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Submitted
April 26, 2017
Approved
May 4, 2018

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Communication & Society
ISSN 0214-0039
E ISSN 2386-7876
doi: 10.15581/003.31.3.211-222
www.communication-society.com

2018 – Vol. 31(3)
pp. 211-222

How to cite this article:
Alvarado Duque, C. F. (2018).
Goodbye to Latin America. The
erring man in Lisandro Alonso's
cinema. *Communication & Society*
31(3), 211-222.

Goodbye to Latin America. The erring man in Lisandro Alonso's cinema

Abstract

This article explores the work of argentinian director Lisandro Alonso starting from the nomadic man figure to the contemporary wanderer that no longer finds a place in the modern cities. In what way does Alonso's work offer a new cartography of contemporary man? It could be said, after the exegesis of his filmography, through the challenge of the idea of humanity common of modern discourse. His filmography could be thought as a fake Latinamerican map, in the measure that abandons the political divisions (attached to different ideological practices) that other subcontinent's cinema have drawn. In that way, it is exposed how the absence of certain shapes of territorialization (family, home, city) are un- mounted to give shape to the wandering. We believe that a cinema as Alonso's anticipates itself to a new man, or at least, it constitutes a portrait of a necrology announced many years ago: the death of modern man.

Keywords

Latin American cinema, cinematic narrative, errancy, humanity, Lisandro Alonso, cinema studies.

1. Introduction: Overture of a de-territorialized filmography

In the last years, changes in production technologies have allowed an exponential increase in Latin American filmographies. We find at a moment where it is difficult, for any spectator, to sail in the gross work of our subcontinent, especially if it is guided by old categories such as the rebellious cinema, film of revolution or cinema of customs. A couple of decades ago, it was easy to think that Latin America was joined by a cinema that wanted to witness his own miseries and that, in the midst of this type of portraits, wanted the images in movement to spread a sort of collective identity. With the beginning of the new millennium, the increase of productions accommodates to other types of explorations in Latinamerican narratives to the point of recognizing the authorship of many of its directors without associating them with a militant cinema. And when pondering, explicitly, that there is an author behind the camera, body is given to the singularity within the seventh art. It allows, for the spectators, the strange intimate ritual of engaging in a personal dialogue in the middle of the crowd in the room. Thanks to this, we can see that there is not one Latin America (it has never

existed), as maybe, the collective cinemas could make us think. And the uniqueness of ways to understand it is at the hand of those who wish to navigate in the new aesthetic offers.

The variety of voices in Latinamerican cinema prevents us from thinking about a single map of our territory. Even, any imaginary map would have to break any taxonomy so that the versions of authors such as Carlos Reygadas, Ciro Guerra, Claudia Llosa or Fernando Meirelles (for bringing some names) could be located on the same surface. And because of this cartographic impossibility, the continent tends to dissolve, which, no doubt, has already occurred in other geographies. Just think of the Europe narrated by the great masters of modern cinema or the impossible east of the new Asian directors. Question the figure of the map (which questions the political divisions of modern nation-states) has the effect of a kind of regression, and at the same time, an opening to the future. On the one hand, the limits between nations have been overthrown, a pre-modern geography seems to emerge, a space where political limits lose thickness and the distance between the great conurbations and the indomitable natural spaces extends. On the other hand, the future appears as a denial of the past. The need to violate the cartographies built politically in favor of other types of geography, whether virtual or drawn in secret, outside of institutional control, is growing.

In this measure, we do not want to suggest that Lisandro Alonso's work is a map of Latin America, but that his work portrays the desire of the new filmography for turning its back on the idea of representing a subcontinent defined politically as a block. And beyond that, we pretend to point out that his filmography puts on the scene the break of the family, the house and the city (understood in a modern way) as the support of socio-institutional stability. Without announcing a new man, Lisandro Alonso challenges the idea of humanity that has been woven into modern discourse.

His route, which well anticipates the future, has as its main tone a strange return. And that return is not to the past, in a sense of the return of old habits, but an effort to climb the road in search of the future, which is to say, in a search without a term. In the words of Lyotard (1998), a re-writing that always has to say something different from the original text.

It is not our interest (which also goes beyond this text) to make a cartography about Latinamerican cinema. However, we do believe that a characterization of both its historical transit and its irrevocable social commitment may well allow us to think about the importance of a cinema like that of Lisandro Alonso, so close to the destructuring and the montage of tradition that precedes it. In historical terms, the 'new' label is being recognized as a sort of call for the renewal of cinema in these latitudes. The new Argentine cinema, for example (which may well be thought with the closing of the last century), testifies to this horizon. And there is located, initiatory, the work of our director.

We would like to visit the cinema of this singular contemporary author to make a film hermeneutics, focused on the idea of the human, on man as the center of gravity, of work: *The Freedom* under the production of Hugo Alberto Alonso (2002), *The Dead* with the production of Micaela Buye (2004), *Ghosts* from the production of Lisandro Alonso (2006), *Liverpool* produced by Luis Miñaro (2008) and *Jauja* produced by Micaela Buye (2014). Our research operates from *case studies*, which, as a trend in this field, access secondary sources (films) to make a re-construction of social texts from the aesthetic field. It is key to consider that this type of investigation is contemplated within the theoretical filmic studies in which the empirical cinematographic evidence is balanced with the speculative support on different conceptual foci. Our analysis aims to go beyond what Catalá (2001) proposes as a method of study focused on a structural review. It is an attempt to delve into the exegesis of the *filmic text* to reflect on the capacity to compose reality, in terms of Ricoeur (1980), as a text that exposes a world to the reader that can be inhabited. To this extent, the meeting point between textual and intertextual relationships with different socio-cultural practices is focused.

As Catalá correctly points out: “During the last years, the field of film studies has been changing [...]. As Bordwell and Carroll confirm the absolutist theories that determine a hegemonic style of research have been abandoned in favor of partial studies” (2001, p. 16). In other words, it is not about filming compilations (“obtuse empiricism”) but about creating an academic work that accounts for the theoretical-empirical implications from particular methods. For this, we intend to make it clear that this analysis distances itself from the sociological perspective of *the Mobility turn* (a shift in mobility that privileges diagnostic studies on spatial and social mobility, within the framework of modern societies) that may well be found in the work of Adey (2010), Cresswell (2006), among others. Our approach, although interested in a reading of man in spatial terms, does so from a poetic-relational angle that listens to the way a body is modified when it is affected by delocalisation. To such extent, we focus on the analysis of some features of Lisandro Alonso's filmic *poetics*, along the lines proposed by Russo (2011), specifically, the configuration of his stories, his staging as a spatial modulation, without exhausting with it the entire film spectrum of his work. However, these poetic traits interest us as they allow us to get out of strictly formal film studies. As Muñoz (2017) suggests, the richness of Alonso's cinema is that it opens a post-narrative field of analysis: “The Argentine filmmaker [Alonso] focuses on the films 'profilmic elements [space, time and body] rather than narration and plot” (p. 1). Our exegesis of contemporary man is offered thanks to the interest in the body-space relationship that we traced in the narrative warp to give way to the cinematographic interests that can be understood as post-narrative.

2. A cartography of Latinamerican cinema as a theoretical precedent

In terms of background, the filmographies of the subcontinent (in which Alonso's films are inserted, which does not imply that his work serves as a model for Latin American cinema), as noted by various historians and a few recent investigative works, have been oriented, in the present, through narrative exploration, the dismantling of ideological struggles and the creation of a plural cinematic map capable of accounting for the most significant social changes. In this way, within the framework of contemporary Latinamerican cinema, the reference to an institutional cinematography is no longer central to put at the center of the debate a bunch of intimate poetics. Such aesthetic explorations have as a central note the diversity and dispersion that puts in check the dream of a collective and common identity of previous years.

In Salinas's terms, a historical thematization of Latinamerican cinema can be carried out in three great moments. First the strength of a melodramatic cinema, associated with classical models of representation. Second, a strong period of militancy (and political resistance). Third, a moment of intimate poetry that recalls the perspective of auteur cinema. This taxonomy does not suppose rigid divisions. It simply operates as an orientation map. To such extent it can well be thought that after the wake of melodrama: “[...] narrative structure and symbolic or cultural matrix” (Salinas, 2010, p. 126) and its dismantling, thanks to subsequent cinemas, Latinamerican filmography can be thought of.

In front of a cinema dedicated to replicating the strategies of the classic American canonical model, which finds in the melodrama an alibi to captivate massive audiences, it is given way to a cinema that makes political resistance on the screen. In the sixties, (after three decades of melodramatic cinema), following the analysis of Torres (1996), Carro (1997), Lillo and Chacón (1998), Martins (2003, 2010), Gunderman (2005), Page (2005, 2007, 2014), Angona (2008), Doll (2012, 2012a), Schroeder (2013), Ardiles (2013), among others, a cinema is set up that could well be called 'of the complaint, of the enunciation, of the penury' (the proposal of a Third Cinema by Octavio Getino [2005] is not free).

And while it is true that the sixties gives rise to a revolutionary / rebellious cinema, the subsequent cinema begins, gradually, to distance itself from militancy without this meaning that it loses contact with its own time. It could be said that in the following decades, the policy of denouncing the excesses of power continues (the diatribe against imperialism on the screen) and, at the same time, it gives way to a cinema that testifies to loneliness. After this, it can be understood that the closing of the century and the beginning of the millennium meant an aesthetic expansion for the subcontinent. It begins to talk about a new cinema, as we suggested, and the common note is, without hesitation, the dissemination of the canons and a unique interest in marginality in its many expressions.

Our second guide to address the context of Latin American filmography is its marked social commitment. We are facing a cinema that adopts a performative function, as Barthes (1987) suggests, which is separated from the act of recording, of officiating as a neutral mirror of the context, to intervene with a certain militant tone in its own geography. Undoubtedly, it has the ability to reveal the double contingency (a category coined by Luhmann [1998] to analyze the relations: interaction and social order) that determines the lives of Latinamericans and the institutions that regulate their societies. The case of the new filmographies does not suppose a resignation to the social interest, only a change of focus. It operates through “[...] a dialogue with the previous traditions” (Lillo & Chacón, 1998, p. 7), to give body to a narrative that, as Quijano suggests, breaks with the discourses of liberal modernity to enter the discourses of the “[...] paradoxical character of the private / social” (cited in Schroeder, 2013, p. 141). It can well be recognized that other forms of relationship with the social lead to other modes of discursive re-production within the cinema. As Doll (2012) states:

[...] the spectator is summoned to suspend the certainties of the division between documentary and fiction from different strategies, the pact with the spectator requires a mobility, a kind of flexibility, different from the fiction and different from the documentary, which allows to make a reception that, unlike the documentary or testimonial in which the receiver must accept what is narrated as a truth, must now approach a hybrid discourse, fictional, but in another way of contact with the real and with the social (p. 3).

Many of the new cinemas of the subcontinent break with the Hollywood industry (embodied in the melodrama) to continue the political resistance in the middle of the screen, to bear witness to the social dispersion characteristic of contemporary societies. We have a cinema “[...] accessible through the operation of the spectator, that is, by exceeding the text in a restricted sense or, in other words, by mobilizing extra-film information” (Doll, 2012a, p. 55). There is no doubt that current trends seek to bring the viewer to the dialogue between the story and the Latinamerican life system. A cinema that finds in the difficult vicissitudes of daily life (in particular of a subject paradoxically lonely in the monstrous conurbations of these latitudes) another way of configuring the experience of the human.

In short, the new sub-continental cinema, no longer a cinema of political exhortation, is a cinema that: “[...] does not try to narrate the motives and look for the culprits (but) tries to share, inhabit and show spaces [...], spaces not made by their inhabitants, or invented by their individuals (they are individuals) [...]; they are made of habits and it is the habits that make the inhabitant” (Muñoz, 2013, p. 457).

As Pardo (1991) suggests, we now have a cinema interested in making visible “[...] repetition and routine” (p. 64), which means directing attention to everyday life. That's why intimacy steals the scene in much of the new works. In the first place, we can recognize the portrait of profiles apparently lacking in interest for the great classical narrative, or far from the difficult anti-colonial political resistance. It gives way to a cinema that opts for “[...]

unnoticed actors in the macro-political scene [...] to become (landscape, discourses, spaces [...]) in micro-political narratives" (Valenzuela, 2010, p. 142).

3. De-construction of the dwelling

Without a doubt, the cinema offers us images of space. In any of its forms, whether as documentary writing or as a fantastic mechanism, the seventh art allows us to recreate, virtually, the spatiality we inhabit. Its nature updates both historical and impossible spaces. And this virtue is typical of poetic work. A poetic image gives body, materializes, as Gastón Bachelard suggests. That is why the French philosopher mistrusts the metaphor that always speaks through detour or deviation. "The image, in its simplicity, does not need a knowledge. It is owned by a naive conscience. In its expression it is young language" (Bachelard, 2002, p. 11). If every image offers us a space, we would have to say that Lisandro Alonso's cinema is characterized by avoiding refuge spaces or spaces of control. His territories are bordering and transit. This allegorizes the evasion of a Latin America thought of as a political map and leaves us in front of a man adrift, given to wandering.

Bachelard emphasizes that the house is one of the spaces that, in phenomenological terms, determines the mode of construction of the human. We humanize ourselves in the home, as a refuge, insofar as it offers protection from the outside world in its ability to condition our childhood memory, insofar as it provides us with our own private cartography: "[...] the house is our corner of the world. It is our first universe. It is really a cosmos" (Bachelard, 2002, p. 34). It is therefore significant that the cinema of Alonso avoids the houses to the point of annulling them in his narrative. And with that we mean that for their characters they do not exist. Any house simulation appears as a hostile space impossible to inhabit. His debut feature, *The Freedom* (Lisandro Alonso, 2002), is a unique portrait of a day's work by a farmer in the Argentine pampas. Its protagonist is a sawyer who lives from the sale of wood at retail. At least with the information that the story offers us, we can say that he has no home. Not only does he live in an improvised store, but he seems to avoid any shelter space. And while it may seem simply a portrait of working life in rural areas, it is a statement against the social space that will continue throughout his work.

His interest in rural spaces, which has as a distinctive note a kind of tension with the characters, as if they do not fit at all in this wild geography, can be read as a return and at the same time as a negation. It returns to the outside, to the barbarian space, but not in search of a house. In his second work, *The Dead* (2004), we see the journey of a man who after serving a sentence in prison, apparently for killing a part of his family, returns to the most untamed camp in search of his daughter. The singular prison in which he pays his penalty is an open architecture. Without almost bars, it shelters clear spaces with leafy vegetation. And we can not stop thinking that their demolished structures, which give way to nature, illustrate the destruction of urban space. Our protagonist travels by canoe through tropical water channels and feeds himself by hunting. His journey concludes in the middle of the jungle but without finding his daughter. In a place of passage (similar to the one that serves as home to the peasant of his first film) he runs into a grandson he did not know and returns perhaps to his biographical origins, but in that return to the city, he denies the house, the family. But more importantly, he denies the natural space himself by surrounding it quickly.

His third film allegorizes the distance with the urban space. Titled *Ghost* (2006), this work places us in an old theater in Buenos Aires. His narrative, essay type, has as a conductive thread the wandering of two characters through the old nooks of the building as spectra locked in an inhospitable space. In this story, we meet again with the two protagonists of Lisandro Alonso's previous films (*The Freedom and The Dead*). Both attend the premiere of *The Dead*. In this case, they are no longer the characters, but the actors who

represent themselves. Ghosts of their own bodies in a strange place. And it is that both are natural actors, countrymen that now are in an unknown space. The most interesting thing is that they do not meet each other despite their constant wandering in the middle of the old theater. At the time of production, there are only a couple of more viewers. Which seems as much a kind of epitaph for the cinema as a room space or as a dismantling of an urban space. In the end, without haste, both characters abandon this scenario epitome of modernity. We can not forget that the theater is a structure for the nineteenth-century arts (strictly modern), an emblem of the nation-states that exhibit their institutional power.

His most recent work: *Fauja* (2014) has as a distinctive note the fact that it is a period film. Located at the beginning of the 19th century, it tells the story of a Danish Captain and his daughter in Argentine lands. As a backdrop, reference is made to the advance of civilization (to the deployment of modernity that domesticates wild nature) and the resistance of local indigenous groups to social impositions. However, the story focuses on the search, on the part of the captain, of his daughter, after she escapes with an Argentine soldier to enter the desert. As expected there is no home. They live in tents and suffer the inclemencies of being in the open. The journey of the father leads him to an arid geography. Any place controlled politically is denied. Not only disappears any vestige of culture but this military strategist goes astray in the monumentality of the desert. In the end our protagonist has a unique encounter with a kind of ghost of his daughter, his own future locked in a cave. Everything seems to indicate that she has aged and has been waiting for decades for her father who can not recognize her. And we can not stop thinking that this kind of future, embodied in the present, anticipates the disappearance of a unified civilization. The final section of the film seems to suggest that everything we have witnessed has been an illusion, a strange dream about past times that anticipates an approaching future. And we see the daughter in the only concrete house in Alonso's cinema. An old Victorian house. She is young again but she is in our present, in the 21st century. And she seems lost. It seems that she does not know exactly where she is or where she should go.

Bachelard praises the house, not only in a poetic sense, but in the face of the kind of de-spatialization produced by the large contemporary cities. And it is that the accelerated (and uncontrolled) development of megacities in Latinamerican countries serves as a symptom of a certain imbalance with the goals of modernity. The impossibility of controlling the city, in an apollonian sense, as well as the inability to limit certain cultural practices of mythical-symbolic nature, has as a consequence that the cities become monstrosities that threaten their inhabitants. If the house dissolves, there is no form of protection: "Buildings have no more than an exterior height in the city. The elevators destroy the heroisms of the staircase. It no longer has any merit living close to heaven" (Bachelard, 2002, p. 58). Deformed spatial arrangements that bring heaven closer to the earth or erase the earth in favor of the air: Latinamerica suffers a relocation that unites it with the rest of the planet. And our director's cinema testifies to this type of mutations.

As we have pointed out, Alonso eliminates the house from his cinema. But if it is erased, the city is absent in his work. It is the untamed spaces that challenge their characters, which makes the city, operate as a ghost. We do not stop thinking about his landscaping as the absence of a city. His vision of Latinamerica invites us to think about what future holds for man after dismantling all known spaces. Lyotard (1998) reminds us how men who live together, capable of making community, only achieve this cohesion because they domesticate space and time. Therefore, he does not hesitate to point out that it is a kind of domestic language, a *domus* that conditions the ways of living. In this key the *domus* allows us to be together. However, facing the megalopolis, this type of linkage is becoming less and less easy. If there is no space to tame, there is no place for bonding. And that explains the loneliness of Alonso's characters. In *The Ghost*, as we suggested before, the characters wander in an old theater. This monumental space, designed to ennoble the spirit in its own

architectural volume, does not host any encounter. Except for a small dialogue after finishing the function (as if the cinema was the last crack of an encounter, a symbolic *domus*), there is no contact between human beings. We might think that ghosts have no space, or can not tame the materiality of this old theater.

However, the manner of representation of the destiny of men that our director makes is much more bloody. As we suggested, his cinema is more interested in transit and passage spaces, which allows him to domesticate the human body, convert it into an object of a kind of *domus*. Whether it is thought of as an evasion of space, that is, a tour of the plains and deserts in *Jauja* or the wetlands and jungles in *The Dead*, as if they did not belong to them, a domestication is always created. In this case, of a resistant body, a body that denies the external force that surrounds it. But we believe that transit is a response to how wild spaces condition the body. By not allowing it refuge, untamed nature forces the human body to transit, to de-localization. This virulent outside makes man an undesired prosthesis by denying him protection. Therefore, the cinema of Lisandro Alonso speaks of wandering men.

His fourth film entitled: *Liverpool* (2008) offers a unique story of step, another wandering that dismantles the city. It tells the story of a sailor who arrives at port and asks for a few days of permission to visit his mother. The first thing he does when disembarking is to go to an elegant restaurant and eat a good dinner accompanied by a bottle of wine. He is dressed for the occasion. He does not look like the careless and shy sailor we've seen before. This man is domestic. He is the son of the modern city at this moment in history. However, after that comes the disassembly. And the trip seems typical of a Bachelard-style space poetics. He leaves the concrete jungle, leaves behind the buildings of the megalopolis to seek refuge of his childhood home. We witness his journey that brings him closer to a rural area where you live by cutting down trees. The freezing weather of winter turns the space into an inhospitable territory. To get there, our traveler takes different routes that take him further and further away from the city. But when he arrives, he is not just a stranger. His father does not want to see him; his mother does not recognize him (apparently, because she suffers from senile dementia) and has a daughter who did not know about him. There is no refuge, there is no house anymore. Again part, leaving behind his family, in a gesture that can not be read but as a form of relief. There is no interest in any type of *domus*, as if our director told us about a man who renounces any form of community. We assume that he returns to the ship where every sailor is anonymous and the security of the land is replaced by the perpetual evolution of the sea.

We can not help but think that Alonso offers us the same critical lesson as Lyotard but in a reverse sense. Both speak of the same future, but while our director chooses to return to a new place, our philosopher yearns for the lost past. Both tell us that there is no *domus*. Lyotard states that the deployment of the megalopolis destroys the meeting space. Alonso shows us that wandering in the indomitable space has no place that offers the relief of the encounter. "There was still *domus* in the metropolis, polis-mater, mother city, mater and heritage. The megalopolis refers only to a magnitude that exceeds the domestic scale [...]. The megalopolis is not inhabited, except in so far as it is designated uninhabitable. Otherwise it is only domiciled" (Lyotard, 1998, p. 201).

In both cases, space, linked to a form of time that tends to be annulled, is in ruins. In the megalopolises, there is no place for being-together and time accelerates until it is nullified. Its velocity vector prevents it from pausing or cadence. In the cinema of Alonso, the space is huge and threatening, and the inhabitants have no place in it for any home. Only transit. Their times, although they are those of duration, always lead to evasion. Any temporality in the escape is spent. As Cuestas (2016), correctly points out, in his study of the narrative keys of *the Freedom*, Alonso offers a representation of time as a continuous present

almost annulled by slow spatiality. In this film, the vital transit of the characters temporality is virtually nullified (or if you want becomes absolute) by its slow spatial errancies.

Beyond the dismantling of the city, the disappearance of the house, in Alonso's cinema there is another blow to the ways of building community. In his cinema, the family fractures. We could think that he makes a portrait of dysfunctional families, which we can see in many of the Latinamerican narratives. However, it is not what he does in his films. The family seems like a burden for the characters. The search for a member of the family nucleus is always present, whether as the engine of some of his stories or as a secondary part of the plots. But in any of its forms, it is always an obstacle from which the characters can not free themselves. It could be thought of as a last symbolic space of encounter. But there is no greater optimism that guarantees linkage. If the family does not serve as an anchor, the solitude for the Latinamerican man is allegorized in the cinema of Alonso. And at the end in his cinema, the family disappears because it is the last burden for this man who flees from the city, who has no house and who can not integrate into the arid natural landscape.

In the film *The Freedom*, as we mentioned before, a day is recounted in the life of a sawyer. And during that day, we see the felling, transfer and sale of wood. At the end of his day the character makes a call to which, we assume, is his mother's house. He does not talk to his mother, but he asks about her. He only says that it is possible that in a few months he visits her. His family disappears when he hangs up the phone. The film *The Dead* begins with the apparent murder of the close relatives of the protagonist in the middle of the jungle. With a dreamlike tone, we witness a crude massacre that well suggests the literal elimination of the family body. The protagonist makes a trip to look for his daughter, after purging sentence. But he does not find her. He only runs into two grandchildren he did not know. And although in this case the story ends with them, which may suggest that the protagonist resumes the family bond, the ambiguity of the closure does not guarantee a being together again. In the movie *Liverpool* the sailor finds his family, but he is not welcomed by his parents. His daughter is the only one who seems interested in resuming links. But this wanderer only wants to clean up faults. And after giving her some money he abandons her. In the film *Jauja* the family begins united. Father and daughter, danes in Argentina, travel together. But in this case it is the daughter who abandons her father. And our story takes place in the unsuccessful search of this old captain. The singular thing is that, as we mentioned, he finds her apparently aged and locked in a cave. It seems she would have waited all her life. In an early senescence she enjoys a meeting that never takes place because he does not recognize her. After that we see her in an old house, already young again, without knowing anything about her father. Maybe as if his father was just a blurry memory of the past.

After the process of gradual elimination of family ties in the cinema of our director, it seems to announce a feature of Latinamerican contemporaneity: the disappearance of the homeland. As José Jiménez points out, in a world dominated by the hypertrophy of technology, the old institutions such as the family or the nation do not resist and their role of cohesion evaporates. In short, the spanish philosopher points out that there is no longer a homeland because no connection is possible. There is no way to return to nature, as it happens to the characters of Alonso who circulate in a natural world without linking with it, which makes modern man a prisoner of loneliness. "Expelled from ourselves, banished from our homeland, nature and culture, we float, *without roots*, at nothing" (Jiménez, 1994, p. 220).

As we have insisted, all the characters of Alonso, in one way or another, are a sort of exiles and therefore they are doomed to displacement, the wandering far from the city. Jiménez says that contemporary man is characterized by the need to find something lost, to materialize the desire to recover a forgotten origin. "From our deepest interiority springs that search for roots. The image of a native soil. Of the homeland. Of which, however, we

always feel absent, distant" (Jiménez, 1994, p. 222). Hence, in the cinema of Alonso, we recognize a man without a place, without ties, without relationships. And although it is possible he looks for something (as indeed it happens), it is not an image of a seemingly better past. It is the void of the future that motivates his return to the rural space. And there, foreigner perhaps, he must simply be a passer-by who has nothing to tie him up, who has nothing to lose.

Thus, after the dismantling of various institutional forms that unfolds the cinematography of Alonso, -annulation of the city, denial of the house, destruction of the family-, his characters must resolve what to do with a bloody loneliness. And we say bloody because this leads to a certain type of exile. There is no link with the land despite the interest in the portrait of the wild space. Now echoing the allegorical tone that we have suggested, the personal vision of our director seems to tell us that in this kind of passer-by who exiles from all kinds of social ties, that fractures all forms of being-together, lies a way of understanding the Latinamerican man. And beyond the forms of crowd that the mass media portray well, the Latinamerican has had to face multiple forms of uprooting. Suffice it to say that the monster-cities that he inhabits, evict him (as in *Ghost*), that dwelling houses do not offer any refuge (*Liverpool*) and that families increasingly dissolve more easily (*The Dead and Jauja*). After that, without this becoming a rigorous generalization, we can not think but that Latinamericans are wandering, like the characters in Alonso's cinema, and in that trip that flies over the earth they have exiled themselves from every instituted bond.

As Isaac Joseph suggests, to talk about the figure of the passer-by in the urban space, the wanderers of Alonso's cinema have to act as exiles. And Joseph reminds us that whoever exiles from his homeland (like any other institution) must recognize that his natural world is an artificial product. The known culture dissolves. The world loses its face.

The experience of the emigrant is characterized by an obsession: the loss of the sense of the world. Their testimonies are therefore of paramount importance: from the moment the migrant communicates this experience, from the moment he is placed outside the walls of the ghetto, such experience reveals to him what is not cultural in a culture, the nature of the constitutive intervals of the world (Joseph, 2002, p. 31).

We can not stop thinking that these solitudes can be a condemnation, a radical rejection of the instituted world. But also the claim for another future, a singular return to the future.

To give body to the figure of the passer-by, Joseph suggests, among several possibilities that to this type of wanderer precedes the somnambulist. Whoever walks asleep has the virtue of a semi-oniric state, that is, the physical mobility of the body in a semi-conscious state. He is still dreaming of space displacement. "The somnambulist is a pragmatic being in the sense of W. James. He has given up on finding the meaning: he knows it beforehand and with excess, he bets for the infinite proliferation of associations between ideas and men, he bets for qualitative profusion even if these are precarious" (Joseph, 2002, p. 16).

It does not look for anything His fortuitous wandering, his journey without a port, his forced exile, are an expression of retreat. Hence, the characters of Alonso's cinema enter a drift to avoid certain cultural forms. And, as we have insisted, their return is not to previous cultural forms, as if by going against the path of modernity it was expected that a better destiny would be found in a feudal or magical world. His return is towards emptiness, towards the absence of meaning (or their death by excess).

4. As a closing. Epigram for a passer-by

Alonso with his filmography has materialized a passerby who escapes from the city, from the lodging, from the filial bond. His somnambulism takes place to the extent that the lives

of each of his protagonists avoid any form of conscious reflection. We do not see any of them on screen questioning their motivations. In *The Freedom* the work as sawyer of our protagonist makes him an automaton. But equally, his evasion of any filial bond is clear. In *The Dead*, although the return in search of the daughter seems a conscious act of redemption, any form of salvation is denied by the ease with which he abandons this destiny. In *Liverpool*, the abandonment of the daughter is fast. And the conscience is cleaned with a handful of bills. And in *Jauja*, the father looks for the daughter as an instinctive behavior. After finding her, metamorphosed into an old woman, he does not recognize her, nor does he realize what separates them. This travel on earth, without putting his feet on the ground, reveals a man whose commitment to his own time is broken. And although Alonso does not make a conscious portrait of Latin America (or maybe yes), he allows us to think about it, after his possible abandonment.

In short, we would like to point out that the new Latinamerican cinema, in the hands of Alonso, opts for the liminal. A portrait that draws segregated subjects, blurs borders and focuses on the internal springs of marginalization. This particular tone is well present in a filmography that suggests a new type of man after the dismantling of the ferrous places of modernity: family, home, city. The work of the Argentine filmmaker is tuned with the interest to review a social problem but already far from the ideological commitment, and not for that, non-political. As Gunderman (2005) points out Alonso, “[...] works on the highly political issue of the collapse of time or ends / beginnings of the millennium [...] without explaining the political implications [...] but that's not why he stops being political” (p. 10). A cinema that re-builds a Latinamerican cartography marked by wandering, transhumance unnoticed and supported in portraits of loneliness from the phenomenon of the de-territorialization of the home. A poetic re-creation that Alonso enunciates in a nomadic everydayness as another form of humanization from the haptic experience, as an imminent sensory journey.

Finally, we can point out that Alonso's work accounts for the emergence of a new man, the wandering man who reveals the affections and modulations of the body in a new territory. Space where the dwelling is deterritorialized and reterritorialized, perhaps, in terms of Aguilar, as “[...] a celebration of asceticism [isolation-withdrawal] and retirement” (2001, p. 13). A cinema that shines from and beyond the story, in post-narrative key (of metamorphosis), allowing us to think about the possible drifts of the body and space or, perhaps, better, of the body-space. His work “[...] is not of characters, but of bodies [...] is not intellectual, but bodily, sensory and haptic [...] is not current, but primitive and anachronistic [...] is not simple but labyrinthine and elliptical [...]” (Muñoz, 2017, p. 292-294).

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