

CINEMATOGRAPHIC LITERATURE IN MATERA

DOI: 10.26341/issn.2241-4002-2020-1c-sv-1

Maria Manola

Assistant Professor, University of Western Attica, Department of Tourism
mmanola@uniwa.gr

Marina Kapsaski

University of Western Attica, Department of Tourism

Olga Raptopoulou

University of Western Attica, Department of Tourism

Abstract

How many people are potential tourists from the moment they see their favourite movie? How many of them eagerly want to star in it, by visiting the places where the movie was shot? Have you ever had the ardent desire to travel to the place you saw on TV or in the cinema?

Cinematic tourism manages to make these wishes come true. It is an alternative form that belongs to the cultural part of it, which is one of the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry not only domestically but also globally. However, a basic condition for the development of film tourism is the shooting of a film at a location, which will become more widely known after the screening of the film in cinemas.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse, the concept of film tourism and its existence specifically in the Italian city of 'Matera'. It will be investigated whether or not production and screening of a film can contribute to the economic development in which the film was shot. In addition to that information will be given for a specific film each time while also examining four different cinematic films.

1.1 Definition of Cinematic Tourism and Typology of tourists

Although until the end of the last century, tourism was a fairly conventional concept, mass tourism was widespread as the predominant form of tourism. However, over time, the requirements of tourists have created the demand for new forms of tourism. Thus, with the emergence of special resources and characteristics of each region, special forms of tourism have been born which in turn push people to choose an "alternative" destination. (Varvaresos, 1998)

Based on what has been mentioned, a sophisticated type of tourism, the "film tourism", was created. To understand in depth, one first needs to explore how the big screen affects the psychology of potential travellers, their thoughts and possible concerns. The factors that probably affect them are many with the first and most important being "image" as through it emotions emerge. However, if anyone considers that both cinema and tourism are two fast-growing industries with a long history that now plays a leading role in our lives, one does not wonder why the need to unite them for immediate financial gain and more begun to rise.

In the age of globalisation and the digital revolution where man has the means to process the image in more detail than ever before, there is no doubt that cinema can significantly influence the travel decisions of all of us without exception. From the point of view of travel agents, it is common to draw inspiration from an idyllic scene of a movie or from a typical landscape, giving the place a unique advantage with a social and cultural character. In cases where a site is a 'filed' point or appears in multiple scenes of the project, that point now acts as an idol. Cinema lovers and those who consider a new trip as an

unforgettable experience, won't hesitate to visit places and attractions that they have watched in the cinema or on television, thus becoming the so-called "cinema tourists" (Manola, 2020).

In this part of our research is necessary to talk about the motivations of tourists which seem to be multidimensional. Any destination can theoretically attract tourists whose motivations are neither homogeneous nor necessarily compatible. However, having a better knowledge of the possible motivations behind the travel decision can lead to a better approach to the film tourist.

Many well-known connoisseurs have referred to this characterisation of tourists, including Niki Macionis, from the University of Australia, in a related article in 2004, entitled: "Understanding the film tourist". This includes a special conceptual approach to understanding the possibilities and real motivations of the tourist, categorising them into 3 groups as follows:

- The Specific film tourist or otherwise 'special interest' (Specific Film Tourist), who is looking for actively pursues the landscapes that have been shown in a film.
- The General film tourist, who is not only attracted to the film site but also participates in the tourist film activities while at the destination.
- The Serendipitous film tourist, the one who simply, without looking for cinematic destinations, happens to be at the location depicted in a movie.

1.2 Benefits for the cinema given by the tourism industry

The competent bodies of each region, before the filming studio can research for any existing project by proposing suitable locations (Anon, 2004). They can also enter into agreements of various kinds with the productions. One of them could be related to accommodation and food so that the community businesses have a respectable income from the whole process. Additionally, a smart deal could be made regarding the direct access of the public.

It is very important to understand that these actions act as a support to the already existing profile of the place. This means that with the proper management and promotion of the place as part of the film, everyone will be interested in it, attracting tourists both in the short and long run.

1.3 Benefits for the tourism given by the film industry

As it is already mentioned, the tourism and film industries are two fast growing global industries that began to interact by offering "generous" positive elements to each other as referred by Riley and Van Doren (1992).

In order to be set up as required by the circumstances, the film requires all the resources offered, both public and private. The authorities of each region (and more specifically the tourist offices / destination offices) as Manola refers (2020) have the opportunity to contribute focusing mainly on the local network and finding resources to finance.

At the same time, the tourist organisations of the area are an important help for the production and the directors. They can and should be in close contact with the film production as they are the most suitable connoisseurs of the key points for filming. In addition, regarding the accommodation and catering of the crew and the actors, amounts of expenses not at all negligible in the total budget, the local companies in turn contribute positively to the film industry if they make some kind of agreement with it (either informally or in writing). so that the accommodation of so many people and their feeding cost as little as possible. This is one

of the most important benefits for both the local community and the production as it manages to save huge sums of money¹.

2.1 Cinematic Tourism in Italy

As Took and Baker referred (1996) the effect that a film could have on visitor numbers to screened locations as seeing is believing is very big so in this chapter of our paper, we will refer to the phenomenon of film tourism specifically in Italy, as an EU member state with a growing tourism industry since ancient times. At the same time, both its cultural heritage and its history are evident in every corner of the place, while the fact that it coexists with Greece has as a natural consequence that many common features are presented in terms of the tourism sector. As a neighboring country it has a highly competitive advantage which is nothing more than attracting many movie giants who act as a stimulus injection into the economy.

This is, in essence, the field that studies the financial data and the specific policies that have been implemented, so that an environment exists and is maintained in order to maximize the production of value for the business and its people. At the same time, in relation to the tourism industry, advertising also plays a very important role. This may not be obvious at first glance, but putting a destination in a movie always has an obvious purpose, or not. In fact, it is considered, perhaps, the best promotion of a 'product' in the field of tourism. Product placement as a method can favorably influence the motivations and choices of the recipients, consciously or unconsciously. It was created after the saturation of traditional advertising techniques while at the same time it is considered narrower as advertising and more visible compared to the already widely used techniques of spreading a product.

In general, the increase of visitors to a site, can lead to mostly positive for the local economy. One of the most important benefits of cinematic tourism is advertising and the ability to visit the site all months of the year, without severe restrictions due to seasonality or weather. Thanks to the shooting of a film, extremely common places such as roads or common buildings, gain power and are transformed into places of crowds.

It was said again, in a previous section of our paper, the concept of "motivation of film tourist". And what is more, the truth is that there are many daily activities of Italians and Greeks related to the arts. Concepts and activities related to literature, painting and cinema are directly related to our neighboring country with a very typical example; the organization of the "Italian Film Festival" under the Thessaloniki Film Festival, in collaboration with the Embassy of Italy and the Hellenic Cinema Center. For the first time, the organization of the 1st Italian Film Festival was announced in 2009 as a cultural and at the same time, cinematic 'bridge' of cooperation between the two countries.

Cinematic events have a positive effect on economic and cultural development in a place. To achieve this, managers and competent organizers are hired in the industry, investing time, effort and financial resources to promote these tourism products. At the same time, the contribution of ECOC (European Capital of Culture) is great as it creates and hosts competitive programs and strategies in order to promote a cultural event. This often also benefits film tourism. The cities hosting these programs have the characteristics of competitiveness and readiness in order to make the most of the proposed program, while in this study the city of Matera in the region of Basilicata in Italy will be analysed.

¹ handbook of film tourism, retrieved on 25/12/2020 from the following link:
http://www.northseascreen.eu/File/Handbook_Filmtourism_double_1.pdf

2.1.1 Cinematic Tourism in Matera, Italy

The province of Matera is located in southern Italy, within the Basilicata region and has been a tourist attraction mostly since 1993, when it was designated a World Heritage Site according to the official UNESCO site.

Over the years and the events that marked the evolution of the city, the cinema had its own role in the city center as it contributed to the audiovisual recording the landscape and of all decisions that were made. Let us emphasize here, that the shooting of a film not only depicts, but has already brought its own advantages to the site. Fame has risen sharply for this and countless films have been shot in this city, either historical or more general.

For the best approach and understanding of the competitiveness of this city, it is important to take into account its location (favors inland travel), its natural beauty (varies with fauna and flora in various protected areas, with lakes, of course landscapes, forests and mountains) and as mentioned above the attraction of film tourists of general or special interest. It is also characterized by two national parks: the ‘Pollino Parco Nazionale’² and the ‘Val d’Agri National Park’³.

2.1.2 European Capital of Culture – ECOC

In contrast to other paths and other movements that have taken place in recent years, the most decisive one was in 2019 where the residents of Matera themselves managed to make it a ‘European Capital of Culture’. The application was submitted to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in September 2013, stating: “The people of Matera and Basilicata are interested to connect with other cultural people and all of them are looking forward to a better future for our communities.” In fact, the Matera file that was submitted focused on 5 areas as follows:

- Ancient Futures: With roots in the ancient past, the city aims at economic and social development, from the perspective of a global model.
- Roots and Routes: With great influences from ancient Greeks, the Romans and Byzantium, as well as the various signs of immigration waves that passed through the area.
- Reflection and Connections: The arts, the economy, the environment and the daily life of the inhabitants of the area. The purpose is to resolve various issues facing crises at this time.
- Continuity and Disruptions: The evacuation of the center of Sassi, in the ‘50s, was a milestone in the history of the area with the community collapsing completely at that time.
- Utopias and Dystopias: The city hides forgotten civilizations of those southern areas of Italy. The values of thy, may be useful in resolving variables while creating new fresh, economic models and social development. There is ground for new alternatives and solutions.

This was a great movement for the region, and, it is worth noting that in just 64 years, the city ceased to be "a national disgrace" (as we will see later) but a World Heritage Site with thousands of visits and views worldwide. This achievement is admirable and represents a vision of culture from an economic and social point of view. Growing tourism is an indicator of success for the Capital of Culture and also an attractive way for human capital to gain incentives and added value in innovative sectors.

² *Pollino Parco Nazionale: National Park of Italy: it was founded in ‘93 and has as its main purpose, the protection of the flora and fauna of the place, It is protected together with the surrounding areas by environmental law. It includes some of the highest peaks in southern Italy with magnificent views from everywhere, while to the east it overlooks the Ionian Sea.*

³ *Val d’Agri National Park: Another beautiful and protected park of the area with religious content where it was founded in 2007. Characteristic of the area are the traditional villages and the archeological site of the Roman area.*

3. Case Study: Matera, Italy»

3.1 The Gospel According to St. Matthew, 1964

The film "The Gospel According to St. Matthew"-Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo- was shot in 1964 by the director Pierre Piolo Pasolini (Murri, 2003). The great Italian director and film theorist, presents to the public according to Ferrero (2005) a film in which "the cinema of poetry and prose, political and artistic discourse are mixed", a film that was characterized by critics everywhere as a masterpiece, won the special award at the Cannes Film Festival and composed with absolute realism the most reverent cinematic performance of the life of Christ.

During the release of the film and after, a great interest was gradually noticed by the artistic world, but also later. The film depicts the deserted city and the signs of poverty and misery. Historically, the city had been deemed unsuitable for permanent residence and the authorities had planned to evacuate it. At that time, no waves of tourist visitors were observed. However, the film "The Gospel According to St. Matthew " along with others, are synonymous with the city of Matera relating to many different fields worldwide.

At the same time this movie is not only a historical relic for Italian cinema, but also for the local community. The biblical and eerie energy that is captured, combined with the austerity that was necessary for the subject of the film, until today, is one of the reasons that it is a tourist destination. In addition, the tension caused during the release of the film and the interest of the cultural field, brought to the competent local bodies the motivation to expand in movements for the development and advertising of the place. Undoubtedly, the city of Matera, which has now been named the Capital of Culture, having its own growing economy, owes its credit to directors and producers of the past for its current development, as through their lens, the opportunity is given to the whole world. to testify to the past and present image of the area.

3.2 Christ stopped at Eboli, 1979

This film is the only one mentioned, which before being shot in cinematic form was written in a book several years before its shooting, in 1945 by Carlo Levi. This text was later based on the director of the film, who 'used' the landscape and the story cleverly based on the pre-existing recordings. It seems that the choice of location from the beginning was not just accidental because the city of Matera had several times negatively occupied those who visited it mainly due to the architecture of its historic centre which consists of settlements on the famous Sassi rock as well as numerous monasteries, churches from Byzantium era and that of the Western Benedictine Monarchy.

The 1979 film "Christ stopped at Eboli" depicts the memoirs of Carlo Levi (cit. in Manola , 2019), where he quotes the following passage from his book on living conditions: "The houses were open because of the heat and as I passed from one to the other I could see many of them inside - they looked like caves. Some, in fact, did not even have a main entrance, except for a hatch and a staircase. In these dark 'holes' with walls 'cut off' from the ground, I saw some pieces of miserable furniture, beds and some tattered clothes hanging until they were dry. On the floor there were animals, dogs, sheep and even pigs. Most families had only one cave to live in, where they all slept together: men, women, children and animals. Twenty thousand people lived like this, while as a child I saw an infinite number. They appeared from everywhere, in the dust and heat, among the flies, naked or covered with rags. "I have never seen such a picture of poverty in my whole life." (Levi, cit. in Manola, 2019) he was exiled to the Basilicata in 1935 and thus narrates his impressions of the City that testify to the magnitude of the degradation, characteristic of Sassi of Matera who was under the fascism of war. In 1937 there were 3000 settlements where in a survey of health conditions, 70% of them were deemed unsuitable for the public. This research was done in the effort of regeneration of the city since on this occasion the decongestion of the villages with

people orientation started, this time, as well as the creation of decent social, cultural and economic conditions. The discarded houses were characterized by limited light, air and high humidity as many of them were excavated sections in rocks. However, contrary to the above findings, the discovery of the above was not enough to resolve the issue, culminating in the characterization of the memoirs by many even as "national shame" of the newly established Italian Republic.

At the same time, Italian sociologists and not only, dealt with the issue at a deeper level. Matera, a place now defined as the capital of rural culture, also represented an exemplary case study in economic, social and moral terms for Southern Italy in general. The underlying issue of the deterioration of the quality of its inhabitants could be solved by evacuating the place and rebuilding the settlements away from the historic center (Restucci 1991). The decongestion of the city was the beginning of a better life for its people, and of the impending economic, social and cultural prosperity. In 1952 there was a relevant bill (in 619), which allowed the partial evacuation of the village with the settlement of its inhabitants in permanent residences with acceptable living conditions.

The reconstruction and renovation of these settlements of Matera, alters and ignores the cultural identity of the area. In terms of quality of life, living was poor but its cultural value was invaluable. It was characteristic that the new settlements were abandoned for various reasons and so the issue of the historic centre was re-discussed in 1970 where with relevant bills (126 of 1967 and 1043 of 1971) began its use as an archaeological site. This marked the beginning of the development of the region for health, social, historical and artistic reasons. At the same time, in the year 1979, the film was screened, which made the local reality widely known, a fact that contributed even more to the awareness of the Italian community. The tourist traffic was slowly felt. From the following decade, that of the '90s, the historic centre of Sassi was partially repopulated and at the same time there was growth in accommodation and advertising activities.

3.3 The passion of the Christ, 2004

Movie of great significance at Matera's dissertation descriptive require "The Passions of the Issue" (The Passion) of actor-director Mel Gibson starring Jim Cavizel, to go through information about 2004 the library material and then selected. The film tells the story of the last 12 hours of Jesus Christ until his martyrdom. He has been characterized as one of the most violent in recent years as he plays his martyrdoms with picturesqueness and a more human and vulnerable perspective compared to others. The plots, although narratively evolving in biblical Jerusalem 2,000 years ago, actually took place in the City of Matera and in the historic center of Sassi, Italy.

Since the release of this film, its effects have been immediate and enormous on the economic and tourist development of the place since the city was advertised internationally - thanks to the advertising distribution channel provided by the film production. It is characteristic that, in the following years, after its first release, there was an increase of visitors in 2006 by 40% while at the same time there was a decrease in overnight stays by 30% compared to the year 2003. In 2003, there was generally an increase of 83% arrivals and a simultaneous increase of 53% among foreign travelers.

The above remarks were soon realized by the competent local bodies and the inhabitants of the area, underlining the forthcoming prospects of tourist development that the cinematic screening promised. This resulted in the establishment of the Lucana film production committee. Thanks to the presence and contribution of this committee, in 2015 the film was shot in the city blockbuster remake movie "Ben Hur".

Let us mention briefly at this point, that a little earlier, in 2012, the aforementioned film committee was established in the city of Matera with the aim of supporting and promoting the production of various projects, national and non-national, that place the Basilicata area in their shooting. This would be successful with film productions and television / audiovisual commercials.

Thus, the people of the new generation were shown the environmental beauty of the area, its historical and cultural heritage, which remains unchanged over the centuries. The above has the effect of attracting even more cinematic interest as we will see later.

3.4 No time to die, 2020

In the last paragraph we will discuss about the well-known and beloved James Bond that his stories according to Grinhault (2003), defined many places as tourist destination, in this film Bond shooting took place in "Cappadocia, Italy". Agent 007 is expected to make his appearance through the British actor Daniel Craig, in cinemas in April 2021 against the backdrop of the iconic Mother of Italy, one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world and not by chance.

The "No time to die" is not just any movie out there and the location of its shooting could not be a random choice. It is the 25th major film production in a row with the secret agent frantically pursuing his enemies in the alleys of a city - a cultural jewel of all of Europe.

The city of Matera in the province of Basilicata is, among other things, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is famous for its troglodyte dwellings, some of which have been converted into boutiques or luxury hotels. Nevertheless, according to local newspaper reports, it seems that the filmmakers are not interested in the famous Trulli, a prominent symbol of neither the region, nor the iconic houses with the conical roof of Puglia, but in a railway station located in community.

In conclusion, the statements of the mayor leave a positive impression, who, among other things, referred to the impact that the shooting of the film was going to have in the wider area, with the revenues from it reaching a total of almost 12 million Euros. He even characteristically stated: "In the past we hosted several national and international productions, now we will face James Bond".

Conclusions

The cinema can have a very positive impact on the image of a spectator for a location, thus setting the possibility of creating the 'cinematic tourist' but also strengthening the location where the film is being shot as a tourist destination. Cinema acts as a witness with audiovisual evidence for the form of the space where the a project takes place, as well as for the transformation of the landscape over the years, which are always full of life, ready to unite human relations with the countryside and its beauties.

One of the important benefits of film tourism is the reduction of the problem of seasonality since the visit of film sites can take place throughout the year. At the same time, the image of a location through a movie theater can have a much greater impact and therefore attract many more people compared to an organized advertising campaign. But why is this happening? The answer is easy to give if we think as spectators of a cinematic blockbuster, which will offer us an emotional experience, which we often associate with the location of the background.

The Mother is a characteristic and compromising proof of this relationship between people and the environment. The relationship between the two in this region had its own waves as from "national shame" it emerged as a European capital of culture and a global tourist destination. The contribution of the inhabitants with their movements to the competent

bodies of Italy, the correct approach of advertising methods and undoubtedly all those cinematographic shots that have taken place since the beginning of the last century have been integral to the tourist prosperity of the region.

Many times the theme played on the screen was not directly related to the history of the city; however a cultural event can become an important tool on the set in terms of local marketing strategies, designing a clear and coherent description and implementation of strategies for segmentation. Demand for full expression of supply. With the title of "European Capital of Culture 2019", Matera embarked on a journey to renew her image and reconsider her development.

References

- Anon (2004) 'Movies That Give Brits the Travel Bug', *The Guardian*, 28 September.
- Ferrero, A. (2005). *Il cinema di Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Venezia: Marsilio.
- Grihault, N. (2003) 'Film Tourism – The Global Picture'. *Travel & Tourism Analyst on line on <https://www.cabdirect.org/cabdirect/abstract/20033194494>* [15/12/2020].
- Levi, C. (1945) 'Cristo si è fermato a Eboli'. Torino: Einaudi.
- Macionis, N. (2004) *Understanding the Film-Induced Tourist*. In Frost, Warwick, Croy, Glen and Beeton, Sue (editors). International Tourism and Media Conference Proceedings. 24th-26th November 2004. Melbourne: Tourism Research Unit, Monash University. 86-97. (PDF) *Understanding the film-induced tourist*. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228790015_Understanding_the_film-induced_tourist [accessed Dec 12 2020].
- Restucci Am. (1998) . *Matera: I Sassi: manuale del recupero*. Milano: Eletra.
- Manola M. (2019). *Literature – civilization – tourism*. Athens: Tsiotras.
- Manola M. (2020). *Literary tourism as a phenomenon examples in Greece and Italy*. [On line] Polysemi: literature as a tourist guide, 27/11/2020. Liv streaming: <http://bit.ly/3746TZT>.
- Murri, S. 2003. *Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Milano: Il Castoro.
- Riley, R. and Van Doren, C.S. (1992) 'Movies as Tourism Promotion: A Pull Factor in a Push Location', *Tourism Management* 13(3): 267–74.
- Tooke, N. and Baker, M. (1996) 'Seeing is Believing: The Effect of Film on Visitor Numbers to Screened Locations', *Tourism Management* 17(2): 87–94.
- Varvaresos S., (1998). *Tourism, concepts, sizes, structures, the Greek reality*. Athens: Propombos.
- <https://www.iefimerida.gr/zoi/tzeims-mpont-agria-katadioxi-se-arhaia-poli>
- https://www.ethnos.gr/politismos/sinema/48640_tzeims-mpont-stin-matera-gyrismata-stin-kappadokia-tis-italias
- http://ofisofi.blogspot.com/2012/04/blog-post_22.html
- <https://thecaller.gr/xronomixani/ta-pathi-tu-xristou-kaviezel-tameia-kavizel/>
- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228790015_Understanding_the_film-induced_tourist
- <https://www.filmfestival.gr/el/professionals-gr/press/news-press-el/1627-newsid-el-1149>
- <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/670/>
- <https://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema/2020/accreditation>
- <https://www.basilicataturistica.it/en/turismi/the-pollino-national-park/>
- <https://www.basilicataturistica.it/en/?link=1028>
- <http://parcopollino.gov.it/it/>
- <http://www.lucanafilmcommission.it/index.php?lang=it>

- http://www.cinemagazine.gr/themata/arthro/the_gospel_according_to_matthew_pier_pao_lo_pasolini-130348170/
- http://tcl.infota.org/proceedings/articles/09_a014_delio_colangelo_cinematic_representations_of_landscape_image_creation_and_tourism_in_the_city_of_matera.pdf