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## *A Daughter of the Gods* (1916): Film, Tourism and Empire on Location in Jamaica<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

This article examines the location production of the early Hollywood blockbuster movie *A Daughter of the Gods* (1916) in British colonial Jamaica on the basis of historical newspapers and magazines, and demonstrates the close ties between film, tourism and empire on the island in the early twentieth century, both materially and ideologically. In so doing, the article reflects a twofold comparative perspective: between different histories and between different countries. Despite the rise of postcolonial cinema historiography, the early cinema histories of the Caribbean have remained largely unexposed. More specifically, Jamaica's early film history has, notwithstanding some notable exceptions, hardly been dealt with, particularly in relation to the island's tourism and colonial histories. At the same time, the early relationship between Hollywood and the British Caribbean has not often been explored. All in all, this article seeks to contribute to the discussion of the interconnectedness between cinema, tourism and empire, and between Hollywood, the British Empire and Jamaica, by revealing the colonialist cine-tourist practices and discourses of *A Daughter of the Gods*, one of the most important American moving pictures of the silent era, and one of the most significant global imperial tourist films of the early twentieth century.

### Keywords

postcolonial cinema historiography; empire cinema; film tourism; Jamaica; *A Daughter of the Gods*

### Introduction

Picture (...) this vast audience that is reviewing this picture nightly gazing in rapture at the wonderful scenes that pass before their eyes hoping that sometime they will be able to visit this little island of Jamaica and gaze at these scenes in reality. This is what I want the Jamaicans to realize and prepare for.

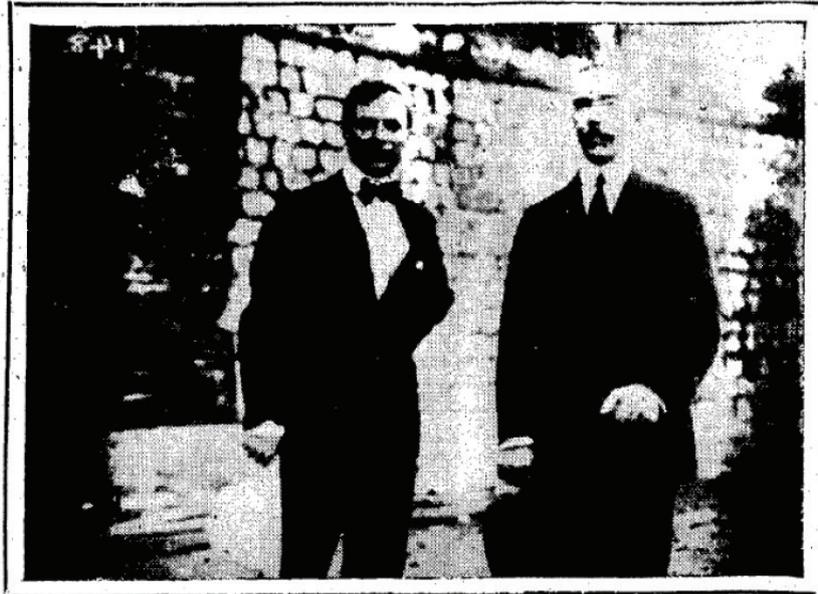
James Sullivan (*Jamaica Gleaner*, 28 October 1915)

In 1915, the American promotor, James Sullivan, wrote a series of articles for the *Jamaica Gleaner* (JG)<sup>2</sup>, Jamaica's foremost national newspaper, about the location shooting of *A Daughter of the Gods* (1916), at the time the biggest Hollywood production ever undertaken. The Fox film starring Annette Kellerman was entirely shot in Jamaica and Sullivan was on location to accompany the famous silent-era actress, both as her husband and manager. In his article series, as in the quote above, Sullivan emphasised the impact the moving picture would have on the island's tourism appeal. According to the promotor, movie-going audiences worldwide would get acquainted with Jamaica and inspired to 'visit the beauty spots of the island shown in this picture.'<sup>3</sup> He anticipated that *A Daughter of the Gods*, which he called 'the greatest film play of modern times,'<sup>4</sup> would serve as 'a tremendous advertisement for the island'<sup>5</sup>, and open the gateway to the island's tourism future. According to Sullivan, 'the Kellerman Fox picture' would 'acquaint the world with Jamaica', and that 'it now rests with Jamaicans how to present to the tourists the wonders of this island.'<sup>6</sup>

At the same time, Sullivan stressed the immediate advantages to Jamaica resulting from the location shooting of *A Daughter of the Gods*. He mentioned that the Fox Film Company was spending 'a great deal of money on this island'<sup>7</sup>, particularly as the film's budget was 'the largest sum of money ever paid for a moving picture.'<sup>8</sup> According to Sullivan, the production created temporary employment to 'thousands of labourers'<sup>9</sup>, including a 'vast amount of supernumeries'<sup>10</sup>, such as hundreds of 'little native children' who all received 'a little ready money'.<sup>11</sup> In addition, he pointed to the use of properties during the production period as well as the building of 'huge laboratories' and an 'outdoor moving picture studio' for the filming of *A Daughter of the Gods* and other moving pictures.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, Sullivan referred to the potential of Jamaica as a regular film location. Following the location shooting of *A Daughter of the Gods*, director Herbert Brenon expressed his gratitude for the cooperation he had received from 'the public officials, business men and natives of Jamaica'<sup>13</sup>, particularly governor William Manning and general Leonard Blackden, who had provided 'every possible assistance' during the period of filming (see Figure 1).<sup>14</sup> Both Brenon and Sullivan also specifically thanked John Pringle, the 'wealthy colonial planter' whose property was used for filming 'most of the important scenes'.<sup>15</sup> Pringle, in turn, said that he had provided permission 'for the people of Jamaica', as he believed *A Daughter of the Gods* would become 'the greatest advertising boom in the history of the island.'<sup>16</sup>

The many *Gleaner* articles on the location production, and particularly the series written by Sullivan, offer an insightful example of the close ties between the film and tourism industries in the

## Making of a Great Moving Picture Drama by Fox Film Corporation.



*Figure 1. A photograph in the Gleaner depicting a meeting between Herbert Brenon and the then Governor of Jamaica, William Manning.  
Source: JG, 22 November 1915.*

early twentieth century. The film's production and marketing expose a synergistic relationship between the two international industries as early as the 1910s. In the past twenty years or so, scholars have increasingly explored the connections between film and tourism. Correspondingly, film tourism, i.e. the (until the global corona crisis) growing trend of tourists visiting the locations where movie productions have been filmed, became a new field of inquiry within both film and tourism studies. While most studies in the field have focused on the tourist activities generated *after* the making and release of a film, Ward and O'Regan, among others, have proposed to approach film tourism as a type of business tourism *during* the location production as well. In other words, Ward and O'Regan point to the ways in which governments increasingly respond to 'the film producer as a long-stay business tourist, and film production itself as potentially another event to be managed and catered for.'<sup>17</sup> Both types of film tourism are often referred to as recent phenomena. However, although their size and scope indeed became unprecedented in the past two decades, both types (or at least their envisioned potential) originated almost as soon as cinema emerged.

In the case of Jamaica, the interwoven history of film and tourism, or *cine-tourism*, began at the opening of the twentieth century, when the first foreign filmmakers arrived on its shores. The first time that moving pictures were discussed in the *Gleaner* as tools to advertise tourism on the island appears to be 1906, when the West India Committee, a colonial institution promoting commerce in the West Indies, aimed to capitalise on the opportunities of film as ‘valuable advertisement without cost’.<sup>18</sup> They hired British cinematographer Alfred West to shoot *Westward Ho! Our Colonies* (1906–1907), a series of ‘West Indian views’<sup>19</sup>, including a dozen views of Jamaican ‘life, industry and scenery’, for ‘exhibition overseas’.<sup>20</sup> However, it lasted until the 1910s, when the first fiction filmmakers arrived in Jamaica, that the island’s colonial officials and business elites started to really recognise the economic potential of hosting foreign film productions. Notably, during World War I (1914–1918), when the Jamaican tourism industry got on the verge of ‘an almost complete cessation’<sup>21</sup>, they came to consider the hosting of overseas moving pictures as an opportunity to promote the economically troubled island as a tourist and film destination.<sup>22</sup> In 1915, British filmmaker Tom Terriss travelled to Jamaica to film *Pearl of the Antilles* (1915) and *Flame of Passion* (1916). The Jamaica Tourist Association (JTA), set up in 1910 by a group of local businessmen, showed great interest in using the dramas to advertise Jamaica abroad. In addition, the Business Men’s Association of Kingston expressed the hope that the location filming would lure ‘other picture producers’ to the island and establish Jamaica as ‘a producing place of pictures’.<sup>23</sup> A few months later, the island came to host *A Daughter of the Gods*, with a record-budget of over one million dollars considered to be one of the first, if not the first, Hollywood “blockbuster” spectacles’.<sup>24</sup>

Apart from – or, better, inclusive of – its connections with tourism, the location production of *A Daughter of the Gods* should be related to empire, i.e. the colonial enterprise that still dominated the island’s (and the world’s) political order throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In this late colonial period, Jamaica was a British Crown Colony with ‘a semi-representative government – that is, the legislature was partly elected and partly nominated, but it was a form of Crown Colony administration, nevertheless’ – which it remained until the island’s independence in 1962.<sup>25</sup> The colonial project was also extended into the realms of cinema and tourism. In the early twentieth century, and very much until the present day, both realms were forms of *leisure imperialism*<sup>26</sup> that not only adhered to empire, but actively facilitated the colonial project and its hierarchical power relations. The early period of both cinema and tourism in Jamaica overlapped

with the peak of classical imperialism, when the European empires tried to consolidate their stranglehold over the globe and the United States rapidly expanded into one of the world's major colonialist powers. Following Shohat and Stam,

It is mostly significant (...) that the beginnings of cinema coincided with the giddy heights of the imperial project (...). The most prolific film-producing countries of the silent period – Britain, France, the US, Germany – also ‘happened’ to be among the leading imperialist countries, in whose clear interest it was to laud the colonial enterprise. The excitement generated by the camera’s capacity to register the formal qualities of movement reverberated with the full-steam-ahead expansionism of imperialism itself.<sup>27</sup>

In a similar vein, Bruner, among others, has argued that tourism and colonialism ‘were born together and are relatives.’<sup>28</sup> Tucker and Akama contend that the development of tourism in colonial states reflected ‘the economic structures, cultural representations and exploitative relationships’ of empire.<sup>29</sup> Zooming in on the Caribbean, Perez claims that ‘travel from metropolitan centres to the West Indies has served historically to underwrite colonialism’ in the region.<sup>30</sup> Since the early 2000s, an increasing number of studies have appeared that examine the history of tourism in the Caribbean as a colonial practice and discourse.<sup>31</sup> These studies not only joined the body of critical research exploring the negative impacts of Caribbean tourism, but also complemented the literature on ‘the vexed history of visual culture’ in the region during the colonial period and beyond.<sup>32</sup>

The aim of this article, then, is to evaluate the location production of *A Daughter of the Gods* in Jamaica on the basis of the *Gleaner* – ‘Jamaica’s leading newspaper throughout the twentieth-century colonial period’<sup>33</sup> – and other relevant historical newspapers and magazines, mainly from the United States, and to demonstrate the close ties between film, tourism and empire on the island and beyond in the early twentieth century, both materially and ideologically.<sup>34</sup> In so doing, the article reflects a twofold comparative perspective: between different histories and between different countries. Following Musser, I find it crucial to ‘imagine cinema as an element (...) of other histories.’<sup>35</sup> My ongoing archival research into Jamaica’s film history has forced me to consider the island’s tourism history as well, since the sources I found made clear that productions shot on the island were almost always translated in touristic terms, i.e. how can film production

and exhibition help promote Jamaica as a holiday destination? At the same time, with the acknowledgement that ‘the dominant European/ American form of cinema’<sup>36</sup> was a colonialist cinema or *cinema of empire*<sup>37</sup>, I situate my work in the field of critical colonial film historiography<sup>38</sup> or postcolonial cinema historiography.<sup>39</sup> Despite the rise of such historiography<sup>40</sup>, the early cinema histories of the Caribbean have remained largely unexposed. As Hambuch argues, ‘scholarship in Caribbean film studies has been scarce’<sup>41</sup>, and this applies even more to the study of Caribbean film histories. More specifically, Jamaica’s early film history has, notwithstanding some notable exceptions, hardly been dealt with, particularly in relation to the island’s tourism and colonial histories.

This article focuses on the ‘global conditions of production’ and the ‘interconnected organizational cultures that characterize the film production industry.’<sup>42</sup> Biltreyst and Meers rightfully indicate that, ‘given the international dimension of the film industry in terms of production, trade and consumption, the comparative mode has always been present in some form or another in film criticism and film studies.’<sup>43</sup> However, they also argue that, so far, discussions of ‘crossnational flows’ of films and filmmakers have mainly addressed ‘the relationship between Hollywood and European cinema’ or within a ‘continent like Europe.’<sup>44</sup> The early relationship between Hollywood and the colonial Caribbean has not often been explored. One of the reasons for this scarcity could be that, historically, the position of the region within the world of film was, at least until the 1970s, that of ‘a receiver/consumer of and a resource for Euro-American productions (in terms of its use as location)’.<sup>45</sup> The early twentieth century utilisation of the Caribbean as a location for ‘foreign productions which exploit(ed) the natural/physical endowment of the tropical islands’<sup>46</sup> has not been a common subject of investigation. However, given the above-mentioned ‘global conditions of production’ and the ‘interconnected organizational cultures that characterize[d] the film production industry’<sup>47</sup> from the onset, early Hollywood film history is also Caribbean colonial film history and vice versa. All in all, this article seeks to contribute to the discussion of the interconnectedness between cinema, tourism and empire, and between Hollywood, the British Empire and Jamaica, by revealing the colonialist cine-tourist practices and discourses of *A Daughter of the Gods*, one of the most important American (lost) moving pictures of the silent era, and one of the most significant global imperial tourist films of the early twentieth century.<sup>48</sup>

## Setting the scene: colonial travelogues and the cinema of exotic attractions

At the close of the nineteenth century, film succeeded photography as the most advanced visual medium of the time. The initial period of cinema has often been characterised as *cinema of attractions*, a term introduced by Gunning to designate early cinema's fascination with novelty and curiosity about the new technology of visual display.<sup>49</sup> The attractions of early cinema were largely based on its ability to present objects and events 'as real as life'.<sup>50</sup> According to Popple and Kember, cinema was widely regarded as 'an objectified recorder of contemporary life, an adjunct of the "scientifically rational" art of photography, with the added dimension of movement.'<sup>51</sup> As such, cinema came to the public as the ultimate 'reality capture' technology.<sup>52</sup> Taken in by its 'startling realism'<sup>53</sup>, spectators of early cinema were most fascinated by moving images of real events. Such actuality films, or *actualities*, typically depicted current affairs, official events and everyday scenes. While domestic actualities enjoyed significant popularity, early filmmakers also extensively travelled the world to record moving pictures of more distant places and peoples. The shorts they brought back for viewing on screens in Europe and North America were promoted as scenic views and would later become known as *travelogues*.<sup>54</sup>

Travelogues became among the most prominent moving pictures of early cinema and were 'a regular part of the moviegoing experience from cinema's inception through the middle 1910s.'<sup>55</sup> According to Bruno, early travel films provided millions of people 'a set of travelling pleasures' that turned them into 'enthusiastic voyagers'.<sup>56</sup> Ruoff even proposes to view early cinema as a 'machine for travel', arguing that watching travel pictures offered experiences similar to those produced by modern means of transportation.<sup>57</sup> At the same time, for the more affluent metropolitan audiences, these films increasingly served as 'a stimulant and preparation' for actual travel.<sup>58</sup> The medium of cinema appeared in a period when tourism took off as a major force in Euro-American popular culture. Kirby asserts that travelogues came to participate in an emerging *touristic consciousness*, 'a fascination exerted by foreign images.'<sup>59</sup> According to Bruno, early cinema was highly shaped by this consciousness, which stemmed from 'new means of transportation, architectures of transit, world expositions, (...) aesthetic panoramic practices, (...) travel photography, the postcard industry, and the creation of the Cook tours'; indeed, 'film was affected by a real travel bug.'<sup>60</sup> Cinema became immediately identified as a powerful means of promoting tourism. From the onset, railway and

steamship companies were interested in the use of film for the marketing of their travel packages. They entered into arrangements with film production companies to facilitate filmmakers in the making of travel films in exchange for promotion. According to Gunning,

the connection between early American travel films and the transportation industry is proudly displayed in early film catalogues. (...) In all cases the transportation companies sponsored these films with the specific intention of encouraging tourism along their routes.<sup>61</sup>

Even if the majority of the cinemagoers were not yet involved in international tourist activities, travelogues still conferred ‘a tourist point of view on their spectators’.<sup>62</sup>

From the onset, cinema was not only closely aligned with tourism but also with empire. According to Griffiths, early cinema ‘followed the geographical itineraries and ideological rationales of colonial expansion’.<sup>63</sup> The reaches of empire set the film camera in motion, both literally and ideologically. The journeys of early filmmakers, and of ‘Euro-American image factories’<sup>64</sup> more generally, were dependent on, and hence complicit with, the routes of the colonial project:

The acquisition of new territories, coupled with the explosion of tourism, meant that itinerant cameramen and production companies could set up the base in colonial expatriate communities and shoot films of native societies under the protection of the governing authority.<sup>65</sup>

The popularity of war and other imperial actualities evidences early cinema’s immediate preoccupation and alignment with colonial expansion.<sup>66</sup> However, travel films constituted an integral part of the cinema of empire as well. As Bruno argues, ‘in touring cities, exploring landscapes, and mapping world sites, early film also “discovered” otherness, made it exotic, and often acted as agent of an imperialist obsession.’<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Chapman and Cull state that ‘images of imperial splendour’ and ‘pictures of exotic lands and customs’ were ‘a natural for the travelogues’.<sup>68</sup>

Around the mid-1900s, with the rise of the nickelodeons in the United States and the establishment of commercial film distribution and exhibition worldwide, cinema entered a next phase. Although travelogues and other actualities ‘continued to be a major presence on cinema screens’ throughout the following decade,<sup>69</sup> fiction films came to dominate the screens. The great majority of these dramas were shot in a studio or on location close to the studio. By 1912, most of the major film

companies in the United States had bought land for ‘studios, standing sets, and back lots’ in California, and by 1915 most American films were already made there.<sup>70</sup> Concurrently, in Britain, several big film studios emerged as well, most of them in London. Still, while most film companies heavily relied on studio filmmaking, they also still sent out crews to different parts of the world to capture dramatic events on location. The first film teams coming to Jamaica to shoot fiction films were the Vitagraph Company in 1910, the British and Colonial Kinematograph Company (B&C) in 1913, and the already mentioned Terris Feature Film Company in 1915.<sup>71</sup> These foreign productions extended the links between cinema and tourism in the realm of fictional filmmaking, and paved the way for the first feature-length drama filmed on the island.<sup>72</sup>

After the location production of *Pearl of the Antilles* and *Flame of Passion*, Terriss told the *Gleaner* he planned to return to Jamaica to ‘erect a moving picture studio somewhere in this island, and stop here for six months each year.’<sup>73</sup> Besides the hospitality he had received, the filmmaker considered the ‘wonderful variety of the scenery’ as the ‘island’s greatest charm’ and one of the reasons he wanted to come back, as there was still ‘so much to be obtained’.<sup>74</sup> In addition, Terriss identified Jamaica’s black population as offering great picturesque possibilities: ‘Natural scenery is only a small part of the good things waiting the camera (...). The negroes themselves, with their quaint ways, are an abundant source of good material.’<sup>75</sup> Terriss provided the example of ‘the strange baptismal ceremonies’ performed by a ‘black Messiah’, which he had caught on camera ‘from ambush behind a screen of cactus.’<sup>76</sup> The qualities highlighted by Terriss echoed the main lines of promotion that were used to attract tourists to Jamaica since the advent of tourism on the island in the 1890s: modern hospitality, tropical fecundity, and exotic people. The latter, exemplified by the ‘quaint’ and ‘strange’ fashions of the black population, was almost considered as picturesque as the island’s tropical landscape. In fact, Terriss here joined the early ‘tourism image makers and travelers’ who ‘framed the island’s black population as parts of the tropical scenery.’<sup>77</sup> At the same time, the startling manner in which the filmmaker had obtained the images of the people, secretly without their knowledge and consent, demonstrates the lack of humanity black people in the colonies possessed in the ‘conquering eye of the motion picture camera’.<sup>78</sup> In doing so, Terriss followed in the tradition of early colonialist filmmakers who,

just like freebooting imperialists in their quest for plunder, (...) scurried all over the globe, frenetically gathering images – exotic, arcane, bizarre, sensational, revelatory – which became “the reality” about the world for millions of people.<sup>79</sup>

Although Terriss never carried out his intention to build a film studio in Kingston, he did induce another film company to the island. A few months after his departure, Terriss wrote a letter to the Jamaica Tourist Association announcing that ‘a very large organization for taking moving pictures’ was coming to Jamaica.<sup>80</sup> He stated that the company was going to spend ‘a great deal of money’ on the island and emphasised that it was mainly through his efforts that ‘this has been all brought about.’<sup>81</sup> He further added that the two films he had made in Jamaica ‘turned out to be so extraordinarily successful that it has filled other people with a desire of coming down’ as well.<sup>82</sup> The JTA responded by sending a letter to Terriss expressing ‘the appreciation of the advertisement he has given Jamaica’.<sup>83</sup> In the *Gleaner*, Terriss was widely praised for the ‘splendid service’ of ‘booming us’.<sup>84</sup> The newspaper stated that it was through his efforts that ‘Jamaica is coming in for a lot of useful advertisement abroad, and it would seem that this island will, in [the] future, figure large in moving picture shows.’<sup>85</sup>

The film company that Terriss had lured to Jamaica was the Fox Film Corporation, the company that had just been formed by American theatre chain pioneer William Fox. In August 1915, a team of about thirty ‘moving picture artists’<sup>86</sup> from the company arrived from New York in Kingston to produce a series of films on the island. According to the *Gleaner*, the delegation was ‘the first batch of a large number of the leading moving picture actors and actresses that will come to these shores.’<sup>87</sup> Their filmmaking trip was intended to result in, at least, five Fox films: *A Wife’s Sacrifice* (1916), *The Spider and the Fly* (1916), *The Marble Heart* (1916), *The Ruling Passion* (1916), and *A Daughter of the Gods* (1916). The latter, an aquatic fantasy adventure set in ‘The Land of the Orient’<sup>88</sup> and starring ‘Australia’s Diving Venus, Annette Kellerman’<sup>89</sup>, was by far the most ambitious production to be made on the island. In fact, the four other films were primarily ‘by-products of the great drama’<sup>90</sup>, shot in Jamaica to ‘offset the expense of the big one.’<sup>91</sup>

With a record-budget of over one million dollars, *A Daughter of the Gods* allegedly became the most expensive film production ever attempted by an American film company.<sup>92</sup> Two years earlier, Kellerman had already worked with Brenon on another aquatic fantasy picture, *Neptune’s Daughter* (1915). This film was shot on location in Bermuda, the oldest British colony and an emerging tourism hotspot. With a budget of \$35,000, the Universal Pictures production grossed over one million dollars worldwide, making it one of the most successful box office hits of its era. The



Figure 2. A film poster of Neptune's Daughter, emphasizing both Kellerman's aquatic performance and Bermuda's exotic appeal.  
Source: Universal (1914, public domain).

success was largely attributed to Kellerman's aquatic performance and Bermuda's exotic appeal (see Figure 2). According to one critic at the time,

Universal Pictures must believe they have uttered the last word in photoplay art. The wondrous beauty of the story (...), the enchanting scenes afforded by the Bermuda Islands with their coral reefs (...) semi-tropic verdure and the vast expanse of wide Atlantic: the company of over 200 actors headed by Miss Kellerman who, aside from marvellous aquatic feats (...), proves that she is also a splendid actress, a graceful dancer, an expert swordswoman and mistress of a hundred arts (...) the masterly staging of the drama by Herbert Brenon – all these are factors (...) help to make *Neptune's Daughter* a production to be watched with delight.<sup>95</sup>

Following the success of their first feature-length water fantasy film,<sup>94</sup> Brenon, now working for Fox, decided to travel to another British island colony for his next, even more lavish, production with 'his aquatic star'.<sup>95</sup>

### **The production of *A Daughter of the Gods*: colonial hospitality and exotic tropicality**

For *A Daughter of the Gods*, Brenon decided to shoot in Jamaica because of his and the island's position within the British Empire:

Because I am a British subject and also because I made my greatest picture in Bermuda (...) I thought (...) I should make the next picture [again] in a British colony, and so I have selected Jamaica, which I think will provide us with ample scenery and every hospitality that we should expect.<sup>96</sup>

Although the director did not mention Terriss as his advisor, he stated the same reasons for visiting Jamaica as his predecessor. In addition, both filmmakers thought of themselves as loyal British subjects who, besides considering colonial rule as self-evident, expected to receive the most hospitable reception for the advantages they supposedly brought to the island colony. In reality, the practice of hospitality at play could be seen as what has been referred to as *colonial hospitality*. With this form of hospitality, 'the *arrivant* turns into a colonizer, invader, or occupier', whereas the original hosts become 'powerless guests in their own land'.<sup>97</sup> While the Terriss crew already showed signs of invading guest-turned-host filmmakers, the production of *A Daughter of the Gods* pushed the 'transformation of

guests into hosts'<sup>98</sup> to new limits. As such, Brenon's 'film extravaganza'<sup>99</sup> helped establish the colonial practice of temporarily transforming landscapes and exploiting resources by Hollywood runaway productions. As Gibson notes,

*A Daughter of the Gods* set the standard for the tradition of the impermanent imperialism of big-budget Hollywood film shoots. The film crew would arrive, taking over not only the location but the entire landscape and the local economy for the term of the film's production. Just as suddenly, like a colonial power, they would strategically withdraw, leaving the country bereft of patronage. Because most of the world had been discovered and colonised by 1915, directors, behaving like true imperialists, went to exotic locations and made their own worlds in which, for the duration of the shoot, they were absolute rulers.<sup>100</sup>

During the location production of *A Daughter of the Gods*, the Fox Film company almost treated Jamaica as a *tabula rasa*, open to the transformation and domination of the environment. In doing so, they perpetuated the colonialist practices of shaping, using and controlling 'empty' spaces instigated by plantation slavery and paradise tourism.<sup>101</sup> During the production period, the island's colonial administration did much to 'facilitate the operations of the company.'<sup>102</sup> While the state's servicing came together on an ad hoc basis, the filming was approached as a highly profitable venture that should be accommodated in any way. Brenon allegedly even received 'special permission of the British government'<sup>103</sup> to shoot on the island.

Newspapers that reported on the shooting of *A Daughter of the Gods* suggest the freedom the crew had to rearrange the Jamaican landscape according to the needs of the 'fantastic fairy tale'.<sup>104</sup> Brenon integrated major film sets into the natural environments. For example, the production team transformed the entire base of the Roaring River Falls into a miniature gnome village, replete with 'huts, streets, [and] bridges'.<sup>105</sup> In addition, the team 'diverted a river from its course' and 'razed a range of hills'.<sup>106</sup> In another instance, the Fox crew built an entire Arabic city at Fort Augusta along the Kingston Harbour shoreline. At the time, Fort Augusta was by and large 'a ruin surrounding a swamp, the home of landcrabs, mosquitoes, sand-flies'.<sup>107</sup> Brenon obtained approval from the British Foreign Office to restore the fortress and to use the surrounding wastelands for the purpose of his moving picture. He hired local workmen to rebuild the fortress and to drain the swamp. In order to clear the area from flies and mosquitoes, he ordered tons of disinfectants from

New York, with the result that, according to one British reporter, ‘the plague-spot was turned into a pleasure resort.’<sup>108</sup> In addition, for the film’s final scenes at Fort Augusta, Brenon acquired a fleet of historic sailing vessels and brought in dozens of lions, tigers, elephants, donkeys, lizards, camels, and other animals from the New York Zoo.<sup>109</sup> Eventually, according to the filmmaker, the huge sea-front set consisted of

a palace, a castle, a mosque, an Arabian slave market as well as a regular market place, and practically everything one could hope to see in an Arabian city, based to a great extent on the story of the ‘Arabian Nights’.<sup>110</sup>

The complete Arabian city at Fort Augusta was built in three months at a cost of \$350,000<sup>111</sup> – only to be demolished again a few months later for the final scenes in which the huge set was consumed into flames.<sup>112</sup> Finally, the fortress was ‘smashed to pieces by the West Indian squadron of the British navy’<sup>113</sup>, to be left as ‘a waste once more’ (see Figure 3).<sup>114</sup>

The sets of *A Daughter of the Gods* were not only intended to be temporary, but also to make Jamaica stand in for an imaginary fantasyland. Brenon’s moving picture portrayed an exotic-erotic fairy tale set in a mythical Arabian world. The film, in summary, chronicled

the tale of Sultan Omar, who promises to help the Witch of Evil to destroy the mysterious Anitia if only she will revive his drowned son Omar. Ten reels later, having escaped to Gnomeland, Anitia leads the gnomes to Omar’s defense.<sup>115</sup>

#### THE MAMMOTH WORK OF THE FOX FILM COMPANY IN JAMAICA



Figure 3. Two photographs in the *Gleaner* depicting the work of the Fox Film Company at Fort Augusta, on the left ‘Mr. Brenon working at Fort Augusta under difficulties’ and on the right ‘the sultan’s palace at Fort Augusta.’  
Source: JG, 29 January 1916.

Reportedly, *A Daughter of the Gods* consisted of ‘a collage of fantasy, fairy tale, melodrama, and sexual display’<sup>116</sup>, featuring ‘lavish scenic displays’ typical of the costumes pictures of ‘the early feature scene’.<sup>117</sup> Evidently, the tropical environment of Jamaica provided the exotic wonderland Brenon was looking for. The island’s tropicality played an essential role in the creation of the ‘oriental fantasy’.<sup>118</sup> The director explained that the tropical scenery of Jamaica ‘fit in very nicely’ with the film’s ‘Arabian fairy story’.<sup>119</sup> Similarly, Sullivan stated that the ‘wonderful beauty’ of the island offered a ‘fitting framework’ for the ‘fairy-like story’.<sup>120</sup> He even described Jamaica as the ‘garden spot of the world’, the biblical earthly paradise he had always dreamt of.<sup>121</sup>

All in all, the Jamaican landscape in *A Daughter of the Gods* became, like many colonial landscapes in Hollywood cinema before and after, ‘the stuff of dreamy adventure’ in tropical paradise.<sup>122</sup> For the purpose of Brenon’s film, Jamaica was transformed into what in a different context has been called a ‘space of radical *dépaysement*’.<sup>123</sup> The notion of *dépaysement*, literally translated ‘out-of-nation-ness’, represents the simultaneous ‘attraction of geographical defamiliarisation’ and ‘separation of the lost homeland’.<sup>124</sup> In order to make Jamaica look like another world, the landscape had to be removed from its identity and history, and to be supplied with settings and meanings imported from somewhere else. The island was, like so many colonised states in the margins of empire, designed to produce ‘raw visual material; exotic views for the centre of the empire’.<sup>125</sup> As such, Jamaica was made part of the early imperial tourist spectacle and constructed through an orientalist tourist gaze for the enjoyment of metropolitan armchair travellers. At the same time, *A Daughter of the Gods* actualised the practice by Hollywood runaway productions of using Jamaica as *transposable otherness*, i.e. the exploitation of the island as ready-made



Figure 4. The film *A Daughter of the Gods* (1916) has been lost, but a ten minute condensed reconstruction was made in 2017 by Trench Art Productions, mostly based on film stills, production photos and title cards.

exotic tropicality.<sup>126</sup> In so doing, the film prepared the terrain for the future branding of Jamaica as a transposable location fit to evoke a variety of tropical settings (see Figure 4).

Undoubtedly, *A Daughter of the Gods* also instigated the cinematic practice of sexualising the Jamaican landscape. From the onset, it was clear that the film would inscribe erotic spectacle into the island’s exotic tropicality through the physical performance of Kellerman. Brenon stated that his film was first and foremost ‘made to exploit’ his star actress<sup>127</sup>, whose career was largely based on bodily display. In her role as water nymph Anitia, Kellerman was often seen unclad while strolling through a waterfall landscape with only her long hair covering her breasts and pubic area (see Figure 5). According to *Variety*, Brenon had filmed ‘his aquatic star in the nude on every possible occasion.’<sup>128</sup> The long ‘personal scenes’ with the actress<sup>129</sup> at the Roaring River Falls were unambiguously invested in the erotic connotations of tropical environments and particularly tropical waterfalls. According to Hudson, *A Daughter of the Gods* established the ‘long association’ of ‘eroticism on the silver screen’ with Jamaican waterfalls, which since have ‘often been used as settings for adventurous exploits or romantic, even erotic episodes.’<sup>130</sup> As such, the film foreshadowed the equation of the Jamaican



Figure 5. A publicity photo of *A Daughter of the Gods*, depicting Annette Kellerman unclad in a Jamaican waterfall landscape, with only her long hair covering her breasts and pubic area. Source: Fox Film Corporation (1916, public domain).

landscape with sexuality and hedonism, prefiguring the future ‘marketing of the Caribbean via imagined geographies of tropical enticement and sexual availability’<sup>131</sup> (see Figure 5).

***A Daughter of the Gods* as early cine-tourism: the spectacle of production and exhibition**

During the almost 9-month filming period on the island, *A Daughter of the Gods* reportedly made a significant impact on Jamaica’s economy. First and foremost, the production provided temporary employment for ‘thousands of Jamaica[n] people’ behind and in front of the camera.<sup>132</sup> According to the

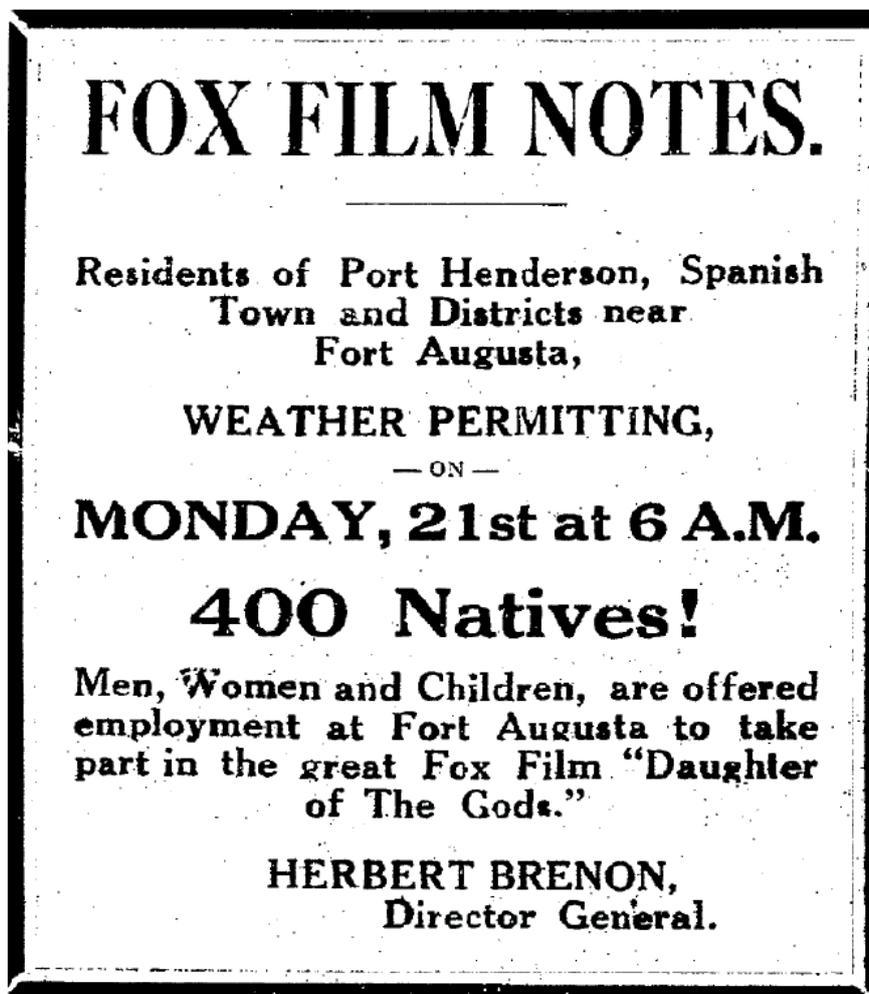


Figure 6. An advertisement in the Gleaner of the Fox Film Company offering temporary employment at Fort Augusta to ‘400 Natives!’ Source: JG, 18 February 1916.

*Gleaner*, Brenon had ‘spent on native labour here over \$165.000’, including ‘dressmakers’, ‘an average of 550 people (...) in the Manufacturing and Construction Departments’ and ‘from time to time in the capacity of extra actors, 61.000 local people (see Figure 6).<sup>133</sup> According to the Jamaican newspaper, the director even established ‘a special municipality’ near Fort Augusta for the thousands of locals he hired during the filming period there.<sup>134</sup> According to the *Gleaner*, Brenon first underpaid his Jamaican labourers, but after the newspaper protested against this a ‘higher daily wage for thousands of people’ was secured.<sup>135</sup> In addition, the stay of the Fox team at the Myrtle Bank Hotel and their transportation to the various locations across the island created many short-term jobs in the accommodation and transport sectors. While Brenon initially arrived with about thirty staff members, on average his team consisted of ‘230 people for 8½ months’.<sup>136</sup>

For the duration of their stay, the Fox team remained in the Myrtle Bank at the Kingston waterfront. Apart from occupying guest rooms, they also built work spaces in separate annexes on the property to develop their film recordings in order to avoid the trouble and expense to send them back to New York.<sup>137</sup> At the same time, Brenon set up the ‘headquarters of the Fox Film Company in Jamaica’ at Rose Gardens in Kingston<sup>138</sup>, which reportedly became ‘the finest outdoor moving picture studio that has ever been built’.<sup>139</sup> Concerning transport, the *Gleaner* stated that

the company maintained its own transportation facilities between Fort Augusta and Kingston, (...) and its own automobile service between Kingston and St. Ann’s Bay, and between Kingston and Annotto Bay, during their operations at these points.<sup>140</sup>

After the filming, the Fox press department even stated, in the ‘Startling Facts’ about *A Daughter of the Gods* that were distributed to American newspapers, that the film company had used ‘an entire Caribbean island and all of its population (...) in the making of the picture.’<sup>141</sup> Although grossly and grotesquely exaggerated, it points to the idea that the location production had a major employment impact on Jamaica.<sup>142</sup>

In addition, the filming of *A Daughter of the Gods* became a tourist event in itself, what Ward and O’Regan call ‘the spectacle of film production within the locale.’<sup>143</sup> The *Gleaner* reported widely on the location shooting, with that attracting a great deal of interest. According to the newspaper,

the making of moving pictures is something new in Jamaica, and anything that gives an idea, even a faint and imperfect idea, of the methods employed and the mode of work will have an

attraction for readers anxious to obtain a peep into the arcana of what has always appeared to them to be allied to the marvellous.<sup>144</sup>

Much coverage was devoted to the actors involved in the film production. Their visit created a buzz in Kingston and drew both journalists and ordinary citizens to the hotel where they were staying and rehearsing: ‘The Myrtle Bank Hotel presents a truly wonderful sight to the eyes of the visitors these days, for almost every corner of it you see the different actors holding their rehearsals.’<sup>145</sup> In addition, a New York newspaper described the Rose Gardens studio as the new ‘show place of the island’ and indicated that the property’s staff was increased in order to meet the amount of visitors that came by (see Figure 7).<sup>146</sup>

Apart from the direct economic benefits associated with the location shooting, and with that the consideration of the film producers as long-stay business tourists, the *Gleaner* also devoted much attention to the indirect economic benefits that would result from Jamaica’s inclusion in *A Daughter of the Gods*. As mentioned in the introduction, particularly Sullivan, Kellerman’s husband and



Figure 7. A photograph of the *Gleaner* depicting ‘the diving girls of the William Fox Film Company, who will appear as mermaids in the scenes along with Miss Annette Kellerman,’ at the Myrtle Bank Hotel in Kingston.  
Source: *JG*, 25 September 1915.

manager, repeatedly stressed the publicity value of the film’s global theatrical exhibition for Jamaica in his *Gleaner* series. He regarded cinema as a new popular medium for tourism promotion:

The moving picture industry has advanced tremendously in the last three years. We are able nowadays to acquaint the public by projection on the screen with almost every object or scene of interest in the world. (...) We will to all intents and purposes carry back the island of Jamaica (...) by a process of photography.<sup>147</sup>

According to Sullivan, *A Daughter of the Gods* would publicise Jamaica’s natural scenery ‘in a way no amount of advertising could have done’<sup>148</sup> due to the great scope of cinema across social classes and national boundaries:

[Cinema is] an entirely new channel that spreads its separate threads to the far distant parts of the world, for the Kellerman picture is such that it will be understood by all classes of people. The tremendous advantage of a picture of this kind is beyond comprehension, for Mr. Fox will be able to present it in any country. Just imagine for instance five hundred separate and distinct copies of this big picture being presented in different parts of the world (...) Have you any idea of what this means?<sup>149</sup>

Sullivan often wrote in great detail and in lyrical words on the locations that were used for filming. For example, about the parish of St. Ann, where the first weeks of the filming took place, he wrote:

Mammy Beach has been the scene of beautiful visions (...) of mermaids disporting themselves on the white, sandy beach, under the shade of the majestic coconut trees, and in the water of the sea. (...) Then, too, at Don Christopher’s Cove, with its small beach and massive coral formation, reaching out to the sea in line with the big ocean swell that comes in to break on the rocks with tremendous roar and splurge, all this, combined with the mermaids battling in the sea against the onrushing waves, will be an added thrill. (...) Then on to Runaway Bay Beach, where other spectacular scenes take place with Miss Kellerman and the mermaids. (...) She will again present her famous diving speciality in this new film play, this time to a greater advantage, owing to the important discovery of Durnock River, on the Sewell Estate, up near Dry Harbour. (...) On the road to Roaring River Falls, we pass

for an instant at Dun's River Falls, where some important views were taken, to be included in this Treasure Picture. Then too, where the Roaring River comes by the main road, Miss Kellerman will be seen in some remarkable artistic poses, and then on to the 'wonder of wonders', Roaring River Falls (...). This scene (...) will become one of the most talked about scenes in the picture.<sup>150</sup>

Apart from the tourism promotion through 'the presentation of the picture itself', Sullivan argued that the film's publicity campaign, including 'newspaper space', 'billing matter', and 'personal advertising'<sup>151</sup>, would also greatly increase Jamaica's reputation. The American anticipated that within the United States alone, the island's name would appear in over 5,000 newspapers as a result of the film's promotional campaign.<sup>152</sup> This campaign already started well before the release of *A Daughter of the Gods*, when shooting in Jamaica was still in full swing. As early as January 1916, the Fox press department started sending out press releases about the making of the film to American newspapers and magazines, hoping they would write about it.

One article that followed from these press releases also made headlines in the *Gleaner* due to its offensive portrayal of Jamaica. In the *New York Morning Telegraph*, a journalist described Brenon as the saviour of Jamaica while the island stood on the brink of 'a financial crisis' as a result of 'earthquakes, wars, plagues, hurricanes'.<sup>153</sup> According to the article, Brenon had not only created 'a new industry' in Jamaica, but also founded 'an educational fund' to assure 'the future prosperity of the island'.<sup>154</sup> After hearing about the article, the *Gleaner* published it in its entirety and provided severe critique. They condemned the representation of Jamaica as an island 'afflicted with plague, pestilence and sudden death, (...) only [to be] saved by the Fox Film Company', and Jamaicans as 'uncivilised fools or savages, or as people waiting with open arms to welcome benefactors'.<sup>155</sup> According to another critic, the *Morning Telegraph* journalist implied that Jamaica owed 'huge indemnity' to Brenon 'for being brought within the pale of civilization'.<sup>156</sup> The director immediately expressed his regret for the 'ridiculous article' of 'some overzealous journalist' and requested Fox to 'instruct the Press Department in each of its articles to write of the island and its people in appreciative terms, both so thoroughly deserve'.<sup>157</sup> Brenon reiterated his gratitude for 'the generosity and hearty co-operation' he had received while filming in Jamaica.<sup>158</sup> To undo the damage, he proposed to place 'the line "Made in the island of Jamaica" (...) upon the main title' of the film, which would help 'startle the world because of its natural beauties'.<sup>159</sup> The *Gleaner* accepted Brenon's

explanation and concluded that the director ‘can be of use to Jamaica and Jamaica can be of use to him, and we want our business relations to be placed on this reciprocal basis and on no other.’<sup>160</sup>

Notwithstanding the incident, the expectations about the tourist potential of the film created considerable enthusiasm among Jamaica’s colonial officials and business elites alike. They recognised ‘the benefit that is sure to accrue to the island from the picture’<sup>161</sup> and supported the showcase of ‘the beauties of our land’ to ‘millions of people all over the world’ through ‘the marvellous Kellerman-Brenon film’.<sup>162</sup> As with the Terriss features, the Jamaica Tourist Association expressed the hope that *A Daughter of the Gods* would help promote Jamaica as a tourist resort for affluent travellers in the US, the UK and the rest of the world.<sup>163</sup> Furthermore, they arranged a meeting with representatives of the Film Fox Company to see if they could do anything else ‘in regards to advertising the island’ abroad.<sup>164</sup> More specifically, they asked if the moving picture company could produce ‘a film to advertise the beauties and attractions of Jamaica in different parts of the United States.’<sup>165</sup> Such a travelogue film, they felt, ‘would be a very good means of inducing tourists to come here, and at the same time would be an effective all-round advertisement.’<sup>166</sup> The Fox representatives agreed to make ‘a film typical of Jamaican scenery’ for the JTA ‘free of cost’.<sup>167</sup> They also offered, although this time not free of charge, to organise the showings of the travelogue in the United States as ‘they wanted to do all they could do to assist in booming the island.’<sup>168</sup>

After the world premiere of *A Daughter of the Gods* in New York in October 1916, the film reportedly became an instant ‘big movie box office success’ and garnered widespread critical acclaim in the United States.<sup>169</sup> The first reviews of *A Daughter of the Gods* in the New York newspapers were all published in the *Gleaner*, and reviews continued to be written in the following months and even years. The film had a long domestic theatrical run and a gradual international distribution. In addition, Fox rereleased the film in the United States in 1917, 1918 and 1920, each time generating a new round of press coverage. Many of the billings and reviews of the almost three-hour long film extolled two virtues, first and foremost the virtue of Kellerman’s body and secondly the virtue of the exotic setting: ‘Together with the daring of Miss Kellerman, (...) the natural beauty of the Jamaican seascapes and landscapes makes a picture of great attractiveness.’<sup>170</sup> Still, most billings and reviews referred to the film’s tropical scenery in general terms. They usually did not mention Jamaica as filming location, but emphasised the ‘beautiful pictures to delight the eye of the spectator’ (see Figure 8).<sup>171</sup> However, some critics did mention the location used in *A Daughter of the Gods*,<sup>172</sup> and others not only identified the Jamaican settings, but also described them in highly favourable terms.<sup>173</sup>

Same High Class Orchestra  
Special Musical  
Score.

WILLIAM FOX PRESENTS  
**"A DAUGHTER  
OF THE GODS"**  
THE PICTURE BEAUTIFUL  
WITH **ANNETTE  
KELLERMANN**

A masterpiece! That is what the play is in itself. And as regards the story, no grander one was ever told by tongue, or pen, or picture. For two and a half hours one sits entranced, wondering how on earth they were ever able to make a such a spectacle, or, having made it, to make it tell so splendidly, and yet so plainly its inspiring tale of undying love.

Same Surprisingly Low Admission Prices  
ADULTS - - 25c CHILDREN - - 10c  
Saturday Afternoon and Evening All Seats 25c

Figure 8. An advertisement of *A Daughter of the Gods* in a Canadian newspaper. While the moving picture was clearly promoted as a Kellerman spectacle, no mention was made of Jamaica as the shooting location.  
Source: *Manitoba Free Press*, 16 February 1918.

In Jamaica, *A Daughter of the Gods* only received its premiere in March 1919, well over two years after its original release in the United States, when it was shown in Kingston and later also across the island, including in Port Antonio and Montego Bay (see Figure 9).<sup>174</sup> Although Jamaicans were reportedly ‘awaiting with unabated interest to see’ the picture ‘for the past many months’<sup>175</sup>, ‘Jamaica’s great picture’<sup>176</sup> did not appear earlier on the island since it was allegedly ‘impossible to get the film here at a price that would suit the pockets of this very unwealthy community.’<sup>177</sup>

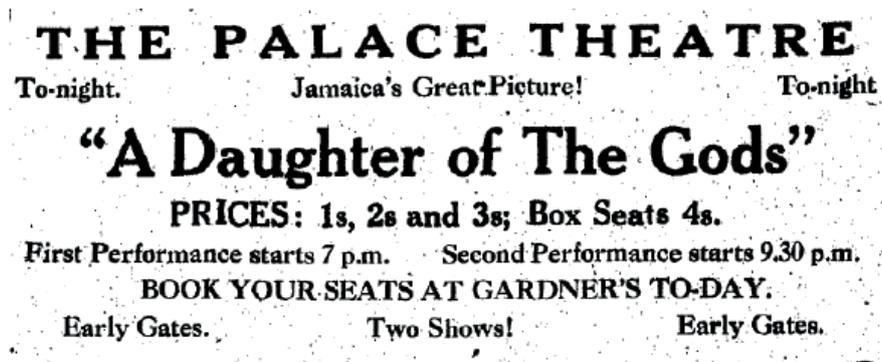


Figure 9. An advertisement for the first screenings of *A Daughter of the Gods* in Jamaica in March 1919. The film was first shown in *The Palace* in Kingston, before it went to other venues across the island. Source: *JG*, 3 March 1919.

According to Palace Amusement, the distribution company having ‘more or less a monopoly for the entertainment of the inhabitants of the metropolis’<sup>178</sup>, they could only bring ‘the master film into the country’<sup>179</sup> after the film’s rental costs went down due to its age.<sup>180</sup> When *A Daughter of the Gods* was finally released in Jamaican theatres, it reportedly attracted ‘mighty crowd[s]’.<sup>181</sup> While the plot was not always highly appreciated, as it supposedly left ‘much to be desired’, the film was considered a success from ‘the spectacular point of view.’<sup>182</sup> In particular, the *Gleaner* stated that it contained ‘some very good reproductions of Jamaican scenery’.<sup>183</sup> In one advertisement published in the newspaper, *A Daughter of the Gods* was even described as ‘the picture that has won fame through Jamaica’s charming scenery.’<sup>184</sup> It were these kind of written endorsements that Jamaican tourism stakeholders had hoped to see (more) in American, British and other foreign newspapers when they envisioned the potential indirect benefits through the promotion of Jamaica in the film and the press. At the same time, it reminded them of ‘the good old days’ when the Fox Film Corporation was ‘spending money largely on the island’ and ‘some of the local people’ had ‘good times’, referring to the incidental direct benefits of hosting the major Hollywood runaway production.

## Conclusion

In the period following the initial theatrical run of *A Daughter of the Gods* in the United States, Britain and elsewhere, it seems Jamaican tourism stakeholders were disappointed with the outcomes of the

location production. The lack of press coverage in the *Gleaner* on the topic after its original release suggests that the film did not have the significant impact in terms of enhancing Jamaica's reputation and increasing the number of tourists visiting the island as was anticipated. It was only years later, when subsequent foreign film companies arrived in Jamaica, that some critical reflections started to appear. The *Gleaner*, for example, argued that Jamaica had 'lost a fine advertisement' since Brenon had not kept his promise that he would 'set forth on the moving picture screen that the scenes of "A Daughter of the Gods" had been taken here'.<sup>185</sup> Indeed, the name of the island was eventually excluded from the film's credits as well as most of the advertisements of the Fox Film Company. On top of that, the travelogue film that the Fox team agreed to produce and exhibit for tourist promotion purposes seemingly never materialised.<sup>186</sup> When the English Film Company visited Jamaica in 1920, to make an actuality film on 'all phases of the colony's life' for 'educational purposes', the *Gleaner* argued that it would be 'the first time' that Jamaica would be filmed 'in this way', and that it would constitute 'a far better advertisement' than *A Daughter of the Gods*.<sup>187</sup> Furthermore, a year later, when the next 'American moving picture concern' came to the island to make another drama, *Love's Redemption* (1921), it was praised that, this time, the Jamaican places 'where its scenes were laid' were 'named on the screen'.<sup>188</sup>

Still, the production of *A Daughter of the Gods* took the awareness of the tourism potential of location filming and the collaboration between the film and tourism industries in Jamaica, to a new level. In one of the articles that Sullivan wrote for the *Gleaner*, the moving picture was mistakenly but very aptly referred to as an 'ad venture', with a space between 'ad' and 'venture'.<sup>189</sup> In 'early, racist silent cinema',<sup>190</sup> *A Daughter of the Gods* did not only set the tone for 'colonialist adventure films'<sup>191</sup> taking place in the British Empire, but also for the future of advertising ventures between the film and tourism industries in Jamaica and other 'exotic' European and American colonies. As early as the mid-1910s, the island's interwoven history of cinema, tourism and empire definitely took off with Brenon's 'million dollar miracle'.<sup>192</sup> From that moment onwards, the call to establish 'a British Hollywood within the Empire'<sup>193</sup>, or at least 'some sort of tropical Hollywood'<sup>194</sup> that would encourage American and British filmmakers as well as tourists to visit Jamaica, became part of the island's imperial tourist consciousness – and with that the envisioned road of its 'chances of development'<sup>195</sup> in the century to come. By connecting and integrating different histories and countries, the comparative history of early (empire) cinema both widens and deepens the understanding of the global workings of leisure imperialism. The cine-tourist practices and

discourses of Hollywood's *A Daughter of the Gods* in British colonial Jamaica demonstrate the historical and geographical interconnections between cinema, tourism and empire in the early twentieth century – and with that, the potential of a cross-industry and cross-border comparative perspective within film studies.

## Notes

- 1 This article has been partly derived from a chapter in my dissertation “Welcome to Paradise Island: The Rise of Jamaica’s Cine-Tourist Image, 1891–1951” at the University of Amsterdam. Further research on the topic was made possible by a one-year postdoc at the KITLV/Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies in Leiden. Finally, to complete the research, this project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement 681663).
- 2 As newspaper reports of the *Jamaica Gleaner* are the primary source materials for this study, the abbreviation *JG* is used when quoting or paraphrasing from these reports. When referring to other newspapers and magazines, their full title is provided in the text.
- 3 *JG*, 28 October 1915.
- 4 *JG*, 28 October 1915.
- 5 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 6 *JG*, 28 October 1915.
- 7 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 8 *JG*, 20 December 1915.
- 9 *JG*, 28 February 1919.
- 10 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 11 *JG*, 20 December 1915.
- 12 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 13 *JG*, 16 February 1916.
- 14 *JG*, 11 April 1916.
- 15 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 16 *JG*, 11 April 1916.

- 17 Susan Ward and Tom O'Regan, "The Film Producer as the Long-stay Business Tourist: Rethinking Film and Tourism from a Gold Coast Perspective," *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment* 11, no. 2 (2009): 218.
- 18 *JG*, 5 May 1906.
- 19 *JG*, 6 October 1906.
- 20 *JG*, 26 March 1906. The West India Committee expected that West's films would make many cinema-goers in the UK and across the British Empire 'interested commercially in the islands and purchase properties' (*JG*, 5 May 1906). Notably, West was a strong supporter of the British Empire, best known for his long-standing patriotic and jingoistic moving picture shows, *Our Navy* (1898–1913). The film series West came to shoot in the Caribbean were also part of his empire-building efforts. In his unpublished autobiography *Sea Salts and Celluloid* (1936) West argued that he decided to visit the Caribbean islands 'since as a whole they rank second to Newfoundland as our oldest possessions'.
- 21 *JG*, 15 February 1923. See also: Frank Fonda Taylor, *To Hell with Paradise: A History of the Jamaican Tourist Industry* (Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press), 140. According to Taylor, in the year 1913–1914 there were still about 3,000 tourist arrivals in Jamaica (excluding cruise ship arrivals, p. 111), however, when World War I broke out, this number was reduced to almost zero.
- 22 According to Dalea Bean, 'despite its distance from active combat, Jamaica was not spared the economic hardships of the Great War. Jamaica reeled from shortages of food, petrol, manufactured goods and sharp increases in food prices' (*JG*, 3 August 2014).
- 23 *The Moving Picture World*, 1 May 1915.
- 24 Bell Greene, *Book and Camera: A Critical History of Witches in American Film and Television* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2018), 34.
- 25 Clinton Black, *The History of Jamaica*, second edition (Essex, Kingston and San Juan: Longman Caribbean, 1991), 150.
- 26 Malcolm Crick, "Representations of International Tourism in the Social Sciences: Sun, Sex, Sights, Savings, and Servility," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989): 322.
- 27 Ella Shohat and Robert Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, reprinted edition 2002 (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 100–104.
- 28 Edward Bruner, "Of Cannibals, Tourists, and Ethnographers," *Cultural Anthropology* 4, no 4 (1989): 439.
- 29 Hazel Tucker and John Akama, "Tourism as Postcolonialism," in *The SAGE Handbook of Tourism Studies*, ed. Tazim Jamal and Mike Robinson (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2020), 4.

- 30 Louis Perez. "Aspects of Underdevelopment in the West Indies," *Science and Society* 37 (1974): 473.
- 31 See e.g. Ian Strachan, *Paradise and Plantation: Tourism and Culture in the Anglophone Caribbean* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2002); Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003); Krista Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics: Tourism, Photography, and the Framing of the Caribbean Picturesque* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).
- 32 Geoff Quilley and Kay Dian Kriz, "Introduction: Visual Culture and the Atlantic World, 1660–1830," in *An Economy of Colour: Visual Culture and the Atlantic World, 1660–1830*, ed. Geoff Quilley and Kay Dian Kriz (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 1–14.
- 33 Ann Spry Rush, *Bonds of Empire: West Indians and Britishness from Victoria to Decolonization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 33.
- 34 For the investigation of newspapers I mainly used NewspapersARCHIVE.com, an online subscription database providing access to thousands of historical newspapers, mostly American city and regional newspapers but also the *Jamaica Gleaner*. The online database offers full digital access to all the issues of the Jamaican national newspaper from its establishment in 1834 until the present time.
- 35 Charles Musser, "Historiographic Method and the Study of Early Cinema," *Cinema Journal* 44, no 1 (2004): 105.
- 36 Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, 103.
- 37 James Chapman, "Cinemas of Empire," *History Compass* 4, no 5 (2006): 814–819; Prem Chowdhry, *Colonial India and the Making of Empire Cinema: Image, Ideology and Identity* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000); Jeffrey Richards, *Visions of Yesterday* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).
- 38 Priya Jaikumar, "An 'Accurate Imagination': Place, Map and Archive as Spatial Objects of Film History," in *Empire and Film*, ed. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe (London: British Film Institute, 2011), 167–188.
- 39 Sandra Ponzanesi and Marguerite Waller, "Introduction," in *Postcolonial Cinema Studies*, ed. Sandra Ponzanesi and Marguerite Waller (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 11.
- 40 In general, postcolonial cinema historiography consists of recognising and revealing Euro-American cinemas of the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century as 'mass media tool[s] of European [and American] imperial projects' that 'helped shape, enforce, and naturalize the relationships between hegemonizing groups and their 'dominated' others' (Ponzanesi and Waller, "Introduction," 1). Rethinking many of the popular films of early cinema, late silent cinema and classical sound cinema from a postcolonial perspective, these new film histories not only revised old film histories but also old colonial histories. The body of films that has been – and still has to be – rethought became coined as the *cinema of*

*empire* or *empire cinema*. Already in the early 1970s, Richards defined the cinema of empire as ‘not simply which are set in the territories of the British Empire but films which detail the attitudes, ideals and myths of British Imperialism’ (*Visions of Yesterday*, 2). In the following years, the definition of empire cinema got extended to include the national cinemas of other empires, notably the United States, which emerged as an imperialist power by the early twentieth century (though the British tradition has remained prominent). For example, Chapman simply but effectively defined the cinema of empire, or rather cinemas of empires, as ‘films promoting ideologies of popular imperialism’ (“Cinemas of Empire,” 814). At present, the cinema of empire is most closely associated with the British and American empire films of the 1930s and 1940s. As Chowdhry notes, empire cinema is ‘a term now accepted for both the British as well as Hollywood cinema made mainly during the 1930s and 1940s, which projected a certain vision of the empire in relation to its subjects’ (*Colonial India and the Making of Empire Cinema*, 1). Indeed, with the proliferation of the imperial adventure genre in the early sound period, ‘the heyday of the classical cinema of Empire was undoubtedly the 1930s’ (Chapman, “Cinemas of Empire,” 814). However, already prior to this period, popular cinema proved to be a significant cinema of empire. Over the years, scholars of early cinema have carried out important work to better understand the imperial workings of film production, distribution and exhibition at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century. See, for instance, James Burns, *Cinema and Society in the British Empire, 1895–1940* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997); Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe, eds., *Empire and Film* (London: British Film Institute, 2011); Lee Grieveson, *Cinema and the Wealth of Nations: Media, Capital, and the Liberal World System* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018); Jennifer Lynn Peterson, *Education in the School of Dreams: Travelogues and Early Nonfiction Film* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013).

- 41 Doris Hambuch, “Caribbean Cinema Now: Introduction,” *Imaginations: Journal of Cross-Cultural Image Studies* 6–2 (2015): 4.
- 42 Richard Maltby, “New Cinema Histories,” in *Explorations in New Cinema Histories: Approaches and Case Studies*, ed. Richard Maltby, Daniel Biltereyst, and Philippe Meers (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 9.
- 43 Daniel Biltereyst and Philippe Meers, “New Cinema History and the Comparative Mode: Reflections on Comparing Historical Cinema Cultures,” *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media* 11 (2006): 14.
- 44 Biltereyst and Meers, “New Cinema History”.
- 45 Mbye Cham, “Introduction: Shape and Shaping of Caribbean Cinema,” *EX-ILES: Essay on Caribbean Cinema* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1992), 2.

- 46 Cham, "Introduction", 2.
- 47 Maltby, "New Cinema Histories," 9.
- 48 Despite the numerous copies that existed during its theatrical run, no surviving copies of *A Daughter of the Gods* are known, making it one of the most important lost films of the silent era.
- 49 Tom Gunning, "'Now You See It, Now You Don't': The Temporality of the Cinema of Attractions," in *Silent Film*, ed. Richard Abel (London: Athlone Press, 1996), 71–84.
- 50 *The Davenport Daily Leader*, 14 July 1896.
- 51 Simon Popple and Joe Kember, *Early Cinema: From Factory Gate to Dream Factory* (London: Wallflower Press, 2004), 2.
- 52 *Winnipeg Free Press*, 1 June 1891.
- 53 *Alton Evening Telegraph*, 20 May 1899.
- 54 Jennifer Lynn Peterson, "Travelogues," in *Encyclopedia of Early Cinema*, ed. Richard Abel (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005).
- 55 Peterson, "Travelogues," 927.
- 56 Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* (London: Verso, 2002), 77. At the time, travelogues were regularly advertised in the newspapers as, like one contemporary described it, 'a capital substitute for actual personal travel' for 'the stay-at-homes' (*The Washington Post*, 15 January 1905).
- 57 Jeffrey Ruoff, "Introduction: The Filmic Fourth Dimension: Cinema as Audiovisual Vehicle," in *Virtual Voyages: Cinema and Travel*, ed. Jeffrey Ruoff (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 1.
- 58 Gunning, "Attractions," 28.
- 59 Lynne Kirby, *Parallel Tracks: The Railroad and Silent Cinema* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 59.
- 60 Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, 76.
- 61 Gunning, "Attractions," 30.
- 62 Peterson, *Education in the School of Dreams*, 8–9.
- 63 Alison Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference: Cinema, Anthropology, and the Turn-of-the-Century Visual Culture* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2002), 232.
- 64 Cham, "Introduction," 2.
- 65 Griffiths, *Wondrous Difference*, 234. Although commercial filmmakers were perhaps not explicitly deployed to promote colonial interests and activities (as with governmental filmmakers), they firmly established the imperial tourist gaze as a dominant visual mode and way of seeing for metropolitan audiences in the early twentieth century.

- 66 Apart from actualities (and after-the-fact re-enactments) of warfront events, moving pictures portrayed many more scenes associated with imperial events, including the departure and return of troops, imperial jubilees, funerals and coronations. Together, these early films disseminating supportive images of empire (of overseas battles, mundane rituals and ceremonial events) established cinema as empire cinema from the outset. As such, the cinema of attractions played a major role in raising imperial consciousness, provoking imperial sentiments, amplifying imperial spectacle and normalizing imperial discourse. See e.g. Ian Christie, “‘The Captains and the Kings Depart’: Imperial Departure and Arrival in Early Cinema,” in *Empire and Film*, 21–34.
- 67 Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* (London: Verso, 2002), 77.
- 68 Chapman and Cull, *Projecting Empire*, 1.
- 69 Peterson, “Travelogues,” 929.
- 70 Anthony Fellow, *American Media History* (Boston: Wadsworth, 2013), 219.
- 71 While Vitagraph made *Between Love and Honor* (1910) in Jamaica, described as a ‘powerful drama of fisher folk life’ that was ‘photographed amid the beautiful scenery of Kingston’ (e.g. *The Moving Picture World*, 28 June 1910), B & C shot a series of nine ‘big dramas’ (*JG*, 2 February 1914) on the island, including *Favourite for the Jamaica Cup* (1913), *Tom Cringle in Jamaica* (1913), *The Old College Badge* (1913), *A Flirtation at Sea* (1913), *The Creole Love Story* (1913), *The Overseer’s Revenge* (1913), *The Planter’s Daughter* (1913), *Lieutenant Daring and the Labour Riots* (1913), and *Lieutenant Daring and the Dancing Girl* (1913).
- 72 Emiel Martens, “The History of Film and Tourism in Jamaica,” in *Reshaping (G)local Dynamics of the Caribbean*, ed. Anja Bandau, Anne Brüske and Natascha Ueckmann (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing, 2018), 193–216.
- 73 *JG*, 14 May 1915.
- 74 *JG*, 14 May 1915. In the same interview, Terriss also advised Jamaican tourism industry stakeholders to improve the roads across the island. According to the filmmaker, ‘the possession of better highways would induce motorists to come here, and so considerably enhance the value from the tourist standpoint. (...) You have the scenery that attracts, but you want better roads, and as you are out for the tourist trade you should improve your highways’ (*JG*, 14 May 1915). He seemed to mainly refer here to the regular tourism trade, but he possibly also thought of foreign film producers (including himself) who would appreciate such improvements as it would ease location filming on the island.
- 75 *The Moving Picture World*, 16 June 1915.
- 76 *The Moving Picture World*, 16 June 1915.

- 77 Thompson, *An Eye for the Tropics*, 103.
- 78 Peterson, *Education in the School of Dreams*, xvi.
- 79 Peter Davis, *Darkest Hollywood: Exploring the Jungles of Cinema's South Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1996), 2.
- 80 *JG*, 24 August 1915.
- 81 *JG*, 24 August 1915.
- 82 *JG*, 24 August 1915.
- 83 *JG*, 11 September 1915. The response to Terriss was instructed at a meeting of the JTA in September 1915. During that meeting the association also pronounced the intention to approach 'the different Government Departments with suggestions for improvements in various services and information to the travelling public with the view of facilitating tourists, and others who have to make use of the public service of the island' (*JG*, 11 September 1915).
- 84 *JG*, 24 August 1915.
- 85 *JG*, 24 August 1915.
- 86 *JG*, 11 September 1915.
- 87 *JG*, 31 August 1915. The visiting Fox team included, among others, general director Herbert Brenon, film director Gordon Edwards, and the silent-era film stars Annette Kellerman, Genevieve Hamper, Claire Whitney, Violet Horner, Walter Miller, Robert Mantell, and Stuart Holmes.
- 88 *JG*, 1 November 1915.
- 89 *The North Western Advocate and the Emu Bay Times*, 20 February 1917.
- 90 *JG*, 3 February 1916.
- 91 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 92 Although *A Daughter of the Gods* is widely recognized as the first film production worldwide with a budget over one million US dollars, there is some debate about the size and composition of the film's budget. Several sources state that the 'million dollars of expenditure' also included 'the cost of advertisement' and the actual production costs were about US\$850,000 (*JG*, 27 April 1916). Other sources suggest that the budget was merely used for promotional purposes, i.e. to bill *A Daughter of the Gods* as 'William Fox's million dollar picture' (*Variety*, 20 January 1917).
- 93 *Bernews*, 14 December 2010.
- 94 *Neptune's Daughter* marked the first of several popular feature-length aquatic fantasy pictures starring Australian swimming champion Annette Kellerman, who was often described in the press as 'the most

beautifully formed woman in the world' (*JG*, 31 August 1915). In these pictures, Kellerman controversially pushed the boundaries of nudity in silent cinema. For example, in *Neptune's Daughter*, she introduced the first one-piece swimsuit and advanced bareleggedness on movie screens (up until then women's legs were always covered in American films). With her performance in *A Daughter of the Gods*, Kellerman allegedly became the first female Hollywood star to appear nude on the silver screen.

- 95 *Variety*, 20 January 1917.
- 96 *JG*, 31 August 1915.
- 97 Janis Haswell, Richard Haswell, and Glenn Blalock, "Hospitality in College Composition Courses," *College Composition and Communication* 60, no 4 (2009): 715.
- 98 Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodies Others in Post-Coloniality* (London: Routledge Books, 2000), 190.
- 99 *The Billboard*, 28 October, 1916.
- 100 Emily Gibson (with Barbara Firth), *The Original Million Dollar Mermaid: The Annette Kellerman Story* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2005), 134.
- 101 Strachan, *Paradise and Plantation*.
- 102 *JG*, 4 March 1916.
- 103 *Pinnacle News*, 20 March 1917.
- 104 *The Billboard*, 26 October 1916.
- 105 *JG*, 15 October 1915.
- 106 *Manitoba Free Press*, 16 February 1918.
- 107 *JG*, 20 January 1916.
- 108 *London Daily Mail*, 11 February 1916.
- 109 *JG*, 20 December 1915.
- 110 *JG*, 31 August 1915.
- 111 Strachan, *Paradise and Plantation*, 142.
- 112 *JG*, 31 March 1916.
- 113 *JG*, 14 February 1916.
- 114 *JG*, 29 January 1916. From the onset, Brenon seemed to be fascinated by the thought of holding 'the world's record for the largest and most expensive film ever made' (*JG*, 22 November 1916). According to the *Gleaner*, the director aimed to make 'the best film yet produced in the world' and spared 'neither money nor labour to achieve the goal of his ambition' (*JG*, 22 November 1916).
- 115 Rick Altman, *Silent Film Sound* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 300.

- 116 Andrew Erdman, *Blue Vaudeville: Sex, Morals and the Mass Marketing of Amusement, 1895–1915* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2004), 97–98.
- 117 Richard Koszarski, *An Evening's Entertainment: The Age of the Silent Feature Picture, 1915–1928* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1994), 186.
- 118 *The Pinnacle News*, 20 March 1917.
- 119 *JG*, 31 August 1915.
- 120 *JG*, 20 December 1915.
- 121 *JG*, 15 October 1915. 'I have always had an idea even as a child that whenever I read of the Garden of Eden, I always hoped that sometime I should see something that would carry out the thoughts that were running through my mind as to what it would look like. It has all come true, more I cannot say but that to my mind the interior of this island carries out this dream' (Sullivan in *JG*, 15 October 1915).
- 122 Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, 124.
- 123 Thierry Jutel, "Lord of the Rings: Landscape, Transformation, and the Geography of the Virtual," in *Cultural Studies in Aotearoa New Zealand: Identity, Space and Place*, ed. Claudia Bell and Steve Matthewman (Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press, 2004), 60.
- 124 Jutel, "Lord of the Rings", 60.
- 125 Alfo Leotta., *Touring the Screen: Tourism and New Zealand Film Geographies* (Bristol and Chicago: Intellect, 2011), 18.
- 126 Jutel, "Lord of the Rings," 55.
- 127 *JG*, 31 August 1915.
- 128 *Variety*, 20 January 1917.
- 129 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 130 Brain Hudson, *The Waterfalls of Jamaica: Sublime and Beautiful Objects* (Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press, 2001), 31–32.
- 131 Mimi Sheller, "Natural Hedonism: The Invention of Caribbean Islands as Tropical Playgrounds," in *Tourism in the Caribbean: Trends, Development, Prospects*, ed. David Timothy Duval (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 31.
- 132 *JG*, 28 February 1919.
- 133 *JG*, 27 April 1916.
- 134 *JG*, 8 October 1915. According to the *Gleaner*, the vast number of supernumeraries who appeared in *A Daughter of the Gods* as 'crowds, soldiers, slave-drivers, [and] gnomes' were 'all Jamaican' (*JG*, 29 January

1916). In American newspapers it was reported that most of the gnomes were ‘in reality, little ‘black boys’ from the West Indies’ (*Manitoba Free Press*, 10 November 1917). The *Gleaner* reported that up to ‘1,000 children were employed daily for some weeks’ (*JG*, 15 February 1916). Brenon called the Jamaican supernumeraries ‘the finest in the world’, adding that he found only one fault with hem, namely that ‘once they start, they get so enthusiastic I can’t stop them quickly enough; but, it’s a fault on the right side’ (*JG*, 29 February 1916).

135 *JG*, 3 May 1916.

136 *JG*, 27 April 1916.

137 *JG*, 19 October 1915.

138 *JG*, 3 February 1916.

139 *JG*, 19 October 1915.

140 *JG*, 27 April 1916. Besides the creation of employment, rental of rooms and use of transportation, the *Gleaner* also mentioned additional expenditure brought about by the production. For example, when the visiting Fox team filmed for weeks at St. Ann’s Bay, the newspaper reported that ‘some of the shops replenished their stores in anticipation of unprecedented business’ (*JG*, 15 February 1916). The *Gleaner* also stated that the film company had used thousands of barrels ‘all purchased in Jamaica’ (*JG*, 15 February 1916).

141 E.g. *Manitoba Free Press*, 10 November 1917.

142 In the *Gleaner*, the amount of Jamaican labourers mentioned by the Fox press department was rectified: ‘Though we (...) saw quite large crowds on more than one occasion (...), we do not remember ever seeing nearly a million people. As a matter of fact a million, or a fiftieth part of a million, people were never required’ (*JG*, 28 February 1919). Strikingly, the Fox press department also seems to have made up ‘the appearance of man-eating sharks’ during the filming of the water scenes at St. Anne’s Bay (*Chronicle Telegram*, 29 August 1920) to promote *A Daughter of the Gods*. It is highly unlikely that this ‘horror’ actually befell the actors during the shooting (*Chronicle Telegram*, 29 August 1920), as the *Gleaner* did not report about this incident and shark attacks hardly ever happen in Jamaica.

143 Ward and O’Regan, “The Film Producer as the Long-stay Business Tourist,” 216.

144 *JG*, 3 February 1916.

145 *JG*, 1 November 1915.

146 *New York Morning Telegraph*, 30 January 1916.

147 *JG*, 28 October, 1915.

- 148 *JG*, 20 December 1915.
- 149 *JG*, 28 October 1915. Like Terriss previously, Sullivan advised the Jamaican tourism industry to improve the domestic mode of travelling, as ‘the average tourist is unable to pay the cost of transportation throughout the island’ (*JG*, 19 October 1915). In another article, Sullivan stated that Jamaica should improve the information flows, pleasure resorts and beauty spots in ‘the undeveloped section of Jamaica’ (*JG*, 26 February 1916), referring to the North Coast areas outside the already established tourist towns of Montego Bay and Port Antonio.
- 150 *JG*, 20 December 1915.
- 151 *JG*, 28 October 1915.
- 152 *JG*, 20 October 1915.
- 153 *New York Morning Telegraph*, 30 January 1916.
- 154 *New York Morning Telegraph*, 30 January 1916.
- 155 *JG*, 16 February 1916.
- 156 *JG*, 16 February 1916.
- 157 *JG*, 16 February 1916.
- 158 *JG*, 16 February, 1916.
- 159 *JG*, 16 February 1916.
- 160 *JG*, 16 February 1916.
- 161 *JG*, 4 March 1916.
- 162 *JG*, 28 October 1915.
- 163 *JG*, 19 October 1915.
- 164 *JG*, 26 February, 1916.
- 165 *JG*, 25 February 1916.
- 166 *JG*, 25 February 1916. Interestingly, the Jamaica Tourist Association seemingly perceived a non-fictional ‘travelogue picture’ (*JG*, 26 February 1916) as more effective promotion than *A Daughter of the Gods*, even if it concerned ‘the biggest thing in the cinema for years to come’ (*JG*, 4 March 1916). This perception may have come from the expected audiences of the commercial fiction film, i.e. the lower- and middle-class cinema-goers who generally did not have the financial means to travel abroad. A travelogue film, on the other hand, could be exhibited at illustrated travel lectures, which were still popular among the more affluent Americans in the late 1910s. Another reason for the preference could be that *A Daughter of the Gods* was not actually set in Jamaica. It could therefore have been assumed by the JTA that the film did not provide the publicity value for the island claimed by Sullivan.

- 167 *JG*, 25 February 1916.
- 168 *JG*, 25 February 1916.
- 169 *The New York Clipper*, 6 December 1916. *A Daughter of the Gods* reportedly netted well over 1 million US dollars at the domestic box office, which allegedly made it ‘the greatest box office’ movie ever made’ (*The New York Clipper*, 20 December 1916). Thus, despite the high production costs, the early blockbuster film already made back its million dollar budget through its domestic run only. The film’s worldwide box-office gross is unknown, but newspapers reports from other countries suggest that *A Daughter of the Gods* was a box office hit abroad as well. For example, when the Kellerman film premiered in New Zealand, it screened ‘before a packed audience, while hundreds of people had to be turned away’ (*Poverty Bay Herald*, 11 July 1918). However, not all reviews were favourable. On the contrary, *A Daughter of the Gods* received some very negative reviews, some of which got published in the *Gleaner*.
- 170 *New York Herald*, 25 October 1916.
- 171 *Variety*, 20 January 1917.
- 172 For example, one reviewer stated that ‘Herbert Brenon, director of the great feature, chose Jamaica as his locale’ (*Public Ledger*, 20 January 1917).
- 173 For example, one reviewer stated that ‘the beautiful landscapes taken in Jamaica are beyond description’ (*Daily Kennebec Journal*, 9 July 1918).
- 174 *JG*, 3 March 1919; 17 March 1919; 20 March 1919.
- 175 *JG*, 27 February 1919.
- 176 *JG*, 3 March 1919.
- 177 *JG*, 28 February 1919.
- 178 *JG*, 1 March 1919.
- 179 *JG*, 27 February 1919.
- 180 Some critics questioned this reason at the time, as they argued that *A Daughter of the Gods* had screened for low admission prices in both New York and London soon after the film’s original release in 1916. According to one critic, the prices in New York were already as low as 25 cents per ticket in the second week the film was running there, while ‘up to February, 1918, when last [shown] in New York City, this picture was around all the 15, 20, 25 cents houses’ (*JG*, 7 March 1919). Another critic added that the film was screened in London in early 1918 for ‘1/ and 1/6, and these prices included the usual cup of tea and biscuits generally served at a first class English Picture Show’ (*JG*, 1 March 1919). Palace Amusement maintained that the rental costs of *A Daughter of the Gods* were still high, even two years after its original

release, and that they also had to deal with ‘the increased cost of bringing such a film to the island’ (JG, 1 March 1919). In fact, when it screened the film in Kingston, the company allegedly increased the regular ticket price ‘beyond all reason’, resulting in ‘exorbitant prices for admission’ (JG, 1 March 1919). This all while, according to the first critic, *A Daughter of the Gods* by that time could have been ‘shown profitably in any moving picture theatre for one shilling and no ice water’ (JG, 7 March 1919).

181 JG, 27 March 1919. When *A Daughter of the Gods* was screened in the Paramount Theatre in Montego Bay, the *Gleaner* reported that the theatre was ‘packed to its utmost capacity’ by not only ‘residents in the town’, but also by visitors coming ‘by car from the country parts and the neighbouring parishes (JG, 18 March 1919).

182 JG, 28 February 1919.

183 JG, 28 February 1919.

184 JG, 1 March 1919.

185 JG, 4 February 1920.

186 No sources have been found that confirm that Fox Film Company ever delivered the travelogue film to the JTA. However, the company did make a war actuality of the departure of the first Jamaican contingent to serve the British Empire in the World War I on November 8, 1915. According to the *Gleaner*, the ‘lifelike record’ was made by ‘the branch of the Fox Film Company at present in Jamaica’ and intended as a recruitment propaganda film to encourage other young Jamaican and West Indian men to enlist for the Caribbean regiments of the British colonial army (JG, 24 February 1916).

187 JG, 4 February 1920.

188 JG, 30 November 1923.

189 JG, 20 December 1915.

190 Denzin Norman, *Reading Race: Hollywood and the Cinema of Racial Violence* (London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, SAGE Publications, 2002), 21.

191 Richard Dyer, *White* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 155.

192 JG, 28 February 1919.

193 JG, 7 August 1925.

194 JG, 16 November 1925.

195 JG, 4 February 1920.

## Biography

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