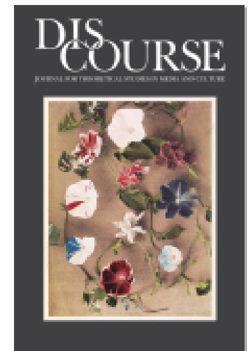
# In the Wake of Militant Cinema: Challenges for Film Studies

Matthew Croombs



Discourse, Volume 41, Number 1, Winter 2019, pp. 68-89 (Article)

Published by Wayne State University Press

For additional information about this article
https://muse.jhu.edu/article/751591

Access provided at 19 Mar 2020 18:33 GMT from University of Calgary

# In the Wake of Militant Cinema: Challenges for Film Studies

**Matthew Croombs**

> We look for images that make us feel less alone when we are journeying toward that thing that has not yet been.
>
> —Audre Lorde, *Conversations with Audre Lorde* (2004)

## Introduction

This essay examines the concept of militant cinema with a focus on an enduring tendency within film theory to identify the militant tradition with both its failures and its dissolution by the mid-1970s. I aim to show that as a term that is as summarily invoked as it is dismissed, "militant cinema" remains a deeply incoherent concept, fraught with internal contradictions. The first half of the essay explores the ways in which militant cinema has been situated within a diverse body of theory, observing how the term has become synonymous with the related yet opposing categories of "political modernism" and "parallel cinema." As the militant tradition has come to embody the critical impasses of both categories, its theorization is often accompanied by sentiments of melancholia and

*Discourse*, 41.1, Winter 2019, pp. 68–89.
Copyright © 2020 Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan 48201-1309. ISSN 1522-5321.

nostalgia for the fallen Marxisms of the 1960s. The latter half of the essay, however, draws from a recently renewed investment in the militant image and explores how the very tension between political modernism and parallel cinema worked in a dynamic exchange throughout the 1970s and 1980s, unfolding onto the related tensions between "first world" theory and "third world" practice as well as class- and identity-based critique. In analyzing one of the period's key debates between Julianne Burton-Carvajal and Teshome Gabriel as well as the aesthetic innovations of Haile Gerima, my goal is to move beyond the discourse of the end and reopen the militant tradition's complex orientation toward questions of global solidarity, methodology, and psychic liberation.

## The Discourse of the End

Within film studies, the term "militant cinema" invokes a set of aesthetic tactics as well as a particular historical lineage. Its genealogy is conventionally understood to emanate from the Great International Revolutionary Style of the Soviet cinemas of the 1920s and to gradually intersect with concepts, motifs, and institutions throughout the New Wave cinemas of the developed world and the third-world cinemas of the Global South.[1] While each of these traditions was conditioned by particular national determinations, the debates and discourses surrounding militant cinema, as worked through in manifestos, pamphlets, and international conferences, tended to return to similar pragmatic and formal ideals. At the level of production, militant cinema aimed to proletarianize the labor process by breaking down the intellectual hierarchy between artists and technicians and by ensuring that each member of the crew could engage holistically with the craft.[2] The desire to "weaken the individual personality of the filmmaker," in Carlos Alvarez's terms, was further tied to utopian speculations about the affordances of 8mm and 16mm film as cheap and effective media that could be put in the hands of the people.[3] At the level of distribution, militant cinema aimed to destroy the hermetic structures of the Hollywood movie palace and the European art house theater by generating an extrainstitutional matrix of exhibition sites. Taking inspiration from Dziga Vertov and Aleksandr Medvedkin's ciné-train experiments of the 1920s, the militant cinemas of the 1960s and 1970s were screened in factories, dormitories, and churches, often in an atmosphere of drinking and debate and alongside intellectual lectures and works of theater.[4] Accordingly, at the level of reception, militant cinema aimed to transform the text into a "pre-text for

dialogue" by inciting spectators to take the next step in the fight against both situated sites of struggle and broader structural forms of oppression.[5] Resolutely anticapitalist and anti-imperialist, militant cinema consistently conceptualized its image production in insurrectional terms as working on the intellectual-cultural front of the collective struggle, like a worker's picket sign in a strike or a Molotov cocktail against the police.[6] Over the course of the 1970s, militant cinema's fate would become increasingly entwined with the related yet distinct category of "political modernism," with the works of such figures as Jean-Luc Godard, Jean-Marie Straub, Danièle Huillet, and Nagisa Oshima and with the desire, in David Rodowick's terms, "to combine semiotic and ideological analysis with the development of an avant-garde aesthetic practice dedicated to the production of social effects."[7]

The genealogy of militant cinema thus invokes a series of fraught associations both within film history and for the study of film itself. On the one hand, this genealogy represents a body of cinema that is inscribed by the traumas of the long 1960s, a period encompassing the exhilaration and fatigue that bracketed the events of May 1968 as well as the failed utopias that emerged with the global decolonizing movements of the late 1950s.[8] On the other hand, the term "militant cinema" is associated with the excesses of 1970s film theory, with the once pervasive assemblage of Althusserian Marxism, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Saussurian semiotics that drained filmgoing of its pleasures and effaced questions of historical context, affect, and cultural difference.[9] Since as early as the 1980s, the term "militant cinema" has provoked sentiments of embarrassment, disidentification, and a discourse of the end.

In 1983 Guy Hennebelle, "the godfather of militant cinema in France," wrote a brief foreword to a special 1976 dossier titled "Militant Cinema," which offered a state-of-the-cinema address on the interventionist cinemas born after May 1968 in Europe and most strongly articulated by Solanas and Getino's "Towards a Third Cinema" in Latin America.[10] Encountering the dossier seven years later, Hennebelle reflected on how both the rhetoric and aspirations of that moment appear "surrealistic" and "intolerable to me today."[11] "Since then," he writes, "many hopes have collapsed and too many 'successful revolutions' have led to sometimes frightful results."[12] Marxism, he concluded, had been revealed as an "inoperational" praxis with a "deplorable" conception of aesthetics.[13] This rather broad narrative, in which a coherent aesthetic practice yoked to a Marxist theoretical framework "crumbled" in the wake of the failures of the 1970s, is one that persists into debates about the film politics of the present.

In his recent *The Intervals of Cinema*, for example, Jacques Rancière identifies the genealogy of militant cinema with the classical phase of the "Brechtian paradigm," in which a "fragmentary form and the dialectical confrontation of opposites was aimed at sharpening the gaze and judgment so as to raise the level of certainty supporting adherence to a particular explanation of the world, the Marxist explanation."[14] Exemplified by the work of the Medvedkin and Vertov groups, this phase would come to an end after the disappointment of the leftist decade—austerity, armed confrontations between the radical Left and the police, the ultimate conservatism of socialist party politics—giving rise to a so-called post-Brechtian phase in which cinema gave up on "being a medium of communication in the struggle" in order to study the "aporiae of emancipation."[15] Consider a slightly different iteration of this narrative, when the journal *Cinéaste* celebrated its fortieth anniversary by asking some of world cinema's most acclaimed directors a set of standard questions about film politics today as contrasted against the 1960s and 1970s, "the last great moment of political cinema."[16] When the director Olivier Assayas was asked to reflect on obstacles to making and distributing political films, he responded, "What you are referring to is what could be summed up as 'militant' cinema." Militant cinema, for Assayas, "is mostly about preaching to the converted, through marginal circuits, to bring them what the 'mainstream media' rejects, censors, or is just plain bored with. Honestly, the Internet does a much better job at reaching that audience."[17]

Significantly, both Rancière and Assayas use the term "militant cinema" to designate a well-rehearsed and now defunct category of film, and yet they point to two historically clashing traditions. Rancière's definition of militant cinema is consistent with the genealogy of the blackboard film or countercinema, works that sought to merge Brechtian tactics of estrangement with an *ideological* critique of vision. By exposing the materiality of the film image and by breaking apart narrative unity across shifting modes of address, countercinema was guided by the epistemological aim of deconstructing the identificatory processes that enabled classical Hollywood film grammar to support the spectator in a complacent and bourgeois position of mastery. As Rancière notes, the aesthetic policies of a film such as *Vent d'Est* (1970) were founded on "the Marxist 'horizon' that gave them meaning and intellectually granted their efficiency, *without the need to demonstrate it materially*."[18] By contrast, Assayas's understanding of militant cinema is closer to what was called "parallel cinema" in Europe, networks of underground film that challenged the theoretical obscurantism of art cinema,

working instead to usurp the economic means of production and to provoke spectators into direct material action.[19]

Significantly, these two conceptions of film politics were the subject of major debate in film theory during the 1960s and 1970s, informing Solanas and Getino's distinction between "second" and "third" cinema and the exchange between *Cahiers du cinéma* and *Cinéthique* that resulted in Jean-Louis Commoli and Paul Narboni's legendary "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism" essays.[20] For Comolli and Narboni, parallel cinema, a mode of film practice that addresses the exigencies of the political present and circulates outside the distribution channels controlled by the state and the commercial film industry, posits a critical outside to the dominant ideology, thus falling back on a prestructuralist faith in documentary truth and its attendant discourses of authenticity and transparency.[21] By contrast, the modernist text apprehends the mediated quality of all representation and, through its formal discontinuities, creates a polysemy of interpretation that requires reading.[22] More recently, this binary opposition served as the very basis of Paul Douglas Grant's 2016 book *Cinéma Militant: Political Filmmaking and May 1968*, which repeatedly frames militant cinema's preoccupation with controlling the means of distribution against countercinema's investment in "theoretical" or "superstructural" critique. For Grant, militant cinema "took the approach (in a sense, more orthodox) that if the base was determinant in the last instance, then an attack on the social formation and control of production would perhaps be a more appropriate intervention than the more classically superstructural approach of the increasingly formalist *telquelians*."[23] Grant's assessment is consistent with both Rancière's and Assayas's understanding of the term insofar as he also understands militant aesthetics as something that came to an end by the mid-1970s, an ending he articulates with a symptomatic melancholy. In citing Rancière's *Nights of Labor*, Grant frames his book as a sort of love ballad to those figures that have been forgotten in the age of late capitalism: "the people, the poor, revolution, the factory, workers, the proletariat."[24]

If militant film came to an end by the mid-1970s, then what kind of cinema gained critical purchase in its place? Mariano Mestman and Masha Salazkina take up this transition in their recent study of the 1974 Rencontres Internationales pour un Nouveau Cinéma in Montreal, a key event in the history of militant cinema in which filmmakers, critics, and historians from around the world aimed to "strengthen ties among politically committed cinemas in the wake of the ruptures of 1968 in Europe as well as the emergence of Third Worldist filmmaking."[25] Mestman and Salazkina note that

the "militant model of cultural and imperialist critique," which Montreal '74 embodied, was to be "upstaged in contemporary critical discourse by various competing models of globalization, soft power, cultural hybridity, creolization, and transcendence."[26] Similarly, Rodowick concludes his *Crisis of Political Modernism* by examining the turn to *feminine* écriture, which took over the theory *and* practice of countercinema. Whereas the works of the Vertov and Medvedkin groups still took ultimate recourse in the metanarratives of communism, *feminine* écriture, for Rodowick "*has no metalanguage*, in fact, it is *antitheoretical*. . . . [T]he specificity of feminine language resides in its 'jamming of the machinery of theory' and its deconstruction of Aristotelian logic of syntax. Here the reference to Marxism is dropped."[27] Such accounts reflect a broader historical claim within film studies that the militant tradition, founded on a hardline anticapitalist and anti-imperialist politics, gave way to a politics of representation and identity.

On the one hand, it seems irrefutable that such a change of orientation took place within both film studies and radical film practice. This mutation was conditioned by broader currents in theory such as the rise of poststructuralism, black British cultural studies, and gender studies, all of which rejected the messianic destiny of the working class.[28] Moreover, in films such as Robert Kramer and John Douglas's *Milestones* (1975) and the broader work of European auteurs such as Godard and Chris Marker, it is evident how the militant model of film as an act of guerrilla warfare gave way to more meditative and melancholic reflections on the history of the Left, which largely anticipated the future directions of modes such as the essay film and sensory ethnography.[29] On the other hand, the current consensus position for the demise of militant cinema by the mid-1970s raises both historical questions of continuity and rupture and ontological questions about the nature of militancy itself. If one paradigm gave way to another or a series of others, then did this transition happen overnight? Or were there instances when the anticapitalism and anticolonialism of militant cinema fused with a nascent identity politics? And under what pretenses can a politics of representation be understood as a loss of militant values? After all, the melancholia associated with the end of militant cinema is accompanied by increasingly less subtle value judgments about the cinemas that took its place.[30]

The remainder of my essay returns to the period between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, the moment in the wake of militant cinema. My goal is to move beyond the reified definitions of the militant tradition, which tend toward the critique of parallel cinema's vulgar realism and political modernism's semiotic idealism.

Rather, I hope to recapture something of the period's dynamism, showing how these categories were in a constant struggle on both the theoretical stage and the aesthetic stage. My initial point of inquiry is what Chuck Kleinhans has recently identified as one of the period's key debates between Julianne Burton-Carvajal and Teshome Gabriel in the journal *Screen* on the history of militant third cinema, a debate whose "central issues still face useful reconsideration."[31] I focus on this debate in particular because it demonstrates how the critical deadlock between parallelism and political modernism implicates a broader global context, unfolding onto the dialectic between first-world theory and third-world practice and between class- and identity-based politics. For Burton-Carvajal, the category of third cinema was at best a heuristic abstraction, which obscured the diverse struggles within the Global South, and failed as a model of film practice because of its refusal to adopt the discourses of political modernism. For Gabriel, on the other hand, the abstract nature of third cinema was a positive condition of possibility, calling for the invention of global modes of solidarity through methodological experimentation and imagined unities. In situating Gabriel's understanding of militant cinema within a broader matrix of theory, I then emphasize one of the tradition's most undertheorized dimensions—the theme of psychic liberation—mobilizing Haile Gerima's film *Bush Mama* (1975) as a privileged example.

## Internationalism, Method, and the Psychoaffective Image

> Decolonizing the mind is not just the first step in an anti-imperialist struggle, but in the case of the 'internal colony' inhabited by a nonwhite underclass, it is perhaps the most radical gesture.
>
> —Allyson Field, Jan-Christopher Horak, and Jacqueline Najuma Stewart, "Emancipating the Image: The L.A. Rebellion of Black Filmmakers," in *L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema* (2015)

Across the range of recent discourse on militant cinema, the most consistent focus has been on the tradition's internationalism. This emphasis forms the core of Kodwo Eshun and Ros Gray's influential issue of *Third Text* on the militant image, which articulates the political aims of militant cinema in terms resembling the cartographic metaphors of postmodern and postcolonial theory.[32] For Eshun and Gray, militant cinema constructs a "'relational geography' in which objectivities and subjectivities that may at first appear antagonistic or isolated are brought into close proximity through a practice of

mapping that acknowledges its own partiality."[33] Likewise, studies of individual auteurs, such as Pere Portabella and Joris Ivens, and institutions, including the Cuban Institute of Film Art and Industry, have each underscored the transposition of militant concepts, arguments, and motifs across historical eras and national boundaries.[34] In retrospect, the internationalist impulse of militant film is indeed present in the Latin American manifestos on the 1960s and 1970s, from Solanas and Getino's call to establish a "Guerilla film international" to Fernando Birri's and Mario Handler's tendency to confer radicalism upon all aesthetic practices that took up the struggle against imperialism, regardless of geographical location.[35] The question of tricontinental unity was also a recurrent theme of international meetings and symposia, such as the Resolutions of the Third World Filmmakers Meeting in Algiers in 1973 and the aforementioned Rencontres Internationales pour un Nouveau Cinéma in 1974.[36] However, in the wake of militant cinema in the 1980s, this geopolitical openness was not always so evident. A recurrent argument for the demise of militant cinema as a subcategory of third cinema, for example, was its apparent adherence to a Fanonian ideology of tabula rasa nationalism, which would liberate "new man" from the petrifying stasis of Western capitalism.

This position was nowhere as apparent as in Burton-Carvajal's essay "Marginal Cinemas and Mainstream Critical Theory," a trenchant critique of the very concept of militant third cinema directed at Gabriel's contemporaneous book *Third Cinema in the Third World: The Aesthetics of Liberation.*[37] For Burton-Carvajal, the discourse of militant cinema, dating back to Julio García Espinosa's concept of "imperfect cinema," was beset by a "'mythical' vision of an internally consistent cultural practice across oceans and decades" and betrayed a nostalgic "desire to return to a state of pre-colonial innocence."[38] Burton-Carvajal, against film scholarship's present emphasis on militant cinema's globalism, argued that "Third World cinema has not been satisfactorily defined up until now" because "those who have made the attempt have regarded it as a geographically and ideologically circumscribed activity."[39] In its negation of the tools of political modernism—namely semiotic-ideological critique—Burton-Carvajal claimed that third cinema remained arrested within a liberal humanist worldview and a naive trust in the veracity of the image.[40] Gabriel in her writings perceived a symptomatic tendency to understand mediation as a Western problem, since only colonial cinema invests in practices of dissimulation and suture. Third cinema supposedly claims a privileged relationship to transparency by documenting the reality of social struggle in the third world. But this monolithic notion of the third world is

"a signifier without a signified, a term without a referent."[41] Third cinema occludes not only the internal frictions within the Global South—for example, in the term's rootedness in Perón's third way—but also the constitutive influence of Western culture on marginal film aesthetics.[42] For Burton-Carvajal, marginal cinemas are positioned in a reactive stance against the dominant culture, which sets the terms of the struggle through its forms of socioeconomic hegemony. She thus argues that third cinemas must embrace their global interdependence, working not to produce a pure indigenous aesthetic but instead to subvert cinema-as-spectacle through strategies of parody, negation, and substitution.[43]

In a response titled "Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," Gabriel subjects Burton-Carvajal's logic to a series of reversals that not only anticipate the globalism of contemporary scholarship on militant cinema but also suggest ways of thinking about the tradition beyond the idealist and positivist pitfalls of political modernism and parallelism, respectively.[44] Burton-Carvajal's model of the developed and underdeveloped worlds as being interlocked in a "hostile embrace," according to Gabriel, functions to screen a latent defense for the universalism of Western theory. By denigrating third-world filmmakers for their recalcitrance or plain obtuseness toward Lacanian and Althusserian models of mediation, Burton-Carvajal fails to adequately consider how these models are themselves saturated with Western bourgeois values, which may fail to comport with non-Western sign systems.[45] Their utility is accepted as given, and in this way Burton-Carvajal reproduces an outmoded core-periphery model of geopolitics in which the periphery is defined negatively against a monolithic notion of the core.[46] As Gabriel writes, "Just as 'socialism' is not only non-capitalism but 'Socialism,' so also is Third World cinema not only non-spectacle but Third World cinema. The 'otherness' is not only one of degree but also of kind."[47]

Despite her calls for a relational film politics, Burton-Carvajal's claim that proponents of cultural decolonization advocate for a return to a "pre-colonial innocence" demonstrates a strange disregard for anticolonial film and theory's key concepts.[48] If militant cinema has its own identity, then this identity is rooted in neither a simplistic faith in the documentary real nor a nostalgic desire for preconquest origins. Militant cinema is an orientation toward both space and time. First, the tradition's third worldism is not reducible to the third world: "the territory is not the map."[49] The aesthetics of liberation fuses a combative anticapitalism with anticolonialism, and Gabriel's understanding of these terms can be productively situated within theories of the world socialist system. At the conclusion

of *The Class Struggle in Africa*, for example, Kwame Nkrumah writes, "The struggle against imperialism takes place both within and outside the imperialist world. It is a struggle between socialism and capitalism, not between a so-called 'Third World' and imperialism. Class struggle is fundamental in its analysis."[50]

Second, militant film discourse is characterized by the recurrence of a prognostic desire to apprehend fragments of emancipation in the present and project them onto images of the future.[51] The very term "militant cinema" designates a *method* rather than a stable genre or mode. The term's history is one of ongoing attunement to the specificities of the anticapitalist and imperialist struggle, a struggle whose path is illuminated by walking the walk.[52] For García Espinosa, militant cinema is "a question which will discover its own answers in the course of its development," just as for the authors of the "Luz e Ação" (Light and Action) manifesto militancy necessitates "permanent invention, on all levels of creation."[53]

The question of method became increasingly complex throughout the 1970s as the machismo and vulgar economism of radical film discourse was challenged by the interventions of identity politics. In their remarkable discussion of *The Nightcleaners* (1975) in the year of its release, for example, Paul Willemen and Claire Johnston discerned a new kind of film, one that sat uneasily beside the avant-garde methods of Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen as well the activist politics of *Newsreel*.[54] By relating the work of representation, such as the intrusive close-up, to the representation of work, such as the night cleaners' gestures, the Berwick Street Film Collective represents itself as an embedded discourse within the labor struggle of the film. Rather than starting from the position of a predetermined metadiscourse, the film "proceeds by orchestrating a series of discourses in struggle: the real object of the film becomes the charting of the shifting relations between these discourses, each representing a political/ideological position within the social formation and caught up within its dynamic."[55] It is through the synthetic method of mapping the levels between discourses that the discourse of women's liberation evolves from a marginal problematic to the film's main oppositional force.[56]

While militant cinema tends to be associated, paradoxically, with both documentary realism and epistemological modernism, the tradition's commitments to international solidarity and methodological experimentation point to one of its most undertheorized dimensions: the realm of the psychoaffective. I borrow the term "psychoaffectivity" from Frantz Fanon, who used it to describe how the violence of colonialism and neocolonialism are symptomatized through "the body, dreams, psychic inversions and

displacements, phantasmic political identifications."[57] For Fanon, the psychoaffective describes a specific dynamic in which the colonized transform the embodied pressure of living under an unending state terror and the "myriad signs of colonialism" into scenes of imagined violence. But beyond its function as a site of fantasmic vengeance, the work of the psychoaffective is also the necessary precondition of political agency and liberation. Dreams, fantasy, and the imagination, for Fanon, were instrumental in the projection of a global public sphere. Since international solidarity is a utopian aspiration directed toward the future, its actualization, as Cynthia A. Young argues, must involve "multiple translations, substitutions, and the production of an imagined terrain able to close the gap between First and Third World subject."[58]

Militant cinema demonstrated an attentiveness toward the cause of psychic liberation throughout its history. Recall sequence 12 of *The Hour of the Furnaces* (1968), "Ideological Warfare," in which the narrators argue that "in Latin America, the war is waged principally in the minds of men [*sic*]. Ideological frontiers replace conventional ones. The means of mass communications replace conventional weapons. For neo-colonialism, mass communications are more effective than napalm."[59] In the 1970s and 1980s, with the increased displacement of peoples, money, and media, the question of psychic liberation was elevated to one of the tradition's primary occupations. In *Third Cinema in the Third World*, Gabriel defines "the decolonization of the mind" as third cinema's first and principal objective.[60] Following suit, Clyde Taylor argues that third cinema "is a mental state for which no one holds an official passport" and "an anti-propaganda movement for a mental reality free of the self-serving symbolism of the monopolist political machine."[61] And here we must return to Burton-Carvajal's attacks on third cinema for its failure to assimilate the discourse of political modernism. Burton-Carvajal fails to make her own position truly dialectical by questioning how "mainstream theory" could be transformed by the radicalisms of the Global South. How, for example, can the anticolonial critique of life under state terror be recalibrated to confront the combination of corporatized incarceration, police sadism, and institutional segregation faced by visible minorities in the developed world?

This was precisely the question confronted by filmmakers of the third-world Left, an orientation exemplified by the diverse body of artists who emerged from the University of California–Los Angeles film school (where Gabriel worked as a professor) and whom Taylor would later call the "L.A. Rebellion."[62] A film such as Haile Gerima's *Bush Mama* (1975), for example, represents a dissident

strand of the militant tradition, tethering its analysis of international solidarity to the problem of psychic liberation. Admittedly, *Bush Mama* may appear to be an unconventional choice within the context of a discussion about the history of militant cinema. The film seems too overdetermined by the legacies of neorealism and the art film to be subsumed within that particular tradition. Indeed, in an excellent essay on Pere Portabella's *Informe general* (1974), Jerry White singles out Gerima's work, which although political in its own way is not "recognizable as militant cinema" insofar as it is "more or less narrative" and has been consumed in a "Second Cinema way."[63] For White, legitimate militant cinema resists institutionalization through the risks it takes at the levels of both production and exhibition, while at the level of aesthetics militant cinema functions in pamphlet form, unfolding as a series of arguments rather than propelling a narrative forward. While I generally agree with White's characterization of the militant model, I suggest that there is a slight tension between his understanding of militancy as a function of a given film's extratextual circulation history and as something intrinsic to its formal operations. By the first criterion, Portabella as well as Solanas and Getino would no longer qualify as militant filmmakers insofar as their works have been co-opted by institutions ranging from the festival to the university and are thus regularly appreciated in a "Second Cinema way." It also seems strange to disqualify Gerima by this criterion, given that his films were made with great risk—one thinks of the arrest of the entire crew during the opening sequence of *Bush Mama*—and in close collaboration with the Watts community in Los Angeles.[64] Gerima explicitly identifies himself as a "Third World independent filmmaker" working in the militant tradition, so why might there be a hesitation to consider his work *as such*?[65] It is the second criterion, the aesthetic—that militant cinema unfolds as a series of arguments—that makes Gerima's work less recognizable within the militant model. In their emphasis on character psychology, his films seem to clash with both the documentary realism of parallel cinema and the antihumanist orientation of political modernism. However, if we accept that militancy is rooted in experimentation rather than being a definable set of aesthetic prescriptions and that the discourse of the psychoaffective has been one of the tradition's underlying problematics, then it is possible to discern how Gerima uses fictionalization toward the very aims suggested by White's article: to weave together a series of problems and to map their political dynamic within a particular social formation.

*Bush Mama* traces the political awakening of its protagonist, Dorothy, thrusting the spectator into the phenomenology of a

post–Richard Nixon, postriots Watts. Although structured as a fictional narrative, the film is a study in method, charting the relations that constitute the struggle for black liberation in segregated America. On one level, the film demonstrates how the police act as a repressive agent of state terror who kill people of color with both impunity and sadism; in a particularly harrowing scene, a man protesting outside of the local welfare office is shot by a cop at a distance and then again at point-blank range. At another level, *Bush Mama* underscores the administrative dimensions of racialized capitalism, juxtaposing images of violence with a soundtrack that assails the spectator with the routinized questions of welfare bureaucrats: "have you received or won cash gifts?"; "have you received income from a disability?" At another level still, the film entwines the discourses of class, race, and sex in its attentiveness to the colonization of the everyday by consumer society, from liquor stores to the proliferation of wig shops that promise the phony utopianism of postracial transcendence.

But the film's carceral mise-en-scène is progressively invaded by fragments of anticolonial discourse. Dorothy's lover, TC, returns politicized from Vietnam, recognizing capitalist domination as the common denominator between the helicopters that fly over Watts and those that fly over Hanoi. Dorothy's neighbor Angi regularly brings over protest posters, such as the images of a local man shot twelve times by the police and of an Angolan bush mama who signifies the "struggles of our people in Africa, and the Europeans who stole our land." For Audre Lorde, this very image functioned as a signifier of futurity, an image of black women expressing a combination of care, militancy, and self-determination in the face of overwhelming colonial violence. In an interview with Ilona Pache, Lorde described the militancy of the Angolan Bush Mama as one of the "images that make us feel less alone when we are journeying toward that thing that has not yet been."[66] And in *Sister Outsider*, Lorde further remarked that "the image of the Angolan woman with a baby on one arm and a gun in the other is neither romantic nor fanciful."[67] In Gerima's film, the anticolonial poster of the Angolan bush mama becomes associated with Dorothy's evolution as a thinker, since the film interlocks the two in an extended shot/reverse shot pattern, contracting on the heroine's eyes as she contemplates what this image means for her and her immediate surroundings. Dorothy's consciousness becomes the medium that synthesizes the various discourses in the film, the "glowing focal point" in Fanon's terms, "where citizen and individual develop and grow."[68] As Homi Bhabha writes, "The colonized, who are often devoid of a public voice, resort to dreaming, imagining, embedding

the reactive vocabulary of violence and retributive justice in their bodies, their psyches."[69] Given that the history of cinematic representation has consistently reduced people of color to their brute indexical presence, making the body the sum total of subjectivity itself, one of Gerima's most militant gestures is to engender these dreams of militancy with substance.[70]

In keeping with other films by the L.A. Rebellion, including Bernard Nicolas's *Daydream Therapy* (1977) and Larry Clark's *Passing Through* (1977), *Bush Mama* explores the protagonist's fantasy of breaking physically free from the strictures of colonial society. The film actualizes what Fanon referred to as "muscular dreams, dreams of action, dreams of aggressive vitality."[71] When a welfare officer makes incursions into Dorothy's reproductive rights by coercing her to have an abortion, Dorothy dreams of killing her with a liquor bottle. Gerima initially withholds any formal markers that would code Dorothy's fantasies *as such* and thus gives her dreams the same phenomenological weight as all of the film's images. Dorothy's dreams of aggressive vitality are a function of the systemic and not always visible collusion between the state and capital, and as she becomes radicalized, her consciousness makes associative connections between the two. What ultimately dissuades her from having an abortion is the memory of the poster of the local man shot to death by police. Similarly, when Dorothy is herself beaten by the police, the soundtrack invokes the voices of the welfare bureaucrats first heard on the film. Such episodes anticipate her concluding speech when, following her vengeance against the cop who raped her daughter and preceding a potential lifetime of incarceration, she speaks against a prison-industrial complex owned by money.

While *Bush Mama* invokes racialized capitalism and anticolonialism as competing systems of representation, its investment in Dorothy's subjectivity would seem to betray the liberal humanist ideology critiqued by Burton-Carvajal in her attack on third cinema. However, Gerima's treatment of the theme of psychic liberation works to affirm Bhabha's claim that the psychoaffective realm "is neither subjective nor objective, but a place of social and psychic mediation."[72] Consider the key scene in which Angi reads Dorothy a letter from an incarcerated TC. What begins as an intimate intersubjective exchange dilates to reach the social space of the prison. As TC meditates on the relationship between jailers and colonial overseers, Gerima frames him in direct frontal address and then tracks across the hall's prison cells to situate his oration in the context of the other prisoners' suffering, while cutting back to Dorothy who is also framed against the bars of her apartment window. Here,

as throughout the film, militancy is inseparable from the socialization of thought and the ways in which, after Édouard Glissant, the psychoaffective "spaces itself out into the world."[73] Far from a retreat into idealism, the psychoaffective is that which informs "the imaginaries of peoples, their varied poetics, which it then transforms, meaning, in them its risk becomes realized."

## Conclusion

Militant cinema may appear as a lost object through the nostalgic lens of white male workerism, but that position underscores the need to historicize a more formally expansive and politically inclusive definition of the tradition. In the case of my example of the third-world Left, there remains a great deal of research to be done on both filmmakers and film collectives who mobilized militant cinema's guerrilla tactics and fundamental anticapitalist and anti-imperialist orientation to promote solidarity with indigenous self-determination movements in North America, advance the critique of gendered violence in both the West and the Global South, and cultivate forms of solidarity across divisions of class, race, and sex. This work might include, but is certainly not limited to, Carole Roussopoulos's and Vidéo Out's vanguard use of video to promote the causes of both sex workers and the LGTBQ community in Europe and of Palestinian liberation; Édouard de Laurot's collaboration with the Black Panthers and Malcolm X to formulate a series of pamphlet attacks against America's "internal colonization" of the black underclass; René Vautier's career-long investment in weaving together the discrete yet overlapping legacies of anticolonialism, socialism, feminism, and environmentalism; the commitment by Reelfeelings, Amelia Productions, and Emma Productions to women's industrial militancy and indigenous sovereignty in Canada and to exposing women's working conditions in Central America; Lizzie Borden's framing of black queer women's resistance within the global contexts of anticapitalism and anticolonialism; and Med Hondo's prototypical work on what T. J. Demos has called "the migrant image."[74] By circumventing the now-familiar narrative of militant cinema, which emphasizes its failures and ultimate irrelevance to the politics of our present condition, film studies will be able to discern new and robust connections across the genealogy of radical cinema. This project seems particularly germane at a moment, when some of the most vanguard work occurring across political film and media has explicitly taken up the challenge of the militant image, from Hito Steyerl's attempts

to rethink Espinosa's "imperfect cinema" in the digital context of the "poor image" and Basma Alsharif's psychoaffective rendering of occupied Palestine as a means to exemplify "small pockets of the world where people are finding ways to exist that are redefining civilization" to the Otolith Group's use of opacity to evade both the ethnographic gaze and the profiling tactics of state terror and surveillance capitalism.[75] At a broader political level, the nascent intersectionality that characterized the evolution of militant cinema should remind us that the current tensions surrounding the politics of class and identity have a rich representational history and also challenge us to revitalize expressions of solidarity that envisioned the complexity of the future.

## Notes

1. Nicole Brenez, "Édouard de Laurot: Engagement as Prolepsis," *Third Text* 25, no. 1 (January 2011): 61; Jim Pines, "Notes of Political Cinema," *Cinema Rising*, no. 1 (April 1972): 25.

2. Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Scott MacKenzie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 244.

3. Carlos Alvarez, "For Columbia 1971: Militancy and Cinema," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 258–64.

4. Trevor Stark, "'Cinema in the Hands of the People': Chris Marker, the Medvedkin Group, and the Potential of Militant Film," *October* 138 (Winter 2012): 117–50.

5. Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema," 244, 248.

6. Writing on behalf of *New York Newsreel* in the late 1960s, Robert Kramer argued, "We want to make films that unnerve, that shake assumptions, that threaten, that do not soft-sell, but hopefully (an impossible ideal) explode like grenades in peoples' faces, or open minds up like a good can opener." Quoted in Simon Hartog, "Nowsreel or the Potentialities of a Political Cinema," *Afterimage* 1 (1970): n.p.

7. David Norman Rodowick, *The Crisis of Political Modernism: Criticism and Ideology in Contemporary Film Criticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 12.

8. Fredric Jameson, "Periodizing the Sixties," in *The Sixties without Apology*, ed. Sohnya Sayres et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 178–209.

9. Matthew Croombs, "Pasts and Futures of 1970s Film Theory," *Scope: An Online Journal of Film and Television Studies* 20 (June 2011): 1–18.

10. Thomas Waugh, *Show Us Life: Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary,* ed. Thomas Waugh (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1984), 168; Guy Hennebelle, "French Radical Documentary after May 1968," in *Show Us Life*, 168–91.

11. Hennebelle, "French Radical Documentary after May 1968," 170–71.

12. Ibid., 170.

13. Ibid.

14. Jacques Rancière, *The Intervals of Cinema*, trans. John Howe (London: Verso, 2014), 104.

15. Ibid., 105.

16. Gianni Amelio, et al., "The Prospects for Political Cinema Today: A Critical Symposium Featuring Commentary by Gianni Amelio, Olivier Assayas, Costa-Gavras, John Gianvito, Amos Gitai, Robert Greenwald, Rajko Grlic, Robert Guédeguian, John Hughes, Pere Portabella, Sally Potter, Kelly Reichardt, John Sayles, and Travis Wilkerson," *Cineaste* 37, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 6.

17. Ibid., 8.

18. Rancière, *The Intervals of Cinema*, 105 (my emphasis).

19. The French militant cinemas of the 1960s, for instance, were catalyzed by the state's rigid censorship of content relating to the Algerian War and equally by the failures of the Left, be they the inactivity of the Parti communiste français, the timid political overtures evident in the films of the Left Bank Group, or the escalating criminality of colonial governance. In making clandestine high-risk films with the Front de Libération Nationale that showed how the counterinsurgency was a direct threat to dissent within France, directors such as René Vautier and Jacques Panijel anticipated the extrainstitutional distribution and hard-line anticapitalist and anticolonialist thought of the film collectives that emerged in and around May 1968. See Filmmakers of *J'ai Huit Ans*, "Manifeste pour un cinéma parallèle," *Positif* 46 (June 1962): 18; René Vautier, *Caméra citoyenne*: *Mémoires* (Paris: Éditions Apogée, 1998); Jean-Philippe Renouard and Isabelle Saint-Saëns, «Festivals d'un film maudit: entretien avec Jacques Panijel,» *Vacarme* 13 (September 2000), http://www.vacarme.org/article221.html.

20. As I will discuss in the following section, "third cinema" is generally understood in terms similar to "parallel cinema" because of its emphases on extrainstitutional exhibition and on cultural decolonization in the service of and revolutionary *action*. As Solanas and Getino write in "Militant Cinema," "the animators of a cinema of militants do not seek only to work on cultural decolonization, or the recuperation of a national culture, but are proposing a *revolutionary politics* through their militant activity (and here they see their work above all as political-cinematic) that leads to the destruction of neo-colonialism, to the national liberation of our countries and the national construction of Socialism." Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino, "Militant Cinema: An Internal Category of Third Cinema," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 257.

21. The authors argue that parallel cinema is founded on "setting up a false front, a 'neo-system' alongside the system from which one is attempting to escape, in the fond belief that it will be able to negate the system. In fact all it can do is reject it (idealist purism) and consequently it is very soon jeopardized by the enemy upon which it modelled itself. This 'parallelism' works from one direction only." See Jean-Luc Comolli and Paul Narboni, "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism," trans. Susan Bennett, *Screen* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 27–36.

22. As David Rodowick has shown, this "polysemy" of interpretation was often subtended by the assumption that the spectator would read *with* the Marxist grain of the film, prompting his critique that "rather than a difficulty in reading, which is supposed to encourage a productive and active semiosis in the spectator, is it not the case that what is asserted in place of a mimetic theory of representation is in

fact a 'negative' identity theory where contradictions produced 'semiotically' within the modernist text are said to be reproduced as 'gaps and fissures' in the spectator's consciousness?" See Rodowick, *The Crisis of Political Modernism*, 60.

23. Paul Douglas Grant, *Cinéma Militant: Political Filmmaking and May 1968* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 173. Grant focuses on the work of Jean-Pierre Thorn and collectives, including Atelier de recherche cinématographique, Cinélutte, Les groups Medvedkine, and Cinéthique. His book skillfully illustrates how French militant cinema's desire to directly contribute to the overthrow of capitalism was eventually deflated. For example, whereas Thorn's *Oser lutter, oser vaincre* (1968) concludes with a rousing montage of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, and Mao Zedong that is punctuated with the caption "WE WILL WIN," the director's later films, such as *La grève des ouvriers de Margoline* (1973) and *Le dos au mur* (1980), work toward the modest and situated objectives of increasing factory workers' wages and providing undocumented migrants with winter coats. However, key figures such as René Vautier and Carole Roussopoulos are not included in this particular history of militant filmmaking in post-1968 France.

24. Ibid., 5; Jacques Rancière, *The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France*, trans. John Drury (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

25. Mariano Mestman and Masha Salazkina, "Introduction: Estates General of Third Cinema, Montreal '74," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 4.

26. Ibid., 11.

27. Rodowick, *The Crisis of Political Modernism*, 249.

28. See Jane Gaines, "White Privilege and Looking Relations: Race and Gender in Feminist Film Theory," *Cultural Critique* 4 (Autumn 1986): 59–79; Charlotte Brunsdon, "Feminism, Postfeminism, Martha, Martha, and Nigella," *Cinema Journal* 44, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 110–16; Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

29. In her discussion of Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1983), Catherine Russell argues, "Marker's melancholia is in many ways directed at the loss of a militant avant-garde, the disintegration of a guerilla cinema of the 1960s when the camera could be considered a weapon in revolutionary independence movements. The discursive structures of experimental ethnography, so evidently displayed in *Sans Soleil*, lend themselves to a different interventionist role that operates on the level of *a politics of* representation." See Catherine Russell, *Experimental Ethnography: The Work of Film in the Age of Video* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 303 (my emphasis).

30. Consider Adam Curtis's recent documentary *Hypernormalisation* (2016), which highlights Martha Rosler's 1975 *Semiotics of the Kitchen* as symptomatic of the Left's broader aesthetic retreat from class-based politics into detached, individualistic self-expression.

31. Chuck Kleinhans, "Threads and Nets: The L.A. Rebellion in Retrospect and Motion," in *L.A. Rebellion: Creating a New Black Cinema*, ed. Allyson Field, Jan-Christopher Horak, and Jacqueline Najuma Stewart (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 67.

32. Kodwo Eshun and Ros Gray, "The Militant Image: A Ciné-Geography: Editors' Introduction," *Third Text* 25, no. 1 (January 2011): 1–12. For Fredric Jameson, for example, "The political form of postmodernism, if there ever is any, will have as its vocation the invention and projection of a global cognitive mapping, on a social as

well as spatial scale." See Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 54. See also Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Theory, Culture & Society* 7, nos. 2–3 (June 1990): 295–310.

33. Eshun and Gray, "The Militant Image," 2.

34. Jerry White, "*Informe general* and the Missing Link of Third Cinema," *Screen* 54, no. 3 (September 2013): 305–21; Thomas Waugh, *The Conscience of Cinema* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017); Masha Salazkina, "Moscow-Rome-Havana: A Film-Theory Road Map," *October* 139 (Winter 2012): 97–116; Ros Gray, "Haven't You Heard of Internationalism? The Socialist Friendships of Mozambican Cinema," in *Postcommunist Film—Russia, Eastern Europe and World Culture: Moving Images of Postcommunism*, ed. Lars Lyngsgaard and Fjord Kristensen, 53–74 (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2013); Christina Gerhardt and Sara Saljoughi, eds., *1968 and Global Cinema* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2018).

35. Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino ask, "A *Guerrilla Films International?* And why not? Isn't it true that a kind of new International is arising through the Third World struggles; through OSPAAAL and the revolutionary vanguards of the consumer societies?" See Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema," 247. Argentine filmmaker Fernando Birri calls for a cinema that is "anti-oligarchic and anti-bourgeois at the national level, and anti-colonial and anti-imperialist at the international level." See Fernando Birri, "Cinema and Underdevelopment," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 211. Uruguayan filmmaker Mario Handler argues, "As so we have to turn to outside the country and acquire a foreign public. For reasons of our own conscience, the public we are addressing is the Latin American public; they are the ones who matter to us. After the Latin Americans, the people of the Third World in general and, after that, any militant public of the developed countries." See Mario Handler, "Consciousness of a Need," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 255.

36. See Fernando Birri et al., "Resolutions of the Third World Filmmakers Meeting," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 275–84; Mestman and Salazkina. "Introduction," 4–17.

37. Julianne Burton-Carvajal, "Marginal Cinemas and Mainstream Critical Theory," *Screen* 26, nos. 3–4 (May–August 1985): 2–21; Teshome Habte Gabriel, *Third Cinema in the Third World: The Aesthetics of Liberation* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982). See also Teshome Habte Gabriel, "Towards a Critical Theory of Third World films," *Critical Interventions* 5, no. 1 (2014): 187–203.

38. Burton-Carvajal, "Marginal Cinemas and Mainstream Critical Theory," 6, 9.

39. Ibid., 10.

40. Ibid., 5.

41. Ibid., 11.

42. Ibid., 7.

43. Ibid., 13.

44. Teshome H. Gabriel, "Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," *Screen* 27, nos. 3–4 (May–August 1986): 140–48. For an additional critique of Burton-Carvajal's essay, see Scott Cooper, "The Study of Third Cinema in the United States: A Reaffirmation," in *Questions of Third Cinema*, ed. Jim Pines and Paul Willemen (London: BFI, 1989), 218–22.

45. In a passage informed by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's writings on the decolonization of the mind, Gabriel writes: "The question is whether the categories that inform Western semiotics are fully relevant to the analysis of non-Western sign systems. Western semiotics has presumed that its categories can travel across cultures and languages. But language is saturated with the values of its own culture. To think in a language other than one's own is to experience a peculiar form of alienation—a kind of self-exile." Gabriel, "Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," 143. For Ngũgĩ, "Culture is almost indistinguishable from the language that makes possible its genesis, growth, banking, articulation and indeed its transmission from one generation to the next." Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Nairobi: East African Publishers, 1994), 15.

46. Gabriel, "Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," 140.

47. Ibid., 141.

48. Gabriel writes, "For instance, Burton sets up proponents of 'cultural decolonisation' in the Third World as though their only desire is a return to 'pre-colonial innocence.' This, of course, denies them any awareness of their history" ("Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," 141). Along these lines, recall Frantz Fanon's strong rejection of a return to precolonial ritual in *The Wretched of the Earth*: "During the struggle for liberation there is a singular loss of interest in these rituals. With his back to the wall, the knife at his throat, or to be more exact the electrode to his genitals, the colonized is bound to stop telling stories." See Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth,* trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove, 2004), 20.

49. Gabriel, "Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," 141. Similarly, as Paul Willemen notes, "although Third Cinema is discussed in relation to Latin America, the authors of the manifestos see it as an attitude applicable anywhere." See Paul Willemen, "The Third Cinema Question: Notes and Reflections," *Framework* 34 (January 1987): 14.

50. Kwame Nkrumah, *Class Struggle in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 1970), 83.

51. In her discussion of the third-worldist filmmaker Edouard de Laurot, Nicole Brenez describes how militant film aspires "not only to record and follow political and social conflicts, but also to analyse situations in order to reveal that which, in the present, could sow the seeds for another future." See Brenez, "Edouard de Laurot," 57. In pointing toward the psychoaffective dimensions of militant film that I will discuss below, de Laurot writes, "Propositions of the spirit, and a truly revolutionary view of the world, are much more concrete than the actual material exemplifications of them." See Yves [Edouard] de Laurot, "Composing as the Praxis of Revolution: The Third World and the USA; The Concrete Stages of Realisation: Part 2," *Third Text* 25, no. 1 (January 2011): 68. For his part, Gabriel concludes his polemic against Burton-Carvajal by citing the utopian thought of Herbert Marcuse, noting that "in the theoretical reconstruction of the social process, the critique of current conditions and the analysis of their tendencies necessarily include future-oriented components." See Gabriel, "Colonialism and 'Law and Order' Criticism," 146.

52. In writing of Gabriel's *Third Cinema in the Third World: The Aesthetics of Liberation*, Michael Chanan notes that "the idea of third cinema is not a set of discrete products but a *process of becoming*." See Michael Chanan, "The Changing Geography of Third Cinema," *Screen* 38, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 382. For Solanas, "It is the way the world is conceptualized and not the genre nor the explicitly political character of a film which makes it belong to Third Cinema. . . . Third Cinema is an open category, unfinished, incomplete." Quoted in Willemen, "The Third Cinema Question," 14.

53. Julio García Espinosa, "For an Imperfect Cinema," trans. Julianne Burton, *Jump Cut* 20 (May 1979): 24–26; Carlos Diegues et al., "The Luz e Ação Manifesto," in *Film Manifestos and Global Cinema Cultures*, 285.

54. For Willemen, *Penthesilea* (1974) "deals with theoretical problems of cinematic construction and the ideology of patriarchy. *The Nightcleaners* does raise theoretical issues when compared with the dominant mode of making political films today, but it is not primarily concerned with those issues. The problem is whether a primarily political film of this type can proceed on these, for want of a better word, avant-garde notions of cinematic construction. I think it's an absolute necessity that it be tried, because at present I do not see any other form within British political film-making that counters the ideology of immediacy and transparency which is central to the notion of a coherent working class ideology, i.e. to workerism." See Claire Johnston and Paul Willemen, "Brecht in Britain: The Independent Political Film (on *The Nightcleaners*)," *Screen* 16, no. 4 (December 1975): 115.

55. Ibid., "Brecht in Britain," 107.

56. Ibid., 108.

57. Homi K. Bhabha, "Foreword: Framing Fanon," in Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, xix.

58. Cynthia A. Young, *Soul Power: Culture, Radicalism, and the Making of a US Third World Left* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 4. For a discussion of the psychoaffective in Japanese political cinema, see, Mika Ko, "'Neo-Documentarism' in *Funeral Parade of Roses:* The New Realism of Matsumoto Toshio," *Screen* 52, no. 3 (2011): 376–90.

59. This last line is reiterated in Solanas and Getino, "Towards a Third Cinema," 235.

60. Gabriel, *Third Cinema in the Third World*, 4.

61. Clyde Taylor, "One Struggle, Many Fronts," *Jump Cut* 23 (October 1980): 10–11.

62. See Clyde Taylor, "Preface: "Once upon a Time in the West . . . L.A. Rebellion," in *L.A. Rebellion*, ix–xxiv; Jan-Christopher Horak, "Tough Enough: Blaxploitation and the L.A. Rebellion," in *L.A. Rebellion*, 119–55.

63. White, "*Informe general* and the Missing Link of Third Cinema," 310.

64. For Gerima, cinema "must be umbilically linked to the community from which it comes." Quoted in Amy Abugo Ongiri, "Charles Burnett: A Reconsideration of Third Cinema," *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 21 (Fall 2007): 83.

65. Gerima has said, "To me, being Black is inherent. I would say that I'm an Ethiopian filmmaker, residing for many historical reasons here in the United States. I would say, really, that I'm a Third World independent filmmaker. . . . For some filmmakers 'independence' is a kind of waiting room to the industry, or a sign of rejection from the established order. In my case, and with many others, independence is a declaration. We believe that the existing system fails to respond to our cultural needs. And it is a militant position in saying that this society fails to respond to my kind and my people and myself." Quoted in Tony Safford and William Triplett, "Haile Gerima: Radical Departures to a New Black Cinema," *Journal of the University Film and Video Association* 35, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 60–61.

66. Audre Lorde, *Conversations with Audre Lorde*, ed. Joan Wylie Hall (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 68.

67. Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (New York: Crossing, 2012), 46.

68. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 40. As Jan-Christopher Horak argues, "Gerima's film creates a cacophony of sounds and images that defy easy insertion into a unified narrative, where reality and Dorothy's daydreams are inextricably intertwined. Synchronous sound scenes of Dorothy in dialogue with her friends and acquaintances are mixed with flashbacks, flash-forwards, dream sequences, and newsreel montages, as well as nonsynchronous loops of dialogue from the welfare office, police sirens, radio sermons, and political speeches, the latter functioning less as narrative content than as a never-ending soundscape of oppression." See Horak, "Tough Enough," 138.

69. Bhabha, "Foreword," xx.

70. See Morgan Woolsey, "Re/soundings: Music and the Political Goals of the L.A. Rebellion," in *L.A. Rebellion*, 251–90.

71. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 15.

72. Bhabha, "Foreword," xix.

73. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 1.

74. Stéphanie Jeanjean, "Disobedient Video in France in the 1970s: Video Production by Women's Collectives," *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and Enquiry* 27 (Summer 2011): 5–16; Hélène Fleckinger, "Entretien avec Carole Roussopoulos," *Nouvelles questions féministes* 38, no. 1 (2009): 105–6; de Laurot, "Composing as the Praxis of Revolution," 67–91; Marc Kravetz, "Entretien avec René Vautier," *Positif* 50 (March 1963): 43–50; Nicole Brenez and Bernard Benoliel, "Un entretien avec René Vautier," *Cahiers du cinéma* 561 (October 2001): 14–19; Marusya Bociurkiw, "Big Affect: The Ephemeral Archive of Second-Wave Feminist Video Collectives in Canada," *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies* 31, no. 3 (2016): 5–33; Stephen Dillon, "'It's Here, It's That Time:' Race, Queer Futurity, and the Temporality of Violence in *Born in Flames*," *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 23, no. 1 (2013): 38–51; Med Hondo, "What Is the Cinema for Us?," *Framework* 11 (1979): 20; T. J. Demos, *The Migrant Image: The Art and Politics of Documentary during Global Crisis* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

75. Hito Steyerl, "In Defense of the Poor Image," *e-flux journal* 10 (November 2009), https://www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/; Aily Nash, "Basma Alsharif: Working with, and through, Conflict," BOMB, March 12, 2015, http://bombmagazine.org/article/5922223/basma-alsharif; Demos, *The Migrant Image*, 144–68.