





# AicE-Bs2023Marrakech



updates

https://www.amerabra.org

#### 11th ABRA International Conference on Environment-Behaviour Studies

Semiramis Hotel, Marrakech, Morocco, 01-07 Mar 2023

# Cinema-induced Tourism in Morocco: A narrative review

# Moulay Abdellah Taibi\*, Fatima-Zohra Iflahen

\* Corresponding Author

Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, CADI AYYAD University, Marrakech, Morocco

myabdellah.taibi@gmail.com, f.iflahen@uca.ac.ma Tel:: 00212666782882

### **Abstract**

A leading destination for both tourists and filmmakers, Morocco - specifically the province of Ouarzazate - has the potential to be a cinema-induced tourism (CIT) cradle. Branded as the "Hollywood of Africa," this province is privileged due to its diversified landscape. Through a narrative review approach, this article explores the development of (CIT) in Morocco. It identifies research areas and trends by providing state-of-the-art knowledge and highlighting gaps. The results unveil the dearth of research in this field despite Morocco's pioneerism as a (CIT) destination. Furthermore, this niche is underexploited as a tourism product by national destination marketers.

Keywords: Cinema-induced tourism; Morocco; narrative review

eISSN: 2398-4287 © 2023. The Authors. Published for AMER ABRA cE-Bs by e-International Publishing House, Ltd., UK. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/). Peer–review under responsibility of AMER (Association of Malaysian Environment-Behaviour Researchers), ABRA (Association of Behavioural Researchers on Asians/Africans/Arabians), and cE-Bs (Centre for Environment-Behaviour Studies), Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.21834/ebpj.v8i23.4507

#### 1.0 Introduction

One of the leading destinations for international tourists, Morocco ranked second in Africa in 2021 regarding global tourism receipts. In addition to tourists, the country attracts directors and cinematographic industry experts who consider Morocco, mainly the province of Ouarzazate, the "Hollywood of Africa ."The unique topography and landscape of the region have established Ouarzazate as an appealing destination for filmmakers since the 1960s. Besides its natural features, the province of Ouarzazate affords highly qualified human resources in the cinematographic industry, mainly scenic artists and set builders. The mentioned advantages have paved the way for the foundation of three filming facilities (Atlas, CLA, and Kanzaman studios) and a cinema museum that attracts national and international producers along with cinephiles to this province associated with many blockbuster movies like Gladiator, The mummy, The prince of Persia, Game of Thrones, and other films that fascinate movie fans.

Being at the crossroads of both tourism and cinema, Morocco has a good potential for becoming a key destination for movie-induced tourism, an emerging typology of cultural tourism "fueled by both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel" (Hudson & Richie, 2006,387). Tourism experts recognize this niche as a driver of tourism development for many destinations (Connell, 2012)

eISSN: 2398-4287 © 2023. The Authors. Published for AMER ABRA cE-Bs by e-International Publishing House, Ltd., UK. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/). Peer-review under responsibility of AMER (Association of Malaysian Environment-Behaviour Researchers), ABRA (Association of Behavioural Researchers on Asians/Africans/Arabians), and cE-Bs (Centre for Environment-Behaviour Studies), Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.21834/ebpj.v8i23.4507

Research in cinema-induced tourism has also rapidly grown worldwide, particularly in the destination image formation and branding, embedded marketing, impact on destinations, and sustainable tourism. This review article explores the development of cinema-induced tourism as an emerging field of research in Morocco. Its main intention is to identify the major research areas, trends, and findings.

The present article adopts a narrative review approach to provide state-of-the-art knowledge on cinema-induced tourism in Morocco. It explores all produced studies that referred to Morocco as a cinema-induced tourism destination. The significance of the paper lies in identifying the knowledge gap and "leading to best practices and improv(ing) the quality of future research" (Heyn, 2019)

## 2.0 Literature Review

Movie-induced tourism and film tourism are interchangeably used to refer to a type of tourism that "falls under the umbrella of cultural tourism" (Gjorgievski & Trpkova, 2012,98), a tourist visit "to a destination or attraction as a result of the destination's being featured on television, video, or the cinema screen" (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006, p. 387). It is also a "specific pattern of tourism that drives visitors to see screened places during or after the production of a feature film or a television production." (Roesch, 2009,6). Broadly speaking, It is a "visitation of a site or a location that is or has been used for or is associated with filming" (Buchmann et al., 2010,233)

Referring to Wexman's description of the attractiveness of the scenery that features San Francisco (1986), Connel (2012) asserts that interest in film as a cultural production was first mentioned used by Alfred Hitchcock's films in the 50s and 60s, particularly in *Vertigo* (1958). Connel also highlights Edgerton's (1986) opinion that this city was considered the first to attract tourists, thanks to the film. Bolan & Kearne (2017) argue that the phenomenon started much earlier with the Irish movie 'Quiet Man' by John Ford, filmed in 1952, among the first with similar attributes. According to the authors, the movie sets in Cong Mayo, Ireland region have consistently attracted American tourists. However, it seems that the turning point of the connection between moving pictures and tourism knew their best time in the 20th century (Beeton, 2016), when cinema and television became the dominant media, while movie-induced tourism has not become a widely researched topic among academics until the late 2000s (Connel, 2012, p. 1012).

Cinema has a significant role in destination imaging and marketing. It reinforces potential visitors' perception of a destination, builds a new one, or replaces another. The effect of films on tourists who seek to "re-live an experience (or even emotion) encountered in the film reinforce myth, storytelling or fantasies, or for reasons of status (or celebrity)" (Beeton, 2010,2) is one of the factors behind the advertising industry's endorsement of film as an effective strategy towards potential mass markets. After being featured in films or television dramas, many countries have witnessed an increase in tourist numbers (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). Tourism Organizations can use film as springboards for marketing if perceived as appropriate for the destination (Horrigan, 2009). It is generally accepted that destinations featured movies attract cinephiles mainly if the film is set in Hollywood (Spears et al., 2013).

## 3.0 Methodology

The present article utilizes a narrative review approach to provide state-of-the-art knowledge on cinema-induced tourism in Morocco. The authors opted for this approach due to its flexibility and the possibility of using diverse movie-tourism-oriented texts. The paper explores all produced studies that refer to Morocco as a cinema-induced tourism destination.

Due to the novelty of the concept of cinema-induced tourism, which was identified and defined by Riley et al. (1998), we did not specify the date interval for the included document. The authors also lifted study-type restrictions in selecting relevant research works because of scarcely related studies in Morocco. They first researched all forms of texts in both English and French from the reputed databases, Scopus, Google Scholar, and Jstor, using English and French keywords: Cinema-induced tourism; film tourism Morocco; Ciné-Tourisme Maroc, Tourisme Cinématographique Maroc. They then compiled all relevant writings in English and French (books, journal articles, and conference papers) and classified them chronologically. After studying the sources, they summarized their content and categorized their salient themes and topics.

#### 4.0 Findings

The table below introduces retrieved sources that studied or at least mentioned cinema-induced tourism (CIT) in Morocco. The references are classified in chronological order. The number of sources complying with our stated criteria is fourteen documents in French and English, among which we have one book, nine articles, one conference paper, and three theses. The table also shows that the first referral to cinema-induced tourism in Morocco was in 2004 in K. Dwyer's book. And since then, research in cinema-induced tourism in Morocco has received little attention from academia, mainly Moroccan. Only Two articles tackled CIT in Morocco as the main topic, while one only referred to the activity.

Table1: list of sources retrieved from databases using keywords: Cinema-induced tourism – Morocco (in both English and French)

Author	Title	Date	Type of source	Journal/Publisher
Dwyer, K.	Beyond Casablanca: M. A.Tazi and the Adventure of Moroccan Cinema	2004	Book	Publication of Indiana University Press
Hasnaouy, B.	Quelques représentations de la société oasienne dans la carte postale touristique.	2008	Conference paper	Colloque International "Tourisme Oasien: Formes, Acteurs Et Enjeux". Université Ibn Zohr, Agadir (Maroc)

Govers, R. & Go, F.	Place Branding: Glocal, Virtual, and Physical Identities, Constructed, Imagined, and Experienced	2009	Journal Article	Palgrave Macmillan
Lapompe- Paironne, L.	Cinéma et désert : de Tataouine à Ouarzazate.	2011	Journal Article	Téoros Revue de recherche en tourisme
Pruseviciute, I.	the influence of movie trailers on destination image: the case of china	2014	Thesis	University of Ljubljana
Haney, M. R.	Back to Reality: A Study of Reality Television Tourism	2014	Thesis	Texas university
AKHAJAM, S.	When Cinema Boosts Tourism in Ouarzazate: The Cine-Tourism as a New Form of Tourism in the Southern Region of Morocco?	2015	Journal Article	Journal of Tourism, Hospitality, and Sports
Haney, MR.	Back to Reality: A Study of Reality Television Tourism	2016	Journal Article	Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally
Eskandari, S.	Cinematic Plateau and Sustainable Tourism	2017	Journal Article	Studies in Media and Communication
Sola-Real , R. & Medina- Herrera, C.	The influence of cinema and television on tourism promotion	2018	Journal Article	Revista de Historia y Estética audiovisual
Chaouni, N.	Ciné-tourisme : films et séries télévisées comme outils de promotion touristique territoriale	2018	Journal Article	Revue Internationale de Management, Entrepreneuriat et Communication
Chaouni, N.	Etude de réception transnationale d'une série télévisée et ses effets sur l'attractivité touristique d'une région rurale.	2020	Thesis	Sciences de l'information et de la communication. Université Montpellier Paul Valéry - Montpellier III, 2018.
Staszak, J-F.	Casablanca : le film, la ville et les touristes. À propos du Rick's café et de quelques autres simulacres in situ	2021	Journal Article	Annales De Géographie
Contu, G. & Paul, S.	The impact of TV series on tourism performance: the case of Game of Thrones	2022	Journal Article	Springer Science and Business Media

Source: elaborated by the authors

Starting with Dwyer (2004), Several references suggest that Michael Curtiz's *Casablanca* (1943) is the first film associated with Morocco. Although none of the movie scenes is shot in Casablanca or Morocco, this film "still calls up the image of Morocco for many" (Dwyer, 2004,123). Haney (2014) considers this work the pioneering movie that initiated (CIT). The fictional location of Rick's Café, featured in the movie and built in the Moroccan city decades after the film debut, became an attraction for eager tourists and fans for related "experiences and paraphernalia" and for film-induced fantasies (Haney, 2016,4); these fans are the youth of the 40s and 50s who sought to renew their memories with the film (Eskandari, 2017,39). For Haney (2016), the fantasies created by these tourists are purely fictional because the movie was filmed entirely at the WB Studios in California, which confirms the significance of the connection between cinema and tourism even through the choice of the film title. In his study of the relationship between *Casablanca* and the eponymous city, Staszak (2021) investigated the circumstances of the film production and how it led to the establishment of the fictional location, coining the "in situ simulacrum" to reflect on "the relationship between places and imaginaries" (2021). The author states that the symbolic value of the work is a permanent and free advertisement for Casablanca and Morocco.

To Pruseviciute (2014), substituting a factual location leads to building false representations of destinations by foreign filmmakers who seek cheaper and similar-looking places rather than original/actual ones. The author refers to the Moroccan city Ouarzazate as the principal substitute location where directors constructed diverse civilizations and countries like Persia, Egypt, Rome, Macedonia, and even China, which may falsify formed images by tourists and can lower the satisfaction of their tourist experience once they visit the actual places. However, Sola-Real & Medina-Herrera (2018) believe that Morocco is one of the countries that do not take full advantage of the potential of its cinematographic industry to promote tourism.

Akhajam (2015) has highlighted this potential by trying to find the connection between cinema and tourism and the impact of (CIT) on the territory of Ouarzazate. Lapompe-Paironne (2011) undermines this potential by comparing Ouarzazate and the Tunisian city Tataouine regarding movie sets and desert landscape exploitation in (CIT). The study states that the main difference between Ouarzazate and Tataouine is that the latter is a destination for displays of a specific film, **Star Wars**, which attracts mainly **Star War** lovers, while Atlas studio in Ouarzazate stands as a secondary activity for mass tourists. Lapompe-Paironne (2011) even argues that tourism professionals in both Morocco and Tunisia do not consider (CIT) as a fundamental element of sightseeing in both regions. Hasnaouy (2008) supports this argument by stating that (CIT) in Morocco, especially in Ouarzazate, does not contribute to local development, given the significant investments in the cinematographic industry.

Promoting destinations through motion pictures is not restricted to Hollywoodian productions in Morocco. Chaouni (2018a) emphasized the role of national films in promoting domestic tourism and the value of cinema as a tourism communication strategy. Her study established the increase in visits to Chefchaouen, the filming location of the soap opera *Lalla Mennana*, both by national and diaspora Moroccans, after broadcasting the show that was not only a marketing teaser for domestic tourism but also an identity consolidator for Moroccans of the diaspora.

### 5.0 Discussion

The literature reveals that the first known form of cinema-induced tourism is associated with Casablanca (1943) by Michael Curtiz (Haney, 2014), which refutes Connel's (2012) claim that Hitchcock's Vertigo (1958) was the pioneer in this regard, as well as Bolan's & Keane's (2017) John Ford's Quiet Man (1952) avant-gardism. The review has also shown that Casablanca and Rick's café represent a very peculiar phenomenon of cinema-induced tourism because its characteristics escape Beeton's (2005) classification of on-location and off-location movie-induced tourism. The first refers to the physical site where the movie was set, while the second alludes to movie sets and locations created in film studios and theme parks that replace the actual site. *Casablanca* was neither shot in an actual physical place in the eponymous city nor an off-location substitute for an existing bar in Casablanca. Rick's café came into existence 61 years after its debut and was not even an exact copy of the fictional bar. Nevertheless, the location has a significant symbolic and emotional merit, which raises serious questions about the creation of the imaginary.

Despite its multiple assets, this brief review highlights the limited recognition of Ouarzazate, the so-called Hollywood of Africa, as a cinema-induced tourism site. The studies identified some of the reasons behind this issue; being a substitute location for many places, Ouarzazate is not associated with a specific film to relate to, unlike Casablanca and Titaouine in Tunisia, which respectively promote only one particular film: Casablanca and Star wars. Moreover, most documents agree that despite the prosperous cinematographic industry, Moroccan destination marketers and tourism authorities do not take full advantage of this industry as a marketing tool. There is a lack of institutional promotion valorizing the movies filmed in Morocco.

The review also reveals the crucial position of national cinema-induced tourism, despite its significant standing as a promising niche for local tourism, and against current international trends in promoting destinations through successful films/series, an efficient destination marketing strategy worth adopting by destination marketers.

The study has also shown that a film's success is fundamental to cinema-induced tourism enhancement. For example, Casablanca is a three-Oscar-winning film that still ranks among the 43rd-best films ever produced on IMDb after 80 years. The same goes for the national soap opera Bnat Lalla Mennana which was praised by the Moroccan audience and press through a study of fan feedback on social media (Chaouni, 2018). The imaging power of film can provide residents with a positive view of their town if the film portrayal is "realistic, evocative and desirable" (Beeton, 2005, p.14).

Movies do shape potential visitors' perception of destinations. Cinema has both a positive and negative impact on destinations. Positive impact boosts the featured locations through promotion and, subsequently, the rise in visitor numbers. Negative consequences, however, concern replaced locations due to the misrepresented images embodied in movies once filmed in a substitute location.

Finally, the CIT niche in Morocco is under-researched. As stated earlier, only a few sources tackled cinema and tourism in Morocco as their principal research subject, while the remaining nine mentioned Morocco as an example. Additionally, only three out of the five references have Moroccan authors-researchers. Academia does not grant recognition to CIT equal to other classical forms of tourism like nature and historical tourism though we can attribute this limited recognition to various reasons. In addition to the absence of a specific research field for CIT, it is an emerging field positioned at the intersection between cinema and tourism. This dearth of research in this area could subsequently trigger a deficit of creative solutions potent to enhance and develop this niche.

This narrative review has highlighted studies that referred to Cinema-induced tourism in Morocco. Despite the dearth of research in this area, the available studies have contributed to our understanding of the breadth of the gap that remains to be bridged. As stated earlier, the main objective of this review is to guide future studies, particularly by unveiling the potential of Morocco in terms of cinema-induced tourism, as well as determining the possible measures to be adopted to enhance the performance of the niche. The dominant themes that emerge from this review are the importance of cinema-induced tourism as a prolific field for creativity and sustainable development fueled by the entertainment industry's growth (Hudson & Richie, 2006). In this form of tourism, any location is a potential destination needing filmmakers' innovative contributions. Cinema is a vital marketing tool for the hospitality industry through product placement techniques requiring explicit advertising thrust to enhance its effect. Moreover, tourism stakeholders should invest in the national cinema industry to develop this domestic cinema-induced niche. Successful national films can act as destination promoters for local tourists, as well as nostalgia generators for the Moroccan diaspora, which already represents a substantial proportion of inbound tourism.

The few available studies cannot guarantee a clear and comprehensive picture of cinema-induced tourism in Morocco from which we can withdraw practical strategies. However, the significance of the paper lies in identifying the knowledge gap and "leading to best practices and improv(ing) the quality of future research" (Heyn, 2019,198).

Therefore, recommendations include focusing on competitive benchmarking and comparing the Moroccan experience in cinema-induced tourism with global success stories. It is also necessary to enhance collaborative planning and synergies between cinematographic and hospitality management in Morocco. It is essential to optimize customer experience within destinations and to valorize feedback using various social media.

Finally, it is necessary to investigate why research in the area is still shy. Scientific research is a lever for innovation and creativity. It should measure the significance of CIT in tourism income as well as the influence of cinema and films on tourists. To this end, it is necessary to establish research collaborations between academic institutions of cinema, tourism industries, and stakeholders.

# Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

This paper provides a synthesized overview of the current state-of-the-art and defines the knowledge gap in cinema-induced tourism in Morocco. It has identified how research perceives the field of cinema-induced tourism in Morocco, and some of its weaknesses, especially in Ouarzazate. The paper identifies significant inconsistencies in prior studies which ignore Morocco as one of the pioneering

destinations for cinephiles. It also describes general research insights, draws attention to the existing gaps in the literature, and suggests future research directions to understand cinema-induced tourism dynamics and how Rick's café earned more attention than Ouarzazate studios and the film museum where sets of a collection of blockbusters movies are displayed.

#### References

Akhajam, S. (2015). "When Cinema Boosts Tourism in Ouarzazate: The Cine-Tourism as a New Form of Tourism in the Southern Region of Morocco?" Journal of Tourism. Hospitality, and Sports, vol. 5, Jan. 2015, pp. 6–12.

Beeton, S. (2005). Film-Induced Tourism (Aspects of Tourism, 25). Channel View Publications. p.14

Beeton, S. (2010). The Advance of Film Tourism. Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development. 7. 1-6. 10.1080/14790530903522572.

Bolan, P., & Kearney, M. (2017). Exploring film tourism potential in Ireland: from Game of Thrones to Star Wars. *INVTUR 2017: Co-Creating the Future of Tourism*, 1(1), 2149–2156.

Buchmann, A. & Moore, K. & Fisher, D. (2010). Experiencing Film Tourism – Authenticity Fellowship. Annals of Tourism Research. 37. 229–248. 10.1016/j.annals.2009.09.005.

Chaouni, N.a (2018). "Ciné-tourisme : films et séries télévisées comme outils de promotion touristique territoriale", RIMEC [en ligne], 01 | 2018, mis en ligne le 19 juillet 2018, consulté le 03 January 2023. URL: http://revue-rimec.org/cine-tourisme-films-et-series-televisees-comme-outils-de-promotion-touristique-territoriale/

Chaouni®N. (2018) ETUDE DE RECEPTION TRANSNATIONALE D'UNE SERIE TELEVISEE ET SES EFFETS SUR L'ATTRACTIVITE TOURISTIQUE D'UNE REGION RURALE. Sciences de l'information et de la communication. Université Montpellier Paul Valéry - Montpellier III

Connel (2012) Progress in Tourism Management Film Tourism: Evolution, Progress, and Prospects. (n.d.). Retrieved January 12, 2023, from https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/43094795.pdf

Connell, J (2012). "Film Tourism – Evolution, Progress, and Prospects." Tourism Management, vol. 33, no. 5, Elsevier BV, Oct. 2012, pp. 1007–29. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.02.008.

Dwyer, K. (2004). Beyond Casablanca: M. a. Tazi and the Adventure of Moroccan Cinema. Illustrated, Indiana UP.

Eskandari, S. (2017). "Cinematic Plateau and Sustainable Tourism." Studies in Media and Communication, vol. 5, no. 2, Redfame Publishing, Sept. 2017, pp. 39-44. https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v5i2.2640.

Gjorgievski, M; Melles T. S. (2012): Movie induced tourism: A new tourism phenomenon, UTMS Journal of Economics, ISSN 1857-6982, University of Tourism and Management, Skopje, Vol. 3, Iss. 1, pp. 97-104

Haney, M R. (2016). "Back to Reality: A Study of Reality Television Tourism ."Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally. 14. https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ttra/2016/Academic\_Papers\_Visual/14

Haney, M. R. (2014). Back to Reality: A Study of Reality Television Tourism [Ph.D. Dissertation Back to Reality: A Study of Reality Television Tourism]. https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/handle/2346/60650

Hasnaouy, B. (2008). "Quelques Représentations De La Société Oasienne Dans La Carte Postale Touristique." Colloque International "Tourisme Oasien: Formes, Acteurs Et Enjeux". Université Ibn Zohr, Agadir (Maroc), Faculté Polydisciplinaire De Ouarzazate, Oct. 2008.

Heyn, PC., et al. "Methodological Guidance for a Quality Review Article." The Gerontologist, vol. 59, no. 2, Oxford UP (OUP), Jan. 2019, pp. 197–201. https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gny123.

Horrigan, D. (2009). Branded Content: A New Model for driving Tourism via Film and Branding Strategies. Published in: TOURISMOS: An International Multidisciplinary Refereed Journal of Tourism, Vol. 4, No. 3 (November 15, 2009): pp. 51-65. p. 52

Hudson, S. & RITCHIE, J.. (2006). Promoting Destinations via Film Tourism: An Empirical Identification of Supporting Marketing Initiatives. Journal of Travel Research - J TRAVEL RES. 44. 387–396. 10.1177/0047287506286720.

Lapompe-Paironne, L. (2011). Cinéma et désert : de Tataouine à Ouarzazate. Téoros, 30(1), 90-98. https://doi.org/10.7202/1012112ar

Pruseviciute, I. (2014). The Influence of Movie Trailers on Destination Image: The Case of China [Review of The Influence of Movie Trailers on Destination Image: The Case of China]. http://www.cek.ef.unilj.si/magister/Pruseviciute1538-B.pdf

Roesch, S. (2009). The Experiences of Film Location Tourists. Bristol, Blue Ridge Summit: Channel View Publications. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781845411220

Sola-Real, R. & Medina-Herrera, C. (2018). The Influence of Cinema and Television on Tourism Promotion. Latente. Revista de Historia y Estética audiovisual. 9-36. 10.25145/i.latente.2018.16.001

Spears, D. L.; Josiam, B.M.; Kinley, T.; and Pookulangara, S. (2013) "Tourist See Tourist Do: The Influence of Hollywood Movies and Television on Tourism Motivation and Activity Behavior," Hospitality Review: Vol. 30: Iss. 1, Article 4. Available at: https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/hospitalityreview/vol30/iss1/4

Staszak, Jean-François. "Casablanca: Le Film, La Ville Et Les Touristes. À Propos Du Rick's Café Et De Quelques Autres Simulacres in Situ." Annales De Géographie, vol. N° 741, no. 5, CAIRN, Oct. 2021, pp. 30–59. https://doi.org/10.3917/ag.741.0030.