

Lucia directed by Humberto Solas (1968)
Film Workshop by Caryn Cline

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Preliminary question for writing and/or discussion--How do we know what we know about Cuba? How is our knowledge about Cuba constructed?

Questions about *Lucia*:

In the first episode, how are Lucia (Raquel Revueltas) and Fernandina (Idalia Anreus), the madwoman, introduced? How does Solas's staging of each of these introductions set these two women apart? How are their stories paralleled? How do these introductions, the physical characteristics of each of the actresses portraying Lucia and Fernandina, and these scenes they share contribute to our understanding of their similarities and differences?

In the flashback, Fernandina's rape at the hands of the Spanish soldiers is depicted in a highly stylized manner: high contrast black and white film, an eerie landscape, a haunting soundtrack. Why do you think Solas decided to stage the flashback in this way?

In the first episode, Lucia meets Rafael in an abandoned sugar mill. What significance does this location have to what happens there? To Solas's larger themes?

In the battle sequences in part one, Solas's cinematographer, Jorge Herrera, uses a lot of "hand-held" camera techniques. This sequence is based on historical fact: there was a troop of black Independence soldiers who rode naked, at night, so that they were difficult to see. What is the effect of the way this sequence is shot?

In all three episodes, mirrors are used (as they often are in cinema) to reveal something about each of the characters. What?

How is music used in each of the episodes? What do the musical selections tell us about the period?

In *Lucia #2*, parallel editing is used to connect the scene in which Aldo ambushes the policemen and Lucia organizes the factory women. Why do you think Solas cuts back and forth between these two events?

If the past is inscribed in the present in this film, then by the time we meet the third Lucia (196--) we view the scenes between Lucia and Tomas not only for what they say about this episode and the new Cuban society, but for how they reflect back on the experiences of the two previous Lucias. For example, the scene in which Tomas and Lucia chase each other around the house recalls the Lucia/Rafael encounter in the abandoned sugar mill. What other connections can you make across these episodes?

One of the things which characterizes Cuban cinema is a commitment to a dialectical process within the film and between the film and the audience. Can you identify these processes?

Bibliography:

Burton, Julianne. *Cinema and Social Change in Latin America: Conversations with Filmmakers*.

Georgakas, Dan and Lenny Rubenstein, eds. *The Cineaste Interviews: On the Art and Politics of the Cinema*.