Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem

Bölcsészettudományi Kar

DOKTORI DISSZERTÁCIÓ

SERKÉDI ORSOLYA

PIER PAOLO PASOLINI FILMMŰVÉSZETÉNEK IKONOGRÁFIÁJA

Irodalomtudományi Doktori Iskola

Iskolavezető: Prof. Dr. Kállay Géza DSc, egyetemi tanár
Italianisztikai Irodalom- és Művelődéstörténet Program
Programvezető: Prof. Dr. Szkárosi Endre PhD, egyetemi tanár

A bizottság tagjai
Prof. Dr. Kelemen János CMHAS, egyetemi tanár *(elnök)*
Dr. Stőhr Lóránt DLA, egyetemi docens *(bíráló)*
Dr. Török Tamara PhD, egyetemi tanársegéd *(bíráló)*
Dr. Szegedi Eszter PhD, egyetemi tanársegéd *(titkár)*
Dr. Földényi F. László CsC, egyetemi tanár *(tag)*
Dr. Fried Ilona CsC, habilitált egyetemi docens *(póttag)*
Dr. Gelencsér Gábor PhD, habilitált egyetemi docens *(póttag)*

Témavezetők:
Prof. Dr. Szkárosi Endre PhD, egyetemi tanár
†Dr. Takács József PhD, egyetemi docens

Budapest, 2014

Eötvös Loránd University
Faculty of Arts

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

ORSOLYA SERKÉDI

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF PIER PAOLO PASOLINI'S CINEMA

Doctoral School of Literary Studies
Head of Doctoral School: Prof. Dr. Géza Kállay DSc, full professor
Doctoral Program in Italian Literary and Cultural Studies
Head of Doctoral Program: Prof. Dr. Endre Szkárosi PhD, full professor

The Doctoral Committee
Prof. Dr. János Kelemen CMHAS, full professor *(chair)*
Dr. Lóránt Stőhr DLA, associate professor *(referee)*
Dr. Tamara Török PhD, assistant lecturer *(referee)*
Dr. Eszter Szegedi PhD, assistant lecturer *(secretary)*
Dr. László Földényi F. CsC, full professor *(member)*
Dr. Ilona Fried CsC, associate professor with habilitation (*alternate member)*
Dr. Gábor Gelencsér PhD, associate professor (*alternate member*)

Supervisors:
Prof. Dr. Endre Szkárosi PhD, full professor
†Dr. József Takács PhD, associate professor

Budapest, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I.   INTRODUCTION

I.1. Scope of dissertation

The topic of the dissertation links two fields: it approaches Pasolini's cinema from the angle of art history. Its general aims are to reconstruct the complex course of Pasolini's filmography, with a focus on its iconography, and to follow the change of the film language based on Pasolini's films, screenplays and his theoretical works. The paper concentrates on the interactions of cinema and painting in Pasolini's films, which is a scarcely researched field both from the point of view of cinematographic studies and from the approach of art history.

The dissertation is the first to focus on the citations of painting in the whole course of Pasolini's cinema. This enables the analysis to draw a more detailed picture of Pasolini's film language and its theoretical background than before (up to date, the most thorough scholarly examinations on the subject are Alberto Marchesini's and Francesco Galluzzi's monographs).

Since the closest precedent of the moving image and its first reference point is painting, numerous correlations derive from this relation. Considering Lessing's concept which states that each field of art represents its object with its own means of expression, it is suggested that film can represent "movement" in a direct and implicit way. Therefore, the possibility of a painting in motion is suggested as opposed to a still, and in consequence, several aesthetical problems might arise and differences may emerge between a film scene and a painting. Apart from Pasolini, numerous artists occupied with film, painting and graphics at the same time, for instance Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein, Sergei Parajanov, Fernand Léger, László Moholy-Nagy, Peter Greenaway, Salvador Dalí, Zoltán Huszárik, Zoltán Fábry, Miklós Erdély, György Kovásznai, Tihamér Gyarmathy and András Jeles. In addition, one could refer to the German expressionists, Luis Buñuel, Andrei Tarkovsky or Jean-Luc Godard whose works are influenced by painting to such an extent that they are not interpretable without the understanding of the context and some elements of art history. Furthermore, the art of such photographers and painters as Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Francis Bacon or Cindy Sherman cannot be explained in-depth

without the knowledge of certain filmic counter-information.[1]

The singularity of Pasolini's application of picturesque citation is that in his films painting becomes a filter of perceiving global and human concepts and a mirror of Pasolini's poetics. Regarding the intertwining phenomena of the elements of painting and cinema in Pasolini's filmography, several lists of citations have been made. However, the interpretation of the value of these paintings has rarely been elaborated.

My dissertation argues that a chain of visual metonyms constitutes the basis of Pasolini's "poetic cinema" inside of which the elements of the Christian iconography occupy a central position. This supposition has an aspect based on the relation between painting and cinema. In addition, it also paves the way to such a consequence which has not been followed in the research of Pasolini's oeuvre: the referred icons are the objective reflections of the characters' psychology.

The presumption of a metonymical Pasolinian cinema is confirmed by the author's own declaration in *Empirismo eretico*, when claiming that film is "the written language of reality" (*Heretical Empiricism* 243). Therefore, it is unequivocally enhanced that Pasolini's cinematography focuses on the presentation of reality. According to Pasolini's thesis, reality should be displayed by the means of real signs and without the application of symbols:

> By studying the cinema as a system of signs, I came to the conclusion that it is a non-conventional and non-symbolic language [*linguaggio*] unlike the written or spoken language [*lingua*], and expresses reality not through symbols but via reality itself. If I have to express you, I express you through yourself; if I want to express that tree I express it through itself. The cinema is a language [*linguaggio*] which expresses reality with reality. So the question is: what is the difference between the cinema and the reality? Practically none. I realized that the cinema is a system of signs whose semiology corresponds to a possible semiology of the system of signs of reality itself. So the cinema forced me to remain always at the level of reality, right inside reality: when I make a film I am always in reality, among the trees and among people like yourself; there is no symbolic or conventional filter between me and reality, as there is in literature. So in practice the cinema was an explosion of my love for reality. (Stack 29)

---

[1] Editors' introduction. "Festészet és film", *Metropolis* Nr. 3, 1997.

Therefore, it is argued that Pasolini's film language is metonymical and exempt from symbolism.

The dissertation also pinpoints that Pasolini's films tend to create the impression of "déjà vu, déjà entendu." As for the scene settings, it means that a painting is inserted in the film and it is transformed to be a part of the directed world, creating thereby the so-called "painted effect", as Antonio Costa calls it ("Effetto dipinto" 37-48). What is meant by this phenomenon is the fact that the author inserts a painting in his film to establish the iconography of his works through the allusions of another and already known visual structure. In order to prove this hypothesis, the dissertation gives an overview of the general relationship of cinema and painting, with special respect to Pasolini's affiliations with figurative arts. More specifically, it analyzes the interaction of filmic and picturesque motifs in each work of Pasolini's cinematographic oeuvre.

Concerning this foretold interaction, the analysis addresses not only the relationship of Pasolini's cinema with painting but traces the problems of its literary connections. Considering that the films are founded on Pasolini's texts or adapted from various authors, the connections of the filmography with the literary resources are also examined. Furthermore, the investigation is also supported by a continuous consultation with Pasolini's essays and journalism.

Based on the study of Pasolini's screenplays, theoretical works and self-reflections, the paper endeavours to analyze the level of consciousness in terms of the application of the pictorial citations. When the intervisuality was carried out upon the author's instruction, the paper investigates the method of insertion in the visual texture, the allusive functions attributed to the given icons or citations and the potential interaction between the cited image and the receiving context. The aim of such a train of thought is to prove that Pasolini consciously applies the elements of painting in the visual texture, and the icons function as the visual reflections of the characters' psychological mechanisms.

I.2. Structure and methodology

As it has been noted before, the dissertation approaches the relation of cinematographic and picturesque elements in Pasolini's oeuvre from different perspectives in order to be able to grasp the complexity of the historical and theoretical aspects of the

interaction between these two phenomena. The thesis is among the first attempts to interpret the relation of cinema and painting in Pasolini's oeuvre, with a focus on the citations of figurative arts but not neglecting related disciplines, either. There is considerable space devoted to the inclusion of such primary and secondary sources that are unavailable in Hungary and are hoped to attract critical attention to them. However, as we shall see, historically, very little scholarship has dwelt on the different visual representations as a means of shedding further light on Pasolini's films.

The first section of the dissertation aims at the elaboration of the theoretical frames and those of the film history. It focuses on the overall relationship of cinema and painting and discusses the theoretical and aesthetical questions that might arise from this correlation. It approaches the genre of film from such an angle that considers cinema the synthesis of the previous manifestations of visual arts (photography, painting), and it analyzes the problems that derive from this aesthetical change. It departs from the Italian perception of Eisenstein's theory, and based on Ragghianti's thesis it considers the genre of film as one belonging to the category of fine arts, which is to be analyzed by the means of art history. It categorizes the films that are concerned with the relation between cinema and painting, and in terms of Pasolini's films it examines the semiotic problems of the "painted effect".

The second section attempts to display Pasolini's affiliations with figurative arts, describing the origins of this interest and providing an overview of the sign system applied by Pasolini. The third section includes the individual analyses of the films that are relevant from the point of view of the relation between cinema and painting in Pasolini's oeuvre. These single analyses attempt to trace each and every reference to painting, and to present the presumable relation between the visual references and the "syuzhet" as well as the interaction between the iconographical elements and the characters' psychology. Through the analyses of the single films the paper aims at the demonstration of associating the iconographical elements with a value of reflection. On the basis of the single consequences, the paper attempts to draw general conclusions about Pasolini's film language in the last chapter of the dissertation.

II. THE FUSION OF FINE ARTS AND CINEMA IN FILM HISTORY

II.1. The theoretical questions

Film has its visual origins in painting and photography. In the 19th century the technical and aesthetical conditions of moving images were created due to the development of photography. Several photographers were interested in the research of motion, such as Eadweard Muybridge who, in 1877 and 1878, experimented with animal locomotion which used multiple cameras to capture motion. Muybridge's influence can be found in many diverse fields, from Marcel Duchamp's painting *Nude Descending a Staircase* through various works by Francis Bacon to the film *The Matrix*. Ha also made an impact on the French photographer, Étienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904) who invented, in 1888, a method of producing a series of successive images of a moving body on the same negative in order to be able to study its exact position in space at determined moments, which he called "chronophotographie". His chronophotographic studies cover human locomotion (e.g. *Successive Phases of Movement of a Running Man*, 1884), the movement of animals and the flight of birds. Another significant contribution was made by Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia and his brother, Anton Giulio Bragaglia: in their experimentation with photography, theatre and filmmaking they invented the photodynamism (*foto-dinamica*) which focused on capturing the energy and the feeling of the movement.

The appearance of the first films distinguished two paths of the cinema. On the one hand, there is a more realistic and object-oriented approach offered, as determined by Lumière's *L'arrivée d'un train à la gare de la Ciotat* (*Arrival of a train at La Ciotat*) dating back to 1896. On the other hand, there is the approach offered by George Mélies which involves more work on surreality and irrational fantasy. This is what is emblematized by George Méliès's *Le voyage dans la lune* (*A trip to the Moon*, 1902) which paves the way for the metaphorical film. What links the two paths is that they were both tightly linked with painting, their immediate visual origin.

The phenomenon that the present thesis focuses on concerning Pasolini's oeuvre is exactly the detection of the symbiosis and the interaction between cinema and painting.

12

The rapport and communication between the two genres do not only describe the imagery of the first films but they also characterize the history of the cinema in its completeness as filmmakers often turn to painting in order to shape or enrich the meaning of their work. Therefore, a chapter of analysis is dedicated to the revelation of the encounter between cinema and painting.

The fusion of painting and cinema emerges as a theoretical question since it is to deal with two genres with similarities and differences between one another. At first sight cinema is extremely close to figurative arts as they are all image-focused fields. However, apart from this fact several differences could be pinpointed between cinema and painting. First and foremost, while painting elaborates its subject through homogeneousness, cinema allows more heterogeneity. It derives from the fact that films make characters visible and mobile which foresees the changes of the material, a fact that is not realizable on canvas. In consequence, as opposed to the static nature of painting, cinema makes the representation of motion possible, allowing thereby the visualisation of the characters' motions and changes. In addition, painting works on the singularity of the image, it realizes a complex figure all the elements of which are simultaneous. Cinema, on the contrary, focuses on the plurality of the images which are arranged in time sequence and thereby the representation of time and temporality is also enabled. In addition, it is of not inconsiderable importance that the technological instruments of cinema and photography exceeded the limits of painting since they were enabled to reproduce the entities of the world exactly as they materialized.

Therefore, painting appears to be the past of cinema which could be regarded as the manifestation of all its past artistic forms. At this point it is necessary to recall what Eisenstein wrote in an article entitled "Proud" in 1939 for the 20th anniversary of Soviet cinema: "For every art cinema represents the highest stage, as it were, of the realization of its potentials and tendencies. But moreover, for all the arts, taken together, cinema represents real authentic and final synthesis of all its manifestations" (qtd. in Beccastrini 51). Cinema is rightly regarded as the synthesis of all the artistic manifestations considering that when film was born at the end of the 19th century, among its ancestors various types of previous performance arts could be recognised: from theatre to circus, opera or even pantomime. The principle that led to cinema was that of the animated images, an ancient method of impressive performance: it is enough to think of the "wayang kulit", the Indonesian Shadow Puppet Theatre or the Chinese Shadow Puppetry.

The multimedial quality of cinema is reaffirmed by several other aesthetes, such as the Roman Eisenstein-specialist, Pietro Montani who refers to that property of film that it is able to initiate a dialogue between the various forms of representation and thereby it is capable of obtaining meanings from this dialogue ("La vita postuma della pittura nel cinema" 31). His theory derives from Eisenstein's thesis on the audiovisual editing according to which cinema is able to involve the greatest heterogeneity of the levels of expression in the complexity of all operations through which the audiovisual text is produced. The particular figurativeness of cinema, its "imaginicity" (or its "obraznost" as Eisenstein called it) originates from this multimedial aspect, or in other words, from the ability of activating a high number of perceptive methods ("La vita postuma della pittura nel cinema" 31). Together with its multimedial quality cinema seems to be the continuity of painting for Eisenstein as he regards its concept the "contemporary phase of painting" (Montani, "La soglia invalicabile della rappresentazione sul rapporto pittura-cinema in Eizenstein" 45). In speaking of cinema as the "contemporary phase of painting" Eisenstein stresses the fact that cinema inherits certain problems from painting – what we call "visual representation." Therefore, there is some continuity between painting and cinema: for Eisenstein they both belong to a problematic tradition of representation and are related to a certain group of problems that have been handed down to the figurative arts over time. One of the problems of representation that cinema inherits from painting is the problem of "ex-stasis" and the construction of its figure – that is, the problem of pathos which is tied to the experience of producing meaning (Montani, "La soglia invalicabile della rappresentazione sul rapporto pittura-cinema in Eizenstein" 51). The modern Italian perception of Eisenstein's theory also adapts the concept of cinema as the "contemporary phase of painting". Among the Italian art historians it is Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti who paid the greatest attention to cinema. As a theoretician he supports the thesis of cinema as fine art which is to be studied and understood with the instruments of art history (Costa, *Cinema e pittura* 93). We apply this approach when proceding with the analyses of the single films.

II.2. The history of the fusion of cinema and painting

The relationship between cinema and painting emerges as a historical problem as well considering that film was nourished by his past composed of literature, music and painting most prevalently. When reinstating the origins of this artistic interlocking, the silent film, and considering the case of the Futurists and Surrealists, it can be pointed out that cinema expressed the same meanings and values as painting did inasmuch as several representatives of the Futurist and Surrealist cinema came directly from the field of painting such as the Surrealist Marcel Duchamp or Salvador Dalí. The Expressionism is mostly represented by the German Robert Wiene's *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* 1920) which contains the complete aesthetical oeuvre of the Avant-garde in its violent and unreal geometry of lights and shadows; although no concrete painting is cited in the film. The same characteristics could be traced in terms of the most representative Surrealist pieces, including *Entr'acte* (1924) by René Clair or *L'âge d'or* (1930) or *Un chien andalou* (1929) by Luis Buñuel or Salvador Dalí. These films are also reflections of the Surrealist aesthetics, even though no Surrealist painting is concretely evoked. At this point we also need to mention the Futurist film as it has a significant manifesto (*Manifesto del cinema futurista*) which considers film to be the most adequate form of art through its dynamism and synthethic language.

In Italy in the evolution of the cinematographic language several artists were involved, such as Virgilio Marchi, an Italian architect who was the production designer of several films in the 1940s-1960s. Another instance could be Enrico Prampolini who designed the splendid Futurist scenic design of *Thaïs* (1917) by Anton Giulio Bragaglia. In addition, one could mention the name of the painter Giulio Aristide Sartorio to whom the only silent film, entirely written and directed by an Italian painter, could be attributed: *Il mistero di Galatea* of 1918. Six years later Fernand Léger directs *Le ballet mécanique* (1924) in the same way since the plot, the direction, the scenic design, the costumes and the screenplay are all attributed to him (De Santi 9). In terms of the Scandinavian cinema, Benjamin Christensen in *Häxan: Witchcraft through the Ages* (1922) has reconstructed an Infernal witches' Sabbath through the citations of some canvases by Hieronymus Bosch, Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Francisco Goya, reproducing the atmosphere of these paintings (De Santi 13). A further example can be Fritz Lang who had recourse to the medieval miniatures for the costumes designed by Paul Gerd Guderian in *Die Nibelungen*

15

(1924). In the same film he quoted Arnold Böcklin's *The Great God Pan* in the sequence of Siegfried's ride through the fog-shrouded, enchanted forest. He was also inspired by an engraving of Max Klinger for the image of the nude children with garlands on their heads next to Attila in his black armour. In the French silent cinema it was Jean Renoir in *Nana* (1926) who created images that evoke the figurative elements and influences of Auguste Renoir (his father) and Édouard Manet. As a last instance of silent film, Eisenstein in *Thunder over Mexico* (1932-33) applied the elements of the Primitive Mexican, Aztec and Maya art. In the famous sequence of the "Day of the dead" Jose Guadalupe Posada's grotesque representation of death in his engravings and his figures called "Calaveras" are evoked.

The history of the sound film also demonstrates rich traces of pictorial elements. In terms of the Italian cinema, it is to refer to Renato Castellani's *Giulietta e Romeo* (*Romeo and Juliet* 1954) in which the major reference points are composed by Piero della Francesca's frescoes (*Legend of the True Cross* 1452-1466), Leonardo da Vinci's *La Vergine dell'Annunciazione* (*Annunciation* 1472-1475) and Hans Holbein's *Henry VIII* (1536-37). Castellani's Juliet coincides with the Madonna of Pasolini's *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*) inasmuch they both model on Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto* (*Madonna of Childbirth*, 1457). Apart from Castellani, it was most prevalent in Luchino Visconti's cinema to insert pictorial citations in films. In *Senso* (1954), for instance, the visual text goes back to a gallery of pictorial resources: *La lettera* (*The Letter*, 1867) and *La toilette del mattino* (*Morning toilette*, 1898) by Telemaco Signorini, *Il bacio* (*The Kiss*, 1859) by Francesco Hayez or *Dopo la battaglia di Magenta* (*After the battle of Magenta*, 1860-61) by Giovanni Fattori are all evoked.

In the Russian cinema the phenomenon is mostly represented by Eisenstein's oeuvre. In *Ivan Groznyy* (*Ivan the Terrible* 1944, 1946-48) El Greco is the composing matrix of the scenes, costumes and characters. It is also abundant in references to the Russian art of the late 19th century: Vasily Surikov's paintings (*The Boyarynya Morozova*, 1887; *Tsarevna Visiting Monastery*, 1912) determined the representation of the faces and the attitudes of the characters to a great extent. As for the sequence of the *Aleksandr Nevskiy* (*Battle of Alexander Nevsky*, 1938) the director admitted having borrowed it from Piero della Francesca and Paolo Uccello.

The modern American films are also interwoven with artistic allusions. For instance, *The Merry Widow* (1934) by Ernst Lubitsch appears as a reminiscence of Henri Matisse's world. In addition, George Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* (1936) presents several

citations from Beato Angelico, Botticelli, Mantegna and Piero della Francesca. Moreover, in Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (1975) the iconography of the English painting of the 19th-18th century is most significant: John Constable's *Malvern Hall* (1809), Joshua Reynolds' *John Hayes St. Leger and Lord Heathfield* (1787) and Thomas Gainsborough's *Lady Sheffield* (1785-86) are cited among others.

The list of films demonstrating the coincidence of cinematographic elements with painting could be continued in an endless way. This is why the present paper presumes the importance of their alignment. The first group of films is composed by those documentaries which are about painters or paintings, such as *Van Gogh* (1948) and *Gaugain* (1950) by Alan Resnais, *Piero della Francesca* (1949), *Goya* (1951), *Picasso* (1955), *Giotto* (1969) by Luciano Emmer; *The Fantastic World of M. C. Escher* (1980) by Michele Emmer; *Carpaccio* (1947) by Umberto Barbaro and Roberto Longhi; *Deposizione di Raffaello* (1948) and other works by Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti. Such films suggest several aesthetical problems. For instance, the embedded visualization or the pictorial narration raises the phenomena of double surreality: that is, artistic coding embedded within another artistic structure. In addition, we might also need to ponder on the value of black and white representation of a coloured painting, as it happens in Alan Resnais's *Van Gogh* or *Gaugain*. The black and white images and close-ups bring a documentarist, realist point of view into the narrative structure. At this point, we might need to decide where the border is: which images can be still considered those of Van Gogh and which are already those of Resnais?

A second group of films is constituted by those which are about the more or less fictionalized biographies of painters, such as *Surviving Picasso* (1996) by James Ivory, *The Agony and the Ecstasy* (1965) by Carol Reed dedicated to Michelangelo or *Pontormo* by Giovanni Fago in 2004. The most iconic example of this category might be Tarkovsky's *Andrey Rublyov* (*Andrei Rublev*, 1966) which depicts the life of the major fifteenth-century Russian iconographer. This film could be considered the emblem and a theoretical summary of the relationship between cinema and painting. As the black and white projection of fiction is transformed into coloured icons (coloured non-fiction) in the final scene, it might be interpreted as the concluding station of a spiritual and figurative itinerary.

Remaining at this category, it is essential to add that several American biopics also devoted to the life of an artist, such as John Huston's *Moulin Rouge* (1952), about Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Vincente Minnelli's *Lust for Life* (1956), about Vincent van Gogh.

These films might have the tendency to recycle society's cliches about artists, such as notions of genius, recklessness and inner torment. Other films such as *Modigliani* (2004) by Mick Davis suggest that making art is in harmony with living intensely, talent with struggle. As it appears through the character of Waldo Lydecker (Clifton Webb) in *Laura* (1944) by Otto Preminger, Hollywood traditionally represents artistic figures and environments in a self-destructive or corrupting light. The French director Maurice Pialat, instead, brings a rather sociological and existential approach to his subject in *Van Gogh* (1991), where art-making is still self-destructive, yet, it leaves room for socializing.

To another category those works belong that portray a "tableau vivant", such as Luis Buñuel does it in *Viridiana* (1961) when he recreates Leonardo da Vinci's *Ultima cena* (*Last Dinner,* 1494-98) in the environment of beggars. This is a phenomenon that characterizes Pasolini's oeuvre as well, most typically in *La ricotta* as it will be discussed later. One of the most relevant examples could be Jean-Luc Godard's *Passion* (1982) in which the main character, a Polish painter directs a series on Rembrandt, Francisco Goya and Eugène Delacroix, using exactly the system of "tableaux vivant".

A further group is represented by those films which are realized by painters. This is where several above-mentioned pieces belong, such as *Il mistero di Galatea* of 1918 by Giulio Aristide Sartorio, a cinematographer and painter whose frescoes in Pre-Raphaelite style can be seen in Palazzo Montecitorio of Rome. In addition, *Thaïs* (1917) by Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Un chien andalou* (1929) by Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí also belong to this category.

Finally, those films remain in which there is a reference to a painter, necessary for the definition of the cultural context. This is the case of the references to the painting of Rembrandt and Jan Vermeer in Carl Theodor Dreyer's cinematography (as in *Dies Irae*, 1943) or the allusions to Thomas Gainsborough's painting in Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*. In addition, this phenomenon interweaves Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* (1972) through its allusions to Francis Bacon's imagery.

II.3. The painted effect and its semiotic problems

What Pasolini's films tend to create through the citations of fine arts is the impression of "déjà vu, déjà entendu." As for the scene settings, it means that a painting is

inserted in the film and it is transformed to be part of the directed world. This is what Andrea Costa started to call "painted effect" (152). The citation of a painting in film essentially equals with setting a picture in motion, as the original meaning of the Latin word "citare" suggests it so.[2] When a painting is put in motion in a filmic milieu, the "quotation marks" disappear and the picture is adapted to its new surrounding. This hypothesis of ours is supported by Walter Benjamin's theory elaborated in *Das Passagen-Werk*, according to which cinema is able to decontextualize, recontextualise and recycle: "Questo lavoro deve sviluppare al massimo grado l'arte di citare senza virgolette. La sua teoria è intimamente connessa a quella del montaggio." (qtd. in Costa, *Il cinema e le arti visive* 119).[3] Furthermore, it is sustained in the present paper that the insertion of a pictorial citation is a key to the interpretation of the film. This theory is in line with Antoine Compagnon's hypothesis, discussed in *La seconde main, ou le travail de la citation* (1979): "La citazione tenta di riprodurre nella scrittura una passione di lettura, di ritrovare l'istantanea, folgorante sollecitazione, perché è appunto la lettura, intrigante ed eccitante, che produce la citazione. La citazione ripete, accoglie la lettura nella scrittura: in verità lettura e scrittura non sono che la stessa cosa...ecc" (qtd. in Costa, *Il cinema e le arti visive* 101).[4]

The phenomenon of the painted effect can be observed in several films to greater or less extent. The Italian cinema, in general, often turned to the pattern of the painted effect. A notorious coincidence with the Pasolinian cinema can be detected in Valerio Zurlini's *La prima notte della quiete* (*The Professor* 1972) in which the professor Daniele Dominici (Alain Delon) and his student visit Monterchi in order to interpret Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto*, the painting that emerges in Pasolini's *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 1964) as well. The same motif is testified in Vittorio De Sica's *Miracolo a Milano* (*Miracle in Milan*, 1951) which presents a wide range of references to the world of Chagall and Grosz. Bertolucci's *Ultimo tango a Parigi*

---

[2] The Latin "citare" is an iterative form of the word "ciere" which means " to put something in motion".

[3] "This work has to develop the art of citation without questions marks to its maximum degree. Its theory is intimately connected with that of the montage."
The translations of the single extracts from studies, screenplays, interviews, Pasolini's novels, poems or dramas are my own works, when not indicated differently. The quotations are normally in the original language (or in the language they were cited in a study, like in the case of Walter Benjamin), with the English translation in the footnote. When I found the published English translation of the cited text, I inserted that in the main text, without footnoting it.

[4] "The citation attempts to reproduce a passion of interpretation in the writing, it feels to recover the momentary and stunning solicitation because it is exactly the intriguing and exciting reading which produces the citation. The citation repeats, receives the reading in the writing: in reality, reading and writing are the same things…etc."

(*Last Tango in Paris*, 1972) can also be inserted in this line of films inasmuch as it contains the reproductions of some images by Francis Bacon in its headlines. In addition, Michelangelo Antonioni's *Deserto Rosso* (*Red Desert*, 1963) has been compared to abstract painting in that the atmosphere is a reminiscent of Giorgio De Chirico's world.

The cinematographers who made the greatest impact on Pasolini's films were also influenced by the painted effect as several of their films underline. One of the most significant films was Carl Theodor Dreyer's *La Passion di Jeanne D'Arc* (*The Passion of Joan of Arc*, 1928) in which the painted effect has an important role to outline characters: the face of one of the inquisitor monks is a reminiscent of Albrecht Dürer's *Portrait of Hieronymus Holzschuher* (1526). In terms of the other most influential pieces, the films of the Nouvelle Vague, even in Jean-Luc Godard's *À bout de soufflé* (*Breathless*, 1960) James Abbott McNeill Whistler's *Symphony in White* (1862) becomes the composing motif when Michel sees Patricia's reflection in the mirror. In addition, in *Pierrot le fou* (1965) when Mariann manifests her desire about going back to civilisation, an allusion to Édouard Manet's *Le déjuener sur l'herbe* (*Breakfast on the Grass*, 1862-63) can be pinpointed. Furthermore, in Francois Truffaut's *La nuit américaine* (*Day for Night*, 1973) *Las Meninas* (1656) by Diego Velázquez is the visual leitmotif, another common element with Pasolini's oeuvre as the same picture determines the visual world of *Che cosa sono le nuvole?*

The number of the examples is nearly infinite as the fusion of cinema and fine arts is a prevalent motif even in the modern American films. It is enough to think of Peter Greenaway's *A Zed and Two Noughts* (1985) with its allusions to Vermeer's artistic world or Martin Scorsese's *After Hours* (1985) with its references to hyperrealism. Furthermore, it is impossible to exclude *Girl with a Pearl Ring* from 2003 by Peter Webber, which is probably the most recent illustration of the phenomenon. The major questions raised in all these works are concerned with the method of insertion of a painting in the film language and the allusive functions of the given image. Since the "quotation" communicates with the new artistic environment in its "ensemble", it is also necessary to describe the nature of this communication between the recreated work and its new intervisual milieu.

***

To sum up, this chapter presented film as the product of the development of photography and painting. Therefore, it concentrated on the description of the encounter between cinema and painting. First, the similarities and differences between the two genres have been depicted. Second, the consideration of cinema as the synthesis of the past artistic

manifestations leads to various theoretical problems which have been investigated. We arrived at the conclusion of accepting the modern Italian perception of Eisenstein's theory and regarding cinema as fine art which is to be studied and understood with the instruments of art history. Third, the intertwining phenomena of cinema and painting have also been analyzed as a historical problem, and therefore, the French, German, Italian, Russian and American instances have been displayed. Moreover, we have also introduced a classification of the films concerned, on the basis of which we can state that the films concerning with the relationship between cinema and painting can be arranged in the following five categories:

1.) Documentaries which are about painters or paintings

2.) Fictionalized biographies of painters

3.) Those films that portray a "tableau vivant"

4.) Those films that are directed by painters

5.) Those films in which there is a reference to a painter or a painting

Finally, the "painted effect" and its semiotic problems have been analyzed. As a consequence, we declared that when dealing with this phenomenon the following questions should be taken into consideration:

- the method of insertion of a painting

- the allusive functions of the given image

- the nature of the communication between the recreated work and its new intervisual milieu

III. PASOLINI'S AFFILIATION WITH PAINTING

III.1. The origins of Pasolini's interest in fine arts

III.1.1. The theoretician and art historian

Pasolini's oeuvre is the imprint of a poet, a writer and a film director who nourished a deepened affiliation with fine arts, especially with painting. This cinematographic interest in painting is reaffirmed by Pasolini's own confession:

> (…) my cinematographic tastes are not essentially cinematographic, but figurative…when the camera moves in my images, they are movements akin to a camera moving along a canvas; I cannot conceive images, landscapes, or compositions of figures outside of my initial passion for fourteenth-century painting where man was the center of all perspective. . . I always conceive the background as the background of a painting . . . and therefore I always attack it frontally. And figures are always moved against this background, as far as possible symmetrically: close-up against close-up, a forward pan against a backward pan, a regulated rhythm (thirds of shots), etc., etc. There is almost never a coupling of close-ups and long shots. Figures in long shot are in the background, followed by a pan, which, I repeat, appears always symmetrically, as if I was looking at a painting – where figures can only be dimly seen. I would use the shoot to see the details better. (*Mamma Roma* 145)[5]

The pictorial references either in his poetry or in his films are completed with a thoroughly elaborate theoretical work. Namely, in 1943 Pasolini started to work for *Setaccio*, an art magazine of Bologna, as an art critic. His activity as a critic mainly concentrated on the analysis of the contemporary Italian painting. In his studies, which are collected in *Descrizioni di descrizioni* he examined the works of Mario Mafai, Renato Guttuso, Robert Bresson, Toti Scialoja and Giorgio Morandi. He dedicates important chapters to Pablo Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and *Korean War* (1951) as well. Moreover, an

---

[5] The passage is from the English translation published in Naomi Greene, *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 45.

in-depth analysis is concerned with anxiety and Narcissism as they appear as mental structures in Carlo Levi's painting. Furthermore, a homage in verses entitled "I Reca" is paid to his painter friend, Giuseppe Zigaina in 1969.

III.1.2. The graphic designer and painter

In addition to the theoretical work, Pasolini's oeuvre also offers the works of a graphic designer and a painter. A couple of metaphysical landscapes in the style of De Pisis are the first results of Pasolini's painter attempts, which are related to his homeland, Casarsa. Its world of rituals, customs and faces was the core of his poetic inspiration, he even experimented with lexical forms to give literary expression to the language of this milieu. Thus, these pictures are prevalently in connection with Pasolini's youth, which is also a reason why most of these pictures are kept in Casarsa.

The majority of Pasolini's painter activity is concerned with portraits or self-portraits. A gallery of portraits is dedicated to his friends and colleagues, among which one finds the pictures of Alberto Moravia, Laura Betti, Ninetto Davoli, Maria Callas and Roberto Longhi. Among the paintings, two youthful self-portraits are most referred to: *Self-Portrait with His Old Shawl* (oil on hardboard, 1946) and *Self-Portrait with a Flower in his Mouth* (oil on hardboard, 1947). Both of them envisage an opaque gaze, which alludes to the intention of concealing the private self for the public.

III.2. A discovery of the roots

Pasolini's passion about the images started in 1938-39 while at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Bologna he was reading Art History, attending the courses held by Roberto Longhi. From the point of view of pictorial effects, it was undoubtedly Longhi who made the deepest impact on Pasolini's visualisation. This hypothesis is underlined by the screenplay of *Mamma Roma* whose motto says: "A Roberto Longhi, cui sono debitatore della mia «fulgurazione figurativa»."[6]

---

[6] "To Roberto Longhi, to whom I am in debt for my *figurative fulguration.*"

Longhi's special field of interest was constituted by the painting of the 13th and 14th century; Masolino, Masaccio and Piero della Francesca from the 15th century and Caravaggio from the 16th century. In 1942-1943 he was holding a series of lectures on the art of Masolino and Masaccio (*Fatti di Masolino e Masaccio*), which was visited by Pasolini with enthusiasm. These interests of the art historian made a huge impact on Pasolini's creative orientation, steering his attention towards painting. In addition, the art historian's innate inclination towards celluloid also influenced the cinematographic attitude of the future director. Pasolini describes in *Descrizioni di descrizioni* the origins of his cinematic vocation in conjunction with his attendance of Roberto Longhi's art history course in Bologna:

> Che cosa faceva Longhi in quell'auletta appartata e quasi introvabile dell'Università di via Zamboni? Della "storia dell'arte"? Il corso era quello memorabile sui *Fatti di Masolino e di Masaccio* […]. Sullo schermo venivano infatti proiettate delle diapositive. I totali e i dettagli dei lavori, coevi ed eseguiti nello stesso luogo, di Masolino e di Masaccio. Il cinema AGIVA, sia pure in quanto mera proiezione di fotografie. E agiva nel senso che un'inquadratura rappresentante un campione del mondo masoliniano – in quella continuità che è appunto tipica del cinema – si 'opponeva' drammaticamente a un'inquadratura' rappresentante a sua volta un campione del mondo masaccesco. Il manto di una vergine al manto di un'altra Vergine...Il Primo Piano di un Santo o di un astante al Primo Piano di un altro Santo o di un altro astante... Il frammento di un mondo formale si opponeva quindi fisicamente, materialmente al frammento di un altro mondo formale: una «forma» a un'altra «forma». (251-2)[7]

---

[7] "What was Roberto Longhi doing in that small and isolated classroom of the university in Zamboni Street? Art history? His course was a memorable one on the "Facts about Masolino and Masaccio". […] On the screen some slides were projected. The long shots and the detailed fragments of the works carried out at the same time and at the same place by Masolino and Masaccio. Cinema was ACTING even as a mere projection of photographs. And it was acting in the sense that a framing representing a sample of the Masolino-world – in that continuity that is exactly typical of the cinema – opposed dramatically against a framing representing in turn a sample of the Masaccio-world. The mantle of a virgin against the mantle of another Virgin…The close-up of a Saint or of an observer against the close-up of another Saint or of another observer….The fragment of a formal world, therefore, opposed physically and materially against the fragment of another formal world: a "form" against another "form."

III.2.1. Pasolini and Masaccio

Owing to Longhi's influence the painter who inspired Pasolini's visuality the most is Masaccio, particularly for the black and white representation of grief. In relation to this effect Pasolini himself provides the testimony of his affiliation with Masaccio's art: "Il pittore che mi ispira figurativemante più di tutti anche come colore direi (per quanto si possa intravedere del dolore nel bianco e nero) è Masaccio sopratutto: cioè un pittore più fermo [...]. Anche la fotografia, vorrei che assomigliasse un po' alle riproduzioni in bianco e nero di Masaccio" (Magrelli 52).[8] Masaccio's frescoes exactly correspond to how Pasolini conceives cinema. In other words, in his pictures one might point out stationary figures, light-shadow technique, which is exactly what Pasolini appreciates in painting, as suggested in *Mamma Roma*: "la mia macchina da presa si muove su fondi e figure sentiti sostanzialmente come immobili e profondamente chiaroscurati. [...] Non si può concepire una pala d'altare con le figure in movimento. Detesto il fatto che le figure si muovano (149)."[9]

The frescoes by Masaccio which inspire Pasolini the most are the ones in Brancacci Chapel in the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence (see fig. 1-3). In these pictures, namely in the episode of "The Expulsion from the Garden of Eden" Adam and Eve are intensely enlightened from a side so that their bodies are accentuated. Similarly, in the picture "St. Peter Healing the Sick with his Shadow" the importance of the body's contours is reflected through the shadows. Taking all this into consideration, Ottenbacher is right when saying that Pasolini "bequeaths Masaccio's figurative model to cinema (18)" inasmuch as "Masaccio paints like a master of the light-shadow technique, like an explorer of the enlightenment in painting" (19). Pasolini applies the same technique in the course of the representation of the human body in his own cinematography. In addition, Ottenbacher explains that Masaccio uses new methods for the representation of religious legends and his focus is the representation of human body, with a special attention to gestures and emotive content. His characters are often simple people represented in a realistic way;

---

[8] "The painter who inspired me figuratively the most of all, even in regards to colour, I would say (as one can see it from the grief in the black-and-white is especially Masaccio: that is, a firmer painter [...]. Even in regards to photography, I would like to make it similar to the black and white reproductions of Masaccio."

[9] "my film camera focuses on deep ends and characters which are substantially perceived as immobile and represented through the intense use of light-shadow technique. [...] It is not possible to perceive an altar piece with the characters in motion. I hate the fact that the characters move"

however, they are not as gleaming as Giotto's characters who are enlightened by a fervid light.

What Pasolini primarily borrows from Masaccio is his light-shadow technique, the representation of gesture and human emotive content and the realistic representation of simple characters. The confirmation comes from the director himself in *Mamma Roma*: "Io cerco la plasticità dell'immagine, sulla strada mai dimenticata di Masaccio: il suo fiero chiaroscuro, il suo bianco e nero – o sulla strada, se volete, degli arcaici, in uno strano connubio di sottigliezza e di grossezza. Non posso essere impressionistico. Amo lo sfondo, non il paesaggio" (149).[10]

The traces of Masaccio's effect are primarily present in *Accattone*. This influence can be evidently pinpointed in the representation of faces, gestures and the use of light-shadow technique applied in the various scenes. However, Pasolini does not imitate Masaccio's paintings; he uses them as sources of inspiration to determine his own way of envisaging characters and materials. Moreover, the reference points are not Masaccio's frescoes any more, but their black and white reproductions, as observed and remembered them from Longhi's monochromatic projections. This is the way Masaccio's pictures are inserted and transformed in the Pasolinian cinema, however, they are given an own milieu, an own motion and an own rhythm to have a Pasolinized post-existence.

III.2.2. The Mannerist painting in Pasolini's cinema

Apart from Masaccio, other fields of art history also constituted a provision of materials for Pasolini. For instance, in the 1960s he demonstrates a growing interest in Mannerist painting and as an art historian he writes critiques or studies concerning this art period. The rediscovery of the Mannerist painting of the 16th century is a typical phenomenon of the 20th century in Italy which becomes recognizable in the reclamation of the iconographic models of the style 'liberty', designed for the aesthetics of the bizarre. In the 1930s such terms were used by the artists of the Roman School, such as Mario Mafai, Scipione and Corrado Cagli. Furthermore, a series of studies published by the Longhi-Workshop demonstrates the persistent interest in Mannerism which results in well-known

---

[10] "I am looking for the plasticity of the image on Masaccio's never forgotten way: his dignified light-shadow technique, his black and white – or if you want, on the way of the archaic, in a strange union of fineness and thickness. I cannot be impressionist. I love the background, not the landscape."

interventions, such as Giuliano Briganti's book about the Italian Mannerism, *La maniera italiana*. As Galluzzi remarks, it happened in this cultural climate that Pasolini discovered a consonance between Mannerism and his aesthetical focus (25). Galluzzi also recapitulates that the real period of the Pasolinian Mannerism is around 1964, after Pasolini's literary magazine, the *Officina* fails and the first debates arise between him and the artistic group called "Gruppo 63" – a unity of the Italian neo-avantgarde movements. It happens in this period that Pasolini's activity as a civil poet terminates and he becomes aware that in order to react to the surrounding aggressions, he must turn to provocation (Galluzzi 29). These are the years when Pontormo and the 16th century's painters appear on the screen and he protests against the artists of the past: "amo anche la morte di Giotto, / che non mi piace più, laggiù, in quella triste navata, / piccola come una navicella pirata, / pittore con la testa corta come l'Umbria!" (Galluzzi 29)[11] Moreover, these are also the years in which, aesthetically speaking, the project of the conscious use of death as a linguistic sign appears on screen.

Mannerism means a conscious break with the classical in the climate of incredulity and demonism, as it is most effectively reflected in the short film, *La ricotta*. Its fabula is related to the Bible, this is where the film's Christian iconography stems from. A film crew is shooting a film on Christ's passion, having a starving and penniless character called Stracci in the Good Thief's role. Simultaneously with the fictive passion, Stracci's real passion and death is in the focus. The insensitivity towards the real-time crucifixion and, therefore, the decadence of the basic values of Catholicism are pinpointed by the references to the exaggeration of the Mannerist iconography. Stracci's passion is confronted with and, thereby, reflected through the colourful "tableaux vivants", which are inspired by Jacopo Pontormo's and Rosso Fiorentino's pictures entitled *The Deposition from the Cross* (1521). What Pasolini cites from their visual world is Pontormo's incredulity and "religious aberration" and Rosso Fiorentino's demonism.

In addition to *La ricotta*, the iconography of *I racconti di Canterbury* also appears as an imprint of Mannerism. The ridiculousness of human flaws and attitudes is portrayed through the evocation of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Flemish Proverbs* (1559). Furthermore, the visualisation of the underworld is facilitated through Hieronymus Bosch's *Hell* (1490) with all its exaggeration, aberration, demoniac and shocking traits.

---

[11] "I also love Giotto's death, / which I don't like anymore, down there, in that sad aisle, / little like a pirate boat / painter with a head as short as Umbria!"

III.2.3. Pasolini and Leonardo da Vinci

Apart from Mannerism, Leonardo da Vinci's impact upon Pasolini's cinema is also of great importance. As Galluzzi points out, this inclination started during the university years: in the summer of 1942 Pasolini, wishing to graduate in Art History, sent two letters to Longhi, proposing two possible topics for his thesis paper (39). One of these potential topics was the analysis of Leonardo da Vinci's "Nude Mona Lisa" (Galluzzi 39)[12]. Furthermore, Leonardo's effect can also be pinpointed in *Mamma Roma* inasmuch as the opening scene of the film, that is, the images of Carmine's wedding evoke the motif of the last supper. It is presumed to be a citation of Girolamo Romanino's *Ultima cena* (*Last supper*), however, as an archetype, Leonardo's fresco of the Church of Holy Mary of Grace (Chiesa di Santa Maria delle Grazie) of Milan might have also been taken into consideration.

III.2.4. Pasolini and Caravaggio

Pasolini shows great interest in Caravaggio's art as well. For instance, Ettore Garofalo, a character in *Mamma Roma*, reminds of Caravaggio's teenager characters. The film's scenario underlines that Ettore was working in a restaurant in Trastevere when the director discovered him. Ettore was standing with a fruit bowl in his hand when Pasolini caught sight of him, this is why this scene is referred to as a realisation of a Caravaggio-painting ("as if the boy stepped out of a Caravaggio-painting").[13] In addition, the illumination of the characters is a reminiscence of Caravaggio's typical light-shadow painting technique. For instance, in the final scene Ettore's death evokes the death of Christ as if it was illuminated by Caravaggio and painted by Masaccio. Moreover, at the wedding scene one can discover the traits of Caravaggio's late and Sicilian period in the fact that the characters are minimized in the enlarged milieu of the walls.

---

[12] In Italian the title would have been *Intorno alla «Gioconda ignuda» di Leonardo.* (*Around Leonardo's "Nude Mona Lisa"*)

[13] It is referred to in "Schwartz B. D., Pasolini-rekviem" which was published in *Filmvilág* (March 2000) Júlia Csantavéri's translation: 45.

III.2.5. Pasolini and the contemporary painting

Pasolini maintained a continuous relationship with contemporary art. This passion is confirmed by the fact that he decided to prepare his thesis paper on contemporary painting, dedicating the first three chapters to Filippo De Pisis, Carlo Carrà and Giorgio Morandi. Finally, these chapters got lost during the defeat of the Italian army after 8 September 1943 and while escaping on foot to Livorno. In the end, he elaborated his thesis paper on Giovanni Pascoli's poetry which earned him a graduation in 1945 (Galluzzi 44).[14]

The influence of modern painting is most visibly demonstrable in *Teorema* and *Salò*. As Gérard points out, in *Teorema* the effects of Cubism, Russian Futurism and Imagism are observed (43). The Cubism is present through the evocation of Francis Bacon's imagery, whereas Imagism is represented by the insertion of Percy Wyndham Lewis's Vorticist silhouettes. In *Salò* modern painting is evoked through the references to Fernand Léger's pictures and to Futurist and Formalist works, such as paintings by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni or Carlo Carrà.

It is modern painting which acts as the principal iconographical reference point of the visual texture of *La rabbia* (*The Anger*) as well. As Marchesini enhances, the iconography of this film is based on Renato Guttuso's *Crocefissione (Crucifixion*, 1940-41) (67). In this Crucifixion-representation the traditional iconography is set into the actual context which lists other suggestions of fine arts, from Picasso to Mafai.

III.2.5.1. Pasolini and the Futurism

Out of all the tendencies of contemporary art Pasolini nourishes the most manifold relationship with Futurism, this is why a more elaborate analysis is dedicated to its investigation. In *Empirismo eretico* an entire chapter examines the avant-garde tones of the 1960s. As opposed to these tendencies, Futurism and the other classical avant-garde directions are supported due to their attempts to make a positive and radical contribution to the social norms, offering a static and stabile alternative. Furthermore, Pasolini favours

---

[14] The title in Italian: *Antologia della lirica pascoliana: introduzione e commenti* (An Anthology of Pascoli's Lyric Poetry: Introduction and Comments).

these tendencies also for their ambition to create literature and introduce innovative writing techniques.

According to Pasolini's interpretation, the Futurists did not endeavour to annihiliate language and literature through their extreme and scandalizing rebellions. Instead, their destructive rhetorics aimed at the delimitation of the surrounding bourgeois milieu. This social awareness manifests itself in the application of the free indirect speech ("discorso indiretto libero") either in literature or in painting. In the latter, this tradition becomes visible in pop-art, therefore in the phenomena of inserting an object similar to an extract of spontaneous speech in favour of expressivity or ironic tone. This element of pop-art can also be found in literature, namely in an innovative application of free indirect speech: in the ambition that the technical language of the "addressee" (thus, the working class) be present in the sender's (thus, the author's) language (*Saggi sulla letteratura e sull'arte* 1363). Thereby the main components of this new, anti-classical poetics are constituted by the technology and the machines which incarnate and become "humanists" (*Saggi sulla letteratura e sull'arte* 1402). By means of these changes, the Futurists' language was modified and the technicist language was born, which is considered dilettante by Pasolini. The Futurist texts appear to be deprived of syntactic and stylistic elements, and the different levels of the narrative structure are linked together by means of lexical elements, which are prevalently noun combinations. Thus, the Futurist authors object to the validity of syntax and aspire to create the lexical quality through a prevalently nominalized register. Pasolini claims that such linguistic experiments lack content and quality and, in consequence, they float instead of operating with engrossment. Such innovative tendencies are results of a linguistic battle aiming at the destruction of the philistine language and the traditional literature. To Pasolini's mind, this scope is regarded positive, however, the means of realization do not lead to real innovations.

Therefore, Pasolini's attitude towards Futurism is rather ambivalent. He appreciates their attempt to destroy and annihilate the social norms and the surrounding bourgeois milieu, dedicating even literature and painting to this scope. However, their definitions of innovations (such as the application of free indirect speech or the incarnation of the machines) are considered dilettante by Pasolini. Their innovations contributed to the creation of the technicist language, however, it emerged at the expense of expressivity and it restrained the space between each and every linguistic level. The nominalized language that they created deteriorated both syntactically and stylistically speaking, and it was not able to lead to constant and intense results in terms of aesthetics or content.

III.3. The imprint of the affiliation with painting in the filmography

The aim of the present dissertation is to present and analyze the traces of Pasolini's affiliation with painting in his overall cinema. Before engaging in any details and having each relevant film in a "close-up", we feel the necessity of providing the reader with a "long shot".

Concerning the starting point of his cinematography, *Accattone*, Pasolini declared that in the abjection of his characters living in misery there is something "saint" or "religious".[15] Pasolini endeavoured to convey this "saint abjection" through music in *Accattone* and through the settings in some other films. For instance, in *Mamma Roma* Ettore appears as a real projection of Caravaggio's *Ragazzo con canestro di frutta* (*Boy with a Bowl of Fruit*, 1593), as suggested by the screenplay itself: "exactly as I showed him in the film, carrying a bowl of fruit just like a figure in a Caravaggio painting (Stack 51)." Moreover, Ettore's death in the hospital is a resurrection of Andrea Mantegna's *Cristo morto* (*Lamentation over Dead Christ*, 1480) according to several critics. We will argue that instead of Mantegna it is Masaccio whose visual structures gave energy and inspiration to the realisation of this scene.

Il Vangelo secondo Matteo (*The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*) offers various citations of painting. It appears as a reminiscence of the works of Piero della Francesca, Fra Filippo Lippi, Duccio, Botticelli, Giotto, El Greco, Carlo Levi and Rouault. Considering all the effects in the *Il Vangelo*, those of Piero della Francesca and Fra Filippo Lippi are the most significant since the film recreates Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto*, his characters of the Arezzo frescoes and Fra Filippo Lippi's *Banchetto di Erode* (*Salomè's Dancing at the Feast of Herod*, 1452-65). As a general remark, it is noted that Pasolini describes a traditional myths with the tools of the documentaries and by destroying and reconstructing the traditional iconography.

In the *Trilogy of Life* Pasolini often inserts paintings as citations. For instance, the *Decameron*'s (1971) famous dream scene is a recreation of Giotto's *Giudizio universale* (*Last Judgement*, 1306), or *The Tales of Canterbury* (1972) shows the effects of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. In addition, the last film of the oeuvre,

---

[15] http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mamma_Róma

Salò appears as an amalgam of the effects of Futurism, Cubism and Dada with some glances at Giotto's and Bosch's visual structures.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

To sum up, Pasolini's oeuvre is the imprint of the activity of a poet, a writer and a film director who had a deepened affiliation with fine arts, especially with painting. In addition to the theoretical work, Pasolini's works also offer the art pieces of a graphic designer and a painter, the majority of which is concerned with portraits or self-portraits. Pasolini's passion about fine arts started in 1938-1939 while at the Faculty of Arts of the University of Bologna he was reading Art History, attending the courses held by Roberto Longhi. The most significant impacts on Pasolini's visual structures are made by the following painters or styles:

- Masaccio
- Mannerism
- Leonardo da Vinci
- Caravaggio
- Contemporary art (Cubism, Futurism, Imagism)

IV. A FILMIC AND POETIC JOURNEY IN THE INFERNO OF THE SUBPROLETARIAT: AN INTRODUCTION TO *ACCATTONE*, *MAMMA ROMA* AND *LA RICOTTA*

A heap of broken images, where the sunbeats,
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket
no relief,
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only
There is shadow under this red rock,

I think we are in rats' alley
Where the dead men lost their bones.

"Are you alive, or not? Is there nothing in
your head?" (*The Waste Land* by T. S.
Eliot)

In his first films Pasolini handles social problems, focusing on the tragic human conditions and the future prospects of the inhabitants of the working-class suburbs (or as they are called in Italian: the "borgatori").[16] This interest of Pasolini accommodates the Neorealist Italian cinematographic traditions, and follows the path of *Ladri di biciclette* (*Bicycle Thieves*, 1948), *Miracolo a Milano* (*Miracle in Milan*, 1951), *Umberto D.* (1952) and *Il tetto* (*The Roof*, 1956) by Vittorio De Sica, Federico Fellini's *Le notti di Cabiria* (*Nights of Cabiria*, 1956) or that of *Amore in città* (*Love in the City* by Michelangelo Antonioni, Federico Fellini, Alberto Lattuada, Carlo Lizzani, Francesco Maselli, Dino Risi and Cesare Zavattini, 1953). The topics of the "Roman borgatas", "social and self-destruction", "doomed protagonists and their saviours" are introduced in Pasolini's first novels: in *Ragazzi di vita* (*Boys of Life*, 1956) and in *Una vita violenta* (*A Violent Life*, 1959).

These novels are also set in the Roman suburbs, in and around the tumble-down shacks of Garbatella and Pietralata. Their protagonists are starveling and debauched characters of the subproletariat whose life is about criminalities, humiliations, brutalization, revelries and (self-) prostitution. Whoever aspires to something more

---

[16] In Italian the working-class suburb is called "borgata", and its inhabitants are the "borgatori".

valuable or meaningful becomes estranged from his class and he is doomed. In *Una vita violenta* (*A Violent Life*) the unfeasibility of adaptation is discussed through the protagonist's, Tommaso's calvary. Tommaso is one of those "borgatori" who are not satisfied with their current conditions and yearn for a better way of living. He searches for a job; however, the work itself (similarly to Accattone's case) does not facilitate his progress. Nevertheless, his life approaches the borders of adaptation to society, considering that after his release from prison, he is provided with an own home in one of those blocks of flats that he calls luxury apartment houses: "Era sempre vissuto, dacché se ne ricordava, dentro una catapecchia di legno marcio, coperta di bandoni e di tela incerata, tra l'immondezza e la fanga, le cagate: e adesso, invece, finalmente, abitava nientemeno che in una palazzina, e di lusso" (188).[17] The miserable shacks are soon occupied by families coming from South-Italy (Puglia, Calabria). Upon his acquaintance with Irene, he wishes to become a better person: he turns to a priest and creates marriage plans. However, he is diagnosed with tuberculosis and placed in a hospital where an entirely infernal scene begins. The patients call a strike to which the police react with brutality. Only the members of the Communist Party are able to overcome the chaos through their inherent solidarity, which impresses Tommaso and convinces him to join them. However, when the district of Little Shanghai is flooded, his lung disease returns and he dies while saving others' lives. The "dénouement" of the novel can be compared to a film: every chapter appears as a sequence.

A year after this novel is published, in 1960 Pasolini starts to shoot his first film, *Accattone,* continuing the same track that was initiated in his novels. The main role is assigned to Franco Citti, an actor from the Roman suburbs, who has been discovered and often assigned with the role of the protagonist by Pasolini in his films. In 1962 *Accattone* is followed by *Mamma Roma*, the female pair of Accattone, after which, in 1963 *La ricotta* still concentrates on the survival chances of the subproletariat. However, *La ricotta* is rather innovative and experimental considering its film-in-the-film structure and the insertion of "tableaux vivants".

The novels and the upcoming films are linked for several reasons. One of them is a linguistic point of view as all these works use the Roman dialect, the so-called "romanesco" either as a filmic or as a literary language, to show the sub-proletariat milieu

---

[17] "He has always lived, since his early memories, in shanties made of rotten wood, covered by corrugated cardboards and tar papers, among rubbish, mud and shit: and now, instead, finally he lived in nothing less than a luxury apartment house."

in its naked reality. This project was initiated in *Ragazzi di vita* (*Boys of Life*) in which Italian is mixed with "romanesco" in order that reality could be portrayed as faithfully as possible. This aspect is made clear by Pasolini in an interview about his transition to cinema:

> Ho voluto adoperare una tecnica diversa spinto dalla mia ossessione espressiva. Ho voluto cambiare lingua abbandonando la lingua italiana, l'italiano; una forma di protesta contro le lingue e contro la società. Ma la vera spiegazione è che io, facendo il cinema, riproduco la realtà, quindi sono immensamente vicino a questo primo linguaggio umano che è l'azione dell'uomo che si rappresenta nella vita e nella realtà. ("Perché amo il cinema")[18]

Apart from the linguistic aspect, a thematic approach also links the above-mentioned works inasmuch as all of them end with the death of the sub-proletarian protagonist. The female characters (Irene for Tommaso, Stella for Accattone and Bruna for Ettore) might mean a sign of change for the male figures; however, such a change remains only an illusion in their seclusion. This confinement in which they suffer as "felons" is interpreted as Hell. This is exactly why Dante's "Inferno" is evoked both in the novels and in the screenplays. In the prosaic works, the most typical reference to Dante occurs in *Ragazzi di vita*, as a motto of the bathing scene at the Aniene:

> Traiti avanti, Alichino, e Calcabrina
>
> – cominciò egli a dire – e tu, Cagnazzo;
>
> E Barbariccia guidi la decina.
>
> Libicocco vegna oltre, e Draghinazzo,
>
> Ciriatto sannuto, e Graffiacane.
>
> E Farfarello, e Rubicante pazzo.
>
> ("Inferno", Canto XXI, verses 118-123)[19]

---

[18] "I wanted to use another technique, urged by my expressive obsession. I wanted to change language, abandoning the Italian language, the Italian; a form of protestation against the languages and against society. But the real explanation is that I, making films, reproduce the reality, so I am immensely close to this first human language which is the action of the person who is represented in life and in reality."

[19] Translated by Rev. H. F. Cary:
"Come Alichino forth," with that he cried,
"And Calcabrina, and Cagnazzo thou!
The troop of ten let Barbariccia lead.
With Libicocco Draghinazzo haste,
Fang'd Ciriatto, Grafflacane fierce,
And Farfarello, and mad Rubicant."

A particular dedication to Dante is "La mortaccia", published in 1959 in *Alì dagli occhi azzurri* together with the screenplays of *Accattone*, *Mamma Roma* and *La ricotta*. It is a narrative text in fragments, considered as the archetype of *La Divina Mimesis*, and called as a comedy of the "borgatas" by Dini (140). This work concentrates on the prostitute Teresa who descends into Hell which appears as imagined and structured by Dante, however, it is seen through Teresa's eyes. There emerges again a characteristic Pasolinian phenomenon inasmuch as Teresa's and the underworld's "romanesco" is mixed with the narrator's literary Italian language. Nonetheless, this linguistic contamination is motivated and well-explained by the fact that in her Hell, Teresa encounters a wide range of politicians, from Christian democrats to Stalin, from criminals to Moravia, from Neapolitans to Milanese. The same linguistic contamination and the same Dantesque effects determine Pasolini's first films, which will be demonstrated and thoroughly analyzed throughout the chapters concerned.

Apart from the literary-linguistic fusions, these first films are made suggestive by the contradiction of contaminating the subproletarian thematic focus with the exaltations of the figurative and musical allusions. The calvary of the most miserable, the somber spheres of the "borgatas" and the desolation of modernization are illustrated through the invocations of the finest pieces of art. The thematic aspect is undoubtedly prompted by the mythic and a historical vision that Pasolini has in regards to the working-class:

> attratto da una vita proletaria
>
> è per me religione
>
> la sua allegria, non la millenaria
>
> sua lotta: la sua natura, non la sua coscienza (*Le ceneri di Gramsci*)[20]

---

[20] "attracted by proletarian life /... their mirth is like / a religion for me, / not their age-old strife: their nature, not their class conscience"

V.   *ACCATTONE,* 1961

Accattone represents Pasolini's directorial debut since he mainly wrote screenplays prior to 1961.[21] On a thematic level, it transfers to screen the narrative material used in these previously written screenplays, such as in *La notte brava* (*Lusty Night in Rome*, 1959), *Morte di un amico* (*Death of a Friend*, 1959-60), *Una giornata balorda* (*From a Roman Balcony*, 1960). In addition, it follows the path of *Ragazzi di vita* (*Boys of Life*, 1956) and *Una vita violenta* (*Violent Life*, 1959), dealing with the lumpen-proletariat's reality and their potential chances for survival.

The "fabula" of this film presents the vicissitudes of a Roman lumpen-proletarian, Vittorio (known to everyone as Accattone), whereas the "syuzhet" describes the lumpen-proletariat's via crucis in Hell. The different stations of this journey are equal with the protagonist's transformation into a beast and the stations of the degradation of this social class.

Accattone, representing the fate of the lumpen-proletariat is a barbarian man, living on the margins of society. In his physical and mental conditions he is an ailing man who has lost every moral and intellectual sense. As a consequence, he exists in a complete uncertainty, in a psychological vacuum, beyond every moral principle, without any prospects for improvement. Three women endeavour to render Vittorio's precarious livelihood more stable. One of them is Ascenza, the wife: a hard and violent woman who does not wish to become attached to her husband any more. The second woman is Maddalena, who – as a reference to the *Bible* – is the prostitute who maintains Accattone. Finally, the third woman is Stella, who in her idealized appearance means the prospect of redemption for the failed man. She is impeccable and even virgin at the moment of their encounter; the unique fact that adumbrates her character and thereby approximates her to Accattone, is that her mother earned her living as a prostitute. Stella's figure always

---

[21] These screenplays include *La donna del fiume* (*The River Girl*, 1954) by Mario Soldati, *Il prigioniero della montagna* (1955) by Luis Trenker, *Le notti di Cabiria* (*Nights of Cabiria*, 1956) by Federico Fellini, *Marisa la civetta* (*Marisa*, 1957) by Mauro Bolognini, *Giovani mariti* (*Young Husbands*, 1958) by Mauro Bolognini, *La notte brava* (*Lusty Night in Rome*, 1959) by Mauro Bolognini, *Morte di un amico* (*Death of a Friend*, 1959-60) di Franco Rossi, *Il bell'Antonio* (*Bell'Antonio*, 1960) by Mauro Bolognini, *La canta delle marane* (1960) by Cecilia Mangini, *La giornata balorda* (*From a Roman Balcony*, 1960) by Mauro Bolognini, *La lunga notte del '43* (*It happened in '43*, 1960) by Florestano Vancini, *Il carro armato dell'8 settembre* (1960) by Gianni Puccini.

emerges in the deepest and most obscure moments, anticipating the prospect of redemption in the course of the infernal journey, as the following extract supports it:

> ACCATTONE (*sempre far sé, disperato*) A 'sto mondo, nun se campa più! Bisogna proprio tirà fori l'unghia! Ma possibile che la vita mia debba finì così? Ma io nun ce sto!Nemmeno se viè Dio pe' terra!
>
> Tace ancora. Intorno a lui il silenzio dei ruderi, dell'erba, del cielo, delle luci che scintillano tristi lontane, fin sui Castelli. Ed ecco laggiù comparire un'ombra: la figura di Stella. (*Per il cinema* 113)[22]

V.1. Accattone's hell

The supposition that Accattone goes through suffering in his own hell is reinforced by several references in the screenplay. First of all, right at the beginning of the plot the description of the landscape evokes the infernal fire inasmuch as "everything burns" (*Per il cinema* 7)[23], and the sun is compared to "hot lime". This is when Scucchia starts to speak and there evolves an apocalyptic vision: "SCUCCHIA Ecco la fine del mondo. Fateve vede bene, nun v'ho mai visto del giorno! V'ho sempre visto a lo scuro!" (*Per il cinema* 7)[24] Secondly, the characters seem to have infernal looks: "SCUCCHIA: Me parete tutti usciti dall'obitorio" (*Per il cinema* 7).[25] Thirdly, one can trace the motifs of the river and the bridge as they are present in Dante's "Inferno" and in Thomas Stearns Eliot's "The Waste Land".

For Accattone the water in which he wishes to throw himself implies salvation from his sins, as well as the prospect of mercy. By making the sign of the cross, the sacred content of the scene is underlined. To accentuate this sacred layer more intensely, at the river, right at the St. Angel Bridge the children appear like angels from an altar piece: "Accattone è solennemente in piedi sulla spalletta del Ponte degli Angeli, con tutta la fila degli angeli alle spalle. Indugia, scultoreo. [...] Scende, passa tra due tre ragazzini, belli

---

[22] "ACCATTONE (talking to himself, in a state of despair) In this world it's impossible to live anymore! You have to stand up for yourself! But is it possible that my life should end like this? […] And then down there he notices some shadow: it's Stella's figure."

[23] "Tutto brucia. Il sole tenero della mattina di fine estate, come calce rovente. Una faccia bruciata alza la scucchia coi due buchi sulle guance, e lo sguardo acquoso."

[24] "SCUCCHIA: Here is the end of the world. Come and show yourselves, I've never seen you by daylight! I've always seen you in darkness!"

[25] "SCUCCHIA: You all seem to have come from a morgue."

come angioletti, e tutti stracciati, che giocano nella polvere, entra in una delle bicocche" (*Per il cinema* 7, 15).[26] On the river one might observe another sacred motif in that of the float which appears like Noe's Arch: "[Luciano] Si alza, seguito dagli altri, attraversa l'Arca di Noè del galleggiante, arriva sulla spiaggetta trucida coi soliti indigenetti mezzi ignudi: e tutta la batteria dietro, sulla sabbia sporca, lungo la corrente sporca" (*Per il cinema* 14).[27] Another Biblical reference is implied in the conversation of Renato and Accattone when Renato blames Accattone for selling all his possessions to make money, and Accattone strikes back with a quotation from the *New Testament*:

> E Renato riprende, biblico: RENATO Ascolta, Accattone, quello che ti dice il profeta! Oggi ti vendi l'anello, domani la catenina, fra sette giorni l'orologio, e fra settantasette giorni non ciài nemmeno l'occhi pe' piagne! ACCATTONE 'Mbèh, tanto come dice er Vangelo, è più facile che un cammello passi per la cruna di un ago che un ricco vada in paradiso! (*Per il cinema* 43-44)[28]

Furthermore, there emerges the motif of atavic hunger, present also in *La ricotta* (*Curd Cheese*), which is the root cause of Accattone's death according to the "fabula", as his accident is preceded by a salami theft. Another element in connection with hunger is that of the spaghetti dinner, which is served as "last supper", a motif associated with *Mamma Roma*.

In the course of this infernal suffering, Accattone's character undergoes degradation. According to the "fabula" this transformation is indicated by physical signs as well, such as by resemblances to other figures or by masks. The first instance can be caught in the scene of Vittorio's standing on St. Angel Bridge, amidst the Bernini statues, ready to dive in The Tiber. His figure is defined statuesque in the screenplay, and a Neapolitan boy, Don Salvatore calls him "cardboard man" (*Per il cinema* 11).[29] The first time he wears a mask is when he puts on a halo hat, arriving hungry at Scucchia's home. While the mother brings a pot of water to boil, Accattone takes Scucchia aside, suggesting

---

[26] "Accattone is solemnly at the parapet of the St. Angel Bridge with all the rows of angels at his back. He's hesitating, he's like a sculpture. […] He goes by two or three little children, as beautiful as angels…"

[27] "[Luciano] gets up, followed by the others, he goes through Noe's Arch of the float and arrives on the bank tired with the usual local half-naked people: and the whole branch behind, on the dirty sand, along the dirty current."

[28] "RENATO Listen, Accattone, what the prophet says! Today you sell the ring, tomorrow the necklet, in seven days the watch and in seventy-seven days you won't even have eyes to cry with!
ACCATTONE Eh, it's like how the *New Testament* says: it is *easier for a camel to go through the eye* of a *needle* than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

[29] "uomo di cartone": "chiamatelo, fatemelo conosce' sto' omo 'e cartone!"

him to provoke the others in order that they could eat up the spaghetti all alone. This is when he puts on a black halo hat with a veil and an artificial flower on it and this is what, aesthetically speaking, serves as a disguise for the film character. Accattone's second mask is a sand mask which he wears after Luciano's provocation[30] and after her anger actuated by jealousy. This is when he runs down towards the Tiber, drunk, followed by friends, plunging his face first in the water and later in the sand. This is the point when he is degraded into a demonic black mask and his appearance resembles more a beast than a human being.

Moreover, on two occasions Accattone is presented with resemblances to Christ. First, at the gates of the cemetery of Ardea, he falls asleep in the backseat of a Millequattro, and this is when his head rolls over the back like that of Christ, or as Petraglia puts it, that of an anarchist Christ (37).[31] The second occasion is when he is in the courtyard of San Lorenzo, as an unrecognizable "Ecce Homo", black of dust and carbon, and not being able to stand on his feet, he loses his consciousness.

The figurative language of the film conveys reality in its coarseness and primitiveness. In this filmic reality "the sacred" is conveyed through faces, gestures, places and situations. Pasolini himself confesses in *Il sogno del centauro* (*The Dream of the Centaur*): "Quando giro un film, mi immergo in uno stato di fascinazione davanti a un oggetto, a una cosa, un viso, gli sguardi, un paesaggio, come se si trattasse di un congegno in cui stesse per esplodere il sacro [...]. In *Accattone*, la sacralità era allo stato puro" (95).[32]

V.2. *Accattone* and Masaccio

As it has been proved, Accattone's character is linked with sanctitity. In terms of the visual representation, the sacred content of Accattone's journey in hell is accentuated by intervisual and intertextual references. The most prevalent effect upon the film's iconography is that of Masaccio, as it is highlighted by Pasolini himself:

---

[30] "He's got the profession of a pimp in his blood." ("Ce l'ha nel sangue il mestiere di pappone.") (*Per il cinema* 95)

[31] "La testa gli rotola sullo schienale come quella di un Cristo", "Come un Cristo anarchico"

[32] "When I shoot a film, I immerse myself in a state of fascination in front of an object, a thing, a face, looks, a landscape, as if it was a device that would explode the sacred […]. In *Accattone*, the sacred was in a pure state."

Quello che ho in testa come visione, come campo visivo, sono gli affreschi di Masaccio, di Giotto, che sono i pittori che amo di più, assieme a certi manieristi (per esempio il Pontormo). E non riesco a concepire immagini, paesaggi, composizioni al di fuori di questa mia iniziale passione pittorica, trecentesca, che ha l'uomo come centro di ogni prospettiva. ("Diario al registratore")[33]

Pasolini does not imitate Masaccio for certain framings, however, he perceives his art as substance, as a way to see certain faces, certain gravity of the material (Magrelli 70).[34] What Pasolini veritably "borrows" from Masaccio is chiefly his representation of simple and real characters together with their expression of sorrow (see fig. 4).

Pasolini considers Masaccio an extremely figurative painter inasmuch as "the subject that he presents has a *chiaroscuro*[35] violence of an impressive plasticity while other, more figurative painters [...] are more ornamental and therefore they are duller, they remain attached to the wall or to the canvas or they do not even come out" ("Una visione del mondo epico-religiosa" 31).[36] The "chiaroscuro" is applied as means to enhance the three-dimensionality. This phenomenon is in tune with the Florentine painting tradition of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. However, the references are not Masaccio's frescoes any longer; they are their black and white reproductions instead, as if they represented the essential framework of the artist's painting (Magrelli 52).[37] Nevertheless, according to Pasolini, the gravity of Masaccio's painting has been transformed while being transposed into cinema: "Stilisticamente la semplicità è venuta mutandosi in austerità, l'elementare è diventato assoluto: ciò appunto a cui miravo quando trasponevo nel cinema il modello figurativo di Masaccio" (Duflot 97).[38]

Masaccio becomes the mythic filter, the emblem of the epic-religious nature of man through which the figurative suggestions are enhanced:

---

[33] "What I have in my mind as vision, as visual field are the frescoes by Masaccio, by Giotto, who are the painters I love the most, along with certain Mannerists (e.g. Pontormo). And I don't manage to conceive of images, landscapes, compositions beyond this initial passion of mine for the fourteenth century painting, which has man as a center of each perspective."

[34] "Non lo imito per certe inquadrature, ma proprio ci penso come sostanza, come modo di vedere certe facce, certa gravità della materia."

[35] The Italian term for the sharp contrast used in art between light and dark.

[36] "la materia che lui mostra ha una violenza chiaroscurale di una plasticità impressionante mentre gli altri pittori più visivi […] sono più ornamentali quindi più piatti, restano più nel muro o nella tela o addirittura non ne vengono nemmeno fuori"

[37] Pasolini himself declares: "I would like the photography to resemble Masaccio's reproductions in black and white." / "Anche la fotografia, vorrei che assomigliasse un po' alle riproduzioni in bianco e nero di Masaccio."

[38] "Stilistically, the simplicity has been transformed into austerity, the elemental became absolute: exactly what I aimed at while transposing Masaccio's figurative model into cinema."

Ora, che io ami o non ami i miei personaggi deve risultare soltanto da come io li ho espressi e non da quello che ho detto contenutisticamente su di loro. Se io sono riuscito a dare quello che volevo dare in *Accattone*, ammettiamo, cioè la grandezza epico-religiosa di questi personaggi miserabili, se io sono riuscito a darla attraverso gli stilemi del mio film, attraverso il ritmo del racconto, attraverso il modo con cui li muovo, l'atmosfera in cui li immergo, attraverso la luce, il sole, l'ambiente intorno a loro, se io sono riuscito a dare quest'idea di loro vuol dire che li amo [...]. (Duflot 97)[39]

The epic-religious greatness of the film characters that Pasolini accentuates is reflected by the insertion of Masaccio's evocation. Masaccio's figures are generally Biblical characters that are shown in their simplicity and weaknesses. Their original humble nature is represented by an elaborate study of their psychology. Their gazes, gestures and movements are the reflections of their inner torments and struggles. When their images are applied as points of reference by Pasolini, two aims are intended. On the one hand, they are used as mirrors which reflect on the misery of the film characters in *Accattone*. On the other hand, the allusions to the Bible create an atmosphere of sacredness which counterpoints the tragedy and it elevates the original fallibility into Biblical heights. In consequence, the characters' psychological and physical representation goes through the Florentine painter's experience, as filtered through Longhi's sensitivity. Furthermore, other elements of the visual field (such as exposition, the technique of the close-ups, mounting with intervals) are also followed by Pasolini to a certain extent.

V.3. *Accattone* and Morandi

In addition to the references to Masaccio, *Accattone* could be considered as a homage to Morandi's figurative art (see fig. 5). Stella's character in her appearance among piles of bottles in the sun is a reminiscence of the pictorial world of Morandi, a Bolognese painter,

---

[39] "Now, the fact that I love my characters or not must be the result of the way I have expressed them and not of the way I have spoken of them. If I managed to give what I wanted to give in *Accattone*, so the epic-religious greatness of these miserable characters, if I managed to give that through the style of my film, through the rhythm of the narration, through the way I move them, the atmosphere I immerse them, through the light, the sun, the surrounding environment, if I managed to give this idea of them, it means I love them [...]."

who was admired by Pasolini (see fig. 6). This presumption is reinforced by Pasolini's confession in the interview given to Duflot:

> P. Così, generalmente, se vuole, a seconda di questo o quel prestito dalla cultura figurativa, l'intenzione può cambiare...In Accattone, per esempio, il piano in cui Stella viene rappresentata in mezzo a un mucchio di bottiglie, e là come un omaggio privato a Morandi (oltre al significato propriamente filmico del piano stesso)."
>
> D. "Un ricordo dei tempi in cui Lei preparava la sua tesi sulla pittura italiana moderna."
>
> P. "Sì, ma credo del tutto inutile ricordare quest'aspetto aneddotico. Quello che posso dire è che in effetti faccio uso di riferimenti figurativi e integro spesso nei miei film ciò che mi piace; [...] (*Il sogno del centauro* 116)[40]

However, the screenplay does not contain any precise references to Morandi, only the description of the apparent woman can be found there:

> Sempre sbadigliando, Accattone, si scosta un po' dalla donna e dal suo mucchio di bottiglie, per andare a rifugiarsi su un muretto sbrecciolato. Si accinge ad aspettare che Ascensa stacchi. Ma subito i suoi occhi avidi, da rapace, sono distratti da qualcosa, tra le bottiglie.
>
> È una giovane donna, bionda, grande ma che sembra una ragazzina: forse è una burrina. Lavora alle sue zozze bottiglie con grande pazienza e dolcezza.
>
> (*Per il cinema* 54)[41]

It is the bright appearance of the female character among the dirty bottles is what emerges with a great visual impact. The function of the bottles is to create a link with the Bolognese painter's pictorial universe. By means of this allusion to Morandi, Pasolini evokes Fellini's cinematic atmosphere as well. In *Accattone* Pasolini offers an alternative version of a scene from *La Dolce Vita* (1960) in which Marcello and Steiner talk about a painting by Morandi in the parlor, and Steiner emphasizes Morandi's precision and his objects' tangibility

---

[40] "P. So, generally, if you want, depending on this or that citation of the figurative arts, the intention can change ... In *Accattone*, for example, the scene in which Stella is shown in the middle of a pile of bottles, there is like a private homage to Morandi (besides the effectively filmic meaning of the scene).
D. It reminds one of the time when you were preparing your thesis on modern Italian painting.
P. Yes, but I believe this anecdotal aspect is absolutely useless. What I can say is that in fact I do use figurative references and I often integrate what I like in my films [...]"
[41] "Always yawning, Accattone walks away a bit from the woman and from her pile of bottles, to go and find shelter on a crumbled wall. He is about to wait for Ascensa to leave. But his greedy, rapacious eyes are suddenly distracted by something, among the bottles.
She is a young blonde woman, adult but looks like an adolescent girl: she might be a peasant. She's working on her filthy bottles with great patience and gentleness."

coated with a dream-like athmosphere. As Roberto Chiesi describes, Fellini appointed Pasolini to write some scenes for *La Dolce Vita,* especially those regarding Steiner's intellectual suicide. However, Pasolini's contributions were modified and his name was not even accredited in the headlines of the film ("Pasolini e Fellini, Una lunga infedeltà"). Nevertheless, as a curious fact for *Accattone*, it is to be noted that Pasolini planned to make Marcello say the following sentence to Steiner apropos of Morandi's picture: "Delizioso. Tutto rosa e grigio, come te..." (*Per il cinema* 2320).[42] Finally, in the film this dialogue is modified, however, the idea of using a painting as a basis of comparison to highlight Steiner's personality is present in Pasolini's whole screenplay.

The same idea is preserved in *Accattone* inasmuch as Morandi's world is evoked in order to accentuate Stella's personality. Morandi normally operates with a meager selection of objects, which are usually bottles located in the focus of a minimalized atmosphere. The simplicity of their selection conveys cleanness, sensitivity and delicacy. These traits are in perfect accordance with Stella's character since she appears to be the emblem of salvation for Accattone out of the three female figures.

V.4. *Accattone* and Dante

The "sacred" appears even through literary quotations in *Accattone*. Pasolini's cinema begins under Dante's influence, which is demonstrated by quotations from the *Divina Commedia* (*The Divine Comedy*) that are scattered throughout the screenplays of *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma*. First and foremost of all, there is an epigraph after the headline that refers to the dispute between the angel and the devil regarding the corpse of Buonconte da Montefeltro:

> L'angel di Dio mi prese, e quel d'inferno
>
> gridava: O tu del ciel, perché mi privi?
>
> Tu te ne porti di costui l'etterno
>
> per una lagrimetta che 'l mi toglie ("Purgatory", Canto V, lines 102-106)[43]

---

[42] "Wonderful. All pink and grey, like you…"
[43] Translated by Rev. H. F. Cary:
"Me God's angel took,
Whilst he of hell exclaim'd: "O thou from heav'n!
Say wherefore hast thou robb'd me? Thou of him

Taken from "Purgatory"'s fifth canto, these verses handle the topic of the famous tear which saves Buonconte in the final moments of his sinful life. When he bursts into tears, he is saved by God, who takes the tear as a sign of commendable repentance. Satan feels deprived of a soul to which he thought he had all the rights, and he is scorned "for one poor tear!" Thus, this tear which is meaningless for the devil, interprets as a sign of repentance for God, and this is what allows the angel to rescue him from the devil who wished his corpse for himself. In the last scene of the film, when Accattone dies, a tear can be seen on his eyes as well. In this motif Pasolini indicates a sign of repentance, alluding to a posthumous salvation of his character.

Another reference to Dante's "Inferno" is pinpointed in scene 23 when Accattone makes acquaintance with Stella, the immaculate girl who might be able to lead him to salvation.

> ACCATTONE Come te chiami, te?
>
> STELLA (alzando gli occhi verso di lui) Stella.
>
> ACCATTONE Io Vittorio, piacere! (ci pensa un po') Eh Stella, Stella, Indicheme er cammino! (*Per il cinema* 50)[44]

The name Stella is another Biblical reference as it alludes to the sacred Star of Bethlehem that guided the Magi on their journey, going to pay homage to the Child Jesus. Hence, Stella in her angelic appearance becomes a guide for the main character, like the Moon in *Uccellacci e uccellini* (*The Hawks and the Sparrows*) or Virgil for Dante during his trip to Hell. Essentially, in this invocation he reveals a semiconscious need of redemption which will return in the forms of hallucinations:

> E poco prima di morire, fa un sogno che è appunto la sua salvezza: sogna di scavalcare un muro che getta la sua ombra su una grande vallata illuminata dal sole e vede un vecchietto, un becchino che scava una buca, e capisce che è la buca per il suo cadavere, e chiede a questo becchino di scavare un po' più in là, appena un po' più in là del filo d'ombra, nel sole, nella luce: fa il segno della salvezza della propria anima. (*Pier Paolo Pasolini nel dibattito culturale contemporaneo* 95)[45]

Th' eternal portion bear'st with thee away
For one poor tear that he deprives me of.*"*
[44] "ACCATTONE What's your name?
STELLA (looking at him) Stella.
ACCATTONE I'm Vittorio. Nice to meet you (he thinks for a bit) Oh Stella, Stella, Show me the way!"
[45] "And shortly before his death, he has a dream which is precisely his salvation: he climbs over a wall that casts its shadow over a huge sunlit valley and sees an old man, an undertaker who is digging a hole, and

In addition, in scene 46 when Accattone is bringing Stella on the road of prostitution, a prostitute, Amore (Adriana Asti) comments on the scene with these words: "Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate" ("Inferno", Canto 3, line 9).[46] Pasolini makes the woman's speech intellectually contaminated by citing a line from Dante's *La Divina Commedia*, precisely from the "Inferno" (canto III., line 9), which focuses on Dante's and Virgil's encounter with the infernal world.

Another instance of the reanimation of Dante's "Inferno" is identified in scene 48 when Accattone washes his face with water from the Tiber and then he drags it in the sand. His face is transformed into a black monstrous mask:

> Con improvvisa docilità, Accattone si mette in ginocchio, sulla sabbia. Appozza le mani sull'acqua, faticosamente, e si lava il viso, due tre volte. Poi alza la faccia, tutta gocciolante, e sempre docile e buono, si guarda intorno come in un sogno. Ma gli viene un nuovo impeto di rabbia convulsa, un'esplosione intrattenibile di nervi: stando sempre in ginocchio, affonda la faccia nella sabbia nera e sporca, strusciandola rabbiosamente. / La rialza: è un mascherone nero, con la sabbia appiccicata sulla faccia bagnata, contro le palpebre, il naso, le guance, la fronte, il mento. Non ha più niente di umano. (*Per il cinema* 103) [47]

This motif is most probably understood as a reference to the first song of "Purgatory" (lines 121-129), when Dante makes Virgil wash his face blackened by the walk in the depths of the Hell. In the case of Accattone the mask lends a demonic face to the character, representing the boundary between Purgatory and Hell. In the background, blues accompanies the scene, which, being the music of the black, is a reference to the Third World. All things considered, the resurrection of Dante's memory intensifies the drama and serves the aim of ennobling the Roman "borgatori".

---

understands that it is the hole for his corpse, and asks him to dig a little further where the sunlight is: thereby he makes the sign of the salvation of his soul."

[46] Translated by Rev. H. F. Cary: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here."

[47] "With sudden docility, Accattone brings himself on his knees in the sand. He dips his hands in the water, with difficulty, and he washes his face two or three times. Then he raises his face, all dripping, and still tame and good, looks around like in a dream. But another impulse of rage overcomes him, an irrepressible outburst of fury: being still on his knees, he plunges his face in the black and dirty sand, dragging it angrily. He raises it: it is a black mask, with sand stuck on his wet face against the eyelids, nose, cheeks, forehead, and chin. He has not got any more human traits left. "

V.5. The music in *Accattone*

It can be observed that the more humble the characters of Pasolini's films are, the nobler the references to arts are. The contaminations are present at a musical level as well, creating thereby the effect of a multimedial "plurilingualism". This phenomenon is well-known from Pasolini's novels in which various linguistic layers (slang, jargon, different dialects) are simultanously present. These verbal layers become visual and acoustic in Pasolini's films inasmuch as the filmic contamination consists in the parallel encounter of pictorial, literary and musical citations. Bach's selection as the soundtrack of *Accattone* is motivated by the fact that Bach's music is considered "the absolute music" by the author, as he confirms it in an interview:

> Quanto alla scelta, è una scelta molto irrazionale, perché prima ancora di pensare ad Accattone quando pensavo genericamente di fare un film, pensavo che non avrei potuto commentarlo altrimenti che con la musica di Bach: un po' perché è l'autore che amo di più; e un po' perché per me la musica di Bach è la musica a sé, la musica in assoluto... Quando pensavo ad un commento musicale, pensavo sempre a Bach, irrazionalmente, e così ho mantenuto, un po' irrazionalmente, questa predilezione iniziale. (Ferrero 36)[48]

When Accattone is at his last breath on the pavement, the director bestows him an honourable death: Johann Sebastian Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* is the soundtrack of the liberating end of his life. The open provocation to use one of the cornerstones of the traditional religious music, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* as a leitmotif for Accattone's desperate deeds, has the function to associate Accattone's fate with Christ's conditions.

The extract of the Choir of the *St. Matthew Passion* is associated with Accattone's destiny and the Neapolitans in their cruelty towards Maddalena. In addition to the *St. Matthew Passion* (Choir 78, BWV 244) which accompanies the topics of death and violence, Pasolini also cites other pieces from Bach: "Adagio from Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 (BWV 1046)" expressing Accattone's relationship with women. "F major" and "Andante"

---

[48] "As for the choice, it is a very irrational one, because before even thinking of *Accattone* while I was considering to shoot a film in general, I thought that I could comment on it only through Bach's music: a little bit because he is the composer I love the most, and a little bit because for me, Bach's music is the music itself, the absolute music... When I thought of a musical score I always thought of Bach, irrationally, and thus I kept a little irrationally this initial predilection."

from *Brandenburg Concerto No.2* (BWV 1047) accompanies Stella's visions, and finally "F Major", "Sonatina (Molto Adagio) in B flat major" of the cantata *Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit "Actus Tragicus"* (BWV 106) is the soundtrack during the topics of betrayal.[49]

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

To sum up, all the "sacred" or "noble" elements, such as the literary, pictorial and musical citations, serve to ennoble the humble human condition of the characters who live under the devastating conditions of the Roman "Borgatas". In their degradation there is something "sacred" and religious (Pasolini, "Colonna Sonora")[50] , which is beyond the horizon of expressibility.[51] Therefore this is exactly what is emphasized and intensified by the quotations of music, literature and painting. Although Accattone is shown from the point of view of the "sacred", it is not the belief or the religion that redeems him. The "sacred" manifests itself only as a technique: like "binoculars" through which Pasolini sees and depicts the world.

> Con *Accattone,* inesperto di cinema, io avevo semplificato al massimo tale oggettiva semplicità. E il risultato mi pareva essere – e in parte, lo era – quello della sacralità: una *sacralità tecnica* che poi investiva nei profondo paesaggi e personaggi. Non c'è niente di più tecnicamente sacro che una lenta panoramica. […] (Ferrero 17-37)[52]
>
> La mia visione del mondo è sempre nel suo fondo di tipo epico-religioso; quindi anche in personaggi miserabili, personaggi che sono al di fuori di una coscienza storica, e nella fattispecie, di una coscienza borghese, questi elementi epico-religiosi giocano un ruolo molto importante. La miseria è

---

[49] The identification and the analysis of all these soundtracks are owed to the work of De Giusti Luciano. Apart from the instances of classical music, the characters sing extracts from the following folk songs as well: "Fenesta ca lucive" by Giulio Genoino-Mariano Paolella-Guglielmo Cottrau, "Barcarolo Romano" by Madonna dell'Angeli, "La Madonna dell'urione" and "La sagra di Giarabub".

[50] "Io sentivo, sapevo, che dentro a questa degradazione c'era qualcosa di sacro, qualcosa di religioso in senso vago e generale della parola, e allora quest'aggettivo "sacro" l'ho aggiunto con la musica. Ho detto, cioè, che la degradazione di Accattone è, sì, una degradazione, ma una degradazione in qualche modo sacra, e Bach mi è servito a far capire ai vasti pubblici queste mie intenzioni." / "I felt, I knew, that inside this degradation there was something sacred, something religious in the vague sense of the word, and then I added this adjective "sacred" with music. I said, therefore, that the degradation of Accattone is, yes, degradation, but in some fashion a sacred degradation and Bach served me to communicate this, my intention, to the broad public."

[51] One could refer to Debussy who in his conversations with Guirod came to the following conclusion: "The music begins where words end. Music was made for the inexpressible." In Italian: "La musica comincia dove la parola finisce. La musica è per l'inesprimibile (Lockspeiser 31)."

[52] "With *Accattone*, inexpert as I was in cinema, I simplified to the maximum the objective simplicity of the cinema. And the result ought to have been - and in part was sacredness: a technique of sacredness that profoundly affected settings and characters. There is nothing more technically sacred than a slow pan. […]"

> sempre, per sua intima caratteristica, epica, e gli elementi che giocano nella psicologia di un miserabile, di un povero, di un sottoproletario, sono sempre in un certo qual modo puri perché privi di coscienza e quindi essenziali. (*Per il cinema* 2846)[53]

In consequence, the "sacred" is only a technique which fulfills exclusively an aesthetical function, merging the cruelty of reality with the sublimeness of irreality. However, none of the forms of "sacred" offer any solutions. Most probabaly this is what is indicated in the improper way of making the sign of the cross, as in the final scene Accattone's friend touches first the right shoulder, then the left. Instead of "sacredness" the only possible salvation is suggested by death considering that due to his humble social status Accattone has neither stamina nor means for redemption. This is why he says at the moment of death: "Mo' sto bene" (*Per il cinema* 142).[54]

Accattone's fate embodies by itself the destiny of the characters of *Ragazzi di vita* (*Boys of Life*, 1955) and *Una vita violenta* (*Violent Life*, 1959). It is primarily Tommasino, the protagonist of *Una vita violenta* with whom Accatone shares the most common features and experiences. Both of them are two typical phenomena of the lumpen-proletariat, however, Accattone's drama is much more pathetic. While in *Una vita violenta* there is some hope offered, in *Accattone* there is not even the slightest sign of optimism. Accattone's most tragic destiny is pinpointed by the director himself: "Accattone è molto più indietro di Tommasino. Il suo destino è molto più tragico. [...] Con Tommasino ho dato un dramma, con Accattone una tragedia: una tragedia senza speranza" (qtd. in De Giusti 21).[55]

Accattone's via crucis in Hell is emphasized by the quotations of fine arts. The most dominant effects upon the film's iconography are those of Masaccio and Morandi. The "sacred" also appears through literary citations, for instance, in the form of references to Dante's *Divina Commedia*.

---

[53] "My vision of the world is in essence epic-religious; thus also and above all they are in squalid characters, characters outside historical consciousness and thus outside bourgeois consciousness; these elements that have a role in the psychology of a poor, poverty-stricken wretch, a lumpenproletarian, are always 'pure' to a certain extent because they are without consciousness and thus they are 'essential'."

[54] "Now I'm fine."

[55] "With Tommasino I provided a drama, with Accattone a tragedy: a tragedy without hope, because I hope few will be the spectators who see some significance of hope in the sign of the cross with which the film ends."

VI. *MAMMA ROMA*, 1962

In *Mamma Roma*, Pasolini continues to occupy with the destiny and prospects of the "borgatori". The connection with the antecedents is reinforced by the continuity and further elaboration of certain roles. For instance, Lamberto Maggiorani, whose bicycle is stolen in *The Bicycle Thieves* (*Ladri di biciclette*, 1948) is the one whose radio is pilfered by Ettore in the hospital scene. Another example is that of Franco Citti who from Accattone transforms into Carmine, who is still a pimp with a minor role, though. He is the character who takes advantage of Mamma Roma's profession. In his moustached appearance he might remind one of Don Fefè Cefalù from *Divorce, Italian style* (*Divorzio all'italiana*, Pietro Germi, 1961), another notorious philanderer of the Italian cinema of the epoch. Moreover, Mamma Roma is interpreted by the same actress (Anna Magnani) who, in Rossellini's *Rome, open city* (*Roma, città aperta*, 1945) acts as Francesco's pregnant fiancée and becomes shot by the Nazis before their child could even be born. As Mamma Roma, she is reborn in Pasolini's film, and since she is already a mother, one of the crucial aspects of this film is constituted by the mother-son relationship. As a matter of fact, the rapport which has already started to compound subject of analysis in Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and her Children* (1938-39) or in Luchino Visconti's *Bellissima* (1951, the mother is interpreted by the same Magnani) evolves and develops in Pasolini's *Mamma Roma*. In consequence, apart from the topic of the "borgatas", the phenomenon of "mater dolorosa" and the question of social and individual responsibility will also be handled in the course of the present analysis through the examination of literary and pictorial citations.

In terms of pictorial citations, the icon of the last supper will be examined in *Mamma Roma*, compared with that in Luis Buñuel's *Viridiana* (1961). As another figurative reference, the allusion to Caravaggio's *Ragazzo con canestro di frutta* (*Boy with a Fruit Bowl*) will be handled. In addition, the image of the dead Christ will be analyzed and confronted with that of Holbein through Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot* (1869).

VI.1. Social problems in *Mamma Roma*

Mamma Roma's character appears as the reflection of that of Accattone.[56] Firstly, it is due to the fact that they belong to the same social stratum. They both belong to the race of the depressed/underdeveloped areas or as Carlo Levi put it, to the "grey race" (24).

> Gli uomini potrebbero dividersi in tre grandi tipi: o diciamo anche razze, dato che non sono razzista! La razza europea protestante, la razza europea cattolica e la razza delle aree depresse. In Italia venti o venticinque milioni di abitanti appartengono ancora a quest'ultima razza: la razza grigia, come diceva Carlo Levi parlando di *Accattone*. Il grigio ardore del sole sull'ardente grigiore della miseria. Tre quarti della popolazione del mondo, dalla Bassa Europa, all'Africa, all'Asia, al Sud America, vivono in questo stato inferiore, brulicando al sole come felici animali. ("Il peccato di essere poveri." 26-27)[57]

Secondly, the similarity between Mamma Roma's and Accattone's character is explained by the fact that the same fate is ordained for both of them. However, the accusation against society is more serious in *Mamma Roma* than in *Accattone*. As death is the maximum where these characters are able to arrive, Accattone is a "winner" in the sense that he reached redemption through death. Mamma Roma, instead, has to liberate herself by continuing to live, which is understood as a provocation and a critical accusation against society. As Pasolini points out, she expects all the hope of redemption from his son, Ettore

---

[56] The similarities between the two characters are recognized by Pasolini in an interview in 1970:
"P. [...] *Mamma Roma* è l'opera in cui per la prima volta nella mia vita mi sono ripetuto.
D. È per il fatto che, attraverso il personaggio di Anna Magnani, Lei ha riproposto lo stesso tipo umano di Accattone (Franco Citti)?
P. No, il fatto è dovuto alla similitudine di stile. Il tipo piccolo-borghese di Anna Magnani, e il mondo piccolo borghese a cui aspira, non potevano adattarsi allo stesso stile 'mitico'. Accattone è un personaggio popolare e quindi epico." (Duflot 97-98.)
Translation:
P. [...] *Mamma Roma* is the work in which I repeated myself for the first time in my life.
D. Is it because through Anna Magnani's character you presented the same human character as that of Accattone (Franco Citti)?
P. No, it's owing to the similarity of style. Anna Magnani's petty bourgeois type and the petty bourgeois world she longs for are not able to adapt to the same "mythic" style. Accattone is a working-class man and therefore he is an epic character.
[57] "People could be divided into three main types: or let's say, even races, as I am not a racist! The European Protestant race, the European Catholic race, and the race of the depressed areas. In Italy, twenty or twenty-five million inhabitants still belong to this last race: the grey race, as Carlo Levi said it, talking about *Accattone*. The grey heat of the sun on the burning greyness of poverty. Three quarters of the world's population, from Europe's poorer countries to Africa, Asia, South-America live in this lower state, swarming about in the sun like happy animals."

(qtd. in Marchesini 23)[58], which is a presumptuous idea inasmuch as with her humble background she aims at constructing a petty bourgeois future for her son. Considering her past and present circumstances, such idealistic plans are doomed and this is exactly why Ettore has to die.

Apart from the topic of the "borgatori", the film discusses the image and the analysis of "mater dolorosa" through Mamma Roma's character. Anna Magnani seems to be made for this role if one takes into consideration that in Visconti's film (1951) she interpreted Bellissima's persistent mother who wishes a prosperous future for her daughter through a glittering career despite every disgrace they encounter. In *Mamma Roma* Magnani is still a vivacious and restless character who aspires to create a better future for her son by even starting a new life, giving up prostitution and endeavouring to adapt to the petty bourgeois class, even though she observes it with diffidence and hostility. However, her ideas of a better future are not clear enough, which turns out immediately when in the depths of despair she turns to the priest for advice and upon his response (that Ettore should learn some trade), Mamma Roma reacts violently: "allora io ho messo al mondo un fijo pe' faje fà er muratore? No, deve avè un lavoro decente!" *(Per il cinema* 201)[59] The only problem is that her ideas about "decent" are not very straightforward. In such circumstances Ettore feels insecure, and although the love with Bruna, a girl from her stratum could provide him with stability, Mamma Roma attempts to direct him even in this path towards an affinity with a less humble class. However, when Ettore learns his mother's real profession, he faces a trauma and ceases to fight. After joining a gang of criminals and being caught for pilferage, in the prison in a "wandering" vision he accuses the whole society for his disgrace and dies tied to the hospital bed. Death is the maximum where he is able to arrive, and its emphasis might be more intense in *Mamma Roma* than in *Accattone*, being in connection with sacredness and irrationalism according to Pasolini:

> Death does not determine life, I feel that, and I've written it, too, in one of my recent essays, where I compare death to montage. Once life is finished it acquires a sense; up to that point it has not got a sense, its sense is suspended and therefore ambiguous. However, to be sincere I must add that

---

[58] "Questa Mamma Roma ha un figlio su cui punta tutte le sue speranze, appunto, di redenzione. Vuol rifarsi la vita ma non ci riesce perché il suo passato è di povera donna, così, che batte le strade, e il suo idealismo fasullo di piccola borghese non costruiscono niente e questo figlio le morirà." In "Intervista radiofonica con Lello Bersani. Ora sul disco *Le canzoni di Anna Magnani.*" edited by V. Moliica and L. Magnani, quoted by Marchesini 23.

[59] "so you think I gave birth to my son so that he could become a bricklayer? No, he has to have a decent job!"

52

for me death is important only if it is not justified and rationalized by reason. For me death is the maximum of epicness and myth. When I'm talking to you about my tendency towards the sacred and the mythic and the epic, I should say that this can only be completely satisfied by the act of death, which seems to me the most mythic and epic aspect there is – all this, however, at a level of pure irrationalism. (Stack 55)

Pasolini considers the end of *Mamma Roma* and therefore something in Ettore that belongs to him. This is what emerges from a dialogue between him and Ferretti:

Sento che la fine di *Mamma Roma* sarebbe un po' la mia fine. Perché ben poche sono le persone il cui giudizio critico è autonomo, basato su reali ragioni di cultura: e quindi capaci di resistere agli esperimenti di un autore. Le masse sono spietate. Sono come dei re. E io di fronte a questi re, ormai, sono un po' come il giullare che se sbaglia un motto, viene condannato a morte. ("I dialoghi" 270)[60]

In this quotation by Pasolini one might be able to read an allusion to the final scene of the film in which there is Ettore, tied to a hospital bed and appears as a victim of the bourgeois society.

The element that differentiates this film from *Accattone* is the question of responsibility. This problem is missing from the previous film since *Accattone* is completely alone in a completely desolate society. In *Mamma Roma*, instead, this topic is highly emphasized by the fact that the film ends in Mamma Roma's scream: "I responsabili! I responsabili! (*Per il cinema* 263)"[61], pronouncing all these words at the window of her room facing the empty and white city landscape, as if there was an insuperable gap between her own and the outside world. Therefore, the question raised here is whether it is the responsibility of the individual, the environment or the society what happens to the "borgatori".

---

[60] "I feel that the end of *Mamma Roma* would be my end a little bit. Because there are only few people whose critical judgement is autonomous, based on real cultural reasons, and are thus able to resist to the author's experiments. The masses are cruel. They are like kings. And I am, in front of these kings, a little bit like a jester who when mispronouncing a motto, is doomed."

[61] "The people in charge! The people in charge!"

VI.2. The citations of figurative arts

Inside the ongoing tragedy the mise-en-scène-s of three paintings are hidden. These images concern the motifs of the last supper, the boy with a basket of fruit and the dead Christ.

VI.2.1. The motif of the Last Supper

The first pictorial quotation is the scene of Carmine's (Mamma Roma's ex-pimp) and Clementina's banquet which is an allusion to the sacred motif of the last supper. This supposition is underlined by the screenplay: "[Mamma Roma] Gira vorticosa intorno: e vorticosa gira intorno a lei la tavolata dell'Ultima Cena (*Per il cinema* 160)."[62] The element of the sacred is evoked through explicit references in this scene. For instance, right at the beginning Mamma Roma utters the following exclamation: "E che ce volete insegnà la Bibbia a noi! La Messa va detta cantando, mica così!" (*Per il cinema* 157)[63]. In another sentence Mamma Roma refers to Jacob: "Fatene tanti de fiji! Come Giacobbe!" (*Per il cinema* 159).[64] A further example can be Carmine's blessing Mamma Roma: "Te benedico in nomine Patris, Filii e Spiritus Mundi." (*Per il cinema* 159)[65]

What makes the scene utterly bizarre and quite particular is the co-presence of the banquet guests and the three piglets in the inn.

> Tre bei maialetti entrano, sul rozzo pavimento, intruzzando, grugnendo, spaventati, disorientati.
>
> Sono tutti incravattati, uno ha un cappello in testa, uno un fiocco alla coda, uno un paio di giarrettiere.
>
> Entrano come un manipolo di matti, di condannati a morte, come un balletto.
>
> […]
>
> I tre maieletti sono spinti avanti a scopate da Mamma Roma, in piedi, scarmigliata, folle, dentro lo stanzone dell'osteria. […]

---

[62] "[Mamma Roma] is swirling around: and the table of the Last Supper is swirling around her..."
[63] M. ROMA "And you want to teach us the Bible! The mess has to be said singing, and not like this!"
[64] M. ROMA "Make a lot of babies! Like Jacob!"
[65] CARMINE "I bless you in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

I maiali tendono a squagliarsela, e Mamma Roma lotta una dannata, a
scopate, per tenerli insieme. (*Per il cinema* 155)[66]

According to several critics, Leonardo Da Vinci's *Ultima cena* (*Last supper*) serves as a
model for the banquet scene. For instance, Fabien S. Gérard points out that the frontal and
symmetrical arrangement of the table alludes to Leonardo's *Last supper* ("Ricordi
figurativi" 41).[67] According to Finestauri, instead, the framing reflects upon the Last
supper images of the fifteenth century's masters (qtd. by De Giusti in *I film di Pier Paolo
Pasolini* 52).[68] Thus, it could be understood as an allusion to the Last Supper
representations of Ghirlandaio, Andrea del Sarto, Girolamo Romanino and Paolo
Veronese.

According to the present thesis, Girolamo Romanino's representation of the Last
Supper seems to be the most probable model for Pasolini's banquet scene among all the
Last Supper representations of the 15th century (see fig. 7). This presumption is enhanced
by the similar setting of the table and of the space in Pasolini and in Romanino. That is,
both the framing and the painting illustrate a horseshoe-shaped table around which the
celebrators sit. In addition, the structure of the two images demonstrates similarities
inasmuch as they focus on the one for whom the supper indicates a significant breakage.
Romanino's picture concentrates on Christ who communicates the Apostles that one of
them will betray him. The Last Supper signifies a breakage for Mamma Roma as well
insofar as it indicates her break with her career of prostitution. On the basis of the structure
and the table setting of Pasolini's scene, it could have been inspired by any images of the
fifteenth century's masters. However, what definitely renders it a homage to Girolamo
Romanino is the presence of the animals (see fig. 8). Romanino's art is also characterized
by a naturalistic aspect inasmuch as pets are often inserted in his altar pieces. Both of his

---

[66] "Three beautiful piglets enter, they are on the rough floor, grunting, frightened, disoriented.
They are all wearing ties; one has a hat on his head, one has a bow on the tail, one has a pair of garters.
They enter as a sector of crazy soldiers, condemned to death, like a ballet. [...]
The three piglets are pushed forward by Mamma Roma's broom; she is standing, dishevelled, demented, in
the great room of the inn. [...]
The pigs start to slip away, and Mamma Roma fights with the broom to keep them together."
[67] "In un assetto frontale e simmetrico, la collocazione dei convitati dietro la tavola, aggiunto all'ombra
portata di una nicchia a volta che si staglia sul muro del fondo, contribuisce a rammentare, sia pure con
discrezione, la disposizione leonardesca dell'*Ultima Cena*." / "In a frontal and symmetrical structure, the
guests' arrangement behind the table, added to the shadow which brought about by a vaulted recess that
stands out on the wall of the bottom, it contributes to recall, although with discretion, the arrangement of
Leonardo's *Last Supper*. "
[68] "Mamma Roma [...] inizia con una sequenza del manuale, un banchetto nunziale iconograficamente
impostato sulle 'cene' dei nostri maestri del primo Quattrocento: tavolo a ferro di cavallo, ambiente
disadorno e risonante." Originally in E. Finestauri. *Giornale dello Spettacolo*, 13 Oct 1962, qtd. in De
Giusti, Luciano. *I film di Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Roma: Gremese, 1983.

Last Supper representations (the one in Padova and the other one in Montichiari) contain cats at the Apostles' feet to bestow an atmosphere of everyday life on the sacred scene, making it more familiar for the faithful. It is precisely this motif which is evoked by Pasolini in the analyzed scene when Mamma Roma leads the three piglets in the unadorned room where the banquet is held.

The allusion to Girolamo Romanino's implementation of the Last Supper motif has most probably two functions. On the one hand, it creates the illusion of sacredness and therefore it accentuates the "sacred" quality of the film characters' misery. This is the same momentum of elevating everyday tragedies to Biblical heights that we have pointed out in relation to Accattone's fate. On the other hand, the insertion of piglets in the scene is an allusion to the everyday life of the characters.

This initial sequence might remind one of the famous Last Supper scene of Luis Buñuel's *Viridiana* (1961) as it did to Carlo di Carlo, Pasolini's assistant, even if there is no direct link between Buñuel's film and that of Pasolini: "Gli parlo di Buñuel. Penso anche all'inizio di Mamma Roma. Mi ricorda l'Ultima Cena di Viridiana. Pasolini dice che non conosce nulla di Buñuel e che vorrebbe finalmente vedere un film" (qtd. in Bertini 137).[69] In Buñuel's story there is Mamma Roma's contrary: a young novice called Viridiana, who, after leading a sacred life and after having seen all of her projects fail, arrives at the ambiguous acceptance of a compromise. While spending some time on her uncle's tenancy before her ordainment, the uncle becomes sexually obsessed with her. He lies to Viridana that he has raped her, which is why the girl is unable to return to the convent and decides to dedicate her life to daily charities by inviting mendicants and crippled to her home. However, one night this band of hideous people organise a banquet at Viridiana's house. Their feast turns into an infernal scene in the course of which apart from committing desecration (Bárdos)[70], they keep abusing each other. For a moment they form a still, evoking thereby a bizarre interpretation of the Last Supper motif in which Christ is surrounded by shady, frightening and lame people whose faces radiate rancour and mischief. As Bárdos pointed out, this framing reminds one of Jacopo Bassano's *Last Supper* in which Jesus is surrounded by drunken and sleeping apostles; or it might also

[69] "I talk him of Buñuel. I also think of the beginning of *Mamma Roma*. It reminds me of the Last Supper of *Viridiana*. Pasolini says that he does not know anything from Buñuel, and thus he finally wants to watch one of his films."
[70] In her presentation Bárdos highlights several elements of desecration, such as the spilt red wine, the blind mendicant's occupying Jesus' place and turning the feast into an orgy.

evoke Franz Anton Maulbertsch's fresco (*Last Supper*) which illustrates a group of conspirators.

VI.2.2. Caravaggio's effects

Another picturesque reference can be pointed out in the evocation of Caravaggio's *Ragazzo con canestro di frutta* (*Boy with a Basket of Fruit*, see fig. 9). It takes place in the episode in which Mamma Roma and her friend, Biancofiore, are spying on Ettore at the restaurant of Trastevere where he became a waiter (see fig. 10). The supposition that his appearance should be an allusion to Caravaggio's childlike but sensual character is confirmed by Pasolini: "Vidi Ettore Garofalo quando stava lavorando come cameriere in un ristorante dove andai a cena una sera, Da Meo Patacca, esattamente come l'ho mostrato nel film, mentre porta un cesto di frutta, proprio come una figura di un quadro nel Caravaggio" (Stack 51).[71] Similarly to Caravaggio's character, Ettore has also a square-jawed face, full lips, decisive eyes and childlike neck and shoulders. By his serene and sensual appearance he might remind one of other figures by Caravaggio such as *Fanciullo che monda un frutto amaro* (*Boy Peeling Fruit*, 1593), *Fanciullo morso da un ramarro* (*Boy Bitten by a Lizard*, 1594-96), *Bacco* (*Bacchus*, 1595) and *Sonatore di liuto* (*The Lute Player*, 1600).

The allusion to Caravaggio's visual field serves as an impersonal point of reference in the film. This image appears as an objective reflection of Ettore's character and his inner motivations. On the one hand, it projects on Ettore's sensuality and immaturity. On the other hand, it also implies the concealed brutality and aggression of his subconscious that might as well urge his decisions.

---

[71] "I saw Ettore Garofalo when I was working as a waiter in a restaurant where I went for dinner one evening, Da Meo Patacca, exactly as I showed him in the film, carrying a bowl of fruit just like a figure in a Caravaggio painting."

VI.2.3. The motif of the Dead Christ

In addition to the citations of Romanino's and Caravaggio's world, according to the critics the end of the film evokes Mantegna's *Cristo morto* (*Dead Christ*, 1480). This allusion takes place when Ettore's martyrdom is presented. He was stealing a pocket radio from a hospital patient, and after being caught red-handed, his calvary starts in the infernal atmosphere of the prison. His fever heat causes him paroxysm, which is why he will be punished to be tied to a psychiatric bed, in a segregation cell. Ettore's image as being tied to a psychiatric bed was immediately interpreted as a citation of Mantegna's *Cristo morto* (*Dead Christ*) by the critics, as these instances demonstrate:

> "[...] [i fotogrammi], davvero sacrileghi, di suo figlio, incatenato in quelle prospettive studiatissime, che ricorda in parte il Cristo di Mantegna e in parte una figura di *boxeur* caduto sul *ring*." (Ferrarelli)[72]

> "[...] come non pensare al *Cristo morto* del Mantegna nelle ripetute inquadrature del figlio della prostituta sdraiato sui sinistri prati della periferia, o legato sul letto di cemento della 'cella di contenzione'?" (Casiraghi-Magnani)[73]

Others critics such as De Santi (53) or Gérard ("Ricordi figurative di Pasolini" 41) also attribute the derivation of the sequence to Mantegna's painting.

However, the present thesis does not attribute the origins of this framing to Mantegna but to Masaccio's representation of Dead Christ in *Trinity* on several grounds (see fig. 11-12). First of all, there is neither an explicit nor an implicit reference to this picture in the screenplay which contains only the following description: "Ettore è legato al letto. Mezzo nudo, come si trovava in infermeria, quando ha cominciato a urlare. È come un piccolo crocifisso, con le braccia tese, coi polsi legati: legati sono anche i piedi, e una cinghia gli stringe anche il petto" (*Per il cinema* 258).[74] Pasolini talks about a "little cross", without referring to any figurative matrix. However, his identification with Christ is entirely conscious, as it is illustrated by Mamma Roma's following utterance: "È venuto al

---

[72] "[...] the really sacrilegious frames of the son, tied in those highly analyzed perspectives that reminds one partly of Mantegna's Christ, and partly of a figure of a *boxer* fallen on a *ring*."

[73] "[...] how not to think of Mantegna's *Dead Christ* in the repeated framings of the prostitutes son as lying on the sinister fields of the suburbs, or tied to a cement bed of a psychiatric cell?"

[74] "Ettore is tied to a bed. Half-naked, as he was found in the infirmary when he started to shout. He is like a little cross, with his stretched arms and with his tied wrists: even his feet are tied, and a belt tightens even his chest."

mondo ed è stato sempre solo. Solo s'è ritrovato come un Cristo passeretto..." (*Per il cinema* 259-260).[75] Even if this identification is in the screenplay, Pasolini makes no reference to Mantegna at all. He even rejects the idea of establishing a parallelism between the two images:

> [...] siccome, nel finale, la figura di Ettore è vista di scorcio, ecco che tutti, in coro, hanno fatto il nome di Mantegna! Mentre il Mantegna non c'entra affatto, affatto! Ah, Longhi, intervenga lei, spieghi lei, come non basta mettere una figura di scorcio e guardarla con le piante dei piedi in primo piano per parlare di influenza mantegnesca! Ma non hanno occhi questi critici? Non vedono che bianco e nero così essenziali e fortemente chiaroscurati della cella grigia dove Ettore (cannottiera bianca e faccia scura) è disteso sul letto di contenzione, richiama pittori vissuti e operanti molti decenni prima del Mantegna? O che se mai, si potrebbe parlare di un'assurda e squisita mistione tra Masaccio e Caravaggio? (*Le belle bandiere* 230-231)[76]

Pasolini's reaction to the critics has generated a series of misunderstandings, for instance that of Gérard: "[...] il corpo dolente del ragazzo si offre allo sguardo in uno scorcio che evoca in modo irresistibile il *Cristo morto* del Mantegna (sebbene il cineasta, non senza civetteria, abbia sempre negato di essersene ispirato deliberatamente)!" ("Ricordi figurative di Pasolini" 41)[77] Nevertheless, the conscious citation of Masaccio (instead of Mantegna) is also confirmed by a Pasolini-poem which mentions Mamma Roma, her son and Masaccio's characters in the same text:

> La luce è monumentale, / forza, forza, approfittiamone, forza, / il cinquanta e il carrello a precedere: / vengono Mamma Roma e suo figlio,/ verso la casa nuova, tra ventagli / di case, là dove il sole posa ali / arcaiche: che sfondi, faccia pure / di questi corpi in moto statue / di legno, figure

---

[75] "He came to the world and he was always alone. He was like a little Christ, a little sparrow." Finally, the word "Christ" was subtracted from the film.

[76] "[…] since in the final scene Ettore's figure is seen from a perspective, everybody, in a choir, mentioned Mantegna's name! But Mantegna has nothing to do with it at all! Oh, Longhi, intervene and explain them that it is not enough to show a character from a perspective and see him from his soles in a close-up in order that they could talk about Mantegna's effect! But don't these critics have any eyes? Can't they see that this so essentially black and white with a forceful "chiaroscuro" of the grey cell where Ettore (white undershirt and dark face) is lying on the psychiatric bed, evokes painters who lived a lot earlier than Mantegna? Oh, could they ever talk about an absurd and fine mixture of Masaccio and Caravaggio?"

[77] "[…] the boy's aching body can be seen from a perspective, which irresistibly evokes Mantegna's *Dead Christ* (although the film-maker, not without impishness, has always denied to be deliberately inspired by him)!"

masaccesche / deteriorate, con guancie bianche / bianche, e occhiaie nere opache [...]. (*Mamma Roma* 155)[78]

The mention of Masaccio also returns in another poem by Pasolini: "Pecore e pastore, un pezzo / di Masaccio (provi col settantacinque, / e carrello fino al primo piano). / Primavera medievale" (*Mamma Roma* 153).[79] In addition, the allusion to Masaccio is also discussed in an interview between Pasolini and Magrelli:

> Questi ruderi mi sono piaciuti come piacevano ai manieristi del '500...Sì, è vero c'è una certa insistenza, e in realtà questi ruderi mi sono piaciuti appunto come potrebbero essere piaciuti al Pontormo, cioè, mi riconducono in fondo sempre ad una ispirazione rinascimentale, cioè ai pittori da lei nominati prima, per quanto in realtà il pittore che mi ispira figurativamente più di tutti anche come colore direi è Masaccio sopratutto: cioè un pittore più fermo, secondo quanto diceva anche Lei prima; se Lei isola i pezzi di Masaccio, dei primi piani di Masaccio, vedrà che in un certo senso ritroverà almeno in parte, quelle inquadrature isolate di cui si parlava prima. Anche la fotografia vorrei che assomigliasse un po' alle riproduzioni in bianco e nero di Masaccio. Il pittore ch'io amo di più è questo... (Magrelli 52)[80]

Through the allusions to Caravaggio's or Masaccio's painting, a parallelism is established between Christ's and Ettore's fate. As it has already been pointed out, Ettore's character is an attribute to the young boy characters of Caravaggio's paintings. Moreover, Ettore's character is also a reflection upon Masaccio's dead Christ image as it appears in *Trinità* (*Trinity*, 1426-28). The importance of the resemblance can be caught in the parallelism drawn between Christ's suffering and death for the humanity and Ettore's suffering and death as an emblem of the sub-proletariat's destiny. Hence, it is suggested that the aspirations of the sub-proletariat are in vain, it is a class condemned to death.

---

[78] "The light is monumental, / come on, come on, let's exploit it, / the fifty mm and the dolly come first. / Mamma Roma and his son come, / towards a new house, among a bunch / of houses, there where the sun places archaic / wings: what backgrounds, simple faces / of these moving bodies wooden / statues, Masaccesco's figures, / deteriorated, with white cheeks / white and opaque black eyes […]"

[79] "Sheep and shepherd, a bit / of Masaccio (rehearsals with seventy-five mm, / and dolly till close-up). / medieval spring."

[80] "I liked these ruins as the Mannerists of the '500 liked them…Yes, it's true there is a certain insistence, and in reality I liked these ruins exactly in the way Pontormo would have liked them, that is, basically they bring me back to a Renaissance inspiration, that is to painters you talked about earlier, so much that actually the painter who inspires me figuratively more than any others even in terms of colours, I would say, is especially Masaccio: that is a more stable painter, as you also said previously; if you isolate Masaccio's fragments, from Masaccio's close-ups, you will see that in a certain sense you will find again at least in parts those isolated framings about which we talked earlier. I would like the photography to resemble Masaccio's reproductions in black and white. The painter I love the most is him…"

The motif of the Dead Christ as a picturesque image appears in various literary or filmic works. In literature, an avowed example could be the mention of Hans Holbein's *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb* in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*. The novel's Prince Myshkin, having viewed the painting in the home of Rogozhin, declares that it has the power to make the viewer lose his faith.[81] The representation of Christ that (via Holbein) Dostoyevsky offers is an undeniably human character, vulnerable to suffering and death. Therefore, this is exactly the link between him and Pasolini's "Christ figure" as represented by Ettore's humble and tormented character. The question that Dostoyevsky poses is what if Christ was only a man? What if he suffered, died, and was left a bruised and lifeless corpse, as depicted by Holbein? That is, the question the novel deals with is that of the Resurrection. In Pasolini the possible Christ-miniature is a simple character of the subproletariat who suffers and dies. The question that the film poses is what chances and what perspectives his class has (if there are any)?

As for the filmic instances, Mantegna's *Cristo morto* (*Dead Christ*) has been recreated several times in the history of the cinema with the intention of exalting and releasing from martyrdom the humanity of the poor. This phenomenon is testified through the image of the sailor Vakilinchuk's dead body in Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925). Another example can be the delineation of the killed boy in the final sequence of King Vidor's *Hallelujah* (1929) or the representation of the husband's corpse in the episode of the Widow of Ephesus in Federico Fellini's *Satyricon* (1969). Furthermore, an allusion to Mantegna's *Cristo morto* (*Dead Christ*) is made through the image of the astronaut David Bowman's dead body in the appalling final sequence of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).

VI.3. Literary citations in *Mamma Roma*

Similarly to his previous film, even in *Mamma Roma* Pasolini invokes Dante who already fulfils the same role as the muses do for the epic poets. After Ettore is caught red-handed at the hospital, he is placed in prison. This is where the infernal atmosphere and

---

[81] "A man could even lose his faith from that painting!" (Dostoyevsky Part Two, Chapter 4, translated by Richard Pevear)

Ettore's physical torture begin. In addition, this is exactly the place where a prisoner recites some tercets from Dante's "Inferno":

> Ruppemi l'alto sonno ne la testa
>
> un greve truono, sì ch'io mi riscossi
>
> come persona ch'è per forza desta;
>
> e l'occhio riposato intorno mossi,
>
> dritto levato, e fiso riguardai
>
> per conoscer lo loco dov'io fossi.
>
> Vero è che 'n su la proda mi trovai
>
> de la valle d'abisso dolorosa
>
> che 'ntrono accoglie d'infiniti guai.
>
> Oscura e profonda era e nebulosa
>
> tanto che, per ficcar lo viso a fondo,
>
> io non vi discernea alcuna cosa.
>
> "Or discendiam qua giù nel cieco mondo" ("Inferno", Canto IV, 1-13)[82]

In this film, the references to Dante serve the purpose of gradually intensifying the drama and creating an infernal atmosphere for Ettore's calvary which will lead towards his death.

Apart from the citation of the "Inferno", further literary contaminations or resemblances appear in the film. For instance, Mamma Roma's character might easily remind one of Daniel Defoe's Moll Flanders, George Bernard Shaw's Mrs. Warren, Alberto Moravia's Adriana in *La romana* (*The Woman of Rome*, 1947), Guy de Maupassant's Jeanne in *A life* or Bertolt Brecht's Mother Courage. The resemblances of either of these works are not deliberate, except for Maupassant's mention which appeared in an interview between Pasolini and Ferrero: "Il nome di Maupassant può venire in mente,

---

[82] In Rev. H. F. Cary's translation:
 "Broke the deep lethargy within my head
A heavy thunder, so that I upstarted,
Like to a person who by force is wakened;
And round about I moved my rested eyes,
Uprisen erect, and steadfastly I gazed,
To recognise the place wherein I was.
True is it, that upon the verge I found me
Of the abysmal valley dolorous,
That gathers thunder of infinite ululations.
Obscure, profound it was, and nebulous,
So that by fixing on its depths my sight
Nothing whatever I discerned therein.
"Let us descend now into the blind world,"

o perlomeno, è lecito che venga in mente."[83] What connect all these above-listed women is their original virtue and their independent struggle for the greater good of their progeny. Mamma Roma's character is especially linked to that of Mother Courage: they both have higher hopes for their offspring but they both lose their children and they both have to "pull their wagon"[84] all by themselves from that point on. What might differentiate them is the fact that in Pasolini Ettore indicates the possible redemption for his mother, as it is underlined by Pasolini in an interview:

> Beh, immaginate un Accattone che invece di essere maschio sia femmina, il quale anzichè redimersi morendo, si debba redimere continuando a vivere. Questa Mamma Roma ha un figlio su cui punta tutte le sue speranze, appunto, di redenzione. Vuol rifarsi la vita ma non ci riesce perché il suo passato è di povera donna, così, che batte le strade, e il suo idealismo fasullo di piccola borghese non costruiscono niente e questo figlio le morirà.
> (qtd. in Marchesini 23)[85]

However, this hope of redemption and the aspiration for a petty bourgeois way of life remain Idealist plans for Mamma Roma. She loses her son in the end and therefore her tragedy becomes equal with that of Mother Courage.

VI.4. The music in *Mamma Roma*

As it has been pointed out, in *Accattone* the music further emphasizes the characters' sacralisation. The same function of music is observed in *Mamma Roma* as well. In this film Pasolini chose Antonio Vivaldi's *Concerto in re minore* to accompany Ettore's and Bruna's love, whereas *Concerto in do maggiore* from the same author was selected as a soundtrack for all the scenes illustrating Carmine's appearance, Mamma Roma's destiny

---

[83] "Maupassant's name might pop into one's mind, or at least it is right that it comes to one's mind."

[84] In Brecht, in the final scene of *Mother Courage* after leaving her daughter's corpse for the local peasants to bury, Mother Courage resolves to continue her trade and says so: "Hope I can pull this wagon by myself. Gotta manage. Not much in it, now. Gotta get back in business."

[85] "Well, imagine an Accattone who instead of being male is female, who rather than redeem herself dying, has to redeem herself by continuing her life. This Mamma Roma has a son on which she counts all her hope of redemption. She wants to recreate her life but she does not manage to do so because she has a past of being a poor woman, thus in this way that she works the streets, and with her queer idealism of becoming petty-bourgeois, they do not construct anything and this son will die." In "Intervista radiofonica con Lello Bersani. Ora sul disco *Le canzoni di Anna Magnani*." edited by V. Mollica and L. Magnani, quoted by Marchesini.

or Ettore's death. Whereas in *Accattone* there is an evident contrast between Bach's music and Accattone's violent character, in Mamma Roma this difference with Vivaldi is less marked because as Pasolini writes, the Vivaldian motifs are popular elements and they are given real sentimental, sweet, melodic and therefore popular nature (Magrelli).[86] In other words, in *Mamma Roma* the contamination of the ordinary people who are trying to be petty bourgeois with Vivaldi's music is less violent than in *Accattone*, since Vivaldi's music is based on popular music and it is much more Italian than Bach's tune.[87] In addition to Vivaldi's music, all the other soundtracks (Cherubini-Bixio: *Violino tzigano*, Carlo Rustichelli: *Cha-cha-cha*, Stornelli: *Fiore de gaggia, Fiore de sabbia, Fiore de menta, Fior de cucuzza, Fior de mmerda* and Gaetano Donizetti: *Una furtiva lacrima*, from *Elisir d'amore* enhance the popular quality of the musical accompaniment.[88]

<div align="center">***</div>

In conclusion, *Mamma Roma* can be regarded the continuation and the further elaboration of the filmic work that Pasolini started in *Accattone*. On the hand hand, the characterization proceeds with the same problems that were proposed in the previous film, and therefore, Mamma Roma is regarded as the female reflection of Franco Citti's character. However, the precedently offered issues of the Roman subproletariat are supplemented with the image and the consequent problems of "mater dolorosa". On the other hand, the previously raised questions of the "borgatori" are further analyzed from social and political approaches, and the topic of responsibility is added.

In *Mamma Roma* three scenes model on three picturesque images. First, the banquet scene is inspired by Girolamo Romanino's *Ultima cena* (*Last supper*) as the structure of the framing and the presence of the animals demonstrate it. Another instance is Ettore's representation on the basis of Caravaggio's *Ragazzo con canestro di frutta* (*Boy with a Fruit Basket*). It is the immature physique aspiring for sensuality

---

[86] "Probabilmente questi motivi di Vivaldi che ho scelto sono motivi popolari ed io ho ridato loro la loro vera natura, sentimentale, dolce, melodica e quindi popolare." / "Probably these motifs of Vivaldi that I chose are popular elements and I gave them back their real sentimental, sweet, melodic and therefore popular nature."

[87] The same topic is discussed in the interview between Stack and Pasolini: *The critics who complained about the music in Accattone seem to have digested the music in Mamma Roma without much trouble. Do you know why that was?*
I'm not sure. I think what scandalized them in *Accattone* was the mixture of the violent Roman subproletariat with the music of Bach, whereas in Mamma Roma there is a different kind of combination which was less shocking – ordinary people who are trying to be petit bourgeois with the music of Vivaldi, which is much more Italian and is based on popular music, so the contamination is much less violent and shocking. (Stack 52)

[88] For the soundtracks the following book was consulted: Magaletta, Giuseppe. *La musica nell'opera letteraria e cinematografica di Pasolini*. Urbino: Quattroventi. 1997.

and the facial resemblance what Pasolini borrows from the Baroque canvas. Furthermore, the final scene of the films is inspired by Masaccio's representation of Dead Christ in the picture *Trinità* in which Ettore's fate is called to be drawn as a parallelism to Christ's destiny. The literary and musical contaminations contribute to the sacralisation of the characters, however, a more popular approach is applied in this work.

VII. *LA RICOTTA*, 1963

La Ricotta (*Curd cheese*) is an episode of RoGoPaG (later: *Let's Have a Brainwash*, *Laviamoci il cervello*) which was directed by Roberto Rossellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Ugo Gregoretti, and produced by Alfredo Bini. It indicates a certain continuity of *Mamma Roma* and *Accattone* in the sense that the man who is conned in *Mamma Roma* is the same character who interprets the journalist in *La ricotta*. Another instance can be pointed out in Stracci's character that is interpreted by the same actor (Mario Cipriani) who illustrates the thief in *Accattone*. The "fabula" applies a film-in-the-film construction, and this trick allows creating the vicissitudes of a film crew that is shooting a crucifixion scene inspired by some quotations of the Italian Mannerism. Its idea was suggested by a news section according to which during the sun eclipse of 1961 a crucifixion scene of a film [Barabba] was shot and one of the crucified men fainted because of the cold ("Non ho offeso il cattolicesimo").[89]

However, on the level of the "syuzhet" the subproletariat's destiny constitutes again the focus of attention. It is represented by the vicissitudes of the Chaplinian character, Stracci ("Rags") who is a utility man during the built-in shooting and suffers from an atavistic hunger all over the film, not being able to consume his curd cheese. When he can finally bolt not only the curd cheese but all the food that the film crew throws him, he has to go up the cross for the crucifixion scene. When he dies of indigestion, all his environment remains absolutely indifferent, this is explained by Pasolini in the following way:

> [...] il reale contenuto del film è Stracci, è il sottoproletariato visto questa volta non più dentro se stesso [...] come appunto in *Accattone* in cui personaggi come Orson Welles non c'erano [...]. Ne *La Ricotta* c'è questo personaggio [Welles] che è un po' la presenza dell'altro mondo, del mondo delle classi dominanti, della cultura in rapporto con il sottoproletariato, ed è un rapporto cinico ed estettizzante, nel migliore dei casi, che è rappresentato

---

[89] "L'idea dell'opera mi fu suggerita da un fatto di cronaca. Durante l'eclisse di sole del 1961 fu girata la scena di una crocefissione destinata ad un film le cui riprese non erano state ancora iniziate [Barabba]. Uno degli uomini crocefissi fu colto da un malore per il freddo."

da questa regista, che è un uomo colto, estetizzante, cinico appunto.
(*Pasolini nel dibattito culturale contemporaneo* 100)[90]

Therefore, Stracci's drama is an "imitation Christi" as it reflects on Christ's passion, demonstrating, however, that the real passion is that of the sub-proletarian Stracci.

VII.1. Picturesque citations: the role of Mannerism in *La ricotta*

The narration of Stracci's vicissitudes takes place through the recreation and the insertion of two "tableaux vivants": the *Depositions* of Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino (see fig. 13-16). Both paintings are instances of the Italian Mannerism which often occupied with religious subjects with odd modifications, such as representing angels with black wings, estranged faces, revealing torment instead of seraphic bliss. Both Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino worked in a period of crisis which explains the sense of tragic isolation, intellectual anarchy and formal extravagancy that we find in their works (Briganti 26). Discussing the rational proclivities of such Mannerists, Arnold Hauser wrote:

> On the one hand, they took fully into account the inadequacy of rational thought and appreciated that reality, everyday reality, was inexhaustible and defied rational synthesis. On the other, in spite of their fundamental irrationalism and in the scepticism, they could not give up the art of reason, playing with problems, throwing them up and catching them again. They despaired of speculative thought, and at the same time clung to it; they had no high hopes of reason, but remained passionate reasoners. (Hauser 15)

Pasolini's interest in Mannerism is justified by his participation at a workshop, held in 1965 about Girolamo Romanino, a Mannerist painter from Brescia (qtd. in Marchesini 41).[91] With the scope of presenting the eccentric position of the Brescian painter inside the pictorial panorama of the sixteenth century, Pasolini provides the audience with an interpretation of the Mannerist painting, quoting Rosso Fiorentino and Pontormo as

---

[90] "[…] the real content of this film is Stracci, the sub-proletariat, no longer seen in itself […] like in *Accattone* in which there were no such characters as Orson Welles […]. In *La Ricotta* (*Curd cheese*) there is this character [Welles] who signifies the presence of the other world, the world of the dominant classes and the culture in relationship with the sub-proletariat, and it is a cynic and aestheticizing relationship in the best case and it is represented by this director who is a cultured man, cynic and aestheticizing indeed."

[91] Originally in *L'arte del Romanino e il nostro tempo*. Brescia: Grafo, 1976.

emblems (qtd. in Marchesini 42)[92] He underlines that Mannerism appears as a deliberate corruption with classicism in a climate of disbelief and demonism, as if it were a religious "desertion" from the "intact, complete, and harmonious" world in the early sixteenth century (Marchesini 42). The choices upon Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino are motivated by their delineation from the classic iconography: "Ho scelto i quadri del Pontormo e del Rosso Fiorentino perché questi pittori rappresentano, nel momento della grandezza rinascimentale, l'inizio dell'inaridirsi della pittura e sono perciò fuori dell'iconografia classica" (G.G.).[93]

The photography of the set also underlines the deliberate imitation of the Mannerist Deposition-images inasmuch as next to the scene there is an open book on Pontormo's *La Deposizione dalla croce* (*The Deposition from the Cross*, 1526-28). As Marchesini proves it on the basis of some set photos and references to the book format, the extract is taken from Giuliano Briganti's *The Italian Mannerism* (45).[94] In this study on the sixteenth century's painting, the author handles the two artists in the same chapter, and they appear together even in Pasolini's film. As Longhi demonstrated, what links these two painters is the capacity of expressing a tragic imposition of times through a distressed art, which is full of contradictions, in a deformation of the classic world which is full of irrational, capricious and subjective effects (22).[95] Pasolini applies the implications of these Mannerist painters for their extremity and their provoking style. He receives inspiration from Rosso Fiorentino who revolutionizes the current models of the religious compositions. In other words, as Marchesini stresses, Rosso Fiorentino decomposes the classic hierarchic order of the sacred characters through broken lines which create a strong disequilibrium in the space and in the faces by using grotesque expressions until this tecnique leads to a certain deformity (51). Moreover, Pasolini's inspiration derives from the mysterious and striking colours of Pontormo's painting. It is proved by the fact that

---

[92] "[...] non c'è mai un quadro del Romanino in cui la dominante sia classicistica oppoure la dominante sia manieristica. Perché questo? Perché il Romanino non voleva essere un classico o un classicista ma non voleva nemmeno essere un manierista [...] e cioè il classicismo era dentro di lui superato in quanto visione integra, totale, armoniosa del mondo e il manierismo era da lui rifiutato in quanto questa visione integra, totale, armoniosa del mondo, il manierismo la dissolveva, la disgregava, la degenerava coscientemente. Il manierismo era miscredente: il Pontormo, il Rosso Fiorentino dipingevano la crocifissione però evidentemente nel loro fondo erano diabolici, erano miscredenti. Il Romanino, no, [...]."

[93] "I chose Pontormo's and Rosso Fiorentino's painting because these artists represent, in the moment of the Renaissance grandiosity, the beginning of shoving off from painting and this is why they are beyond the classic iconography."

[94] Marchesini refers to the photos published in Longhi's work (Longhi, Roberto. *Cinquecento classico e Cinquecento manieristico*. Firenze: Sansoni, 1976: 101-102).

[95] "[...] esprimere questa tragica imposizione dei tempi [...] in un'arte turbata e ricca di contraddizioni, in una deformazione del mondo classico piena di effetti irrazionali, capricciosi e soggettivi.".

Pasolini also uses the bright colours of Pontormo's fresco in his "tableau vivant" which interrupts Stracci's black and white calvary, creating thereby a violent effect of break.

Another reason why Pasolini turns to Mannerism is the distinct expressivity of inner nature through which Mannerism operates. This is what is suggested in the interview that Bertolucci and Comolli made with Pasolini: "Ho accuratamente ricostruito i loro quadri [di Pontormo e di Rosso], non perché rappresentino la mia visione delle cose, né perché io li ami: non ho proceduto ad una ricostruzione in prima persona. I due dipinti devono simboleggiare lo stato d'animo con cui lavora Welles" (7).[96]

The two Mannerist pictures cited by Pasolini convey different emotions despite the thematical parallels. On the one hand, in Pontormo's image the stunned and suffering faces express subtle shades of a desperate sadness through light and bitter colour tones, such as grass green or spring flower colours (periwinkles, roses, violets, pollen yellow, light green stems). On the other hand, in Rosso Fiorentino's more violent and bizarre picture it is not the melancholy but the demonic and anguishing quality that dominates. As Marchesini highlights, what Pasolini borrows from Mannerism is primarily the religious aberration in the form of misbelief (from Pontormo) and in the form of demonism (from Rosso Fiorentino) (47).

The originality of the Pasolinian mise-en-scène of the oil paintings can be primarily caught in the use of colours. One can observe every tone, from the very light to the sharpest ones. However, it is only the irreality of the built-in fiction (that is, the film inside the film) which is in colours, whereas reality remains black and white in its simplicity and misery. The originality of the use of colours can be pointed out in the fascination of the different tones, as it is described in *Alì dagli occhi azzurri*, recreated through the associations with plants and flowers:

> Pànfete, un'altra volta – stacco netto- la Deposizione del Pontormo a colori, coi colori che sfolgorano in pieno petto. Colori? Chiamali colori...
>
> Non so...Se prendete dei papaveri, lasciati nella luce del sole d'un pomeriggio melanconico, quando tutto tace ('perché mai nessuna donna cantò – alle tre del pomeriggio'), in un ardore di cimitero – se li prendete e li pestate, ecco, ne viene fuori un succo che si secca subito; ebbene annacquatelo un po' su una tela bianca di bucato, e dite a un bambino di

---

[96]"I have reconstructed accurately their paintings [those of Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino] not because they represent my vision of things, not because I love them: I have not proceeded towards a first-person reconstruction. The two pictures have to symbolize the frame of mind with which Welles works."

passare un dito umido su quel liquido: al centro della ditata verrà fuori un rosso pallido pallido, quasi rosa, ma splendido per il candore di bucato che cià sotto; e agli orli delle ditate si raccoglierà un filo di rosso violento e prezioso, appena appena sbiadito; si asciugherà subito, diventerà opaco come sopra una mano di calce...Ma proprio in quello sbiadirsi cartaceo conserverà, morto, il suo vivo rossore. (480)[97]

At this point it has to be pinpointed that the use of particular colours belongs also to Pasolini's activity as a painter. His painter friend, Zigaina describes the way Pasolini colours the series of Callas-profiles in the minutest details: "prende dal tavolo – dicevamo– una rosa e ne schiaccia i petali sulla tempia, poi impallidisce le guance con degli acini d'uva bianca spremuta; sui capelli versa ancora del vino rosso e qualche volta, da una candela accesa fa gocciolare sull'immagine [...] delle perle di cera" (*Pasolini e la morte* 52).[98] In terms of the colourisation, the "tableaux vivants" of the film follow faithfully Pontormo's and Rosso Fiorentino's paintings. The proof of a precise reproduction can be found in Oswald Stack's interview with Pasolini:

> *This was the first time you used colour and the pancinor – did you have any trouble?*
>
> No, using the zoom is the easiest thing in the world. I discovered it by chance. I saw you could get certain effects with it, so I used it. Instead of doing a close-up with one kind of lens I did a close-up from a distance with a 250 which gives pictorial effects, which I like, which gives a Masaccio-like image. There was no difficulty with the colour because the only thing about colour is selecting the colours, because there are too many colours in real life. That's why I chose Morocco for Oedipus, because there are only a few main colours there – ochre, rose, brown, green, the blue of the sky, only five or six colours for the camera to register. To do a really good colour film you'd need a year or a year and a half to choose the right colours for every

---

[97] "Pontormo's *Deposition* in colours, in colours which blaze as a whole. Colours? Call them colours… I don't know…If you take some poppies, left in sunlight for a melancholic afternoon, when everything keeps quiet ('as no woman sang at three in the afternoon'), in an ardour of cemetery – if you take and press them, here we go, there comes out a juice which dries immediately; so dilute it on a snow white canvas, and tell a child to put a damp finger on that liquid: from the center of the fingermark a pale red, and almost pink colour will come out but it will be bright with the whiteness of the canvas which is behind it; and at the edges of the fingermark one will find a bit of violent and precious red which has just faded; it will get dry immediately, it will become opaque like over a lime hand…But it will keep its deep redness."

[98] "[...] he picks from the table a rose and presses its petals against the temple, then he turns the cheeks pale with a squeezed white grape, on the hair he pours some more red wine and a couple of times from an inflamed candle he drops some pearls of wax on the image"

image, the ones you really need and not the twenty or thirty colours you always find in the cinema. So *La Ricotta* was easy; I just reproduced the colours used by Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino. (63)

The colours used by Pontormo and reproduced in the film are described in the screenplay in minute details to rebel against the Producers and the Capitalist, as Pasolini puts it (*Per il cinema* 347).[99] However, the referred painting is not the *Deposition* but the *Incoronazione della Vergine* (*Coronation*) which was later substituted by Rosso Fiorentino's picture (*Per il cinema* 331). In terms of the colourisation, the screenplay provides one with a profound display of Pontormo's palette, by describing his application of tones in minute details. For instance, it compares Pontormo's light green to the water of a pond and his red to blood (*Per il cinema* 331).[100] Another example can be the application of two tones of green by Pontormo: the azure that becomes green in the blood vessels or in the velvet of the water plants; and another green, a coarse one of the healing herbs, stained by the slightly muddy brown of the earth (*Per il cinema* 331).[101] As for Pontormo's brown, Pasolini compares it to the mud and calls it evanescent as it turns purple to fury or frost (*Per il cinema* 331).[102] In addition, Pontormo's red is associated with a very subtle must or dead strawberries which are pressed onto a white parchment paper or bed linen (*Per il cinema* 331).[103] On the basis of the colourisation it can be well seen that Pasolini associates

---

[99] "Perché ho tanto insistito a descrivere, per *persone colte* il quadro del Pontormo coi suoi colori? Perché, per ribellarsi ai Produttori, ai Capitalisti, al Capitale, o si usa una cultura difficile, specializzata, folle magari, e squisita: imprendibile, insomma...oppure...Ma non anticipiamo: lo vedremo nell'ultima scena.)"

[100] "Il fondo verdino, come l'acqua di uno stagno, i pannolini rosso sangue che tremolano sui lombi bovini della soldataglia bionda. Cristo è in mezzo, patito, occhioni bassi, che abbozza; si lascia mettere la corona di spine e pure sfottere e farsi dare caracche."

[101] "Il verde...Il verde è l'azzurro delle foglie delle vasche. Di sera, quando le campane suonano e le donne cantano, sulle soglie. E, nella pace gentilizia del giardino, scende la notte come l'ombra di un temporale: le foglie stanno immobili sotto il pelo dell'acqua, e si fanno sempre più azzurre, finché diventano verdi. Ma è verde o azzurro? Così si sono vestiti certi soldati crudeli, nei secoli, Lanzichenecchi o SS: e se ne sono andati a riempire gli ossari del mondo col ricordo del dolore di quel loro panno, perduto nei crepuscoli di temporale. Ma accanto all'azzurro che si fa verde nelle vene e nel velluto delle foglie d'acqua, resta il verde vero: quello rozzo dell'erba medica, macchiato solo dal bruno della terra leggermente fangosa. C'è anche questo verde."

[102] "E il bruno: quello marroncino del fango, evanescente. E quello che, per interno furore, per gelo, si fa viola, nell'arco della volta del fondo."

[103] "E un secondo rosso: mosto tenue tenue, o fragole morte: sempre spremuti, mosto o fragole, su candida carta di pergamena, o lino di bucato, poi schiacciati col dito, sì che il liquido si spande tutti sugli orli, intenso e, nel contro resta un pallore, un vuoto, un nulla carico di qualcosa che fu rosso, ed è: ma come spettro fragrante. Il vuoto che resta nel quadro, nei corpo dei componenti della Sacra Famiglia, e dei loro conoscenti – resta sì, così bianco da sfolgorare (opaco, asciuttissimo) agli orli nelle pieghe dei manti, ma è pur esso dipinto. E si tratta stavolta, di un giallino di spighe e di un rosa di quei fiori che non so come si chiamino, credo rose selvatiche, cresciute rozzamente tra i cespugliacci della primavera, in comuni prati o pascoli o prode di fossi: con le foglie delicate che si staccano appena a toccarle. Una rosa più squisita di così, così femminile, è impossibile pensarlo: su quei fiori che non costano niente. Questo giallo e questo rosa – che empiono il gran vuoto dei corpi dagli orli schiumeggianti di papaveri, mostro, fragole e foglie lacustri – non sono tinte, ma soffi: soffi delicati, irregolari e potenti: come un resto indelebile d'incendio o sole sui fianchi d'un vapore in forma di colli o torrioni."

Pontormo's painting with a harsh psychology the elements of which are fury, fight or rebellion.

However, the colourisation of the Pontormian mise-en-scène contains some minor differences compared to the painting. The Pasolinian Deposition-scene is rendered more tragic and pessimistic, and less energetic. These qualities are expressed through the minor changes made to the colourisation. For instance, Pasolini chooses the black monochrome for the background which appears more vivid and irrational in Pontormo's image. Another instance can be the application of lighter tones in the film as opposed to the prevalent surrealism of the image. The mise-en-scène eliminates the surrealistic tones of the painting: the artistic value of the structure and the natural colours are underlined instead. In consequence, the Pontormian misbelief is made more realistic and terrestrial, and thus, the tragedy is more accentuated.

When confronting Rosso Fiorentino's *Deposition* with Pasolini's other mise-en-scène, it is observed that Pasolini follows faithfully the original structure. Thus, in both images it is Mary Magdalene who connects the lower right corner of the composition with Madonna on the opposite side. She is on her knees and in the act of stretching out towards the Madonna to embrace her legs, bending elegantly around the cross. Like her red dress, this pose is typical for the representations of the Crucifixion. What differentiates this representation of Mary Magdalene from the traditional ones is the fact that she normally holds the base of the cross tight instead of the Madonna. This motif particularly highlights the Madonna's cult in Pasolini's setting which later returns in the *Decameron* as well.

Both Pasolini and Rosso Fiorentino focus on a dramatic representation of grief, however, Pasolini emphasizes more the tragical factor. Whereas Rosso Fiorentino accentuates the Madonna's dignity and discretion, Pasolini would rather stress her agony. Rosso highlights the Madonna's simplicity and modesty through her clothing. To show her state of despair, Rosso depicted her with closed eyes and shaded face and gave her body an incline up to ninety degrees. However, her dignity still wins over her sorrow; whereas Pasolini's Madonna with her gaze heavenwards conveys much more anguish and less discretion. Madonna is surrounded by three women both in the painting and in the mise-en-scène. In the bottom left corner of the painting one of them is looking at the spectators, drawing their attention to the dramatic nature of the event. This act of "wink" at the spectators is missing from Pasolini's setting where the same character's gaze focuses on Madonna's grief.

As for Christ's representation, his body is thinner than any other prototypes both in the film and in the painting. Both works depict him with a disconcerting smile which is utilized to express a state of anguish. In addition, both artists opt for portraying the act of deposition through the representation of a fact which was not evidenced by the evangelical sources: Christ's body is slipping from the grasp of the rescuers who come beside Christ in the attempt of avoiding his incumbent and disastrous fall.

The aspect that has mainly influenced *La ricotta* is the originality of the colour spectrum of Rosso Fiorentino's painting. This originality can be primarily demonstrated in the juxtaposition of complementer colours. On the one hand, there is a luminous irradiation of dress colours, which can be contrasted with the opacity of the background, on the other hand. The juxtaposition of complementer colours and that of "chiaroscuro" lend a particular significance to the complex linear articulation both in the pictorial and in the cinematic image.

The bright colourisation of Pasolini's mise-en-scène of Rosso's painting is in opposition with the black and white simplicity of Stracci's calvary. This technique creates the effects of breakage in the dramaturgy as it confronts the film's internal fiction (the film-in-the-film) with the Chaplinian burlesque scenes of Stracci. In addition, it also contrasts the profound quality of the sacred representation with the sacredness of mundane tragedies. This phenomenon contributes to the antithetical quality of the film which is present at every level of Pasolini's art, even in his literary works. The first researcher is Franco Fortini who accurately observes that antithesis is detectable at all levels of Pasolini's writings. He explains that it is about the antithesis of language, national and dialectal, even multidialectal; and it is also present as an opposition between syntactic and metrical structures, until the frequent application of synecdoche – a language figure, subspecies of oxymoron, with which two opposites of the same subject are declared. (130)[104] The antithetical layer of the film manifests itself in several other ways. Another instance can be the contrast of "high" and "low" qualities inasmuch as the Scarlatti's elated music is set against twist, or Stracci's hunger is in opposition with the accentuated richness of the table. Furthermore, immobility is confronted with constant motion (Welles's stillness and Stracci's frenzy) in the same way as reality and fiction oppose each other (Stracci's real passion and the directed scene of passion). This real calvary is emphasized

---

[104]"L'antitesi è rilevabile a tutti i livelli della sua scrittura […]. È antitesi […] di linguaggio, nazionale e dialettale, anzi pluridialettale; fra struttura sintattica e struttura metrica, come dirò, fino alla sua più
frequente figura di linguaggio, quella sottospecie dell'oxymoron, che l'antica retorica chiamava sineciosi, e con la quale si affermano, di uno stesso soggetto, due contrari […]"

and elevated by sacred music through the citation of Jacopone da Todi's *Lauda* and Scarlatti's music.

In the shaping of Stracci's character, instead of the Mannerist effects, it is Masaccio and Giotto who make the most prevalent impact on the author. The evidence is provided by Pasolini himself:

> Il Santo è Stracci. La faccia di antico camuso
>
> che Giotto vide contro tufi e ruderi castrensi,
>
> i fianchi rotondi che Masaccio chiaroscurò
>
> come un panettiere una sacra pagnotta...
>
> Se vi è oscura la bontà con cui egli si toglie di bocca
>
> il cestino, per darlo alla famiglia che lo mastichi
>
> al suono del Dies Irae; se vi è oscura l'ingenuità
>
> con cui piange sul suo pasto rubato dal cane;
>
> se vi è oscura la tenerezza con cui poi carezza
>
> la colpevole bestia [...];
>
> se vi è oscura la semplicità con cui muore... ("Pietro II") [105]

There is a juxtopposition even in the parallel use of the two pictorial impacts. On the one hand, there is the association with Masaccio's sacred world in "chiaroscuro" that sculpts Stracci's lineaments. On the other hand, there is Giotto's effect in the creation of simplicity and in the frontal representation. The result of this "sculptor" is a "working-class Christ"who comes from the periphery but through his everyday tragedy he becomes sacralised.

---

[105]The literary translation of the poem comes as it follows: "The Saint is Stracci. The face of the antic snub-nosed / that Giotto saw by tuffs and field ruins, / the round hips that Masaccio shaded like a baker does to a sacred loaf… / If there is darkness in the goodness with which he takes from his mouth / the basket to give it to the family that masticates it by the tone of Dies Irae; if there is darkness in the naivety with which he cries after the food stolen by the dog; / if there is darkness in the tenderness with which he later strokes / the guilty beast […]; / if there is darkness in the simplicity with which he dies…"

VII.2. Literary contaminations

Similarly to *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma*, *La ricotta* also contains elements of literary contaminations. First of all, it starts with two Biblical references to create a Biblical atmosphere right at the beginning:

> For there is nothing hid, which shall not be
>
> manifested; neither was anything kept secret, but
>
> that it should come abroad. If any men have ears
>
> to hear, let him hear. (Mark 4:22-23)[106]
>
> And he told those who sold the pigeons,
>
> "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house
>
> a house of trade." (John, 2:16)[107]

Therefore, the mottos foreshadow the ridiculous factor of the bourgeoisie's "flea flair". In addition, they stress the materialization that takes place in the "House of Religion".

At another point of the film the fiction's director, Orson Welles recites a poem ("Mamma Roma") by Pasolini. This poem has two functions: first, it creates continuity with Pasolini's previous film entitled exactly in the same way; second, it focuses the problem on the social factors, those of the sub-proletarians.

> Io sono una forza del Passato.
>
> Solo nella tradizione è il mio amore.
>
> Vengo dai ruderi, dalle chiese,
>
> dalle pale d'altare, dai borghi
>
> abbandonati sugli Appennini o le Prealpi,
>
> dove sono vissuti i fratelli.
>
> Giro per la Tuscolana come un pazzo,
>
> per l'Appia come un cane senza padrone.
>
> O guardo i crepuscoli, le mattine
>
> su Roma, sulla Ciociaria, sul mondo,
>
> come i primi atti della Dopostoria,

---

[106] In Italian: "Non esiste niente di nascosto che non si debba / manifestare; e niente accade occultamente, ma / perché si manifesti. Se qualcuno ha orecchi per / intendere, intenda."

[107] "...e spazzò via le monete dei banchieri e buttò / all'aria i banchi, e ai venditori di colombe disse: / 'Portate via di qua, e della casa di mio padre / non fate un mercato."

cui io assisto, per privilegio d'anagrafe,

dall'orlo estremo di qualche età

sepolta. Mostruoso è chi è nato

dalle viscere di una donna morta.

E io, feto adulto, mi aggiro

più moderno di ogni moderno

a cercare fratelli che non sono più.[108]

It is known that Pasolini wanted to make a film about a heretical medieval saint named Bestemmia (Blasphemy). Although this project was never realized, it becomes clear from Pasolini's own notes that his objective was to present Christ as he was in reality ("Bestemmia"). That is, what he really wished to realize in "Bestemmia" and in *La ricotta* was to evoke a Christ-figure which was exempt from all those authorial fantasies that poetry or painting attributed to him:

un'idea di Cristo

anteriore a ogni stile, a ogni corso della storia,

a ogni fissazione, a ogni sviluppo; vergine;

realtà riprodotta con la realtà; senza

un solo ricordo di poemi e pitture;

Voglio non solo non conoscere il Dante, o il Masaccio

o il Pontormo che a lungo hanno dominato

i miei occhi, il mio cuore,

i miei sensi: ma non voglio

neanche conoscere la lingua e la pittura

Voglio che quel Cristo si presenti come Cristo in realtà ("Bestemmia")[109]

---

[108] "I am a force of the past / Only tradition is my love. / I come from the ruins, from the churches, / from the altarpieces, from the villages / abandoned on the Apennines, the Alpine foothills / where my brothers lived. / I rove the Via Tuscolana like a madman, / or the Appia like a dog without a master. / Or I look at the twilights, the mornings / over Rome, Ciociaria, the world, / like the first acts of post-history, / which I witness, thanks to my date of birth, / from the far edge of some buried / age. Monstrous is he born / from the womb of a dead woman. / And I, adult fetus, roam, / more modern than any modern, / seeking brothers who are no more."

[109] "an idea of Christ
    which precedes every style, every twist of history,
    every fixation, every development; virgin;
    reality reproduced with reality; without
    a single echo of poetry and painting;
    I want not only to be unaware of Dante, or Masaccio
    or Pontormo who have long dominated
    my eyes, my heart,
    my senses: I do not even want

VII.3. Musical references

Similarly to *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma*, even in *La ricotta* the citations of figurative arts are accompanied by musical references. First of all, there are musical improvisations with mouth organ: these pieces emphasize the motif of nature, the place and the characters are simple and rural. As another instance, the music of twist expresses the motif of contempt towards the bourgeoisie. For instance, it manifests itself in the interview scene in which the director ridicules the journalist by regarding him a compliant man. The sacredness is elevated by some extracts of Alessandro Scarlatti's and Francesco Biscogli's music with which the two *Deposition* images are in absolute consonance. In addition, Stracci's passion is enhanced by Tommaso da Celano's *Dies irae*. In contrast, the rather banal situations, such as the feast or the motifs of eating, are accompanied by Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata*.

<p align="center">***</p>

To sum up, *La ricotta* continues to deal with the topic of the tragedies of the Roman sub-proletariat of the 1960s, as represented by the vicissitudes of the Chaplinian character, Stracci. His drama is an "imitation Christi" as it reflects upon Christ's passion. The dramatic circumstances of his stratum are enhanced by sacred picturesque and musical references. In terms of figurative arts, the *Depositions* of Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino are inserted in the plot as "tableaux vivants" to evoke Christ's suffering in a fictive way and to confront it with the humble protagonist's, Stracci's real passion. The choices upon Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino are motivated by their delineation from the classic iconography. On the one hand, Pasolini is inspired by Rosso Fiorentino's revolutionarist model. On the other hand, the mysterious and striking colours of Pontormo's painting nourish the visual structure of Pasolini's film. In addition to the "pastiche", oxymoron and inversion are the principal figures of speech through which the aesthetical quality of *La ricotta* is deciphered. Similarly to *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma*, *La ricotta* also contains elements of literary contaminations, such as Biblical references or insertions of Pasolini's poems ("Mamma Roma" or "Bestemmia"). The sacred quality is enhanced by Alessandro Scarlatti's and Francesco Biscogli's music and Tommaso da Celano's *Dies irae*.

---

to know language and painting.
I want this Christ to appear as did Christ in reality."

VIII.EXPERIMENTS WITH STYLES AND FORMS: *LA RABBIA* (*THE ANGER*), 1963

La rabbia (*The Anger*, 1963) is a film in two parts: the first by Pier Paolo Pasolini, the second by Giovanni Guareschi. Pasolini's part is a collage of documentary materials whose elegiac commentary is written in poetry and prose. The poetic narration is read by the novelist Giorgio Bassani, and the prosaic register is interpreted by the painter Renato Guttuso. In an interview with Oswald Stack, Pasolini underlines that he "did not shoot a single frame" but he put the film together from newsreels of the late fifties:

> *The Anger* is a strange film because it is entirely made up of documentary material; I didn't shoot a single frame. Mainly it's pieces from newsreels, so the material is extremely banal and downright reactionary. I chose some sequences from newsreels of the late fifties and put them together my own way – they are mostly about the Algerian War, the reign of Pope John, and there are a few minor episodes like the return of the Italian prisoners of war from Russia. (Stack 70)

As Biamonti reveals, the materials (photographs and clips) are taken from various magazines and catalogues and put together without any chronological or logical order. As Roberto Chiesi points out, the idea of the project was proposed by a producer, Gastone Ferranti who provided Pasolini with the archive material of a newsreel, "Mondo libero" that he edited for several ages (7). In an interview with Maurizio Liverani Pasolini declares:

> Ho visto questo materiale. Una visione tremenda, una serie di cose squallide, una sfilata deprimente del qualunquismo internazionale, il trionfo della reazione più banale. Però in mezzo a tutta questa banalità e squallore, ogni tanto saltavano fuori immagini bellissime: il sorriso di uno sconosciuto, due occhi con una espressione di gioia e di dolore e delle interessanti sequenze piene di significato storico. Un bianco e nero molto affascinante visivamente.[110]

---

[110] "I have seen this material. A tremendous vision, a series of miserable things, a depressing sequence of international political apathy, the triumph of the most banal reaction. However, in the middle of all this banality and squalor, sometimes beautiful pictures came out: an unknown person's smile, two eyes with an

VIII.1. Social and political content in *La rabbia*

La rabbia is an attempt to answer the dramatic questions posed by the preface: why is our life dominated by discontent, anguish, fear of war, and war itself?[111] Pasolini called it "a Marxist denunciation of society and recent events", or even "cry of rage" against human suffering and man's inhumanity to man (Greene 68). This poetic montage is a political and ideological poemic piece about the events of the preceding ten years. On the one hand, it is an act of indignation against the unreality and the consequent historical irresponsibility of the bourgeois world. To document the presence of an environment that, in contrast with the bourgeois world, has a profound reality. The reality, or in Pasolini's words "a true love for the tradition that only revolution can give" (qtd. by Carlo di Carlo in Bertini 147). On the other hand, *La rabbia* is a protest and a condemnation against threats (such as atomic bombing or fascism) and the consequent fear.

By using a montage technique based on moving images, photographs and painting reproductions, Pasolini intended to realize a new cinematographic genre (Chiesi 7). The pictures come from Italian, Czech or English footage, art albums (reproductions of paintings by Ben Shahn, Renato Guttuso, George Grosz, Jean Fautrier, Giovanni Pontormo, Georges Braque, Jackson Pollock) and news magazines (Marilyn Monroe's photographs). From the point of view of the visuality, even in *La rabbia* one can point out continuity with the previous films. This phenomenon is detectable in the fact that the same painting by Pontormo (*Deposition*) is inserted in its black-and-white modification in this film as the one put on stage in *La ricotta* (Chiesi 7).

The focus of this film is constituted by a social and political analysis in the form of a poetic diary in which Pasolini's "political arguments and poetic sensitivity dominates".[112] After some disquieting images of atomic explosions, the film starts with the pictures of the Soviet invasion of Hungary: "Neri inverni d'Ungheria: / è scoppiata la Controrivoluzione.

---

expression of joy and pain, and some interesting sequences full of historical significance. A visually very fascinating black and white material."
[111] The preface of the film is the following: "Perché la nostra vita è dominata dalla scontentezza, dall'angoscia, dalla paura della guerra, dalla guerra? Per rispondere a questa domanda ho scritto questo film senza seguire un filo cronologico e forse neanche logico."
[112] The quotation still comes from the preface of the film: "[…] Ma soltanto le mie ragioni politiche e il mio sentimento poetico."

[...] Nero sole d'Ungheria: / le colpe di Stalin sono le nostre colpe" (*Per il cinema* 368).[113] The effects of Communism and thereby the anti-communist demonstrations are also shown in Paris where Parisian crowds burn the French Communist party headquarters: "Neri boulevards di Parigi: / i suoi leaders marciano come colonnelli. / Neri presagi di Parigi: / la libertà è diventata un dolore" (*Per il cinema* 369).[114] After some images of Italian refugees, the problems of colonialism and colour are raised through several references to Egypt, Congo, India, Indonesia, Tunisia and Tanganyika: "Scoppia un nuovo problema nel mondo. Si chiama Colore. / Si chiama Colore, la nuova estensione del mondo. / Dobbiamo annettere l'idea di migliaia di figli neri o marroni, / infanti con l'occhio nero e la nuca ricciuta. / Dobbiamo accettare distese infinite di vite reali, che vogliono, con innocente ferocia, entrare nella nostra realtà" (*Per il cinema* 371).[115] Another problem is suggested by the references to the Cuban freedom fighters who rejoice and die on dusty roads: "Morire a Cuba! / Forse solo una canzone / poté dire cos'era il morire a Cuba" (*Per il cinema* 375).[116] After some sarcastic visual quotations of newsreel snippets representing Sophia Loren and Ava Gardner, images from the Italian economic miracle are displayed: the unions sign an agreement with the government: "Comprare un operaio / non costa nulla. Basta / far balenare alla nobiltà del suo cuore / un riconoscimento di nobiltà. [...] e vuole, disperato, anche lui essere spirito, far parte dei festini di chi non vive di solo pane" (*Per il cinema* 358).[117]

The pictures of the coronation ceremony of Elizabeth II and those of the nomination of presidential candidate Eisenhower are also inserted in the sequence: "La gioia dell'americano che si sente uguale a un altro milione di americani nell'amore per la democrazia: questa è la malattia del mondo futuro! Quando il mondo classico sarà esaurito – quando saranno morti tutti i contadini e tutti gli artigiani – quando l'industria avrà reso inarrestabile il ciclo della produzione e del consumo – allora la nostra storia sarà finita"

---

[113] This and the following citations in parentheses all belong to the commentary written by Pasolini. "Black Hungarian winters, the counterrevolution has erupted. […] Black Hungarian sun, Stalin's mistakes are our mistakes."

[114] "Black Parisian boulevards, your leaders march like colonels, black Parisian forebodings, freedom has become suffering."

[115] "A new problem burst out in the world: it is called colour. The new dimension of the world is called colour. We must incorporate the idea of thousands of black and brown children, with black eyes and curly heads; we must accept the infinite spectacle of real lives that want to enter our reality with ferocious innocence."

[116] "Fighting in Cuba! Perhaps only a song can tell us the meaning of the Cuban fights."

[117] "it's easy to buy a worker. It is enough to lure him with the recognition of nobility. […] He wants to be spirit, to be part of the banquet of those who do not live by bread alone."

(*Per il cinema* 381-382).[118] After some fleeting images of the atomic mushroom cloud in the Nevada desert, the funeral of Pope Pius XII is displayed.

Then the camera focuses on an exhibition of socialist-realist paintings: "Guardate come sono ben eseguiti / questi nostri compagni minatori, / queste nostre compagne colcosiane...Eppure qualcos'altro mi pesa nel cuore [...] in questi quadri c'è il nostro errore. Dovremo toglierli da queste pareti!" (*Per il cinema* 387)[119] Subsequently through some colour shots of Renato Guttoso's pictures and through a long sequence on the Algerian war ("Gente di colore, / l'Algeria è restituita alla storia! [...] Sul mio primo fratello predone / sul mio secondo fratello sciancato / sul mio terzo fratello lustrascarpe / sul mio quarto fratello mendicante / scrivo il tuo nome. / Sui miei compagni della malavita / sui miei compagni mantenuti / sui miei compagni disoccupati / sui miei compagni manovali / scrivo il tuo nome / libertà!" (*Per il cinema* 394-395)[120], the viewer arrives at the "Marilyn Monroe"-sequence accompanied by Bach on the soundtrack. That is the point when Bassani says: "Del mondo antico e del mondo future / era rimasta solo la bellezza, e tu, / povera sorellina minore [...] / quella bellezza l'avevi addosso umilmente, / e la tua anima di figlia di piccola gente, / non ha mai saputo di averla, / perché altrimenti non sarebbe stata bellezza. / Il mondo te l'ha insegnata. Così la tua bellezza divenne sua" (*Per il cinema* 397-398).[121] When reality is reduced to the shapes of atomic explosions[122], a contrast between images of the bourgeoisie (Guttuso: the class that warrants beauty and the rich) and the disenfranchised (Bassani: the class of the black, wool shawls, of the cheap, black aprons) is presented. Finally, Gagarin's return from space is shown as welcomed by Khruschchev and the Russian people. In addition, revolutionary song can be heard on the soundtrack together with Guttuso's final comment, reaffirming that revolution demands one war only, a war within the spirit.

---

[118] "The joy of the average American who feels equal to other millions of Americans united in their love of democracy: this is the disease of the future world. When the Classical world is exhausted, when artisans and peasants are all dead, when industry makes the cycle of production and consumption unstoppable, then our history will be over."

[119] "Look at these beautifully painted miners, look at these wonderful women comrades…and yet something else weighs on my heart […] these paintings contain our mistake; we must take them down from these walls!"

[120] "people of colour, Algeria is given back to history…"On my first brother, the bandit; on my second brother, the cripple; on my third brother, the shoeshiner; on my fourth brother, the beggar, I write your name. On my lowlife friends; on my jobless friends; on my working comrades, I write your name: freedom!"

[121] "Of the ancient world and of the future world, only beauty had remained, and you, you, little younger sister […] had that beauty upon you, humbly; and your soul, as daughter of humble people, was never aware of it, because otherwise it would not have been beauty. It vanished, like a golden dust. The world taught you about it, so your beauty became the world's."

[122] Guttoso's comment: "Reality is nothing but these shapes in the sky."

As it has been demonstrated through these further mentioned examples, the ideology behind *La rabbia* is rather complex. Pasolini believes in the revolution of the poor and in the Soviet Union. He also stresses the problem of the "colour" through the wars of Algeria and Cuba. The tragedy of the Soviet repression through the Hungarian instance is also enhanced. In addition, the fear of living in the shadow of nuclear threats is accentuated as well. The appearance of the television is interpreted by Pasolini as another way of spreading lies.

VIII.2. The role of figurative arts in *La rabbia*

When the prosaic voice announces the need of intelligent humor and culture, reproductions of several paintings appear on screen in black and white.[123] These reproductions include *Chicago* (1955), *East 12th Street* (1947), *Quartet* (1944), *The Blind Musician* (1945), *The Orator of 4th July* (1943) by Ben Shahn and *The Walk* (1922) by George Grosz.

VIII.2.1. References to Ben Shan's art

The paintings by Ben Shan, a Jewish Russian artist moved to Brooklyn at the beginning of the 20th century follow Rouault's and Matisse's models. Bentivoglio considers his art a "social commentary" (12) which is capable of pointing out the most contradictory aspects of the American society. Since 1939 Shahn had stayed in Jersey Homestead, a little comunity of the working class which immediately became a privileged observatory of human types, inspiring a series of "Sunday pictures" (Bentivoglio 22) among which three (out of four) were used by Pasolini.

---

[123] VOCE IN PROSA
"Voce del commento del conformista che si rifiuta, per paura del ridicolo, a parlare sul serio.
"Voce dell'umorismo sciocco, della paura della cultura, scatenati! È il tuo momento! Tira, tira il tuo sospiro di sollievo, voce della quotidiana volgarità" (*Per il cinema* 376). /
VOICE IN PROSE
"Voice of the comment of the conformist who rejects, for fear of being ridiculous, to speak seriously."
"Voice of the silly humorism and the fear of culture, unchain yourself! It is your moment! Sigh with relief, voice of the daily vulgarity."

In the course of World War II, Shahn was employed by the Office of War Information as an Anti-Nazi manifest designer and started to elaborate a new form of realism. It is proved by Shahn's own confession:

> Il mutamento artistico, il mio compreso, si comprì durante la seconda guerra mondiale. [...] Le teorie si erano liquefatte di fronte a tale esperienza. Allora la mia pittura si trasformò dal cosiddetto 'realismo sociale' ad una specie di realismo personale. Mi piaceva scoprire le qualità popolari, vi era il minatore violoncellista, che organizzava per me un quartetto, un quartetto formato da tre musicisti [Cfr. *Quartetto*, 1944] [...] Vi erano i cinque fratelli Musgrove, che suonavano cinque armoniche, vi erano i meravigliosi nomi della gente, Plato, Jordan e Jasper Lancester, e delle città: Pity Me, Tail Holt e Bird-in-Hand. Vi erano i poveri ricchi di spirito, ed i ricchi che talvolta erano ricchi anche di spirito. Vi era il Sud, con le sue leggende, le sue incantevoli storie di serpenti, ed uragani, e case visitate dagli spiriti; e un tale rigoglioso talento conviveva, nello stesso involucro umano, con pregiudizi inguaribili, con il fanatismo e l'ignoranza. (Shahn 11)[124]

Ben Shahn presents a series of subjects particularly apt to comment on Pasolini's text. Three of the cited pictures depict musicians, and it is in relationship with the content: jazz, which does not know boundaries because with the frenzied rhythm it makes all the people, irrespective of belief and latitude (*La rabbia, Lista dei dialoghi* 7).[125]

The presumably most moving citation from Ben Shahn might be *East 12th Street* (1947, private collection, Los Angeles, see fig. 17), which appears in the episode dedicated to Marylin Monroe's death.

VOCE IN PROSA

---

[124] "The artistic alteration, mine included, takes place during World War II. […] The theories were molten in front of such an experience. In that period my painting transformed from a so-called "social realism" into a kind of personal realism. I liked discovering the popular qualities, there was a cellist miner who used to organize a quartet for me, a quartet composed of three musicians [*Quartet*, 1944] […] There were the five Musgrove brothers who played the mouth organs, there were the beautiful names of the people (Plato, Jordan e Jasper Lancester) and those of the towns: Pity Me, Tail Holt e Bird-in-Hand. There were the spiritually rich poor, and the materially rich who were sometimes even spiritually rich. There was the South with its legends and incredible stories of snakes and hurricanes, and houses haunted by spirits; and a certain blooming talent lived together, in the same human packaging with incurable prejudices, with fanatism and ignorance."

[125] This is how it is referred to in the screenplay:
"VOCE SPEAKER UFFICIALE
A quanto pare il jazz non conosce barriere e confini perché affratella nel ritmo frenetico del cosidetto divertimento gli uomini di tutte le latitudini e di tutte le fedi.
Insomma Gershwin e Armstrong hanno battuto Carlo Marx."

"Del mondo antico e del mondo futuro / era rimasta solo la bellezza, e tu /
povera sorellina minore, / quella che corre dietro i fratelli più grandi, / e ride
e piange con loro, per imitarli,

tu sorellina più piccola, / quella bellezza l'avevi addosso umilmente, / e la
tua anima di figlia di piccola gente, / non ha mai saputo di averla, perché
altrimenti non sarebbe stata bellezza.

Il mondo te l'ha insegnata. / Così la tua bellezza divenne sua. /

[...]

La tua bellezza sopravissuta dal mondo antico, / richiesta dal mondo futuro,
posseduta / dal mondo presente, divenne un male mortale.

Ora i fratelli maggiori, finalmente, si voltano, / smettono per un momento i
loro maledetti giochi, / escono dalla loro inesorabile distrazione, / e si
chiedono: 'È possibile che Marylin/ la piccola Marylin, ci abbia indicato la
strada?' /

Ora sei tu, / quella che non conta nulla, poverina, col suo sorriso, / sei tu la
prima oltre le porte del mondo / abbandonato al suo destino di morte. (*Per il
cinema* 397-98)[126]

The elegy of Marylin Monroe is interrupted by Shahn's picture, which is inserted in the
film after the metaphor of the street. The street on which children ice-skate is the same one
that Marylin indicates with a frightful gesture. The mystery of Marylin's beauty, like that
of her death, is evoked in the picture in which some real children ice-skate, with a vivid
trill of their caps, and "if they escape there is because they live, we always avoid them
running the forever in the rectilinear nightmare" (Bentivoglio 54).[127] Thus, Ben Shahn's
pictures function as visual commentaries in *La rabbia* inasmuch as they figuratively and
fictively reflect on the social and cultural realism presented in the film.

---

[126] " VOICE IN PROSE
From the antic world and from the modern world / only beauty remained, and you poor younger sister, / who
runs after the elder brothers, / and laughs and cries with them, to copy them,
you, the youngest sister, / that beauty you had humbly, / and your soul of small fry's daughter has never
known to have it, because otherwise it would not have been beauty.
The world has taught it to you. / Thus your beauty became its possession. / […]
Your beauty survived by the antic world, / requested by the future world, possessed / by the present world,
became a mortal harm.
Now the elder brothers, finally, turn themselves, / they finish their damned games for a moment, / they leave
their inescapable distraction, / and they ask each other: "Is it possible that Marylin / the little Marylin showed
us the way?" / Now it is you, / the one who does not matter at all, poor you, with your smile, / you are the
first beyond the doors of the world/ left to its destiny of death."
[127] "[...] bambine vere pattinano, [...] col trillo vivace dei loro berretti, e se ci sfuggono è perché vivono, noi
ci impediscono di rincorrerle per sempre nell'incubo rettilineo."

VIII.2.2. References to George Grosz's art

Shahn's pictures are alternated by *The Walk* (1922) by George Grosz (see fig. 18).
Having a background similar to that of Shahn (being an immigrant in the USA), Grosz is
concerned with social and political aspects in his artworks.

> Per raggiungere uno stile che [...] riproducesse la durezza e la mancanza di
> amore drastica e senza fronzoli dei miei oggetti, studiai le manifestazioni
> drastiche dell'istinto artistico. Presi a copiare nelle latrine i disegni
> folkloristici che mi parevano l'espressione diretta e la traduzione più
> concisa di forti sensazioni. Anche i disegni infantili mi stimolavano per la
> loro univocità. Pervenni così gradualmente a questo stile tagliente che mi
> serviva per la traduzione delle mie osservazioni, dettate allora da
> un'assoluta misantropia. (Grosz, "Svolgimento" 44)[128]

Grosz's political engagement manifested itself in his accession to the German Communist
Party and the Dadaist movement. About his affiliations with the latter he confesses in his
autobiography that as Dadaists they were eager to shed light on reality through insultations
and verbal aggressions. (*Autobiografia* 72).[129] Grosz's art is the expression of his
revolutionary feelings and his social condemnation. This supposition is proved by Grosz's
own words:

> L'arte per me non è una questione estetica. Il disegno non è fine a se stesso,
> senza senso. Né uno scarabocchio musicale che solo pochi dotti dai nervi
> delicati possono avvertire e indovinare. È necessario che il disegno sia di
> nuovo subordinato a un fine sociale...contro il brutale medioevo e la
> stupidità degli uomini del nostro tempo, l'arte del disegno può rappresentare

---

[128] "To achieve a style that [...] would reproduce the hardness and the drastic and simple lack of love of my
objects, I studied the drastic manifestations of the artistic instinct. In the outhouses I started to copy the
folkloristic drawings that seemed to me the direct expression and the most precise translation of strong
feelings. Even the children's drawings stimulated me through their uniqueness. So I gradually came to this
harsh style that I needed for the translation of my observations, dictated by an absolute misanthropy."

[129] "Come dadisti [...] non facevamo altro che dire la verità alla gente, e cioè la insultavamo, non avevamo
peli sulla lingua...Ci facevamo beffa di tutto; per noi nulla era sacro, sputavamo su tutto. Questo era il dada."
/ "As Dadaists [...] we didn't do anything else but saying the truth to the people, and thus we insulted them,
we didn't mince our words...We made a joke on everything; for us nothing was sacred, we spat on
everything. That was Dada about."

un'arma efficace, a patto che a esercitarla siano una volontà decisa e una mano esperta. (*Breve schizzo* 124)[130]

The drawing inserted in the film does not belong to Grosz's political engagement. The two women exposing their sexual attributes to the indifference of a passer-by represent the voice of the daily vulgarity. Therefore, the presence of the Groszian allusion can be understood as an objective and figurative "backup" of the intention of provocation and scandalisation.

VIII.2.3. Jean Fautrier's paintings on screen

At another point of the film a sequence of pictures by Fautrier appears on screen. His paintings accompany the verbal manifestations regarding the problems of industrialism:

> VOCE SPEAKER UFFICIALE
>
> "[...] Ma una volta l'anno anche gli industriali, anche gli uomini che misurano perfino i fenomeni naturali in cifre e si fanno schiavi dei dividendi, diventano poeti."
>
> VOCE IN PROSA
>
> "Sì, voce degli industriali, voce della finta imparzialità...essi diventano poeti, purché la poesia sia pura forma, voce dell'incoercibile formalismo!
>
> La forma! Ormai, 'gli industriali che diventano poeti', hanno come vessillo un quadro astratto, la proterva forma della mancanza dell'anima." (*Per il cinema* 379)[131]

---

[130] "Art for me is not an aesthetical question. The drawing is not an end in itself, without a meaning. It is not even a musical scribble that only some intellectuals with delicate nerves can notice and understand. It is necessary that a drawing should be subject to a social aim…against the brutal medieval ages and the stupidity of people of our times, the art of the drawing can represent an efficient weapon if there is a decisive will and an expert hand for that."

[131] OFFICIAL SPEAKER VOICE
"But once a year even the industrialists, and those who measure even the natural phenomena in numbers and make themselves slaves of dividends, become poets."
VOICE IN PROSE
"Yes, voice of the industrialists, voice of the fake impartiality…they become poets as long as poetry is a pure form, voice of the incompressible formalism!
The form! "The industrialists who become poets" have already an abstract picture as a standard: an arrogant form of the lack of soul."

When the initial words are pronounced, two works by the French Jean Fautrier appear on the screen: *Le vallon* (*The Small Valley*, 1928, pastel, private collection, Paris) and *Tempera su "enduit"* (*Tempera on coating*, 1934, tempera, private collection, Paris). As Giulio Carlo Argan points out, in the 1940s Jean Fautrier began to divulge a new picturesque verb through his paintings *Nudes* (*Nus*, 1943) and *Otages* (*Hostages*, 1943-44) which started to become a real and proper school (see fig. 19). The pictures selected by Pasolini are exclusively presented as an exhibition of the lack of soul and as a voice and standard of capitalism.

In another sequence four pictures by Fautrier follow a sequence of framings on atomic explosions. These images create a phenomenon of destruction of the natural order which is in harmony with the prosaic content. The contiguity of the pictures or the abstraction of the devastating explosion and Fautrier's world indicate a negative evaluation which is reaffirmed by the prosaic comment: "VOCE IN PROSA La classe padrona della bellezza. / Fortificata dall'uso della bellezza, / giunta ai supremi confini della bellezza, / dove la bellezza è soltanto bellezza" (*Per il cinema* 400).[132] Therefore, the presence of the allusions to Fautrier's pictorial space can be interpreted as the means of a visual reaction to the surrounding aggressions and destructions which derive from the capitalism and industrialism.

VIII.2.4. Citations from Renato Guttuso

In the following comment eight pictures by Renato Guttuso are exposed, two of these paintings appear in two different framings:

> VOCE IN PROSA
> Serie di quadri di Guttuso a colori
>
> "Dovremo ricominciare daccapo, da dove [1]
>
> non c'è certezza, [2] e il segno è disperato,
>
> e il colore stridente, [3] e le figure
>
> si contorcono come i cremati di Buchenwald, [4]
>
> e una bandiera rossa ha il tremore

---

[132] "VOICE IN PROSE
"The owner class of beauty. / Fortified by the use of beauty, / reached the greatest boundaries of beauty,/ where beauty is only beauty."

di una vittoria che non dev'essere mai l'ultima. [5]

Perché non è finita la lotta di classe,

e noi non siamo [6 a] Russi, siamo chi combatte:

siamo gli operai spagnoli, italiani, [6b]

gli intellettuali francesi, i partigiani algerini, [7]

noi non siamo a Mosca o a Leningrado,

ma nelle fabbriche dove si combatte la lotta di classe, [8]

e nei deserti delle colonie dove si combatte per / la libertà. (*Per il cinema* 387)[133]

The sequence opens with *La crocifissione* ([1] *The Crucifixion*, oil on canvas, 1941, private collection, Rome, see fig. 20) in which the sacred iconography is reinvented in an actual context alluding to the horrors of Guttuso's reality: "Voglio dipingere questo supplizio del Cristo come una scena di oggi, [...] come simbolo di tutti coloro che subiscono oltraggio, carcere, supplizio per le loro idee..." (Guttuso 68).[134] *The Crucifixion* is radically set against the Soviet painting of the preceding sequence inasmuch as its epic-popular character is linked with history without any anesthetizing filters but through the desperate mechanisms and the strident colour of the work. As Mario De Micheli points out, Guttuso's poetics handles the perception of reality without sophistries and formal circumlocution, all of his rules are sacrificed to this need. This poetic language originates from a vivid substance of living and acting and it should not be the product of the mystification of the rapports with reality (193).

The next painting cited from Guttuso is *Lotta di minatori francesi* ([2] *The Plight of French Miners*, 1948), a Cubist piece. The stylistic characteristics of this work are echoed

---

[133] "VOICE IN PROSE
Series of coloured pictures by Guttuso
"We should restart from the beginning, from the point [1]
where there is no certainty, and the sign is deperate,
and the strident colour, [3] and the figures
contort themselves like the cremated bodies of Buchenwald, [4]
and a red flag trembles of victory that should never be the last. [5]
Because the class war has not finished,
and we are not [6a] Russians, we are the ones who fight:
we are the Spanish, Italian workers, [6b]
the French intellectuals, the Algerian partisans, [7]
we are not in Moscow or in Leningrad,
but in the factories where the class war takes place, [8]
and in the deserts of the colonies where they fight for the liberty."
[134] "I want to paint this agony of Christ as it was a scene of our ages, [...] as a symbol of all of those who suffer abuse, prison sentence and torture for their ideas…"

in Pasolini's text, in such characterizations as "desperate sign" and "strident colour", as signs of a renewed art.

The third picture cited by Pasolini is *Operai in riposo* ([3] *Workers at Rest*, 1945), which was amply commented by the director in a catalogue of 1962:

> Beato te quando prendi la matita o il pennello in mano, scrivi sempre in versi!
>
> Chi dipinge è un poeta che non è mai costretto dalle circostanze a scrivere in prosa...
>
> Ti trovo fratello proprio in questo: nella disperata premeditazione di fare sempre poesia, in ogni discorso, magari abbandonandolo a sé, incompiuto, caotico, neonato, là dove potrebbe livellarlo, con l'integrità del testo, la prosa. (*20 disegni di Renato Guttuso*)[135]

The figures, which might radiate a high level of sensuality and physical force, are often unresolved due to the mysterious "white zones", as Pasolini calls them (ibidem)[136] and the poetic black pauses of the drawing. Pasolini describes the characters as figures from the Garden of Getsemane: "Ma insieme a queste figure da orto di Getsemani, / secondo la tradizione realistica degli umili dormienti, / ci sono tre ceffi orrendi, / venuti da Buchenwald. / Eravamo nel quarantacinque: e gli scheletri erano ancora vivi." (ibidem).[137] This above-cited poetic comment of Pasolini on Guttuso's drawing returns in fragments in the "voice in poetry" of *La rabbia*, culminating in the terrifying image of the skeletons of Buchenwald.

The fourth painting, *Ragazzo che urla con bandiera rossa* ([4] *The Shouting Boy with Red Flag*, 1953) is accompanied by the direct verses of the trembling red flag of victory[138] This image belongs to the period of "social realism" and as Crispolti points out, it derives from the cut of the great painting *Occupazione di terre in Sicilia* (*Occupation of the lands in Sicily*, 1953) (Crispolti 277).

---

[135] "Lucky you when you take a pencil or a paintbrush in your hand, you always write in verses! Who paints is a poet who has never been forced by the circumstances to write in prose…I find you a brother exactly in this: in the desperate premeditation of creating always poetry, in every discourse, perhaps leaving it to itself, unfinished, chaotic, newborn, where it could be leveled, with the integrity of the text, the prose."

[136] "Zone bianche, contenute dal solo contorno, se ne vedono qua e là arbitrariamente [...]"

[137] "But together with these figures of the Garden of Getsemane, / according to the realist tradition of the sleeping poor, / there are three hideous and shady people, / came from Buchenwald. / we were in forty-five: and the skeletons were still alive"

[138] "e una bandiera rossa ha il tremore/ di una vittoria" / "and a red flag trembles / of victory" (*Per il cinema* 387)

The fifth picture *Carretta di fucilati* (*The Cart of the Shot*, 1944) evokes another political topic. The painting, which describes two German soldiers carrying a corpse on a cart containing a heap of dead bodies, reflects on the German occupation of Rome.

This image is followed by *Fucilazione di patrioti* ([6a, 6b] *Shooting of patriots*, 1945, see fig. 21), proposed in two framings. It still reflects on the political climate, continuing the previous topic. The painting illustrating *Stromboli in eruzione* ([7] *Stromboli in eruption*, 1956), however, returns to the topic of class war. The sequence finishes with *Donne di Algeri* ([8] *The Women in Algeria*, 1959) which illustrates a woman in white bending to a corpse. This picture is dedicated to the topic of war in the colonies where one fights for the liberty.

All things considered, the insertion of Guttuso's images serves two functions. On the one hand, these pictures are visual reflections on the social-political milieu. They react to the topics of war and contribute to the analysis of the problems of the working class. On the other hand, they can be considered as the means of the intention of revolution and provocation.

VIII.2.5. Pontormo's, Georges Braque's and Jackson Pollock's effects

The last sequence of paintings interrupts the topic of space travel and it is accompanied by a poetic text:

> VOCE IN POESIA
> Volo a Occidente, e il mio volo / assorbe nel mio cuore buono, / il male che domina il mondo. / Roma si libera vista dall'altezza / ch'è giudizio morale – dal buio degli incensi / come un gas disperso nella brezza / di uno Spirito di puri sentimenti.
>
> Volo a Occidente, e il mio passaggio / è come quello di una semplice rondine / che annuncia che irrimediabilmente è il maggio. / Una civiltà laggiù trionfava: / improvviso io ne annuncio l'agonia. / A Parigi, a Londra frana una favola umana, / una grande storia, / col suo pensiero, e la sua poesia.

Volo a Occidente, e alla mia vita / di nemico che invade in pace il cielo, / Washington trattiene il suo furore / contro il popolo che avanza: / ritrova un impeto di amore, / sotto il mio volo purificatore / anche quel mondo senza speranza. (*Per il cinema* 402)[139]

This above-cited sequence is first interrupted by Pontormo's *La deposizione di Cristo dalla croce* (*The Deposition from the Cross*, 1525-28) in its black-and-white version so that it could adapt to the documentary quality of the film. The Mannerist altar piece might have been intended as a nebulous aggregate of forms and an inauthentic representation of sacredness ("the dark incenses") by Pasolini.

It is followed by Georges Braque's *Broc et violon* (*Jug and Violin*, 1910, see fig. 22). The astronaut appears as a silent witness of the decline of a magnificent culture which is evoked by the poetic voice.

The last picturesque citation follows the line of the rejection of avant-garde and especially abstractionism. It is Jackson Pollock's *Research of a Symbol* (1943) which stigmatizes the image of a "hopeless" world.

The paintings inserted in *La rabbia* could be divided into two types. On the one hand, there are those which are provocatively preoccupied with the so-called political and social "now and then". On the other hand, there are some more abstract paintings which deal with an exasperated search for forms. Hence, they are able to reflect on the games that the power might play upon the people. The first type of pictures include those of Guttuso, Grosz and Shahn, while the second type of images consists of those by Fautrier, Braque, Pollock, and to a certain extent even that of Pontormo for his heretical and morbid Mannerism. In *The Anger* music might have a minor role; however when it comes to the scenes of war and devastation, these tortures are accompanied by Albinoni's "Adagio in G".

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

---

[139] "VOICE IN POETRY

Flight to the West, and my flight / absorbs in my good heart, / the bad that dominates the world. /Rome is free seen from the heights / which is moral judgement – from the darkness of the incenses / like a gas scattered in the breeze / of a Spirit of pure sentiments.

Flight to the West, and my passage / is like that of a simple swallow / that announces that irremediably here is May. / A civilizations triumphed down there; / suddenly I announce its agony. / In Paris, in London a human tale, / a great story, / with its thought, and its poetry.

Flight to the West, and to my life / of an enemy who invades the sky in peace, / Washington holds its fury / against the population that progresses: / it finds again a passion of love, / under my purifying flight / even that world without hope."

In conclusion, *La rabbia* is a collage of documentary materials whose elegiac commentary is written in poetry and prose, and in painting in a visual sense. It is a protest and a condemnation against such threats as atomic bombing or Fascism. The use of the montage technique based on moving images, photographs and painting reproductions served the purpose of creating a new cinematographic genre. The reproductions of paintings by Ben Shahn, Renato Guttuso, George Grosz, Jean Fautrier, Giovanni Pontormo, Georges Braque, Jackson Pollock appear as visual commentaries to emphasize the embedded revolutionary feelings and the social condemnation. Such reproductions include *Chicago* (1955), *East 12th Street* (1947), *Quartet* (1944), *The Blind Musician* (1945), *The Orator of 4ᵗʰ July* (1943) by Ben Shahn, *The Walk* (1922) by George Grosz, *Le vallon* and *Tempera su "enduit"* by Jean Fautrier, several paintings by Renato Guttuso, among which *La crocifissione* appear as the most significant one. Apart from creating a scenic design, these images become points of reference that reflect on the social and political context.

IX. TWO POLITICAL FILMS: *IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO* (*THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW*, 1964) AND *UCCELLACCI UCCELLINI* (*THE HAWKS AND THE SPARROWS*, 1966)

After the social questions posed in *Accattone*, *Mamma Roma* and *La Ricotta* and after the filmic and stylistic experiments committed in *La rabbia* and *Comizi d'amore*, the cinematographic attention focuses on political interventions. This is the period in which *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, 1964) and the *Uccellacci e uccellini* (*The Hawks and the Sparrows*, 1966) are presented on screen. Both films were made in the period between the 20th Congress of Vatican on the one hand, and the escalation of the Vietnam War and the world of May 1968, on the other hand. Due to the ambiguous political atmosphere of the era these are the films which earned Pasolini the dubious title of a Catholic Marxist (Smith 11). The director's religious sensibility and his inability to abandon the "bourgeois and Catholic" world of his youth in order to make the "virile and definitive" choice of communism (*Lettere* 695) fuelled his desire for such an alliance. Moreover, he was also encouraged by certain historical factors of the early 1960s inasmuch as the traditional chasm between Marxists and Catholics appeared to narrow due to the emergence of a less rigid Communist party and the simultaneous presence of a compassionate religious leader, Pope John XXIII (Mazzeo 31). As a matter of fact, *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*) is dedicated to his memory, as – in Pasolini's words – he was "the first to understand that a Marxist is not a "bête noire" and that it is possible to create a dialogue between Marxists and Catholics" (qtd. in Rusconi 16).[140]

Apart from these historical factors Pasolini was enormously motivated by his belief in a profound affinity of Marxism and Christianity. As underlined in *Le belle bandiere,* only these forces might have stood opposed to the materialist values of neocapitalism:

---

[140] Published in Greene's translation (*Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* 70).

The great enemy of Christianity is not Communist materialism, but bourgeois materialism. The former – because it is theoretical, philosophical, and speculative – contains the most absolute moments of religion. The latter – totally practical, empirical and functional – excludes …every sincerely religious or cognitive moment of reality.

…In the former one can always find moments of idealism, of desperation, of psychological violence, of cognitive desire, and of faith – moments that however desperate, are elements of religion. In the latter one finds nothing but mammon." (qtd. in Greene 71)[141]

This original affinity of Marxism and Christianity nourished Pasolini's hope in their ability to initiate a dialogue that would lead to the improvement of the social sphere. In an interview published in the Communist newspaper *L'Unità* on December 22, 1964, Pasolini reiterated the necessity of this alliance and, simultaneously, he expressed the fundamental arguments of *Il Vangelo*:

Catholicism must be capable of taking into account the problems of the society in which we live; and so too must Marxism face the religious moment of humanity. There will always be an irrational, religious moment. Improving the social sphere will place the moment of the religious problem in a different perspective; once class oppression is over, man will confront only his own human nature – death. ("Cristo e il Marxismo: Dialogo Pasolini-Sartre" 26)[142]

However, the common practice of labelling Pasolini's political films as evidently Marxist works is hardly sustainable. The proof is provided by the author's own confession on his technique, according to which *Il Vangelo* and its technical intuition is based on pure poetry and not on any rationalist or Marxist vison. Furthermore, he adds that this film has to be the result of fury and irrationality ("Lettera al produttore A. Bini" qtd. in Bertini 82).[143]

---

[141] Published in Greene's translation (*Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* 71).

[142] Published in Greene's translation (*Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* 71).

[143] "L'idea di fare un film sul Vangelo, e la sua intuizione tecnica, è invece, devo confessarlo, fondato sulla pura poesia, non su una visione razionalista, marxista della storia, dovrà essere frutto di una furiosa ondata irrazionalistica." / "The idea of making a film of the Gospel and its technical intuition is, however, I have to confess, is based on pure poetry and not on a rationalist, Marxist vision, it will have to be fruit of a furious and irrational wave."

X.   *IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO* (*THE GOSPEL ACCORDING ST. MATTHEW*), 1964

This film can be considered the continuation and the further elaboration of *La Ricotta* inasmuch as in this latter work the topic of Christ's Passion has already been proposed. In *Il Vangelo* the whole Christ-phenomenon is narrated, thoroughly following St. Matthew's version in terms of storytelling and style. The choice upon St. Matthew was motivated by his being the most earthly and the most revolutionary evangelist to Pasolini's mind:

> Matthew is the most earthly of all the evangelists.
>
> *Is that why you chose him?*
>
> Yes, and because he is the most revolutionary; he is the nearest to the real problems of a historical epoch. Personally, I like John's Gospel even more, but I thought Matthew's was the best for making a film. Christ going round Palestine is really a revolutionary whirlwind: someone who walks up to a couple of people and says 'drop your nets and follow me' is a total revolutionary. Subsequently, of course, you may go into more thoroughly, historically and textually, but the first reading is profoundly revolutionary. (Stack 94)

In addition, St. Matthew's version of the Gospel appeared to possess "a national-popular epic" quality for Pasolini. As he remarks in an interview with Rusconi, Mark's version seemed too crude, John's too mythical, and Luke's sentimental and bourgeois" (16). Once the text had been chosen, Pasolini literally followed it, remaining scrupulously faithful even to its stylistic characteristics. He avoided any additional explanations and transitions in the belief that "inserted words or images could never reach the poetic heights of the text" (*Il Vangelo* 16).[144] Furthermore, he also imitated the abolition of chronological time, the elliptical jumps and the disproportions of St. Matthew's text. This staccato nature of the

---

[144] "nessuna parola inserita potrà mai essere all'altezza poetica del testo" This idea of Pasolini was proposed in a letter written in February 1963 to Lucio Caruso, the head of the cinema section of the Cittadella: "La mia idea è questa: seguire punto per punto *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*, senza farne una sceneggiatura o una riduzione. Tradurlo fedelmente in immagini, senza un'omissione o un'aggiunta al racconto. Anche i dialoghi dovrebbero essere rigorosamente quelli di San Matteo. / "My idea is this: to follow word by word the Gospel According to St. Matthew, without making its screenplay or reducing it. To translate it faithfully into images, without any omissions or narrative additions. Even the dialogues must be rigorously those of St. Matthew." (qtd. in Naldini 266)

most revolutionary evangelist's Gospel corresponded to what Pasolini considered the fundamental "violence" of Christ and which could be contrasted with the cynicism, brutality, compromise and conformity of modern man: "La figura di Cristo dovrebbe avere la stessa violenza di una resistenza: qualcosa che contraddica radicalmente la vita come si sta configurando nell'uomo moderno, la sua grigia orgia di cinismo, ironia, brutalità pratica, compromesso, conformismo, glorificazione della propria identità nei confronti della massa, odio per ogni diversità, rancore teologico senza religione" (*Il Vangelo* 14-15).[145]

In this natural-popular atmosphere the characters' faces have an accentuated importance. Pasolini always searched for authentic visages, wherever he shot, and therefore he often inserted non-professional actors in his films. For *Il Vangelo* he found these faces partly in South Italy where Puglia and the old town of Matera provided the landscape. Furthermore, his mother, Susanna Pasolini was entrusted to interpret the old Madonna's character, which is a prophetic element to a certain extent. In addition, even when instructing professional actors, he told them to be themselves instead of performing a role (Bertini 39).

Christ's figure was also discovered in the course of a research for authentic faces, since he was performed by Enrique Irazoqui, a 19-year-old Spanish student majoring in economics. Pasolini confesses in the screenplay of *Il Vangelo* that he considered him the most authentic character possible for Christ's role: "Appena vidi entrare nello studio Enrique Irazoqui fu certo di aver trovato il mio Cristo. Aveva lo stesso volto bello e fiero, umano e distaccato, dei Cristi dipinti da El Greco. Severo, perfino duro in certe espressioni" (301).[146] Irazoqui was also given the instruction that instead of transforming into Christ's mystic ascetic figure, he had to remain with his original personality (Bertini 39). In consequence, Pasolini's Christ is not so much like God's son but he is more like a suffering intellectual in a peasant milieu: "I thought of representing Christ as an intellectual in a world of the poor available for revolution" (Stack 78). While the mystical side of Christ has been refused, his deep moral and social sensibility has been enhanced and he became a figure of rebellion and scandal in Pasolini's reading. That is why in his

---

[145] "the figure of Christ should finally assume the violence inhering in any rebellion which radically contradicts the appearance and shape that life assumes for modern man: a grey orgy of cynicism, irony, brutality, compromise and conformism…or hatred for anything that is different and teleological rancour without religion"

[146] "As soon as I saw Enrique Irazoqui enter the studio, I was sure that I had found my Christ. He had the same beautiful and proud, human and reserved face of the Christs depicted by El Greco. Severe, even harsh in certain expressions."

representations Christ is not lent the soft characteristics of Renaissance painting; he is, instead, "distant and hieratic" with a "face that corresponds to the arid and rocky places in which his sermons took place" (*Il Vangelo* 300).[147] As Bouquet states, Pasolini's Christ is analogous to Carl Theodor Dreyer's idiot Johannes in *Ordet* (1955) and Lars von Trier's Bette in *Breaking the Waves* (1996) inasmuch as they all had enough belief to resurrect a dead person (25).

The conciliation of Marxism with Christianity and the particular interpretation of Christ's figure lead one to the conclusion that Pasolini destroys the traditional iconography and provides the cinema with a "Gospel According to Pasolini". As Sandro Petraglia remarks, in this unique world of the gospel one can hardly decide whether Pasolini "began with Christ in order to arrive at Marx or, vice versa, if in fact his love for the story of the Passion took him…to a version of the myth profoundly renewed by a populist, sub-proletarian, or Third World current" (Petraglia 58). Another critic, Eduardo Bruno explicitly considers *Il Vangelo* a national-popular film: "After *La ricotta* and especially, after the brief, intense, enlightening montage film *La rabbia*, Pasolini's mournful poetry had to approach themes of a religious, epic nature, themes that reflected the nature – popular and national, ideological and civil – of his mandate" (356). This popular-national quality of the film was intentional on the part of Pasolini, considering that he wanted to create a Christ who was a member of the sub-proletariat and acted in that milieu:

> For a Frenchman [*Il Vangelo*] may be a religious film. For an Italian proletarian there is no ambiguity. Christ is a member of the sub-proletariat and is involved with others of his class. A historical relationship exists between Christ and the proletariat; he would not have done anything if he had not been followed by proletarians. The Pharisees would not have killed him. And the proletariat would have remained immersed in an unhearing darkness without the revolutionary teachings of Christ. I have been faithful to myself and I have created a national-popular work in the Gramscian sense. Because the believer through whom I see Christ as the son of God is a humble Italian seeing the world through his eyes I came close to Gramsci's national-popular conception of art. ("Cristo e il marxismo: Dialogo Pasolini-Sartre" 26).[148]

---

[147] "Una faccia, insomma, che corrispondesse ai luoghi aridi e pietrosi in cui avviene la predicazione."

[148] Published in Greene's translation (*Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* 74).

X.1. The figurative, cinematographic and musical contaminations in *Il Vangelo*

In *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* the contaminations take place at every level. The musical layer consists of citations from Johann Sebastian Bach, Carl Maria von Weber, Sergei Prokofiev, the African "Missa Luba" and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Masonic Funeral Music*. The images are rich in cinematographic loans, there are references from Sergei M. Eisenstein to Kenji Mizoguchi: "Non ho visto *La congiura dei Boiardi*, però è vero, ho pensato all'*Alexander Nevskij* di Ejzenštejn e un po' a Dreyer" (Gemini).[149] The effects of Mizoguchi's cinema are also reinforced by Pasolini: "Per quanto riguarda Mizoguchi, penso che forse si può riconoscere qualcosa concretamente nella sequenza del deserto, quando arriva il diavolo, oppure la corsa che fa Giuda per impiccarsi." (Magrelli 63).[150] In addition, the framings of Christ's trials are Godardian scenes, shot like "cinema vérité" (Stack 84).

X.1.1. References to figurative arts

From the point of view of figurative arts and iconography, *Il Vangelo* is a real visit to a museum as its visual universe consists of a broad spectrum of references: Piero della Francesca, Duccio, Botticelli, Giotto, the Byzantine mosaics, El Greco and Rouault. In "Marxismo e Cristianesimo" Pasolini handles the presence of the picturesque elements in the following way:

> Nel mio film ci sono dei riferimenti pittorici, i più disparati e i più raffinati, vorrei dire. Pensavo principalmente a Piero della Francesca, da cui ho preso i costumi dei farisei, per esempio, ma pensavo anche al pittore, che io amo di più, cioè a Masaccio; pensavo ai primitivi, a Giotto. Nella faccia di Cristo voi vedrete degli elementi che sono del Greco e degli elementi che sono bizantini; in una inquadratura, nel presepio, durante l'adorazione dei Magi, voi potete riconoscere un quadro di Carlo Levi. Ci sono delle donne con

---

[149] "I haven't seen *Ivan the Terrible* but it is true that I thought of Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* and a little bit of Dreyer."

[150] "As for Mizoguchi, I think that something can be recognized in the sequence of the desert when the devil arrives or in the running that Judas does to poke around."

degli scialli neri, bianche, con degli zigomi sporgenti, con facce che sembrano un quadro lucano di Carlo Levi. (qtd. in Marchesini 78-79)[151]

Compared with the previous works, in this film a completely new visual world emerges. On a figurative level *Accattone* or *Mamma Roma* remain with the simplicity of Masaccio, whereas in *Il Vangelo* the sacred combines with documentary elements, therefore, its picturesque amalgam is more complex than that of the previous films. The presence of the references to figurative arts is deliberate and in accordance with the Christian tradition, as Pasolini reaffirms it in an interview: "Besides, as I have said, I wanted to do the story of Christ plus two thousand years of Christianity. At least for an Italian like me painting has had an enormous importance in these two thousand years; indeed it is the major element in the Christological tradition." (Stack 91)

Il Vangelo intentionally and consistently avoids the traditional representations of Biblical scenes. It contains numerous sources of painterly echoes; however they always appear in a modified, Pasolinized way with the intention of creating analogies with the modern world, as suggested in the screenplay of *Uccellacci e uccellini* (*The Hawks and the Sparrows*): "As far as the Roman soldiers during Christ's sermon at Gethsemane were concerned, I had to think of the Celere [tough anti-riot police]; for Herod's soldiers before the slaughter of the innocents, I had to think of Fascist hoods; Joseph and the Virgin Mary in flight were suggested by so many similar dramas of flight in the modern world (for example, in Algeria)"(49).[152] An instance for the deliberate destruction of the traditional representation can be Pasolini's Madonna and Joseph who are young peasants and might as well be characters of a Neorealist film. Another example is constituted by Christ's followers, including St. John the Baptist, who resemble Accattone's sub-proletarian comrades. Moreover, Salomè appears as a graceful, almost timid adolescent instead of the erotic contents she normally represents.

---

[151] "In my film there are picturesque references, the most varied and the most refined ones, I would like to say. I primarily thought of Piero della Francesca from whom I took the costumes of the Pharisees, for example, but I also thought of the painter that I love the most, that is, of Masaccio; I thought of the primitives, of Giotto. On Christ's face you will see elements that belong to El Greco and other elements that are Byzantine; in a framing, in the nativity scene, during the adoration of the Magi, you can recognize a picture by Carlo Levi. There are women with black, white scarves and protruding cheekbones, with faces that seem a picture of the Lucania area by Carlo Levi."

[152] Published in Greene's translation (*Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy* 76).

X.1.2. Piero della Francesca's role in *Il Vangelo*

All the cited painters of the film appear as figurative flashes, it is only Piero della Francesca who makes an exception inasmuch as his effect can be the most significant in *Il Vangelo*. Pasolini's interest in Piero della Francesca's painting is declared in Magrelli's interview: "[...] ho un grande amore per la pittura, per una certa pittura del Quattrocento, del Cinquecento, cioè, per esempio, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca, la scuola officina ferrarese, un po' il gusto di Longhi che mi è rimasto dentro come rimangono dentro le cose della formazione giovanile" (70).[153] The film quotes several of his paintings: *Madonna del Parto* (*Madonna of Childbirth*, 1455-1465) and the frescoes in Arezzo (*La Leggenda della Vera Croce – The Legend of the True Cross*, 1452-1466). Pasolini is especially inspired by Piero della Francesca's several elements, especially by the costumes of the Pharisees and the Roman soldiers seen in his paintings: "Piero della Francesca mi ha ispirato un certo numero di elementi stilistici, per le cuffie e i costumi dei farisei" (Duflot 116).[154]

The first citation emerges during the silent discourse between Joseph and the pregnant Mary: Madonna's figure standing against the niche in the wall is a reminiscence of Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto* (see fig. 23-24). The Renaissance painter's picture represents the standing Madonna between two gracious angels who are in the act of opening a rich tent. As Roberto Longhi describes this Madonna, she displays both noble and rural traits: "Solemn like a king's daughter under that pavilion lined with ermine, however, she is rural like young woman from the mountains who comes to the door of a charcoal pit" (52). On the one hand, her character radiates majesty through her divine expression and the surrounding milieu composed of a wine red brocade canopy lined with grey fur, like a royal mantle. On the other hand, this Madonna's appearance also expresses rural characteristics which can be traced in her clothing and her coiffure that contain no decoration or elegance.

---

[153] "I have a great love for painting, for a certain painting of the 15th and 16th century, that is, for example, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca, the school of Ferrara, a little bit Longhi's taste which stayed in me as the things of the youth education stay in."

[154] "Piero della Francesca inspired a certain number of my stylistic elements, such as the headdresses and the costumes of the Pharisees."

Similarly, Pasolini's Madonna in *Il Vangelo* also reflects the oxymoron of a noble-rural woman. The deliberate intention of creating a Madonna with this ambiguity is proved by the screenplay:

> Essa è una giovinetta, ma lo sguardo è profondamente adulto: vi brilla, vinto, il dolore. Il dolore che si prova nel mondo contadino (l'ho visto in certe giovanette friulane, durante la guerra: un dolore quasi precostituito, uno stato in cui si entra fatalmente, perché si è umili). È una giovinetta ebrea, bruna, naturalmente, proprio 'del popolo', come si dice; come se ne vedono a migliaia, con le loro vesti scolorite, i loro 'colori della salute', il loro destino a non essere altro che umiltà vivente. Tuttavia c'è in essa qualcosa di regale: e, per questo, penso alla *Madonna incinta* di Piero della Francesca: la madre-bambina. Il ventre leggermente gonfio, appuntito, per la miracolosa gravidanza, dà a quella giovinetta che tace, col suo dolore, una grandezza sacrale. (*Per il cinema* 487)[155]

However, the two Madonnas show sharp contrasts as well. First of all, the communication of Piero della Francesca's Mary seems to be more complex than that of Pasolini's. In other words, the painter's Madonna radiates pride, dignity together with humility and sorrow, whereas Pasolini's girl-mother mainly conveys the tragedy of her miserable conditions. Another instance can be detected in the adverse attitude towards the Christian doctrines which is manifested in a figurative way as well. That is, while the painting's Madonna is standing inside a tent with a step forward, approximating Corpus Christi to the believers, the film's Mary is staying outside a recess. The tent might be associated with the institution of the Catholic Church and therefore the presence or lack of such a tent conveys an attitude towards the principles and doctrines of that institution.

Another difference between the representation of the painting and that of the framing can be pinpointed in the Madonnas' environment. While Piero della Francesca's Mary is surrounded by sacred elements, for instance by two angels, in the film Madonna is surrounded by everyday objects, such as a ladder or a rake. The foundations of the deliberate realism of the scene are laid in the screenplay:

---

[155] "She is a young woman but her gaze is profoundly adult: it is the victory of sorrow that shines. The grief that characterizes the peasant world (I have seen it in some young women from Friuli during the war: a grief that is almost preconstructed, a state in which one enters fatally because she is humble). She is a Jewish young woman, brown, naturally, exactly one "from the crowd", as they say; as one can see a thousand of them in their faded clothes , their "colours of health", their destiny not to be anything else but living poverty. Nevertheless, there is something royal in her: and, this is why, I think of Piero della Francesca's *Madonna of Childbirth*: the girl-mother. The belly is slightly swollen, pointed, for the miraculous pregnancy; it gives a sacred grandiosity to the young girl who falls silent in her pain."

3. CASA DI GIUSEPPE. INTERNO. GIORNO (BETLEMME)
F.I. o M.F. di Maria col bambino che lo succhia il seno, Una maternità
purissima, ma 'realistica'. Voglio dire che l'immagine di Maria col
Bambino è una di quelle che l'uomo conosce come l'immagine
iconografica, insieme a quella della crocifissione, più tipica della sua vita:
ma, in questa, non ci deve essere nulla di agiografico o di aprioristicamente
sacro. Il realismo consiste nel fatto che intorno alla Madonna ci sono gli
oggetti reali, e perciò stesso commoventi e infine sacri, della sua reale vita
di sposa povera. (*Per il cinema* 490)[156]

Through the presence of the daily objects the film avoids any wink at any pompous icon in
order to create an atmosphere of everyday realism and reflect on this Madonna's social
origins.

A famous appearance of Piero della Francesca's *Madonna del Parto* (*Madonna of
Childbirth*) emerges in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Nostalghia* (1984), shot in Italy between 1979
and 1983. In the first scene of the film, the protagonist and Russian poet, Andrei
Gorchakov and his guide, Eugenia visit the *Madonna del Parto* (*Madonna of Childbirth* in
Monterchi. Eugenia is seen in the pillared and candlelit interior of a church with women in
black dresses kneeling in prayer in the background. In the meantime, Piero della
Francesca's *Madonna del Parto* (*Madonna of Childbirth*) is visible on the wall behind
them. As a woman opens the statue's robes, a flock of small birds streams out. A series of
virtual graphic matches join a close-up of Eugenia's face with a slow track to the Madonna
of the painting and finally, in black and white, to Andrei. Several parallel myths lie in the
background of this visit. For instance, Gorchakov wishes to see the painting because it
reminds him of his wife, Tarkovsky chooses the painting for the same reason. In addition,
as the words appearing at the end of the film suggest, this piece is a dedication to
Tarkovsky's mother, which echoes the reason that inspired Piero della Francesca to paint
the cited picture in his mother's home village of Monterchi. Moreover, the motif of the
return to the mother reappears in Pasolini as well inasmuch as *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*
(*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*) conveys his devotion to his mother who even acts
as the old Madonna of the film. Therefore, in *Nostalghia* the picture's significance can be

---

[156] "3. JOSEPH'S HOUSE. INTERIOR. DAYTIME (BETHLEHEM)
Mary with the child, breastfeeding him. A very pure maternity, but 'realistic'. I want to say that the image of
Mary with the Child is one of those that one knows as an iconographic image, together with that of the
crucifixion, which is more typical of his life: but in this framing nothing has to be hagiographic or a priori
sacred. The realism can be caught in the fact that around Madonna there are real objects of her real life of a
poor wife, and this is why they are touching and eventually sacred."

seized in the fact that it mirrors Eugenia's personality. Simultaneously, it is also a symbol of the desperate search for a mother, which is another common motif with Pasolini.

Apart from the pregnant Madonna's figure, the headdresses and the dresses of the Pharisees and the Roman soldiers are references to the frescoes of Arezzo (*La leggenda della Vera Croce – The Legend of the True Cross*) by Piero della Francesca (see fig. 25-26). It is confirmed by the screenplay: "ho preso i costumi, *non il gusto*, da Piero della Francesca per rappresentare la classe dirigente e per rappresentare i soldati, e il Cristo ha caratteri sopratutto o arcaico-bizantini o spagnoli barocchi, il Greco sopratutto" (qtd. in Marchesini 85).[157] The character of the man with a huge turban also appears in the film, represented fresh-faced and not curly-haired, though. In addition, the film also borrows the slightly effeminate figure of the magistrate from Piero della Francesca's painting. Furthermore, the moving images also cite the figures of the warriors, the character of the bugler with high and white conoid hat, that of the white-haired cavalier launching a spear and the multitude of the priests, following Heraclius.

X.1.3. Botticelli's and Filippo Lippi's figures in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*

In addition to Piero della Francesca's effects demonstrated in *Il Vangelo*, Filippo Lippi's and Botticelli's figurative suggestions seem to be decidedly significant since the scene of Salomè's dance quotes elements from Botticelli's *Primavera* (*Allegory of Spring*, 1482, see fig. 27) and Filippo Lippi's *Banchetto di Erode* (*The Feast of Herod*, 1441-1447, see fig. 28). The proof of Pasolini's conscious approach of these painters is supported by the screenplay: "Essa è tutta coperta, dal collo alle caviglie, dalle leggiadre vesti che può avere un angelo del Botticelli – o la sua *Primavera*. Anzi essa è proprio vestita come l'ha immaginata Filippo Lippi in un suo affresco severo" (*Per il cinema* 558).[158]

Salomè's appearance is rather unusual in the film: her character is not the common Hollywoodian "femme fatale" any more, but she is a more immaculate, virgin-like character, instead (see fig. 29-30). Instead of sensuality, she communicates severity and

---

[157] "I have taken the costumes, not the taste from Piero della Francesca to represent the leading class and to represent the soldiers, and the Christ has mainly got archaic-Byzantine or Spanish baroque traits, the Greek especially."

[158] "She is fully covered, from the neck to the ankles by the graceful clothes that an angel of Botticelli or his *Allegory of Spring* can have. Actually, she is dressed like Filippo Lippi imagined her in one of his severe frescoes."

modesty. This aspect is emphasized by the fact that she is fully covered by her dress, as if she were one of Botticelli's angel figures. This representation is stressed in the screenplay:

> La festa è nel suo cuore. Salomè sta già danzando al suono di uno stupendo "adagio" di Teleman, con lieve ritmo di danza. La danza di Salomè non ha nulla di profano, di sensuale e d'impudico. [...] La festa della corte di Erode II non ha nulla di orgiastico. È una festa ufficiale, estremamente raffinata. Il TOTALE immobile, in cui consiste semplicemente la danza di Salomè, rappresenta una delle solite grandi scene di genere, tolte però dal loro realismo spicciolo a qualcosa di sacro che è nella composizione, e dal ricordo delle grandi immaginazioni figurative dei classici. L'interno, la tavola imbandita con misurato lusso, i convitati in cerchio, con al centro Erode e Erodiade, i servi fermi all'estremità della tavola. E Salomè che danza una squisita danza che solo vagamente accenna, stilisticamente, ai movimenti della danza orientale. Il supreme «adagio» di Teleman finisce, e finisce la danza. [159] (*Per il cinema* 558)

Pasolini's representation of Salomè's dance is particular and pioneer in the iconography. The previous and the successive Salomè-representations either on film (by Ugo Falena in 1910, Bryant Charles in 1923, William Dieterle in 1953, Carmelo Bene in 1972, Claude D'Anna in 1986, Ken Russell in 1988 and Al Pacino in 2011) or in literature (by Oscar Wilde in 1894) all focus on the wealth of the palace and the sensuality of the nude dance. Other painters (such as Moreau, Beardsley, Klimt) have been indulged in representing morbidity and some strange situations regarding the Biblical topic. Pasolini's scene, instead, does not contain any trait of richness or eroticism. The palace in its dire state has been transformed from majesty into a realm of poverty and ignorance. In addition, Salomè's inapt attitude conveys modesty, humility and naivety, which contradicts her usual fascinating representations.

---

[159] "The feast is in her heart. Salomè is already dancing to the sound of a stupendous adagio by Teleman with delicate rhythm of dance. The dance of Salomè does not have anything profound, sensual or immodest. [...] The feast of the court of Herode II does not have anything orgiastic. It is an official feast, extremely elegant. The immobile total image which simply consists of Salomè's dance, represents one of the usual and great scenes of this kind which were deprived of their simple realism for the benefit of something sacred that is in the composition, and of the memory of the great figurative imaginations of the classics. The interior, the luxurious table setting, the banqueters sitting in a circle with Herod and Herodias in the middle, the standing servants at the ends of the table. And Salomè who is dancing an exquisite dance that stylistically only vaguely refers to the movements of the oriental dance. Teleman's supreme "adagio" ends, and the dance comes to an end."

The antithetical representation substantially characterizes this scene. The fact that Pasolini's Salomè is a reminiscence of Botticelli's *Primavera* (*Allegory of Spring*) creates a visual chaos, an absolutely antithetic state. That is, while Pasolini's Salomè is dancing in a dusty and ruinous palace, Primavera appears in a natural richness, surrounded by a wide variety of flowers and beauties. Thus, while Primavera's environment is associated with "the Garden of the Hesperides", Salomè appears on the opposite pole, as a contrapuntist of any beauty and pomposity.

X.2. The music in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*

The political analogies of the film are frequently supplemented and reinforced by music. The voice of purity and the topic of joy are transmitted through "Gloria" from the Congolese *Missa Luba*. Therefore, the scenes of exaltation are intensified by this Negro spiritual. The musical pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach (*The Passion according to Saint Matthew* BWV 244, "Aria" n. 47, "Choir" n. 78, Aria 47; "Adagio" from *Concerto for 2 Harpsichords, Strings, and Continuo in C minor, BWV 1060*; "Dona nobis pacem" from *The Mass in B minor BWV 232*; "Adagio" from *The Violin Concerto in E Major BWV 1042*) and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *The Maurerische Trauermusik* (Masonic Funeral Music) in C minor, K. 477 (K. 479a) and *Adagio and Fugue in C minor* K 546 emerge as expressions of solemnity. Moreover, in a distinctly complex moment the music evokes overlying strands of film and history: the scene of the Massacre of the Innocents is accompanied by Sergei Prokofiev's music (*Alexander Nevsky*, Cantata op. 78). It is the same piece that Sergei M. Eisenstein used in *Alexander Nevsky* to accompany scenes of a battle on the ice in which Russian soldiers defend their homeland. In addition, a Russian Resistance song is played in a similar manner during one of Christ's diatribes, with the result that, in the words of René Prédal, "the martyrdom of the son of God…announces and rejoins that of all victims come in the revolutionary struggle" (8).

***

In conclusion, *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* is one of Pasolini's political interventions and it abounds in picturesque and musical citations. The quotations of the figurative arts mainly regard the works of Piero della Francesca, Duccio, Botticelli, Giotto, El Greco and Rouault. This chapter has focused on the analysis of Piero della Francesca's

Madonna del Parto (*Madonna of Childbirth*) and the relative mis-en-scène in Pasolini's film. In addition, Salomè's filmic dance has been compared with Botticelli's *Primavera* (*Allegory of Spring*) and Filippo Lippi's *Banchetto di Erode* (*Feast of Herod*). It has been demonstrated that both paintings serve as points of reference which reflect on the psychological representation of the film characters. As far as the Madonna's character is concerned, two major conclusions have been drawn. First, both Piero della Francesca's and Pasolini's Madonna contain the oxymoron of divine and rural qualities. Second, the Madonna of the painting is a much more complex character, expressing the ambiguity of dignity and humility, whereas Pasolini's Madonna mainly conveys the grief of her distressed conditions. Although the film suggests an alienation from the Catholic doctrines, the sacred demonstrates its existence in Pasolini's universe. What makes the traditional iconography destroyed is the surrounding of the sacred with some ordinary objects of reality. The same concept must have lead Pasolini when creating the mis-en-scène of Salomè's dance inasmuch as the character associated with Botticelli's *Primavera* (*Allegory of Spring*) or Filippo Lippi's Salomè, is separated from her usual role of a noble and sensual woman and transformed into the representation of ingenuousness and bare humility.

XI. *UCCELLACCI E UCCELLINI (THE HAWKS AND THE SPARROWS*), 1966

According to the original idea, *Uccellacci e uccellini* was an aggregate of three episodes with different ideologic roles, all of them had the titles of bird names, such as "The Eagle", "Hawks and Sparrows", "The Crow":[160] As Pasolini reflects upon the process towards the final idea in the interview lead by Dario Argento, the first episode (which tells the story of a tamer who attempts to make an eagle speak) the topic is the irrational religion, the 'savage thought', the Third World (embodied by the eagle) which opposes the Western reasoning (the tamer). Pasolini takes the side of the eagle rather than that of the tamer; however, in the end, the tamer transforms into an eagle and flies towards the Gran Sasso. The second episode reflects upon the new attitude of the Church towards the problems of the social classes, according to which the evangelization itself has to be transformed into a mass evangelization, considering the changing state of the things. The story of this episode focuses on a friar who, helped by a young man, talks to the small birds as Saint Francis did. The third episode faces an even wider problem, a mystery of the humanity which is still to be explored. It is the story of a man and his son who, during his journey, meet a crow. This bird bores the two people with his long and incessant talks so much that the two men kill and eat him. The crow represents the closed Stalinism, which is already dead and no longer necessary to understand life. The people digest him and go on, perhaps towards other crows which will also be devoured and digested.[161]

---

[160] The articles in which Pasolini refers to these episodes are the following: "L'aigle", *Vie Nuove XX, n. 17*, 29 April 1965. "Faucons et moineaux", *Vie Nuove XX, n.18*, 6 May 1965, "Le corbeau", *Vie Nuove XX, n.19*, 13 May 1965. They are collected in *Le belle bandiere* 321-334.

[161] "Nel primo episodio (che narra la storia di un domatore che tenta di far parlare un'aquila) il tema è la religione irrazionale, il 'pensiero selvaggio', cioè il Terzo Mondo (impersonato dall'aquila) che si contrappone alla logica occidentale (il domatore). [...] Certo, personalmente 'parteggio' per l'aquila piuttosto che per il domatore: alla fine, infatti, il domatore si trasforma in aquila e vola verso il Gran Sasso. [...] Il secondo episodio [...] riflette il nuovo atteggiamento della Chiesa di fronte ai problemi delle classi sociali. [...] oggi non troviamo più il singolo che si oppone al singolo, ma masse davanti a masse. L'evangelizzazione stessa si deve perciò trasformare in evangelizzazione di massa, tenendo conto del mutato stato di cose. La storia di questo episodio vede un frate che, assistito da un giovane, parla agli uccellini come faceva San Francesco. Il terzo affronta un problema molto più vasto, un mistero dell'umanità ancora da scoprire. È la storia di un uomo e di suo figlio che, durante un viaggio, incontrano un corvo. Questo uccello annoia gli uomini con discorsi lunghi e insistenti, tanto che alla fine i due lo uccidono e lo mangiano. Il corvo rappresenta lo stalinismo chiuso, che è ormai morto e non serve più a capire la vita. Gli uomini lo assimilano e vanno avanti, forse verso altri corvi che saranno a loro volta divorati e digeriti." (Argento)

As for the final version of this film is concerned, the first episode becomes absolutely omitted, whereas the nucleus of the film will be composed of the third episode inside of which the original second episode reappears in the form of the crow's tale: "Ho quasi finito di montare il film. L'ho stretto, reso più rapido. Ho tolto un intero episodio, il primo. Non è più un film in tre episodi, ma un film unico, con dentro un altro breve film, come raccontato dal corvo parlante." (*Uccellacci e uccellini* 53).[162] In consequence, the final story has a film-in-the-film structure, similarly to *La ricotta*.

The "fabula" is a picaresque narrative, portraying a father and a son, Totò and Ninetto who wander around the outskirts of Rome, without anyone's knowing where they head for. At a certain point they are joined by a talking crow who says he comes from the land of ideology and is the son of Father Doubt and Mother Consciousness. The raven tells Totò and Ninetto a medieval fable about Brother Ciccillo and Brother Ninetto. Saint Francis orders these two friars to preach love to the birds, particularly to the hawks and the sparrows, which hate each other. Although Ciccillo and Ninetto manage to talk to both species, the war between the hawks and sparrows never ceases. At this point the plot returns to its frame, where Totò and Ninetto give and receive cruelty. Simultaneously to this cruelty, they encounter the funeral of Togliatti, the former head of the Italian Communist Party. Finally, they decide to consume the last vivid representative of Marxism, the raven which will be killed and eaten up by them.

The "syuzhet" of the film is the relationship between the industrial world and the Third World. Totò and Ninetto represent the same humble and popular milieu where Accattone, Mamma Roma or Stracci belong to. The cityscape they wander aimlessly through is a reminiscent of the Roman borgatas with its shanties and debris, or as suggested by Adelio Ferrero, it is the exhausted periphery of a world beyond history (referred to in Greene 81).

The film's ideology centers about a confirmed Marxist who appears in the form of a talking crow and speaks with the voice of Francesco Leonetti, an intellectual friend of Pasolini's. The author refers to the Marxist ideology in "Confessioni tecniche" and argues that the Marxist crow is an autobiographical motif in his anarchy, independence and sincerity. However, such a crow for its norm and reasonability is condemned to be eaten according to the film. Pasolini argues that if the Marxism of the crow does not coincide

---

[162] "I have almost finished to edit my movie. Then I tightened it and made it faster. I eliminated an entire episode, the first one. It is not a film in three episodes any more. It is only one film, and inside there is another short film, as told by the speaking crow."

with his, the crow becomes an objective person whose argumentation is not in line with his concepts any more. In addition, while the story requires him to be pleasant, being eaten eventually inspires two equivalent emotions: the liberation from the ideologic obsession, and the compassion for his final misery. In consequence, Pasolini had to separate the Marxism of the crow from his Marxism, making its actuality objective. In other words, the bird needed to be conscious of the crisis of Marxism but on the basis of such reasons that are not strictly the director's arguments ("Confessioni tecniche" 58-59).[163]

The crow tells Totò and Ninetto a tale which constitutes the middle-part of the film. In this story-within-a story, the two characters appear as medieval friars who, inspired by the words of St. Francis, have the intention to preach a message of love to the hawks and the sparrows. As the hawks and the sparrows mirror the division of society, the two friars set out with the mission of stopping the oppressors from preying on the oppressed ones. Since the hawks end up killing the sparrows, Totò and Ninetto face he failure of their mission and the film returns them to the present day. In the end, however, Totò and Ninetto wreak revenge on the crow's obsession with Marxism by killing and eating it. This act might be interpreted as assimilation with Marxism since according to Pasolini's idea they absorb Togliatti's body: "They perform an act of cannibalism, what Catholics call communion: they swallow the body of Togliatti (or of the Marxist) and assimilate it; after

---

[163] "Ho scritto la sceneggiatura tenendo dunque presente un corvo marxista, ma non del tutto ancora liberato dal corvo anarchico, indipendente, dolce e veritiero.
A questo punto il corvo è diventato autobiografico – una specie di metafora irregolare dell'autore. Così è nato il suo background psicologico: il marxismo innestato come una norma innocente, palingenesi non tuttavia matta ma ragionata, su una incrinatura della norma, sul trauma.
Il corvo "doveva essere mangiato."
Se il marxismo del corvo non coincide con il mio, allora il corvo diventa un personaggio del tutto oggettivo, che dice cose che io non condivido di più: un personaggio noioso e antipatico, in fondo stalianiano, la cui voce risuona vecchia nel contesto tutto sommato molto nuovo della favola. Mentre invece la storia richiede che egli sia simpatico, che egli abbia ragione nei suoi interventi sia pure un po' noiosi: così che l'essere mangiato alla fine ispiri due sentimenti equivalenti: il senso piacevole di liberazione dalla sua ossessione ideologica che vuol spiegare tutto e sempre, e la compassione per la sua brutta fine.
Dovevo quindi staccare il marxismo del corvo dal mio, oggettivandone la sua attualità. Ossia anch'egli come me, doveva essere cosciente della crisi del marxismo – essere cioè un marxista degli anni sessanta ma con delle ragioni che non fossero strettamente le mie." / "I wrote the screenplay having present a Marxist crow, but absolutely not distant from an anarchic, independent, sweet and sincere crow. At this point the crow became autobiographical – a certain irregular metaphor of the author. This is how his psychological background was born: the Marxism inserted as an innocent norm, palingenesis, however, not crazy, but reasonable, on the rift of the norm, on the trauma. The crow "had to be eaten". If the Marxism of the crow does not coincide with mine, the crow becomes a totally objective person who says things that I do not share any more: a boring and annoying person, at heart a Stalinian whose voice sounds old in the, after all, very new context of the tale. While the story, instead, requires him to be pleasant and to be right in his interventions, even if they are a little bit boring: thus, being eaten eventually inspires two equivalent emotions: the pleasant sense of liberation from his ideologic obsession which always wants to explain everything; and the compassion for his ugly end. So I had to separate the Marxism of the crow from mine, making its actuality objective. That is, similarly to me, even he had to be conscious of the crisis of Marxism – to be a Marxist of the 1960s but based on the reasons that are not strictly mine."

they have assimilated it they carry on along the road, so that even though you don't know where the road is going, it is obvious that they have assimilated Marxism" (Stack 106). Discussing the ideological implications of *Uccellacci e uccellini*, Pasolini observed that he has never chosen for the theme of a film one so explicitly difficult: the crisis of the Marxism of the Resistance and the 1950s. What makes this crisis especially difficult is that it is suffered and viewed from the inside by a Marxist who is not ready to believe that Marxism is over. Furthermore, the theme of the crisis of Marxism is supplemented by further realities, such as the scandal of the Third World, the immensity of human history and the end of the world, with the religiosity that these later cases imply ("Lettera aperta" 58).

XI.1. The references to figurative arts

The peculiarity of *Uccellacci e uccellini* could be caught in the fact that it is based on cinematographic references rather than allusions to the figurative arts. Pasolini himself underlines this feature in the interview given to Oswald Stack: "In my opinion the novelty of *Uccellacci e uccellini* is that I tried to make it more "cinema-like": there are almost no references to figurative arts and there are several explicit references to other films" (Stack 99-100).[164]

Although this work effectively lacks picturesque allusions, in traces it contains references to Giotto's and Velázquez's artistic oeuvre. As the screenplay reveals, Giotto is the iconographic "referent" of the central episode: that of the friars' sermon to the sparrows and the hawks. This scene is a fondly grotesque homage to Giotto's figurative world, blended with some Chaplinism. The representation of Ninetto and Totò is an indirect allusion to Giotto's figures on the frescoes of Assisi and Basilica of Santa Croce. This connection is stressed in the screenplay: the episode of Paradise reveals Ninetto's dream as "painted by Giotto", even if later this episode is eliminated. During Friar Ciccillo's sermon to the birds Ninetto falls asleep and dreams of Paradise, the vision of which reminds one of a Giottesque painting:

Frate Ninetto si addormenta.

---

[164] "Secondo me l'elemento nuovo in *Uccellacci e uccellini* è che io ho cercato di farlo più 'cinema': non c'è quasi alcun riferimento alle arti figurative e molti più riferimenti espliciti ad altri film."

PARADISO DI NINETTO

Interno, Giorno

Il Paradiso di Ninetto è dipinto da Giotto.

La sua fantasia non va oltre gli stretti limiti del mondo casalingo e comunale: gli «interni» sobri e poveri, in cui però ogni oggetto ha la solennità delle cose incorruttibili. Forse Ninetto sogna a colori. Il blu di Prussia, un po' sgualcito e liso, il morello, il sangue di bue, l'ocra, il grigio pantano. Siamo in un interno: indicato da essenziali segni architettonici di colonnine di legno, e pavimenti a mattonelle. Da una parte c'è un coretto di maschietti, messi tutti in fila, e le file una sopra l'altra. Dall'altra c'è un coretto di femminucce. Il canto è angelico. Ed ecco altri angoli del paradiso, con personaggi gravi, dalle grosse guance e dai grossi bacini, coperti di sobri mantelli. Ninetto guarda quei gruppi giotteschi, un po' intimidito. Ed ecco lassù il Padre Eterno, con la grande barba, tra gli apostoli importanti e misteriosi.

Ninetto si fa il segno della croce e si inginocchia con le mani giunte sul pavimento a grandi mattonelle rosse e nere. Egli vede per prima cosa una lunga tavola di legno coperta da una tavola linda, bianchissima, che ricade tesa sugli spigoli. E sopra, ogni ben di Dio, ma come l'avrebbe dipinto di Giotto, con grande sobrietà e quasi grandiosità: ricotte, formaggi, pagnotte, scodelle, cocomeri…(*Per il cinema* 727-28)[165]

The other figurative world evoked is a painting by Velázquez, *the Equestrian Portrait of Prince Balthasar Charles* (1635, see fig. 31). It emerges in the scene which takes place in Villa Generone where a rather affluent engineer hosts a conference of

---

[165] "Friar Ninetto falls asleep.
NINETTO'S PARADISE
Interior, Daytime
Ninetto's Paradise is painted by Giotto.
His fantasy does not go beyond the narrow boundaries of the domestic and municipal world: the plain and poor "interiors" in which, however, every object has the solemnity of the incorruptible things. Ninetto might dream in colours. Prussia's blue, a little bit creased and threadbare, the black horse, oxblood, the ocher, the mire grey. We are in an interior: indicated by essential architectural signs of wooden columns, and floor tiles. On one side there is a little choir of boys, all in a row, and the rows one above the other. On the other side there is a little choir of girls. The song is angelic. And there are other angels of the Paradise, with more sombre characters, with large cheeks and pelvis, covered with plain mantels. Ninetto watches those Giottesque groups with a slight of fear. And up there is the Eternal Father, with long beard, among important and mysterious apostles. Ninetto makes the sign of the cross and kneels down with his hands reaching the floor of big red and black floor tiles The first thing he notices is a long wooden table covered with a clean and snow white table linen which is stretched at the corners. And upwards all the good things of God, but as if they had been painted by Giotto, with extreme simplicity and almost grandiosity: ricotta, cheese, bread, bowls and watermelons..."

"Dantist Dentists" (see fig. 32). This painting by Velázquez stands out on the wall of the villa, although the screenplay refers to a picture by Bacon:

> Ninetto dunque si rassegna: e gira intorno gli occhi stupiti. Vede cose dal basso all'alto: Delle pareti coperte di quadri astratti e informali: forse anche un Bacon. I mobili antichi, con suppellettili comprate di prima mano a Kano o a Pahnira.[...] INGEGNERE: Li vedete, tutti questi quadri qui intorno? Questi oggetti rari, ecc? TOTÒ: Come no? Belli! INGEGNERE: Fanno schifo, compreso il Bacon! È mia moglie che li ama, come è lei del resto che riceve i suoi amici intellettuali e i suoi colleghi dell'Università...Io sono soltanto un uomo d'affari, faccio l'affari, e ci tengo agli affari. (*Per il cinema* 790)[166]

This is the first time in the history of Pasolini's cinema that Francis Bacon is referred to, even if it has a rather negative connotation due to its associations with abstract painting. Later Bacon's figurative world will return both in *Teorema* and in *Salò*. The substitution of Bacon's painting with that of Velázquez might be due to the fact that Velázquez as one of the most appreciated court painter is associated with the leisure class. This is why it is logical that this painting appears among Persian carpets, marble busts and other precious objects in order to characterize the environment. All in all, despite the appearance of these connotations, *Uccellacci e uccellini* remains a film of a mainly cinematographic figurative background.

XI.2. Filmic, literary and musical contaminations

Uccellacci e uccellini is a film inspired by a cinematographic culture instead of a pictorial background, as underlined by Pasolini in the interview given to Oswald Stack:

> Unlike *Accattone*, it is a product of a cinematographic culture rather than a pictorial one. It is at the end of Neorealism in terms of limbo and it evokes

---

[166] "So Ninetto lumps it: and he turns his astonished eyes around. He notices the things from downwards to upwards: some walls covered with abstract and informal paintings: perhaps even a Bacon. The antique pieces of furniture with ornaments, bought first hand in Kano or in Pahnira. [...] ENGINEER: Can you see all these paintings here inside? These rare objects, for example? TOTÒ: Of course. They are beautiful! ENGINEER: They are disgusting, the Bacon included! It is my wife who loves them, and it's her, by the way, who invites her intellectual friends and her colleagues from university...I am only a businessman, and business is important for me."

the spectrum of Neorealism, particularly in the beginning with two characters living out their life without thinking about it – i.e. two typical heroes of Neorealism, humble, humdrum and unaware. All the first part is an evocation of Neorealism, though naturally an idealized Neorealism. There are other bits like the clowns episode which are deliberately intended to evoke Fellini and Rossellini. Some critics accused me of being Fellinian in that episode, but they did not understand that it was a quotation from Fellini; in fact immediately afterwards the crow talks to the two of them and says 'The age of Brecht and Rossellini is finished.' The whole episode was a long quotation. " (Stack 99-100)[167]

Therefore, *Uccellacci e uccellini* mainly contains quotations from Roberto Rossellini, Federico Fellini and Chaplin. The central part of the film could be understood as a tribute to Rossellini's *Francesco, giullare di Dio* (*St. Francis, God's Juggler*, 1950). Apart from that, Chaplin's effect might result being the most significant since Totò appears as a Chaplinian character. Furthermore, in *Il cinema italiano degli anni sessanta*, Miccichè argues that *Uccellacci e uccellini* belongs together with Paolo e Vittorio Taviani's *I sovversivi* (*The Subversive Ones*, 1967), Bernardo Bertolucci's *Prima della rivoluzione* (*Before the Revolution* 1966), Marco Bellocchio's *I pugni in tasca* (*Fists in the Pocket*, 1967) and Florestano Vancini's *Le stagioni del nostro amore* (*The Seasons of our Love*, 1966), to a group of films he calls "the films of crisis", that is, films characterized by the double motif of a disappointed (or unfounded) past hope and the necessity (or impossibility) of refounding the future" (qtd. in Viano 147).

In terms of literary connotations, Dante is evoked again inasmuch as there is a scene of "Dantist Dentists" Conference in which a group of intellectuals discuss the polyphony of Dante's verses:

> Due dantisti – uno con la barba, l'altro con le basette come Stanlio e Ollio – si chinano uno verso l'altro, e il grasso deversa nell'orecchio del magro:
> DANTISTA GRASSO (con somma ironia, degustando infinite allusività)
> Sono disposto ad ammettere con Contini un polilinguismo in Dante, ma

---

[167] "È diversamente da *Accattone* il prodotto di una cultura cinematografica più che figurativa. È sulla fine del neorealismo in quanto specie di limbo ed evoca lo spettro del neorealismo, particolarmente all'inizio con i due personaggi che vivono incarnati nella vita senza distinguervisi e senza rifletterci, cioè due tipici eroi del neorealismo, umili, comuni e inconsapevoli. Tutta la prima parte è un'evocazione del neorealismo, sebbene sia un neorealismo idealizzato. Ci sono altri pezzi come l'episodio dei clowns che sono deliberatamente intesi a evocare Fellini e Rossellini. Subito dopo infatti, il corvo parla ai due e dice: 'Il tempo di Brecht e Rossellini è finito'. L'intero episodio era una lunga citazione."

quanto alle possibilità di una recitazione allofonica....tendente a ipotizzare

nella *Commedia* una possibile polifonia! (*Per il cinema* 788)[168]

This scene is present in the screenplay; however, it is slightly modified in the film. As the curators of the volume *Per il cinema* (3099) reaffirm, in an earlier version of the screenplay the crow should have recited the invective of Purgatory: "Ahi serva Italia, di dolore ostello..." (Purgatory, Canto VI, 76-78).[169]

This work scarcely contains musical references as the soundtrack was mostly written by Ennio Morricone. However, some themes allude to Mozart's *Magic Flute* to accompany the embedded surreality. In addition, the film contains the direct quotation of "Sigfried's Rhine Journey" by Richard Wagner from *Twilight of the Gods*, which is associated with the filmic journey.

<div align="center">***</div>

In conclusion, *Uccellacci e ucccellini* is another political intervention made by Pasolini to reflect on the relationship between the industrial world and the Third World. Totò and Ninetto represent the same milieu where Accattone, Mamma Roma or Stracci belong to. The additional ideology centers about a confirmed Marxist who appears in the form of a talking crow, and he is identified as an autobiographical motif in his anarchy. Unlike the previous films of the Pasolinian oeuvre, *Uccellacci e uccellini* illustrates a scarce appearance of pictorial, literary or musical citations. The visual texture contains references to Giotto's and Velázquez's artistic oeuvre. On the one hand, the representation of Ninetto and Totò is an indirect allusion to Giotto's figures on the frescoes of Assisi and the Basilica of Santa Croce. On the other hand, the *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Balthasar Charles* by Velázquez is concretely inserted as part of the scenic design. However, the focus of this film is to track down the possibilities of cinema as an autonomous medium of expression. Although the genre of film comes from a pictorial tradition, Pasolini continues his cinematographic vision with a film which is able to develop its own figurative and musical impact.

---

[168] "Two Dantists – one with a beard, another one with sideburns like Stan and Pan – bend towards each other, and the fat one whispers in the ears of the thin one: FAT DANTIST (with great irony, tasting infinite allusion) I'm ready to admit with Contini a plurilingualism in Dante, but as for the possibilities of an allophonic recitation…tending to hypothesize in the *Comedy* a possible polyphony!"
[169] Translated by Rev. H. F. Cary: "Ah! servile Italy, grief's hostelry!"

XII. *CHE COSA SONO LE NUVOLE?* 1968

Immediately after *Uccellacci e uccellini* Pasolini directs another film with Totò and Ninetto Davoli with the intention of enhancing what he defines his "comic vein". This film, *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* was shot in a week after Pasolini's return from Morocco where he was looking for locations for *Edipo Re* (Stack 116).[170] It belongs to a project entitled "What is cinema?" according to which Pasolini intended to direct a film composed of comic-surreal episodes (De Giusti 64). Out of the comic episodes only two have been realized invariably with the same two actors (*La terra vista dalla luna* and *Che cosa sono le nuvole?*) and after Totò's death the project fails to be realized. As a consequence, the two sketches constitute part of two different films: *La terra vista dalla luna* is inserted as the third episode of *Le streghe* (1967) together with *La strega bruciata viva* by Luchino Visconti, *Senso civico* by Mauro Bolognini, *La siciliana* by Franco Rossi and *Una sera come le altre* by Vittorio De Sica. In addition, *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* appears in *Capriccio all'italiana* (1968) together with *Il maestro della domenica* by Steno, *Perché* by Mauro Bolognini *Viaggio di Lavoro* by Zac, *La bambinaia* by Mario Monicelli and *La gelosa* by Mauro Bolognini. Pasolini did not even write a proper screenplay for this sketch of his: he elaborated the scenes by drawing them into comic strips. According to Pasolini the background ideology is a picaresque ideology which, similarly to all the things of pure vitality, disguises a deeper ideology: the ideology of death. In fact, *Che cosa sono le nuvole?*, Pasolini's second sketch ends with the death of the two main characters who are two puppets or two marionettes, Jago and Othello: the enraged public kills them before they could commit their crime. These two marionettes are thrown by a refuse collector, Modugno, in a rubbish dump but inside this rubbish dump they reveal their world of paradise (qtd. in De Giusti 65).[171]

---

[170] "Yes, I shot it when I came back from looking for locations for Edipo in Morocco. I shot it in a week because I was in a hurry."

[171] "[...] l'ideologia di fondo è un'ideologia picaresca, la quale, come tutte le cose di pura vitalità, maschera un'ideologia più profonda, che è l'ideologia della morte. Infatti *Che cosa sono le nuvole?*, questo mio secondo sketch, finisce con la morte dei due protagonisti, che sono due pupi, o due marionette, Jago e Otello: il pubblico, inferocito, li uccide prima che perpetrino il loro delitto. Queste due marionette vengono gettate da un immondezzaro (che è Modugno, e che quindi lo fa cantando) in un orribile immondezzaio; ma lì, in questo immondezzaio, scoprono il mondo, che sarebbe il loro paradiso."

XII.1. References of fine arts

Simultaneously to the "fabula" represented by Othello's Ninetto-like parable, five reproductions of Velázquez's paintings mysteriously allude to the complicated mechanisms that are woven into the chain of events.

After a shot of the puppets aligned against the wall, the camera focuses on a movie poster on the ground that says: "Yesterday – *La terra vista dalla luna*". The camera then tilts to frame a wall with three more posters on it, two of which announce coming productions: *Mandolini* (*Mandolins*) and *Le avventure del re magio randagio* (*The Adventures of the Stray Wise Man*). The third announces the features of the day: *Che cosa sono le nuovole?*

All four posters are reproductions of paintings by Velázquez. The one advertising "today" and *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* is *Las meninas* (1656). The one advertising yesterday's film, the *La terra vista dalla luna* is *The Jester Don Diego de Acedo* (1645, see fig. 33-34). Tomorrow's *Le avventure del re magio randagio* is emblematized by *Portrait of Philip IV* (1644). In addition, *Mandolini*, the film of the near future is portrayed by *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf* (1631, see fig. 35-37).

Che cosa cono le nuvole? is linked to *Las meninas* (see fig. 38-39), which is the painting analyzed by Foucault in the first chapter of *Let mots et les choses* (*The Order of Things*, 1966). Pasolini has alluded to a picture that is the perfect example of self-referential ambiguity and to a book which examines the relationship between things and names. The contiguity of Foucault's and Pasolini's interests is evident in a remark made by Foucault in *Les mots et les choses*:

> The relation of language to painting is an infinite relation. It is not that words are imperfect, or that, when confronted by the visible, they prove insuperrably inadequate. Neither can be reduced to other terms: it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say. (qtd. in Viano 170)

Pasolini accepted and appropriated Foucault's argument on incommensurability between word and image. However, he exclaimed against the conclusion of the book which questioned both the verbal and the iconic signs. The film opts for the primacy of images and for the display of a Pasolinian order of things.

Foucault considers *Las meninas* as an example of the representation of the methods of the visualisation itself. The analysis departs from the fact that the picture portrays a painter while working on a portrait of the royal couple, however, the picture is only visible in its vague quality in the mirror. What it transmits to the perceivers is a group of people (the young infanta Margaret who is surrounded by her entourage of maids of honour, chaperone, bodyguard, two dwarfs and a dog) as they enter the painter's atelier to watch King Philip IV and Queen Mariann of Austria. It is assumed that the mirror on the back wall reflects the upper bodies and heads of the couple in the pose they are holding for Velázquez as he paints them. The subject of the real picture has priority as compared to the subject of the official picture the painter is working on. The hierarchies have also been inverted inasmuch as the infanta, the maids of honour and the dwarfs are in the foreground, whereas the royal couple is hardly visible. Moreover, the viewers of the painting are also involved as both the royal couple and the entourage of the Infanta Margaret turn their attention towards the viewers, which, in consequence, creates a metaphorical communication between creation and perception. Taking into consideration that the real perceivers (the Infanta and her entourage) are able to watch the fiction (the portrait of the royal couple) in a mirror, which is further complicated by the fact that for the outside viewers the whole complex is imaginary, the relationship between reality and fiction is placed into focus. This presumption is reinforced by a dialogue taken from the film: "Voce da burattinaio: Questa non è solo la commedia che si vede e che si sente; ma anche la commedia che non si vede e non si sente. Questa non è solo la commedia di ciò che si sa, ma anche di ciò che non si sa. Questa non è soltanto la commedia delle bugie che si dicono, ma anche della verità che non si dice" (*Per il cinema* 939-40).[172] Similarly, the truth of Velázquez's painting remains unexpressed and intact. Furthermore, because of the presence of the creator, the picture has a painting-in-the-painting structure which is in tune with the theatre-in-the-cinema quality of Pasolini's film. However, the central question suggested by the painting is what the subject of the picture is composed of: whether it is what the painter is watching or what he is painting? Regarding this question, Foucault argues as follows:

> What is there, then, we ask at last, in that place which is completely
> inaccessible because it is exterior to the picture, yet is prescribed by all the

---

[172] "Voice of the puppeteer: This is not only the comedy that one can see and one can hear; but it is also the comedy that one cannot see and one cannot hear. This is not only the comedy of what is known but even of that not known. This is not only the comedy of the lies that are said but even that of the truth which is not said."

lines of its composition? What is the spectacle, what are the faces that are reflected first of all in the depths of the Infanta's eyes, then in the courtiers' and the painter's, and finally in the distant glow of the mirror? But the question immediately becomes a double one: the face reflected in the mirror is also the face that is contemplating it; what all the figures in the picture are looking at are the two figures to whose eyes they too present a scene to be observed. The entire picture is looking out at a scene for which it is itself a scene. (27)[173]

Las meninas can also be read as a great container within which other sections open, divided by the mirror. For De Tolnay the pictures in the background should be interpreted with regard to the painter's action who might not be painting but he might only be admiring the internal picture, following the neoplatonic theories which are diffused by the Italian writing treatise. If in the medieval iconography the painter or the sculptor appears in the role of a creator, exhibiting the manuality of the artistic action, in *Las meninas* the painter illustrates himself in the moment of suspense – a concentration on that inner image which the theoreticians of the period called the 'disegno interno'. This is the painter as sovereign creator who is capable, thanks to a divine gift, of recreating within himself the visible world (C. De Tolnay 36). According to this interpretation, the two pictures allude to the victory of divine art over human craftsmanship and they are commentaries which explain the inspired attitude in the self-portrait of Velázquez (C. De Tolnay 36). On the wall in the background there are two doors, one is open and the other one is closed. Thereby, real and painted spaces constitute the map of the worlds that open within the canvas. In particular, it is the mirror which reflects what is watched but cannot be seen. According to De Vecchi's interpretation, another function of the mirror is the control of the mimesis following the decrees of Alberti and Leonardo Da Vinci (60).[174] However, the practice of inserting a mirror within a painting diffused mainly in the Flemish art, as it shows some of Van Eyck's works, such as *The Arnolfini Portrait* (1434). In the Italian painting the most well-known example of this phenomenon might be Savoldo's *Gaston de Foix* (1529) in which the multiplication of the mirrors reproduces the same figure from different points of view. Therefore the mirrors have a function of multiplication inasmuch as they repeat the original setting within the unreality of the space. In Velázquez, instead,

---

[173] The anonymous translation published on http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Foucault-Order_of_things-text.html is used.

[174] "strumento di controllo della mimesi secondo i dettami dell'Alberti o di Leonardo da Vinci"

the mirror has an absolutely different function inasmuch as it becomes the space of visibility. What remains invisible beyond the visible space of the fictive viewers, becomes visible in the irreal space of the mirror. Simultaneously, it distances the visible and emphasizes its uncertainty.

Apart from *Las meninas*, the connection between the other Velázquez-paintings and the films they are associated with is less clear. For instance, yesterday's film, *La terra vista dalla luna* is linked to *The Jester Don Diego de Acedo* (1645), which could be explained by the jester-like quality of the film characters and that of the picture. In terms of the near future's film, *Mandolini,* which would have been the last episode of a film by Pasolini entitled *Che cos'è il cinema?*, it is illustrated by *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf*. However, since the film has not been completed, no relevant explanation can be given at this point. Another episode of *Che cos'è il cinema?* was supposed to be *Le avventure del re magio randagio* which is illustrated by the *Portrait of Philip IV* by Velázquez in *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* Concerning this film, the foretold discussion could be repeated as the film episode was not realized.

The appearance of another poster of a painting by Velázquez, that of *The Rokeby Venus* (c. 1647-51) is more significant. It emerges when the dead puppets are taken to the garbage dump in a van in which a poster of this painting hangs. In this poster Venus, reclining, regards herself in a mirror. The reflection of Venus resembling herself, doubled and reversed in the mirror, is returned to the viewer, but with a doubly split object, Venus and her reflection.

The mirror that the poster of the painting contains is a repetition of a repetition in that the initial subject repeated is a subject of the repeated duplicate of Venus reflected. This picture is in the same relation to the mirror as the painting mirrored in *Las meninas*. The structure of the Pasolini-film is analogoues to the Velázquez-painting inasmuch as both of them propose the idea of a structure within another structure. Apart from the irony that the picture of Venus creates in the van, the multiplication of the images alludes to the sequence of the dreams in the existence of the puppets; after the dream of the little theatre the dream of death opens wide with the revelation of the "agonizing, astonishing beauty of the creation (*Per il cinema* 966)."[175]

---

[175] "straziante, meravigliosa bellezza del creato"

XII.2. Literary citations

The montage-like and cross-referenced quality of Pasolini's direction is manifested in *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* as well.

First and foremost of all, this film by Pasolini is a puppet theatre-like adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603). Therefore, apart from the painting-in-cinema structure there emerges the situation of a theatre-in-cinema phenomenon. Moreover, Laura Betti's Desdemona reminds one of the Infanta Margarita, which is underlined by the fact that Pasolini emphasizes Desdemona's childish character: "Ma è proprio una ragazzina, questa Desdemona! Ci ha in braccio una bambola, proprio una bamboletta di quelle che tengono in braccio le ragazzine, e la culla; e, cullandola, le canta una canzoncina – sempre come le ragazzine, ma quelle piccole piccole, cinque sei anni..." (qtd. in Pistoia 83).[176] This childish trait of Desdemona is inherited from Shakespeare:

> Those that do teach young babes
>
> Do it with gentle means and easy tasks.
>
> He might have chid me so, for, in good faith,
>
> I am a child to chiding. (Act 4, Scene 2)

The Shakespearean dialogues are reformulated at other points of the Pasolinian text as well. For instance, when in Shakespeare Othello claims that "Perdition catch my soul, /But I do love thee! And when I love thee not, / Chaos is come again / […] (Act III, Scene 3)" it is echoed in *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* when the rubbish dumper sings: "Ch'io possa esser dannato se non ti amo/ e se così non fosse non capirei più niente/ Tutto il mio folle amore Io soffia il cielo, lo soffia il cielo, così."[177] This latter line is a reiteration of the Shakespearean "All my fond love thus I blow to heaven (Act III, Scene 4)."

Another most characteristic instance can be pinpointed in one of Jago's cues: "Eh, figlio mio, noi siamo IN UN SOGNO DENTRO UN SOGNO" (*Per il cinema* 956).[178] By this dream-within-a-dream concept Pasolini alludes to a series of literary sources, the most famous among them is Calderòn de la Barca's play, *La vida es sueño* (*Life is a Dream*, 1635) which has always been appreciated by Pasolini. In June 1940 he writes the following

---

[176] "But she is a little girl, this Desdemona! We have a doll in our arms, the same doll that little girls hold in their hands […]."

[177] "That I can die I don't love you / and if it wasn't for this, I wouldn't understand anymore / All my crazy love is blown by the sky, blown by the sky, like this."

[178] "Oh, my son, we are IN A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM."

in a letter to Franco Farolfi: "[...] ho letto anche *La vita è un sogno* di Calderón della Barca che sebbene inquiniata talvolta fino all'ossesione di Gongorismo è una sorprendente modernità: mi ha stranamente colpito e ho scritto anche delle note intorno all'eventuale regia di quest'opera."(5)[179] Furthermore, it is the text of the Spanish playwright that provides the basis of the Pasolinian elaboration, published in 1973 under the title *Calderón* and in which the idea of life being a dream is preserved: "Sì, interroga l'autore, coinvolto anch'esso / nel mondo della nostra ricchezza, / che, *pur guardando da fuori Il quadro, ne è dentro*! (*Calderón* 43)"[180]

The central motif of the Spanish drama, that is, the awakenings of Segismundo, Prince of Poland, who was imprisoned for years in a tower by his father, King Basilio, returns in Pasolini's theatre play, repeated in the four awakenings of Rosaura, in an aristocratic, sub-proletarian, petit bourgeois environment and in the horror of a lager. Rosaura's opportunism, which manifests itself in continous transformations in Calderón, alienation in Pasolini inasmuch as she keeps appearing extraneous to the context she emerges. Pasolini's version preserves Segismondo's falling in love with Rosaura, and therefore, the Calderonian concept of having love as a link between reality and dream. The father's, King Basilio's figure in Pasolini becomes the incarnation of the power, as Pasolini confirms it in *Descrizioni di descrizioni*:

> Il Potere in *Calderón* si chiama Basilio (Basileus), ed ha connotati cangianti: nella prima parte è Re e Padre (appare nello specchio – con l'Autore!! – come nel quadro de *Las Meninas*), ed è organizzato classicamente: la propria coscienza di sé – fascista – non ha un'incrinatura, un'incertezza. Nella seconda parte, quando Rosaura si risvegli 'povera', sottoproletaria in un villaggio di baracche – Basilio diviene un'astrazione quasi celeste (sta nello stanzone de *Las meninas* vuoto, come sospeso nel Cosmo: e da lì invia i suoi sicari sulla terra); infine, nella terza parte, egli è il marito piccolo borghese, benpensante, non fascista ma peggio che fascista. (214-5)[181]

---

[179] "I have even read *Life is a Dream* by Calderón della Barca which, although being sometimes polluted with Gongorism up to obsession, is a surprising modernity: strangely it had a great impact on me and I have even written the notes around the eventual direction of this work."

[180] "Yes, ask the author, involved even him / in the world of our richness, / which, although watching the picture from outside, it is inside of it!"

[181] "The power in *Calderón* is called Basilio (Basileus), and he has iridescent connotations: in the first part he is King and Father (he appears in the mirror – with the Author!! – as in the picture *Las meninas*), organized in the classical way: his own self-consciousness – Fascist – does not have any fractures, any uncertainties. In the second part, when Rosaura wakes up as a poor, sub-proletarian in a village of shacks – Basilio becomes

As it is suggested by the above-cited extract, Pasolini inserts *Las meninas* even in his drama, *Calderón*, creating thereby a link between the drama and the film episode. In the drama Rosaura's fourth awakening takes place in a salon, which is the same room that *Las Meninas* represents. When discussing the function of the painting in *Descrizioni di descrizioni*, he refers to the inspiration of a mysterious quality which does not create nostalgy for the old theatre but this is what makes the old theatre function, like an expressive element of an uncertain sensation. Furthermore, Pasolini also stresses the conscious application of the citation as a result of a calculation. (*Calderón* 35-36)[182]

In *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* the pictorial citations are complemented with cinematographic and musical contaminations. For instance, the puppet show ends with a quotation from Roberto Rossellini's *Paisa* (*Paisan*, 1946), namely from the Neapolitan episode in which the black G.I. interrupts a marionette show by climbing on the stage and trying to help out the Moor in his struggle against the Christian. The musical references are also made to be in accordance with the scenic design and the literary context. Such "loans" include popular nursery rhymes, Domenico Modugno's "Cantata", Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Adagio" from *String Quintet No. 3 in G minor K*. 516 when Jago decides to kill Desdemona, and Jaques Offenbach's "Can Can" from the *Gaité Parisienne* (*Parisian*

---

an almost heavenly abstraction (he stays in the room of *Las Meninas*, empty, as suspended in the cosmos: and from there he sends his assassins to the earth); finally, in the third part he is the petit bourgeois husband, benevolent, not Fascist but worse than Fascist."

[182]"Ciò che ha spinto l'autore a immaginare questo episodio come se si svolgesse all'interno del quadro de *Las meninas* di Velázquez (del resto già citato nel I Episodio) è un'ispirazione di qualità misteriosa, che non comporta nostalgia per il vecchio teatro, ma adopera il vecchio teatro, mescolato alla pittura, come un elemento espressivo dal senso incerto. Non un compromesso, ma un calcolo, certamente un po' folle (di cui l'autore ancora si scusa, presso coloro che pretendono dagli altri il rigore, non sapendo che molto spesso il rigore è una giustificazione dell'aridità): e non una contraddizione innocente, ma una contraddizione cosciente.
L'autore vi prega dunque di sentirvi, per una decina di minuti, gli spettatori del vecchio teatro come rito sociale, e di godere ciò che è stato fatto per il posto godimento. La precisione patetica della ricostruzione, la bellezza dei colori (peraltro dovuti a Velázquez, di cui lo scenografo non è stato che un mediatore entusiasta), la grazia massiccia degli oggetti (acquisiti preziosi d'antiquariato), la sudata disposizione delle luci, le materie scelte con vero e proprio amore. Tutto elaborato, messo a punto, composto, di nascosto da noi per far piacere a voi." /
"What urged the author to imagine this episode as if it took place inside the picture of *Las meninas* by Velázquez (by the way, already cited in Episode I) is an inspiration of a mysterious quality that does not create nostalgy for the old theatre but it makes the old theatre function, as mixed with painting, like an expressive element of the uncertain sensation. It is not a compromise but a calculation, certainly a little bit lunatic (for which the author excuses himself at those who expect severity from others, not knowing that very often severity is a justification of the aridity): and it is not an innocent contradiction but a conscious one.
The author, therefore, asks you to consider yourselves for ten minutes the viewers of the old theatre as a social ritual, and to enjoy what was done for the pleasure. The pathetic preciseness of the reconstruction, the beauty of the colours (owing to Velázquez, of whom the scene designer was only an enthusiastic mediator), the massive graciousness of the objects (precious purchases of an antique store), the sweaty arrangement of the lights, the materials chosen with true and proper love. All elaborated, set, composed, as hidden by us to give you pleasure."

Gaiety) when Othello hits and strangles Desdemona under the secretive look of the hidden and spying Jago. This is the point when the public also starts to participate and attacks Othello and Jago.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In conclusion, *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* is a sketch film, an episode of *Capriccio all'italiana*. To create a link with the previous film, the characters remain the same Totò and Ninetto who interpreted the picaresque plot of *Uccellacci e uccellini*, however, in this film they recreate Shakespeare's *Othello*. The visual language consists of the reproductions of Velázquez's paintings in the form of film posters which allude to the complicated mechanisms that are woven into the chain of events. The poster which is associated with the given day's film, *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* is *Las meninas*. The one advertising yesterday's film, the *La terra vista dalla luna* is *The Jester Don Diego de Acedo*. Tomorrow's *Le avventure del re magio randagio* is emblematized by *Portrait of Philip IV,* 1644. In addition, *Mandolini*, the film of the near future is portrayed by *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf*. The most significant associative value is linked to *Las meninas* as both the painting and the film episode contain an embedded theatre inside the figurative structure. This solution also alludes to literary sources, Calderòn de la Barca's, *La vida es sueño*, the central motif of which reappears in Pasolini's theatre play, the *Calderón*. Based on all this, in *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* iconography has the function of a mediator which facilitates the dialogue between the film and Pasolini's literary works, offering thereby a key to the interpretation.

XIII. *TEOREMA* (*THEOREM*), 1968

After the technical experimentations of *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* and *La terra vista dalla luna* Pasolini turns his auteurial attention towards the bourgeois milieu and the dissolution of the bourgeois family. His radical criticism of the bourgeoisie and the consumer society is expressed in *Teorema* (1968) which focuses on the dissolution of a wealthy Milanese bourgeois family composed of mother Lucia, father Paolo, the son Pietro, the daughter Odetta and the maid Emilia. The concept of this film is linked to Pasolini's theatrical ideas inasmuch as in 1965 he started to elaborate works for theatre, among which he wrote six tragedies in verses, and as a first idea he put *Teorema* into a seventh tragedy in verses. However, an intuition urged him to unfold the love between this divine visitor and the bourgeois characters in silence. This is the point where the idea of transforming a theatre play into a film originates. Therefore, *Teorema* has two dramaturgical moments: the first is a theatrical moment which later brake, and the second moment is divided into cinematographic and literary branches as the original drama was elaborated into a novel which was further developed into a film. Thus, this history of *Teorema* greatly explains the film's connection with literature and theatre (qtd. in Peroni 35-6).[183]

The link between the cinematographic and the theatrical forms is one of the most determining qualities of *Teorema*. However, the film does not remain in the simplicity of being purely a "derivation" as it continues to live an autonomous artistic life, instead. Pasolini's concept of dedicating separate structures to theatre and screenplay is elaborated in an essay of *Empirismo eretico*, as well ("La sceneggiatura come struttura che vuol essere altra struttura", *Empirismo eretico* 188-197). The absolute completeness of *Teorema* in its cinematographic form is interpreted by a figurative metaphor: "*Teorema*-libro è nato, come su fondo oro, dipinto con la mano destra, mentre con la mano sinistra lavoravo ad affrescare una grande parete (il film omonimo). In tale natura anfibologica, non so sinceramente dire quale sia prevalente: se quella letteraria o quella filmica."

---

[183] "Circa tre anni fa ho cominciato a scrivere, per la prima volta in vita mia, delle cose di teatro, ho scritto quasi contemporaneamente sei tragedie in versi e *Teorema* era, come prima idea, una tragedia in versi, la settima. Avevo già cominciato a elaborarla come tragedia, come dramma in versi; poi ho sentito che l'amore tra questo visitatore divino e questi personaggi borghesi era molto più bello se silenzioso. Questa idea mi ha fatto pensare che allora forse era meglio farne un film [...]. Quindi *Teorema* ha due momenti: un primo momento teatrale, che poi è caduto, e un secondo momento che si è diviso in due rami: uno cinematografico e uno letterario. Dunque si tratta di un rapporto stranissimo tra letteratura e cinema."

(Pasolini, "Risvolto di copertina di Teorema." qtd. in De Giusti 67).[184] As Pasolini confirms it, it is the stylistic rigour and a form of sacredness that distance the film from the novel: "Dato che il mezzo cinematografico era totalmente diverso da quello espressivo letterario, per ottenere lo stesso distacco che avevo ottenuto nell 'opera scritta, ho sostituito la chiave umoristico-pietosa con quella del rigore stilistico e, direi quasi, con una forma di sacralità stilistica che allontana." (Ventura).[185]

The stylistic rigour to which Pasolini alludes is mainly observed in the film's mathematical structure that triggers the mechanisms of the plot. This logic is conveyed through the title "Teorema" which is concerned with the consequences of the following problem: how does a bourgeois family react to the presence of God? (Pasolini, qtd. in Rusconi).[186] Furthermore, knowing Pasolini's awareness of etymology, the word's origin should not be disregarded, either. As Viano points out, the word "teorema" has its roots in "theorem", the Greek word for spectacle, intuition; in "theorein", to look at, to observe; from "theoros", spectator (200). Theory and spectatorship, the theory of looking, are thus implied. Moreover, so are the ideas of theory as spectacle and spectacle as theory.

The nucleus of this film is constituted by the figure of the visitor who becomes equal with the element of sacredness. Being a reminiscent of Christ's figure, he changes the lives of all the family members. His appearance reveals the inherent reality of all the institutions of the bourgeoisie and, as a last resort, the archaic world and the myths offer themselves. Terence Stamp's visitor brings the power of sacredness into the family, every member of which loses himself or herself in a different way. He is an ambiguous character with both angelic and demonic traits, who also demonstrates vulgar elements, as Pasolini underlines: "I made Terence Stamp into a generically ultra-terrestrial and metaphysical apparition: he could be the Devil, or a mixture of God and the Devil. The important thing is that he is something authentic and unstoppable" (qtd. in Stack 157). Whenever Pasolini talks about the visitor, he emphasizes his sacredness:

> "Q. "Le séducteur de Teorema represénte-t-il le Diable ou le Bon Dieu?"
>
> P.P.P. "Ni l'un, ni l'autre. Il symbolise une hypothèse de l'authenticité.

---

[184] "The book *Teorema* was born, like on a golden background, painted with the right hand while with the left hand I worked to paint a fresco on a huge wall (the film is of the same title). In such an amphibolic nature I cannot say sincerely which one is prevalent: if the literary or the filmic quality."

[185] "Given that the cinematographic means were totally different from those of literary expression, to obtain the same detachment that I have obtained in the "written work, I substituted the humorous-compassionate key with the stylistic rigour and, I would almost say, with a form of stylistic sacredness that distances itself."

[186] Pasolini's own interpretation of the title comes as it follows: "Il titolo vuol dire questo: dato un problema quali sono le conseguenze? Nel caso in questione, data la presenza di Dio, come si comporta una famiglia borghese?"

> Qu'il soit le Diable ou Dieu, c'est la même chose. Tous deux représentent à un certain moment L'authenticité qui contredit et sape les habitudes (Hennebelle)."[187]

In other words, he emphasizes the importance of authenticity in the visitor's character, irrespective of the connotations associated with him. On the basis of the visitor's authenticity and sacredness, Pasolini arrives at the conclusion of attributing him a role of God's delegate (Foglietti).[188]

What elevates the visitor to the level of sacredness, is his sexuality. None of the characters are able to explain their departure and destination, therefore the visitor brings the authenticity into the surrounding complete inauthenticity. In his mysteriousness, his tool of creation is not the communication as he does not utter a word. Instead, the missing dialogue is substituted by the sexual intercourses he is involved in.

After a sexual encounter with the visitor, all the characters take a different path, however, all these passages lead to the absence of communication. For instance, Emilia, upon her return to her home, refuses to talk and becomes a saint healer. She is still in a relationship with the archaic roots of the reality and she will find the key point of her existence in sanctity. Emilia stays outside the bourgeois family inasmuch as she belongs to the working class. This is exactly why she is not separated from reality. Her choice is to opt for the security and comfort of religion to be able to continue to exist in the sanctity she managed to find in the visitor. Odetta, instead, escapes to dumbness which leads her to madness. The mother, Lucia loses herself while escaping to the desperate search for newer and newer men. Pietro wants to lead an artistic path and experiments with different techniques; however, he ends up painting with eyes shut. The father, Paolo, to free himself of every necessity, walks naked in the indistinct space of a desert which appears as the area of absolute reality. The family members' bodies do not communicate any more, whereas the guest's naked body contains every potential form of communication, including the completeness of communication itself. In conclusion, the sacred appears as destructive towards the existence of rules and rituals as established by a bourgeois community. If authenticity means auto-destruction for the bourgeois, for the peasant Emilia, instead, it represents a return to the basic authenticity and thereby it functions as regeneration.

---

[187]"Q: "Does the seducer in *Teorema* represent the Devil or the Good Lord?" P.P.P. "Neither the one, nor the other. He symbolizes a hypothesis of the authenticity. If he is Devil or the God, it is the same thing. Both of them represent at some point The authenticity, which contradicts and destroys the habits."

[188] "[...] più che di Dio, parlerei di un 'inviato' di Dio" in M. Foglietti, Pasolini: "Ritroviamo il senso del metafisico", *Il Popolo*, 3 May 1968

XIII.1. Pictorial contaminations in *Teorema*

Among all the characters of *Teorema* it is Pietro, the son who is mostly associated with painting and, in consequence, he appears the most analogues to Pasolini's figure. In terms of his character, Pasolini remarks the following in an interview: "I y a des analogies entre nous dans la mesure où il y a en lui cette vocation esthétique […]" (Brunetta 15).[189] In addition, it is exactly within the limits of a pseudo-artistic passion that he expresses his desperation after the guest's departure.

The abstract painting becomes his tool of filling the existential vacuum he finds himself in with individuation. Regarding the new initiation of the bourgeois boy, the description of his artistic interest is associated with the geometry of abstract painting, as the novel *Teorema* supports it:

> Nella camera di Pietro, il giovane ospite, accanto a Pietro, sfoglia un grosso libro dalle tricromie splendenti alla luce del pomeriggio, che batte potente sulle pagine patinate. Pietro guarda quelle riproduzioni a colori di una pittura che egli non conosce e che, magari fino allora, per influenza, forse, del suo insegnante di storia dell'Arte, aveva ignorato o disapprovato. (C'è infatti nei suoi occhi l'attenzione di chi scopre qualcosa, dopo una prima diffidenza, quasi con gratitudine.)
>
> Il quadro che i due ragazzi hanno sotto gli occhi, è fortemente colorato - di colori puri: osservandolo meglio, è come un reticolato di contorni, che lasciano delle superfici libere, triangoli e rettangoli rotondeggianti (come distesi, cioè, su una superficie curva): è su queste superfici libere che sono distesi quei colori puri: blu di Prussia e rossi; puri ma estremamente discreti, quasi in sordina; quasi velati da una patina di vecchio. La carta da disegno su cui quegli acquerelli o quelle tempere sono distesi [...] è infatti ingiallita; poveramente ingiallita: pare di sentirvi l'odore di vecchio, di stantio, di biblioteca. (*Teorema* 47-8)[190]

---

[189] "There are analogies between us insofar as there is this aesthetical vocation in him […]."
[190] "In Pietro's room, the young guest, next to Pietro leafs through a large book of three colours shining in the afternoon light, which powerfully hits the glowing pages. Pietro is looking at those colour reproductions of a painting that he does not know and that, probably until then, probably upon the influence of his Art History teacher, he ignored or disapproved. (In his eyes, in fact, there is the attention of the one who reveals something, after an initial scepticism, almost with gratitude.)

As we learn from the same novel, the picture concerned dates back to 1910-1920 and it is a work by the Imagist Wyndham Lewis, a friend of Pound. It is a graphic picture with colour surfaces, and Pasolini considers its "thinness", "freedom" and "naivety" its most prevalent qualities (*Teorema* 47-48). Pasolini gets to know Lewis after an interview with Ezra Pound in which the American poet talks about his taste regarding painting:

> P. P.P. "Senta Pound, quali sono i pittori che Lei ha amato di più?"
>
> E.P. "Credo quelli del '400."
>
> P.P.P. "I pittori del '400. E dei pittori Suoi contemporanei? Dei pittori che lavorano dal '17 al '30, insomma durante la Sua gioventù?"
>
> E. P. "Léger."
>
> P.P.P. "Voglio dire Lei ha amato di più i pittori la cui pittura assomigliava più alla Sua poesia, oppure pittori diversi dalla Sua poesia?"
>
> E. P. "Ho scritto un giorno, al margine di una lettera al pittore Wyndham Lewis "mi interesso molto poco ai pittori". Un critico infatti ha scritto di me: "Pound sceglie la musica e la scultura per paragonarle alla poesia, e non ha mai dimostrato interesse speciale per la pittura. (Ronsisvalle)[191]

Lewis is one of the representatives of the English Vorticism, a stream akin to the Italian Futurism, through its severity it distances from the sensuality of the Italian movement. As Cork points out, Italian Futurism had initially helped the Vorticists to realize the importance of interpreting the machine age in their art, however, Lewis and his group abhorred the blurred multiplicity and flux admired by Marinetti (138). In addition, he adds that "the incessant motion celebrated in so many Futurist images was anathema to Vorticist artists, who preferred to enclose single forms in steely contours which took on the thrusting, clean-cut efficiency of the modern machine" (138).

The picture that the two boys have in front of them is strongly coloured – of pure colours: observing it better, it is like a grid with outlines that leave free surfaces, roundish triangles and rectangles (as if they were stretched, so on a curved surface): it is on these free surfaces that those pure colours are stretched: Prussian blue and red; pure but extremely discrete, almost stealthily; almost veiled by a patina. The drawing paper on which those watercolours and temperas are expanded is yellowed, in fact; poorly yellowed: it seems as if one could smell something old, stale, something from a library […]."

[191]P.P.P. "Listen, Pound, which painters did you like the most?"
E. P. "I think those of the fifteenth century."
P.P.P. "The painters of the fifteenth century. And what about your contemporaries? The painters who work from '17 to '30, thus during your youth?"
E.P. "Léger."
P.P.P. "I mean did you prefer the painters whose works were more similar to your poetry or the painters who differed from your poetry?"
E.P. One day I wrote on the margins of a letter to the painter Wyndham Lewis "I'm interested very little in painters." In fact, a critic wrote about me: "Pound chooses music and sculpture to compare them to poetry, and he has never shown any particular interest in painting."

The identification of the cited image is rather problematic; even if Pasolini's description perfectly fits the painting entitled *New York* (1914-15). The book mentioned in the novel is substituted by a catalogue containing Francis Bacon's following works: *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* (1944); *Two Figures in the Grass* (1954); *Two Figures* (1953); *Study of a Baboon* (1953); *Study for a Portrait* (1953); *Landscape* (1952); *Study for Crouching Nude* (1952): *Pope II* (1951); *Fragment of a Crucifixion* (1950); *Head II* (1945); *Painting* (1940); *Figure Study I* (1945-46); *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* (1944). Among the listed works two are proposed with particular insistence: *Two Figures in the Grass* (see fig. 40-41) and *Three Studies* (see fig. 42-43). For Bacon the Crucifixion for its complex stratification of motifs remains a privileged place "[...] on which one can operate all types of level of feelings" (Sylvester 45). One of the most personal recurrent configurations in his works is the interlocking of Crucifixion imagery with that of the butcher's shop. This connection with meat is explained by Bacon in the following way: "If you go to some of those great stores where you just go through those great halls of death, you can see meat and fish and birds and everything else all lying dead there. [...] we are meat, we are potential carcasses (Sylvester 46)." Accordingly, in a *Fragment of a crucifixion* the hung silhouette is a reminiscent of the carcasses as they appear in the slaughterhouses. As Bacon underlines, this picture emerges similarly to Cimabue's Crucifixion in which a worm is crawling down the cross: "You know the great Cimabue Crucifixion? I always think of that as an image - as a worm crawling down the cross (Sylvester 14)." The distortion of the human figure has a particular code in Bacon, which is that of the scream:

> D.S "On the other hand, it's not altogether stupid to attribute an obsession with horror to an artist who has done so many paintings of the human scream."
>
> F.B. "You could say that a scream is a horrific image; in fact, I wanted to paint the scream more than the horror. I think if I had really thought about what causes somebody to scream, it would have made the scream that I tried to paint more successful." (Sylvester 48.)

The topic of scream is strongly linked to solitude, especially when taking into consideration that none of Bacon's characters are ever in dialogue with one another. Even when a couple is represented, the two figures form a block (e.g. *Two Figures in the Grass*). Bacon's characters remain normally perfectly independent fragments which are not able to

demonstrate any intertwining story whatsoever. This quality of the figures is pinpointed by Bacon himself:

> F.B. "In the complicated stage in which painting is now, the moment there are several figures – at any rate several figures on the game canvas – the story begins to be elaborated. And the moment the story is elaborated, the boredom sets in; the story talks louder than the paint.[.,.]"
>
> D.S. "And is it true that people have been trying to find a story in the Crucifixion on triptych. Is there in fact any explanation of the relationship between the figures?"
>
> F.B. "No." (Sylvester 22)

Through the allusion to Bacon's visual world, Pasolini recreates the Baconian athmosphere together with its sense of solitude, lack of communication and the figures' incapacity of building relationships. After the departure of the guest, each of the film characters in *Teorema* are obliged to close themselves into absolute isolation which marks their personal Calvaries as opposed to the dynamism of the bourgeois rites they experienced when belonging to the family. Another allusion to Bacon's visualization can be explored in the motif of the already mentioned scream as Paolo's, the father's corollary culminates in a scream in the infinite space of a desert. Furthermore, the motif of crucifixion is another linking point in itself with Bacon's world as its element is recurrent configuration in Pasolini's whole oeuvre, from *La ricotta* through *Il Vangelo* and *Porcile* to *La Trilogia della Vita*.

On the basis of *Teorema*, Pasolini's condemnation of avant-garde as being arid and provocative gains new perspectives as compared to *La rabbia*. For instance, when Pietro's pictorial performance culminates in the gesture of urinating on his proper works, Pasolini explains this extremism with the poetics and provoking abstraction of the classical avant-garde: "Tale estremismo è tipico delle avanguardie classiche o delle neoavanguardie. Esse coltivano abitualmente la creazione poetica, cifrata, l'astrazione provocatoria. Si vogliono in rottura con qualsiasi psicologia. Non appena la reintroducono, le conferiscono un carattere oltranzistico, blasfematorio" (Duflot 102).[192] On the whole, Pasolini distances himself from Pietro and thereby from the avant-garde. Such distance is expressed by himself in the interview with Brunetta:

---

[192] "Such extremism is typical of the classical avant-garde and the neo-avantgarde. They usually nurture the coded poetic creation, the provocative abstraction. They want to damage any kind of psychology. As soon as they reintroduce it, they lend it an extremist, blasphemous character."

P.P.P. "Je dirais que c'est mon contraire. Il y a des analogies entre nous dans la mesure ou il y a en lui cette vocation esthétique: mais elles sont très superficielles, et malgré ces ressemblances fatales, je suis en conflit avec lui parce qu'il représente certains intellectuels velléitaires..."

Q "Est-ce que Pietro fait lui-même ce genre d'autocritique?"

P.P.P. "Sincèrement il se regarde. Evidemment, cette sincérité, c'est ce qui est positif en lui. [...] Il n'est sincere que dans la critique. (15)[193]

All things considered, the Imagism through Percy Wyndham Lewis and Francis's Bacon's painting serve the visual key to the interpretation of the psychological cycles of the characters. Lewis offers a sense of closure and a sphere of tension and angst with his painting. It would have been an ideal pictorial reference to allude to the inner distress of the family. However, his paintings do communicate, his characters and colours are so vivid and the ongoing visual expression is so active that they would not have been able to reflect on the communicative problems of the family members, and they would have lead to a verbal-visual chaos. Therefore, it was a good choice by Pasolini to change Lewis's paintings to Francis Bacon's figurative world. Bacon operates with a stronger sense of dissolution, his paintings convey a psychological vacuum in which the tension of the silence and the frustration of the frustration of the compact space "communicate". Therefore they are more authentic to refer to a milieu which suffers from the inability of communication and inner angst and frustrations. In consequence, Bacon's art offers a point of reference to reflect on the inner drama and its root causes the characters face and fight with.

XIII.2. Literary quotations

The intertwining of cinema and literature can be well detected in *Teorema* as well. First and foremost of all, the film is originally written as an experimental novel organized more or less as a screenplay which was later further developed to a film. This presumption

---

[193] "P.P.P. "I would say that he is my opposite. There are analogies between us insofar as there is this aesthetical vocation in him: but they are very superficial, and despite these fatal similarities, I am in conflict with him because he represents certain indecisive intellectuals…"
Q. "Is Pietro also involved in this genre of auto-criticism?"
P.P.P. "He looks at himself in a sincere way. Obviously, this sincerity is what is positive in him. […] He is only sincere when it comes to criticism."

is strongly linked with the two Biblical citations that emerge in the course of the film: "So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea (Exodus 13:18)" and "You seduced me, LORD, and I let myself be seduced / you were too strong for me, and you prevailed" (Jeremiah 20:7).

The five destinies are characterized according to what they read. The five characters act in five different scenes of irrationality: religion (Emilia), lunacy (Odetta), art (Pietro), sexuality (Lucia), power (Paolo) and they are all tightly linked with the book they hold in their hands. For instance, the mother Lucia is associated with a zoological work entitled *King Solomon's Ring* by Konrad Lorenz which focuses on animal psychology. His observations on the wild geese's rituals and their phenomena of depression and death following the breakage of a ritual might be seen as connected with the post-traumatic conditions Lucia experiences after losing the values that the guest represented for her. In addition, the guest is associated with Rimbaud's works twice: once when sitting in the garden and Emilia spies on him, another occasion is when the mother Lucia is seduced in the mountain hut. Rimbaud's poetics is linked to Pasolini's youth and his poetic formation, therefore his evocations might be understood as references to the search for identity and authenticity, creating even a poetic shell inside the cinematographic structure.

Teorema also quotes Lev Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886), a novella that recounts Ivan's life from the moment of his death backwards. Seen from this perspective, Ivan's life appears "most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible" (11). As with Paolo and Lucia in *Teorema*, ordinariness and stability bind Ivan to the reality of his position, to the fragility of his social and emotional relationships. Ivan's incurable disease, which manifests itself through a sharp pain in his side, becomes his purveyor of truth as it forces him to look at things from an estranged perspective. It is emphasized that the disease plays a revelatory role in Ivan's life. The significance of this quotation might be revealed in the fact that the guest fulfils the same role as the Ivan's pain does: it affects the body of each family member and alters it accordingly. The head of the family in *Teorema* recognizes this when he tells the guest that he has only come to bring destruction.[194] Like Ivan's pain, *Teorema*'s guest destroys his old and apparently natural identity and exposes his truth from and of his position in the social context.

<div align="center">***</div>

---

[194] "Tu sei certamente venuto qui per distruggere" (*Per il cinema* 1087). / "You have only come to bring destruction."

In conclusion, in *Teorema* Pasolini turns his auteurial attention towards the bourgeois milieu and the dissolution of the bourgeois family after the technical experimentations of the previous films. The concept of this film is linked to Pasolini's theatrical ideas inasmuch as in 1965 he started to elaborate works for theatre, and originally he elaborated *Teorema* into a tragedy in verses. The nucleus of this film is constituted by the visitor's figure who becomes associated with sacredness. As a reminiscent of Christ's figure, his appearance reveals the inherent reality of all the institutions of the bourgeoisie and, the archaic world and its myths offer the solution. The film presents the intertextuality and intervisuality on the level of literature, painting and music. The musical references bear with less relevance in this film from our dissertation's point of view inasmuch as it is almost completely composed by Ennio Morricone. Apart from his work, it is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem Mass in D minor (K.626)* which accompanies the father's final struggle. As for the references to figurative arts, it is the abstract painting which is most prevalently associated with the visual language of the film. On the one hand, Imagism is evoked through the allusions to Percy Wyndham Lewis's oeuvre. On the other hand, Francis Bacon's works are proposed with particular insistence. The Baconian athmosphere is recreated together with its sense of solitude, lack of communication and the figures' incapacity of building relationships. The intertwining relationship of cinema and literature can also be detected through the references to the Bible, Rimbaud, Konrad Lorenz and Lev Tolstoy.

XIV. *PORCILE* (*PIGSTY*), 1969

XIV.1. Fabula and "syuzhet"

Similarly to Buñuel's *L'âge d'or* Pasolini's *Porcile* is another film which is concerned with the bourgeois civilisation through the references of fine arts. It is a montage of two figuratively different story lines which are led alternately. One story is Julian Klotz's parable, set in a villa of the 18th century in West Germany, "at Godesberg, near Cologne" (Stack 142). Julian is a son of a wealthy industrialist, Herr Klotz and he is sexually attracted to pigs, which is a secret for his family and his girlfriend, Ida. When Mr Herdhitze, a businessman with Nazi past, an economic and political rival of Klotz's, pays a visit to the family, Klotz threatens him to make his Nazi past public. However, Herdhitze, has the trump-card since after spying on Julian, he knows about his secret aberration. Crushed by the revelation, Klotz accepts a merger with Herdhitze's companies. After Herdhitze's revelation and in the middle of the merger celebrations, Julian goes to the pigsty and sees Spinoza in a vision. Spinoza explains his life to him and tells him that his love for the pigs is equivalent to an affirmation of the existence of God and leaves him. In the next scene some farmers approach the old industrialist, communicating him that Julian was devoured by the pigs. The episode ends with Klotz's only comment: "Ssst, non dite niente a nessuno" (*Per il cinema* 1174).[195]

The other story is set on the slopes of the Etna: a young man (Pierre Clémenti) wanders in the wilderness of the volcanic landscape, eating butterflies and snakes. From this point of view, *Porcile* begins where *Teorema* ends both figuratively and literally, that is, in the same windswept volcanic desert where the father in *Teorema* uttered his last anguished cry. On the slopes of the volcano in *Porcile* there appears a soldier from nowhere lagging behind a search patrol, the young man kills him and eats his body. At this point he is no longer alone but has a small group of men with him who capture three women and kill the soldiers escorting them. Their deed is reported to the authorities by a man who managed to escape and they are all condemned to be devoured by animals. Shortly before the execution, the young man pronounces the only words of the narrative:

---

[195] "All right, don't say anything about this to anybody."

"Ho ucciso mio padre, ho mangiato carne umana e sto tremando di gioia" (Pasolini, *Porcile* 75).[196]

On the level of the "syuzhet" the film departs from the historical conditions of Germany to handle the ambiguous relationship between the old and the new Capitalism, as confirmed by Pasolini (qtd. in De Giusti 73).[197] The two story lines, therefore the two main characters (Pierre Clémenti and Julian) represent two different paths of compliance with the power. In Pierre the fate of a barbarian, or as Ferrero put it, "a hallucinated Christ" is portrayed (104). In contrast with the Franco Citti's character, who is a real barbarian as he is driven by his hunger when turning to human flesh, Pierre Clémenti's character is essentially an intellectual rebel with even a Nietzschean philosophy (qtd. in De Giusti 75). His last and already quoted words indicate a radical act of rebellion against the power and the taboos which are recognized simultaneously in Julian's zoophilia. Julian, who is always compared to victims during the plot (for instance, to Charlie Chaplin, a Mannerist St. Sebastian or even Christ on the Cross) feels a secret love towards pigs, which is interpreted as a symbolic love by Pasolini: a love similar to cannibalism (Duflot 90). However, while for Julian the attraction towards pigs is only an alternative to love that he might not feel towards his family or girlfriend, Pierre's cannibalism is an absolute way of revolt which "borders on the most atrocious sanctity" (Duflot 90). In his constant hunger he is a reminiscent of Accattone, however, this filmic hunger is understood as an expression of disobedience. He is a representative of anarchy and apocalypse, which is why he is the character with whom Pasolini manages to identify to the greatest extent (De Giusti 74).[198] His cannibalism has the same function as sexuality in *Teorema*. What links the two deviances (zoophilia and cannibalism) is that they are able to provoke wreckages in the two societies (barbarian and capitalist) concerned.

While Pierre's cannibalism is compared to that of Franco Citti's character, Julian's eccentricity is parallel to Herdhitze's Nazi past:

> HERDHITZE "Alla salute ... degli Ebrei, dunque, sig. Klotz!"
>
> PADRE "Ma salute dei maiali, sig. Herdhitze!"

---

[196] "I have killed my father, I have eaten human flesh, and I tremble with joy."

[197] "Il contenuto politico esplicito del film ha come oggetto, come situazione storica, la Germania. Ma il film non parla della Germania, bensì del rapporto ambiguo tra vecchio e nuovo capitalismo" (Pasolini, "Note su *Porcil*e", qtd. in De Giusti 73).
Translation: "The explicit political content of the film is Germany as subject, as historical situation. But the film does not talk about Germany, it is more about the ambiguous relationship between the old and the new Capitalism.

[198] "il film è in parte autobiografico: io mi identifico con il personaggio di Pierre Clémenti (anarchia apocalittica)"

HERDHITZE "A proposito di maiali..."

PADRE "Di Ebrei o di maiali?" (*Porcile* 55)[199]

The two secrets with their terrible nature intersect continuously until they merge. Their intersection is explained by Pasolini in "Più cuore che testa." He implies that, on the one hand, there is the desperate story of a sinner who makes sanctity of his sin, and on the other hand, there is a devastating story of an impossible love with a devastating farewell. As a result, there emerges an ambiguous and dramatic relationship between old and new capitalism, which leads to the disapproval of both systems.[200] Julian emerges as "a character without a character" inasmuch as he is not able to decide whether he is a conformist or a non-conformist, whether he supports the student movement of 1968 or not. His waft and indifference might be as dangerous as Herdhitze's Nazi past, most probably. This is why he is condemned to the mention of the same niveau as Herdhitze.

XIV.2. The elements of fine arts in *Porcile*

In this context the pictorial citations of George Grosz relate to perfection. Grosz is incorporated ensuring an absolute pertinence in a context where pigs have a fundamental role. In an article entitled "Art is in Danger" (1925) Grosz declares the following: "In the time before the War my views could have been summed up as follows … People are pigs. All talk of ethics is a fraud, meant only for the stupid. Life has no purpose except to satisfy one's hunger for food and women. There is no soul. All that matters are the necessities of life." Moreover, in a letter written to Otto Schmalhausen of 3 March 1918 Grosz advises the same content: "Nail a motto over your sty of a bed…Men are swine." Grosz's declaration suggests that the pigs tend to be associated with the representatives of the power when demonstrating their bestiality. The same identification of the powerful with

---

[199] "HERDHITZE "Here's to ... the Jews, so, Mr. Klotz!"
FATHER "But to the pigs, Mr. Herdhitze!"
HERDHITZE "As for the pigs..."
FATHER "As for the Jews or the pigs?"
[200] "C'è da capire la disperata storia di un peccatore che fa del peccato la sua santità, c'è da capire una straziante storia d'amore impossibile con uno straziante addio, c'è da capire un rapporto ambiguo e drammatico tra vecchio capitalismo e nuovo che si conclude, anche se nei toni di una poesia quasi contemplativa, con la condanna ad ambedue." / "There is to understand the desperate story of a sinner who makes sanctity of his sin, there is to understand a devastating story of an impossible love with a devastating farewell, there is to understand an ambiguous and dramatic relationship between old and new capitalism which results in, even if in the tones of an almost contemplative poem, the disapproval of both of them."

the pigs reoccurs in Pasolini: "È il potere che rende porci gli uomini, porci in senso metaforico, e devo dire, ingiusto, perché poi i personaggi più simpatici del film sono i porci veri. Essi sono innocenti" (qtd. in De Giusti 74).[201] Grosz's caricatural view serves Pasolini a filter through which the iconography of *Porcile* is constructed. In other words, Klotz and Herdhitze appear as two caricatural characters who could undoubtedly belong to Grosz's figurative world (see fig. 44-48).

Grosz and Brecht become points of reference in a cultural sense, which is manifested in Herr Klotz's words told to his wife: "I tempi di Grosz e di Brecht non sono affatto passati. E io avrei potuto benissimo essere disegnato da Grosz sotto forma di triste maiale, e tu di una triste maiala; a tavola, naturalmente. Io col sedere di una segretaria sulle ginocchia, e tu con le mani fra le gambe dell'autista. E Brecht potrebbe benissimo, buonanima, farci fare la parte dei cattivi in una pièce dove i poveri sono buoni." (*Porcile* 19)[202] Herr Klotz's admission is a reminder of the grotesque description of the bourgeoisie represented in Brecht and Grosz. In the inedited screenplay of *Porcile* there emerges the direct comparison of Herr Klotz to a pig as depicted by Grosz, however, this time the scene is set around a table:

> La sala da pranzo della villa di Godesberg. Il signor Klotz e signora siedono a tavola, stanno finendo di cenare. Il signor Klotz, vestito di scuro, mangia con evidente piacere, ma con gesti precisi, 'educati'. Un cameriere silenzioso serve a tavola e non lascia mai la stanza [...].
>
> KLOTZ: "Ma è con me o contro di me?"
>
> MADRE: "E chi lo sa?"
>
> KLOTZ: "Già: eppure non è che le cose siano tanto cambiate, dai tempi di Grosz e di Brecht. Grosz potrebbe benissimo averci disegnato: io come un grosso maiale e tu come una grossa maiala, come siamo adesso, a tavola; io col culo di una segretaria sulle ginocchia, e tu la mano dell'autista in mano. Oppure potremmo fare una parte di cattivi in una pièce di Brecht dove i poveri sono buoni. E allora non capisco: cosa aspetta Julian a ingrassare come un maiale? Cosa aspetta a fare regali ai poveri e poi a fare con loro un bel balletto tirolese? Oppure che dia del maiale a me! [...] Klotz parla

---

[201] "It is the power that makes people pigs, pigs in a metaphorical sense, and I have to say, injust because then the most appealing characters of the film are the real pigs. They are innocent."

[202] "The era of Grosz and Brecht isn't over. And I could well have been drawn by Grosz as a great pig and you like a sad sow. We would be eating, of course, me with my secretary on my lap and you with your hand between the chauffer's legs. And Brecht would have given us the parts of bad guys in a play in which the poor play the good guys."

assaporando il suo ragionamento con la stessa soddisfazione con cui assapora i cibi che mangia. Il discorso è spesso interrotto da accurate operazioni del mangiare: pelare la frutta, prendere il caffè, accendere il sigaro ecc. (*Porcile* 19-20.)[203]

At this point the pictorial quotations appear on a prevalently verbal level. While Klotz imagines himself with his wife in erotic contexts, he behaves like one of the pigs painted by Grosz in the act of eating voluptuously. This verbal visualization of Grosz's world characterizes the whole imagery of the film which is also reinforced by a dialogue between Klotz and Herdhitze:

> HERDHITZE "Ma cosa dice mai? Lei, quanto a questo, è un jet, proiettato verso l'avvenire, signor Klotz."
>
> PADRE "Mmmmmmh! Queste metafore un po' grassoccie mi fanno pensare, ahi, a Grosz." [...] (*Porcile* 49)
>
> PADRE "Ha qualche divertente storiella da raccontarmi? Devo dirle, in tal caso, che le storielle sui maiali grazie a Brecht e a Grosz le so tutte. (*Porcile* 55)[204]

A further example of a reference to Grosz can be pointed out in the discussion of the final scene of the merging party.

> KLOTZ Tu dirai che è una mania. Ma io insisto Grosz non è morto.
>
> La festa della fusione Klotz-Herdhitze ha la naturalezza di un ritorno della primavera. Spensieratezza, mio caro Herdhitze, spensieratezza! Chi dice che la religione è morta? Guarda che bel rito! Ora è mia moglie che apre le sue fauci dipinte e vi infila il bignè.

---

[203] "The dining room of the villa of Godesberg. Mr. Klotz and his wife are sitting around a table, finishing their dinner. Mr. Klotz, dressed dark, is eating with obvious pleasure, but with precise and good-mannered gestures. A silent waiter is serving the table and he never leaves the room […]
KLOTZ: "But is he with me or against me?"
MOTHER: "But who knows that?"
KLOTZ: "Sure: yet, it's not that the things have changed since Grosz's and Brecht's times. Grosz could have drawn us very well: me as a fat pig and you as a fat female pig, as we are now, at the table; me with a secretary's ass on my knees and you holding a driver's hand in your hand. Or we could interpret the role of the bad guys in a play by Brecht in which the poor are good. And then I understand: what is Julian waiting for to become as fat as a pig? What is he waiting for to give presents to the poor and then to make a beautiful Tyrolean dance with them? Or he should give some pigs to me! Klotz is speaking tasting his reasoning with the same saddisfaction with which he is tasting the food he is eating. His speech is often interrupted by accurate operations of eating: peeling the fruit, having a coffee, lighting a cigar."
[204]"HERDHITZE "But what do you mean by never? You, in these terms, are a jet cast towards the future, Mr. Klotz."
FATHER "Mmmmmmh! These slightly pudgy metaphors make me think, ay, of Grosz."
FATHER "Have you got some entertaining little story to tell me? I have to tell you, in that case, the little stories about pigs, thanks to Brecht and Grosz, I know them all."

Dio benedica l'appetito di queste nostre consorti! Germania! Quanta capacità di digerire! (*Porcile* 74)[205]

As compared to the final version realized in the film, the original screenplay was much more detailed in description and references to Grosz, alluding directly to typical Groszian elements.

KLOTZ "Tu dirai che ho la mania di Grosz, ma guarda! Guarda la signora Hollerer! Guarda! Piglia bignè, apre la bocca, e infila il bignè, lo ingoia, l'ha ingoiato! Perfetto! Adesso ride...gira la bocca verso la signora Brandt; prende un altro bignè, apre la bocca, lo inghiotte, l'ha ingoiato! Pare quasi che abbia fame: innocente fame di innocenti bignè. Ma ridi, Kulen! È un dovere! Crede che le signore si sforzino? Per loro è naturale; mangiano bignè come le scimmie dello zoo mangiano le banane: è naturale. Cioè: è la loro natura. È il gioco: loro ridono e mangiano (è sempre Grosz che mi viene in mente) io le descrivo, sono un cinico...questa è la mia natura. Non pare una festa della primavera? Dicono che la religione è morta; ma guarda che bel rito. E guarda le pettinature; e le pancie! Le pancie dei colleghi, le pancie dei tre ministri, le pance dei sedici sottosegretari. L'unico magro è il giornalista dello 'Spiegel'. La Germania; che capacità di digerire! (*Porcile* 82)[206]

When comparing the screenplay with the film, it can be concluded that Pasolini eliminated the too direct references to Grosz. For instance, the zoo monkeys, the big bellies or the hairdos make Grosz's world special, their quotation was cancelled from the final version of the screenplay. Furthermore, in this film the pictorial allusions are reduced to verbal references instead of being directly visual representations. However, on a verbal level it functions as a "leitmotif" in this work. Their function is to reflect on the the mechanisms

---

[205] "The Klotz-Herdhitze merging party has the naturalness of the return of the spring. KLOTZ You will say that it is a mania. But I insist that Grosz is not dead. Tranquillity, my dear Herdhitze, tranquility! Who says that the religion is dead? Look what a beautiful ritual. Now it is my wife who is opening her painted mouth and puts in a cream puff. God bless the appetite of our spouses. Germany! What a capacity of digestion!"

[206] "KLOTZ "You will say that I have the mania of Grosz, but look! Look at Mrs. Hollerer! Look! She takes a cream puff, opens her mouth and takes in the cream puff, she swallows it, she has swallowed it! Perfect! Now she is laughing...she is turning her mouth towards Mrs. Brandt; she takes another cream puff, she opens her mouth, she swallows it, she has swallowed it! She almost seems to be hungry: innocently hungry of innocent cream puffs. But laugh, Kulen! It is a duty! Do you believe that the ladies force themselves? For them it is a natural thing; they eat cream puff like the monkies of the zoo eat bananas: it is natural. That is, it is their nature. It is the game: they laugh and eat (it is always Grosz who comes to my mind), I describe them, I am a cynic…this is my nature. Doesn't it seem to be a spring party? Religion is said to be dead; but look what a beautiful ritual. And look at the hairdos and the bellies! The bellies of the colleagues, the bellies of the three ministers, the bellies of the sixteen undersecretaries. The only skinny person is the journalist of the "Spiegel". The Germany: what a capacity of digestion!"

and acts of the bourgeoisie, and to provide the spectators with a caricature of this social stratum in the mirror of another visual context, which is the grotesque representation of Grosz's figurative art.

<div align="center">***</div>

In conclusion, *Porcile* is a testimony of distrust in any forms of societies. This scepticism is motivated by the presumption that each society castrates the disobedients. This concept is what is conveyed through a declaration which could function as an in-a-nutshell summary of the film: "a father addresses a disobedient son: after having properly interrogated our conscience, we have decided to devour you on account of your disobedience" (qtd. in Stack 142).

All the references to art and culture in the film are determined by cynism. Hence, Julian is compared by Mrs Klotz both to Christ on the cross, and to the iconography of a Mannerist St. Sebastian. Moreover, the grotesque visual world of Grosz is what is mostly evoked in a verbal way. In addition, in this film Pasolini makes several self-references. For instance, Julian models on Odette's conditions in *Teorema*. Another link with *Teorema* is the character of the soldier killed and eaten in *Porcile* as he is the same young person who was eyed up by the father in the previous film. In addition, several elements refer to *Il Vangelo*. The most salient example is most probably the image of the man leading the woman on horseback, which models on the tableau of Joseph and Mary or the courtyard shots of the captured cannibal as they are built up to recall Christ before the Sanhedrin.

XV. THE PAINTED EFFECT IN THE *TRILOGIA DELLA VITA*: *DECAMERON* (1971), *I RACCONTI DI CANTERBURY* (*THE CANTERBURY TALES*, 1972), *I FIORI DI MILLE E UNA NOTTE* (*THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*, 1974)

After the resurrection of the mosaics of mythology in *Medea* (1969) or *Appunti per un'Orestiade Africana* (*Notes Towards an African Orestes*, 1970), we arrive at the last stage of the Pasolinian filmography: that of the adaptation and Pasolinisation of three literary opus, *Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer and *The Arabian Nights* (also known as *One Thousand and One Nights*). These films have the reputation of being Pasolini's most lightsome and less oppressive pieces with an enlarged content on human corporeality and sexuality in each. Moreover, what also links them is that they all go back to the Middle Ages, an epoch which did not experience industrialization or consumer society. This conception is confirmed by Pasolini's own declaration: "e io li ho fatti per opporre al presente consumistico un passato recentissimo dove il corpo umano e i rapporti umani erano ancora reali, benché arcaici, benché preistorici, benché rozzi, però tuttavia erano reali, e opponevano questa realtà all'irrealtà della civiltà consumistica" (Naldini 348).[207]

Stylistically speaking, the *Trilogia della vita* is the cinematic translation of theoretical and stylistic reflections dating as far back as *Comizi d'amore* when Pasolini considered the existence of psychological truth more important than logical truth. Pasolini was seeking for freedom from ideological duties, he involved himself in formalism which he had contemptuously criticized all of his life:

> *La Trilogia della vita* has been my most ambitious project, requiring from me the most intense formal attention and stylistic commitment. A political-ideological film is easy. But it is rather more difficult to make a pure film, attempting to create a pure act of narration as the classics did, keeping

---

[207] "I made them to contrast the consumerist present with a very recent past in which the human body and the human relationships were still real, even if archaic, even if pre-historic, even if rough, however, they were real and they contrasted this reality with the irreality of the consumerist civilisation."

oneself outside of ideologies while at the same time avoiding escapism. (Willemen 77)

XV.1. Visualisation in the *Trilogia della vita*

One of the most appreciable aspects of the trilogy stems from its visual world. Throughout the *Trilogia della vita*, Pasolini continually attempts to remind the viewers of preceding ways of intervening in the world. The compositional strategy of "pastiche" is maintained in the *Trilogia della vita*, and it takes the form of an insistence on medieval and Renaissance figural traditions in the case of the first two films. In the *Decameron* intertextual references are particularly made to the visual structures of Giotto and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. In *I racconti di Canterbury* one finds citations from the medieval iconographic tradition and from the paintings of Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Hieronymus Bosch. In *I fiori di mille e una notte* Persian and Rajput miniature traditions serve as the subterranean figurative models underlying the film's images, lending them a doubled quality.

In addition, similarly to the already cited *Las meninas* by Velázquez, which contains a self-portrait of the artist, the first two films of the trilogy contain a performance by Pasolini himself: in *Il Decamerone* he appears as Giotto, and in *Canterbury Tales* as Chaucer. Being a writer and a painter simultaneously, Pasolini locates cinema between these two genres. In the *Trilogia della vita* he might be closer to Giotto than to Chaucer: the fresco painter's obvious pleasure in confronting the physical realities of his art – realities embodied in oozing paints and imposing stone walls seems to echo his own desire to seize reality in a tangible way.

XV.2 *DECAMERON* (1971)

As it has been mentioned, Chaucer's and Boccaccio's world might have been chosen for their being uncontaminated by industrialization and its effects. On the other hand, both authors of the literary work belonged to the bourgeoisie but they experienced it in different ways. Whereas Boccaccio saw bourgeoisie at its triumph, Chaucer experienced more of its iniquity and corruption. At this point it is significant to note Pasolini's own comparison of these first two films of the *Trilogia della vita*. He claims that Chaucer stands astride two epochs inasmuch as there is something medieval and gothic about him and his metaphysics of death, however, on the other hand, he is already as modern as Shakespeare, Rabelais or Cervantes (*Per il cinema* 1395). According to the director, Chaucer is already a bourgeois who looks forward to the Protestant Revolution (*Per il cinema* 1396). At this point Pasolini argues that whereas Boccaccio had a clear, uncritical vision regarding the bourgeoisie, with Chaucer there emerges some extent of scepticism. Chaucer foresees all the victories and triumphs of the bourgeoisie but he also foresees its rottenness and depicts it in a moralist and ironic way. Boccaccio, instead, offers a more optimist and even idealist social description since he catches the bourgeoisie at its moment of triumph, when it was being born (*Per il cinema* 1396).

The *Decameron* narrates nine stories from Boccaccio's *Decameron*, augmented by Pasolini's own invention. Two of them (Ciappelletto and Giotto) are woven into the others, serving as a frame for the rest: I.) "Ciappelletto" (frame story): 1.) "Andreuccio" (a young man from Perugia, swindled twice in Naples but finally he becomes rich), 2.) "Masetto" (the "deaf-mute" gardener at the convent), 3.) "Peronella" (a woman who must hide her lover when her husband comes home early), 4. "Ciappelletto" (a scoundrel cheats a friar on his deathbed and becomes a saint), II. "Giotto" (frame story): 1.) "Giotto" (who arrives at Naples to paint the fresco of the Church of Santa Chiara), 2.) "Caterina" or "The Nightingale's Tale" (a young girl sleeps on the roof to meet her boyfriend at night), 3.) "Lisabetta and Lorenzo" (Sicilian brothers take revenge on their sister's borther), 4.) "Don Gianni" (a crafty priest attempts to seduce his friend's wife), 5.) Tingoccio and Meuccio (two friends try to find out if there is life after death). The film transfers the action from Tuscany to Naples and replaces Boccaccio's narrative framing structure with a different framing structure animated by elaboration on two characters drawn from the stories.

XV.2.1. Visualizing *Decameron*: pictorial motifs in Pasolini's *Decameron*

As Ricketts pointed out, a wide array of visual representations of Boccaccio's stories attest to the rich possibilities offered by the book. In addition to the illustrations in manuscripts, innumerable visual representations of Boccaccio's tale have been made, including frescoes, tapestries, painted canvases, engravings, sculptures (3). Pasolini's film also incorporates painting and elements of the written text into its version of the stories, providing therefore an opportunity to investigate the interpenetration and mutual illumination among the various media.

In order to investigate the relationship between verbal and visual art in Boccaccio's and Pasolini's *Decameron*s, it is essential to analyze the role of the painters in the two *Decameron*s and their relationship to the storytelling. In both versions the tale begins by introducing Messer Forese and Maestro Giotto as grotesque characters. The anecdote begins with a description of Giotto riding to Florence in the company of Forese, who is a renowned attorney. On the basis of their dialogues they appear as two cynical characters.

In terms of Giotto's pictorial space, Paul Watson argues in his article on Florentine painters that Boccaccio praises Giotto's mimetic ability. It is explained by Giotto's accuracy and innovation regarding his representation of people. As Watson points out, Giotto does not normally have this reputation among the art historians: "no one nowadays considers his works masterpieces of trompe l'oeil illusionism nor probably, did any of his contemporaries ("The Cement of Fiction" 51)."

The film *Decameron*'s imagery is a result of a contamination borrowed from Pasolini's previous films. The construction of "tableaux vivants" follows the path initiated in *La ricotta*, and the complementary comicality is an element repeating *Uccellacci e uccellini*.

The painted effect in Pasolini's *Decameron* is interpretable in the phenomena of referring to Giotto's real sacrality, and to the iconographic layout and sources of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting. In this way the film director presents the spectators with two contradictory methods of representation which form an antithesis. On the one hand, the realism and rationality of Bruegel is suggested through *The Combat of Lent and Carneval* (1559). On the other hand, sacrality and moral allusions are inserted through Giotto's religious and moralizing frescoes.

XV.2.2. "Perché realizzare un'opera, quando è così bello sognarla soltanto?"[208] – the dream sequence after Giotto

In the *Decameron* Giotto's influence results of the greatest significance. The affinity he experienced regarding Giotto is suggested by the analogies he created between himself and the medieval painter. In *Decameron*, he observed:

> I created a perfect analogy: I played the role of a Northern Italian artist who therefore comes from the historical Italy and goes down to Naples to paint frescoes (exactly according to this ontology of reality) on the walls of the Church of Santa Chiara. And, in fact, I am a Northern Italian from the historical part of Italy who goes to Naples to make a realistic film. Thus, there is an analogy between the character and the author…a work within a work. (*Intervista con Pier Paolo Pasolini,* "Cinemasessanta" 96)[209]

Thus, Giotto appears to be a central character of *Decameron* as he arrives to Naples to paint the frescoes of the Church of Santa Chiara. It is Pasolini himself who interprets his character throughout the film. The film's dream sequence is inspired by Giotto's *Giudizio universale* (*Last Judgement*, 1306, see fig. 49-50), as painted by Pasolini.

Pasolini's profound interest in Giotto's painting is underlined by two letters in which he explicitly refers to surveys made in the footsteps of Giotto: "Può darsi però che entro Natale rivada in Friuli, in tal caso mi fermerei da un treno all'altro a Padova (è tanto fra l'altro, che vi devo vedere Giotto: sarebbe assai bello andarci insieme)" (qtd. in Marchesini 170).[210] / "Ho tardato a risponderti perché Bassani mi ha portato con sè, con la sua macchina, a fare un delizioso giro per l'Italia centrale: Firenze, Arezzo, Assisi, Perugia, Todi, Spoleto...sulle orme di Giotto e di Piero" (qtd. in Marchesini 170)."[211] Furthermore, the proof of turning to Giotto's visual structure as a source of inspiration is underlined by the director himself: "Quello che io ho in testa come visione, come campo visivo, sono gli affreschi di Masaccio, di Giotto [...]. E non riesco a concepire immagini,

---

[208] "Why create a work of art when dreaming about it is so much sweeter?" (*Decameron* 68)
[209] Translated by Greene (186).
[210] "It might happen that until Christmas I return to Friuli, in this case I would get off the train and get on another one to Padova (as among other things, there I need to see Giotto: it would be great to go there together)." Pasolini, "A Cesare Padovani-Nogara, 24 settembre 1953", in Pasolini, *Lettere 1940-1954,* ed. N. Naldini, Einaudi, Torino 1986: 600.
[211] "I answered you late because Bassani gave me a ride and we travelled around central Italy: Florence, Arezzo, Assisi, Perugia, Todi, Spoleto…in the footsteps of Giotto and Piero." Pasolini, "A Biagio Marin – Trieste, 10 settembre 1954", in Pasolini, *Lettere 1940-1954,* ed. N. Naldini, Einaudi, Torino 1986: 680.

paesaggi, composizione di figure al di fuori di questa mia iniziale passione pittorica, trecentesca, che ha l'uomo al centro di ogni prospettiva"(*Mamma Roma* 145).[212]

In the *Decameron* a part of the iconography is dedicated to Giotto's fresco, the *Giudizio universale* (*Last Judgement* 1306), found in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua. The Pasolini-scene follows Giotto's fresco as a model, however, it also demonstrates several differences. The most evident difference is explained by the structural diversity of the two images. First of all, while Giotto angles Christ the Judge in his fresco, in Pasolini it is the Madonna who results being in the focus of the compositon. Repetto argues that in this figurative metamorphosis one can point out the Oedipal component of the Pasolinian eros (qtd. by Marchesini 166). We would, instead, argue that it has got more to do with the intention of transforming the scene as Neapolitan as possible. It is due to the fact that in the Neapolitan religiousness Madonna's figure seems to occupy a role which is more important than that of Christ. In Naples, it is generally the Madonna who is invoked instead of the Christ, and simultaneously the mother-figure is of higher significance than in the rest of the Italian culture. Our thesis is confirmed by an interview given by Pasolini in *La Stampa* in which he disavovs any special purpose of this substitution, and claims that the "tableau vivant" is a "Neapolitan version of the *Giudizio universale*…and in Naples – as you know – everyone always invokes the Madonna, not God" ("Giudizio universale alla napoletana per Pasolini").[213]

In terms of the other elements of the two visual spaces, both Christ's figure in Giotto's representation of the Last Judgement and the Madonna's figure in Pasolini's composition are surrounded by the rows of saints and angels in a relatively symmetrical way. While observing the painting, the viewer might have the impression that the saints and the angels are hanging in the space, being precisely in Heaven, whereas the composition by Pasolini is supplemented with the illusion of depth. Moreover, in both visual structures the sky neatly divides the Hell from Heaven, suggesting a straightforward vision about the unworldly existence.

A significant difference between the two visualizations can be detected in the representation of the Madonna. While in Giotto's fresco she appears with the naïve traits of a virgin, like the Madonna of Charity or the Madonna of Mercy, in Pasolini she is provided with the allusions of the "femme fatale". The Madonna of the film has decisive gestures

---

[212] "What I have in my mind as vision, as visual field are the frescoes by Masaccio, by Giotto […]. And I do not manage to conceive of images, landscapes, compositions beyond this initial passion of mine for the fourteenth century painting, which has man as a center of each perspective."

[213] Translated by Ricketts in *Visualizing Boccaccio*: 157.

and a strict look which creates anxiety in her environment, as embodied by the actress Silvana Mangano (see fig. 51). Thus, the viewer might have the impression that she acts as the judge of the ranks of the doomed who are wating to be judged at the entrance of the Hell.

In both compositions the structure of the Hell is characterized by the following quality: first there are the doomed, waiting to be judged, "guarded by devils as hairy as monkeys (*Trilogia della vita* 64)."[214] Then comes the section of those doomed who have already begun their eternity in Hell, and have more ferocious torments.

In Giotto there is a stronger emphasis on the horrendous representation of Hell than in Pasolini. For instance, the structure of the fresco is more complex and more terrifying. The resurrected are dreadfully tormented by the devils. Judas occupies the center of Giotto's Hell, whereas the representation of the Hell in the film does not emphasize or depict his character at all. Furthermore, Giotto portrays Lucifer's character as well, towering over two dragons in a large, quadripartite flame, surrounded by different forms of torture. His nude, appalling and enormous figure creates terror, which is worsened by the vision of people hanging from his lips, and the image of snakes hanging from his ears, right about to kill a woman.

In Pasolini the representation of Hell is not as sharpened and deteriorated as in Giotto (see fig. 52). First, the Hell occupies only a restricted space in the dream sequence of the film. Pasolini's Hell is not so much of a sphere of terror as the portrayals of Lucifer and Judas are not focused. In Pasolini's imagination there is a metarealistic vision according to which the Hell and Heaven are dissolved. This is reinforced by the fact that in the film Lucifer might be substituted by the Madonna who creates almost as much terror as Lucifer.

In terms of the structure of Heaven, in Giotto the Heaven is depicted as a larger sphere, containing three regions; whereas in Pasolini it only consists of two regions. In the fresco first there is the region of the angels with their emblem and flag. Their choirs fly from two sides towards the center of the picture, Christ the Judge. This region is followed by that of the saints with the Madonna and, accompanied by angels, they head towards Christ and the cross, as held by two angels. In the same region one can also point out the scene of donation, as Enrico Scrovegni offers a little model of the chapel to the Madonna. In the film, instead, Heaven only consists of two regions. The angels and the saints belong to the same region where the Madonna and the Child are found. A little more underneath,

---

[214] "sorvegliati da Diavoli pelosi come scimmie"

one can pinpoint the sphere of the cross, as held by two angels, representing always the judgement and the barrier between Heaven and Hell. Next to the cross the scene of donation is repeated in its unaltered version (see fig. 53).

All things considered, the traditional Christian iconography is significantly modified by Pasolini. When inserting the icon of the the Last Judgement in his film, he has three aims. On the one hand, he adapts the scenography to the epoch and the milieu (see Neapolitanisation). On the other hand, he endeavours to break and destroy the schematical concepts in relation to religion. Furthermore, when dedicating an elaborate visual space to the medieval representation of Hell, the imagery attempts to reflect on the political and social mechanisms that might take place in the hell of Pasolini's "present tense".

XV.2.3. A homage to Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Combat of Lent and Carnival* and *The Triumph of Death*

In addition to Giotto's most prevalent presence, it is Pieter Bruegel the Elder's iconography which forms the visual language of Pasolini's *Decameron*. It takes place within Ciappelletto's episode that in a green field cheerful scenes alternate each other, which also involve strict rituals of religious devotion, resulting in an image of a skull. It receives an immediate reaction by showing a close-up on Ciappelletto as sitting at a table with two usurers. The complete sequence is a homage to Pieter Bruegel the Elder: perky beginning, lively moments, the fraternal jokes of the peasant, echoing the rural feasts represented by the Flemish painter. At a certain point the rhythm of the visualization slows up and becomes even lugubrious, dictated by the solemn pace of the lame and the procession of the penitent, which perishes in the inane attempt of the undertakers overwhelmed by the bulk of their weight. This almost swooning rhythm switches on again during the symbolic and final liturgy of the transport of the coffin as carried out by two skeletons. This scene is cut by a shot of two men struggling to roll a large cart filled with human skulls over the lumpy meadow, an image similar to the death cart in *The Triumph of Death* (see fig. 54-61).

In terms of the citation of *The Combat of Lent and Carnival*, the center of Pasolini's image is clearly Lent who has a human skull rather than two herrings on her baking paddle. To the right we can see a group of men passed out under a round table laden with goods, an

image rather from Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Land of Cockaigne* (1567). To the left of this figure a man lies in peasant dress, passed out next to a cart in an attitude reminiscent of the man sleeping under the pear tree in Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Wheat Harvest* (1565). Directly behind Lent there is a pedestal upon which Ciappelletto's corpse will later be displayed. In the far left corner of the screen there is a circle formed by a bishop and several monks wearing white cassocks who toss a human skull around to each other playfully. The location of the group and their white cassocks recall the group of skeletons in Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Triumph of Death* (1562). Monks playing toss-the-skull appears as a reminiscent of a detail from Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Children's Games* (1560).

Pasolini precised the Bruegelian component for the Ciappelletto-episode already in the time of the interviews. For instance, in an interview given to Germinasi he declares:

> A Bolzano sceglierò altresì dei personaggi e delle figurazioni: anche qui cercherò un atipico che tuttavia sia concreto. Ho già visto delle facce stupende, sopratutto di uomini anziani, che ricordano tutto ciò che si sa del mondo poetico tedesco. Poiché, naturalmente, non ho trovato a Bolzano un 'totale' di città, la descriverò attraverso una serie di dettagli. Prenderò di peso questi dettagli dalla pittura di Brueghel, la vecchia magica crudele e un po' mostruosa vita contadina. (Germinasi)[215]

The general criterion for Pasolini's reconstructing the Bruegelian antology expects a continuous hybrid of figurative "topoi" (the lame, the games, the skulls, the hayforks) which are normally decontextualized and isolated as figurative particles, lacking in any particular narrative value.

In the contrast of Carnival and Lent the composition displays two antagonists which are often identified as the Lutheran Reformation as opposed to the Catholic Church by the art historians. For instance, it is Stridbeck who argues for the hypothesis of such an allegory: "According to this interpretation, Lent and her surroundings were intended to represent the Catholic Church and the methods employed in its struggle. If this is correct, the obese Prince Carnival and his feasting and gambling partisans must represent the opponents of the Church, the Lutheran Reformation (140)." Other critics, such as Demis,

---

[215] "In Bolzano I will choose more from characters and depictions: even here I will search for an atypical who is concrete, anyways. I have already seen marvellous faces, especially those of elder people who remind one of all what he knows of the German poetic world. Since I have not found in Bolzano a long shot of a town, I will describe it through a series of details. I will take these details from Bruegel's painting, the old, rough magic and a little bit atrocious peasant life."

see the opposition of different human morals erupting in the juxtaposition of Carnival and Lent (qtd. in Marijnissen 147).

One can discover various differences in the representation of Bruegel's and Pasolini's figure of Carnival and Lent. First, in the painting Lent is sitting on a church chair, as pulled on a cart. The character is filled with a visible sense of fatigue and agony, the impression of which is disregarded concerning Pasolini's same standing figure. In addition, in the painting Lent is wearing a hive on the head, while Carnival is having a cake as headgear on his head, alluding to the gluttony. Pasolini repeats the figurative suggestions of the extended headgear, dedicating them a less symbolic quality. However, the original two herrings on the shovel are substituted by the image of a skull on the same shovel in Pasolini. In the consecutive framing a group of friars recaptures a motif associated with Lent (that of the friar and the nun as pulling the cart), however, this image becomes contaminated by the macabre apocalypse of the *Triumph of Death* and the playful folly of *Children's Game*. The theory of the embedded content of folly in Bruegel's *Children's Game* is reinforced by the critics Gibson and Hindman as well, when affirming: "The round-eyed, unblinking gravity with which Bruegel's children pursue their games suggests that they, too, symbolize folly [...]" (Gibson 85) or "The painting uses children's games to present the folly as a characteristic feature of adolescence and manhood, as well as youth and infancy" (Hindman 449).

The image of the friars playing with a skull at a hayfork is a citation from Bruegel's *Triumph of Death*. Whereas in Bruegel the lightness of this entertainment conceals the incumbent horror, the iconic mechanism of this Pasolini-sequence is dedicated to the character formation and, therefore, to the expansion of the argument of crudity which characterizes the Nordic spirit and is also in line with the viciousness of Boccaccio's grotesque figures. The coarseness of the Nordic athmosphere appears to be in contrast with the sensuality and vividness of the Neapolitan milieu.

XV.3. *I RACCONTI DI CANTERBURY* (*THE CANTERBURY TALES*), 1972

XV.3.1. *Decameron*, "the connector"

The thematical slackness of *Decameron*, its literary dependence and its iconographical richness were all continued in its adherent pair, *The Canterbury Tales* in 1972. Apart from the well-known fact that when applying Geoffrey Chaucer's text as source, Pasolini, turns again to the genre of literary adaptation, he grooms the setting for the continuing motif of literary milieu right in the beginning. Pasolini-Chaucer is at his desk, with piles of books by Seneca, Plato, Boethius, Cato, Augustine of Hippo, Petrarca, Dante and Boccaccio which create a Renaissance scenic design. Chaucer is consulting these works, most strictly related to Boccaccio's *Decameron*, which functions as the connecting lead (frequently present element in Pasolini's cinema) between this and the previous film.

As a consequence of its literary adaptation-quality, the plot follows the Chaucer-written and Pasolini-recreated screenplay. Thus, the fabula remains that of a narrative pilgrimage as a group of pilgrims journeying to Canterbury share stories to entertain each other. The stories adapted from Chaucer come as follows: 1.) The Merchant's Tale, 2.) The Miller's Tale, 3.) The Friar'sTale, 4.) The Cook's Tale, 5.) The Reeve's Tale, 6.) The Pardoner's Tale, 7.) The Wife of Bath's Tale and 8.) The Summoner's Tale. Due to two piquancies which lie in the insertion of double-authorship (having Chaucer as a film-character as interpreted by Pasolini) in the plot and in the recreation of a picturesque iconography, *The Canterbury Tales* results in the fantasy reconstruction of Chaucer's verses.

In the motif of resurrecting *Decameron* and *The Canterbury Tales* one might point out Pasolini's belief in the revolutionary power of the ancient myths and medieval narratives. It would also explain his motivation for campaigning to save the walls of Sana'a in Yemen. This presumption is underlined by Pasolini's own remark on his fascination with the past: "Adesso preferisco muovermi nel passato proprio perché ritengo che l'unica forza contestatrice del presente sia proprio il passato: è una forma aberrante ma

tutti i valori che sono stati valori nei quali ci siamo formati, con tutte le loro atrocità, i loro lati negativi, sono quelli che possono mettere in crisi il presente" (Pasolini, *Ideologia e poetica*).[216]

XV.3.2. The Renaissance scenic design

In terms of its iconography, *I racconti di Canterbury* appears as the evocation of the Bruegelian-Boschian picturesque milieu. Both Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Hieronymus Bosch represent the Flemish Renaissance painting, the former prevalently for the satiric peasant scenes, the latter especially for the grotesque illustration of moral concepts. The film alludes several times and in numerous ways to Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Flemish Proverbs* (1559) and it concludes in an infernal imagery cited from Bosch. As a matter of fact, Pasolini's present film appears as Bruegel's *Flemish Proverbs*, thought as a long-shot and realized in its close-ups, blowing up every minute detail and finally leading the Bruegelian microcosms to a Boschian macrocosmic conclusion.

XV.3.3. Pasolini's and Bruegel's imagery in *I racconti di Canterbury*

The similarities between Pasolini's images and those by Bruegel lend the characters and the settings a doubled quality. An episode from Bruegel's painting is literally translated into the film during "The Reeve's Tale". The episode concerned is that of Alan and John, the two students who bring corn for the Miller to grind and intend to watch him to avoid him performing his job with any trickery. Upon arrival at his home, they meet the vision of the wife's and the daughter's derrières, the detail of which derives from Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Flemish Proverbs*. Its presence contributes to the poetic ambivalence of Pasolini's signifiers, and as a result, Pasolini's film appears as a mediator and a synthesis of the myths of the past. The prevalence of the "painted effect" enhances the structural dichotomy, started already with the quality of double narration: Pasolini leads

---

[216] "Now I prefer moving in the past exactly because I think that the only protesting power of the present is the past: it is an aberrant form but all the values that were values we made from, with all their atrocities and all their drawbacks, are those which can put the present into crisis."

the narrative thread in lieu of the original Chaucer. The formerly Bruegelian scenic design is adopted and Pasolinized.

In "Ricordi figurativi di Pasolini" Gérard argues that the character of the apparitor on horse is another iconographic element (see fig. 62-63). He is considered a reminiscent of the central figure of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Conversion of Paul* (1567). Although Gérard is right regarding the similarities between the dresses and the portrayal, however, we would consider such an affinity rather subjective and far-fetched as no reference in either of Pasolini's works alludes to such a connection.

XV.3.4. Infernal imagery under Hieronymus Bosch's effect

In "The Summoner's Tale" the film's imagery recalls the infernal imagery of Hieronymus Bosch's iconography along with Dante's "Inferno" and certain elements from the medieval iconographic tradition (see fig. 64-68). The scene focuses on the friars as they are gorged and excreted by the Satan. The setting is described in the screenplay as follows:

> Inferno
>
> Si aprono le porte della Città di Dite, ed ecco la luce e lo stridore dell'Inferno: un seguito di visioni…
>
> Si vede gente nel fuoco, nell'acqua bollente, nel ghiaccio, nella merda: ma sono tutti barbieri, mercanti, mugnai, venditori d'Indulgenze, signore, studenti ecc. Di frati nemmeno uno.
>
> Infine il frate si rivolge all'angelo, sua guida, e abbastanza compiaciuto.
>
> [Angelo conduce il Frate verso la buca più profonda dell'Inferno dove si trova Satanasso.
>
> […]
>
> È l'enorme culo di Satanasso: e la coda, secondo l'ordine dell'Angelo, si sta sollevando, e scoprendo il mal foro: rombando come un tuono, da questo foro scoppia un terribile peto, che scaglia nell'aer perso un branco di ventimila frati, che volano intorno per tutto l'Inferno. Poi il mal foro si

153

contrae, formando un sibilante risucchio, e i frati scagliati fuori, vi sono risucchiati dentro come un immenso sciame di api. (*Per il cinema* 1539)[217]

The organization of space and certain punishments found in the scene of *The Canterbury Tales* are reminiscent of those found in Hieronymus Bosch's *The Seven Deadly Sins or The Table of Wisdom* (c. 1500) or *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (also known as *The Millennium*, 1490-1510). The posture of Satan, and the imprisoning function of his posterior seem to be drawn from the left panel of *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* (c. 1500-1525). This final scene serves a double purpose. On the one hand, it depicts the logical end of a corrupt churchman. On the other hand, it summarizes the Parson's sanctimonious condemnation of the Seven Deadly Sins leading to the abode of the damned.

XV.4. *I FIORI DI MILLE E UNA NOTTE* (*THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*, 1974)

The contamination of visual languages appears in its mixture of Western and Oriental pictorial models. The whole plot is a complex of mosaics – this is what is reflected in the mosaics of the film's iconography. In other words, the film's narrative model follows a mosaics-like structure in which one element succeeds the other one, and one scene is inside another one. Pasolini provides the confirmation of the conscious use of this narrative technique in an interview given to Naldini: "*Le mille e una notte* sono un modello narrativo…Il narrare illimitato. Una cosa dopo l'altra, e una dentro l'altra, all'infinito" (380).[218] Therefore, this narrative presents a sequence of embedded stories, which results in embedded pictures in the visual space.

---

[217] "The doors of the City of Dis open, and here is the light and the shrieking of the Hell: a sequence of visions…
We can see people in the fire, in the boiling water, in the ice, in the shit: but they are all barbers, merchants, millers, indulgence sellers, ladies, students…etc. There is not even a friar.
Finally, the friar turns to the angel, his guide and he is very pleased.
[The Angel leads the Friar to the deepest hollow of the Hell where Satan is found […].
Satan's ass is enormous: and his tail, upon the Angel's command is lifting and revealing the asshole: rumbling like a thunder, from this hole there explodes a terrible flatulence which throws and spreads something like 20 thousand friars in the air. They fly all around the Hell. Then the asshole retracts, forming a hissing undertow, and the friars thrown out are swallowed up like a huge swarm of bees."
[218] "*The Arabian Nights* are a narrative model…Unlimited narration. One thing after the other, and one inside the other, to infinity" (Pasolini in Naldini 1989, 380, translation by Rumble in *Allegories of Contamination in the Trilogia della vita: The Case of Il fiore delle mille e una note*: 210-231).

Rumble is right when arguing that the combination of narrative structures and visual strategies offers an image of social structures (211). This thesis is explained by the fact that in the combination of narrative and visual techniques one might find homologies with social and economic structures. The pertinence of his reasoning can be explained by the fact that in *Empirismo eretico* Pasolini develops a theory of homology, or structural parallel, between models of storytelling and models of social and economic aggregation, and thus reveals an ethical dimension of style.

The presence of the allegorical representation in *I fiori di mille e una notte* is also emphasized in the works of the American novelist John Barth, who has been a central figure in Italian cultural debates related to postmodern literature. Similarly to Pasolini, Barth was drawn to the image of unlimited narration found in *The Arabian Nights*, and in *Chimera* he writes the story of his imagined visits and conversations with Sherezade and her sister Dunyazaidad.

XV.4.1. Orientalist iconography

In this film Pasolini is inspired by the imagery of the art and architecture of the Orient, and, as Pasolini's scenographer Dante Ferretti reinforces, Pasolini is especially intrigued by the art of the Oriental, Indian and Persian miniatures (Bertini 191). On the one hand, the Oriental miniatures are used as sources for costumes and architecture. On the other hand, certain distortions found in these miniatures are reconstructed in Pasolini's spatial compositions as well (see fig. 69-70).

As Brunetta has noted, such distortion (or what he calls a figural disorientation caused by the mutation of certain visual codes) is introduced into the film through Pasolini's adoption of Oriental figural models, and it is a sign of an altered address to the film spectator (Brunetta 662). The mutation Brunetta highlights has its origin in the fact that the miniatures that Pasolini translates to the screen are not in harmony with the characteristic codes of Western art. The space organization and the application of perspectives in Persian art remarkably differ from the types of perspectival cues used in Western art since the fifteenth century. In this art, as Rumble remarks, receding orthogonals are avoided, similarly to the Western tendency of foreshortening (220).

The same Rumble pointed out that Pasolini's source for the representation of Aziz and Budur appears to be the seventeenth century Rajput miniature as reproduced in the illustrations (221). In this miniature tradition the comparison of sex to a tiger hunt was a topos. Nevertheless, even at a thematic level, the image calls upon a visual literacy. The film is a reconstruction of this miniature. In addition, it is precisely this tale in which a peculiar object-language is applied by Budur to communicate with Aziz. That is, specific objects are given mysterious significance by Budur, the consequence of which Aziz is running to Aziza for the decoding of this cryptic language.

XV.4.2. The connection of visual and linguistic coding

Analogously to Pasolini's use of dialects in his other films and writing, the Oriental miniatures are visual dialects. As he reaffirms in *Scritti corsari* in 1973, "Oggi il dialetto è un mezzo per opporsi all'acculturazione. Sarà, come sempre, una battaglia perduta" (*Saggi sulla politica e sulla società* 290).[219] The use of dialect in his writing is not simply a moment of linguistic resistance. From the beginning, as it can be seen in the Friulian poems, the choice of dialect also represents Pasolini's nostalgia for the peasant culture of his childhood Friuli which is a primarily agrarian region whose rituals and rhythms of life made huge impact upon his poetic imagination. The contamination of standard Italian and regional dialects found in his later works, inspired in part by the style of plurilingualism as found in the writing of Gadda and Pascoli, is a characteristic feature of a collective style.

Thus, it can be confirmed that Pasolini carries these poetic tendencies of plurilingualism over into his films. In *Il fiore di mille e una notte* we have an analogues mixture of a standard classical cinematic language and visual languages functioning within the conventional cinematic language. The result of this innovative cinematic coding is a linguistic hybrid which is always a product of a moral hybrid. Similarly to his early poems, in the use of the Friulian dialect Pasolini formed a linguistic resistance to the standardizing culture of Fascism in the early 1940s. In consequence, the contamination of visual languages, which characterizes *Il fiore di mille e una notte* in its hybrid of Western and Oriental pictorial models, is a manifestation of an analogues resistance to what he called in

---

[219] "Today dialect provides a means to oppose acculturation. As always, it will be a lost battle."

his *Lettere luterane* the "angolo visuale" (or visual angle) of the conformist or even neofascist majority (*Saggi sulla politica e sulla società* 558). Furthermore, in *Descrizioni di descrizioni*, when confronting *Il fiore di mille e una note* with Alberto Moravia's *Un'altra vita*, Pasolini declares that the destiny of *Il fiore di mille e una notte* is that of a religious-feudal civilisation in which the people impose their attitude regarding reality upon the dominant class (*Saggi sulla letteratura e sull'arte* 1921).[220] It is precisely this religious-feudal rebellion which is expressed through the linguistic and visual contamination of the film.

<center>***</center>

In conclusion, the last stage of Pasolini's cinematographic oeuvre is the literary adaptations of *Trilogia della vita*. In the motif of resurrecting Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Arabian Nights*, Pasolini's belief in the revolutionary power of the ancient myths and the medieval narratives is demonstrated. In terms of the visual language, the compositional strategy of "pastiche" is maintained in the *Trilogia della vita*, and it takes the form of an insistence on medieval and Renaissaince figural traditions in the case of the first two films. In the *Decameron* intertextual references are made to the real sacrality of Giotto and and to the iconographic layout and sources of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting. Namely, Giotto's *Ultimo giudizio* and Bruegel's *Combat of Lent and Carneval* and *The Triumph of Death* are evoked.

In *I racconti di Canterbury* one finds citations from the medieval iconographic tradition and from the paintings of Pieter Bruegel the Elder and Hieronymus Bosch. The film alludes several times and in various ways to Bruegel's *Flemish Proverbs* and it concludes in an infernal imagery cited from Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.

In *I fiori di mille e una notte* Persian and Rajput miniature traditions serve as the figurative models underlying the film's images, lending them a doubled quality. The narrative presents a sequence of embedded stories, which results in embedded pictures in the visual space. This mosaic-like imagery is inspired by the art and architecture of the Orient. These Oriental miniatures are understood as visual dialects, and therefore, they establish a form of communication with Pasolini's literary work.

All things considered, Pasolini's film language appears to be a synthesis of the medieval and Renaissance visualisation in the *Trilogia della vita*. It aims at the destruction of the iconographical schemes, and at the revelation of the political, religious and social

---

[220] "Il «destino» de *Le mille e una notte* è quello di una civiltà religioso-feudale, in cui il popolo impone alla classe dominante, cui appartiene il narratore, il suo atteggiamento verso la realtà."

driving forces of the present context through the projections of a past iconography. Another function of the allusion to the Renaissance scenography is to reflect on the psychology of the peasant characters, and display the grotesque content of their moral concepts. Furthermore, it is also motivated by the linguistic concept of the "free indirect speech" inasmuch as the films' iconography is a visual language. If it is adapted to the addressee's (thus, the milieu's) language, it makes room for the author to enter the addressee's world. Therefore, the iconography enables the author to provide the spectator with a key to the understanding of the "syuzhet" and the problems that the films raise in global terms.

XVI. *SALÒ, O LE 120 GIORNATE DI SODOMA (SALÒ, OR THE 120 DAYS OF SODOM)*, 1975

The last step of the Pasolini oeuvre is *Salò, o le 120 giornate di Sodoma* (*Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom*) in 1975. Its screenplay was elaborated by Sergio Citti with Pupi Avati's help. Its "syuzhet" was forecast in *Teorema* considering that the guest in that film alludes to a deity who is a carrier of the annunciation of the end of the world in which the bourgeois faces, tightened in the firmness of their degradation, are the tragic masks of a historical apocalypse, the actors of a modern myth.

The "fabula" takes place in 1944 within the political climate of the Republic of Salò, the Nazi-controlled, Northern Italian state which endeavoured to oppose the Allies' progress. According to the plot, four dignitaries – a Duke, a Bishop, an Eccellenza (Chief Magistrate) and a President –, after marrying each other's daughters, organize mass arrests of youths in order to select sixteen specimens and bring them, together with guards and servants into a palace near the town of Marzabotto. This place was chosen because its population was massacred by the Nazis. In addition, the plot is supplemented by four middle-aged women: three will recount arousing stories: the fourth will accompany their narration on the piano.

While working on *Salò*, Pasolini wrote a repudiation of the *Trilogia della vita*, which prefaced the book in which their screenplays were collected and later appeared as a posthumous final column for *Corriere della sera*. These columns were collected as *Lutheran Letters*. In the repudiation it is claimed that during the first phase of the cultural and anthropological crisis which started towards the end of the sixties in which the unreality of the subculture of the mass media began to reign, the last milestone of reality seemed to be innocent bodies with the violence of their sexuality. However, as Gary Indiana suggests that entire concept has been destroyed for two reasons. First, the progressive struggle for democratization of expression and for sexual liberation has been brutally superseded and cancelled out by the decision of the consumerist power to grant a tolerance as vast as it is false. Secondly, even the reality of innocent bodies has been violated, manipulated, enslaved by the consumerist power – indeed such violence to human bodies has become "the most macroscopic fact of the new human epoch" (Indiana 28). Pasolini develops these ideas into writing that the degeneration of bodies has assumed a

retroactive character: "In effect, the bodies of the present used to portray bodies in the narrative past, corrupted as the 'present' bodies are by consumer society, means that they were already so potentially' – the naked youths in the actual past, represented by naked actors in the present, were already 'degenerated', *if they could come to exemplify degeneracy in the future* (qtd. in Indiana 29)." Furthermore, Pasolini adds that if today the present bodies are human garbage it means that they were potentially the same then; thus, "they were imbeciles forced to be adorable, solid criminals forced to be pathetic; useless, vile creatures forced to be innocent and saintly…etc." ("Abiura della Trilogia della vita", *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società* 601).[221]

The narrative is subsequently divided into four parts whose titles recall Dante's or De Sade's vision of Hell: the Anti-Hell (Anti-Inferno), the Circle of Manias (Girone delle manie), the Circle of Shit (Girone della merda), and the Circle of Blood (Girone del sangue). In the first circle of the Hell Signora Vaccari tells stories of her past encounters with sex maniacs and the four libertines often interrupt her to act out their fantasies to make philosophical comments. Signora Maggi then continues the narration in the second circle. The theme of coprophagy culminates in a dinner of excrement celebrating the President's marriage to a boy. The next circle, which centers around Signora Castelli's stories, is a prelude to the final horror, in which all the boys and girls who did not comply with the libertines' desires are tortured. The night before the judgement day, the libertines catch a guard making love to a black servant which results as the only instance of normal sexuality in the film. The tortures begin from this point as the guard and the servant are shot while the guard raises his fist in a Communist salute. Furthermore, on the final day, the pianist commits suicide by throwing herself out of a window. In the meantime, each of the libertines takes his turn as a voyeur, watching through binoculars as the other three perform the most horrible mutilations. As a final scene, and to mitigate the horror, the film ends with the image of two soldiers dancing together to a soft tune coming from the radio and airplane sounds can be heard.

---

[221] "Trilogy of Life rejected in *Lutheran Letter*s." Trans. by Stuart Hood, Manchester: Carcanet New Press 1987: 49-52

XVI.1. Literary sources for *Salò*

After the headlines of *Salò* there appears the essential bibliography of the film. It refers to the French theoreticians, such as what Pierre Klossowski, Maurice Blanchot, Philippe Sollers remarked about Sade, as well as various extracts from Simone de Beauvoir's and Roland Barthes's texts. In addition to these sources and beyond the literary basis of the film, which is Marquis the Sade's *Les Cent Vingt Journées de Sodom* (*The 120 Days of Sodom*, 1785), *Salò* also quotes Dante's "Inferno", Ezra Pound, Nitzsche, Hitler, Marcel Proust and Carl Orff. During the coffee break, the Eccellenza (Il Presidente della Corte d'Appello) recites a passage from *The Genealogy of Morals* but he ascribes it to Baudelaire. Upon the Presidente's remark that it is Nietzsche instead of Baudelaire, the Eccellenza replies that it is neither Baudelaire, nor Nietzsche, nor is it St. Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*: it is Dada (*Per il cinema* 2043).[222] In this verbal chaos there is a slight fight among the authorities for the choice of the right name and title, which signifies a verbal contest for dominance and power.

The idea of multiple narratives is inspired by Sade's work. However, in the original *The 120 Days of Sodom*, Sade presents four narrators and each of them tells short episodes for the amusement of the four libertines and their prisoners: five stories every day for 120 days. Sade elaborated thirty cases in details, leaving schematic drafts for the rest, and he specified that thirty of the victims need to be massacred, divided into different categories.

The symbolic system applied in Sade by Pasolini to illustrate his subject was found through Barthes. What is intended by this is the application of the idea that once the language of the power in Italy is corrupt, the degradation resulted in the reification of the body and the interpretation of sexuality as the symbol of power. The Italians' silence in the face of the hegemony of consumerism is analogous to the victims' silence in Sade. At this point, it is necessary to quote Pasolini who in the interview given to Naldini underlines this hypothesis: "Fatto sta che qui il sesso […] è diventato la metafora di quella che Marx chiama la merceficazione del corpo, l'alienazione del corpo. Quello che ha fatto Hitler

---

[222] "**Il Presidente della Corte d'Appello:** Il principio di ogni grandezza sulla terra è stato totalmente e lungamente inzuppato di sangue e ancora — amici miei — se la memoria non mi tradisce — sì è così: senza spargimento di sangue non si dà perdono... senza spargimento di sangue! Baudelaire... **Il Presidente Curval**: Spiacente eccellenza, ma devo farle notare che il testo da lei recitato non è Baudelaire, bensì Nietzsche ed è tratto precisamente da *"Zur Genealogie der Moral"*. **Il Presidente della Corte d'Appello**: No, non si tratta di Baudelaire, né di Nietzsche, né eventualmente di San Paolo – "Lettera ai romani." *C'est* du Dadà."

brutalmente, cioè uccidendo, distruggendo i corpi, la civiltà consumistica l'ha fatto sul piano culturale, ma in realtà è la stessa cosa. (406)."[223]

The final scene of *Salò* is a Poundian end inasmuch as it offers a fragmentary citation from Ezra Pound's *Canto XCIX*. It is the same Canto which was partially applied in a theatre piece entitled *Bestia da stile* as well:

> Disordini e baruffe, anche maneschi e
>
> tutta la famiglia ci rimette.
>
> Una stirpe sorge da uno solo,
>
> come pensare diverso?
>
> Il cognome, le nove arti.
>
> La parola paterna è compassione
>
> filiale, devozione;
>
> la fraterna, mutualità.
>
> Del tosatel la parola è rispetto.
>
> Uccelletti cinguettano in coro,
>
> la proporzione dei rami armonizza
>
> come chiarezza (chao) (*Per il cinema* 2060).[224]

Its role is of early origin which goes back to Pasolini's relationship with Pound. It is well known that Pasolini did not only appreciate Pound's poetry but he also went to New York in 1967 to make an interview with him for "Incontri della RAI", edited by Vanni Ronsisvalle. This quoted Canto alludes to a Confucian ideal of a harmonious state organized under the principle of *shu* or reciprocity. Therefore, the function of this Canto is to counterpoint the ongoing horror since the Confucian ideology on a state construction might well appear the complete opposite of what the final frames suggest.

---

[223] "The fact is that here sex […] became the metaphor of what Marx called the commercialization of the body, the alienation of the body. What Hitler did brutally, thus killing, destroying the bodies, the consumerist civilization did it on the cultural level, but in reality it is the same thing."

[224] "The whole tribe is from one man's body, / What other way can you think of it? / The surname and the 9 arts. / The father's word is compassion; / The son's, filiality. / The brother's word: mutuality; / The younger's word: deference. / Small birds sing in chorus, / Harmony is in the proportion of the branches / as clairity (chao)."

XVI.2. Iconography in *Salò*

The walls of the villa where the plot takes place (the walls of the Hell) are decorated with the paintings of the historical avant-gardes which are mainly Futurist and Formalist works, such as paintings by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni or Carlo Carrà. Similarly to De Sade's novel, which is the film's model, the beauty of the young victims was compared to the Classicist norms and especially to the reproductions of Fernand Léger. Pasolini applies Léger's technical experience, his monumentality, stylistic expansion and a certain level of distortion and frustration on his own screen. This Légerian, avant-garde concept of the iconography is reinforced by the film's scenic designer, Dario Ferretti:

> Ecco, *Salò*…Posso dire, senza tema di smentite, che è proprio lavoro mio, tutto quanto. Sì, abbiamo parlato dello stile, abbiamo scelto insieme i quadri, mi ha portato dei libri sul Futurismo […] Doveva essere tutto molto preciso; lampadari, appliques, specchi, tappeti, quadri, mobili. C'era una stanza con due Léger, e un boudoire. Quel boudoire non era altro che una decorazione da bar su cui abbiamo messo le figure di Léger. È stata un'idea sua di usare le figure di Léger, era una idea folle, ma data la follia di tutta la situazione. (Bertini 192-3)[225]

The film operates with a wide range of intertextual and intervisual references. The most visible sources are the allusions to Giotto, the Mannerist painting, Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* and De Chirico's or Picasso's geometry. In one of the first scenes, which takes place in the Orgy Room, one can observe the presence of a painting, representing Madonna with the Child, which appears in contrast with the figure of one of the narrators, Signora Maggi. The presence of the icon remains subliminal to the comfort of the prisoners. Its vanish coincides with a short, blasphemous and antitheist poem by de Sade, entitled "La vérité" ("The Truth") in which he enhances the disorder of sacred impulses: "There is nothing sacred: in this universe everything / has to bend at the yoke of our impetuous deviations." The appearance of the Madonna on the sumptuous

---

[225] "So, as for *Salò*, I can say, without any fear of contradiction, that it is completely my work. Yes, we spoke about the style, we chose the pictures together, he brought me some books on Futurism. […] Everything had to be very precise; chandeliers, appliques, mirrors, carpets, pictures, furniture. There was a room with two paintings by Léger, and a boudoir. That boudoir was nothing else but a bar decoration on which we put Léger's figures. It was an idea of his to use Léger's figures, it was a lunatic idea but filled with insanity of the whole situation."

golden tapestry as surrounded by the hierarchy of the saints and two kneeling angels, in this rather infernal context suggests the contribution of the religion to the shaping of the history of society and cultures.

XVI.2.1. Traces of Futurism, Cubism and Dada

It is evidently the avant-garde that serves Pasolini to define the cultural texture of his Sadian-Fascist project. In the Art Déco rooms the Futurist, Cubist instances are only imitations and they represent Pasolini's anti-cultural rephrasing of art. One of the most prevalent Futurist effects is linked with Giacomo Balla's pictorial presence. As in 1912 Balla goes to Düsseldorf to decorate the interior of the Loewenstein villa, a study entitled *Finestra di Düsseldorf* (*Window in Düsseldorf*, 1912), exposing binoculars on a windowsill, keeps the memory of this visit. This image creates a bridge with the basic sequence of the film as it summarizes the images and objects of the epilogue of the tortures as watched from the room of the Signori (Seq28, see fig. 71-72). The parallel derives from the fact that the Signori in the film, standing in front of a window invaded by light, also utilize binoculars, identical with those illustrated by Balla. In addition to Balla's visual presence, other Futurist influences can be traced through the sporadic flashes of Umberto Boccioni's *Elasticità* (*Elasticity,* 1912, see fig. 73), *Costruzione spiralica* (*Spiral Construction*, 1913, see fig. 74) or *Carica di lancieri* (*The Charge of the Lancers*, 1915, see fig. 75) in seq. 18 (see fig. 81-82). Boccioni also works on landscapes, such as *Le periferie* (*The Suburbs*, 1909), and those pictures which belong to this category reveal some affinity with the initial panorama of the rural raking of the young victims in *Salò* (seq. 2.1).

In addition to the Futurist sources, the most dominant influence is that of Fernand Léger. The paintings cited from his oeuvre are *Nus dans la foret* (*Nudes in the Forest*, 1909, see fig. 76), *Contraste de formes* (*Contrast of Forms*, 1913, see fig. 77) and *La partie des cartes* (*The Card Party*, 1917, see fig. 78) in the sequences 18.1 – 28.1. The painted murals imitate such works as *Le grand déjeuner* (*Three Women*, 1921, see fig. 79) in seq. 13.1, *La lecture* (*The Reader*, 1924, see fig. 80) in seq. 24.1 and *Composition aux deux perroquets* (*Composition with the Two Parrots*, 1937) in seq. 18.1 (see fig. 83-84).

Futurism and Cubism appear in *Salò* with their intrepidity in terms of colourisation (see fig. 85-89). In addition, its representation of deformed and disproportionate human figures is also translated into Pasolini's visualisation in the forms of a certain Baroque-like gestural expressiveness. The caricatural and grotesque deformation that characterizes the bourgeois faces might be an interpretation of the Groszian concept. The obtuse vision of mercantilism is often stultified by George Grosz in his representation of the bourgeois. For instance, this is the case in *Die Räuber* (1922, see fig. 90) in which the obtuseness of the German bourgeoisie is made ridiculous. This visual Groszianism is in line with Pasolini's focus in terms of the portrayal of the four leaders.

XVI.2.2. Mannerist instances in *Salò*
XVI.2.2.1. Hieronymus Bosch and *The Garden of Earthly Delights*

As claimed in the previous chapter about *The Canterbury Tales*, the way Pasolini perceives the vision of Hell is parallel to how it was depicted by Hieronymus Bosch. The most prevalent iconographic reference is Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (1503, see fig. 65), about which Ernst Gombrich wrote an extraordinary and witty essay ("Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights: A Progress Report").

The Triptych can be considered as the allegoric representation of the primordial and pre-linguistic bestiality of man, which was nourished by the Biblical citation of Genesis 6: 11-13. The similarities between this picture and the last scene of *Salò* are numerous and eye-catching. First of all, Bosch's painting is a triptych which is analogous to the presence of the Signori who are also in three and take turns to look in the binoculars. The triptych, which is closed in its casket shape, displays two parts of sphere, divided into two perfect halves. Therefore it has an identical structure with the binoculars from which the executioners are watching. According to Gombrich the central image represents humanity before the flood: that is, in a period of time in which the world was not governed by any laws and exactly this is why God was obliged to remedy this state by means of the flood. The Genesis testifies these pre-flood conditions: "So God said to Noah, I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both of them and the earth (*Genesis* 6: 13)." The circumstances in *Salò* are highly analogous to these pre-flood circumstances described in the Bible.

The importance of the flood can be caught in the fact that it was not sent by God to destroy the earth but to clean it and recreate it, filling it with a sense of sin where it had been missing previously. Bosch's painting illustrates nude men and women floating in a proscenium of fruits and animals: they all eat and nourish themselves in the same way, even the portrayals have the same proportions. Furthermore, Bosch's pre-flood vision narrates about a place where people and animals were not separate yet and were feeding on giant fruits. In the picture there are no references to the viciousness of that world, the emphasis is on the undistinguished status of humans and animals, instead. In contrast, the film stresses this pre-flood wickedness of humanity and in addition to that, it reflects on another passage of *The Genesis*: "My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years (Genesis 6:1-4)."

The vision of bestiality in the pre-language state is not different for Bosch and Pasolini. In the former case it is about a joyous vision as it is deliberately provocative: the key elements are identified with the state of liberty, the absence and the invisibility of the sin. In Pasolini's case the interpretation is silent (as if there were no adjectives), similarly to the Sadian understanding. The written version of Sade follows a language which according to Bataille represents only violence since violence consists merely of stimulus, it acts instead of being expressed in words (De Paolis 162). Pasolini retraces this Sadian language which stimulates the violence, however, he supplements it with Bosch's vision. It is the final scene in *Salò* where by means of the binoculars the different forms of violence and torture are isolated, and these single and scattered moments appear as puzzle pieces from the canvas of *The Garden of Earthly Delights.* Sade, similarly to Pasolini uses the language to demolish its rules, distorts the words, rendering them almost mathematical indicators, making them objective and impersonal. Pasolini encodes Bosch's visual and Sade's verbal languages and digits them in his own imagery which is reflected in the projections.

XVI.2.2.2. Bruegelian effects in *Salò*

In addition to Bosch's influence and remaining within the traces of Mannerism, another thought-provoking coincidence is the visual connection with Pieter Bruegel's painting. The grotesque human gestures, the bizarre representation of frenzy or the

macabre spectacularity of death are recurring motifs in Bruegel and appear to return as flashes in Pasolini's *Salò*. For instance, in the film art and funeral coincide with each other in the scene of the ritual and ceremony which is defined in the epilogue of the tortures in a concluding way:

> Where Nietzsche contrasts the art of the image (apollinee) with the art of the feast (Dionysian) Warburg replies – recalling Burckhardt – that the art of the image are anthropologically inseparable from the art of the feast: the intermezzos, the triumphal entrances, the Pagan and devoted representations, all these manifestations of the human action (Handlung) constituted for Warburg the picture from which the pictorial forms gained sense […]. Furthermore, Nietzsche writes that the Greek tragedy, in its most ancient form had as subject only the sorrows of Dionysius. And the sorrows are: battles, animality, slaughtering, masks and metamorphoses (Didi-Hubermann 139-140, 143).

Therefore, through Bruegel the Apollonian and the Dionysian elements combine in the scenes of rite and ceremony of *Salò*. This motif is a gesture of resurrection of the ancient myths, which is a recurring element of Pasolini's filmography. They offer a source of inspiration in contrast with the industrialized and bourgeois world. Thereby they might be able to visualize the aesthetical layer of beauty parallel to the ongoing brutalities.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

In conclusion, Pasolini's last film, the *Salò* is a portrayal of the Fascist dictatorship as it takes place in 1944 within the political climate of the Republic of Salò, the Nazi-controlled, Italian state. Its "syuzhet" is concerned with the degradation of the body and the consequent interpretation of sexuality as the symbol of power. It is interwoven with various literary references, such as Marquis the Sade's *Les Cent Vingt Journées de Sodom* Pierre Klossowski, Maurice Blanchot, Philippe Sollers and extracts from Simone de Beauvoir's and Roland Barthes's texts. In addition to these sources, *Salò* also quotes Dante's "Inferno", Ezra Pound, Nitzsche, Hitler, Marcel Proust and Carl Orff. In terms of the visual language, it also appears as a mosaic-like structure. The walls of the villa where the plot takes place (are decorated by the paintings of the historical avant-gardes which are mainly Futurist and Formalist works, such as paintings by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni or Carlo Carrà. In addition to the Futurist sources, the most dominant influence is that of Fernand Léger. Pasolini applies Léger's technical experience, monumentality, and a certain level of distortion on his own screen. The caricatural and grotesque deformation

that describes the bourgeois characters in *Salò* might be an interpretation of the Groszian concept of the bourgeoisie. Furthermore, Pasolini also encodes Giotto's and Hieronymus Bosch's visual languages and digits them in his own imagery.

All things considered, the elements of the figurative arts represent mosaic pieces of the visual language, and as such, they offer a key to the understanding of the "syuzhet" and the mechanisms of the horror. The Futurist, Cubist and Formalist paintings appear as reflections on the deformation of the body which becomes an element at the mercy of the power. The distorted bodies of the contemporary painting refer to a deformed psyche, as a consequence of defencelessness experienced in every dictature. Thus, the Futurist and Cubist distorted figures allude to the psychology of Fascism and this is the point where the iconography contributes to the understanding of the deep layer of the film. In addition, the grotesque humour is involved in the film through the references to Grosz which serve the aim of ridiculing the bourgeoisie with the final scope of dissolving the horror. Furthermore, Bosch's triptych offers a visual summary of the problems that the film discusses. This tableau functions similarly to "Prezi" where by clicking on the single items, the separate problems become visible and enlarged, the ensemble of which facilitates the understanding of the general theme. Therefore, the iconography contributes to the revelation of the "syuzhet" as it is a visual reflection on the inner mechanisms that take place socially, politically and psychologically.

XVII. CONCLUSION

I. The dissertation has pointed out that contamination is the principal figure of speech through which the aesthetical quality of Pasolini's films is deciphered. It consists in the mixture of various cinematic, visual and spoken languages on an aesthetical level. Therefore, in terms of Pasolini's cinema, we can talk about the contaminations of literature, music, painting and film, and the encounter between the different layers of the spoken language. As a result, the paper has arrived at the conclusion that Pasolini's film language is an innovative cinematic coding as well as a linguistic hybrid.

II. The dissertation has traced all the citations of painting in relation to Pasolini's complete cinematography. The paper states that the iconography of Pasolini's cinema was most prevalently influenced by Giotto, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca, Caravaggio, the Mannerism, and the elements of the contemporary (Futurist, Formalist, Cubist) painting. Their impact upon Pasolini's cinema is detectable either in the realisation of a fresco (that is, in the phenomenon of the so-called "tableaux vivants") or in the insertation of an image in the film language (identified as the motif of the "painted effect" by Antonio Costa). Through the presentation of this latter phenomenon, that of the "painted effect", the dissertation has shed light on the ways that the iconic, intervisual representation is able to take part in the film language and it has investigated how the iconography is able to contribute to the elaboration of the "syuzhet" and to the character representation. Pasolini's first films follow the path of the Italian Neorealism, although they open a new course from this already begun path. While the Neorealist films aimed at the documentarist reproduction of the reality with the precision of photography, Pasolini's cinematographic debut renew the Italian film history insofar as it added the elements of poetry and the analysis of the psychological processes into the film language which still aimed at the authentic reproduction of the reality. This is the point where Pasolini brings a new approach to the Italian film history, and simultaneously, this is the point where an iconographical approach is able to provide the research of Pasolini's oeuvre with new results.

III. Based on the analyses of the single films, it can be concluded that Pasolini's cinema is an attempt for the minimalization of verbalization and the maximalization

169

of visualization. In other words, in this cinema it is not the word but the imagery that conveys the deeper significance, the "syuzhet". It is a cinematographic concept which departs from Christian Metz's idea stating that cinema is a "language" without a "langue", that is, a language without a code (*A Semiotics of the Cinema* 21). This theory is applicable to Pasolini's cinema inasmuch as in his films the verbal communication-interaction between the characters is minimalized. What is further developed in this thesis by Pasolini is the fact that his filmic "langue" is not only deprived of a "language" but it is also a code which returns to the communicative archetypes. In other words, Pasolini's film language appears as one without a real basis, a code exempt from a communicative logic. However, as cinema is a channel of communication, we need to suppose that it is based on such "natural communicative archetypes" as motion, sounds and a visual sign system. By motion we mean the body language, the gestures and the mimicry of the diction. The sounds include their presence in the form of poetry, musical citations or compositions made directly for the given topic. However, they are also meant by their lack in the form of silence or the problem of the inability of communication. This is what takes place in *Medea* or *Teorema* where silence is the channel of communication. Moreover, Pasolini's film language is a prevalently visual texture which communicates through visual signs, such as the visual metonym of the desert in *Edipo re* (*Oidipus rex*, 1967) and *Porcile* (*Pigsty* 1969), that of the space in *Teorema* (1968). In consequence, it is stated that Pasolini's film language is an objective, impersonal and deformed "language", similar to the mathematical coding, in which visual signs validate the communication in lieu of verbality.

IV. The dissertation also constates that the application of the natural communicative archetypes and the tendency to return to the myths and the archaic rites create the cinema of poetry in Pasolini. This cinema is based on the production of a complex world of significant images. These pictures derive from the environment through the practice of gestures or from the memories of personal experience or from the evocation of images which were created by others. This latter experience has been identified as the visual solution of inserting a painting in a film and rendering it a part of the new visual context. This is the phenomenon which defines the poetry of the film's deep structure and it manifests itself in the form of an expressive violence and an oniric physicity. Therefore, the bases of this film language are constituted by irrationality, oniric and elementary qualities, poetry and an antinarrative tendency.

As a result, Pasolini's cinema appears as a mythic hypnosis which is superior to the narrative process.

V. A further conclusion of the iconographic investigation is that the linguistic technique that Pasolini called "free indirect speech" in *Empirismo eretico* is applicable to Pasolini's cinema as well. When Pasolini investigated the element of the "free indirect speech" in terms of Dante's poetry, he referred to two observations. One is the phenomenon of "plurilingualism", which means the co-presence of various linguistic variations, such as slang, jargon, dialects in the same text. The other remark concerned with the application of the elements of spontaneous speech. Pasolini dedicated two studies to the analysis of this stylistic and linguistic model, as a reaction to Gyula Herczeg's book entitled *Lo stile indiretto italiano*: *La volontà di Dante a essere poeta* (*Dante's Poetic Intention*) and *La mala mimesi* (*The bad mimesi*) which were later published in *Empirismo eretico*. On the basis of these studies we conclude that the technique of "free indirect speech" is adaptable to Pasolini's cinema by altering the term "free indirect speech" to "free indirect subject". By doing so, we can prove that the "free indirect subject", thus the subjective and lyrical self of the author is able to enter the narrative structure of the film and it is capable of identifying with the characters's inner processes both at a psychological and a linguistic level. This psychological identification with the characters is facilitated through the application of the pictorial allusions, thus, through the phenomenon whose analysis constitutes the focus of the present study. This is what appears as one of the most significant results of this study as we have proved that through the analysis of the iconographical elements we might gain a better understanding of the psychological mechanisms of the film characters. Therefore, the iconography in Pasolini's cinema is a part of the film language and the pictorial allusions appear as its organic elements. They result being a means of communication by the help of which the human experiences can be better understood.

VI. Concludingly, we can claim that the elements of iconography are attributed with three major functions. First of all, they desacralize the sacred and sacralise the everyday, simple contents. Regarding this function, the phenomena of the technical sacredness is observed. It means that the simplicity and the humbleness of the characters are ennobled and sacralised through the allusions of classical music, Christian icons and literary references. This thesis was proved by the analysis of the

socially concerned *Accattone*, *Mamma Roma* and *La ricotta*. Through the analyses of these films it has been observed that the "sacred" is only a technique which has an aesthetical function inasmuch as it dissolves the cruelty of reality with the sublimeness of irreality.

As a second function of the elements of iconography, we have pinpointed that they render the topic more apparent in a physical sense. From this point of view, we have made clear that the dramatic circumstances and the calvary of the characters are made explicit by the picturesque and musical references. As a third function of the elements of iconography, they reflect on the psychological cycles of Pasolini's film characters. It means that the cited images and the icons serve as mirrors in the film which reflect on the inner mechanisms of the characters. From this point of view, it can be concluded that Pasolini's film characters have generally no real personalities; and they are the reflections of the author's intentions and coding, instead. In consequence, the elements of iconography are frequently the visual and objective projections of the author's ideology.

XVIII. ILLUSTRATIONS

V. *Accattone*, 1961

V.2. Pasolini and Masaccio

Fig. 1. Masaccio. *Raising of the Son of Teophilus and St. Peter Enthroned.* Detail in black and white. 1425-1425. Fresco. Cappella Brancacci, Florence. *Wikimedia.* Web. 11 August 2014. <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 2. Masaccio. *St. Peter Healing the Sick with his Shadow*. Detail in black and white. 1425-1427. Fresco. Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence. *Wikiart.* Web. 11 August 2014. < http://www.wikiart.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 3. Masaccio. *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden.* Detail in black and white. 1424-1425. Fresco. Cappella Brancacci, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence. *Wikipedia.* Web. 11 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 4. The realistic representation in *Accattone*. VLC snaphot.

V.3. *Accattone* and Morandi

Fig. 5. Morandi, Giorgio. *Natura morta*. 1929. Oil on canvas. Mart, Rovereto. *Museo di Arte Moderna Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.* Museo di Arte Moderna Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. Web. 11 Aug 2014. Digital image.

Fig. 6. Stella among the piles of bottles in *Accattone*. VLC snapshot.

VI. *Mamma Roma*, **1962**

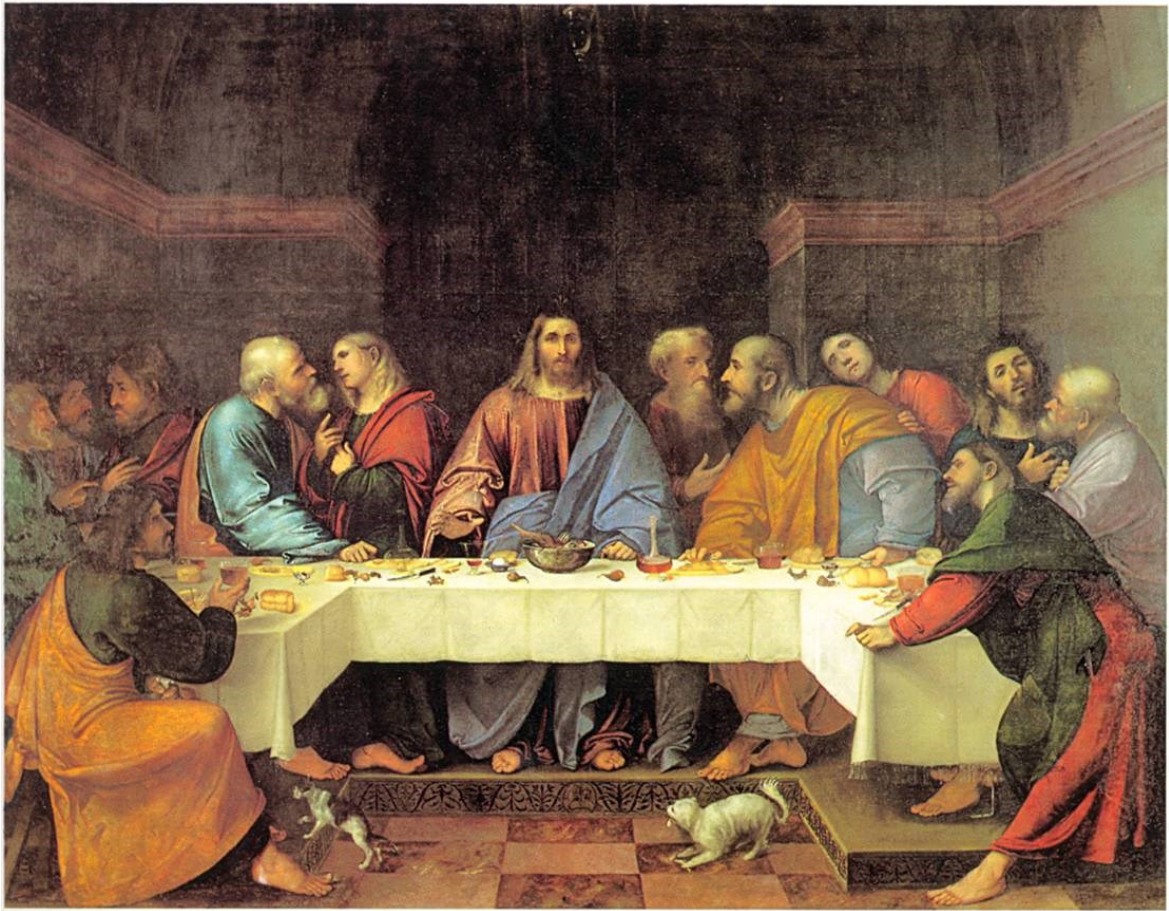VI.2.1. The motif of the Last Supper

Fig. 7. Romanino, Girolamo. *Last Supper*. 1513. Oil on canvas. Musei civici, Padova. *Artericerca*. Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://www.artericerca.com/>. Digital image.

Fig. 8. The presence of the animals at the banquet scene. VLC snapshot.

VI.2.2. Caravaggio's effects

Fig. 9. Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da. *Boy with a Basket of Fruit*. 1599. Oil on canvas. Galleria Borghese, Rome. *Galleria Borghese*. Galleria Borghese. Web. 11 Aug 2014. Digital image.

Fig. 10. Ettore with a bowl of fruits. VLC snapshot.

VI.2.3. The motif of the Dead Christ

Fig. 11. Masaccio. *Trinità*. 1426-28. Fresco. Chiesa di Santa Maria Novella, Florence. *Fondazione Zeri*. Web. 11 Aug 2014. <http://www.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/>. Digital image.

Fig. 12. Ettore on the psychiatric bed. VLC snapshot.

VII. *La ricotta*, 1963

VII.1. Picturesque citations: the role of Mannerism in *La ricotta*

Fig. 13. Pontormo. *Deposition*. 1525-28. Oil on panel. Church of Santa Felicità, Florence.
Wikipedia. Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 14. Pontormo's *Deposition* in *La ricotta*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 15. Rosso Fiorentino. *Deposition*. 1521. Oil on wood. Pinacoteca Comunale, Volterra. *Pinacoteca e Museo Civico di Volterra*. Pinacoteca e Museo Civico di Volterra. Web. 11 Aug 2014. Digital image.

Fig. 16. Rosso Fiorentino's *Deposition* in *La ricotta*. VLC snapshot.

VIII. *La rabbia*, **1963**

VIII.2.1. References to Ben Shan's art

Fig. 17. Shahn, Ben. *East 12th Street*. 1947. Private Collection, Los Angeles. *My Free Wallpapers.* Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://www.myfreewallpapers.net/>. Digital image.

VIII.2.2. References to George Grosz's art

Fig. 18. Grosz, George. *The Walk*. 1922. Watercolour on paper. Private collection. *Stock Photo*. Web. 11 Aug 2014. < https://www.superstock.com>. Digital image.

VIII. 2.3. Jean Fautrier's paintings on screen

Fig. 19. Fautrier, Jean. *Tête d'Otage.* 1944. Tempera. Centre Pompidou, Paris. *Appunti di Storia dell'arte.* Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://appuntidistoriadellarte.blogspot.it/>. Digital image.

VIII.2.4. Citations from Renato Guttuso

Fig. 20. Guttuso, Renato. *The Crucifixion*. 1941. Oil on canvas. Private collection, Rome. *Letteratu*. Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://www.letteratu.it/>. Digital image.

Fig. 21. Guttuso, Renato. *Shooting of patriots.* 1945. Oil on canvas. *Renato Guttuso e i suoi colori.* Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://blog.libero.it/quarantangelo>. Digital image.

VIII. 2.5. Pontormo's, Georges Braque's and Jackson Pollock's effects

Fig. 22. Braque, Georges. *Jug and Violin*. 1910. Oil on canvas. Kunstmuseum, Basel. *Wikiart.* Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://www.wikiart.org/>. Digital image.

X.   *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*, 1964

X.1.2. Piero della Francesca's role in *Il Vangelo*

Fig. 23. Piero della Francesca. *Madonna del parto*. 1459–1467. Fresco. Chapel of the cemetery, Monterchi. *Beni culturali*. Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://www.beniculturali.it/>. Digital image.

Fig. 24. Mary in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 25. Piero della Francesca. *Battle between Heraclius and Chosroes*. Detail.
From *The History of the True Cross*. c. 1455–1466. Frescoes, San Francesco, Arezzo.
Wikipedia. Web. 11 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 26. The priests in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo.* VLC snapshot.

X.1.3. Botticelli's and Filippo Lippi's figures in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*

Fig. 27. Botticelli, Sandro. *Allegory of Spring*. c. 1482. Tempera on panel. Uffizi Gallery, Florence. *Uffizi Gallery*. Uffizi Gallery. Web. 11 Aug 2014.

Fig. 28. Lippi, Filippo. *The Feast of Herod: Salome's Dance*. 1464. Fresco. Cappella Maggiore, Duomo, Prato. *Wikipedia*. Web. 11 Aug 2014.
< http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filippo_Lippi>. Digital image.

Fig. 29. Salomè's dance in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 30. Salomè's dance in *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*. Detail. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 31. Velázquez, Diego. *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Balthasar Charles*. 1635. Oil on canvas. Prado, Madrid. *Wikipedia*. Web. 11 Aug 2014. < http://en.wikipedia.org>. Digital image.

Fig. 32. At the engineer's villa in *Uccellacci e uccellini*. VLC snapshot.

XII.   *Che cosa sono le nuvole?*, 1968

Fig. 33. Velázquez, Diego. *The Jester Don Diego de Acedo*. 1645. Oil on canvas. Museo del Prado, Madrid. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. < http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 34. *The Jester Don Diego de Acedo* in *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* VLC snaphot.

Fig. 35. Velázquez, Diego. *Portrait of Philip IV*. 1644. Oil on canvas. Frick Collection, New York. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. < http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 36. Velázquez, Diego. *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf*. 1631. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 37. *Portrait of Philip IV*. and *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf* in *Che cosa sono le nuvole?* VLC snaphot.

Fig. 38. Velázquez, Diego. *Las Meninas*. 1656. Oil on canvas. Museo del Prado, Madrid.
Museo Nacional del Prado. Museo Nacional del Prado. Web. 12 Aug 2014. Digital image.

Fig. 39. *Las Meninas* in *Che cosa sono le nuvole*? VLC snapshot.

Fig. 40. Bacon, Francis. *Two Figures in the Grass*. 1954. Private Collection, Paris. *Queer Arts Resource*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://www.queer-arts.org/>. Digital image.
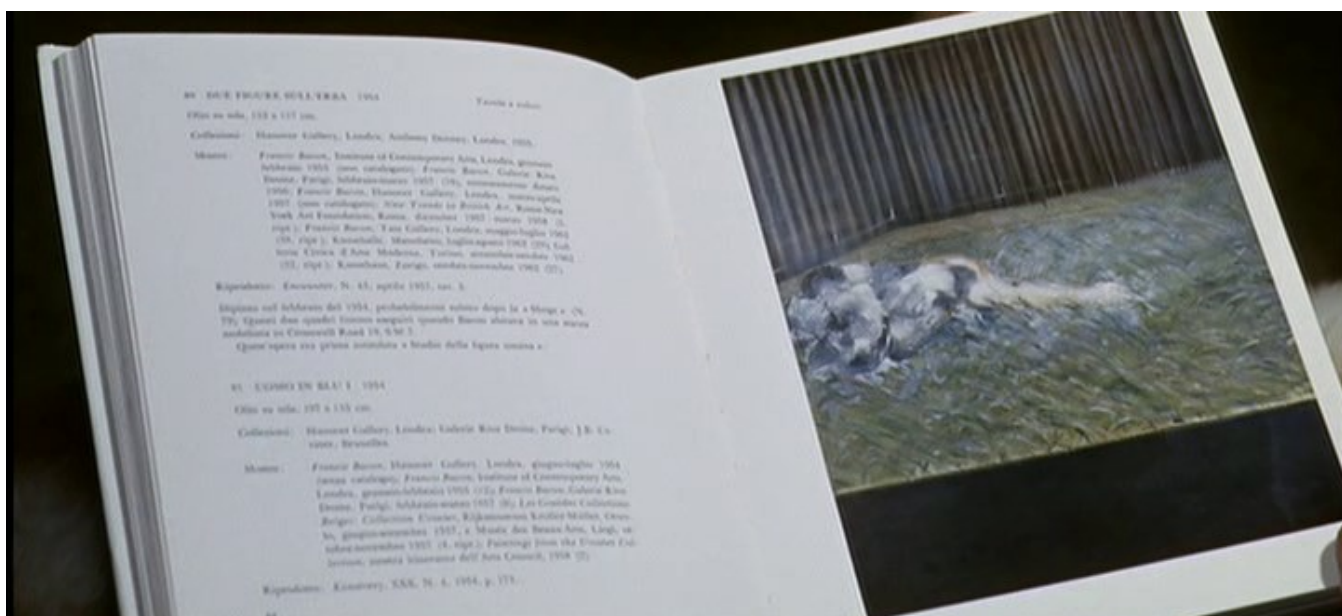

Fig. 41. Francis Bacon's *Two Figures in the Grass* in *Teorema*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 42. Bacon, Francis. *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*. 1944. Oil paint and pastel. Tate Gallery, London. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 43. Francis Bacon's *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* in *Teorema*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 44. Grosz, George. *Eclipse of the Sun*. 1926. Oil on canvas. Heckscher Museum of Art, New York. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. < http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 45. Verbal reference to George Grosz in *Porcile*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 46. The caricatural characters in *Porcile*, evoking Grosz's figurative world. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 47. The last scene in *Porcile*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 48. The caricatured version of the last scene, on the basis of which the cinema poster was made. *Daring to do.* Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://www.daringtodo.com/>. Digital image.

XV.   The painted effect in the *Trilogia della vita*: *Decameron* (1971), *I racconti di Canterbury* (*The Canterbury Tales*, 1972), *I fiori di mille e una notte* (*The Arabian Nights*, 1974)

XV.2. *Decameron*, 1971

XV.2.2. "Perché realizzare un'opera, quando è così bello sognarla soltanto?" – the dream sequence after Giotto

Fig. 49. Giotto. *Last Judgement*. 1306. Fresco. Cappella Scrovegni, Padova. *Wikipedia.* Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 50. The dream sequence in *Decameron*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 51. The Madonna (Silvana Mangano) in the dream sequence. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 52. The representation of Hell in *Decameron*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 53. The scene of donation in the dream sequence of the *Decameron*. VLC snapshot.

XV.2.3. A homage to Pieter Bruegel the Elder

Fig. 54. Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *The Combat of Lent and Carnival*. 1559. Oil on wood. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 55. Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *The Triumph of Death.* c. 1562. Oil on panel. Museo del Prado, Madrid. *Wikimedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014.< http://commons.wikimedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 56. A reflection on Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *The Combat of Lent and Carnival* in *Decameron*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 57. The figure of Lent in *Decameron*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 58. Fraternal jokes in the Bruegelian sequence of *Decameron*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 59. An image of the rural feasts in *Decameron*, echoing Bruegel's iconography. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 60. A cart filled with skulls, an image similar to the death cart in Bruegel's *The Triumph of Death*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 61. A skull on a shovel in *Decameron*, echoing Bruegel's The Triumph of Death. VLC snapshot.

XV.3. *I racconti di Canterbury*, 1972

XV.3.2. The Renaissance scenic design

Fig. 62. Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *The Conversion of Paul*. 1567. Oil on panel.

Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. *Wikipedia.* Web. 12 Aug 2014.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 63. The apparitor on horse in *I racconti di Canterbury*. VLC snapshot.

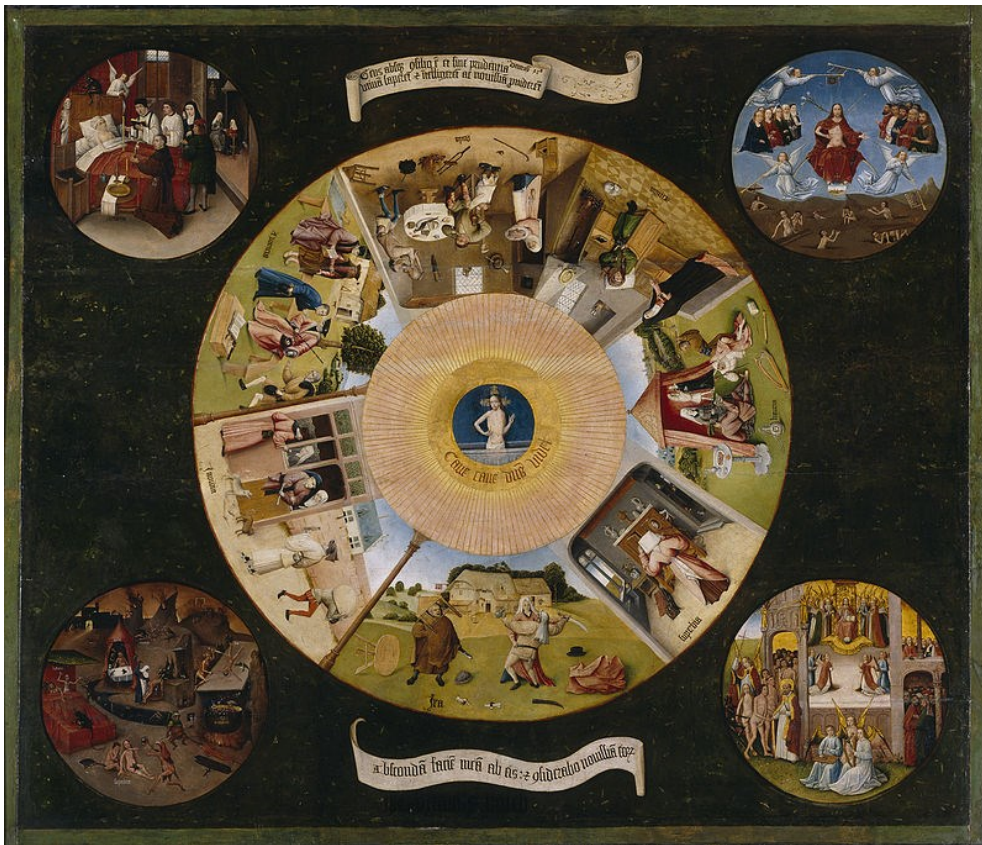## XV.3.4. Infernal imagery under Hieronymus Bosch's effect

Fig. 64. Bosch, Hieronymus. *The Seven Deady Sins or The Table of Wisdom*. c. 1500. Oil on wood. Museo del Prado, Madrid. *Wikipedia.* Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.
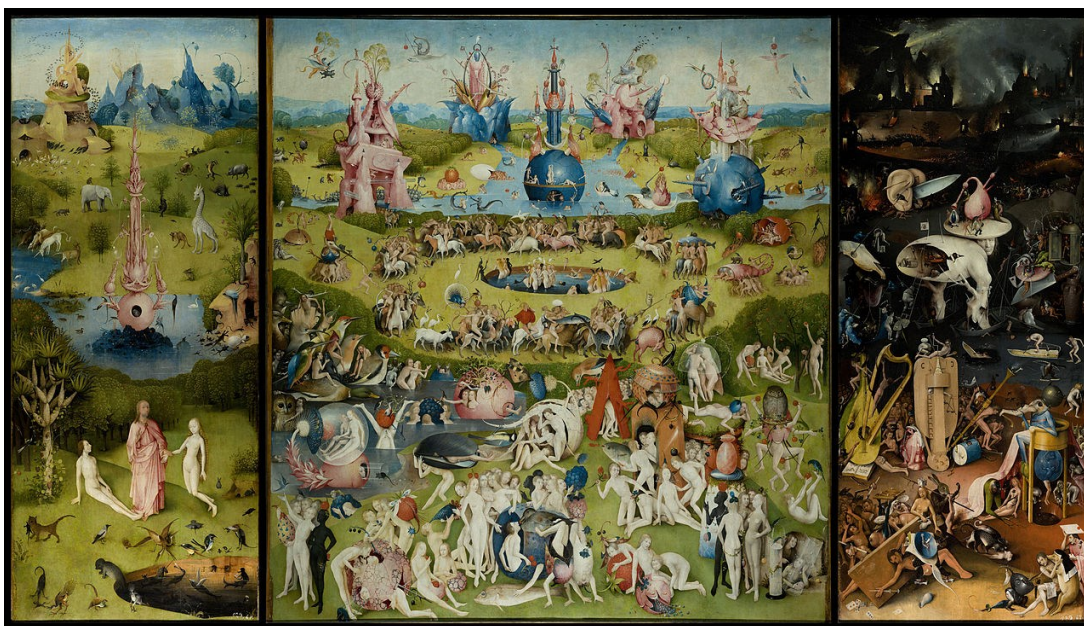

Fig. 65. Bosch, Hieronymus. *The Garden of Earthly Delights.* 1490-1510. Oil-on-wood panels. Museo del Prado in Madrid. *Wikipedia.* Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.
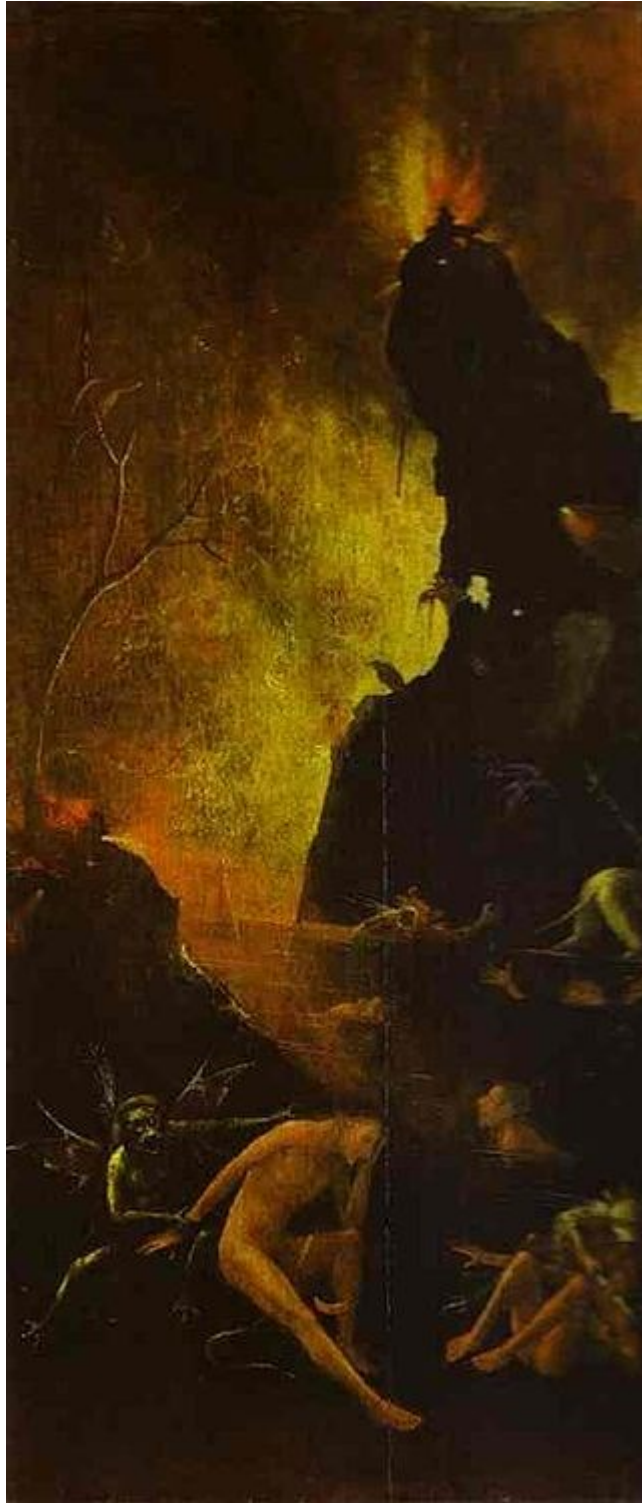
Fig. 66. Bosch, Hieronymus. *Hell.* 1490. Palazzo Ducale, Venice. *Wikipedia*. Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 67. The representation of Hell in *I racconti di Canterbury*. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 68. The final sequence of *I racconti di Canterbury*. VLC snapshot.

XV.4. *I fiori di mille e una note* (*The Arabian Nights*), 1974

Fig. 69. Rajput miniature from the Jammu hills, dated circa 1750, and painted by the famous Pahari painter Nainsukh. *Wild Boar Hunt.* Web. 12 Aug 2014. <http://wildboarhunt.blogspot.it/>. Digital image.

Fig. 70. A scene taken from *I fiori di mille e una notte*, as a reminiscence of the Orientalist iconography. VLC snapshot.

XVI. *Salò, o le 120 giornate di Sodoma*, **1975**

XVI.2.1. Traces of Futurism, Cubism and Dada

Fig. 71. Balla, Giacomo. *Window in Düsseldorf*. 1912. Oil on wood. Private collection. *Department of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Madison*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. <http://arthistory.wisc.edu/>. Digital image.

Fig. 72. The epilogue of tortures as watched through binoculars from the room of the Signori. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 73. Boccioni, Umberto. *Elasticity.* 1912. Oil on canvas. Collection Dr. Riccardo Jucker, Milan. *Pitture e artisti in mostra permanente*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. <http://www.pittart.com/>. Digital image.

Fig. 74. Boccioni, Umberto. *Spiral Construction*. 1913. Oil on canvas. Modern Art Gallery, Milan. *Frammenti d'arte*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. < http://www.frammentiarte.it/>. Digital image.

Fig. 75. Boccioni, Umberto. *The Charge of the Lancers*. 1915. Tempera and collage on pasteboard. Ricardo and Magda Jucker Collection, Milan. *Pitture e artisti in mostra permanente*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. <http://www.pittart.com/>. Digital image.

Fig. 76. Léger, Fernand. *Nudes in the Forest*. 1909. Oil on canvas. Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo. Netherlands. *Wikiart*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. < http://www.wikiart.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 77. Léger, Fernand. *Contrast of Forms*. 1913. Oil on canvas. MoMA, New York. *Artsy*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. < https://artsy.net>. Digital image.

Fig. 78. Léger, Fernand. *The Card Party*. 1917. Oil on canvas. Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo. Netherlands. *Reproduction Gallery*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. <http://www.reproduction-gallery.com/>. Digital image.

Fig. 79. Léger, Fernand. *Three Women*. 1921. Oil on canvas. MoMA, New York. *Wikiart.*
Web. 13 Aug 2014. < http://www.wikiart.org/>. Digital image.

Fig. 80. Léger, Fernand. *The Reader*. 1924. Oil on canvas. Musée National d'Art de
Moderne, Paris. *Boundary Gallery*. Web. 13 Aug 2014.
<http://www.boundarygallery.com/>. Digital image.

Fig. 81. The painted murals in *Salò*, echoing Boccioni. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 82. The painted murals in *Salò*, echoing Boccioni. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 83. The painted murals echoing Léger's figurative world. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 84. The painted murals echoing Léger's figurative world. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 85. Futurist and Cubist iconography in *Salò*. 1. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 86. Futurist and Cubist iconography in *Salò*. 2. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 87. Futurist and Cubist iconography in *Salò*. 3. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 88. Futurist and Cubist iconography in *Salò*. 4. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 89. Futurist and Cubist iconography in *Salò*. 5. VLC snapshot.

Fig. 90. Grosz, George. *Die Räuber*. 1922. Print. Malik-Verlag, Berlin. *Artvalue*. Web. 13 Aug 2014. < http://www.artvalue.com/>. Digital image.

XIX. WORKS CITED

Primary resources

<u>Pasolini's films:</u>

Accattone. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1961.

Appunti per un'Orestiade Africana. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1970.

Che cose sono le nuvole? Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1968.

Decameron. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1971.

Edipo re. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1967.

I fiori di mille e una notte. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1974.

I racconti di Canterbury. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1973.

Il Vangelo secondo Matteo. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1964.

La Rabbia. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1963.

La Ricotta. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1963.

Mamma Roma. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1962.

Medea. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1969.

Porcile. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1969.

Salò, o le 120 giornate di Sodoma. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1975.

Teorema. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1968.

Uccellacci e uccellini. Dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1966.

<u>Pasolini's paintings:</u>

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Self-Portrait with his Old Shawl*. 1946. Oil on hardboard.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Self-Portrait with a Flower in his Mouth*. 1947. Oil on hardboard.

<u>Pasolini's poetic works:</u>

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Bestemmia." *Cinema e film* I /2, Spring 1967: 225. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "I Reca." *Tutte le poesie II*. Ed. Walter Siti, Fernando Bandini, Nico
    Naldini. Milano: Mondadori, 2003: 290. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Le ceneri di Gramsci: poemetti.* Milano: Garzanti, 1975. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Mamma Roma." *Poesia in forma di rosa: 1961-1964.* Milano: Garzanti, 1964. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Pietro II." *Poesia in forma di rosa: 1961-1964.* Milano: Garzanti, 1964: 74-75. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Poesia in forma di rosa: 1961-1964.* Milano: Garzanti, 1964. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Tutte le poesie.* Ed. Walter Siti, Fernando Bandini, Nico Naldini. Milano: Mondadori, 2003. Print.

Pasolini's prosaic works:

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Alì dagli occhi azzurri.* Milano: Garzanti, 1989. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *La Divina Mimesis.* Torino: Einaudi, 1975. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Ragazzi di vita.* Milano: Garzanti, 1963. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Romanzi e racconti.* Ed. Walter Siti, Silvia De Laude, and Nico Naldini. Milano: Mondadori, 1998. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Teorema.* Milano: Garzanti, 1968. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Tutte le poesie.* Ed. Walter Siti, Fernando Bandini, Nico Naldini. Milano: Mondadori, 2003. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Una vita violenta.* Torino: Einaudi, 1979. Print.

Pasolini's screenplays

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo.* Milano: Garzanti, 1964. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *La rabbia.* Ed. Roberto Chiesi. Bologna: Cineteca di Bologna, 2009. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *La rabbia, Lista dei dialoghi.* Ed. Associazione "Fondo Pier Paolo Pasolini." 1963. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Mamma Roma.* Milano: Rizzoli, 1962. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Per il cinema: Sceneggiature (e trascrizioni); Commenti per documentari; Sceneggiature in collaborazione e materiali per film altrui; Idee, soggetti, trattamenti; "Confessioni tecniche" e altro; Interviste e dibatitti sul cinema.* Ed. Walter Siti, Franco Zabagli. Milano: Mondadori, 2001. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Trilogia della vita – Le sceneggiature originali di Il Decameron, I racconti di Canterbury, Il fiore delle Mille e una notte*. Garzanti: Milano, 1995. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Uccellacci e uccellini*. Milano: Garzanti, 1966. Print.

Pasolini's theatrical works:

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Bestia da stile*. Ed. Pasquale Voza. Bari: Palomar, 2005. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Calderón.* Milano: Garzanti, 1973. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Teatro.* Ed. Walter Siti, Silvia De Laude. Milano: Mondadori, 2001. Print.

Pasolini's Articles, Essays, Interviews, Letters and Studies:

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Abiura della Trilogia della vita." *Corriere della Sera*, 9 Nov 1975. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "A Biagio Marin – Trieste, 10 settembre 1954." *Lettere*. Ed. Nico Naldini. Torino: Einaudi, 1986: 680. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "A Cesare Padovani-Nogara, 24 settembre 1953." *Lettere*. Ed. Nico Naldini. Torino: Einaudi, 1986: 600. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "A Franco Farolfi-Parma." *Lettere*. Ed. Nico Naldini. Torino: Einaudi, 1986. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Colonna Sonora." *Bianco & Nero* 3-4, March-April 1967. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Cristo e il Marxismo: Dialogo Pasolini-Sartre." *L'Unità*, Dec 22 1964: 26. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Descrizioni di descrizioni.* Ed. Graziella Chiarcossi. Torino: Einaudi, 1979. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Diario al registratore." *Il Giorno*, 20 May 1962. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Empirismo eretico.* Milano: Garzanti, 2005. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Giudizio universale alla napoletana per Pasolini." *L'Unità*. 7 Nov 1970. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Heretical Empiricism.* Ed. Louise K. Barnett. Trans. Ben Lawton, Louise K. Barnett Bloomington. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Ideologia e poetica:* A registered conversation in Roma on 14 Dec 1972. Ed. Gideon Bachmann. Published in *Filmcritica* 232, March 1973. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *I dialoghi*. Ed. G. Falaschi with a preface by D.C. Ferretti. Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1992. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo "Il peccato di essere poveri." *La fiera del cinema* 9, Sept 1962. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Il sogno del centauro*. Ed. Jean Duflot. Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1983. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "La sceneggiatura come struttura che vuol essere altra struttura." *Empirismo eretico*. Milano: Garzanti, 2005: 188-197. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Le belle bandiere*. Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1977. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Lettera al produttore A. Bini." *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo*. Milano: Garzanti, 1964. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Lettere.* Ed. Nico Naldini. Torino: Einaudi, 1986. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Non ho offeso il cattolicesimo", *Avanti!*, 6 March 1963. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Perché amo il cinema." *Pier Paolo Pasolini*. 9 August 2014. Web. ‹http://www.pierpaolopasolini.it/filmografia.htm›.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Più cuore che testa", *Tempo Illustrato* 4, October 1969. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Porcile.* Brescia: Edizioni l'Obliquo, 1994. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Presentazione, 20 disegni di Renato Guttuso, presentati da Pier Paolo Pasolini." Roma: Editori Riuniti - La Nuova Pesa, 6 Oct 1962. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Saggi sulla letteratura e sull'arte.* Ed. Walter Siti, Silvia De Laude. Milano: Mondadori, 1999. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società.* Ed. Walter Siti, Silvia De Laude. Milano: Mondadori, 1999. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Una discussione del '64*. In *Pier Paolo Pasolini nel dibattito culturale contemporaneo: con un intervento inedito di Pier Paolo Pasolini e una lettera di Franco Fortini*. Alessandria: Amministrazione Provinciale di Pavia, Comune di Alessandria, 1977. Print.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. "Una visione del mondo epico-religiosa." *Bianco & Nero*, June 1964. Print. Published also in Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Per il cinema*. Milano: Mondadori, 2001: 2844-2879. Print.

Secondary resources

<u>Films:</u>

À bout de soufflé (*Breathless*). Dir. Jean-Luc Godard. 1960.

After Hours. Dir. Martin Scorsese. 1985.

Amore in città (*Love in the City*). Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni, Federico Fellini, Alberto Lattuada, Carlo Lizzani, Francesco Maselli, Dino Risi, Cesare Zavattini. 1953.

Aleksandr Nevskiy (*Alexander Nevsky*). Dir. Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein. 1938.

Andrey Rublyov (*Andrei Rublev*). Andrei Tarkovsky. 1966.

A Zed and Two Noughts. Dir. Peter Greenaway. 1985.

Barry Lyndon. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. 1975.

Battleship Potemkin. Dir. Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein. 1925.

Bellissima. Dir. Luchino Visconti. 1951.

Breaking the Waves. Dir. Lars von Trier. 1996.

Capriccio all'italiana. Dir. Steno, Mauro Bolognini Zac, Mario Monicelli, Mauro Bolognini. 1968.

Carpaccio. Dir. Umberto Barbaro, Roberto Longhi. 1947.

Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*). Dir. Robert Wiene. 1920.

Deposizione di Raffaello. Dir. Carlo L. Ragghianti. 1948.

Deserto Rosso (*Red Desert*). Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni. 1963.

Die Nibelungen. Dir. Fritz Lang. 1924.

Dies Irae. Dir. Carl Theodor Dreyer. 1943.

Divorzio all'italiana (*Divorce, Italian Stlye*). Dir. Pietro Germi. 1962.

Entr'acte. Dir. René Clair. 1924.

Francesco, giullare di Dio (*St. Francis, God's Juggler*). Dir. Roberto Rossellini. 1950.

Gaugain. Dir. Alan Resnais. 1950.

Giotto. Dir. Luciano Emmer. 1969.

Giovani mariti (*Young Husbands*). Dir. Bolognini, Mauro. 1958.

Girl with a Pearl Ring. Dir. Peter Webber. 2003.

Giulietta e Romeo (*Romeo and Juliet*). Dir. Renato Castellani. 1954.

Goya. Dir. Luciano Emmer. 1951.

Hallelujah. Dir. King Vidor. 1929.

Häxan: Witchcraft through the Ages. Dir. Benjamin Christensen. 1922.

Il bell'Antonio (*Bell'Antonio*). Dir. Bolognini, Mauro. 1960.

Il carro armato dell'8 settembre. Dir. Puccini, Gianni. 1960.

Il maestro della domenica. Dir. Steno. 1968.

Il mistero di Galatea. Dir. Giulio Aristide Sartorio. 1918.

Il prigioniero della montagna. Dir. Trenker, Luis. 1955.

I pugni in tasca (*Fists in the Pocket*). Dir. Marco Bellocchio. 1967.

I sovversivi (*The subversive ones*). Dir. Paolo e Vittorio Taviani. 1967.

Il tetto (*The Roof*). Dir. Vittorio De Sica. 1956.

It happened in '43 (*La lunga notte del '43*). Dir. Vancini, Florestano. 1960.

Ivan Groznyy (*Ivan the Terrible*). Dir. Sergei M. Eisenstein. 1944, 1946-48.

La bambinaia. Dir. Mario Monicelli. 1968.

La canta delle marane. Dir. Mangini, Cecilia. 1960.

Ladri di biciclette (*Bicycle Thieves*). Dir. Vittorio De Sica. 1948.

La Dolce Vita. Dir. Federico Fellini. 1960.

La donna del fiume (*The River Girl*). Dir. Soldati, Mario. 1954.

L'âge d'or. Dir. Luis Buñuel. 1930.

La gelosa. Dir. Mauro Bolognini. 1968.

La giornata balorda (*From a Roman Balcony*). Dir. Bolognini, Mauro. 1960.

La notte brava (*Lusty Night in Rome*). Dir. Bolognini, Mauro. 1959.

La nuit américaine (*Day for Night*). Dir. Francois Truffaut. 1973.

La passion di Jeanne D'Arc (*The Passion of Joan of Arc*). Dir. Carl Theodor Dreyer. 1928.

La prima notte della quiete (*The Professor*). Dir. Valerio Zurlini. 1972.

La siciliana. Dir. Franco Rossi. 1967.

La strega bruciata viva. Dir. Luchino Visconti. 1967.

Laura. Dir. Otto Preminger. 1944.

Le ballet mécanique. Dir. Fernand Léger. 1924.

Le notti di Cabiria (*Nights of Cabiria*). Dir. Fellini, Federico. 1956.

Le stagioni del nostro amore (*The Seasons of Our Love*). Dir. Florestano Vancini. 1966.

Lust for Life. Dir. Vincente Minnelli. 1956.

Marisa la civetta (*Marisa*). Dir. Bolognini, Mauro. 1957.

Miracolo a Milano (*Miracle in Milan*). Dir. Vittorio De Sica. 1951.

Modigliani. Dir. Mick Davis. 2004.

Morte di un amico (*Death of a Friend*). Dir. Rossi, Franco. 1959-60.

Moulin Rouge. Dir. John Huston. 1952.

Nana. Dir. Jean Renoir. 1926.

Nostalgia. Dir. Andrei Tarkovsky. 1983.

Ordet. Dir. Carl Theodor Dreyer. 1955.

Paisa (*Paisan*). Dir. Roberto Rossellini. 1946.

Passion. Dir. Jean-Luc Godard. 1982.

Perché. Dir. Mauro Bolognini. 1968.

Picasso. Dir. Luciano Emmer. 1955.

Piero della Francesca. Dir. Luciano Emmer. 1949.

Pierrot le fou. Dir. Jean-Luc Godard. 1965.

Prima della rivoluzione (*Before the Revolution*). Dir. Bernardo Bertolucci. 1966.

RoGoPaG: Laviamoci il cervello. Dir. Roberto Rossellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Ugo Gregoretti. Prod. Alfredo Bini. 1963.

Roma, città aperta (*Rome, open city*). Dir. Roberto Rossellini. 1945.

Romeo and Juliet. Dir. George Cukor. 1936.

Salomè. Dir. Ugo Falena. 1910.

Salomè. Dir. Bryant Charles. 1923.

Salomè. Dir. William Dieterle. 1953.

Salomè. Dir. Carmelo Bene. 1972.

Salomè. Dir. Claude D'Anna. 1986.

Satyricon. Dir. Federico Fellini. 1969.

Senso. Dir. Luchino Visconti. 1954.

Senso civico. Dir. Mauro Bolognini. 1967.

Surviving Picasso. Dir. James Ivory. 1996.

Thaïs. Dir. Anton Giulio Bragaglia. 1917.

The Agony and the Ecstasy. Dir. Carol Reed. 1965.

The Fantastic World of M. C. Escher. Dir. Michele Emmer. 1980.

The Last Salomè. Dir. Ken Russell. 1988.

The Matrix. Dir. The Wachowski Brothers. 1999.

The Merry Widow. Dir. Ernst Lubitsch. 1934.

Thunder Over Mexico. Dir. Sergei M. Eisenstein. 1932-33.

Ultimo tango a Parigi (*Last tango in Paris*). Dir. Bernardo Bertolucci. 1972.

Umberto D. Dir. Vittorio De Sica. 1952.

Una sera come le altre. Dir. Vittorio De Sica. 1967.

Un chien andalou. Dir. Luis Buñuel, Salvador Dalí. 1929.

Van Gogh. Dir. Alan Resnais. 1948.

Van Gogh. Dir. Maurice Pialat. 1991.

Viaggio di lavoro. Dir. Zac. 1968.

Viridiana. Dir. Luis Buñuel. 1961.

Wilde Salomè. Dir. Al Pacino. 2011.

2001: A Space Odyssey. Dir. Stanley Kubrick. 1968.

Music:

Albinoni, Tomaso. *Adagio in Sol minore.* 1958.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Brandenburg Concertos No. 1-4*. c. 1721.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Cantata No. 106, Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit*. 1707.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *Concerto for 2 Harpsichords, Strings, and Continuo in C minor, BWV 1060.* 1730-45.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *St. Matthew Passion*. 1727.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *The Mass in B minor BWV 232*. 1748-49.

Bach, Johann Sebastian. *The Violin Concerto in E Major BWV 1042*. c. 1720.

Cherubini, Bixio. *Violino tzigano*. 1934.

Donizetti, Gaetano. "Una furtiva lacrima". *L'elisir d'amore*. 1832.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Adagio and Fugue in C minor K 546*. 1788.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Die Zauberflöte, K.620*. 1791.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *Requiem Mass in D minor (K.626)*. 1791.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *String Quintet No. 4 in G minor K.* 516. 1787.

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus. *The Maurerische Trauermusik (Masonic Funeral Music) in C minor, K. 477 (K. 479a)*. 1785.

Offenbach, Jaques. *Gaîté Parisienne.* 1866.

Prokofiev, Sergei. *Alexander Nevsky* (cantata), Opus 78. 1938-39.

Rustichelli, Carlo. *Cha cha cha*. 1962.

Verdi, Giuseppe. *La Traviata*. 1853.

Vivaldi, Antonio. "Largo in fa maggiore" from *Concerto in re minore per viola d'amore, liuto e con tutto gli strumenti sordini RV 540*. 1713-15.

Vivaldi, Antonio. "Largo in mi minore" from *Concerto in do maggiore per flautino, archi e basso continuo RV 443*. 1716-17.

Wagner, Richard. *Götterdämmerung, WWV 86D*. 1848-1874.

<u>Paintings:</u>

Bacon, Francis. *Figure Study I.* 1945-46. Oil on canvas.

Bacon, Francis. *Fragment of a Crucifixion*. 1950. Oil and cotton wool on canvas. Stedelijk
    Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven.

Bacon, Francis. *Head II*. 1945. Oil on canvas.

Bacon, Francis. *Landscape.* 1952. Oil paint on paper. Tate Gallery, London.

Bacon, Francis. *Painting*. 1940. Oil on canvas.

Bacon, Francis. *Pope II*. 1951. Oil on canvas. Kunsthalle, Mannheim.

Bacon, Francis. *Study for Crouching Nude*. 1952. Oil on canvas. Institute of Contemporary
    Arts, London.

Bacon, Francis. *Study for a Portrait*. 1953. Oil on canvas.

Bacon, Francis. *Study of a Baboon*. 1953. Oil on canvas. Museum of Modern Art, New
    York.

Bacon, Francis. *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*. 1944. Oil paint and
    pastel. Tate Gallery, London.

Bacon, Francis. *Two Figures*. 1953. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

Bacon, Francis. *Two Figures in the Grass*. 1954. Private Collection, Paris.

Balla, Giacomo. *Window in Düsseldorf*. 1912. Oil on wood. Private collection.

Bassano, Jacopo. *The Last Supper*. 1542. Oil on canvas. Galleria Borghese, Rome.

Boccioni, Umberto. *Elasticity.* 1912. Oil on canvas. Collection Dr. Riccardo Jucker, Milan.

Boccioni, Umberto. *Spiral Construction*. 1913. Oil on canvas. Modern Art Gallery, Milan.

Boccioni, Umberto. *The Charge of the Lancers*. 1915. Tempera and collage on pasteboard.
    Ricardo and Magda Jucker Collection, Milan.

Boccioni, Umberto. *The Suburbs*. 1909. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

Bosch, Hieronymus. *Hell*. 1490. Palazzo Ducale, Venice.

Bosch, Hieronymus. *The Garden of Earthly Delights.* 1490-1510. Oil-on-wood panels.
    Museo del Prado in Madrid.

Bosch, Hieronymus. *The Seven Deady Sins or the Table of Wisdom*. c. 1500. Oil on wood.
    Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Bosch, Hieronymus. *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*. c. 1500-1525. Oil on panel. Museo
    del Prado, Madrid.

Botticelli, Sandro. *Allegory of Spring*. c. 1482. Tempera on panel. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Braque, Georges. *Jug and Violin*. 1910. Oil on canvas. Kunstmuseum, Basel.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *Children's Games*. 1560. Oil on panel. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *Flemish Proverbs*. 1559. Oil on panel. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *Land of Cockaigne*. 1567. Oil on panel. Alte Pinakothek, Münich.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *The Combat of Lent and Carnival*. 1559. Oil on wood. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *The Conversion of Paul*. 1567. Oil on panel. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *The Triumph of Death.* c. 1562. Oil on panel. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Bruegel, Pieter the Elder. *Wheat Harvest.* 1565. Oil on wood. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da. *Bacchus.* 1595. Oil on canvas. Galleria Uffizi. Florence.

Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da. *Boy Bitten by a Lizard.* 1595-1600. Oil on canvas. The National Gallery, London.

Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da. *Boy with a Basket of Fruit*. 1599. Oil on canvas. Galleria Borghese, Rome.

Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da. *Boy Peeling Fruit*. 1592-93. Oil on canvas. Longhi Collection, Rome.

Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da. *The Lute Player*. 1600. Oil on canvas. Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.

Constable, John. *Malvern Hall*. 1809. Oil on canvas. Tate Gallery, London.

Da Vinci, Leonardo. *Annunciation*. 1472-75. Oil and tempera on panel. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Da Vinci, Leonardo. *Last Supper*. 1494-1498. Tempera and oil on plaster. Refettorio Di Santa Maria Delle Grazie, Milan.

Duchamp, Marcel. *Nude Descending a Staircase*. 1912. Oil on canvas. The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA, USA.

Dürer, Albrecht. *Portrait of Hieronymus Holzschuher*. 1526. Oil on panel. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin.

Fattori, Giovanni. *After the battle of Magenta*. 1860-61. Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

Fautrier, Jean. *Hostages*. 1943-44. Tate Gallery, London.

Fautrier, Jean. *Inks*. 1938. Ink. Galleria Apollinaire, Milano.

Fautrier, Jean. *Nudes*. 1943. Galerie Rive Droite, Paris.

Fautrier, Jean. *Pastello*. 1929. Pastel. Private Collection, Parigi.

Fautrier, Jean. *Tempera on coating*. 1934. Tempera. Private collection, Paris.

Fautrier, Jean. *The Small Valley*. 1928. Pastel. Private collection, Paris.

Gainsborough, Thomas. *Lady Sheffield*. 1785-86. Oil on canvas. National Trust, Waddesdon Manor, UK.

Ghirlandaio, Domenico. *Last Supper*. 1480. Fresco. Cenacolo di Ognissanti, Florence.

Giotto. *Last Judgement*. 1306. Fresco. Cappella Scrovegni, Padova.

Giotto. *Madonna in Maestà*. 1310. Tempera on panel. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

Grosz, George. *Die Räuber*. 1922. Print. Malik-Verlag, Berlin.

Grosz, George. *Eclipse of the Sun*. 1926. Oil on canvas. Heckscher Museum of Art, New York.

Grosz, George. *The Walk*. 1922. Watercolour on paper. Private collection.

Guttuso, Renato. *Occupation of the lands in Sicily*. 1949-50. Oil on canvas. Gemäldegalerie, Dresda.

Guttuso, Renato. *Shooting of patriots*. 1945. Oil on canvas.

Guttuso, Renato. *Stromboli in eruption*. 1953. Oil on canvas.

Guttuso, Renato. *The Cart of the Shot*. 1944. Oil on canvas.

Guttuso, Renato. *The Crucifixion*. 1941. Oil on canvas. Private collection, Rome.

Guttuso, Renato. *The Plight of French Miners*. 1948. Oil on canvas.

Guttuso, Renato. *The Shouting Boy with Red Flag*. 1953. Oil on canvas.

Guttuso, Renato. *The Women in Algeria*. 1959. Oil on canvas.

Guttuso, Renato. *Workers at Rest*. 1945. Oil on canvas.

Hayez, Francesco. *The Kiss*. 1859. Oil on canvas. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.

Holbein, Hans. Portrait of *Henry VIII*. 1536-37. Oil on canvas. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Holbein, Hans. *The Body of the Dead Christ in the Tomb*. 1520-22. Oil and tempera on limewood painting. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.

Léger, Fernand. *Nudes in the Forest*. 1909. Oil on canvas. Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo. Netherlands.

Léger, Fernand. *Contrast of Forms*. 1913. Oil on canvas. MoMA, New York.

Léger, Fernand. *The Card Party*. 1917. Oil on canvas. Kroller-Muller Museum, Otterlo. Netherlands.

Léger, Fernand. *Three Women*. 1921. Oil on canvas. MoMA, New York.

Léger, Fernand. *The Reader*. 1924. Oil on canvas. Musee National d'Art de Moderne, Paris.

Léger, Fernand. *Composition with the Two Parrots*. 1937. Painting - gouache brush and ink and charcoal on paper on canvas. Private collection.

Lippi, Filippo. *The Feast of Herod: Salome's Dance*. 1464. Fresco. Cappella Maggiore, Duomo, Prato.

Manet, Édouard. *Breakfast on the Grass*. 1862-63. Oil on canvas. Musey d'Orsay, Paris.

Mantegna, Andrea. *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*. 1480. Tempera on canvas. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.

Masaccio. *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*. 1424-1425. Fresco. Cappella Brancacci, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

Masaccio. *Raising of the Son of Teophilus and St. Peter Enthroned*. 1425-1425. Fresco. Cappella Brancacci, Florence.

Masaccio. St. *Peter Healing the Sick with his Shadow*. 1425-1427. Fresco. Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence.

Masaccio. *Trinity*. 1426-28. Fresco. Chiesa di Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

Maulbertsch, Franz Anton. *The Last Supper*. 1754. Oil on canvas. Residenzgalerie, Salzburg.

Morandi, Giorgio. *Natura morta*. 1929. Oil on canvas. Mart, Rovereto.

Picasso, Pablo. *Guernica*. 1937. Oil on canvas. Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid.

Picasso, Pablo. *Massacre in Korea*. 1951. Oil on plywood. Musée National Picasso, Paris.

Piero della Francesca. *The History of the True Cross*. c. 1455–1466. Frescoes, San Francesco, Arezzo.

Piero della Francesca. *Madonna del parto*. 1459–1467. Fresco. Chapel of the cemetery, Monterchi.

Pollock, Jackson. *Research of a Symbol*. 1943.

Pontormo. *Deposition*. 1525-28. Oil on panel. Church of Santa Felicità, Florence.

Pontormo. *Coronation*. 1494. Fresco. Cappella dei Papi, Florence.

Reynolds, Joshua. *John Hayes St. Leger and Lord Heathfield*. 1787. Oil on canvas.

Rosso Fiorentino. *Deposition*. 1521. Oil on wood. Pinacoteca Comunale, Volterra.

Romanino, Girolamo. *Last Supper*. 1513. Oil on canvas. Musei civici, Padova.

Sarto, Andrea del. *Last Supper*. 1526. Fresco. The Abbey of San Salvi, Florence.

Savoldo, Giovanni Gerolamo. *Gaston de Foix*. 1529. Oil on canvas. Louvre, Paris.

Shahn, Ben. *Chicago*. 1955. Oil on canvas. Private Collection.

Shahn, Ben. *East 12th Street*. 1947. Tempera. Private Collection, Los Angeles.

Shahn, Ben. *Quartet*. 1944.

Shahn, Ben. *The Blind Musician*. 1945.

Shahn, Ben. *The Orator of 4th July*. 1943. New Canaan, Connecticut.

Signorini, Telemaco. *Morning toilette*. 1898. Oil on canvas.

Signorini, Telemaco. *The Letter*. 1867. Oil on canvas. Fondazione Cariplo, Milano.

Surikov, Vasily. *The Boyarynya Morozova*. 1887. Oil on canvas. The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow.

Surikov, Vasily. *Tsarevna Visiting Monastery*. 1912. Oil on canvas.

Van Eyck, Jan. *The Arnolfini Portrait*. 1434. Oil on board. National Gallery, London.

Velázquez, Diego. *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Balthasar Charles*. 1635. Oil on canvas. Prado, Madrid.

Velázquez, Diego. *Las Meninas*. 1656. Oil on canvas. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Velázquez, Diego. *Portrait of Philip IV*. 1644. Oil on canvas. Frick Collection, New York.

Velázquez, Diego. *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf.* 1631. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Velázquez, Diego. *The Jester Don Diego de Acedo*. 1645. Oil on canvas. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Velázquez, Diego. *The Rokeby Venus*. c. 1647-51. Oil on canvas. National Gallery, London.

Veronese, Paolo. *Last Supper*. 1585. Oil on canvas. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.

Whistler, James Abbott McNeill. *Symphony in White*. 1862. Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

Books, articles, interviews, letters:

Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy, Complete*. Trans. Rev. H. F. Cary. *Project Gutenberg's The Divine Comedy, Complete, by Dante Alighieri*. Sept. 2005. Web. Jan. 2014. ‹http://www.gutenberg.org/files/8800/8800-h/8800-h.htm›.

Arecco, Sergio. *Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Roma: Partisan, 1972. Print.

Argan, G.C. *Fautrier.* Milano: Edizioni Apollinaire, 1960. Print.

Argento, Dario. "Opera ideo-comica con tema religioso." *Paese Sera*, 29 Oct 1965. Print.

Argentieri, Mino. "Accattone senza lieto fine." *Vie Nuove*. 12 Nov 1960. Print.

Argentieri, Mino. "Nella periferia romana nasce il film di Pasolini. Incontro con lo scrittore divenuto regista." *L'Unità.* 6 April 1961. Print.

Bárdos, Judit. "Csúfak és gonoszok (Buñuel, Pasolini, Scola)." ELTE University, Institute of Philosophy, Budapest, 4 Oct 2013. Conference Presentation.

Barth, John. *Chimera*. New York: Random House, 1972. Print.

Bazzocchi, Marco Antonio. *I burattini filosofi: Pasolini dalla letteratura al cinema*. Milano: B. Mondadori, 2007. Print.

Beccastrini, Stefano. *Messaggio incompiuto: Masaccio e il cinema.* Firenze: Aska, 2006. Print.

Benjamin, Walter. *Das Passagen-Werk.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1982. trans. *Parigi, capitale del XIX secolo. Progetti, appunti e materiali 1927-1940*. Torino: Einaudi, 1986. Print.

Bentivoglio, Mirella. *Ben Shahn*. Roma: De Luca Editore, 1963. Print.

Bertini, Antonio. *Teoria e tecnica del film in Pasolini*. Roma: Bulzoni, 1979. Print.

Bertolucci, Bernardo and Comolli, Jean-Luis. "Le cinéma selon Pasolini." *Cahiers du cinéma* 169, Paris, Aug 1965. Print

Biamonti, L. "Commento in versi di Pier Paolo Pasolini per *La rabbia*." *Paese Sera*, 12 Oct 1962. Print.

Bouquet, Stephane. *L'Évangile selon saint Matthieu*. Paris: Cahiers du cinema: Scérén-Cndp, 2003. Print.

Brecht, Bertolt. *Mother Courage and her Children*. Trans. Eric Bentley. New York City: Doubleday, 1959. Print.

Briganti, Giuliano. *Italian Mannerism.* London: Thames & Hudson, 1962. Print.

Brunetta, Gian Piero. "Entretien avec Pier Paolo Pasolini." *Cahiers du Cinéma*, n. 212, May 1969. Print.

Brunetta, Gian Piero. *Forma e parola nel cinema: il film muto, Pasolini, Antonioni*. Padova: Liviana, 1970. Print.

Bruno, Eduardo. "Il Vangelo secondo Matteo." *Filmcritica 147-148*, Jul-Aug 1964. Print.

Calderón, de B. P. *Life is a Dream*. Trans. Helen Edmundson. London: Nick Hern, 2009. Print.

Casiraghi, Ugo. "Il Vangelo secondo Matteo." *L'Unità*, 5 Sept 1964. Print.

Casiraghi, Ugo and Magnani, Lorenzo. "Mater dolorosa nel secondo film di P. P. Pasolini." *L'Unità*, 1 Sept 1962. Print.

Chiesi, Roberto. "Pasolini e Fellini, Una lunga infedeltà." MAMbo, Cineteca di Bologna e Centro Studi-Archivio Pier Paolo Pasolini, Bologna. 21 Apr 2010. Presentation.

Cinema/Pittura. Dinamiche di scambio. Ed. Leonardo de Franceschi. Torino: Lindau, 2003. Print.

Cinotti, Mia. *Caravaggio.* Bergamo: Poligrafiche Bolis, 1983. Print.

Compagnon, Antoine. *La Seconde Main: ou le Travail de la Citation*. Paris: Seuil, 1979. Print.

Compton, Susan P, and Dawn Ades. *British Art in the 20th Century: The Modern Movement.* Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1986. Print.

Conti Calabrese, Giuseppe. *Pasolini e il sacro*. Milano: Jaca Book, 1994. Print.

Cordazzo, Isadora. *Accattone di Pasolini: dal testo al film*. Bologna: Pendragon, 2008. Print.

Cork, Richard. "The Vorticist Circle, Bomberg and the First World War." *British Art in the 20th century*. Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1986: 125-140. Print.

Costa, Antonio. *Cinema e pittura*. Torino: Loescher, 1991. Print.

Costa, Antonio. "Effetto dipinto." *Cinema e cinema*, Nr. 54-5, January-August, 1989: 37-48. Print.

Costa, Antonio. *Il cinema e le arti visive*. Torino: G. Einaudi, 2002. Print.

Crispolti, E. *Leggere Guttoso.* Milano: Mondadori, 1987. Print.

Defoe, Daniel. *Moll Flanders*. New York: Knopf, 1991. Print.

De Giusti, Luciano. *I film di Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Roma: Gremese, 1983. Print.

De Giusti, Luciano. "Note sulla musica di Pasolini." *Bianco & Nero* 1-2, Jan-April 2001: 182-193. Print.

De Giusti, Luciano, ed. *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Il cinema in forma di poesia*. Pordenone: Edizioni Cinemazero, 1979. Print.

De Micheli, Mario. "Guttoso." *La pittura presente.* Napoli: F. Fiorentino Editore, 1974: 183-208. Print.

De Micheli, Mario. *La pittura presente.* Napoli: F. Fiorentino Editore, 1974. Print.

De Santi, P. M. "Cinema e pittura." *Art e dossier* 16, Sept 1987. Print.

De Tolnay, Charles. *Velázquez, "Las Hilanderas" and "Las meninas "(an interpretation).* "Gazette des Beaux-Arts", n. 983, Jan 1949: 36. Print.

De Vecchi, P. L. *La mimesi allo specchio.* Milano: Electa, 1990. Print.

Didi-Hubermann, Georges. *L'immagine insepolta. Aby Warburg, la memoria dei fantasmi e la storia dell'arte.* Torino: Bollati Boringhieri, 2006. Print.

Dini, Andrea. "Una commedia di borgata. Pasolini, Dante e La mortaccia." *Paragone* 60-61, Aug-Dec 2005. Print.

Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. *The Idiot.* Trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Vintage, 2003. Print.

"Editors' Introduction. "Festészet és film", *Metropolis*, Nr. 3, 1997. Web. 10 Aug. 2014. ‹http://metropolis.org.hu/?pid=16&aid=124›.

Ferrarelli, E. "Retorica del mammismo." *Tempo Presente* VII / 9-10, Sept-Oct 1962. Print.

Ferrero, Adelio. *Il cinema di Pier Paolo Pasolini.* Venezia: Marsilio, 1977. Print.

Ferrero, Nino and Mignano, Dora. "Mamma Roma, ovvero dalla responsabilità individuale alla responsabilità collettiva." An interview with Pasolini. *Filmcritica*, Sept 1962. Print.

Ferrero, Nino. "Primo incontro." *Filmcritica* 116, 1962. Print.

Foglietti, M. "Pasolini: Ritroviamo il senso del metafisico." *Il Popolo*, 3 May 1968. Print.

Fortini, Franco. *Attraverso Pasolini.* Torino: Einaudi, 1993. Print.

Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things.* London: Routledge, 2002. Print.

G.G. "4 mesi di carcere con la condizionale a Pasolini per vilipendio alla religione nel film "La ricotta", *La Stampa*, 8 March 1963. Print.

Galluzzi, Francesco. *Pasolini e la pittura.* Roma: Bulzoni, 1994. Print.

Gemini, L. "Intervista in un atto con Pier Paolo Pasolini." *Il Pensiero Nazionale* 18-19, Oct 1964. Print.

Gérard Fabien S. *Pasolini ou le mythe de la barbarie.* Bruxelles: Université de Bruxelles, 1981. Print.

Gérard, Fabien S. "Ricordi figurativi di Pasolini." *Prospettiva* 32, Jan 1983. Print.

Germinasi, R. "Pasolini girerà a Bolzano." *Alto Adige*, 4 Sept 1970. Print.

Gibson, W. *Bruegel.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1977. Print.

Gombrich, Ernst H. "Bosch's Garden of Earthly Delights: A Progress Report." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32, 1969:162-170. Print.

Greene, Naomi. *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Cinema as Heresy*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990. Print.

Grosz, George. *Art is in Danger*. 1925. Web. 9 Aug 2014. ‹http://www.artmutt.org/1999/11/art-is-in-danger/›.

Grosz, George. *Autobiografia*. Milano: Sugarco, 1984. Print.

Grosz, George. *Breve schizzo*. 1924. Print.

Grosz, George. "Letter on 3rd March 1918 to Otto Schmalhausen." *German expressionism: the Graphic Impulse*. New York: MoMA, 2011: 192. Print.

Grosz, George. "Svolgimento." Schneede, Uwe M. *George Grosz. Vita e opere*. Milano: Mazzotta, 1977: 44. Print.

Guttoso, Renato. "Catalogo della mostra antologica dal 1931 ad oggi." Parma, 15 Dec 1963. Print.

Hauser, Arnold. *Mannerism: The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art.* Belknap Press of HUP: Cambridge, MA, 1986. Print.

Hennebelle, G. "A Paris Pasolini déclare: La porcherie symbolyse pour moi la société bourgeoise." *Revue du Cinéma International* n.2, Apr 1969.

Hervé, Joubert-Laurencin. *Pasolini. Portrait du poète en cineaste*. Paris: Cahiers du Cinéma, 1995. Print.

Hindman, Sandra. *Pieter Bruegel's "Children's Games", Folly and Chance. The Art Bulletin* LXIII, n.3 Sept 1981. Print.

Intervista con Pasolini. "Cinemasessanta" n. 87/88, 1972. Print.

Jelavich, Peter and Figura, Starr. *German expressionism: the Graphic Impulse.* New York: MoMA, 2011. Print.

Le città del cinema: Pier Paolo Pasolini. Ed. Paolo Federico Colusso, Fabrizia Da Giau, Angelo Villa. Venezia: Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia, Archivio Progetti Angelo Masieri: Biblioteca dell'immagine, 1995. Print.

Levergeois, Bertrand. *Pasolini, L'alphabet du refus*. Paris: Le Félin, 2005. Print.

Lockspeiser, Edward. *Debussy.* Milano: Rusconi, 1983, Print.

Longhi, Roberto. *Cinquecento classico e Cinquecento manieristico.* Firenze: Sansoni, 1976. Print.

Longhi, Roberto. *Piero della Francesca.* Firenze: Sansoni, 1927. Print.

Magaletta, Giuseppe. *La musica nell'opera letteraria e cinematografica di Pasolini*. Urbino: Quattroventi. 1997. Print.

Magrelli, Enrico. *Con Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Roma: Bulzoni, 1977. Print.

"Mamma Roma." – *Wikipedia*. Web. 10 Aug 2014.
‹http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mamma_Róma›.

Marchesini, Alberto. *Citazioni pittoriche nel cinema di Pasolini: da Accattone al Decameron*. Firenze: Nuova Italia, 1994. Print.

Marijnissen, Roger H. *Bruegel le Vieux*. Bruxelles: Arcade, 1969. Print.

Martin, Daisy. "L'«Accattone» di Pier Paolo Pasolini." *Cinema Nuovo* 150, March-April 1961. Print.

Mazzeo, Donato M. *Cristo è nato a Barile*. Basilicata Arbereshe, 2007. Print.

Maupassant, Guy de. *A Woman's Life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965. Print.

Metz, Christian. *A Semiotics of the Cinema*. Translated by Michael Taylor. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990. Print.

Miccichè, Lino. "I miti di Pier Paolo Pasolini." *Il cinema italiano degli anni '60*. Venezia: Marsilio, 1975: 151-171. Print.

Micciché, Lino. *Pasolini nella città del cinema*. Venezia: Marsilio, 1999. Print.

Montani, Pietro. "La vita postuma della pittura nel cinema." *Cinema/Pittura. Dinamiche di scambio*. Ed. Leonardo de Franceschi. Torino: Lindau, 2003: 31-41. Print.

Moravia, Alberto. *La Romana*. Milano: Bompiani, 1979. Print.

Murri, Serafino. Pier Paolo Pasolini, Milano: Il Castoro, 1994. Print.

Naldini, Nico. *Pasolini, una vita*. Torino: Einaudi, 1989. Print.

"Nostalghia.com The Topics: Macgillivray: Andrei Tarkovsky's Madonna Del Parto." *Nostalghia.com | The Topics: James Macgillivray: Andrei Tarkovsky's Madonna Del Parto*. Web. 08 Feb. 2014.
‹http://people.ucalgary.ca/~tstronds/nostalghia.com/TheTopics/Piero.html›.

Notarangelo, Domenico. *Pasolini Matera*. Matera: Giannatelli, 2013. Print.

Ottenbacher, Albert. *Heilige im unreinen Licht – Pier Paolo Pasolini, das Trecento und der Manierismus*. München: Selbstverlag des Verfassers, 2003. Print.

Parigi, Stefania. *Pier Paolo Pasolini: Accattone*. Torino: Lindau, 2008. Print.

"Pasolini e Fellini, una lunga infedeltà - Centro Studi Bologna 21 April 2010." *Pasolini e Fellini, una lunga infedelt*à. Web. 16 Jan. 2014.
‹http://www.pasolini.net/centroBO_INIZ_ppp-Fellini_21aprile2010.htm›.

Peroni, L. "Incontro con Pier Paola Pasolini." *Inquadrature* n. 15-16, Autumn 1968: 35-36. Print.

Pier Paolo Pasolini. Ed. Paul Willemen. London British: Film Institute, 1977. Print.

"*Pier Paolo Pasolini ritira la firma dal film* La rabbia." Ed. Maurizio Liverani. *Paese sera*, 14 Apr 1963. Print.

Petraglia, Sandro. *Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Firenze: Il Castoro Cinema, La Nuova Italia, 1974. Print.

Pound, Ezra, and Sieburth, Richard. *New Selected Poems and Translations*. New York, NY: New Directions Pub. Corp, 2010. Print.

Prédal, René. "L'évangile selon Saint-Matthieu: du l'évènement au sacré," *Avant-scène du cinema 175-176*, 1964. Print.

Repetto, Antonio. *Invito al cinema di Pasolini*. Milano: Mursia, 1998. Print.

Ricketts, Jill *M. Visualizing Boccaccio: studies on illustrations of The Decameron, from Giotto to Pasolini.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Print.

Ronsisvalle, Vanni. ed. "Intervista di Pier Paolo Pasolini ad Ezra Pound del 26 ottobre 1967." Associazione "Fondo Pier Paolo Pasolini" di Roma. Web. 10 Aug 2014. ‹http://www.oilproject.org/lezione/ezra-pound-pier-paolo-pasolini-poesia-canti-pisani-1942.html›.

Rumble, Patrick. *Allegories of Contamination: Pasolini's "Trilogy of Life"*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996. Print.

Rusconi, Marisa. "4 registri al magnetofono." *Sipario*, October 1964. Print.

Rusconi, Marisa. "Pier Paolo Pasolini e l'autobiografia." *Sipario* n.258, Oct 1967. Print.

Sade, Marquis De. "La vérité." Web. 10 Aug 2014. ‹http://www.sade-ecrivain.com/verite.html›.

Sade, Marquis De. *Les 120 Journées de Sodome, ou, L'école du Libertinage*. Paris: Union générale d'éditions, 1998. Print.

Schneede, Uwe M. *George Grosz. Vita e opere*. Milano: Mazzotta, 1977. Print.

Schwartz B. D. "Pasolini-rekviem." Trans. Júlia Csantavéri. *Filmvilág*, March 2000. Print.

Shahn, Ben. *La forma e il contenuto*. Roma: Editori Riuniti, 1964: 11. Print.

Shaw, George Bernard. *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview, 2005. Print.

Siciliano, Enzo. *Vita di Pasolini*. Milano: Rizzoli, 1978. Print.

Smith, Geoffrey-Nowell. "Pasolini's Originality." *Pier Paolo Pasolini*. Ed. Paul Willemen. London British: Film Institute, 1977: 11-12. Print.

Spinazzola, V. "Al Cristo di Pasolini manca la dimensione religiosa." *Vie Nuove*, 10 dicembre 1964. Print.

Stack, Oswald. *Pasolini on Pasolini*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1969. Print.

Stridbeck, C.G. *"Combat between Carnival and Lent" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder*, *Journal of the Warburg & Courtald Institutes* 19 (1/2), 1956: 96-109. Print.

Subini, Tommaso. *La necessità di morire. Il cinema di Pier Paolo Pasolini e il sacro*. Roma: EdS, 2007. Print.

Sylvester, David. *Interviews with Francis Bacon.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1950. Print.

The New Jerusalem Bible. Ed. Susan Jones. New York: Doubleday, 1985. Print.

"The Waste Land."By *Thomas Stearns Eliot: The Poetry Foundation*. Web. 17 Jan. 2014. ‹http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/176735›.

Tolstoy, Leo. *Death of Ivan Ilich*. Trans. Louise and Aymler Maude. Boston: Houghton, 1904. Print.

Ventura, G. "Pasolini difende *Teorema* dalle accuse di oscenità." *ll Gazzettino*, 10 Nov 1968. Print.

Viano, Maurizio. *A Certain Realism. Making Use of Pasolini's Film Theory and Practice*. Berkeley, Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1993. Print.

Watson, Paul F. "The Cement of Fiction: Giovanni Boccaccio and the Painters of Florence." *Modern Language Notes* 99 n. 1, January 1984: 43–64. Print.

Wilde, Oscar. *Salomè*. New York: Dover Publications, 2002. Print.

Zigaina, Giuseppe. *Pasolini e la morte, Mito alchimia e semantica del "Nulla Lucente"*. Venezia: Marsilio, 1987. Print.

Zigaina, Giuseppe. *P.P. Pasolini: organizzar il trasumanar*. Venezia: Marsilio, 1999. Print.