

## 'Sí, señor, yo vivo aquí' ('Yes, sir, I live here')

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Film title: Buenos Aires

Director: David Kohon

Year of local release: 1958

Brief scene description: 'Sí, señor, yo vivo aquí' ('Yes, sir, I live here')

Timecode for scene: 10.31-11.35

Filming location for scene: Buenos Aires Shantytowns

In this lucid critique of the modern city Kohon plays with a counterpoint between the developed, machine-like city centre of Buenos Aires and the homeplace of those who prop it up and produce it - the shantytowns. The late 1950s was a moment in which development, embodied by modern architecture and international investment, was expected to solve the pressing housing shortage of Argentina. However, Kohon's Buenos Aires is a Manichean world in which it becomes clear that housing is still a great problem. An advertisement for middle-class apartments - of a type that populated the newspapers of the time - is used to emphasize how the fruits of such celebrated development were shared in a painfully unequal way. By underlining the habitation conditions of workers, Kohon takes a strong position in a key debate in Argentina, in which shantytown residents were seen as indolent by some groups and accused of 'immorality'. The film acutely challenges this assertion through its use of a leaflet containing official 'moral' propaganda. 'Sí, señor, yo vivo aquí' ('Yes, sir, I live here') is the only dialogue in this short film, repeatedly declared by three workers whose daily routine the film depicts; this statement heavily condenses Kohon's critique. The words are intercut with images of a heavily-graffitied wall, bearing the names of election candidates, being white-washed. In a context where the gap between poor and wealthy was widening, and where the most popular political party (Peronism) was proscribed from competing in elections, the painting-over may call into question the legitimacy of the advertised candidates.

