Title: Refashioning the Legacies of Lampiao, Che Guevara, and Bartolomé de las Casas in Literature and Film

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Department/Program: Spanish and Portuguese

Type: Dissertation

Sponsors: Digital Repository at the University of Maryland, University of Maryland (College Park, MD)

Issue Date: 2015

URI: http://hdl.handle.net/1903/16642

DRUM DOI: doi:10.13016/M22K7S

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Abstract: This dissertation focuses on the refashioning of complex legacies of prominent, yet controversial, figures in Latin America in both literature and film: the contemporary Brazilian bandit Lampião, the twentieth-century revolutionary Che Guevara, and the colonial era priest and polemicist Bartolomé de Las Casas. I argue that, like storytelling and collective/social memory, history is a continuing narrative that serves specific ends (Hayden White) and is framed by ideological perspectives (Walter Benjamin). Furthermore, by expanding upon Stephen Greenblatt's concept of Renaissance self-fashioning, I introduce the idea of refashioning--when societies reimagine history, generally apart from or in contrast to dominant narratives--as a postmodern phenomenon of remaking the other. An analysis of the textual origins of the legacies reveals the constraints that genre (cordel, diary, and historical essay) imposed on the writing of their lives. Furthermore, these same texts are reshaped as the film directors adapt the written texts to fit the confines of film and the expectations of the audience. In this manner, we observe how both history and genre become malleable as the individuals' legacies are rendered anew cinematically. Specifically, in the Brazilian sertão, popular lyrical cordel pamphlets merge oral and written traditions, as well as "official" and "popular" history and lore to mythologize the bandit Lampião and refashion the outlaw's legacy in largely positive terms. This legacy, which is developed in the verses of cordel chapbooks, undergirds Glauber Rocha's film Antônio das Mortes (1969) both stylistically and ideologically. Che Guevara's travel "diaries," which are constructed within the conventions of the travel diary and autobiography, reveal that Che, unlike
Lampião, very much shaped his own revolutionary image. Walter Salles' film The Motorcycle Diaries (2004) relies heavily on Che's diaries, yet the director weaves a modern interpretation of historical events in the life of this now-iconic revolutionary, and the result is a "filmed diary" that ultimately becomes part of the "official" (auto)biography of Guevara's life. Finally, the sixteenth-century friar Bartolomé de Las Casas provides another example of a man who actively shapes his image via writing. His Historia de las Indias and Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias craft an image of the priest within the context of the conquest of the New World and reveal the controversial nature of his philosophical stance as one who fought for indigenous rights, albeit from the top down. The politics of historicity are played out in Icíar Bollaín's film También la lluvia (2010), as the director incorporates Las Casas' texts into a fictional film script that frames the friar in contemporary terms and situates his legacy in human rights activism for indigenous peoples. Thus, I conclude that these texts and films compose additional nuanced accounts of the three historical figures' legacies: the texts and the filmic representations uncover the complex relationships between "legitimate" or "official" histories and the refashioning of these individuals in popular memory.