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**MASTER'S THESIS**

**LA MANSION DE ARAUCAIMA UNDER BRECHTIAN  
EYES**

Study of Mayolo's dramaturgical and montage intentions from a Bertol  
Brecht theoretical point of view.

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**Keywords**

Colombia, Gothical Tropic, La Mansion de Araucaima, Bertol Brecht, Dramaturgy, Editing, comparative study, Carlos Mayolo, Luis Ospina.

**Klíčová slova**

Kolumbie, Gothic Tropic, La Mansion de Araucaima, Bertolt Brecht, Dramaturgie, Střih, srovnávací studie, Carlos Mayolo, Luis Ospina.

## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the theoretical principles of Brechtian theory, and its relationship with Carlos Mayolo's *La Mansion de Araucaima* (1986) by focusing on the structural elements and editing decisions that lead to the creation of this film. The thesis will explore the social context of the film as well as the implications of the genre "tropical gothic" (a short-lived subgenre of Colombian horror) for the creative intentions of the director. Lastly it will attempt to enunciate some principles followed by the film in the way it developed its own dramaturgical structure.

## **Abstrakt**

Tato práce zkoumá teoretické principy brechtovské teorie a její vztah k *La Mansion de Araucaima* (1986) Carlose Mayola se zaměřením na strukturální prvky a stříhová rozhodnutí, která vedou k vytvoření tohoto filmu. Práce prozkoumá sociální kontext i důsledky vlivu tropické gotiky na záměry režiséra. Nakonec se pokusí formulovat některé principy, kterými se film řídí ve způsobu, jakým si vytvořil vlastní dramaturgickou strukturu.

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## Prologue

As long as filmmaking is concerned, experimentation is always on the table, we are attracted by films that do not open easily, that asks questions, and become complicated puzzles to be discovered. I have felt a special connection toward intriguing and unconventional filmmaking since I was a teenager, starting with David Lynch, Andrei Tarkovsky and Andrzej Żuławski I have felt attracted by different forms of cinema experimentation, and as well to genre like horror.

In the present thesis I will study one of my personal favorites of Colombian filmmaking: *La Mansion de Araucaima* (1986)<sup>1</sup>. Is the second and last fiction film by Colombian filmmaker Carlos Mayolo, who directed only another feature film *Carne de tu Carne* (1983)<sup>2</sup> as well as some other short films. As his fiction filmography is so short is hard to tell how it could had evolved if the circumstances would been different, he directed however many documentaries and TV series after this film but never directed for the big screen again.

This feature film is based on the homonymous novel by Alvaro Mutis<sup>3</sup> and tells the story of Angela, a model that gets trapped in a decaying manor with a group of picturesque characters. Angela is used by every single character on the manor in different ways, until she is driven into suicide. The movie finds its uniqueness in the way it has been built, with an atmosphere of

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<sup>1</sup> 1986, Carlos Mayolo, FOCINE

<sup>2</sup> 1983, Carlos Mayolo, FOCINE

<sup>3</sup> Bogotá, Colombia 1923- Ciudad de México 2013.

bizarre and decaying dismay, very different from other films of the same period in Colombia.

The consolidation of a film history and industry in Colombia is a process that it hasn't been exempt of critic, not only there has not been a lot written about Colombian film history until very recently, but the same existence of Colombian Film industry had been put in question<sup>4</sup>. The history of Colombian history is marked by irregular attempts to create a consistent industry, both from public cultural institutions and individuals, these attempts have ended in periods of prolific productions interrupted by periods of little production.

Until very recently, the country did not produce more than 5 feature films per year. It is just after the law on film passed in 2003<sup>5</sup> that the film production has went upwards both because of economic incentives and because of tax exemptions, most of the biggest productions in Colombia remain foreigner because of the size of Colombian audiences which make any return on the movie theatres very small.

"Tropical gothic" is a genre originally composed of 3 films created in the 80's in Cali, Colombia: *Pura Sangre* (1982)<sup>6</sup> – Luis Ospina, *Carne de Tu Carne* (1983) – Carlos Mayolo and *La Mansion de Araucaima* (1986) – Carlos Mayolo<sup>7</sup>. The term was brought to light by Carlos Mayolo when asked about

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<sup>4</sup> Colombian Film researcher Juana Suarez put in her book "Cinembargo Colombia, Ensayos críticos sobre cine y cultura" (2007): "A pesar de la larga trayectoria del cine colombiano y de una extensa producción (en el sentido cronológico mas no en la cantidad), existe una discusión en el país sobre si hay o no una historia y una industria del cine colombiano o si, por el contrario, éste se compone simplemente de una serie de películas"

<sup>5</sup> *Ley 397 de 2003* (Law 397 from 2003) Created the FDC (Fondo Cinematográfico Colombiano) which is a public fund in order to support Colombian Cinema. This fund has give back up to 137.000 millions pesos in incentives since created, it also added special tax incentives up to 40% of tax return, over every expense of the shooting.

<sup>6</sup> 1982, Luis Ospina, ICAIC

<sup>7</sup> 1986, Carlos Mayolo, FOCINE.



what type of film *La Mansion* was. Inspired from the title that Alvaro Mutis own depiction of the novel gave to *La Mansion de Araucaima*: "Relato Gótico en Tierra Caliente [Gothic Tale in Hot Weather]"<sup>8</sup>

Both Luis Ospina and Mayolo had a long-shared friendship together, they enjoyed the same type of films and were together in what will later be known as Caliwood, it was an artistic movement created along the cine club of the city, both Mayolo and Ospina coincided together in this space and for years they growth a long-lasting friendship up until Carlos Mayolo's death in 2007.

To define these films is to try to understand the intentions that intentionally or unintentionally relate to a political context. In the words of Carlos Mayolo "None of these [filmmaking] paths satisfied us because we had thoughts about an independent, cheap filmmaking. Better if it were horror. One that would demystify the horror of violence and misery."<sup>9</sup> Mayolo in "Cinembargo Colombia, Ensayos críticos sobre cine y cultura" (Suárez, 2009)

Here Mayolo defines his conception of cinema, firstly as an aesthetic critic of what Colombian cinema was at the time and secondly as a highly subversive form of art that could demystify the narrative around violence and poverty that was so present in other Colombian films of the same period.

The impact of Tropical Gothic movies was so important that it makes them still relevant today, not only because of the very fresh topics and depictions

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<sup>8</sup> According to ISAAC Leon Fridas, This subtitle was written on the first page of the short novel as an answer from Alvaro Mutis to Filmmaker Luis Buñuel with whom he had proposed to adapt this novel. Buñuel had refused the project arguing that it was not posible to recreate the ambience of gothic in the tropical region.

<sup>9</sup> Ninguno de estos caminos nos satisfacían a nosotros, pues teníamos lucubraciones sobre un cine independiente, barato. Ojalá que fuera de horror. Que desmitificara los horrores de la violencia y de la miseria.

they created, but because these films question the Colombian society and drive into topics that are still relevant today, such as the portraying of the ruling class and their values. For example, in *Carne de tu Carne*, two high class siblings escape to a countryside house where eventually they become fund of each other, showing in a very crude and brutal way the cruelty of Colombian high classes by turning what seems like innocent characters into cruel monsters.

This master thesis will question the way of representation in *La Mansion de Araucaima*, in which the dramaturgy seems to divert into a non-classical and non-hegemonic way of representation instead of the iconic, traditional way based on empathic emotion. We will study this by understanding the structure used in the montage and structuring of this film, and then comparing them with Bertol Brecht ideas about dramaturgy.

The film itself doesn't seem to adhere to any conventional rule of storytelling, in the way that its narration and structure on the screen is closer to its literary counterpart. I will study the methods that Carlos Mayolo uses, to understand his reasons for taking specific stylistic decisions that creates a non-ordinary non-hegemonic antiestablishment type of filmmaking. I will research his filmmaking methods at the light of Brechtian theory situating his films in a political and historical context.

In the process of understanding the different structural elements used by Mayolo in this movie I will draw a parallel with some of the theory as well as practical examples of Brechtian dramaturgy. Bertol Brecht was a renown theatre author and filmmaker that disrupted the theatre and performative craft. Therefore, his aesthetical and political theories can help us understand

in a more conclusive way the films we are studying in this work. By taking key elements from his theoretical approach to film and theatre, I will explain and decrypt the intentions behind the creative decisions taken in *La Mansion de Araucaima*.

In short, I will analyze *La Mansion de Araucaima* under the scope of Brechtian theoretical principles, I will use this analysis for understanding the aesthetical decisions and to confront Mayolo's creative vision on this film, more specifically in the dramatic structure and Montage. Finally, I will reach a comprehensive analysis of his methods and the connection between them and the inherent political context of the movie.

## **I. Understanding the subject**

### **I.A. Tropical Gothic and its political context**

The genre Tropical Gothic comes into life as an attempt to put together a series of films made in Colombia in the 80s from two directors: Carlos Mayolo (1945-2007) and Luis Ospina (1949-2019). Juana Suarez, researcher and specialist in Colombian cinema, in her book *Cinembargo Colombia: Ensayos críticos sobre cine y cultura* (2009) describes their relationship as follows:

"Even though both are different directors, the cinema of Carlos Mayolo (1945-2007) and Luis Ospina appear to be frequently associated for different reasons, the main one, a friendship that goes back to their childhood, filled with cinephile and galvanized with several projects"<sup>10</sup> (Suárez, 2009)

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<sup>10</sup> "Aunque se trata de dos directores diferentes, el cine de Carlos Mayolo (1945-2007) y el de Luis Ospina aparecen frecuentemente asociados por múltiples razones; la principal, una amistad que data de la infancia, se

Luis Ospina and Carlos Mayolo are two sides of the same coin, both directors were part of the "Grupo de Cali" and "Caliwood" two different artistic movements from Cali, Valle del Cauca, Colombia, around those years. According to different interviews "El Grupo de Cali" was created by people that became Friends in the film club of the (Fridas, 2015) and (Suárez, 2009). These Artistic movement of a very informal character did not share any specific manifest apart from the love of cinema and literature, Both Mayolo and Luis Ospina were influenced by Andres Caicedo an important writer of the time who was the lead in many ways of these movements.

Andres Caicedo died at the age of 27 after a very prolific but short writing career. He collaborated with Luis Ospina and Mayolo in at least two short films and one unfinished feature film. His love of horror films inspired the two directors to work on their own artistic ideas to redefine and reinvent the genre. Among his many recurrencies Andres Caicedo made an adaptation of *The Night of the Assassins* from Jose Triana to theatre, and even tried to sell some of his scripts in Hollywood without much success<sup>11</sup>. In his lasts years he created "Ojo al Cine" a critical magazine about cinema that would become influential in years to come.

Under the influence of Andres Caicedo and some of the 1960s horror movies like "The night of the living death" (Berdet, 2016). The tropical Gothic intended to build a cinema to reinvent traditional Colombian Cinema (or the absence of one), a cinema not demagogic and marginal, portrait of an explosive reality with the possibility of immediate change.

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nutre de una cinefilia compartida y se galvaniza con la ejecución de varios proyectos" Translated by the author

<sup>11</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andr%C3%A9s\\_Caicedo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andr%C3%A9s_Caicedo)

While maintaining certain elements from the gothic like the atmosphere, the creepy settings, the connection with the supernatural, among others. The tropical gothic reveals a transcultural appropriation of the topic to address very local narratives such as the colonial order and social hierarchy. As explain by Isaac Fridas in his essay about Tropical Gothic:

“On the first place, the closed space the houses, with their immediate borders, situated outside the urban sides, and with notorious elements from the Colombian landowner spectrum the strange atmosphere and with strong dreamy components. As well the manners marked by unstoppable erotical and tannaitic desires. The vampirism or the “zombieness” of the characters.”<sup>12</sup> (Fridas, 2015, pág. 47)

Ospina and Mayolo specific fixation on classic horror topics such as zombies and vampires come into the movies as a re-signified elements that will always enable a reflection into the social reality of Colombia. The vampires, for example in *Pura Sangre* (1986) portrait as the rich elite that holds their power based on sucking of the blood of the working people, living in isolation reject all the misery that lays outside their manor gates and every now and then bring some of this new blood to fill up their twisted desires. In *Carne de tu Carne* (1983) Mayolo portrays the elite as incestuous cannibalistic, embodied in a couple of siblings teenagers who escape to a countryside house after a catastrophe occurs in the city. There they consummate their incestuous love in front of the ghosts of all members of their family. During the movie Mayolo depicts the true horrible nature of his characters, going as far as making them

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<sup>12</sup> En primer término, el espacio cerrado de las casas y sus linderos inmediatos, situadas fuera del ámbito urbano, y con notorios rasgos propios del universo terrateniente colombiano la atmósfera enrarecida y con fuertes componentes oníricos. También, las conductas marcadas por irrefrenables deseos eróticos y tanáticos. El vampirismo o el “zombismo” de los personajes.

kill an innocent family and capture a baby that they will later devour. At last, the couple is killed but returns in the form of zombies.

Mayolo was indeed an irreverent filmmaker, and from both *La Mansion de Araucaima* and *Carne de Tu Carne* it is possible to interpret a strong political irreverence even though there is not explicit message on either of them.

Colombia at the time was dominated by a strong economic and political elite that had deny sharing the political power with the rest of society, after a strong period of violence in the 50s several leftist guerrillas had surge with the aim to take the power by the arms. By the time *La Mansion de Araucaima* was shot, most of these guerilla group had developed into a complex criminal organization that lived side by side with narcotraffic pimps as Pablo Escobar. The movies in a way without citing specific elements of the political history show the way the elites behaved, as closed, vampiristical and incestuous groups.

These movies reflect this period of violence of the 50's between liberals and conservatives, especially in the rural areas of Colombia. As Leon Fridas put it:

"It has been said that in the two feature films from Mayolo there is a metaphorical collapse of the landowner Colombian caste and an allegory of the period of the "Violence" in which liberals and conservatives confronted specially in the rural parts of Colombia for around 20 years. The incest, is in its double dimension attraction and rejection it would be a way to understand

the bond between the traditional parties and its confrontation.”<sup>13</sup> (Fridas, 2015, pág. 47)

The bond he speaks about its the pact between liberals and conservatives in order to alternate the political power every four years with complete disregards for the results of the elections. The pact signed in the 50`s survived for almost 20 years until it was changed after the new constitution from 1991.

In conclusion the “Tropical Gothic” was as short lived genre in Colombia that together with strong aesthetical decisions and with an interest of creating a marginal anti-establishment cinema, created a different genre that draw from horror to portrait local specific narratives that were relevant for a political context of the time.

### **I.B. La Mansion de Araucaima the book and its adaptation**

Originally a book about 50 pages long by the writer Alvaro Mutis<sup>14</sup>, *La Mansion de Araucaima* tells the story of the manor of Araucaima an old decaying manor in the middle of the Colombian Valle del Cauca, in which 5 characters are trapped or more likely do not want to leave. Angela a young woman comes in the manor to disturb the order that rules the place, and

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<sup>13</sup> “Se ha dicho que en los dos largos de Mayolo hay una visión metafórica del derrumbe de la casta terrateniente colombiana y una alegoría del periodo de La Violencia en la que liberales y conservadores se enfrentaron, sobre todo en el medio rural colombiano, durante veinte años. El incesto, en su doble dimensión de atracción y rechazo, sería un modo de dar cuenta de ese vínculo entre los partidos tradicionales y su enfrentamiento.”

<sup>14</sup> Bogota, 1923 – Mexico DF, 2003. Colombian writer author of “The Adventures and Misadventures of Maqroll”. Source: Wikipedia.org

ends up trapped in a circle of characters and situations that eventually bring her to suicide.

The subtitle of the novel is "a fable of gothic in hot weather". It came as a challenge to Buñuel who rejected the possibility of adapting the novel to film.

This unofficial subtitle that Mutis used to refer in multiple interviews is part of a broad view over the topic itself, in this way we can define more specifically what perhaps was Mayolo referring when speaking about tropical gothic. For Alvaro Mutis the tropic has a decaying and deadly nature:

"The tropical Gothic, more than a landscape or a specific weather is a living experience. One that will give account for the rest of our lives, not only our senses, but also our reasoning, our relationship with the world and its people (...) Neither the jungle has any relationship with what the tropic is about. A short vegetation, skeletal bushes and naked brambles, slow muddy rivers, huge gray estuaries where dancing clouds of mosquitos move around with a sleepy zigzag, towns eaten by the dust and woodworms, starving people with eyes open in an inner vigil. Of the fever that files and crumbles all possible energy. Long nights of humidity rule by insects that not the wildest fantasy could have imagined, milky sunrises where every act of the day we fancy mean, frivolous or impossible, completely oblivious of the clumsy poison that gets in the mind and confuses the senses with its tasteless molasses. This is closer of what the tropic could be.<sup>15</sup>" Mutis in *Alvaro Mutis: Estética del Deterioro* (Hernandez, 1996, p. 232)

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<sup>15</sup> "El trópico, más que un paisaje o in clima determinado es una vivencia, una experiencia de la que darán testimonio para el resto de nuestras vidas no solamente nuestros sentidos, sino también nuestro



This decaying ambience and rotten background in the book, it is deeply connected with the idea of gothic for Mayolo, many of these elements like the nature, the idea of inaction and asphyxiating hot weather are going to become central in the adaptation, it will also work very well with the political aspect of the movie and its connection with the political context in Colombia.

The short novel is originally built as a series of chapters each of them from the point of view of a different character, the movie follows a similar pattern, that I will develop in my analysis in chapter V. the book revolves around the descriptions and detailed characterization of the people in the manor, making not much space for the plot itself. Building instead an atmosphere of dreamy elements and strangeness, that creeps from the dark parts of the manor.

Instead of sticking to one single perspective the short novel emphasis is put in the creation of atmosphere and the introduction of a series of elements that will also be present in the adaptation, among these elements are the dreams, nature, sexuality, and racism.

Even if the book is built in separate chapter for each character, both the movie and the book keep Angela a central character that will serve as a catalyst in the developing of the plot.

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sistema de razonamiento nuestra relación en el mundo y con sus gentes (...) Tampoco la selva tiene relación alguna, con lo que en verdad es el trópico. Una vegetación enana, esqueléticos arbustos y desnudas zarzas, lentos ríos lodosos, vastos esteros grises donde danzan las nubes de mosquitos un soñoliento zigzag, pueblos devorados por el polvo y la carcoma, gentes famélicas con los grandes ojos abiertos en una interior vigilia, de la fiebre palúdica que lima y desmorona todo vigor, toda energía posible. Vastas noches de humedad señoreadas por todos los insectos que la más loca fantasía no hubiera imaginado, lechosas madrugadas cuando todo acto en el día se nos antoja mezquino, gratuito e imposible, ajeno por entero al torpe veneno que embota la mente y confunde los sentidos en su insípida melaza. Esto más pudiera ser el trópico." Translation by the author

The novel was brought to Mayolo to be directed founded by FOCINE (Fondo Nacional de Cine de Colombia) which was the public fund for Colombian productions because he had lived in London with the at the time director of FOCINE, Maria Ema Mejia.

The interest on the script on the side of Mayolo was always very eminent, in an interview in 1987 Mayolo says: "in the cinema it also happens the same, a door to the unconsciousness is open, that's the type of cinema I'm interested about, the one of the hidden truth and in that sense Mutis is very good... Mutis and Buñuel are the guys who have open the doors all their life no matter what<sup>16</sup>" (Mayolo, Carlos Mayolo habla sobre la «Mansión de la Araucaíma», 1987) Mayolo's interest in horror and subversive films is the reason he decided to direct this adaptation over other movies.

The movie, made in 1986, is the last of what we can truly consider tropical Gothic (Gómez, Caníbales por Cali van: Andrés Caicedo y el gótico tropical, 2007). It tells the story of a model who while shooting a commercial for TV, finds an eerie manor in the middle of the countryside, this beginning its only present in the movie, the book starts directly in the manor. This manor transforms into a prison where she is sacrificed for the people on the manor to walk freely out of it. *La Mansion de Araucaima* is a rich example of extravagant characters and seemingly obscure metaphors, the atmosphere and visual elements build a world that as we will see explore a set of social

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<sup>16</sup> "Entonces en el cine también sucede eso, que se abre la puerta del inconsciente. Ese es el tipo de cine que me interesa, o sea, el de las verdades ocultas y en ese sentido Mutis es muy bueno... Mutis y Buñuel son tipos que han abierto puertas toda la vida pase lo que pase" Translated by the author

hierarchy, and conflict. As Juana Suarez writes in his essays over Colombian Cinema:

“The manor is a micro reproduction of a social hierarchy en decay: a renegade Jesuit priest (Alejandro Buenaventura); Don Graciliano (Josué Lewgoy), an old landlord that rdaws a map connecting the sugar history of Pernambuco’s sugar mills in Brazil; Cristobal (Antonio Pitanga) his black servant, and Camilo (Luis Montoya), a pilot trap in the place, who is sexually impotent, and is unable to abandon the manor. La Machiche (Vicky Hernandez) who is a theatre actress also in decay; in the manor she is a middle-aged woman who regulates the placer and fight it away between Camilo, Cristobal and the guardian of the place (Carlos Mayolo)”<sup>17</sup> (Suárez, 2009)

This social structure and their interactions will mostly be the main elements present on the plot, departing from a more traditional character based situation with a classical hero’s journey development in *La Mansion de Araucaima* the decaying nature of a specific social structure will become the most essential element.

The conflict emanating from this social structure will touch every aspect of the character’s life, elements like the mix of races, and mix blood will be a common element in the filmography of both Luis Ospina and Carlos Mayolo,

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<sup>17</sup> “La mansión es una micro reproducción de una jerarquía social en decadencia: un fraile renegado jesuita (Alejandro Buenaventura); Don Graciliano (Josué Lewgoy), un viejo hacendado que traza un mapa que conecta con la historia azucarera de los ingenios de Pernambuco en Brasil; Cristóbal (Antonio Pitanga), su sirviente negro, y Camilo (Luis Fernando Montoya), un piloto atrapado en el lugar, impotente sexualmente e impotente para abandonar la mansión. La Machiche (Vicky Hernández) es también una actriz de teatro en decadencia; en la mansión, es una mujer madura que regula el placer y lo reparte entre Camilo, Cristóbal y el guardián (Carlos Mayolo).” Translated by the author

In the case of the first one the movie "Pura Sangre" (Ospina, 1982) for example portrays the life of an ill landowner that needs to drink blood from young poor men and women in order to keep living, the blood is given by employees that kidnap poor people in the outskirts of Cali. Blood is a symbol as well of racial purity because this landowner cannot drink black's people blood.

In the case of *La Mansion* there is not literal blood, there is however metaphorical blood as Angela arrives to the place as new blood new flesh that needs to be consumed. In this sense the sexual exchange that occurs between Angela and almost all the other members of the manor could be seen as this need for consummation, devouring Angela's only commodity: her new blood.

### **I.C. Dramaturgy of emotions (classic dramaturgy) and its connection with *La Mansion de Araucaima***

When referring to dramaturgic elements in a film or a book, we must look at the basis or the concepts that define a mode of representation to understand it. In the case of movies as well as books, we can mention the human need for entertainment, or simply enjoyment. This enjoyment could be extracted by the aesthetic or simply visual stimuli of the work of art. To be more specific, we watch films under the idea of feeling some connection with what is being presented on the screen.

Since we feel positive or negative feelings around characters and situations presented in a dramatic environment, we can agree that film creates emotions in the audiences and among many objectives cinema may have, the

procurement of emotions is one of the main ones. In that topic Jennings Bryant and Peter Vorderer, writers of *Psychology of Entertainment* describe: "Identification with media characters is an imaginative process that is evoked as a response to characters presented in mediated texts. Mediated texts construct worlds in which characters are seen to operate. Viewers often respond to such texts by feeling if they are part of these fictional worlds." (Bryant & Vorderer, 2013).

Given what we know so far from experimental and controlled environments we can pretty much say that audiences feel as if they were witnessing a very familiar environment when they watch a film, Bryant and Vorderer describe the situation of watching a film as getting involved in a social situation in which the audience judge positively or negatively the behavior of each the characters.

As I we will see along this thesis this is not the case for *La Mansion de Araucaima*, which in many instances appears in the opposite position, by presenting amoral or unempathetic characters.

Many films present a coherent world with dramatic situations in which the actions of characters are judge good or wrong by the audiences, developing a moral status; identification comes as a moral judgement of the action of the protagonist or protagonists, as generally we can understand the situation in which the protagonist is into, and we judge his actions positive in the context of the story. Depending on the type of story these actions could be seeing as heroic or antiheroic, but the crucial elements is that from a poorly morally point of view we understand the emotions from the protagonist, and we feel an inner sense of justice (or injustice) that emanates from his final

situation in the movie. In contrast, we feel antipathy against the antagonist for the same reasons we feel empathy towards the protagonist. Nevertheless, as Jennings Bryant and Peter Vorderer write " The identification of viewers is influenced by their own perspectives, values, and interests as individual. Identification, then, requires taking on the perspective if another, walking in another's shoes (Livingstone 1998), but necessarily doing so through the filters of one's own understanding and experience." (Bryant & Vorderer, 2013)

The intensity by which any audience is entertained by the film or play they are watching, is directly related to the emotional connection that that specific audience feels. Without being the only factor involve in the satisfaction obtain by the audience, this satisfaction is indirectly connected with intentional temporary distraction from reality. As Bryant and Vorderer say in their book it is not only the entertainment what we seek in the content, but it is the ability to expand our emotional and mental lives away from our own limited experiences<sup>18</sup>.

*La Mansion de Araucaima* escapes to this logic by confronting us with a contradictory reality. The temporality distraction from the real world its in this sense not complete, the movie pushes you back into the world by creating small gaps that will eventually lead to create questions in the audiences.

The traditional approach to dramaturgy or how Bryant and Vorderer calls it *Dramaturgy of emotions* is nevertheless problematic, it will be necessary to

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<sup>18</sup> "It is not the mere exposure to entertainment that we enjoy, but the ability of entertainment content to distract us from ourselves and to reveal to us novel exciting experiences of others (...) We expand our emotional and mental lives beyond the scope of our personal experience and participate in community and cultural life. Entertainment is as old as human society, but modern media communication has multiplied the variety of stories we have access to. " (Bryant & Vorderer, 2013)

prove that entertainment is a human need, to decide as well how to define entertainment, where are the boundaries of what is socially acceptable vs what is not socially acceptable. But essentially it all comes to the purpose or need for entertainment, if we just assume that the purpose of every film or book is to be entertaining alone, the quality or specificity of the work of art also loses relevance, because as a human need we can be fed with poorly designed but emotionally exciting content that fulfills our need, and that do not necessarily mean that said content is worth watching.

In other words, watching a movie or reading a book that simply triggers an emotional response as crying or laughing, do not guarantee that the book or film is interesting, and it does not make it qualify as relevant. Bryant and Verger recognize this as follows: "What should be recognized, however, is that the evocation of emotion is not the only objective of drama, not even necessarily the most desirable one. Drama may captivate and intrigue us in cognitive terms (Zillmann, 1991). It can be thought-provoking and inspiring. Rather than still our emotions to the fullest, it may gently touch us. Drama that combines the indicated elements, that both touches our hearts and challenges our minds, may arguably define a genre of superior entertainment value." (Bryant & Vorderer, 2013)

I will argue that *La Mansion de Araucaima* challenges this notion of mere entertainment by creating a more complex and not only emotionally compelling story, the tools of dramaturgy of emotions are therefore not enough for understanding properly the specify of this film. And for this reason I believe Brechtian Theory could be very useful to analyze thorough the film.

## **I.D. Montage in La Mansion de Araucaima**

Before jumping into the Montage analysis, it would be useful to make a short recapitulation of the plot. The film begins with Angela, a young actress who is shooting a commercial in the countryside, after fighting with her boyfriend decides to take her bicycle and run away, the bicycle breaks and she finds the manor as the only possible place to take shelter, Angela then enters the place in which all the characters are strange and seamlessly becomes integral part of it while at the same time breaking the inner social equilibrium of the place. Eventually Don Graciliano the owner of the manor decides to do something about it, and with the help of some of the other characters pushes Angela to suicide. The movie ends with drama; after Angela dies the Pilot decides to avenge her by killing Machiche one of the main responsible of the plot, and because of that Cristobal (the servant) decides to kill the pilot as well. In the end all the remaining characters leave the manor and never come back.

*La Mansion de Araucaima* specificity of its montage presents real challenges both for the analysis and the casual viewer, the way the movie is structure in a non-conventional way, make us find a different model to understand it. The position and length of the different scenes as well as the interruptions between scenes and cross cutting will give us some clues to understand how the movie was designed.

This chapter has the objective of to draw some characteristics across the film as well as point out to specific elements that will later be used in the Brechtian analysis of the film.



The movie begins with a shot of a diary, a diary that later we will find out it is the diary of Angela's death father who committed suicide, followed by a shot of Angela in front of the bathroom's mirror while getting ready for the shooting. The mirrors as well as different objects for the vision, will come back frequently along the film, showing the way Angela is being observed, and framed.



*1. Angela looking at herself in the mirror*

The Mirror could also be a representation of the character's change along the film, as she also loses the sense of herself and decides to kill herself following the steps of her father.

After this, another element which will be as well present in the whole film, is the awareness of fictional quality of the film, first by the introduction of the film set inside the film, in which Angela is shooting a commercial, and later on by the constant reference to either theatre or film, either with Machiche saying she used to be a theatre actress or Don Gracio saying he made films in his youth, as well as the use of operatic music from Don Giovanni.

Another important element is the use of the music, which from this very first scene when Angela is in the bathroom we listen for the first time to the music that is use to build as leitmotif of her character, this leitmotif will be repeated every time Angela listens to this song on her Walkman, and it has

some dark tones pointing into the obscure ending of the plot. The music is later use continuously either to exacerbate the topic of the movie or to set up the atmosphere of the scene.

In *La Mansion de Araucaima* there are of two different worlds. First there is the commercial shooting in which Angela (Adriana Herran) appears for the very first time. This section last around five minutes, and it can be described as a natural realistic representation of the world. Things occur in this world as it will occur in real life, contrasting with the main body of the movie that will happen on the manor.



## *2. The shooting of a commercial inside the film*

This scene ends and is followed immediately by the introduction to the manor (La Mansion). Here again the music is important creating the sensation decaying abandon place helping to build the leitmotif for the manor itself. This segment of what I call the introduction takes around 25 minutes, and will present all the characters and relationships which are described carefully as well as their specific situation, the narration itself does not seem to stick to one single point of view.

In comparison with the segment before, this sequence is extremely stylized full of music and complex camera movements; the mise-en-scène shows

several dispositions of the characters on the frame, making emphasis in relations of power or sometimes making a special emphasis in the scenography. This is evident specially on the scene between Machiche and Don Gracio in 00:08:30 and as well the relationship between Cristobal "El Sirviente" and "El vigilante" in 00:12:10. Where with Don Gracio and Machiche we can see how he is treated like a child by her, and with Cristobal and The vigilant we can see how there is a racist relationship against Cristobal.

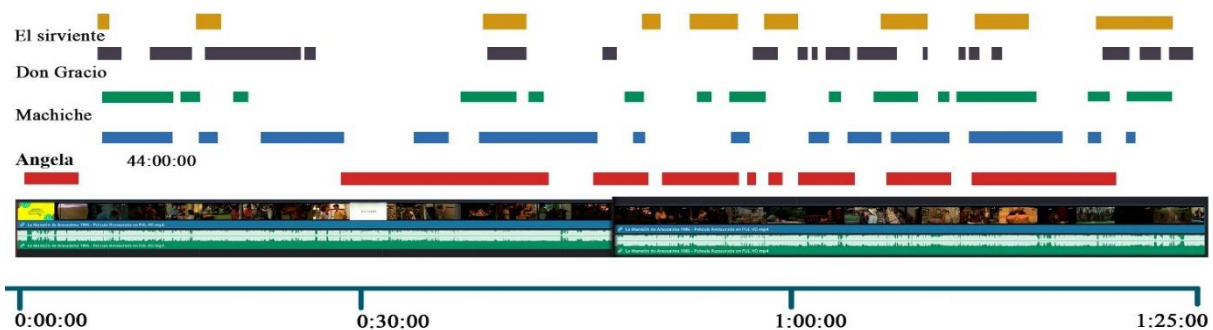


### *3. Don Graciliano in his room with Machiche*

After this first introduction of the characters there is a general over view over their daily routines and traditions. On the case of Don Graciliano there is a communal baths in the center of the manor which repeats along the movie, here Don Gracio will take a bath alternatively with different characters like Machiche and Cristobal (the servant), and eventually as well with Angela. This bathes scenes are of special importance for our analysis, as they spread long the movie in crucial moments, signifying moments of change. More specifically there is three scenes scattered across the film, the first one is here on the introduction on the minute 00:10:26 here Don Graciliano bathes with Cristobal, the second scene is in 00:38:00 where Angela discovers this ritual at night after arriving to the manor, this moment is the beginning of

Angela's role in the manor. Then we see the next bath scene on the minute 00:45:00 when Angela watches Don Gracio with Machiche together, here the bath is even more intimate. And finally, the last bath scene occurs on minute 00:55:00 after Angela's destiny is already sealed, each one of this scenes works initially as a breaking point, marking the path of the movie and also as divisive moments in the plot.

This first segment of introduction to the manor ends with the irruption of *Angela* (Adriana Herran) to the place, from this point she takes protagonism in the montage structure. We can see in the table bellow how she is present the rest of the movie, having 44 minutes of screen time.



#### 4 Structure table

The structure itself could be comprise in what we could call a sort of group protagonist movie, in this type of structure in comparison with other types of narratives, we encounter a group of individuals that share a same destiny or objectives, in *La Mansion de Araucaima* there is not such a thing as a common objective, but what really takes importance is the way the plot develops the inner dynamic or inner tension between the group.

Angela irrupts the hidden reality of *La mansion* as a revitalizing agent that will change everyone routines, in this process her presence is also portrait as a treat to the survival of the group itself. Machiche who is the other woman in the house feels her matriarchy is menaced by the strong sexual presence of Angela.

In these sexual exchanges that happens after the destabilizing power of Angela in the manor we can see the connection with the "racial purity" as Angela becomes sexual partner of every character on the manor except Don Gracio and the pilot, Angela is a destabilizing element of the racial order that support the social structure inside the movie.

"Even though it is Don Graciliano the one who pushes Cristobal to lay Angela, in the Araucaima Manor, the racial mix is as destructive as it is liberating. Don Graciliano reclaims his patriarchal authority over the death body of Angela, authority that have been destabilized after the chain of events cause by jealousy that finish with the sexual encounter between the mulatto and the white young woman."<sup>19</sup> (Suárez, 2009)

Here Suarez reminds us of Angela's role as a destructive element and, as well, as the new blood that is consumed by the inhabitants of that place, as only thru her sacrifice the characters in this movie can leave the surreal prison, they have been trapped in.

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<sup>19</sup>Si bien es don Graciliano el que empuja a Cristóbal a mezclarse con Ángela, en La mansión de Araucaima, la mezcla racial es tanto destructiva como liberatoria. Don Graciliano reclama su autoridad patriarcal ante el cuerpo muerto de Ángela, autoridad que se ha desestabilizado por la cadena de celos que genera el contacto sexual entre el mulato y la joven blanca

Coming back to the structure what we can take from *figure 3* is that the relative importance of every character is the same if we analyze solely the screen time of each of the characters, even though that does not say much about the nature of the narrative. It can give us some clues of what intentions could be there for the director.

The necessity to create a film that answers to a group dynamic more than a specific psychological drama can be observed in the other film of Mayolo "Carne de Tu Carne" in this one the main storyline of the siblings is always interrupted by parallel scenes that present different characters that give some context to the plot but are not involved in the main chain of events of said movie.

The montage then is divided by small segments each one corresponding to different characters, initially each character separated and then together with Angela. Most scenes lack the use of close ups, and use composition inside the frame, shifting perspectives with camera movement and focus pulling.

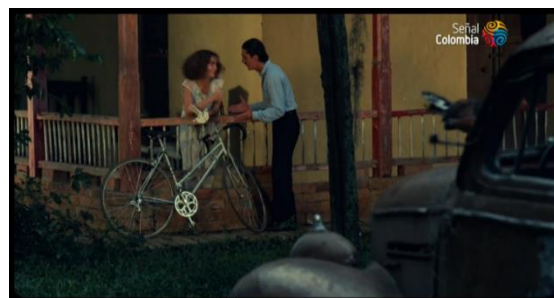


5. *Machiche in the Background*



6. *Angela in the Background*

It is common across the movie to find figures and characters creeping out in the background of the scene, this adds to the complexity of the *mis en scène* and creates a feeling of uneasiness, this is also comes supported using impossible perspectives or obstructed views, by which the characters seem to be observed by someone external.



7. *Objects interrupting the view of the camera*

Here we can see as well as with the mirrors how the person who is looking its important, the constant reference to someone who observes, might make us more conscious about our place as spectators, and put into a reflexive

position towards the movie while creating distance between us and what is being shown.

Finally, I will like to talk about the use of breaking elements, specially in the music, the sound effects, and the cuts. The cutting follows a pattern of constant interruption, both by actions that are being interrupted by the cut and by scenes that break the normal succession of the plot, one of the first times we can see one of these cuts it is on 00:11:30 on the first cut from the bath to the guardian:



8. Cut Between the Bath and the vigilant

The action is interrupted, as well as the music which had a crescendo in the scene before and its immediately follow by a more calm scene with the guardian which is simply observing. It is possible to see the same kind of interrupted action all across the film. In the case of the music, it is more a matter of strength, when the music is introduced there is usually a strong change in the narrative or break in the plot a good example of this is when in the minute 00:38:00 one of the dream sequences in this case of Machiche, the sound changes drastically and all we can listen to is a strange piano, that helps to build the atmosphere of strangeness.



In conclusion the use of mis en scene, creates an atmosphere of strangeness, and uneasiness that together with the isolation of individual characters by scenes or segments help to build an unconventional narrative.

### **I.E. The Characters.**

The characters are portrait in their natural environment, each one occupying their own room that gives them defining characteristics. This helps build a story without giving excessive importance to any of them.



*9. Cristobal (The servant)*

Here in image above the servant (Antonio Pitanga) is portrait surrounded by candles that showcase his connection with spiritual pagan rituals and his connection with black/mix culture, he also appears without clothes in a small back room of the house emphasizing his lack of means.



*10. Machiche in the Kitchen*

Machiche for instance is immediately characterized by her sexuality, she appears surrounded by exotic fruits wearing a quite transparent shirt and taking care of the food, as the obvious representation of fertility and femininity in the very traditional sense. In this sequence the sound also emphasizes this characterization with some of the characters singing different songs, some sort of leitmotif for each of them.

Each of the character is portrait in a one shot fully packed scene in which we understand their disposition towards their social context and their interconnection in between them. The importance of the tropical nature is also showcased from the beginning of the sequence, by showing a huge tree that covers big part of the shot the first time we see the house.

The tropical nature will be a recurrent motive in the whole film in some other scenes there are several moments in which the extravagant elements of the tropical nature will help the mise-en-scène in creating a strangeness atmosphere. This disposition of natural elements will speak about the relationship with their surroundings and the very voracious nature of these characters, as they appear surrounded by fruits or food ready to be eaten.

Every character portrait under their own specific characteristic comes as well as a more general representation of archetypical characters that will come in the movie like different forces striking each other.



*11 Don Graciliano looking at his book.*

For example, here we see how Don Graciliano is treated as a little boy by Machiche, he appears looking at this children's book with cutouts, here perhaps there is a fiction element as the book he holds looks like a frame, a frame with characters very similar to a small theatre.

Every part of the morning routine forms part of a series of never-ending traditions.

The way each of the characters speaks is as well important, each with their own intonation, and some like Machiche speak in a theatrical manner, or some like Don Graciliano and Cristobal speak in Portuguese, maybe a reference to the slaves' history of Brazil and its connection with plantations.

## **I. Bertolt Brecht and Carlos Mayolo: a reflection of one's theories in the other's Film**

To approach a comprehensive analysis of the dramaturgical structure used by Mayolo in his film, I will use tools proposed by Bertolt Brecht in his theoretic and practical work by which he defines dramaturgic principles that could be applied to his work as well to other forms. Brecht's work influenced

mainly modern theater and modern art theory, but his ideas could also be applied to film.

Brecht will enable us to create a parallel between his enunciations and Mayolo's work in *La Mansion de Araucaima* and give us a better and a new understanding of Mayolo's Film. In the same way giving a theoretical frame of reference to this film will help us analyze the complexity of Mayolo's montage and understand his creative decisions.

Brecht enunciates his theory in several essays, but his thoughts changed in different moments of his life. The essays he wrote in the period between wars, were more radical, directly attacking any kind of form of art that would be used for the purpose of entertainment and denouncing it as a tool of the bourgeoisie.

In what follows I will try to organize his theory in a series of key concepts that tend to be contradictory because of the nature of his writings. But nevertheless, will keep the discussion centered around aesthetical and political problems.

## **II. a. Brechtian Theory: the main concepts**

Using Marxist theory Brecht, attempts to found a new theatre, that using dialectics will change the way things were done. Dialectics are understood in terms of contradictory elements that will reveal to the spectator the inner problems of society.

Brecht believes in the change from a theatre in which the play will be only a momentary relief from the world by living emotions, the extreme cult to the individuals and harsh old contexts dramas undermined the efforts of the

group; to a didactic theatre that will help people to change their material circumstances. A theatre that asks questions that according to him German theatre was not asking.

In this sense contradictions and oppositions in the same way of Eisenstein's theory of montage became crucial elements in his theoretic approach to theatre. Contradictions and struggle embodied for him the possibility of change outside the theatre.

In the case of Eisenstein and his theory of Montage in which he places Art as a form of conflict:

"For art is always conflict:

( 1 ) according to its social mission,

( 2 ) according to its nature,

(3) according to its methodology." (Eisenstein, 1949, p. 46)

Eisenstein influence on Brecht will be absolutely important, as he write in one entry of his diary in 1945 (Koutsourakis, 2018, p. 19) both of them will have similar ideas in regard to the need for discontinuity both in theatre and in cinema, nevertheless with important differences, as said before Eisenstein will put special importance in the collision effect as a synthesis of the dialectic process.

Brecht on the other side will consider contradiction as the main element that will create the necessary thought process that will lead eventually to change on the mind of the spectator. Conflict is however represented in a different way than in Eisenstein who trust the technical mechanical process of collision of shots in the case of Brecht the contradiction should emerge

from gaps in the play or film, that will allow the inherent contradictions of reality to emerge.

If we go back to *La Mansion de Araucaima* we will encounter the idea of discontinuity. In *La Mansion de Araucaima* the montage structure make the movie discontinuous from the beginning, each scene seem to be interrupted by a new character or sometimes the actions itself seem to just linger enough to reach a cut point. In my point of view all of these discontinuity is intended to shock the spectator to block the simple obvious understanding of the movie and force reflection, force to pay more attention to every detail. And create a feeling of uneasiness.

Coming back the Brecht the dialectic for him will be related with a more broad issue and is that of the human nature is one that will be fundamental for Brecht along his theoretic writings, his main complaint is pointed towards the "old" representation of humans in German theatre in which the individual is occupying a main important character obstructing the vision and fueling the spectators with emotions that will blur their visions and make them incapable of understanding the subtextual and interconnected network behind one's persons action. On this subject Brecht in his essay on *Notes on the Opera Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* writes:

"A crude and shallow realism, which never revealed any deeper contexts, and which was therefore at its most excruciating when it aimed at tragic effects, because it was not (as it believed) portraying nature, which is an eternal and immutable human category. This style was termed Naturalism, because it portrayed human nature, that is to say, directly, just the way it was (phonetically). The 'human' factor played an important role here: it

'unified' everyone (this sort of unification was all that was necessary). And the idea of 'milieu as fate' inspired compassion; the emotion that 'one' feels when one cannot do anything to help but does at least suffer vicariously. Milieu was treated as a natural phenomenon, immutable and inescapable." (Brecht, 2015, p. 53)

As we can see his vision of the old theatre was crossed by the idea of immutable old stories that were just change cosmetic ally to be re-released into new plays and operas, but most importantly there is a re-definition of human nature that will be essential for his plays and movies.

For Brecht dramas should explore external material actions over emotional development or psychologic depth, in this same sense every individual character is presented linked to his or her social role, like a gear in the machine of social development. (Koutsourakis, 2018, p. 20) Humans are seen as forces that can and should push societal development, not much as individuals, there is in this case a disinterest in emotions or emotive reactions on the side of the audience.

"Brecht drew on Marx's understanding of the individual as 'the ensemble of social relations'. For Marx the individual is not an independent entity nor those the individual has 'intrinsic' transhistorical characteristics" (Koutsourakis, 2018, p. 20)

The individual is thus considered a nexus of relations rather than a unified entity, every specific characteristic like personality way of looking, talking etcetera should be understood as part of this network, and in opposition with other individuals. In this sense is way for Brecht the film or play should prioritize external action over internal development.

In *La Mansion de Araucaima* specially we find a contradiction on one side characters are indeed related to a network of human relations, as Don Gracio is unimportant if we take away his position of power in the manor. The same way Machiche as this decaying feminine force is incomplete without the interactions with other characters.

The type or "archetypical" character in the film could be considered not realistic and more like sketch of real people. This however does not mean that Mayolo subscribes to the optimistic idea of an ever changing historical gear human being, he embraces a far more pessimistic and turbulent notion, in which death is prevalent at the end, and his characters are trapped in the asphyxiating heat of the tropic. Unlike Brecht, Mayolo's characters do not attempt to showcase (or at least not purposefully) the different oppression mechanisms that compose the capitalistic system or for that matter any other system.

Epic mode of narration is the general concept used by Brecht to describe some of his more advanced ideas. It will become his fundamental innovation, in this theatre Brecht will try to put an order to many of his theoretical approach. We will use Epic Theatre as a point of reference when comparing-Brecht concepts with *La Mansion de Araucaima*.

Koutsourakis describes Brecht intentions with Epic theatre as follows: "Brecht's introductions of gaps in his theatre followed the epic mode of narration so as to create a series of heterogeneous elements and show how they dialectically connect as a whole." (Koutsourakis, 2018, p. 18)



On the essay *Notes on the Opera Rise and Fall of the City Mahagonny* Brecht subsequently makes a comparison between what the two main different type of theatre Epic on one side and traditional Dramatic on the other.

<b>Dramatic form of Theatre</b>	<b>Epic Form of Theatre</b>
Action	Narration
Involves spectators in events on stage consumes their activity	Turns spectators into observers, but awakens their activity
Enables them to have feelings	Force them to make decisions
Experience	World-Picture
The spectators are immersed in something	They are put in opposition to it
Suggestibility	Argument
Emotions are preserved	Are turned into insights
The spectator stands right in the middle	The spectators are turned into insights
Shares in the experience	Studies
Human nature presumed to be common knowledge	Human nature is object of investigation

Humankind unchangeable	Humankind changeable and able to change things
Tension at the outcome	Tension as you go
One scene for the next	Each scene for itself
Growth	Montage
Structure of events linear	In curves
Evolutionary inevitability	Jumps
Human nature as fixed	Human nature as process
Thought determines being	Social being determines thought
Feeling	Rationality <sup>20</sup>

As we can see the type and view of spectators, as subjects capable of transformation. The view of art as a tool for transformation. "Awaken their activity" "they are put in opposition to it" etc.

Secondly, the view over human nature, from static, unchangeable, common knowledge etc. to changeable, process, argument, and rationality.

Lastly the change on theatre from "experience", "tension in the outcome", "growth", "linear", to "world-picture", "montage", scene independence, "tension as you go".

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<sup>20</sup> Table taken from Notes on the Opera Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny (Brecht, p. 63) 1930

This perception of theatre as necessarily separated from old classical drama is going to become the main soul of Brechtian dramatic theory. The call for theatre was to become an institution that will keep the pace of its time and therefore abandon the need to entertain people and turns into a mass communication institution.

In *La Mansion de Araucaima* there are several similitudes with the Epic theatre as well as differences. Broadly speaking there is not such a clear contradiction between *La Mansion de Araucaima* and the dramatic form of theatre, there is the independence between scenes for instance, specially at the beginning when each of the characters is described. There is "World-picture" as it drives social dynamics from the real world. There is as well jumps and Montage, for example with the dream sequences in which Mayolo breaks the linear tale, creating jumps in time. There is as well parallel timing on some scenes as an example in the beginning while the shooting of the commercial is happening, we can deduce that is all happening at the same time the introduction of the manor.

The use of time is also closely related with the Epic form, when the boyfriend of Angela comes for the second time to the manor in the final scene it appears that no time has happened for him, whereas in the manor several days or even a week have gone by. The idea that the time in the manor works differently is present along the whole movie.

It will be useful for the analysis to make a straighter comparison between Brechtian theory and Mayolo's *La Mansion de Araucaima*

<b>Epic Form of Theatre (Brecht)</b>	<b>La Mansion de Araucaima (Mayolo)</b>
narration	narration
Turns spectators into observers, but awakens their activity	Turns spectator into observers by awaking them to the reality of watching a movie
Forces them to make decisions	Creates more questions
World - picture	Experience/ World picture
Spectators are put in opposition to something	Spectators are put in perspective but not opposition.
argument	Suggestability
Emotions turn into insights	Emotions are reduced or avoided
The spectator stands on the opposite side from the characters	The spectator is away from identification
Studies the situation	Studies the situation
Human nature is object to investigation	Human nature is enigmatic or unintelligible
Humankind changeable and able to change things	Humankind unchangeable in principle but decadent.
Tensions as you go through the plot	Tensions as you go
One scene for the next	One scene for itself
Montage	Montage
Structure of events in curves	Structure of events in parallel and circular

Jumps	Jumps
Human nature is a process	Human nature is a process (negative) By showing the degradation or corruption of the characters.
Social being determines thought	Thought is determine by archetypical behavior
rationality	rationality

There are some shared elements both in Mayolo's La Mansion de Araucaima and Brecht's Epic theatre, for example the clear separation from a only emotive drama, and how spectator are put in a position of no identification and more reflexive situation. This of course have to do with the way the montage interrupts actions and situations, letting to undeveloped dramatic situations. The patern exists from the very beginning of the movie when actions are constantly interrupted.

On the second scene Angela and her boyfriend are about to kiss but they stop because of the shooting, later the acting of Angela is interrrupted by the in-film director, who cuts inside the scene, after someone with a mule irrupts in the background.



12. Action interrupted first scene.



13. Action interrupted by the mule.

Where Brecht marks Epic theatre as “narration” we will do the same this is because of the importance of the medium in this film. The apparatus of filmmaking or the self referenciation its present across the film, this creates a level of “narration” in which we are constantly reminded of the fictional character of the film.

We can find several examples to this accros the film, starting again on the presence of a commercial shooting at the beginning of the film, then later on in the minute 30 when Angela arrives to the mannor and on the first dinner there is information about Don Gracio’s past as an actor. Later when Angela meets Machiche in her room again there is a reference to her past as an actress. All across the film the subtil reference to the filmmaking apparatus is present, reinforcing the idea of a fictional narration.



14. *Self Referentiality inside the film.*

Moving on when Brecht refers to Epic Theatre as “forcing them to make decisions” he refers to the idea of theatre inciting actions in the audience, we can clearly tell that there is not this type of intention on Carlos Mayolo. On his case it is rather creating more questions about the characters and situations. As there is more emphasis in the social structure of the manner without proposing specific answers.

Next lets discuss “World Picture” here Brecht refers to the quality of epic theatre to create a mirror with the real world to create awareness in the audience. In contrast *La Mansion de Araucaima* does not create an accurate representation of the world, but it does create a symbolic equivalent, in this case it is the representation of the characters as archetypes of a social order. I will argue that it is also an experience as it translates the social order into a dense atmosphere that offers a real experience much similar to Brecht’s dramatic theatre. Some examples of this atmospheric elements are the music that creates a unease feeling, as well as the tropical nature sound effects. The constant present of the nature and heat helps to creates the idea of immobility and degradation.



*15. Don Graciliano and the Pilot in the heat of the tropic*

Unlike for Brecht in *La Mansion de Araucaima* spectators are not put in opposition to the situation presented on the movie, there is however a distance build as explained before in different elements, one is disrruption of continuos actions, another is strong images, like the use of an iguana, as breaking point in two moments of the plot.



*16. Iguana the last bath in the film*

There are some categories in which I will argue that Mayolo and dramatic theatre share similarities. This movie call for suggestability, as the use of sound is meant to accentuate dramatic meanings, a good example of this is how the leitmotif of the movie transforms along the film leaving us to believe that something is terriby wrong, or something bad it is going to happens.



Another main difference from Brecht's appreciation of things is how the movie portrays its characters, always decaying, non-heroic and cynical. This can be seen in the way they plot to kill Angela, on 01:02:00.

In conclusion there are some very significant differences between the two types of narrative. In Brecht we find a main motivation, one could say an optimistic one, and is the need to change the world, for Brecht Art is a means to transform society, and therefore every aspect of his theory revolves around that idea, art should lead to an evolutionary jump, an awakening of the oppressed social classes. On the contrary for Mayolo Art is a way of rebelling against the establishment, of being uncomfortable and strong without necessarily having a political agenda behind.

## **II.B. The Gestic principle or *Verfremdungseffekt* and its application in *La Mansion de Araucama***

Brecht places the Gestic principle as one of the bases of dialectical representation. In his words he proposes that the use of gestic relationships over emotional relationships helps to make evident the social context behind of what is being represented. An emphasis on stylized gestic representation can help to denaturalize the individual actions and therefore expose the social impact.

The gestural elements according to Brecht are those gestures that tend to break the linear dramaturgy, to achieve an answer on the spectators.

"*Gestus* does not simply refer to physical gesture but to the whole performance of the actors including 'posture, tone of voice and facial expression' (Man Equal Man, 1926). Thus, the gestic approach to the

representation aims to de-individuate characters, emphasize their relationships to one another and make the audience reflect on everyday situations and behaviors that are taken for granted.” (Koutsourakis, 2018, p. 29)

This series of possible gestural elements could be things like character looking directly into the camera, or a specific way that put in context each character’s way of thinking and relation with his or her social context. It could be thought as an over stylization of what is represented to avoid identification and create new possible connections in the mind of the spectator.

The objective of these gestural elements is to create a significant impact on the audience and an appropriate reflexive thought that eventually will lead to real actions in the world. In the same way Eisenstein believed that Film should be part of an organized strategy for helping the revolutionary project, Brecht view theatre as a tool for awakening and bringing into the representation topics that touch the everyday living of the audiences. As Brecht put it in his essay on *A Short Organum for the Theatre (1948)*:

“A representation producing *verfremdungseffekt* is one that allow us to recognize an object, but at the same time makes it appear strange. The classical and medieval theatre estranged its characters by making them wear human or animal masks, the Asiatic theatre even today uses musical and pantomimic V-effects. These V-effects certainly prevented empathy, yet this technique owed more, not less, to hypnotic suggestion than the technique by which empathy is achieved. The social aims of these old effects were entirely different from our own.” (Brecht, 2015, p. 190)

The *verfremdungseffekt* is refer to the presentation of the familiar as strange with the objective to reveal its historical specificity and possibility of change. These V-effects will be the wholes on the plot that I explained above.

For Brecht film should be a series of tableaux that do not produce plot development but have a sense of autonomy. His appreciation of early cinema tends to present it as a more analytical means of communication, in which the audience has a more active role due to the lack of direct message (especially when talking about silent early cinema). In opposite to a representative identification in which the audience is emotionally connected to the characters.

One of the preferred gestic effects used by Brecht is the creation of small "filmic" independent cinema in theatre, creating the sensation of montage in between the scenes.

I will argue that this V-effects are constantly present in *La Mansion de Araucaima* either by the representation of familiar elements in a strange manner, or the constant interruptions or even a scene in which Don Gracio talks directly to the audience. It is however not clear if this V-effects are there to create social awareness or are introduce as another disruptive element without a specific political agenda behind.

In the case of Brecht V-effect are the tool for accentuating specific elements of the plot, like social relationships or to change perspective on the audience regarding what is otherwise presented naturally. It is through the gestic elements, that conflicts from the outside and inside can be overcome. The filmic nature of this elements is related to appreciation of early cinema,

there is a clear understanding of the silent cinema and its ability to convey one story without the need of words, just by the force of the situation.

In *La Mansion de Araucaima* there are certain glimpses to these film tableaux, as most of the film is shot in big established shots, and they as well have a sense of autonomy, as they live inside the films as explained with the dream sequences, in which the plot is interrupted only to go back to it later on.

The gestus is also related with the importance of the body in early cinema, how the body operates in a social context and how these interactions affect the postural gestic transformation of that body. The body on the workplace, on the cinema, on the street, or on a social event, changes accordingly revealing a series of interconnections that could be read as the real nature of human relationships. There is an overall ability of the audience to analyze from an intellectual point of view the scene in contrast with a more outspoken non-gestic narrative. The evident and direct image of the body in specific situations should declare specific external outcomes to the spectator and provoke specific thoughts.

The body in *La Mansion de Araucaima* is an ever-changing motive, it clearly represents the social conditions of the characters as the servant is Afro-American, Don Gracio big build, the poet fragile nature and Machiche voluptuous sexual character, can all be observed in their bodies

But is not only that, but the body is also object of exchange in social relations, as Angela's body is used and sexualized by almost all the other characters. Extracting her youth and consuming her beauty, being her body

the ultimate reason for violence at the end of the movie, and the reason why the remaining characters finally leave the place.

The gestic principle in Brechtian theory refer to the use of gestic elements to accentuate non emotive or empathic relationships that helps to ground the audience in the social context to which the film or play is referring.

In the case of *La Mansion de Araucaima* we find that even though there are several elements that could enter the category of gestural. It would not necessarily means that Mayolo is attempting to refer to a specific social context. The symbolical and political elements present in *La Mansion* play a part in the plot and style itself of the movie.

We can clearly tell the use of action interruption through cutting, this is an element use from very early on in the film as discussed before (see chapter I), which has the capability of either breaking or disrupting the narrative. The actions of the characters are constantly interrupted which created the sensation of something missing, and in this missing time is where to the audience has time to reflect about the movie.

In 01:08:00 we have the double V-effect both by irruption of a strange element and the action interruption effect.



17. Cut between scenes

Here the scene jumps from the sexual initiation of Angela with the snake to a travelling shot of the house, interrupting the sexual action, and thus creating the v-effect.

The bathing scenes create an extravagant and rich environment. I will argue that this induce the sensation of contradiction or discontinuity by taking a common routine like bathing and putting it out of context by bringing elements such as the costume of Don Gracio, typical of a roman emperor, and the exotic fruits into the context of bathing.



*18 First Bath scene*



*19 Last Bath Scene*

Across the different bathes scenes where we can observe the V-effects there is the same type of elements like the milk on the first bath scene which Cristobal is pouring over himself. This as well as the costumes, the set decoration and other elements including an iguana, build to the strangeness of the situation and comes like a shock to the spectators taking us away from what it is happening in the plot and helping to create questions and a reflexive attention in the audience.

There is as well the importance of the social context of each of the character, as Don Graciliano is the center of attention, and is by his command that one or other of the character is allowed to take a bath with him. The bathes will also mark the way time behaves in the manor, disrupting the

linear dramaturgy of the film. The bath will configure a symbolic and ritualistic element as well, that repeated along the movie help us detach ourselves from the drama and embrace the anarchic energy of the movie.

The other type of scene repeated at least four times on the movie are dreams, the first is the dream from Machiche, in which she sees herself as a nurse taking care of other characters from the manor, and heal the suffering from the pilot, the scenes end with Machiche trying to cut some bad weeds that are growing on the medical equipment.



*20. Machiche's dream*

This scene comes quite early in the development of the plot just as Angela is staying for the first night in the manor, the scene itself also breaks the filmic language used until that point of the movie, with a more mobile camera almost no cuts and strong lighting.

Machiche behaves different in this dream space, in what seems to be a hospital, she reaches out to the pilot to save him from his incapability to fly.

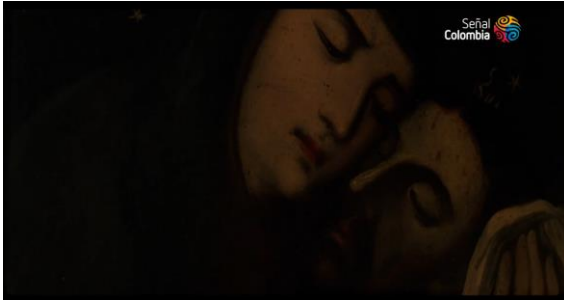


21. *The cut at the end of Machiche's dream*

At the end of the dram Machiche cuts the scrubs trying to clean the place from the dirty plants on her dreams, only to wake up with the shadow of Angela over her window looking at her. This could be read as a message or their future conflict, as Angela represents a treat to Machiche, with her renovated youth and sexual capabilities.

The second dream is more a short visualization, of which I think it is important to talk because of the sudden impact it creates on the spectator, on the minute 00:45:00 after not being able to have sex with the Pilot, Angela goes into the priest room. They kiss and start to have sex when a strong incidental music fills the scene, and there are three cuts, again interrupting the action, that creates the effect of strangeness typical of V-Effects.





*22. Sequence of shots into the dream*

Angela first looks at the painting which we can see in a very close details, capturing the suffering emotion over the face of the woman, then cut to Angela having sex, and then cut to Angela reading a book while looking at herself. The images, even though, are very symbolic occur on the space of dream breaking the narrative before the next scene.

In the third dream, more of a nightmare type, appears the priest in Franciscan robes praying. The scene begins with a music coming out of an old keyboard, presumably played by the priest, then the camera follows the

priest across the manor, it is a shoulder camera, the priest in this case is fully dressed like a Franciscan monk and prays.



*23. The priest dream*

The whole sequence ends in the priest being desperate and repeating one specific word. In the background it is possible to observe a dark shadow behind a grid like a nun creeping from behind. Again, the dreams here break the narrative and aesthetic of the movie creating a gestic V-effect that will make us (the spectators) aware of the movie itself.



*24. The Priest dream second part*

Additionally, there is a fourth dream in this case from Angela, in the dream she tries to escape the manor by taking her broken bike and attempting to leave. Don Gracio is presented in a different way, with strong unrealistic make up and a cane resembling to some depictions of the devil.



#### *25. Angela's dream*

In this case the dream is not only breaking the dramaturgical and narrative elements, but it also creates another layer of interpretation showcasing Don Gracio "real" inherent evil character.

Here we can take a moment to speak about the sound, which at moments supports the narrative by building into emotions typical of the genre, like with the leitmotif of Angela that forecasts her perdition on 00:24:00 when Angela leaves the set. But at moment seems to work as an awakening device bringing back the attention of the spectators toward something important, or simply interrupting the low level from the previous scene. A good example of this is on 00:57:00 when after the scene of the priest's dream the next scene is a heavy storm, that seems to still be part of the dream, but then it is clearly a completely different scene.

The presence of strong sounds of nature across the film also helps to detach the audience from the narrative content of the movie, almost creating a second layer of meaning that could be read parallelly. This might have to do with the technical limitations of the movie, but in any case it creates a feeling that supports the Brechtian concept of v-effects.

Finally, I would like to talk about the last supper scene in which Don Gracio towards the end looks directly to the camera saying "And now let's play the English hide and seek, everyone hides, and no one seeks" breaking in this way the fourth wall and revealing the artifact behind the movie, the illusion that is hidden behind the fictionality of film.



*26. The last supper*

The words he uses with an enigmatic meaning could be explain as a wakeup call for the spectators and a coming back to reality, that later will have some echoes with the epilogue in which the boyfriend of Angela comes back looking for her and the only thing he finds is a rusty sign with the words "If you come inside the house do not go out, if you go out do not come back, if you are near this house do not look at it, if you live in this house do not pray"

In this case the effect not only breaks the narrative of the movie, but also opens the last sequence by which Angela decides to commit suicide. The words of Don Gracio in a way reveal the true nature of the characters in the film, reveal the fact that they are united in their complot against Angela. Exposing the real motives and structures behind their actions. And revealing the pessimistic nature of the movie as well as presenting the death of Angela

as inevitable and portraying the inner violence hidden in the characters as impossible to change, like eternal cycle Colombians are condemned to repeat.

## **II. Final thoughts on Brechtian Theory in La Mansion de Araucaima**

"*La Mansion de Araucaima*" presents an approach to the dramaturgy different from the conventional mimetic approach, their characters are presented without much psychological depth, in the expositional sequence we understand their roles more as prototypic characteristics than a complex realistic psychological character. In this way one of the characters "the pilot" is presented as a lost poet without ambitions. "Don Graciliano" is simply the owner of the house. "El vigilante" oversees the security of the manor. "El Sirvente" is simply a servant, and "Machiche" is the woman representative of the femininity.

The initial sequence as said before is framed in unitary shots, presenting the character in contrast with his environment, the characters are essentially connected to the spaces he or she inhabits, and the excessiveness of colors décor and elements creates the sensation of strangeness, it is not a realistic objective reality what its being represented but a visually exaggerated version of it. In this sense Koutsourakis addresses one of the concepts use by Brecht in his movies and plays.

"The logic of the gap, as she argues, is the logic of the contradiction, the point that the familiar reality is made strange so as to reveal the social processes behind the everyday events" (Koutsourakis, 2018, p. 19)

Individualization as we can appreciate in the introductory sequence, will always be tighten to a social role, to a place in the microcosmos that represents *La Mansion*. In this sense the characters are not fully separated, they respond to a set of specific characteristics but not to a clear objective or decision making, at least on the beginning, what is clearly more important in the development of the plot is their inner interconnections.

This translates in the Brechtian theory to the conception of human nature as a network of social connection, humans understood as transhistorical and codependents.

This conception of characters and individuals can be reflected as well in the archetypical representation and symbolical elements on each of the characters. As each one of them play out as a representative of one specific part of society, Don Graciliano, the owner could be seen as the landowner, who owns the means of production, is the boss or in general terms the ruling class inside the manor, "el vigilante" is the representation of the armed forces who is loyal to Don Gracio and is as well in charge of repression or violence in case there is any attempt to subvert the natural order. A good example of this is the multiple confrontations with Cristobal (the servant), there is one scene in which they both fight for Machiche.

Cristobal is the representation of the oppressed social classes who are forced to play along and is too scared to defy the authority, and is also full of sexual nature, use both by Don Gracio to seduce Angela and by Machiche as a source of pleasure, at the end of the film we can see how Cristobal regains his freedom when they all walk out of the manor.

The pilot on the other hand, could be seen as a representation of the poets and artists always lost and willing to die, for romantic reasons, impotent, or to use the Freudian term castrated, he wonders the manor trying to regain his lost powers, he is left to rot by Don Graciliano unaltered and incapable, his destiny is death for love, revenge to Machiche who is the apparent reason why Angela kill herself.

The priest also in a close friendship with Don Gracio can be seeing as the representation of the church in the public matters of the country, as well as its hypocritical role in every public matter, concealing the sins of the political class as he is part of the decisions that results in the dead of Angela. Finally, Angela, represents the promiscuity that holds together the status quo and avoids any kind of altercation, is shared like a piece of commodity holding the balance between the forces, and is used and sexualized for her youth and body.

What is more important for the development of the movie is the relationships between characters and the way each of them plays a role in the structural organization of the manor. For Brecht it was essential portrait characters from their role in society and not by their individual story, this works as a way of showcasing the gears and structures by which society works.

A good example of this importance is how the plot evolves when Angela first comes to the manor, she enters like a new force that pushes the order hold by Machiche, in her appearance the relationship between the characters change, and the inner conflicts between characters turn into reality.

This could be seeing when the servant and the vigilant fight, after the vigilant find out that the other have been having sex with Machiche.

With the arrival of Angela to the manor what we see is a break of the status quo, The house in which everything was working according to plan suddenly enters into anarchy this is driven by the strong sexual nature of Angela, her sexuality seems to provoke every member of the house, but also because she is the only one who is young and seems to be able to renovate the old estate of things.

In conclusion there is a clear attempt to portrait a social structure across the film, and in this way the portraying of the characters do not obey the logics of identification creating again a separation with the viewer, nevertheless Mayolo does not fully embrace the Brechtian techniques as the film itself does not follow the pattern of bringing answers to the public, somehow the movie manages to create strong sensations as well as atmospheric elements that do not attempt to pursue an specific political agenda.

### **III.A. An analysis of the las sequence: "The last supper"**

I decided to begin the analysis from the moment in which is clear something bad is going to happen with Angela around 1 hour into the movie. The sequence starts with Machiche coming into Don Gracio's office and conjuring the end of Angela by saying that she will have to stay in the Manor.

The two shots used to portrait this scene are largely static and long shots. As a repetitive characteristic along the movie, there is extensive use of the foreground *mis-en-scène*, the camera works the same that in the rest of the movie does not really describe small details. Most shots are expressed from



a singular general take, that includes several layers of motifs and meanings, in the foreground and background as well as in the positioning or interaction between the actors.



*27. Tracking shot on the last sequence*

Moving into the next scene the bath scene it is divided into four main shots there are shots of people looking into what is happening in the yard, the scene then shows the ever-important presence of the strange nature represented in the iguana and exotic fruit, could be trace back to the goal of the consumption of Angela´s youth. This is showcased in the shot of Graciliano that resembles an old roman emperor eating a mango while looking at Angela.

Angela stops being an object of sexual desire and becomes an empty vessel unable to ultimately find its place in the manor.



28. Don Gracio eating mango



29. The cut from previous shot

I will argue that in this scene we can appreciate the some of the structural elements of Brecht theory the *verfremdungseffekt* here is evident as we are able to recognize a subject like a specific character but at the same time it is strange to us, creating the effect of realization of the fictional device, and therefore opening the space for questioning about the real meaning of the action's characters.

Moving forward to the next scene we have again a lot of emphasis in the mise en scene the scene is described in only one shot. The scene portraits the erotic relationship between the two women Angela and Machiche, including a very cryptic image of Angela with a snake on top of her.

This scene ends there with an interrupted action, this seems to be a common type of ending for most of scenes on this movie, the action is always cut to either go to another character or to completely advance in the plot.

There is not a clear answer of this cut in this part in specific to the style Mayolo was aiming for, we can only assume that the interruption effect also helps to create a feeling of discontinuity or inner contradiction in the actions of the characters, that as seen before is a characteristic element from the dramatic theory proposed by Brecht.



*30. The sexual exchange with the snake*

The next part of the sequence is one I would like to call the “last supper” we go in a series of scenes to every character preparation efforts before the beginning of the dinner. Everyone seems to be in a very good mood in exception to the pilot, who is been drinking.

The sequence itself it is a clear example of the style of montage use along the film, with one shot per scene separating as I explain earlier from the one single main protagonist story, paying more attention to the archetypical roles of each of the characters on the story.

This could be read as well as the *film tableaux* referenced by which Brecht describes cinema as a series of disconnected frames, with autonomy from one another, this of course evolves from his preference for early cinema, and the capability it had to evoke thought in the audience. In the case of this sequence each character individual shot describes characteristics from each of them, opening over what the world around them says about each of them.



31. Film Tableaux

As we can see each of the shots that forms the sequence are almost the same size, creating the feeling of separation and autonomy, but also creating a comparative instance between the characters. When the dinner begins Angela and Machiche are discovered surrounded with a glow of mystery.

Then we jump into the scene of the dinner itself, this scene is mark for the transformation of Angela, she enters the dining room fitting her new costume completely transform into the classic gothic female character, ready for the ultimate sacrifice. She now seems to fit perfectly in the manor, we will later know however that this acceptance is only the sign of her annihilation.



*31. Angela's transformation*

Then there is a game happening between Angela and Don Gracio in which she becomes the subject of jokes. And Machiche suggest playing hide and seek. Is here when suddenly the movie dive into the last sequence. Angela looks for the others, and Don Gracio pronounce his enigmatic speech looking at the camera: "And now let's play the English hide and seek, everyone hides, and no one seeks"



*32. Don Gracio speech to the camera*

Finally, Angela after being rejected from everyone in the manor. And more crucially her sexual charms do not have the same effect over the other characters, decides to kill herself. However, this decision appears to be taken in a hasty way maybe another clue of Mayolo's deliberate attempt to disrupt the narrative and create discontinuity inside the plot.

Which just a few shots Angela that had no problem with living in the manor before, takes the decision of taken her own life. This will again refer to the

need to not empathize with Angela as well as to show the social development of that situation.

The sequence concludes there, with Angela going into a dark room, disappearing from the world of the living. The music that has been present until that moment goes silent and only the sounds of menacing nature can be heard in the background.

### **III. Transgression of the Brechtian principles and irreverent filmmaking**

As we can see *La Mansion de Araucaima* is a complex rich movie, made in a very specific political and historical context in Colombia, the movie itself may not ever become a worldwide recognized classic, but it is a relevant example of a specific experimentation process in the very complex and unstable situation of Colombian cinema.

The attempt to make a movie that does not call for an empathic compelling story, but instead reflects consciously about its own matter is laudable, in this sense even the scenes and characters are very intriguing and visually astonishing.

Mayolo and Luis Ospina attempt for renovating the filmmaking practice in Colombia will definitively leave a trace in generations of filmmakers to come and will be a significant referent to new complex narratives that will emerge in the country.

Unlike in Brechtian ideas in *La Mansion de Araucaima* there is not a real call for revolutionary causes, and is more about the need of art for art itself. There is of course the whole political symbolic nature of the characters, and

the inherent revolutionary nature of the way to make cinema in the Colombian context, which can push the idea of a very critical film. But its ambition is not to awake masses or to change the world. As we saw before we can clearly find the *verfremdungseffekt* in *La Mansion de Araucaima*, but those effects do not necessarily mean Carlos Mayolo had a political agenda behind it. On the contrary *La Mansion de Araucaima* incites to transgress the Brechtian elements in order to create a truly free cinema, free of emotional melodrama, and committed with its own disruptive artistic nature.

The moral elements so clearly established by Brecht first texts are far from applicable to most artistic works, in that sense *la mansion* is not an exception, there is no push from the author to make the audiences confront with a social dilemma as it is in most of Brecht films. In other words, there is not a call to action or awakening waiting for the spectators of *La Mansion*. Mayolo's pessimistic and in some ways melancholic view of the world can clearly be seen to have transpired into the movie.

Being said that it is this type of film with all sorts of enigmatic nuances that will create new questions in the spectator and could eventually lead to a more intellectual approach on the side of the spectator than an empathic one, there is the need to denounce and characterize power structures in *La Mansion de Araucaima*. For example regarding Don Gracio who represents an old elite, or the priest, is not one that is completely good or evil, or even Angela who is the apparent victim is not either good or bad.

The inner pessimism in the film that affects the way it is perceived contrast with the Brechtian approach in which there is the need to portray Humankind into a mobile socially determined entity with possibility of change and

redemption, on the contrary in *La Mansion de Araucaima* nothing can really change, the movie ends as many horror films in sad tone in which the boyfriend of Angela comes into the manor, and it seems like the nightmare will start all over again.

The film lacks a very important element of the dramaturgy of identification which is the moral value, the conclusive positive or negative connection with a character, and therefore leaves the door open for us the audiences to draw our own conclusions.

I will argue that because that is not its objective the film does not concede the satisfaction of watching a typical blockbuster but rather a more complex more rich experience that departs from the mere identification into an intellectual thought intense experience.

And this is why I decided to name this chapter irreverent filmmaking, because the type of film *La Mansion de Araucaima* represent is one that is disappearing, starting with the way this movie was shot, it is a film that have little to do with big budget films of today, and way more to do with a small craft done in between friends, the experience of the film its constantly challenging the socio-political structures of the time.

And seeing through the lens of Brecht we have widen our field of view and are able to better decipher the intentions of Mayolo and Ospina. In conclusion this film is a good referent of an anti-establishment irreverent and fighting filmmaking in a time where film productions in Colombia where not able to get a more substantial independent view on political matters.

It is irreverent filmmaking also because it doesn't match or fit completely Brecht's ideas, it doesn't push for a specific political agenda, and instead



pursues absolute freedom in its own craft, on the other side the film does not match either a classical narrative structure, with its constant action interruptions, multiple characters, strong symbolical motives etc. it is impossible to classify it inside the simple narrative of emotions, as the main character does not fulfill the model for identification, or attempts to put the audience in her place.

*La Mansion de Araucaima* it is a disruptive anti-establishment film that is very valuable in the current state of world cinema, especially when the local and specific content seems to be more standardize by the big Netflix productions. In this sense Mayolo could shine a light on how to fight back against the hyper standardized content that we are obliged to consume in a daily basis and how to make films that reflect the authenticity and strangeness of a moment in time.

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