Expulsion from the urban paradise: representations of the *informal city* in the movie *Hechos consumados* (1986)

La expulsión del paraíso urbano: representaciones de la ciudad informal en el filme Hechos consumados (1986)

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Abstract

This article establishes representations of the urban typology referred to as "informal city" in the film Hechos consumados (An Accomplished Fact) (1986), using a methodological design to put mass media in touch with the city from the mediational perspective of Martín Serrano (2004). Likewise, certain categories were previously identified to observe this type of land use ("informal city") in a communicative product. This is an interdisciplinary study that may be of interest for both researchers of urban phenomena and those studying it through its representations in iconic mass media, such as, in this case, national cinematography as a mediational practice.

Keywords

Informal City, Santiago de Chile, Representations, Chilean Cinema, Social Mediation.

Resumen

Este artículo establece las representaciones de la tipología urbana conocida como "ciudad informal" que propone el filme *Hechos consumados* (1986). Para ello utiliza un diseño metodológico que pone en relación a los medios masivos y la ciudad, desde la perspectiva mediacional de Martín Serrano (2004). Así previamente se identificaron ciertas categorías que permiten la observación de este tipo de ordenamiento territorial ("ciudad informal") en un producto comunicativo. Se trata de una investigación interdisciplinar que puede ser de interés tanto para aquellos que tienen al fenómeno urbano como objeto de estudio, como para aquellos que lo hacen desde el punto de vista de las representaciones que construyen los medios masivos icónicos, en este caso, la cinematografía nacional como práctica mediacional.

Palabras clave

Ciudad informal, Santiago de Chile, Representaciones, Cine Chileno, Mediación Social.

1. Introduction

This paper aims to establish and characterize representations of the urban typology known as the "informal city" (Laguerre, 1994; Brillembourg & Klumpner, 2005; Sassen, 2005; Duhau, 2003, 2004, 2008; Hernández, Kellett & Allen, 2010; Jirón 2010; Glaeser, 2011; Torres, 2011; Fiori & Brandão, 2010; Fiori, 2014). It will focus on the film *Hechos consumados* (Vera, 1986)[1], specifically on the sequences which show the public space of Santiago. The *informal city* is a challenging typology to describe since it originated as a manifestation of the urban (dis)order for many different reasons, and thus appears in different forms, from social exclusion and misery to an almost formal status. Emilio Duhau (2003) states that the informal city is a product of the housing situation in an area prior to urbanization. It corresponds to what is commonly known in México as popular urbanization. That is to say, "[…] when we refer to an informal city, in fact we are talking about different ways of producing the city informally" (Duhau, 2003, p. 5).

This movie tells the story of marginalized[2] people who converge on a riverside (Mapocho River probably) due to economic, psychological and/or ideological causes. Hard-core poverty and exclusion are present in this story set in the 1980s, where a human settlement is precariously taking shape, far away from the formalities of Santiago.

The current research is based on a methodological design[3] for analysing urban representations in the mass media (Lagos-Olivero, 2015a; 2016), where certain theoretical typologies about cities converge, explaining the way public space is manifested in some urban contexts. In other words, this model allows for an analysis of urban representations in traditional mass media from the mediation perspective (Martín Serrano, 2004, 2008), which provides a theoretical and methodological basis to identify the transformations of public space in a city in terms of its historical (time) and geographical (space) context.

The Communication Social Theory proposed by Martín Serrano (2004) permits socio-historical analyses of change or no change in the representation system (cognitive context), social system (in this case, the urban context), and/or communication system (media context).

The paper raises a prior theoretical question about the "informal[4] city": on the one hand, this urban phenomenon has a strong presence in certain chilean cities, including Santiago, and on the other hand, it is mostly absent from Latin American cinema (Lagos-Olivero, 2015a), if compared to categories defining other types of cities. This theoretical reflection indicated will allow us to establish the criteria for observing this type of urban order in the iconic mass media in general, and in cinematography in particular. That will be the basis of this analysis.

1.1. *Predominance of the visual in the informal city*

Hechos consumados is the debut film of Luis R. Vera and is based on the work of playwright Juan Radrigán[5], whose work usually tells stories about marginal people in marginal contexts. That is his original brand. Vera's film version reflects this, recreating the contexts and atmospheres that Radrigán creates in certain parts of Santiago. Thus, the locations captured by his camera indicate —visually and hegemonically— the urban informality present in the material reality[6] of that time (1980-1990). *Hechos consumados* is, by far, the film that presents Santiago most clearly as an "informal city".

> While groups like Ictus offered stories that appealed especially to the enlightened middle class that constituted the largest part of its public, the dramaturgy of Juan Radrigán addressed popular sectors. His texts have the distinctive feature of turning marginal individuals, such as layabouts, prostitutes, and the homeless in general into the sole protagonists that bring stories to life. Here the Chilean slang has a major role as an identity marker and a register of the expressiveness of the world portrayed" (Correa, Figueroa, Jocelyn-Holt, Rolle & Vicuña, 2001, p. 316).

The text is divided into four parts. Firstly, there is a theoretical discussion in which the informal

city and social mediation are framed in the historic context to which they belong; secondly, I will provide details on the relevant aspects of the methodology applied; thirdly, I will indicate the main results, and finally, propose some conclusions.

1.2. *Historical context.*

The Chilean decade of 1980 is a sociohistorical period that has been extensively studied from different points of view in the social sciences. As is well known, in political terms, this decade corresponds to the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet and his implementation of neoliberal economic policies, which had a profound impact on the middle and lower classes. At that time, poverty indicators, as well as overall dissatisfaction, started to increase[7] (Correa et al., 2001). Poverty became widespread, affecting over 60%[8] of the national population (Mideplan, 1998), and, naturally, the structures of the city.

De facto government repression increased its cruelty as it became clear that it was losing control over the situation. But the fear that took root in people's daily lives in 1973 was decreasing in the 80's. As a result, a period of protests and national strikes began on May 11, 1983 (Bravo, 2017). Eventually, this led to a complex understanding of democratic political forces. Most certainly, Santiago was the scenario and witness of the actions described, which more often than not were bloody (Salazar, 2006). Films of the 1980-1990 period show largely no compunction in the public space in relation to this economic crisis. Watching a movie produced in the 1980s about marginal people places us at a time of radical changes in the Chilean economy, adjustments that ultimately sustained the current neoliberal model. With this background information on display, we can dig deeper into the urban informality represented in direct relation to the story. This will allow us to observe the characteristics of Santiago as an "informal city[9]".

1.3. *Films in the 80's.*

As could be expected, national film production was also affected by the political context. In this regard, it may be noted that the period was cha-

racterized by three phenomena: (i) the limited number of films released in cinemas, in a sort of "cultural blackout" (Mouesca, 1990; Correa et al., 2001; De los Ríos, 2010) that was exacerbated by both official censorship and "self-censorship" (Mouesca & Orellana, 2010, p. 155); (ii) the strengthening of what is known as Chilean cinema in exile (Mouesca, 1992); and (iii) the new format that burst onto the scene to provide alternatives to the expensive way of making films: the U-matic ¾ VCR was a new production method that was born and died in the same decade.

It should be considered that making films at that time was, without a doubt, a heroic act. Maybe it was closer to art itself, where there is a risk to the creative reputation and very integrity of all the parties involved. Reflecting on the risks of making films during the dictatorship, we should also note –an apparently obvious, but significant difference– from the viewpoint of this text: filming in the security of the set or studio was one thing; but doing it in the public space was quite another. The regime was suspicious of cinematographic activity, and thus gave dual merit for filming in outdoor locations, in full view of its many agents. Luis Vera was one of the few filmmakers who dared to develop a marginal history filmed outside. It is thus a singular case study regarding the subject of this paper.

1.4. *Representations of the informal city.*

As Stuart Hall (2003) states, presence is as important as absence in social representations, and the "informal city", as an urban typology, had a moderate and even low presence in the periods analysed. In general, "The representations that mass media propose about public space show a part of reality, and at the same time hide another. For instance, the traits that define urban informality (poverty, precariousness, deterioration) of a city like Santiago" (Lagos-Olivero, 2015a, p. 44). While in 1981-1990 the representation of the informal city is more evident, it is far from symbolically configuring a hegemonic urban image. In this regard, *Hechos consumados* is an exception.

2. Theoretical framework. The representation of the city.

As I said, this article works with the urban typology known as the informal city. This is a type of territorial order with particular characteristics, diverse manifestations, and whose emergence is due to a specific social context. Identifying these characteristics through a review of the literature, I propose a model for analysing this type of public space as recorded in the movie.

2.1. *The informal city: the origin of the concept.*

Delimiting the boundaries of this kind of city in theoretical terms is a complex task. Even though Michel Laguerre (1994) worked on the idea of an informal city in terms of social anthropology in the nineties, his work was based on big American cities, particularly on the large metropolitan area of San Francisco and Oakland in California. Therefore, he refers to cities in the western democratic project (Laguerre, 1994, p. xi), whose high-income economies produce an informal space that is part of the formal city. It is not about the concept of a dual city (Kasarda, 1985; Marcuse, 1989) as a previous idea of the informational city (Castells, 1989); he rather locates this manifestation in the urban interstices (Sassen, 2005) as part of a whole conforming the city itself. His view point is, therefore, far from the Latin American informal city and fits better with the concept of a layered city proposed by Marcuse & Van Kempen (2000). This is part of a large typological group that tries to explain the "strengthening of structural spatial divisions" (Marcuse, 2000, p. 250) in the context of globalization. Specifically, it refers to the concept of a *fragmented city*.

In that line of thought, Saskia Sassen (2005) recognizes that of low-paid work, the need for low-cost housing, and the urban offering of services, all of which are characteristic of an informal city, manifest an advanced urban economy (Sassen, 2005) in the so-called big and complex cities, such as the global city itself (Sassen, 1999). That is to say, in this context Sassen understands the informal city as part of certain advanced economies, which are materially possible if urban space is observed as fragmented by certain symbolic limits, but united by "underlying interconnections" that are not always evident in observation *in situ*, as in Laguerre's ethnographic observation (1994).

2.2. *The Latin American informal city.*

The informal city, which is the object of study in this article, has another nature. It is associated with losers, the marginalized, and poverty. All topics are far from the success rhetoric that is proposed, for example, by Richard Florida's urban creative indicators[10] (2008). In 2010, Felipe Hernández and others published *Rethinking The Informal City: Critical Perspectives from Latin America*. The book is based on a central idea: there are many kinds of urban expressions coexisting in the same space. Under this concept, they identify two types of cities: (i) static or formal city, whose representation is basically determined by its architecture, and (ii) kinetic or informal city, whose representation is determined by its space and the values of those who inhabit it. This book promotes overcoming the binary observation logic of rich and poor, center and outskirts, or first and third world (Mehrotra in Hernández et al., 2010) to establish that beyond the burden of marginal stigma, informal urban development is rich in values and manifestations.

Such expressions go from formal to precarious, as Paola Jirón (2010) says when she identifies this structure with inhabited areas that lack core services like running water, electricity, or a sewage system (Jirón, 2010, p. 71). We situate Fiori and Brandão's point of view in the land of the formal. They, propose it as live space, in motion, with its own cultural and identity traits (Fiori & Brandão, 2010, p. 189). We understand that such reflections stem from the observation of the Brazilian favela as a socio-cultural expression. Fiori also talks about "auto-generated cities" (Fiori, 2014, p.41) whose inhabitants create their own roof. This positive denomination is similar to the idea proposed by Edward Glaeser (2011), who defines favelas, particularly the so-called Rocinha, as an indicator of urban vitality that generates bet-

ter services and opportunities in comparison to what happens in rural Brazil. Glaeser states that cities have the key to defeating poverty (p.366), an idea that is coherent with his appraisal of the favela.

The informal city is not an urban anomaly in itself, although it supposes the presence of certain urban shortcomings. Or rather, it is not pure defect. This is how Torres (2011) understands it on the basis of his observations of the Colombian informal city.

> Informality is not a synonym of grinding poverty. While a socio-economic continuum between formal and informal levels exists, there is also a gradual scale inside the latter, from survival and the possibility of obtaining minimum housing to hard poverty, misery and indigence (Torres, 2011, p. 68).

Alfredo Brillembourg and Hubert Klumpner, published "Informal City" (2005), which shows an important effort to characterize, define and problematize this kind of urban structure based on the Venezuelan example. The text includes several reflections that are useful to delimit the concept from an interdisciplinary point of view, which seeks to give theoretic order to a phenomenon that as we have seen, is generally understood as a problem rather than as another way of creating a city.

Within the above framework, the presence of the informal city necessarily supposes a formal city, which can be understood as a Manichean relation, reduced to a counterpoint between legal (as regulated by the Law) and illegal (not regulated) (Brillembourg & Klumpner, 2005, p. 41; Torres, 2011, p. 66). In other words, any kind of urban planning produces or could produce (for different reasons) certain informality in its territory. In fact, there are cases in geographic zones all over the Earth, both in high-income countries and in average and low-income countries; Emilio Duhau includes the informal city in the context of the "Latin American Metropolis" (Duhau, 2008, p. 161), which stems from the precarious housing associated with vulnerable sectors of the population, outside of the established order.

In summary, the informal city is an urban category with different causes, and thus different manifestations, which range from quasi-formality to structural misery. Therefore, we can say that it is an ordering of land that escapes the established legal order (Duhau, 2003). This is partly due to the absence of public policies (Sassen, 2005), which in most cases creates a social division of the metropolitan space, causing the breakdown of the urban continuum (Duhau, 2008), and emblematic icons of which may be found in big Brazilian cities. Nevertheless, some authors associate this kind of city with vitality, opportunities, and identity construction (Fiori, 2010; Glaeser, 2011), which arise from self-management housing processes. As mentioned above, in the Chilean case, Paola Jirón notes that "These settlements are scattered throughout the country's main cities as well as in small towns and rural areas" (Jirón, 2010, p. 71). Thus, the informal city is understood as a manifestation of urban informality and, therefore may be part of other types of cities, such as the global city, in a certain territory.

All this theoretical reflection briefly explains the urban informality that defines a city (or part of it) in the global context. In general and in light of this theoretical frame, this paper proposes two major dimensions (from the view point of urbanism and sociology) to observe the informal city (Lagos-Olivero, 2016): (i) urban informality (in the material production of the city itself), and (ii) informal economy (in its social development). From this emerge the criteria for observing this kind of urban planning, which are identified in point 3, "Methodological design for the analysis of the represented city."

2.3. *The Social Theory of Communication.*

The social theory of communication proposed by Manuel Martín Serrano (2004) analyses the interaction between two systems that the author understands as independent and interdependent (the social system and the communication system). This is based on the social mediation paradigm (Martín Serrano, 2008), which explains the role of institutional public communication

as a part of social control in capitalist societies. From this perspective, we can assume that the national film production of that time, which, as is well known, was limited and handcrafted, suggests a certain vision of reality. This could be considered part of the cultural code of order that films, as a media, use in processes of change and social reproduction (Lagos-Olivero, 2015a).

The social theory of communication is appropriate to address the subject matter because it can be used to analyse the relation among transformations in communication and changes in the social system where they take place. For instance, it allows us to study communicative and social changes in connection to economic and technological transformations in communication. This corresponds to theories about the city that, according to Castells (1989), explain the transformation, in this case, of post-industrial urban structures due to the irruption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). This refers to the social system affected by transformations in the communication system. The same reasoning can be applied to the relation between neoliberal economic politics and the informal city, understood as a link between causes and effects at an urban level. Therefore, this article relates urban and cinematographic production in a capitalist context.

3. Methodological design for the analysis of the represented city.

3.1. *Identification of analysis units.*

Hechos consumados is a movie recorded in many outdoor locations. The first task in the methodological design was to identify the sequences shot outdoors, which correspond to the basic analysis units. Such sections (9) contain representations of the city's public space and the citizens who inhabit it.

3.2. *Data collection.*

Secondly, content analysis was applied according to a model that collected data on the two indicators defined for this type of urban structure, which, as already stated, emerged from the theoretical discussion of Lagos-Olivero (2016): (a) urban informality, and (b) informal economy. Each indicator has been transformed into variables and categories for observation, as can be seen on Table 1.

Table 1. Informal city[11] categories.

Indicator	(a) Urban informality			(b) Informal Economy		
Variables	(a.1) Territorial identity	(a.2) Low status urbanization	(a.3) Informal housing	(b.1) Informal consumers	(b.2) Marginal jobs	(b.3) Informal commerce
	(a.1.1) Pride	(a.2.1) Precariousness or absence of public spaces	(a.3.1) Self-built housing	(b.1.1) Men	(b.2.1) Trade and transactions	(b.3.1) Street markets
Categories	(a.1.2) Challenge to the authority	(a.2.2) Continuity disruption of urban structure	(a.3.2) Housing in precarious conditions	(b.1.2) Women	(b.2.2) Collecting reusable materials	(b.3.2) Small shops
		(a.2.3) Urban anomaly		(b.1.3) Children		(b.3.3) Illegal activities
				(b.1.4) Senior adults		

Source. Author (2016).

3.3. *Presence is as important as absence.*

Since it is pertinent for this paper to know about the urban context of the story, I have used the analysis units (9 cinematographic sequences shot in Santiago public spaces) to establish a correspondence between the characteristics of a theoretical city type, the informal city, and the city represented in the images. This explains the presence or absence of each category in Table 1. If a category is absent, it means that a certain urban characteristic is not part of the cinematic story, and, therefore, does not symbolically build an informal urban structure. A category that is present means the opposite.

4. *The invisibility of urban informality. Some results.*

Hechos consumados is a story with predominantly long sequences shot in the public space of Santiago. Two very specific zones are emphasized: the historic city downtown (the Ahumada pedestrian promenade and the Concha y Toro neighbourhood), and the outskirts, where there is a flow of water. The periphery-center relationship is truly evident in the images, where the center is very visible, and the periphery is rather hidden, out of the visual field of the ordinary citizen.

Table 2. Informal city categories.

Indicator	Nº	Categories	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9
(A) Urban informality	(a.1)	**Territorial identity**									
	(a.1.1)	Pride									
	(a.1.2)	Challenge to the authority						+			
	(a.2)	**Low status urbanization**									
	(a.2.1)	Precariousness or absence of public spaces						+	+		+
	(a.2.2)	Continuity disruption of urban structure						+	+		+
	(a.2.3)	Urban anomaly		+		+		+	+		+
	(a.3)	**Informal housing**									
	(a.3.1)	Self-built housing									
	(a.3.2)	Housing in precarious conditions								+	+
(B) Informal economy	(b.1)	**Informal consumers**									
	(b.1.1)	Men									
	(b.1.2)	Women									
	(b.1.3)	Children									
	(b.1.4)	Senior adults									
	(b.2)	**Marginal jobs**									
	(b.2.1)	Trade and transactions									
	(b.2.2)	Collecting reusable materials	+	+	+			+			
	(b.3)	**Informal commerce**									
	(b.3.1)	Street markets									
	(b.3.2)	Small shops									
	(b.3.3)	Illegal activities									

Source. Author (2016).

In this context, the content analysis shows the presence of certain characteristics of an *informal city* in seven of the nine sequences observed. It also highlights the absence of categories such as "pride" (a.1.1), "self-built housing" (a.3.1), categories under, "informal consumers" (b.1), the "trade and commerce" category (b.2.1), and all the categories which are part of "informal commerce" (b.3).

4.1. *The big picture.*

According to the categories, we can see a partial representation of an informal type of urban structure. The predominant characteristics indicate a low level of urbanization (a.2), as Table 2 shows. We can also observe a sequence (S7) that shows a "house in precarious conditions," which indicates the creation of a settlement or illegal land occupation. There is another sequence (S6) where the main characters challenge authority —not the police in this case— (a.1.2), by invading private property.

As an indicator of informal economy, the category of "Collecting reusable materials" (b.2.2) is very present as an expression of the margi-

nal jobs carried out during the 1980s crisis. Correa *et al.*, (2001) points out that the economy showed an increase in the unemployment rate from 19.6% in 1982 to 26.4% in 1983.

4.2. *Inhabiting the public space of the historic city centre.*

Vera introduces us to his film with a long sequence of shots in colour that show the city centre of Santiago and its citizens. A prostitute can be seen (figure 1-B), as well as street artists (figure 1-C), newspaper sellers, street sellers, taxi drivers, tricycle drivers, shoe shiners, cyclists, and pedestrians, among others, as Figure 1 illustrates. Namely, it is a kind of preface of the informal city on any given day. The next shot shows a man driving his tricycle, -we can still see these men all across Santiago- taking waste material to be recycled (category b.2.2). The director inserts two shots in black and white, which break with the formality of the big city to introduce the periphery, unveiling with this filmic action one of the main characters: Emilio (Nelson Brodt), a homeless man. Vera establishes two associations: (i) colour with formality, and (ii) black and white with the informal city, bitter and inhospitable.

Figure 1. Sequence 1. Copyright: Luis Vera.

4.3. *Indigence and informality.*

Here we can see in black and white the expulsion of Emilio from the gateway where he has been sleeping (Figure 2). The architecture of the city itself provides him with shelter. Thus, he starts an urban pilgrimage to find another shelter. On his way, he collects some material to recycle (b.2.2), and at the same time he meets other citizens of the same social standing. Poverty is a general condition in this urban depiction (see footnote 7). Category b.2.2 supposes the search for waste material in places where litter is collected.

Emilio walks along the streets of the Concha y Toro neighbourhood, moving further away from the city centre and carrying a sack with his belongings on his shoulder. He walks around zones with certain urban abnormalities (a.2.3), empty areas where dust, dried grass, or litter prevail. The character encounters a religious pilgrimage (on the bridge of what used to be the North-South Road and is now the Central Highway). He does not head towards it since they are going in opposite directions, which strengthens the idea of his social estrangement. In fact, he walks against established urban logical order, which is typical of the homeless, who kill time in public space. In fact, there is a shot where Emilio faces cars on the highway. He does not follow urban rules, because there are no rules for the homeless. This sequence also features Marta (Loreto Valenzuela), who is kidnapped in the middle of the night and tossed into the riverbed by unknown men. The main characters meet, and there is a confluence of marginalized people.

4.4. *The precariousness of industrial labour.*

The next character to appear is Miguel (José Soza), a textile worker on the edge of unemployment. The shots show him carrying a wooden rod as a watchman (Figure 3). The camera is inside the private property of the factory; however, it films a public space, specifically a street where a horse-drawn wagon passes by carrying reusable materials (b.2.2).

Figure 2. Sequence 2. Copyright: Luis Vera.

Figure 3. Sequence 3. Copyright: Luis Vera.

4.5. *Marginal convergence.*

This sequence shows the convergence of the marginal couple on the riverside of a dirty and stony urban river, which corresponds to the category of urban abnormality (a.2.3). Emilio pulls Marta out from the waters, and at the same time Marta rescues Emilio, little by little, from his learned hopelessness regarding the future and humans in general. As the relationship grows, so do basic necessities: food and shelter (Figure 4). The synergy produced by the encounter leads to the creation of a squatter settlement. The sequence ends with a wire fence indicating private property (Figure 4-D).

Figure 4. Sequence 4. Copyright: Luis Vera.

4.6. *The streets of old Santiago.*

Figure 5. Sequence 5. Copyright: Luis Vera.

The director then relocates the action to the downtown area, where there are no features of an informal city. Miguel walks to his home in the basement of a building, still carrying a wooden rod. He disappears from the scene as if he were going into an invisible world, far away from daylight and public scrutiny.

4.7. *Public-private tension.*

Most of the characters converge here. While Marta and Emilio reflect on their miserable lives, Aurelia (Myriam Palacios), a homeless woman with psychiatric issues, bursts into the scene, collecting reusable materials (tin cans) (b.2.2). She has a harsh encounter with Miguel, who appears with the intention of driving them out of the place. In the story, what should be public (the riverbanks) is actually private property, jealously guarded by Miguel, who becomes a watchman once again[12]. On the other hand, as defined by category a.1.2, Emilio challenges the watchman's authority with a few words and he obtains an extension. All categories that indicate a low level of urbanization are also present (a.2). In the shots where the big city and its buildings arise, cutting the skyline (see background of figure 6-C), we can see the features of precariousness and absence of public space (a.2.1), as well as the continuous disruption of urban structure (a.2.2) and urban abnormality (a.2.3). These shots indicate that abandoned areas are adjacent to the formal city. In urban terms, the images show proximity between the formal and the informal.

Figure 6. Sequence 6. Copyright: Luis Vera.

4.8. *The squatter settlement arises.*

Marta and Emilio begin to take root on this (forbidden) land, and at the same time they strengthen their relationship. A shelter thus emerges, indicating the category of housing in precarious conditions (a.3.2), and there is also a garden (Figure 7-A), a clothesline (Figure 7-B), and even an outdoor living room[13]. While Marta tries to do the cleaning, Emilio pretends to wash his face in the river, both actions being more symbolic than real. Once again Aurelia and Miguel converge on the scene, and Miguel tries to drive them out of the place. As a detail of the setting, the city skyline with its big towers is observed (Figure 7-B and C), as well as the consolidation of the categories which define a low level of urbanization (a.2). The main characters resist and once again avoid being forced out of the site.

Figure 7. Sequence 7. Copyright: Luis Vera.

4.9. *Back to the formal city.*

Luis R. Vera again shows the formal city, specifically the front of Miguel's basement-flat. All the shots of this sequence contrast with the categories of the informal city.

Figure 8. Sequence 8. Copyright: Luis Vera.

4.10. *Precarious housing.*

In the final sequence, the categories present in sequence 7 appear again and show a precarious dwelling. Tragedy suddenly occurs. Emilio resists being forced out just as Miguel insists on the eviction. The "promised land" is behind the wire fence, but Emilio will stay in the forbidden area. The movie ends with an open general shot that shows the field where the events occurred, and allows us to observe the formal city with its buildings against the skyline (Figure 9-C). Urban formality and informality are part of the same thing in those images, which show a no-man's land, both public and private; or to be specific, we see a fragmented city (Brenner, 1997; Marcuse & Van Kempen, 2000).

Figure 9. Sequence 9. Copyright: Luis Vera.

5. Conclusions

While the film scene in that period cannot be referred to as a film "industry" as such, it does not mean that films' ability to mediate disappeared. Mediation did occur, in fact, hand in hand with the representations created with other iconic products as part of a communication system (e.g., television). Of all the films produced during the decade, *Hechos consumados* and *Caluga* o *menta* are the only ones where informal urban contexts are used to tell stories of marginal individuals, although the former is the only one showing complete informality. This singularity explains the interest in its analysis.

The cinematic representation of Santiago's public space in *Hechos consumados* partially shows the characteristics which define an informal city. That is to say, the characteristics of Santiago as shown in sequences shot in public spaces are

consistent with certain theoretical characteristics of this kind of urban structure.

The sequences analysed suggest a fragmented city (Brenner, 1997; Marcuse & Van Kempen, 2000) and an exclusive city, with a border between formal and informal, public and private. The relation between so-called neoliberalism and the public space crisis becomes evident in certain images where the most noticeable characteristic is precarious urbanization (a.2), while the absent ones indicate an informal economy (B). In any case, from the view point of mass media, the movie shows a kind of Latin American informal city, not showing other urban typologies which explain of power-elite relationships, as in the case of creative cities (Florida, 2008), to point out an entirely opposite example.

5.1. *Socio-historical context.*

The filming took place when large-scale economic changes were being promoted by the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1989). Hence, the movie takes place amid changes (the 80's crisis) and social adjustments (higher unemployment and lack of housing access) that resulted in the expulsion and exclusion of certain citizens of the metropolitan area, or, as this paper states in its title, expulsion from urban paradise. In fact, Emilio's expulsion is actually a double eviction: first, out of the city; then, out of the city boundaries as delimited by the river.

5.2. *Giving visibility to informality*

The homeless man Emilio represent the marginalized person who lives on the boundaries of society and suffers all the violence of a Santiago that is undergoing a complete change. As for Marta, she transacts her expulsion when she loses the possibility of doing her job, and when she passes through the dictator's intelligence service filters, as her kidnapping suggests. One of her dialogues shows the transformation of the working environment due to the repression: the private space of the home turned into a safe space due to the dangers awaiting in the public sphere. This idea remains today in urban actions such as street closures, the proliferation of metal

fences and barbed wire, or the private condos with CCTV.

> I designed gardens (...) that's what makes me feel really angry with people.
> They locked themselves inside their houses and they let [sic] the flowers die (Marta)[14].

The quote indicates an evident change in the social system regarding the relationship between citizens and the city, which becomes their battlefield. Since the 80s, the private has acquired a new meaning that has consolidated itself over time, and it partly explains the inequalities Santiago still faces. In turn, Miguel is an alienated being due to his work, which he is willing to keep. Thus, a textile worker ends up as a watchman of an abandoned terrain. From a weaving machine, he moves on to preventing occupation of potential squatter settlements (informal city). But above all, he becomes the watchman of a private space, which, however, does not belong to him. The three characters (marginalized, and/or on their way to becoming so) converge in the inhospitable periphery of the city, and they converse with the big buildings of formal Santiago as a backdrop.

The analysis model used here allows us to focus on the public space represented, which constitutes the context of the story. This helps characterize the Santiago of the 1980's as an informal city. In the narratives of audio-visual fiction, urban informality tends to be underrepresented, transforming the degraded spaces of the city into invisible areas. *Hechos consumados* is unique in this regard, which indicates a certain subversion in terms of the context in which the film was shot (1985). In his eagerness to tell a story about marginality, the director made public space the protagonist of a dark city, which still remains in most of the metropolitan area, despite the parks and skyscrapers that dominate the mass media (Lagos-Olivero, 2015b). Accordingly, the use of black and white is a political interpretation of the sad times that the images show. The river, an ancient urban boundary, is also congruent with this idea, reflecting us as if it were a mirror of inequality: upriver, it is surrounded by green areas and urban develo-

pment; downriver, there is only precariousness and loose soil.

### 5.3. *Urban change and social mediation.*

As Martín Serrano (2004) points out, communication seeks to avoid collapse, contributing necessary information to guide social action so that social organizations can work within certain boundaries that are compatible with the system (Lagos-Olivero, 2015a).

> "All social mediation seeks to provide models which serve as a reference to the group to preserve its cohesion from the divisive effects of social change"[15] (Martín Serrano, 2004, p. 162).

Thus, as a communication product, *Hechos consumados* participates in the social mediation process, providing a repertoire of urban stereotypes that are characteristic of an informal city. The message indicates the dangers of being excluded from the system, the community, or the peer group.

Outside of the formal urban order, there is only space for a hopeless marginality; therefore, it would be more convenient to remain within the regulatory margins of the big city. The urban depictions in these images include a specific message about the marginalized. In fact, its examples of urban exclusion can be observed in the city even today, as Figure 10-B points out.

Figure 10. *Hechos consumados* and a picture of the Mapocho River, King's Park area, 2016. Copyright: Luis Vera (10 A); Claudio Lagos-Olivero (10 B).
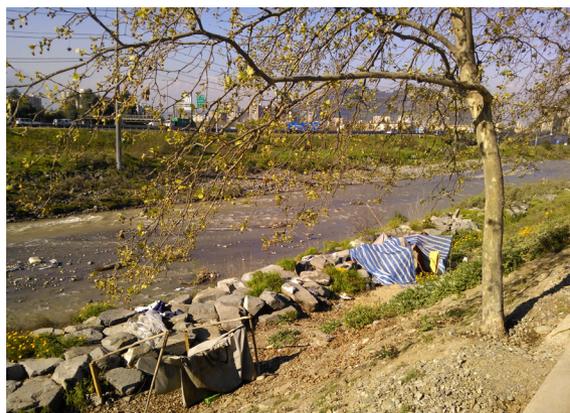
The 1980s were characterized by a low output of national fiction films. Between 1981 and 1990, there were only 8[16] (full-length) movies filmed on 35 mm celluloid with the city of Santiago as their main location. This paper is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to analysing cinematic representation of urban informality in this Chilean decade.

Notes

1. Hechos consumados, meaning An Accomplished Facts. The film is available on the website cinetecanacional.cl. Retrieved November 2, 2018.

2. It is based on the theater script written by the Chilean playwright Juan Radrigán (1998, [1981]).

3. Proposed by the Doctoral Thesis titled "The symbolic construction of Santiago de Chile. Representations of the public space of the city in the cinematographic national production" (Author, 2015a).

4. Elmar Altvater (Free University of Berlin), states that there are three megatrends that mark the change in the urban social context in history. The first one is the "urbanization", the second the "globalization", and currently we are in the third megatrend he names "informalization" (Brillembourg and Klumpner, 2005, p. 51), which places the "informal city", and the urban informality, as one of the main issues cities are facing today.

5. Regarding the work of Juan Radrigán, Correa et al. (2001, p. 316) indicate: "characters (…) reflect conflicts and ethical positions which importance goes beyond life situation of the marginalized, contributing to the understanding of why, when released in the centric theaters of the capital, his works congregate a socially heterogeneous public". Self-translation.

6. "The term reality designates in its systemic dimension the physical, biological, psychological, cultural, institutional and social sphere in which each individual exists; and in its procedural dimension all that occurs in that sphere" (Martín Serrano, 2004, p. 55). Self-translation.

7. "(…) the official unemployment figures, which registered 19.6% in 1982, showed a worrying increase of 26.4% in 1983. Earlier that year, around half a million people worked in the "Minimum Employment Program" and in the "Occupational Program for Heads of Households" (…) non official unemployment figures for the poorer sectors reached 50%" (Correa, et al., 2001, p. 327). Self-translation.

8. According to the official figures provided by Mideplan (1998), in 1987 homeless individuals in the country reached 17.4% of the population (2,125,138 people), while individuals declared as poor, represented 45.1%, equivalent to 5,501,153 people. This data became the political mantra of the opposition party: 5 millions of poor people.

9. Any kind of urban planning produces or could produce certain informality in its territory by different causes; therefore, strictly speaking, the "informal city" has various names (Author, 2015b): "villas miseria" (Argentine, Uruguay, and Paraguay), "favelas" (Brazil), "colonias populares" (Mexico), "barriadas", "pueblos jóvenes" (Peru), "barrio" (Venezuela), "población callampa" or "campamentos" (Chile), "shanty towns" (South Africa), "slums" (Indian subcontinent), "squatter settlements" (Anglo-Saxon world), "kampungs" (Southeast Asia), "jhuggi-jhompris" or "bustees" (Southern Asia) (Caves, 2005), "poblado de chabolas" (Spain), among other concepts.

10. This fact would come to explain –partly– why research having the "informal city" as object of study shows a low impact in terms of commercial publishing houses.

11. All the information about the categories used can be reviewed in appendix 23 "Libro de códigos" (Author, 2015a) this work is based on.

12. "The answer of Emilio, a character of Hechos consumados (1981) to the guardian that ordered him to leave the private property he was in charge of — an uncultivated lot—, expresses the challenge to the perpetuation of the abuse and the determination to confront power that feeds upon violence" (Correa, et al., 2001: 316). Self-translation.

13. Illegal land occupations to set up precarious housing.

14. Self-translation.

15. Self-translation.

16. Los deseos concebidos [Conceived Desires] (Sánchez, 1982), Cómo aman los chilenos [How Chileans Love] (Álvarez, 1984), Hijos de la guerra fría [Children of the Cold War] (Justiniano, 1985), Nemesio (Lorca, 1986), Hechos consumados [Accomplished Facts] (Vera, 1986), Sussi (Justiniano, 1988), Imagen latente [Latent Image] (Perelman, 1989), Caluga o menta [Toffee or Mint] (Justiniano, 1990).

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