**Representation of the City's Periphery in Portuguese Cinema**

**INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the years, the periphery of big cities has been growing considerably, thus making the limits of urban space (evermore fragmented and polarized) less and less clear. As the traditional urban landscape fades, a new space of transition appears, on the fringe, somewhere between inside and outside, between urban and non-urban. This investigation stems from an ensemble of films that have in common the setting in which they take place: the city's margins.

The main question of this work is framed in terms of how urban periphery is portrayed, or better yet represented, on the big screen. In a time in which we find ourselves constantly bombarded with images, it is of the utmost importance to be conscious of the act of representation. Cinema disposes of the impact of images to encourage reflection and to build narratives. The strategy chosen by a director once he faces his object of study, the way he positions himself when questioning a given reality, is determinant in its representation.

**OBJECT OF STUDY**

This study focuses on the specific case of Portuguese cinema and its representation of urban periphery over the last sixty years. How does cinema interact with this space? Can this urban space question itself on the basis of its filmic representation?

At this stage of the investigation, there are five films presented as possible case studies: *Os Verdes Anos* de Paulo Rocha (1963); *Habitat* de Fernando Lopes (1976); *Clandestinos Urbanos* de Manuel Graça Dias (1996), *Arena* de João Salaviza (2009); *Bela Vista* de Filipa Reis e João Guerra (2012).

It should be noted that this is not a completely uniform set of films, since they each belong to distinct filmic categories, as well as different time periods. Nevertheless, they all take place in the designated AML, Área Metropolitana de Lisboa. Each film portrays a specific periphery landscape thus revealing the transformation of this urban space throughout the years and its ever-changing relation with the surrounding city.

**METHOD**

The adopted methodology is based on a strong graphic component stemming from the detailed analysis of the body of works selected. Documentation will be simultaneously consulted, namely interviews, as well as relevant reviews and magazine articles, which will allow the films and their directors to be placed in the context of Portuguese cinema.

From an urban and architectural approach it is also essential to study the neighborhoods and buildings which serve as setting for the films. Bibliography presenting the evolution of urban space in Portugal will be taken into account, as well as Public Housing Policies.

More than providing a historical perspective, this work focuses on building a critical reflection around the city's periphery and its countless layers. The selected films are an essential testimony of how this space is inhabited and perceived.