiges, memories, fragments, too, like the compound outside, and faced with them, once again the same question, the same conclusion: how difficult it is to imagine, to feel, what happened there.

In his essay "The Abuses of Memory", Todorov points out that a phenomenon is unique to personal experience. In the section entitled "Memory and Justice" (Todorov, 2006: 6-26), the philosopher and historian distinguishes between the public and the private sphere, recognising that everyone has a right to recover the past, their past, but that this is not the function of the public space, or it is in a different way. The public space cannot submit to the cult of memory because to do so would make it sterile. The philosopher distinguishes between the literal recovery of the event,[3] of the experience, and the exemplary—and therefore patterned—use of that event. The literal use makes it unsurpassable and renders the present a slave to the past. Todorov advocates the exemplary use of the event, which allows the past to be used with the present in mind, taking lessons from the injustices suffered and abandoning the self to reach out to the other. The literal memory is nothing more than memory; the exemplary memory is justice, according to the philosopher. Todorov adds a final reflection or warning: preoccupation with the past cannot be an excuse to ignore the present. And especially not in this present, in which thousands upon thousands of people are fleeing wars, dictatorships and poverty in search of a refuge that they do not always find. On the evening of the day we visited Rivesaltes, the jihadist attacks took place in Paris. A new pretext to close and control the borders, in spite of the fact that the perpetrators of the attacks grew up in France, in urban slums where people live with a sense of exclusion. ■

NOTES

1 Quote translated by the editor. In the original text: "ces 'vieux papiers' sont l'histoire de jour à jour des injustices et des souffrances subies par des milliers d'êtres humains".

2 Quote translated by the editor. In the original text: "l'histoire du camp de Rivesaltes dessine en creux celle de la gestion technocratique des flux humains par l'Etat. Ce camp est le signe de la volonté étatique de parvenir à contrôler les corps migrants sur son territoire".

3 "Suppose an event—let us posit a painful segment of my past or of the past of the group to which I belong—is preserved literally (which does not mean truly); it remains an intransitive fact, leading nowhere beyond itself" (Todorov, 1996: 14).

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FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR TO THE PRESENT: HISTORY AND MEMORY, A CENTURY FOR REFLECTION

Abstract

Taking the First World War and the commemoration of its centenary as a starting point, this article/questionnaire offers a reflection on the past in the broadest sense, on the uses of history and memory, or memories, and their use by the most diverse groups; from their appropriation by power —or powers— in an attempt to offer an official history that legitimizes it in the public eye and perpetuates it, to their utilization by those who do not support the powers that be and develop narratives of resistance and reparation. The article also reflects on the uses of history and memory as a cultural or consumer product, the consequence of a commemorative obsession in Western societies, and the perhaps inevitable conversion of many of the sites of memory into tourist attractions.

Key words

History; Memory; First World War; Commemorations; Memory tourism.

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Miguel Morey Farré (b. Barcelona, 1950). Professor emeritus of Philosophy at the Universitat de Barcelona. He has translated the works of Michel Foucault, Giorgio Colli, Gilles Deleuze, and Pascal Quignard, among others. His main publications are:

DE LA PRIMERA GUERRA MUNDIAL AL PRESENTE: HISTORIA Y MEMORIA, UN SIGLO PARA LA REFLEXIÓN

Resumen

Tomando como punto de partida la Primera Guerra Mundial y la conmemoración de su centenario, el presente texto/cuestionario propone una reflexión sobre el pasado, en sentido amplio, sobre los usos de la Historia y la memoria, o memorias, y su utilización por parte de los más diversos colectivos; desde su apropiación por parte del poder —de los poderes—, en un intento por ofrecer una historia oficial, que lo legitime ante la opinión pública y lo perpetúe, hasta su utilización por parte de aquellos que no lo sustentan y que elaboran relatos de resistencia, de reparación. El texto también reflexiona sobre les usos culturales o de consumo de la Historia y la memoria, fruto de una cierta obsesión conmemorativa, en las sociedades occidentales, y de la conversión, tal vez inevitable, de muchos de los lugares de la memoria en polos de atracción turística.

Palabras Clave

Historia; memoria; Primera Guerra Mundial; actos conmemorativos; turismo de la memoria.

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Camino de Santiago (1987), *El orden de los acontecimientos* (1988), *Nietzsche, una biografía* (1993); *Deseo de ser piel roja* (winner of the 12th Anagrama Essay Prize, 1994); *Pequeñas doctrinas de la soledad* (2007); *Monólogos de la bella durmiente. Sobre María Zambrano* (2010); *Hotel Finisterre* (2011); *Lectura de Foucault* (2014); and *Escritos sobre Foucault* (2014).

Jordi Font Agulló (b. Sant Miquel de Fluvià, 1964). Historian, cultural administrator and curator. He has been the director at the Museu Memorial de l'Exili (La Jonquera, Spain) since February 2008. In recent years his research work has focused on the field of cultural history and the relationship between history and memory. Contemporary art is also one of his main professional interests. He is a member of the research group GREF-CEFID (Grup de Recerca sobre l'Època Franquista i Centre d'Estudis sobre les Èpoques Franquista i Democràtica) at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the research group Història, Memòria i Identitats de la Universitat de Girona (Institut de Recerca Històrica), and researcher for the project Memoria y sociedad. Las políticas de reparación y memoria y los procesos sociales en la construcción de la memoria pública contemporánea en España: conflicto, representación y gestión (Universitat de Barcelona, 2011-2014). He is also a member of the ACCA (Associació Catalana de Crítics d'Art).

Javier Cercas Mena (b. Ibahernando, 1962). Writer. In his famous novel *Soldados de Salamina* (2001), he offers a fictional treatment of a real episode of the Spanish Civil War (a mass execution by firing squad which the Falangist writer Rafael Sánchez Mazas survived) vindicating the unsung heroes who do not even receive a footnote on this page in history. His latest book, *El impostor* (2014), takes up the case of Enric Marco (who falsified his biography claiming, along with other fabrications, that he had been interned in a Nazi concentration camp) to reflect on how the past is constructed. Cercas calls into question the concept of historical memory, arguing that memory is individual, partial and subjective, while history is collective and aspires to be complete and objective. His other books, which usually combine research with narrative techniques and metaliterary reflections, include *Anatomía de un instante* (2009), about the attempted coup d'etat in Spain on 23 February, 1981.

tiago (1987), *El orden de los acontecimientos* (1988), *Nietzsche, una biografía* (1993); *Deseo de ser piel roja* (XXII premio Anagrama de Ensayo, 1994); *Pequeñas doctrinas de la soledad* (2007); *Monólogos de la bella durmiente. Sobre María Zambrano* (2010); *Hotel Finisterre* (2011); *Lectura de Foucault* (2014); *Escritos sobre Foucault* (2014).

Jordi Font Agulló (Sant Miquel de Fluvià, 1964). Historiador, gestor cultural y comisario de exposiciones. Desde febrero de 2008 dirige el Museu Memorial de l'Exili (La Jonquera-España). En los últimos años ha centrado su atención profesional en el ámbito de la historia sociocultural y las relaciones entre historia y memoria. Asimismo, el arte actual es también uno de sus principales intereses profesionales. Es miembro del GREF-CEFID (Grup de Recerca sobre l'Època Franquista i Centre d'Estudis sobre les Èpoques Franquista i Democràtica) de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, del grupo de investigación Història, Memòria i Identitats de la Universitat de Girona (Institut de Recerca Històrica) e investigador en el proyecto *Memoria y sociedad. Las políticas de reparación y memoria y los procesos sociales en la construcción de la memoria pública contemporánea en España: conflicto, representación y gestión* (Universitat de Barcelona, 2011-2014). También forma parte del ACCA (Associació Catalana de Crítics d'Art).

Javier Cercas Mena (Ibahernando, 1962). Escritor. En su famosa novela *Soldados de Salamina* (2001), aborda a través de la ficción narrativa un episodio real de la Guerra Civil Española (un fusilamiento colectivo al cual sobrevivió el escritor falangista Rafael Sánchez Mazas) vindicando los héroes anónimos, que ni tan siquiera tienen una nota a pie de página en la historia. En su libro más reciente, *El impostor* (2014), parte del caso de Enric Marco (que falseó su biografía haciendo creer junto a otras invenciones que estuvo internado en un campo de concentración nazi) para reflexionar sobre cómo se construye el pasado. Cercas pone en cuestión el concepto de memoria histórica considerando que la memoria es individual, parcial y subjetiva mientras que la historia es colectiva y aspira a ser total y objetiva. Entre otros libros, que suelen combinar la investigación con procedimientos narrativos y reflexiones metaliterarias, también ha publicado *Anatomía de un instante* (2009), sobre el 23-F.

Xavier Antich Valero (b. La Seu d'Urgell, 1962). Doctor of Philosophy at the Universitat de Barcelona and Professor of Aesthetics and Art Theory at the Universitat de Girona. He is the principal investigator of a R+D+i research project for the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness Excellence Program (with the research group Teories de l'Art Contemporani de la UdG). He has been Visiting Chair at Stanford University (Palo Alto, California, US) and The Lisbon Consortium (Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, Lisbon, Portugal). He has also been the director of the Programa d'Estudis Independents at the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) and of the Master's program in Communications and Art Criticism at Universitat de Girona. He has published several books and more than 100 journal articles on philosophy, aesthetics, art, photography and music (especially contemporary). His articles also abound with reflections on the universe of the Nazi concentration camp and on art after Auschwitz. He received the Premi Octubre d'Assaig Joan Fuster prize for his essay *El rostre de l'altre. Passeig filosòfic per l'obra d'Emmanuel Lévinas*. He is a regular contributor to the newspapers *La Vanguardia* and *Ara*, and is assistant director of the philosophy program *Amb filosofia* (TV3. Televisió de Catalunya).

Carmen Castillo Echeverria (b. Santiago de Chile, 1945). A writer and film documentary maker with a degree in History, she is a member of Chile's Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), and remained in Chile resisting the dictatorship after the Pinochet coup. On October 5, 1974, the Chilean secret police (DINA) raided the house where she lived secretly with Miguel Enriquez, leader of the MIR. He was assassinated and she survived the raid in circumstances which, thirty years later, she reconstructed in *Calle Santa Fe* (2007), a documentary in which personal memory is linked to the collective, specifically for the purpose of recovering the history of the MIR movement massacred under the dictatorship. Another of her landmark documentaries is *La Flaca Alejandra* (1994), which owes its title to the nickname of Marcia Alejandra Merino, another MIR member who, under torture, betrayed her comrades and became a DINA collaborator. This exemplary documentary explains the modus operandi of the dictatorship's killing machine through the testimony of someone who crossed over to the other side, without ever falling into the temptation to judge or punish the traitor.

Xavier Antich Valero (La Seu d'Urgell, 1962). Doctor en Filosofía por la UB y profesor titular de Estética y Teoría del Arte de la Universitat de Girona. Es el investigador principal de un proyecto de investigación de R+D+i del Programa de Excelencia del Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (con el grupo de investigación Teories de l'Art Contemporani de la UdG). Ha sido *Visiting Chair* en la Universidad de Stanford (Palo Alto, California, EEUU) y en The Lisbon Consortium (Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, Lisboa, Portugal). Ha sido el director del Programa d'Estudis Independents del MACBA y del Máster en Comunicació i crítica d'art de la UdG. Ha publicado diversos libros y más de un centenar de artículos en revistas especializadas sobre filosofía, estética, arte, fotografía y música, especialmente contemporáneos. En sus artículos también hay abundantes reflexiones sobre el universo concentracionario del nazismo y sobre el arte después de Auschwitz. Recibió el Premi Octubre d'Assaig Joan Fuster por el ensayo *El rostre de l'altre. Passeig filosòfic per l'obra d'Emmanuel Lévinas*. Colabora regularmente en los periódicos *La Vanguardia* y *Ara;* es subdirector del programa *Amb filosofia* (TV3. Televisió de Catalunya).

Carmen Castillo Echeverría (Santiago de Chile, 1945). Licenciada en Historia, es una escritora y documentalista cinematográfica. Militante del MIR (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario), permaneció en Chile resistiendo a la dictadura después del golpe de estado de Pinochet. El 5 de octubre de 1974, la policía secreta (DINA) asaltó la casa donde vivía clandestinamente junto a Miguel Enríquez, máximo líder del MIR. Él fue asesinado y ella sobrevivió al asalto en unas circunstancias que, treinta años más tarde, reconstruyó en *Calle Santa Fe* (2007), un documental en que la memoria personal se liga a la colectiva, sobre todo con el propósito de restituir la historia del MIR, movimiento masacrado por la dictadura. Otro documental fundamental de Carmen Castillo es *La Flaca Alejandra* (1994), que debe su título al sobrenombre de Marcia Alejandra Merino, una militante del MIR que, bajo tortura, delató a sus compañeros y se convirtió en colaboradora de la DINA. Es un documental ejemplar que, para que explique el funcionamiento de la máquina de matar de la dictadura, recoge el testimonio de alguien que pasó al *otro lado*. Lo hace sin caer en la tentación de juzgar a la *traidora* o vengarse de ella.

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Girona, Ramón, Merino, Inma (2016). From the First World War to the present: History and Memory, a Century for Reflection. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 133-164.

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Referencia de este artículo

Girona, Ramón, Merino, Inma (2016). De la Primera Guerra Mundial al presente: historia y memoria, un siglo para la reflexión. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 133-164.

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VANISHING POINTS

THE DOLL IN THE IMAGINARY OF THE LATE FRANCOIST PERIOD: AN ANALYSIS OF *NO ES BUENO QUE EL HOMBRE ESTÉ SOLO*

SILVIA GUILLAMÓN-CARRASCO

One of the most oft-recurring fantasies in the Western imaginary in relation to femininity is the idea of creating an artificial woman to replace real women, a doll[1] that finds its origins in the myth of Pygmalion, and that has returned again and again in the form of the ideal girlfriend, wife or lover. This article offers an analysis of the doll, which forms part of a long line of representations of the feminine associated (in an unsettlingly touching and perverse manner) with the dead lover (Bronfen, 1992: 59-75; Pedraza, 1998: 125-163), through an analysis of Pedro Olea's film *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo* (It Is Not Good For Man to Be Alone, 1973). This study will take a gender-based approach and apply a methodology of textual analysis that takes into account both the construction of gender discourses and representations in film narration and the processes of signification derived formally from the audiovisual language of the filmic text.

My exploration of the film will also consider the connection between the historical context and the text analysed, understanding the latter as a symptom of the crisis that afflicted the patriarchal and family-centred system in the late Francoist period, a historical moment when the central issues of Spain's transitional period first began to be raised (Monleón, 1995: 10-16), and when certain discursive fluctuations between progressivism and tradition, between the crisis of gender roles and their persistence, became explicitly perceptible. As noted by Folguera (1988: 111-131), the models that had homogenised the cultural imaginary of the dictatorship began to come undone in the last years of Francoism. These stereotypes, which were depicted in domestic melodramas through the images of the angel in the house and the *pater familias* (Martín, 2005: 114-138), were proving obsolete in a society where there were increased calls for the integration of women into the workplace and an effec-

tive change in gender relations. The new gender discourses began to penetrate the social fabric as a result of the activity of feminists in the 1970s who began to raise serious questions about the patriarchy that highlighted the urgent need for real change at all levels of society. These discursive tensions appear in the texts of the period as symptoms of certain social issues that will be interpreted in this article in relation to the attitudes towards the dictatorship of a society that was already preparing for a transition to democracy. In this context, *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo* depicts the decline of Francoist gender discourse by linking the theme of the melancholic subject to the trope of the doll.

Olea's film narrates the story of Martín, a lonely and rather reclusive widower who lives out a conjugal relationship with a life-size doll. The doll is a reproduction of his wife Elena, who died in a tragic car accident on their wedding day. In his *relationship* with the doll, Martín has not only physically recreated his late wife, but has also designed a script for her behaviour (with the pertinent responses). The relationship that Martín establishes with the doll can be interpreted on the basis of the notion of melancholia and its particular connection with the processes of sublimation of the lost object. As suggested by Butler (2001: 149), melancholia represents a specific mode of identification whereby the subject denies his loss, attempts to preserve the lost object and internalizes it as a fundamental part of his identity, making it a *co-extension* of the ego. In this sense, it could be argued that Martín acts as a melancholic subject, since he denies the loss of his wife and incorporates her into his own ego, turning her into a primary part of his own identity. Butler suggests that «the melancholic refuses the loss of the object, and internalization becomes a strategy for magically resuscitating the lost object» (Butler, 2001: 95). In the film this process of reviving the lost object is symbolised in the doll, a fetish-object that «replaces the human

Figures 1 y 2. ***No es bueno que el hombre esté solo*** **(Pedro Olea, 1973).**

sex object with another object associated with it» (Tuñón, 2015: 46) and that allows Martín to establish a sublimation fantasy of his dead wife, or rather, a sublimation fantasy of the bourgeois ideal of marital bliss harmony.

In his relationship with the doll, Martín portrays (literally, as he himself is the subject in the performance) a marital relationship through the repetition of everyday events; however, this rep-

etition does not refer literally to the lost object, as he acts out idealised scenes which he never actually experienced. It should therefore be interpreted as an imaginary representation of something he longs for but never actually knew, given that he never had the experience of a marital relationship with Elena. In this context, the doll projects an exalted image of the wife, an image that symbolises the ideal of bourgeois femininity, becoming an imaginary projection of Martín's desire. The doll is a symptom of the protagonist's condition, a defensive process of the ego that transfers the grief of his loss onto a place inhabited by performance, by fantasy, a place that denies his loss and facilitates the realisation of his desire.

IN THESE FORMS OF FANTASY, DESIRE IS INSCRIBED IN THE STORY IN RELATION TO CULTURALLY AND SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED PLACES THAT DEFINE THE DICHOTOMOUS CATEGORIES OF MASCULINITY AND FEMININITY

The notion of fantasy is introduced into the film's narrative on these terms and this, paradoxically, opens up a gap in the naturalised representation of gender, as I will argue below. But first, it is important to note that the hegemonic standards of narrative cinema are intended to convey a *naturalised* representation of the categories of femininity and masculinity through identifications whose purpose is to perpetuate the social and sexual roles defined by patriarchal society.

De Lauretis (1995: 37-64) explores the connections between gender, narration and spectator-subject, arguing that the notion of fantasy refers not so much to the presence of the object of desire as to the *stage*. In this sense, it is worth highlighting the importance of the acting out of the desire, of the place in which the subject (with his presence) can form part of his own fantasy, or participate in it in another way: symbolically, through the syntax of film. On this point, De Lauretis (1995: 54-60) suggests that this description of the subject trapped in a series of images is revealing for film theory as it provides us with the key to the operation of spectator identification, pointing to the connection between the processes of private fantasy (articulated in relation to the psychoanalytical subject) and the public forms of fantasy that are articulated, especially, in narrative cinema.

In these forms of fantasy, desire is inscribed in the story in relation to culturally and socially constructed places that define the dichotomous categories of masculinity and femininity. But the operation of hegemonic gender roles requires a *naturalised* representation of gender, a performance that is not explicitly identified as a performance in the film. This is what Olea proposes by placing fantasy at the very heart of the filmic representation. The film suggests the idea that gender relationships are everyday *performances*, like those acted out by Martín with his doll when he recreates the fantasy of an ideal marriage which, furthermore, never really existed. Martín's fiction represents an attempt to transfer loss and channel desire through the ritualised performance of social conventions in which gender roles are symbolised in a bourgeois domestic imaginary associated with the ideology of the *angel in the house*. This imaginary, centred on the household universe and associated with private life, actively pursues the separation of sexual and political discourses in order to «introduce a new form of political power» (Armstrong, 1991: 15), a model of subjectivity which, as a product of bourgeois society, is posited as desirable and within everyone's reach, a functional model for the hierarchical structuring of society based on gender division.

If it seems that the depiction of these everyday rituals in Olea's film posits a disruption in the *naturalised* representation of gender, it is because

the spectator's identification with the protagonist is mediated through the notions of performance and fantasy, which reminds us that both masculinity and femininity are constructs that refer not to a supposedly natural reality but to the terms of a discourse, of social rituals, of the representation of models or roles to be followed, of the repetition of a series of codes or norms that we are required to observe both in social contexts and in private spaces.

THE FUNCTION OF THE UNCANNY

As noted by Pedraza (1998), the film begins by situating us in a unique setting, a mixture of the baroque and the ugly, which she interprets to be an allegory for Francoism. Following the opening credits, which show a photograph of Martin's late wife (in her wedding dress) and a table clock symbolising the passage of time, in a clear allusion to melodrama, a privileged genre for the presentation of the ideology of domesticity (Armstrong, 1991: 15-43), the first scene could not be more powerful. In this scene, the first shots of Martín contrast with the distance shots showing us the strange presence of the *wife*, who lies completely still on the bed, with her face covered by a long mane of hair that conceals her true nature. At the same time, the theme of the double is suggested symbolically in the constant presence of Martín in the mirrors of the house: in the bathroom and on the door of the wardrobe, which creates a kind of *mise en abyme* when we see his image reflected in another of the mirrors in the bedroom. This repetition and preponderance of the character's reflection in the mirror introduces the theme of the performance that Martín is playing out in his life.

At this point in the film, the spectator is still unaware that the protagonist is living with a doll, and our interpretation of the character of Elena will therefore change substantially about half-way through the film, when we realise that all of Martín's actions (locking away and concealing Elena; the separation of his private and public lives) are the product of his peculiar relationship with the doll; i.e., they occur because the protagonist is aware that this relationship is socially abnormal. However, in the beginning, the performance serves to deceive the spectator, to make us believe that Martín's wife exists, that she is seriously ill and that he has her shut up in the house not out of sadism but to protect her from the outside world, a dangerous world from which she must be sheltered.

But returning to the question of representation, the peculiar *mise en abyme* of the mirrors is not the only way that the theme of performance and fantasy is introduced in the film. A particularly significant scene is the one in which Martín invites Paula (his wife's sister), another doll with whom he performs the role of the ideal husband. Seated facing one another at the table, the two dolls symbolise the two female stereotypes par excellence: the virginal woman and the carnal woman. The first represents the de-sexualised and sickly wife, who exhibits her slightly emaciated angelical beauty with long red hair and a white dress, symbolising the sublimated, pure love of the conjugal relationship. The second represents vitality and sensuality, dressed in black with a plunging neckline that Martín can't help but notice, and her face, enhanced by make-up, appears healthier and more cheerful. Between the two is Martín, who has arranged everything for a big celebration. After dinner, he dresses up as a master of ceremonies and entertains his *audience* by projecting a blank film on the wall which he *fills* with his presence as an actor in front of the dolls, for whom he dances and performs to sound of cabaret music. With this private show, Martín also identifies himself as the subject and object of the performance: as the subject who performs and acts with the others, and as the object of the performance, the spectacle intended to entertain, amuse and delight his audience (the dolls/the spectators).

Figures 3, 4 y 5. *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo* (Pedro Olea, 1973).

But the film poses another dilemma that brings the notion of the uncanny into play in relation to the doll. Over the course of the film, the narration serves first to confuse the spectator, making us believe that the doll is Martín's wife, and then, once we know the truth, raises a slight doubt as to the inert condition of the doll and her state of *longing* (a characteristically human condition). I refer here to the ambiguous depiction of the doll at certain moments of the film, which appear to evoke the notion of the uncanny which Freud (1974: 2483-2491) referred to as the interpretation offered by Jentsch of the doll Olimpia in E.T.A. Hoffmann's short story *The Sandman*. According to this interpretation, the doubt as to whether an inanimate object can come to life in some way evokes a sensation of the uncanny, as experienced by Nathaniel, the story's protagonist, who believes that the doll is alive.

Olea's film plays with the confusion over the inanimate state of Elena in a significant scene in which we bear witness to the reality that Martín is in fact living with a doll. In the scene, Martín is reinforcing the bolts on the windows to prevent the outside world from getting into his home. However, it is precisely at this moment when the first intrusion occurs, as his placid, monotonous daily matrimonial existence is invaded by the arrival of two of his neighbours: Lina (a prostitute who lives with her pimp in a nearby block of flats) and Cati, her young daughter, who discovers Martín's great secret. Taking advantage of the widower's absence, the girl manages to invade his territory and get inside the house, where she finds Elena. In this scene, we are given our first glimpse of the doll's face, so carefully concealed until that moment. But what provokes the sensation of the uncanny, more than the revelation of the secret, is the doubt as to her inanimate nature; the fact that the doll (as an allegorical representation of femininity) is positioned as a kind of hinge «between the organic and the inorganic» (Colaizzi, 2007: 161).

Cati's intrusion into the mansion is presented as an unsolved mystery, as all the security systems installed around the house (bolts, blinds, padlocks...) fail to prevent her from entering. What the film posits is a problem related to the doll's loneliness, or rather, with the doll's maternal *desire* (if we accept, in keeping with the fantasy genre, that an inanimate being can in fact desire things). In effect, it is suggested that it was the doll herself who opened the doors of the mansion to the girl. This is at least the conclusion of Martín, who reproaches her gently for her attitude.

The doll's inability to have children, however, is presented as a threat for her husband. Her maternal *desire* is interpreted, with the entry of Cati, as a malign and unexpected intrusion into Martín's life. The girl's presence arouses the widower's jealousy, as it is revealed in his own words: «Elena, I can't be angry with you. How am I going to reproach you because you let her in and even brush your hair? Although that is something only I should do».

THE INVASION FROM THE OUTSIDE

The first part of the film clearly establishes the widower's obsession with keeping his secret under lock and key. In one of the first scenes, we see him leaving the mansion for work, but only after ensuring that he has locked it up safe and sound, as the camera shows us by zooming in on the huge bolts that prevent anyone from entering. The windows are also shut up completely to block out all outside light. The mansion is turned into another character of the story, symbolising the world in which the widower lives; a closed world, mired in the past but, at the same time, besieged by the present and the world outside. This separation between the inside and the outside underscores the principle of reality accepted by the protagonist, whose *delirium* is thus called into question, since he knows that he cannot present the doll to society, that he cannot go outside his territory with her because she is socially unacceptable. This reveals his resistance to blurring the boundaries between the public and the private, which would mean losing control over a world that he has (re-)created. However, while Martín establishes a radical dichotomy between the two worlds, he will soon find himself overwhelmed in his futile effort to keep them apart. The girl's discovery will have unexpected consequences for the widower. What at first appears a mere bit of childish mischief will turn into an invasion from the outside that ultimately displaces the residents of the house when Cati tells her mother about Martín's peculiar form of entertainment, and Lina uses this knowledge to blackmail him into allowing her to move into his home. With the idea of becoming the lady of the mansion (and also of the widower's considerable fortune), she appears at his workplace posing as his wife to compromise him socially.

Lina represents the malignant and destructive dimension of the carnal woman. From the outset, the dangerous world from which Martín wishes to protect his doll is represented in the form of this woman linked to the underworld. She poses a threat to the widower's bourgeois world because she knows what he is hiding, because she could use the information and expose his secret publicly so that he would lose his job. Her first appearance in the film reveals the sexual violence to which she is subjected by Mauro, her pimp and lover, who, in a significant moment off-screen, rapes her after a heated discussion. This scene is cross-cut to place it in contrast with another scene depicting Martín's relationship with his doll.

Lina embodies the antithesis of the virginal, angelical doll, and represents the entry into his life of a world unknown to him and which he has always tried to avoid: the world of the marginalised and of criminal activity. The interaction with this world represents contact with the *Other* and, even more disturbingly, with a female *Other* who inspires Martín's repugnance and with whom he

Figure 6. *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo* (Pedro Olea, 1973).

feels defenceless and constantly threatened. Lina's invasion, to which Martín reacts with extreme bitterness, represents a certain feminisation of the male. While the prostitute is initially represented as the victim of a pimp who rapes her and exploits her, as a woman who is intimidated and frightened by the man she loves, it is clear that when she comes into Martín's life she threatens him, exploits his situation and in turn makes him her victim. The fact that she becomes a powerful character with the ability to intimidate and subjugate Martín, the bourgeois man who had everything under control, is highly significant because it reveals to us that power relations are never static or immobile, but rather depend on the position that each individual holds in the relationship.

Lina's intrusion into his life necessarily entails the appearance of change. In contrast with the opening scenes showing the peaceful and monotonous marital life of the couple, we now see Lina cleaning and decorating the house to her tastes, taking advantage of Martín's absence. On the banister of the stairway she places a white Venus, and, replacing one of the stale old paintings that decorate the house, she hangs a calendar with a picture of a naked woman. Both objects arouse the widower's rage when he sees his home invaded by elements that evoke sensuality and which, moreover, highlight the passage of time. Later, Lina tries to reconcile with him by offering herself to him sexually; playing the role of wife, she comes to him wearing a suggestive negligee and begins unbuttoning his pyjamas. Martín, hysterical and embarrassed, tries to get away from her and defend himself against her kisses, covering himself up and expelling her from his bedroom. Annoyed by his rejection, Lina gives him a slap and decides to go a step further by insisting that he gets rid of «that revolting puppet», referring to the doll.

After this unpleasant encounter, Martín immediately decides to lock himself in his room, but on turning around he finds Marilyn, Cati's cat, on top of the doll: another sign of Lina's invasion. The reaction of Martín, who kills the cat off screen, foreshadows the tragedy that is about to unfold. Lina takes revenge for the death of the cat by killing Paula, breaking the doll's neck and leaving it lying on the floor of the garage. After this event, a series of scenes suggests that Martín, pressured by the situation, has been compelled to get rid of Elena, throwing her into the sea. Later we discover that in reality he had concealed her in the attic to prevent Lina from destroying her. Without the doll by his side, he is haunted once again by nightmares that remind him of his loss, of the death of his wife. In this respect, Martín's dream about the tragic accident that led to Elena's death on the day of his wedding is particularly significant. The scene is presented exclusively from the point of view of the protagonist. Through his eyes we see various close-ups of the newly wed Elena, looking constantly at the camera, addressing her husband and, at the same time, the audience. The extradiegetic music, played on a church organ, fills the scene up to the moment of the car accident in the tunnel. A resounding crash and a thud link into the next scene, where we see Elena in her coffin at the funeral parlour. The white of the walls, the candles, the dress and the coffin denote the purity of the deceased virgin, while a frenetic tracking shot brings the camera up to her face, framing it in a close-up. This scene reaffirms the hypothesis that the doll operates as a defence mechanism against the loss, as a way of denying and covering up the grief that threatens the subject.

THIS SCENE REAFFIRMS THE HYPOTHESIS THAT THE DOLL OPERATES AS A DEFENCE MECHANISM AGAINST THE LOSS, AS A WAY OF DENYING AND COVERING UP THE GRIEF THAT THREATENS THE SUBJECT

Figures 7 y 8. *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo* (Pedro Olea, 1973).

Martín's situation very soon goes from bad to worse. With Lina's lover practically living in his house and a party being prepared to celebrate his promotion, he decides to get rid of the intruders once and for all. He has Cati admitted to a boarding school and plots to kill the others that very night. The scene of Paula's death is repeated near the end of the film, when Lina finds Mauro on the floor of the garage in the same position that the doll had occupied, and Martín takes advantage of the moment to run her down with his car.

The final scene takes us to a party being held for Martín, who has just been promoted at work. The guests exchange puzzled comments about the lateness of the guest of honour on such an important occasion. Finally he arrives, dressed to the nines and accompanied by his doll, which he has prepared expressly for the situation.

In the opening scenes we bore witness to Martín's obsession with keeping his secret safe, his need to control the situation, to hide away from the gaze of others. A notable example of this is the scene in which he lingers in front of a shop window displaying women's underwear, eyeing the stockings[2] of the mannequins with fascination. His gaze, which he had thought had gone unnoticed, is returned by the knowing looks of the shop staff, who smile at each other as they watch him. The return of his gaze destroys the space created by the protagonist, a space that placed him in the privileged position of the *voyeur* who watches without being seen. While at the beginning of the film the doll could not appear in public because it had to be protected from the outside world where danger lurked, the final scene represents the recognition of his perversion by society, the overlapping of the private and public spaces, the difficulty of keeping the two spheres completely apart, and, in short, the impossible nature of keeping under cover, of avoiding exposure to the gaze of the other.

By way of conclusion, it is clear that Olea's film presents the loss of the model of domestic femininity from perspectives associated with trauma (the uncanny or the melancholic), which were symptomatic of the way in which Spanish society in the late Francoist period struggled with the incipient changes to gender models resulting from the resurgence of the feminist movement in the 1970s. ■

NOTES

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1 In a recent text, Julia Tuñón (2015: 41-43) analyses this concept in Olea's film from a psychoanalytical perspective, although she does not consider a specific reading of the film in relation to its context. My analysis in this article explores this connection, understanding the film as symptomatic of the socio-historical and cultural processes of the late Francoist period.

2 It is no mere coincidence that these stockings are the same ones worn by his secretary (whose legs catch Martín's eye in a previous scene, making his unsatisfied desire evident) and also the same ones we later see on the doll's legs.

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THE DOLL IN THE LATE-FRANCOIST IMAGINARY. ABOUT *NO ES BUENO QUE EL HOMBRE ESTÉ SOLO*

Abstract

This article deals with the issue of the doll as figure of the dead beloved by analysing Pedro Olea's film *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo*, a movie that presents an allegory of gender relationships under francoism. Throughout this analysis shall be reviewed the way in which the film articulates the sublimated fantasy of the melancholic protagonist, who does not resign himself to leave his object of desire and ends up fictionalising an everyday life with the doll in which recreates the normative and official values of the domestic ideology. The film shows the decline of the gender discourse under Franco through concepts such as uncanny or melancholy, both associated with trauma and characterized by revealing the capacity of the daily life to become strange and disturbing.

Key words

Fantasy; Doll; Melancholy; Uncanny; Spanish Cinema; Filmic Imaginary; Late-Francoism.

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Article reference

Guillamón-Carrasco, Silvia (2016). The Doll in the Late-francoist Imginary. About *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo*. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 167-176.

LA MUÑECA EN EL IMAGINARIO TARDOFRANQUISTA. EN TORNO A *NO ES BUENO QUE EL HOMBRE ESTÉ SOLO*

Resumen

El artículo aborda el tema de la muñeca como figuración de la amada muerta a partir del análisis de la película de Pedro Olea *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo*, un film que presenta una parábola de las relaciones de género bajo el franquismo. A lo largo del análisis se revisará la forma en que la película representa la fantasía sublimada del protagonista melancólico quien, no resignándose a abandonar su objeto de deseo, acaba recreando una convivencia con la muñeca basada en la repetición de actos cotidianos que incorporan los valores normativos de la ideología de la domesticidad. La película plantea el declive del discurso de género bajo el franquismo, estableciendo su oposición desde lo siniestro o la melancolía, lugares que remiten al trauma y que se caracterizan por exponer la capacidad de lo cotidiano para convertirse en algo extraño e inquietante.

Palabras clave

Fantasía; muñeca; melancolía; siniestro; cine español; imaginario fílmico; tardofranquismo.

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Referencia de este artículo

Guillamón-Carrasco, Silvia (2016). La muñeca en el imaginario tardofranquista. En torno a *No es bueno que el hombre esté solo*. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 167-176.

Published by / Edita

L'ATALANTE · EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

INTENTIONS AND INTERSECTIONS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC IN BRYAN FULLER'S *HANNIBAL* (NBC)

TERESA PIÑEIRO-OTERO

1. INTRODUCTION

In *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), Matthew Arnold stressed the role of culture in the growth and predominance of our humanity over our animal nature. This conception of culture as a catalyst comes undone when we meet Hannibal Lecter.

Lecter has managed to seduce audiences with his class, wit and extraordinary sensibility for art in all its manifestations. The social competence of this "aesthete killer" exposes an unsettling link between barbarism and civilisation that adds to his lethal nature (Ullyat, 2012).

Hannibal represents the hidden face of society and the fantasy of himself, the dark side of the psyche that goes astray for a reason that is explicable—a traumatic childhood event—but not socially acceptable. The horror inspired by his cannibalism is inextricably linked to his sybaritic nature, his love for cooking and sampling the rarest and most exquisite delicacies, in dining experiences invariably accompanied by music to enhance this psychotic psychiatrist's enjoyment.

While a fondness for classical music is a trait attributed to a whole generation of on-screen serial killers, Hannibal Lecter is depicted as the music lover par excellence, "moving his bloody fingers in time to the *Goldberg Variations*" (Ross, 2008: 560).

In the original, literary conception of the character, Thomas Harris gave Hannibal a taste for the music of Bach that represents an essential ingredient in the characterisation of genius. Thanks to his class and refinement he orchestrates his crimes as if they were compositions that combine music and brutality into a higher art form (Fahy, 2003).

The choice of Bach is not incidental. In Bach, "all the vital seeds of music are brought together, like the world in God. Nowhere else has there been such polyphony" (Mahler in Lack: 1999: 386). Hannibal's predilection for the *Goldberg Varia-*

tions underscores the seriality of serial killing, as it "emphasizes rationality, system, order [...], a discernible pattern, well planned, meticulously executed; it's the same thing done again and again with extraordinary efficiency, differentiated only by minor variations of *modus operandi* and an escalation of frequency" (Dyer, 2002: 112).

In this sense, the Aria from the *Goldberg Variations* constitutes an identifier for Hannibal which, like a stylistic accessory, has accompanied him in the different audiovisual adaptations of the character (Cenciarelli, 2012). This piece of music does not act as a character *leitmotif* in the sense suggested by Constantini (2001), but is introduced at moments when Lecter is able to listen to and even delight in each of its piano chords.

Through the use of the Aria, "the scene thus implicitly celebrates the fluidity of the music's identity, its ability to establish a range of relationships with the image" (Cenciarelli, 2012: 119).

Although in filmic narrative the image constitutes the conscious focal point of attention, it is the music that creates a series of effects, sensations and significations that vest the story with meaning that is projected into the visual discourse (Chion, 1993; Gorbman, 1980; Brown, 1994).

As suggested by Torrelló and Duran (2014: 111), from the moment the music appears on screen, irrespective of its form, it influences the creation and definition of the film's diegesis and the construction of the audiovisual discourse in formal, narrative, poetic, dramaturgical and psychological terms, among others. The music is not positioned on an equal footing with the image but is juxtaposed against it, acquiring its meaning through the relationship they establish in the filmic space (Aumont and Marie, 1990; Gorbman, 1987).

This phenomenon, for which Chion has coined the term *audio-vision* (1993), forms a complex structure of perception whose reading transcends the sum of the visual and auditory discourses, which constitutes the cornerstone of the television series *Hannibal* (Bryan Fuller, NBC, 2013-2015).

2. HANNIBAL: BAROQUE STYLE AND SERIAL DISSONANCES

Hannibal is a television production created by Bryan Fuller for the NBC. Based on the characters in *The Red Dragon* (1981), the first novel to feature Lecter, the series focuses on the relationship established between FBI special agent Will Graham and the famous anthropophagic psychiatrist. It is a relationship in which the music, directed by Brian Reitzell, assumes an unusually central role.

Rather than an adaptation of the saga, what Fuller proposes is a translation, in the sense this term is used by Kwaczyk-Łaskarzewska (2015) to refer to the complex process of transformation and expansion of Harris's characters in the series. Torrey (2015) takes it a step further by suggesting that *Hannibal* is a *fanfic* (fan fiction) that draws on a Lecterian universe to construct a new story with constant references to the novels and films. Yet Fuller's story creates an intertextual dissonance with the original texts by "swapping dialogue between characters and grafting quotes into completely different contexts" (Casey, 2015: 554).

The score for the series is based on electronic music that combines sound effects (beating sounds, crashes and assorted noises) with glitches, sustained notes, static and isolated sounds suggestive of chance music, with no defined melodic line. Only two compositions assume some kind of melodic form: Hannibal's theme, which the character plays on his harpsichord at the end of the episode "Futamono" (#2x06); and "Bloodfest", Reitzell's reworking of the Aria from the *Goldberg Variations* to underscore the final climax (#2x13).

The particular conception of this music, in which Reitzell makes constant use of environmental clashes and sustained tones, reveals the influence of composers like Peter Ablinger, John Cage and Morton Feldman.

Like other audiovisual adaptations of Harris's work, the series establishes a dialectic between the original music composed specifically for the

program and the music taken from the classical repertoire. Its main divergence from other productions lies in the conception of the soundtrack as a *continuum,* instead of a concatenation of cues. Even the way in which the classical compositions are introduced and varied to give way to the original score is a characteristic feature of this television series.

As in life, nothing essential occurs in *Hannibal* without the presence of sound. The music contributes actively to the interpretation of the image (Gorbman, 1980). It changes from one scene to the next to reflect the characters' identities, actions or personal evolution, as well as the development of their relationships.

Moreover, acousmatic listening (see Torelló and Durán, 2014; Chion, 1993) to different episodes of *Hannibal* reveals the existence of an enveloping musical background that contributes to the creation of the gloomy and unsettling atmosphere that characterises the series, with atmospheres based on continuous tones, static music and reverberations that are perceived unconsciously by the viewer. Following Lack (1997: 319), expressiveness is not so much a question of musicality but of the structural effectiveness implicit in the richness and textural diversity of Reitzell's work.

In this context, the music integrates the sound effects and even emulates some of these noises, taking a step further in the conception of scoring as a global sound design, a more aesthetic and immersive experience (Richardson and Gorbman, 2013: 29).

Reitzell projects this holistic view of the soundtrack in *Hannibal,* making use of "many layers in the soundscape and very little sound design [...]. The music does most of the sound FX, so there is a great deal of textural complexity" (Film Music Magazine, 2014).

Based on Murray Schafer's concept of *soundscape* (1994, 33 et seq.) the musical atmosphere of *Hannibal* can be considered a *keynote* due to its continuous background presence, which marks the texture of the series, and which to a large extent is absorbed unconsciously by the listener.

Its static essence and its tones at the extremes of the threshold of perception, coupled with its use between scenes where the music assumes a greater presence and intensity, provokes a sensation of silence in the viewer. This is what Rodríguez Bravo (1998: 50) calls a silence effect, and its impact is startling.

The music that stands out in this context, either because it accompanies and identifies characters or situations or because it has an expressive or symbolic function, constitutes the *signal* in the *soundscape* of *Hannibal.* This is the *foreground sound* which the viewer hears intermittently and consciously.

EXPRESSIVENESS IS NOT SO MUCH A QUESTION OF MUSICALITY BUT OF THE STRUCTURAL EFFECTIVENESS IMPLICIT IN THE RICHNESS AND TEXTURAL DIVERSITY OF REITZELL'S WORK

In terms of the *soundmark,* the third element that defines the soundscape (Schafer: 1994), two types of music can be identified which vest the image with symbolic value and act as an acoustic atmosphere for different spaces: (1) the musical insertion and treatment accompanying the outline of each killing made by Will Graham at the scene of the crime; and (2) the classical music used as a sonic background in Hannibal Lecter's kitchen-dining area.

Graham's presence at the murder scene is accompanied by an audiovisual curtain that triggers a drop in sonic intensity, more reverberation and a constant beating sound. These sounds help mark out an impenetrable space between two *worlds of the work* (Jullier, 2007): the diegesis, where Jack Crawford's team are investigating the crime, and the inner word of Graham, who

gets into the skin of the killer to decipher how the crime was orchestrated.

The visualisation of the protagonist's thought process breaks the linear flow of time. The images rewind and move forward again when Graham outlines the murder. The sonic projection of this process should therefore be considered metadiegetic (Gorbman, 1976) or intradiegetic (Winters, 2010).

With respect to Lecter's *soundmark*, while the identification of this character with classical music implies its extension to the whole domestic sphere, the enjoyment of these compositions is inextricably linked to the kitchen-dining area. More than half of the classical repertoire used in the first seasons of the series (32 out of 53 pieces) is introduced as diegetic music when Hannibal is cooking or enjoying a meal, giving these activities a quality akin to an operatic performance.

In spite of the definition of this sound space, it is possible to identify moments when the *soundmark* described above is absent or imperceptible. For example, the dinner with Hannibal, Will and Alana ("Naka-Choko", #2x10), when we hear a *pianissimo* rendition of Chopin's *The Raindrop Prelude Op. 28 No. 15*, or with Lecter and Crawford ("Mizumono", #2x10) which is practically silent.

3. LECTER VS. GRAHAM: ANTAGONISM IN MUSICAL FORMS

The first episode of *Hannibal* ("Apéritif", #1x01) presents the two protagonists of the series using music to emphasise their antagonism and the difference in their personalities, on the terms suggested by Prendergast (1992) or Neumeyer and Buhler (2001). Will is introduced with dissonances and intricate compositions, lacking melody or any apparent order, while Hannibal is positioned in an orderly, harmonious atmosphere with a piece as complex as it is exquisite.

When Lecter creeps into Graham's house he plays the first notes of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* on the piano. This intrusion represents an attempt to appropriate Will's space and at the same time offers new symbolic perspectives on the depiction of both characters: the music is made up of a series of games with tonality and dissonance, which may allude both to their antagonism and to their relationship with Hannibal's sacrificial victims.

The plot of Stravinsky's ballet is a bloody story of the abduction and sacrifice of a damsel who, according to the ancient tradition, must dance to her death. This composition establishes a relationship between art, the expressive force associated with dance, and ritual sacrifice.

The idea of a homicidal art, suggested in Harris's books, is taken to its furthest extreme in the series (Mcateer, 2015). Hannibal presents his killings as acts of beauty: intimate moments of remarkable virtuosity performed with apparent calmness and solemnity (Bruun Vaage, 2015).

The significance of the music in the construction of the characters is hinted at in a conversation between Lecter and Graham ("Fromage", #1x08): "Every life is a piece of music. Like music we are finite events, unique arrangements. Sometimes harmonious. Sometimes dissonant. Sometimes not worth hearing again."

The score composed by Reitzell for both characters sounds at once familiar and strange: familiar because the particularities of this music make it recognisable, and strange because the absence of a melody makes it difficult to recall whether we have heard it before.

While Reitzell's score belongs to the non-diegetic world, the world of the imaginary recesses of the psyche of the characters (Jullier, 2007), classical music belongs mainly to the diegesis.

These compositions are associated with Lecter, as they are heard when he appears on screen. Only one case has been identified where classical music is not associated with the visual presence of Hannibal or his imminent appearance: when Jack Crawford questions Bedelia Du Maurier, Lecter's

Figure 1. *Hannibal* (Bryan Fuller, NBC, 2013-2015)

psychiatrist, about her patient and his relationship with Graham ("Relevés", #1x12).

Hannibal's relationship with music is clearly referenced in "Sorbet" (#1x07), when we are shown the transformation of the vibrations of a soprano's vocal cords into her voice, which filters into Lecter's ear canal, arousing his emotions. Music is absolute sensation and as such it allows Hannibal to abandon, for a brief moment, the total control he exercises over every aspect of his life.

Lecter's passion for music is also expressed in his playing of an instrument. Hannibal displays his ability as a pianist on the harpsichord, an instrument that underscores his sybaritic nature, his taste for the authentic and his European origins.

His other instrument is the theremin, an electronic instrument with no pre-established notes or any type of keyboard. As Hannibal himself points out, "you can't impose a traditional composition on an instrument that is intrinsically free form" ("Fromage", #1x08).

These two instruments are presented as opposites in their interaction with music and with the character. The harpsichord is associated with self-control, power over the situation and the apparent repression of violence, while the theremin is suggestive of control over others. As Hannibal himself notes, "a theremin is an instrument which can create exquisite music without ever needing to be touched [...]. It's a very psychological instrument [...] we work with people the same way. Never touching, but finding wavelengths and frequencies to affect change. Guiding them from dissonance toward composition" ("Naka-Choko", #2x10).

The unsettling timbre of the theremin, used in film music to underline a character's insanity or create a futuristic atmosphere (Lack, 2009), fits perfectly within Reitzell's sound design.

4. CLASSICAL MUSIC AND INTERTEXTUALITY

In the realm of quality TV, series have turned to incorporating pre-existing musical works as the atmosphere for the audiovisual narrative. This technique vests the music with new meaning

based on the intentions and intersections of the musical selection and its interference in the subjective perception of the viewers.

The impact of the pre-existing music depends directly on the cultural or collective memories that those compositions evoke, establishing a dialogue between the original text and its new context (Richardson and Gorbman, 2013: 23). The choice of these pieces requires a consideration of how familiarity with a given composition could determine how an audiovisual narrative sequence is decoded (Powrie and Stilwell, 2006: 23).

As noted by Lack (1997: 298), "classical music sources take on a mythic grandeur when added to [audiovisual] narrative, and a substantial part of this myth is our recognition of the piece itself."

In his revision of the Lecterian universe, Fuller builds a clearly intertextual narrative that rewards the most committed followers with frequent references to Harris's novels and their film adaptations. These elements of intertextuality coincide with the main ingredients of the series, one of which is classical music (Casey, 2015: 555).

Given its nature as a long and fragmented narrative, the use of classical music in the series is not limited to the *Goldberg Variations*. While the celebrated Aria accompanies Hannibal at key narrative moments, the television production expands the repertoire of pieces and composers that contribute to the creation of the refined universe of the cannibalistic psychiatrist.

In this universe, Bach is clearly the most prominent composer (nine appearances in the first two seasons of the series), although others are also notably well represented, such as Chopin, Beethoven and Mozart (appearing in eight, seven and six scenes, respectively).

The music accompanying Lecter is a carefully chosen selection of complex pieces that combine innovation and a clever use of different compositional techniques, such as *Brandenburg Concerto No. 4*, the most dazzling and modern in terms of composition, or the *Cello Suite No. 2 in D Minor*, one of the finest works ever written for cello.

None of the pieces used in *Hannibal* is chosen at random; rather, as suggested by Mundy (1999), each composition is intended to invoke its sociological and cultural background, lending greater complexity to the musical analysis of the series.

For example, during breakfast with Crawford we hear Debussy's *La Cathédrale Engloutie* (#2x05). This piece, based on a Breton legend about a temple that rises from the waters on clear mornings, provides a frame of reference for Lecter's only forenoon foray into the kitchen.

Similarly, the background music to Jack Crawford's interrogation of Bedelia Du Maurier, as Hannibal's psychiatrist, is *Piano Trio Op. 70, No. 1 "Ghost"* (#1x12), which Beethoven composed to thank Countess Marie von Erdödy for her hospitality. This music constitutes a projection of the reserve and discretion with which Du Maurier protected her patient.

THE MUSIC ACCOMPANYING LECTER IS A CAREFULLY CHOSEN SELECTION OF COMPLEX PIECES THAT COMBINE INNOVATION AND A CLEVER USE OF DIFFERENT COMPOSITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Finally, the repeated use of Schubert's *Op. 142 No. 3 in B-flat major* for different meals shared by Crawford and Lecter (#2x01) establishes a parallel between these encounters and the piece, which offers variations and re-readings of this old friendship.

The first time we hear the Aria from the *Goldberg Variations* is when Hannibal is first introduced (#1x01). He is eating dinner alone, and thus from the outset this music becomes a stylistic atmosphere for his culinary enjoyment.

The entry of the Aria into the diegesis, after we have been introduced to the dissonant and

complex world of Graham, contributes to Lecter's depiction as a character with refined, quasi-baroque tastes, while at the same time highlighting the calmness and self-control noted by Bruun Vaage (2015) and Logsdon (2015).

The relationship between the celebrated Aria and self-control is reinforced in the episode "Fromage" (#1x08), when, after a fight to the death with Tobías Budge, Hannibal, the music-loving killer, plays a few notes of Bach's piece while waiting for the police to arrive. His playing is relaxed, after the previous agitation, allowing him to regain his self-control.

THE MUSICAL SELECTION SUPPORTS THE IDENTIFICATION OF LECTER AS A MODERN VERSION OF THE DEVIL (KWACZYK-LASKARZEWSKA, 2015), A DIABOLICAL TERROR WHOSE CANNIBALISM IS ASSOCIATED BOTH WITH THE VISUAL CONSTRUCTION OF LUCIFER AND WITH THE NORTH AMERICAN WENDIGO (LOGSON, 2015)

The next time the piece is introduced in the series is in "Kō No Mono" (#2x11), when Will and Hannibal share a meal of ortolan bunting drowned in Armagnac. It is a highly symbolic scene as the two protagonists are seated face to face, like a master and his apprentice, like a rite of initiation in which the complex harmonies that accompany Graham give way to the Aria from the *Goldberg Variations* that represents Lecter.

As Hannibal suggests, "[o]ne of the most powerful forces that shape us as human beings is the desire to leave a legacy" ("Kō No Mono", #2x11), and the act of sharing his design with Graham reveals Hannibal at his purest. This is the same Hannibal who in the final sequence of the season is reborn in a dazzling scene on a plane, to the sound of Bach's Aria, toasting his victory with Bedelia Du Maurier (#2x13).

Apart from the *Goldberg Variations*, the first two seasons of the series bring together a selection of pieces that give Hannibal Lecter an aura of superhuman superiority. It is a musical atmosphere that vests Hannibal with qualities of the divine, the diabolical, or a convergence of the two, from the perspective of Judaeo-Christian tradition and symbolism.

Pieces like "The Golden Calf" from Gounod's *Faust* ("Sorbet", #1x07) associate Lecter with the devil. This association will be taken up again later when Hannibal plays *Suite No 4: La D'Aubonne*. The performance and adaptation to the harpsichord of this piece by Forqueray, whose contemporaries believed he played like the devil, links Hannibal to Satan himself.

The musical selection supports the identification of Lecter as a modern version of the devil (Kwaczyk-Laskarzewska, 2015), a diabolical terror whose cannibalism is associated both with the visual construction of Lucifer and with the North American Wendigo (Logson, 2015). In Graham's subconscious-nightmare state, the killer is presented as an ash-coloured humanoid with horns, features commonly attributed to the anthropophagic demon of Algonquian mythology (Nielsen, 2014).

The musical selection also presents allusions to Hannibal's divinity. For example, in his office we hear the *O Euchari* by Hildegard von Bingen, Doctor of the Church (#1x09), a medieval composition that has been described as music of the angels or of God. Another piece that may be said to hint at Lecter's divine nature is "Vide Cor Meum" (#1x13), the aria that Patrick Cassidy composed for Ridley Scott's film *Hannibal* (2001). While this aria, based on Dante's *Le Vita Nuova*[1], is not technically a work of classical music, it could be read as a suggestion that Hannibal is the god who compels Beatriz to eat the heart of her lover. It is a piece which, like Dante's dream, represents a

premonition of Will's initiation into ritual sacrifice and cannibalism.

In the episode "Sakizuki" (#2x02), Hannibal abandons this superhuman position, his god complex (Casey, 2015: 555), when he discovers the great human mural made of intertwined bodies in a palette of colours and skin textures. While he admires the beauty of this work of art, we hear (this time in the non-diegetic space) *Dona Nobis Pacen* from Bach's *Mass in B minor*, a song of thanks to the Creator.

The inclusion of sacred music in these sequences is not unintentional. As Lack (1997) suggests, their use represents a decision that transcends the creative sphere to be positioned on an ideological level which offers, with greater intensity than other compositions, new readings and meanings.

The classical repertoire constitutes a constant in Lecter's personal and social world that will be projected onto the development of his relationship with Graham. The musical selection that accompanies his dinners ranges from Beethoven's Sonata and Piano Concerto (#1x09, #2x08) to Mahler's *Symphony No. 5 – Adagietto, sehr langsam* from the film *Death in Venice* (#2x10), which takes over from Will's dissonant theme.

This last composition describes the relationship between the two characters as a constant fight, just like Mahler and his work; a tragic ambiguity, with a simple orchestration that displays a certain intimacy and a modern perspective on the act of love. The melody ends on a shot where the identities of the two characters are blurred and superimposed on one another ("Naka-Choko",

Figure 2. *Hannibal* (Bryan Fuller, NBC, 2013-2015)

#2x10). This effect, suggestive of Bergman's influence, reflects the relationship of manipulation and influence established between the two characters. "Lecter attempts to manipulate Graham, transform him into a serial killer, and to remake Graham in his own image" (Casey, 2015: 555).

THE CLASSICAL REPERTOIRE CONSTITUTES A CONSTANT IN LECTER'S PERSONAL AND SOCIAL WORLD THAT WILL BE PROJECTED ONTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH GRAHAM

The same interpretation can be given to the inclusion of Scarlatti's *Sonata in F minor*, which is played *pianissimo* while the two characters are eating dinner ("Mizumono", #2x13). This musical composition represents a duality as it is structured in two apparently equal parts intended to be repeated.

Another of the moments where Graham and Lecter's relationship is described through classical music is during the montage sequence in the episode "Hassun" (#2x03). While the two characters are getting dressed we hear "Dalla sua pace" from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, a piece that relates how the accusation of murder against Don Giovanni prompts his friend Octavio to keep an eye on him, because "On her peace mine depends". In *Hannibal*, the suspicion of murder hangs over both protagonists, prompting each of them to keep an eye on the other.

Classical music also fulfils a function of continuity (Gorbman, 1987) between two different actions that are related in the narrative. For example, in the episode "Su-zakana" (#2x08) Hannibal prepares a trout to the music of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 1*, a work that will be heard again at his dinner with Jack Crawford and Will Graham. Similarly, "Fromage" (#1x08) opens with a recital at which a soprano performs "Piangero la sorte mia" from Handel's opera *Giulio Cesare in Egitto*. This piece closes the episode when Lecter presents dinner to his guests, Baltimore's cultural arts community, establishing a cyclical structure through the music.

The musical selection in *Hannibal* includes two other pre-existing pieces: "Vide cor meum" and "The Celebrated Chop Waltz".

The first of these pieces constitutes a *musical quotation*. In Ridley Scott's film, this piece accompanies a triumphant Hannibal who, after evading a plot orchestrated by Rinaldo Pazzi, wins the admiration of his wife. In *Hannibal*, Cassidy's aria underlines Lecter's victory over Graham.

For a follower of the Lecterian universe, "Vide cor meum" is yet another ingredient in the textual dissonance offered by Fuller. Graham is arrested for Lecter's crime and is locked up in the Baltimore State Hospital, the psychiatric penitentiary where the books and films place Hannibal. When Lecter visits Graham, the two face each other through the bars, like a mirror that inverts the iconic scenes of previous texts (Casey, 2015).

The second piece is a waltz for piano by Euphemia Allen, a composition that is very popular among novice pianists and which, played in the series by Alana Bloom, serves to contrast the sociocultural levels of the young psychiatrist and her mentor. While Bloom is only able to play a very basic piece, practically a learner's exercise, Lecter not only entertains himself with more complex music but also composes and arranges it (#2x06).

5. BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

Hannibal offers a complex score by television standards, resulting in a spectacle of perception that is sometimes more auditory than visual. Reitzell himself has described the series as an enhanced reality in which the soundscape plays an essential role.

Every time that Lecter sits at the table, a connection is established between the music, the *mise-en-scène* and the cinematography, producing a sensation of opposition in the viewer: the horror inspired by the cannibalistic murderer and the appeal of the sophistication of the scene. All of this is presented with a sonic atmosphere that combines pieces from the classical repertoire with original music composed by Reitzell.

In *Hannibal,* Fuller constructs an openly intertextual narrative that offers a re-reading of the Lecterian universe. While the *Goldberg Variations* constitute an element intrinsic to the character, the use of classical music in the series goes further, acquiring its meaning through the interaction established between the original texts and their new context.

In the sense suggested by Brown (1994), the classical music in *Hannibal* maintains a complex dialectic with the image, consolidating a parallel aesthetic, narrative or expressive universe based on the intersections of the music chosen and its interference in the subjective perception of the viewer.

Paraphrasing Walter Murch (LoBrutto, 1994: 96), the *flavour of the music* in *Hannibal* goes further than its holistic conception of soundtrack. Fuller offers the view an inversion of the convention that has music as one of its main ingredients. It is an audiovisual counterpoint—a term coined by Chion (1993)—that transcends the use of the classical repertoire as a foundation for Lecter's monstrous transgression to establish intertextual dissonances between the television series and the texts that preceded it. ■

NOTES

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1 "Joyfully Amor seemed to me to hold / my heart in his hand, and held in his arms / my lady wrapped in a cloth sleeping. / Then he woke her, and that burning heart / he fed to her reverently, she fearing: / afterwards he went not to be seen weeping." Dante Alighieri, *La vita nuova*, Ch. 3, 1294.

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CLASSICAL MUSIC INTENTIONS AND INTERSECTION IN BRYAN FULLER'S *HANNIBAL* (NBC)

Abstract

Music plays a key role in our audiovisual experience. Although the image is the conscious focus of attention in the audiovisual narrative, it is the soundtrack that provides a series of effects, sensations and significations that enrich the story and frequently interconnect with the visual. The active role of music in the interpretation of the image is especially notable in the TV series *Hannibal* (Fuller, NBC). The particular qualities of its score, which combines original compositions with classical repertoire to characterise Hannibal Lecter, contributes to the creation of the atmosphere of the series and offers new meanings through the clever use of intertextuality. This article presents an analysis of the classical music in *Hannibal*, its relationships and significations.

Key words

Music; musical atmosphere; scores; TV series; classical music; Hannibal.

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Article reference

Piñeiro-Otero, Teresa (2016). Classical Music intentions and intersection in Bryan Fuller's *Hannibal* (NBC). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 177-189.

INTENCIONES E INTERSECCIONES DE LA MÚSICA CLÁSICA EN *HANNIBAL* DE BRYAN FULLER (NBC)

Resumen

La música desarrolla un rol clave en nuestra experiencia audiovisual. Aunque en un relato audiovisual la imagen es el foco consciente de la atención, es la banda sonora quien aporta una serie de efectos, sensaciones, significaciones que enriquecen la narración y que habitualmente se asocian a lo visual. El papel activo de la música en la interpretación de la imagen resulta especialmente destacable en *Hannibal* (Fuller, NBC). La particularidad de su *scoring*, que conjuga composiciones originales con el repertorio clásico característico de Hannibal Lecter contribuye a la creación de la atmósfera de la serie y la dota de nuevos significados derivados de un inteligente uso de la intertextualidad. En este sentido el presente artículo presenta un análisis de la música clásica en *Hannibal*, sus relaciones y significaciones.

Palabras clave

Música; ambientación musical; *scoring*; serie televisiva; música clásica; Hannibal.

Autora

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Referencia de este artículo

Piñeiro-Otero, Teresa (2016). Intenciones e intersecciones de la música clásica en *Hannibal* de Bryan Fuller (NBC). *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 177-189.

Edita / Published by

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

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COMMENTING ON IMAGES WITH IMAGES: DIALOGIC-VISUAL CRITIQUE IN THE FILMS OF HARUN FAROCKI

DAVID MONTERO SÁNCHEZ

'*One* image, incidentally, is too few; you need to take *two* images of everything [that matters]. Things are in flux so much that it requires two images at the very least to properly register the *direction* of the movement.'

HARUN FAROCKI, (1944-2014, *in memoriam*)

It is not an easy task to define the work of Harun Farocki according to the most habitual criteria and categories of film theory. To categorise his films as non-fiction, for instance, all but overlooks his habit of eschewing the construction of imaginary discourses. On the other hand, to classify them as documentaries would be an even greater blunder. Even the deliberate ambiguity of the term 'film essay' tends to water down central aspects of his films, such as their use of visual modes of knowledge.[1] Farocki himself claimed that he aspired to make films that could act as a 'form of intelligence' (Elsaesser, 2004a: 103), which places his work halfway between artistic expression and critique, the latter being understood as the capacity to pinpoint the cracks in reality by working with images. In short, his aim was to strike up a critical relationship with the image similar to that described by Nicole Brenez in her characterisation of visual study as 'a face-to-face encounter between an existing image and a figurative project dedicated to observing it—in other words, a study of the image by means of the image itself' (Brenez, 2009: 129). Indeed, in his films and art installations Farocki activates what Althusser terms symptomatic reading (Althusser, 1972) and a sense of Derridean deconstruction that tends to dwell on specific aspects of contemporary visual culture so as to highlight what that culture strives to keep under wraps. According to Rancière, this is a natural reaction of the political artist to the excess of images: not to try to directly remedy this state of affairs, but rather to draw attention to what is absent; 'the absence of certain images in the selection of what those in charge of the distribution of images consider to be interesting to show' (Rancière, 2014: 71). Thus, the production contexts from which images emerge, their exchange value, the relationship they establish with the receivers, the intentions to which they respond or the way in which their meanings evolve in diverse social, historical and political contexts constitute the critical linchpins

most commonly found in Farocki's audiovisual productions (see Blümlinger: 1998: 307-317).

My approach to Farocki's films revolves around two specific but intersecting lines of analysis that will allow me to cover a large part of his life's work: on the one hand, the examination of a sort of visual activism in which the image emerges as an artefact marked by power dynamics, in turn shaping the visible as a primary political category; on the other, an ontological exploration of a broader scope which focuses on the mechanisms for constructing audiovisual meanings and on the strategies that allow an image to reveal latent or largely inaccessible meanings, in other words, what Deleuze defines as 'tearing a real image from clichés and turning it against them' (Deleuze, 1983: 283)[2]. In an essay recently translated into Spanish,

THE CENTRAL ELEMENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY MONTAGE, UNDERSTOOD AS A PROCESS WHEREBY IMAGES REVEAL THE MECHANISMS THAT LEND THEM SOCIAL MEANING

Hito Steyerl refers to these two dimensions as 'two different types of concatenation: one at the level of symbols, the other at the level of political forces,' before going on to explain that the relationship between the two has typically been 'treated in the field of political theory, and art often appears as its ornament' (Steyerl, 2002). Conversely, Farocki's audiovisual productions place the political essence within the very process of generating meaning; hence, his affinity for the theorisation of Mikhail Bakhtin and his quest for repositioning semiosis in the field of history and ideology.

The use Bakhtin makes of the term 'dialogism' refers to the ways in which each discourse acquires its meaning in relation to others, as well as to the tension between these discourses and a socio-historical reality in a constant process of becoming. In line with Bakhtinian theorisation, in Farocki's films the image emerges as part of a discursive reality steeped in ideological, social, cultural and political meanings whose presence only becomes visible when related to other discourses. It is thus an image in conflict, woven by tensions and power struggles that change and adjust but ultimately determine the meaning of each image at different historical moments. This paper addresses this central idea with the aim of revisiting key instances in the work of Farocki and examining the way in which they prefigure a critical language that derives from and leads to the image itself. To this end, I will focus my attention on montage, understood as a process whereby images reveal the mechanisms that lend them social meaning. Each image enters into a relationship with the others in a dialogic-critical sense aimed mainly at exposing the power dynamics increasingly associated with visibility in areas such as urban surveillance, armed conflicts, training and education processes and advertising; his work thus becomes an exercise in criticism in which reality is only accessible through images.

DIALOGISM AND IMAGE

In 2004, Thomas Elsaesser noted that 'the habit of thought to express one thing through another, and to "see" the self in the other' is so prominent in Farocki's films that 'it must be considered the founding gesture of Farocki's body of work and the signature of his mind at work' (Elsaesser, 2004a: 19). This type of thought goes beyond mere comparison: it entails approaching any phenomenon through the constellation of discursive relations that articulate its meaning and, ultimately, define it. Applying a dialogic principle to Farocki's audiovisual productions would thus refer, first of all, to the capacity of language to articulate several voices in the same discourse. In general terms, Bakhtin conceives language as a heteroglossic reality: an uninterrupted social dialogue that takes

place between historically determined actors representing 'the coexistence of different socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form' (Bakhtin, 1981: 291). This dialogic principle relates these actors and voices *within* each language, as well as in each and every one of the units of a discourse woven by different power struggles. Farocki's films establish the legitimacy of these dynamics at the level of the images and he develops montage techniques that make visible the ways in which they respond to shifting intentions, interests and pretensions.

In *Bilder der Welt und inschrift des Krieges* [Images of the World and the Inscription of War] (1989), for instance, Farocki deals with the first images taken by the allies of the Auschwitz concentration camp, on 4 April 1944. They were aerial photos in which Auschwitz appears by chance, since the American planes were looking for more imperative military targets: factories, industrial complexes, warehouses and transport networks. It was due to its proximity to an IG Farben factory still under construction that three photos of the camp have come down to us. Thirty-three years later, the success of the programme *Holocaust* inspired two CIA employees to search for aerial photos of Auschwitz in the agency's archives until they finally came across these photos taken in 1944 and identified over thirty years afterwards. Their meaning is now completely different. Other images and a different social, political and cultural context lend them a new visibility and a distinctive place in contemporary visual culture. Indeed, as Farocki suggests, '[w]e only recognise in these images what others have already testified to, eyewitnesses who were physically present at the site.' Ultimately, these aerial photos become a metaphor for destruction at several levels: they are images that were meant to capture a military target so as to ensure its destruction; nonetheless, they end up acquiring a metaphorical value that points to the passive attitude of the allies towards the reality of the Holocaust.

This type of dialogic-visual critique has, in the case of Farocki, a fairly specific origin in the context of West Germany during the Vietnam War and the following years, when the political use of images became widespread by the conservative media and peace activists alike. This involved the aggressive use of harsh, violent images as weapons with which to defend their convictions. These are precisely the images that Farocki brings together in his earliest audiovisual and written work, with the intention of deciphering the diverse socio-cultural contexts on which they have an influence, as well as the intentions they generate. In an essay entitled 'Dog from the Freeway', Farocki gives an account of an episode occurring in this period whose central theme revolves around two photographs the filmmaker remembered from his youth. Photo 1 is a pro-Vietnamese image, which shows an American soldier hitting a prisoner; Photo 2 is a pro-American image showing several victims of the communist terror in Saigon. 'Photos 1 and 2 belong together. Opponents of the Vietnam War

Figure 1. First aerial photographs of the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Figure 2. An American soldier hits a Vietnamese prisoner.

Figure 3. Victims of a communist raid in Saigon.

separated them, but they were not so easy to separate. If in Berlin you distributed pamphlets with a copy of Photo 1 and then drove home afterwards, the Berlin daily newspaper *BZ* might contain a copy of Photo 2. One side published one picture, and the other side published the other' (Farocki, 2004: 114).

Filmmaking allowed Farocki to connect both images not as complementary realities, but as parts of the same discourse with a similar origin: the American army. The critical exercise implicit in the comparison of these images underlines the need to consider at whom are they addressed if we want to understand them politically. 'Photo 1 did not leak out to reveal anything, it was authorised and distributed to represent something. Photo 1 is not aimed at readers of the *New York Times* or *Paris Match*. It is directed at farmers in Malaysia, students in Djakarta, the residents of Phnom Penh. It states: one must fight the guerrilla as a guerrilla, that is what we are doing.' (Farocki, 2004: 114). The basis of the dialogic-visual critique is therefore a 'questioning of the document' (Foucault, 1972: 6) and its position beyond the sym-

bolic plane, to consider it at the discursive level, where what is important is who says what and, above all, with what reasons or intentions.

MONTAGES IN ABSENCE

The final objective of the exercise in dialogic critique sustained by Farocki's films is to advance towards the discursive origins of each image until, by putting two and two together, the audience ultimately glimpses specific 'Archimedean points' (Elsaesser, 2004a: 16) or 'the im/perceptible' (Alter, 1998: 168); in other words, as yet imprecise conceptual nodes that speak to us about the economic, social and political contexts in which the images are produced and consumed, restoring a sense of fleeting, but revealing, integrity to them. One of these im/perceptible instances relates to a burn mark on Farocki's forearm. *Nicht löschbares Feuer* [Inextinguishable Fire] (1969) addresses the use of napalm as a weapon of destruction. In the first minutes of the film, Farocki (after reading the testimony of a Vietnamese victim before an international tribunal) looks straight into the camera to explain why, in a film on the use of napalm, the audience is not going to be shown images of victims: 'how can we show you the deployment of napalm and the nature of the burns it causes? If we show you pictures of the injuries inflicted by napalm, you will just close your eyes. At first you will close your eyes before the pictures, then you will close your eyes before the memory of the pictures, and then you will close your eyes before the realities the pictures represent.'

And it is precisely the social, economic and ideological context that produces and circulates these images of the victims on which Farocki sets his sights. From this perspective, the images of burnt bodies are not only unnecessary, but even counterproductive for his intentions. Instead, Farocki performs an act of self-mutilation, burning himself on the forearm with a cigarette, while a voice-off explains in a neutral tone that 'a cigarette burns at roughly 500 degrees Celsius, while napalm burns at approximately 3000 degrees Celsius.' The image of the cigarette being extinguished on his forearm rings now with the echo of the images that are not present, and he does this to spotlight the principle of separation that underlies each one of them, situating them at a prudential but devastating distance. In short, Farocki's cigarette burns because, as in a children's game, it approaches a place where something remains hidden; in this case, the lack of deep empathy that constitutes the essential condition for which these images are produced, circulated and consumed. As Georges Didi-Huberman explains, the burn in this way becomes 'a point of comparison' (Didi-Huberman, 2009: 44), but one that underscores aspects that allow us to reassess the way in which we approach the images of the victims.

For *Respite* (2007), Farocki recovered images filmed by Rudolf Breslauer in 1944 at the Westerbork transit camp, located in Nazi-occupied Netherlands. Breslauer was one of the camp inmates and was tasked with recording daily life at Westerbork. Unlike the film *Terezin: A Documentary Film from the Jewish Settlement Area* (*Theresienstadt. Ein Dokumentarfilm aus dem jüdischen Siedlungsgebiet*, Kurt Gerron and Karel Pecený, 1944), made with the aim of silencing international criticism of the Nazi regime's inhumanity, the film on Westerbork was never made public. Nor was its intention to deceive: it was an initiative of the commandant whose main objective was to document the camp's efficiency and thus prevent its closure. Westerbork was not an extermination camp, but rather a transit camp. From there, prisoners were transferred to other places, primarily located in the East. More than 100,000 people were sent to Auschwitz, including Breslauer himself soon after filming the images that Farocki recovered for *Respite*. As Sylvie Lindeperg points out, the technique used in the film is 'at once minimalist, modest and subtle' (Lindeperg, 2009: 31). It is a film about the Holocaust in which, yet again,

the Holocaust is only visible as a spectre that pervades everything. *Respite* unfolds in silence. Occasionally, fragments are shown in slow motion or are reframed using a zoom effect. There are images of the platforms and the transfer of prisoners, and also of the camp's dental clinic; footage of the inmates participating in leisure activities and even a fairly elaborate graph designed to highlight the camp's productivity and efficiency in the organisation of transfers. They are ultimately images that can only be understood in their sense of reverse shots, in a visual culture that has placed the (real or fictitious) images of the camps on a level bordering on irrelevance due to overabundance.

In both cases, the critical connection (the authentic montage in a Godardian sense) is made in the mind of the spectator based on points of connection and rupture with a visual baggage of horror whose original force currently runs the risk of being attenuated with each repetition. This is why both *Respite* and *Nicht löschbares Feuer* choose to invoke these images in their absence, by means of a relation of contiguity that does not allow the audience to ignore them or objectify them on screen. The Holocaust and the napalm victims only manifest themselves on a spectral plane, which makes their invocation much more disturbing. The essence of these images as a socio-historical reality only inhabits the present image through its small details: a watchtower behind the prisoners dancing in the courtyard of Westerbork or the smoking chimney depicted in the camp logo in the case of *Respite*, or the burn mark on Farocki's forearm in *Nicht löschbares Feuer*.

FROM AUDIOVISUAL CATALOGUE TO SOFT MONTAGE

The dialogic sensibility of Farocki's films reached its zenith with the establishment in the mid-1990s of a sort of visual catalogue based on the collection of cinematographic expressions according to the specific *topoi* present in them,

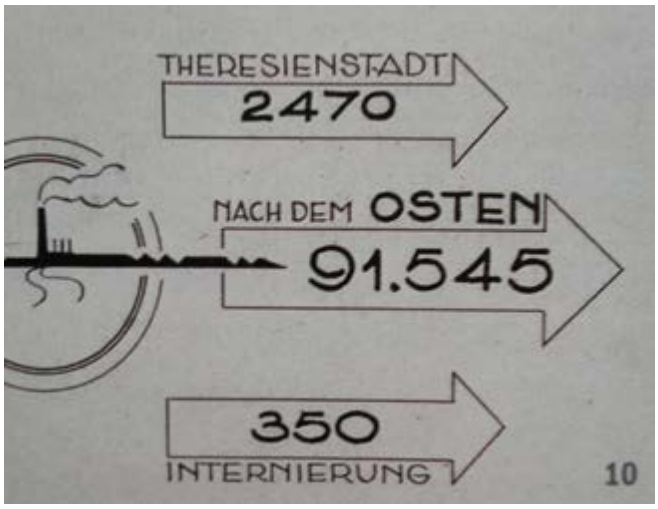

Figure 4. Explanatory graph of the operations of the Westerbork Nazi camp.

with an eye to creating 'a culture of visual thinking with a visual grammar analogous to linguistic capacities' (Farocki and Ernst, 2004: 265). The project recovers an idea of the art historian Aby Warburg who, in the inter-war period, put forward the possibility of creating a visual archive based on the use of gestural expressions in Western art, connecting yet again with the dialogic conception of language in its asystematic approach, based not on the establishment of a recognisable meaning in the different examples used in the catalogue, but on understanding the way in which meaning construction processes are related to specific social, economic and political realities.[3] In the words of Farocki himself, the objective is to sharpen 'one's consciousness for the manner in which language functions' (Farocki and Ernst, 2004: 273), in this case a visual language whose return to specific recurring motifs makes it possible to establish a new study method based on linking images.

Three of Farocki's films form part of the creation of this archive of visual concepts: *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* [Workers Leaving the Factory] (1995), *Der Ausdruck der Hände* [The Expression of Hands] (1997) and *Ich glaubte Genfangene zu sehen* [I Thought I Saw Prisoners] (2000). In these films,

the interest shifts from the original motif of leaving the factory in footage shot by the Lumière brothers, to the ways in which hands have been depicted in films and, lastly, through the prison as a space of social interaction. In all of them, a basic dialogic principle is activated according to which there is not only an exchange of statements or sentences, but also of ideas and positions (Vice, 1997: 52), while in *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* Farocki focuses his gaze on identifying the socio-historical influences that differentiate each of the examples used. This documentary essay takes up the topic of the Lumière brothers' original film and is entirely composed of a succession of examples revolving around this thematic motif, whether in fiction films, documentaries, propaganda films or industrial shorts. Here, the discursive device points obstinately to the obverse of the images, towards a dimension of knowledge that is normally concealed by the development of each narrative and, in practice, emerges from the dialogic relation of each element.

In *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik*, the very organisation of the fragments and sequences already foreshadow a set of socio-historical criteria associated with the image, suggesting that Farocki's main interest is not history itself, but the way in which it seeps into the representation. In the first thematic block, for instance, the factory appears as the sublimation of the collective space where a sense of belonging that surpasses the sphere of the individual is plainly identifiable. The act of leaving still maintains the sensation of the workers as a collective intact. At other moments, for example, *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* also associates the workspace symbolically with the deprivation of liberty, such as when the voiceover commentary defines the factory as 'a kind of house of correction.' The link between factory and prison is even more evident in the only moment of the film which does not feature the workers leaving the factory: close-ups of a modern security door, images of surveillance cameras, an ad spot in which the durability and stress-resistance of vehicles are tested and, finally, closed circuit television images showing a couple of thieves trying to escape from a factory after committing a robbery.

The shift from linking images in the context of traditional montage, in which the images follow one another, towards the use of a multi-screen schema occurs in a practically simultaneous way in Farocki's work. *Arbeiter verlassen die Fabrik* itself has a double life as a compilation film, on the one hand, and an art installation, on the other, which is developed with the use of eight screens positioned on the floor in a straight line, reproducing the different audiovisual fragments making up the film in a continuous loop. The simultaneous coexistence of several images allows Farocki to evade the sense of necessity determined by traditional montage, bringing the audience closer to the dynamics that structure the montage process in video format, based on the material experience of relating two audiovisual channels, one with raw footage and the other resulting from an editing process. Art installations such as *Schnittstelle* [Intersection], the series *Auge/Machine* [Eye/Machine] (2001) and *Ich glaubte Gefangene zu* [I Thought I Saw Prisoners] itself are in line with this logic of representation

IN *ARBEITER VERLASSEN DIE FABRIK*, FAROCKI FOCUSES HIS GAZE ON IDENTIFYING THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL INFLUENCES THAT DIFFERENTIATE EACH OF THE IMAGES COMPRISING THE FILM.

Farocki calls this type of work with images 'cross influence' or 'soft montage', claiming that they promote an interpretative schema that stimulates essay even more and statement even less, while making even more explicit the dialogic relation on the basis of which the meaning of each image can be explored: the audience now has

the option of observing, in the visible nature of the device, how the images acquire different dialogic nuances depending of the audiovisual elements which that device places in relation with each other. 'It was possible to cut in a title on one track whilst the image continued on the other, so that the viewer had the choice -amongst other things, of relating the title to one track or to both. It also lent itself to interrupting the image flow on both tracks with a title, as well as showing the same image on both tracks'. It also has the aim of breaking up the elements comprising the film and bringing the audience closer to the productive dynamics that mark the shift of Farocki's images towards the museum space in search of an audience with 'a less narrow idea of how images and sound should conform' (Farocki, 2009: 72).

CONCLUSIONS: BLIND SPOTS IN DIGITAL IMAGES

Serious Games (2009-2010), which, sadly, was to be one of Farocki's last works, underscores the extent to which the critical-dialogic method he applied throughout his career acquires an even greater relevance in new digital imagery environments. This series of four videos, *Watson Is Down* (2009), *Three Dead* (2010), *Immersion* (2010) and *A Sun with No Shadow* (2010), focus on the simulation of military scenarios by means of the language of the videogames used by the US army both before engaging in combat, as a form of training, and afterwards, to help soldiers who have experienced traumatic situations to deal with their own memories. In this regard, *Serious Games* articulates a reflection on what Yvonne Spielmann calls the 'logic of simulation' (Spielmann, 2000: 20) and how this principle occupies an increasingly central place in the mechanisms for management of armed conflict.

Figure 5. Farocki facing his own image in *Schnittstelle*.

In a line that he would later complement with *Parallel* (2012), Farocki seems to posit the virtual image as a condensation of the dialogic characteristics of the image, insofar as it offers a still saturated representation of the different socio-historical dimensions that shape it, but now free from a referentiality that can, at times, be undesirable or too real. Parts of *Serious Games* clearly suggest these ideas, above all in the second video where virtual reality acquires the status of physical simulation in the reconstruction of a Middle Eastern village in the desert at Twentynine Palms. In this place, halfway between the physical and the virtual, American soldiers to be stationed in Iraq or Afghanistan can practice methods of interaction and procedures to be used in the field. The beginning and the end of this second video, entitled *Three Dead*, are particularly significant, since the link in them between virtual reconstruction and the reference image makes explicit a process of virtualisation of reality; i.e., the reality created for the troops tends to be more akin to a videogame with the aim of giving those participating in training exercises a greater sensation of control. Here, the virtual image does not exist as an external representation of the armed conflict, but is integrated into the very apparatus of war so as to make it disappear and invent a new war, generated solely on the discursive plane and whose relationship with reality (contact) is reduced to the very minimum.

Unfortunately, Farocki's untimely death in July 2014 has curtailed a line of research that indeed seemed all the more important at a moment when the production of digital images and their social, ideological and political significance appears to be culminating in industries such as that of videogames or in the audiovisual palimpsest of YouTube. To an even greater extent than a few years ago, the new digital scenarios call for forms of critical work that will allow us to navigate the troubled waters of contemporary audiovisual culture and understand the new status of the virtualised digital image. In fact, the final stage of Farocki's oeuvre insistently raises this issue. His last films betray a concern for the growing virtualisation of reality and its subjugation to the economic parameters that regulate this new image economy. They are contributions that unveil a critical terrain where images appear inevitably linked to the nature of what is observed; grouped around them are new forms of relating, loving, making war or overcoming a traumatic reality. In this regard, Farocki's last works define the threshold from where to begin to illuminate the multiple blind spots of the omnipresent digital image. ■

NOTES

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1 For a more comprehensive debate on Farocki's relationship with the essay form, see Montero, David (2012). *Thinking Images: The Essay Film as a Dialogic Form in European Cinema*. London: Peter Lang, pp.103-117.

2 Farocki occasionally referred to this process also using a fairly graphic metaphor, according to which it is necessary to eliminate debris, added interpretations or confusions with the aim of accessing meanings 'buried' in the image itself. 'You don't have to look for new images that have never been seen, but you have to work on existing images in a way that makes them new. There are various paths. Mine is to look for the buried sense, and to clear away the rubble lying on top of the images' (Voester, 1993).

3 The mode of visual exploration used by Farocki invokes an essayistic zeal as conceived of by Adorno as an asystematic exploration of reality mediated by language. According to Adorno, '[t]he way in which the essay appropriates concepts is most easily comparable to the behavior of a man who is obliged, in a foreign country, to speak that country's language instead of patching it together from its elements, as he did in school. He will read without a dictionary. If he has looked at the same word thirty times, in constantly changing contexts, he has a clearer grasp of it than he would if he looked up all the word's meanings…' (Adorno, 1991: 13).

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COMMENTING UPON IMAGES WITH IMAGES. DIALOGIC-VISUAL CRITIQUE IN THE FILMS OF HARUN FAROCKI

Abstract

The act of connecting images is central to all of Harun Farocki's body of work in film, video and art installations. Whether it is by using a montage of ideas, based on the principle of joining and separating (Elsaesser, 2004b: 150), through double-screen techniques, or simply by allowing an image to collapse into its own production context, as happens for instance in *Ein Bild* [An Image] (1983), what Farocki is after involves critically interrogating images not only as inscriptions of an all-embracing visual culture, but also as political agents that are increasingly involved in surveillance processes, armed conflicts, sentimental relationships, training or marketing. This paper offers a dialogic-visual critique as an analytic category with which to approach Farocki's work and its relevance in relation to contemporary visual culture. This formula stems from the specific need to connect the critical stance which pervades his oeuvre with the concept of 'dialogism' as a mechanism for meaning construction based on the constant socio-ideological tension between different signs in a particular system. This paper does not take a purely theoretical approach, however, but aims to apply the aforementioned concepts to the analysis of key moments in Farocki's work and, more concretely, to his use of montage as a self-reflexive approach to the study of images.

Key words

Dialogism; Harun Farocki; Soft Montage; Visual Critique; Mikhail Bakhtin.

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Article reference

Montero Sánchez, David (2016). Commenting upon images with images. Dialogic-visual critique in the films of Harun Farocki. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 191-201.

COMENTAR IMÁGENES CON IMÁGENES. EL CONCEPTO DE CRÍTICA VISUAL DIALÓGICA EN EL CINE DE HARUN FAROCKI

Resumen

El acto de poner unas imágenes en relación con otras representa un elemento central del trabajo de Harun Farocki en cine, video o en el museo. Bien sea a través de un montaje de ideas, basado en el principio de unir y separar (Elsaesser, 2004b: 150), mediante dispositivos de doble pantalla o sencillamente permitiendo que una sola imagen se pliegue sobre su propio contexto de producción, como ocurre por ejemplo en *Ein Bild* [Una imagen] (1983), lo que se persigue es interrogar críticamente a las imágenes no solo como inscripciones de una cultura visual en auge, sino también como agentes políticos que juegan un papel cada vez más importante en procesos de vigilancia, conflictos bélicos, relaciones amorosas, la formación profesional o el mundo del marketing. El presente texto propone la fórmula de la crítica dialógico-visual como categoría analítica relevante para comprender el calado del trabajo audiovisual de Farocki y su relación con la cultura visual contemporánea. Dicha fórmula parte de la necesidad de conectar el afán crítico que subyace a su obra con el concepto de «dialogismo» como mecanismo de construcción de significados basado en la constante tensión socio-ideológica presente en los diferentes signos de un sistema. El artículo no se plantea, sin embargo, desde una perspectiva teórica, sino que busca aplicar los conceptos discutidos de forma instrumental al análisis de fragmentos clave en la obra de Farocki y, de forma más concreta, a su utilización del montaje como acercamiento autorreflexivo a las imágenes.

Palabras clave

Dialogismo; Harun Farocki; montaje blando; crítica visual; Mijail Bajtín.

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Referencia de este artículo

Montero Sánchez, David (2016). Comentar imágenes con imágenes. El concepto de crítica visual dialógica en el cine de Harun Farocki. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 191-201.

Edita / Published by

L'ATALANTE — EL CAMAROTE DE PERE JULES

ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

THE FLOWERS OF THE REVOLUTION. THE NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA FILM

ADRIÁN TOMÁS SAMIT

"At that moment they had the idea of guiding the cinematograph towards the ardent fight against the wicked elements that rose up against the unprecedented reorganisation of the New World"

ALEKSANDER MEDVEDKIN (1973)

THE FLOWERS OF THE REVOLUTION

After overthrowing the despot who has oppressed his family for six years and thus being able to be reunited with his sisters, Chol Yeong addressed the villagers, proclaiming:

> "You don't know the reason why we are all living in bitter tears. It is because we have lost our country, and the Japanese, the landowner Pae and other facts are putting us Koreans through hard times. This is the tragedy of a stateless nation. Fellow villagers, to put this sorrow and this pain behind us, we must restore our country and build a new society free of overlords and capitalists. To dress, feed and educate these poor children, we must all stand together and lead a revolution. You must help the Korean Restoration Army. The red flowers of the revolution have blossomed. I've seen the seeds of the flower of the revolution. You must help the Party, right?"
> "Right!"

Chol Yeong's speech is addressed to the people. Not the people depicted in the fiction film *Kotpanum Chonio*[1, 2] (The Flower Girl) (Ik-kyu & Hak Pak, 1972), but the North Koreans watching it. The film, which at this point is missing the melodramatic music that accompanies the rest of the story, weaves together a series of shots to construct a discourse that the audience can empathise with and that make them feel part of this revolution:Chol Yeong starts talking while embracing his two sisters. A tracking shot moves into a close-up of them while his gaze is directed towards the position of the spectator, almost looking at the camera. When he reaches the line "this is the tragedy of a stateless nation", this idea is symbolised by showing the face of the elder sister, Koppun, the film's protagonist, whose tear-filled eyes return Chol Yeong's gaze, looking off camera as if towards the future. Chol Yeong then addresses the crowd and we cut to a shot of the people, holding torches, approaching the speak-

Figures 1 y 2. Series of shots during Chol Yeong's speech.

er in the centre of the frame, who is positioned higher than the rest and clearly illuminated. Another shot pans over the faces of the villagers, pausing at the person who moments earlier had saved the younger sister from freezing to death in the snow. He nods and shows a hint of a smile when he hears the words: "we must restore our country and build a new society free of overlords and capitalists." A medium shot shows Chol Yeong looking directly towards the camera ("To dress, feed and educate these poor children we must all stand together and lead a revolution"), followed by a group shot of the poor children of the village, and, as he finishes this sentence, another cut to the people around him. When the new leader asks them if they agree, the villagers nod and raise their fists. Finally, we return to a close-up of Koppun as her musical leitmotif rises in volume, with central lighting to accentuate her hopeful face, looking once more to an idealised point off camera, complemented by a reverse shot of several newly blossoming branches as a symbol of the revolution.

In this way, what began as an intense family melodrama finally reveals its propagandistic intentions, turning the image of the flowers, which has been charged with meanings over the course of the film, into a revolutionary symbol. This reflects how propaganda is underpinned by "the idea that the visual establishes and crystallises certain aspects of the collective memory, operating through the choice of images, turning some of them into symbols of values" (Sánchez-Biosca, 2006: 14).

BRIEF CHRONOLOGY AND EVOLUTION OF THE PROPAGANDA FILM (1925-1976)

Richard A. Nelson defines propaganda as "an intentional and systematic form of persuasion with ideological, political or commercial purposes, with the intent of influencing the emotions, attitudes, opinions and actions of groups of specific recipients" (Nelson, 1996: 38), i.e., to suggest to spectators that they belong to a group. Llorenç Esteve summarises its most important uses as follows: "sacrifice as a morale-generating idea, the enemy as a motivating concept for the struggle and the justification of a socio-political and ideological model as a legitimiser." If we set a chronological line with paradigmatic examples we will find that despite narrative, technical or ideological differences, every propaganda film is based on these premises. As early as the First World War, the cinema was being used as a medium of propaganda in films like *The Battle of the Somme* (Geoffrey Malins & John McDowell, 1916), a documentary that shows the days prior to and during the beginning of the battle, or *The Bond* (1918) by the ever militant Charles Chaplin, which uses comic sketches to explain the bonds issued by the US government to finance the Great War. After that first major international conflict, the newly created Soviet Union established a new model of representation: Constructivist cinema, whose leading figure was Sergei M. Eisenstein, with films like *Strike* (Stachka, 1925), *Battleship Potemkin* (Bronenosets Potyomkin, 1925) and *October* (Oktiabr, 1928). This film genre received its first major boost from communism and was picked up and developed by the republican socialism of the Spanish Civil War and by German National Socialism, which took power in 1933 and established the model for the pre-war propaganda film with *Triumph of the Will* (Triumph des Willens, Leni Riefenstahl, 1935). During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) with *Aurora de Esperanza* (Antonio Sau, 1937), the genre established the postulates with which we generally identify it today: films produced during and in contact with a military conflict and which, "like the war itself against the rebels, also had to be an instrument for social revolution" (Sala, 1931: 40). The contradictions within a single movement and a lack of centralisation meant that "in the films of this period, preparation was almost always eclipsed by illusion, reflection by haste,

THE MOST VISIBLE AND REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE OF A PROPAGANDA FILM THAT IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM EARLIER STYLES

and clear-headed research by shots in the dark" (Sala, 1931: 43). The propaganda ideas of Spanish Republican Socialism would turn into a breeding ground for the expansion of capitalist imperialism, but now with a higher level of organisation, unity and technology. Thus, the US film industry would produce an elaborately crafted filmography together with its allies (especially the British), which over the course of the Second World War (1939-1945) would generate a whole series of symbols: *An Airman's Letter to His Mother* (Michael Powell, 1941), for example. These films would demonise the enemy, as in *Know Your Enemy: Japan* (Frank Capra & Joris Ivens, 1945), while at the same time applauding the soldier's sacrifice in films like *The Purple Heart* (Lewis Milestone, 1944).

Archive footage would be the most popular resource up to that time, but once the war was over the propaganda film took a new direction. In its first anti-communist skirmish, during the Korean War (1950-1953), the US produced impressive films with its soldiers, showing once more their sacrifice and their (presumed) benefits that they were bringing to Korean civilians. This message is quite clear in John Ford's *This is Korea* (1951). But when the battle stage moved to Vietnam, propaganda turned against it and a new, more radical and experimental film genre fostered criticism, reflection and revolution by the working class, for which the preferred narrative form was the essay. Representative of this movement are *In the Year of the Pig* (Emile de Antonio, 1968) and the films of Jean-Luc Godard and the Dziga Vertov Group, such as *Wind from the East* (Le vent d'est, 1970) and *Struggle in Italy* (Lotte in Italia, 1971). The style, which paid tribute to Vertov's cine-eye, but which found its ultimate definition in Medvedkin's idea of the "movie-train" ("We would fearlessly reveal the causes of the failures, the scandals; we would bring the 'harmful subversives' to the screen and we would present our well-reasoned demands; we would not stop until a reform came and the villains were disarmed" [Medvedkin, 197: 4)), failed in its mission and the group would make its last essay-film in 1976.

At this point on the chronological line, the object of my analysis, *The Flower Girl*, was released. It was North Korea's most successful film in history, both within and beyond the country's borders. In the year of its release it won the special jury prize at the Karlovy Vary Festival (held in what was then the Czech Socialist Republic), but is banned to this day in neighbouring South Korea, where it is considered communist propaganda and a symbol of the enemy. The movie was so important that even today it is "still present in the iconography of the country in images on Korean banknotes, murals, pictures, etc." (Fernández Munárriz, 2012). This film thus offers the most visible and representative example (within the limits of the country's hermetic secrecy and its limited production) of a propaganda film that is completely different from earlier styles, making use of the genre to achieve a higher level of identification and engagement with the spectator.

Figure 3. North Korean banknote featuring three significant moments from the film.

THE FLOWER GIRL: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Flower Girl is an adaptation of the opera of the same name originally conceived by Kim Il-sung, the founder of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), while in prison, during the Japanese occupation of the country (1910-1945), as recorded in his memoirs:

"There was a time during the independence movement in our country when we realised our vision to build an 'ideal village concept'. At that moment, we adopted the Korean students in Jilin [where he was incarcerated] to teach the people how to sing a wide variety of revolutionary songs [...]. When the script was finished, the production of the opera began, and it was performed at the Samseong School on the thirteenth anniversary of the October Revolution. For many years after the liberation the opera was not performed again until it was improved and adapted for film, and rewritten as a novel, under the direction of the Secretary for Organisation (Kim Jong-il), published at the beginning of 1970" (Kim, 1992).

In contextualising the film, we therefore need to consider two historical periods: first, the year of its production, 1972, which was preceded by a major increase in the country's national income due to the completion of the Seven Year Plan (1961-1967), "increasing from 25% (1956) to 65% (1969)" (Kim and Shin, 2010: 310). The nation's pride in its ideology and of its way of life led to the drafting of the Socialist Constitution in 1972, which, "between the lines, vested absolute trust in the Joseon Workers' Party during the process led by Kim Il-seong to build a nation and for the gains made in its fight against the Japanese" (Kim and Shin, 2010: 311). It is important to remember that the United States, together with the Republic of Korea, was still at war with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, justifying the government's continued indoctrination of the people in spite of years of no armed conflict. Outside the country, Richard Nixon, who in November would be re-elected President of the United States, visited China that same year, a move that was not viewed favourably by the DPRK, which came under pressure to form a part of the newly developing social and economic system from which it sought to protect the New World that the North Koreans were building. 1972 was thus a good moment to make a propaganda film extolling the spirit of *juche* (i.e., the idea that the people are the sole owners of the revolution and the subsequent construction) conceived by the leader of the nation in its Constitution.

1972 WAS A GOOD MOMENT TO MAKE A PROPAGANDA FILM EXTOLLING THE SPIRIT OF *JUCHE* (I.E., THE IDEA THAT THE PEOPLE ARE THE SOLE OWNERS OF THE REVOLUTION AND THE SUBSEQUENT CONSTRUCTION) CONCEIVED BY THE LEADER OF THE NATION IN ITS CONSTITUTION

Back in the late 1920s, when writing began on the opera *Kotpanum chonio*, the country was subjugated by the Japanese and by local landowners: work camps, slaves by birth, and extremely poor living and working conditions. In 1929, student movements gained force and the Wonsan general strike took place. In 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria, prompting Korea and China to join forces to fight for the region. Koreans of different ideologies began joining forces and an uprising slowly began forming, although it would never succeed in expelling the Japanese. In 1938, the Joseon Righteous Army was organised in China, while 1940 saw the establishment of the Korean Restoration Army referred to in the film, and the libretto for the opera was reportedly completed during the Second World War (Japan entered the conflict in 1941), and performed in 1947 as noted

by Kim Il-seong ("on the thirteenth anniversary of the October Revolution"), by which time Korea had become an independent nation, albeit racked by internal conflicts due to the ideological differences imposed by the liberating countries. As a result, once again, 1947 was the ideal moment to send a new message to the people about the idea of the collective and the fight against the Japanese empire in the story, and against the capitalist empire of the United States in reality.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF PROPAGANDA FILM

The propaganda film has gone through very different periods over the course of its history, always in search of the most effective way to convey its message. On the revolutionary side, whether socialist or communist, it only achieved success under the Soviet Constructivist model. D. W. Griffith consolidated the well-known Institutional Mode of Representation (IMR) (Burch, 1968), and American cinema made use of a sensationalist narrative style that occasionally drifted away from direct propaganda and into film genres, especially melodrama, manipulating the spectator indirectly. Two feature films emblematic of this approach are *In which we Serve* (David Lean and Noël Coward, 1942) and *The Best Years of Our Lives* (William Wyler, 1946).

The DPRK would adopt the heritage of communist cinema but was also aware of the power of the IMR to achieve the spectator's identification with the story through drama, and thus developed a hybrid cinema that turned the enemy's own weapons against it. *The Flower Girl* uses an intense palette of colours and plays with lights and shadows in a style reminiscent of Douglas Sirk's films, which include the acclaimed *A Time to Love, A Time to Die* (1958), an emblematic war drama that was probably analysed by the communist resistance.

The narrative arrangement thus takes precedence over the allegorical-poetic arrangement that characterises Constructivist cinema, although these are still present in elements such as the close-up of flowers to emphasise a new hope or the idea of continued struggle to attain freedom, ultimately to become a symbol of the revolution, or the images of waves breaking on the rocks when Koppun is told in the work camp that his brother is dead.

The film is an adaptation of an opera from which, to achieve a more realistic effect, the dances but not the songs have been eliminated. The musical component is important in any representation of the revolution, as a tool of ideological persuasion and moral struggle. Miklós Jancsó's films stand as a point of reference for revolutionary musicals; *Csillagosok, Katonák* (The Red and the White, 1968) and *Még kér a nép* (Red Psalm, 1972) were highly successful and their influence is palpable in the images of *The*

Figures 4 y 5. Playing with light and shadow and the palette of saturated colours give the film the quality of the war melodramas of the 1950s, reflecting the stagnation of the North Korean film industry.

Figures 6, 7, 8 y 9. The presence of the flowers and the poetic editing used in their close-ups turn them into the symbol of the revolution and liberation.

Flower Girl. Furthermore, the musicalised oral tale, i.e., the popular song tradition, is deeply rooted in Korean culture. The film thus incorporates a series of pop-folk songs which tell the story of Koppun and the sense of nation, struggle and freedom necessary to survive any drama. One example of this can be heard in the lyrics accompanying Koppun's leitmotif that opens the film: "Buy flowers, red flowers, beautiful and full of fragrance. Flowers grown with devotion to get the medicine for my ill mother. Buy flowers, red flowers." The film thus constitutes a *rara avis* among propaganda films, a unique model that draws both from American melodrama and from the musical, as well as from Constructivist ideas. There is no use of documentary style or of found footage, two potential tools of the genre. There is no acclamation of a charismatic personality or leader, like Hitler in Riefenstahl's film; nor is there a vision of the people as a collective. Rather, the role of the main narrator falls on a character who is representative of the group, who is given minimal dialogue, as his attitude is basically that of an observer of the events and a representation, and thus there is no attempt to give the proletariat a voice or to theorise on the class struggle, as the Dziga Vertov Group had done. It is also important to bear in mind the quality of the production, which was made with significant resources and conceived as what might be called a blockbuster within the borders of the DPRK, making it quite different from the republican films made during the Spanish Civil War and the minority and marginalised films of the Dziga Vertov Group. At the same time, it also avoids giving the enemy a face as done in American cinema, turning it instead into an idea, a power in the shadows capable of manipulating Korean citizens, like the landowner and his wife in the film. For all these reasons, the people need a leader who is able to see, to send a clear message against the enemy and to foster the idea of a collective: a person like Choel Yeong, the *deus ex machina* at the end of the film. To achieve all this, the film makes use of the three symbolic keys mentioned previously, which are outlined in more detail below.

Figure 10. The songs introduce and/or resume actions or sequences intended to emphasise the propagandistic aspect in the film.

SACRIFICE AS A MORALE-GENERATING IDEA

Within the Constructivist movement, this film is closer to *Mother* (Mat, Vsevolod Pudovkin, 1926) than to the postulates of Eisenstein because it better reflects its intention as propaganda and melodrama, exemplified in the family sacrifice rooted in Korean culture by the concept of *ajumma*, whereby mothers feel indelible obligation to protect their children under any circumstances. Thus, Koppun's mother, who dies trying to clear the family debt so that her daughters do not have to work for a landowner who is a Japanese sympathiser, becomes a martyr. However, her whole family will be a symbol of her sacrifice.

Koppun's family represents Korea and its history. Her mother is Korea subjugated to Japanese domination; from the very beginning her status as a slave is emphasised with a close-up of the chains and pulley of a well where she draws water, with the sound of the clanking metal and music with a gloomier tone. The camera follows the chain until we see the hands pulling it, dragging the full weight of the oppression she has inherited. Koppun and her blind sister represent the divided Korea of the time when the film was made: Koppun is North Korea, fighting, striving, and sacrificing herself by selling those flowers (of the revolution) so that her mother (old Korea) can go on living and, consequently, so the spirit of a nation stigmatised by the Japanese can rise again; the little sister, Sun Hui is South Korea, blinded by the enemy within, the United States (in a flashback, a device used meaningfully in the film to speak to us of the past, we are shown how the landowner's wife, in an act of violence that is to some extent unconscious, tips a cauldron of boiling water over Sun Hui's eyes, which is the cause of her blindness). Later, when Koppun goes in search of her brother, Sun Hui runs away to the mountains and is on the verge of death when a Good Samaritan, the old grandfather of the village (with all the symbolic weight this carries), saves her and takes care of her until the elder brother, Chol Yeong, arrives. Chol Yeong him-

Figure 11. Koopun's mother, the representation of the oppressed and martyred Korea.

Figure 12. Koppun, representing communist Korea, extols the values of struggle and sacrifice in her efforts to sell flowers to save her sick mother.

Figure 13. Sun Hui, representing Korea subjugated to American capitalism, blind to the North Korean sacrifice in the fight to maintain the values of the past.

Figure 14. The demons in the conscience of the landowner's wife after years of mistreating Koppun's family.

self represents the revolutionary (North) Korea that will rise up against the invaders: this is what he did when the landowners who blinded Sun Hui and beat his mother, and as a result he was sent to a work camp from which he escapes four years later. And he will do it again to save his two sisters (the two Koreas) and reunite his family, symbolising a united Korea.

THE ENEMY AS THE MOTIVATING CONCEPT FOR THE STRUGGLE

As noted above, the Japanese invader does not appear in the film; nevertheless, there is no shortage of references to Japan and to the harm it has done. First and foremost, the narrative prefers to emphasise the fact that the enemy is as huge as it is unrepresentable, that it is practically a fight against an evil ideology which destroys all forms of social equality, which only accepts people who support it and whom it can exploit. This idea is personified in the film by the overlords, or owners, of Koppun's family. The film repeatedly reminds us of the division of Korea, and thus by not showing the Japanese as the enemy to be defeated, the discourse turns on the United States, the empire which in 1972 was repressing the unity of the country. Thus, the enemy is also a virus that has affected the nation itself, the South Koreans, whose consciences must be pricked, as exemplified by the landowner's wife, who, through the use of a collage accompanied by a soundtrack of Sun Hui's weeping, is shown memories of the past, the mistreatment of Koppun's family that has turned these saints, as the Japanese (and now the Americans) depicted them, into demons.

The songs also emphasise these events, in lyrics like: "when we have no country" or "With no country and with no money, there is no way to live." As does the dialogue, when the poor villagers ask "When will these sorrows end?"; or when the overlord threatens: "If you don't pay your debts today, I'll sell your daughter." And when the story takes us to the work camp, it reveals the horrors of the invasion: prisoners shackled around the hips, wrists and ankles, and women with babes in arms who have been waiting for their husbands for fifteen years. Two elements symbolise the harsh conditions of their subjugation: a close-up on the shackles and the crying of the baby that fills the soundtrack.

THE JUSTIFICATION OF A SOCIO-POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL MODEL AS A LEGITIMISER

The Flower Girl tells us that hard work, respect and helping one's neighbour are the values on which a society should be based, but that such equality will always be suppressed by the inter-

ests of a person with too much power, and that the only way to fight that person is through the strength of the collective. In order to say all this and to engage the spectator, the Korean propaganda film, in an era when television was already available to issue direct proclamations and to present reality, prefers to make use of the Aristotelian narrative model with exposition, climax and dénouement. The first act presents Koppun and her conflict (selling flowers to save her sick mother), exposes the brutality of the antagonist and sets out a series of actions to develop the conflict. In the second act the fulfilment of the desire will be complicated and the plot will thicken: she obtains the medicine, but she gets back too late to save her mother. Koppun and Sun Hui are all alone now, and the elder decides to go in search of their brother, who she learns is dead. The girls are themselves on the verge of death when, in the resolution of the conflict, the brother appears and saves them and the village.

There is a continuous narrative line, with a drama in crescendo and its respective climax, only broken by the interjection of a male voice-over, an extra-diegetic mega-narrator who, in the middle of the drama, offers a synopsis of the story and reveals Koppun's internal state after losing her mother. Finally, this narrator brings Chol Yeong onto the scene and explains why he has been away for so many years. This voice-over is intended to clarify and tie up all the loose ends in order to close the story and the interpretations thereof. Reflecting this closure is the element of the flowers, which give the film a circular structure: at the beginning, Koppun could not sell a single flower, but in the end they will be snapped up from her hands. In other words, from the misery of the subjugated to the victory of the revolution; the flowers as the blossoming, once again, of the fight against the empire.

But what gives this film its persuasive force is the Hitchcockian manipulation of the spectator, as the whole story is characterised by the generation of suspense and the withholding of information. A flashback (the only one, inserted using a fade-out and with a colour treatment that is even more saturated but will be gradually diluted) shows how happy Koppun was with her brother and how he was arrested. We are not told what happened to him, but we are led to believe he died, as several characters suggest. A similar effect is achieved when Koppun disappears from the story and Sun Hui becomes the protagonist, leading us to believe that the elder sister has also died. But when she appears again, Sun Hui is lost in the mountains in midwinter and villagers express their doubts to Koppun as to the chances that her sister is still alive. When at the end of the film the family is reunited, except for the martyred mother, the tied-up loose ends and the happy ending so longed for after the drama has been taken to such extremes, leaves the spectator with a sense of relief and hope.

In conclusion, the most important propaganda film ever produced in the DPRK establishes a propaganda model in the form of a feature film

Figures 15 and 16. The flowers as a chronological marker of the change from oppression to revolution.

that appropriates the narrative tools and the *mise en scene* of the enemy, while also drawing on the symbolic strategies of revolutionary cinema, although opting for melodramatic fiction over reactionary documentary. And in spite of being quite different from other variants of the propaganda film, it retains the main elements that characterise the genre. ■

NOTES

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1 Due to the various circumstances affecting the situation of North Korean cinema, the only place where this film can be located is on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qf9xu2nvRNE. As a result, the quality of the frame captures are unfortunately not ideal for an analysis of a text as complex as this one.

2. Synopsis: A young girl, Koppun, sells flowers in the hope of raising enough money to cure her ill mother. She has a younger sister, Sun Hui, who is blind, and an elder brother, Chol Yeong, who was jailed six years earlier. Her mother dies before she is able to obtain the medicine. Koppun goes out in search of her brother, whom she is told has died. In desperation, Koppun disappears, as does her little sister. Koppun returns to the town to be subjugated by the landowner. Chol Yeong appears, finds Sun Hui and rescues Koppun. The revolution has come to the village.

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THE FLOWERS OF THE REVOLUTION. THE NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA FILM

Abstract

North Korean cinema is a great unknown for socio-political reasons. Analysing North Korean films is a difficult task, particularly given the absence of existing literature on the country's film production. This essay constitutes a first approach to a particular, unique and interesting body of films, whose most popular genre is the propaganda film. To this end, an analysis is offered of its most successful film: *The Flower Girl* (Ik-kyu Choe and Hak Pak, 1972), making a comparison between the evolution of this kind of cinema and the techniques that define it to establish how this genre changes depending on the ideology and the period, while maintaining certain interchangeable themes. The North Korean propaganda film is a hybrid that mixes melodrama with indoctrination, and elements of American cinema with Soviet Constructivism, to pursue a discussion of moral sacrifice, the perversity of the enemy and ideology as the legitimiser of the revolution.

Key words

Propaganda Film; North Korean Cinema; Constructivist Cinema; Melodrama; Musical; Aristotelian Narrative.

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Article reference

Tomás Samit, Adrián (2016). *The Flowers of the Revolution*. The Northcorean Progaganda Film. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 203-214.

LAS FLORES DE LA REVOLUCIÓN. EL CINE DE PROPAGANDA NORCOREANO

Resumen

El cine norcoreano es un gran desconocido debido a razones sociopolíticas. Poder visionar su filmografía es una tarea ardua, al igual que no hay una bibliografía que lo trabaje debidamente. Este ensayo se presenta como una primera aproximación a un cine particular, único y de gran interés analítico, cuyo género más popular es el cine de propaganda. Para ello se analiza su film más exitoso: *La chica de las flores* (Ik-kyu Choe y Hak Pak, 1972). Lo pondremos en común con la evolución de dicho cine y con aquellas herramientas que lo definen para comprobar cómo este género muta según la ideología y el periodo pero mantiene unas temáticas intercambiables. El cine de propaganda norcoreano es un híbrido que mezcla el melodrama con el adoctrinamiento y el manierismo norteamericano con el constructivismo soviético para seguir hablando del sacrificio moral, la perversidad del enemigo y la ideología como legitimadora de la revolución.

Palabras clave

Cine de propaganda; cine norcoreano; cine constructivista; melodrama; musical; narración aristotélica.

Autor

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Referencia de este artículo

Tomás Samit, Adrián (2016). *Las flores de la revolución*. El cine de propaganda norcoreano. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 21, 203-214.

Edita / Published by

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ISSN 1885-3730 (print) /2340-6992 (digital) **DL** V-5340-2003 **WEB** www.revistaatalante.com **MAIL** info@revistaatalante.com

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