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The love for cinema undergoing transformations. *New cinephilia in Uruguay today*

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Photo: Painting on Cinemateca Uruguaya. Mylenne Lacrampe. CreA Research Group – FIC UDELAR

ABSTRACT

Today, love for cinema is one of the most significant cultural consumptions for exploring the current cultural practices and aesthetic preferences of individuals. This article poses questions in relation to how the love for cinema is transformed, considering three dimensions of change: aesthetic taste and options, different forms of induction and acquisition of cultural capital or resources for consolidating such love, and the concretion of that love through practices and routines. The outcome has shown that the new ways of cinephilia that coexist with modern patterns have become more cosmopolitan and international, as well as more democratic and, in a way, less erudite, for they have gained ludic and emotional aspects. The manner in which cinephiles appreciate cinema these days is less technical than before, and more independent as regards the traditional institutions and social agents of cinema, all in pursuit of a process of technological change relative to access and viewing. Such transformations imply novel aesthetic trends derived from a greater insertion in global culture and the existence of new technological and audiovisual cultural capitals. These result not only from technological advances but also from the generational change that has an impact on the ways and meanings of cinema as a form of cultural consumption. The basis of the results obtained is a qualitative research founded on twenty semi-structured interviews with cinephiles related to institutions from the field of movie projection and film schools in Uruguay, namely, Cinemateca Uruguay and Dodecá.

Introduction

“Omnivorous and cosmopolitan preferences shall be the ultimate mark of legitimacy registered by the new elites.” (Voisin, 2013).

Love for cinema, just like romance in contemporary times, is undergoing a profound transformation. Though the ‘Seventh Art’ –as Ricciotto Canudo called it almost a century ago– became the tension between art and industry, ‘modern’ cinephilia has proven totally elitist and distant from the cinema phenomenon as a cultural industry. The cinephilia originating in ‘Cahiers du Cinéma’ was based on the worship of authors, on the support of “Nouvelle Vague”, on the rites of ‘going to the movies’ and sitting on the front rows of the theater that provided the dark environment for enjoying the great love of cinema professed (De Baecque, 2005). However, the new scenario for cinephilia in the digital era differs from that one in that it is governed by technological guidelines founded on new cinematographic rituals, preferences and practices. Such practices imply neither the growing apart from and reminiscing about the typical rite of ‘going to the movies’ (Rosas Mantecón: 2015), nor the “death” of cinephilia (Sontag: 1996). The new context allows for the greater autonomy and independence of cinephiles for accessing and selecting the audiovisual contents of their choice.

From the viewpoint of Jullier and Leveratto (2012: 196), cinephiles of ‘postmodern’ times adopt home viewing as a privileged access to cinema and digital platforms, cable television or DVDs of ‘rare’ films and indie cinema comprising a variety of experimental aesthetics, narratives, locations and genres. The pleasure found in movies is currently one of the most socially extended cultural consumptions around the globe, and an exemplary aesthetic and emotional consumption for profiling present times within the context of globalized culture and the transformations that bring along ICTs for the culture industry. This is how postmodern cinephiles continue to diversify and internationalize the consumption of films, with

an offer that is de-centralized from the American hegemony implied in Hollywood, and the possibility of digital access to contents from the most distant locations worldwide. The choices of new cinephiles are more pragmatic and ludic, as they depend less on cultural institutions for their cinematographic opinion, more focused on quality than on the classification of films (Jullier y Leveratto, 2012, De Valck: 2006).

The current news regarding cinematographic consumption bring forward a new vision for the classical analyses of cultural consumption relative to the validity of a social categorization of preferences (Bourdieu). Different studies have revealed cultural de-classification processes, as well as new mechanisms for social differentiation, including eclecticism, omnivorousness, cosmopolitanism, and explanatory dimensions of taste in the social sphere: genre and generations (Donnat: 2008, Bernard Lahire, 2008).

Pursuant to Peterson's omnivore theory, the elites of current capitalism consume all types of cultural goods, and they show a wide variety of artistic and cultural preferences that result from the declining process of the strict cultural strata system prior to modernity. This leads to the adoption, by the higher classes, of a heterogeneous variety of cultural and artistic preferences that include the classical expressions of the more popular culture. Other viewpoints oriented towards the criticism of the hegemonic Bourdian theory of homology also speak of insufficient concepts like flaunting and snobbery for analyzing the preferences and guidelines relative to the cultural consumption of the higher classes. In turn, concepts like cosmopolitanism (Hannerz, 1990), eclecticism and erudite eclecticism (Coulangeon, 2005), and cultural openness seem to better describe the new creative classes, classes of services (Lash and Urry, 1998), or the new middle-class (Featherstone, 1990).

Unlike most of the other cultural consumptions, the love for cinema articulates what is learned with what is popular and massive, as it is part of the tension between parochial and universal aspects within an extensive middle class holding a significant cultural capital (Prieur, A, Savage, M. In: Coulangeon, P, Duval, J., 2015: 227). Among the daily practices revealed in the advent of global culture, the taste for cinema -based on characters, images and stories appearing in films, series and a variety of audiovisual contents that are circulating and appropriated from technological platforms throughout the world-

constitutes the basis of the aesthetic and cultural core of the social identities of our days. These are synthetic and complex identities that arise from those aesthetic trends and shared imaginary relative to a global culture, all of which are deemed as symptoms of aesthetic cosmopolitanism (Cicchelli and Octobre, 2017, Regev, 2013).

This article questions the changes in the love for cinema at the light of the dimensions of change that comprise aesthetic preferences and options, and different forms of induction and acquisition of cultural capital or resources for consolidating such love. The questions point at the direction of such changes and the tensions between modern and postmodern cinephiles. A specific mention is made of the new preferences and aesthetics stressed by cinephiles, and their inclinations relative to making assessments and incursions in the global cultures and who take part in consolidating love for cinema and how they do it. Methodology wise, the study is founded on twenty semi-structured interviews that were held with cinephiles from various cultural entities associated with movie films in Uruguay, like Cinemateca and Dodecá. The results presented here are part of a research work done by the Group of Innovative Creative Industries (CreA) of the University of the Republic of Uruguay (UDELAR) between 2015 and 2017.

2. Methodology

The method applied was mainly qualitative, with the idea of exploring the meaning attributed by cinephiles to their ‘love for cinema’, and also the study of the creation of traditional cultural capitals and techno-audiovisual resources. The empirical activity consisted of twenty semi-structured interviews with cinephiles related to institutions from the field of indie movie projection and film schools in Uruguay, namely, Cinemateca Uruguaya and Dodecá.

Cinemateca was founded in the year 1952, as a non-profit association. The purpose of this institution is to contribute to the development of society’s cinematographic and artistic culture, and particularly that of the young, based on proposals oriented at the creation of audiences for independent films and the education of filmmakers at the film school known as “Escuela Cinematográfica del Uruguay” (ECU), owned by Cinemateca Uruguaya. In turn, Dodecá is a more recent institute, founded in 2003, that is both a Cultural Center and a Film School, whose purpose is to offer artistic and technical education to

students, particularly the young. The support of both institutions was requested for contacting subscribing members and/or students. A list was requested at Cinemateca Uruguaya, including the names and seniority of subscribers in order to identify active members, with the possibility of including elderly cinephiles in the sample, as well as young students. Dodecá was considered for it includes a differential profile of youth with higher socio-economic levels.

Interviews were semi-structured and based on twelve questions covering the following aspects: social meaning of cinema, preferences, audiovisual literacy –influences, knowledge–, viewing ways and rituals –movie theaters, households, festivals, etc.–, access to films and selection mechanisms, opinions on national filmmaking. The methodological question that guided the work revolved around the definition of the meaning of love for cinema, and its consequential practices. To this end, the words expressed by interviewees were presented as ‘real’ experiences (King, 2004:12). The fieldwork was carried out between April 2015 and October 2016.

3. Cinephile taste: from modern love to postmodern passion

“Affinity originates in selection, and the umbilical cord is never severed. To the extent that selections are renewed on a daily basis, with the concretion of new acts for confirming it, affinity will not wither or decline to its disarticulation or destruction. The will for keeping affinity alive foretells the everyday battle and promise of an unrelenting watchfulness. For the modern, this solid and durable love contrasts with the need for instantaneity.” (Bauman, 2006: 65)

Love is something quite hard to define. Inspirational feelings and emotions that permeate lead us to thinking that we are in the right place, at the right time, and with the right person. In the case of modern or traditional cinephiles, the ‘conceptual’ taste was key, for it resulted from the script and the staging. Such ‘educated’ taste had the substantial influence of techniques and an ‘erudite’ profile. Even when numerous studies –particularly those relative to musical preferences– have confirmed the decline of

snobbery, with the advent of cultural omnivoroursness (Peterson and Kern: 1996), the taste for cinema revealed by the individuals interviewed maintains the consideration of every film's technical criteria – imagery, photography, and so on. Taste is deemed as the capacity for judging. And the ways in which cinephiles judge cinema is experienced from a venue of subjectivity, from the feelings involved, and from the atmosphere created or reproduced by the work presented, as well as from the emergence of an almost visceral personal sensitivity. From a psychological perspective, emotions imply the convergence of physical and mental aspects. As Plutchik (1980) explained it, it is a mood, or a complex emotional experience, that involves a particular state of consciousness (fear, surprise, sadness, disappointment, rage, hope, joy, or acceptance, depending on the author's taxonomy), and certain physiological reactions (different forms of breathing, altered blood flow, gland secretions, muscle tension, facial changes, and dilated pupils, among others).

“I am eminently more of a devotee of indie cinema and European and Latin American films, rather than of mainstream or Hollywood films. That could be a possible path. (...) I am very fond of the cinema which, in some way, shows metaphysical and introspective aspects relative to the human condition.” (Pedro)

The “emotional” preferences brought up by several individuals interviewed point at the cinema that is experienced through feelings and sensitivity. As Benzecry explained (2012) in a reference to opera lovers, it is a passion based on a strong bonding that implies a search for transcendence. For some, it is a matter of standing out and going beyond their everyday lives by becoming heroes, and for others it is an addiction to artistic expressions. For others, the nostalgic ones, it is a way to reaffirm past times through a cultural practice. And there are others who go on a pilgrimage for identifying with those they barely know, as they get carried away with the story. In all of them, their commitment is as much evident as their profound communion with the cultural expression.

“Another type of movie that I really like are films with a narrative that builds up emotions in the viewer. I like to call that the “positive atmosphere”. (...) The atmosphere is like sound, something dense that upsets us. But, how could an atmosphere be positive? That is what happens to me with movies that clearly belong to the classical type of films, such as “Catch me

if you can” or “Almost Famous”, or “Marley & Me”. Those are movies where characters are built along with the bonds between them, and the storyline and the emotional states shown are not to feel identified with them but rather to be shocked with what you see happen, as your feelings open up from your condition of viewer until they reach a climax. I just love that kind of movies.” (Andrés)

In the opinion of Metz (1977), as we experience a film, we activate different pleasure mechanisms such as voyeurism, fetishism, and narcissism. Observing the other, as well as the treatment of the play as a fetish, and the satisfaction of omniperception implied in viewing the film, all guarantee filmic pleasure and enjoyment. The ‘emotional’ pleasure described by the interviewee refers to a cinema experienced in a subjective way, from the viewer’s feelings and from the atmosphere created and the sensitivity unfolded. According to Pinker (2007, 671), our brain elaborates pleasure from mechanisms comprising neuronal circuits stimulated by certain activities. The enjoyment of art is one of them, and movie fictions are a clear example of how those processes operate. The technology of fiction expresses a simulation of life that envelops the audience from the comfort of their sofa at home or from the theater seat. “*When illusion operates, there is no mystery in the enjoyment of movies or in wondering why we enjoy life.*” (Pinker, 2007: 689)

Thus, the pleasure of fiction resembles what philosopher Danto (2005: 129) pointed out about the works of Renaissance that allowed for the possibility of gazing at the world. Even when films are not deemed as a copy or as the parallel actual world assumed by neuroscience in relation to the physical bond between viewing and the resulting emotions, it is indeed possible to find a connection between the script, the story told and the audiovisual work as a whole, and the different moods caused in viewers.

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“I do like it when there is a will for **experimenting, trying and being challenged**, saying that “we want to reach “the maximum”. I like that, I like searching for what is rare.” (Julián)

“If I find out that there is something new by Kawrismaki I go to see it because I saw things done by him that I really liked. At Cinemateca, they showed two films by Atom Egoyan. And when I lived in Barcelona, I saw a whole series, and repeated two or three films that I had already seen because I really liked those movies a lot. So, I could say that my choices are based on references. I also like new things: I am used to viewing new proposals that come with good comments by the public.” (Andrea)

Additionally, for cinephiles, going to the movies tends to represent an experience of multiple meanings. The contemporary codes of the love for cinema include not only friendly and happy emotions but also provocative feelings that relate to poignancy and shock. Emotivity is sensed either in a romantic and nostalgic manner, or in a challenging way, as a risk and a provocation, and as a paralyzing shock. These forms reveal the intensity and passion that are the contemporary keys of love, as well as of the love for cinema.

Films also represent a combination of different arts. In what concerns art in general, **I like to feel moved with the generation of feelings and emotions**. Sometimes it is not so easy to determine why we feel that way. For example, from a rational point of view, I do not like Tarantino, whose political ideas are quite opposite to mine. But I adore Godard, and I am sure that Tarantino was an absolute consumer of Godard. If I realize that I actually do not like the individual, I think it is better than just having him go unnoticed to me. Apart from those in relation to whom I feel total indifference, there are guys who in fact bother me, but they have a way of filling me with emotions, and that is the type of film I prefer. Sometimes I complain, but I think that it is better to complain than feeling just nothing at all. For instance, I hate Lars Von Trier with all my heart, but there is something that he generates in me.” (Matías)

Something that Jullier and Leveratto –as well as Lipovetsky and Serroy– point at as “camp and kitsch films” appears within this category of preferences with a trend towards eclecticism that includes the global market with renowned directors, apart from pursuing aesthetics and a perspective for an ‘utmost’ and ‘uncomfortable’ provocation. Along that line, movies that include non-conventional narrative techniques are deemed valuable.

“I can think of two perspectives appreciative of two types of movies that I like a lot, and they are quite different from one another. They are those “blow out” movies –as I like to call them– in the sense that there is a turning point in the film that brings up the surprise or astonishment effect as you watch. Something that makes you say “WTF?!” (Leonardo)

Among the preferences of the cinephiles interviewed, some new aspects detected are pointing at present times. On one side, there is the worship of ‘provocative films’, a ‘strident’ type of cinema that is ‘shocking’. It is a sort of good taste of bad taste, and the preference for excess. It is also about the taste for what is not enshrined and what is reactive (‘dud’). There is particular evidence as to the taste for what is camp, associated with what is trash and kitsch. ‘Trash’ relates to ‘shocking’ works that challenge social, sexual and political norms. The taste for what is kitsch is also an emblem for the time period. According to the authors, the historical kitsch proposed the replication of classical trends enshrined amidst decorative aesthetics that were sumptuous and annoying. At present, in kitsch, ‘the excessive side is fully and awarably assumed: noisy and loud kitsch that is never quite self-assumed.’ (2015: 259). In its application to the case of films, what Lipovetsky and Serroy call ‘neokitsch’ plays a ludic role more intense than the classical ways of social distinction, for the neokitsch cinematographic preferences are also an expression of the hedonistic consumption of culture and art.

As the authors have explained, upon its emancipation regarding class norms and cultures, the ways of consumption have become hedonized and privatized to a great extent. People buy pleasure, emotions, and relax, with no significant ambition. Delusions and ecstasy in cinematographic works focus on entertainment rather than on ‘cultural ambition’. The advent of what is considered ‘neokitsch’ is an

indication of unregulated cultural hierarchies. The eroded difference between high and low culture is quite evident. All aesthetics become plausible and legitimate. Individuals increasingly select their choice without the social cost of what would be “legitimate” taste for “cultural” works, without assigning importance to the negative judgments of others as a result of their own cinematographic options. Bad taste shown in a bold way turns into something that is deemed ‘cool’. The taste for bad taste and for what is insignificant and vulgar has become chic.

So, there is an acclaimed form of kitsch under development, which Sontag (1984) called ‘camp’, as an expression indicating something that is “offensive, inappropriate or in such bad taste that it ends up being amusing.” This neokitsch brings along the appreciation of extravagant fantasy. According to Moles, there are two types of kitsch, whereas Lipovetsky and Serroy have even added a third category. The notion of kitsch originates in the second half of the 19th century, and according to etymologists Kluge and Götze, the term “kitsch” comes from the English word ‘sketch’, as a form of evidence of the unrelenting search for cheap sketches and works of art by tourists from the U.S. who visited the city of Munich around 1870. Also, it is common to make reference to the Mecklenbourgeois dialect that includes the verb “kitschen” which means “picking up mud from the street” or “disguising furniture to make it look more antique”, while the variant “verkitschen” means to sell at a low price.

Who could possibly deny answering the question regarding the keys of their love for cinema? This is something that Jullier wonders in his book “Qu'est-ce qu'un bonfilm?” [What is a good movie?] (2002). In the author’s opinion, the puzzle made up with the responses to that question includes Kantian models as well as postmodern subjectivities, and everything in between. Who could possibly define art? As Pierre Bourdieu has said, the strategies for distinction also imply camouflage strategies that impose a logic of ‘good taste’. Is there a possibility that kitsch may have become the new distinctive code of today’s cinephiles?

4. The love for cinema as a distinctive taste and as cultural capital. Snobs, innovators, and cosmopolitans

“I am most attracted by authors. I feel that elitist classicism that takes me to view works of art as the work of some enlightened authors. That is what I am initially guided by.” (Mathías)

“In general, I chose directors and not actors, in whom I am not so much interested.” (Rosa)

Among the cinephiles interviewed, there are different ways of legitimizing their love for films, and different forms of representing the distinction and singularity that such hobby conveys. The value enhancement of authors, that is, of film directors, is quite significant, as evidenced in the story of Germán who considers them as “visionary”. And the preference for **classics** is usually an aspect in common between cinephiles that conveys the force of tradition and of erudite codes of modern cinephilia (Jullier and Leveratto). The value attributed to cinema classics is that of a referential icon in terms of taste, attraction and enchantment. Those references include the most enshrined examples of movies, with mention of European directors like Visconti, Hitchcock and Godard, among others, and movements like Italian neorealism as evidenced in the quote below, in addition to numerous aesthetic trends.

“I am very fond of Italian movies, like those of Luchino Visconti. I love those films, and in general, I particularly enjoy the Italian films from the 50s and 60s.” (Lourdes)

“I loved those Hitchcock movies. I am not sure of watching them now because I have gone back to previous stages of cinema due to the existence of Cinemateca. I have seen the festivals that they organize by directors or genres many times (though not as systematically as my son does it).” (Grazziella)

“Taste changes with time,...as a grown-up I became very interested in Italian neorealism and tried to see everything available in that regard.” (Julio)

In addition to the most common forms of cultural snobbery in modern cinephilia which characterize most of the cinephiles interviewed, there are other varieties that reveal the advent of “postmodern eclecticism” –as defined by Donnat (2008)–, based on the flaunt of classical preferences as well as on the combination of dissimilar attractions. Taste diversity may be found in two recurrent values mentioned by those interviewed, which imply a transition towards postmodern fields in what concerns cinematographic preferences.

Firstly, the inclination for what is new, associated not only with reproducing renowned authors – directors already well known amidst the international world of movies– as evidenced in Pedro’s case, but also with the inclusion of **market success criteria** for defining an orientation in viewing options, was something pointed out by some of the younger cinephiles like Mario.

“Because there are some **directors** I like, every time they release a **new movie**, I try to go to the cinema to see that film.” (Pedro)

“I don’t know my reasons for selecting one movie. I know about directors (...) and my choice depends on preferences. I also like **new things**: I try to see new things for which I have heard **good critics by the public**.” (Mario)

Representing “what is new” is the modern essence of films. Something trendy from the present time is unfolded for the 2.0 cinephiles or postmodern cinephiles. There is always a value found in the new things as a motivation for movie viewing. The differences among the cinephiles interviewed relate to the factors that represent the more significant guide and motivation for selection a specific movie, like considering the director, as Pedro mentioned, or the “critics by the public” as Mario said. In both cases, the interviewees revealed their will to discern the work to be viewed on their own. In the first case, the value of a previous reference reproduces the cinematographic model and relates to modern cinephilia,

while in the other case, where market success is also considered, the behaviors mentioned are characteristic of postmodern cinephilia, which deems movie goers as a qualified referential factor, with which box-office results or the scope of viewers on the Internet stir up the curiosity of cinephiles.

Secondly, the trend of cosmopolitan taste is revealed in the search for what is universal and global, which is considered as having an exacerbated value resulting from its aspects that are different and assessed not in relation to their capacity for representing a particular nation or territory, but rather upon their consideration as an expression of what is global.

“I am never guided by countries of origin either, except in cases of **the latest trend** from a country that produced good movies before, as was the case of Romanian films. (...) A number of filmmakers appeared on scene with movies that were quite similar, but they were all good anyway. Before that, we had Danish movies like those by Lars Von Trier, Thomas Vinterberg (Dogma 95), and the new films from Argentina. But except for that, I never say that I prefer one particular country for choosing my favorites. The fact that a film was made in a specific country will hardly determine our preference for it, nor will the work have any special merit due to its origin.” (Gustavo)

It could be said that preferences for exotic movies are the new archetypal way of the love for cinema among the interviewees. Exoticism is a term that originates in the 16th century (Beyme, 2008). However, it was not until the 19th century that we started using the word. During that last century, it was possible to see a variety of exotic modes in Europe. Creative musicians, writers and decorators under the influence of Art Nouveau ended up filling up European spaces with exoticism, as they “charmed people”. At present, exotic taste is a mark of belonging to a global culture and a symptom of cosmopolitanism and omnivorousness. The cinephiles interviewed associated preferences for what is exotic with a variety of aesthetics. In one way, they saw that taste as a trend towards hybridity and aesthetic mixes, and in another way –and in relation to the taste of movies from distant origins– they

considered those preferences as a sign of cultural globalization. That is how, today, Iranian, Japanese or Finnish films, as well as movies from Hong Kong, are all present in the taste of the interviewees.

“I am very fond of Japanese movies, but not because I think it is better or because I prefer it over others. I just like it. However, I have no favorite countries or directors. I also like the slow Iranian films and other movies from the Eastern world. I consider a lot of those films as moving and I like them very much.” (Yamandú)

“I really like Iranian movies and particularly the work of Kiarostami. Not long ago, I saw “Where is the friend’s home?” again, which is absolutely great. I even have a copy to watch at home. I also like his movie “Taste of cherry”, which is a different type of film, but also spectacular.” (Cristina)

“Exotic” taste, associated with authors and stories from the most diverse parts of the world, is reaffirmed among cinephiles who consider cinema as a universal language where the world’s aesthetics and narrative are all part of a shared global sense. What is exotic pursues the emotion arisen by the storyline, by the performance of actors, by the narration, by the photography and all of the aesthetic assembly that turns the movie into a work of art and an emblem of globalization.

References made to preferences for universal aesthetic proposals reveal an interest in aesthetic perceptions and expressive forms and cultural practices that provide a sort of aesthetic cohesion to those who share them beyond the geographical context to which they belong, applied to the case of movies and similar to those proposed by Regev (2013) for the preferences associated with pop-rock, explaining part of the advent of aesthetic cosmopolitanism. Then there is Savage’s (Savage, M. In: Coulangeon and Duval, 2013: 227-235) confirmation of the advent of a cosmopolite cultural capital –abiding by Holt–, where those with a more significant cultural capital like professionals and managers have a broader vision of the world that also relates to their having lived in various countries or regions and their profuse regular travels. Perhaps the taste for exotic films among the cinephiles interviewed (mostly professionals or university students of an intermediate socio-economic level and with a high cultural capital) is an indication of the differential preferences of postmodern cinephilia that is oriented at a

worldly and global position amidst the definition of new forms of cultural capital in an audiovisual context.

5. About love and legacies: habitus, cultural capital and techno-audiovisual resources

One of the classical forms of love related to ‘reproduction’, and from the love of cinema –the ‘social reproduction of love for cinema’– is noticed in the generational transmission of cinephilia. We could even say that in their biographical line, cinephiles mention cultural capitals and techno-audiovisual resources that place them within a cinematographic habitus that make them different from those who view films as amateurs or as simple and occasional consumers of culture. Cultural capitals are recurrently naturalized by people, operating invisibly throughout the life of every one. Nevertheless, they imply a significant contribution to the ways in which those strongly related to educational processes act, think, and feel.

The generational transmission of cultural capitals comprises the “habitus” (Bourdieu) of the close environment, particularly the original family and socializing institutions such as schools, clubs, neighborhoods, and religion, among others. It is the opinion of Pierre Bourdieu that family and school function in an “indivisible manner” as the places for defining the competence deemed necessary, and where the value that such competence will have is determined. Far from being something that is easily taken in, acquiring cultural capital implies a lot of hard work and efforts, as well as enchantment and celebration. According to Bourdieu (1989), cultural capital may be detected in different stages: as an in-built capital that relates to the “habitus” acquired in our education, as something that is part of learning, for example, languages or arts, and as an objective capital received through the possession of cultural assets in a domestic atmosphere, such as original works of art, and copies thereof, or musical instruments and books present in the household, or in the form of institutionalized capitals that include the rites of educational degrees.

The built-in capital implies the personal tasks of instilling and absorbing, thus requiring a lot of time, with different results obtained depending on each individual. That capital may be acquired inadvertently and in a concealed manner as a form of hereditary transmission. And that characteristic is the most powerful principle of this. The capital acquired in an objective manner is materially transmitted by means of texts, paintings, and sculptures, among other elements. Apparently –and due to its material nature– this capital is seen as autonomous. It is nevertheless commonly associated with the built-in capital. The institutionalized capital refers mainly to the achievement of educational degrees. With them, “social alchemy” produces a type of cultural capital that is in a way autonomous in relation to the bearer, even when it also calls for its constant validation. Cultural capital provides a social and taxonomic ranking that enables social identifications on the basis of one’s status and lifestyle.

In recent years, and far from Bourdieu’s original viewpoint, studies were made on new forms of cultural capital associated with the processes of economic globalization and cultural worldliness, among which the **so-called “techno-cultural capital”** (O’Keefe: 2009) or **“audiovisual-technological capital”** (Radakovich: 2011, 2014, 2015) stands out. As Silverstone and Hirsch (1992) have indicated: *“our home life has been invaded by technology and by what is defined as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), which have become a central component in family life and in the culture of households.”* O’Keefe (2009, 2) calls it “techno-cultural capital” and describes it as the possibilities for acquiring, accumulating, using and interacting with means of communications and ICTs. From this perspective, “techno-cultural capital” is a type of cultural capital that lies in the attitude and the willingness of individuals towards technology and in the existing aptitudes, knowledge and skills, where time and efforts are put into what Bourdieu calls “self-improvement”.

Additionally, technological habitus imply certain skills and knowledge –a competence that proves important in mastering the field. There is also a form of techno-cultural capital that is **objectivized** and includes the hardware of technology, along with contents and products. Proficiency in the language is as much necessary as the technological acquisitions for making that cultural capital something possible.

Lastly, there is evidence of an **institutionalized** capital that is part of the educational credentials that prove specific competence and evidence a high social status. The acknowledged and legitimated techno-cultural capital may derive into honor and influence, thus becoming a powerful resource, while its non-existence could lead to lack of skill and social exclusion.

The relation with films that was most recurrent among the interviewees was one that went back to childhood days and to their original families and traditions, with the cinematographic routines and selections of their parents. In that sense, a strong family influence was detected in the social appraisal of films and in the affective dimension that involves that practice of cultural consumption. However, according to the discourse of the cinephiles interviewed, there are three aspects that promote their ‘love for cinema’, namely: family and friends; cinematographic institutions; and self-expertise (starting with video clubs for some and with Internet for others, depending on the generation they are in).

At first, when the power of families in defining a cinematographic habitus is considered, personal memories arise in relation to the parents’ decisions regarding routines, going out and the possible options of cultural consumption. The concept of ‘heir’ indicates the survival of classical mechanisms for the creation of cultural habitus applied to the audiovisual field.

“I grew up with movies. When we were kids, the best family entertainment was going to Rodó Park or to the movies. Those trips included matinées with my siblings and going out with our parents to see a movie in the theaters of downtown. To us those were exciting experiences, for there was no television at the time. And my children have **inherited** that [love for cinema]. I think they have inherited it from me because their father is not **so much of an addict** as I am. (...) My own father was very fond of French films and movies from the U.S., and there were also the musicals, so much in fashion when they were young, I mean those Broadway musicals. And I also like them! Those old musicals with Fred Astaire and all those fantastic dancers. What a pleasure!” (Graziella)

Secondly, there is the significance of cultural institutions such as CineClub and Cinemateca Uruguay, which is evident in the interviewees of different generations.

“Before the creation of Cinemateca Uruguay we had Cineclub (when I was young!) in the Old City quarters, where I used to go. And I was also a frequent moviegoer of Cine Universitario. Then came the times of the films we saw at Cinemateca.” (Oscar)

For the generation of cinephiles who grew up during the years of dictatorship in Uruguay, their bond with movie-going has political connotations and involves a particular sensitivity and an ‘activist’ type of ideology and affinity, to the extent that cinema is considered as a counter-hegemonic space.

“At home, we liked to organize projections, and that was something considered illegal during the times of dictatorship.” (Claudia)

“My father had been a prisoner during the dictatorship, and it was paradoxical that they had movie sessions provided by Cinemateca at the Libertad Penitentiary. It was a strange agreement that they had there. It was odd that people who were there as political prisoners would be offered the opportunity to view quality films... (...). Later on, when my old man came out of prison, he once said to me “I want to watch moving movies” and it was then that we became subscribing members of Cinemateca.” (Ruben)

In terms of experience and sensitivity, some of the individuals interviewed mentioned cinema as an ‘addiction’ and their comments on ‘induction’ made comparisons with sexual initiation. Intensity and passion pop up naturally during the interviews. Because of the substantial aspect of the experience, the first encounter with cinema becomes a central issue for considering the love of films that they profess for the rest of their lives.

“My father used to take me with him to Cinemateca, and one day, when I was twelve, he said to me: “You have to watch this movie.” He sat me there and showed me Kurosawa’s “Dersu Uzala”. At the time, I saw it as an absolute snore! This was like his favorite movie of all, so he must have thought that I was ready for it, instead of taking me out for a drink! In addition to Dersu Uzala, he showed me “25Watts” which had just premiered... it is from 2001 and I was around twelve. (...) I remember my dad taking me to Cinemateca’s movie theaters where I felt really bored. Because of my parents being separated, most of the times my dad took me out, he used to take me to the movies.” (Mathías)

Lastly, an aspect shared by the different generations interviewed was the self-expertise or incursion into films viewed as an encounter with the cinema world based on a particular movie, or on the actors, or on viewing experiences that had an impact on their lives.

“I was not used to going to the movies as a young girl. I remember my first movie, which I saw with a friend from my neighborhood, when I was around 14 or 15 years old. Esther Williams starred in that movie, and I really enjoyed the whole show. And that was probably the moment when I became captivated. After that I took up the habit of watching movies.” (Verónica)

Those interviewed who are in their middle-age or in their youth revealed other ways in which they became acquainted with movie films, such as searching in video clubs or the Internet.

“When I was a boy I used to go to the video club, with my family. Going there to choose which movies we would watch was, in a way, our weekend activity. And there was a video club just one block away from my house, so I was used to going there all the time. I also used to watch the same movie several times, so it was quite convenient because I paid for just one rental and was entertained during the whole afternoon watching the same movie over and over again. In my childhood days, I spent most of my free time watching movies, and I enjoyed it a lot. And when you really enjoy something you continue doing it, or at least you try to keep it up.” (Gerardo)

“A wider range of movies to see and to start watching films. When I was young, I used to see any film and enjoyed it. But as you learn about those who better explore language, you say “wow, this is really good!” And now with the Internet **it is possible to search for whatever you prefer and you have the possibility to see what you really like**”. (José)

Here we see a strong relation between the taste for movies and the definition of audiovisual capital along the early socialization process of childhood and teenage. According to the statements by the interviewees regarding the creation of audiovisual capital for appreciating and acknowledging the worth of films, there are generational differences based on different social institutions. In the case of elder individuals interviewed, family and institutions related with film schools and the promotion of movies – Cinemateca Uruguay and CineClub, for example– were key factors for their becoming involved with cinema, including the outstanding counter-hegemonic role of cinephilia during the times of dictatorship. On the other hand, for the middle-aged and the younger generations, the origins of their love for cinema are more related to family and individual practices referred to the market –finding films at video clubs– and to cultural intermediaries who are responsible for those business initiatives through the neighborhoods. Internet searching is also a factor considered, which implies the existence of autonomous criteria for selection and for accessing films.

It is important to point out that families continue to play a significant role in the induction towards cinephilia, despite ritual changes –the range covers from going to a video club to searching in the Internet. For several of the individuals interviewed, entities that promoted movie-going such as Cinemateca Uruguay, CineClub and Cine Universitario were also spaces where they learned the love for films –particularly “good” films. That love arose from feelings and emotions, and from ideologies and a democratic spirit. And also from a diversity of cultural expressions more than from just the acquisition of specialized knowledge. These institutions also appear in cinephiles as an embryo of new audiovisual capitals that guide them from an aesthetic and technical viewpoint, as well as from an ideological perspective that reveals the counter-hegemonic capacity of films.

Conclusions

The novel forms of cinephilia, or ‘postmodern’ cinephilia in the case of Uruguay, reveal a partial transformation of modern cinephilia that is more widespread as the result of its classical codes for identification. The coexistence of the two modes of cinephilia indicates the pace and timing of a transition that is mainly generational. Such process is articulated in three dimensions of social relations with the cinematographic piece: preferences and the palate of cinema goers, the ways of cinematographic induction and appreciation, and the rites implied in getting involved with movies.

In what concerns current cinematographic palates, what is eclectic or kitsch (Lipovetsky y Serroy), camp (Sontag) and trash (Jullier y Leveratto) aesthetics take the lead. The new and more widespread and democratized cinephilia derives from the value enhancement of codes that are less related to erudition and more focused on the enjoyment impact that results from every cinematographic experience. Postmodern cinephiles worship ‘provoking movies’ and they prefer ‘garish’ and ‘shocking’ films determined on the basis of camp and trash codes with kitsch aesthetics. Even when the issue of omnivorousness in the cinematographic consumption of the cinephiles interviewed could be a subject of debate, a stronger appreciation of what is global, international and exotic was detected, over the taste for popular audiovisual culture as a favorite. This, despite an identification of what is popular in relation to Hollywood as a form of mass entertainment.

Cinephiles are commonly divided into the modern cinephiles who prefer classical movies and are prone to strongly appreciate European films as well as some referential examples from Hollywood’s golden years, and the more eclectic postmodern cinephiles –described by Coulangeon (2005) as “illustrated eclectics”– with more cosmopolitan taste, who prefer the works from various origins and exotic authors and would rather go for camp, trash and kitsch aesthetics. In that sense, the new audiovisual cultural capital appearing as the distinctive element is the aesthetic cosmopolitanism that operates as a guide for appreciation in the preferences of cinephiles.

The search for cinematographic novelties reveals new behaviors in some of the interviewees who have included market criteria when it comes to selecting what they want to see. Even when, among the interviewees, the inclusion of taste of peers –the public interested in cinema, box office data, etc.– as an

indication of how attractive a film is proved not significant, it is a symptom of postmodernism in relation to cinephilia.

On the other hand, the mechanisms through which cinephilia is reproduced, based on the creation of techno-audiovisual capitals, have not fully replaced the classical institutions like families and schools. They rather add new mechanisms for accessing and consecrating films. More specifically, families are the most mentioned, because references to the initial infatuation with cinema always go back to the past times of childhood, and to the cinematographic traditions, routines and options of parents. This is even more evident in the case of generations for which indie cinema represented a means of freedom opposed to the totalitarian regime that ravaged the Republic of Uruguay between the years 1973 and 1985. Nevertheless, for the generations of middle-aged and younger adults, video clubs and the Internet are respectively the references for their access to films, with an increased self-expertise and greater personal interest as the elements for induction, to the detriment of family influences.

Such new ways of access to cinema –also related to induction mechanisms that are self-promoted– were shown as less inbred than in-family reproduced cinephilia. Generational differences thus indicate a gradual change in references and in the mechanisms that activate preferences and values relative to specific movies, genres or directors, and also as a result of the bonds established with films.

The new forms of cinephilia of our days are cross-cut by technology, but they are also quite different, from a social perspective, from the classic cinephilia that revolved around ‘going to the movies’ (Sontag, Rosas). These transformations are closely related to the recently acquired and widespread new technology in the fields of information and communications. However, they come down to more than just the effects of technological devices on cinematographic consumption. On the contrary, they are more intense and relate to the determination of a novel habitus for postmodern cinephilia by way of changing preferences towards integration with the global culture and with the presence of new techno-audiovisual cultural capitals. The love for cinema in transition is thus revealed, in the case of Uruguayan cinephiles, not only in the way in which cinephiles make love to cinema –as to the when, how and where they do it– but also in the type of cinema with which they sustain a love

relationship, and the meaning that the bond has for them, in addition to who takes part, and how, in allowing for such infatuation to occur.

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