

## ***Unfinished Diary***

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« It is this evocation of a space only barely (re)presentable, given over to reflection, “*feminine écriture*” a writing in the gasps and silences of patriarchal discourse. »

« **If, as has been suggested, a feminist writing is a writing of the body, [...] then *Journal* eloquently succeeds [...]** »

« A film that resists the authoritarian logic of ordering events into neat narrative resolutions, that moves to no fixed point, according to some invisible agenda, but maintains a feeling of improvisation and spontaneity in its response to a developing situations. »

Brenda Longfellow, *Feminist Language in Journal Inachevé* and *Strass Café*. p.86.

« **The *Unfinished Diary* is the opposite of the travelogue or the conventional ethnography.** [...] Movement and travel no longer legitimate the subject’s right to speak through/with disembodied discourses, master narratives and mythologies in which the corporal “I” who speaks dissolves it self into the disembodied, depersonalized, institutionalized discourse of power and knowledge. **This is the Cartesian, Griersonian, scientific legacy in documentary film that Mallet rejects.** »

« Mallet’s placement of herself within the film as a person whose authority derives from experience more than from theories, methods or institutional legitimacy, her displacement of the “history lesson” or “ethnographic message” from its privileged position of justification for her diaristic account, her refusal to make herself into the figure of the one-who-knows that most voice-over commentary in documentary evokes, all propose **a radically distinct model of social representation.** »

Bill Nichols, *The Ethnographer’s Tale*.

« **The autobiographical mode of *Unfinished Diary* expands the place of the subject in political representation.** »

« **By restaging the process by which distinct social, cultural, and political experiences enter into conflict, Mallet has used cinema to stress difference.** »

Zuzana M. Pick, *The New Latin American Cinema*, University of Texas Press, Austin, p.166.

« Mallet’s film, *Unfinished Diary*, would fight for an absent feminine language through its ferocious deconstruction of masculine narrative and documentary forms, here implemented and boxed in order to operate a return to zero degree writing. » Brenda Longfellow.»

Brenda Longfellow.

« A possible way to start discussing gender representations in *Unfinished Diary*, is the use of direct language undertaken by the filmmaker. **The production of the film, which is constructed and exposed in a game of metalanguage - where the director is the protagonist of the film and lets herself be filmed reflecting and asking herself about the creative process of the work itself -**, reveals itself as an exercise in search for identity, ... At the same time, it raises the question, expensive for the time, of treating women as homogeneous and universal subjects – Woman. In this sense, positioning oneself as an artist is also a political position here. » Ivan Lima Gomes, 2014

The same hypnotic indeterminacy one encounters in Salman Rushdie and Michael Ondaatje, incidentally, is captured poignantly in a number of **other exilic masterpieces**, Jonas Mekas's autobiographical *Lost, Lost, Lost* (1976), Fernando Solanas's *Tangos: Exiles of Gardel* (1983) and Marilu Mallet's Canadian film of memories of Chile, ***Unfinished Diary* (1983)**. Bakhtin's Chronotope, Hypnotic Indeterminacy, and Postcolonial Exile© 1997 Anthony R. Guneratne, Department of English Language and Literature, National University of Singapore