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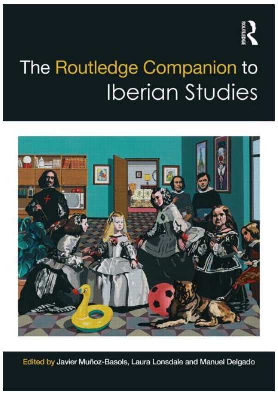

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(INTER)NATIONAL SPECTRES

Cinema in mid-twentieth-century Iberia

Brad Epps

The spectre of death marks the opening of two of the most celebrated films associated with the *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona*, two cinematic currents from the 1960s and early 1970s whose oppositional pairing has both stimulated and exasperated critics and whose enduring, if contested, relevance raises questions about the contours of Spanish, let alone Iberian, cinema. Miguel Picazo's *La tía Tula* (1964), based on a short novel by Miguel de Unamuno, begins with a tracking shot of a little boy carrying a bulky funeral wreath along a deserted pavement as a bell tolls; Vicente Aranda's *Fata Morgana* (1965), based on a screenplay by Aranda and Gonzalo Suárez, begins with alternating static shots of a graphic crime novel and photographs of two young women depicted as murder victims, one preterit and the other predicted, the face of the first woman progressively lighted, or darkened, in a way that makes it resemble a skull. Linked by images of death, the two films are separated by form, structure, style and tone. In *La tía Tula*, filmed in black and white, death appears in the familiar Catholic guise of a wake with weeping mourners, dour nuns, shiny black casket, white shrouded corpse, candles, flowers and the aforementioned wreath. In *Fata Morgana*, filmed in Eastmancolor, death appears in the familiar pop cultural guise of a series of comic book vignettes and photographic stills that seem to quiver between forensics and fashion and that suggest a sexually charged violence tagged by commodity fetishism. In both films, ritual is at work, albeit in significantly different ways. In *La tía Tula*, we find the well-established rituals of provincial Catholicism and of the national literary canon, with a peculiarly Unamunian sense of sexual sublimation updated (the film is set in the 1960s) in a manner that conveys the *refusal to update* of "eternal" Spain; in *Fata Morgana*, we find the newly established rituals of urban consumerism and of the international counter-canon, with a diffusely psychoanalytic sense of sexual trauma recycled (the film is set in the near future) in a manner that conveys the *rush to outdate* of "modern" Europe. Both films insinuate ironic critiques of their respective rituals, whose symbolic sweep extends to the currents to which the two films are said to pertain: in the case of *La tía Tula*, a muted, for politically restrained, critical realism, and in the case of *Fata Morgana*, a resolute, but also politically restrained, experimentalism. Between the two currents, a national if not plurinational cinema is configured whose troubled status, signalled by a plethora of mortal metaphors, is only heightened when brought into play with the *Novo Cinema Português* "next door"—yet still so far away – in the Iberian Peninsula.

Deadly semblances and ritualised practices suffuse, of course, cultural products quite generally, but the almost ritualistic insistence with which metaphors of mortality, fragility and failure inflect critical discourse on the *Nuevo Cine Español*, the *Escola de Barcelona* and the *Novo Cinema Português* is nonetheless notable and bears on the temporal and spatial sweep, perhaps indeed the very viability, of the Iberian moniker showcased in the present volume. For strictly speaking, it may well be that Iberian cinema does not exist – or has existed only sporadically and haphazardly in the form of academic trends, disciplinary reformulations, cultural aspirations, personal relations and more insistent geopolitical markers. With respect to cinematic production, arguably at no time is such a deliberately provocative statement – which might be amplified to query the stability of "Spanish," "Portuguese," "Catalan," "Basque" and other component parts of "Iberian" – more resonant than during the 1960s and early 1970s, when cinema in the Iberian Peninsula undergoes a series of refurbishments in which novelty is enshrined as a badge of distinction and in which the maintenance of decrepit dictatorial regimes bent on a unified vision of nationality at once compels and constrains the films produced. The refurbishments, augured and accompanied by others in other countries across the world, are haunted, practically from the beginning, by senses of precariousness, inadequacy, failure and impending demise that pertain not only to the dictatorial regimes but also, and quite importantly, to the possibility of effective cinematic resistance to the regimes. These mortally inflected refurbishments take the form, as noted, of the *Nuevo Cine Español*, centred in Madrid in the 1960s, but linked to the "Primeras Conversaciones sobre Cine Español" held in Salamanca in 1955; the *Escola de Barcelona*, centred in Barcelona, but linked to the "Primeras Jornadas Internacionales de Escuelas de Cinematografía" held in Sitges in 1967, and the *Novo Cinema Português,* centred in Lisbon, but linked to the "Semana de Estudos sobre o Novo Cinema Português" held in Porto, also in 1967.[1]

The three rubrics, each with its primary and secondary sites, are as insistent as they are inadequate, at once summoning up a semblance of homogeneity and undercutting it with heterogeneous works in which the imprint of the director as *auteur* imposes itself only to end up becoming, as Sally Faulkner persuasively notes with respect to the production context of *La tía Tula* (2006, 101–102), likewise as insistent as it is inadequate. Recognizing, then, the inadequacy of rubrics both collective and individual, it nonetheless bears noting that, along with *La tía Tula*, the films most insistently associated with the *Nuevo Cine Español* include *Los golfos* (Carlos Saura, 1960, usually presented as a "pioneering" work), *Young Sánchez* (Mario Camus, 1963), *La niña del luto* (Manuel Summers, 1964), *Nueve cartas a Berta* (Basilio Martín Patino, 1965), *De cuerpo presente* (Antonio Eceiza, 1965), *La busca* (Angelino Fons, 1966), *La piel quemada* (Josep María Forn, 1965, notable for its engagement of immigration to Catalonia and its inclusion of spoken Catalan) and, most famously, *La caza* (Carlos Saura, 1965), films in which, to varying degrees, social problems are staged. Along with *Fata Morgana*, whose relation to the Escola as "precursor" is itself the subject of debate, the films most insistently associated with the *Escola de Barcelona* include *Noche de vino tinto* (José María Nunes, 1966), *Circles* (Ricardo Bofill, 1966), *Dante no es únicamente severo* (Jacinto Esteva y Joaquim Jordà, 1967, often considered the "manifesto" of the *Escola*), *Cada vez que . . .* (Carlos Durán, 1968), *Biotaxia and Sexperiencias* (José María Nunes, 1968), *Después del diluvio* (Jacinto Esteva, 1968), *Ditirambo* (Gonzalo Suárez, 1969) and *Liberxina 90* (Carlos Durán, 1970) as well as, if only as outliers, early works by Pere Portabella such as *No compteu amb els dits* (1967), *Nocturn 29* (1968) and *Vampir-Cuadecuc* (1970), films in which, to varying degrees, formal experiments are highlighted. With respect to the *Novo Cinema Português*, the films most insistently associated with it include *Dom Roberto* (Ernesto de Sousa, 1962), *Os verdes anos* (Paulo Rocha, 1963), *Belarmino* (Fernando Lopes, 1964), *Domingo à tarde* (Antônio de Macedo, 1965), *Mudar de* *vida* (Paulo Rocha, 1966), *Nojo aos cães* (Antônio de Macedo, 1970), *O cerco* (António da Cunha Telles, 1970) and *Uma abelha na chuva* (Fernando Lopes, 1972), films in which both social problems and formal experiments figure prominently, perhaps because the "new" is not so visibly and tendentiously divided as it is in the neighbouring country.

In all three cinematic ventures, and more tensely in the two that take place within the Spanish State, national questions are, to employ a phrase from Zunzunegui (2002, 106), critically and cryptically at play. The interplay of the critical and the cryptic in and around the national is conditioned by an often arbitrarily enacted censorship and by an ultimately unconvincing semblance of "normalcy" and "modernity" that accompanied participation in international festivals. The right-wing dictatorships in place in both Spain and Portugal, in which traditional values of family, country and church were presumably condensed in the persons of Francisco Franco and António de Oliveira Salazar, recognised the potential for cinema, as a mass medium, both to shore up and to subvert the regimes' dogmatic origins and aims. "In the Estado Novo dictatorship," as Paulo Granja notes, "films were financially supported by the regime in the hope that something like a popular cinema marked by its nationalist ideology would be produced" (2010, 62). In the Francoist dictatorship, as Casimiro Torreiro remarks, "un intento de rentabilizar políticamente la defensa de una determinada concepción de la cultura nacional a través del cine" (2009, 308) led to the implementation of a series of measures aimed at fortifying a positive image of the regime at home and abroad. Along with the production of a popular cinema of positive images, the production and maintenance of a cohesive, compliant national public was, in both countries and under both regimes, as important as it was impracticable. For if the ideology of Lusotropicalism and the contested status of the African territories meant that the concept of a national public had a violent intercontinental dimension for Portugal, the long-standing claims to alternative nationalities and the presence of languages other than that of the State meant that the concept of a national public had a tense intranational dimension for Spain.

The status of a national public and a popular cinema was further complicated, of course, by such factors as socioeconomic class, education and even taste, which perturbed even a relatively monolingual country like Portugal, where Mirandese was recognised as a regional language in 1999, long after the end of the Estado Novo. According to Paulo Cunha, "a generação que promoveu o designado *novo cinema português* tentou, numa primeira fase, conquistar o grande público sem prescindir da qualidade estética das suas propostas" (2011, 83). That the "public at large" remained largely indifferent to the *Novo Cinema* contributed to what Cunha calls "a falência deste primeiro período do novo cinema" (83). A similar situation obtained in a Spain whose multilingual reality, though disavowed and impugned by the Francoist regime, was undeniable. José Enrique Monterde, for instance, considers "la incapacidad – o imposibilidad – de generar un nuevo público, ése que podríamos definir como de 'arte y ensayo,' dispuesto a sostener intelectualmente al movimiento de renovación" to be one of "los grandes lastres del NCE y la EB" (2003, 12). What both Monterde and Cunha indicate, in other words, is that none of the "new cinemas" captured the nation in its fractured, vital entirety. The point is important, for one of the primary "accusations" that the detractors of the *Escola de Barcelona* have leveled against it is, as Rosalind Galt has noted (2010, 503), its elitist irrelevance, its inability, if not indeed its hypocritical refusal as the "*gauche divine*," to engage a wider national audience, be it Spanish or Catalan. In some respects, experimentalism would appear to be neither here nor there, for even in those films that attempted to depict contemporary problems in a fairly accessible manner, such as Rocha's *Os verdes anos* or Camus's *Young Sánchez*, the very pretense to intellectual and aesthetic quality was, it seems, a deterrent to a public accustomed to the patriotic fare of the regime and, no less importantly, the largely diversionary fare of Hollywood, typically dubbed and censored, when not outright banned, in Spain.

The inability of the "new cinemas" to generate "new publics" in their respective national settings is a recurrent topic in critical and historical studies on them and dovetails, and at times even motivates, the previously noted rhetoric of dissolution and demise that implicates, to differing degrees, both the films and the contexts in which they arise. For all three currents purchase their novelty, their edge, their *raison d'être* by implicitly or explicitly positing existing cinematic practice in Spain and in Portugal – and hence, it would seem, in Iberia – as being in a state of stagnation, even decrepitude, a state, that is, of dissolution and demise that merits dissolution and demise. It is within this depleted, beleaguered context that, in Portugal, César Moreira Baptista, who was named director of the Secretariado Nacional de Informação, Cultura Popular e Turismo in 1958, declares the need for new cinematic talents (Monteiro 2001, 5–6), and that, in Spain, José María García Escudero, who was named Director General de Cinematografía y Teatro in 1962, sets in motion the institutional reforms that undergird a relative loosening of prior strictures encapsulated in the buzzwords "aperturismo" and "posibilismo." Critics and historians of Spanish cinema generally take the appointment of García Escudero – a *comparatively* open-minded conservative jurist, journalist, military man and film critic whom dissident director Juan Antonio Bardem called "un hombre de bien" (1995, 28) – as the point of departure of a new cinematic environment in which paternalist protectionism and international projection ambivalently spurred innovation. Many filmmakers and critics alike promptly cast such institutionalized innovation into suspicion if not worse, seeing it as a ruse and an illusion, a cynical exercise in cultural cosmetics, what Torreiro has called a "lavado de cara del régimen" (2009, 300) and Monterde a mode of "travestismo" (2003, 13). With respect to Portugal, a group of filmmakers and technicians working more or less in concert with the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian in the late 1960s sought, and to some extent achieved, similar modes of protection and promotion, including the creation of the Centro Português de Cinema, but, as Jacques Lemière notes, there too the "legitimidade interna" that accompanied these developments "se revelou sempre precária" (2006, 738).

Institutionalized innovation, in which a certain risk is promoted and protected, constitutes, of course, a paradox, but the paradox is all the more striking when the legitimacy of the regime is itself in question. For if "artistic freedom" is always already compromised by the now converging, now clashing forces of global capitalism and national sponsorship, it is even more compromised under dictatorship. The precarious, contested legitimacy of filmmaking in Spain and Portugal under Franco and Salazar in which totalizing concepts of the nation held ascendancy, spilt into the international domain. For both regimes, their *image abroad* was critical to their material and symbolic maintenance at home, especially as they became further entangled in multinational, technocratic networks. The image or images so produced did not, however, proceed in a unidirectional manner, inside out, but were often as not reprocessed or recycled, outside in, complicating in the process the very contours of the national and the pan-national. In the words of Anthony De Melo: "[a]lthough an ostensibly national movement, the Cinema Novo Português was, at the same time, profoundly conditioned by a world cinema culture" (2009, 8) and "drew inspiration from various world cinema figures, most notably Visconti, Rossellini, Renoir, Cassavetes, Mizoguchi, Bergman and Antonioni" (6). And in the words of Monterde: "los 'nuevos cines' españoles tuvieron mucho de mimetismo, de adopción de alternativas foráneas, todo lo más cruzadas con ciertas tradiciones propias, por supuesto venidas de más allá del campo estrictamente cinematográfico" (2003, 12). What comes to the fore is a national-international dialectic that, according to De Melo, "was evident in the history of Portuguese cinema as early as 1930" (2009, 8), but that was, in fact, at work in Portugal, Spain and elsewhere from the very origins of the cinematograph. Questions of *portugalidade*, *catalanitat* and *españolidad*, variously broached by Maria do Rosário Lupi Bello, Galt and others, are thus inevitably entangled in questions far beyond them.

It bears noting that Monterde refers to new Spanish *cinemas* in the plural, effectively linking the Madrid-based *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona* and referring to a "double expression" in which the nation-state of Spain is at once reaffirmed and bisected. He is by no means alone. In a roundtable discussion on the "Barcelona School" held in Murcia in 1991, Florentino Soria, screenwriter, actor and former director of the Filmoteca Española, declares that the *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona* were two faces of a new cinema and, moreover, that *both* were supported by the Administration, by which he means García Escudero (Paco 1991, 35–36). José María Nunes, the Portuguese-born director who was one of the central players and most persistent proponents of the *Escola de Barcelona*, concurs, claiming that at least two of his films, the glorious *Noches de vino tinto* (1966), with its inebriated, amorous nocturnal ramblings through the old city of Barcelona, and the stilted Biotaxia (1968), with its anxious, adulterous diurnal wanderings through the Eixample and the Parc Güell, were at least partly financed by the State (Paco 1991, 38); so too, if indirectly, was Aranda's *Fata Morgana* (Torriero 2000, 91). Although filmmaker Joaquim Jordà, another of the principal figures of the *Escola de Barcelona*, scoffs at Nunes' portrayal of García Escudero as a lover of cinema—"Sí, y Hitler también, y Franco también" (Paco 1991, 38)—he does not dispute that members of the *Escola* received support from the Administration. He recounts, for example, how Ricardo Muñoz Suay, a Valencian who had collaborated with Bardem and Luis García Berlanga (arguably the two most accomplished Spanish filmmakers of the fifties and early sixties) and who is generally considered to be the principal verbal architect, publicist or manager of the *Escola*, arranged a meeting between García Escudero, Jordà, Jacinto Esteva and Carlos Durán at which the Director General de Cinematografía reportedly said that he would continue to subsidize their films as long as they did not feature members of the working class (Paco 1991, 37–38).

Anecdotes aside, there is little doubt that State censorship and State sponsorship intertwined and implicated *both* the *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona*. Moreover, as José María Caparrós Lera notes, "el 'padre' del NCE," José María García Escudero, "habló de dos tendencias, la de Madrid – 'social y celtibérica, en torno a la Escuela Oficial de Cinematografía' – y la de Barcelona, la célebre 'escola'" (1983, 43). The two tendencies, faces or sides, linked as they are to two cities whose modern history – the Civil War notwithstanding – has been marked more by competition than by collaboration, at once rive and reinforce the notion of Spanish cinema. Esteve Riambau, along with Casimiro Torreiro and Jean-Paul Aubert, one of the undisputed experts in the cultural history of the *Escola*, admirably encapsulates how such competition – or, as he puts it, confrontation – functions as a distinguishing feature of "Spanish cinema" in its would-be "unified" state *before* the creation of the autonomous communities and the asymmetrical devolution of power that mark the democratic return:

> Dicha confrontación es aparentemente insólita en otros Nuevos Cines, pero, en realidad, no cumplía otra función que la de enmascarar la oposición entre la influencia neorrealista fuertemente arraigada en Madrid, a partir de los precedentes constituidos por Juan Antonio Bardem, Luis G. Berlanga y Marco Ferreri, y las características de la Escuela de Barcelona, nacida, en cambio, a veinte años vista del neorrealismo y en el seno de unos Nuevos Cines mucho más desarrollados que cuando apareció el movimiento de renovación en Madrid.
>
> (2002, 5)

The apparently unwonted confrontation that differentiates the new Spanish cinema(s) from other new cinemas, including that of Portugal, remits, in Riambau's reading, to matters of cinematic influence and development that elide long-standing cultural, linguistic and political differences between the centre and the periphery, the meseta and the coast.

And yet, in dictatorial Spain, where a principle of national unity was authoritatively enforced in a manner that strove to enmesh language and culture in a univocal Spanish grasp centred in Madrid, it was the *Escola de Barcelona* that found itself not just in a geographically peripheral but also a politically ectopic position – a position that the Barcelona-based filmmakers were quick to style to their advantage. According to Juan Amorós, director of photography of Esteva's and Jordà's *Dante no es únicamente severo*, Durán's *Cada vez que . . .* and Esteva's *Lejos de los árboles* (1963, 1972): "Había una pugna entre lo que era la costa y la meseta, y de esa pugna nació la Escuela de Barcelona" (Paco 1991, 32). The "pugna," or tug-of-war, was ideologically charged, with the landlocked "meseta" evoking close-minded traditionalism and the "costa" evoking open-minded innovation in tune with Europe or – in a pregnant precision – the "rest" of Europe, Barcelona's much-touted cosmopolitanism having long functioned as a sign of its difference from a presumably parochial Spain. It is not insignificant that Amorós, along with countless others, refers to the proximity of "la frontera" (Paco 1991, 32), nor that the border, even without the precision of 150 km, was understood to be French, not Portuguese, for it was to the provincial city of Perpignan, not to the capital city of Lisbon, itself under dictatorial rule, that cinephiles from Spain made secular pilgrimages to see films prohibited or otherwise unavailable in Spain, just as it was to Jean-Luc Godard – Saint Godard, as celebrated critic and historian Román Gubern quipped in Jordi Cadena's documentary *La passió possible* – and not to, say, Manoel de Oliveira, that Jordà, Esteva and other Barcelona-based filmmakers turned for inspiration. Then again, it was not just the Portuguese capital but also the Spanish capital that remained at what often seemed an insurmountable distance from Barcelona; in the words of Riambau: "Para la Escuela de Barcelona, París quedaba mucho más cerca que Madrid y, por tanto, es en la capital cultural europea donde deben buscarse las principales influencias del grupo" (2002, 6).

In Lisbon it would also seem that Paris, or Rome, was closer than Madrid. Studies of the *Novo Cinema Português*, no less than those of the *Escola de Barcelona*, are rife with references to the *Nouvelle Vague* as well as to the English Free Cinema, Fluxus, the New York School, and the Polish and Czech New Waves (Galt 2006, 3; Ledesma 2013, 256; Riambau and Torreiro 1999, 199), but unlike their Barcelona counterparts, the Portuguese studies contain, on the whole, virtually no substantive reference to cinema in Spain. The situation appears to be mutual, because cinema in Portugal figures scarcely if at all in accounts of the *Nuevo Cine Español* or the *Escola de Barcelona*. While contention, competition and confrontation characterise cinematic relations between the "meseta" and the "costa" in the Spanish State, unfamiliarity and indifference appear to characterise cinematic relations between the two nation-states of the Iberian Peninsula. This is not to say that contention is absent from Portuguese cinema, for as in Spain the so-called "new" cinemas are founded, in no small part, on the denigration and rejection of "older" national cinemas, on a temporal break that, in the case of the Spanish State, fuels a spatial break as well. But along with relatively general categories of time and space the specificities of personhood are also here at issue – and to such a degree that what de Melo writes about the proponents and practitioners of the *Novo Cinema Português* holds, *toutes proportions gardées*, for those of the new cinemas of the Spanish State: "The explosion of 'young' cinemas worldwide inspired them to make *personal* films as distinct from those of their Portuguese forbears, as they were similar to the various national new cinemas" (2009, 6, emphasis added). The reference to the personal is by no means incidental and buckles back to the figure of the *auteur*. As one of the salient traits of the *Nouvelle Vague* and its theorization and promotion in *Cahiers du Cinéma*, the *auteur*, as polemically posited by François Truffaut in 1954, stands in tension with both the literary adaptor and the cinematic industry and, as reformulated by Andrew Sarris in 1962, signals a mixture of technique, personal style and, most importantly if ineffably, "interior meaning" (51). As such, the *auteur*, though implicated in the national, shimmers internationally, but in a manner that is at once infranational (too specific to represent the nation in its generality) and supranational (too general to represent the nation in its specificity).

The person and persona of the *auteur* complicates the aforementioned national-international dialectic in a manner that, going beyond the constraints and contradictions that critics rightly link to the dictatorships, impinges on the critical viability of the Iberian moniker before, during or indeed after Franco, Salazar and Marcello Caetano, Salazar's successor from 1968 to 1974, under whose government, as Ana Bela Morais notes, "a atuação dos censores não divergiu muito da que estava vigente durante o regime salazarista" (2014, 148). For in one study after another, whatever its historical coordinates, the emphasis almost invariably falls on the national (Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, Basque, Galician), the international (European, Western, global), and/or the personal (Picazo, Aranda, Rocha), as well as on questions of genre, technology, industry, financing and reception. References to something Iberian – which is effectively a restricted mode of the international – are, as already intimated, as rare as any sustained dialogue on the cinematic production of the nation-states of Spain and Portugal. With regard to Portugal, Lupi Bello signals two principal and counterpoised tendencies: one that maintains that the search for something "Portuguese" is vacuous and vain, and another that proceeds "como se a busca dessa eventual 'portugalidade' fosse condição *sine qua non* para a adequada compreensão e contextualizacão de cada objecto cinematográfico de nosso País" (2010, 19). Similar concerns animate works on cinema in Spain, with some, like filmmaker José Luis Borau, advocating a film's independence from "non-cinematic constraints" (1999, xxii), including nationality, as the paradoxical sign of Spanish cinema's "coming into its own," and others, like critic Santos Zunzunegui, insisting on a film's immersion in national tradition (see Vernon 2002, 99). The Madrid-based *Nuevo Cine Español*, with its engagement of the "problem of Spain," might appear to correspond more closely to what Kathleen Vernon has called Zunzunegui's "claustrophobic closing of the hermeneutic circle that restricts the focus to an exclusively Spanish cultural patrimony" (99) than to the *Escola de Barcelona*, which largely eschews both Spanish and Catalan traditions, at least in any direct or explicit manner. Perhaps not surprisingly, however, the traditional topic of traditions is more complex.

For all their purported Spanish "centralism," the filmmakers of the *Nuevo Cine Español* took many of their cues – or so the story goes – from Italian neorealists such as Roberto Rossellini or Vittorio de Sica and demonstrated, on the whole, an eagerness to participate in wider, international circuits. Despite its derisive designation by some as "cine mesetario," the *Nuevo Cine Español*, with its "hambre de realidad" (Gubern 1966, 6), was by no means "landlocked," any more than it was unfettered because it occupied an ostensibly privileged position in the centralised State. Subject to censorship and co-option, the Nuevo Cine did not issue in straightforward critiques of an oppressive system; far from it. This is not to suggest that the *Nuevo Cine Español* issued in reticular and opaque works such as the *Escola*'s *Dante no es únicamente severo* or *Fata Morgana*, for Saura's *La caza*, one of the most celebrated films associated with the *Nuevo Cine*, is quite clearly an allegory of the Civil War. Nor, for that matter, is it to suggest that the *Escola de Barcelona* would perforce have eschewed the elliptical, fragmentary aesthetic that distinguishes it even if those associated with it could have worked in conditions that would have allowed them to be – to loop Jordà's much-cited witticism – Victor Hugo instead of Mallarmé

(Paco 1991, 25). Rather, it is to note, simply yet significantly, that despite the aforementioned ethos of contestation and competition, evident in subsidies, prizes, and other promotional and protectionist measures, and despite a lengthy history of intranational tension, the works variously associated with Madrid and Barcelona are more mutually entangled than the rhetoric of opposition that informs both the conception and reception of the films indicates. Indeed, contestation, competition and even opposition are all critical signs of entanglement. The entanglement does not extend, however, to the entirety of the Iberian Peninsula, or at least not nearly so intensely, for as already noted, the two nation-states, however marked by belatedness, insufficiency or embattled grandeur, enjoy an internationally recognised sovereignty that does not extend to, for instance, Catalonia, the Basque Country or Galicia.

Entangled or not, endowed with a state apparatus or not, there is no national rubric, including that of Portugal, that is not internally fractured and fissured. Such fractures and fissures, though often gainsaid by appeals to some sort of framing unit (Catalonia, Spain, Portugal, Iberia, Europe, etc.), are not merely adventitious, for as Andrew Higson rightly remarks: "Communities are rarely self-sufficient, stable or unified. They are much more likely to be contingent, complex, in part fragmented, in part overlapping with other senses of identity and belonging that have more to do with generation, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity, politics or style than with nationality" (2000, 66). Fissured, hybrid and impure, the "modern cultural formations" that Higson signals as "always re-fashioning themselves" (67) – and whose more radical formulation might be Gilles Deleuze's "swarm of differences" (1994, 50) – seem particularly germane to the *Escola de Barcelona*, which Eduardo Ledesma links to practices of intertextuality and, more compellingly, of intermediality, in which various media careen and collide, intersect and overlap. In the words of Ledesma, the *Escola de Barcelona* "mobilized political critique by engaging in 'impure' and 'contaminated' media practices, especially in regard to relations between the verbal, the visual and the aural" (2013, 254). That the political critique that resulted was often deemed to be unintelligible or accessible to only a small number of "discerning" viewers fuelled previously noted tensions between the meseta and the coast as well as tensions among leftist artists and intellectuals, with their attendant vocabulary and accusations of populism and privilege or, as Faulkner puts it, naïveté and elitism (2006, 126). The politics of nationality and form almost invariably implicate questions of totality, singularity and purity, all of which are at play, often in the negative, in cinematic production. For if cinema has been international since its beginnings (technological exchanges, co-productions, subtitles and dubbings, distribution circuits, immigrant, exilic personnel), it has also been intermedial (drawing on and bringing together a variety of techniques, modes and media), even before the term gained currency in the 1990s (Ledesma 2013, 256).

Ledesma's reading of the *Escola de Barcelon*a, in which he persuasively defends the anachronistic deployment of the term "intermedial," might be productively extended, at least in part, to the *Novo Cinema Português*, which, as Paulo Filipe Monteiro remarks, is paradoxical inasmuch as it is the *Estado Novo* that creates the conditions of possibility – principal among which, for Monteiro, the assault on "cineclubismo" – and supports some of its most avant-garde and experimental endeavours. Citing Paulo Rocha's declaration that " '[n]o começo do anos 60 a juventude europeia estava na moda. Ser novo, ter ideias novas era de repente um valor,' " Monteiro extends the cult of the new to the State itself: "[m]esmo no Portugal salazarista, como se poderá ver pela rápida ascensão dos novos valores" (2001, 312). Just as some of the experimental works of the *Escola de Barcelona* were implicated in, and even conditioned by, the regime's policies (as Jordà sardonically remarked, since it was easier to say the truth about a billiard ball than the Civil War or the working class, he would stick to speaking about billiard balls [Paco 1991, 37–38; Riambau and Torreiro

1993, 141; 1999, 178]), so too were some of the works of the *Novo Cinema Português*. It is important to remember, of course, that the *Novo Cinema Português* does not "divide" itself so doggedly into neo-realist and anti-realist modalities as occurs with the *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona* and that both the relatively straightforward narrative of *Os verdes anos*, with its "green" protagonist, and the decidedly more tortuous narrative of *Uma abelha na chuva*, with its jaded married couple, are associated with it. It is also important to remember that the divisions that have characterized "new cinema" – or "new cinemas" – in the Spanish State have long been marked and marred by stereotype and, moreover, that the intermediality that Ledesma understandably associates with the more experimentalist works of the *Escola de Barcelona* is in fact so widespread that many so-called mainstream works employ it as well, although almost always less conspicuously.

The mixing of writing, sound and image that constitutes, at a minimum, the "promiscuous" and "impure" core of intermediality is operant, for instance, in adaptations of literary works whose status as films has also long been disputed, even impugned. True, it is a mixing that often as not dissembles itself, just as camera, photogram and material base also often as not dissemble themselves, dissemblance being the price not just of the mainstream feature but also, ironically, of many modes of realism (social, poetic, psychological), and exposure, in the guise of self-referentiality and meta-critique, being a mainstay of the arthouse feature and, more pointedly still, avant-garde experimentation. The dissemblance or exposure of a promiscuous plurality of forms, media and materials, in many respects parallels, moreover, the dissemblance or exposure of a promiscuous plurality of people, places and practices. In *Fata Morgana*, which lays bare a variety of media (photography, comic books, advertisements) and foregrounds a cosmopolitanism whose background remains enigmatic and apocalyptic, the city of Barcelona is defamiliarised and signs of national identity largely made to go "missing" (Galt 2007, 209). For Torreiro, *Fata Morgana* is a collage that bears little if any identifiable relation to "la exigua, por no decir raquítica, herencia cinematográfica" of Spain (2000, 94); for Aubert, it constitutes "une sorte de mosaïque de mots, solgans publicitaires, entretiens journalistiques, badinages incohérents" (2006, 22), a film in which "la ville est devenue un vaste terrain vague que parcourent sans raison des êtres privés d'identité" (2009, 160). For Gubern, in one of the first essays published on Aranda's film, however, *Fata Morgana* is "una obra que se define precisamente . . . por sus características de desarraigo y de rechazo" (1966, 6), a work produced "en el seno de una cultura cuya negación no hace sino afirmarla" (6). In other words, Gubern persuasively contends that it is amidst loss that something Barcelonan, indeed something Catalan, is to be found, and that it is in "un cosmopolitismo generalizado" (9), a diffuse internationalism, that the specificity of an uprooted, stateless culture is to be identified.

And yet, even in such "identifiably" Spanish works as *La tía Tula*, of which a contemporary reviewer said that it would be pointless to search for "los descubrimientos formales de las últimas tendencias del cine moderno" (Gortari 1964, 692), it would be "naïve," as Faulkner notes, "to state that Picazo's frame of filmic reference is . . . Spanish, as any notion a pure national cinema is a fallacy that overlooks the transnational hybridity of film" (2006, 106). True as it is, the invocation of the transnational hybridity of film is also so general as to risk sapping its critical force, something that Faulkner seems to recognise when she goes on to note both that "Picazo is less concerned with his place among European New Cinemas than other NCE directors" (106) and that *La tía Tula* is "indebted to earlier practices in Spanish film photography, rather than the technical developments in vogue in contemporary European New Cinemas" (108). As Picazo himself has declared: "Me he movido en un cine muy concreto, que es el español" (Gregori 2009, 383). Still, as Faulkner remarks, moments such as the "static camera and trick long take" of the credit sequence (110) contribute to the sense of imprisonment and stagnation that is at the thematic core of *La tía Tula* and that is, tellingly enough, repeatedly adduced as the environment of cinematic production in Spain more generally. Meek as *La tía Tula* may be in formalist terms, Patino's *Nueve cartas a Berta*, which is often considered to be even more emblematic of the *Nuevo Cine Español* than *La tía Tula* (just as *Dante no es únicamente severo* is considered to be more emblematic of the *Escola de Barcelona* than *Fata Morgana*), is decidedly more robust in its deployment of a number of formal devices that include stillness, accelerated montage and disjunctures between sound and image that give the lie to the notion that formal experimentation was the exclusive province of the *Escola de Barcelona*.

The problems involved in taking *La tía Tula* or *Nueve cartas a Berta*, *Fata Morgana* or *Dante no es únicamente severo*, *Os verdes anos* or *Uma abelha na chuva*, as "emblematic" or even "representative" of particular movements, groups or schools is related, of course, to the problems involved in taking any selection of works, attitudes or styles as representative of a particular nation or assemblage of nations, Iberia undoubtedly included. The exhaustion, frustration and even exasperation with which many critics have lately come to address questions of national identity is in some ways anticipated by José María Nunes's insistence that his is a cinema of Barcelona, not of Catalonia (Paco 1991, 24). Nunes's assertion is bolstered by the fact that, unlike either the *Nuevo Cine Español* or the *Novo Cinema Português*, the "Escola de Barcelona" – or, rather, the "Escuela de Barcelona," for the Catalan language, though defended by Jordà and others, was massively censored under Franco – spotlights the Catalan capital and not some nationally modified "new," overshadowing, in the process, a presumptive *Nuevo Cine Catalán*, let alone a *Nou Cinema Català*. And yet, even when it is dismissed or demonized, the national continues to lurk, often sous rature, in such designations as "European," "cosmopolitan" and "Iberian," and, more noticeably, in such prefixed variations as "international," "pan-national," "transnational," "supranational" and "postnational." It lurks, however, not necessarily as some master signifier, essentialist anchor or determinative force, but rather as a problem, a question, a remainder and a reminder of both the insistence and the insufficiency of identity categories more generally. In the case of recognised *nation-states*, the national, in its very insufficiency, obviously insists, and so much so that, as Higson notes, "[i]t would be impossible – and certainly unwise – to ignore the concept altogether" (2000, 73), just as it would be unwise not to query "what sort of cultural developments it can embrace and what it makes difficult" (70).

It is in the light of both the insistence and the insufficiency of national designations that the relatively discrete entities that go by the name of *Novo Cinema Português*, *Nuevo Cine Español* and *Escola de Barcelona* find themselves hounded, in their critical treatment but also in their very themes and conditions of production, by the rhetoric of dissolution and demise noted at the outset of this essay. Whether it be in Zunzunegui's mobilisation of the phrase "de cuerpo presente" – which refers to a cadaver that is prepared and displayed before burial but which is also the title of a 1967 film directed by Antonio Eceiza – to lament what he sees as the inability or unwillingness of the filmmakers associated with the *Nuevo Cine Español* to draw nourishment from an extensive Spanish literary and artistic tradition (2002, 106); or in Riambau and Torreiro's reference to "la simultánea frustración provocada por la prematura defunción del NCE y el abortado intento de gestación de un Nuevo Cine Catalán" (1999, 184); or in Riambau's presentation of "una Escuela [de Barcelona] ya agonizante" as a "Crónica de un suicidio anunciado" (2002, 3; 10); or in Ricardo Muñoz Suay's "Nacimiento de una escuela que no nació" (1967); or in João Bénard da Costa's *O cinema português nunca existiu* (1996), the spectre of death, failure and non-existence looms large. Stated more broadly, in all three cinematic movements, spanning the fractured and fissured Iberian Peninsula at a time of dictatorially constrained, (inter)nationally inflected innovation, something at once momentous and momentary, dynamic and depleted, is adumbrated. Torn between social realism and avant-garde experimentation, constrained denunciation and ironic consumerism, the "new" cinemas of the 1960s and early 1970s are also torn between modes of protracted localism and surging globalism in which questions of statehood and statelessness become involute.

A comparative reading of filmic production that moves beyond the overdetermined oppositional pairing of the *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona* to encompass the *Novo Cinema Português* conjures up the prospect of an Iberian cinema whose innovative success and promise are shadowed, like those of its would-be component parts, by inadequacy, expiration and failure. There can be little doubt that, as the editors of the present collection contend, the fading of the Franco and Salazar regimes ushered in new social and cultural realities in which the multicultural richness and linguistic diversity of the region came increasingly to the fore. And yet, it remains to be seen to what degree such richness and diversity are "Iberian" – circumscribed, that is, to a geopolitically naturalized "peninsula" – and to what degree they remain marked by signs both larger (European, Western, international, trans-Atlantic, global, etc.) and smaller (Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, Basque, Galician, etc., but also individual, personal, *auteurial*), signs that endure, at times ghost-like, and that return, at times zombie-like, in an age of corporate capitalism, neoliberal reason and splintered democratic devolution.

Note

1 The *Novo Cinema Português* is also linked to the document *O Ofício do Cinema em Portugal* that followed in 1968. Its prehistory is, however, considerably longer. As de Melo notes: "The desire for a new cinema to emerge in Portugal was articulated as early as 1957, when cine-club enthusiast and eventual film director, José Fonseca e Costa, argued for a fundamental change in the national film practice in an article titled, 'Cinema novo' ('New Cinema'), and published in the first issue of the magazine, *Celuloide*" (9). Not surprisingly, precursors to the *Nuevo Cine Español* and the *Escola de Barcelona* also exist.

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