

The City in Brazilian Cinema

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Over 80 percent of the Brazilian population lives in urban areas, so it is not surprising that many Brazilian films are set in cities. This paper examines the image of Brazilian cities that is presented in country's exported films over approximately the past quarter century. Rio is overwhelmingly the favored setting for urban films, probably because it is also the country's cultural center. Brazilian film for decades has had a strong realist focus, and the country's filmmakers also are concerned with poverty, the fate of street children, drug dealing and addiction, and other social problems. Therefore, many films are set in favelas, housing projects, and other areas where such problems are found. Rarely are middle-or upper-class settings featured. The brutality of urban life is also prominently featured in many contemporary Brazilian films. This realist focus may present, in its own way, just as biased a view of urban life in South America's largest country as would films that emphasized upper-class life.