

1.) DATE: 10/4/13		2.) COMMUNITY COLLEGE: Maricopa Co. Comm. College District			
3.) COURSE PROPOSED: Prefix: SPH Number: 241 Title: Spanish and Latin American Film in Translation Credits: 3					
CROSS LISTED WITH: Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ;					
Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ; Prefix: Number: ;					
4.) COMMUNITY COLLEGE INITIATOR: ANTONIO CARDENAS				PHONE: 480-461-7039	
FAX: 480-461-7458					
ELIGIBILITY: Courses must have a current Course Equivalency Guide (CEG) evaluation. Courses evaluated as NT (non-transferable) are not eligible for the General Studies Program.					
MANDATORY REVIEW: <input type="checkbox"/> The above specified course is undergoing Mandatory Review for the following Core or Awareness Area (only one area is permitted; if a course meets more than one Core or Awareness Area, please submit a separate Mandatory Review Cover Form for each Area). POLICY: The General Studies Council (GSC-T) Policies and Procedures requires the review of previously approved community college courses every five years, to verify that they continue to meet the requirements of Core or Awareness Areas already assigned to these courses. This review is also necessary as the General Studies program evolves.					
AREA(S) PROPOSED COURSE WILL SERVE: A course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. Although a course may satisfy a core area requirement and an awareness area requirement concurrently, a course may not be used to satisfy requirements in two core or awareness areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirements and the major program of study.					
5.) PLEASE SELECT EITHER A CORE AREA OR AN AWARENESS AREA: <u>Core Areas:</u> Select core area... <u>Awareness Areas:</u> Global Awareness (G)					
6.) On a separate sheet, please provide a description of how the course meets the specific criteria in the area for which the course is being proposed.					
7.) DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Description <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course Syllabus <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Criteria Checklist for the area <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Table of Contents from the textbook required and/or list of required readings/books <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of how course meets criteria as stated in item 6.					
8.) THIS COURSE CURRENTLY TRANSFERS TO ASU AS: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DECTCL, FMS prefix <input type="checkbox"/> Elective					
Current General Studies designation(s):					
Effective date: 2014 Spring Course Equivalency Guide					
Is this a multi-section course? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
Is it governed by a common syllabus? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
Chair/Director: STEVE BUDGE				Chair/Director Signature: Submitted to J. Holston	

AGSC Action: Date action taken: Approved Disapproved

Effective Date:

Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for

GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]

Rationale and Objectives

Human organizations and relationships have evolved from being family and village centered to modern global interdependence. The greatest challenge in the nuclear age is developing and maintaining a global perspective which fosters international cooperation. While the modern world is comprised of politically independent states, people must transcend nationalism and recognize the significant interdependence among peoples of the world. The exposure of students to different cultural systems provides the background of thought necessary to developing a global perspective.

Cultural learning is present in many disciplines. Exposure to perspectives on art, business, engineering, music, and the natural and social sciences that lead to an understanding of the contemporary world supports the view that intercultural interaction has become a daily necessity. The complexity of American society forces people to balance regional and national goals with global concerns. Many of the most serious problems are world issues and require solutions which exhibit mutuality and reciprocity. No longer are hunger, ecology, health care delivery, language planning, information exchanges, economic and social developments, law, technology transfer, philosophy, and the arts solely national concerns; they affect all the people of the world. Survival may be dependent on the ability to generate global solutions to some of the most pressing problems.

The word university, from universitas, implies that knowledge comes from many sources and is not restricted to local, regional, or national perspectives. The Global Awareness Area recognizes the need for an understanding of the values, elements, and social processes of cultures other than the culture of the United States. Learning which recognizes the nature of others cultures and the relationship of America's cultural system to generic human goals and welfare will help create the multicultural and global perspective necessary for effective interaction in the human community.

Courses which meet the requirement in global awareness are of one or more of the following types: (1) in-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region of the world, country, or culture group, (2) the study of contemporary non-English language courses that have a significant cultural component, (3) comparative cultural studies with an emphasis on non-U.S. areas, and (4) in-depth studies of non-U.S. centered cultural interrelationships of global scope such as the global interdependence produced by problems of world ecology, multinational corporations, migration, and the threat of nuclear war.

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

ASU--[G] CRITERIA			
GLOBAL AWARENESS [G]			
YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Studies must be composed of subject matter that addresses or leads to an understanding of the contemporary world outside the U.S.	Course Description, Competencies, & Outline; Syllabus; Class Schedule; Film Summaries
		2. The course must match at least one of the following descriptions: (check all which may apply):	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. In-depth area studies which are concerned with an examination of culture-specific elements of a region, country or culture group. The area or culture studied must be non-U.S. and the study must contribute to an understanding of the contemporary world.	Course Competencies & Outline; Syllabus; Class Schedule; Film Summaries
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. The course is a language course for a contemporary non-English language, and has a significant cultural component.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. The course is a comparative cultural study in which most, i.e., more than half, of the material is devoted to non-U.S. areas.	Course Competencies & Outline; Syllabus; Class Schedule; Film Summaries
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. The course is a study of the cultural significance of a non-U.S.-centered global issue. The course examines the role of its target issue within each culture and the interrelatedness of various global cultures on that issue. It looks at the cultural significance of its issue in various cultures outside the U.S., both examining the issue's place within each culture and the effects of that issue on world cultures."	

Page 3 of 4

Course Prefix	Number	Title	Designation
SPH	241	Spanish and Latin American Film in Translation	Global Awareness (G)

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the specific designation criteria.

Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checksheet)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
I. Studies must be composed of subject matter that addresses or leads to an understanding of the contemporary world outside the U.S.	As stated in the course description, this course is a survey of Spanish and Spanish American film as art form and social commentary. The course examines film content as cultural production from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries.	<p>Course Competencies: All six competencies focus on subject matter that leads to an understanding of the contemporary Spanish-speaking world outside the U.S.</p> <p>Course Outline: All four sections of the outline focus on subject matter that leads to an understanding of the contemporary Spanish-speaking world outside the U.S.</p> <p>Syllabus: The course requirements (oral presentations, participation activities and essay) were designed to ensure that students learn the content specified in the course competencies and outline.</p> <p>Class Schedule: The emphasis in each week is on subject matter (topics) that leads to a better understanding of the Spanish-speaking world in Spain and Spanish America.</p> <p>Film summaries: *<i>Pan's Labyrinth</i>. This film takes place during the Spanish Civil War. *<i>All About My Mother</i>. This film focuses on contemporary Spanish social issues. *<i>Babel</i>. This contemporary Mexican film takes place in four different nations, including Mexico. *<i>Captain Pantoja and the Special Services</i>. This Peruvian film deals with the sexual-social behavior and living conditions of a soldier in the Peruvian Amazon. *<i>Talk to Her</i>. This contemporary</p>

		<p>film deals with the social issues in Spain. <i>*Under the Same Moon.</i> This Mexican film deals with the separation of families. <i>*Viento negro.</i> This Mexican film takes place in Mexico during the building of the railroad in Sonora.</p>
<p>2.c. The course is a comparative cultural study in which most, (i.e. more than half), of the material is devoted to non-U.S. areas.</p>	<p>This course focuses on the cultures of a variety of regions and countries in Spanish American and Spain through film. A variety of cultural themes, including social values and norms, socio-economical issues, and social behaviors in the modern Spanish-speaking world are examined.</p>	<p>Course Competencies/Outline: Again, all six competencies and all five sections of the outline provide ample evidence that the requirements of this criterion are met. Syllabus; Course Schedule; Films: In order to perform well on the oral presentations, participation activities and essays, students must think deeply and critically about what they are learning from viewing the films and class discussions. The discussions, essay and oral presentations required in this course (described in the Syllabus and Course Schedule) require students to conduct in-depth inquiries into the cultural and social heritage the Spanish-speaking world outside the U.S.</p>

SPH241 General Studies Proposal (G)

As stated in the course description, this course is a survey of Spanish and Spanish American film as art form and social commentary. The course examines film content as cultural production from a variety of Spanish-speaking countries. This course focuses on the cultures of the various regions and countries in Spanish America and Spain through film. A variety of cultural themes, including social values and norms, socio-economical issues, and social behaviors in the modern Spanish-speaking world are examined. All six competencies and the course outline focus on subject matter that leads to an understanding of the contemporary Spanish-speaking world outside the U.S. The discussions, essay and oral presentations required in this course (described in the Syllabus and Course Schedule) require students to conduct in-depth inquiries into the cultural and social heritage the Spanish-speaking world outside the U.S.

NEW-Course Proposal
Maricopa Community College District
SPH 241 Spanish and Latin American Film in Translation

Originator: Jan Rohloff **Status:** In Process
Department: Mesa Community College

Date Created: 01/22/2013 **Submitted:** 02/15/2013
Completed:

Faculty Initiator: Antonio Cardenas

DCC Online Agenda Date: March 25-28, 2013

MCCCD Governing Board Approval Date: April 23, 2013

Vice President of Academic Affairs Approval: Jim Mabry

Instructional Council(s) Receiving Proposal: Language (29)

Instructional Council Recommendation(s): Approved

Need Statement: Creation of this course would open this important area of study to students whose command of Spanish is insufficient to do all of the coursework in Spanish. Spanish language film is an integral component of US and global culture, and making its study accessible to Maricopa students is an essential part of internationalizing the curriculum.

Course Subject: SPH
Course Number/Suffix: 241

Cross-Referenced Course(s):

100 Character Title: Spanish and Latin American Film in Translation
30 Character Title: Span/Latin-Film in Translation

Effective Term: Summer I
Effective Year: 2013
Course Type: Academic
Load Formula: S- Standard

Activity Type: Lecture

Credits: 3

Periods: 3

Load: 3

Activity Type (2):

Credits (2):

Periods (2):

Load (2):

**Allow Repeat for
Credit:** No

**Number of Repeats
Allowed:**

**Total Repeat Credits
Allowed:**

Description: A survey of Spanish and Spanish-American film as art form and as social commentary. Includes documentary, biography, and films based on works of literature. Coursework, class participation, and oral and written reports conducted in English.

Requisites: Prerequisites: None.

Course Notes:

**Common
Competency** No
Course:

**Proposed
Equivalency:**

**Proposed NAU
Equivalency:**

**Proposed U of A
Equivalency:**

**Articulation
Information:**

**Justification-Do Not
Articulate:**

**Modularization -
Parent/Child
Relationship:**

Add Parent Course:

Competencies: 1. Critique Spanish film within the era of art control and

1. censorship from 1936 to 1975. (I)
2. Critique Spanish film within the era of liberation and license from 1975 to the present. (I)
3. Identify important Spanish directors, and analyze their major contributions. (I)
4. Critique film from South America, the Caribbean, Central America or Mexico. (II, III, IV)
5. Identify important film directors from the various Spanish speaking countries, and analyze their major contributions to the art of filmmaking, including their social impact. (I, II, III, IV)
6. Analyze and critique Spanish and/or Spanish-American film by applying conventional aesthetic criteria. (I, II, III, IV)

- Outline:**
- I. Spanish Cinema
 - A. Cultural Context
 - B. History of Filmmaking
 - C. Influential Filmmakers
 - II. South American Cinema
 - A. Cultural Context
 - B. History of Filmmaking
 - C. Influential Filmmakers
 - III. Caribbean and Central American Cinema
 - A. Cultural Context
 - B. History of Filmmaking
 - C. Influential Filmmakers
 - IV. Mexican Cinema
 - A. Cultural Context
 - B. History of Filmmaking
 - C. Influential Filmmakers

Syllabus
SPH 241 Spring 2014
Spanish and Latin American Film in Translation

- 1 Dr. Antonio Cárdenas.
Mesa Community College.
World Languages Department. Building 41, office 109
(480) 461-7039 direct line.
antonio.cardenas@mesacc.edu

Course description and overview: A survey of Spanish and Spanish-American film as art form and as social commentary. Includes documentary, biography, and films based on works of literature. Coursework, class participation, and oral and written reports conducted in English. Prerequisites: none.

Office hours: Daily 11:00 AM-11:50 P.M. Friday by appointment only. If you leave a message please speak slow and clearly. Repeat your area and phone number twice. **However; e-mails are received and answered faster.**

SPH 241 library link: MCC Home Page + Research Guides + SPH 241

See free films at:

<http://www.divxonline.info/peliculas-estreno/1.html>

www.tomapelículas.com < <http://www.tomapelículas.com/> >

www.cinegratis.net/index.php

www.dospuntocerovision.com < <http://www.dospuntocerovision.co> >

www.veocine.es < <http://www.veocine.es/> >

- 2 Recommended readings. Sixteen of the forty three films in the course film bank are based on books published by famous authors; two of the films have newspaper articles. The film theories of Masud Zavarzadeh is the textbook class; and, *Ensayos claves sobre cine latino* is an extra recommended reading for the native Spanish speaker student .

- 1 *Ensayos claves sobre cine latino* by Antonio Cárdenas
- 2 *Seeing Films Politically* by Masud Zavarzadeh
- 3 *The Secret in their Eyes* by Eduardo Sacheri
- 4 *A boca de noche* by Ángel García Roldán
- 5 *Short Stories* by Grimm Brothers
- 6 *Naufragios* by Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca
A Land so Strange: The Epic Journey of Cabeza de Vaca by Andre Resendez
The Journey of Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca: And his Companions from Florida to the Pacific by Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca
- 7 *Diario de viaje/The Motorcycle Diaries* by Ernesto Che Guevara y Alberto Granados
- 8 *As Water for Chocolate/Como agua para chocolate* by Laura Esquivel
- 9 *The Crime of Padre Amaro/El crimen del padre Amaro* by Eca de Queiros
- 10 *Celda 211* by Francisco Pérez Gandul
- 11 *Canoa* (newspaper articles)
- 12 *La tregua* by Mario Benedetti
- 13 *The sea inside/Mar adentro* (newspaper articles)
- 14 *Viento negro* by Mario Martini
- 15 *Arráncame la vida* by Angela Mastreta
- 16 *Macario* by Bruno Traven
- 17 *Captain Pantajo and the Special Services/Pantaleón y las visitadoras* by Mario Vargas Llosa
- 18 *Love in the Time of Cholera/El amor en los tiempos del cólera* by Gabriel García Márquez
- 19 *La Rosa Blanca* by Bruno Traven
- 20 *El hombre, el bosque y el hombre nuevo* by Senel Paz

All films are located at the MCC Library Circulation Desk! The student has three hours to view the film in the library! Please bring your own headphones!

3 Film archive for SPH 241. Please bring your own headphones!

- 1 *The Secrete in their Eyes – El secreto de tus ojos*
- 2 *Carol's Journey – El viaje de Carol*
- 3 *Pan's Labyrinth – El laberinto del Fauno*
- 4 *Babel – Babel*
- 5 *Under the Same Moon – Bajo la misma luna*
- 6 *To the Other Side – Al otro lado*
- 7 *Amor en silencio – A Silent Love*
- 8 *A Better Life – Una mejor vida*
- 9 *Cabeza de Vaca*
- 10 *The Motorcycle Diaries – Diarios de motocicleta*
- 11 *All About my Mother – Todo sobre mi madre*
- 12 *Like Water for Chocolate – Como agua para chocolate*
- 13 *Innocent Voices – Voces inocentes*
- 14 *El Bola*
- 15 *The Crime of Padre Amaro – El crimen del padre Amaro*
- 16 *Celda 211 – Cell Two Eleven*
- 17 *Canoa*
- 18 *The Orphanage – El orfanato*
- 19 *La tregua – The Truce*
- 20 *Solas*
- 21 *The Sea Inside – Mar adentro*
- 22 *Viento Negro*
- 23 *Santitos*
- 24 *Arráncame la vida – Tear this Heart Out*
- 25 *El cometa – The Comet*
- 26 *Wondering Lives – Vidas errantes*
- 27 *Hombre mirando al sudeste*
- 28 *La guerra santa*
- 29 *Matador – Matador*
- 30 *Eva Perón*
- 31 *Macario*
- 32 *Enamorada*
- 33 *Captain Pantoja and the Special Services – Pantaleón y las visitadoras*
- 34 *El principio – The Beginning*
- 35 *Love in the Time of Cholera – El amor en los tiempos del cólera*
- 36 *Talk to her – Hable con ella*
- 37 *En el hoyo*
- 38 *Rosa Blanca*
- 39 *Which Way Home –*
- 40 *Strawberry and Chocolate – Fresa y chocolate*
- 41 *Sin dejar huella – Without a Trace*
- 42 *El castillo de la pureza – The Castle of Purity*
- 43 *Los Caifanes*

All films are at the MCC Library Circulation Desk. Films must be seeing in a three hour period.

4 Grades:

90-100 points	= A
80-89 points	= B
70-79 points	= C
59 or less	= F

Access your final semester grades at:
my.maricopa.edu

- a) Class participation includes: viewing class films, and oral participation on discussing the following 13 topics. $80\% \div 16 \text{ classes} = 5\% \text{ max per class!}$
- 1) Discuss what cultural aspects you learned after seeing each film.
 - 2) In what matter you changed your perspective of the culture presented after seeing this film.
 - 3) Topic and subtopics such as war, abuse, politics, religion, women, disease, adventure, colonization, economy, social issues. Explain what is dominant in the film, which are the victims or receptors of hegemonic characters.
 - 4) Relationship between actions, and sound and color.
 - 5) How you compare this film with others you have seen before and your own culture.
 - 6) How this film is related to contemporary reality and history.
 - 7) The director's importance in world cinema. What is his/her legacy?
 - 8) Discuss if this film is based on a book, or articles of a true human event.
 - 9) Characters: adults, women, children, disable, militaries, professionals, good, bad, honest, social norms and values of the specific culture; which characters are dominant.
 - 10) Film techniques such as: forward and retrospective flashes.
 - 11) The historic time of the film; or specific era.
 - 12) The film space (Where the filming takes place).
 - 13) Discuss cinematographic movements such as: Romanticism, Realism, Magic Realism, Naturalism, Modernism; or cinema of Homoerotic Identities **80%**
- b) For your 10-15 minutes semester final oral presentation select one of these recommended topics from the film archive for SPH 241 available to the library.
- 1) Analysis of three films of your choice seeing out of class!
 - 2) How your perspective on Spanish and/or Latin American cinema changed this semester from beginning to end.
 - 3) How your view of the world changed after taking this class.
 - 4) What films do you view of historical cinema, what is the importance in Spanish and/or Latin American cultures.
 - 5) Explain what films and why you would recommend.
 - 6) Discuss cinematographic movements present on the films such as: Romanticism, Realism, Magic Realism, Naturalism, and Modernism.
 - 7) Discuss one of the films from the SPH 241 archive based on a book; or articles; establish similarities and differences between book and film.

It is expected that the student demonstrates critical thinking, understanding of the film, and better and/or new perception of the world. The student is welcome to use power point for this presentation. **10%**

Term paper:

- c) Three page paper on a film from the film archive for the SPH 241 class at the MCC Library. Typed, letter size 12, double spaced, completed on a topic of your choice. The student must demonstrate critical thinking, comprehension of the film and better understanding of the culture presented in the Spanish world outside the US. Can't be a film previously viewed in class or viewed for the oral presentation. Citations-bibliography must be MLA format. **10%**

The term paper and the semester oral presentation will be graded as follow:

1% for overall performance; thus is, quality of the oral presentation and written errors on the term paper.

2% Demonstration of cultural awareness of Spanish and Spanish American cultures.

2% For using oral and written authority/resources (Bibliography).

5% Filling basic requirements for the assignment.

- 5) There are no late make up exams or class assignments. **There are no exceptions!** All class work should be done on schedule!

8) Class participation: Learning cinema is an ongoing process that requires continual viewing and discussion. It is in the student's best interest to arrive to class having read and/or seeing the film and completed the assigned homework. Mistakes are part of the learning process and students should expect to be corrected. Active participation is required to learn and students will be given points based on participation. Students should be ready to work individually or in groups during the class sessions. If you miss a class your instructor will not reduce or penalize your grade, but be aware that absences may affect the participation grade. The following considerations are included in class participation: absences, tardies, leaving the classroom during class time, answering cell phones, interrupting the teaching-learning process, providing wrong oral answers, lack of academic enthusiasm, and working on unrelated items during class time etc.

9) Attendance: The instructor may initiate an official withdrawal of any student after missing one class. Tardiness or leaving early will be counted as absences. Absences will be considered as 'excused' if written verification is received before the next class session. **Written verifications include; doctor's note, police officer, funeral home, or court of law. Verifications must include the reason of the missed class, dates the student was unable to attend, must be signed and dated.**

A medical prescription will not be accepted, but a doctor may write a note on a blank prescription requesting me to excuse you from not attending class due to a medical treatment etc. There are no exceptions!

NOTE: For MCCCCD policy on attendance see MCC Catalog. The instructor is following these guidelines. No exceptions! Calling or e-mailing the instructor will NOT excuse the student for being absent! Class policy on attendance will be followed!

10) Academic dishonesty and behavior: All forms of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Any form of dishonesty, cheating (or the appearance of it), fabrication, or plagiarism may make you subject to disciplinary action. If any student disrupts the study learning process, that student will be recommended to be dropped. Please turn off all cell phones and beepers during class. **There are no exceptions!**

11) This syllabus is intended as a guide only. The instructor has the right to change assignments, dates and oral reports as needed. Students who have a concern or questions about the syllabus should see the instructor during the first couple days of the semester.

Films commentaries on imdb.com and/or amazon.com

12) SPH 241 class schedule:

R August 22	Syllabus
R August 29	Film: <i>Pan's Labyrinth</i>
R September 5	Discussion: <i>Pan's Labyrinth</i> and MCC Library Instruction
R September 12	Film: <i>The Motorcycle Diaries</i>
R September 19	Discussion: <i>The Motorcycle Diaries</i>
R September 26	Film: <i>All about my mother</i> or <i>Sin devoluci3n</i>
R October 3	Discussion: <i>All about my mother</i> or <i>Sin devoluci3n</i>
R October 10	Film: <i>Babel</i> or <i>Cabeza de Vaca</i>
R October 17	Discussion: <i>Babel</i> or <i>Cabeza de Vaca</i>
R October 24	Film: <i>Captain Pantoja and the Special Services</i>
R October 31	Discussion: <i>Captain Pantoja and the Special Services</i>
R November 7	Film: <i>Eva Per3n</i> or <i>Talk to her</i>
R November 14	Discussion: <i>Eva Per3n</i> or <i>Talk to her</i>
R November 21	Film: <i>Viento negro</i> or <i>Under the Same Moon</i>
R November 28	Thanksgiving Day!
R December 5	Discussion: <i>Viento negro</i> or <i>Under the Same Moon</i> Class oral presentations/Term papers!

M A S ' U D
Z A V A R Z A D E H
S E E I N G
F I L M S
P O L I T I C A L L Y

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C O N T E N T S

Preface	ix
1. Tales of Intelligibility	1
2. Pleasure, Resistance, and the Ludic Postmodern	31
3. The Politics of Reality	91
4. The Cultural Politics of Intimacy	113
5. Change, History, Nostalgia	153
6. The Center and the Margin	169
7. Ideology, Desire, and Gender	203
8. The Political Economy of Art: Ingmar Bergman's <i>Fanny and Alexander</i>	229
Bibliography	247
Index	257

SEEING FILMS POLITICALLY

MAS'UD ZAVARZADEH

"In a big league along with Brecht and Barthes."

—ERNEST CALLENBACH, Editor, *Film Quarterly*

In this bold political rethinking of contemporary film theory, Zavarzadeh overturns the dominant concepts that fetishize film as a work of art or simple entertainment. He demonstrates how aesthetic notions obscure the ideological effects produced by viewing films, particularly the production of the spectator as the subject of social class. Seeing films, he argues, is part of the political struggle over cultural intelligibilities, subjectivities, and representations. One of the book's analytical innovations is its concept of renarrating: a reading strategy that displays the logic of the film, showing that it is not so much a unique aesthetic articulation as it is the common logic of the dominant ideology. In a series of brilliant readings of recent films, the book constructs a critical space for the reader to not only see the culturally visible tale of the film—the one that legitimates the existing reality, the status quo—but also to see the other, suppressed tale that (de)narrates the social contradictions arising from exploitation and class rule.

"An eye-opening book that bridges the gap between the abstractions of radical theoretical perspectives and the concrete details of contemporary culture."

—ROGER S. GOTTLIEB, Editor, *Western Marxism*

"Zavarzadeh's stance is quite original and distinct. He has made me see the films with fresh eyes, and the approach is applicable to works of popular culture in general."

—ROBIN WOOD, Author, *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan*



Photo: Teresa Ebert

Mas'ud Zavarzadeh was educated in Middle Eastern, European, and American universities and teaches critical theory at Syracuse University. He has written on postmodern critical theory and is the author of *Mythopoeic Reality* and coeditor of *Theory, Pedagogy, Politics*.

A volume in the SUNY series in
Radical Social and Political Theory
Roger S. Gottlieb, editor

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Customer Reviews Pan's Labyrinth

994 Reviews	Average Customer Review (994 customer reviews)
5 star: (664)	Share your thoughts with other customers
4 star: (150)	
3 star: (70)	
2 star: (43)	
1 star: (67)	

This product



Pan's Labyrinth by Guillermo Del Toro \$2.99

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Astounding.

This is the way fairy tales used to be -- before they got bleached, pressed, and de-linted by half-wits trying to protect tender ears. Before they got Disney-fied. Sure, there's violence here, some of it shocking, but none of it gratuitous. Could it give a kid nightmares? Maybe. But given today's pablum stories, maybe it's about time.

Pan's Labyrinth takes us...
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Published on January 27, 2007 by Maine Writer

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The most helpful critical review

23 of 33 people found the following review helpful

One of the best films I didn't

like

Critics loved "Pan's Labyrinth"--if you look it up on Rottentomatoes.com their favored critics averaged 100% in loving it--and that's rare. It's well acted, beautifully directed, perfectly cast, evocative, deep...and I didn't like it.

For one thing, it includes graphic scenes of torture and harm to children. You could say the same thing about Saving Private...
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Published on January 6, 2008 by Ehkzu

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Astounding., January 27, 2007

By **Maine Writer "David"** (Maine, USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

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This is the way fairy tales used to be -- before they got bleached, pressed, and de-linted by half-wits trying to protect tender ears. Before they got Disney-fied. Sure, there's violence here, some of it shocking, but none of it gratuitous. Could it give a kid nightmares? Maybe. But given today's pablum stories, maybe it's about time.

Pan's Labyrinth takes us directly into the subconscious, and into the storyforms that infuse all of the great myths, fairy tales, and religions. It's a rich and satisfying stew of symbolism, mystery, and redemption. Multilayered and inspiring, it's a film you'll want to see again. It's hard not to gush, but it's been so long since a movie this good has made it into the quasi-mainstream.

What makes Pan's Labyrinth most effective is its juxtaposition of harsh "reality" and the mysterious world that lives side by side with it. The heroine, a young girl who may carry a magical seed of immortality (the soul of god's only child who once ventured into the world of men, suffered, and died long ago), is contacted by shapeshifting fairies who lead her to a faun (much like the mythological Pan) who says she may reclaim her throne and escape the mortal world by performing three tasks. The faun in Pan's Labyrinth is every bit as complex as the mythological Pan, a creature perhaps older than the gods themselves. There's something sly, and perhaps even sexual about this elegant and almost alien faun, as he represents the forces at play inside this sensitive young girl. In fact, like every good fairy tale, all of the strange, wondrous, and chilling creatures represent facets of the subconscious, including baby-eating ghouls, flitting fairies, and gluttonous toads.

Pan's Labyrinth is a commentary on the resiliency and power of the human imagination, and takes us to the place where dreams are spun and the great heroic tale of overcoming (of the self and the world) takes root. That spark of the divine in all of us -- or at least the hope of it -- powers the great story of our lives, and we need tales like this to remind of us of the magic and transformative power of story telling. In the flickering light of the theater, like some great hearth around which we've gathered, Pan's Labyrinth took me back to my childhood, and made me think of

so many of the great stories I'd read over the years -- of demonic dogs with saucer-sized eyes, of child-stealing trolls, and evil stepmothers. And, finally, of the champions who venture down into those great cracks in the Earth, where the roots of mythic trees twist and wind and the greatest treasure of all can be found: the noble, heroic, and undying spirit that lies within us.

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123 of 136 people found the following review helpful

A Haunting and Beautifully Crafted Film, May 2, 2007

By [mothermaven "webjaw diva"](#) (San Rafael, CA USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [Pan's Labyrinth \(New Line Two-Disc Platinum Series\) \(DVD\)](#)

First of all, this film is not suitable for children. It is intended to be an adult fairytale with a young girl as its protagonist. Everyone I know who have viewed this film has loved it, including my 75 year old father, who is not really into foreign films or art films.

The is not suitable for children for a few scenes of torture and violence. While difficult to watch, it serves to create a sense of real peril, ugliness, cruelty and evil that propels our protagonist to seek comfort in another world of grotesque beauty. She is a young girl in the midst of a brutal civil war where both sides reside under her roof, and the only reason she is safe is because her mother is pregnant by a fascist general. There is a sense that this safety is precarious and could evaporate quickly due to circumstances beyond her control.

The protagonist's other world is sparked by a discovery of an old labyrinth by the old house where the general holds his position and has a doctor see to the pregnant mother's ailing health.

This other world that is created is amazingly done and is beautiful in its grotesquely Gothic way. The original score is perfect for the film with its haunting humming lullaby. The young girl is perfect young heroine that is flawed but lovable. You want her to fulfill her destiny and escape to her throne in a magical place. The rest of the cast are amazing showing the full range of humanity in a time of war from immense cruelty to amazing courage and compassion. The film itself has a great sense of pacing, almost poetic writing, and is able to keep up the feeling of suspense.

The movie is sad, beautiful, cruel, agonizing, and has kept haunting me. The film made me cry and at times took my breath away. It made me feel great to see such a well-made movie in the era of over hyped corporate films. This had the craftsmanship of an expert watchmaker.

The lullaby still lingers in my mind.

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Into the labyrinth, October 12, 2007

By [E. A Solinas "ea_solinas"](#) (MD USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

Amazon Verified Purchase ([What's this?](#))

This review is from: [Pan's Labyrinth \[HD DVD\] \(HD DVD\)](#)

If anyone wants to know where the dark, creepy fairy tales of old went, here's a hint: Guillermo del Toro is doing a pretty good job with the fairy tales for adults.

"Pan's Labyrinth" ("El Laberinto del Fauno") is a sequel of sorts to "The Devil's Backbone," a magical realism film about the Spanish Civil War. But this movie takes us deeper into a world that is half real, half ominous fairy tale, with a unique and imaginative story and some really excellent acting -- in short, a triumph.

Time and place: 1944, Spain. Ofelia (Ivana Baquero) and her very pregnant mother travel to meet her new stepfather, the brutal and murderous Captain Vidal (Sergi López). Ofelia loathes her new stepfather, but is transfixed by the eerie forests around them -- and one night she is visited by a fairy, and encounters a giant faun who tells her that she is Princess Moanna of the netherworld, and must return there.

To do so, he tells her that she must do three things, and gives her a strange book. Ofelia menages first task, but is frightened out of her wits by the second task, which involves a hideous monster with eyes in its hands. Even worse, her mother's pregnancy is getting more dangerous. As the guerillas and the fascists clash, Ofelia faces being trapped outside the netherworld forever... and being offered a terrible choice if she wants to get in.

Fairy tales have become cleaned-up and cutesy over time, so that children can read

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Captures the Essence of the Account
 I don't normally address other reviewers in my reviews, but in this instance I believe the reviewer from Arizona who gave this movie a one star rating to be totally off base. That, and the fact that he posted two one-star reviews to bring the totals down for an international award winning film. I've read de Vaca's account, and it is indeed a great tale, which is why I was...
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Published on May 19, 2003 by Bruce Kendall

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The most helpful critical review

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful

Why i give a low score to a great movie?
 I agree whit all the good reviews, is not a good movie, is one of the best movies I have ever see, great in any aspect, but, Yes here comes the problems! The DVD is just a bad copy, whit the subtitles built in, no menus and the worst, HUUUU! This just make me sick! No 16:9 How can that be possible? Is a great movie, So why is not realised like a movie? I just hope this...
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65 of 70 people found the following review helpful

Captures the Essence of the Account, May 19, 2003

By [Bruce Kendall "BEK"](#) (Southern Pines, NC) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: **Cabeza De Vaca (DVD)**

I don't normally address other reviewers in my reviews, but in this instance I believe the reviewer from Arizona who gave this movie a one star rating to be totally off base. That, and the fact that he posted two one-star reviews to bring the totals down for an international award winning film. I've read de Vaca's account, and it is indeed a great tale, which is why I was so looking forward to this movie's measuring up to the original narrative. I was not disappointed in the slightest, although naturally the movie doesn't portray all the passages from the account.

It's evident from every frame of this film that the filmmakers invested a great deal of love, energy and artistry to their task. Director Echevarria gets the utmost out of his outstanding cast. The Spaniards and the Native Americans are entirely believable, and the film depicts one of the most authentic representations of Native American cultures I've seen on screen. The only film that comes close is Last of the Mohicans. It's definitely a case of the good, the bad and the ugly. The clash of cultures couldn't be represented any better.

Juan Diego as de Vaca is a revelation. He should have been up for an Oscar for his performance. The dwarfish villager who first vividly menaces and later befriends de Vaca has to be one of the most memorable characters in recent cinema. The same can be said for the village Shaman, also an exceptional performance.

From the credits, it is evident that the Mexican Government had a hand in funding the filming of this movie. It is well that they should have, as this has to be something of a national treasure.

Definitely disregard any negative comments about Cabeza de Vaca. It's a great film about an amazing man, whose courage and fortitude may have been unmatched in the annals of European exploration of the New World. This is decidedly a must-see.

BEK

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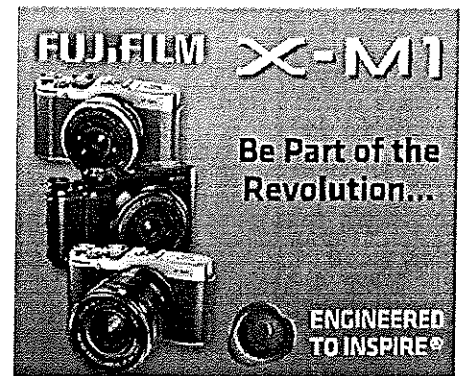


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Wonder filled movie, February 23, 2003By [GHT](#) - [See all my reviews](#)Amazon Verified Purchase ([What's this?](#))This review is from: **Cabeza De Vaca (DVD)**

Cabeza de Vaca, Spanish nobleman looking for riches and adventure, ends up with much more adventure than he planned for. A journey for gold turns into a harrowing spiritual journey, a twisting torture of his soul and beliefs.

Face to face with barbarians, de Vaca must face his own nature and ultimately the barbaric nature of the Spanish Conquest.

A beautifully shot movie - the melange of tribal cultures that de Vaca encountered on his wanderings is well portrayed, and as de Vaca goes from slave to shaman to the next meal back to holy man, etc., this viewer was caught up in de Vaca's spiritual journey - how survival and spirituality spring from the same place for many of us.

Juan Diego masterfully portrays de Vaca's spiritual trials and tribulations - a man adapting to what he had to adapt to to survive, almost losing himself in the process, reborn almost unrecognizable to himself.

This movie reminds us that culture clashes are really clashes of souls, an always timely message.

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19 of 21 people found the following review helpful

The Most Under-rated Movie Ever, May 2, 2003By [Walter W. Lyford](#) (Miami, FL United States) - [See all my reviews](#)This review is from: **Cabeza De Vaca (DVD)**

I saw this movie in Miami, FL when it was newly released. It electrified me but I was disappointed that it did not create a huge sensation. It should encourage people to read the original writings of Cabeza de Vaca on his prodigious wanderings. He is one of the greatest explorers ever!

But this movie goes much deeper into his and our collective unconscious. It is not merely a factual description of his trip across the North American continent but a journey into our mental and spiritual make up.

Shipwrecked, captured and sold to the tribal Shaman, the mighty European Conquistador is reduced to the fetal position on the shores of the New World.

But it is his deep and sincere Christian belief that makes him a potent Shaman himself as he is trained by the master and the two powers merge.

There is plenty of indictment against the narrow confines of the Church and the brutality of the conquest. The Native Americans are depicted as mostly noble, perhaps primitive yet organized and in harmony with nature. There is a scene in the desert SouthWest where they appear like Buddhist monks as they inter the first to fall to the bullet on this continent.

I have seen the movie once or twice since 1992 and can't wait to get the DVD to further study the film and get any extras it may provide.

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11 of 11 people found the following review helpful

See the New World through the eyes of ancient explorers,

June 27, 2005

By [No Stone Left Unturned "soundingstone"](#) (Michigan, USA)
- [See all my reviews](#)This review is from: **Cabeza De Vaca (DVD)**

This movie is so surreal! It places you inside the eyes of early Spaniards landing in the Americas- how they see the land and People, having only their life in a European context to relate. The viewer is drawn in by their fears and superstitions, the mystery of these unexplored places, and the clashes of cultures and difficulties of understanding. I saw a subtle message comparing the indigenous societies and shamans who were in sync with their surroundings, to the Catholicism of the time which seemed to be about fear, demons, and not part of the natural world (and did not save their lives either). Some scenes reminded me of Hieronymus Bosch paintings-as though the Spaniards thought they had descended into a Hell.

This is not at all like a Hollywood Native American movie.

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122 Reviews

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75 of 79 people found the following review helpful

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Visual, Moving Masterpiece

The Struggle Between

"Todo Sobre Mi Madre," or "All About My Mother," revolves around the life of an organ transplant coordinator, Manuela, who was briefly shown in one of Almodovar's most recent movie "The Flower of My Secret". After the death of her only child, Manuela sets off from Madrid to Barcelona to find both his father and the traveling troupe who...

Heartbreak and Hope
Pedro Almodovar's All About My Mother contains more pure emotion than anything Hollywood puts out these days. The film follows the turbulent life of Manuela (Cecilia Roth) who tragically loses her teenage son Esteban (Eloy Azorin) after they both attend a performance of A Streetcar Named Desire. Esteban is killed when he is hit by a car while chasing after actress Huma...

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Published on July 19, 2000 by Luis Hernandez

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Visual, Moving Masterpiece, July 19, 2000

By [Luis Hernandez](#) (New York, New York, USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [All About My Mother \(DVD\)](#)

"Todo Sobre Mi Madre," or "All About My Mother," revolves around the life of an organ transplant coordinator, Manuela, who was briefly shown in one of Almodovar's most recent movie "The Flower of My Secret". After the death of her only child, Manuela sets off from Madrid to Barcelona to find both his father and the traveling troupe who performs "A Streetcar Named Desire," throughout Spain.

Argentinian actress Cecilia Roth is both excellent and convincing as Manuela. Her performance for an actress not from Spain is original, since most of Almodovar's leading startlets are Spaniards. Marisa Paredes as Huma, a fading starlet, reminded me of her performance in "High Heels," wher she played a similar character. However the two emerging standouts in this film are Antonia San Juan as Manuela's drag-queen friend (fact: although she looks like a man, San Juan is actually a woman) and the beautiful Penelope Cruz, who plays a HIV-positive pregnant nun (only Almodovar can bring us such characters). Cruz, who radiates natural beauty and style has become Spain hottest export to Hollywood since Antonio Banderas. Keep an eye out for her in the near future.

The visual arrangement of colors, patterns, and clothes brings the film so much beauty it is unbearable not to watch and adore it. Almodovar's camera illusions, especially watching a grieving Manuela run to her injured son, Esteban, after he is struck by a car (the camera looks like if the victim is watching his mother run in the rain) and the trick of watching Esteban write in his journal (we see his pencil move through a glass that is supposed to be his pad) is amazing. Only the pure genius that Almodovar is could have thought of this.

This happens to be Almdovar's best film in the past 10 years. Truly, if you are an artist, an admirer of Spanish culture, or just love art films, then this film will fascinate you. A true gem in the evolution of Spanish cinema.

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Captain Pantoja and the Special Service: A Novel

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Published on February 15, 2001 by Guillermo Maynez

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The most helpful critical review

2 of 5 people found the following review helpful

Long Form Morality Play
One of Mario Vargas Llosa's weaker efforts, Captain Pantoja is a heavy-handed satire about corruption and fanaticism. Intertwined stories deal respectively with Captain Pantoja's efficient command of a military prostitution unit and an outlaw religious sect with a crucifixion fetish.

Readers expecting the sort of thematic depth of "The Storyteller" will be...
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Published on March 3, 2006 by hb

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The best satire of discipline and technocracy, February 15, 2001

By **Guillermo Maynez** (Mexico, Distrito Federal Mexico) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: **Captain Pantoja and the Special Service: A Novel (Paperback)**

Sometimes, the most serious and deep messages are hidden in the form of light and funny literature (one book that jumps to mind is "Gulliver's Travels"). In this simply genial novel, the Peruvian military has a problem: the garrisons of the Amazonic regions are very short of women and feeling extremely sexual, so rapes are mounting. This, of course, is bad PR for the Army and a real problem for the chiefs. They decide to create the "Special Service", a well-ordered and efficient ring of disciplined prostitutes who will satisfy the soldiers' needs and eradicate the problem of rapes. Who is the perfect man to be in charge of the Service?: Captain Pantaleon Pantoja, a model soldier, who lives with his lovely wife and his mother-in-law. Pantaleon is a sober and righteous guy, enemy of prostitutes, bars and fights. He is also the most efficient manager of the Army. He is dismayed at the task but, always disciplined, puts all his intelligence and efficiency to it. The learning process proves problematic for his marriage: since Pantaleon knows nothing about the night life, he has to learn it by visiting sordid brothels and buying drinks to informants. Of course, when he starts arriving home in the morning, extremely drunk, his wife gets very disappointed. But he convinces her of the importance and required sacrifices of his new mission. Eventually, the Special Service becomes the most efficient branch of the military, and it gets famous. The very funniest parts of the book are the official reports where Pantaleon informs to his superiors of the successes and problems he has in his job. The official language describing absurd and outrageous situations is just great. Of course, things get out of control, with dramatic but funny consequences.

The plot is rapidly developed, with the surfacing of a sect of fanatics as its counterpoint. These sect crucifies people and animals, and the story includes a harsh criticism of the Church as parallel to the Army. The reader wonders: why is it that Vargas Llosa decided to intertwine a satire of military discipline with another one of religious fanaticism? And the conclusion is that it is an extremely smart and witty novel, hilarious and troubling at the same time. The characters are really, really great, including Panta, his wife, his mother-in-law, some of the prostitutes, and some of the officers. Great book by a great contemporary author.

This product



Captain Pantoja and the Special Service: A Novel by Mario Vargas Llosa (Paperback - October 1, 1990)
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Powerful portrayal of Latin

America's most powerful woman
 Eva Peron was born in rural Argentina in 1919. At the age of 15 she made her way to the capital, Buenos Aires, to pursue her dreams of cinema stardom. By 26 she was the first lady of the nation, becoming the liaison between the people of Argentina and her husband, Juan Peron. She presided over the creation of the Eva Peron Foundation, the first real welfare system the...

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Published on December 9, 2003 by Andrew Parodi

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The most helpful critical review

Consideration

This movie would have been rated a five star had it not been for an over zealous translation in the sub-titles of the movie. Although I am not a huge fan of vulgar language, there were times when it seemed as though the translation was made for the expressed purpose of scintillation versus a desire to provide assistance to the viewer.

Published 7 months ago by Laurie Davison

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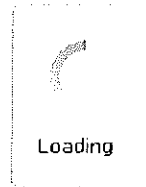
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28 of 29 people found the following review helpful

Powerful portrayal of Latin America's most powerful woman,

December 9, 2003

By **Andrew Parodi** (Oregon, United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: **Eva Peron (DVD)**

Eva Peron was born in rural Argentina in 1919. At the age of 15 she made her way to the capital, Buenos Aires, to pursue her dreams of cinema stardom. By 26 she was the first lady of the nation, becoming the liaison between the people of Argentina and her husband, Juan Peron. She presided over the creation of the Eva Peron Foundation, the first real welfare system the nation had ever seen (for the first time in Argentine history there was no inequality in health care), created entire cities where thousands of homes were given to the impoverished, pushed for legislation that benefited women (including granting women the right to vote), and challenged just about every notion Latin America had about women's roles, defying even her husband's requests that she slow down.

Argentine director Juan Carlos Desanzo has decided to focus on the years 1951-52 in Evita's life. She has decided that she would like to become the first female vice president in her country's history, the first in world history. But she has two adversaries: the oligarchy, who would be horrified to see a woman of her "common" background officially recognized; the military, who would not stand for the possibility of a female commander in the event of their president's death. Can Evita, with the wild enthusiasm of the people for her candidacy, defeat them? Will her husband support her bid? The majority of EVA PERON is devoted to posing and answering these questions.

Is this the definitive version of Evita? There is no way to know for sure. But I can assure you that the producers succeeded in their attempt to offer a counter-point to the Madonna version, to put more substance to the story. In fact, it's hard to believe the respective movies concern the same figure. Argentine actress Esther Goris brings Eva Peron to life, amazingly making human a woman who has become superhuman, an archetype, a legend, and a myth.

Andrew Parodi

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A Timely Topic, An Uplifting

Film
Sensitive director Patricia Riggen has, in LA MISMA LUNA (UNDER THE SAME MOON), succeeded in creating a story about the travails of the illegal immigrants from Mexico that serves as a reminder to all of us that one of the reasons for the obsession to take the risks of crossing the border is an attempt to find a better life. While this story concept is by no means a novel...

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Published on June 23, 2008 by Grady Harp

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Decent

The movie is predictable with stereotypical characters, such as the gruff man who discovers he has a heart and the boy who captivates everyone with his cute looks and charm. I still liked the film as I was entertained and emotionally invested in the characters. America Ferrera is in this movie for about ten minutes. The ending is perfect.

Published 23 months ago by Angela S.

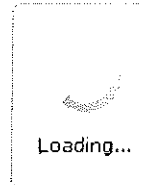
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A Timely Topic, An Uplifting Film, June 23, 2008

By [Grady Harp](#) (Los Angeles, CA United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [Under the Same Moon \(DVD\)](#)

Sensitive director Patricia Riggen has, in LA MISMA LUNA (UNDER THE SAME MOON), succeeded in creating a story about the travails of the illegal immigrants from Mexico that serves as a reminder to all of us that one of the reasons for the obsession to take the risks of crossing the border is an attempt to find a better life. While this story concept is by no means a novel one, writer Liglia Villalobos has provided a script that avoids taking sides, but instead concentrates on creating wholly believable characters caught in the web of immigration - from both sides of the wall. This little film from Mexico is, above all, a film about love, about courage and about resilience and is portrayed by a very fine cast in every role.

Rosario (Kate del Castillo) is a single mother who crossed the border four years earlier in order to support her young son Carlitos (a superb young actor, Adrian Alonso) and her ailing mother by working double jobs as a housekeeper in Los Angeles. She keeps in touch with Carlitos with weekly phone calls and sends him gifts as well as money and love. When Rosario's mother dies, Carlitos takes life into his own hands and plans to cross the border with a little help from his experience with a wise old lady Coyota (Carmen Salinas) who aids immigrants. With his savings in his backpack and his heart aimed toward Los Angeles he sets out on his journey and is thwarted at every turn. He is picked up by two Hispanic students from the US (America Ferrara and Jesse Garcia) whose attempt to transport Carlitos is halted at the border - with the little Carlitos hidden under the seat of the now towed away car. Carlos escapes from the car in El Paso, meets up with some illegal workers who are arrested, leaving the hidden Carlitos with a reluctant companion Enrique (Eugenio Derbez) who is able to aid Carlitos (reluctantly!) to escape to Los Angeles. Through many 'jobs' and untoward situations Carlitos finally finds his way to the spot where he hopes he will meet his mother.

The rhythms of the cinematography, the sets, the flavors of both sides of the border, and the music that accompanies the film all contribute to making this story real and believable - and VERY touching. While Kate del Castillo is the major star of the film, it

is the performance by Adrian Alonso that remains in the mind long after the credits are shown. Some viewers may find this film a bit too 'novella-like', but the magic that Patricia Riggen pulls from her large cast and verismo directing style will touch the hearts of most everyone. A fine little reminder of the other aspects of the Immigration topic! Grady Harp, June 08

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great educational movie, December 16, 2008

By **Nina B "Nina B."** (Southampton, PA) - [See all my reviews](#)

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This review is from: [Under the Same Moon \(DVD\)](#)

This movie was an excellent addition to my high school Spanish class. It was a good lesson from many perspectives- family values, legal/illegal immigration, culture and class. What was also very good was that the movie did not have any scenes that I needed to "bleep out" for my students! It held thier attention and they were able to see a current topic from a new perspective.

I highly recommend this movie!

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Addresses issues in a way that allows a good film to materialize...

June 19, 2008

By **Steve Kuehl "SLV Video"** (Boulder Creek, CA) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [Under the Same Moon \(DVD\)](#)

The numerous discussions here and at other forums over the feelings/issues covered in the film almost makes one want to steer away from watching this - "another" immigration film. I would hope instead that any movie watcher will see this film anyway and be rewarded with a life affirming family love story.

The performances, graceful music, relevant locales and (sometimes rushed but believable) scenarios fill the story line with the necessary themes to make this an inspirational film. The Superman song is hilarious as I had never heard it before - great lyrics. The most interesting thing about this experience was my 6-year old daughter (who speaks only a few words of Spanish) was completely intrigued by the entire piece. The boy actor is obviously ahead of his years, and his expressions and delivery made my girl realize what was happening without even knowing the full dialogue.

The DVD has a decent transfer, and both docus on the disc are worth watching. Docu #1 is over 30 minutes long covering the creation, inspiration and logistics of making the film. Only after watching it did I realize the power of the mother/son relationship showed in the film, even though they shared no scenes together. Docu #2 reveals the artwork/murals created for the film and in respect to the film throughout the Boyle Heights and neighboring areas. For those that revel in the appreciation of mural artwork and the artists behind them - the DVD would be a must-see just for this.

Putting aside all the political and personal issues being written here and elsewhere, I believe the whole family can sit down and watch this film. No work of fiction/reality can capture all of the complexities brushed upon by this movie, but the heart of the message shines through and will make you feel satisfied in the end.

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Get the tissues out, May 29, 2008

By **Antonio Avila** (Orem, UT United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [Under the Same Moon \(DVD\)](#)

Excellent movie with strong actors. A moving tale of the Mexican struggle for providing a better life for the rising generation despite great sacrifices made from the parents, in this case, single parent.

The experiences Carlitos encounters as he crosses the border to be with his mother are not far from the truth, unfortunately.

I wish something could be done to have hard working, honest hispanics respected with citizenship and/or at least treated more humanely and given the same opportunity as other people with "papers". This movie is a step in the right direction

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A tight well written screenplay and exceptional cinematography.,

June 14, 2010

By **R. F. Munoz "Eclectic Listener"** (South Pasadena, CA USA) - [See all my reviews](#)

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This review is from: **Viento Negro [NTSC- Region 1 & 4- Import Latin America] David Reynoso (DVD)**

Viento Negro offers a tight well written screenplay and engrossing cinematography that is exceptional in the narrative's development.

The story tracks the emotional conflicts that Manuel engages involving his values as un hombre macho in dealings as jefe de cuadril and in establishing a bond with his only son, who seeks his respect.

For the most part the acting and character development is convincing.

It is a film that leaves a lasting impression.

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I loved It!, November 23, 2011

By **pera99** - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: **Viento Negro [NTSC- Region 1 & 4- Import Latin America] David Reynoso (DVD)**

It is such a great movie. It had really great actors. Great natural backgrounds to put the movie in since they were natural.

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"On the Road" with Che Guevara As most potential viewers know, this film is based on diaries and letters to home written by Ernesto "Che" Guevara during a motorcycle and foot tour of a significant portion of South America during the early 1950s, years before Guevara achieved international renown as a Communist and Latino revolutionary. Thus, the film functions as an attempt to get at the heart of the...

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The most helpful critical review

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A Myopic Look at an Iconic Figure

This is a tough review to write because of the subject matter we're dealing with: a militant revolutionary who became Castro's right-hand man during the 1959 Cuban revolt. But here in THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES film, we don't see this man; we see instead the formation of the person whom this man (Ernesto "Che" Guevara played by the talented Gael Garcia Bernal) would...

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"On the Road" with Che Guevara, October 3, 2004

By Robert Moore (Chicago, IL USA) - See all my reviews

As most potential viewers know, this film is based on diaries and letters to home written by Ernesto "Che" Guevara during a motorcycle and foot tour of a significant portion of South America during the early 1950s, years before Guevara achieved international renown as a Communist and Latino revolutionary. Thus, the film functions as an attempt to get at the heart of the person who preceded the myth. The film is therefore difficult to judge as pure cinema. Is this, on its own merits, a great film? Or is it a great film about Che Guevara? Interestingly, the person I saw this film with knew absolutely nothing about the subject of the film before it started, and did not connect Ernesto Guevara with Che Guevara until very late in the film. Her reaction was interesting. Until she realized that it was about Che, she says that she considered it a decent but only slightly above average "road" picture, but it gained considerably in her estimation once she realized who the film was about. I think she was correct, and I would agree with those who feel that what merits the film has depends to some degree on who the film is about. If Ernesto hadn't become Che, it would be a good film but of considerably less interest than it is.

The film does a good job of rooting Che's eventual concern with the liberation of the oppressed by depicting his broad and constant encounters with everyday people throughout the continent. Camus wrote that it was important to side with the victims and not the executioners, and in his travels Ernesto spends most of his time with the victims. His near-epic exposure to the continent clearly condition his sympathies and inform his vision. At the end of the film it is easy to understand why Che chose a life dedicated to aiding the oppressed in Cuba and elsewhere. The great question left unanswered, and the one reason one can find Che's life morally troubling, is why he felt that the causes he espoused demanded a violent, military response. Why follow in the steps of Trotsky and Lenin rather than Gandhi? Apart from a single line which merely hints that Che felt violence might be necessary, the film doesn't come anywhere close to answering this question.

In many ways, the star of the film is the South American continent. I have seen many films over the years set in one corner of the continent or another, but none provided a panoramic view. This film, however, by swinging through Argentina, Chile,

Peru, Columbia, and Venezuela provides a graphic impression of the continent's immense geographical diversity, expanse, and enormous beautiful. I don't think it would be possible to see this film without a deep urge to visit the land. The scene shot in Machu Picchu reveals the incredible beauty of the site better than anything else I have ever seen.

Gael Garcia Bernal is a remarkably handsome, talented young actor, formerly best known for one of the two young men in Y TU MAMA TAMBIEN, and is outstanding in portraying the young Che Guevara. One suspects that his days as an actor in primarily Latin productions is close to an end, his next several projects originating in Hollywood. Rodrigo De la Serna does not have the enormous charisma of Bernal, but he more than holds his own in the film. The cast is rounded out by a large roster of professional and amateur performers.

Che Guevara is such a controversial figure that this film could elicit a host of differing responses. How one will respond to this film will be deeply conditioned by how one views him. But I do think that it is a film that virtually every viewer will respond to with great interest, and I defy anyone not to find the remarkable landscapes anything short of stunning.

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Contrary to the review below..., June 20, 2005

By [Jerika](#) (9th circle) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [The Motorcycle Diaries \(Widescreen Edition\) \(DVD\)](#)

...I want to offer an almost-opposite reaction. Yes, I admit I went into the theater not knowing a) much at all about Che Guevara, or b) that the film was even about Che. I was mesmerized all the way through, by the subtle messages about the plight of working-class Latin Americans, by the sweeping landscapes and by the fantastic performances. Once I (finally) figured out that the Ernesto Guevara in this film was indeed *the* Ernesto Guevara, I thought, "How brilliant." It doesn't set out to portray him as a saint (as a previous reviewer said), or as a villain-in-the-making. It's a very rare thing in cinema, or history studies in general: a portrait of a man as a man. What you make of the path Che later chose as a result of these experiences is a different matter entirely, and one frankly not related to this film at all.

Some have cried, "Would you enjoy a movie that portrayed a young Hitler sympathetically?" My answer: a) that's really not an accurate comparison, and b) maybe, if it were this well written and acted and filmed. Imagine the story of the Beer Hall Putsch told in such a way that we really got into the youthful main character's mind to discover its workings and motivations. It wouldn't excuse what he did, but explain it in a more insightful way than the boiled-down mush we are served in our history books. This is what cinema should be used for more often.

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51 of 62 people found the following review helpful

A Myopic Look at an Iconic Figure, November 27, 2005

By [B. Merritt "filmreviewstew.com"](#)
(WWW.FILMREVIEWSTEW.COM, Pacific Grove, California United States) - [See all my reviews](#)

This review is from: [The Motorcycle Diaries \(Widescreen Edition\) \(DVD\)](#)

This is a tough review to write because of the subject matter we're dealing with: a militant revolutionary who became Castro's right-hand man during the 1959 Cuban revolt. But here in THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES film, we don't see this man; we see instead the formation of the person whom this man (Ernesto "Che" Guevara played by the talented Gael Garcia Bernal) would become. He's a young idealist living in South America when he and a friend (Alberto Granado played by up-and-coming actor Rodrigo de la Serna) decide to take a road trip across the continent before bellying down into their chosen careers in medicine.

The film succeeds in giving us a very myopic view of these two men: Guevara for the initial changes he begins to go through as he witnesses injustices to the low and poor; Granado for his love of women and grudging dedication to Guevara. We travel with them on a 1939 Norton 500 motorcycle (my hat's off to the two actors who had to ACTUALLY learn to ride one of these behemoths!) as they argue with each other over money, their deficient form of transportation, and Guevara's unflinching honesty when asked delicate questions (this is brought into focus when they first meet a man - who looks very German - in a small village and asks Che and Granado to look at a lump on his neck, which Granado diagnoses as a cyst but Che calls a tumor).

The cinematography was done exceptionally well on a small budget. The beauty of

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4 interlocking stories all connected by a single gun all converge at the end and reveal a complex and tragic story of the lives of humanity around the world and how we truly aren't all that different. In Morocco, a troubled married couple are on vacation trying to work out their differences. Meanwhile, a Moroccan herder buys a rifle for his sons so they can keep the jackals away from his herd. A girl in Japan dealing with rejection, the death of her mother, the emotional distance of her father, her own self-consciousness, and a disability among many other issues, deals with modern life in the enormous metropolis of Tokyo, Japan. Then, on the opposite side of the world the married couple's Mexican nanny takes the couple's 2 children with her to her son's wedding in Mexico, only to come into trouble on the return trip. Combined, it provides a powerful story and an equally powerful looking glass into the lives of seemingly random people around the world and it shows just how connected we really are. *Written by Mac*

In Morocco, a shepherd buys a powerful rifle for his sons to protect his herd of goats against jackals attack. The younger decides to test the weapon's range of 3 km and shots an American woman in bus. Her husband is trying the reconciliation of their lives through vacation in Morocco. Due to the incident, in San Diego their Mexican maid travels to Mexico with their children for the marriage of her son. Meanwhile in Tokyo, the police tries to contact the former owner of the rifle, and his daughter that is feeling rejected misunderstand the reason of the investigation. *Written by Claudio Carvalho, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil*

"In Gen. 11:9, the name of Babel is etymologized by association with the Hebrew verb batal, 'to confuse or confound'" (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babel)..."Babel", through a series of misunderstandings, interweaves the unfortunate circumstances of a Moroccan, an American, a Mexican and a Japanese family. A Moroccan family acquires a rifle to protect their goats. An American woman, on a bus tour with her husband, is accidentally shot, which is in turn grossly exaggerated by the press who are quick to label the incident as a "terrorist attack". The same couple's children accompany their long-time caretaker to Mexico to attend her son's wedding, where upon re-entering the United States face problems. A Japanese widower confronts difficulties in communicating with his deaf teenage daughter whom simply craves human contact. *Written by Krystl Hazel*

Richard and Susan are a couple from San Diego, California who are vacationing in Morocco while their two children are at home with their Mexican housekeeper, Amelia. A rifle finds its way into the hands of a local herdsman's young sons, who recklessly take a shot at a tour bus and hit Susan in the shoulder, causing her severe injury. The distraught Richard calls home to tell Amelia of the situation, who shortly departs for Mexico to attend her son's wedding, with Richard and Susan's children in tow. Disaster thus multiplies, with the situation in Morocco ascribed to terrorists in the media, while Amelia meets with trouble at the Mexican border when she attempts to return to San Diego with Richard and Susan's children. Meanwhile, in Tokyo, a widower tied to the rifle in question, a complex shift of ownership to which the audience is privy, attempts to deal with the memories of his recently deceased wife and his strained relationship with his deaf teenage daughter. *Written by alfiehitche*

Plot Synopsis: A Moroccan Arab sells a shotgun to a goat herder, who intends to use it to kill jackals that are attacking his goats... [See more \(warning! contains spoilers\)](#) »

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