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Department of Film and Video

December 4, 1987

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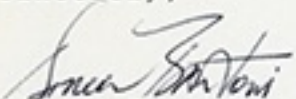
Dear Mr. Leduc,

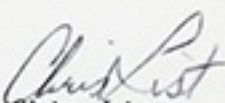
Hope this letter finds you well and productive. We have finally transcribed our interview we conducted with you on August 21, 1987, and are now in the process of submitting this interview to Cineaste for possible publication. Please let us know as quickly as possible if this meets with your approval. Basically we tried to organize the interview in three parts; 1) your history as a filmmaker 2) discussion of Frida and 3) distribution of Mexican films.

Once again thank you for your graciousness that rainy afternoon in Chicago. We both were delighted to meet with you and your daughter.

Continued success to you-

Sincerely,


Doreen Bartoni
Film/Video Faculty
Columbia College Chicago


Chris List
Lecturer
Northwestern University

INTERVIEW WITH PAUL LEDUC

(The following interview was conducted in English by Doreen Bartoni and Christine List on 8/21/87 in Chicago. The interview has been subsequently edited and condensed by List and Bartoni.)

LEDUC AND THE MEXICAN FILM INDUSTRY

BARTONI: How long have you been a filmmaker?

LEDUC: Since the sixties back in Mexico. There were only very few examples of independent films at that time. It was not even a movement. It was not like in Brazil where you had fifteen or twenty filmmakers altogether doing films, organizing the producing and distributing companies at the political level. In Mexico it was like a group of people loving films, trying to do films, not being able to do films because it was too expensive. It was impossible. You needed at that time more than one hundred thousand pesos to make a film. To get that money from anybody, you had to belong to the union. And to get into the union you had to have made a film. So you never break the circle. It was an industry that used to be very big and strong. We still had all the structure from the forties and all that. It was in a big crisis and it started to fall down from that moment. [Then there came the contest, for experimental films (First Competition for Experimental Cinema in 1965) which I entered.] But there were still problems. [So many filmmakers of my generation left the country.] I went to France. Just a few years after that a little bit younger generation went to London. We had to go out because

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it was the only way to learn. There were no film schools at that moment. There were no short films, [no television. ***] It was impossible.

BARTONI: And this was before the Super 8 group got involved?

LEDUC: Yes. Super 8 started four or five years later when I came back to Mexico. Even a little bit later, '68, '69.

BARTONI: Did you come back with the intention of getting things going again?

LEDUC: In '67 I was part of a group that made a contract with the Olympic Committee to make a certain amount of shorts. Alberto Isaac was head of this committee. At that moment we were all very much into cinema verite. We wanted to make documentaries, ~~but~~ we ~~also~~ saw the possibility with the 16mm Eclair system, to make fiction films without the union and at lower budget and with the same quality. So we made this group that was called Cine 70 and we started doing short films.

BARTONI: How would you describe the state of the Mexican film industry right now?

LEDUC: Catastrophic. But first of all it's part of a larger catastrophe, the cinema catastrophe all over the world. I think

cinema's dying. I don't know if that's good or bad but it's a fact. In Brazil they're closing ³ movie houses each day and in Italy, they went down from 75% to 25% in the time Italian film was screened weekly. So we're not so exceptional. For us it could be more difficult in a way. The only thing peculiar is our geographical position. We still have our industry that makes eighty or ninety films a year, films made in Mexican pesos that are distributed to earn dollars imported for Mexican workers here, at least up to a couple of months ago because now with the immigration laws and all that. With this condition of very low budget, very commercial, and very bad kind of films, with Mexican songs, Mexican jokes standing for Mexico. But still the union has the same attitude because they still think that things are going great. Although they have problems which makes it worse. I mean they don't want people to go in and join. So for instance, I might go into the Union but my crew that I worked with on FRIDA for instance, cannot go into the union. So I'd rather stay out.

But so far in Mexico you have various ways of producing films. You have ~~the~~ ^{the} kind of film which is private enterprise. We had during the Echeverria period from '70-'76 the state producing films and it had a policy on films. It didn't discuss it, but it had a policy. When Lopez Portillo came in in '76, everything disappeared. He was so clearly against films and against what was going on that he even put some people in jail. ~~Most~~ got out. Everyone was innocent. And now with De La Madrid

All finally

with the Monetary Fund, the state has started to disappear. It started last year with Alberto Isaac, who was the head of the Instituto Mexicano ^{de} Cinematografía resigning. The problem was not having cinema as a priority with the governments of Latin America. So there's no longer a solution and you have independent filmmakers who, during the Lopez Portillo era, made about twice or three times more films than what the government industry and the private enterprise made together, considering all kinds of films, short films, long films, documentary and fiction. And that's where the most interesting things happened. But now with the economical crisis which is hard upon Mexico, things have become very difficult. Kodak goes with the dollar. Laboratories go with the dollar. So it is very different now.

BARTONI: Is there a lot of co-producing still going on? I noticed that your film ETHNOCIDE: NOTES ON MESQUITAL was co-produced by the Canadian government.

LEDUC: It's difficult to do co-productions because you have to find the subject that has a logic for the production. In the United States since we're close and we have the possibility of the common market, it makes sense. Yet, there's never a real co-production. It usually becomes an American production with a Mexican crew. It becomes lower budget for the Americans and the Mexicans lose control, especially for the money that comes back, the distribution and all that. So it's easier apparently to look

for co-productions with Europe or other Latin American countries. So there are many projects.

LIST: What was the function of the Instituto which was headed by Alberto Isaac?

LEDUC: It was like the government office in charge of everything concerning cinema. It also was connected with the school, but the name of the school is Centro de Capacitación Cinematográfica. There is another school that's called Centro Universitario de Estudios Cinematográficos which belongs to the University. But Alberto Isaac was something like Echeverría during the Echeverría period. He was the head of the film industry from the government's point of view. Rodolfo Echeverría was the head of the Banco Cinematográfico. To be that, he was the chief of the bank, because it was the moment when what the government did was mainly give money to make films, to make distribution companies. It became something of a state monopoly during the Echeverría period. But since there was no more money they created an institute, which even the word is a little bit ambiguous. What it was for was never too clear. They tried to produce, but didn't have the money. Tried to change things, but didn't have the political support. So finally, Alberto resigned because of that.

LIST: What options are available for the new filmmakers coming

out of the film schools?

LEDUC: There are so many new filmmakers. I don't know what they are going to do in life. And so you have both problems. You have the problem of having big groups now trying to make films. And you have the problem of very good people trying to do things in a system that's against them. I mean even from the very beginning in the school, they have to learn that everything is against them. It's difficult for them to find the money, to find distribution. I don't know what's going to happen with them. And of course you have my generation and even older generations and we all have the same problems, money. And of course video now. It's starting to be "a problem". In Mexico city violence is also starting to be a problem. People don't go out, so you have empty movie houses.

LIST: Is there much video cassette rental?

LEDUC: It's starting to be a boom. It's been there for quite some time, but now it's really starting to become competition.

LIST: Do you think that films that are less commercially oriented could get distributed on video tape eventually and thereby create a bigger market?

LEDUC: Well, I don't know if you heard of Zafra, which is a

distribution company that was created by a group some ten years ago for mainly 16mm alternative distribution. Little by little, they brought in American independent films. They brought Latin American films. So now they have a catalog of more than ~~xxx~~ five hundred films. For a certain amount of time that was the solution for us, but not an economic one. This film that I made with Canada was largely seen in the country because of Zafra. But the money that came back was nothing, not enough to pay for another film, for me or for anybody working in the system. But at least our films were seen. Now with the economic crisis their work is getting to be very difficult. So as part of the same group, Jorge Sanchez started a new thing, Macondo Cine Video, which started just this year to distribute video. I think it has a long way to go, but it's going to be the solution. But also at the same time not the economical solution. There are pirates all over the world. In Mexico, the small amount that goes into video, the Mexican producer never sees it.

BARTONI: Can you support yourself mainly by filmmaking?

LEDUC: It's a very absurd situation. For many years I was supporting myself by doing documentaries or other kind of films. I could make a living out of that. Now that's over. So now apparently, they're paying me not to shoot films. For a year and a half or two I've been living on writing scripts. In some cases it's a very absurd situation. I mean they call me and say why

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don't we make a script for a T.V. series on Flores Wagon. I know that from the beginning it would make a great series. But I know that in the political situation of Mexico, that's it's impossible. It's an expensive project, because they don't call me for a film. They call me for fourteen chapters. It's a period story, many characters involved. You write it in the least expensive manner. I don't want to waste my time, so I say why don't we do something else? They say no no we want to do this. It's gonna be great. They pay me to make the script. It's absurd. *They never produced the series, of course.*

BARTONI: There's a lot of screenwriters in Hollywood who have never had a credit on film and they've made a very good living writing screenplays.

LEDUC: Well, if you're a scriptwriter, then you can be very happy, but if you're a filmmaker, then it's absurd. You don't like it so much.

BARTONI: Your next project will be a film on Tina Modotti?

LEDUC: No, that's an old project. It could happen one day but I'm not working on that now. The same co-producer of FRIDA wants me to do an old project and I'm not so sure it's going to be possible. It's based on a short story by Alejo Carpentier. It's called "Concierto Barroco". It's a very short story and we have

to expand it very much because it's for three hours worth of television and a shorter version for film. That would be a co-production with Spain, Cuba and Mexico. It would be shot one chapter, one hour in Mexico, one in Cuba and one in Spain. And according to the producer, I'm going to start that in January.

FRIDA AND THE NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA MOVEMENT

BARTONI: Do you have any speculations on why Frida Kahlo's so popular now? There's a play that was done here in the Spanish area of Chicago, and there are art retrospectives on her. The biography was quite popular...

LEDUC: When we made the film the only things that were done was the exhibition that went all over Europe and New York, "Tina Modotti and Frida Kahlo." (The museum was always there,) but it was not crowded. One of the reasons ^{to make the film.} was because she was forgotten. We thought it was interesting for her to come back. At the same time, I believe that this international recognition happened because of the exhibition. She became well known in Sweden in London or New York. People start writing books or writing plays at the same time. (At least outside of Mexico because in Mexico we knew about her.) And I imagine, for instance, in Berlin, she became a flag for the Feminist Movement. In San Francisco, I think something like that happened also. When I went there last year you could find tee shirts and

paraphernalia about Frida, not because of the film but because of herself. And I think it's mainly because of the Feminist movements all over the world that took her or were interested in her which is quite logical. I'm afraid that now, at least in some cases, she can become mythified. In Berlin, I remember in the days after the film a strong feminist radical asked me why I didn't show all the struggle that she had to live through from an economic point of view -- her proletarian origin. I had to answer, because there was no proletarian origin and because she didn't have economic problems. Diego gave her money to live. That's not too feminist and maybe the Feminists don't like that argument, but it's a fact. She had Diego supporting her. And although she didn't sell much, she sold enough. She was quite well known, even if she wasn't as well known as now. She needed lots of money for her operations and all that and it came from Diego. I don't think it's a big crime to say it, especially if it's an historical fact. I mean the problem doesn't change the image of Frida. So these small details, or not so small details made me afraid that she could become mythified or altered in some direction or another.

LIST: What do you think is the connection between her art and the proletarian movement?

LEDUC: Well she was interested in the proletarian idea and the

possibilities of a revolution and she lived in a country that just came out of a very large revolution with a million people dead. It changed the whole country. She was in the middle of that and the uprisings of the left with the Communist Party, and the problems with the Communist Party splitting in a moment when it was very strong and the left was very strong in Mexico. She was in the middle of a very large and very important cultural movement, the most well known aspect being the muralists, but it had musicians and writers also. It was like Nicaragua now but even on the larger scale because it's a larger country. You had people coming from all over the world to see what was going on. So it was a rich movement and of course she was interested in all that. But the fact that she was interested in the revolution and she was a revolutionary doesn't mean she was from proletarian origins. She was a middleclass intellectual, the daughter of a photographer, a painter, a student etc...etc...who was interested in politics which is not better or worse than anything else, it's just her situation.

BARTONI: What about your personal views on politics and art, the relationship? Do you feel there's a commitment by artists to deal with social concerns?

LEDUC: The word commitment, at least if I translate it to Spanish, sounds like if you're forced to do something. I think that it's not only myself. I think that for Latin American

filmmakers mainly the people from my generation, a little bit older and younger, it's not commitment. It's part of our everyday preoccupations. We're surrounded by political problems. When we started with the moment of the Cuban revolution, then up to now with Nicaragua, Chile, Brazil, then changes in Mexico and all over the world. All over the world, we've been involved more or less, not necessarily with a party ^{as} ~~or~~ militants but we're involved in politics. We are political minded. Even if we're making a love story, we're interested in the political concern of how to tell the love story.

For some time in Latin America, there was this moment of the "Third Cinema" with the cine guerilla of which some films I might like, but the theory itself -- cinema being a guerilla -- I think it's absurd. I think it's a very petite bourgeois notion. If you want to be a guerilla you can go and be a guerilla. If you want to make films, you accept that you want to make films, and that you can do a political work, whatever that is, but with the limitations of a film. So there was much exaggeration about the influence that some films had on the audience. The statistics of some films -- this film was seen by I don't know how many millions of workers -- it's not true. The fact is that many of those films were seen by intellectuals and petite bourgeois filmmakers themselves because it was the only audience available. I don't want to exaggerate. Many films were seen also by workers, also by peasants, also by unions but they didn't have the same effect sometimes. And some people realizing the

change tried to have feed back with this reality and some people just made a myth that they were becoming heroes. But still I think that most of these Latin American films are the best films that have been made. *in our movement.*

LIST: Do you think Trotsky's writings on art have had an influence on you or any other Mexican filmmakers?

LEDUC: Not on me. Maybe on somebody else but not on me. I mean not particularly. I mean maybe...for instance in this film I'm not a Trotskiist. I even disagree a lot with Trotsky's attitudes, but I had to deal with the character of Trotsky. In Mexico, the Trotsky assassination in 1940, was an impact that the Left has not recovered from. If not from the political incident itself -- the murder -- from the political consequences and the way it was done. The Communist Party was split at that time: the group that said we had to do what Moscow said even if it's killing Trotsky or whatever, and the group that said we must do whatever must be done in Mexico and we have to have fraternal relations with the Soviet Party but if they want to kill Trotsky, it's not our problem. But this problem is still not solved in Mexico, so it's a political subject. In this film I don't think we deal with that really. But it's something that ^{is} ~~was~~ still *being* discussed in Mexico. Still there are some reactions to the film. There are Stalinists who only to mention Trotsky is like hell. It was mainly to talk about this that we dealt with the

subject...more or less.

LIST: Have you had any objections from leftists about you film being too personal?

LEDUC: I had some objections from some leftists. Some old Stalinists, especially art critics felt that not only because of Trotsky, but also that Frida, Diego, Siqueros were their domain and nobody should touch their sacred image. With younger people, no. With younger people maybe even the fact that they found it more personal was not necessarily considered a problem but as something that should be done that way. No in general I don't think that was a problem. At least nobody said it or wrote it if they did think that way. The fact that the film was "not popular," was the subject of debate and criticism. But I think that at least when I did the film, now it's changing, but... This joke that I mentioned "Let's do whatever we want. Nobody's going to see the film," we knew otherwise how to get our money back etcetera. We knew that small crowds all over the world could be interested in this film. Let me put it this way, when I went into films, films were a popular means of communication. It was like doing popular music. You were addressing or trying to address a large audience. You thought you were able to do it. Now films are becoming like chamber music. I don't know if it's good or bad, but it's a fact. I don't think it's so bad to address it to a small audience. Especially if it's a fact that

you're not really addressing workers of the world but you're addressing people from cinema. *Wases.*

So what happened to Frida was that I found out, and I can prove to myself, that small audiences can make a large audience. You can also address a larger audience, maybe even larger than we did when we were trying to make films addressed to a larger audience. So it's very paradoxical and not so easy. But people, maybe in the left, still think you would have to deal with other subjects and treatments or ways of telling the story in order to be understood obviously by the audience. But I don't think that's necessarily true.

LIST: Often those who are trying to understand Third Cinema still cling to the ideas of the manifesto by Solanas and Getino...

LEDUC: But Solanas has changed...I think it's in many ways similar to myself. You start with documentaries, trying to be in the center of the struggle addressing all the militants and then you find out you're not really reaching them. What they did to reach them -- the phenomenon of cinema and video -- is changing also. And you think again what your own work is and what you have to do and you do it in another way. I'd don't think Solanas is less good or less political in TANGOS than in HORA DE LOS HORROROS, just different. He talks about a different thing and a different problem and ^{to} a different audience. He made a different

film. I think it's much more political than to try to find one formula which twenty years ago...It's what's happening in politics. The whole political conception of everybody in the socialist countries, the capitalist countries and the third world is changing. Our problems, ideological, political, social, economic problems are quite different now than they used to be twenty years ago. I mean if we don't think about what is going on and what we have to do then we're not doing politics we're doing I don't know, masturbation, political masturbation...

BARTONI: There is a surprisingly minimal amount of dialogue in FRIDA...

LEDUC: There is a Tina Modotti project that I haven't done yet, that I'll do some day. We were working and just about to make that film with Ofelia Medina as an actress, as a completely silent film black and white film. There was some sort of a challenge. Tina was a photographer and I wanted to tell the story of a photographer.

BARTONI: So somewhat mimicing her medium with the black and white?

LEDUC: I wanted to see if it was possible to say it without words. Also I had the problem of the language, she being Italian, if she was going to speak with or without an accent.

It's a little bit of an absurd problem, but the whole thing started like that. So it took quite some time. It was difficult to make the script for a silent film, no words at all for Tina Modotti. We were going to start shooting that the day that nothing could get started, the day of the devaluation of the peso, the first of September in '82. So in August, just before that, the country was full of rumors - coup de etat, devaluation - so the whole production stopped for a moment. I knew that Ofelia wanted to make something on Frida, which is normal. To see herself in the mirror, she was obsessed by the character. I was very interested in the subject. I thought that there was the danger of doing a cheap melodrama, a soap opera full of tears and nothing more was too much in that project. So I didn't want to go into the Frida project. But once we had the situation of postponing the Tina Modotti project, David Viñas suggested, why don't we start working on the idea of Frida. Then he went back to Argentina so I didn't work with him on the ^{FRIDA} script. But all the work that was done for imagining a silent film was very useful for FRIDA. FRIDA had more elements because it was not only her work but it was a graphical way, a graphical language of the way she dressed, locations. I thought that was one of the tricks to avoid melodrama, the lack of dialogue. The other one was this unorthodox narrative, not to tell a story but to give some images, flashbacks, I mean whatever you want to see and to suggest more than to explain.



BARTONI: When I first watched it, there was something very different about the editing of FRIDA. And it seemed that you would cut into her memories and get to a certain point to where you'd expect more and then you'd cut it...

LEDUC: Of course it's editing, but I think it comes more from the script because of the situations that are chosen. Usually what you show in the film is the moment after not the beginning. The idea was to make people think about the whole thing. I mean not to show it in a very traditional way. It's peculiar because it's usually in the United States that I've found this reaction and I think it's normal because of the kind of movie thinking there is in the U.S. It's more disturbing here. We want it to be frustrating and disturbing in that particular area. It's for them to finish the film. We had the problem from the very beginning of the conception of the script. Whom are we addressing: the people that know about Frida or the people that don't know anything about Frida? So what we wanted to do is a film that could reach both especially because we felt Frida was starting to be known by more people. The thing is that if you know about Frida, I think that in the very beginning you know that we're doing something else, like the Trotsky letter. The Trotsky letter doesn't exist as it is in the film but we are certain that such a letter can exist. It's based on a collage of Trotsky's ideas and Trotsky's text. Trotsky wrote to his wife telling her about the affair with Frida and some part comes from

this letter. And if he wrote to his wife telling her about another woman it's sure that he wrote to this other woman and we know that he wrote her because he had a meeting out in the woods. So it's more or less real but it's not a biography, not a documentary.

BARTONI: I'm just wondering if that's indicative of her own art where you don't know what's true, what was in her imagination and what was taking place.

LEDUC: The other thing is that we also wanted to make a film for people not knowing anything about Frida and then it's just a particular woman who happened to paint etcetera, etcetera. People that don't know anything about Frida are not so much disturbed because they have to reconstruct the whole thing without any other thing but the film. Whether they like it or they don't, it's the film that's giving them the elements to follow the story.

LIST: It also made me want to go out and find out more about her, verify the film.

LEDUC: Right. And when people know about Frida then they are a little bit troubled by the facts. Was it really like that and who's this guy? It's not important.

LIST: Did you always conceive of the film with so much camera movement?

LEDUC: No, when I go to the set I don't know exactly what I'm going to do. I have a general idea. I like moving the camera in general and it's also a solution for production problems. It's easier to make one or two shots a day and I get bored with reverse shot set-ups. Also the cutting room is something that I like but not for too many days. The shorter the better. I was conditioned for my work before, maybe not the work that you know, but mainly by a certain amount of documentaries that I made. I was using a lot of camera movements. In this story in particular you have the problem of a character that doesn't move normally. Sometimes it's a wheel chair, sometimes it's a bed, sometimes it's a cane and also to try to show her point of view to create this atmosphere that we're going in her house like breaking the intimacy, coming out of walls and all that. There were many reasons. Most of them I realize in interviews and after.

BARTONI: There weren't all that many point of view shots from Frida's perspective.

LEDUC: I think there're none. I don't like subjective camera. I don't think there's one shot in the film that's subjective camera. It's like suggesting a way of looking. I don't know. That's for film critics.

BARTONI: So you feel that it geers the audience too much if it's from the character's point of view, that it's telling the audience what to see?

LEDUC: I think it's impossible. I think that the camera can only shoot what your eye can see. You can not go through the mind of the character. Alain Renais tried to do that with memory. In HIROSHIMA MON AMOUR for instance, it's different than when he did it in MARIENBAD. That didn't work. I don't think that film worked but it's a very interesting film that had to be done in a certain moment. The big lesson from American films is that the camera can only shoot concrete things, glass, windows, people, conversations, whatever. When you try to shoot imagination, you also have to shoot concrete things. I never like it when a camera pretends to see what a character sees and then goes out to see what the director sees or another character sees. It doesn't work.

LIST: It seemed to be the appropriate style to show her paintings.

LEDUC: Yes, also you're not trying to do a documetary. It's like taking him to a gallery. You're trying to tell the viewer something else about that painting and you have to choose what part of the painting or what rhythm you want -- to make a film

out of it and not just a postcard of the gallery. Especially since we're going to deal with silence and music and all that we needed...

DISTRIBUTION

BARTONI: Your film FRIDA which was shown at the Chicago Latino Film Festival in June has been well received. It had three screenings that first night when it was here. People were lining up on the streets and I understand it did quite well in San Francisco. What's your distribution plan for the film?

LEDUC: Well the film has been distributed in almost all of Europe except France. Now it's starting in the United States. I understand it's going to open in New York in January or something like that. It's been distributed in some Latin American countries. It's going to start in Argentina. I think it's going to start in Brazil, Colombia. So little by little...

BARTONI: What sort of distribution has Frida had in Mexico?

LEDUC: In Mexico, it's had normal commercial distribution. We were surprised it was a big success, because it's a difficult film. When we made the film, we had a joke. When we were shooting, we said nobody is going to see this film anyway, because we knew about the distribution problems and we knew we

were doing a difficult film. We thought a small group would see it in Mexico. We were surprised because many many people saw it. It started in five movie houses in Mexico and it went up to six and to seven for many weeks then it went back to six and to five, and finally went away. We were puzzled because part of the reason could be because Ofelia Medina is quite popular in Mexico, but it was more than that. So we did some research of the audience through friends and others. We went to the movie houses and talked to the people. Many people said that they were tired of garbage in television, tired of garbage in films. The fact that the film was difficult and made them think was gratifying for them as an audience. I think it's important for us filmmakers to think about this because ^{many}~~one~~ usually assumes ^{they} must produce for the lowest common denominator.

LIST: What is the situation with the distribution of your other films?

LEDUC: I know that ETHNOCIDE has been shown in the U.S., but I don't know where or how. HISTORIAS PROHIBIDAS DEL PULGARCITO, a film on El Salvador has a problem with the distribution because it was mainly distributed with ZAFRA in Mexico for cinema goers and politically by the Salvadorians themselves. So they took a copy here and then they took it someplace else ^{without a cinematographical}~~and then they read~~ ^{strategy}~~the copy~~ I don't know where, but I know it's been shown in the United States.

HISTORIAS PROHIBIDAS DEL PULGARCITO was a film that the Salvadorians asked me to do for many purposes. It was some years ago, five or six. Now everybody more or less knows what's going on in El Salvador, but in that moment it was not so clear. So they needed a film for political use which could address people ignoring where El Salvador is and what the whole thing is about. It could be used as part of an agitation campaign, in a union, in the middle of a speech, to raise funds... So what I tried to do was, first of all it was on four reels. So according to what they ^{distributor} needed, they could choose to show the whole film or the first reel or the third or the fourth or whatever they wanted to do. And each reel was divided in chapters with titles and black, ⁱⁿ so even if they wanted to re-edit this film and make whatever they ^{distributor} wanted to with the film, they could. The problem was, they never did it. Usually, the whole thing which was too long, two hours and something, was shown altogether and I couldn't control that. But the idea was to make them think in a way and use that information as they wanted according to the circumstances.

In ETHNOCIDE, I tried to do the same thing. It was at the end of the Echeverria period. We knew that we could produce the film that we wanted, but we were not sure how the film was going to be distributed. We thought we could have problems. So the idea was to make a short film for each letter of the alphabet from a to z. For instance, the "G" which was the government, is a short film about eight minutes, that you can cut out of the film and use as propaganda or whatever, or you could relate a

combination of letters and do one film for peasants and another film for workers, another film for cineclubs. But it didn't work also. They usually show the whole film.

My other films, except FRIDA, are distributed in Mexico through Zafra. Here, New Yorker has JOHN REED: MEXICO INSURGENT and FRIDA.