

More more Moro: Music and montage in *Romanzo criminale**

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One of Italian cinema's biggest export successes of recent years was *Romanzo criminale* (2005), directed by Michele Placido, and adapted by Placido, Giancarlo De Cataldo and powerhouse screenwriting team Stefano Rulli and Sandro Petraglia from the novel by De Cataldo. The film showcased a mostly male ensemble cast of rising and established stars: Stefano Accorsi, Pierfrancesco Favino, Kim Rossi Stuart, Claudio Santamaria and Riccardo Scamarcio.¹ According to Gian Piero Brunetta, the film, which tells the story of the real-life criminal gang, the Banda della Magliana in Rome in the 1970s, is the one which has elevated Placido to the Pantheon of Italian directors.² One of the points of discussion and interest for Italian and non-Italian critics was the film's obvious indebtedness to the models of the US gangster genre; as Guido Bonsaver notes, 'the American models for the film are the Scorsese of *Goodfellas*, and the camera work in De Palma's *Scarface* and Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*'.³

This is no surprise, however, as the trailer for UK and US release self-consciously signposts this heritage. The trailer fades up, in bold red and white print, a series of dates and titles ('1972: *The Godfather*; 1983: *Scarface*; 1990, *Goodfellas*; 2006: *Romanzo criminale*' – the last graphic fading up matched to the sound of a gunshot). Once the film's visual and aural heritage has been thus announced, the action of the trailer begins, choppily edited against the sound of 'Ballroom Blitz' by The Sweet (1973).⁴ This relationship between music and image will clearly be a key element of the retro style of the film itself; in this article I will address, however, the way in which music works not merely as 'retro fetish', but as accompaniment and counterpoint to an important historical event depicted by the film, the kidnapping and death of Aldo Moro.⁵ How and why music signifies in conjunction with the image, and the relationship of pop music to the historical, will be the subject of my argument.

Research is just beginning on the function of the pop soundtrack in recent Italian cinema. For example, Emanuele D'Onofrio has investigated the role of pop music in politically committed cinema, such as *I cento passi* (Marco Tullio Giordana, 2000);⁶ there is much more to be said about how the soundtrack forms part of the middlebrow address of films such as *I cento passi*, *La meglio gioventù*

(Giordana, 2003) and *Mio fratello è figlio unico* (Daniele Luchetti, 2007), as well as the use of 'Toop Toop' by French electro-house duo Cassius to counterpoint a montage of murders, including that of Aldo Moro, in Paolo Sorrentino's recent biopic of Giulio Andreotti *Il divo* (2008).⁷ Alan O'Leary argues that films such as *Romanzo criminale* and *Piazza delle cinque lune* (Renzo Martinelli, 2003) are 'tainted heritage' films, in which terrorism becomes another element of Italy's exportable cultural past, along with fashion, art and design.⁸ I would add Italian popular music to this 'tainted heritage' package: *Romanzo criminale* also features period songs by Equipe 84 ('Ho in mente te'), Franco Califano ('Tutto il resto è noia' and 'Me 'nnamoro de te'), and Anna Oxa ('Un'emozione da poco'), amongst others. The focus of this article, however, is the section of the film that uses Labelle's 'Lady Marmalade' as soundtrack to the display of footage of the kidnapping of Christian Democrat president Aldo Moro in 1978.⁹

In addition to its relation to Hollywood gangster films, Bonsaver notes *Romanzo criminale*'s debt to 'Italy's tradition of B-movie gangster films of the 1970s directed by the likes of Fernando Di Leo, Bruno Corbucci and Umberto Lenzi'. Curti slightly disagrees, saying that *Romanzo criminale* is 'una sorta di kolossal, un racconto corale che riunisce i più bei volti del giovane cinema italiano' in the tradition (*pace* Bonsaver) not of Lenzi or Di Leo, but of Rosi, Damiani, and 'quel cinema medio che univa denuncia e spettacolarità'.¹⁰ The film's display of its generic antecedents might account for its commercial success, but inevitably there is a certain critical suspicion towards even a well-executed genre film: Bonsaver's review of *Romanzo criminale* concludes that it 'may not be a groundbreaking masterpiece and a future classic – despite its brilliant cinematography, there is not a single strikingly memorable sequence. It is, however, a superb gangster movie which marks the current healthy state of Italian cinema'.¹¹ That 'however' may be said to mark the limits of genre cinema in the Italian critical imaginary: as many scholars have noted, Italian film studies has been slow to engage with the genres that compose the majority of Italian film output.¹² Critics generally agree, however, that the distinctive aspect of *Romanzo criminale*'s generic status is its engagement with Italian politics and history of the 1970s, which grounds the film nationally.¹³

Romanzo criminale adopts a use of stock footage familiar from Giordana's *La meglio gioventù*;¹⁴ for example, the shooting of Pope John Paul II in 1981, and Italy's World Cup victory in 1982 are employed as period signposts. In addition, the use of footage of events like Aldo Moro's kidnapping in 1978 and the 1980 Bologna bombing which killed eighty people has ignited some controversy. Alan O'Leary is one of the few commentators to note how the film's use of newsreel or television footage goes beyond a desire to give 'autenticità' and to 'garantire alla *fiction* il suggello della verità storica'; the familiarity of these images, as well as their intensely mediated nature, means that

l'uccisione del politico e l'esplosione alla stazione sono diventate dei *tropoi* staccati dalle loro circostanze storiche precise: si sono trasformate in ricordi da schermo che evocano l'atmosfera degli anni di piombo mentre oscurano la politica, le proteste e le mobilitazioni di massa dell'epoca.¹⁵

The voluminous literature on the Moro kidnapping and execution by the Brigate Rosse, and the number of films which address the event, are testimony to the extent to which Moro 'continues to haunt the cultural psyche of the Italian nation'.¹⁶ The various fictional or 'factional' reworkings to which the events of the 'caso Moro' have been subjected is testimony, argue Ruth Glynn and Nicoletta Marini-Maio, to the way in which Moro is now a 'metonym for the dilemmas regarding the ideological affiliation of Italian left-wing terrorism, the legacies of Marxism in Italian society, and the use of political violence in general'.¹⁷ As O'Leary notes, '[in *Romanzo criminale*] Moro and Bologna are granted a moot equivalence and joint status of quintessentially recognizable or "spectacular" happenings of the *anni di piombo* – something underlined by the use made of newsreel footage of both events'.¹⁸

Some Italian critics, in particular, have paid attention to the Bologna sequences in *Romanzo criminale*, which on first viewing appear to be a CGI superimposition of Kim Rossi Stuart's character, Il Freddo, onto footage of the explosion and its aftermath, but which, on further viewing both of the film and its 'making-of' DVD featurette, turn out to be a convincing reconstruction and refilming of the rubble; this technique of apparent simulation has led to accusations of inaccuracy or a dangerous manipulation of historical fact: 'la sceneggiatura e la regia compiono una "falsificazione" deliberata del dato storico'.¹⁹ What appears to be a superimposition of Rossi Stuart onto existing archive footage materializes the Banda della Magliana's alleged involvement in the Bologna bombing, and forms part of Placido's strategy of 'rewriting' the historical record.²⁰ However, what has been overlooked in discussions of Placido's film is the precise way in which the Moro footage functions, and its significance in relation to the film's status as a film 'about' the 1970s.

More more Moro

Romanzo criminale's manipulation of the Moro footage has not been discussed. The scene in question shows the juxtaposition of the Banda della Magliana's celebration of their 'taking of Rome' after the murder of their rival Terribile, with footage of the abduction of Moro and the funeral of his bodyguards. Immediately after the scene the Banda will be asked to find Moro by shadowy agents of the state. Shots of the gang and their entourage dancing, drinking champagne and

celebrating in the club they have bought are intercut with snippets of footage of TV coverage of Moro's kidnapping, the funeral of his bodyguards, and the discovery of his body. Some of the footage is, as I will discuss, difficult to identify with certainty, apart from the iconic photographs of Moro in the Brigade Rosse 'prison', and the much-aired coverage of the ambush site itself.

I want to look at the musical choice first: it may seem strange that the high tragedy of Moro, an event described as the Italian September 11th by Giampaolo Cassitta, is juxtaposed so brashly with Labelle's 'Lady Marmalade'.²¹ Or perhaps we are used to this kind of ironic counterpointing through music: the *Guardian's* review refers to 'the debt to Scorsese [via] the soundtrack of disquietingly inappropriate pop music.'²² Scorsese's 'jukebox sound'²³ has of course been hugely influential (think Tarantino) and the use of music here is both 'retro fetish' and marketing device, and also explains some of film's overseas success. 'Non-diegetically used pop music [...] confirms the slick interplay between the different divisions of global entertainment corporations. The song as tacit commentator is almost a genre of film music in its own right and has reinvented the value of a record company's back catalogue'.²⁴ *Romanzo criminale* also came out after Baz Luhrman's *Moulin Rouge* (2002), which provided a worldwide hit for Christina Aguilera, Pink, Mýa and Lil Kim with their cover of 'Lady Marmalade'.

However, there are some oddities. The song is clearly intended to connote a notional '70s urban nightlife – although it dates from 1974 and is thus not used as a precise temporal marker of 1978. It is, rather, used as a generic and intertextual marker: for example, it appears also in Brian De Palma's *Carlito's Way* (1993) in a nightclub scene at the height of Al Pacino's character's power (and the parallels between the films, both recounting the rise of criminals from the streets, are obvious). Placido's film clearly juxtaposes the gang's hedonism with the suffering of Moro and his escort and the nation – the montage creates a relationship of cause and effect between the two. However, at a textual level, not just a cultural or intertextual one, it would be unwise, I think, to assume that just because the song is very popular and familiar, it does not contain any narrative information.

The sound bridge that links the preceding scene to the nightclub is carefully chosen to consist of the vocal scream (which is not, incidentally, the beginning of the song).²⁵ The sound bridge links the space of the piazza (or the Spanish Steps, where Terribile is killed) to the space of the disco, and anticipates the action to come. As Edward Branigan notes:

asynchronous sound may [...] pose more complex problems for the spectator if it signifies a true discontinuity in the depicted space – another 'scene' not yet visible and perhaps not yet narrativized: for example, when sound is used to bridge, or overlap, shots or scenes; or, used to foreshadow an event; [...] In such a case sound is somehow 'ahead' of light, not following in its

wake but somewhere else: sound seems to be anticipating and creating space, addressing questions about the how and the why of the objects seen.²⁶

Sound is here given narrative priority, driving the action, and rendering the image secondary. The sound bridge also opens up a space outside and beyond the frame, a technique which will be further exploited in the following sequence.

The lyric 'more, more more' introduces the first piece of Moro-related footage.²⁷ The song then becomes ostensibly diegetic, although it is unclear whether the gang are actually dancing to it or to an entirely different song. The quick editing moves back and forwards between the disco and the TV coverage, compressing the 'Moro story' into a series of media snapshots, and emphasizing their seriality (and duration).²⁸

As Philip Drake points out, the pop song, when used to accompany the visual track, 'always retains an autonomous identity and resists full integration into narrative. This means that recognition of songs by audiences will influence narrative events'.²⁹ On a narrative level, the song 'Lady Marmalade' is of course about prostitution and offers a thematic analogy to the theme of prostitution that runs throughout the film – the prostitute Patrizia, who is shared by Inspector Scialoja and the gangster Dandi is, as Danielle Hipkins points out, a metaphor for political complicity.³⁰ Hipkins has noted that 'Scialoja's failure to pursue Patrizia's evidence of conspiracies because he is continually distracted by her sexuality is of course a means of displacing political guilt onto the body of the prostitute'.³¹ Scialoja's inability to get on with his job and forget Patrizia, and his ever-deepening involvement in the murky world of the Banda, are evoked in the lyric 'Now he's at home doing nine to five | Living his brave life of lies | But when he turns off to sleep | All memories keep More, More, More'. Just as Patrizia is passed between criminals and police representing the common ground they share, a metonymic token illustrating the proximity and similarity between the two seemingly antithetical organizations, so the prognosticatory song hints at Moro's analogous function. He is shared between state and criminals, a token whose presence will haunt Italy for decades to come.³²

The effect is heightened as the last line plays over the close-up image of the body of one of Moro's police escort, the visual and the aural working together to suggest complicity, a complicity which the narrative itself later makes explicit; the 'cinque agenti della scorta', announced by the voice-over, who died protecting Moro, are matched visually by a cut to four or five of the group lined up having their photo taken. Distinctions between the worlds of men that compose the state and the criminal band are thus blurred. It is significant that the homosocial environment of the gang is emphasized throughout, with references to their shared sense of brotherhood.³³ Additional parallels between the world of the banda and the actions of the state are made through graphic matches using the colour red: the DC and PCI flags, the red car from which Moro was taken, red flowers thrown on

the funeral cortege and red stripes on the carabinieri's trousers are matched to the red jackets and shirts of some of the criminals, as well as the club lighting that casts a red tint through the interior.³⁴

Taking the music in conjunction with the images, what is also striking is the manipulation of the footage itself: at times it appears slowed down, the tones are unusual, extreme close-ups are used, and the chronology of the events depicted is unclear. Familiar 'filmati di repertorio'³⁵ of the TV coverage are thus made slightly unfamiliar (apart from the 'fetishized photograph' of Moro under the Brigade Rosse banner).³⁶ The temporality of the events depicted is a little odd, as we see the funeral of the escort before the voice-over announcing Moro's kidnapping (and here sound occupies a secondary position, reinforcing the already-seen).

Theorists working on film music have long debated the concept of the 'inaudibility' of film scores, a view first put forward by Claudia Gorbman.³⁷ Gorbman's view that film scores go unheard has been challenged by many critics: for example, Kalinak argues that in moments of montage music is privileged and given priority.³⁸ Such scenes are therefore highly marked, in terms of the function of the musical soundtrack: this is evidently the case in the montage scene under discussion here, where the song first drowns out and then gives way to the non-diegetic voice-over of the television footage narrating the kidnapping of Moro. In fact Gorbman argues that the use of songs with lyrics 'require narrative to cede to spectacle'; the action freezes into spectacle for the duration of the song (pp. 19-20). It is necessary, however, to nuance this idea of a lack of narrative function of musical sequences.

In *Romanzo criminale*, what happens in this 'synch point' (when a sound event and a visual event meet in synchrony)³⁹ of music and montage is intriguing in narrative terms: the seeming incongruity between musical and visual tracks, the rapidity with which the montage moves, its compression of the 'caso Moro' into a series of rapid-fire images presented almost subliminally, and intended to be emblematic, ensure that this is an interlude that offers itself as a sequence designed to 'defy continuity to produce textual disruption'.⁴⁰ The effect of that textual disruption is, I will argue, a play with historical memory itself – the memory of the Moro kidnap as it is now received and self-consciously recycled in familiar images of Italian popular culture.

The function of the montage of Moro-related images and footage is, I would argue, to make visible the 'materiality of the edit' itself:⁴¹ the elisions that the edits suggest within the sequential narrative of the Moro affair are thus dramatized.⁴² The visual clichés (the iconic Brigade Rosse flag, in particular) are staged on a metadiegetic level, avowing the 'constructedness' of the Moro narrative. Meanwhile, the aural commentary offered by 'Lady Marmalade' on one level offers pure pleasure: the impassioned female vocals narrating a tale of sex and prostitution form part of the film's genre packaging, and offer access to

thematic continuities between song-text and film-text. Yet they also introduce a vital affective dimension: Estella Tincknell, in her analysis of *Forrest Gump* (Robert Zemeckis, 1994), comments that the film's soundtrack constructs a textual affect that is at odds with the representational strategies of the film narrative.⁴³ Further, she argues that 'where a film's narrative discourse is incoherent or fractured the musical soundtrack can "fill the gaps" by speaking to the audience in ways in which the narrative cannot'.⁴⁴ In *Romanzo criminale*, emotion (and excess) is offered by a distinctively female, black voice, offering a commentary on one of the most significant moments in recent Italian history. The moment in which this female vocal collides on the soundtrack with the voice of the male TV announcer narrating the Moro kidnap with authority dramatically juxtaposes the affective dimension of the song with the beginning of the official account of the Moro affair.⁴⁵ It is a jarring aural experience. In addition, the TV voice-over narrative is played over footage which, as I mentioned, comes chronologically later, of the funeral of Moro's bodyguards. The overall effect is one of disorientation, despite the overfamiliarity of the images. Mary Ann Doane notes that 'sound carries with it the potential risk of exposing the material heterogeneity of the medium [of film] itself'.⁴⁶ Here sound is used to explore and expose the interstices in the Moro accounts, the official or public one, and its popular reception.

The movement from one affective dimension to another (the voice of the announcer, although slightly agitated as he announces the 'drammatica notizia che ha dell'incredibile' is professional and still detached) is abrupt. As Doane points out in relation to voice-over commentary, 'it is its radical otherness with regard to the diegesis which endows this with a certain authority' (p. 42). Here, the song which functions both diegetically and non-diegetically, opens up a space beyond the frame, or rather spaces. Three different spaces (and three different temporalities) are thus held in tension: the space of the club, the space of the piazza, where ordinary Italians are demonstrating, and the space of Moro himself, in the BR 'prigione del popolo'. However, the sequence is not merely expositional, but meta-expositional: that is, it acts as a commentary upon its own mode of representing history. The three intertwined spaces (the space of popular exploitation or fascination, the space of national tragedy, and the space of traumatic history) are held together by the common denominator, the soundtrack, which works to both suggest and defamiliarize the film's allusion to multiple spaces beyond the space of the diegesis. The rapid succession of media images indicates that this historical event can only be accessed through its mediatized representations, and the film's staging of this suggests its confidence in its own role in intensifying and continuing this process of mediatized representation.

The three competing narrativities of the sequence (that of the song, that of the metadiegetic historical images, and that of the disco itself) thus produce a dizzying excess of signification. O'Leary has written of Marco Bellocchio's

Buongiorno, notte (2003) that as an event Moro offers itself to this kind of over-representation because 'when the full facts are perceived to be elusive, fictional means can step in to fill the interpretive breach, to articulate a truth that is felt or assumed rather than definitively known'.⁴⁷ To this end, *Romanzo criminale* suggests a relationship between the Banda and the State (and the Moro kidnap) that is allusive and elliptical.⁴⁸ In a later scene we see information about Moro's whereabouts being relayed by Freddo to the 'pezzo dello stato', Carenza, who is then ordered to call off the search for Moro by his superior. Yet I would argue that the disco scene has already staged that elliptical relationship: the editing that directly intercuts the Banda with the Moro footage suggests a direct yet uncertain relationship with the events. In a different way from the recreation of the Bologna footage, the Moro montage points up the gaps in knowledge about the event, leaving the spectator with a full visual and aural experience, but with a troubling sense of these aporias.⁴⁹ Thus Guido Bonsaver's comment that the documentary excerpts 'do not make us any wiser about the actual links between criminal gangs and a corrupted state' may be accurate, but does not tell the full story.⁵⁰

Disco itself is perceived as a decadent form, deeply imbued with the processes of capitalism and consumerism. However, Richard Dyer has argued for the liberating, if not radical, potential of disco's mixing of romanticism and materialism, saying that its eroticism 'allows us to rediscover our bodies as part of this experience of materialism and the possibility of change'. Emanuele D'Onofrio has used Dyer's work to posit the discotheque in Renato De Maria's *Paz* (2002) as a site of collective action analogous to the rallies and youth activism of the 1970s.⁵¹ Yet in *Romanzo criminale*, although the intercutting of the disco scenes with the scenes featuring the DC and PCI flags suggests a relationship between the space of the discotheque or club and the action being taken on the streets, the precise nature of that relationship is again left unclear. What is more apparent is that within the diegetic space of the disco, music and dancing are actually of secondary importance. The gang do not dance, although those around them do (quite badly). As I said, it is unclear whether 'Lady Marmalade' is actually playing diegetically or not, and the focus is on the disco as a homosocial space: Libanese hugs some of the guys, Freddo walks across the dancefloor, they talk on the dancefloor and on the stairs, Libanese claps along (but not in time with the music). This is not the working-class masculinity made good through the disciplining of the male body of films such as *Saturday Night Fever* (John Badham, 1977) or *Staying Alive* (Sylvester Stallone, 1983).⁵² The scene's appropriation of a popular glamour typical of the gangster genre (see *Carlito's Way*, *Scarface*) is also a moment that is about homosocial interaction, and it is worth noting that the homosocial is currently the pre-eminent mode of doing history in middlebrow Italian film – examples include *La meglio gioventù*, *Mio fratello è figlio unico*, *I cento passi*, and even Giordana's recent *Sanguepazzo* (2008).⁵³

'Old memories creep': nostalgia and history

Is the collision between a soundtrack moment that invokes a generic '70s feel (albeit with its own narrative of sexual politics) and a series of shots with a direct historical referentiality mere 'retro fetish'? Is Moro yet another stylistic element in Italy's 'tainted heritage'? The politics of nostalgia in relation to filmic representations of the past have been heavily debated by critics: Drake discusses the idea of retro style's use of 'selected signifiers of the past' as an 'avoidance of direct referentiality'.⁵⁴

Concentrating specifically on the particular role played by the soundtrack in representing history, Phil Powrie has argued that music in historical film often has the power to unsettle accounts of history – that it does not always merely function to create 'unproblematic pseudo-historical spectacle'.⁵⁵ The 'emotionalizing of history' that Powrie argues that non-diegetic music can accomplish, 'reintroduces affect into the spectacular'.⁵⁶ The voices of LaBelle – Patti LaBelle, Nona Hendryx and Sarah Dash – with their connotations of black, urban America, singing a disco song that is entwined with gay culture's appropriation of disco, add eroticism and otherness to the account of Moro, perhaps illustrating the lack of a specifically Italian soundtrack for this Italian national tragedy.⁵⁷ The sequence offers not just a nostalgic account of the past, of Italy's 'tainted heritage'. Rather, it self-consciously, through the play with music and montage, foregrounds its own awareness of the Moro representation as already clichéd.⁵⁸

Part of the patronizing dismissal of Italian popular cinema has centred on its perceived inability to offer a critique of the state of the Italian nation; however, just as Moro has been interpreted as a metonym for Italian political violence of the 1970s, we can interpret *Romanzo criminale's* use of snippets of Moro-related footage as themselves metonymic, standing in for the 'caso Moro' in its entirety. The 'unknowability' of the Moro affair is hinted at in the use of montage, even while the shorthand technique of invoking the events of 1978 through a few key images and scenes would appear to make those events knowable and usable to an audience. 'Moro' is here manipulated to match and complement the stylistic register of the film; however, the means of its representation indicate that as an event it is still felt to be more meaningful than can be adequately expressed or understood.

Ultimately, we need to be wary of the idea that the use of popular song or music is unable to offer a profound commentary on narrative – even when the narratives are thought to be gibberish, as in 'Lady Marmalade'.⁵⁹ Susan McClary reminds us that 'music and its procedures operate as part of the political arena – not simply as one of its more trivial reflections'.⁶⁰ Thus we can hope to open the way towards a more rigorous study of the relation between popular music and Italian cinema.

Notes

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¹ *Romanzo criminale* came ninth in the list of Italian films at the box office in 2005, earning €4.822.864,44 (source <<http://www.anica.it/rassegna/anicainforma.pdf>> [accessed 21 May 2009]).

² *Romanzo criminale*, l'opera che riteniamo collochi definitivamente Placido nel Pantheon dei registi che hanno contribuito a formare l'identità vecchia e nuova del cinema italiano'. Gian Piero Brunetta, *Il cinema italiano contemporaneo: da 'La dolce vita' a 'Centochiodi'* (Bari: Laterza, 2007), p. 635. Placido himself is an interesting intertext in the film's reception: his acting performances range from popular mafia TV drama *La piovra* (1984-89) to appearances in socially committed dramas such as *Mery per sempre* (Marco Risi, 1989), playing Giovanni Falcone in Giuseppe Ferrara's 1993 *Falcone*, playing Enzo Tortora in *Un uomo perbene* (Maurizio Zaccaro, 1999), and an intriguing recent appearance as Aldo Moro in the TV production *Aldo Moro – il presidente* (Gianluca Maria Tavarelli, 2008). Likewise his directorial career began with the engagé study of illegal African workers, *Pummarò* (1990), and has moved between social-realist dramas (*Un eroe Borghese*, 1995) and middlebrow costume dramas (*Un viaggio chiamato amore*, 2002; *Ovunque sei*, 2004). Placido's crossover appeal, for engagé and middlebrow audiences, would be worthy of study.

³ Guido Bonsaver, Review of *Romanzo criminale*, *Sight and Sound* (November 2006), 80. Lindsey Irvine in 'On Mean Street', *The Guardian*, 15 November 2006, goes so far as to call the film 'the year's finest Marty [Scorsese] movie'. The film also bears the influence of the 'intensified continuity' style of the thrillers of Michael Mann, and Hong Kong genre movies such as *Infernal Affairs* (Lau and Mak, 2002), itself remade by Scorsese as *The Departed* (2006). On intensified continuity see David Bordwell, 'The Departed: No Departure', <<http://www.davidbordwell.net/blog/?p=18>> [accessed 21 May 2009].

⁴ <<http://movies.virginmedia.com/player/default.asp?url=/film/fid5641/trailers/trid2409/wm/bb.aspx&filmid=5641&trid=2409&partner=virgin&sec=trl&psec>> [accessed 21 May 2009]. See Lisa Kernan on the trailer as both narrative and promotional text, and as a form of self-quotation. *Coming Attractions: Reading American Movie Trailers* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004).

⁵ On soundtrack as 'retro fetish' see Russell Lack, *Twenty-Four Frames Under: A Buried History of Film Music* (Quartet, 1997), p. 229.

⁶ Emanuele D'Onofrio, 'Film Music and National Identity: The New Italian Cinema Revisits the 1970s', PhD submitted at Manchester University, 2008. See also his 'Italian Cinema Revisits the 1970s: Film Music and Youth Identity in De Maria's *Paz*', in *Music, Sound and the Moving Image*, 1:2 (2007), 161-86, and 'Seeking a New "Chance for a Reawakening": The New Italian Cinema Revisits the 1970s', paper given at 'Italy on Screen' conference, London, 10 February 2007. A film like *La meglio gioventù* intersperses its use of canonical 1960s countercultural rock and pop with strategic use of Italian songs such as Fausto Leali's 'A chi'.

⁷ Pierpaolo Antonello briefly discusses the use of the soundtrack, including Massive Attack's 'Herculeum', in Matteo Garrone's *Gomorra* (2008). See 'Dispatches from Hell: *Gomorra*', in *Mafia Movies: A Reader*, ed. by Dana Renga (University of Toronto Press, forthcoming).

⁸ On 'tainted heritage', see O'Leary, 'Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy: The Paranoid Style in Italian Cinema', in *Imagining Terrorism: The Rhetoric and Representation of Political Violence in Italy 1969-2009* (Oxford: Legenda, 2009), pp. 48-62. Christian Uva talks of how the film 'si rivolge al terrorismo per farne un ingrediente, tra gli altri, di un generale revival degli anni '70'. *Schermi di piombo: il terrorismo nel cinema italiano* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2007), p. 89.

⁹ 'Lady Marmalade' was written by Bob Crewe and Kenny Nolan and released in 1974.

¹⁰ Bonsaver, p. 80. Roberto Curti, *Italia odia: il cinema poliziesco italiano* (Turin: Lindau, 2006), pp. 368-69.

¹¹ Bonsaver, p. 80.

¹² Christian Uva discussed this period in 'Italia P38: i terrorismi italiani nel cinema di genere', paper given at

the AAIS-AATI conference in Taormina, 22-25 May 2008. On the absence of the study of genre film in general see Mary Wood, *Italian Cinema* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), pp. 35-62; Alan O'Leary, 'After Brunetta: Italian Cinema Studies In Italy, 2000 to 2007', in *Italian Studies*, 63:2 (2008), 279-307.

¹³ 'The film ticks all of the crime genre's boxes [...] However, when it reminds itself that it is telling a story based on a real-life Italian gang, it rises above the basic conventions'. Alan Morrison, review in *Empire*, <<http://www.empireonline.com/reviews/review.asp?DVDID=117574>> [accessed 21 May 2009]. *Variety* notes that 'what gives *Crime Novel* [*Romano criminale*] its structure is in the way political events impact the lives of these antiheroes'. Jay Weissberg, review of *Crime Novel*, *Variety*, 5 October 2005. <<http://www.variety.com/index.asp?layout=features2006&content=jump&jump=review&head=berlin&nav=RBerlin&articleid=VE1117928424&cs=1&p=0>> [accessed 21 May 2009]. 'Michele Placido's film clearly aspires to grander things than generic gunplay. A sense of historical sweep is underscored by the use of archive TV reports on everything from the bombing of Bologna station to Italy's 1982 World Cup triumph'. Matthew Leyland, '*Romano criminale*', <http://www.bbc.co.uk/films/2006/10/31/romano_criminale_2006_review.shtml> [accessed 21 May 2009].

¹⁴ *Variety* notes that the film 'offers a gangster's-eye view of recent Italo [*sic*] history that represents the flip side of *The Best of Youth* – not coincidentally co-scripted by *Crime Novel* writers Stefano Rulli and Sandro Petraglia'. Weissberg, review of *Crime Novel*.

¹⁵ Alan O'Leary, *Tragedia all'italiana: cinema e terrorismo fra Moro e memoria* (Tissì: Angelica, 2007), p. 209.

¹⁶ Alan O'Leary, 'Dead Man Walking: The Aldo Moro Kidnap and Palimpsest History in *Buongiorno, notte*', in *New Cinemas*, 6:1 (2008), 33-45 (p. 34). O'Leary lists at least six films that deal directly with the Moro case, including *Il caso Moro* (Ferrara, 1986), *Piazza delle cinque lune*, and *Buongiorno, notte* (Bellocchio, 2003), as well as others that allude to it in various ways.

¹⁷ Nicoletta Marini-Maio, 'A Spectre Is Haunting Italy: The Double "Emplotment" of the Moro affair', in *Terrorism Italian Style: The Representation of Terrorism and Political Violence in Contemporary Italian Cinema*, ed. by Ruth Glynn, Giancarlo Lombardi and Alan O'Leary (London:

IGRS Books, forthcoming). She is referencing Glynn's paper 'Displaced Confessions: Moro in Female Perpetrator Narratives' presented at the conference 'Remembering Moro', Institute of Germanic and Romance Studies, London, 10-11 November 2006. Glynn argued in her paper that 'the significance of the "Caso Moro" [...] is such that it transcends the individual event and comes to be constructed metonymically as the site, the locus, around which displaced anxieties relating to the whole experience of widespread political violence in Italy converge'.

¹⁸ Alan O'Leary, 'Dead Man Walking', p. 42, n. 11.

¹⁹ Roberto Escobar, *Il Sole-24 Ore*, 15 October 2005. Escobar points out that 'quella che si vede esplodere a Bologna è la parte destra della stazione, non la sinistra, come invece accadde il 2 agosto del 1980'. 'Ciò sul quale bisogna stare attenti non è tanto l'impianto ideologico, ma l'uso del materiale di repertorio, che confonde ancora di più gli intrecci'. Aldo Fittante, *Film TV*, 4 October 2005 <<http://www.cinemamignon.it/arc2005/romanzocriminale/critiche.htm>> [accessed 21 May 2009].

²⁰ Christian Uva talks of Placido's 'riscrittura' of history, *Schermi di piombo*, p. 90.

²¹ 'Quello fu per noi italiani, almeno per quei tempi, il nostro 11 settembre', Giampaolo Cassitta, *Il giorno di Moro* (Genoa: Frilli, 2006), p. 233.

²² Lindsay Irvine, 'On Mean Street'.

²³ Lack, p. 225.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ In the director's cut of the film, the disco scene is preceded by a scene featuring Freddo and Libanese at their favourite beach, as Libanese recounts his favourite dictators. The scene ends with Libanese announcing drunkenly to Freddo 'come ti conosco io, non ti conosco nessuno', and Freddo responding 'è vero'. The elimination of this scene in the theatrical version of the film slightly dilutes the homosocial bond between the men, celebrated on the club dancefloor; the theatrical version instead privileges the link between the streets of Rome and the gang's success, whilst simultaneously suggesting that the champagne-fuelled lifestyle they now enjoy is taking them away from the streets, and might prove their downfall.

²⁶ Edward Branigan, 'Sound, Epistemology, Film', in *Film Theory and Philosophy*, ed. by R. Allen and M. Smith (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), pp. 95-125 (p. 100).

²⁷ The line is 'Seeing her skin feeling silky smooth | Colour of café au lait | Made the savage beast inside | Roar until it cried "More, More, More"'.

²⁸ The footage is at times deliberately vague: it appears to depict, in order: the street protests after Moro's kidnapping, a shot of the scene of the kidnapping in Via Fani, the bodies of Moro's police bodyguards, the funeral of the bodyguards, a police roadblock during the search for Moro, the bodyguards' funeral again. Alan O'Leary comments on the duration of the Moro kidnapping as one of the reasons it garnered so much media attention, calling it 'an extended and morbidly photogenic series of events'. 'Dead Man Walking', p. 37. He also notes that the kidnapping was 'the first example of round-the-clock news reporting in the Italian context' (*ibid.*). Later in the film we hear the famous Brigade Rosse phone call to Franco Tritto, announcing the location of Moro's body, played over the finding of his body in Via Caetani, and Freddo watches the Moro funeral on TV.

²⁹ Philip Drake, "'Mortgaged to Music": New Retro Movies in 1990s Hollywood Cinema', in *Memory and Popular Film*, ed. by Paul Grainge (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 183-201 (p. 194). Kathryn Kalinak makes a similar point: 'the formal autonomy of popular music can sometimes lessen its chances of being used to maintain structural unity or continuity', *Settling the Score: Music and the Classical Hollywood Film* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), p. 187. In a similar fashion, 'Moro' as an event arguably resists full integration into the Italian national narrative.

³⁰ The lyrics state that 'Lady Marmalade' is a prostitute in the French Quarter of New Orleans: 'He met Marmalade down in Old New Orleans | Struttin' her stuff on the street'.

³¹ Danielle Hipkins, 'Criminal Romances: Prostitution and the Indulgence of Political Ambiguity in Contemporary Italian Cinema', paper presented at symposium on Gender and Contemporary Italian Cinema, 6 June 2007, University of Bristol.

³² On Moro and 'hauntology' see Marini-Maio, 'A Spectre is Haunting Italy'.

³³ Libanese says to Freddo, 'Eravamo fratelli, io e te'. Likewise Dandi says of Freddo, 'è come se fosse mio fratello'.

³⁴ Arguably the song lyrics work on yet another level, suggesting not just complicity between criminals and state but also the role of the gang as themselves prostituted, as themselves passed between the state and 'the street' (itself a metonym for the people). I am grateful to Ruth Glynn for this idea.

³⁵ O'Leary, *Tragedia all'italiana*, p. 209.

³⁶ O'Leary, 'Dead Man Walking', p. 37.

³⁷ Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).

³⁸ Kalinak, *Settling the Score*, p. 97.

³⁹ See Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, trans. by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 58.

⁴⁰ Estella Tincknell and Ian Conrich, 'Introduction', to *Film's Musical Moments*, ed. by Conrich and Tincknell (Edinburgh: EUP, 2006), pp. 1-13 (p. 5).

⁴¹ Carol Vernallis, 'The Kindest Cut: Functions and Meanings of Music Video Editing', in *Screen*, 42:1 (2001), 21-48 (p. 22).

⁴² Bazin's critique of montage and the 'intelligibility' of the real is relevant here. See 'Le réalisme cinématographique et l'école italienne de la Libération', in *Qu'est-ce que le cinéma?* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1975), pp. 257-85. See also Robert Burgoyne, 'Memory, History and Digital Imagery in Contemporary Film', in *Memory and Popular Film*, ed. Grainge, pp. 220-36.

⁴³ Tincknell writes that 'The affective power of the music may offer a source of resistance to the meanings offered by the narrative'. 'The Soundtrack Movie, Nostalgia and Consumption', in *Film's Musical Moments*, ed. by I. Conrich and E. Tincknell (Edinburgh: EUP, 2006), pp. 132-45 (p. 144).

⁴⁴ Tincknell, p. 136.

⁴⁵ The TV voice-over begins with the words 'interrompiamo questa trasmissione per una drammatica notizia che ha dell'incredibile: il presidente della Democrazia Cristiana, l'onorevole Aldo Moro, è stato rapito a Roma poco fa da un commando di terroristi'.

⁴⁶ Mary Ann Doane, 'The Voice in the Cinema: The Articulation of Body and Space', in *Yale French Studies*, 60 (1980), 33-50, (p. 35).

⁴⁷ O'Leary, 'Dead Man Walking', p. 34.

⁴⁸ This relationship is slightly less elliptical in the DVD of the director's cut of the film (Warner Home Video, 2007), which includes several rather clunky expository scenes omitted from the theatrical release and the 2006 DVD (Warner).

⁴⁹ This is particularly the case for non-Italian audiences, for whom the events alluded to may be mysterious and unexplained. For example, Peter Bradshaw writes in *The Guardian*, 'it is very murky stuff, and Placido could and should have explained the conspiracy theory a little more', <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2006/nov/03/thriller.family>> [accessed 21 May 2009].

⁵⁰ Bonsaver, p. 80.

⁵¹ Richard Dyer, 'In Defence of Disco', in *On Record: Rock, Pop and the Written Word*, ed. by Simon Frith and Andrew Goodwin (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 410-18 (p. 418). D'Onofrio's analysis can be found in 'Italian Cinema Revisits the 1970s', p. 186.

⁵² The scene marks a moment of joyous togetherness soon to be dissolved by the lavish champagne and drug-fuelled lifestyle celebrated in this scene. In that sense the film has a punitive narrative structure conventional for the gangster genre, as the movement away from the streets is punished by downfall and death.

⁵³ This tendency is especially marked in the work of scriptwriters Rulli and Petraglia: I discussed this in a paper 'Homosexuality, Melodrama and *La meglio gioventù*', given

at a symposium on 'Gender and Contemporary Italian Cinema', University of Bristol, 6 June 2007.

⁵⁴ Drake, "'Mortgaged to Music'", p. 189.

⁵⁵ Phil Powrie, 'Outing the Synch: Music and Space in the French Heritage Film', in *European Film Music*, ed. by M. Mera and D. Burnand (Ashgate, 2006), pp. 86-99 (p. 86).

⁵⁶ Powrie, p. 90.

⁵⁷ Though see *Piazza delle cinque lune's* use of the song 'Maledetti voi, uomini del potere' composed by Aldo Moro's grandson, Luca: significantly, the song accompanies the film's end credits, rather than having a place within the body of the film.

⁵⁸ In this context we could usefully discuss *Buongiorno notte's* juxtaposition of Moro's suffering with both Pink Floyd's 'Great Gig in the Sky' (Richard Wright, 1973) (another female vocalist, Clare Torry) and clips from Rossellini's *Paisà*, although that is outside the scope of this article. It would also be useful to analyse the same film's climactic representation of Moro's counterfactual walk through Rome and death, set to the sound of Pink Floyd's 'Shine On, You Crazy Diamond' (Waters, Wright, Gilmour, 1975).

⁵⁹ 'Gitchi gitchi ya ya da da | Gitchi gitchi ya ya here | Mocha chocolata ya ya | Creole Lady Marmalade'.

⁶⁰ Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minneapolis Press, 1991), p. 27.

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