

Chiapas, se está manifestando intensamente debido, entre otras razones, a la disposición del Gobierno federal de no mantenerlo más como guerra de baja intensidad ni cercado en la selva. En éste también todo está por resolverse.

El hecho es que los guerrilleros virtuales –que siguen declarando la guerra al Gobierno– pudieron recorrer diez estados de la República bajo protección del Gobierno y de grupos de simpatizantes, y decir todo lo que quisieron antes de entrar, triunfalmente, al Zócalo de la Ciudad de México, además de emitir sus ideas en el recinto de la Cámara. Esto resulta digno de consideración.

La marcha de los zapatistas dio lugar a tres hechos: 1) mostró las divergencias entre el presidente Fox y su partido; 2) permitió una alianza coyuntural y novedosa entre la izquierda del PRD y Fox, y 3) la acción del Gobierno federal y las polémicas entre partidos por el acceso de los indígenas a la Cámara dio a la actividad parlamentaria un estatuto de primer plano.

Ante este gobierno de derecha, que algunos pintaban como una catástrofe anunciada –desde la perspectiva de los primeros cien días–, más vale esperar, revisar prejuicios, soportar complejidades y novedades, y no emitir juicios apresurados o definitivos.

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The Loss of the Father: Chilean Cinema in the 1990s

In the decade that has passed since dictator Augusto Pinochet handed over the presidential sash to Patricio Aylwin, Chilean cultural production has unevenly recovered from the drain of exile, censorship and oppression. Cinema is a good example for the problems that culture has to face in the neoliberal Chile of the *transición*. Compared to its heyday in the late 1960s and early 1970s when it was considered a Latin American leader of the new revolutionary film cinema made in Chile today keeps a low profile and addresses its messages to a rather small and assorted public. Yet, the issues it addresses and fictionalizes are important. They reflect the deep trenches within Chilean society. In this short essay, I will first explore the basic economic conditions of cinematic production in Chile today and then focus on one of its major themes. From both

perspectives the loss of paternal guidance and of the strong father figure and the resulting problems of orphanhood mark the experience of Chilean cinema of the 1990s.

For an understanding of the context a glance at history is necessary. In the course of the 20th century, the production of movie films in Chile has never managed to escape the long shadow of Hollywood. Already during the period of silent movies did the Chilean market come under the control of U.S. film producers and distributors and that dominance has remained a constant factor in the history of movies in Chile ever since. In that sense, the country may be cited as a prime example to corroborate Octavio Getino's recent analysis of the economic and cultural dependency of Latin America's moving pictures upon the powerful giant in the north (Getino 1998:183).

Despite the preponderance of Hollywood, however, a significant Chilean film production emerged in the 1910s and 1920s. It managed to survive the severe setbacks of the Great Depression because in the following decade the state massively invested in film production hoping to create a new export item. In 1949, the state stopped its subventions and the film industry almost collapsed. When the ideological changes of the 1960s made themselves felt in Latin American cultural production the cinema of Chile became a vanguard of what was called the "third" or "new cinema" (King 1990:66-72). Again it was the state which served as the mainstay of the fledgling film industry and at the same time used cinema as an active agent of political propaganda.

The coup of September 1973 put an abrupt end to the boom and the most important Chilean filmmakers had to go into exile during the Pinochet regime. Rigid censorship stifled cinematic expres-

sion in the following decades. Nevertheless, in the final years of the dictatorship some technicians and filmmakers returned, and some young producers emerged within the country. Film production profited immensely from international solidarity funds in these years (Mouesca 1992: 54-81).

After the return to democracy filmmakers hoped for a new bonanza and there was indeed an increase of filmmaking in the country in the early 1990s. However, given the traditionally small internal film market and the rise of new media like home videos and cable television Chilean cinema remained dependent upon state subventions which in the neoliberal Chile were increasingly hard to get. Thus in a very material sense, Chilean filmmakers have found out that there was no way back to the old days of paternal backing by an interventionist state which often carried with it a more or less subtle form of guidance as to the contents of the final products.

Despite the financial problems the number of Chilean feature films in the 1990s is in itself impressive. In a recent publication some 40 productions have been counted (Cavallo et al. 1999:18). This number is higher than in most decades of Chilean cinema history save the 1920s. However, in an age of globalization what exactly is Chilean cinema? The purely technical definition of feature movies made in Chile does not cover all the facets. Does one count the numerous productions of exiles like Raúl Ruiz amongst the Chilean films and what about the international coproductions, the low-budget video films or the films sponsored by national television?

There is certainly no clearcut answer to these questions. Yet, in order to determine the identity of Chilean cinema today and to get at what distinguishes it from

productions in other Latin American countries a close scrutiny of its recurrent themes is necessary. Obviously, the traumatic experience of the military coup has become a dominating point of departure for many Chilean movies. As Cavallo, Douzet, and Rodríguez have pointed out there are usually three states of being in Chilean cinematic expression: "a *before* (before the coup), an *after* (the military regime), and a *now* (the *transición*)" (Cavallo et al. 1999: 24). This can clearly be seen in the overwhelming presence of the dictatorship as reflected in the use of the father figure in many recent films from Chile. Indeed, the very first Chilean film to premiere after the Pinochet regime, *La luna en el espejo* by Silvio Caiozzi, set the standard for exploring the father-son relationship. Based on a script co-authored by José Donoso, Caiozzi started to produce the movie in the mid 1980s and finished it by 1990.

In *La luna en el espejo*, the old father Don Arnaldo – a former soldier – controls every single movement in the life of his son, El Gordo, from his sick-bed by means of a set of mirrors. Due to the tyrannical power of his father, the son has given up his own will and turned into a submissive nurse, cook, and servant. His only passion remains the drive to eat in the kitchen – the only room which his father cannot oversee. The situation changes when the neighbor Lucrecia, "a widow with the body of a woman and the mentality of a little girl" (López Navarro 1994:212-213) enters the scene and becomes the son's lover. El Gordo is now caught in a conflict of emotions between love on the one hand and submissiveness towards the father on the other.

At first sight, El Gordo's obedience seems hard to understand because his father is a frail old man. Yet, Don Arnaldo's spell is firmly grounded on the power of past, a

past he invokes at the oportune moment: "... *me queda una cosa, una que ustedes no tienen y no saben: los recuerdos, el pasado. Eso no se pierde jamás*" (Cavallo 1999: 38). Memory is strong enough to keep El Gordo in a state of dependence. Even in the rare moments of freedom when the father is asleep his actions remain focussed upon the possible reactions of the old man. In the end, however, Don Arnaldo's power wanes and he decides to vanish into the darkness of the city.

Obviously, Caiozzi's film can be read as a metaphor of Chile in the later years of the dictatorship. In that sense, Don Arnaldo is the aging dictator living off the power of past glories and off an ingenuous system of oppression. With *El Gordo* director Caiozzi has touched a sore spot because this figure can be read interpreted as the submissive average Chilean or even the Chilean people at large. Most troubling is the relationship between the two because it is not physical violence but rather El Gordo's submissiveness which guarantees the functioning of Don Arnaldo's domination. Indeed, the dynamics of the relationship between father and son is corrupting what beauty is left in life – even El Gordo's love to Lucrecia. Thus Arnaldo's departure leaves a bad taste. Transferred to Chilean reality in 1990, Caiozzi presaged a problematic future now that the 'father' had left the house.

The ambivalent evaluation of the loss of the authoritarian father has not remained the only way in which Chilean cinema has dealt with the symbolism of the generational conflict in order to discuss the problems of the immediate past, present, and future of the country. In his first movie made in Chile after returning from exile master director Miguel Littín shares this concern for the role of the father. Yet, in *Los naufragos* (1994) a completely different story is told.

The hero of the story, Arón, returns from exile to search for his disappeared brother and the tomb of his father. It is this father who becomes the center of interest in Littín's film. Spiced with his typical magical realism the film creates a mythical world in which the idealization of the dead father reaches religious proportions. Although he was an oligarchic landowner the man had been a champion of socialist ideals. In a paternal relationship to his peasants and day laborers he had followed the idea to set up a socialist model society on his own estate. Eventually, however, he had been betrayed by his own protégés and become a victim of the military coup.

Littín leaves no room for doubt that Arón's father is a symbol for Salvador Allende. Indeed, he intersperses documentary scenes from the military coup and photographs of Allende to emphasize his point. The frustrations of the returning exile Arón truly reflects the experiences of the generation of Littín himself. Thus, *Los naufragos* can be read as a highly mythical but still strongly autobiographical narrative. In an interview Littín clarified his feelings of failure and of the loss of utopia: "Sí, aquí me he sentido naufrago. Y es algo que le ha pasado a gran parte de mi generación. Después de que nuestro gran padre romántico y utópico murió, nos quedamos huérfanos, naufragando sin un proyecto" (Cavallo et al. 1999: 42-43).

If in *Los naufragos* it was the authoritarian father and in *La luna en el espejo* the idealized father in *Reunión de familia* by Andrés Wood (1994) both figures are integrated into the movie. In this short film fatherhood is the central theme. A father and his 9-year old son visit the grandfather. It turns out that the latter had been arrested in the days of the military coup but regained his liberty because of the influence and connections of his son's friends. Far from showing gratitude the

grandfather blames his son for being an opportunist and treats him in a condescending and authoritarian manner. In the relationship towards his grandson, however, he shows the kinder sides of his character and becomes the ideal father figure trying to prevent the boy from following in the footsteps of his own son.

Films like the three mentioned here and the many others studied by Cavallo, Douzet, and Rodríguez are symptomatic for the constant concern of Chilean filmmakers with the power of the patriarchy while at the same time demonstrating the very failure and loss of perspectives of the father figures. What remains is the experience of orphanhood for the generations left behind (Cavallo et al. 1999: 30 and 47). Yet, paradoxically, the very physical absence or departure of the father is the fundament of his omnipresence. Even if dead and untouchable, like in *Los naufragos*, the father's spell is ubiquitous. But this presence has a mythical, a ghostly quality and is detached from the real world. Thus, the films ask the inherent questions if whether it is better or worse to go on living without the fathers – or more generally speaking the past which they personify and symbolize. Cinema poses the fundamental question in how far the weight of the past will influence the future and in how far it will be possible to deal with the memory of the unspeakable, the failure of the Unidad Popular, the coup, and the terror of the military regime.

The Chilean cinema of the 1990s is indeed the "register of a society that changes" (Vásquez 1996). Its films are a proof of the constant search for a father, a guide, a new moral authority in a post-dictatorial society. At the heart of this search lies the question of what kind of father, what kind of authority is needed. Answers to this question differ widely. There are numerous perspectives reflecting the ideologi-

cal splits within society. In Chilean films two stand out among them: first, the perspective of those who have remained and arranged themselves with the regime while keeping a critical distance; second, that of the returning exiles if whether during or after the Pinochet regime. Thus the Chilean films of the 1990s reflect – albeit in a very incomplete manner – the different directions on the problematic path toward a democratic political culture.

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Los meandros de la censura: una entrevista con Jerónimo López Mozo

En 1974 la revista *Primer Acto* (165 y 166) publicó una encuesta que recogía la contestación de casi medio centenar de autores teatrales españoles a cuatro preguntas relacionadas con sus experiencias con la censura. Fueron formuladas en los siguientes términos: relación de sus obras prohibidas, supuesta causa de la retirada, modificaciones realizadas después de sufrir la acción de los censores y opinión personal sobre dicha entidad.

Entre los creadores dramáticos que respondieron se encontraba Jerónimo López Mozo (Gerona, 1942), a la sazón uno de los más jóvenes, aunque no por ello de los menos activos. Hasta la fecha había escrito ya un total de 25 obras de teatro, algunas de las cuales habían sido editadas por revistas tan prestigiosas

Jerónimo López Mozo ha publicado (entre otras) las siguientes obras:

Cuatro happenings [contiene: *Blanco en quince tiempos; Negro en quince tiempos; Maniquí; Guernica*]. Murcia: Universidad 1986.

Bagaje. Málaga: Diputación Provincial 1991.

Eloídes. Madrid: Visor 1996.

Entre el agua y el pan. Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia 1996.

Ahlán. Madrid: Cultura Hispánica 1997.

Combate de ciegos / Yo, maldita india... Madrid: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia 2000.