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Book Reviews

World Film Locations – Madrid

Torres Hortelano, L.J. (ed) (2011)

Intellect Books & University of Chicago Press, Bristol and Chicago.

128 pp.

Pb ISBN-978-1-84150-568-8

Yes, it is only one hundred and twenty eight pages although it seems a more substantial tome. However, the font size is not too large and it is quality paper, making this book feel much more substantial than would be guessed. Hortelano is the editor with a number of „essay“ and individual film review contributors.

The Introduction, by Hortelano, is illuminating in several ways. He points out that the *World Film Locations* series of books cannot be comfortably classified as academic text, critical film review, or for „those who just love to talk about movies“ (p.5). It was with this in mind that I used the volume in Madrid with twenty-two students on a final year undergraduate module which addresses the relationship between literature, film and heritage. It was a success. Although the Hispanic-speaking market is clearly one to be considered, this volume also features English language movies and, it probably needs no stating, those movies were more easily related to by the predominantly British students.

Hortelano refers to Madrid, itself, as being one of the main characters in the movies reviewed and that is certainly true and was, to some extent, appreciated by the undergrads. Pointing out that key scenes from the 2008 movie *Deception* were filmed at the Cervantes Institute in Calle de Alcalá, for example, enhanced the students' experience.

The earliest movie reviewed is *The Assassination and Burial of Don Jose de Canalejas*, released in 1912, and based on the actual assassination of a liberal politician. This is a „semi-documentary“, utilising a fictional recreation of the murder and actual footage of the funeral. Puerta del Sol and the Spanish Parliament are the relevant locations. What makes the book useful are the maps, enabling the visitor to get to the locations easily.

To conclude, even to Spaniards, Madrid's role as a centre of international productions and the considerable size and impact of its film industry is largely unknown, according to contributor Helio San Miguel. Another reason why this volume is timely: dissemination.

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World Film Locations: Paris.
Marcelline Block (ed). (2011)
Intellect Books & University of Chicago Press, Bristol and Chicago.
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E ISBN 978-1-84150-561-6.

Figure 1 Paris skyline viewed from the Tour Montparnasse.



Source: Author photo

Literary tourism, rather than film-induced tourism, has a well-documented history of searching for the precise spot recorded in the work of fiction. Nicola Watson unearths an early documented use of the phrase 'the precise spot' in *The Journals of Mary Shelley 1814-1822*, 'We went again to the bosquet de Julie, and found that the precise spot was now utterly obliterated' (cited in Watson 2006, 142). It is worth noting here that a bosquet is a copse of trees deliberately laid out in planting to appear naturalistic. In much the same way that film sets are designed to give the appearance of true nature.

The use of topographical accuracy by novelists in siting their purely fictional events, Watson shows (Watson 2006, 132), is a powerful catalyst for the creation of sites of literary pilgrimage; while Busby & Klug (2001) develop this research into movie-induced tourism. Watson steps back to the publication in 1761 of *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse*, an epistolary novel which attempts to explore authentic human feelings, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). As early as 1764, Watson discovers (Watson 2006, 132) using her methodological approach of working through travel writing, that James Boswell (1740-1795) is the first literary tourist to follow up the search for the fictional character, *Julie* and her haunts (Watson 2006, 134-135). The sentimental, in the context of novels in the mid-1700s, including *Julie*, is still considered then as a powerful and serious challenge to the reader to feel true emotions rather than be subsumed by rationalism. As such it was taken up by the writers of the later phase of Romanticism in Britain (early 1820s): Mary Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats and Lord Byron. It is these poets who, mobilised by the Grand Tour, follow in Boswell's footsteps from Britain to Lake Geneva where Rousseau lived and set his novel.

The history of my connection with film locations came in 1974 when an Italian film crew led by Catalonian director, Jorge Grau came to the Peak District in England to shoot *Non si deve profanare il sonno dei morti*. I am marked by an image from my childhood. The Dovedale tourist locations used in the film and those on the Peak District Farm, called The Waterings, can be seen on Roland Keates' web-site.¹ The Internet Movie Database also gathers shooting locations, currently listing nearly 20 places detected in this film directed by Jorge Grau. These locations are hyperlinked and a single click lets users see all the other films in the IMDB database which use this same named location.

Seeing Keates' photographs of the film location side-by-side with stills taken from the Italian film from nearly forty years earlier beneath the bosquet of trees planted around the old farm buildings evokes powerful sentimental feelings. This connects us with the project that the Romantic movement writers were engaged upon as they explored what it is to be human with desires and feelings beyond the rational.

Marcelline Block's (2011) *World Film Locations: Paris* draws on both this feeling of being beyond the rational and on the obsessive aspect of being human, too. For it is the obsessive collection of film stills, of contemporary colour photographs of the shot locations shown in 46 scenes around Paris, the commissioning and editing of seven useful essays by academics with long publishing pedigrees (eg Professor of Modern French Studies, Keith Reader) , and the commissioning and editing of 46 short scene-setters by a range of over 30 contributors that gives the book its value. As a reference book or as a guide book for film fans heading for Paris this year it is perfect but trying to read it for its narrative thread is as challenging as watching Chris Marker's short film, (1962) *La Jetée*; Kristiina Hackel explains why; '[The film] is composed [...] entirely of still photos [...] it is about the power of the image, and how an image can mark and determine destiny' (Block 2011, 34).

Marker himself sets the scene for his short in a few sentences: 'This is the story of a man, marked by an image from his childhood. The violent scene that upset him, and whose meaning he was to grasp only years later, happened on the main jetty at Orly, the Paris airport, sometime before the outbreak of World War III.' (Marker 1992, preface, cited in

¹ See Keates, R. Filming Location Detective's photostream on Flickr <http://www.flickr.com/photos/filminglocationsdetectives/> and Filming Locations Detectives own web-site; <http://www.filminglocationsdetectives.com/> and Peak District farm images at: http://www.filminglocationsdetectives.com/films/living_dead_manchester_Morgue_page_3.htm

Mansfield (2001: 1)². Throughout Block's collection of Paris film locations we oscillate between two main reasons for wanting to make a tourist pilgrimage to the sites where films were shot. The first act of desire is generated from having witnessed the scene on the screen, Block's intrepid researchers present the Avenue des Champs-Élysées and the stills from Godard's (1960) *À Bout de souffle* (pp.30-31) in this light. It may be that a violent scene upsets the viewer, as with Marker's character above, such as the assassination of Mathilde in *L'armée des ombres* (1969) (p.57) and for which we need the closure of a visit. It is as if the location visit can provide meaning. This is in the realm of self-narration (Mansfield 2001, 3) as used in psycho-analysis to restore the self after early trauma.

The alternative driver is the tourist's awareness that the cast and crew used this everyday place for their work. A space like rue Bleue in the 9th arrondissement (pp.90-91) looks mundane in the documentary photograph and it may even be completely obliterated, as Mary Shelley discovers above, but it is given value by the time spent there by those from the film industry. Bourdieu offers us a way of understanding how this additional, symbolic capital is generated for a place and urges researchers to examine all the practices that are connected with place, including disinterested or gratuitous practices, which he says social scientists should study as if they were economic practices directed towards maximising symbolic profit (Bourdieu 1977, 183), (Bourdieu 1972, 375). In a more contemporary society these gratuitous practices may be considered to include several forms of mediation. This term mediation here means the production of literary texts, films, drama and poetry whose aim is not to market a destination.

In conclusion this book should be useful to three groups of reader (i) those heading for Paris on holiday who want to find more interesting cultural spots in the city, (ii) the French film specialist, academic or enthusiast and (iii) those studying movie-induced tourism and consumption.

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² A copy of Mansfield (2001) is available at: http://plymouth.academia.edu/CharlieMansfield/Papers/452802/Identity_and_Narration_in_Chris_Markers_La_Jetee_and_the_Appearance_of_the_Internet_as_a_Symptom_of_Cold-War_Anxiety

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Reviewed by: Charlie Mansfield, University of Plymouth.

Collective Creativity: Art and Society in the South Pacific.

Katherine Giuffre (2009)

Ashgate

pp163

ISBN 987-0-7546-7664-5

It needs to be said at the outset that I found this to be a rather baffling book, one that contains a great deal of fascinating insights into art markets on a micro level, yet one which also seeks to utilise an analytical approach I thought had disappeared into obscurity many years ago. On another level I also found this to be a book that does not link to the wider literature as one might expect, but let me deal with each of these points in turn.

First, although this book is not ostensibly about tourism, it describes a situation where tourism is clearly an important factor of cultural change in relation to the development of art markets, in the South Pacific, with a particular focus on Rarotonga, the largest of the Cook Island group. Size is of course relative and the island is only 64 square kilometres in total area, with nine thousand inhabitants clustering on the narrow coastal fringes. The first few chapters are devoted to a detailed description of the history and indigenous social structure of the islands and how this has been changed over the past centuries since contact with Europeans. Perhaps of most importance was the creation of a large diaspora consisting mainly of those who had left to be educated in New Zealand. The author provides an account of how the islanders created a distinct Cook Islands culture based on common Maori (Polynesian) themes, and she skilfully draws out the tensions that exist between insiders, outsiders, those who have been educated abroad and returned, and those who may be labelled traditionalists or modernists in terms of their artistic production, and the development of an indigenous art market as well as one that sells to the tourists.

So far so good, but the book has what I would regard as a rather odd approach to the analysis of the material, which brings me to my second point. In the first chapter Giuffre informs the reader, quite rightly, of the importance of networks in the creation of both art and art markets, so seeing that chapter five was titled Social Networks and Making Art came as no surprise. However, I have to own up that it was at this point my heart sank when I realised that it was based on social network analysis (the book also contains an appendix that outlined the basic concepts and terminology of this practice). I first encountered network analysis some years ago as a postgraduate student when I was assessing the utility of it for my own research, and it was one I rejected for a number of reasons, and I thought it had passed away as a transitory fad some years ago.

I don't want to get lost in the terminology of network analysis but the problem I have with it, and which is evident in this book, is the way that qualitative material has been abstracted into numerical forms which are then used to assess (among other things) the 'strength' and 'density' of networks. The author goes to great lengths to describe and map out the different groups and factions that exist within the island's artists, but having done so, this dynamic complex of shifting allegiances is then reduced to some basic numbers that are supposed to be an accurate measure of their density, which, as the appendix explains is '...the number of actual ties made by the group divided by the number of ties that could have been made.' So what we are left with are baffling claims that one group has a density of 0.25 and another 0.17, and so on, and that groups with different densities will show different characteristics. Now it is surely a basic tenet of social research that frequency should not be confused with quality. We can draw parallels here with language, for example we can count the number of times a word occurs in a series of articles, and on that basis come to the conclusion that the most frequently used word must be the most important. Of course that is entirely fallacious as it is the context and only the context that determines the actual meaning and hence importance of individual words, and I would suggest that the same applies to networks – counting linkages is meaningless if we do not know what the context of each link is. Even if links between people could be measured in this way that would need more sophisticated scaling and statistical modelling techniques than are evident here. The end result is that the formal properties of an abstracted network becomes the object of analysis, not the actual practices and strategies of building and maintaining such networks that are so carefully detailed and explained elsewhere in the book. Network analysis is really a misnomer as all it can offer are descriptions of some (very limited) attributes of networks.

My third point relates to the way this study has been situated within the literature. I am not an expert in the anthropology or history of Polynesia but in terms of tourism and the

anthropology of art and indeed cultural change there are also some rather large gaps in the literature. Beginning with art, there is no reference to Nelson Graburn's (1976) work on tourism and ethnic art, and no mention either of Phillips and Steiner's (1999) excellent edited collection on art, commodity, colonialism and post-colonialism. Neither is there any mention of the extensive post-colonial literature that deals with similar issues of belonging, identity and cultural production that are key to this book. There is hardly a mention of the tourism literature dealing with the region either, I do not think it unreasonable to expect more, after all it is the outsider tourists who are instrumental in both creating and sustaining the art market of Rarotonga. It is of course very easy to produce lists of this kind, perhaps after all it is my expectations that are the problem here, but for all that to ignore a substantial literature that directly addresses the subject in hand does seem a bit odd, the opportunity to ground what is – despite my criticisms outlined above - a fascinating study in a wider debate is therefore missed.

Overall there is no doubt that the author has carried out meticulous fieldwork and generated a great deal of interesting and detailed observations and findings about the internal workings of the art market, and this is the book's strength. Where it is on less solid ground though is the application of network analysis which seems to me to have little utility, and a lack of wider contextual grounding within the relevant literature.

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