A POSTMODERN 'NEW' WAVE?
Sicily, Women, and the Gendering of Seascape in Contemporary Italian Cinema

Antonio D'Amico*

Abstract

Recent scholarship on the marginalization of women across the Mediterranean has reframed the issue of gender inequality on labour, culture, and religion. This paper examines how recent cinematic representations of women across Italian films set in Sicily reproduce regressive gender politics on a symbolic level. To this end, my discussion focuses on two contemporary texts: *È stata la mano di Dio / The Hand of God* (Paolo Sorrentino, 2021) and *L'attesa / The Wait* (Piero Messina, 2015). My comparison highlights how both films rearticulate a set of aesthetic strategies previously adopted by Modernist Italian directors to frame the island's female inhabitants through the prism of religious iconography. Hence, I interrogate the meaning of mobilizing these formal operations in a postmodern register to argue that *È stata la mano di Dio* and *L'attesa*'s aestheticizing framing of womanhood in a Mediterranean space is emblematic of a broader tendency in contemporary Italian cinema. This trend manifests itself in the two films' construction of gender through the conversion of mythical archetypes and Catholic iconography into a series of floating signifiers. Accordingly, my analysis probes the inherent limitations of the postmodern attempt to portray the experience of women through a Christian and Classical male-oriented iconographic tradition *vis-à-vis* the work of contemporary women filmmakers offering alternative representations of their own experience on the shores of the Mediterranean.

Keywords: Contemporary Italian Cinema, Mediterranean Studies, Piero Messina, Paolo Sorrentino, Sicily

In a 2016 article titled *Una certa tendenza del cinema italiano*, Vito Zagarrio invokes François Truffaut's renowned 1954 piece to celebrate

* Yale University
I wish to thank Prof. Millicent Marcus for her feedback on the first draft of this article as well as this journal editors' Prof. Giovanna Summerfield and Prof. Rosario Pollicino for their subsequent corrections.

the changing fortunes of contemporary Italian cinema: "While Italian cinema has not been *propheta in patria* for more than two decades, Italian films are now viewed with respect even by their own audiences."[1] Unlike Truffaut's inflammatory article, Zagarrio is mainly concerned with championing the work of a new generation of young directors. Chief among these is Piero Messina's debut feature *L'attesa* / *The Wait* (2015). Zagarrio upholds the film as the most emblematic sign of this rebirth.[2] His enthusiasm appears out of tune *vis-à-vis* the deep pessimism surrounding the decline and crisis of Italian cinema.[3] This attitude has been denounced by Pierpaolo Antonello as a "misuse of the concept of 'crisis' in Italian critical discourse" which has "neglected crucial aspects pertaining to film production and has proposed fairly simplistic, often highly ideological analyses on the relation between aesthetics and politics."[4] Similarly, Millicent Marcus challenges "the expectation that a cinematic revival must always follow the paradigms of earlier avant-gardes" as she claims that "it fails to take into account

1 Original Italian: "Mentre per più di due decenni il cinema italiano non è stato propheta in patria, ora i film italiani sono guardati con rispetto anche dal proprio pubblico." Vito Zagarrio. "Una certa tendenza del cinema italiano." *Flinders University Languages Group Online Review* 5.1 (2016): 8. Zagarrio develops this thesis in *Nouvelle vague italiana: Il cinema del nuovo millennio*. Marsilio Editori spa, 2022; François Truffaut, "A certain tendency of the French Cinema," in *Movies and Methods*, translated by Bill Nichols (University of California Press Berkely, Los Angeles, London: 1976): 221 – 237. All translations from Italian to English are mine.

2 Born in Caltagirone in 1981, Messina began his filmmaking career while attending the DAMS of Roma Tre with *Stidda ca curri* (2004). The short won the first prize at the 50th Taormina Film Festival (2004), where the young Sicilian filmmaker met the festival's main juror and his future collaborator, Paolo Sorrentino. Before the two began working together, Messina studied at the *Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia* graduating in 2012. In the meantime, he shot the historical documentary *Pirrera* (2006), which chronicles the decline of inland Sicily's sulphur mining industry. Messina began working as the assistant director for Sorrentino's English language film *This must be the place* (2011) and the Oscar winning *La grande bellezza / The Great Beauty* (2013). Following *L'attesa*, Messina returned to making smaller projects.

3 See for instance Luca Barattoni, *Italian post-neorealist cinema*. Edinburgh University Press, 2012.

4 Original Italian: "abuso della nozione di 'crisi' nel contesto critico italiano (…) trascurato aspetti cruciali inerenti la produzione cinematografica e proponendo analisi alquanto schematiche, spesso fortemente ideologizzate, rispetto al rapporto tra estetica e politica." Pierpaolo Antonello. "Di crisi in meglio. Realismo, impegno postmoderno e cinema politico nell'Italia degli anni zero: da Nanni Moretti a Paolo Sorrentino." *Italian studies* 67.2 (2012): 169.

the vastly altered cultural context within which the current cinema must operate (…) in this age of postmodern simulation, the cinema's vocation for reference (…) requires deliberate strategies of resistance and reinvention."[5] But to what extent does *L'attesa* represent, if not the herald of what Zagarrio admits is an impossibility (i.e., a new New Wave), at least a sign of renewal?

This article challenges this idea and suggests that, on the contrary, the film merely reproduces old *Nouvelle Vague* clichés about feminine imperviousness while having little if anything that is substantially new to communicate to its audience. At the same time, my discussion suggests that *L'attesa*'s lack of depth is indicative of a certain tendency in contemporary Italian cinema. This inclination manifests itself most explicitly in the articulation of some of the aesthetic strategies employed by 20th-century Italian directors to frame womanhood through the lens of religious iconography. To illustrate that *L'attesa* is not an isolated instance, the following paragraphs will briefly consider the latest film of Messina's former collaborator as well as the most renowned contemporary Italian director, Paolo Sorrentino.

In a particularly significant moment taking place towards the end of Sorrentino's *È stata la mano di Dio / The Hand of God* (2021), the orphaned Fabio momentarily leaves Naples to spend time in Stromboli, 243 kilometers away from his native city.[6] Upon disembarking on Stromboli's black ashen shores, Sorrentino's camera captures the sight of a naked woman.[7] The woman stands in shallow water and is recorded by a high-angle bird's-eye-view framing her body on screen right as she walks toward the shoreline (screen left). Before long, however, the sea 'nymph' plunges into the water and vanishes from our sight. Without lingering any further, a cut fishes her washed ashore sunbathing on the beach. Her body is now on full display for the camera. Much like Haydée's beach stroll in

5 Millicent Marcus, *After Fellini: National cinema in the postmodern age* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2002), 8.

6 In a film that is otherwise almost entirely set in Naples and its immediate surroundings – except for Maria and Saverio's tragic death in Roccaraso – the significance of this brief excursion is immediately apparent.

7 This image is preceded by two shots depicting Fabio's arrival on the island aboard a ferry, a set-up that is highly reminiscent of Nanni Moretti's odyssey across the Aeolians in the second episode (i.e., *Isole*) of *Caro diario* (1993). Yet, Sorrentino's use of formal devices foregrounding his authorial presence in the text / behind the camera marks a significant departure from Moretti's minimalist style. The former's adoption of oblique camera angles and of shallow focus (just as Stromboli erupts!) offer a much more overt display of directorial bravado.

the opening moments of Éric Rohmer's *La Collectionneuse* (1967), the woman's emergence reenacts the – post-Renaissance iconography of the – birth of Venus from sea foam.[8] This is further underlined by the contrast between her pale complexion and the black sand. Moreover, her appearance establishes a direct link between the small Mediterranean island and the female body, a gendering of seascape which gains in narrative significance in relation to the dramatic function Stromboli performs in Fabio's journey as a negative image of urban Naples – despite both spaces being similarly plunged in a cobalt blue Mediterranean.

The following shots anchor what the camera has hitherto displayed to Fabio's voyeuristic position. A 'reverse' shot frames the adolescent before he too appears naked before the camera, covering his genitals with a bush. This is, in turn, revealed as the perspective of his older brother Marco.[9] This recursive play of gazes is interrupted by five shots framing a grieving Fabio against the slopes of the island's volcanic cone, momentarily turning the young man into a solitary 'Romantic' figure contemplating nature much as he contemplated the naked woman earlier. However, not before long, the landscape is overhauled by a flashback bringing us back to Na-

8 *The Collector* explores balneal heterosexual relationships by deconstructing the Medusean male point of view. This is most explicit in the film's opening moments. Following a brief credit sequence accompanied by a drumming soundtrack playing against a blue backdrop gesturing towards the film's Mediterranean setting, a title card which reads "Haydée" introduces the film's first prologue. The sequence is 1:03-minute and is comprised of seven shots (ASL = 9 seconds) of decreasing length. In the opening 23-second shot, the camera follows the short-haired blonde walking on the shoreline wearing a two-piece swimsuit in a panning high-angle long shot. A cut-in shows her tanned feet splashing in the water and plunging in the sand, an image which gestures towards the Venus archetype of a woman arising from sea foam. Haydée turns around and moves in the opposite direction before stopping and turning her feet towards the camera. The male gaze turns her into a static, lifeless object. A medium close-up showing her frozen statuesque pose is followed by a series of shots encapsulating cinematographer Néstor Almendros's minimalist compositions which fragment her body into static close-ups of her shoulder blades, the back of her knees and her collarbones converging in her jugular notch. In the sequence's final shot, the camera travels across her body from feet to head by tilting upwards before lingering on a shallow focus close-up framing Haydée's profile against the sea's blue backdrop.

9 Fabietto stands up (match-cut) and the film cuts to a long-shot showing him walking away from the camera towards the sea before a high-angle shot of Marco gazing towards screen right while sunbathing next to a friend – a backgammon board lying between them – situates this as his perspective.

ples.[10] The film then returns to sea level, setting a dialogue between Fabio and Marco lasting twelve shots (organized according to a shot/reverse shot logic) on a pier. As Fabio puts it: "we are not rich… we have to understand what we want to do when we grow up."[11] Unlike the previous shots, the final six shots are set at night and are also conspicuously devoid of Fabio's presence. The camera abandons the protagonist to show the ferry's nighttime departure from the island. His absence provides this moment with its oneiric quality, allowing the anonymous collectivity to emerge from the background. In fact, the sequence ends by showing a significant number of people jumping in the sea in a fable-like moment.

The sequence is devoid of non-diegetic music. In its place, the score accompanying Fabio's journey to Stromboli interweaves the sound of the ferry's engines with an earthly symphony of waves and volcanic explosions. Similarly, the film itself ends with another departure, only this time not *to* but *from* his native city, the train carrying a matured Fabio to Rome to jumpstart his career in cinema self-reflexively gesturing towards the medium itself (or the film strip's rotation).[12] At the same time, the *monacello* who waves good-bye to him represents Naples and its rich folkloristic traditions which Fabio leaves behind to the tune of Pino Daniele's *Napule è* (1977). The film's final moments encapsulate the nostalgic pastiche of 1980s Italian popular culture (Maradona, television, Oriana Fallaci's books), filmic references to Sorrentino's adoptive masters (Federico Fellini and Antonio Capuano) and quasi-Oedipal adolescent sexual desire (directed at Fabio's voluptuous and neurotic aunt representing his muse and, to a certain extent, his elderly neighbor) dominating the film's auto-biographical *Bildungsroman*. Whereas the opening shots of traffic appear to go beyond citation and verge (much as *La grande bellezza* (2013)) on plagiarism of *8 ½* (Federico Fellini, 1963), the off-screen inclusion of a perverted Fellini foregrounds Sorrentino's conscious attempt to distance himself from Fellini's legacy and step outside his shadow (even while making his own *Armacord*!), a position in which *La grande bellezza* put the Neapolitan

10 Fabio puts on his earphones but instead of prompting diegetic music, this gesture is followed by a cut to the earlier shot depicting Fabio and his parents on a scooter which introduced the characters to the audience, thus returning us to the film's opening moments, a small subversion of expectations placing us directly inside the character's mind.

11 Original Italian: "non siamo ricchi… dobbiamo capire cosa vogliamo fare da grandi."

12 Much as the repeated appearance of a VHS tape of *C'era una volta in America* / *Once Upon a Time in America* (Sergio Leone, 1984) in Fabio's house.

director in and which is one of, if not the reason of his staggering domestic and international success.

On the one hand, Fabio's destination at the end of the film represents the center of gravity of Italian cinema. On the other hand, the protagonist's brief albeit significant trip to the Eolian islands situates him in a space defined by a palimpsestic layering of film history – as Giovanna Taviani's *Fughe e approdi* (2010) highlights. Notwithstanding its link to classical iconography, the film's landing on the island exemplifies the extent to which Sorrentino's representation of gender is coterminous with that of his adolescent protagonist. The naked woman is likely a tourist and hence the film has little to say about native islanders. Their absence identifies the island as a holiday destination for young people. At the same time, the image of womanhood that the film stages for the camera (motivated diegetically by Fabietto's position as the narrative's focalizer) is quite eloquent about the broader issue of the cinematic representation of the place of women on the shores of the Mediterranean in the age of mass tourism.

Within the textual economy of the film, Stromboli sets the stage for the urban tourist's primitivist return to nature (performed through nudism) to find himself in a time of crisis.[13] Accordingly, the sublime seascape shots of the island could be read in opposition to the film's urban setting, but this becomes increasingly difficult when considering the amount of screen time Sorrentino devotes to the Gulf of Naples. In fact, it is no coincidence that the film opens with a long and uninterrupted bird's-eye-view of the bay. In addition, the film's climactic sequence silhouettes Fabietto's dialogue with Antonio Capuano against the gulf in a highly evocative and quasi-surrealist moment marking the protagonist's maturation into manhood – Capuano 'rebaptizes' him as Fabio before he dives into the sea and disappears from the film. In this context, one could easily draw a connection between Sorrentino's filmic representations of Naples and Stromboli and the many parallelisms between Roberto Rossellini's *Stromboli – terra di Dio* (1950) and his framing of Capri in *Viaggio in Italia* (1953), starting from their Northern European female protagonists played by Ingrid Bergman. At the same time, it would be more productive to turn in the opposite direction, sixty kilometers south of Stromboli, and situate Sorrentino's brief engagement with the *isole* '*circumsiciliane*' in relation to the screening of Sicily in the debut feature of his former assistant Messina.

13 It is quite interesting that the sequence is preceded by an extremely high angle shot of the house framing a bored Fabietto staring at the television before he turns off the television with his father's stick, disconnecting himself from the imagined community created by low-brow mass entertainment.

Early on in *L'attesa*, Messina offers a set-up echoing the apparition of a sea nymph in *È stata la mano di Dio* quite closely. Following an elaborate transition which sees a shot of the sky dissolve into an underwater shot, a woman in a bikini appears before the camera as she swims to the surface. However, unlike in Sorrentino's film, she does not emerge on the seashore, but rather in the middle of the lake of Santa Rosalia, a small artificial lake situated in inland Sicily and a womb-like space staging a symbolic link between water and procreation. Although seemingly unimportant, this moment is quite revealing. First, the lake functions as a simulacrum of the Mediterranean, thematizing the displacement of characters and events across more inessential effigies. Indeed, it is no coincidence that this moment is repeated later in the film. On this other occasion, however, the woman appears to a small audience, emerging beside a small boat to the sight of two male spectators. If the siren in Lampedusa'a *La Sirena* is an allegory of classical literature, the two swimmers in *L'attesa* and *È stata la mano di Dio* can be read as allegories of cinema as a medium devoted to the display of erotic spectacles. Yet, unlike the woman who disappears before Fabietto, the 'siren' in Messina's film is not merely an unnamed apparition. She is the deuteragonist, and as such, she performs various other functions within the film's narrative.

Screened at the 72nd Venice film festival, Messina's film was met by seven minutes of clapping.[14] However, upon its domestic release on September 17, the film received a mixed critical reception. A transnational co-production, the film was produced by the Italian *Indigo Film* – the production company behind Sorrentino's earlier 2010s works. And much like *La grande bellezza* and *Youth* (2015), the film was distributed by *Medi-aset* and French production companies *Barbary films* and *Pathé*. Its plot is overtly allegorical and Pirandellian. Set during Easter, *L'attesa* follows Anna, a divorced French woman (played by Juliette Binoche) transplanted in Sicily. After attending the funeral of her son Giuseppe, Anna returns to her empty mansion and shuts herself off from the world, inside a cavernous domestic space. Mirrors are covered with black cloths, windows are barred closed, and the screen falls into darkness, as a motionless Anna is pushed to the edge of the frame in highly unbalanced shots reflecting her inner state. The film seems to come to a halt, returning to the primordial state of undifferentiated darkness of its opening moments. This trend is suddenly reversed by a phone ringing. Technology rekindles Anna's link to the world.

14 The film was screened alongside another Sicilian island film set in Pantelleria: Luca Guadagnino's remake of Jacques Deray's 1969 *La Piscine*, *A Bigger Splash* (2015).

A swift fade overturns the gradual dimming of the image to white. The call announces an unexpected visitor: her son's French girlfriend Jeanne and the abovementioned siren figure. Jeanne is unaware that Giuseppe is dead, and upon her arrival, Anna avoids informing her about it to pretend that her son is still alive. Indeed, she tells Jeanne that Giuseppe will return for Easter. Hence, the two women begin waiting in the mansion and its rural surrounding, allowing the film to linger on the island's landscape throughout its 100-minute running time.

Interviewed by Mariella Caruso, Messina describes Sicily as ubiquitous in his work. As he puts it, "Even if I did a science fiction series, there would be Sicily in its fabric."[15] This is not the case with *L'attesa*, as the film is set entirely on the island. Conversely, Fabio's sojourn in Stromboli only lasts 4:37 minutes, i.e., 3,69% of *È stata la mano di Dio*'s 125-minute running time. In a similar fashion, Messina purports a strong attraction to the world of women. As he puts it, "I inhabit the female world, it intrigues me, and I fall in love with it. I have a very strong relationship with my mother on whom I modelled the protagonist of The Wait played by Juliette Binoche."[16] Accordingly, the film revolves around these two thematic coordinates: Sicily and women. Yet, it is interesting to note that the character Binoche portrays bears striking affinities to the ageing actress she plays in the French-Swiss-German co-production *Clouds of Sils Maria* (Olivier Assayas, 2014).[17]

15 Original Italian: "Anche se facessi una serie di fantascienza nel suo tessuto ci sarebbe la Sicilia."
Piero Messina quoted by Mariella Caruso, "Il regista Piero Messina tra Artemisia e Mika," in *Volevo fare il Giornalista*, November 1, 2022. https://www.volevofareilgiornalista.it/il-regista-piero-messina-tra-il-doc-artemisia-e-stasera-casamika/. Accessed on October 22, 2022.

16 Original Italian: "quello femminile è un mondo che abito, m'incuriosisce e di cui m'innamoro. Ho un rapporto molto forte con mia madre sulla quale ho modellato la protagonista de *L'attesa* interpretata da Juliette Binoche." Ibid.

17 Assayas's film offers an interesting point of comparison. Its narrative follows Maria's (Binoche) preparation for a role in a play aided by her younger assistant Valentine (Kristen Stewart) and explores themes of generational replacement, the loss of youth and art criticism. She is set to star alongside the young and up and coming actress Jo-Ann (Chloë Grace Moretz) in a play about the entanglement between an older woman and her younger assistant self-reflexively mirroring the relationship between the film's protagonists. In a moment recalling Anna's disappearance (through a dissolve) on the rocky shores of Lisca bianca in Michelangelo Antonioni's *L'avventura* (1960), Valentine disappears (from the film) in the grassy plateaus near the Maloja Pass, the site of a unique meteorological phenomenon documented by Arnold Frank's 1924 short *Cloud Phenomena of*

But Messina's representation of place and gender does not merely reflect the experience of womanhood in Sicily. Instead, it actively participates in the production of the meaning of both 'woman' and 'Sicily' through a set of binary oppositions.[18] In her analysis of the representation of gender in Italian cinema between the 40s and the 60s, Maggie Günsberg builds on the theoretical paradigms of classical 1970s feminist film criticism through the work of Judith Butler and identifies a tension between a dynamic and a static construction of gender (i.e., gender as either process or fixity). The latter, she argues, is most apparent in genres pivoting around body-spectacle and the visual pleasure of dissolving boundaries (i.e., peplum, horror, and spaghetti western).[19] Conversely, notwithstanding the consonance of their names, Jeanne and Anna embody two distinct but similarly static modes of womanhood. While the younger woman is both an object to-be-looked-at (according to Mulvey's classical 1970s formulation) and an active desiring subject, the older woman's divorced status allows her to embody her role as a mother. In fact, Anna prides herself on being the first woman to have divorced in the *ragusano* (i.e., the area where the film takes place).

In recent years, scholarship in the field of Italian film studies has shifted its focus to more contemporary texts raising contemporary issues such as the representation of queer identities, gender mobility, and migration. For instance, Bernadette Luciano and Susanna Scarparo describe contemporary Italian migrant films as inviting the audience to sympathize with "migrant and female characters" in "a nation of transformed landscapes which is still desperately holding on to traditional cultural and gender myths."[20] Conversely, Messina's film appears to continue to

---

Maloja. Assayas's meta-cinematic inclusion of Frank's mountain film (within the film) evokes a key cinematic genre in the ideology of Nazism (Leni Riefenstahl is the star of many of his films) with direct links to German Romanticism. While it could be argued that *L'attesa* too shares some Romantic affinities (given the place Sicily holds in Goethe's writing), it is more interesting to note that both films are about the relationship between two women haunted by the absence of a dead man (in the case of *Clouds of Sils Maria,* the author of the play).

18 For instance, Friedrich Kittler argues that Victorian-inflected early cinema is directly producing (rather than reproducing) female hysteria. Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, film, typewriter* (Stanford University Press, 1999): 124.

19 Maggie Günsberg, *Italian cinema: gender and genre* (New York: Springer, 2005)

20 Bernadette Luciano and Susanna Scarparo, "Gendering mobility and migration in contemporary Italian cinema", *The Italianist* 30.2 (2010): 178. See also Bernadette Luciano and Susanna Scarparo, *Reframing Italy: New Trends in Italian Women's Filmmaking*, Vol. 59 (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2013).

hold onto these traditional myths. Chief among them is the connection between Anna (and thus womanhood) and domesticity, which Giuliana Bruno frames as supporting the gender binary opposition underpinning a static view of identity in which "domus, domesticity, and domestication continue to be confused and gendered feminine" and the gendered domus or home as female, understood as antithetical to voyage, becomes the "very site of the production of sexual difference."[21]

Although Jeanne and Anna are defined by their shared ethnic and national affiliations (i.e., white metropolitan French), they are subjected to vastly different degrees of objectification – which are inversely proportional to both their age and their rootedness in the film's setting. The younger Jeanne is both exoticized and conscripted to exoticize Sicily through her tourist gaze. While also an outsider, the older Anna appears to have assimilated the local customs and is quite at ease in her role as a wealthy upper-class woman who does not have to work. Indeed, much of the film's generic pleasure lies in the camera's display of her landed property. Her mansion offers the (*gattopardo*-esque) spectacle of an aristocratic dwelling. In addition, we are constantly reminded of her social status by her delegation of domestic labor to her housekeeper. Hence, the specific type of womanhood she embodies cannot be divorced from either her race (lest one falls into white solipsism) or her social class. In fact, she appears quite distinct from another Pirandellian mother roaming the Sicilian countryside on the screen: the destitute and illiterate Mariagrazia who is split across two timelines intersecting the macro-historical events of the Risorgimento in the first episode (i.e., "L'altro figlio") of *Kaos* (Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, 1984).

On a formal level, the film is punctuated by a series of self-reflexive, meta-cinematic moments offering a way into its construction. In the opening credits sequence, for instance, a static interior shot silhouettes various static figures against Mount Etna in a Surrealist image recalling the view of the mountain from Taormina in the closing shot of *L'avventura* (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1960).[22] The mountain is framed by a large window

21 Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film*, (New York: Verso, 2007), 85.

22 The citation is overt, but the tone is quite different. Whereas in *L'attesa* Etna dominates the screen, in Antonioni's modernist film the mountain is pushed to the bottom left corner of the frame. Indeed, it is dwarfed by the wall which splits the screen in half and symbolizes the existential barrier between the two protagonists: Claudia and Sandro. Alternatively, the wall could be read as a warning against heavy-handed symbolic readings, a blank slate defying signification that

fragmenting its conic shape into various rectangular panels. The frame-within-a-frame composition explicitly recalls the film strip, thus thematizing the status of the cinematic image (of Sicily) as an image both textually and intertextually.

The constructedness of Etna's postcard-like image is foreshadowed by the earlier top-down X-Ray shot scanning the objects inside various bags, scrolling screen left as they pass through controls. Coincidentally, one of these objects is a pair of women's heels. Their skeletal contours explicitly recall both Anna's footwear in the film's opening sequence and Andy Warhol's *Diamond Dust Shoes* (1980). By extension, this parallelism evokes the opposition that Fredric Jameson draws between Warhol's negative image and Vincent van Gogh's *A Pair of Shoes* in his analysis of Postmodernism.[23] In this context, the lived-in heels Anna wears at Giuseppe's funeral gravitate towards the paradigm exemplified by the latter. Their appearance signposts the scene's circular closure, and thus they emerge as particularly significant. The camera's descending movement follows Anna's tears as they soak her feet before dropping to the floor, a composition paralleling the camera's elaborate rotation around a statue of a crucified Christ (representing Giuseppe) in the film's opening shot.

This overabundance of visual and symbolical allusions carries over to the sequence depicting Jeanne's journey through Sicily. The film eschews plausibility and has her take a detour through the barren slopes of Etna. Its infernal landscape stages her encounter with a mourning statue of the Virgin Mary wrapped in black plastic. The statue will only be unveiled in the film's final moments when in the streets of Caltagirone, where Anna finds herself on the eve of Easter Sunday. While the statue's initial apparition foreshadows Jeanne's encounter with Anna, this later moment marks a pivotal moment of mirror stage identification – as a point of view shot makes explicit. Yet, Jeanne's journey through Hell carries both Scriptural and pagan echoes, the transformation of the island into a barren landscape

---

inhibits the reification of nature under a picturesque register. See Rosalind Galt, "On *L'Avventura* and the picturesque," *Antonioni: Centenary Essays* (London: BFI Publishing, 2011). Nonetheless,the hand of the modernist artist behind this cold and calculated formalist framing conveying existential dread makes itself felt. While the man caught in a fedifragous act looks down in shame, Claudia rises 'above' the mountain. She mediates our view of the landscape, operating as a diegetic observer refracting our gaze. Conversely, Messina's highly impactful image is devoid of narrative weight and operates merely on a self-referential and touristic level.

23 Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism* (Durham: Duke university press, 1991), 58.

closer to the underworld evoking both Good Friday and the Harrowing of Hell, as well as the myths of Orpheus and Ceres.

Upon Jeanne's arrival at the mansion, Anna spies on the young woman's naked body through the crack of a door – a voyeuristic position echoing that of Norman Bates in *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960). Following a brief misunderstanding that once again thematizes the idea of copies and simulacra (Jeanne mistakes Anna's sister-in-law for Anna), the two women start to bond over the memory of the deceased Giuseppe. Anna takes Jeanne to the artificial lake and once again stares at Jeanne as she undresses before diving into the water. Yet, in both instances her presence carries little narrative weight and appears as more of an excuse to display Jeanne's body to the camera's male gaze.

But *L'attesa* thematizes film spectatorship even more explicitly in a later sequence by showing Pietro, Anna's house steward, watching Mauro Bolognini's 1959 black and white comedy *Arrangiatevi* on a small television. The film-within-the-film shows Totò playing tug-of-war with an old man in Rome's urban periphery. The two are cheered by a small proletarian crowd – an audience reflecting Pietro/the spectator's position. After a quick panning shot framing the rope from one end to the other, the film cuts between the two men showing Totò's slapstick physical performance. Messina's choice to show this moment is not casual. Indeed, on a thematic level, the scene echoes the generational themes that Messina's film explores through homosocial relationships, albeit through the opposite gender. Nothing could be further away from *L'attesa*'s meditative exploration of female bonds than a comedic fight between two old patriarchs. Yet, this juxtaposition allows Messina's representation of womanhood to emerge even more forcefully.[24] Moreover, on a formal level, the film-within-a-film foregrounds the same visual doubling technique that Messina adopts to link his characters into mirroring couples. In addition, the opposition between Anna and Jeanne does not lead to a physical scuffle but develops dialectically through a series of dialogues culminating in Jeanne's infidelity.

This trajectory becomes most explicit in the scene depicting Jeanne and Anna's visit to the *Villa Romana del Casale* in Piazza Armerina. The 1:15-minute sequence set in the ruins of another aristocratic mansion comprises eight shots, resulting in a contemplative 9.38-second ASL. This is roughly equivalent to the 9.23-second ASL emerging in the

24 Much like the representation of women in Sorrentino's film is in the service of and brings to the fore his representation of boyhood and brotherhood.

4:37-minute sequence showing Fabio's journey to the Aeolians in thirty shots. This formal affinity reflects the two films' ideological proximity. An establishing long shot shows the two women arriving at the archaeological site at night. An iron structure divides the screen into a series of rectangular frames(within-a-frame), evoking the opening shot fragmenting Mount Etna. As a result, the image possesses a strong symmetrical (hence static) composition. Shot in low-key lighting, Anna and Jeanne are silhouetted against the pavilion surrounding the ruins. As they move screen left, their shadows appear in the lower half of the frame moving in their opposite direction. This proto-cinematic phantasmagoria recalls both Plato's cave and Jean-Louis Baudry's Platonic description of the cinematic apparatus.[25] Moreover, they foreshadow the ground-level shots displaying the villa's mosaic floors. These culminate in a high angle-shot of the 'bikini girls' mosaic in the *Sala delle Dieci Ragazze*. A voice-off accompanies their appearance providing a sociological explanation to their representation: "The mosaic depicts ten women in bikinis putting on a show in honor of the goddess Tethys. Judging from their bodies, we can deduce that beauty standards were different from those today. In the first centuries, three out of ten women died in childbirth. Wide hips, hence, the chance of surviving childbirth, were greatly valued by men back then." The *subligacula* (loincloth) and *strophia* (breastband) worn by these figures – Roman women were allowed to compete amongst themselves but not naked – inevitably recalls the swimwear Jeanne wears in the earlier scene, prompting Anna to underly the generational gap separating them:

> "You thought Louis Réard invented it?"
> "Huh?"
> "The bikini. That's before your time." [26]

25 Jean-Louis Baudry and Alan Williams, "Ideological effects of the basic cinematographic apparatus," *Film Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1974): 39-47.

26 Drawing on Patrik Alac's 2002 *The Bikini: A Cultural History*, David Abdulafia suggests that in the postwar period the display of the body became increasingly common. As he notes, while the bikini was first exhibited "at a fashion show in Paris in 1946," it only started to be widely adopted in the following decades, as people began exposing increasing amounts of skin. In 1948 it was banned in both Italy and Spain, but the influx of foreign tourists reversed the tide. David Abdulafia*, The great sea: a human history of the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

A long shot situates the previous framing of the mosaic as a POV by showing Jeanne and Anna standing on a raised platform above it. The two are positioned in a perfectly symmetrical shot separating them into distinct frames (much like the shot of Totò and his Istrian neighbour in *Arrangiatevi*). While Jeanne looks down at the mosaic, Anna glances at the couple beside her and awkwardly stares at them as they listen to an audio recording revealing the source of the voice-off. Shortly thereafter, the two women are silhouetted against the mosaic in an extremely high-angle over the shoulder view, breaking once again the 180-degree rule while maintaining some degree of spatial coherence. This mirroring juxtaposition invites two possible interpretative strategies: are Jeanne and Anna active spectators looking at a pre-modern screen, or is the film projecting them on the mosaic, collapsing them on the same level as the flat figures dancing below them? As Messina's framing of the two across the scenes that I have considered above suggests, the latter seems to be the case. When Anna leaves the frame on screen right, the film (match)cuts back to this camera set-up. But when Jeanne follows her off-screen the shot remains momentarily 'empty', lingering on the mosaic (partially covered by the balustrade) for four seconds as we hear the steps of the two women walking off-screen. This post-neorealist detaching of the camera from the narrative subjects displays Giuseppe's ghostly perspective much as Antonioni's camera reflects Anna's perspective when following Sandro and Claudia throughout their journey across Sicily in *L'Avventura*.

The film is punctuated by a series of similarly 'lyrical' or 'poetic' (or at least attempting to be so) instances. For instance, the same formal operation is performed to show the close-up of a thread blowing in the wind, a plastic cup rolling on a table, and an exterior long-shot of an inflated sunbed flying in a courtyard. The conspicuous lack of human presence coupled with the animation of an inanimate object inevitably recalls the Zen-inspired metaphysical pulsion of Yasujirō Ozu's cinema (e.g., *Banshun / Late Spring* (1949)) and what Noel Burch refers to as "pillow shots."[27] Their insertion introduces an element of discontinuity

27 Burch defines pillow shots as shots which "never contribute to the progress of the narrative proper" while "often refer(ing) to a character or a set, presenting or re-presenting it out of narrative context. The space from which these references are made is invariably presented as outside the diegesis, as a pictorial space on another plane of 'reality' as it were, even when the artefacts are, as is often the case, seen previously or subsequently in shots that belong wholly to the diegesis." Noël Burch, *To the distant observer: Form and meaning in the Japanese cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 161-2.

in the construction of diegetic space. This aesthetic device is already present in Messina's earlier work. An analogous moment appears in the short film *Terra* (2012), for instance, when the camera shows a cutaway of the wind pushing a plastic chair on a ferry's deck.[28] However, the significance of these moments lies not in their aesthetic value, but in their inherent ephemerality exacerbated by their derivative nature.

In this context, Messina's four-minute short advertisement commissioned by Armani *Films of City Frames* (2014) emerges as particularly significant *vis-à-vis* the aesthetic trajectories of his work and that of Sorrentino, as well as, more broadly, of Italian cinema. The film opens with a collection of picturesque views of Rome that is immediately reminiscent of Sorrentino's *La grande bellezza*. Its grandiose framing of the Tiber at golden hour encapsulates Italian cinema's gravitational pull towards the Eternal city. Rome's urban landscape is accompanied by a voice-over reciting Louis-Ferdinand Céline's 1932 *Voyage au bout de la nuit*. Before long, the city's skyline is revealed as a mere reflection appearing inside the lens of a pair of Armani sunglasses resting on a table where a man (i.e., 'Sorrentino') is writing the screenplay of *La grande bellezza*. Hence, it displays its status as a companion piece to a text that is already parasitical, notwithstanding the degree of self-awareness that *La grande bellezza* demonstrates about its indebtedness to Fellini's *La dolce vita* (1960). Yet, the high-art pretensions that *Films of City Frames* displays unveils the shallowness of both works. The corporate advertisement unmasks the highbrow text. Both are similarly rooted in the Neoliberal commodification of the city's architectural beauty. Messina's competently made short about an artist's Romantic engagement (filtered through sunglasses) with Rome's cityscape has very little substance of its own. This is exemplified by the Surrealist interaction between a catatonic friar and a woman seducing him. The decadent subversion of Catholic iconography evokes Fellini's desecrating masquerades Christian ritual.

However, both Sorrentino and Messina operate in a context in which the Catholic signifiers overturned by Fellini's parodic representations have been thoroughly emptied of their meaning. And whereas the characters of *La grande bellezza* search for meaning in a world of anomie where grace

28 Set entirely on a ferry crossing the strait of Sicily, the 23-minute *Terra* was screened at the 65th Cannes Film Festival. The short follows a mysterious man who returns to Italy after many years. He wanders across the vessel's confined "heterotopic" space interacting with his fellow passengers in a series of brief conversations punctuating the film's episodic progression – thus further underlying its indebtedness to Elio Vittorini's work.

offers a tenuous line of flight, Messina's brief vignette is no deeper than the sun lenses it advertises. This postmodern lack of depth manifests itself most conspicuously in the way the religious allegory which the film is built around seems to go nowhere. Messina's attempt to craft a more personal (and hence more authentic) film by turning his camera to his native island – much as Sorrentino does by turning *É stata la mano di Dio* into a love letter to Naples – is ultimately devoid of substance. As a result, much like the characters in *L'attesa*, we find ourselves waiting for a miracle that will never happen.

My analysis, however, does not seek to offer a critical assessment of the film. Rather, it aims to probe the deeper implications of the aesthetic failures lying beneath the film's opulent surface. Overall, *L'attesa* is far from the resounding aesthetic success that Zagarrio celebrates. But while the film fails to be the herald of a 'new' Italian New Wave, it reveals quite a lot about the status of contemporary Italian cinema. Much as *É stata la mano di Dio*, it is steeped in a masculinist heritage that the original French *Nouvelle Vague* (1959-62) inherited but eventually overcame as *La Collectioneuse*'s self-awareness about its representation of gender demonstrates.[29] Conversely, Messina and Sorrentino appear too invested in their own prophetic vision to go beyond it. Thus, they are perhaps best understood in relation to Emanuele Crialese's 2002 *Respiro*, a film which Giuliana Muscio upholds as "belonging to the tradition of quality European cinema" antithetical to "dominant commercial cinema" (i.e., Hollywood) and whose "peculiar expressive strength (…) depends on its 'Sicilianity', on its representation of the Sicilian landscape, its social conventions and culture."[30] Unlike *Respiro*, *L'attesa* deals only tangentially with the experience of native Sicilian women and focuses instead on the island's adoptive daughters, plunging them in a milieu oversaturated with Catholic symbolism. However, its 'Sicilianity' should not be understood in essentialist terms. Sicily is not inherently unique as Don Fabrizio argues in *Il gattopardo* (Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, 1958), but rather, as Costanza Quatriglio (2020) suggests, it "is more correctly narrated as a meeting point between geographies, histories, and cultures rather than removed or extraneous to these,"

29 See Geneviève Sellier, *Masculine Singular: French New Wave Cinema*, trans. Kristin Ross (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

30 Giuliana Muscio, "Sicilian Film Productions: Between Europe and the Mediterranean Islands," in *We Europeans? Media, Representations, Identities*, ed. William Uricchio (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 178.

a conceptual shift, she argues, that should also be applied to both Italy and the European continent.[31]

Both Jeanne and Fabio's short but pivotal journeys to Sicily bear witness to the extent to which the island (and its surrounding archipelagos) occupies a privileged place in the history of Italian cinema.[32] The island's

31 Costanza Quatriglio, "Afterword," in *Sicily on Screen: Essays on the Representation of the Island and its Culture*, ed. Giovanna Summerfield (Jefferson: McFarland, 2020), 273-4. Indeed, as Quatriglio argues in an earlier interview: "I aspire to make international films, to narrate stories that will exit the belly button of my country. I do not want to be labeled as a Sicilian filmmaker; I do not like that because I feel I belong to the world. This is something I have always felt. I make my films in Sicily also because our cinema is conservative. One is Sicilian and makes films in Sicily because these are financed earlier and easier than other stories." Costanza Quatriglio quoted in Giovanna Summerfield, "Interview with Costanza Quatriglio (July 2012)," *Italian Women Filmmakers and the Gendered Screen*, ed. Maristella Cantini (New York: Palgrave macmillan, 2013), 268.

32 The imagined Sicily emerging in these works of fiction can be better understood as reproducing mythical archetypes about motherhood and fertility reinforcing traditional gender roles. Implications of female promiscuity (or Queerness) threatening entrenched social hierarchies are conjured on the screen only to be ultimately exorcised through laughter or tragedy. The latter is exemplified by the death of a young Sicilian woman who metonymically stands for the entire nation in the first episode of Rossellini's *Paisà* (1946). The high angle shot of her lifeless body lying on the island's rocky shores portrays Italy as the victim of the German occupier punishing her/the nation for welcoming American G.Is. The opposite strategy emerges in Ettore Scola's debut feature *Se permettete parliamo di donne* (1964), a low-brow comedy comprising nine lascivious vignettes set across the peninsula and starring Vittorio Gassman. Much like *Paisà*, the film's opening episode is set in rural Sicily. However, its tone is comedic rather than tragic, and its simple narrative about marital infidelity and brigands reproduces stereotypes about superstitious backwardness set against the increasingly secularized post-economic boom Italy.

The 9:14-minute episode opens with a horseman riding through a desertic landscape. The camera follows the man's journey to an isolated farmhouse exhibiting his thick eyebrows, his moustache, his flat cap (or *coppola*), and his shotgun. The film then cuts to an interior shot of a woman cooking dinner in her modest black attire. After she notices the mysterious stranger, a mobile high angle shot shows her looking at the horseman through the frames of two windows, a frame-within-a-frame composition recalling the episode's opening 'panel' and positioning her as a spectator. Once the frightened woman informs the man that her husband is not home, he trespasses into the domestic space, walking into the house in one continuous shot bridging interior and exterior space. She offers him a drink and begins to undress, offering herself to the stranger believing him to be a brigand who has come to kill her husband, Gaspare, only for the man to reveal himself as a friend of Gaspare who only wanted to return him the shotgun (carrying overt phallic symbolism) that he had borrowed from him – a Plautine misunderstanding

heterotopic shores offer both Sorrentino and Messina a distinctive backdrop, situating their films in relation to a constellation of canonical works signposting key aesthetic developments of the postwar period. At the same time, *L'attesa*'s and *É stata la mano di Dio*'s aestheticizing framing of womanhood in a Mediterranean space is emblematic of a broader tendency in contemporary Italian cinema. This trend manifests itself most explicitly in *L'attesa*'s construction of gender through the conversion of Christian and pagan iconography into a series of floating signifiers. Yet, this operation displays the inherent limitations of the director's attempt to portray the experience of Mediterranean women *vis-à-vis* the work of contemporary women filmmakers (Donatella Maiorca, Emma Dante, Costanza Quatriglio) offering alternative representations of their own experience on the shores of the Mediterranean through stories about nonnormative relationships.

These authors have been the subject of the edited volume *Sicily on Screen: Essays on the Representation of the Island and its Culture* (Giovanna Summerfield, 2020). The book offers a series of studies on

caused by excessive hospitality that leads to marital infidelity, parodying early cinema anxieties about the disruption of the bourgeois family displayed in home invasion films, a key narrative trope in the development of parallel editing. The woman bears many striking affinities with Binoche's Anna, both on a chromatic and narrative level. On the one hand, their wait for their respective kinsmen is interrupted by a violation of the domestic space. On the other, both are linked to the Virgin Mary, as testified by the woman entrusting herself to a small altar of the Virgin Mary upon the stranger's arrival. Indeed, much as in Dino Risi's *Il Sorpasso* (1962), in which Bruno (Gassman) derides two nuns from Santa Rosalia of Partinico, Sicilian women are connoted, first and foremost, by their Catholic religiosity.

More recently, this long cinematic tradition inspired the region to promote a project titled *Sicily, women and cinema* at the 2021 Cannes film festival. The project sets out to draw productions and (cine)tourism by renewing the image of Sicilian women spread by Visconti, Antonioni, Tornatore, and Rossellini. At the same time, the region's endorsement appears motivated by strictly economic ends, commodifying a repertoire of (already commodified) images of women. The project bears many similarities to an earlier project subsidized by the *Sicilia film commission*. Released in the same year as *L'attesa*, *Τά Γυναικεία – Cose di donne* (Lorenzo Daniele, 2014) features various talking heads recounting their experience as Sicilian women to frame the island as a female land. Once again, the metaphorical gendering of place is as interesting as it is problematic, and it would be more accurate to suggest that Sicily has been constructed as a gendered space. Accordingly, my analysis attempted to engage critically with this characterization rather than reading utopian traces of an egalitarian society into cultural objects produced by a patriarchal social order.

topics ranging from peripherality, racial Othering, Lesbianism, and more broadly, the notion of Sicilianness. Emerging in the wake of Sebastiano Gesù's seminal 1993 work on Sicily and cinema, the volume's contributions share a sense of Sicily as a space of deep contradictions, an island whose long history elevates it as a particularly fruitful object for scholarly engagement. Its overarching argument echoes that of an earlier essay by Gaetana Marrone which frames Sicily as "an island that resists control and constantly reinvents itself on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea" is particularly emblematic.[33] Accordingly, Marrone champions the filmic articulation of new metaphors expanding our understanding of what it means to be Sicilian through the crossing of borders and the re-negotiation of the binary oppositions which have hitherto defined the meaning of the island. At the same time, this argument is perhaps too teleological and one sided. The Mediterranean is indeed a bridge promoting cultural exchange across its shores, but it is also a barrier. Therefore, it would be reductive to only focus on the utopian promise underpinning the qualitative change brought about by cultural hybridization and changing demographics. Hence, the celebration of the entropic effects brought about by the waning of old binary oppositions should go beyond an appraisal of novelty as an end in itself.

To argue that women have been at the center of the process through which the meaning of Sicily has been coded would be to state the obvious. Rather than merely interrogate the specific formal operations through which the image of the island has been constructed (and deconstructed) through the image of its female inhabitants, it would be perhaps more productive to ground future enquiries about the gendering of Sicily's topography across Italian cinema in a deeper understanding of the material circumstances in which this image is produced.[34] One should neither reduce these represen-

33 Gaetana Marrone, "A cinematic grand tour of Sicily: irony, memory and metamorphic desire from Goethe to Tornatore." *California Italian Studies* 1.1 (2010): 11.

34 For instance, an interesting starting point against which the gendering of the island's archaic landscape can be better understood would the unique position in which Sicily's labor market found itself in the second half of the nineteenth century. While salaries in Northern Italy were relatively higher than in the peninsula's poorer southern regions, the island stood as the exception, as its salaries were also higher than those of the rest of the South. This was due to demand of skilled workers that the construction of the island's railways required (*vis à vis* a relatively low availability), but also to the fact that, unlike in the rest of the peninsula, women represented a smaller percentage of the workforce, hence the higher salaries for unskilled male labourers, testifying the extent to which the island's inhabitants clung to their traditional patriarchal roots. As Giovanni

tations to the status of mere superstructural reflections of the existent nor divorce them entirely from their roots in a reality outside of the screen. The meanings of woman and Sicily, woman in Sicily, Sicily as woman, and all other possible permutations of these two terms do not reproduce a static reality but contribute to produce an ever-evolving one subject to alteration – within certain parameters. It develops through a process of poetic or metaphoric augmentation: the semantic field of 'Sicily-woman' embraces new polysemic relations and severs old ones, expanding the horizon of meaning which extends beyond material reality. Accordingly, films like *L'attesa* and *È stata la mano di Dio* can either reinforce or disrupt the understanding of 'Sicily as 'woman' and 'woman' as 'wife', 'object', or 'mother', bringing imagined – but nonetheless impactful – worlds into being. Messina and Sorrentino's failed attempt to conjure novel worlds instead of a pastiche of worlds imagined by others is symptomatic of a deeper impasse: perhaps the *a priori* impossibility for artists in their position to express something new under the current circumstances?

Bibliography

Abdulafia, David. *The great sea: a human history of the Mediterranean*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Antonello, Pierpaolo. "Di crisi in meglio. Realismo, impegno postmoderno e cinema politico nell'Italia degli anni zero: da Nanni Moretti a Paolo Sorrentino." *Italian studies,* 67.2 (2012).

Baudry, Jean-Louis and Alan Williams. "Ideological effects of the basic cinematographic apparatus." *Film Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1974).

Bruno, Giuliana. *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film*. New York: Verso, 2007 Burch, Noël. *To the distant observer: Form and meaning in the Japanese cinema*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

Caruso, Mariella. "Il regista Piero Messina tra Artemisia e Mika." In *Volevo fare il Giornalista*. November 1, 2022. https://www.volevofareilgiornalista.it/il-

Federico (2007: 322) notes: "in almost all regions the number of" female laborers was "40%, while in some southern regions (…) it was much lower. In fact, women accounted for only 25% of the agricultural labor force in Apulia, 11% in Sicily and 4% in Sardinia" – "in quasi tutte le regioni il numero di" manodopera femminile era "40%, mentre in alcune regioni meridionali (…) è molto minore. Infatti le donne rappresentavano solo il 25% della manodopera agricola in Puglia, l'11% in Sicilia ed il 4% in Sardegna." Giovanni Federico, "Ma l'agricoltura meridionale era davvero arretrata?" *Rivista di politica economica* 97.3/4 (2007): 322.

regista-piero-messina-tra-il-doc-artemisia-e-stasera-casamika/. Accessed on October 22, 2022.

De Bonis, Maurizio G. "L'attesa. Un film di Piero Messina." In *CultFrame Arti Visive*. 18 September 2015. https://www.cultframe.com/2015/09/l-attesa-film-piero-messina/ Accessed on October 22, 2022.

Federico, Giovanni. "Ma l'agricoltura meridionale era davvero arretrata?" *Rivista di politica economica*, 97.3/4 (2007).

Galt, Rosalind. "On L'Avventura and the picturesque." *Antonioni: Centenary Essays*. London: BFI Publishing, 2011.

Gesù, Sebastiano, ed. *La Sicilia e il cinema*. Catania: Maimone, 1993.

Günsberg, Maggie. *Italian cinema: gender and genre*. Springer, 2005.

Jameson, Fredric. "Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism

(1984)." *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism. Durham: Duke UP* (1991).

Karagoz, Claudia. "Of Miracles and Madonnas: Roberta Torre's women on the Verge in *I baci mai dati*. In *Sicily on Screen: Essays on the Representation of the Island and its Culture*. Edited by Giovanna Summerfield. Jefferson: North Carolina, 2020.

Kittler, Friedrich A. *Gramophone, film, typewriter*. Stanford University Press, 1999.

Luciano, Bernadette and Susanna Scarparo, "Gendering mobility and migration in contemporary Italian cinema." *The Italianist*, 30.2 (2010).

Luciano, Bernadette and Susanna Scarparo, *Reframing Italy: New Trends in Italian Women's Filmmaking*. Vol. 59. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2013.

Marcus, Millicent. *After Fellini: National cinema in the postmodern age*. Baltimore: JHU Press, 2002.

Marrone, Gaetana. "A cinematic grand tour of Sicily: irony, memory and metamorphic desire from Goethe to Tornatore." *California Italian Studies*, 1.1 (2010).

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema." *Visual and other pleasures*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989.

Muscio, Giuliana. "Sicilian Film Productions: Between Europe and the Mediterranean Islands." In *We Europeans? Media, Representations, Identities*. Edited by William Uricchio. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Quatriglio, Costanza. "Afterword." In *Sicily on Screen: Essays on the Representation of the Island and its Culture*. Edited by Giovanna Summerfield. Jefferson: McFarland, 2020.

Sellier, Geneviève. *Masculine Singular: French New Wave Cinema*. Translated by Kristin Ross. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008.

Summerfield, Giovanna. "Interview with Costanza Quatriglio (July 2012)." *Italian Women Filmmakers and the Gendered Screen*. Edited by Maristella Cantini. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Summerfield, Giovanna. "Sicily, the Key to Everything: Seeking and Finding in *L'Avventura* and *Il bell'Antonio*." In *Sicily on Screen: Essays on the Represen-*

tation of the Island and its Culture. Edited by Giovanna Summerfield. Jefferson: North Carolina, 2020.
Talani, Leila Simona, and Serena Giusti. "Women in the Mediterranean: Still discriminated against?" *Journal of Balkan and near eastern studies* 19, no. 5 (2017).
Truffaut, François. "A certain tendency of the French Cinema." In *Movies and Methods*, translated by Bill Nichols. Los Angeles, London: University of California Press Berkely, 1976.
Zagarrio, Vito. "Una certa tendenza del cinema italiano." *Flinders University Languages Group Online Review*, 5.1 (2016).
Zagarrio, Vito. *Nouvelle vague italiana: Il cinema del nuovo millennio*. Venezia: Marsilio Editori spa, 2022.

Filmography

8 ½ (Federico Fellini, 1963)
A Bigger Splash (Luca Guadagnino, 2015)
Arrangiatevi (Mauro Bolognini, 1959)
Banshun / Late Spring (Yasujirō Ozu, 1949)
C'era una volta in America / *Once Upon a Time in America* (Sergio Leone, 1984)
Cloud Phenomena of Maloja (Arnold Frank, 1924)
Clouds of Sils Maria (Olivier Assayas, 2014)
È stata la mano di Dio / The Hand of God (Paolo Sorrentino, 2021)
Fughe e approdi (Giovanna Taviani, 2010)
Il bell'Antonio (Mauro Bolognini, 1960)
Kaos (Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, 1984)
L'attesa / The Wait (Piero Messina, 2015)
La Collectionneuse / *The Collector* (Éric Rohmer, 1967)
La grande bellezza (Paolo Sorrentino, 2013)
La Piscine (Jacques Deray, 1969)
La terra trema – episodio del mare (Luchino Visconti, 1948)
Psycho (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)
Respiro (Emanuele Crialese, 2002)
Roma (Federico Fellini, 1972)
Se permettete parliamo di donne (Ettore Scola, 1964)
Stromboli – terra di Dio (Roberto Rossellini, 1950)
Terra (Piero Messina, 2012,)
This Must Be the Place (Paolo Sorrentino, 2011)
Τά Γυναικεία – Cose di donne (Lorenzo Daniele, 2014)
Viaggio in Italia (Roberto Rossellini, 1953)
Viola di mare (Donatella Maiorca, 2009)
Youth (Paolo Sorrentino, 2015)