



La condena inaugural de Hollywood de los trabajos forzados en el Sur estadounidense: 'La carretera del infierno' ('Hell's Highway', Rowland Brown, 1932) [

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text (article)

Analítica

The aim of this paper is to study Hell's Highway (La carretera del infierno, Rowland Brown, RKO, 1932), the first American film to make an on-screen denouncement of the brutality exercised against prisoners sentenced to forced labour on chain gangs in the prison camps of the South of the United States. This is an obscure film that has received very little attention from scholars due to the fact that it was overshadowed by the sensational release of a later film, I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang (Soy un fugitivo, Mervyn Le Roy, 1932), produced by Warner Bros. As a result, it is not appreciated that, like the latter film, the film also portrays a true story: the case of Arthur Maillefert, a young inmate who died inside a "sweat box" in June 1932, at the Sunbeam prison camp in Florida. This study will pay particular attention to the filmic representation of these real events and demonstrate the high degree of veracity of the images in the film through a great number of sources and photographs from the era. Unfortunately, it will also confirm that its influence on instigating a reform of the penitentiaries in the South was non-existent

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