

Tangible Benefits and People's Bonding in International Film Production: The Case of Films Shot in Crete

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Since the late 1940s more than forty foreign films have been partially or fully shot on the Greek island of Crete. This article focuses on five of these films: Jules Dassin's *Celui qui doit mourir* (1957), Ella Lemhagen's *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* (1999), Costa-Gavras's *Eden à l'Ouest* (2009), Çagan Irmak's *Dedemin İnsanları* (2011), and Hossein Amini's *The Two Faces of January* (2014). The article examines the effects of these productions on Cretans, their foreign producers and filmmakers, and their audiences around the world. As the research shows, these productions had many material benefits for locals and foreign producers alike and were equally important in bringing people from different backgrounds together and creating transnational bonds. Moreover, having been made within an international context, most of these films told stories of mutual respect and tolerance, thus becoming crucial in promoting international solidarity and advancing transnational cinema as a powerful vehicle for social awareness.

Key Words: film locations, transnational cinema, European cinema, film coproductions, international cooperation

INTRODUCTION

In late 2010s, under the initiative of the national Hellenic Film Office, numerous administrative regions in Greece launched local Film

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Offices to promote their territories as desirable shooting locations and to assist foreign filmmakers hoping to film there. The enthusiasm with which the Greek media covered this news stemmed from what observation and scholarly analyses have shown: international film productions have a positive impact on the host country's foreign exchange inflow, job creation, and film industry (Athanasiadis et al. 2014, 16–17); and through their distribution, such films contribute to the worldwide popularity of a place and its value as a tourist destination (Beeton 2006; Hudson and Ritchie 2006). For example, *Braveheart* (Mel Gibson, 1995) and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (Peter Jackson, 2001–2003) brought a significant increase in visitor numbers to Scotland and New Zealand, respectively (Seaton and Hay 1998, 230; McArthur 2003, 131; Croy 2004). In Greece, productions such as *Never on Sunday* (Jules Dassin, 1960), *Alexis Zorbas* (Michael Cacoyannis, 1964), *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* (John Madden, 2001), and *Mamma Mia!* (Phyllida Lloyd, 2008) have likewise resulted in a rise in the number of tourists (Hudson and Ritchie 2006; Moira, Mylonopoulos, and Kontoudaki 2009, 11–12; Assadourian 2011, 24; Giannouklidi 2017).

The benefits of 'film-induced tourism' notwithstanding, throughout the post-Second World War period, foreign productions in Greece have been profitable for the national economy. According to a 1964 official report, every international production shot in Greece brought about US\$1.000.000 foreign exchange inflow (€7.217.764 today's currency, inflation rate considered) (Ipoepitropi 1964, 9–10); in the 2010s it was estimated that a large foreign production (€25 million expenditure in Greece) can increase the Greek Gross Domestic Product by €39 million (Athanasiadis et al. 2014, 21).

These findings help us formulate more detailed questions: What are the precise material benefits of international film productions for local communities, film companies, crews, and organisations (e.g., gains from employment, accommodation rentals, and business activity)? What are the benefits for foreign producers and filmmakers who choose a Greek place as a shooting location? What are some of the non-economic effects, in terms of the residents' and filmmakers' experiences and relationships? How does international



productions' multicultural character relate to the films' narratives?

This research addresses these questions by using films shot on the island of Crete as a case study. Crete has attracted many foreign film crews throughout the post-Second World War period, thus allowing us to observe data over a range of years. In particular, since the late 1940s more than forty foreign features, short films, and documentaries have been partially or fully shot in Crete. This article focuses on five feature-length foreign dramas which were critically and/or commercially successful: *Celui qui doit mourir* (Jules Dassin, 1957), *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* (*Tsatsiki, Mum and the Policeman*, Ella Lemhagen, 1999), *Eden à l'Ouest* (*Eden is West*, Costa-Gavras, 2009), *Dedemin İnsanları* (*My Grandfather's People*, Çagan Irmak, 2011), and *The Two Faces of January* (Hossein Amini, 2014).

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METHODOLOGY

In examining these productions, this study adopts Hudson and Ritchie's (2006) approach to *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*, shot on the island of Kefalonia, while expanding on Komi's research (2019) on Walt Disney's *The Moon-Spinners* (James Neilson, 1964), filmed in Crete's Elounda region. This article uses the case study methodology (with Crete as a filming location for foreign films) because, in Hudson and Ritchie's (2006, 262) words, 'case research is specifically welcome in new situations where little is known about the phenomenon,' as it offers 'depth and comprehensiveness' for understanding it, enabling 'inductive and rich description.' Also following Hudson and Ritchie, the study utilises a 'multi-method approach' (2006, 262). The article relies on primary sources such as archival material and the local, national, and international press of the time of the films' creations, thus bringing to light data on wages, production plans, filming procedures, and film costs. It draws on secondary sources, including film history studies and film business analyses that help to situate the making of the films within their production framework. Moreover, it makes use of information derived from oral and written interviews that the research team conducted between October 2020 and June 2021 with participants in these productions, including Cretans who worked or played in the

[108] films, local entrepreneurs, Cretan film companies that collaborated with the foreign firms, and film personnel and talent. These interviews proved invaluable not only for discussing numerical data and business activities but also for revealing non-material benefits such as the participants' acquisition of work experience as well as their attitudes, feelings, and memories of the filmmaking.

Analysing information of these sources showed that international film projects have numerous benefits for local economies and foreign producers alike. They offer local people jobs and vocational experience and revitalize local economies. They help foreign filmmakers to make lucrative deals while ensuring a diverse natural landscape and authentic architecture for their films. International productions have also proven valuable in bringing people from different backgrounds together and creating transnational bonds. Moreover, having been made within a transnational context, most of these films tell stories emphasizing mutual respect and tolerance, thus becoming crucial in promoting international solidarity.

CHOOSING CRETE AS FILM LOCATION

Celui qui doit mourir was shot in Crete, although its plot is not set there. Twenty minutes of the 90-minute long *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* take place in an unnamed Greek coastal village. The last six minutes of *Dedemin İnsanları* were shot in parts of Crete that are different from those that the plot mentions. About half of *Eden à l'Ouest* was shot in Crete but the narrative never identifies the island. Only in *The Two Faces of January* does the plot justify specific parts of Crete as shooting locations. In all other cases, certain locations or even Crete itself were chosen because they offered the landscapes or architecture that the filmmakers wanted or because the film company had been able to negotiate a lucrative deal.

The plot of Nikos Kazantzakis's novel *O Christos xanastavronetai* (*Christ Recrucified*, written in 1948), upon which Dassin's *Celui qui doit mourir* is based, is set in Ottoman Anatolia of the early 1920s, in the fictional Turkish-ruled Greek village Lykovrysi, where every seven years during the Holy Week the villagers revive the Passion of Christ. Dassin's film adaptation, *Celui qui doit mourir*, retains some



of the novel's place names (e.g., Sarakina), but it does not name Ottoman Anatolia, leaving the setting of the plot rather ambiguous. Because the film was shot in Crete, some critics erroneously describe the plot as set there; in fact, Crete is never mentioned in the diegesis nor was it the first location scouted for the production.

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Celui qui doit mourir was produced by Henri Bérard, the general director of Indus Films and CEO of Prima (Maeyer 1964–5, 208), who had already collaborated with Dassin in *Du rififi chez les hommes* (aka *Rififi*, 1955). To raise the 250 million francs initially needed for *Celui qui doit mourir* (Dassin 1956a), Bérard partnered with the French Filmsonor and Cinétel and the Italian DaMa Cinematografica, at a time when Franco-Italian coproductions were flourishing (Betz 2009, 75–78; Crisp 1993, 79–83). Dassin, Melina Mercouri – the film's Greek female lead and Dassin's companion – and the novel's author, the Cretan Kazantzakis, wished to have the film shot in Crete ('Eis to perithorion tis zois' 1955a; 'Skinai tis tainias *Christos Xanastavronetai* tha giristoun stin Kriti' 1955; 'Ai gnomai diastavronontai' 1955; Dassin 1955c); however, because of financial and legal issues, including Dassin's temporary inability to leave France as a blacklisted American director, Bérard and Dassin considered shooting the film in Provence and Corsica (Dassin 1955a). When the French government gave Dassin the *titre de voyage* and he could travel abroad, other places seemed better shooting choices, including Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia (Dassin 1955b), most likely because they could more easily suggest a Turkish-ruled territory.

In Greece, there was prolonged location scouting in different territories (Pelion, Nafplion, and Thessaloniki) ('Eis to perithorion tis zois' 1955b; Prosperos 1955),¹ before Crete was selected. In addition to the nice weather, the natural light, the diverse landscape, and the authentic architecture, which one could find in many Mediterranean areas, Crete also offered much-needed local support and fiscal benefits. The foreign production team could count on the as-

¹ Pelion was preferred by Damaskinos-Michailidis ('Kinimatografistika neotera' 1955), a Greek film company with which the foreigners planned to cooperate, something that did not materialize.

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sistance of the locals, who ardently wanted to have their compatriot's Kazantzakis novel filmed on their land and contribute to the success of this project. In addition, prominent intellectuals, artists, politicians, and officials were eager to facilitate shooting on their island ('Kerdizei edafos i ipothesis' 1955; 'Peri to girisma tis tainias' 1955; 'Mia kali eidisis' 1955; 'To flegon zitima' 1955; Dassin 1955c; O Akroatis 1956). Moreover, at a time when most Cretans, especially in rural areas, were struggling financially (Settas 1963), the prospect of reaping economic benefits from a collaboration with foreigners enhanced the locals' eagerness to support the making of *Celui qui doit mourir* in their area. To attract the foreign producers, local trade unions and associations offered such favourable prices that Dassin found shooting in Crete less expensive than in any other country, a vital factor in the producers' final decision to select the island ('To flegon zitima' 1955). Among the villages (Ano Viannos, Garazo, Kalo Chorio, Kritsa, Krasi, Krousonas, and Mochos) that competed to host the project, the winner was Kritsa, one of the oldest and most traditional, semi-mountainous villages of Eastern Crete, that Dassin particularly liked because of 'its style, character, and structural authenticity' ('Giro apo tin pragmatopoiisi enos film' 1956).

Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen is based on Moni Nilsson-Brännström's first two books about the boy Tsatsiki, *Tsatsiki och morsan* (*Tsatsiki and Mom*, 1995) and *Tsatsiki och farsan* (*Tsatsiki and Dad*, 1996). Tsatsiki is the son of a Swedish single mother. He yearns to travel to Greece to meet his father, whom he has never seen before, a dream he eventually fulfils. In Nilsson-Brännström's books, the home of Tsatsiki's father is an unspecified Greek coastal area, which in *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* becomes the unnamed village that the boy and his mother visit close to the film's end.

Based on Swedish children's books and mostly shot in Sweden by Lemhagen, *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* is considered a Swedish film. The film is a coproduction involving Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and Icelandic companies. Adopting the usual practices of coproduction and TV involvement in film projects in 1990s Scandinavian cinema (Stenport 2010, 326; Hedling 2010, 338) – and European cinema more broadly (Rivi 2007) – *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* brought to-



gether Sweden's Felicia Film AB, Film i Väst, and TV 1000; Norway's Norsk Film AS; Denmark's Per Holst Film AIS and Danmarks Radio; and Iceland's national television channel Ríkisútvarpið-Sjónvarp. It was also supported by Eurimages, from which it was awarded €228.674 (Council of Europe 1998), and the Swedish Film Institute. [111]

To find the right Greek locations, the producers contacted an Athenian-based company, Stefi Productions, which suggested Michalis Giannakakis, an experienced filmmaker from Siteia in Eastern Crete, who assumed the post of assistant director of the Greek crew. Giannakakis showed to the filmmakers various locations around the island who eventually chose the small coastal village of Pacheia Ammos (M. Giannakakis, telephone conversation with P. Mini, 11 May 2021). Its wide, long beach and central road lined with coffee shops and taverns offered a ready-made set, where most scenes could be conveniently filmed within walking distance. Equally important was the fact that Pacheia Ammos was (and to a large extent is still) not a popular tourist destination, even among many Greeks. Because Pacheia Ammos was not crowded even during tourist season, filming could easily be done over the summer. In addition, Pacheia Ammos retained the desired sense of village authenticity, thus allowing key messages of the fictional characters' trip to Crete to come through, what Marklund (2010, 88-89) describes, building a relationship to the foreign place 'different . . . than just being an outsider' and wishing to understand a culture 'from another perspective than that of the tourist.'

Without having tourists to accommodate, the residents of Pacheia Ammos were particularly receptive to having the film shot in their area and their possible participation in it. Moreover, Pacheia Ammos offered local talent. Indeed, composer of traditional Cretan music and lyre player Nikolaos Papadakis, a native to the island, played traditional music for *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* along with his music ensemble (Manolis Liapakis, Nikos Mastorakis, Giannis Xanthakis, and Giorgos Mavroeidis). Local Greek rhythms imbue the film with an extra aura of authenticity and complement the score's pop music, predominant in the film since Tsatsiki's mother is a pop band singer.

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The architecture and topography were major factors in the selection of shooting places in Crete in *Dedemin İnsanları*. Irmak's film focuses on an elderly Turkish man living in a small town on Turkey's Western (Aegean) coast, who as a small boy had been forced to immigrate from Crete to Ismir, Turkey, during the population exchange between Turkey and Greece. He died in the 1970s, never having seen his home in Crete again. About twenty years later – towards the film's end – his grandson embarks on the trip to his grandfather's birthplace that the old man had always wanted to take. The protagonist's home is located in Rethymno in North-Central Crete. The Turkish team wished to work in Spinalonga (Bitsakakis 2020), the small, uninhabited island in the Gulf of Elounda in the North-Eastern side of the island, which had formerly been used as a leper colony. Spinalonga, where the Greek TV adaptation of Victoria Hislop's novel *The Island* (2007) was being made at the time, evoked the atmosphere of old Crete that the Turkish producers wanted. Budgetary concerns convinced the foreign producers to choose Fres, a village in Western Crete, at the foothills of the White Mountains, which proved ideal.² With a large main square accessible from four directions, its local shops, and well-preserved traditional buildings and coffee houses, Fres suggested Cretan life of the past (Konstas and Maridakis 2013), thus offering the filmmakers a natural, inexpensive plateau. In addition, thanks to its advantageous topography, Fres had already hosted four Greek film productions (*Pilala*, 2004, Theo Papadoulakis; *Uranya*, 2006, Kostas Kapakas; *Proti fora nonos*, 2007, Olga Malea; and *To gamilio party*, 2008, Christine Crokos);³ as a result, its inhabitants and authorities knew what was expected.

The traditional architecture, along with the natural landscape, plot requirements, and economic concerns played a key role in the staging of *The Two Faces of January*. A British-French-American co-production among Working Title Films, StudioCanal, and Timnick

² Some filming took place in nearby places, the village of Vamos and Almyrida beach.

³ Because of the numerous films shot there, locals have nicknamed their village 'Freliwood' (Konstas and Maridakis 2013).



"Two Faces of January"			
Zelus Pictures Ltd "Two Faces Of January" Location Manager: Greece: Yorgo Stathopoulos / Tel: +30 6947 900 871 / E: yorgostat@gmail.com			
Schedule for Tech Recce in Crete (DAY 3)			
Recce Date: Friday September 21 st 2012 Recce Attendees: Hissia Anni, Hollyn Brown, Tom Blomberg, John Lopez, Caroline Hewitt, Cass Marks, Alex Cliney, Zoe Langlo, Michael Caprin, Patrick Bolla, Alex Bilby, Andrew Pyke, Lisa McQuinn, Damien Copan, Muffin Green, Marco Zyglid, Mark Clayton, Barry Harner, Carl Smechen, Ray Bennett, Andy Bilby, Michael Wright, Stuart Leckley, Jerry Panayiotou, George Tsiak, George Mavrou, Dennis Zikas, Arsenia Sidiropoulou, Eleni-Maria Papatou, Yorgo Stathopoulos, Alexinos Nikolau, Theodoros Thomaidis, Victoria Triposaki, Pavlos Fovarakis, Manolis Lenevelis, Andreas Tsamakis, Gianna Dieringou, Vassia Gritli, George Petralias, Anastasios Vastardis			
08.00	Recce Begins at Mosque Square		
08.00-10.00	Script Reference: EXT STREET/SQUARE/PHONE BOOTH/HARBOUR - CHANIA Sc. 91, 98, 111, 112, 118, 119 Location: Mosque Square, Old Town Chania	12.15-13.00	Script Reference: EXT HOTEL / OLD TOWN / HERAKLIO Sc. 61 Location: "Hotel Contessa", Old Town Chania
5min	Walk time to next location	10min	Walk time to next location
10.05-10.30	Script Reference: EXT CAFÉ ASTER / SQUARE HERAKLIO Sc. 142, 143, 144 Location: Taverna "Take", Old Town Chania	13.10-13.45	Script Reference: BAR / OLD TOWN / CHANIA Sc. 108, 109 Location: Maharradika Area Corner of Sifakia & Malchise
10 min	Walk time to next location	10 min	Walk time to LUNCH
10.40-11.00	Script Reference: EXT. VIEW FROM THE TAXI Sc. 110 Location: In front of Walls of Maritime Museum Old Town Chania	13.55-14.40	LUNCH
1 min	Walk time to next location	5 min	Walk time to next location
11.00-11.45	Script Reference: EXT. RESTAURANT Sc. 93 Location: "Alcañea" Hotel, Old Town Chania	14.45-15.15	Script Reference: EXT. CITY WALLS/ STREETS/ BAR Sc. 105, 104, 107 Location: Narrow Alley, Corner of Gerasimos & Parados Roussou Vordouba Old Town Chania
5 minutes	Walk time to next location	30 min	Travel time to next location
11.50-12.15	Script Reference: EXT STREET/ OLD TOWN HERAKLIO Sc. 60 Location: Donkey Alley, Odos Moschon, Old Town Chania	15.45-17.00	Script Reference: EXT. BUS/ RETHYMNON STOP Sc. 79, 80, 81, 82, 83a, 84, 85, 86 Location: Agia Triada Monastery Akrotiri, Chania
1min	Walk time to next location	5 minutes	Travel time to next location
		17.05-17.45	Script Reference: BACK OF THE BUS/ FRONT OF THE BUS Sc. 88, 89 Location: Rd btw Agia Triada Monastery & Gouverneto Monastery, Akrotiri Chania
		30min	Travel time to next location
		18.15-20.15	Script Reference: PROMENADE/TAVERNA/NIGHTCLUB/BEACH Sc. 72, 73a, 74, 62pt1, 62pt2, 63, 65, 66 Location: 67, 68, 69, 70, 113 Tabakaria, Chalepa Chania
		20.15-2045	Script Reference: TAXI/ STREETS OF CHANIA Sc. 113 Location: Chalepa Area
		20.45	Recce Ends and possible dinner at Chalepa

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FIGURE 1 *The Two Faces of January*; Tech Recce Schedule (courtesy of Indigo View)

Films/Mirage Enterprises, *The Two Faces of January* transfers to the big screen Patricia Highsmith's eponymous 1964 novel. The film focuses on a con man and his wife who while on vacation in Greece in the 1960s meet a tour guide who proves equally cunning. Following the novel's plot, shooting on Greek locations was achieved in Athens and Crete.⁴ The Cretan scenes were carried out in the archaeological site of the Knossos Palace in Heraklion and in the prefecture of Chania: the Old Town of Chania, the Chalepa and Akrotiri districts (as seen in the reconnaissance schedule, figure 1), and Kallikratis village of the Sfakia area situated in the White Mountains. Because of Heraklion's contemporary urban landscape and the extra cost of setting up shop there, the Old Town of Chania stood in as both Chania

⁴ It was also shot in London's Ealing Studios and on location in Istanbul, Turkey. An 85-minute behind-the-scenes documentary of the production, *Two Faces... Behind the Scenes* (<https://vimeo.com/82471067>), gives a good idea of the filming. The work in Crete is covered from 17:50 to 59:50; the scenes set in Heraklion town were shot in Chania.

[114] and Heraklion (D. Xenakis, interviewed by N. Tsagarakis, 30 October 2020; V. Trzeciak, interviewed by N. Tsagarakis, 23 May 2021). ‘The city of Chania,’ Amini (2014) said, ‘was a revelation. I never imagined we’d find somewhere that still had so much of its 1960s charm and atmosphere intact. My brilliant production crew did a fantastic job of recreating the city in 1962, but much of what we used was already there.’ For the landscape, he stated: ‘The rugged hills and cliffs of the island are unique and even though we looked for alternatives in other countries, nothing matched the sheer beauty and savagery of the White Mountains of Crete.’ Furthermore, Amini’s conception of adapting *The Two Faces of January* was linked to his own experiences. As he has stated, apart from being a thriller, *The Two Faces of January* is ‘also my attempt to capture the magic and power that Greece has exerted on me since I was a child [...]. I took my children on holiday to Athens and Crete and it was there that I started to dream about adapting Patricia Highsmith’s Greek set thriller [...] into a film’ (Amini 2014).

Personal reasons were partly responsible for Costa-Gavras’s decision to film some parts of *Eden à l’Ouest* in Greece. The film tells the story of an undocumented young immigrant of unknown nationality who comes ashore on a Greek coastal area before continuing his odyssey to Western Europe until Paris. Originally from Greece, Costa-Gavras maintained strong connections with the Greek state, its people, and film organisations. Thus, the contribution of Greek entities to the making of – a French, Greek, and Italian coproduction⁵ – was essential, primarily that of Odeon SA, one of Greece’s most powerful production and distribution companies, but also CL Productions, the Greek Film Centre (which contributed €500.000) (Venardou 2009), Hellenic Radio & Television, the Greek National Tourist Office and Ministry of Culture, Finos Film, Nova, and East Media Services. The film’s major producing company was the French KG Productions (co-owned by Costa-Gavras and the film’s producer Michèle Ray Gavras), and Pathé, France 3 Cinéma, Canal Plus,

⁵ By adopting the co-production system, Costa-Gavras could raise the film’s budget, which eventually reached about €11.000.000 (Jimeno Aranda 2014, 1114).



CinéCinéma, and La Région Île-de-France also contributed. The Italian Novo RPI and Medusa Film played a supporting role.

Although Crete is unnamed in the film's plot, selecting it for the shooting was, as Costa-Gavras stated, an easy choice due to the quality of its tourist resorts, where the onscreen odyssey of the protagonist begins. 'Crete – and especially the hotels where the filming takes place – represent exactly what the film depicts,' Costa-Gavras said (Tsagarakis 2008). In addition, the Cretans' hospitality and assistance (Tsagarakis 2008) and, as Christina Katsiadakis, one of the film's assistant production managers, explained, the diverse landscape were crucial in the selection of this island (C. Katsiadakis, email correspondence with K. Komi, 1 April 2021).

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BENEFITS FOR THE LOCALS

Along with fulfilling the foreign producers' plans and priorities, all five productions brought about immediate and sometimes long-term gains to the local communities, in proportion to the size of each film crew and the time it spent in each area.

Shot in Kritsa and some nearby areas,⁶ *Celui qui doit mourir* took four months to complete. During that period at least 800 locals ('800 Kritikoi xanastavrosan ton Christon' 1957) – some sources bring the number to 1,200 or 1,500 ('Ta theatrika nea' 1956a; Pili-chos 1956) – worked as extras; adults received daily compensation of 40 to 60 drachmas (€12 to €18 today's currency, inflation rate considered) (Arnaoutaki 1956), at a time when the minimum daily wage in Greece was 37 drachmas for male and 29 drachmas for female workers ('Ergatika-Ipallilika' 1955). Children received 20 drachmas, and 2 drachmas were given for each animal used in the production (Arnaoutaki 1956).⁷ In total, the extras received an estimated 1,200,000

⁶ Seli Ampelou, Profitis Ilias, Theologos, Nikithianos, and Agios Nikolaos. A few interior scenes were filmed in Paris ('Ta theatrika nea' 1956c).

⁷ According to another source of that time, the foreign producers offered much higher salaries than those proposed by the president and the community council of Mochos (one of the candidate villages for filming), who regarded the success of the project as more important than any monetary returns ('Peri to girisma tis tainias' 1955). A much later source defines the daily compensation in Kritsa as 40

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drachmas (€17.300 today's currency, inflation rate considered). Another 1.200.0000 drachmas were spent on salaries for Greek actors and for the construction of the sets and other facilities (Pilichos 1956).⁸ For these works, many locals were hired as builders, carpenters, woodworkers, painters, blacksmiths, locksmiths, and drivers. In mid-1956, for example, a newspaper reported that 45 carpenters and woodworkers, 20 builders, and 15 painters were needed ('Ena istorikis simasias gegonos' 1956). These workers improved their skills as they had to use unfamiliar materials and new techniques and meet unprecedented demand (Skoulikaris 2013, 3).

Equally important were the benefits for local businesses. For the four months of shooting, a hotel (Lato) in Agios Nikolaos – the only tourist hotel in town – accommodated the film's 80-member crew. In the same town, two women opened a club-restaurant named Rifi, after Dassin's previous film, to cater to the crew ([Grammatikakis] 1956). In addition to the film crew, the area was enlivened by Greek and foreign journalists as well as tourists attracted by the filming ('Metaxi mas' 1956; 'Me liges grammes' 1956). In her interview for this study, Maria Klontza, who ran a soft drink shop with her husband in Kritsa, recalled the unprecedented flow of people and impressive profits for their business that allowed her family to buy state property in Agios Nikolaos (M. Klontza, interviewed by K. Komi, 30 May 2021). According to another resident of Kritsa, the film's making invigorated the village's economy thanks to the general development resulting from 'either the activity in the construction sector or the quantitative and qualitative upgrade of the market' (Skoulikaris 2013, 4).⁹ The film's making even improved daily life in Kritsa over the long term, since the square and the sets, con-

drachmas for men, 20 for women, and 10 for children (Skoulikaris 2013, 2). The film's contemporaneous sources should be considered more reliable on the issue of payments.

⁸ Overall, 80 million francs (€1.730.730 today's currency, inflation rate considered) out of the film's final total budget of 320 million francs (about €6.923.000, inflation rate considered) were spent in Crete.

⁹ According to the same local, this development even helped to reduce economic migration from Kritsa (Skoulikaris 2013, 4).



structed there for the film, were left standing to the benefit of the local community ('Ta theatrika nea' 1956b). For years to come, people from all over Crete visited Kritsa and the surroundings to see where Kazantzakis's novel had been filmed (Dimopoulos and Kiriakidis 2000, 61). The film was also mentioned in travel guides to Crete, thus promoting Kritsa and its environs as a travel destination (e.g. Bowman 1969, 291). Moreover, *Celui qui doit mourir* contributed to the reputation of the Agios Nikolaos region as a desirable shooting destination; in less than a decade, such productions as the BBC biblical series *Paul of Tarsus* (Joy Harrington, 1960) and the Disney romantic thriller *The Moon-Spinners* were filmed there.

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Although made many decades later in Crete's tourist destinations instead of in a small, isolated village, such as Kritsa, *Eden à l'Ouest* and *The Two Faces of January* brought similar benefits. Both films' shooting in Crete lasted about one month.¹⁰ *Eden à l'Ouest* was primarily filmed at Hersonissos's 5-star Aldemar Royal Mare Hotel, a member of the major hotel chain Aldemar Resorts.¹¹ The management of Aldemar Royal Mare Hotel and the film's producers were in contact a year beforehand to arrange the shooting at the hotel's outdoor areas and the accommodation of the film's crew and cast (V. Fragoulakis, Aldemar Royal Mare Hotel's commercial manager, and E. Kapsokefalou, the hotel's front office manager in 2008, email correspondence with K. Komi, 3 June 2021). Most of the 40-member crew stayed in this hotel, and others were accommodated in other hotels of the Aldemar Resorts Group: Knossos Royal and Cretan Village. In total, one hundred rooms were booked for the film's crew and cast, and a few more for Costa-Gavras's visiting friends (V. Fragoulakis, and E. Kapsokefalou, email correspondence with K. Komi, 3 June 2021; C. Katsiadakis, email correspondence with K. Komi, 1 April 2021; E. Restaki, interviewed by K. Komi, 17 May 2021).

¹⁰ Costa-Gavras began shooting on 13 May 2008 at Vai and ended on 14 June 2008 (E. Restaki, location manager and assistant production manager of the film, interviewed by K. Komi, 17 May 2021). *The Two Faces of January* was shot in the fall of 2012.

¹¹ Additional shooting took place at 'Out of the Blue' Capsis Elite Resort, Amirandes Grecotel Boutique Resort, and Porto Elounda De Luxe Resort.

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FIGURE 2 Costa-Gavras and Two Cretan Children (Manolis Psychogioudakis and Konstantina Chamalaki) Holding Small Roles in *Eden à l'Ouest* During the Film's Making in Mochos, 2008 (photo courtesy of Proodos – Cultural and Folklore Association of Mochos)

Some members of the production team stayed in smaller hotels in Annisaras and Vai. In addition, approximately 300 people were hired as extras with a daily salary of about €50 (E. Restaki, interviewed by K. Komi, 17 May 2021; V. Trzeciak, casting assistant, interviewed by K. Komi, 23 May 2021; L. Valasakis, telephone conversation and email correspondence with K. Komi, 27 May 2021),¹² when the minimum daily wage in Greece was about €32 (Ipourgeio 2008). Others were employed as actors for small parts (figure 2) and as technicians, carpenters, blacksmiths, electricians, drivers, carriers, and caterers, while local artists worked in the film crew (for instance as location managers, assistant production managers, or casting assistants).

The Two Faces of January is a good example of the revitalisation of a local community even before and after the filming. As the unit production manager of the film Dimitris Xenakis of Indigo View, a local

¹² According to Restaki and Trzeciak, the extras who appeared in the nude, in the scene where the protagonist comes ashore, were paid €150 per day.



production company based in Chania, explained (D. Xenakis, interviewed by N. Tsagarakis, 30 October 2020), the filming was preceded by about a month of preparation and followed by two to three weeks for restoration. Indigo View's total budget was around 2 million US dollars, which were poured into the local economy to hire technicians, craftspeople, and locals as background actors and to cover accommodation, catering, and transportation services. Among craftspeople, many were carpenters hired to build the sets. They came not only from Chania but also from Lasithi at the other edge of Crete, where Indigo View had previously produced *The Island*. In addition to Indigo View, two other Cretan companies were involved, Fixer (in Chania) and Tola films (in Archanes, Heraklion). Their role was crucial in assisting with location scouting, recruiting, and casting extras, providing crew, and arranging accommodation.

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Both Xenakis of Indigo View and Trzeciak of Tola Films (V. Trzeciak, interviewed by N. Tsagarakis, 23 May 2021) stressed that the local community and economy were reinvigorated by such a massive production and that apart from the financial rewards, *The Two Faces of January* helped to put Chania on the map of international film locations and raise the local standards of expertise on industry services and technical know-how. Similarly, many participants in the production of *Eden à l'Ouest*, interviewed for this research, corroborated that through Costa-Gavras's film local talent gained valuable experience and opportunities to display their skills, something that helped their professional career in the long run. Another long-lasting effect of Costa-Gavras's production concerned the publicity of the hotels where staging took place. News of the filming, which was reported in the media for almost six months, benefitted the hotel's brand awareness,¹³ with the Aldemar management observing a positive impact on its resorts' target clientele, especially in the French market (V. Fragoulakis and E. Kapsokefalou, email correspondence with K. Komi, 3 June 2021).

Since Pacheia Ammos offered a ready-made plateau for *Tsatsiki*,

¹³ See *Eden à l'Ouest – Tournage du nouveau film de Costa Gavras*, aired in France in October 2008 at CinéCinéma.

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morsan och polisen, the employment of local craftspersons was not a benefit. Nevertheless, residents were hired as extras – for some scenes of up to 50 people – or in small roles. Furthermore, about twenty Greek technicians participated in the film crew under the direction of Giannakakis, who had prepared all aspects of the production beforehand (e.g., casting and teaching the locals their roles). Another 20 people comprised the foreign crew. As a result, for the three weeks of filming in Pacheia Ammos, about 40 people rented rooms in the village and filled the area’s shops and taverns (M. Giannakakis, telephone conversation with P. Mini, 11 May 2021). After the film’s making, Pacheia Ammos enjoyed additional benefits. Thanks to its non-touristic character and its scenic appropriateness as well as the collaborative way in which *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* proceeded, this village became the setting of the Cretan scenes in the second film in the *Tsatsiki* series, *Tsatsiki – Vänner för alltid* (*Tsatsiki – Friend for Ever*, 2001, Eddie Thomas Petersen). In the 15 minutes’ screening time in Crete in this 82-minute-long film, the locals now played bigger roles, a village elder played *Tsatsiki*’s grandfather, and key talent from the first *Tsatsiki*, including assistant director Giannakakis and composer Papadakis, were hired. Promotional international articles on the village still describe its peaceful environment and mention that *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* had been shot there (e.g. Hoffmann 2019). This film’s making also benefited other sites in Crete. In 2015 the third instalment of the *Tsatsiki* series, *Tsatsiki, farsan och olivkriget* (*Tsatsiki, Dad, and the Olive War*, Lisa James-Larsson), was filmed in Sfakia and Loutro of the Chania region, hiring more than 450 local extras and fuelling the hotel business in the area (‘Efcharistirio xenodochon ton Chanion me aformi tin tainia sta Sfakia’ 2015).

Compared to *Celui qui doit mourir*, *Eden à l’Ouest*, *The Two Faces of January*, and *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen*, the immediate rewards of *Dedemin İnsanları* were not significant given that filming was completed within a day. Still, the rewards were not negligible. As seen in the shoot’s details provided by Dimitris Xenakis (figure 3) (D. Xenakis, email correspondence with P. Mini, 13 January 2021), the scenes in Fres required 25 extras, 3 people in small roles, and the use



FRES VILLAGE SQUARE	EXT/DAY
1st CAFE SHOP	EXT/DAY
2nd CAFE SHOP	EXT/DAY
MOTORBIKE RENTAL STORE	EXT/DAY
EARTH ROADS	EXT/DAY
PENSION	INT/NIGHT

ACTOR	FIGURANS	AKSESUAR/EKİPMAN:
USHAN ÇAKIR	CAFE SHOP OWNER	6 PROPS MOTORBIKE
	1 MAN WITH A DIALOG	OZAN'S MOTORBIKE
	MOTORBIKE STORE OWNER	
	20 MEN FIGURANS	
	5 WOMEN FIGURANS	

FIGURE 3
 Extracts of the 'Shooting Details' of *Dedemin İnsanları* in Crete (courtesy of Indigo View)

TURKİSH CREW	GREEK CREW
1-YÖNETMEN (S.1)	ŞARİOT OPERATOR
2-YAPIMCI (S.2)	2 LIGHTING ASİSTANT
3-GÖRÜNTÜ YÖNETMENİ (S.3)	MAKE-UP
4-SANAT YÖNETMENİ (S.4)	STADYCAM OPERATOR
5-FOCUS PULLER(D.1)	3 SET PEOPLE
6-KAMERA ASİSTANI (D.1)	1 ART DIRECTOR ASİSTANT
7-YÖNETMEN YARDIMCISI 1 (D.2)	TEA GIRL
8-SANAT YÖNETMENİ YARDIMCISI (S.5)	PRODUCTION CREW
9-SES OPERATÖRÜ (S.6)	
10-BOOMER (D.2)	
11-AKTÖR (S.7)	

of two coffee shops, a motorbike rental store, a pension, and external locations (the village square and earth roads). Each coffee shop was rented at a daily price of about €300; the villagers sitting around as extras received a daily salary of about €40 each, and all shops that remained closed during the film work were compensated with about €100 per day (D. Xenakis, telephone conversation with P. Mini, 13 January 2021).¹⁴ We can fully appreciate the benefits from one day of shooting if we consider the following. For such a short filming time, an 11-member foreign crew arrived in the area (the director and his assistant, the producer, the director of photography with an assistant, the designer and an assistant, a camera operator, a sound operator, a boomer, and an actor), who needed accommodation for three nights,¹⁵ while at least 12 Greek people were employed to work

¹⁴ In addition, a Greek actress, Eirini Inglesi, played the current owner of the grandfather's Cretan house.

¹⁵ As Fres did not have accommodation facilities at the time, they stayed in a hotel

[122] in the crew (figure 3). In addition, far-reaching benefits came for the Greek line producers and, through them, other talents. As Xenakis explained, the bond created between the local firm Indigo View and Turkish executive producer Esi Gülce led to common film projects; and through Indigo View's intervention, Anastasia Tsilimbiou, the Greek actress who had played in *The Island*, was cast in the major role of Young Kösem Sultan in the hit Turkish TV series *Muhteşem Yüzyıl: Kösem* (*The Magnificent Century: Kösem*, 2015, 2017).¹⁶

LOCAL INTANGIBLE REWARDS

Material gains aside, the making of all these films brought about a reward that we rarely consider: bonds among people of different places and backgrounds. One should treat with caution oral testimonies and *a posteriori* accounts of feelings; yet, the fondness with which the participants in these productions in different roles and positions talk about their experiences indicates that transnational film productions create a basis for sincere human interaction.

Celui qui doit mourir is a representative case. Although language and cultural differences initially caused some misunderstanding and tension between locals and foreigners (Bérard 1956; Skoulikaris 2013, 2), all participants gradually formed warm relationships that lasted for decades.¹⁷ Dassin's letter to Kritsa's people at the end of the shooting reveals the prevailing climate during the film's making (Dassin 1956b):

Together we created a film, which I hope is worth seeing. We worked very hard [...]. From the beginning, I believed that I did not have subordinates in my work but partners [...]. I made a lot of friends in Kritsa, and that is why it is difficult to leave them. Many of our team cried when they left. Someone even said something that represents us all, 'I'm leaving part of myself here.' [...]

(Irida Hotel) in Chania (D. Xenakis, telephone conversation with P. Mini, 13 January 2021).

¹⁶ Gülce was *Muhteşem Yüzyıl: Kösem*'s line producer.

¹⁷ See Dassin's interview in Fredy Germanos's 1977 TV show *Ekpompes pou agapisa* (<https://archive.ert.gr/73502/>).



'So, goodbye until we meet again, my Kritsa friends.' I will be looking for you and will be thinking of you always. I am happy to have lived here with you.

Years later Dassin described his work in Kritsa: 'I still remember that time as the happiest of my life. Happiness had to do with the whole atmosphere, with all the locals who worked on the film. I have memories that still overwhelm me, and I love this village more than any other in the world' (Dimopoulos and Kiriakidis 2000, 61, 71). [123]

The experience was equally gratifying for Kritsa's people. According to Chrisanthi Katapoti, who played one of Panagiotaros's daughters in *Celui qui doit mourir*, the film's four-month making looked like a celebration (C. Katapoti, telephone conversation with K. Komi, 3 June 2021). All villagers participated by either working in the production or watching the work. Subsequently, various neighbourhoods in Kritsa were named after characters and places in the film (e.g., Ladas's place, Sarakina) and in 1982 the village unanimously appointed Dassin and Mercouri honorary citizens (Skoulikaris 2013, 11). Today – 65 years later – the locals still share stories of the film-making,¹⁸ traces from the film's set remain in Kritsa (figure 4), and the walls of its public buildings are decorated with photographs of the filming (figure 5).

A similar atmosphere is conveyed by the participants in *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen*. Assistant director Giannakakis and musician Papadakis describe the foreign producers as excellent collaborators, recall the locals' enthusiasm and 'positive energy,' and compare the filming to a *panigiri* (the Greek word for the folk fair). They explain how they all became 'co-villagers,' with the locals opening their homes to offer the crew whatever they needed, and how the last day of work culminated in a huge celebration (M. Giannakakis, telephone conversation with P. Mini, 11 May 2021; C. Papadakis, in-

¹⁸ People who participated in the film or lived in Kritsa in 1956, remember fondly Dassin, Merkouri, and the time when their village was transformed into a studio (C. Varda, E Tziris, and M. Klontza interviewed by K. Komi, 30 May 2021, and C. Katapoti, telephone conversation with K. Komi, 3 June 2021).

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FIGURE 4

Remnants of the Set for *Celui qui doit mourir* in Kritsa: Ladas's Place (photo by Katerina Komi)



FIGURE 5

A Photograph Decorating the Walls of the 'Lato' Cultural, Educational and Developmental Association of Kritsa Shows Jules Dassin and Inhabitants of Kritsa Working as Extras During the Making of *Celui qui doit mourir* (photo courtesy by 'Lato' Cultural, Educational and Developmental Association of Kritsa)



interviewed by N. Tsagarakis, 1 June 2021). Making the second film in the *Tsatsiki* series in Pacheia Ammos confirms the amicable climate that characterised the work on the first.

For the director of *The Two Faces of January*, Chania turned out his 'favourite location outside of filming.' As Amini (2014) described, 'After filming we'd [our crew would] disperse to different bars and restaurants and enjoy the city all over again. Despite spending over a month there, many of the crew have since returned for their holidays.' The climate in Fres for *Dedemin İnsanları* was particularly emotional. By narrating the story of an old Turkish-Cretan, who longed



to see his childhood home in Crete, and of his grandson who made the trip the old man could not, Ismak told the story of his grandfather and his first trip to Crete; thus, filming in Fres allowed him to visit this island once more. He said: 'It is all very intense for me. I feel I know the people, the places, everything' (Doumanis 2011). The film, Irmak emphasised, 'is about the friendship between Greeks and Turks,' something captured in the conditions under which the work proceeded in Fres.

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BONDS ACROSS COUNTRIES AND TIMES

Implemented through the collaboration between Turks and Greeks at the production level, *Dedemin İnsanları* puts in effect the ideas of people's partnership and of questioning the borders separating them on the level of the story as well. The film transcends many symbolic barriers: between nations, languages, genders, classes, and social groups, with the first among them being the barriers between Greeks and Turks. Humanitarian issues are also at the core of *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* and *Eden à l'Ouest*, making them suitable for promoting worldwide solidarity and equality.

Dedemin İnsanları has enjoyed special screenings in Greece designed to advance Greek-Turkish friendship: from showings in programs organised under the auspices of the Turkish Embassy in Greece ('Evdomada tourkikou kinimatografou' 2014; 'Oi anthropoi tou pappou mou taxidevoun se Chania kai Irakleio' 2015) to presentations in primary school events (Ramos 2013). Outside of Greece, this film has been selected to represent modern Turkish cinema and culture in festivals and events in many countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Mongolia, Morocco, Slovakia, Spain, Ukraine, and the United States. It has also received the Kemal Sunal Culture and Art Award of 2012 for best film, among other awards.¹⁹

In *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen*, when Tsatsiki travels to Crete, he finds out that his father is a haggard fisherman, not the hand-

¹⁹ For the awards of *Dedemin İnsanları*, see https://m.imdb.com/title/tt2150209/awards?ref_=tt_ql_sm.

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some, muscular octopus catcher that his mother had described. After his initial disappointment, Tsatsiki feels a bond with his father beyond stereotypes. Such an experience does not concern only Tsatsiki. Life in Sweden brings in close contact people of different lifestyles and backgrounds, making them develop feelings of sincere mutual understanding and respect. Touching upon such issues, in addition to its huge commercial success, *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* was awarded numerous prizes for best film for children or young people.²⁰ It was shown in festivals and events – mostly for young audiences – in more than 20 cities worldwide (e.g. Hanoi, Antwerp, Berlin, Bern, Bruges, Copenhagen, Creil, Cote d' Ivoire, Freiburg, Hyderabad, Paris, Poznan, Toulouse, Varese, and Zlin) and used to promote cultural collaboration. To give two examples, in 2008 it was included in the Ciné Nordica week in Paris, organised by the Saga Nordica organisation which works for cultural exchanges between France and the Nordic countries; in November 2009, the Swedish Embassy in Vietnam selected it as one of the five films for the 'Defending Difference' event in Hanoi, Vietnam, celebrating '40 years of friendship' between Vietnam and Sweden.²¹ Moreover, due to its emphasis on a single-mother family and relationships among people of various backgrounds, *Tsatsiki, morsan och polisen* has been mentioned in many pamphlets and projects on appropriate films for school screenings and discussions of issues such as new types of families, friendship, and tolerance (Havran, Sauvage, and Walther 2002).

²⁰ It has been awarded the 1999 Guldbaggevinnare Prize for Sweden's best film; the 1999 Children's Film Prize of the Nordic Film Institutes; the Crystal Bear from the Young People's Jury at the Children's Film Festival of the 2000 Berlinale; the Poznań Silver Goats Best Foreign Feature Movie at Poznan's 18th Ale Kino! International Young Audience Film Festival; the 2000 Euro Kids Network Award; the Golden Plaque in Critics Jury Award at the 12th International Children's Film Festival in Hyderabad, India, and other prizes. See, indicatively, <https://www.svenskfilmdatabas.se/en/item/?type=film&itemid=40615#awards> and https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0171851/awards?ref_=tt_ql_sm.

²¹ See <http://hanoigrapevine.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/swedish-film-program-20094.pdf>.



Through the story of the undocumented immigrant, *Eden à l'Ouest* refers to the plight of millions who flee their countries to reach the West, only to find out that their western destination is a guarded fortress, a Paradise for only some selected few; Costa-Gavras criticises this contemporary situation, advancing instead the need for understanding and equality. Through a strong distribution system, system, *Eden à l'Ouest* was shown in numerous countries, carrying messages of respect to other cultures and of fair multiculturalism. It premiered at the 59th Berlin International Film Festival of 2009, where it represented France, Greece, and Italy, as the closing night film, an acknowledgement of its suitability to signal the end of a festival which since the late 1990s 'has developed into a place of intercultural exchange and a platform for the critical cinematic exploration of social issues' ('The Berlinale: A Constantly Evolving Festival' 2021).

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Later in 2009, *Eden à l'Ouest* opened the London Human Rights Watch Film Festival, which through its organiser – Human Rights Watch – 'strives to expose human oppression worldwide and to promote human rights' (Wong 2011, 174, 176). Since then, the film has travelled to many festivals²² and was presented at events raising awareness about refugees, migrants, and human rights such as the 2009 Human Rights Watch International Film Festival in New York; the 2009 UNHCR Refugee Film Festival in Tokyo; the 2009 Events on Migration of the Pancyprian Federation of Women's Organisations, in Limassol, Cyprus; the 2011 International Crime and Pun-

²² For example, in 2009 it was screened at the French Film Festival, Tokyo-Osaka; the EuroCine27, Brussels; the Mar del Plata International Film Festival, Argentina; the Busan International Film Festival, South Korea; the Melbourne Film Festival, Australia; the Pula Film Festival, Croatia; the Cinemania Francophone Film Festival in Montreal; the Festival del Cinema Europeo, Lecce; the Traverse City Film Festival, Michigan; the St George Bank Brisbane International Film Festival, Australia; the Mumbai International Film Festival, India; the Griechische Filmwoche, Munich; and the Bursa International Silk Road Film Festival in Turkey. It has been awarded the Critics Award at the 2009 ColCoa Film Festival/City of Lights, City of Angels, Los Angeles, and the Critics Award and Special Jury Award at the 2009 Mostra de Valencia in Spain.

[128] ishment Film Festival in Istanbul; and social spaces and squats in Athens. Like *Tsatsiki*, *morsan och polisen*, *Eden à l'Ouest* has been also used as an educational tool in various countries (e.g., France, Greece, Italy, and Spain), engaging students in discussions about xenophobia, prejudice, immigration, diversity, and European politics.

CONCLUSION

Presenting these films in international contexts that promote understanding and respect comes as a corollary of film production procedures that themselves were based on partnership and collaborative work. The foreign films shot in Crete, which have been examined for this study, evince that international film productions can deliver important tangible benefits to both foreign producers and locals and form strong bonds that participants will cherish for a long time. These films bring financial gains for the participants and the hosting communities in addition to technical expertise, familiarisation with international standards of work, and promotion of the shooting locations. They offer foreign producers and filmmakers geographical and architectural authenticity and diversity in addition to fiscal advantages. As the research shows, no less important is the cultural exchange between locals and foreign crews, which leaves behind fond memories, friendships, and professional partnerships. Furthermore, these films may contribute to the mitigation of cultural and historical stereotypes, even while crafting the values of empathy and solidarity into a cinematic narrative.

No doubt, this research has inherent limitations. From the more than 40 foreign productions shot in Crete, it focuses on five, and among hundreds of people participating in the productions, it interviewed 13. In addition, it discusses more productions of the last three decades, for which it was more practical to collect data from local participants. Furthermore, it processes information only from organisations, businesses, and people who were willing to share their experiences and knowledge. Despite these limitations, local and state organisations can use these findings to promote and enhance international film encounters. They could organise transnational film events, emphasising the relationship between the cul-



tural bonds depicted on screen and those created in the course of filming. Organisations could bring the films' international participants back together to discuss past experiences and make future plans. Moreover, interested parties can support more research case studies that may bring to light a greater number of fortuitous film encounters across countries and cultures, reinforcing the conclusion that transnational film collaborations have the potential to unite people. In this sense, the recent initiative of the Hellenic Film Office and the work of local Film Offices across Greece, whose outcomes have already become apparent even during the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the attraction of several foreign productions in many areas of the country, may further inform us on the tangible and non-material importance of international film productions for both local communities and global audiences.

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