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***Journeys in Argentine and Brazilian Cinema: Road Films in a Global Era*. Natália Pinazza. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014 (187 pages). ISBN: 9781137336033.**

A Review by Jamie Steele, University of Exeter

Natália Pinazza's *Journeys in Argentine and Brazilian Cinema: Road Films in a Global Era* navigates a particularly complex and multifaceted terrain that considers several complementary key concepts, such as transnational, national, regional, local, and diasporic cinema. The author draws upon major theorists in the field, and provides compelling evidence for the claims made in two national contexts, Argentine and Brazilian cinema. The book deals with broad themes that cohere with explorations in transnational cinema, by focusing on identities in flux and in renewal, border controls and border crossing, issues of belonging, home and homeland, social marginalisation, and poverty. It is possible to separate this book into three distinct sections: the first an industrial analysis of a transnational cinema; the second dealing with the transnational and accented aesthetics of films in Argentina and Brazil; and the third a return to the local and regional articulations on the margins and peripheries. From this premise, Pinazza posits a need to move beyond the transnational/national binary (as Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden have outlined in their approach to "What is Transnational Cinema?"), incorporating microgeographical analyses of local areas that highlight cultural differences from a national interpretation of the selected film texts.

The Foreword and the Introduction outline an analysis of the road movie genre in the context of Latin American filmmaking, but the book commences with a more detailed analysis of the industrial context. For instance, the opening chapter, "National and Transnational Film Studies: The Argentine and Brazilian Case", nuances the concept of cinematic transnationalism by engaging with modes of production, distribution and exhibition in the two selected national cinemas. It is from this conceptual basis that Pinazza posits a powerful thesis that underpins the premise of the book:

> "Latin American" embraces the national cinemas of 20 countries, which, in general, are more interesting because of their differences than their similarities. Recognising this fact, this study suggests that the term "Latin America" is problematic because it takes almost no account of the variety of cultures and local specificities that it encompasses. (23)

In this sense, the terms "regional" or "supranational" highlight broad tendencies that do not necessarily represent the cultural diversity and local articulations present across the Southern Cone. In its five chapters, the book signposts the necessity of acknowledging how these competing ideas function paradoxically within an analysis of Latin American cinema. This interaction is particularly present in other regional blocs on a global scale, and this

exploration of road movie films could be equally applicable to cinemas from nations in Scandinavia, New Europe, the former Soviet bloc or to East Asian filmmaking.

Returning to Chapter One, it outlines how transnational funding mechanisms are largely used to produce films that articulate regional identities. This includes a discussion of private and corporate actors in the Latin American film-funding ecosystem, which encourages funding ties with the former colonies. These ties are uncovered only through research on connections between countries, corporate entities and film studios (such as Patagonik). The supranational entity Mercosur is introduced at this point as part of these transnational and local dynamics, and it functions as a recurring reference point throughout. This is particularly the case in relation to the regional bloc proffering "the democratisation of cinema as a commodity and as a means of artistic expression" (26). It is from this premise that we see the mobility of films, such as *City of God* (*Cidade de Deus*, Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund, 2002), *Nine Queens* (*Nueve reinas*, Fabián Bielinsky, 2000) and *Motorcycle Diaries* (*Diarios de motocicleta*, Walter Salles, 2004), on film festival and arthouse cinema circuits across the globe by a select group of valorised filmmakers from Brazil and Argentina. In terms of the industrial perspective, Luisela Alvaray and Libia Villazana similarly re-evaluate the national cinema concept in order to consider the local, regional and global forces that underpin Latin American cinema. This chapter furthers this focus by engaging with exhibition patterns for both Argentine and Brazilian cinemas, before considering how these forces extend from this industrial basis to a productive dialogue with individual films.

The second chapter, "Home: National Crisis, Fragmented Family, and Death", engages with the book's central intention of considering road movies from Brazil and Argentina in the form of textual analysis. The chapter analyses the starting point for the titular "Journeys in Latin American Cinema": the home. Whilst the nation and the "national" concept are not jettisoned in this approach, they are challenged through the existence of fragmented families and absent fathers. The absence or loss of the father in the home setting is thus allegorical of the state of the nation. The dissolution of the family is representative of the shared experiences of the social chaos experienced both in Brazil and in Argentina, albeit in different ways. The theme of social chaos is consequently used to unify the focus of this monograph. It is this dissolution of the family at a time of economic crisis at home that leads to the protagonist's journey. This engenders an engagement with a further characteristic of cinematic transnationalism in the form of the "displaced person", as outlined by Ezra and Rowden (7), in *Martín* (*Hache*, Adolfo Aristarain, 1997), *Foreign Land* (*Terra Estrangeira*, Walter Salles, 1996) and *Bar, El Chino* (Daniel Burak, 2003).

The section dedicated to "Home is Babel" (49–57) chimes with Ezra and Rowden's approach to cinematic transnationalism, which is "'at home' in the in-between spaces of culture" and located in the "interstices between the local and the global" (4). Like Ezra and Rowden, this monograph eschews references to the composite term "glocal" in order to address the continued saliency of the national model in critical discourse. From this premise, Pinazza's chapter considers Jewish identity in the Argentine film *Lost Embrace* (*El abrazo partido*, Daniel Burman, 2004), with the textual analysis buttressed by an engagement with Hamid Naficy's notion of accented cinema and its components of accented style. Further examples, such as *Waiting for the Messiah* (*Esperando al mesías*, Daniel Burman, 2000), *Family Law* (*Derecho de Familia*, Daniel Burman, 2006) and *The Year My Parents Went on Vacation* (*O ano em que meus pais saíram de férias*, Cao Hamburger, 2007), serve as a contextual footnote. This framework is also adopted in Chapter Three, "Europe as Destination and Point of Departure", for the exploration of exchanges between Latin America

and Europe and the engagement with the transnational theme of migration for the documentary *The Hungarian Passport* (*Um passaporte húngaro*, Sandra Kogut, 2001). Moreover, the textual analysis considers how the patterns of migration are not restricted to a one-way direction from West to East, but they are reciprocal in the form of European characters present in Latin American films. This certainly chimes with the historical patterns of migration from Europe to Latin America, which are outlined briefly in this chapter.

Whilst engaging with a further theme of transnational cinema, Chapter Four, "Bordercrossing in the Southern Cone", elucidates further the initial and central premise of exploring films set in border areas. The road movie format, underpinning the focus of this book, is an apt means of foregrounding the plurality of cultures, accents, identities, ethnicities and histories across the selected countries and the Southern Cone. An analysis of *The Motorcycle Diaries* is thus inescapable, and Pinazza's work discusses how the film may adhere more to European conventions of the road movie, as the characters go "off road", hiking and swimming across the Amazon, to foreground physical and natural boundaries (104–11). In her analysis of *The Pope's Toilet* (*El baño del Papa*, César Charlone and Enrique Fernàndez, 2007) and *The Fish Child* (*El niño pez*, Lucía Puenzo, 2009), Pinazza posits that national borders may in fact reinforce regional and cultural specificities. This focus on microgeographical areas and locations highlights the cultural and linguistic diversity of such geographically large countries with histories that precede European colonisation, and further challenges the notion of a pan-American or Latin American identity. From this premise, these road movies subvert the codes and conventions of the genre by foregrounding the stasis of the location. The notion of mobility thus arises through the constant movement of people, as opposed to setting and location, in the forms of migration and tourism, which this book addresses with reference to Zygmunt Bauman's "Tourists and Vagabonds" (77–102).

The discussion of marginal and peripheral areas is furthered in Chapter Five's focus on the *Sertão* in Brazil and Patagonia in Argentina as areas on the periphery. The analysis of the *Sertão* draws on traditions from Cinema Novo and Brazilian literature to inform the reading of contemporary texts, particularly *Central Station* (*Central do Brasil*, Walter Salles, 1998). Lucia Nagib's work is used as a reference point for interpreting how the aforementioned film includes landscapes that have formed an important part of film traditions in a national cinema framework. As the book's central premise outlines, the final reading of films set in Patagonia, such as *Born and Bred* (*Nacido y criado*, Pablo Trapero, 2006), interprets local and regional articulations, thereby stepping away from an analysis of traditional images of Buenos Aires as representing Argentine national cinema. This analysis of people and local cultures on the margins and peripheries coheres with contemporary debates in postcolonial and cultural studies.

The road movie genre proves to be a neat structuring guide for key tendencies in both Argentine and Brazilian cinema in the contemporary period, with the theme of mobility permeating each chapter. Pinazza's book ranges from an analysis of themes of loss, displacement and questions of "home" that chime with Naficy's accented cinema, to flows of film funding. It follows the path laid out by key thinkers in the field of transnational cinema, such as Ezra and Rowden, William Higbee and Song Hwee Lim, and Andrew Higson. The first chapter on film production is most insightful since it develops, in Pinazza's words, "a subtle and more flexible critical paradigm" (15). This approach provides a contribution to the field in terms of developing a transnational model that is more inclusive of local and regional articulations. Naficy calls for the formation of a theoretical paradigm that further nuances the

national cinema model in light of shared cultural and artistic concerns within a certain geographical area (97–102). To this end, Pinazza offers a "Latin American" case study.

Interdisciplinary in its study and analysis, *Journeys in Argentine and Brazilian Cinema: Road Films in a Global Era* could operate as a teaching text to introduce students to a range of concepts from diasporic filmmaking through to the all-encompassing, and often vacuous, notion of "world cinema". Throughout this book, Pinazza draws on feature length films with the exception of one documentary, *The Hungarian Passport*. One small lament is the lack of comparisons to tease out the continuities in Argentine and Brazilian documentary filmmaking. Nevertheless, following recent publications like Joanna Page's *Crisis and Capitalism in Contemporary Argentine Cinema*, Cacilda Rêgo and Carolina Rocha's *New Trends in Argentine and Brazilian Cinema* and Jens Andermann's *New Argentine Cinema*, Pinazza's book compellingly addresses a unique blend of road movies from two burgeoning film industries.

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