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Chapter 8

‘Imagination can be a damned curse in this country’:¹ material geographies of filmmaking and the rural

Andy C. Pratt

‘[I’m a] nobody...[I’m] just an extra’

Charlie Conlon, *Stones in his pockets*, Act 1 (Jones 2000).

Introduction

Marie Jones’s (2000) play, *Stones in his pockets*, provides a useful introduction to both the positive and negative aspects of filmmaking in rural areas. The play focuses on two extras that have been employed to help out with a US film shoot in rural Ireland. The play, in part, points to the way that filmmakers and rural communities seek to use one another in order to achieve their own ends. For the two local protagonists the dream is of a life-change, escape and an opportunity in film (one of them has a script that he dreams of pursuing). For the filmmakers the rural is an idealised location where filming costs are reduced (but, where, from the Director’s point of view, the cows are not Irish enough). The village, in turn, hopes to reap income from the incomers in the few short weeks of shooting. Yet, the play’s title also refers to the dark side of dreams: the means of suicide of one of the villagers during

the filming. Jones's play, although fictional, is set in County Kerry, in the far South West of Ireland, near to the Blasket Islands.² The film in the play is *The Quiet valley*, a not-so-obscure reference to the John Ford films *How Green is My Valley*, and *The Quiet Man*, which were filmed in this area in the 1950s. Twenty years later *Ryan's daughter* (David Lean, 1970) made the landscape an additional draw for visitors. The Irish film industry has its roots as far back as 1916; however, despite its attractions to visiting filmmakers, it was not until 1958 that a permanent professional studio was established (Ardmore Studios³) Even today Ireland lacks comprehensive post-production capabilities; work either goes to London or Los Angeles (Pratt, 1999; 2001a). From 1981 onwards the Irish Government have sought to support filmmaking (despite a reversal of policy 1987-93). The particular use of tax incentives has made Ireland renowned for its location shooting; a notable big budget Hollywood film shot here recently was *Braveheart* (Mel Gibson, 1995).⁴ While there is a small and vibrant low budget filmmaking community, major films simply use Ireland as a location shoot.

Similar stories can be found in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Slovakia, South Africa, France, in every major city and many rural districts. It is not simply a case of stage struck politicians but an indicator that images have become a powerful tool for localities to compete with one another in an era of increasingly mobile international investment. This chapter examines this trend, and after grounding it in film making practices, evaluates the potential outcomes. The chapter picks up the theme of the tension between dreams and reality highlighted in Jones's play. In an unorthodox move the chapter considers the material practices of film making rather than dealing with its representational aspects. It also echoes the quotation in the title

by adopting a rather cautionary note regarding the aspiration of rural communities to profit from film location shooting. As will be noted below, the practice of rural (and urban) communities acting as locations for film (and television) shoots is now commonplace. Moreover, many rural (and urban) communities now vie with one another to attract the next big production (Pratt, 2001). Recent examples are the various locations in the UK in the film series *Harry Potter* (Christopher Columbus, 2001), and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (Peter Jackson, 2001; 2002; 2003) in New Zealand. In both cases national and local tourist offices have sought to capitalise on filmgoers' desire to visit the scenes made famous in the film. Thus, tourism is a second way in which the material intersects with the representational. Of course, one irony is that with so much digital post-production of film making, the locations do not appear as they are seen in films: they can, and are, morphed into numerous forms. It raises the question of what exactly the film tourist is viewing in the countryside. However, this must be the topic of another essay. What I want to explore here concerns the material practices of filmmaking and to what extent such dreams and representations (i.e. the projected benefits) are reflected in reality.

In order to explore this question I will sketch out the processes through which film is made, concentrating on the organisation of the 'back of camera' activities; I will illustrate this with some UK data on employment and exhibition. Second, I outline the changing process of film production and the rise of what has been termed 'runaway production'.⁵ Runaway production is considered, on one hand, a threat to Hollywood, and on the other hand, an opportunity for many global locations that hope to benefit from a migrant film industry. Finally, I explore the contradictions of

location shooting for rural areas. Before this I will review some of the relevant debates in the literature.

Situating rural filmmaking

As discussed in the opening chapter of this book, the relationship between Film Studies and the other Social Sciences has been a poor one; mainly based on lack of engagement rather than dispute. Recent work in Geography and Sociology has reflected a closer link to more traditional socio-economic concerns with a focus on the production of film (Christopherson and Storper, 1986; Christopherson and Storper, 1989; Coe, 2000a; Coe, 2000b; Blair, Grey and Randle, 2001; Blair, 2001; Blair, Culkin and Randle, 2003; Scott, 2004; Kong, 2005). Much of this work has explored the development of regional clusters of filmmaking and the impact of labour markets, complex patterns of firm organisation, and cross-firm networking in their development. The upshot of this work is that filmmaking is an urban phenomenon. Debates that extend beyond this consider the national and international scale, often, though not exclusively, engaging with the impacts of 'runaway production' (Coe, 2001, Randle and Culkin, 2005, Scott, 2002): that is, the concern (seen from the perspective of Hollywood) that some aspect of shooting is being re-located away from Hollywood,⁶ and thus leading to the dispersal of economic benefits from that place. As Christopherson and Storper (1986) noted in their study 'runaway' production is a process of organisational change that has been experienced in many industries: the film industry moving from the 'film factory' of Hollywood to disintegrated independent companies is but another example. As Coe and others have noted (Coe, 2001; O'Regan and Goldsmith, 2002), this opportunity is capitalised upon by cities

seeking to position themselves in the film industry, though there are few examples of major cities establishing permanent new studios.⁷ The slew of cities and rural areas that have attracted location shooting for a few days at a time is another issue.

The wider context of ‘runaway production’ is the increasing internationalisation of economic activities. Many authors have pointed to the growth of internationalisation, and to the lengths that countries will go to attract ‘mobile’ or ‘foreign direct’ investment to their locale (Harvey, 1989a; Harvey, 1989b; Dicken, 2003). Specifically, a number of writers have pointed to the distortion of local priorities in order to compete in such an international ‘beauty contest’ (Logan and Molotch, 1987; Kearns and Philo, 1993; Hall and Hubbard, 1998). In order to compete, cities commonly adopt a number of strategies. On one hand, they are seeking more visibility through their own advertising, and increasingly, through ‘appearing’ on film and television.⁸ On the other hand, they seek to capitalise on their ‘unique selling proposition’: usually built environment or cultural heritage.⁹ Film, of course, offers a good opportunity to hit ‘two birds with one stone’ (Swann, 2001).

The major silence in this literature is of course ‘rural’ filmmaking. This is not to suggest that these factors do not apply in rural as opposed to urban locales; they do, perhaps even more strongly. Labour costs have traditionally been lower in rural areas, and the same would apply to the costs of renting facilities and properties. However, against this are the costs of attracting the ‘talent’ (actors and technicians) to a remote location, and the extra costs of accommodation. Moreover, many specialist facilities and equipment may need to be imported. As can be appreciated, many anticipated benefits to a local economy might be lost in this way.

The anticipated benefits of tourism might be expected to be more profound in a rural area; in some senses a proper legacy to the short filming presence. Even relatively small numbers of visitors may have a considerable impact. Finally, and more ambivalently, there is the question of whose representation is being 'captured'. Given the economic agenda in foreign direct investment strategies the 'image' tends to be one of an elite group, and thus, implicitly not shared by all (Pratt, 1996; Pratt, 2000). Such tensions could potentially be starker in rural areas. This assumes, of course, that viewers can even, or wish to identify the locale in the film. In the majority of films the background is just that: background in the sense that it is 'rural' in a signifying sense rather than as a referent. Within the constraints of continuity 'real' spaces may be mixed and matched to create the effect that the Director is seeking; worse still, for the locale seeking to capitalise on its starring role, the 'actual countryside' might be digitally enhanced. Of course, the digital enhancement is part of creating the spectacle which may have benefits for the locale. The point, well ventilated in post-structuralist debates, is that there is no simple one-to-one relationship of countryside-film-viewer as is often assumed in the place marketing and place promotion literature.

Film production: organisation, material production

So much for the imagined rewards of visibility on the silver screen: in order to evaluate the fantasy of recognition we need a dose of realism; or, at least another perspective on what filmmaking involves. The economics and organisation of filmmaking are clearly relevant here, especially if we are to examine the regenerative

claims of those seeking to attract filmmaking to rural areas either as part of image promotion, employment generation or tourism.

Having reviewed the spatial and organisational structure of filmmaking, it is useful to sketch in some of the broader context of the film industry. First, that the industry is dominated by a small number of very large companies that are primarily based in the US (Aksoy and Robins, 1992). These companies control the larger budget international films that are exhibited. However, these companies are also serviced by a large number of production companies who actually develop and make the films. In the early twentieth century, under the classic 'Hollywood system' these functions were integrated into film companies, as was distribution and exhibition (Scott, 2005). The landmark 'Paramount decision' (1948) led to a break up of this monopoly. On one hand this was a regulatory shift, on the other it was one that made possible a number of cost savings for larger film distributors and funders who could pick and choose projects, directors, and other technicians on a project-by-project basis. In effect, saving on development costs, and avoiding a lock-in to particular contracts. This system has been termed 'post-Fordist' in character (Christopherson and Storper, 1986; Christopherson and Storper, 1989). However, in recent years to all intents and purposes the 'Paramount decision' has been reversed in the courts and vertical integration has regained momentum albeit mediated by technological change (digitisation) (Christopherson, 2003). In the UK, film making is concentrated in London and it is characterised by a large number of networked small production companies that are characteristically formed anew for each film around a small core of principals – usually producers and directors (Pratten and Deakin, 2000; Nachum

and Keeble, 2003). Most of the employees are thus freelance or working on serial short-term contracts (Blair, Grey and Randle, 2001; Blair, 2003).

The point is that there are few film studios, and fewer post-production facilities in rural areas, moreover, there are declining numbers of cinemas (Hubbard, 2002). The rather crude, but indicative, data that exists on employment in the film industry¹⁰ in the UK demonstrates this (Table 8.1). Depending upon how one classifies the rural, there is something around ten percent of employment in the film industry in rural areas. Data on the number of screens in rural areas tells a similar story (Table 8.2); In fact, as there is a positive correlation between screen density and film admissions, the fewer screens in rural areas¹¹ also translates into fewer viewers per screen (Film_Council, 2003: 35; Wainwright, 2004). Moreover, the programming in rural cinemas is significantly less diverse than that of urban areas (Film Council, 2003).

[Tables 8.1 and 8.2 about here]

These crude data make the point rather forcefully that filmmaking and film going is predominantly an urban activity; and in the case of the former, massively dominated by London. While we may see rural locations on screen, films are not made in rural, or indeed, most urban areas in the UK.¹² In the remainder of this section I will outline how films are made, how this relates to space, and, where and how the rural enters the big picture.

Filmmaking can best be conceived of as a ‘production network’ whereby a number of discrete but inter-related processes must be integrated (Pratt, 2004). However, particular elements have particular location requirements, or, some kind of inertia (social, political or economic). Each part of the network is not evenly balanced in terms of time, effort or expenditure. Crudely put, filmmaking can be considered as having four elements: pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. Pre-production concerns script writing and development, pre-planning and securing finance and legal requirements. Production usually involves the hiring of ‘talent’ (actors and filmmakers, as well as numerous ancillary staff too numerous to detail here, but this contributes ninety percent of the credits that roll at the end of the typical film), plus the cost of cameras, studio-time and sets (or location costs). The post-production stage takes the film and edits it, dubs sound and adds special effects and the titles. Last, but certainly not least, is distribution. This includes making prints of the film and physically distributing them to cinemas; it involves negotiation with cinemas, marketing and promotion.

Implied in each stage is a level of infrastructure investment and the availability of a particular labour market. In the former case it may entail office space for the writers, directors and producers, a sound stage and related cameras, lights and sets, editing suites, and cinemas. In the latter case, a very specialised labour force for different stages: technicians, administrators, actors, and so forth. All of which will be employed at different stages, and for various amounts of time. The exact balance of costs varies enormously project by project, and may be different for a Hollywood blockbuster against a UK independent film, or a film that uses extensive digital effects. Furthermore, the particular organisational form that filmmaking exists within

can and does change. Costs are very difficult to untangle but the broad breakdown works out something like: ten percent pre-production, forty percent production, ten percent post-production and forty percent distribution and exhibition. Moreover, a large proportion of production costs are tied up with camera hire and fees for the star actors, as well as the crew. To provide a sense of scale Vogel (2001: 80) notes that the average US film cost \$51million to make in 1999.

Very broadly, **pre-production** work allows the team to pitch their project to a funder or a distributor. The issue of selling a script is very ‘touchy feely’ and commonly operates within a small community that works on a ‘reputation’ system (Kong, 2005). Thus, directors need to pay close attention to market trends and funders’ prejudices. They also need to maintain ‘visibility’. It is not difficult to see how this draws directors to a few major cities, along with other directors, funders and distributors. These locations are also close to eventual markets.¹³

Usually, if the distributor agrees, the bank lends the money. As usual it is a story of risk minimisation; just like a mortgage. The distributor is looking to the market and how many viewers they might get, as well as the deals that can be obtained with exhibitors (who may be one and the same). Upon funding the project is realised and in **production**. Here there are a number of issues. First, there are ‘script demands’ suggesting a particular location. However, the Director has the choice of reproducing these in a studio, or going to a location named in the script, finding a ‘stand in’ location, or morphing an existing studio or location using special effects. Here we get to the nub of the question about runaway production: what money can be saved? In large part, it has to be pointed out, ‘runaway production’ refers to re-

location of a Hollywood film to be shot in (urban) Vancouver, Sydney, Prague or London. Thus, it is a process of trading off cheaper crew, more flexible union agreements, and facilities between one site and another. 'On location' shooting is different. Here one is looking for the marginal savings between studio and non-studio time. Talent, and equipment are accounted for in both cases. However, equipment and talent may be more expensive to move around and accommodate for the on-location period.¹⁴ So, the potential cost-savings between 'on-location' and 'studio' shooting may be very small in the production budget, and miniscule in a whole budget. Moreover, the number of days of working on location will be very small, usually no more than four weeks, and often considerably less. The salient point here is that the key 'value added' elements of the film industry production network do not lie in location shooting, quite the opposite. To simply attract film shooting is not to cash in on the huge amounts of money that the film industry earns.¹⁵

Post-production may happen many thousands of miles away from the production site. However, given that the director will want to view the 'rushes', and this may affect subsequent filming, proximity is useful. Post-production facilities are very expensive; they are used for a very short time by one filmmaker, and employ very specialised technicians. Thus, there is a clear case of agglomeration economies. Post-production facilities best serve numerous filmmakers, and thus tend to gravitate to central locations. The location of **marketing and distribution** is not critical, but does relate to filmmakers and the ownership structure of exhibition spaces.

Representation, regeneration and promotion

Thus far I have presented a very negative view of the local benefits of filmmaking. These benefits, it is claimed, are a minute proportion of the total budget. Moreover, the actual location may be unidentifiable, or digitally enhanced. However, it would be wrong to write off the impact. In fact, a stronger case can be made for rural compared to urban areas on the basis that the impact could be greater in terms of a boost to a relatively smaller local economy. It would be inaccurate to imply that all filmmaking took place in studios. Initially, there were limitations due to lighting and film quality that tied films to controlled locations. With technological advances 'on-location' shots became popular. However, the possibilities were always set against the risks of bad weather or local problems that might disrupt a shooting schedule (which is very costly). The aim of this section is to review the potential benefits that rural areas may gain from film making activities taking place there.

The glamour of film and local politicians is a combustible mixture. However, the estimation of direct and indirect economic benefits has created a legitimate argument to promote local filmmaking. Earlier in this chapter I discounted the possibility of film companies basing their sound stages in rural areas. Clearly, there are many traditional economic advantages to locating on the edge of urban areas when land is cheaper, but access is still easy. The exception is for small and independent filmmakers where the case may well be different. There are many areas that support a local film culture and filmmakers can benefit enormously from a reasonable sound stage. For example, the new development of sound stage in Cornwall (St Agnes, South West Film studios¹⁶) has sought to capture film making for Cornwall. It is

claimed that ‘two or three feature films would keep the studios at capacity throughout the year, supporting between 50 and 200 jobs – depending on demand – in addition to directly employing ten full-time staff’. Such employment would represent a slight boost to an economy based upon agriculture and seasonal tourism.

Clearly, the attraction of big-budget location shooting is the target of most initiatives by local communities. Here three categories of impact can be identified. Firstly, direct employment; secondly, indirect job and service creation; and thirdly, tourism benefits. Local Screen Commissions are always happy to cite that numbers of jobs that were created during filming. Sometimes the numbers look impressive. However, they need to be treated with caution. As an example we can look at the production of *The Last Samurai* (Edward Zwick, 2003), a substantial part of which was filmed on location in Taranaki, New Zealand (*not* Japan) in 2003 (VentureTaranaki, 2004). This was a 170million US dollar film, a major Hollywood production. It is claimed that fifty percent was invested in the New Zealand economy, and fifty-eight percent of that fifty percent (\$50m) in the Taranaki economy. 616 jobs were created locally; this total includes direct jobs and those as a result of increased local trade, most likely via hotel bed-nights, transportation, and food and drink. This sounds a lot, except that the impacts were only for six months: 308 full-time equivalents on a one-off. The key point is that such development is not sustainable (unless another film of this size were to follow on). The project was a minor salve to local unemployment. Although there are no similar details available, an interesting comparison might be with the smaller budget *Oscar and Lucinda* (Gillian Armstrong, 1997) filmed in Grafton, NSW, Australia (Martin, 2001). The thirteen-week shoot generated an estimated 0.75m Australian Dollars for the local economy. If the rate of

job creation was in line with *The Last Samurai* as reported above then just four local full-time equivalent jobs might have been created, moreover, *Oscar and Lucinda* did not have a call for as many extras as *The Last Samurai*.¹⁷

The third category of impact is the tourist effect; there is a small body of research that tries to understand the scale and impact of film (and television) tourism. The general argument is that distinctive locations will attract visitors: ‘the ultimate product placement’ (Busby and Klug, 2001). However, the impact is not direct; it depends on the successful combination of additional factors. First, that the viewer recognises the location; second, that the film is sufficiently successful to attract a big audience; third, that tourists thus spurred on can actually access the site. A report notes that the *Lord of the Rings Location Guidebook* sold 70,000 copies in the seven weeks following the film release (Mintel, 2003).

In the case of *The Last Samurai*, there were some further problems given that New Zealand was acting as a ‘stand in’ for Japan: ‘Warners [the film company] did not want the movie to look like New Zealand and does not want to promote this fact’ (VentureTaranaki, 2004); this is despite the fact that seventy-four percent of the film was shot in New Zealand. Another example is the remote village of Furness, Scotland; especially the phone box, that had an iconic presence in the film *Local Hero* (Bill Forsyth, 1983). A report notes that the beach used in the film is several miles away from the village, and only accessible via a poorly signed track (Alderson, 2003). On the other hand the wedding suite in the rural hotel featured in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (Mike Newell, 1993) was booked up a year in advance after the film was released, and visitors to Thailand in the wake of *The Beach* (Danny Boyle, 2000) were

up eleven percent overall, and twenty-two percent in the case of the fifteen to twenty-four age group (Mintel, 2003).

The *Harry Potter* films are included in the British Tourist Authority's 'film location map'¹⁸ (VisitBritain, 2004). This is a tourist strategy that seeks to 'piggy-back' on successful films and point tourists to film locations and other locations that share a similar imagery. So, in the Harry Potter case links are included to a variety of steam train attractions, as well as those featured in the film. Interestingly, in the case of Goathland Station, rural North Yorkshire, which doubles as Hogwarts station in the Harry Potter films, while visitor numbers are up, a local survey revealed that fifteen percent of visitors to the area were looking for Harry Potter locations, yet thirty-eight percent had been drawn by its association with a ITV television series: *Heartbeat* (Topham, 2003).

The process of attracting film shooting is increasingly becoming institutionalised; there is now an international association of screen council/ film commissions¹⁹ whose membership worldwide is in excess of 300. This agency seeks to assist filmmakers to find the right location, and to shoot their film there. Even if successful for local agencies, the impact has a relatively small 'halo' of economic benefits that fades quickly.

In recent years the renewed concentration of film exhibition into fewer hands, and the economies of scale that can be reaped in a multiplex, has led to the decline of independent cinemas. It is perhaps ironic that in this time when rural film shooting does seem to be in ascendance it is paralleled by a decline in film going by rural

inhabitants, and a decline in rural screens: what the UK Film Council calls the 'screen gap'. A recent initiative utilises the possibility of digital film distribution and projection to create economically sustainable film exhibition in rural areas.

Finally, we might consider the potential for different forms of rural film production that are led by cultural rather than economic agendas. A good example in this respect is France. Many small French communities have their own film festival and screen commission, and many also offer subsidies to filmmakers. While there is little evidence on the use and take up of these funds their small scale, and the generous film funding and distribution deals in France, ensure that rural film has the potential to be enacted in different, and perhaps, less obvious ways (Pratt, 2001a). Perhaps this is one direction that other rural communities ought to explore: to develop images and expressions of their own rather than acting as a backdrop for Hollywood. Only then, perhaps, is there a possibility of the elaboration of the multiplicity of 'rurals' rather than simply one externally imposed and idealised version (Murdoch and Pratt, 1993).

Conclusion

The film industry has an unusual structure: domination by a few trans-national companies, and a multiplicity of less powerful short-term micro-production companies. It is the production companies that actually 'make' films; to do so they have to employ a range of specialist and skilled employees for a short period of time and bring them together in one, or a number, of places to actually do the shooting. The

costs at this stage are enormous, and delays, hitches and hold-ups must be avoided if the whole filmmaking machine is not to grind to a halt. Thus, using a studio, where all the variables can be controlled, has its advantages. Moreover, a location that is close to a diverse and skilled labour force helps. Location shooting can clearly add to the artistic conception and execution of the film; however, seldom is a background unique and it may be interchangeable with another, or digitally enhanced in the post-production phase. It is not clear that location shooting is done to simply save money.

The key desire of filmmakers is to ‘get in’, film the shots, and ‘get out’ as quickly as possible with minimal hassle. Rural communities would like the ‘film circus’ to linger as what economic gains there are to be had for the local community from film making rely upon the use of local services. Secondary gains, through visibility in the final film, are neither guaranteed nor certain; however, on occasion they can be significant in the short term.

Despite the self-interested scare-mongering of Hollywood itself, film production is not departing from the major film centres yet. Moreover, as I have pointed out above, the whole production phase (including pre-, post- and production itself) may only absorb fifty percent of a film budget; of that fifty percent the high value added parts, those activities that sustain permanent employees and facilities, tend to be locked into urban locations (especially post-production and film financing), as does the whole distribution system. So, realistically, location shooting is a small time and ephemeral activity that may produce a local bonanza once in a while. Moreover, the chances of a distinctive rural image appearing in the final film are slim:

many end up on the cutting room floor, or 'made over' in the digital post-production suite.

As I have also noted, perhaps the real crisis of rural film is going un-noticed, first, the loss of exhibition spaces. Second, the rush to appear for five seconds in a Hollywood movie is perhaps undermining more thoughtful investment in a film infrastructure, one that might be supportive of local film makers exploring a more variegated and diverse image of the rural. At present economic pressures seem to be driving both local filmmaking and exhibition out of rural areas, in the process rural areas are literally becoming a backdrop for urban film audiences. This surely has implications for how 'we' (as mainly urban dwelling audiences) see the countryside more generally.

Aside from looking at the rise of rural film shoots and the attempts of communities to harness them to an economic end this chapter has sought to place the material practice of filmmaking centre stage. It is hoped that the overwhelming weight of analysis of images and representations of the rural might be tempered by an insight into both their means of production and dissemination. In so doing I think I have pointed to a demise of the practices of production of representations by people who have a strong connection to those places. When we think about the circulation of images, we might perhaps consider who produced them, why they were produced, and how the subjects and objects of their representation might like to respond. Perhaps then imagination may not be a curse, but instead a positive asset, for rural communities.

The political economy of filmmaking is going to present some continuing challenges to rural filmmakers. In many senses rural (or generally, non-Hollywood) filmmaking is as much of an 'extra' as the bit player who delivers the line in Jones' play quoted at the beginning of this chapter: something that can be used and abused, and discarded with little social or cultural responsibility beyond the immediate legal or contractual. More optimistically, rural filmmaking does create new opportunities; potentially these filmmaking events can be used like a catalyst to re-imagine the countryside and to engage with it in new ways. For rural dwellers this may also present a short run opportunity to stimulate the local economy. In terms of film culture the real opportunities at present may be technological in nature; the cheap production possible using digital cameras, lap-top editing and digital distribution may bring film making within in the grasp of more people. Potentially, this could offer a platform for rural filmmakers to pursue their craft without moving away, or having to address urban agendas, or urban representations of the rural. In the end it is this process that may offer the only way of really challenging, or at least offering some diversity to, representations of the rural in film culture.

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Notes

¹ This is a quotation Brother Gerard, Act 2, Jones's

² This paragraph draws upon Anon (2000). The Blasket Islands, uninhabited since 1953, are now a popular subject for Irish historical writers, and temporary home to many, as well as a popular film shooting location. <http://www.blasketislands.com/>

³ Located 12 miles south of Dublin. <http://www.ardmore.ie/>. Ardmore is still the only fully functioning '4 wall' studio in the Republic.

⁴ Of course, *Braveheart* is a 'Scottish' film. This fact further underlines the confusion of location and narrative in the viewers' mind.

⁵ Runaway production is an emotive term that refers to any on location, shooting (some of which may be in a remote studio). The US film industry terms it 'runaway' when shooting does not happen on US soil.

⁶ Plus other film centres such as Hong Kong, Mumbai, and London.

⁷ The exceptions here are Vancouver and Sydney; and latterly, Prague. All, in one-way or another, are based upon cost savings compared to Hollywood.

⁸ Most of the academic work has concerned itself with print based advertising and representations (Short and Kim 1998).

⁹ Or indeed, commissioning architects to create new icons that will court controversy and attract publicity.

¹⁰ Employment data on the film industry is an underestimate due to the crude taxonomies and lack of dedicated classifications that focus only on the film industry (Pratt 1997, Pratt 2001).

¹¹ Rural screens have been declining year on year, however, a reverse trend in 2003 occurred. However, the 13.6% increase represented just 14 extra 'rural screens' (Film_Council 2003) Table 6.4

¹² This is a pattern found in most other nations: one city dominates filmmaking. Moreover, filmmaking is confined to a small number of locations in the world (Scott 2005).

¹³ Proximity is not vital here, as complex – and expensive- first-screening market research is carried out, even to the extent of re-editing a film that does not play well at first screening.

¹⁴ Once again, for talent and crew, urban agglomeration effects operate. They tend to live in urban areas and thus may be able to travel to and from home daily. If they go on-location they need to be accommodated and the situation of time agreements can be complex.

¹⁵ It is significant that the film industry is one of the major contributors to US exports (just exceeded by computer games) (Siwek 2002). Film receipts and profits go to the headquarters, not to the locations where a film is shot.

¹⁶ Claims to be the first purpose built studio in the UK since 1923

<http://www.southwestfilmstudios.com/ne/ne-3.html>

¹⁷ In the case of 'The Last Samurai', 280 people were contracted for the whole film and there were 400 short-term extras (mainly from Japan) (VentureTaranaki 2004) It is not only film that has an impact, but also television.

¹⁸ At the time of writing the focus was the 'The Master and Commander movie map', previous movie-maps featured have included 'Johnny English – Mission to Britain' and 'Harry Potter – Discover the Magic of Britain'.

¹⁹ <http://www.afci.org/> Association of Film Commissioners International.