

Essay aspects of documentary falsity. Study of *A paper tiger**

*Aspectos ensayísticos de la falsedad documental. Estudio de Un tigre de papel**

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Abstract

A paper tiger (Luis Ospina, 2007) is an emblematic piece in the field of documentary experimentation at the service of the historical, cultural and generational memory of Colombia. The main objective of this research is the identification of its essayistic properties, to study the mechanisms with which the author starts from documentary backgrounds that are transformed into an essay under discursive conditions that clearly differentiate it from its generic root of fake documentary. The result is a form that can faithfully express individual experience and at the same time correlate and explain major events that determined it during the middle decades of the 20th century.

Keywords: Fake Documentary, Audiovisual Essay, New Colombian Documentary, Generational Memory, History of Colombia.

Resumen

Un tigre de papel (Luis Ospina, 2007) es una obra emblemática en materia de experimentación documental al servicio de la memoria histórica, cultural y generacional de Colombia. El objetivo principal de esta investigación es la identificación de sus propiedades ensayísticas, para estudiar los mecanismos con los que el autor parte de fondos documentales que se transforman en ensayo bajo unas condiciones discursivas que lo diferencian claramente de su raíz genérica de falso documental. El resultado es una forma que puede expresar con fidelidad la experiencia individual y, al mismo tiempo, correlacionar y explicar grandes acontecimientos que la determinaron durante las décadas centrales del siglo XX.

Palabras Clave: Falso Documental, Ensayo Audiovisual, Nuevo Documental Colombiano, Memoria Generacional, Historia de Colombia.

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1. Introduction

The work by Luis Ospina is emblematic of the new documentary forms in Colombia and all of Latin America. Born in 1949, starting in the '70s he was member of a generational group that promoted Colombian cinematographic culture. Here he began collaborating in work as a film club owner and critic while he created, together with Carlos Mayolo¹, a documentary film proposal against the conventional deformations of the national production and their informative manipulation (Cruz, 1999, p.279).

Resulting from this desire to disassemble and denounce the mechanisms with which communication media convert misery into a mediatic product exportable to international TV channels, *Agarrando Pueblo* (1979) became a classic example of this reflection via the very language of its genre. Starting in the '80s, the filmmakers focused on documentaries for television, bringing about more than 30 works that, defined by the issues of death, memory and the city, have created a school for later generations (Chavarro & Arbeláez, 2011). *Un tigre de papel* is his next to last work before immersing himself in a generational autobiography: *Todo comenzó por el final*, premiered at the 2015 Toronto Film Festival (De Pedro, 2015).

With his *Un tigre de papel*, Ospina marked a decisive moment in his career as well as the history of the Colombian documentary, similar to what three decades before had occurred with the reflexive proposal of *Agarrando Pueblo*. This is explained because this film is a synthesis of formal methodological investigations. Experimentation, review of mediatic language and search for reflections regarding historical-cultural outcomes are tendencies that, from the filmographic beginnings, marked an evolving towards essay writing by this author.

This article addresses general aspects on the coming about and the characteristics of the false documentary. The main points study and show how Luis Ospina, in his film, starts with a false documentary following the principles of the argumentative and essayistic macro-genre. Such perceptions derive from the literary theory and apply to the basic properties of the audiovisual essay. In the studied, compliance with these key aspects originate in the

same *true falsity*, that already implies a reflection on its own mechanisms of representation. Next, it goes through a structuring that is open and organized at the same time, to finally arrive at the expressive interaction of its audiovisual strategies in the montage, among other mechanisms of dialogue with the audience.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. The false documentary

The history of the false documentary goes back to the beginning of cinema itself (López, 2015), when Georges Méliès staged the first war reconstructions. We have had to wait until the emergence of the video, around 1980, to attend what is known as the third grand era of (re)definition and renovation of the formal experimentation of the documentary (Ortega, 2005, p.11).

In this new panorama, the false documentary becomes a way that contributes to a questioning of ourselves as to the logic and nature itself of *documentary representation*. "Yet, above all, it puts us in front of the crisis of the real genres" (Sánchez-Navarro, 2005, p.86), especially that related to the contemporary documentary.

The *fake* represents a special case, for what it *deliberates*, for that eternal struggle between the fictitious and the real that has been historically liberated in the interior of the documentary institution: it presents an invented story that, contrary to habitual fiction cinema, imitates the codes and conventions cultivated by documentary cinema. It could be thought that the *fake* would not be an especially new form for the theory of the genres, given it is possible to classify it within the category of the parody that imitates the traits of its reference. (Weinrichter, 2005, p.69).

All this has decisive implications on the audience. According to Mínguez (2013) "the advance of the false documentary is related with the change that has been produced in the way in which audiences link with the factual discourse" (p.154). That con-

verts it into a potentially critical genre². Particularly, Luis Ospina cinema seeks to stimulate “the critical skills of the audience, creating a reflection on the historical circumstances that legitimizes fiction as source of knowledge” (Barrero, 2017, p.170). Such reflexive willingness is the first between being a false documentary and at the same time an essayistic manifestation³.

2.2. From the literary essay to the audiovisual essay

In its article on identity in the Latin American essay, Pérez-Ruiz (2000) comments that the Colombian writer Germán Arciniegas conceived Latin America like an essay in itself and noted, in addition, that such literary genre had arrived to the continent in the 16th century, even before the influence of Montaigne. Since then and apart from this metaphor, the Latin American essay has evolved, among others things, with some particularities that distinguish it among fiction and politics:

Beyond being questioned by a historic commitment, the fact that the great Latin American essayists are also fiction and poetry writers implies a particular positioning, a special dimension of the essay contained in its conception and execution (Salazar, 2006, p.43).

Although it is impossible to refer to some relationships directly inherited from literary to filmic essays, in the context of Latin America, the same relationship is produced between a certain documentary style with political/experimental tendencies and a shift towards audiovisual essays. To this we must add the direct influence of great European authors (like Jean-Luc Godard) over great Latin American authors (like Luis Ospina).

2.3. Essayistic Properties

The large part of authors dedicated to studying the essay commonly start by exposing how difficult it is to define beyond the simplifications of dictionary. Hernández-González (2005) explains that the theoretical vacancy regarding the essay comes from

the same essayists that “have avoided any trait of systematicity, limiting themselves to, like in the case of Ortega, to give some general guidelines on the nature of the discourse that, on the other hand, are sufficiently broad enough to house a large variety and expressive richness” (p.160).

Without a doubt, the largest and most precise contribution in terms of defining the essay as genre is that declared by Arenas (1997), who emphasizes that its meaning is one of the most subject to confusion in the entire history of literature, in absence of a theoretical-critical tradition that would determine its expressive, referential and communicative coordinates. In this way the world essay has been used in two ways:

The first designates a type of text that, based on the essays of Montaigne, models the production and reception of texts in prose, of mid-length, carefully styled but close to conversational, in those that an opinion or subjective reflection as to a question of general debate is argued in a non-exhaustive manner and without following an explicitly organizational plan, with which the responsibility of the self that speaks comes to occupy the spotlight. But, secondly, the word *essay* also was understood by professors, philosophers and scientists as synonym of method of knowledge, emphasizing the implicit senses of ‘trial’ or ‘attempt’, that indicated that the reflection offered did not exhaust all the possibilities. (Arenas, 1997, p.449).

The essay has various dimensions of meaning: “a type of text in which there is a form of non-conclusive knowledge (a ‘trial’ or ‘speculation’), which is carried out via the use of the reflection and reasoning (developed as a commentary or interpretation), in which experiential aspects or those from personal experience are reflected” (Arenas, 1997, p.91). For its clarity and exactitude, this is the conclusion that we underline.

In regards to some specific properties, the lack of generic definition does not exclude the identification of some features that the essay starts to share with the argumentative texts and what further on a very general outline synthesizes, also on the basis of the same author (Arenas, 1997, p. 447-448).

-Reality and interpretation. Its textual reference is integrated by semantic elements coming from effective reality and by likeness interpretations of these (opinions, values, etc.).

- Implication of a *self* that experiments and comments. The situation of authorial declaration is monological, with diverse degrees of personalization of the subject: dialogue more or less explicitly between a *self* that enunciates and its interlocutor potential thanks to the predominance of the commentative or experiential attitude.

- Reflection. In the declaration, the linguistic mode of presentation expositive-argumentative stands out and there is a syncretic function between the real author, the subject of the enunciation, and the subject of the declaration, so that its phrases can be judged for their value of truth or falsehood.

- Persuasive form or superstructure. Presence in the macro-structure of an argumentative superstructure that defines sections of semantic content and organizes the parts of the text; on this depends the appellative-persuasive textual tone via which it plans to influence in the receptor in order to modify its conduct, so that it assimilates some knowledge or so that it reflects on what is presented.

- Dialogue with the receptor. Finally, the persuasive appellation determines a perlocutionary response on behalf of the receptor that, in the case of the essay, ends up reaffirming the precept of opening that, from different perspectives, entails this mode of audiovisual writing.

Beyond the well-known difficulty to define it and situate it, the essayist text guarantees some indisputable coordinates, deciphered from the proposals by Georg Lukács (1975), Max Bense (1947) and Theodor Adorno (1962), up to some very precise definitions localized in the theory of the literary genres and in the theoretical approximations on the filmic essay. The latter already have classic studies since the late 20th century, such as that by Lopate (1996) and the resulting by Liandrat-Guigues (2004), Moure (2004), García (2006), Machado (2007), Montero, (2006), Català (2014), Mínguez (2019), among many other authors whose investigations delve into the relationships inherited and in particularities disputed by the audiovisual mechanism⁴. Thanks to the determinations of this

theoretical body, it is possible to safely begin the analysis of the essayistic movement to audiovisual media, using for this study the case of *Un tigre de papel*.

3. Analysis of essayistic traits

3.1. The Reference. History: *our history, its history*

The origins of the filmic essay can be related to the first attempts towards a cinema of experimented thought by the Soviet School (Machado, 2007), regarding the socio-historic and political dynamic. In *Un tigre*, Ospina decides to reflect on Colombian history of the last 40 years of the 20th century, in part as an echo of a world political panorama reflected in the life and work of a fictitious character⁵ named Pedro Manrique Figueroa, of whom many real people⁶ speak, and whose career is symbol of a generation of artists that resulted in exclusion and disenchantment after having been left-wing activists for many years.

In an anthology published on the new Latin American documentary (Paranaguá, 2009), the different relations of its inquiries is synthesized in the following:

Upon proposing the death of the utopias of a generation that 4 decades ago had feelings and reasons to believe that it could change the world, in all its dimensions, *Un tigre* is the questioning between the truth and the falsehood: in history, politics, art and representation, including himself with its form of "documentary" where the testimonials are previously guided but their content refers to events that really happened although at other times they describe with meticulous details scientific anecdotes that never took place about a character that never existed (Cruz, 2009, p. 87).

The work is based on a generational historical experience, on which the director began to collect sources to discover the origin of what we understand as history. In an interview given the same year of its premiere, Ospina said:

When I made *Un tigre de papel*, I read a lot about history, in other words, how does history come about? Why does history belong to the ones that write it? So, then I thought that, likewise, history belongs to those who film it. And I decided to film history using Pedro Manrique Figueroa as pretext, and although he didn't exist he can reveal a number of truths around us. In other words, the pretext is false but the context is real. For that reason, for me the testimonial of Alape⁷ that begins the film is really important because he says that history is made via rumor. And that from one moment, like that April 9th⁸, come many moments. Likewise, Manrique Figueroa is a rumor, a ghost rumor that travels and that is corroborated by all the interviewees. (Gómez & Henao, 2007, p.65).

In this introduction, it is clear that the starting point of *Un tigre...*, as an essay, is in the experience of reality, in this case, historic-political-generational. The declarations by the author that appear in the previous paragraph show that a macro-universe (History) is being addressed but from a very concrete time-space area – the life and work of a sole individual– and that a particular historical event is emblematic of others. With these clarifications, compliance is concluded in regards to essayistic treatment to optimize and universalize the humane experiences starting with something singular and anecdotal.

3.2. The self. A collective figure

In Ospina's work, the author often prefers to unfold himself in the characters and, particularly, in his friends (that are also generational protagonists of the story he tells). We could say that Ospina's *self* is masked in that of all this friends that he has made, that talk in front of the camera and share their testimonies between historic times they lived in, personal comments, imaginary anecdotes regarding Manrique Figueroa –although based on the reality of something or someone– and at the same time, what the director has asked them to say.

The autobiographical presence of the author, although it is not especially shown, is related with

the use of materials of his own filmography, one of his traits in other jobs, that he also uses to quote or recycle himself as part of his multiple resources:

[...] The film also has many autobiographical aspects. My work is increasingly autobiographical although it is about another person; In each work, I find a character with whom I have a lot in common [...] I think that *Un tigre de papel* is autobiographical as well, although this time it is an autobiography not of a person but rather a generation. It is the evaluation that a generation makes on the era in which it lives. (en Gómez & Henao, 2007, p. 67).

Thus, the *self* begins to present itself in the form of a *collage* composed by twenty-seven interviewees –that can be grouped into two categories: real, public characters of art and culture, that have experienced first-hand Colombia's political history in the last decades, of which they speak while at the same time they tell anecdotes of Pedro Manrique Figueroa who they claim to have met; the second category is made up of more episodic characters and even with certain false traits in some cases, many of them in different geographies, and more dedicated to giving–false– credibility to the character. Figure 1 shows the collective image of that *I* distributed between the truth and the false throughout the film.

Before and for moments simultaneous to this repertoire of *selves* that present different contents on history –and on the generational experience, national culture, and the life of the character investigated– there is a first declarative instance installed that intervenes sporadically and is manifested using signs that are being *written* on archive images; in other words, a type of omniscient declaration and at the same time, meta-filmic as also part of the different manipulations of the visual materials.

Via the interviews, the writings of narrative signs and the manipulation of the images *Un tigre...* complies with the principles of the argumentative macro-genre and to the particular features of this type of essay although with some variations in regards to the classic model of the essayistic declaration.

Although it is not exactly a monologue subordinated to the author, it is a series of testimonial conversations –in front of the camera or among



Figure 1: Collage of characters from *Un tigre de papel*, indicating the moment they appear in the structure. Source: made by author using film images

characters via the montage-, conditioned by the author or in the form of simulacrum. The declarations contribute evidence of the experience to give credibility (even when it attempts to falsify it). Here there is no questioning of the truth or a lie about these experiences; what is valid is that a person in real life tells them and they are based and contextualized on real events that can be proven.

There is no announcer/observer/author of syncretism. Instead, there is complicity between the author and the friends/characters that speak for themselves and by the author although we don't know it. Given the lack of evidence in the work⁹, we conclude that the *self* of Ospina is expressed via the fiction and at the same time is a collective *self* in real life.

The point of view of the *self* is not dogmatic in the perception of a complex historical reality on which the opinion of the real characters is simply guiding. There is no such "truth" and no such "lie".

The individual experience as both object and method of knowledge is a central feature, but based on a fictitious character that, in every way, is emblematic of many individual experiences. In addition, each experience of each interviewee is a method of knowledge. Therefore, as ways to reflect on history and the memory the individual in the metaphor is proposed, and in the anecdote, while the collective is dedicated to the testimonial.

Both the emotional content and the conceptual content are synchronized for having to do with the manifestation of individuals that contribute testimonials and reflections on what happened historically, from where they lived it and, sometimes in addition, from their professional specialty: history, political militancy, cinema, art, etc. Additionally, in the fictitious part there is emotional and sentimental content (although not always to comment the historic facts, but rather instead to embellish the story of the risky life of the false character).

3.3. Macro-world, micro-worlds and reflexive form

Although at first glimpse, it may seem that the connecting thread of *Un tigre* is the trajectory of Pedro Manrique Figueroa, pioneer of the *collage* in Colombia –born in 1934 and “disappeared” in 1981–, the structure is organized based on four decades of political history exhibited in 5 phases. Next, the protagonist is an excuse to expound on the different geopolitical contexts and, simultaneously, insert a group of representative anecdotes of the experience of a generation in which political activism changed into disappointment in regards to the Communist Party and, in the case of some people, ended in mysticism.

An expositive line parallel to the first two (of history and story), addresses the work of such *collage*, whether as an illustration of the work of the fictitious artist or as a mode of comments of the very film by Ospina. This supposes a triple parallel structure where simultaneously the macro-historic context is presented, the generational experience and the fictitious anecdote with other series of brief expressive commentaries. Sequentially, however, it complies exactly with the conditions and parts of the organization of argumentative macro-genre.

The overture of *Un tigre...* presents three episodes occurring during the year 1934, especially decisive for the socialism/communism story. This introduction already depicts the world historical context in parallel with the Colombian frame and the life of the false character, in other words, from the beginning it puts the spectator in front of the macro-history/micro-story fusion, true/false, reality/fiction, archive image/*collage* image.

Regarding the narration-exposition of *Un tigre...*, there are four decades and five phases, that are political periods based on which the director has selected the most significant characters, events, and the materials to illustrate and reflect on from each period, from the '30s to the '80s of the 20th century.

The argumentative content is in the previous narration-exposition and is exactly the point where *Un tigre...* shows its indisputable essayistic nature,

upon taking as a particular sample both the fictitious life of the false character and the experience of each interviewee when reconstructing his experiences or developing his reflections, in attempts to summarize and think about history (individual, generational, national, global).

The film also has an epilogue: an argumentation that presents conclusions via the opinion of the most authorized characters, but –like in every essay– at the same time the end of the narration leaves an open and unknown space for the audience to fill it themselves.

3.3.1. Systematicity and delirium

The structuration of *Un tigre...* is as macrosystemic as micro-asystemic. In regards to the first, the main plot must obey an order of events not only chronological, but also ideologically interdependent, for which they require a practically didactic organization. The micro-asystematic fragments are interrupted in order to return to the main order, but simultaneously complement each other in regards to the jigsaw puzzle that is the life of Pedro Manrique Figueroa (PMF). In Figure 2 we present a structural approximation, selecting some sample contents for each parallel line.

With a clear essayistic intention, Ospina manages from the start to keep a wide-open substructure, extremely unpredictable by including new interviewees just minutes before ending, and only sustained by the vigor of each moment, each declaration, each effect on the image, each dynamic resource, each delirium:

[...] at first, I wanted the films to always go on tangents, which is a tactic that I have always liked about some films by Buñuel like *La Vía Láctea* [...] However, in the montage, I was not so radical and I went on tangents less than how I had initially thought. I thought that it could become a tic or something very premeditated and distracting. Instead I wanted to make a film that was organic, that went growing as I made it for that reason I did not limit myself in any way and I was not afraid of delirium (Gómez & Henao,

2007, p.66).

The same words by Ospina reproduce the beginning of the essay of *go making it*, which complies rigorously in each one of his fragments and in the set of all, also maintaining the argumentative priority to retake reflexive threads that lead over the parallel threads, micro-structural or stylistic deviations. The element of cohesion always refers to the reconstruction of the fictitious character's life, which in the end comes to be a jigsaw puzzle put together by everyone. A good example of the fragmented constellation and at the same time linked to the rest of the macro-structure is that which constitutes a part of the knot corresponding to the chapter of the "Red Years" (1957-1968), shown in Figure 3.

This selection shows the a-systematicity and open form inside of a micro-structure composed by more than 20 thematic fragments that co-inhabit in a certainly arbitrary order, like life itself and as shown by the zigzagging of the numbering. However, its integrated dynamic –in the purest line of the Vertovian inheritance– is the meaning of the interaction between different spheres of the experience and of the relationships between the small and the large, between the particular and the general, between the system and the individual. Lastly, a micro-structure made of miniscule pieces that express how history can manifest itself via our lives.

3.4. The resources of the *collage*

The concept of *collage* is seen in *Un tigre...* from beginning to end and in every way: it is a *collage* of character, a *collage* of topics, it is an investigation on the *collage's* founder in Colombia that at some moment thought to make a film in the form of a *collage* and, therefore, is a *collage* composed with a large number of resources of multiple natures that integrate, in the midst of other materials, 15 hours of archive images, in the majority of the cases intervened and implicated in a process at the same time meta-filmic, stylistic and conceptual.

The importance and quantity of the archive material is reflected in this note that Ospina includes in the final credits: "the true authors of this film,

Esquema aproximado de macroestructura *Un tigre de papel*

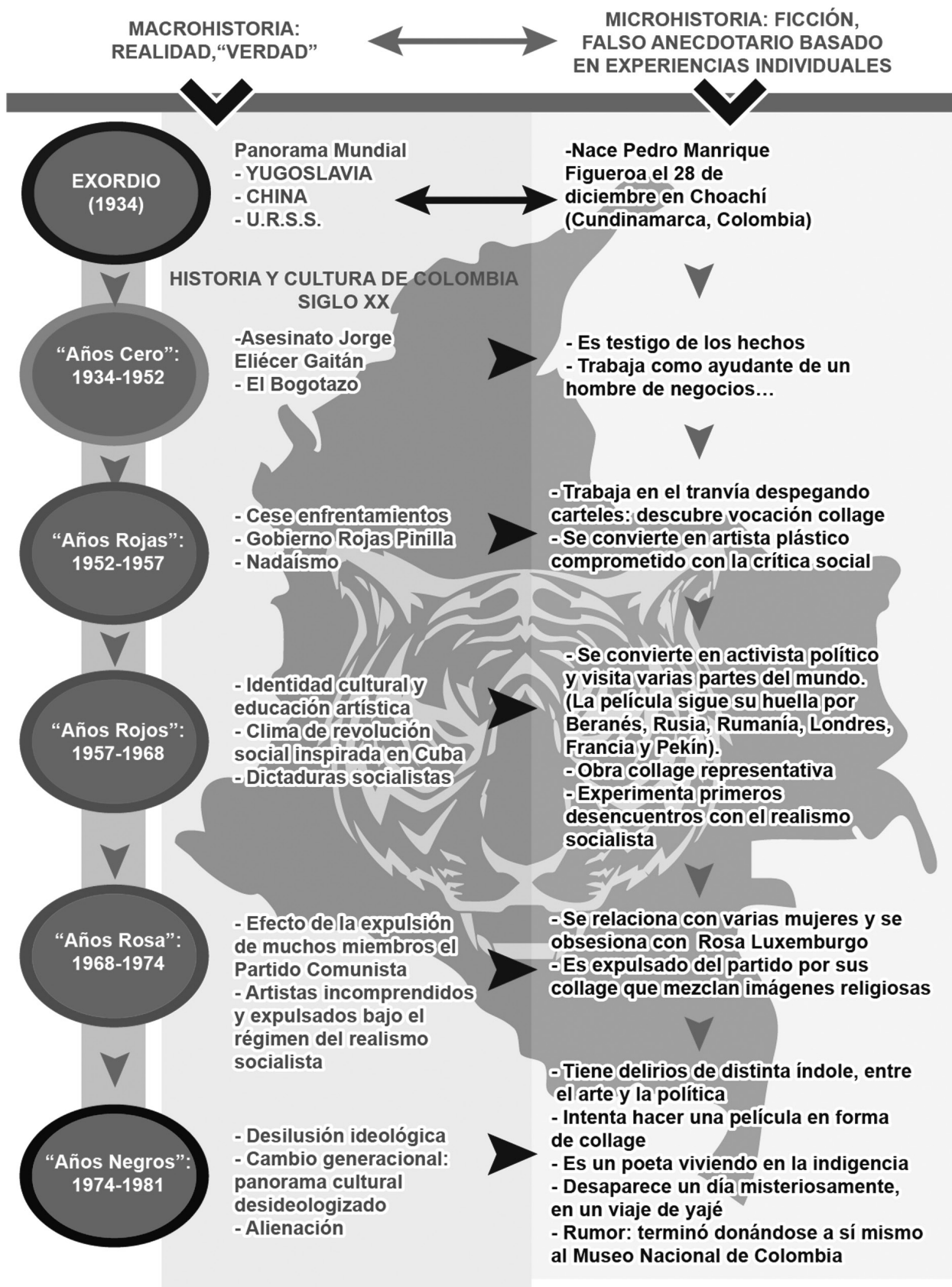


Figure 2. Macrostructure of *Un tigre de papel*. Source: Design by Javier Gayo based on the author's sketch.

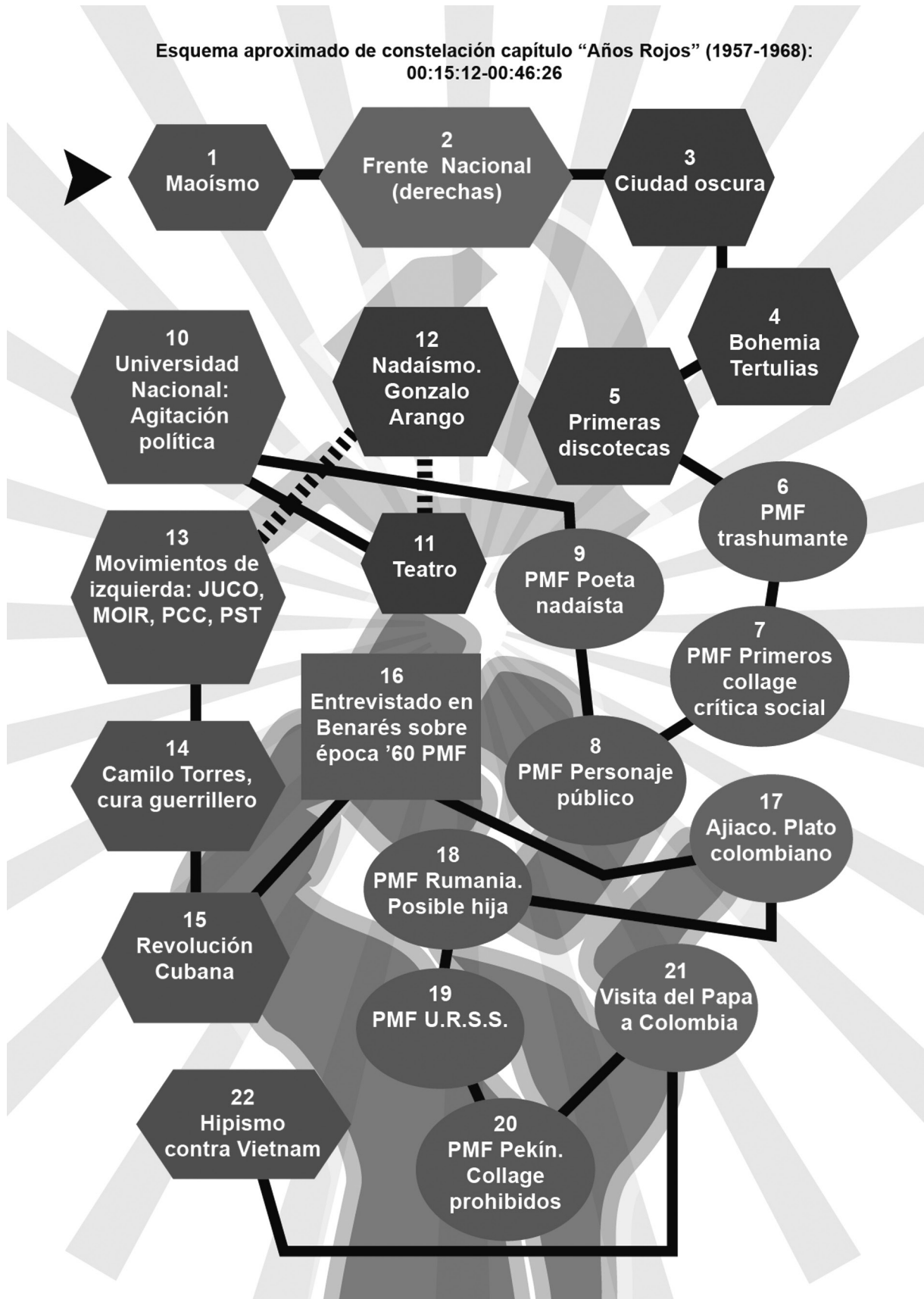


Figure 3: Example of micro-structure in *Un tigre de papel*. Source: Designed by Javier Gayo based on the author's sketch.

although they have not been asked for permission to use their work here, are the countless unknown cameramen that gave us their images, without which we wouldn't have memory".

The dissimilar resources of *Un tigre...* can be grouped in thematic blocks or according to their material origin. For the first category, we have a series of images, almost all taken from TV archives and newsreels, relative to historical people and events (see Figure 4) that are the least technically modified, except for some split screen effects during editing

A following group of materials originally corresponds to other supports although eventually they are passed through an audiovisual medium, generally of paper and with references that can go from the advertisement flyer of a restaurant to a Rus-

sian newspaper, including an article about someone going to jail.

Film "scenes" are used to illustrate historic episodes used in fiction, or are decontextualized illustrations that form part of the figures of style, almost always printing touches of humor. Others come from plastic supports, like that one which illustrates the work of painter Diego Rivera.

The quotes by multiple authors, including those of Pedro Manrique Figueroa himself, are plenty as part of the *collage* composed especially for the film. Without a doubt, they constitute one of his most attractive and versatile visual parts, for which they also make up part of the stylistic figures

The skill with which Ospina uses the archive material is based on all the concepts of *Un tigre...*,



Figure 4: Some historic characters of *Un tigre de papel*. Source: made by author using scene images

starting with the relation between the true and the false, the historic and the anecdote. The same line follows the use of audio resources, characterized by the optimization, amplification, multiplication and transformation of very minimal pieces.

Initially I was going to make the film with a composer, but as luck would have it I found a CD of classic Colombian composers and I heard the song called *En el segundo tono*, by maestro Gustavo Gaviria [...] In such a short piece of music, of only thirteen minutes, I found all the emotions that the film produced. There were lyrical aspects, there were sad or tragic tones, and there were exalting moments. It also had a minimalist side that did not compete with the words and that could go underneath without calling to much attention [to] itself. When I contacted maestro Gaviria to ask his permission to use his composition, he gave me full freedom to edit it as needed for the film. At time I changed the speed, and in some cases I played it backwards. [Ospina in Gómez & Henao, 2007, p.68].

These statements by Ospina emphasize even more the existing relationship between the different materials and the plastic-expressive and reflexive dimension of the film. Its style, therefore, reflects the structural proposal in *collage* form. At the same time, it complies with the essayistic functions corresponding to the manifestation of thought via expressions, in this case, especially coming from humor and provocation.

3.5. Metaphors of laughter

The first grand paradox on which *Un tigre...* is built is the proposal of a lie used to reflect on real history. From this, a coherent and extraordinary repertoire of expressive figures is generated, headed by the protagonist metaphor that supposes the character of Pedro Manrique Figueroa, an invention that in reality is built throughout the memory of historic episodes and generational experiences.

Unlikely, phantasmal or pathetic, the figure of Pedro Manrique Figueroa has in his favor the way h represents an era and its different di-

lemmas. Without being a notable figure, he accidentally became a symbol [...] Thanks to him, we cross from the decades of the '30s to the '80s in the shadows of the history recreated on screen [...] (Chaparro, 2011, pp. 296-297).

Just as the false character is a metaphor for us, many contents of the large part of the discourse are falsified or allusions to a falsification, in a metaphoric tone with the character and with the false documentary that is *Un tigre*:

The following macroanalogy is related with the concept and style of the *collage* that, as we indicated at the end of the previous section, links all the levels of the work and is the basis of the stylistic figures. From the overture, *Un tigre* announces its nature with a literary quote by Kurt Schwitters, writing about a *collage* composed of pictures of the author of the phrase: “*Everything had collapsed and with the debris, we had to make new things. The collage was like the image of the revolution inside of me –not how it was, but how it should be*” [00:02:33-00:02:48].

The writing on the image is one of the many manipulations that create a significant link between the verbal and visual levels. Often, even the rhythm of the writing obeys the textual meaning, like when the phrase of the art critic Marta Traba is written very slowly–“Colombia is a country that moves in slow motion”– on a *collage* of images that at the same time turn into to the colors of the flag. A similar chromatic effect is used on “colored” archive documents with the flag of the People’s Republic of China.



Figure 5: Metaphor composed by bill and writing, also relative to the very nature of *Un tigre de papel*.

A good number of *collages* act like digressions, rhetorical tautology, individual quotes, pauses or transitions between thematic fragments. Those attributed to Pedro Manrique Figueroa are characterized by the irreverent irony and the ideological-cultural eclecticism of their iconography (Figure 6). It is the very decontextualizing nature of the *collage* that provokes the reflection on the icons that compose it.

Digital editing also allows the director to create sets where the real and the imaginary, the character and its thought, or the present and the memory, combine as if it were a didactic illustration.

Like a species of mediatic repertoire, the protagonists of this iconography are the historic and political, national and international figures, with which the generation of the director himself identified. Manipulated and out of place, in the context of *Un tigre* invite one to reflect on the real meaning that have had in history.

Un tigre de papel can see itself like an attempt to denaturalize the images of the show, given that it is built like a coming and going between reality and fiction that encourages the spectator to assume its reception of the film. Later it is the spectator and not the images that dominate the meaning of the film [...] (Barrero, 2017, p.183).

All the stylistic sampling selected for this section facilitates the conclusion that expressive resources of *Un tigre* simultaneously comply with three functions stipulated for the work inscribed in the argumentative microgenre and the essay class: the aesthetic-emotional, especially through the differ-

ent applications of the *collage* and of the absurd humor; the argumentative-persuasive, especially via the fusion between the truth and the false of the very visual compositions; and cognoscitive, especially via the reflection that by way of the same mechanisms is made permanent on the events, the historic experiences, and the memory regarding them.

3.6. The imaginary spectator

The dialogue that Luis Ospina creates with the spectator is produced using many, varied forms of mechanisms that he develops in all the principles studied on the moment. From its testimonial construction, sharing reflections on history, culture and memory via a repertoire of characters with which it is very easy to identify and familiarize given its conversational tone, his congeniality and easy-goingness. Although the interviewees speak about the events and Pedro Manrique Figueroa in third person, they almost always look at the camera and frequently interact with the author and indirectly with us, sometimes even formulating questions.

From the structure, in collage form and especially in the investigation on the life of Pedro Manrique Figueroa, who invites the viewer to go “hand in hand” with the director on his search and to go about putting together the jigsaw puzzle of a perilous life that at the end of the road leaves questions unanswered.

In the interactive game of the true and the false, the spectator is constantly obligated to remain attentive to detect where the information on the objective historic reality and the generational anecdote ends, and from where the same testimonial of the same interviewee –accomplice of the director– is transformed into an invention, happening very often, on the false character.

In the stylistic figures, both the verbal contents as well as audiovisual construction with that which Ospina generates the entire series of fun *collages*, rich in metaphors, irony and, among other strategies, play on words with which he brings about laughter, while at the same time, reflection. The spectator reflects with laughter.



Figure 6: Irony composed by collage and quote.

The spectator must seek historic information to appropriately situate himself in the macro-structure. *Un tigre* only gives a few leads about decisive events, assuming that the viewer knows or looked up the rest of the information. Although the audience may not have information, however, in the film, it may opt to follow the alternate line of the micro-structures, at times delirious, that go tying the loose ends of the story of Pedro Manrique Figueroa, for which he only asks of us a dose of complicity and a sense of humor.

5. Conclusions

Un tigre de papel complies with the objective of expressing the historic reality and reflecting on the written history via the subjectivity of its protagonists. Upon proposing the discussion in regards to the representation of history via false procedures, it contributes to transforming the perception and the ways of thinking on reality. Its social function starts measuring itself using the scope of that reflection and by the destabilization of the communication model.

The film's director uses the polyphony of voices via characters, without the subjectivity disappearing in the degree that it is established. Despite the *self* may seem dissolved in other voices, the structure is maintained as if it were to come spontaneously from a flow of thought, that does not necessarily have to be that of the author himself. Therefore, *the individuality of the voice is not determinant of the form*. What determines the form is the reflexive-emotive flow, not the identity of an author.

The *self* of the director Luis Ospina is diluted in his friends-mirror to participate in a public space where *Un tigre de papel* reclaims the meaning and the importance of the individual memory above the "rumor" or the interests on which the official historical chronicling is based. It is done starting with the most important time of contemporary Colombian history, that at the same time is a replicate of the situation of an entire continent and of an entire world panorama.

Under its disguise of false documentary, *the film* obeys -deliberately or not- all the principles of the argumentative macro-genre and of the essay. It al-

lows the reconfirmation that the essayistic traits are linked to new Latin American modes of documentary and fiction, translated to discursive forms and implicated undissolvedly with the technology of the medium, more accepted to a necessary aesthetic-reflexive process than a generic belonging.

Notes

1 Carlos Mayolo (Cali, 1945 - Bogota, 2007). Scriptwriter, actor, filmmaker and TV producer, member of the Grupo de Cali, promoter of reflective cinematographic activity and with a work recognized by his search of cultural, dramaturgical and aesthetic identity.

2 Outside definitions or classifications that situate it in the origin of cinema, as derived from the documentary, or like a form of fiction that adopts the discursive form of the documentary.

3 False documentary and audiovisual essay belong to different dimensions of categorization. The first can identify itself with a genre. The second is undefined and approaches a form of writing and reflexive structure, possible in genres like, for example, the documentary.

4 For a more specific study on the theory of the filmic essay, see the complete bibliography of this article.

5 In the context of this analysis, the categories of "fictitious character" and "false character" have the same meaning in regards to Pedro Manrique Figueroa, considering that all the interviewees are real people who have experienced Colombian history and in one way or another represent themselves.

6 See previous note. Point 3.2. refers to categories of "real characters" among the interviewed. Some of the episodic characters have nuances of "falsehood" understanding this as a lack of correspondence with their real life, which converts them to a certain point into fictitious characters, staged by the director with a premeditated script.

7 Arturo Álape, whose real name is Carlos Arturo Ruiz (Cali, 1938-2006). Colombian historian, writer and painter. Scholar specialized in the political situation in Colombia. Member of the Communist Youth in the '60s and an ex-guerrilla fighter. His work addresses anthropology, history and plastic arts. More information in: http://www.ecured.cu/index.php/Arturo_Alape

8 April 9, 1948 marked the assassination liberal party leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, an event that led to "el Bogotazo": The city was in ruins thanks to armed conflicts, in the streets, between liberal and conservative parties, between the State and the armed uprisers, between ransackers and those who tried to

restore order to the city. After several days of unrest, close to 3,000 people died or disappeared and over 146 buildings were destroyed, especially, in the downtown area. Revolts would also take place in other cities of the country and "El Bogotazo" would become what historians call the peak and beginning of the Era of Violence, during which over 200.000 Colombians lost their lives as a result of the war between the parties. Source: <http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co/html/home/1592/article-122701.html> (April 2019).

9 That the *I* of Ospina hides in his interviewees is information that the audience does not have. In other words, you can't see it in the work. Therefore, the analysis of the *I* must be done starting with the fiction (part of the declarations of the friends) and the metalinguistic tracks or manipulation of audiovisual material.

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