Introduction
Screen is the Place

Filipa Rosário & Iván Villarmea Álvarez

Cinema is able to capture the intangibility of life: its moods and feelings, its fleeting moments and liminal spaces. In its origins, it combined the objective input of photography –an outcome of technological progress– and the impressionistic drive to crystallize the subjective experience of the world – an inheritance from painting. Since then, we have found and still find an illusion on the screen, a magically arisen reproduction of the world (Cavell, 1978, p. 39) that is phantasmagorical in its essence, echoing the origins of painting itself, when the human shadow was demarcated by lines for the first time (Stoichita, 1997, p. 7). The ubiquitous and interdependent connection between the absent body and its perennial projection, as well as between the spaces that it originally occupied and those in which it has later been preserved, is also reflected, inscribed and thematised –synthesised– in and by cinema.

Such ability to go beyond our everyday experience is probably one of its main virtues: thanks to cinema, we can see and feel –and sometimes even understand– that which escapes us, whether people or places, ideas or emotions, distant or recent pasts, and especially all those simultaneous presents that have already become past. The screen –any screen: the cinema's, the television's, the computer's, the phone's, etc.– is just the interface that links our world to any possible world depicted through moving images. Nevertheless, every screen is first and foremost a surface, a bigger or smaller space where any other real or imaginary space unfolds before us. We see the world through screens, but in order to do that, we have to see before the screen itself. The dichotomy between the infinite spaces that screens invite us to explore and the restricted, material space that each individual screen actually occupies establishes a useful distinction between the two types of cinematic spaces that will be discussed throughout this volume: on the one hand, those depicting real places taken from the

This is an Accepted Manuscript of a book chapter published by Routledge in *New Approaches to Cinematic Space* on 2019, available online: https://www.routledge.com/New-Approaches-to-Cinematic-Space/Rosario-VillarmeaAlvarez/p/book/9780367663353

historical world; on the other hand, those giving rise to imaginary or alternative locations in possible worlds through the slightest nuances of framing, editing, lighting, sound mixing and, more importantly, the very act of perceiving.

Moving images bring together spaces of different natures: those inspiring filmmakers to create their works; those that, when manipulated, allow the profilmic elements to materialise; those offering a glimpse into their creator's inner world and also those related to a film's "multiple historicities" (Frow, 1986, pp. 187-188). All these spaces make up a palimpsestic map in which the historical world meets multiple variations of possible worlds, inasmuch as cinema, as Jean Renoir explained to Eric Rohmer in the latter's documentary *Louis Lumière* (1968), is both "an extraordinary means for representing the life of our times" and "sometimes the opposite: a means of expressing what we have in our imagination". Moreover, as a technology based on the principle of assembly, cinema also reveals itself as a self-reflexive medium, capable of producing, transmitting and questioning meaning and human thought.

The etymological origin of the word 'cinema' is related to the Greek term *kinema*, meaning 'to move' or 'movement' (Koeck, 2013, p. 5). As a cinematic operative concept, the moving image, in a way, disrupts the monocular perspective inherited from the *Quatroccento* system and encourages the 'mobility of the eye'. However, as Stephen Heath states,

> the mobility is nevertheless difficult: movement of figures 'in' film, camera movement, movement from shot to shot; the first gives at once a means of creating perspective (…) and a problem of 'composition' (…); the second equally produces problems of composition and, though often motivated in the manuals by some extension of the eye-camera comparison (...), is strictly regulated in the interests of the maintenance of scenographic space (…); the third, again apt to receive the comparative motivation (…), effectively indicates the filmic nature of film space, film as constantly the construction of a space. (1981, pp. 31-32)

Scholarly literature approaching cinematic space has primarily focused on the examination of (off-)screen space as a threshold that allowed for a chronotopic and narrative space to emerge (Burch, 1981; Heath, 1981; Bordwell, Staiger & Thompson, 1985). By exploring space-time interactions in relation to the diegesis within moving

image dynamics, scholars have linked perspective, framing, sound, *découpage* and editing to classical Hollywood cinema, whose "institutional mode of representation" (Burch 1979, pp. 77-96) has set classical cinematic space as a site for spatial continuity and narrative causality (Bordwell et al., 1985, pp. 50-59).

According to Antoine Gaudin, cinematic space's polysemic nature can be addressed from a scenographic and narratological approach. Within this paradigm, the aforementioned works mainly focus on the organization of the dramatic space –created by the *mise-en-scène* together with the off-screen space–, or on how the film's global universe is fragmented and reconstructed by framing, *découpage* and editing (2015, pp. 13-24). Gaudin, however, provides four other approaches in his book *L'espace cinématographique*, the most comprehensive systematization of this subject matter published so far: geodiegetic or geopoetic, historical and modernist, plastic and techno-aesthetic, essentialist and psycho-perceptive (2015, pp. 13-52).

The geodiegetic or geopoetic approach builds from the articulation between the narrative aesthetics of a terrestrial space and the narrative aesthetics of film movements, periods, filmmakers and genres in order to question the relation between the individual and the contextual. The historical and modernist approach, in turn, brings forward historical time to the framework: space is considered here to be anchored in a specific time period, both concrete and existential, resulting in the construction of symbolic and/or political spaces. Then, the plastic and techno-aesthetic approach focuses on the spatial composition of the image-in-itself: lines, surfaces and volumes, as well as formats and reliefs – all of the abstract forms designed to immerge and separate the spectator in and from the screen space. Finally, influenced by both phenomenology and Christian existentialism, the essentialist and psycho-perceptive approach conceptualises cinematic space as a perceptively, cognitively and spiritually built relation between the viewer and the moving image, into which the body is optically and somatically engaged.

Gaudin's work has brilliantly summarised the main lines of research on cinematic space since the spatial turn of the 1970s and 1980s, when social sciences and humanities began to question modernity's notions of spatial experience from a transdisciplinary perspective. In the last four decades, the concepts of place, territory, nation, city, landscape and distance, among others, have been challenged and re-elaborated according to principles of power, capitalism and neoliberalism, thus highlighting the subjective experience involved in it: the works of Henri Lefebvre (1974/1991), Jean

Baudrillard (1981/1994), Doreen Massey (1984, 1994), Michel Foucault (1986), David Harvey (1989), Edward Soja (1989, 1996) and Fredric Jameson (1991) are remarkable examples of this line of thought.

In this framework, cinematic space has been addressed within the discussion on national and transnational cinemas (Konstantarakos, 2000; Everett & Goodbody, 2005; Zhang, 2010; Carter & Dodds, 2014; Chee & Lim, 2015; Silva & Cunha, 2017), and most especially through the study of the relationship between cinema and the city, which has been booming since the 1990s. Regarding this latter field, Mariana Liz has distinguished two main strands according to their theoretical approach: one focused on early cinema and the development of modernity that establishes "a link between movie-making and movie-going and new forms of social life, occupation of the public sphere and regimes of seeing, as well as notions of realism and objectivity" (Gunning, 1994; Charney & Schwartz, 1995; Barber, 2002; Bruno, 2002; Dimendberg, 2004; Conde, 2012); the other formed by works on post-modern and post-classical cinema (Jameson, 1992; Aitken and Zonn, 1994), as well as on the world of politics and finance (Scott, 2005) (Liz, Forthcoming).

The study of film architecture has also given rise to an extensive bibliography from the 1990s, especially regarding the processes concerning the conception and construction of film sets (Toy, 1994; Neumann, 1996; Fear, 2000; Schleier, 2009; Cairns, 2013; Lamster, 2013; Tobe, 2017). Meanwhile, literature on cinema and landscape also emerged in the same period, despite the fact that nature has been a consolidated moving image trope since early cinema's travel films (Costa, 2006). This line of research has been developed through key works in other disciplines, such as philosophy (Simmel, 1913/2007; Assunto, 1973; Cauquelin, 1989; Berque, 2008/2013), art history (Clark, 1949; Gombrich, 1966; Wood, 1993) and cultural geography (Cosgrove, 1998; Mitchell, 2002). The spatial turn gave cinematic landscape a place of its own within scholarship –apart from its early interpretation as cinematic rhythm and openness (Eisenstein, 1987)– with multidisciplinary readings confirming its palimpsestic essence. A series of works published at the turn of the 20th century have theorised the topic (Sitney, 1993; Natali, 1996; Mottet, 1999; MacDonald, 2001; Lefebvre, 2006), while later volumes and essays have related it to other concepts, such as psychology (Melbye 2010, 2017), national identity (Harper & Rayner, 2010, 2013), as well as nature and ecocriticism (Pick & Narraway, 2013).

The blurring of boundaries between academic disciplines, together with digital databases and GIS development, have recently transformed scholarship on cinematic space by incorporating its material and immaterial history (Bruno, 2002; Zielinski, 2006; Chapman, Glancy & Harper, 2007; Huhtamo & Parikka, 2011; Elsaesser, 2016), as well as its mapping drive (Gunning, 2006; Conley, 2007; Castro, 2009, 2017). This double-take on filmic spatiality exposes the theoretical impulse to address not only cinematic cartography, but also to chart the social experiences and urban practises the moving image is engaged in. Finally, most recent works approaching this subject specifically reflect this tendency (Hallam & Roberts, 2011, 2013; Roberts, 2012; Koeck, 2013; Jacobson, 2015; Penz & Koeck, 2017).

"The construction of memory space is a function of the visual arts and of cinema, as well as of architecture, for they all shape the image of our built environment", Giuliana Bruno states (2008, p. 145). In a way, cinematic space is a landscape in itself, an archive that preserves our cultural memory, whose "most crucial condition is space, but its deepest theme is time" (Solnit, 2002, p. 132). Accordingly, to explain the processes through which filmmakers give rise and meaning to this archive, this volume will attempt to identify and interpret the formal strategies used to depict real and imaginary places, and turn them into abstract, conceptual spaces. Most texts will therefore focus on different systems of representation that go beyond the mere visual reproduction of a given location to construct a network of meanings that ultimately shapes our spatial worldview.

The book thus consists of seventeen essays grouped into six sections: 'urban spaces', 'architectural spaces', 'genre spaces', 'spectral spaces', 'heterotopic spaces' and 'phenomenology of space'. The idea behind this structure is to begin with real spaces –public, objective spaces; then private, subjective ones–, then gradually move to conceptual spaces –whether genre, spectral or mental – and finally, attempt to theorise the very process of the creation of cinematic spaces, understood as a perceptual experience. Each chapter will discuss a limited set of films, some of which will be related to specific genres –from film noir and neo-noir to amateur film and psychogeographical documentaries, with an ecocritical detour through disaster movies– or to the work of well-known filmmakers, such as Alfred Hitchcock, Abbas Kiarostami, Yasujirō Ozu and Cristi Puiu, among others. The choice of case studies lies with each

author, of course, but even so there is a pattern: the volume embraces a self-conscious comparative approach between different types of films from different periods, genres and countries in order to reflect on different kinds of cinematic spaces and perceptual experiences. This is the reason why chapters are organised according to their similarities and contrasts, following an internal logic based on spatial issues rather than on other variables.

New Approaches to Cinematic Space intends to update certain topics with new case studies, beginning with the representation of urban space in times of change and the architectural dimension of film sets and locations; but it also seeks to delve deeper into issues that deserve further discussion, such as the sedimentation of history in spectral spaces, the rise of possible worlds from images themselves and the use of film phenomenology to analyse the gradual unfolding of cinematic spaces. One way or another, all of these spaces appear before the audience through the screen, which must be understood as a heterotopic place that encompasses an infinite variety of potential representations of both the historical world and its parallel universes. From this perspective, this book aims to offer a social, formal and allegorical interpretation of some of the spaces our mind enters through our senses, while our body remains somewhere else in a movie theatre, in a living room, on a plane or wherever films will be screened in the future.

Works Cited

Filmography

Rohmer, E. (1968). *Louis Lumière*.

Bibliography

Aitken, S. C. & Zonn, L. (1994). *Place, Power, Situation, and Spectacle: A Geography of Film*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Assunto, R. (1973). *Il paesaggio e l'estetica ...: Natura e storia*. Naples: Giannini.

Barber, S. (2002). *Projected Cities: Cinema and Urban Space*. London: Reaktion Books.

Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press. (Original work published in 1981).

Berque, A. (2013). *Thinking through Landscape*. New York, NY: Routledge. (Original work published in 2008)

Bordwell, D., Staiger, J. & Thompson, K. (1985). *The Classical Hollywood Cinema. Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Bruno, G. (2002). *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film*. London: Verso.

Bruno, G. (2008). Cultural Cartography, Materiality and the Fashioning of Emotion.In Smith, M. (ed.), *Visual Culture Studies: Interviews with Key Thinkers* (pp. 144-165). London: Sage Publications.

Burch, N. (1979). Film's Institutional Mode of Representation and the Soviet Response. *October*, 11, 77-96.

Burch, N. (1981). *Theory of Film Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cairns, G. (2013). *The Architecture of the Screen: Essays in Cinematographic Space*. Bristol: Intellect.

Castro, T. (2009). Cinema's Mapping Impulse: Questioning Visual Culture. *The Cartographic Journal*, 46 (1), 9-15. https://doi.org/10.1179/000870409X415598

Castro, T. (2017). Cinematic Cartographies of Urban Space and the Descriptive Spectacle of Aerial Views (1898–1948). In Penz, F. & Koeck, R. (Eds.), *Cinematic Urban Geographies* (pp. 47-64). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cauquelin, A. (1989). *L'invention du paysage*. Paris: PUF.

Cavell, S. (1979). *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Clark, K. (1949). *Landscape into Art*. London: John Murray Publishers.

Chapman, J., Glancy. M. & Harper, S. (Eds.) (2007). *The New Film History. Sources, Methods, Approaches*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Charney, L. & Schwartz, V.(1995). *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*. Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA & London, UK: University of California Press.

Chee, L. & Lim, E. (Eds.) (2015). Asian Cinema and the Use of Space. Interdisciplinary Perspectives. New York, NY: Routledge.

Conde, M. (2012). *Consuming Visions. Cinema, Writing, and Modernity in Rio de Janeiro*. Charlottesville, VA& London, UK: The University of Virginia Press.

Conley, T. (2007). *Cartographic Cinema*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Costa, A. (2006). Landscape and Archive: Trips Around the World as Early Film Topic (1896–1914). In Lefebvre, M. (Ed.) *Landscape and Film* (pp. 245-266). New York, NY: Routledge.

Cosgrove, D. E. (1998). *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. Madison, WI & London, UK: University of Wisconsin Press.

Carter, S. & Doods, K. (2014). *International Politics and Film. Space, Vision, Power*. New Your, NY: Wallflower Press.

Dimendberg, E. (2004). *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Eisenstein, S. (1987). *Nonindifferent Nature.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Elsaesser, T. (2016). *Film History as Media Archeology. Tracking Digital Cinema*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Everett, W. & Goodbody, A. (Eds.) (2005). *Revisiting Space: Space and Place in European Cinema*. Oxford: Peter Lang.

Fear, B. (Ed.) (2000) Architecture + Film II. *Architectural Design*, 70 (1).

Foucault, M. (1986, Spring). Of Other Spaces. *Diacritics 16* (1), 22-27. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/464648

Frow, J. (1986). *Marxism and Literary History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gaudin, A. (2015). *L'espace cinématographique. Esthétique et dramaturgie*. Paris: Armand Colin.

Gombrich, E. H. (1966). *Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*. London: Phaidon Press.

Gunning, T. (1994). *D.W. Griffith and the Origins of American Narrative Film: The Early Years at Biograph*. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Gunning, T. (2006). Modernity and Cinema. In Pomerance, M. (Ed.) *Cinema and Modernity*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Hallam, J. & Roberts, L. (2011). Mapping, memory and the city: Archives, databases and film historiography. *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 14 (3), 355-372. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549411399939

Hallam, J. & Roberts, L. (Eds.) (2013). *Locating the Moving Image: New Approaches to Film and Place*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Harper, G. & Rayner, J. R. (Eds.) (2010). *Cinema and Landscape*. Bristol, UK & Chicago, IL: Intellect Books.

Harper, G. & Rayner, J. R. (Eds.) (2013). *Film Landscapes: Cinema, Environment and Visual Culture*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Harvey, D. (1989). *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Cambridge, MA& Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell Publishers.

Heath, S. (1981). *Questions of Cinema*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Huhtamo, E. & Parikka, J. (Eds.) (2011). *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications*. Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA & London, UK: University of California Press.

Jacobson, B. R. (2015). *Studios Before the System: Architecture, Technology, and the Emergence of Cinematic Space*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Jameson, F. (1992). *The Geopolitical Aesthetic. Cinema and Space in the World System*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Konstantarakos, M. (ed.) (2000). *Spaces in European Cinema*. Exeter: Intellect.

Lamster, M. (Ed.) (2013). *Architecture and Film*. New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press.

Lefebvre, H.(1991). *The Production of Space*. Oxford, UK, & Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell Publishers. (Original work published in 1974)

Lefebvre, M. (Ed.). (2006). *Landscape and Film*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Liz, Mariana. (Forthcoming). Cinema, City and Tourism: Examining Contemporary Lisbon. **Revista Volume (Número), Páginas. DOI**

Koeck, R. (2013). *Cine-scapes: Cinematic Spaces in Architecture and Cities*. New York, NY: Routledge.

MacDonald, S. (2001). *The Garden in the Machine. A Field Guide to Independent Films about Place*. Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA & London, UK:University of California Press.

Massey, D.B. (1984). *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. New York, NY: Methuen.

Massey, D.B. (1994). *Space, Place, and Gender*. Minneapolis, MI: University of Minnesota Press.

Melbye, D. (2010). *Landscape Allegory in Cinema – From Wilderness to Wasteland*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Melbye, D. (2017). Psychological landscape films: narrative and stylistic approaches. *Aniki* 4 (1), 108-132. https://doi.org/10.14591/aniki.v4n1.267

Mitchell, W. J. T.(2002). *Landscape and Power*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Mottet, J. (Ed.). (1999). *Les paysages du cinéma*. Seyssel: Editions Champ Vallon.

Natali, M. (1996). *L'Image-Paysage. Iconologie et cinéma*. Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes.

Neumann, D. (1996). *Film Architecture: Set Designs from Metropolis to Blade Runner*. Munich, Germany & New York, NY: Prestel Publishing.

Penz, F. & Koeck, R. (Eds.) (2017).*Cinematic Urban Geographies*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pick, A. & Narraway, G. (Eds.) (2013). *Screening Nature: Cinema beyond the Human*. Oxford, NY: Berghahn Books.

Roberts, L. (2012). *Film, Mobility and Urban Space: A Cinematic Geography of Liverpool*. Liverpool: Liverpool UniversityPress.

Schleier, M. (2009). *Skyscraper Cinema: Architecture and Gender in American Film*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Scott, A. J. (2005). *On Hollywood: The Place, the Industry*, Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Simmel, G. (2007). The Philosophy of Landscape. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 24 (7-8), 20-29. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276407084465 (Original work published in 1913).

Sitney, P. A. (1993). Landscape in the cinema: the rhythms of the world and the camera. In Kemal, S. & Gaskell, I. (Eds.) *Landscape, Natural Beauty and the Arts*(pp. 103-126). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Silva, A. N. & Cunha, M. (Eds.) (2017). *Space and Subjectivity in Contemporary Brazilian Cinema*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Soja, E. (1989). *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London, UK, & New York, NY: Verso.

Soja, E. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Ángeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell Publishers.

Solnit, R. (2002). *As Eve Said to the Serpent. On Landscape, Gender, and Art*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Stoichita, V. (1997). *Short History of the Shadow*. London: Reaktion Books.

Tobe, R. (2017). *Film, Architecture and Spatial Imagination*. London, UK & New York, NY: Routledge.

Toy, M. (Ed.) (1994). Architecture & Film. *Architectural Design*, 64 (11/12).

Wood, C. S. (1993). *Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Zielinski, S. (2006). *Deep Time of the Media. Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Zhang, Y. (2010). *Cinema, Space, and Polylocality in a Globalizing China*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.