

Towards a Third Cinema

by Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino

“It’s not sufficient to interpret the world; it is now a question of transforming it.” —Karl Marx

Authors’ bio:

Fernando Solanas (1936-) is an Argentine film director, screenwriter and politician. Solanas studied theater, music and law. In 1968, he directed his first long feature film *La hora de los hornos* (*The Hour of the Furnaces*), a documentary on neocolonialism and violence in Latin America. This film won several international awards and was screened around the world.



(Solanas: 2nd from left, Getino: 3rd from left, 1971)

Octavio Getino (1935-2012) was born in Spain and moved to Argentina in the early 1950s. He worked with Solanas on the film *The Hour of the Furnaces*, which was largely shot underground and secretly. In 1970s, he was made the Argentinian film censor,

which allowed him to relax the strict artistic regime, but he was soon displaced by a harsher incumbent. He then moved to Peru and in 1980s he moved to Mexico.

Structure of the manifesto:

Some myths about revolutionary films and refuting it with examples

- ↓ The roles of intellectuals
- ↓ How neocolonialism controls people’s minds (“depoliticization”: culture, education and media)
- ↓ The monopoly of Hollywood films and the attempts to get rid of it
- ↓ The joining hands between intellectuals, artistic sectors and the revolutionary masses
- ↓ How imperialism and capitalism veil reality through screens
- ↓ The value of documentary
- ↓ The essence and goal of revolutionary films and the way a team should operate
- ↓ Why and how third cinema promotes revolutionary practice and decolonization

Key arguments of the manifesto

First, Second and Third Cinema: According to Solanas and Getino, First Cinema refers to Hollywood films, in which viewers are only passive consumers of ideology; Second Cinema are European art films which try to be independent of the Hollywood model; and Third Cinema

depicts truth and reality of the society, aiming to inspire revolutionary activism among the masses.

What does Second Cinema and Third Cinema have in common and what are the major differences between the two?

“Depoliticization”:

“Art is cut off from the concrete facts - which, from the neocolonialist standpoint, are accusatory testimonies - to turn back on itself, strutting about in a world of abstractions and phantoms, where it becomes 'timeless' and history-less. Vietnam can be mentioned, but only far from Vietnam; Latin America can be mentioned, but only far enough away from the continent to be effective, in places where it is depoliticised and where it does not lead to action.”

What was the purpose of neocolonialists to depoliticize the society and how did they manage to achieve this? How did Third Cinema tackle this depoliticization?

The essence and goal of Third Cinema:

“Furthermore, revolutionary cinema is not fundamentally one which illustrates, documents, or passively establishes a situation: rather, it attempts to intervene in the situation as an element providing thrust or rectification. To put it another way, it provides discovery through transformation.”

What’s your understanding Third Cinema’s goal? Can you link it to the words of Karl Marx?

The power of films and the value of documentary

“..... make the film far more effective than any other tool of communication.”

“The cinema known as documentary..... is perhaps the main basis of revolutionary film-making.”

Do you agree that film are more effective than any other tool? Do you think revolutionary films should be based on documentary? Why and why not?

In relation to the film *The Hour of the Furnaces*:

1. Do you think the film successful at inspiring revolutionary activism? Did it work for you?

2. the film began with words beating upon the screen cut up by scenes of bloody suppression by the police on the people. Do you think this organization a mere removal of arts or that itself is a form of art?