

RACHEL MOSELEY. *Picturing Cornwall: Landscape, Region, and the Moving Image*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2018. Pp. 249. \$17.49 (paperback).

In a time when much policy emphasis is on cities, leaving rural—or at least non-metropolitan—spaces under-examined and under-supported, all scholarship about rural regions is to be welcomed. This is especially important as rural life chances can be particularly hard, reflecting extensive metropolitan focus as policymakers seek to support the higher populations of urban regions over the dispersed, sparser populations of the countryside. Moreover, the countryside has a particular place in the popular imaginary, and is frequently discursively produced as a form of internal other—an idyllic leisure space operating in a timeless romanticism that is usually more akin to practices of a few decades previously. This means that a thorough and open discussion is long overdue about the ways that rural spaces are portrayed visually, the ways that representations are folded into popular culture, and the effects that these representations have on inhabitants of rural locations imagined primarily as characters in a pastoral narrative and as relative to a more urban core. We also need to know a lot more about the effects of tourism on representations of rural places, and as an early pioneer of rural tourism and leisure industries, Cornwall is an excellent place in which to explore all of these important contemporary questions. How it is popularly imagined is embedded in over a century of tourism, which has successfully managed to navigate and adapt to changing expectations of the visitor experience. Moreover, the ongoing popularity of the region as a visitor destination has also meant that it has an enduring appeal for film and TV, which again, impacts on how local identities are performed.

Picturing Cornwall does set out to do some of these things. It never purports to explore the impact of place representations, or what they mean for local inhabitants; however, Rachel Moseley does intend to use it as a means to understand how Cornwall is imaginatively constructed by analyzing the rich body of moving images that talks about and to Cornwall.

She situates herself as a participant observer and as a long-term visitor whose family holidays are woven into both her personal story and the extensive knowledges that she holds about the region. This is not to say that Moseley is not deeply aware of the issues of the subaltern, and the question of whether it is possible to speak for oppressed others that, similar to the people of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, she identifies as inhabitants of an internal colony. We are, however, given to appreciate that the wild, romanticized, and remote representations of place construct a version of Cornwall that does not operate in contemporary modernity, and we understand that this version follows a vision of landscape that has brought in visitors. But the way that this translates into how local inhabitants are imagined, and the extent to which it coheres or otherwise with subaltern lives is overlooked, as Mosely privileges an analysis of the gendered liminality through which she finds the landscape portrayed.

The focus on gender leads Mosely to some surprising analyses. For example, in her final chapter, entitled “A Different View,” which presents work with a stronger appreciation of ‘local’ issues (as opposed to the outsider gaze), she dismisses the film *Blue Juice* (1995) for following the gendered liminalities of landscape portrayals that she identifies in colonizing narratives. However, this film is a rare example in that it examines the lives of local people and presents a version of culture and living in a place that is recognizable to someone who grew up there. Mosely’s dismissive analysis of *Blue Juice* contrasts heavily with the detailed cinematographic (and sometimes approving) treatment given to well-travelled stories about middle-class people seeking escape through relocation or tourism, or romantic wild tales of times gone by (such as *Poldark*).

There are also some surprising omissions. Tourism travelogues take us up to the 1960s and no further, despite a wealth of material that could have brought Mosely up to the present day and about which no one has yet written. Indeed, it would have been very interesting to have seen some discussion and analysis about how recent films such as

Poldark, TV series such as *Doc Martin*, and drama serials inspired by Rosamund Pilcher's writing (extraordinarily popular in Germany but receiving no mention in this publication) feed in to one of the latest incarnations of the visitor representation and experience. These films also operate as a more contemporary type of travelogue, and in many respects are deeply intertwined with the motivations of the early twenty-first century visitor. Moreover, there is also a whole visual landscape aesthetic around "Cool Kernow" that provides much from the past two decades to unpick, and it is curious why the prodigious offerings of the Kernow King and Golden Tree are not included in the chapter purporting to provide a more "insider" representation, while *Wild West* (widely experienced as insulting, relying on every stereotype about crazy rural people) receives serious attention.

This is not to say that this is a terrible book. It is extensively researched, and as a way of understanding a little of the backstory about Cornwall, landscape, and representation in the moving image, it is a strong start. Moseley offers an introduction to scholarship about Cornwall. Moreover, her work provides an enormous (although not exhaustive) resource of moving imagery about Cornwall, along with some interesting ways of reading landscape. Nonetheless, as a scholar of representation myself, I am minded to add the motto of the city of Glasgow: People make Places.

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