

COSMOPOLITAN AND BORDER EXPERIENCES IN THE GLOBAL CITY OF ZOOTOPIA

ANA VIRGINIA LÓPEZ FUENTES
Universidad de Zaragoza
Avlfuentes@unizar.es

Received 17 February 2021

Accepted 5 July 2021

KEY WORDS

Film Studies; *Zootopia*; Global City; Cosmopolitanism; Borderlands; Diversity.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Estudios Filmicos; *Zootopia*; Ciudad Global; Cosmopolitismo; Borderlands; Diversidad.

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the Walt Disney's animation film *Zootopia* (2016) within the context of contemporary cinematic representations of global cities as borderlands but also as bordering, exclusive, diverse and cosmopolitan places. *Zootopia* is a film about the city space, in this case, about the global city of Zootopia. The film reflects contemporary global cities in which the negotiation of space is a constant issue. It portrays a modern metropolis formed by different neighbourhoods with contrasting habitats such as Sahara, Jungle or Tundra, all comprised in the same space and separated by physical walls. Animals from every environment, size and form cohabit together in the city, but physical and metaphorical borders are erected between them. The film brings an inclusive message breaking with borders inside the global city and portraying moments of openness between the protagonists; a bunny and a fox.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza la película de animación de Walt Disney *Zootopia* (2016) en el contexto de las representaciones cinematográficas contemporáneas de ciudades globales como zonas fronterizas, pero también como lugares limítrofes, excluyentes, diversos y cosmopolitas. *Zootopia* es una película sobre el espacio de la ciudad, en este caso, sobre la ciudad global llamada Zootopia. La película es un reflejo de las ciudades globales contemporáneas en las que la negociación del espacio es un tema recurrente. Retrata una moderna metrópolis

formada por diferentes barrios con entornos muy diferentes como el desierto, la jungla o la tundra, todos comprendidos en un mismo espacio y separados por fronteras físicas. Animales de todos los entornos, tamaños y formas conviven en la ciudad, pero entre ellos se erigen fronteras físicas y metafóricas. La película promueve un mensaje inclusivo rompiendo fronteras en la ciudad global y retratando momentos de apertura entre los protagonistas: una conejita y un zorro.

INTRODUCTION

In the age of globalisation, some borders, rather than disappearing, are becoming stronger than ever. Meanwhile, new borders are being erected, sometimes in unexpected places. Global cities are one of the places in which borders are starting to proliferate, as has been claimed by authors such as Saskia Sassen (2001), Doreen Massey (2007) and Manuel Castells (2010). Global cities are contexts where cosmopolitan encounters and discords take place and where different cultures may come together and collaborate in the light of cosmopolitan aspirations. On the other hand, they can be seen as places of exclusion where borders that separate different minorities are established in multiple ways (Bonafant 4).

This article will look at the representation of borders and cosmopolitanism in the global city of *Zootopia* that gives name to Howard and Moore's Walt Disney animation film released in 2016. *Zootopia* is home to animals of all shapes, colours, sizes, habitats and dietary habits. The narrative deals with the urban structure and the processes that take place within this constructed environment. It portrays a modern metropolis formed by different neighbourhoods with contrasting habitats such as Sahara, Jungle or Tundra, all comprised in the same global city. The city is central to the narrative as it gives meaning to all the actions carried out by the different characters. The two protagonists, Juddy (a rabbit) and Nick (a fox), negotiate the borders that are physically and metaphorically established between different types of animals (mainly between prey and predators). *Zootopia* contradicts the perception of the city as a harmonious multicultural place where various cultures coexist without any problems. It offers a sense of the global city as a borderland of encounters and exclusions, as spaces of globalisation and mobile borders where cosmopolitanism

exhibits its complexities and contradictions, but also its opportunities of collaboration and inclusion. Borderlands are defined by Gloria Anzaldúa as places in which “two or more cultures edge on each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy” (19). In this regard, this article will analyse *Zootopia* within the context of contemporary cinematic representations of global cities as borderlands but also as bordering, exclusive, diverse and cosmopolitan places.

THE GLOBAL CITY

According to Sassen, borders are gradually being established in cities due to the increasing flow of bordercrossers towards the metropolis. Thus, large cities become not only microcosms of a global world, but actual borderlands, which are constantly crossed by fluctuating borders and exchanges, as argued by Davis, Anderson, and Deleyto and López. Global cities are central to globalisation. Sassen argues that global cities are essential to some of the global economy’s key functions and resources (“Global Cities and Survival Circuits” 255) and, therefore, have a direct impact on economic, social, cultural, and political affairs on a global scale. These cities involve “the territorial centralization of top-level management, control operations, and the most advanced specialized services” (256). Together with export processing zones, they constitute fundamental places for global economic activities (257). Sassen establishes a “global city model” in which she indicates the existence of transnational networks of cities that can be identified by the following events that take place in society: the financial growth of global markets and specialised services, the need for transnational servicing networks, the reduced role of the government in the regulation of international economic activity, and the corresponding ascendance of global markets and corporate headquarters (“The global City: Introducing a Concept” 29). While these transnational networks of cities are positioned in strategic static locations, they are also transterritorial spaces because they connect geographically distant places and populations. In light of the foregoing, cities have become “a strategic terrain for a whole series of conflicts and contradictions”

(39). Sassen classifies London, New York and Tokyo as leading transnational financial and business centres in today's global economy (*The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* 89).

Meanwhile, Castells classifies the global city phenomenon as a process that connects "advanced services, producer centers, and markets in a global network, with different intensity and at a different scale depending upon the relative importance of the activities located in each area vis-à-vis the global network" (411). Together with the three global cities mentioned by Sassen, Hong Kong, Paris, Frankfurt, and San Francisco can be considered major players in terms of finance and international business services. These global cities "are information-based, value-production complexes, where corporate headquarters and advanced financial firms can find both the suppliers and the highly skilled, specialized labor they require" (Castells 415). Moreover, Castells argues that global cities constitute flexible networks of production and management with access to workers and suppliers at any time and quantity required (415).

Another example of a global city proposed by Celestino Deleyto and Gemma López is the city of Barcelona. They argue that invisible borders are established in the city thanks to globalisation, gentrification, immigration, and tourism (Deleyto and López 159). The city has an extremely complex social structure and porosity in its borderlands (160). They point out how gentrification is a focal point in today's global cities. Through the example of Barcelona, the authors describe how the city has been transformed in recent decades due to playing host to two major events: the 1992 Olympic Games and the 2004 Universal Forum of Cultures. These events were the starting point for the redesign and modernisation of the city, which also involved a process of consumerism and speculation known as "Barcelona Marca Registrada', the city as trade mark" (159). Similarly, the process of gentrification has led to the construction of exclusionary walls in the cities of London and New York, a practice whereby entire urban neighbourhoods are appropriated by real estate and business concerns, leading to the skyrocketing of housing prices and, as a consequence, the displacement of low-income families that once inhabited the affected neighbourhoods. Neil Smith describes gentrification as a socially organised "global urban strategy" in the twenty-first century, which portends a displacement of working-class residents from urban centres (440).

Overall, these cities have been object of research in many social areas. As will be argued in the following section, the cinematic field has taken advantage of these spaces to portray messages that mirror or distort social realities.

CINEMATIC REPRESENTATIONS OF GLOBAL CITIES

Films are cultural discourses that portray fictional global cities as real places while producing interesting dialogues that influence our perception of reality (Deleyto 6-63). Mark Shiel argues that cinema is more a spatial system rather than a textual system (6; 19). He points out that, due to its images and visual character, cinema provides an accurate representation of spaces and uses them to construct the social life that takes place in the city, in addition to relations of power and the current global systems that materialise in global cities (6). For Shiel, cinema is an appropriate means to understand the complexity of globalisation as modern cinema “exists as part of a much larger global entertainment industry and communications network, which includes older cultural forms such as music and television, and newer forms of techno-culture such as digital, the internet, and information technology” (10).

In *Cities and Cinema* (2008), Barbara Mennel claims that “like cities, films engage in processes of production and reproduction of social relations in spatial configurations” (15). While commenting on how global cities provide settings for narratives about migration, she also highlights a new global version of older analogies associated with the city, for example, the “alienation, now reflected in the representation of tourists, business travelers, and the displacement of migrants within global networks” (196). Mennel also asserts that films reflect urban patterns produced by social differences in class, gender, age, race, and ethnicity in how they code neighbourhoods as rich or poor, or landscapes as urban or rural (15). While some academics see the increase in the hegemony of Hollywood as an effect of globalisation, Mennel emphasises “the creative possibilities of cinematic exchange” generated by globalisation (197).

Deleyto highlights the fact that cinematic cities are not real cities because there is always a process of transformation in filmic narratives. He describes cities in films as artificial constructs that may (or may not) be based on the design of a real place (5).

Through a process of remodelling with new visual cinematic features, these cinematic spaces create discourses that have a significant impact on our perception of the real places and their history (7). Deleyto argues that Hollywood has never aimed to represent cities in a truthful way. Instead, producers prefer to use urban spaces to create amusing and captivating narratives and imaginary worlds. He points out the importance of cinematic urban fictions and claims that they “ought to be considered within the larger parameters of cultural, urban, and political discourse” (7). In order to define the global city as a basis for his analysis of the city of Los Angeles in different films, he draws attention to the economic character of these places. He identifies global cities as nodal centres of globalisation surrounded by the discourses of late capitalism (10).

Some Disney films create fictional cities, such as Monstropolis in *Monsters Inc.* (2001), the Land of the Dead in *Coco* (2017), and San Fransokyo in *Big Hero 6* (2014). These imagined spaces are constructed as global cities where different races, social classes, cultures, customs and forms of life are combined. What is more, in the same line as *Zootopia*, Rich Moore creates another imagined city in *Ralph Breaks the Internet* (2018), in which the internet itself is constructed as a city. The Company presents in this film an example of Janet Wasko’s “Disney multiverse” overlapping films, different corporations and worlds. The internet is presented as a fascinating global city with multiple skyscrapers, technological screens with advertisements and where big companies such as Amazon and Google feature prominently together with popular social networks represented such as Facebook or Snapchat. The city is completely technological and represents a global economic centre of coordination like the ones theorized by Sassen (*The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* 89).

Out of all the Disney animation films that integrate real and fictional cities in their narratives, the case of *Zootopia* is unique in the fact that it is about the city space, in this case, the global city of Zootopia. In the following sections, the different characters and their relationships, and the spaces that make up this film will be formally analysed with a focus on mise-en-scène, editing, framing, and sound. In particular, the article will explore the complexity of the borders established between the different neighbourhoods and characters in the global city of Zootopia.

FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA: CHARACTERS AND RELATIONSHIPS IN THE GLOBAL CITY

The 2017 Oscar-winning animated feature film, *Zootopia*, was a box office hit, grossing \$341.3 million in the United States and over \$1 billion worldwide. It is an example of a Hollywood global blockbuster that has been watched all over the world and which represents the power of globalisation on and off the screen. The *Variety* senior film critic, Peter Debruge affirms that *Zootopia* “turns real-world racial-sensitivity issues into something of a talk point” (67). Debruge uses as an example the moment when the main character, Judy, tells another animal that it is perfectly acceptable for a little bunny to call another bunny “cute” but not for other animals to use this term (67). Scout Tafoya points out that while *Zootopia* is a return to the traditional techniques employed by the Walt Disney Company because it features talking, anthropomorphic animals as its main characters, the characters are involved in a “very modern discussion of race and political corruption” (429). *Zootopia* has been explored from a racial perspective (Beaudine, Osibodu, and Beavers 227-34; Muljadi 236-46), a gender one (Debruge n.p.) and a political one (Hassler-Forest 356-78; Osmond 94; Sandlin and Snaza 1190-213). However, none of these works has space as their main focus.

In *Zootopia*, all types of animals live side by side but not without problems. Indeed, the plot includes a sense of tension between the carnivorous predators and herbivores. The city is governed by Mayor Lionheart, who is a predator, and his assistant Mayor Bellwether, who is a female sheep and, therefore, prey. The protagonist, Judy Hoops, a bunny from a rural town called Bunnyburrow, works hand-in-hand with a fox called Nick Wilde and establishes a fruitful relationship with him during the narrative, overcoming their differences, even though one of them is a police officer prey and the other a swindler predator. The city is transformed from a utopia (with a dreamy initial message) into a dystopia as it mirrors a real global society where diversity coexists with multiple borders between different races and cultures. *Zootopia* directly challenges the rhetoric of “us and them,” good and evil, good guys and bad guys (Keeble 167) and narrativises some of the theories about the global city discussed above. The city that is initially presented as the place where “anyone can be anything” is in fact a border and exclusionary city. *Zootopia* is

presented in the opening scenes as a utopia where, regardless of who you are or what you look like, you are welcome and can become anything you want. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes increasingly apparent that this message is farfetched.

The opening scene sets the basis for the utopian Zootopia. Little Judy and some of her classmates take part in a school performance representing the grandiose and illusory ideas that they have (mainly Judy) about the global city. Judy gives the following speech:

[...] (After performing a predator killing a prey). Back then, the world was divided in two. Vicious predator or meek prey. But over time, we evolved, and moved beyond our primitive savage ways. Now, predator and prey live in harmony, and every young mammal has multitudinous opportunities [...], and I can make the world a better place! I am going to be a police officer!

One of the spectators, a fox, says: “Bunny cop? That is the most stupidest thing I ever heard.” But Judy pays no attention and proceeds to present Zootopia as a cosmopolitan city where this division between species--in other words, racial and ethnic segregation--is a thing of the past and everyone can coexist in harmony. The shortcomings of that utopian view of the global city have been brought to the fore by scholars such as Zlatko Skrbiš and Ian Woodward, who claim that the lofty aspirations of cosmopolitan utopias need to be brought down to the ground and replaced by simple day-to-day actions, such as changing attitudes towards difference, increasingly open-minded attitudes, contact with other cultures, and acceptance of different political opinions and religious beliefs. The narrative of *Zootopia* is developed in line with these new cosmopolitan aspirations, which, unlike cosmopolitan utopias, emphasise ordinary experiences, such as talking, eating, reading and even dreaming (Skrbiš and Woodward 106). In this line, Zootopia also puts forward a more realistic view of multicultural and interracial global societies today.

The message of the film develops primarily through the character of Judy. She is a small female rabbit fighting for a better world that is free from inequality. From the outset, Judy is advised against following her dream. In fact, Judy’s parents encourage her to become a carrot farmer instead of a police officer since the idea of a rabbit becoming a police officer is unheard of. Nevertheless,

she fights for it and demonstrates that you can be whatever you want with effort and determination. Even though Judy maintains her positive attitude throughout the entire film, at the beginning of her trip to Zootopia, Judy is faced with a cruel reality. She arrives in the city with aspirations of being the first bunny in the police force. However, she is promptly rejected by her bigger and tougher colleagues, who doubt her potential because she is a small female rabbit and, by nature, prey. She has idealised Zootopia in her mind as a city of inclusion where discrimination and segregation between animals do not happen, and where all the animals interact and live together in harmony. Nevertheless, this idea is soon brought to a halt when she arrives in the city and sees the stereotypes attached to her wherever she goes, including the police station and even her own apartment. Judy becomes one of the stereotyped: “those who do not belong, who are outside of one’s society,” against the “social types,” who are the ones that belong to society (Dyer 14). She starts to understand that Zootopia is a place where animals coexist, albeit with multiple borders dividing different species, classified by size, type and function, and that the city is compartmentalised by territorial borders and contains a total of twelve unique ecosystems.

The migrants in Zootopia (as in Judy’s case) are challenged on a daily basis by the urban design and municipal policies of the global metropolis. Judy lives in a shabby apartment with unpleasant neighbours in a large building on the outskirts of the city, an area that seems to have been forgotten by the rest of the city. In the global city of Zootopia, she is segregated by what Mike Davis has called “the third border,” that is the invisible line that foreigners come across every day in their interactions with other communities, a reminder that their lives are under constant scrutiny and that, in spite of the apparent freedom of movement, there are many barriers that are difficult, if not impossible, to negotiate (71). Judy is constantly undervalued and unappreciated by the citizens of Zootopia. When Judy joins the police department, which is dominated by predators, the main problem is due to her size and species. She is not even one fourth the size of anyone else in the department run by predators and powerful herbivores. Judy was hired as a part of a “Mammal Inclusion Initiative,” but the reality is that she is marginalised and discriminated against. As a result, she is assigned to parking duty despite the fact that she was top of her class at the academy. Judy

needs to work long hours in the police department because she is female and, on top of this, a small herbivore (prey). The so-called third border follows her wherever she goes. She is constructed as a victim of society, struggling to make her way in a ruthless city, a position that is aggravated by her gender and species.

Zootopia also follows some of the conventions of the detective genre and, as such, Judy will play a key role in moving “the narrative forward to a resolution of the investigation” (Gates 6). As a female detective, Judy has an ability to move from one neighbourhood to another, crossing the physical borders established between districts, and having to adapt herself to each territory and climatic conditions, but doing it successfully, as is established in the detective genre. As argued by Philippa Gates “female detectives are exciting gender-benders that challenge the assumption that femininity and masculinity are fixed categories aligned with opposite sexes” (6), as the protagonist portrays in the film. Judy is a successful detective that tries to erase inequalities in the global city of Zootopia.

Determined to prove herself, Judy gets involved in a dangerous case and, breaking with stereotypes, starts collaborating with Nick, a fox, whom she initially blackmails for help as he is a professional swindler. Both protagonists find themselves navigating the huge city of Zootopia where multiple cultures, races and lifestyles coexist. This overwhelming city contrasts significantly with Judy’s everyday life in a rural town. After settling in Zootopia, she carries around her fox-repellent, and despite establishing a fruitful relationship with Nick, at the beginning, she is suspicious of him. With some discrepancies, both characters get involved in a dangerous case in which predators, for no apparent reason, start to regain their wild ways of past generations and kill prey. Initially, their relationship is based on self-interest, but as Judy and Nick investigate the case together, they get to know each other very well, and “moments of openness” take place. A relationship that starts off with lies and insults blossoms into one of mutual empathy and trust. It is Nick who stands up for Judy when Chief Bogo wants her to quit the police force. Judy finds herself on the wrong side of an interrogation. Her face is illuminated by the light of a lamppost; she is framed standing in the middle of a circle of big, tough police officers—as if she were trapped in a cage. Chief Bogo’s enormous stature is emphasised by the framing—part of his body is off the

screen while Judy is not even one quarter the size of the chief. She is utterly petrified and paralysed by fear and the darkness of the scene mirrors her vulnerability in this threatening situation.

The film uses a combination of low-angle shots focused on Chief Boggo, which assert his superiority, with high-angle shots, which highlight Judy's worried expression, to convey the anxiety and sense of inferiority experienced by Judy. The segregation of Zootopia is reflected in this scene. Judy is not a "social type" but rather a product of stereotypes (Dyer 14). She makes the invisible visible—rabbits (or small prey) can also be good police officers despite being totally discriminated against. In a moment of openness created by the tension of the scene, Nick tells Judy's boss that she is not going to quit because she was given an unreasonably short deadline (which has not yet arrived) to solve the case. Then, the protagonists walk away together from the other police officers and leave the place on a sky tram. For the first time, the two protagonists realise that they are both victims of discrimination, which leads them to join forces and look out for each other.

Yet, Judy is not only a victim of stereotypes. She also enforces them, as can be seen in a later scene. While thinking that they have solved the case, she takes part in a press conference in which she states that the recent return of savage predators "may have something to do with biology. A biological component. [...] For whatever reason, they seem to be reverting back to their primitive, savage ways." Judy's use of the oppositions "us" (prey) versus "them" (predators) is noticed by Nick, who becomes angry with her. He tells her that he knows she has been carrying her "fox repellent" with her all along, showing that she cannot get rid of the stereotypes even when she has a fox as her best friend and work partner. Judy's statement at the press conference causes Zootopia to fall apart: in her words, she has managed to "tear it apart." As a result, the city is engulfed by chaos. The prey are scared of the predators and the predators are marginalised and belittled. Stereotypes are now turned against the predators. Eventually, Judy discovers that someone is targeting predators intentionally with poisonous flowers that bring out their savage side in order to separate society and diminish the population of predators. It has nothing to do with biology. She confesses to Nick that she was ignorant, irresponsible and small-minded, and they join forces again to solve the case once and for all. Their relationship is now

stronger than ever, and they rely on each other as they work side by side.

Throughout the narrative, the protagonists encounter multiple borders imposed by other animals. They constantly challenge these borders and fight against discrimination, while trying to prove their worth by solving the mystery of the savage predators. They work together to preserve the city's multiculturalism. The end of the film sees a moment of openness between all the inhabitants of Zootopia when Judy and Nick solve the case and restore the equilibrium between the citizens, which transmits a poignant message of inclusion. The differences between prey and predators are dissolved (at least momentarily), and the protagonists are truly accepted by their colleagues. Calm is restored in the city, and the fear of the Other is eradicated when the case is solved. In a final speech, Judy inspires Zootopia inhabitants to be more open to the Other and to understand each other's differences, claiming that "no matter what type of animal you are, from the biggest elephant to our first fox, I implore you...try, try to make the world a better place." This way, the film conveys a cosmopolitan message by dismantling borders inside a global city and portraying moments of openness between the protagonists, two natural enemies. Eventually, certain solutions are presented, such as becoming more open-minded and seeing difference as an opportunity and not as an obstacle.

THE USE OF SPACE IN ZOOTOPIA

This part of the analysis will explore the main cosmopolitan urban spaces of *Zootopia* where the encounters and discords of different species occur. It is worth highlighting how the mise-en-scène helps to portray the global city of Zootopia as a place formed by inner borders between different groups of society, but also as an environment of blossoming encounters, which, in some cases, are almost utopian. The use of space is key to understanding the dynamics of the film in which the aforementioned attitudes are perceived as a consequence of the construction of the global city. *Zootopia* is a reflection of contemporary global cities in which the negotiation of space is a constant issue.

After living all her life in a rural setting, Judy joins the police academy to carry out her training. She is the first bunny that has had the courage and initiative to enrol in this academy.

The police academy serves as an initial warning to what Judy is going to encounter in the city of Zootopia. It can be considered the first borderland in the film: one in which different animals, regardless of their dietary preferences and physical differences, work together and train as police officers. It is a microcosm of the global city, in which the different extreme weather systems that shape the city are recreated on a smaller scale. The diverse ecosystems give way to different challenges that the candidates need to overcome to become police officers in the global city, including: withstanding a scorching sandstorm, surviving a 1,000-foot fall, and climbing a freezing ice wall. While completing her apprenticeship, Judy is constantly despised by her peers. She is subjected to the exclusionary attitudes of her classmates and, even more so, of her trainer, a female bear who makes remarks such as, “You’re dead, carrot face!,” “You’re dead, farm girl!,” “You’re dead, Fluff Butt!,” and finally, “Just quit and go home, fuzzy bunny!” These comments do not make Judy feel bad or desperate. On the contrary, these insults make her stronger and more powerful, and after training so much harder than her peers, she becomes the best police officer in her year.

Borderlands are central to the understanding of the city of Zootopia. The city itself may be contextualised as a borderland. In general, borderlands acquire a new power within the context of cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan theory. In *Zootopia*, the city is presented as a borderland where the action unfolds in several important spaces. It is a geography of power that produces an unequal geographic democracy (Massey 119). This geography of inequality is produced by the division of the city into different neighbourhoods that are classified by the species and biological needs of the animals that inhabit them. In the film, some spaces depict isolated neighbourhoods with no diversity at all, while others are public spaces where animals interact, work and establish social relationships (like Downtown). Zootopia is a space of Otherness where multiple cultures coexist, which gives rise to fruitful intercultural and interracial encounters.

The first glimpse of the global city of Zootopia is presented through the windows of a high-speed train, which is the means of transport that takes Judy to the city and, thereby, transforms her into a bordercrosser who migrates from her small carrot farming town to the huge metropolis. This journey changes Judy’s way of seeing the world. She crosses the border from a rural setting to an

urban environment on a train, a vehicle that, according to Mennel, embodies “the changing perception of time and space in modernity—space as urban versus rural and time as modern versus premodern” (8). *Zootopia* portrays the train effect as it demonstrates the contrast between the rural area of Bunnyburrow and the urban metropolis. Extreme long shots are employed to depict the city as an enormous artificial modern city surrounded by water. As the train approaches the city centre the spectator is able to see the different districts of the city through Judy’s eyes. Furthermore, there is a portrayal of the colossal borders erected between the districts to preserve one ecosystem from another. The end of the journey introduces the city centre, which can be considered the point of union between the different boroughs, where all types of animals interact and share the same space.

Judy’s arrival to the city by train is one of the most powerful scenes in the film. The soundtrack reinforces this moment with a diegetic song that features the energetic lyrics “Try Everything” by Gazelle (voiced by Shakira). The song is about taking risks and exceeding oneself (exactly what Judy is about to do) with verses such as, “Birds don’t just fly. They fall down and get up” and “Sometimes we come last but we did our best.” Similarly, the chorus goes, “I won’t give up, no I won’t give in. Till I reach the end. And then I’ll start again. Though I’m on the lead. I wanna try everything. I wanna try even though I could fail,” which is a message of encouragement to try and experience new things. The song also anticipates the hardship to which Judy will be subjected in the global city. It is a song about personal growth and self-improvement in order to finally succeed.

During the journey, it is also possible to see the geographical borders that are established on the basis of the biological characteristics of the animals and their different habitats. Some examples of the different districts traversed by the train are Sahara Square, Tundratown and the Rainforest district, all of which are separated by huge walls that isolate each habitat from the climatic conditions on the other side. The border between the Sahara district and the Tundra district is formed by a wall with snow cannons on the one side and a wall with heaters on the other: a double wall that maintains each ecosystem isolated from the other. When the train passes through the Rainforest district, there is a border formed by a waterfall and a mass of trees. There is a lot of rain, which is artificially produced by a sprinkler system

installed in the branches of the numerous trees located in this ecosystem. Ironically, the animals are holding umbrellas, and there is a luxury hotel in this part of the city. Likewise, each district has all the basic amenities for the inhabitants. For example, Tundratown has a fish market, a chill-out zone, and a restaurant called Blubber Chef. Later on in the film, we see a nudist resort called “The mystic spring oasis,” where naked animals practice yoga, play volleyball, roll in mud, and swim in a natural swimming pool, in a return to their biological origins.

The entrance to the city centre, a place shared by all types of animals, highlights the enormous buildings with extravagant shapes that make up Zootopia’s downtown area. The natural sunlight reflects and draws attention to the modern buildings of the city, replicating the reality of global cities and a sense of freedom, which will be disputed in due course. After alighting from the train, Judy finds herself at the train station, which looks like a jungle with multiple natural spaces and animals. The figure of the singer Gazelle, and the empowering lyrics just heard on the scene’s soundtrack, seems to welcome her from a big screen on a building opposite the train station. The shot contrasts with the following one in which Judy is seen in her new apartment: an old, dirty and desolate dwelling with unwelcoming neighbours who tell her that they are loud and do not expect to apologise for that. The lighting pattern changes, and everything becomes darker when Judy is inside the building. Nevertheless, she remains cheerful about being in the city of her dreams. These are two continuous scenes that unmask the reality of Zootopia. Despite its idyllic external image, the reality inside is somehow rotten and not as perfect as it seems.

The next significant space that reappears several times throughout the narrative and that is conscientiously constructed as a border place, is the police station. It is situated in precinct one of Zootopia. It is a centre of coordination for the city, and everything in the narrative revolves around this site. The first time that it appears is when Judy enters the building for the first time to become the first rabbit police officer. The entrance to this place is constructed as a broad and illuminated space with a reception in the middle operated by a non-scary predator: a fat cheetah. Judy attracts surprised, disappointed and even annoyed looks from the police officers as she walks towards the police station. Once inside the classroom, not even the chairs are adapted to

Judy's size: she needs to stand on her chair to see above the table. Lions, bears, elephants, hippopotami, and rhinos are the types of animals that Judy has for colleagues. The chief of Zootopia's Police Department is a male cape buffalo called Bogo, a stern and inflexible character who intimidates Judy from the beginning. The police department is also shown in different exclusionary scenes; for instance, in the press conference in which Judy accuses the predators of being biologically predisposed to become savage. It is a space that gives way to problems and clannish attitudes, such as when Judy is subjected to discrimination in the classroom. On the contrary, when the police officers give good news, they are always in an open space in a green courtyard. It can be concluded that open spaces in *Zootopia* facilitate positive attitudes towards the other, which in some cases are close to utopian. On the other hand, enclosed spaces, like the police station where Judy is belittled, give rise to a dystopian society where there is a need for a more inclusive and respectful attitude towards the Other.

Even if she is not welcomed, Judy is not willing to give up her dream so easily. She is well-prepared and will cross the metaphorical and physical borders of the city. She gets used to moving from one district to another without any apparent effort. Nick is also a bordercrosser. He was brought up as a swindler, which forces him to travel throughout the entire city, interacting with different people and borders in order to be successful. The first time the two protagonists meet is marked by the "third border," the invisible line that exists in a place mostly inhabited by foreigners reminding them of the multiple barriers that cities arise towards them (Davis 71). A third border has arisen to restrict the use of public space for certain citizens, namely, building boundaries in the inner city between neighbourhoods based on racial segregation. Nick tries to buy a "Jumbo pop" (giant ice-cream) in a different neighbourhood from his own and is rejected by the shopkeeper, who says "There aren't any fox ice cream joints in your part of town?" and "You probably can't read, fox, but the sign says 'We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone' So, beat it." This scene portrays how discrimination and stereotypes are present in the city, and that not everything is as it seems; borders exist between the inhabitants. The ideal of citizenship, in this case, the utopian Zootopia, is challenged by spatial divisions and mechanisms of exclusion that restrict the opportunities in life for the least well-off (Allen, Massey and Pryke 124). Later, Judy and

the spectator learn that the initial intentions of the fox are not reliable. Judy, due to her initial ignorance of the fox's real intentions, helps him to get the ice-cream, as she tries to fight against these discriminatory attitudes from the beginning.

When Nick and Judy start collaborating, this third border of exclusionary and racist attitudes shown at the beginning is counterpoised with the presence of instances of what Michel Foucault calls a "heterotopic place," a space of Otherness that only lasts a moment, in which the protagonists open up to each other, and share their concerns about their marginalised position in society. This space in the film corresponds to a sky tram which the protagonists ride after walking away from Judy's colleagues. For the first time in the film, Judy leaves her colleagues mid-sentence. In the tram, Nick opens up to Judy and tells his own story: when he was little, he wanted to be part of the "Zootopia Junior Rangers," even if he was the only predator. He was rejected and expelled from the community for no other reason than for being a fox. After being humiliated, he decides to assume his preordained role as a shifty and untrustworthy animal. The light changes at this moment; it is the crack of dawn, and the protagonists now have a clearer picture of each other on the inside and outside. It is at this moment that Judy and the viewer realise that predators are not the only cruel characters as they are also victims of exclusion. Judy tells him that he is much more than that. This constructed space has enabled Judy to understand Nick's identity—he is a stereotyped animal. This place is a point of union between them. Later in the narrative, she even encourages him to join the police force. The sky tram helps the protagonists to establish a fruitful relationship. Stereotypes are tangible in Zootopia's society, and the positive relationship between Judy and Nick paves the way for a new dynamic, in which both types of animals (predators and preys) can interact successfully.

Judy and Nick make the perfect team thanks to their blend of cultural, street and detective knowledge. Together, they explore the different parts of the city to solve the case, crossing the borders established by the city between the different species. In accordance with the conventions of the detective genre, each clue leads to a different part of the city and to encounters with inhabitants from each district. The first clue takes them to the naturist centre. From there, they head to the department of mammal vehicles, the Tundratown Limo Service, and the

rainforest District before ending up in Cliffside. Essentially, their investigation provides the viewer with a comprehensive tour of the city. By means of the investigation, the film provides a spatial map of the city and generates moments of openness and knowledge towards different cultures, races and types of animals. During their investigation, the protagonists meet a variety of animals, and fruitful encounters take place. For instance, on one occasion, Judy and Nick are captured and brought to the lair of Mr Big (ironically a small mouse), who resembles Marlon Brando in the opening scene of *The Godfather* (Francis Ford Coppola 1972). After almost being killed by Mr Big, due to Nick's past insults towards him, Mr Big's beloved daughter, who is getting married that day, asks her father for a dance. In an unexpected twist, Judy had saved the life of the bride that very morning and, therefore, her father now is in her debt. Judy and Nick stay for the entire wedding and later resort to Mr Big for help at least twice during their investigation. They have created an unbreakable bond with this family despite their initial differences.

The narrative conscientiously unfolds in these blossoming encounters and creates fruitful spaces for its appearance, not only as environments where different animals (i.e., prey and predators) meet but also spaces where they search for each other's presence, such as the city centre. In the words of Elijah Anderson, this would be a "cosmopolitan canopy" or, in other words, an urban site that offers a special environment that is conducive to interethnic dialogue and communication (xiv), where all the animals come together in spite of their biological differences. Therefore, the city centre is a unique place for otherness. On it, Gazelle organises a "peace rally" when all the animals are fighting among each other due to their fear of the predators reverting to their ancient savage ways, so due to their fear caused by stereotypes. The singer and role model for the city argues that "Zootopia is a unique place. It's a crazy, beautiful, diverse city where we celebrate our differences. This is not the Zootopia I know. The Zootopia I know is better than this." As Judy, she encourages the understanding between species and the fight against fear and stereotypes.

The city of Zootopia can be seen as a product of globalisation; a global city in which convergence and divergence between animals from every type of environment take place. Sassen points out that "[g]lobalization is a process that generates

contradictory spaces, characterized by contestation, internal differentiation, and continuous border crossings. The global city is emblematic of this condition” (“Whose City in It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims” 43). *Zootopia* constructs a cosmopolitan world in which collisions and conflicts between cultures are an everyday occurrence, and everybody collaborates and disagrees, and shares the ins and outs of their cultures. *Zootopia* is a place where different races, cultures and ethnicities coexist and where stereotypes and inclusion are depicted simultaneously.

CONCLUSION

This article analyses *Zootopia* within the context of contemporary cinematic representations of the global city as bordering, diverse and cosmopolitan places. *Zootopia* is a film about the city space, in particular, about the global city. Global cities become places of cross-cultural collaboration or places of exclusion and division, as argued by Bonal (4). In the same vein, Allen, Massey and Pryke support the idea of a paradoxical duality of cities, implying that the mixture of different cultures, races, ethnicities, and classes in the same urban setting can bring about conflict and intolerance, while also creating opportunities for mutual recognition and respect (3-4). *Zootopia* reproduces common problems caused by globalisation, including distrust, fear and prejudice, while also attempting to break with stereotypes and to portray an incredibly fruitful relationship between a rabbit and a fox. During the film, Judy tries to fight against the discrimination from which she and other animals suffer by constantly refusing to let anyone else dictate who she is or what she can or cannot do. Nick joins forces with Judy in her mission to create a more inclusive global city. They open each other’s eyes and realise that not everybody is the same and that you cannot judge someone by their species or physical features. The film addresses certain stereotypes and prejudices that exist in global cities: difference, preconceived notions of the Other, fear of the Other, and racial profiling. Racial segregation is one of the main topics in the film, in which, despite the wide variety of animal species, they have found a way to live together in the same place. However, the borders that are established between the different species at the start of the film are only transgressed at the very end.

Zootopia dwells on the inclusion and exclusion processes at the heart of the global city of the title, and, ultimately, ends up solving some of the problems created by the westernised version of diversity the film presents. The different spaces displayed in *Zootopia* help to highlight the exclusionary attitudes like the “third border” that take place in global cities, in this case, between preys and predators, but also shows constructed cosmopolitan spaces, such as “borderlands,” “cosmopolitan canopies” or “heterotopic places” that provide moments of openness between very different animals/citizens. Therefore, *Zootopia* portrays on the one hand, the borders and the processes of exclusion that occur inside the city, and on the other, the processes of collaboration between different inhabitants, regardless of their race, ethnicity, culture or gender. Despite all the differences and borders established in the global city, this space is ultimately characterised by otherness and understanding.

WORKS CITED

- ALLEN, John, Doreen Massey, and Michael Pryke. *Unsettling Cities: Movement/Settlement*. Routledge, 1999.
- ANDERSON, Elijah. *The Cosmopolitan Canopy: Race and Civility in Everyday Life*. W.W. Norton, 2011.
- ANZALDÚA, Gloria. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. Aunt Lute Books, 1999.
- BEAUDINE, Gregory, Oyemolade Osibodu, and Aliya Beavers. “Disney’s Metaphorical Exploration of Racism and Stereotypes: A Review of *Zootopia*.” *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 61, no. 1, 2017, pp. 227-34.
- BONAL, Xavier. “Editorial.” *Monograph City, Social Inclusion and Education*, edited by Xavier Bonal, vol. 5, International Association of Educating Cities, 2014, pp. 4-5.
- CASTELLS, Manuel. *The Rise of the Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*. Blackwell, 2010.
- DAVIS, Mike. *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the U.S. City*. Verso, 2000.

- DEBRUGE, Peter. "Film Review: 'Zootopia'". *Variety*, 12 Feb. 2016, variety.com/2016/film/reviews/zootopia-film-review-1201703504/, accessed 13 January 2017.
- DELEYTO, Celestino. *From Tinseltown to Bordertown: Los Angeles on Film*. Wayne State University Press, 2017.
- DELEYTO, Celestino and Gemma López. "Catalan Beauty and the Transnational Beast: Barcelona on the Screen." *Transnational Cinemas*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2012, pp. 157-175.
- DYER, Richard. *The Matter of Images: Essays on Representations*. Routledge, 1993.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. *The Order of Things*. Vintage Books, 1971.
- GATES, Philippa. *Detecting Women: Gender and the Hollywood Detective Film*. Suny Press, 2011.
- HASSLER-FOREST, Dan. "Life isn't some Cartoon Musical": Neoliberal Identity Politics in *Zootopia* and *Orange is the New Black*." *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 51, no. 2, 2018, pp. 356-78.
- KEEBLE, Arin. *The 9/11 Novel: Trauma, Politics and Identity*. Mc Farland & Company, Inc, 2014.
- MASSEY, Doreen. *World City*. Polity, 2007.
- MENNEL, Barbara. *Cities and Cinema*. Routledge, 2008.
- MULJADI, Hianly. "Discrimination in Zootopia: A Critical Reading." *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2019, pp. 236-46.
- OSMOND, Andrew. "Zootropolis." *Sight and Sound*, vol. 26, no. 5, 2016, p. 94.
- SANDLIN, Jennifer, and Nathan Snaza. "'It's Called a Hustle, Sweetheart': Black Lives Matter, the Police State, and the Politics of Colonizing Anger in *Zootopia*." *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 51, no. 5, 2018, pp. 1190-213.
- SASSEN, Saskia. "Whose City is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims." *Public Culture*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1996, pp. 205-224.

- SASSEN, Saskia. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton University Press, 2001.
- SASSEN, Saskia. "Global Cities and Survival Circuits." *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*, edited by Barbara Ehrenreich and Arlie Hochschild, Holt Paperbacks, 2002, pp. 254-274.
- SASSEN, Saskia. "The Global City: Introducing a Concept." *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, vol. 11, no.2, 2005, pp. 27-43.
- SHIEL, Mark. "Cinema and the City in History and Theory." *Cinema and the City: Film and Urban Societies in a Global Context*, edited by Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice, Blackwell, 2001, pp. 1-18.
- SKRBIŠ, Zlatko, and Ian Woodward. *Cosmopolitanism: Uses of the Idea*. Sage, 2013.
- SMITH, Neil. "New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy." *Antipode*, vol. 34, no. 3, 2002, pp. 427-50.
- TAFOYA, Scout. 2017. "Zootopia." *Magill's Cinema Annual 2017: A Survey of the Films of 2016*, edited by Brian Tallerico, 36th ed., Gale, 2017, 429-431.
- WASKO, Janet. *Understanding Disney: The Manufacture of Fantasy*. Polity Press, 2020.