

Globalization and Voyeurism: Sexed Identities

By Claudia Salamanca

In August 2004, information about the existence of 12 porno disks, 53 videos with 53 different Colombian women and girls from the towns of Melgar and Girardot, was released to the media¹, and consequently, the Colombian public. Six U.S. military contractors of the Plan Colombia, stationed on the military base, “Tolemaida,” in Colombia, created and produced these videos. The news of such videos and their performers appeared in the major news sources in Colombia, however it did not explain specific details, and some of the written stories in the newspapers appeared, as one journalist pointed out to me, without signature considering the sensitivity of the issue. I interviewed several people from these towns including owners of video rental stores, priests, journalists, girls that claimed that they had not participated, and parents who gathered around the TV, to see if their daughters were on the videos. The videos called my attention, not only because of the scandal developed around the social performers that play roles in the videos (men apparently holding a special status² in a Third World country due to global international relations related to the war on drugs and second, girls and women ranging from daughters of prestigious families to poor girls and prostitutes), but also because they evidence moral discourses embedded into a global field hierarchically constructed in space and time that is displayed through bodies and performance. Whether they are actually contractors of the Plan Colombia remains unclear, however that is exactly what captivated the imagination of these towns. Military discourse interweaves with the morality of the outsider who in the words of the

¹ The persons interviewed for this paper ask me to remain anonymous. This request was made from the people in the towns of Melgar and Girardot, to the journalists that research the issue.

² Even though they are civilians, their status as foreigners and their relation with Plan Colombia establishes a privileged condition.

principal priest of the Melgar and other people from the town, came to corrupt “our” morality with outsider customs.

I discovered during my research that at least two of these men are porn stars, Nacho Vidal (Catalan porn actor) and TT Boy (American porn Actor) and as I said before, even though the relationship of these actors or of the other men featured in the videos to the contractor company is not evident, they are still identified as outsiders, associated with military institutional forms by their appearance (short hair, shaped bodies, tattoos) in a country which is having a war on drugs and a war on terror³ and as *gringos* (they speak mainly in English) in a context where the global becomes local.

I want to emphasize that these videos also interest me by their physicality, meaning bodily contact. The body here is the site for the intercourse of meanings, as a journalist which I interview for this paper pointed out to me, “mam, it is just sex.” Even though he said that to me, in an attempt to dismiss my interest from a feminist perspective in these porn videos, emphasizing that sex happens here and everywhere, his words, although sarcastic, turned my gaze to the physical act in which movements, poses, locations, language, body parts, pain and pleasure are being displayed within coordinates of subjectivity and collectivity within which our sight is framed. And I speak about subjectivity from the perspective of the performers of these videos. They brought to the screen a sense of self and other that is continually displayed and transformed during the videos. I also speak about collectivity meaning spectatorship in which those images reinscribe themselves again in fantasies, behaviors, subjecthood, morality, memory, place, space, and evidently gender. This collectivity and subjectivity move and penetrate each

³ This is how the right wing government of president Alvaro Uribe describes the internal conflict masking an internal social situation marked by corruption and inequality.

other. They transform each other through the performance of the self and the other embedded in a process of global imagination.

And, yes, it is sex, plain sex. Bodies colliding. Looking for what can be understood as my own way of gazing bodies (me as another voyeur-spectator), I watched for the coordinates of the image and the body. Image and body in this case embedded in porn films are constrained under the genre itself meaning that there is a specificity in the pose and in the type of image that must be displayed (i.e. genital close ups, money shots, etc). However, it is because exactly this that we need to look for the social coordinates of these videos to go beyond the pornographic image understanding its function embedded in self and other representations. I do not attempt to create a new body of knowledge around pornography, but I indeed attempt to create a three-dimensional perspective of the visual document by making use of the social field in which they take place. I intend to organize a plane in which the body performing in relation to itself, to the screen, and for me-other spectator are points whose relations, lines, tangents, are part of a constructed imagination of practices. The practices and specifically sex practices in these videos are constructed by difference, not only of a gendered body, woman, but also of a geographical displacement by the Colombianness and Americanness of the bodies, the landscape and their continuous re-representations in the pornographic amateur discourse.

The borders using the image of the physical body as a volume, which can be penetrated and crossed, are displayed and explored by the porno representation. Crossing borders in these porn videos whose focus is on Latinas are developed under a notion of illegality. This illegality is shown in the borderlands whether these borders are geopolitical or simple body borders. Illegality, for example, is represented by illegal Latinas exchanging sex for immigration status in order to avoid deportation or Latin women cheating on their Latin boyfriends with their

American neighbors (literally American lovers living next door), Latin maids fucking with the American boss of the house while the white woman is out, Latin girls that look like women (underage), or girls hiding from their fathers (prominent Latin male figure) to go out and be naughty with the Americans.

When I began my research my emphasis was strictly on the disks distributed in Colombia. Later on, I found clips of these videos on the Internet as well as the same American performers⁴ on other porn sites featuring women from Asia, and other many Latin American countries displayed in a systematic way, as they exclaim on one of their web sites “the best from all over the world.” The disks brought particular reception and distribution processes in these towns embedded in a dialectical movement between private and public. The reception process moved from house to house in communal and family gatherings to see the videos to settings of private viewings in video rental stores, with a distribution crossed by illegality passing from one hand to the other a physical object (disk) of shame and excitement. The catholic priest of Melgar talked to his community that copying the videos was a sin while the regional attorney through a radio station told the towns that to copy the videos was to go against the morality and honor of the persons displayed in the videos, and that whoever duplicated them was committing a felony. Evidently there is no law that can support the statements made by the regional attorney more than the law of copyrights. But whose copyrights? Nobody claimed authorship. These videos are catalogued in a subgenre called “amateur reality porn,” meaning that the performers are not porn stars, that there is no thought given to a final edited version, and the quality of equipment used is not important. It just happens, and it is real, in real time, and in a real unknown place.

⁴ Among them are 18interracial.com, kungpaopussy.com, bestmovies.com, ghettohoochies.com, www.spanishflypussy.com, porn.pornasm.net/out/T.T.Boy.com/, pussypinata.com and T.T.Boy.com.

There is a clear exploration of a body geopolitically and economically constituted whose expression is developed by the construction of imagined selves in these visual documents, inserted in a imagined globalized world with its technologies. Evidently, ethnoscapas, as Appadurai (1996) calls those migratory flows of population, generate imagery that inserts the other into the dominant context. This type of imaginary reinsertion takes place through inserting others' markets and its consuming practices into the dominant context or inserting the others into the dominant context as constructed iconography. Military contractors with their digital cameras need to be included in these ethnoscapas; they function as part of an official tourism with processes of reinsertion. They travel around with their digital cameras and miniDVs recording everything, constructing the imagined world of the other by inserting themselves (and us) by posing among and within the other. Among reinsertion practices, the pornographic vision has been taken as an important mean of the representation of the other. Enough to say, that this representation is crossed by fantasy, imagination and threat. But what vision is this? I have asked myself that question and for the purpose of its resolution I am going to compare two images that I consider equally pornographic and within that same military-otherness that concerns this paper.

The first image corresponds to a still of a porn video featuring T.T. Boy (American porn star) and Lady, a girl from one of the towns around this military base where they apparently were working. This still is when T.T Boy points to this girl while he talks directly to the camera. The camera, following his finger, goes through her face, butt, then her genitals, and later her breasts. In the next photo within the context of war and torture, Private Lynndie England with a cigarette in her mouth, is pointing at the genitals of an Iraqi, who is naked except for a bag over his head,

as he masturbates. Apparently here the face does not matter, everybody there is the same, and the exploration goes towards what nobody has seen, his genitals and his action of excitement.



Figure 1: From left to right. Still from an amateur reality porn video shot in Colombia. T.T.Boy is pointing to a girl that, as he explains, he chased for three days and now he got her. Soldier pointed to the genitals of a prisoner in Abu Ghraib.

By using the term pornographic to denote and describe the term: vision, I want to inquire, what exactly are we attributing to the image? What is the obscenity and threat that is perceived in the image? Seeing these two images in their specific context I arrived at the conclusion that pornography can be understood as the pose that implies an action delivered upon itself and or other. That action can deliver pleasure and pain as well; however what is important here is that the action delivered by the pose is strictly regulated; it is framed in stories of fantasy, fear, threat, love and sex. . Both stills entail action. Neither of them freeze on the pointing finger. Even if we have a still image before us we know that the action is implicit. However we are the ones suppressed from the action. It is the combination between the impossibility and the action taking place in the body of the other that I define as pornographic. The vision is a practice or the possibility of such a practice that produces anxiety, frustration, pleasure, and pain not only exerted over the performers involved in the frame but in the spectator as well.

“The Devil’s Adventures in Columbia XXX”

These porno videos contain important content of what is understood to be Colombian for these apparently American military contractors but also a clear expectation and reciprocal relation in the constitution of what is being American in these men by these women. Sexuality turns into the mean to explore the borders of geopolitical schemas crossed by discourses of diplomatic and military cooperation on a personal scale. I primarily undertake a visual analysis of the video series, “The Devil’s Adventures in Columbia XXX,” to cross reference them to what I have called the contested female imaginary in the Colombian war conflict.

Different institutional forms in Colombia, including groups not officially recognized but already constituted as a body with parts and functions in the social field, have confronted the globalization process by the deployment of the female imaginary (Salamanca; 2003). There is an exacerbation of what is feminine for different groups in Colombia. From human rights organizations to the guerrillas, there is a strong effort for constituting what should be Colombian essentializing it in the female body, whether it is the body of the victim, the mother, or the free guerrilla fighter. Even though all this proliferation of subject positions carry the disjunction of precisely what they attempt to constitute as a unique signifier; they concentrate what is Colombian as a meaningful symbol to the world in the female body. The guerrillas have displayed conspicuously the image of “la mujer fariana” (the women guerrilla), the Colombian Army its own iron woman, the image of the Colombian minister of Defense Martha Lucia Ramirez, with her mirror images of women soldiers and social workers, and the media and the private economic industry have offered the feminine as the perfect labor force at portas of the signature of the TLC (Free Zone Agreement in the Andean region with USA). This labor force

is from off shore industry to models, anchors and cultural products in which the Colombian woman is represented.

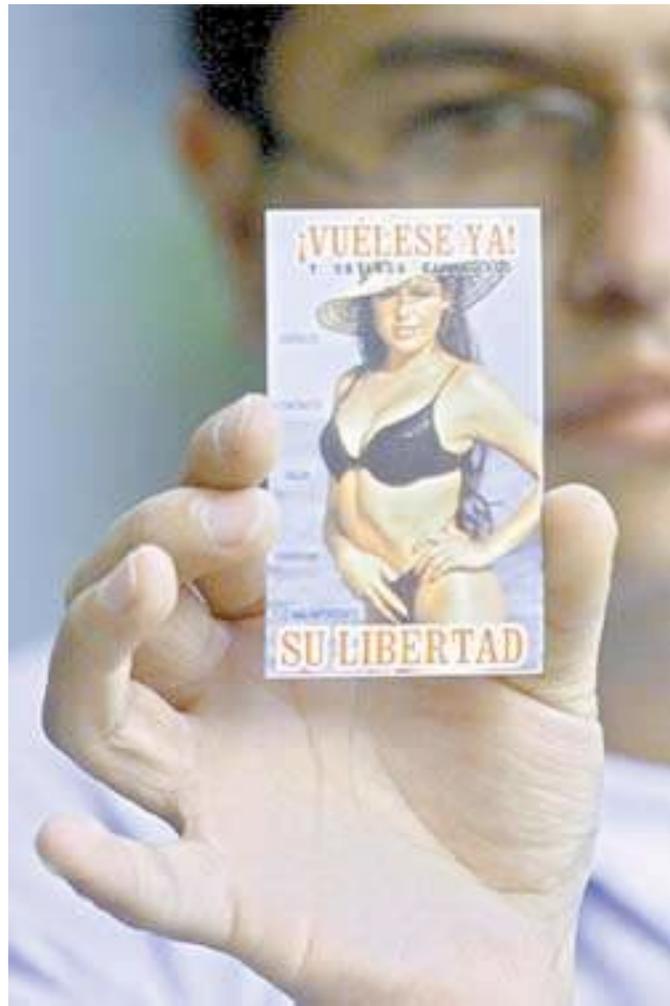


Figure 2: In 2002, the Colombian Armed Forces initiated a reinsertion campaign within guerrilla territory by throwing from helicopters small calendars with the image of a woman (they specified on an interview that the image of the woman was chosen thinking in the Colombian type) in a bikini with a title saying, “Fly away now! And get benefits: economical, legal, health care, educational and the most important thing, your freedom.”

These videos are important in the analysis of the contested female imaginary because it brings a mutual gaze, not to the primary and coherent women figures of the institutional forms. They expressed a mutual projection and a mutual constitution not only of the Colombian identity but its relationship with what is understood as United States. The field of exploration of this mutual process of identification takes sex and the narratives of contact, body, pain and pleasure as their means of sneaking across borders. I state, using voyeurism as a metaphor, parallels between globalization and sexuality. Voyeurism is carried here not by a passive activity; it is

developed through the mutual fantasies that take place during the act. The distance, that is part of the voyeur, is manifested in these videos by the use of language. The voyeur here exposes herself/himself by the desire of being and having that Colombian-ness (in exposure and possession) and at the same time he/she fantasize that American-ness. Globalization and voyeurism allows me to speak about a process of mutual identification in which is inscribed geopolitical processes crossed by diplomatic, and military cooperation rooted in the physical body.

Consuming raw Colombianness and professional Americanness

Pussy Piñata is some very hot mexi-porn brought to you by hardcore legend TT-Boy and the guys who originally produced Rectal Rooter. I must say that I really enjoyed this site quite a bit. Pussy Piñata made it onto my "sites that I would whack to list", which is harder and harder to do these days. What I like about this one that makes it superior to some sites like 8th Street Latinas or Border Bangers is that the girls are hot as hell and really look like some Latina Pussy that just ran across the border in San Diego or swam the Rio and the girls get fucked by some professional male talent, so you don't see any of the soft-serving that you get from a lot of the reality porn wannabes. Another nice thing is they have left out the contrived "reality porn" setups (look, the shock of the Bangbus wore off years ago) and move on to the hot fucking quickly (http://www.jays-xxx-links.com/reviews/pussy_pinata/)

This review was made for pussypinate.com, one of the web sites where the Colombian porn reality videos are posted along with a lot of videos made with Mexican women. The notion of amateur in these visual documents is attached more to the women performers than to the men, who are in most cases the ones directing the action having the knowledge of what their spectators want to see. . They prefigure a type of gaze framed in the act of displacement and closeness, pose and spontaneity. Directing, as Didi-Huberman (2003) reminds us in his study of the images developed in Salpentrie, which not only show by actually creating what the hysteric was, is always at the border of the counterfeit. T.T.Boy and Nacho Vidal in these videos don't only act as porn stars, as recent interviews and biographies posted on the Internet have shown, they are

now directing and producing their own porn videos. After several years in the porn industry, these men realized that they were the ones who possess the real knowledge of the business. Their closeness of the action, and the conscious performance for the camera now takes the form of the one who prefigures the image, entailing a displacement between directing, and posing, as effort to animate the image by the intermix between the creator and its creation, director and model, gaze and object. In this case, they act as performers, cameramen, and directors in their own amateur reality porn video productions. They assume that the qualities of ‘amateur’ and ‘reality’ come from the women and girls who are in some cases unaware of the camera, but not because it is hidden but because some of them have never seen one. The women here carry the level of authenticity. They as amateurs do not lie, and adding the value of the raw body of the Latin woman due to its savage state and basic instincts does not lie. Implicitly, the discourse of difference is embedded in the videos and in their reviews. They pose a difference also by the absence of the white woman.

My white lady, I took you for granted, but I will do anything to get you back by my side, but I failed. So I turned to my Latina, and she was much more kind to me. Took my cock like a birthday present. It sure is great to be wanted and these hot Latinas sure is in demand! They suck cock like ice cream, lie on all 4 like horny doggies, take the cum like champs. It's a wonderful world!

[\(http://www.downloadingpornwithdavo.com/pussypinata/\)](http://www.downloadingpornwithdavo.com/pussypinata/)

Spicy Latina whores just begin to be fucked, doing all the things white girls would never do (http://www.jays-xxx-links.com/reality_porn_sites/pussy_pinata_movies/pussy_pinata_movie_01.html)

She is absent from the scope of these videos but not from their narrative. She is brought into the body of the other, the Latin woman. However, this relationship is more complicated. It goes beyond a simple replacement or absence; it turns into an embodiment and at the same time a displacement.

In one of the videos two of the apparent American contractors are walking and suddenly they hear a girl, so they move to their encounter while getting closer to the girl, they develop their imagined world and fantasy, sneaking over a wall they said, “What are you looking for? Don’t you here the little girl?” “Watch, she is a senior, lalalala lala la, she is alone, Do you see the father? Lets talk to her,” “No,” “Do you see the father?, So...(Laughs),” “C’mon, act like a normal person.” This video takes place in a summer vacation house; the videos were recorded in what is called *casa-quintas*, enormous houses, with pools, usually owned by high-class people from the capital of Colombia that rent their houses for the weekends when they are absent. The people in Melgar who have better idea of what actually happened with the videos are the cab drivers who carry people from the town to the *casa-quintas*. There is no public transportation towards these vacation complexes other than taxis. They told me that they started seeing women in high heels around these houses which they thought awkward for that particular part of town. One of the cabbies told me, “When I saw that I asked myself, What is this? This is not downtown or a red light district, what is happening here?” The women were walking and walking making loops around the houses not wanting to be picked up by the taxis. However, later on the cab drivers started seeing the same women asking for a lift back to town. The women, are said to be employees of the military base and girls from the town randomly picked up by these Americans. I spoke with a woman who works as a maid in one of these *casa-quintas*, and she told me, “They were going around the town stopping and asking if you wanted to go for a ride the next day, they told me I’ll pay you 5,000,00 dollars, and look I am not stupid, maybe they would pay 5,000.00 pesos, and I am not for that⁵.” Others just happen to be involved for a night, but not expecting that those nights were going to be filmed and distributed around the township. Some of the

⁵ One dollar is around 2.500,00 pesos. The minimum official wage per month is \$358.000,00 pesos (U\$150 dollars).

videos recreate a narrative that displaces the social conditions of these women. One of the videos starts with an American guy running through the streets of downtown pointing to a girl turning the corner. They talk a minute and she invites him to follow him to her house, a downtown, middle-low class building. When they close the door leaving the cameraman outside, the video cuts to a shot of an interior that does not correspond to the landscape outside. It continues inside a fancy bedroom.



Figure 3: Both stills belong to the same video. Left, they are entering a house in downtown, next shot, right, is a fancy bedroom. These images are not connected through a tempo-space continuity.

The dislocation of space here is the result of mutual fantasies. While he descends into the rawness of her environment meaning chasing her as he explains in the video, she goes up into a world in which she can ex-pose her/his fantasies that bring them into a mutually imagined world. I am not saying that some of the videos are not violent or full of pain, and almost rape, but they present a displacement rooted in fantasies of the other. They are an immediate contact point that can never be made through other channels. They perform in front of the camera displacing themselves from the actual context into a fantasy constructed by Hollywood images, different presents and futures, and other self-representations. Some of the women listed in these videos

performed for money, others just happened to initiate a casual intercourse that ended in distributed films.

On the other hand the videos allow these men to explore what they consider an authenticity of the act without any script, but also an authenticity in which sex is removed from language, foreplay, and requests by the women. The authenticity is the mark for a body that only expels responses, without script or previous advice of what is going to happen; her pose is understood to come from the authentic body that does not lie. The amateur here is not understood as a person who participates in any kind of experience for pure enjoyment without receiving any payment, nor as a person whose virginity is always remarked. As we have seen some of these girls did receive money and they are not virgins; their amateurism is brought by their Latinness, and in this case by its Colombianness. That Latinness, this rawness, is constructed by first remarking on a natural body that appears to be dark with soft skin, and hips and boobs that are for real. Part of the form that these videos expose is the emphasis of touching. This can sound obvious having in mind that we are talking about pornography. However, these men handle a continuous moving between the closeness of the spectator and the closeness of these women. If mimesis is a form of contact and an intuitive way of knowledge, these videos are clear evidence of that. When T.T.Boy in the video that he called “Golden Girl” shows the body of this woman to the camera describing it making the camera follow all his movements reminds me of videos of explorers that talk to the camera every time they discover something new or something fearful to run away from. The performer is not seen as a surrogate, he is hosting a spectacular-speculum view of the other. T.T.Boy not only points to the woman’s body he also tests it for the camera.

Linda Williams found that an important part of the stag film is the theatrical exposure of genitals and the feminine body, talking to the camera and even reaching it with her hands as the most distinctively primitive qualities of the stag film. Her analysis of the stag films (Porn films developed between 1890 and 1940) is based on a categorization, in which we encounter the word primitive signifying an early stage of cinema in form and content devoid of a full length narrative or conflict, continuity, sound and it is of short length. However, if the stag film remained “primitive” long after the cinema developed into full feature-length sound narratives, as she points out, I want to ask, Why is that? Is this just a matter of genre categorization or could we read this continuity as a specific way of seeing? Why is this primitive way of knowing and seeing the other-body remain as part of the pornographic vision? I pose this question thinking that the videos “The Devil’s Adventures in Columbia XXX” belong to this tradition of the stag film, but this genre belongs more to a specific way of seeing and knowing than to specific film categorization.

Golden Girl’s body is explored in the most western way; borrowing the scientific gaze and method, T.T.Boy explores the firmness of her *teats*, her butt, the wetness of her genitalia, the texture of her skin, and the size of her holes. It might sound like a contradiction, however, as Bataille in his work of taboo and Taussig drawing from Benjamin and Bataille, show us, science is sustained upon the most primitive impulses of knowing but keeping itself from tripping on its own feet, it is held back by the taboo in which science and its “sacred violence” can “proceed calmly despite the violence of its procedure” (Taussig, 1993, 32). This is the same eye that is put in use in the pornographic amateur film. When I see the references that these performers use for themselves in the videos, for instance words like devils, adventures, or explorers bringing to us what they have seen or experienced in South America, I cannot stop thinking about the early

scientific explorer, a mix between entrepreneur, adventurer, and a scientific mind. It is the search for the exotic, the rawness in a professional way. In this enterprise, knowing is seeing and seeing is touching.



Figure 4: Stills from the video “Golden Girl.” T.T.Boy explores the genitalia of this “golden girl.” She remains still, the cameraman directs her. This videos present spaces of no sound or music; the sound has been suppressed when she turns around or opens a leg. I assume that these are the moments when she is being directed. After the sound is suppressed the woman in the shoot looks directly to the camera, asking for approval, or just asking questions.

The search for the unknown embedded in this early enterprise is in an evolutionary discourse: the search for the lost past in a present hierarchically constructed (Appadurai, 1996). They emphasize continuously the natural and savage state of the wild and dirty Latina woman. This wildness apparently involves certain practices that are put in the porn videos leading us to believe that this quality is inherent to Latinness. When I watch these videos they are indistinguishable from other porn videos, however it is what is being constructed by language, exactly the same language that these women do not understand, that creates this specificity of Latinness. Language in this construction plays a crucial role. These men develop the specific type of wild Latina through the method of repetition, generalization and finally standardization through language and its referentiality to the image. There are more than 50 videos indistinguishable from one another. But, in the end, it is the type, the generalization, and

stereotypification of fantasy that reaches us. This yearning for a past, for the natural specimen of womanhood is also remarked by the idea of eternal fucker: The Latin woman. The authenticity of the video in real time is also expressed in how much time these women can fuck. They continually express their astonishment of how much she can fuck, without thinking that there are also other factors that contribute to this long session, for example maybe she cannot go anywhere else or she is trapped in this space. The Latin woman is constructed again by the apparently lost naturalness of the white woman: the fantasy of memory.

These videos are not concerned with showing the pleasures of a woman. It is conveyed that her wildness, and her playful natural state takes pleasure neither as a constructed thing nor a thing that has to be reached. These qualities are simply there or in other cases it does not matter.

The Encounter: It is not only a matter of content but form and stylistics

The Military Contractors Porno Videos present a narrative in contrast to the stag film. Evidently they are not constructed in a full length where a conflict is presented, developed and resolved. Here there is a conflict proposed and it is the encounter. An encounter that for the purpose and message conveyed by these videos is short and with just the necessary elements to bridge the difference. This encounter, as Darwin with the natives in Tierra de Fuego (Land of Fire), is guided by the gesture, an intuitive way of knowing (Taussig, 1993). But in this case it culminates in a sexual exploration in which sex is presented as the natural gesture per excellence beyond culture and language. This first encounter with an other not only genderized, but now exoticized is portrayed here in the frame of global bondage in which forms of cooperation and domination are transmitted into the bodies of these women and men.

Sex is deployed in the narrative as the first natural mimetic language that can cross difference, ending in a full encounter. The encounter and the problematic communicative forms

that difference can pose in a global community are bridged by the sexual act expressed in a multiform of power expressions.

These women do not speak English and it is a conscious decision to involve this difference between the performers in the videos. These men do not express their desire for a silent woman. Evidently these videos are not silence films. But one can argue that while it is important to coincide sound (voice) and body as a sign for authenticity and reality (Doane, 1980), precisely one of the main attempts in these videos, it is the gesture (a reminiscence of the silent films) that comes back again in the pornographic vision as voice. But, what type of voice? One of the video technicians at the visual arts department aware of my interest in pornography told me that he was repairing an editing machine of a pornography post-production studio. The problem was that the machine was not synchronizing the image with the voice. Laughing, he explained to me that it was hilarious to see the moaning of a woman on the lips of a man and how the video lost all its sense because a couple frames were out of sync. Evidently, the body and the sound carry the authenticity of unity, presence, and disposition of ones' own body and space. However important the sound is for these videos, the voice, the right of ones speech is displaced by the gesture. And the presence and possession of ones body is displaced with it. The mime, mimes others; her body is the field of others' gestures. She is requested to mime, to mime herself as a controlled othering. It is shown in the videos how wild she can be, but this is the result of the savagery applied upon her. As Taussig reminds us in his study of Mimesis and Alterity, civilization mimes savagery. It is in pain where she reaches her maximum wildness. Lady begs them to stop she did not know that it was going to be more than one man with her. We hear her surprise, her refusal (in Spanish); however, T.T.Boy and the other performer talk about her pleasure. Again as Butler, points out, pornography presents inversions of different

sorts. There is an inversion in speech, her no is yes, her body is the body of the lost white woman, they act wild on her and apparently that's what she wants, and when she refuses the sound is muted. We see her in the last money shot keeping her mouth closed and her eyes tightly shut, at this moment the sound is gone. They hit her with their penises and slap her until she slowly opens her mouth at which point the sound returns.

When these women speak English in the videos, they are in positions of clear domination and violence or in the other way around they are mocking the gestures, tongue movements or just cliché words of the other. In one of the videos, T.T.Boy looks at the camera in a brief stop of the sexual act and says, "I shot pretty girls for you, like this one, but let me tell you, she is so stupid." And turning back to her, he asks her "Repeat,... me very dumb," she repeats it twice following his directions, and for closing this moment of parody, he directs her to repeat "Bye Bye America." On the website, each video appears with a text, apparently wrote by the performer, a small recounting of his experience. The text that accompanying the video that I described above says:

Paola was by far the dumbest little Latina I have fucked to date! She doesn't speak one lick of English so I helped her out with a little English lesson so she could say "Hello" to all of you! Then I banged the shit of her lil' ass.

In a different web site called "The horny traveler," the videos start from the premise of the language difference. In its description, it says:

It's not easy when you're in a different country where they don't speak English. Sometimes that can be for your benefit though, like for these horny travelers who ask for simple things like "where is the bus" and *end up fucking wild sexy latinass!* Join them on their vacation in South America, where they get lucky with fine ladies!

The language is for them the starting point. They start from the point of the misunderstanding. The horny traveler carries a dictionary, trying to speak Spanish in order to

catch a taxi and ends up saying “do you want to suck my dick?” And we know that, not because the spectator to which these videos are delivered are Spanish speakers. The videos have subtitles and commentaries making explaining the situation.

Displace the Place: The Safe Space of the Voyeur

These men have charged themselves with the tasks of bringing to us the wild women from all over the world. As I pointed out before, they explicitly have put forward this message. The videos are the result of their adventures in wild and far away places. But this is not a discourse that belongs only to T.T.Boy, Nacho Vidal and the other performers. One of the porn web sites to which I expand my research looking for the Colombian woman says:

Colombia is a dangerous place to travel in so we had to be very careful of what we said to people. If you say the wrong thing *you might get your dick blown off!* We wanted to play tennis but couldn't find any tennis balls, that's when we met Nelly. She mistakenly thought we wanted her to play with our balls, which she happily did.

The Horny Traveler Web Site, from where this text is from, deploys this exact same discourse. It is a discourse of bringing closer what is over those far, dangerous, and unknown places to the close range of a specific spectator. In the Colombian case it is important to remark that what captures the imagination of the town regarding these six men was the military discourse. One of the journalists that I interviewed told me that they got the call of the existence of these videos paradoxically from two Colombian military sources referred them of the existence of the videos. They told the journalists that at least two of the performers of the videos came to do some “specials” at the military base and that there was also a rumor circulating that one of these girls was dead. This was not in any news; it was the gossip between military informants. I looked for missing persons ads regarding women in these towns, there were none. Whenever I inquired about the

girls and women from the videos in these towns, they said that many of them had left the town in shame.

When the knowledge of the videos surfaced, families gathered to watch the videos to see if their daughters were included in the group of more than fifty women that were taped. One of the journalists told me that this paranoia of recognition began when the daughter of an ex mayor was seen in one of the videos.

There are two versions of how the videos first started to be distributed. The first one says that one of the girls went to the police denouncing the foreigners for scamming her. She told the police that they promised her payment, which she never received. The police and the regional attorney raided these casa-quintas and discovered the videos. Due to a leak in the regional attorney's office or from the police the tapes were released and the distribution and copying of these videos began. The second version is similar. Again one of the girls apparently denounced these foreigners for violence against her and for obligating her to participate in the recording. What happens next implicates the Colombian police and the regional attorney office. Apparently they called the performers to give their own account of the facts. They brought the videos showing that the woman consented to participate in the recording. Consequently, the videos were requested as evidence, and from there on the recording and copying started. Different versions of the story can be heard from the fast food restaurant to the candy shop with more or less the same details. However, I looked for the official complaints and police reports of these possible versions but there were none. One of the policemen told me that the only complaint regarding the videos was from one girl who wanted to try to sue the whole town and have a restraining order placed on them because everywhere she went people

screamed at her “video, video.” She explained to the police that people in the town were mistaking her for one of the girls in the video and that she wanted them to refrain from making rude comments to her on the street. The police explained to her that she can not sue the whole town because there is not a legal mechanism to do that. That was the only record that I found. The same happens with the identity of the male performers, they are some times military instructors, or mechanics and technicians for fumigation of coca fields or, as I have pointed out before, porn stars.

I got three of the twelve disks from different journalists, and three more from different places in the towns from the ice cream shop to a video rental store that were copied for me on the spot.

The war on terror and the war on drugs have taken a global scale. Policies of cooperation and domination intersect. Alvaro Uribe (Colombian president) has developed a war in which one of the goals is to recover the land where the guerrilla exerts its power. This has entailed global cooperation in training, donations of military equipment and the purchase of newer and more advanced weapons. To recover the territory of the Nation more military personnel have been moved to remote military bases from where they can conduct operations into those apparently lost passages of Colombia. Colombian citizens are returning to their lands or to places where previous access was prohibited or regulated by the guerrilla action. People who want to go for vacation or out of the cities by car whose routes pass through roads previously controlled by guerrilla forces now travel assisted by military escorts. In the imagination of Colombia, the free movement between and through landscapes reposes upon the body of the military. Freedom of movement and action are associated with the military Force as is social

mobility. Colombia has created the program of the peasant soldier. The peasant soldier is the one who without leaving his land and town receives a small training allowing him at least to shoot. Instead of keeping civilians out of war conflict, the recent policies of the State are militarizing its citizens even more. This service receives compensation, a small salary in the Colombian Army. But the guerrilla does exactly the same and some say that they pay better than the State. The Military body and the space in which it develops have reached notions of social, sexual, economical freedom embedded in the restricted space of a country in war.

The government of President Andrés Pastrana in Colombia (1998-2002) opened a space for peace construction in January 1999 creating a table for negotiations with the rebel groups. In this frame, the government yielded 42.000 kilometers of Colombian territory, where the FARC (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*) was allowed to establish their troops without military operations as the place for peace negotiations. We saw for the first time the expression of the guerrilla authority and their approach to civilians and to the international and national press. The town San Vicente del Caguán was the place where the curiosity of many people was satisfied.

One of the biggest shocks was to see so many women in the FARC's army, seeing them as beautiful but at the same time as soldiers. I have found many descriptions of female guerrillas by journalists where they express their astonishment at seeing them with polished nails, makeup, and excellent hairdos.



Figure 5: Left. This image appeared on BBCMundo.com with the article *Entre las Balas y La Tensa Calma del Caguán* (*Between bullets and the tense calm of Caguán*, my translation) by Gloria Helena Rey. This article, referring to women in the guerrilla, says, “According to the nun Celina, the women feel appeal to the guerrilla life because of the image of the female guerrilla well dressed and traveling in cars that they could never buy.”

Center. This image appears on the website of the International Red Cross, with an article published by Karen Marón. Her article *The New Face Of The Arm Struggle, Guerrilla Women* presents interviews with the rebel leaders and female guerrillas in San Vicente del Caguán. www.icrc.org

Right “Sandra highlights the femininity: ‘The fact that we are guerrillas doesn’t mean that we lose our femininity. Our colleagues are the ones who buy the make up, nail polish, lotions and the little bows. They like to see us beautiful, the commanders and the base guys as well. We put on make up so they see us nice’, She speaks while she is cleaning a Kalashnikov that came from Jordan, one of the 33 thousands weapons of the Colombian rebels.” (Marón, *The New Face Of The Arm Struggle, Guerrilla Women.*)

The military body is taken by these women as a way to confront the restrictedness of the space and place. FARC commanders were questioned on this matter, leading to the public knowledge of certain statistics: 40% of FARC Forces are women,⁶ occupying various roles including those of soldier, public relations, and facilitator.⁷ I am not diminishing the agency, social commitments and beliefs that these women see at the moment of enrollment into the

⁶ For this matter I referred to articles in newspapers and publications of International Red Cross.

⁷ This role of facilitator was between media and guerrilla, or between guerrilla and different types of groups around the conflict like for example peasants, mothers of the kidnapped soldiers, media, and indigenous people. This territory was the opportunity for many groups to go and TALK to the guerrilla, to show the guerrillas their discomfort and problems in the frame of the war.

guerrilla armies. They probably see it as an alternative (wrong or good) for an alternative future, in which they want to participate. However, I have to assert that these women reach another discursive field that is different from the women from the towns of Melgar and Girardot in which they place their femininity.

To be in the military in Colombia entails evidently to be involved in a civil war but also it brings to the social relations of the individual a status that provides a safe place for gazing. Even though their lives are constantly in direct physical contact with death, it is at the same time the safer place for gazing. The metaphor of the sight of a sniper or better the optics of weapons allows me to bring my point to you, my reader.

Lets look at the description of the newest optics in the market of the military industry:

The Digital Ultra Sight by ATN is designed to be a both eyes open, heads-up, rapid acquisition reflex sight with a **new revolutionary feature called MultiAim®**. MultiAim® makes the ATN Digital Ultra Sight the only sight on the market that utilizes the push of a button to instantly change the reticle pattern of the sight without a shift in the point of impact. Digitally controlled MultiAim® allows an array of features such as 5-reticle configurations, reticle brightness adjustments, brightness level memory, reticle pattern memory and low battery indication. Since there are no movable parts, the reliability of the device is greater than standard reflex sights.

MultiAim® combined with superb optics, rugged construction, highly accurate windage and elevation system and an efficient electrical design for long battery life makes the Digital Ultra Sight the best Reflex sight on the market. Military personnel, law enforcement professionals, hunters, and sport marksmen can enjoy the sight that surpasses the competition in features and is priced far more economically. Get Digital! (http://www.galatiinternational.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=GIO&Product_Code=AMULTSD&Category_Code=Sights)

Or lets look at the description of the perfect weapon kit called: Ultimate kit for the Patriot:

Red on Green weapon sight eyepiece, mounting rings, 4x90mm 6 element lens, long range infrared illuminator, Goggle Kit

(Head set with chinstrap, transfer piece), 3 element magnification doubler, 15mm high power eyepiece, Camera/Camcorder adapter, Pelican waterproof hard case.

(http://www.galatiinternational.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv?Screen=PROD&Store_Code=GIO&Product_Code=AMULT&Category_Code=Sights)

Or,

Yukon's flexible, durable, light weight, compact NVMT (Night Vision Multi-Task) line is as versatile as night vision comes. With the use of accessories, the palm-sized, water-resistant, plastic body encased in rubber armor, can change from a *hand held monocular* to *rifle scope* to a *head mountable viewer* to a *photo and video component* . Also, Yukon's exclusive PULS System Infrared (IR) Illuminator minimizes battery drainage and increases range. Yukon's Sea Wolf line utilizes the same versatile NVMT technology in addition to a waterproof, sure-grip body.
(www.globaltrades.com/)

The high quality of the optics in the military guarantees a safer place from where to shoot, providing the time and distance necessary to prepare the closeness. The existence of the optics is not just an added mechanism, its existence as well as the distance between the shooter and the target is a necessity not a simple imposition or an option. The effectiveness of the relation between the parts depends on this distance.

The voyeur functions in the same way, it relies on the distance to achieve its pleasure. The distance in the videos is presented by different mechanisms and stages: distance between the male and the female performers due to language, social conditions and by the cinematic apparatus. This gap is intensified by the geopolitical difference constructed by the raw Latinness and the professional Americanness.

The distance and the closeness are tempo-space constitutions of the process of globalization. While time and space are being contracted by technologies of information and flows of populations, the distance remains a paradox. We need, as Massey put it, to discover the

geometrics of power in terms of a global world hierarchically constituted and mirrored in asymmetries of power around race, gender and space-place in the globalized world. All of the women presented in this paper do not signify a single subjectivity. They present particular geometrics of power marked by expectations in Colombia, a territory whose war has captured every single side of the imaginary. These women present different relations of power, wealth, mobility, education, and the right of representation that collided with the expectation and sexual tourism that these men perform as a mission: bringing to us the best from all over the world. (Massey 1993: 6).

The local imagination of the towns of Melgar and Girardot is crossed by larger global forces on discourses of war, cooperation, submission and power.

Conclusion

Linda Williams in her study of pornography *Hardcore: Power, Pleasure, and the Frenzy of the Visible* (1989), points out that the genre has undergone changes in their formulations of what is pleasure and perversion moving, for example, from a position in which the “male spectators of pornography could take their pleasure in investigating the woman without having to worry much about her pleasure”(92) to an intention of discovering the wonders of the woman’s pleasure by bringing to the screen the true moments of the female orgasm.. She asserts that the genre has explored different techniques trying to reach such visibility. However, as Williams states, such mechanism has resulted in seeing woman’s pleasure as a mirror of the male one. The invisibility of her wonders remains in the depths of her own invisibility. Having in mind this discussion, I want to pose my conclusion in the opposite direction. If the intention of these men was to bring the unknown to our scope of closeness, the efficacy of such effort has to be

measured in terms of visibility, that's what the scopic regime is about. The mechanism that the genre has developed, for instance the money shot is no more than a narcissistic approach: pleasure for the male pleasure. I assert that "The Devil's Adventures in Columbia XXX" uses a mechanism rooted in the mix of pleasure and pain that it is not precisely sadomasochism. While pleasure can be faked and pain also, these videos look more for the visibility of the pain, which adds reality and authenticity. Pain is visible not only by the physical signs of such infliction but in the dead. . The rumor regarding the possible death of one of these girls refers to this mechanism. The videos were real to the point that death can be one of their inflictions. Rumor or fact, pain in death captured the imagination where military discourses and bodies intersect.

Some of the videos make more emphasis on the pain than the pleasure that the women are feeling. A website where I found clips of the videos posted, announce them by saying, "Enter here and see tight Latina holes be broken in two." And that is present in the videos: there are women expressing extreme pain during the sexual act. This inversion reverts into the male organ. Again they are the source of all pleasure and pain. They are, by opposition, giving to these women what their Latin boyfriends cannot do. One of the videos creates a story in which a woman comes looking for the satisfaction that her Latin partner cannot give to her. Instead of being a video in which she finds the satisfaction lacking in her Latin relationship, she only finds pain. These American men punish her. They teach her what it is like to be with a real man.

The women and men involved in these videos bring to the screen the performance of the self based on the fantasy of the other. They collide in a narrative that onscreen presents asymmetrical relations of power translated in gender inequality, violence and I

have to say disgust. The difference, so exploited, in these videos is the discrepancy in the global world that permits the fantasizing about the image of the other; however these fantasies are embodiments, they are “no longer mere fantasy, ...no longer simple escape, ... no longer elite past time, ... and no longer mere contemplation, the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work, and a form of negotiation between sites of agency and globally defined fields of possibility” (Appadurai 2002: 49).

I hope that the same practice that brought these videos to the public eye, mainly curiosity, the sneaking across borders, can take that field of possibility that Appadurai talks about. I hope that the difference can be explored by social practices more equal, where power relations elaborate themselves by communicative practices.

Finally, in this sense of difference captured by Derrida and expressed by Hall in the concept of *difference*-- the “a” works as that slippage, that small threshold of subversion where word/concept presents that disturbance in translation. The efforts of representation and visibility of the Colombian female imaginary do not equate to a perfect translation between the image and its meaning, there is the ‘quite not the same’ in a positive conception of power. That mimicry, which visualizes the other in the case of the female emerges as “representation of the difference that is itself a process of disavowal” (Bhabha 1994) and can subvert in the threshold of ambiguity.

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