

Vázquez, Mercedes, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Reflecting “Geographies of Capital”: Realism and Class Differences in Latin American Cinema

In “Des autres espaces,” Foucault likens the function of the “heterotopia” to that of a mirror – it casts doubt on our perception of reality by rendering it as an illusion. The use of realism in cinema to represent contemporary reality can be thought of in terms of this defamiliarizing effect. In recent Latin American films that focus on the distance between slums and middle-class neighborhoods, a mirror is held up to society through cinema that reflects painful class differences. Brazilian films like *Redentor* and *Once Upon a Time in Rio*, the Venezuelan film *The Class* and the Peruvian feature *Dioses* visually describe “geographies of capital” with the aim of intervening in a situation of extreme inequality. Such films engage with social justice through a particular form of realism that promotes ethical reflection and whose origins can be traced to the Third Cinema of the 1960s.