Licensed to Stereotype: Popular Geopolitics, James Bond and the Spectre of Balkanism

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This article explores the geopolitical and post-imperial significance of Ian Fleming’s famous spy, Commander James Bond RN/007. By drawing on two films, From Russia with Love (1963) and The World is Not Enough (1999), it is argued that these productions not only contest Britain’s post-1945 decline in international influence but also actively subvert the binary politics of the Cold War and its aftermath. The actual location of the filming (in Turkey and Central Asia) is also significant in this representational process, however. Turkey was a vital element in NATO’s containment of the Soviet Union and the unexploited oil fields of Central Asia have become a major geo-strategic concern in the post-Cold-War era. Arguably, the films (and Fleming’s novel From Russia with Love 1957) also draw, in order to be politically effective, upon long-standing colonial and European stereotypes regarding the reputation of the Balkans for violence, instability and claustrophobia. In so doing, countries such as Turkey and Azerbaijan are on the one hand simply represented as security- and or resource-based commodities which the West (in the form of the UK in the main rather than the USA) have to contain or selectively exploit but also as places that have witnessed prior infiltration and intrigue. These characterisations of place deserve serious attention because as recent research in film studies and popular geopolitics has demonstrated, fictional referents such as James Bond and Rambo play their part in the cultural re-production of world politics.

Introduction

The exotic Istanbul setting, stunningly photographed in colour, is perfectly geared to mystery, mayhem and machinations of the plot.¹

The book [From Russia with Love] was full of incidental detail about the international game of intelligence ... Ian mixed insider gossip about intelligence with precise details about Bond’s domestic environment.²

The plot of The World is Not Enough revolves around the cutting edge issue of Caspian oil and that’s why Apted [the director of the film] was drawn to the premise.³

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Released to great public and professional acclaim in Britain on 10 October 1963 and the USA on 8 April 1964, the $2 million production *From Russia with Love* (1963) was subsequently acknowledged as one of the finest James Bond films. Set in Turkey and South East Europe, the story centred on Bond’s struggle to obtain a secret cipher decoder (called a Lektor) from the Soviet Embassy in Istanbul. Over 200,000 people flocked to see the film in the first week of its release in Britain. A widespread public interest in espionage stories and spy scandals, despite some evidence of improving political and diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, undoubtedly assisted in producing the impressive reading and viewing figures. When President John Kennedy admitted that *From Russia with Love* (1957) was one of his all-time favourite novels, worldwide sales escalated still further, and by the end of the last century, over 40 million copies of the James Bond series had been sold and total box office earnings exceeded $2.5 billion. Some pundits have claimed that between 25 and 50 per cent of the world’s population have seen at least one Bond film either at the cinema, on television or via home video.

Created by the former British intelligence officer and writer Ian Fleming, the persona of Commander James Bond RN/007 has been adopted by a succession of high-profile actors, including Sean Connery, Roger Moore and Pierce Brosnan. This well-travelled and well-preserved secret agent has arguably emerged as Britain’s greatest contribution to modern genre cinema. While professional film reviewers often glossed over the Bond film locations and their ‘exotic’ qualities, these varied places and regions remain an important component of the Bond films and their potential impact on British and international audiences. Bond’s frequent and worldwide travelling helped to refresh and update the formulaic nature of the missions. Unusually, in the case of the James Bond/Eon Productions series (i.e. from 1962 onwards), the city of Istanbul features substantially in two films, *From Russia with Love* (1963) and *The World is Not Enough* (1999). In the case of the latter, Bond is embroiled in a complex plot involving oil exploitation and transportation in the Black Sea combined with the poorly managed nuclear weapons stocks of the former Soviet Union. Despite the 36 years that separate the films, this act of repetition is significant because Istanbul is actively re-imagined and re-presented as a palimpsest of geopolitical intrigue and mystery.

Arguably, one of the reasons for Bond’s worldwide popularity and commercial success is precisely because the films have (regardless of whether they have been based ‘closely’ on one of Fleming’s 14 novels or not) either reflected on contemporary geopolitical anxieties such as the so-called Second Cold War (for example *Octopussy* (1984) which featured Berlin and the threat of a nuclear explosion on an US airbase in West
Germany) or been filmed in places where audiences (especially Anglo-American) could easily relate to the location (for example carnival time in Rio de Janeiro in the case of Moonraker, 1979). As David Cannadine’s recent essay on James Bond recognised, ‘the end of the Cold War, the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the rise of international terrorism brought into being a wholly new geopolitical world’, which in turn shaped subsequent plots and film locations in the post-Cold War era. The ‘great power certainties and heroic simplicities’ (Cannadine’s phrase) of James Bond moved with the geopolitical times.

Although this investigation has been enriched by the existing cultural-historical- and film-based literature on James Bond, it is also informed by an emerging corpus of work on popular geopolitics. The initial section of this essay focuses on situating James Bond and the spy film genre within the geopolitical and cultural-historical context of the post-war period: 007 appeared at a time of great transition as Britain lost an empire and metamorphosed into America’s junior partner in the struggle against communist forces. Thereafter, the work of Ian Fleming and his creation ‘James Bond’ is scrutinised further not least because it is contended that the success of this fictional character owed a great deal to how Bond subverted the dominant political structures of the Cold War. The subsequent sections of the essay focus on two films, From Russia with Love (1963) and The World is Not Enough (1999), and argue that this act of geopolitical subversion simultaneously utilised particular representations of Istanbul and other parts of South East Europe and Central Asia in order to reflect as much on its assumed ‘Balkan’ character as on the prevailing geopolitics of the period. Long-standing assumptions about these places on the apparent edge of the European continent were conveniently and imaginatively inserted into the James Bond plots. In the aftermath of the Cold War, these place-based characterisations were supplemented by Euro-American doctrines of rogue states, which helped define a geography of evil and terror in the film The World is Not Enough (1999). Finally, the contribution of popular geopolitics to the analysis of cinema is considered because films such as The World is Not Enough (1999) can be used to reflect not only on contemporary anxieties among western strategic planners about the role of regions like Central Asia in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks on the United States but also on the role of post-imperial Britain.

Screening the Cold War: Film, Espionage and Britain’s Place in the World

In a recently edited collection of British Culture and the End of Empire, Stuart Ward claims that there have been few studies focussed on how British
culture was influenced by the post-war demise of British imperial power.\textsuperscript{13} It would, as he and others such as John Mackenzie and Jeffrey Richards have noted, be extremely surprising if there had been no cultural impact on the metropolis following the traumatic loss of India in 1947, the 1956 Suez Crisis and, more generally, post-colonial ‘winds of change’ circulating through and beyond Africa, South Asia and the Middle East.\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, new studies have claimed that the loss of the British Empire was far more unsettling to the everyday life of British citizens than has sometimes been assumed usually on the basis of an examination of British party politics and governance.\textsuperscript{15} From the perspective of Whitehall and Westminster, at least until the early 1960s, Britain retained a global role via the Commonwealth and a ‘special relationship’ with the United States despite post-war rationing, financial hardship and the gradual loss of empire. Thus, there is no reason to presume that this assumption concerning Britain’s continued global significance did not find favour with the wider populace and contemporary popular culture.

This concern for the cultural significance of imperial loss might also have value for other former European empires and Marcus Power’s investigation into post-imperial Portugal is a case in point.\textsuperscript{16} He demonstrates clearly how Portuguese acts of commemoration (following the loss of their imperial possessions in Africa) were used to project particular national identities and post-colonial anxieties. In a similar vein, the Bond series represent post-war Britain during an era of economic, geopolitical and cultural transformation. If formal institutions such as the media and state education are important sources of information for a national citizenry, which in turn facilitate public interaction with the political process including foreign policy making, then this interaction is particularly important in a context of change. Post-war Britain was not only struggling to get to grips with financial hardship and rationing but also to imperial loss and so-called ‘New Commonwealth’ immigration.\textsuperscript{17}

Film and other forms of public entertainment and information programmes play their part in bolstering morale and help to explain or account for dramatic events. As part of this general process, government ministers or political figures are not outside the hegemonic national culture and thus the prevailing circulation of ideas and values shapes their pronouncements. In order to make their contentions appear reasonable or even popular, political figures frequently draw upon popular and sometimes current cultural referents, as in US President (and former Hollywood actor) Ronald Reagan’s infamous reference to the film Rambo (1985) when discussing the response to further hostage crises in the Middle East.\textsuperscript{18} Political leaders often rely on a repertoire of images, metaphors and ‘common sense’ statements to convey complex developments in world politics.\textsuperscript{19}
During the Cold War, national governments not only created specialist institutions (such as the CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom) but also provided monies for propaganda cinema (such as Animal Farm, 1954).\textsuperscript{20} In the case of Britain, the Foreign Office established an Information Research Department (IRD) in February 1948 as ‘a dedicated unit to prepare briefing material on communist policy, tactics and propaganda’ while at the same countering Soviet allegations of persistent British imperialism in the context of the United Nations’ formal condemnation of all forms of colonialism and imperialism.\textsuperscript{21} Funded by so-called ‘secret vote’ in the same manner as the Secret Intelligence Services (SIS), the IRD liaised with other government departments like the Central Office of Information (formerly the Ministry of Information) to produce a raft of propaganda films and documentaries critical of the Soviet Union. Ironically, much of post-war British cinema in the late 1940s remained either fixated with the Nazi menace (e.g. Castle Sinister, 1947) or produced films which provided some form of escapism from the prevailing politics of austerity and ration cards (e.g. Scott of the Antarctic, 1948).\textsuperscript{22}

The Attlee government (1945–1951) envisaged that the IRD would produce two categories of films: first, films which responded to particular events and issues and in which the government deemed it important to convey a particular message (such as documentaries on the Berlin Airlift in the late 1940s) and second, films which portrayed life in the West in positive terms (and that included defence co-ordination and Anglo-American relations) rather than simply condemning the excesses of Soviet communism.\textsuperscript{23} Unfortunately, due to the restricted release of IRD files from the Public Record Office in London, it is difficult to gauge the amount of contact Foreign Office officials had with British filmmakers, especially from the late 1940s onwards. We do know that the IRD developed a series of personal contacts within the film industry precisely because it was recognised that in an era before mass ownership of television, cinema and newsreel organisations such as Rank and Pathe were the dominant broadcasters in over 1,000 British cinemas a week.\textsuperscript{24} The records of the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) also provide evidence of how the ‘official censors’ intervened in order to uphold standards of public decency and political expediency.

Confidence in Britain’s special place in the world was rocked by what the cultural historian John Mackenzie has called a series of post-colonial and political ‘implosions’.\textsuperscript{25} Shortly after the first implosion resulting in the loss of India, Pakistan and Palestine in 1947 and 1948, the Churchill government (1951–1955) faced the high-profile spy scandals involving Cambridge-educated (as was the fictional James Bond) agents Kim Philby, Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess and their defection to the Soviet Union.
Kim Philby was, for example, the Washington DC-based Secret Intelligence Services (SIS) liaison officer with the CIA between 1949 and 1951. Britain’s adjustment to the new world order was thus conditioned not only by post-colonial loss and anti-colonial violence but also shaped by a new confrontation with the Soviet Union and ideas associated with communism. On the other side of the Atlantic, American governments and political figures such as Senator Joe McCarthy were preoccupied with the threat posed by communism to domestic life and phrases such as ‘Reds under the bed’ captured a real sense of the fear and paranoia beyond Capitol Hill. Hollywood responded by producing films that drew inspiration from the prevailing political climate and directors such as Alfred Hitchcock capitalised on audience enjoyment of new political thrillers. According to Christopher Booker, the resurgence of films involving spies in the 1950s and 1960s can be explained by the fact that ‘they provided, in fact, the perfect vehicle for “dream-nightmare” stories in which no one’s identity was certain, in which self-assertive lone heroes [like James Bond] could wander at will, in any disguise, through any social milieu, and in which acts of violence and promiscuity, [was] vaguely condoned by the fact that the heroes were always “fighting for ‘our side’ against the enemy”’.

Most film production companies adopted a fairly rigid view of the Cold War and produced films which by and large accepted that the Soviet Union and communism were a threat to the ‘American or British way of life’. Movies such as The Iron Curtain (1948) and My Son John (1952) were decidedly anti-Soviet productions shaped in part by the prevailing political pressure against Hollywood. Film location was either based within the United States or in a divided Europe. The animated production of George Orwell’s Animal Farm (1954) merely consolidated further that basic political trend. Following on from the investigations of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, a series of public hearings led to at least 10 screenwriters, producers and directors being dismissed because they refused to testify to the committee and resulted in an unofficial ‘blacklisting’ of scores of actors, writers and producers for much of the 1950s.

In a decade characterised by real-life spy dramas and active Soviet repression in Hungary, very few Anglo-American films contested the rigid geopolitics of the Cold War and the ubiquitous culture of spying and surveillance. One early exception to the general rule was Five Fingers (1952), which depicted the spying activities of ‘Cicero’ (the British Ambassador’s valet cum German spy) in neutral wartime Turkey. For much of the Second World War, Turkey was an important centre for espionage and ‘Cicero’ was suspected of regularly copying documents in the British Ambassador’s possession. As a consequence of Turkey’s geographical location and ‘stubborn’ neutrality, it was a hive of spy-based activity at a
time when Prime Minister Winston Churchill unsuccessfully tried to persuade President Inonu of Turkey to support the Allied forces. Despite a personal meeting in January 1943, Turkey did not declare war on Germany until February 1945 because of its fears of provoking a violent German reaction.30 According to one writer, *Five Fingers* (1952) was the first Hollywood film to poke fun at the business of spying and to introduce an element of humour during the Cold War era.31 It did so, however, by focusing on the activities of a wartime German spy (an easier target to poke fun at) rather than by parodying the Anglo-American espionage culture of the Cold War.

According to Jeffrey Richards, audiences were also perceived by Hollywood to be younger, instinctively anti-establishment and less sympathetic to films that, for instance, glorified the achievements of the British Empire and even Britain’s role in the Second World War.32 The early 1960s was a boom time for espionage with 12 major anglophone films appearing on the subject in the period between 1959 and 1963.33 John Le Carre’s famous creation, Alec Leamas, made his first screen appearance in *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1963).34 Leamas, the cynical and veteran spymaster, was constantly preoccupied with the morality of a Cold War spying culture, which placed emphasis on obtaining ‘results’ while ignoring the welfare of the agents. Others such as Graham Greene’s *Our Man in Havana* (1960) were decidedly ambivalent of the espionage culture, as was the Harry Palmer series (played by Michael Caine), which included *The Ipcress File* (1965). The first Bond film, *Dr No* (1962), emerged at a time when film producers were beginning to experiment with the Cold War spy genre.35 Thus, pro-imperial films such as *West of Zanzibar* (1954), *Pacific Destiny* (1956) and *North West Frontier* (1959) were seen to belong to a bygone era.36

The one exception to this general trend against celebrating the British Empire and imperial heroes was, according to James Chapman, the Bond phenomenon, because it represents a nationalist fantasy, in which Britain’s decline, as a world power did not really take place. One of the ideological functions of the Bond narrative is to construct an imaginary world in which Pax Britannia still operates. Thus Britain is presented as being in the frontline of the conspiracies directed against western civilisation.37

To echo the words of Raymond Durgnat, Bond was ‘the last man in the British Empire’s superman XI’ and hence a sop to the painful post-war realities of imperial dissolution, the 1956 Suez crisis and the realisation that Britain was no longer a world power.38 In a similar vein, Jeremy Black contends that the Bond films were a light-hearted attempt to reflect on ‘current fears, but did so
in offering a form of escapism from the politics of the age. He suggests that 'Bond is a figure designed to resist the threat to empire'.

Understanding James Bond as a late imperial fantasy has considerable merit especially when one recalls Bond’s extraordinary popularity in the UK. By 1975, Bond had become a Christmas Day (3:15 p.m.) domestic ritual for British television viewers and followed, appropriately enough, the Queen’s Christmas Day speech. James Bond, a member of Her Majesty’s Secret Service, was saving the world in a manner which demonstrated a capacity for extreme suffering and unfailing virility. He is, as David Cannadine has recently reflected, a figure of superhuman talents and attainments who is happiest when surrounded by equally strong and virile men such as Kerim Bey, Draco and Tiger Tanaka.

Released in the 1960s, Bond’s timely appearance helped to counter the American politician Dean Acheson’s hurtful accusation (in December 1962, two months after the release of *Dr No*) that, Britain had lost an empire but not yet found a role in the world. Many of the Bond films were not set in the former British Empire, but were located in places that British audiences could nonetheless imagine as centres of intrigue and where they could take pleasure in witnessing their secret agent triumph against the odds (see Table 1). For those used to hearing that Britain was becoming ‘the sick man of Europe’ (a title previously reserved for the Ottoman Empire), it was

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Dr No</em> (1962)</th>
<th>Jamaica</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>From Russia with Love</em> (1963)</td>
<td>Turkey, Italy, Yugoslavia</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Goldfinger</em> (1964)</td>
<td>Switzerland, USA</td>
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<td><em>Thunderball</em> (1965)</td>
<td>Bahamas</td>
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<td><em>You Only Live Twice</em> (1967)</td>
<td>Japan, Hong Kong</td>
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<td><em>On Her Majesty’s Secret Service</em> (1969)</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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<td><em>Diamonds are Forever</em> (1971)</td>
<td>USA, Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Live and Let Die</em> (1973)</td>
<td>USA, San Monique</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Man With the Golden Gun</em> (1974)</td>
<td>Thailand, Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Spy Who Loved Me</em> (1977)</td>
<td>Austria, Egypt, Sardinia</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Moonraker</em> (1979)</td>
<td>Italy, USA, Brazil</td>
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<td><em>For Your Eyes Only</em> (1981)</td>
<td>Greece/Corfu, Italy</td>
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<td><em>Octopussy</em> (1983)</td>
<td>India, Germany</td>
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<td><em>A View To A Kill</em> (1985)</td>
<td>USA, France</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Never Say Never Again</em> (1986)*</td>
<td>Monte Carlo, North Africa, Bahamas</td>
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<td><em>Living Daylights</em> (1987)</td>
<td>Austria, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan, Morocco and Gibraltar</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Licence to Kill</em> (1989)</td>
<td>USA, Central America (Isthmus City)</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Goldeneve</em> (1995)</td>
<td>Russia, Cuba, Monte Carlo</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Tomorrow Never Dies</em> (1997)</td>
<td>Vietnam, China, Germany</td>
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*Not produced by Eon Productions/United Artists.*
liberating to see the Americans being depicted as lead-footed and out of their depth in a world made mad by the extremes of the Cold War. According to David Cannadine (writing in 1979), the persistent antics of Bond merely provided a fitting epitaph for a former imperial nation:

The period during which the Bond books appeared, from 1953 to 1966, was one in which Britain was often described as being ‘in decline’. And moral ‘decline’ at home was mirrored in international ‘decline’ abroad, as the tropical empire was wound up. The white Commonwealth was severely shaken by the departure of South Africa, and Britain’s standing in the eyes of the world was irretrievably damaged as a result of the Suez fiasco. Ironically, and perhaps appropriately, Cannadine’s ‘obituary’ appeared at the exact moment James Bond was literally saving the world (without the help of the American special forces until the end of the film) from the evil Hugo Drax in the film Moonraker (1979).

**Ian Fleming's James Bond: Great Power Certainties, Heroic Simplicities and the Stereotyping of Place**

Bond gave at least fictional form to Ian’s frustrated urge to have been out in the field during the war, a fulltime secret agent, rather than a competent staff officer sitting, office politicking and dreaming in Room 39 of the Admiralty. James Bond, first appeared in the novel Casino Royale (1954) and survived a further thirteen adventures before Fleming’s death in 1964. During the Second World War, the author not only served as a Commander in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve but also, as a consequence of his postings, including the Enigma operation (and hence the link to the 1957 novel, From Russia with Love), acquired a detailed knowledge of German and later Soviet intelligence operations. An experienced journalist, he worked for the Reuters News agency during the inter-war years and subsequently as a foreign news manager for The Sunday Times after his wartime stint as assistant to the Director of Naval Intelligence in the Admiralty, John Godfrey. Interestingly, Norman Denning, the post-war successor to Godfrey, recognised that Fleming had a talent for imaginative espionage planning:

a lot of Ian’s ideas were just plain crazy … But a lot of his far-fetched ideas had just that glimmer of possibility in them that made you think twice before you threw them into the wastepaper basket.
By the early 1950s, a Jamaica-based Fleming began writing a series of novels which pitched James Bond against a range of adversaries in a series of British and international settings. Initial sales figures were disappointing but, by the time *From Russia with Love* (1957) was published, Fleming’s spy character was beginning to attract a wider readership. Unlike the subsequent translation into film, the novels were robustly anti-Soviet in nature and often detailed in their description of intelligence planning. Bond was pitted against the Soviet intelligence organisation SMERSH (despite its formal demise in 1946); the ensuing dialogue and descriptions of intelligence operations derived from Fleming’s experiences during the Second World War.

David Cannadine, in his recent essay on James Bond, traces how Fleming’s creation appeared at a particular point in Britain’s cultural and political trajectory. In the period of the novels’ publication (1953–1966), Britain had already experienced imperial losses and outbreaks of anti-colonial violence in Cyprus, Kenya, Malaya and Aden. Desperate to retain some semblance of global influence, post-war governments enthusiastically embraced the United States, nuclear weapons and the emerging Commonwealth. These profound geo-political changes inevitably infiltrated domestic politics and popular culture. While some were inclined to lament the loss of imperial influence, others openly questioned and even satirised Britain’s role in the world. If programmes such as *That Was the Week That Was* poked fun at the British establishment and their post-imperial fantasies, Ian Fleming’s James Bond was designed to be an ardent patriot, a romantic dare-devil and a symbol of national reassurance and great power nostalgia. He was the senior partner in the Anglo-American special relationship and not merely, as Prime Minister Harold Macmillan had once claimed for himself, ‘the honest broker’.

In 1961, Fleming sold the options on all the Bond book titles (except *Casino Royale*, which was later made into a spoof film starring Peter Sellers) to the Canadian producer, Harry Saltzman. Despite his subsequent success with Bond and other projects such as *The Ipcress File* (1965), Saltzman was initially unable to secure funding for the Bond films. After eventually securing financial backing from United Artists Saltzman, in alliance with fellow North American producer Cubby Broccoli, formed a partnership called Eon Productions and began to produce the 007 films from *Dr No* (1962) to *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977). By the time James Bond made his first appearance on the screen in *Dr No* (1962), Fleming’s Soviet intelligence organisation SMERSH was replaced by the non-aligned SPECTRE – the Special Executive for Counter-Intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion. Broccoli and Saltzman were concerned that the geopolitics of the Cold War should not be too explicit within the film and
thus they preferred 007 to be set against a sinister organisation like SPECTRE rather than the Soviets.53 The films were never intended to be faithful reproductions of the novels and the extreme antics of SPECTRE worked well in films such as Thunderball (1965) precisely because they satirised the zero-sum politics of the Cold War.

Set in London, Jamaica and more specifically in the small island of Crab Key, Bond’s first cinematic mission was dedicated to preventing Dr No and SPECTRE from disrupting satellite and space-based operations in Florida. While a great deal of the action occurred in Britain’s Caribbean empire, the geopolitics of the region was being transformed by US-Soviet agitation over Cuba and global currents of decolonisation (Jamaica became independent in August 1962 and British Guiana was agitating for independence, especially in the light of the activities of Cheddi Jagan and the Indian People’s Progressive Party). The controversy over the Soviet placement of nuclear weapons in Cuba also had implications for America’s Jupiter missiles stationed in Turkey. Although officially denied, the Cuban crisis was later diffused by an unofficial agreement on the part of the Americans to remove those Turkish-based missiles in 1963 in return for no Soviet missiles in Cuba.54 As Tony Shaw rightly contends, ‘few people in the audience can have missed the parallels between this and the Cuban Missile Crisis, which had reached its critical stage when the film was released in Britain in late October 1962’.55 Due to the commercial success of Dr No, which grossed an amazing figure of $78.9 million worldwide, planning began in earnest for the next two projects, From Russia with Love (1963) and Goldfinger (1964).

Fleming’s Bond was metamorphosed into a far less introspective persona during the earliest Eon Productions/United Artists films. Other aspects, too, such as intelligence operations,56 locations, Anglo-American relations, sexuality57 and humour58 succumbed to further artistic and political manipulation.

In the films, far less consideration is given to Bond’s reflexive moments on particular people and places. For example, in the novel From Russia with Love (1957), Bond reflects a great deal not only on the nature of Turkey and the Turkish people but also on the corresponding condition of Britain during the Cold War. Bond’s attitude towards Turkey and the Balkans was clearly shaped by a plethora of stereotypes relating to the region’s apparent reputation for backwardness, atavism and tribal violence. As he noted about the city of Istanbul,

from the first, Istanbul had given him the impression of a town where, with the night, horror creeps out of the stones. It seemed to him a town the centuries had so drenched in blood and violence that, when daylight came out, the ghosts of the dead were its only population.59
Instead, the film version of *From Russia with Love* (1963) and others rely more heavily on gadgetry combined with spectacular locations and stunt action. Location was also significant and the United States was the most popular setting for Bond films (*Goldfinger, Diamonds are Forever, Live and Let Die, Moonraker, A View to a Kill, Licence to Kill*). The Bond films were never intended to be a faithful reproduction of the complex geographies of the Cold War and many locations have either been 'faked' (for reasons of cost or inaccessibility) and or filmed in Pinewood Studios in London. Aside from the United States (where there is clear evidence of a domestic legal and political structure in films such as the 1973 production, *Live and Let Die*), overseas locations are frequently depicted as devoid of local government officials. Bond, as befitting an international super-spy, simply glides across national borders with the minimum of fuss.

Finally, the films deliberately accorded a relatively minor role to the United States and its intelligence agency the CIA. Britain and Bond are depicted as the senior partner in the Anglo-American strategic and intelligence community. This argument runs contrary to some writers such as Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, who claimed that 'Britain's great contribution to modern genre cinema, the Bond cycle, was from the outset American backed and has become progressively less "British" as time goes on'. In the context of the Anglo-American relationship (rather than, say, production or marketing values), Bond's relationship with CIA colleague Felix Leiter was decidedly one-sided and simply ignored the realities of the 1950s and 1960s when American intelligence (including satellite and U2-spy-plane-based intelligence) dwarfed British endeavours. It was Bond, for example, who engaged gold thief Auric Goldfinger at his Kentucky-based ranch (and discovered his plot to contaminate American gold supplies at Fort Knox) while his American counterparts who had to wait and watch at the perimeter of Goldfinger's property. In the film *You Only Live Twice* (1967), British officials were seen occupying centre stage (top table in Oxfbridge speak) at an emergency meeting between Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union following the disappearance of an American spacecraft. British intelligence later played the key role in successfully uncovering the absurd SPECTRE plot and as such Bond completely subverts the realities of the Anglo-American special relationship and the prevailing Cold War order.

The net result of these transformations to Bond's character and repertoire was to place a greater emphasis inevitably on what could be depicted visually. From the earliest films, Commander Bond/007 was presented as an image of toughness, snobbery, resourcefulness, cleverness and ability to find the time and resources to be a successful gambler and womaniser. Although he was a servant of the British state (the Secret Service and its cover organisation, Universal Exports), he was also a
character who broke or bent rules and social conventions in post-austerity Britain. Bond’s long-term popularity, however, was based, as film critics have often contended, on a diverse series of ‘exotic’ locations, high tech equipment, distinct stunts and, of course, a series of glamorous ‘Bond girls’ which the never-aging Bond is able to charm and seduce. As Michael Wilson, the stepson of Cubby Broccoli contends, ‘Bond is not provincial – he belongs to all people of all cultures and walks of life’. Commercially, it did not make sense to locate the 007 missions within an ideological and geopolitical context, which could only be understood by an audience unique to Britain and elements of the former British Empire.

Arguably, these changes in the cinematic version of Bond came together most clearly in From Russia with Love, even if it was the most ‘European’ of all films produced by Eon Productions. The choice of Istanbul for the setting appeared to be particularly opportune, as one Bond scholar has recorded:

the use of Istanbul as a locale for much of the action both presented the reality of a location of East–West intelligence operations and confrontation and offered the opportunity of describing a place that could be gritty and exotic.65

Turkey, at the time of the film’s release, was an essential member of the NATO alliance and since 1955 a co-signatory to the Baghdad Pact and the Balkan Mutual Defence Pact which sought to restrain Soviet influence in Central Asia and the Middle East.

The earliest Cold War crises occurred in Turkey and Greece when Britain (with special geopolitical interests in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean) confided in February 1947 to the Americans that they needed military and financial help in order to defend these two countries from subversive and communist influences.66 The American response was to send the US warship Missouri to Istanbul as a morale-boosting exercise. Located on the geopolitical boundary with the Soviet Union and its client states in Eastern Europe, Turkey was considered an essential element in American containment strategy and western intelligence planners were anxious inter alia to survey not only Soviet naval unit movements through the Bosphorus but also to monitor the telemetry of Soviet missile tests.67 Surveillance brought with it considerable dangers, as a number of Turkish-based American spy planes were shot down over Soviet Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the incident in September 1958 when an EC-130 was destroyed with the loss of six men. Later, the Soviets released a transcript of the plane’s broadcast, which demonstrated that it was conducting a spy mission.68

In the first decade-and-a-half of the Cold War, Turkey was subject not only to intense political pressure by the Soviet Union with regard to
negotiating improved access to the Black Sea (covered under the existing 1936 Montreux Convention) but also to Bulgarian agitation over the status of the Turkish–Bulgarian frontier. Turkish Prime Minister Saracoglu warned in 1945 that ‘the Soviets have gone mad, they dream of world domination. They are crossing you and Britain at many points: Bornholm, Trieste, Albania, Greece, Turkey and Iran’. 89 Successive Turkish governments were therefore determined to retain an American/NATO military presence despite the reduction of explicit political pressure in the post-Stalin era. As part of this desire to retain a security umbrella, Turkish political leaders were generally supportive of Britain retaining its colonial presence in Cyprus, Palestine and the Suez Canal zone and thus viewed the withdrawal from the region as nothing short of disastrous with regard to containing the Soviet Union. By the time the film From Russia with Love (1963) was released, the United States had 100 planes, 15 Jupiter missiles and 20,000 personnel stationed on Turkish soil and Britain’s imperial presence was still welcomed in some quarters. 90

Fleming had visited the city of Istanbul in 1955 in the company of Sir Ronald Howe, the assistant commissioner for Scotland Yard, and apparently been captivated by its location and architectural treasures. 91 His visit was also an eventful one because he witnessed at first hand anti-government protests. The Simplon–Orient Express (Fleming had travelled on the train in 1955 as had fellow author with wartime experience of the SIS, Graham Greene) also featured strongly in Fleming’s recollections and provided some of the best moments of the film (rail dramas had already proved commercially successful as in the case of North by Northwest (1959), for example) when Bond is locked in mortal combat with SMERSH’s agent, Grant/Captain Nash, while attempting to escape Istanbul with the secret Lector. 92

As importantly, however, Fleming’s novel and the cinematic translation drew upon older European place-based stereotypes of Turkey and the Balkans to convey a sense of danger and exoticism. As a range of authors such as Bakic-Hayden, Goldsworthy and Todorova have contended, the Balkans have long attracted a series of place-based depictions, which share an ‘underlying logic and rhetoric with Orientalism … a variation on the orientalist theme’. 93 Seemingly imprisoned by national and ethnic stereotypes, the Balkans according to a plethora of films, novels and political statement (such as Anthony Hope’s Prisoner of Zenda and Bram Stoker’s Dracula) remain vulnerable to violent behaviour, tribal loyalties and claustrophobia. As Vesna Goldsworthy has shown in some considerable detail, earlier European spy writers such as John Buchan, in his famous novel Greenmantle, 94 were captivated by the region and subsequently constructed the Balkans as an ‘area of great intrigue’ in their adventures. 95
Within Fleming’s novel *From Russia with Love*, Bond frequently finds reason to question and reflect upon the ‘Balkan’ qualities of Istanbul and Turkey and his encounters were often highly sensual:

So these dark, ugly, neat little officials were the modern Turks ... They were bright, angry, cruel eyes that had only lately come down from the mountains. Bond thought he knew the history of those eyes. They were eyes that had been trained for centuries to watch over sheep and decipher small movements on far horizons ... They were hard, untrusting, jealous eyes. Bond did not take to them. [Later on arrival at his hotel] ... For ten minutes Bond stood and gazed out across the sparkling water barrier between Europe and Asia, then he turned back into the room now bright, and telephoned for his breakfast.76

His suspicions were partially laid to rest when he meets the Head of Station T, Darko Kerim Bey77, who was described as having a

wonderfully warm dry handclasp. It was a strong Western handful of operative fingers – not the banana skin handshake of the East that makes you want to wipe your fingers on your coattails.78

Kerim’s reputation for womanising and rugged individualism clearly appealed to Bond and they formed a warm and successful partnership, which was to be translated in the film version. When their conversational exchange turned to the character of Turkey, Russia and its inhabitants, Kerim Bey and Bond argued that these characteristics were rooted in an unchanging geography and history:

They [Kerim Bey on his fellow Turks] loved to be cursed and kicked. It is all they understand. It is in the blood. All this pretence of democracy is killing them. They want sultans and wars and rape and fun. Poor brutes, in their stripped suits and bowler hats. They are miserable.79

Basically they’re [Bond on the Russians] masochists. They love the knout. That’s why they were so happy under Stalin. He gave it to them ... As for England the trouble today is that carrots for all are the fashion. At home and abroad. We don’t show teeth any more – only gums.80

As Simon Dalby has illustrated, western geopolitical reasoning during the Cold War period frequently depicted the Soviet Union’s character as being determined by environmental and historical factors, which contributed to a timeless and inherently threatening quality.81 In other words, Soviet
behaviour in the global arena was judged to be immutable. Likewise, the unpredictable character of the Balkans was shaped by a series of historical and geographical factors that could not be easily controlled by third parties. Turkey, for example, routinely featured in British Cold War military planning as a potential ‘flash point’ (a possible clash between Turkey and Bulgaria was a favoured scenario) in a NATO/Warsaw Pact confrontation. As Bond noted when leaving Istanbul via the appropriately named Orient Express, ‘At least they would be out of the damned Balkans and down in Italy. Then Switzerland, France – among friendly people, away from the furtive lands’. There is a real sense of crossing a geographical and ideological boundary from unsafe Balkan space to friendly European soil. Ironically, of course, he nearly dies in Paris when the evil Rosa Klebb, Head of SMERSH operations, stabs Bond with her poisoned shoe.

You are in the Balkans Now: James Bond and From Russia With Love (1963)

As a short preamble to this fragrant tale, much of which prances around in a Turkish sewer, you should know that it includes: Garrotting with piano wire; grilling by burning oil; stabbings; shootings; assorted head clunking plus bombs, bosoms and a slight case of sudden death on the sleeping car to Trieste.

The script attached to the film From Russia with Love (1963) explicitly draws on Balkan stereotypes and the Cold War. The film opens with a Venice-based chess tournament featuring two grandmasters, Adams of Canada and Kronsteen of Czechoslovakia. Just before delivering the coup de grace, Kronsteen is informed by a secret message that he must leave the tournament and return for a meeting with the mysterious head of SPECTRE. The game of chess was a classical description of the Cold War, given the emphasis placed upon careful strategy and the pre-determined nature of moves. Sport and politics frequently overlapped with one another during the Cold War period and audiences would have understood the symbolic importance of a competition involving two players representing the West (Canada) on the one hand and the East (Czechoslovakia) on the other hand.

As the plot develops, SPECTRE is revealed as a new terror organisation determined not only to avenge the killing of their operative Dr No but also to trap the British into stealing a secret cipher decoder from the Soviet Embassy in Istanbul. Kronsteen, as a senior operative in SPECTRE, was entrusted with formulating and implementing the plan with the help of a senior (if recently defected) Soviet intelligence officer, Colonel Rosa Klebb.
Kronsteen, assured in the knowledge that he understood ‘the British mentality’, was confident that the British secret service would despatch 007 to retrieve the cipher decoder with the help of a glamorous female member (Tanya Romanova) of the Soviet Embassy who would unwittingly lure/seduce Bond to Istanbul. The trap is set when SPECTRE on ‘behalf’ of Romanova (who was recruited by Klebb for the mission) sends details of how the secret machine (called a Lektor) can be stolen from the Soviet Embassy. Despite the serious misgivings by Bond’s intelligence chief M, Kronsteen is revealed as an astute judge of ‘British character’ because, as he noted earlier to the head of SPECTRE, ‘my reading of the British is that they always treat a trap as a challenge’. If, as M hopes, Bond could seduce Romanova then there is always the possibility that the decoding machine could be stolen from the Russians in return for Romanova being guaranteed political asylum in Britain.

Almost immediately on learning that he is departing for Istanbul, Bond tells Miss Moneypenny about the romantic ‘moonlight by the Bosphorus’ and that she would soon tire of ‘selling rugs’. It is never explained why Istanbul was chosen for the SPECTRE operation but Turkey, as we have seen, was at the centre of real Cold War intrigue in the 1940s and 1950s. Straddling Europe and Asia Minor, Turkey had been identified by both superpowers as a strategically significant ‘listening post’ and geographical gateway.

Shortly after arriving in Istanbul courtesy of Pan-American Airlines (it was British European Airways in the novel), Bond is informed by his Turkish counterpart Kerin Bey that ‘you are in the Balkans now. The game with the Russians is played somewhat differently’. He is informed that ‘we [i.e. the Turkish partners of the British Secret Service] don’t make it too difficult to keep a tab on another’. There is an element of gentle routine to the serious business of espionage as Bond navigates the intricate geographies of the Grand Bazaar, networks of alleyways and even the magnificent covered cisterns built during the reign of Constantine and repaired and enlarged by Justinian I. With the assistance of Kerin Bey and his extensive family, Bond (appropriately enough for a Cold War drama) was driven, rowed and walked through a variety of pathways above and below the city of Istanbul. With the aid of an ex-Royal Navy submarine periscope cunningly located underneath the foundations, Bond is able to spy on a meeting of senior staff attached to the Soviet Embassy and even get glimpses of the shapely legs of the cipher clerk, Romanova.

Istanbul as a location is carefully developed as a centre of intrigue and uncertainty including Bond’s visit to a gypsy community, which depicts a fight (considered quite risqué in 1963) between two gypsy women who were eager to secure their marital attachment to the chief’s son. Indeed, the
British Board of Film Classification, mindful of the explicit sexual overtones of the film, concluded that it had to undergo a degree of censorship:

Shorten the gypsy dance, removing as many of the shots as possible where she is wriggling her stomach or bending right over backwards. Very considerably shorten the fight between the two women.\textsuperscript{90}

Concerned about the audience's moral well-being, the BBFC were nonetheless content for Bond to continue his dangerous mission in Istanbul. He discovers to his horror that the SPECTRE assassin Grant has been instructed to murder some Bulgarian spies working for the Russians in order to ensure that, as Klebb notes, 'the Cold War in Istanbul will not remain cold for much longer'. Critically, the dialogue and ensuing action make it clear that this Cold War only involves Britain and Russia (rather than Turkey and its NATO ally the United States) in a manner reminiscent of the nineteenth-century 'Great Game' involving espionage and intrigue in Central Asia.\textsuperscript{90}

After detonating a bomb in the Soviet Embassy, Bond, with the help of Romanova and Kerim Bey, eventually steals the decoding machine and escapes to the railway station in order to board the Orient Express, which is travelling westwards across Yugoslavia and terminating at Venice. Unusually again for Bond films, the movement of the train is plotted against a map tracing the journey across Greece and Yugoslavia. According to James Chapman, the use of the map is 'a quaintly dated style of narration with its montages of engine wheels and speeding carriages superimposed over a map which charts the train's progress through the Balkans'.\textsuperscript{91} This underestimates the symbolic significance of the 'superimposed map' because, as with the Fleming novel, there is a clear sense of a desperate Bond eager to leave behind the barbarism and claustrophobia of the Balkans (one scene of the film depicts the gypsies torturing some of the captured Bulgarian militia).

Forced to jettison his original plan of leaving the train and catching a plane from Athens, Bond and Romanova, travelling under the aliases of Mr and Mrs Somerset, remain on the train as it thunders across Serbia and Croatia. Bond and his party discover too late that the deceiving and double-crossing Grant has metamorphosed into Captain Nash, who claims to have been despatched by the British Secret Service for the purpose of securing Bond's exit from Eastern Europe. In an unreconstructed moment of British snobbery, Bond finally recognises that Nash is a fraud when he mistakenly orders red Chianti with his Dover sole. As an embarrassed if belligerent Bond later notes to Nash, 'red wine with fish - that should have told me something'.\textsuperscript{92} Nash, from a position of apparent strength, eventually reveals to Bond the nature and extent of SPECTRE's fiendish plotting. As was to
become increasingly obvious in later Bond films, some secret items, including a gas canister and knives (used as darts) packed in Bond’s suitcase, eventually provide his salvation. After rescuing a drugged Romanova (she fell victim to Nash’s master plan), Bond is able to steal a small boat (not before he has been pursued along the ‘Dalmatian’ coast by boats and a helicopter) and escapes to the Italian city of Venice, where he eventually kills a disguised Klebb and secures the safety of the decoding machine. By the end of the film, Bond and Romanova are seen enjoying a romantic cruise along the canals of Venice safe in the knowledge that they have escaped the narrow and dangerous spaces of Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Seemingly oblivious to the Cold War and Turkey’s membership of NATO, most of the film critics who reviewed From Russia with Love (1963) glossed over these geopolitical features in favour of waxing lyrical about ‘exotic’ Istanbul. Fascination for Balkan intrigue predominated in the trade press reviews despite the film’s release in a tense political context where American deployment of Jupiter missiles in Turkey had ensured that the Soviets remained deeply suspicious and resentful of Turkey’s membership of NATO. Intriguingly, some critics complained that the film had not been faithful to the novel, which concentrates on the activities of the Soviet secret service (SMERSH), while the film highlights the evil intentions of the non-aligned international criminal organisation, SPECTRE. Cold War divisions do not explicitly interest SPECTRE [even if Colonel Klebb remains imbued with the bi-polar politics of the period] and thus John Sanders, writing in the Amateur Cine World, contended that

this is in itself an interesting example of how the Cold War has cooled since the book was originally written [in 1957]. Then the archenemy was SMERSH, the code name for the Russian Secret Service. I’m not sure whether the producers of From Russia With Love, a Mr Saltzman and Mr Broccoli, were hoping for a wider distribution of their movie in the Soviet Union, or if this is just their contribution to the easing of international tension, but anyway SMERSH is out, or nearly.95

Strikingly, all the British trade press critics simply assumed that Britain and Bond were the West’s chief players in this new great game with the Soviets and SPECTRE.

The New Great Game? Rogue States, Central Asian Oil and The World is not Enough (1999)

The idea for the film was dreamed up by producer Barbara Broccoli – daughter of Cubby – while she was on a flight to Miami back in 1997.
There was an item on the in-flight entertainment, which claimed oil in the Caspian Sea might determine economic growth in the next century.\textsuperscript{34}

Bond returns to Turkey and the Central Asian region in the film *The World is Not Enough* (1999) in a manner which is both reminiscent of the nineteenth-century ‘Great Game’ and distinct in terms of the challenges that confront 007.\textsuperscript{35} In a post-Cold War world and under the command of a female M (played by Dame Judi Dench) who had previously castigated Bond for being a ‘Cold War relic’ (*Goldeneye*, 1995, and *Tomorrow Never Dies*, 1997), the film’s opening sets the scene for an intrigue involving Caspian Sea oil and the British industrialist and oil tycoon, Sir Robert King. Cinematically, much has changed from the Cold War Bond films, as 007 initially contends with a radio-detonated bomb, which kills King within the MI6 building at Vauxhall Cross in London.\textsuperscript{36} Unlike previous productions, this is the first time that the headquarters of the British secret service was not only attacked but also identified in terms of actual location rather than simply a building close to Trafalgar Square with the sign ‘Universal Exports’ on the exterior. Thus, acknowledgement was made of the prevailing shift in official attitudes towards the British secret services in the late 1990s, which culminated in their official recognition.\textsuperscript{37}

As with previous Bond films, especially the earliest Connery films (1963–1967) and the Second-Cold-War-era films such as *For Your Eyes Only* (1981), there is a geopolitical rationale to the mission even if the United States and its agencies such as the CIA simply do not feature. It is an extraordinary reversal of new world order realities as Britain and its premier secret service agent take on the Soviets and various international crime syndicates. In this scenario, Bond is sent to the Caspian Sea region to assist Electra, the daughter of Sir Robert King, to fulfil their family dream of constructing an 800-mile pipeline from Azerbaijan to the Mediterranean. Once in the vicinity of the capital city Baku, Bond is shown by King a computer-generated map revealing how her proposed pipeline would provide the West an opportunity to access oil from the region independently of the existing Russian pipelines. As King notes, her pipeline has to travel past or close to “the terrorists in Iraq, Iran and Syria ... and the Russians will do anything to stop me”. As before with the 1963 production *From Russia with Love*, Turkey and Central Asia are considered centres for intrigue where Bond has to navigate the unstable intentions of local residents and near neighbours. On entering Baku’s main casino, Bond’s special x-ray glasses detect that all his fellow patrons are discreetly equipped with a wide diversity of small arms. He cannot apparently trust or even call upon the resources of the local authorities and thus deals once again with his ex-KGB
acquaintance, Zukovsky. While the film does not explain the geopolitical and legal complexities of the Caspian Sea region (Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Iran dispute access and ownership rights), it does lead to the acknowledgement by Bond that the West’s fuel-driven economies (not featured explicitly since The Man with the Golden Gun, 1973) depend upon future access to the oil riches of the Central Asian region.98

The exchange between Bond and Electra over the geopolitical significance of the pipeline is deliberately reminiscent of contemporary debates within governments and policy-orientated journals such as Foreign Affairs and The World Today. Writing in the former journal, Jan Kalicki contends that ‘the United States should encourage the construction of multiple pipelines to ensure diverse and reliable transportation of Caspian energy to regional and international markets ... [however] the Caspian serves as a trafficking area for weapons of mass destruction, terrorists and narcotics’.99 With an estimated 100–200 billion barrels of oil reserves, the Caspian Sea region has attracted a great deal of investment and interest from western multinationals and their governments.100 Former US President Clinton, for example, was at the forefront of endeavours to secure American geopolitical and resource access to the Caspian Sea region after the government of Azerbaijan (in the shape of the Azerbaijan International Operating Company) negotiated an access agreement with a consortium of oil companies in 1994.

Building on contemporary political developments, the ‘King’ proposal deliberately echoes an existing plan to construct a pipeline from Baku via Tbilisi to Ceyhan on the Turkish coast in the Mediterranean. Although most of the oil exports from the region go via Russia and the Black Sea (the two main routes are Baku–Supsa and Baku–Novorossiisk), several oil consortia have sought to construct additional pipelines via Iran and or Turkey in order to reduce Russian dominance of the Central Asian region. Successive Turkish governments in the 1990s have been active in promoting non-Russian pipeline options and have sought new natural gas purchasing agreements with Iran and Turkmenistan (instead of dealing with their previous supplier, the former Soviet Union/Russia). Unsurprisingly, other analysts have concluded that a new geography of conflict will emerge around the Caspian Sea and the Middle East as states and multinationals fight it out for access to precious resources.101

Turkey, and in particular Istanbul, feature again in the film as do the Balkans, in the form of the assumed nationality of the main villain, Victor Zokas a.k.a. Renard (played by Robert Carlyle). When Renard is first introduced in a British Secret Service briefing, it is noted that he is an anarchist who has worked, in Bond’s words, ‘all the romantic spots’,
including North Korea, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. No further explanation is offered regarding Renard’s activities and thus it is assumed that this list of countries was self-explanatory to the viewing audience. The nationality of Renard is also left deliberately unclear (obviously French for ‘fox’ and possibly even an allusion to ‘the Jackal’) and when asked about the origin of his character, the actor Robert Carlyle decided that Renard should be Bosnian or Serbian. As he noted in December 1999 to Alan Jones of Starburst magazine about his approach to method acting:

I made him Bosnian and fabricated a back-story just for myself. Bosnia is a dangerous part of the world at this moment and I see Renard as a military man who has seen the horror of it all and decided to make a lot of money out of it as these mercenary guys usually do. Hence the cropped hair look I have. I found a Bosnian actor in Yellow Pages [a telephone directory] and spoke to him for about a week. I also listened to tapes of him in my spare time to get the accent absolutely right.

Unbeknown to Bond, Renard and Electra (his former prisoner and lover) are in alliance. Although Bond attempts to save Electra’s pipeline from potential attack, Renard and his team engineered the theft of nuclear fission material from a poorly guarded depot in neighbouring Kazakhstan. As part of his plan to destabilise the politics surrounding access to Central Asian oil, the destruction of an ex-Soviet nuclear submarine (armed with the stolen radioactive material) underneath the city of Istanbul is envisaged. A contaminated Black Sea would severely affect the transportation of Russian oil. Thus, King’s alternative pipeline via the Turkish Mediterranean would be left with a virtual monopoly. With the help of a Russian gangster and caviar mogul, Valentin Zukovsky (played by Robbie Coltrane, who appeared previously as the same character in Goldeneye, 1995) and an American nuclear expert Dr Christmas Jones (played by Denise Richards) Bond eventually manages to prevent a nuclear explosion by disabling the submarine.

During the eventful production process, the film’s director Michael Apted was sufficiently worried by the threat of Kurdish terrorism (Turkey had captured the Kurdish Workers Party leader Ocalan in February 1999) that the cast never travelled to Turkey and background filming was completed discreetly within 10 days. However, this brief passage of time in Turkey and Azerbaijan did not appear to detract from the significance of the plot and the geographical locations. As Apted recalled in an interview with Cinefantastique magazine in December 1999,

the plot of The World is not Enough revolves around the cutting edge issue of Caspian oil. The story we have in Bond is playing out in front
of us at the moment. It has slowed down somewhat because of the bottom falling out of the oil market but this time last year the papers were full of who was going to have what pipelines going through which country in the Caspian area to the West. We are the first film to be dealing with the issue and its great to be doing a Bond that ahead of the game for a change rather than dealing with old hat intrigues about Russians. When I reached the whole Caspian Sea situation, I went to Baku and thought it was the most incredible looking place... So while it's hard to find a corner of the world no one has seen ... You go for more off-beat locations which mean Azerbaijan as opposed to a beach in Fiji.\(^{106}\)

In another interview, he seemed to confirm the view that places like Turkey and Azerbaijan were simply not safe for westerners (and in this case his film crew):

I felt I would be putting actors at all sorts of risks [if they went to Turkey]. We'd be sitting there like a great plump avocado at the top of the tree just waiting to be picked off. It was very tricky but I needed stuff in Istanbul so I went in quietly with a small unit and shot for one week.\(^{107}\)

The two key themes to emerge from the interview were political relevance and geographical location. Unhindered by the legacy left by Fleming's 14 novels, post-Cold-War-era Bond film scripts were shaped by contemporary geopolitical developments such as rogue/outlaw states, terrorism, oil supplies, media networks and nuclear weapons stocks. Russia, where it does feature in these later Bond films, was inevitably depicted as a 'baskit-case'. Bond negotiates with ex-KGB agents, rogue Russian generals and the Russian mafia rather than central government officials. Judging by the comments of Apted, contemporary political issues such as access to Caspian oil and their translation into film will be inevitably shaped by the perspectives of western governments and their viewing audiences. Strikingly, but in complete keeping with the Bond film series, there is no evidence of local governance in Azerbaijan or Turkey and Bond remains largely free to wander across the Central Asian region notwithstanding the evil designs of Renard. On the question of filming location, Apted is simply being disingenuous because Bond has never been located in Fiji or the South Pacific, not least because scriptwriters could not devise a credible plot involving an apparently minor region either in the Cold War or post-Cold War era. Ironically, many small islands in the South Pacific bore the brunt of Cold War nuclear testing and arguably were at the heart of the nuclear politics of the period.\(^{108}\)
The World is Not Enough (1999) draws on mainstream political concerns within Russian, Turkish and Euro-American security debates even if it completely subverts the great power realities of the post-Cold War era. These include, first, the unstable nature of the post-Soviet Union bloc including the security of nuclear weapons, second, the untapped resources of the Central Asian region and third, Presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush Jr’s concerns with the role of ‘rogue states’ such as Iran, North Korea and Iraq in perpetuating terrorism against the West. Within Turkey, for example, Pinar Bilgin has noted that policy makers and military officials have debated at length the geopolitical identity of Turkey in the aftermath of the Cold War. Given the uncertainty surrounding future membership of the European Union despite membership of NATO, Turkish writers have argued that the country needs to re-imagine itself within a European as well as Central Asian/Black Sea context in the light of European reluctance (Turkey’s candidacy to the EU has at least been recognised) to embrace Turkey within the EU. The film The World is Not Enough (1999) makes no mention of Turkey’s ‘European’ credentials and instead, as the director Michael Apted conceded, the film crew were, as a consequence of fears about Kurdish terrorism, satisfied to locate much of the ‘Central Asian’ action in southern Spain instead. In so doing, the Bond genre retains that curious mixture of geopolitical realism and national fantasy as Britain’s premier agent saves the world again with no direct help from the United States and other NATO allies.

Conclusions

This paper has tentatively explored how a study in the popular geopolitics of Bond can be used to reflect on the cultural history of Britain and the post-war loss of empire. The 19-film series remains an extraordinary cultural phenomena and part of the films’ enduring appeal lies in the fact that they frequently reflect (however obliquely) on Britain and the prevailing geopolitical conditions during and after the Cold War. They have provided audiences around the world (and there is clearly more research that can be done on British and international audience reaction as well as the production values/ideology) with an opportunity to follow the dramatic exploits of a British super-spy and if Bond remains a symbol of British imperial pride then his continued popularity can be used to reflect a great deal further on Britain’s (perhaps reluctant) post-colonial trajectory. One of the challenges for a popular geopolitics must be to interrogate and contest routine representations of place (in Bond films and elsewhere) because they arguably help to inform and sustain post-imperial cultures. As Edward Said in Culture and Imperialism noted, more generally.
the idea of overseas rule – jumping beyond adjacent territories to very distant lands – has a privileged status in these three cultures [i.e. Britain, France and the US]. This idea has a lot to do with projections, whether in fiction or geography or art [or representations of espionage], and it acquires a continuous presence through actual expansion, administration, investment and commitment.\textsuperscript{113}

As part of that wider cultural investigation, the settings for the Bond films have to be seen as important stages from which Bond’s struggles with international enemies unfold. It is quite striking how existing cultural and historical commentary on comic spy dramas such as Sir Harry Flashman and films such as \textit{From Russia With Love} neglect to focus on how places such as Turkey are represented. In the aftermath of the Second World War, Britain was anxious to retain political influence in the Middle East and British officials and the newspaper media considered Turkey to be defined by long-standing atavism, instability and intrigue. This sense of ambivalence towards these apparently distant and unstable spaces of the Middle East and Central Asia was obvious following the release of \textit{The World is not Enough} (1999). The reaction of the British film critics was most instructive and most chose to mock the ‘Central Asian’ filming locations. Some such as the film critic, Alexander Walker cheerfully acknowledged their geographical ignorance:

but now in order to satisfy the hunger for new places, the plot takes us to Baku, Azerbaijan, and other trouble spots I can’t even spell, all of them anti-glamour, pro-grunge ... But the world’s hellholes don’t entirely edge the fleshepots out of the picture.\textsuperscript{114}

Others simply criticised the film for choosing, in the words of Peter Bradshaw, ‘gloomy, cloudy locations in boring places such as Azerbaijan’ or as Anne Billson contended, ‘some other place ending in jan or stan’.\textsuperscript{115}

However, as the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States demonstrate, geographical and cultural ignorance and misunderstanding can be horribly exposed and perhaps in future Bond and his critics will acknowledge the complex cultural and geopolitical interconnections of places such as Britain, the United States, Azerbaijan and the Central Asian region. Despite the rise of new challengers such as \textit{XXX} (a new so-called post-Bond film released to great acclaim in the US in the summer of 2002), Bond demonstrated once again in \textit{Die Another Day} (2002) that his exceptional services are still required in a world where people, ideas and terror can travel everywhere.\textsuperscript{116}
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NOTES

5. Due to costs and access, a great deal of the filming was actually carried out in Scotland rather than the ‘Dalmatian’ coast of Croatia.
6. Ian Fleming’s novel From Russia with Love (1957) had sold over 6 million copies in the UK alone.
7. This was revealed in an article published in Life magazine in March 1961, which revealed From Russia with Love (1957) to be the ninth favourite. Kennedy also arranged for a private showing of Dr No (1962) in the White House. See Lycett (note 2) p.383.
9. Other notable examples include the city of Venice, which featured in From Russia with Love (1963) and more substantially in Moonraker (1979), and Hong Kong, which featured in You Only Live Twice (1967) and Live and Let Die (1973).
10. The strategic significance of place with regard to Anglo-American geopolitical concerns in the Caribbean has also featured in several movies (for instance Dr No, Thunderball and Live and Let Die). The British and the American governments had meet, for instance, in Nassau in order to talk about the purchase of nuclear weapons in the year when Dr No (1962) was released. Other films such as The Spy Who Loved Me (1977) have clearly reflected on the possibilities of Anglo-Soviet détente during a general period of relative stability and diplomatic improvement between West and East.
17. For further details of these international and domestic transformations, especially in the
19. In the United States, for example, the Department of Defense even established a special office in Hollywood to ensure that film producers could secure logistical assistance for their projects such as *The Longest Day* (1961), which witnessed the involvement of 700 marines as extras in Darryl Zanuck’s sympathetic reconstruction of the 1944 D-Day landings. At the time, the United States was embroiled in a worsening diplomatic crisis with the Soviet Union over the city of Berlin and the film was considered by the Kennedy administration to be a useful morale booster for domestic audiences.
23. See Shaw (note 21), esp. ch.2.
30. Churchill was convinced that Turkish neutrality during the First World War had contributed in small part to the 1915 disaster at the Dardanelles and argued that Turkish support against Nazi Germany was critical to the eventual defeat of Hitler. He was totally unable to overcome Turkish worries about giving up their neutrality and several missions to Turkey failed to persuade a high-level change of heart.
33. Shaw (note 21) p.56.
35. When Bond first hit the UK cinemas in the early 1960s, audiences were beginning to decline for the first time following a high point in the 1950s. Falling numbers of cinema (UK cinema admissions in 1951 were 1,365 million compared to 500 million in 1960) outlets coupled with the gradual emergence of television consolidated this decline. See the analysis of S. Harper and V. Porter, ‘Cinema Audience Tastes in 1950s Britain’,
40. T. Bennett and J. Wollacott, Bond and Beyond (London: Macmillan 1987) make the point that Bond by the late 1970s was an institutionalised ritual following cartoon serialisation by the Daily Express (1957–1963), widespread viewing figures in the 1960s and an established slot on British television following the Queen’s Christmas Day message. The booksellers W.H. Smith, in conjunction with the publishers Jonathan Cape, arranged for life-size models of 007 to be put in all their shop windows once Dr No was released in 1962.
41. Cannadine, ‘Fantasy’ (note 11).
42. References such as ‘the sick man of Europe’ and the ‘British/English disease’ became popular in the 1970s and were used as short-hand terms for high levels of industrial unrest. See, for example, M. Tominson, The English Sickness (London: C. Tinling, 1972) and G. Allen, The British Disease (London Institute of Economic Affairs 1976).
44. Lyckett (note 2) p.223.
46. See H. Sebag-Montefiore, Enigma (London: Phoenix 2001) pp.113–15. Fleming had been involved in the planning for Operation Ruthless which had it been launched was designed to steal naval intelligence from the German naval forces.
47. I am indebted to Andrew Lyckett’s excellent biography of Fleming for these background details especially his stint with the Naval Intelligence Division of the Admiralty. See Lyckett (note 2) pp.102–104. Earlier biographies of Fleming include J. Pearson, The Life of Ian Fleming (London: Cape 1966).
49. Famously the British Prime Minister Anthony Eden and his wife stayed with Fleming at his home Golden Eye in the disastrous aftermath of the 1956 Suez Crisis.
51. These basic details about the Broccoli and Saltzman partnership can be found in a range of Bond sources including Chapman (note 4) pp.57–60. The word ‘official’ refers to all the Bond films produced by Eon Productions and thus excludes Casino Royale (1954) and Never Say Never Again (1986), which were produced by Columbia Broadcasting System and Warner Bros respectively. Disputes over screening rights meant that Dr No was the first project to be completed rather than From Russia with Love and Goldfinger.
52. This seems to have been particularly opportune, given the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, which included Yugoslavia, Egypt and India. See P. Willetts, The Non-Aligned Movement (London: Pinter 1978).
53. This clearly set Dr No (1962) apart from other films released in the same year, such as The Manchurian Candidate, which was explicitly concerned with the use by communist authorities of a brainwashed Korean War veteran for the purpose of assassinating the US president.
55. Shaw (note 21) p.60.
56. The Bond films rarely convey the minutiae of intelligence planning and especially the earliest films glossed over the analysis of intelligence materials such as photographs, maps and or recovered objects in the field. In most cases, Bond was seen to rely on personal instinct and his ability to persuade (and/or seduce in the case of female accomplices) others to reveal secret information or secure access to the main villain in
question. Standing in M's office 007, in the film Thunderball (1965), politely declines an offer to accompany a RAF officer to Station C (Canada) and instead persuades M to allow him to pursue a missing NATO airman's sister in the Bahamas in the hope of extracting vital information. While noting his penchant for water sports, M agrees to this change of plan and Bond tells Miss Money Penny that he will not require a photograph of the woman in question (Domino) because he has memorised her physical features including two distinctive moles on her thigh.

57. The Bond films oozed explicit sexuality and, in the case of From Russia with Love (1963), women were frequently depicted, as Laura Mulvey has noted more generally, as viewing objects for the pleasure of heterosexual men. The gypsy fight, for example, encouraged some male reviewers in the film trade press to comment that the film included 'a scrap between a couple of wild cattish gypsy girls, and if that isn't good cinema I don't know what is'. A few commentators were a little prudish and Film and Filming concluded that 'if Odeon cinemas really think the new Bond film is nice clean fun for all the family, then Britain has some pretty kinky families'. Some of the sexual elements of the movie, which shocked some of the reviewers, included the lesbian qualities of Colonel Rosa Klebb, the former Head of Operations for SMERSH, who was seen caressing the shoulders and hair of the beautiful Tanya Romanova. These concerns over the sexually explicit nature of Bond were perhaps unsurprising, given Ian Fleming’s straightforward claim that his novels were designed for 'warm blooded heterosexuals in railway trains, airplanes or beds'. See Chapman (note 4) pp.1–3.

58. Bond’s humour and, in particular, one-line remarks were far more developed in the films as opposed to Fleming’s novels. Every Bond fan, for example, remembers Bond’s 'do you expect me to talk' remark to Auric Goldfinger while an unforgiving industrial laser was threatening his genitals. This type of exchange became a common feature, especially during the Roger Moore era, and thus part of what some critics have charged as the formulaic humour of the ‘official’ Bond series.


60. By the time Bond takes to the field in You Only Live Twice (1967), he has enjoyed the usage of high tech cars, helicopters and aqualung equipment in contrast to the rather simple but effective suitcase (with knock out gas, knife and gold sovereigns as accessories) Bond was supplied with in From Russia with Love (1963).


62. See Andrew (note 26), who notes how US–UK intelligence relations had been very close during the Second World War, especially at Bletchley Park. After 1945, US–UK agencies had co-operated with one another over Operation Boot (the overthrow of the Iranian government of Mossadeq in 1953) but fallen out badly during the 1956 Suez Crisis.


65. Black (note 8) p.29.


70. Turkey provided facilities for the Americans during their operations in the Lebanon in 1958 as part of an attempt to topple the pro-Soviet Syrian government and looked on with alarm at growing Soviet influence in Egypt and Syria. Soviet finances, for example, paid for the construction of the Aswan Dam in Egypt.

71. See I. Fleming, Thrilling Cities (London: Jonathan Cape, 1959) for his reviews of his
favourite and not so favourite cities. Istanbul did not feature but others such as Hong Kong, Tokyo and New York were included in the book.

72. European and American audiences would have been familiar with the Orient Express as a setting for dramas following the popularity of books such as Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934) and Graham Greene's *Stamboul Train* (1932). Alfred Hitchcock's film *The Lady Vanishes* (1938) also situates his drama on a train somewhere in central Europe. There is clearly a very interesting comparison to be made between Fleming and Greene, both of whom had wartime experience in the SIS but produced books of a radically different political character. Greene, for example, met Fidel Castro and was quite unsympathetic to the Anglo-American alliance against the Soviet Union.


74. John Buchan's novel *Greenmantle* was first published in 1916.

75. Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania* (note 73) pp.87–102. The Orient Express was also routinely depicted as indicative of incident, intrigue, and strangeness.


78. Fleming, *From Russia with Love* (note 59) p.100.

79. Ibid., p.110.

80. Ibid., p.142.


83. Fleming, *From Russia with Love* (note 59) p.175.


87. It is worth remembering that the Profumo affair involving the disgraced Conservative Minister John Profumo had hit the newspaper headlines in June 1963. He had been exposed for having an affair with Christine Keeler who was also involved with a Soviet military officer, Captain Yevgeny Ivanov, stationed at the London Embassy of the Soviet Union.

88. This focus on underground access to the Soviet Embassy seems in keeping with contemporary Cold War intelligence politics. In 1955, the SIS/CIA-organised Operation Stopwatch/Gold was successfully designed to create an 800m tunnel under the Russian sector of Berlin. See D. Stafford, *Spies Beneath Berlin* (London: John Murray 2002).

89. Extract from the records of the British Board Film Classification (BBFC) concerning the censorship of *From Russia with Love* (1963). My thanks to the BBFC's Edward Lamberti for his help in providing the material. Other areas of the film which, attracted controversy included bedroom scenes involving Bond and Tania and the famous fight between Bond and Grant.

91. Chapman (note 4) p.94.

92. For further details on Bond’s snobbery see the excellent analysis in ibid., esp. pp.65–110.


94. See the review of *The World is Not Enough* published in the *Sunday Mirror*, 14 November 1999.

95. For an argument about a new ‘Great Game’ involving great powers such as Russia, China and the United States in Central Asia see A Rashid, *Taliban* (London: Pan 2001) which was originally published with the title *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*.

96. There is clearly an interesting geography to spying and the UK secret service. The Vauxhall Cross building caps a process which began with C’s original building facing Queen Anne’s Gate, followed by the SIS main site in Broadway Buildings and then on to Century House in South London during the 1970s and 1980s. George Smiley and his staff were based at Cambridge Circus. Thanks are due to Matthew Jones for this observation to me about London’s geographies of spying and intelligence.

97. More generally, the film, alongside the two earlier post-Cold War films *Goldeneye* and *Tomorrow Never Dies*, acknowledges that that the secret services are more publicly accountable than in the Cold War era.

98. See G. Smith, *The Post-Soviet States* (London: Arnold 1999), who examines the contested politics of the Caspian Sea and records western interest in developing a new pipeline from Azerbaijan and the Central Asian region via Turkey or even Iran.


100. Ibid. The estimates for Caspian Sea oil reserves are controversial and figures closer to 15–30 billion barrels of oil have also been quoted.


104. Access to the Bosphorous has become a very controversial issue between Turkey and Russia because of Turkish concerns that an ecological disaster could hit Istanbul if a major oil spillage occurred in the region. It has been suggested that 4,500 tankers (most of them Russian) pass through the Bosphorous every year and Turkey is anxious to modify existing agreements relating to access rights. Clearly, this concern over health and safety cannot be divorced from the wider issue of access to Caspian oil resources. In 1979, for example, 95,000 tons of oil were spilled into the waters surrounding Istanbul after an accident involving a Russian oil tanker.

109. See, for example, I. Lesser, Bridge or Barrier? Turkey and the West after the Cold War (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation 1992).