

SEARCHING FOR TRUTH: CONSTRUCTING A COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF ALDO
MORO IN ITALIAN CINEMA

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ABSTRACT

Katherine Greenburg Gilliom: Searching for Truth: Constructing a Collective Memory of Aldo Moro in Italian Cinema
(Under the Direction of Marisa Escobar)

This dissertation will address Aldo Moro's presence in film and the changing manifestations of the politician in film throughout the years. I will argue that through film a comprehensive collective memory can be formed from examining what is known of the statesman, before and after his death, helping to ease the continuing sense of guilt felt by the Italian people in regards to his tragic end. In the first chapter of my dissertation I will discuss the concept of martyrdom in two films that depict Aldo Moro before his death; Elio Petri's *Todo Modo* (1976) and Marco Tulio Giordana's *Romanzo di una strage* (2012). Although two totally different films, historically and stylistically, both films portray a devoutly Catholic Moro and a rhetoric dealing with political martyrdom. In the second chapter of my dissertation I will address the conspiracy theories surrounding Aldo Moro's death depicted in the films *Il caso Moro* (Ferrara 1986) and *Piazza delle cinque lune* (Martinelli 2003). Both films present their retellings of the Moro affair as revelations of the truth, focusing on the possible involvement of the Italian government, as well as the United States, in Moro's death. The third chapter of my dissertation will focus on the role of Aldo Moro as a cultural symbol in films dealing with other historic events. The two films I will discuss are Michele Placido's *Romanzo criminale* (2005) and Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo* (2008). The final chapter of my dissertation will address the use of the oneiric in Marco Bellocchio's 2003 film *Buongiorno, notte*. I will employ ideas from

psychoanalysis in my analysis of *Buongiorno, notte*, due to the importance of dreams and imagining in the film. By analyzing the entire cannon of films that involve Aldo Moro, this project aims to create a “total picture” of how Moro is viewed before and after his kidnapping and death.

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INTRODUCTION

The historical political turmoil in Italy reached its peak during the *anni di piombo*, or “years of lead”.¹ Beginning in 1968 with the student revolts and small terrorist attacks, and escalating into increasingly more violent actions, the *anni di piombo* are thought to have ended around the early 1980s as capitalism and productivity flourished. During this time over 14,000 terrorist attacks were committed in Italy (O’Leary “Italian Cinema” 244). Many of these attacks were the result of over twenty years of political frustration with a government controlled by the Democrazia Cristiana (DC). A number of Italians, especially the youth who were overwhelmingly sympathetic to the Communist party agenda, felt that the DC was suppressing social aspirations, since the Communist party was not allowed to participate in the government. The youth of Italy, frustrated by their inability to influence change through the political process, looked to the example of the partisans during WWII for political commitment and idealism, but took these ideals a step farther by forming extremist groups such as the *Brigate rosse* (Red Brigades) and *Prima linea*.² Although there were numerous terrorist attacks conducted during the *anni di piombo*, one event in particular stands out above all others due to the long-lasting impact

¹ The term *anni di piombo* comes from the 1981 German film *Marianne and Julianne* by Margarethe von Trotta, which in Italian was called *Anni di piombo*.

² The Red Brigades and *Prima linea* were Italian-Marxist-Leninist groups that aimed to create a revolution in Italy through armed force. The Red Brigades were an outgrowth of the *Collettivo Politico Metropolitano* in 1970, of which Renato Curcio, Mara Cagol, and Alberto Franceschini, three Maoist students from Milan had been members and all of whom would become the “nucleo storico” of the Red Brigades (Sguerri 10). The *Brigate rosse* used armed force to bring about revolution in Italy. They committed numerous violent crimes, including bank robberies, kidnappings, and murders.

it had on the very soul of the country, the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro by the Red Brigades in 1978. At the time of his kidnapping Aldo Moro was president of the DC, the most prominent political party in Italy since the Second World War. Besides serving as President of the DC, Moro served five terms as Prime Minister, and was also a member of the *Camera dei Deputati*, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Justice, and Minister of Education during his illustrious political career.³

On the morning of March 16, 1978 Moro was headed to Parliament to put the new Italian government into law. This new government, referred to as the historic compromise, created a coalition government between the DC and the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI). While driving to Parliament, his motorcade was ambushed by several members of the Red Brigades disguised in Alitalia uniforms, who shot and killed all the members of his motorcade and security detail in the process of kidnapping Moro. He would be kept a prisoner prisoner in the *prigione del popolo*, for fifty-five days while the Red Brigades tried to negotiate with the Italian government for the release of their fellow comrades in exchange for Aldo Moro.⁴ Throughout the period of Moro's captivity the Italian government upheld what they called the *linea di fermezza*, refusing to negotiate with the terrorists. On May 9th, 1978, Moro's corpse was found stuffed in the trunk of a Renault 4 in Via Caetani, which was believed to be the halfway point between the offices of the DC and the PCI.

³ Moro served five terms as prime minister (December 1963-July 1964, July 1964-February 1966, February 1966-February 1968, November 1974-February 1976, and February 1976-July 1976). He represented the constituency of Bari in the chamber of Italian parliament from the 1940s until his death.

⁴ The apartment where Moro was kept was at Via Montalcini 8 in Rome. The apartment had been bought by brigatista Anna Laura Braghetti. For more information on the *prigione del popolo*, read Braghetti's memoirs *Il prigioniero*. For a discussion of these memoirs as an inspiration for Bellocchio's film, see Chapter Four.

The kidnapping of Aldo Moro was largely attributed to the fact that his historic compromise was contested by both Christian Democrats and Communists. At the beginning of the 1970s, the *Partito Comunista Italiano* (PCI) was continuing its rise to prominence. Aldo Moro's historic compromise safeguarded an alliance between the *Democrazia Cristiana* (DC) and the PCI. Up to this point in history, even though the PCI was one of the largest political parties in Italy, it had never been allowed to be a part of the government. The significance of the historic compromise lay in the fact that by allowing the PCI to participate in the government, the DC was legitimizing the power of the Communist party. Moro believed that by compromising with the PCI, they could work together to end the rampant political violence in Italy. Moro was known for pursuing "the maximum extent of overlapping consensus possible at any particular moment between representatives of conflicting ideals of unequal values, but equal respect" (Moss 20). Many members of the DC were not in favor of including the Communist party in the government due to Italy's strong relationship with the United States, who were still involved in the Cold War, and Nicoletta Marini-Maio explains that some:

scholars and intellectuals have argued that the center right, in fact, feared more Moro's line of openness towards the Communists . . . than the *Brigate Rosse*. According to this interpretation, the DC and its allies used circuitous maneuvers to exploit the Moro kidnapping as a means to derail his strategy, undermine his credibility, and, ultimately, remove his political persona from the Italian scene (46).

The Red Brigades also did not support the involvement of the PCI in the government because they thought it would prevent a proletariat uprising. Moro "the architect of the *historic compromise* between the PCI and the ruling DC, was accused of trying to enslave the working class to the SIM with the help of the communist revisionists," which provided the Red Brigades a motive for killing him (Karmon 103).

The Moro kidnapping became instant national news and was an event followed by all Italians for the duration of his imprisonment. In the immediate aftermath of his death an investigation began into the events of the Moro affair and eventually all the terrorists were found and tried. Although the terrorists were put in prison, many people continued to wonder if the government had anything to do with the situation and if they let Moro die so that the historic compromise would not come to fruition. An important impact of Moro's death was the collapse of the fledgling government and the eventual dissolution of the DC fifteen years later.

The tragedy and social impact of the Moro affair has continued to intrigue people to this day, and there are numerous artistic endeavors that have investigated the Moro affair which add to the lasting influence of this terrorist attack on Italy's political history. There are novels, such as Leonardo Sciascia's *Todo Modo* (1974), Giancarlo DeCataldo's *Romanzo criminale* (2005), and Giorgio Vasta's *Il tempo materiale* (2008); works of non-fiction including Sciascia's *L'affaire Moro* (1978), Jean Baudrillard's *Fatal Strategies* (1983), Richard Drake's *The Aldo Moro Murder Case* (1995), and Sergio Flamigni's *La tela del ragno* (1988), Marco Balliani's stage production *Corpo di stato* (1998), as well as various productions for the screen that have recreated this historic moment of terrorism for Italian audiences in the thirty-seven years since Moro's death. In this study I will concentrate on the fictional depictions of Aldo Moro, specifically the numerous films that include Aldo Moro as a character or a part of the film's story-line. The long tradition of politically engaged Italian film, coupled with the sheer number of filmic productions in which Aldo Moro plays a vital role, led me to focus particularly on film as a medium to explore the Moro affair.

Italian political cinema has a renowned history both in Italy and abroad. As Benito Mussolini rose to power in the 1920s, he believed that “the cinema is the most powerful weapon,” a sentiment that would become widespread in the immediate post-war period (Bondanella 20). The Fascist regime would go on to produce many films that aimed to glorify Italy and its government, and although there were a lot of films made to promote Fascism and Italy’s power, Italy would become better known for its neorealist film that criticized the country’s political ruling classes as well as demonstrated the everyday struggles of the Italian population.⁵ In contrast to the Fascists, Neorealist filmmakers chose to make movies about the war and its aftermath, as well as demonstrate the social injustice and poverty experienced by many lower class Italians. There was a clear social agenda in neorealism, “una nuova tradizione, un’etica del vedere e del narrare e una capacità di investire il più anonimo gesto quotidiano del senso e del valore di un’epopea collettiva” (Brunetta VIII). The neorealists and their political messages would go on to influence Italian filmmakers through the ages, including the political filmmakers of the 1960s and 70s, such as Franco Rosi, Elio Petri, and the Taviani brothers, and continue to influence some of Italy’s most well-known filmmakers today, including Marco Bellocchio, Marco Tulio Giordana, and Nanni Moretti.⁶

The generation of filmmakers following neorealism in the 1960s and 1970s would have a similar dedication to political messages and their films would go on to be known as “*il cinema di impegno civile*, or more simply, *il cinema civile* – perhaps best translated as a cinema of political activism or engagement” (Bondanella 242). These films displayed current political and

⁵ For more information on the history of Fascist film, see Peter Bondanella’s *A History of Italian Cinema* (2009).

⁶ Rosa Barotsi and Pierpaolo Antonello write that from “the post-Second World War years up until the 1980s, collective preoccupations in Italy were consistently expressed through cinematic means” (189).

ideological issues in Italy, which covered many of the struggles of the *anni di piombo*, including Aldo Moro. The increased production of political films in these years was due to a need for “an art that would shake people out of their complacent contemplation of historical inevitability and would convince them of the necessity of political action” (Lapsley and Westlake 164).

Filmmakers began to call out politicians in film, though not by name, to highlight the problems within the government. Politically engaged filmmakers at this time, such as Elio Petri, were not supporters of the Christian Democrats who had long ruled Italy, or the historic compromise. By working towards a political compromise that would include the PCI in the new Italian government, certain Communist groups, as well as filmmakers thought Moro’s historic compromise would diminish the political differences dividing the country. The first film centered on Aldo Moro, Elio Petri’s *Todo Modo*, would be made in 1976 almost two years before the politician was killed, and would demonstrate the dislike of the historic compromise by the PCI.

In the thirty-seven years since Aldo Moro was killed, six more films have been made involving the politician, with the majority focusing on the Moro affair itself. Of the seven films involving Moro, five were made in the past fifteen years, which demonstrates the continued importance of the Moro to Italian filmmakers. A number of the directors of these films, including Marco Bellocchio, Marco Tulio Giordana, and Michele Placido were coming of age during the *anni di piombo* and can remember with clarity the tragedies of that period, such as the Moro affair, and their reactions to what occurred. It is noteworthy to discuss the interest of filmmakers with the *anni di piombo* and the death of Aldo Moro, considering that in recent years, Italian political film has started to return to historical events, which O’Rawe believes demonstrates how Italian cinema returned to its “vocation of civic reference’ and began again to document the realities of history from a politically committed standpoint” (“A Past” 102). Italy and Italian

politics completely changed with the death of Aldo Moro, and not necessarily for the better. David Moss writes that since Moro's death, "the political changes of the late 20th century... have not provided any encouragement to explore Moro's persona or political vision" (19). Italy has continued to face political turmoil, much of which developed with the fall of the Christian Democrats and with Silvio Berlusconi's rise to power. Films that return to past political events are re-configuring memories "within a new symbolic and political space, and thereby giving new epistemic and ethical significance" to past events, such as the Moro affair, in very different political times (Antonello and Mussnug 17). Moro's vision for compromise between political parties and the ability to work together has not come to fruition in Italy today, and filmmakers have returned to his life and kidnapping to show what could have been in Italy had the politician not met his untimely end.⁷

This dissertation will address Aldo Moro's presence in film and the changing manifestations of the politician in film throughout the years. The majority of films that feature Aldo Moro focus on the aspect of finding the truth surrounding his kidnapping and death.⁸ I will argue that through film a comprehensive collective memory can be formed from examining what is known of the statesman, before and after his death, helping to ease the continuing sense of guilt felt by the Italian people in regards to his tragic end. I have chosen to explore this topic because although a number of these films have been analyzed individually, they have never been studied as a body of work. Moro's image has undergone important changes through film since

⁷ "La conclusione del rapimento e l'assassinio dell'uomo politico pugliese provocarono non soltanto la fine ei governi di unità nazionale ma, soprattutto la rottura dello spirit di collaborazione democratic ache aveva condotto al dialogo intessuro, attraverso Moro e Berlinguer, tra la cultura cattolica democratica e quell ache si rifaceva al comunismo italiano, il quale era stato, con il Partito d'azione, fondamentale nella Resistenza italiana" (Tranfaglia 490).

⁸ According to David Moss, "most academic literature has focused on the events surrounding his kidnap and murder at the expense of serious interest in his life" (19).

his death and I find it necessary to examine the metamorphosis from his first portrayal as a cowardly victim of state in *Todo modo* to a Christian father-figure and hero in more recent films. The majority of the films I will be discussing were made in the past fifteen years, but Aldo Moro has been a presence in film for forty years now, demonstrating that the figure of Moro has had a lasting impact on Italian history that continues today.

In regards to the large number of films made that feature the Moro affair, Alan O’Leary writes that “no other real event in Italy has inspired so many feature films” (“Italian Cinema” 252). Not only is the story of Aldo Moro mentioned in numerous films, but archival footage, such as photographs, newsreel, and voice recordings are used in films to ground them historically. Giancarlo Lombardi explains that:

the archive footage of the newsreels announcing the abduction of the president of the Christian Democratic Party and the eventual recovery of his body has been inserted so often in recent Italian cinema that several scholars have come to consider it a fetishistic metonym for the ‘spectacular happenings’ of the 1970s (“Il coraggio” 246).

Christian Uva sees Aldo Moro as a symbol of the *anni di piombo*, and the return to this period, for Uva, is often related to the penchant for Italian filmmakers to undertake the “misteri d’Italia,” violent or traumatic events in which the Italian government is believed to have participated (*Schermi di piombo* 9-10).⁹ A large number of these events, such as the Moro affair, remain very much unresolved for Italians, so filmmakers bring them back to light so that audiences may form their own opinions on the circumstances surrounding the tragedies.

⁹ For more information on the return of film to the *anni di piombo*, please see Christian Uva’s book *Schermi di piombo: il terrorismo nel cinema italiano*.

Besides serving as a symbol of the *anni di piombo* as a whole, Aldo Moro's role in film has been to haunt the conscience of Italy. O'Rawe writes that the high number of Moro films "are testimony to the extent to which Moro continues to haunt the cultural psyche of the Italian nation" ("More Moro" 216). Alan O'Leary also writes that "the notion of 'haunting' has become commonplace in writing about the figure of Aldo Moro and especially about Moro and film" ("Locations of Moro" 156). The concept of Moro as a haunting figure has been thoroughly studied by Nicoletta Marini-Maio, who has investigated the spectrality of Aldo Moro. For Marini-Maio, Aldo Moro's ghost is often used as a tragic palinode, "a collective rite of mourning through which an entire generation both takes responsibility for terrorism and simultaneously abjures it," (1).¹⁰ Throughout this dissertation I will refer to the idea of Moro as a ghost haunting the people of Italy, as a reminder of a terrible event in Italy's past, but also as a way to create a new collective memory of the politician and his death.

This study will investigate the body of films that feature Aldo Moro as a character or a part of the storyline, as well as how his image has changed over the years. Furthermore, the majority of studies on Aldo Moro are concerned solely with his kidnapping and death, rather than his political career leading up to the kidnapping. Having been so involved in politics, it is surprising that there is not much documentation of his political contributions prior to his death, besides his involvement in the historic compromise, but it is quite difficult to find information on his personal life, and parts of his political life pre-kidnapping.¹¹ According to David Moss, the

¹⁰ Marini-Maio also mentions a second type of portrayal of Aldo Moro, the mystery story. She writes that the mystery story casts the event as a transnational conspiracy aimed at blocking the rise of Communism in Italy thus absolving an entire sector of Italian society of the allegation of political violence (1). I will discuss the conspiracies surrounding the Moro affair in my second chapter.

¹¹ Moro's name has never been associated with a specific initiative or reform, which could partially play a role in the lack of information on his life pre-kidnapping.

only clear thing about Aldo Moro “was the shock of white hair above his forehead” (18). What is known about Moro before his death is that his career in politics had only ever seen two setbacks, which were his eviction from the role of DC party secretary in 1968 and his failure to be chosen as DC candidate for the Italian presidency in 1971. It is also known that his mode of speaking and writing was “complex, meditative, and built around an intricate accumulation of assertions, qualifications, and distinctions, with a predilection for sketching options rather than stating intentions” (Moss 18). Since there is not much written about Moro prior to his death, the majority of films focus on his time in captivity. In this project I have chosen to also study the few films that depict Aldo Moro before his death to gain better perspective on the politician and how his character has changed in films over the years.

To expand on who Aldo Moro was before his death, I will also discuss Moro’s deep religious commitment.¹² Moro is often depicted in film praying or attending confession, so it is important to understand his involvement in the Church. The Catholic faith was an integral part of Moro’s life from an early age. From age fifteen he held positions of power in Catholic youth organizations in Taranto and Bari.¹³ While in office he received daily communion, even when he was abroad on political business, and attended mass every Sunday, even inviting his students to join him. Although not totally adherent to Church views, Moro was careful to insure that the Pope or other Vatican officials would not oppose his policy. I believe that Moro’s deep faith plays a vital part in the multiple representations of his character in film. From the first film in which he appears as a character, Moro is often depicted in church or in prayer. He is shown

¹² As of September 2012, the Holy See has received a file for Moro’s beatification, the first step towards sainthood in the Catholic Church.

¹³ Moro served as president of FUCI, the association of Catholic university students, from 1939 until 1941.

having conversations about his faith with members of the Red Brigades, as well as with priests and politicians in the films I will discuss. I will also focus in several chapters on Moro's association with religious imagery and ideas.

In the first chapter of my dissertation I will discuss the concept of martyrdom in two films that depict Aldo Moro before his death; Elio Petri's *Todo Modo* (1976) and Marco Tulio Giordana's *Romanzo di una strage* (2012). Although two totally different films, historically and stylistically, both films portray a devoutly Catholic Moro and a rhetoric dealing with political martyrdom. According to Paul Middleton, a martyr "becomes a symbol of a community's desires and hopes, or for that matter, their terrors and fears, but in either case, the martyr is representative of a larger struggle" (16). Moro has come to be seen as a martyr during one of the most difficult times in Italy, the *anni di piombo*, a time of great struggle for the Italian nation. In *Todo modo* Moro is referred to as a victim of the state and his death becomes necessary to make political progress. In *Romanzo di una strage* Moro will also be associated with the idea of dying for the state, but his character wishes to die to make Italy a better place, unlike the Moro of *Todo modo* who does not wish to die. The concept of Moro as a victim of the Italian State will be reiterated in many of the films discussed in this project.

In the second chapter of my dissertation I will address the conspiracy theories surrounding Aldo Moro's death depicted in the films *Il caso Moro* (Ferrara 1986) and *Piazza delle cinque lune* (Martinelli 2003). Much of my analyses of these films will discuss filmic realism and the idea of finding truth in film. According to Robert Lapsley and Michael Westlake, in film, especially political film "all political positions and programmes are premised on a conception of social reality, so concerned to present certain propositions as true and others as

false” (156). Both films I plan to discuss present their retellings of the Moro affair as revelations of the truth, focusing on possible involvement of the Italian government, as well as the United States, in Moro’s death. According to O’Leary, the uncertainty surrounding the Moro affair is what lends well to a fictive medium like the cinema (“Dead Man Walking” 34). There are still many questions surrounding the circumstances of the Moro kidnapping and death, and I will argue that even though these films are shot in a realist style, they show that there is no way they can present the truth through conspiracy theory.¹⁴

The third chapter of my dissertation will focus on the role of Aldo Moro as a cultural symbol in films dealing with other historic events. The two films I will discuss are Michele Placido’s *Romanzo criminale* (2005) and Paolo Sorrentino’s *Il divo* (2008). While neither film is about Aldo Moro, his kidnapping and death figure into the storylines and add historical significance to both films. In this chapter I will discuss the importance of historic cinema and the filmic devices it uses to construct a relationship between events of the past and the audience of the present. I will employ a postmodern analysis of these films and their stylistic choices. Pierpaolo Antonello and Florian Mussnug define postmodernism as “a triumph of eclecticism, a skeptical but above all playful attitude towards social conventions, a loss of faith in definitive or at least comprehensive representations of the real” (2). These films reject many of the ideas of realism that Italian political film is based on in favor of jarring formalist styles. They present evidence of truth, much like the conspiracy films, but do not place blame, leaving the events up to interpretation.

¹⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary defines conspiracy theory as “an explanatory proposition that accuses two or more persons, a group, or an organization of having caused or covered up, through secret deliberate action, an illegal or harmful event or situation”.

The final chapter of my dissertation will address the use of the oneiric in Marco Bellocchio's 2003 film *Buongiorno, notte*. Unlike the majority of the films discussed, where Aldo Moro is either a supporting character or where the Moro affair is mentioned, *Buongiorno, notte* "restores the long denied centrality of Moro – the presence of his analytical perspective and of his subjectivity – to the kidnapping" (Pezzini 148). Besides discussing Bellocchio's film in detail, I will examine his documentary film that features the Aldo Moro kidnapping and death, *Sogni infranti*, as well as the memoirs of Anna Laura Braghetti, *Il prigioniero*, on which *Buongiorno, notte* is based.¹⁵ I will employ ideas from psychoanalysis in my analysis of *Buongiorno, notte*, due to the importance of dreams and imagining in the film.

To conclude, by analyzing the entire canon of films that involve Aldo Moro, this project aims to create a "total picture" of how Moro is viewed before and after his kidnapping and death. By investigating films set before the Moro affair, during the fifty-five days of his captivity, and that follow the aftermath, the audience is able to see all the different facts surrounding the death of Aldo Moro, as well as what a different place Italy would be had the politician been released by the Red Brigades. It is also possible by looking at all the films made about Moro to see the ways in which his portrayal has changed over the years. In the first film to feature Moro as a character, *Todo Modo*, the politician is not portrayed in a positive light and his death in the film is seen as something necessary for Italy to become a better place. From this very negative portrayal before his death, the films that follow steadily increase their glorification of Moro, from caring grandfather in *Il caso Moro*, to ghostly conscience in *Il divo*, to Christ-like victim in *Buongiorno, notte*. By looking at the varying portrayals of Moro, it is possible to see how over the years, with the fall of the Christian Democrats and the continued political struggles in Italy,

¹⁵ Anna Laura Braghetti was one of the actual kidnapers of Aldo Moro. Mondadori published her memoirs in 1998.

Moro as a proponent of change and collaboration has become a symbol of goodness, rather than a controversial figure.

CHAPTER 1: DEPICTIONS OF MORO AS MARTYR IN *TODO MODO* AND *ROMANZO DI UNA STRAGE*

I. Introduction

The majority of the films that include Aldo Moro as a character or a part of the plot are concerned with his fifty-five days of imprisonment and eventual murder.¹⁶ The end of Moro's life and the historic compromise make up the subject of numerous books, articles, films, and stage productions.¹⁷ Much attention has also been paid to Moro's lasting impact on Italian history and his haunting of the people of Italy, especially in regards to film. Mariane Hirsch, a scholar of memory studies, describes a concept that she refers to as "postmemory" in her book *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust* that I find applicable to the directors making films about Aldo Moro. She defines postmemory as "a form of received memory transmitted from the generation that witnessed the event, and which acknowledges its own belatedness" (5). I believe that this definition can also be used to discuss films made by Italian directors who lived through the *anni di piombo* and the Moro affair. The sense of "what could have been" had Moro been freed by the Brigate rosse felt by many Italians has been adopted by filmmakers such as Michele Placido, Paolo Sorrentino, and Marco

¹⁶ Of the seven films that will be discussed in this dissertation, five of them only discuss Aldo Moro in regards to his kidnapping and murder. These include *Il caso Moro* (1983), which is a recreation of the kidnapping and the investigation into what happened, *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* (2003), which re-investigates the Moro affair twenty-five years after it occurred, *Romanzo criminale* (2005), which depicts the possible involvement of the Banda della Magliana in the Moro affair, *Il divo* (2008), which discusses Aldo Moro's relationship with Giulio Andreotti and implicates Andreotti in his death, and *Buongiorno, notte* (2003), which retells the Moro affair from the point of view of the female terrorist.

¹⁷ There are too many non-fiction investigations into the Moro affair to count, but some of the best known are *L'affaire Moro* by Leonardo Sciascia and Richard Drake's *The Aldo Moro Murder Case*. Recent novels that have included the Moro affair include Giancarlo DeCataldo's *Romanzo criminale* (2002) and Giorgio Vasta's *Il tempo materiale* (2008). There has also been a play about the Moro affair entitled *Corpo di Stato* by Marco Baliani.

Bellocchio, in such films as *Romanzo criminale*, *Il divo* and *Buongiorno, notte*, which I will discuss in later chapters, and gives Italian audiences a visual picture of the negative effects Moro's death has had on Italian society. The three abovementioned films are quite recent, all made within the last fifteen years, and they are a part of a trend in recent cinema "in cui il cinema, come visto, è sempre più interessato a guardare al *the day after*, ossia alle macerie soprattutto psicologiche" (Uva *Schermi di Piombo* 69). As the majority of Moro films concentrate on the Moro affair and its lasting impact, I find it necessary to also study the few films that portray Aldo Moro pre-kidnapping. Moro was killed in 1978 at the age of sixty-one. He had a long illustrious career, serving Italy as Minister of Justice, Minister of Education, Minister of Foreign Affairs, a three-time prime minister, and president of the Christian Democrats, but many of these accomplishments are not discussed in films depicting Aldo Moro. The majority of information I have been able to find about a pre-kidnapping Moro has been in historical texts, but they do not go into much depth. Instead, they mainly mention the different terms of his career, and there has never been an investigation into Moro's personal papers besides the letters he wrote in captivity.¹⁸ In this chapter I discuss the pre-kidnapping Moro, the lack of films depicting a pre-kidnapping Moro, the more controversial side of the politician, and the presence of martyrdom rhetoric in films depicting a him pre-kidnapping.

I believe the lack of information about Aldo Moro pre-kidnapping is partially due to the fact that Moro's kidnapping and death were far more exciting than his actual political career, and the Moro affair is shrouded in mystery and conspiracies. According to David Moss, a cultural anthropologist who specializes in Italian politics and society, Moro had an incredibly successful

¹⁸ There has never been a formal study done into Aldo Moro's personal archive until recently. The current study into Moro's life is coordinated by his nephew Prof. Renato Moro and the Accademia di studi storici Aldo Moro. This study should be completed this year for Moro's centennial birthday (Moss 26 note).

political career before his kidnapping, and his political career had only seen two setbacks, when he was removed as the political secretary of the DC in 1968, and his unsuccessful candidacy bid for the presidency of Italy in 1971 (23). Most career politicians wish to preserve their political legacy, but Moro had no followers and showed no interest “in creating a group of political or intellectual descendants who would preserve his work and reputation for posterity” (Moss 19). This lack of legacy, coupled with the fact that Moro’s name is not attached to any political reform or specific initiative, is most likely a large part of the reason there is not much research into Moro’s pre-kidnapping career.

Another reason I believe there is not much information about Aldo Moro’s pre-kidnapping career is because Moro himself did not let many people into his life. Politics were not Moro’s main priority. Moss writes that Moro had four spheres of commitment: 1) family, 2) religion, 3) politics, and 4) education (19-20). Moro was an incredibly private person, never even granting an interview throughout his life.¹⁹ He was known for being a reserved individual and conducted himself in a formal manner (Moss 22). Although he was a private person, Moro did believe that politics should be a collective effort. He wanted the DC to be like “a family, whose leaders could listen to the different views of members and propose a way forward acceptable to all” (Moss 24). Due to his impenetrability and his movement towards a more cooperative and comprehensive form of politics, Moro was seen as a controversial figure throughout his political career, especially for his openness to the Left. Moro’s image would quickly change from a consummate, impenetrable politician to a hero of the Italian people and a beacon of goodness following his abduction and death.

¹⁹ Aldo Moro refused to meet the first person who tried to write a biography of him, Aniello Coppola. He only granted one interview to Eugenio Scalfari, but on the agreement that it would never be published. Scalfari published this single interview upon Moro’s death (Moss 26).

Aldo Moro's current depiction in literature, art, and film is typically positive, much more so than when he was alive. He has become an Italian hero and "an icon of martyrdom" (Marini-Maio 47). The Roman Catholic Church defines martyrdom as "'bearing witness unto death', and the martyr as one who 'bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine'" (Middleton 119). The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary provides a more secular definition of martyrdom, defining a martyr as "one who undergoes death or great suffering on behalf of any belief or cause or through devotion to some subject" (qtd. in Middleton 5). Bearing these two definitions in mind, in this chapter I will delve into the idea of Moro as "martyr" rather than shrewd politician, discussing two films in particular, Elio Petri's 1976 film *Todo modo*, based on the 1974 eponymous novel by Leonardo Sciascia, and Marco Tullio Giordana's 2012 film *Romanzo di una strage*. Although both films portray Aldo Moro before his abduction, as well as his interactions with fellow politicians, they do so in incredibly different ways. *Todo modo* was the first film made about Aldo Moro and *Romanzo di una strage* is the most recent, but both films include dialogue and imagery of martyrdom in association with the politician. I will also discuss why martyrdom is associated with Aldo Moro in the films taking place before his death, instead of the films portraying his death or discussing the aftermath. By focusing on the positive and negative examples of martyrdom present in these films I will demonstrate the extent to which Moro's image has changed since his kidnapping.

II. The First Moro: Depicting the Historic Compromise in Elio Petri's *Todo Modo*

Todo Modo is a polemic film that has not received large amounts of attention due to the fact that it was banned shortly after its release in 1976. The film, based on Leonardo Sciascia's 1974 novel of the same name, tells the story of a group of elite politicians and social figures who have come together to meet secretly and discuss an unnamed epidemic in Italy. The men are staying at a retreat center in the south of Italy called Zafer that is run by a charismatic priest

named Don Gaetano, played by Marcello Mastroianni. The main character of the film is the president of an unspecified political party. The President, referred to as “M.” in the film’s credits, has come to participate in the organization of new political policy. M., played by Gian Maria Volonté, is uncannily similar in his appearance to Aldo Moro, though he is never referred to as Moro in the film or novel.²⁰ During the retreat a murder occurs, causing an investigation into the politicians. One by one the men of power are killed, including M., leaving the audience to wonder who is responsible for the murders.

Before Moro was killed, *Todo Modo* was actually critically acclaimed and included two of the most popular stars of the time, Volonté and Mastroianni (Drake 115). However the film was immediately criticized in the aftermath of Moro’s death, since it was seen to predict the death of Aldo Moro two years after its release.²¹ Petri was attacked in the Italian press and many speculated that he had encouraged the death of Moro with his film and Petri’s career seemed to vanish after the Moro affair.²² Petri had long been committed to political film, but *Todo Modo* was seen as going too far, especially after Moro died.²³

Todo Modo offers an incredibly harsh treatment of the Christian Democrats. Larry Portis, a scholar of European history writes: “Petri’s most controversial film is *Todo Modo*” (48). O’Leary calls the film “a vicious critique of Christian democracy” (“Locations of Moro” 157), while Peter Bondanella refers to the film as “a broadside attack upon the system of Christian

²⁰ Due to the overarching power of the Christian Democrats in Italian politics, political films made in the 1970s were often censored. Petri himself writes in a short tract on *Todo Modo* that directors “who were most preoccupied with and dedicated to, political film found themselves attacked more aggressively by the critics, censored by political parties, and generally regarded with suspicion” (Petri 139).

²¹ “After the assassination of Moro, Elio Petri stated unambiguously that he did, indeed, wish to make a film against the party that had governed Italy for so many years and brought the country to cultural and political disaster” (Portis “Pt. 2” 49).

²² Tragically, he succumbed to cancer, dying four years later in 1982.

Democratic rule that had dominated Italian political life since 1948” (245). I believe that *Todo modo* is a natural continuation of Elio Petri’s dedication to politically engaged film. Petri had Leftist ties since birth, growing up a member of the working class, with a metal artisan father and a waitress mother. From his youth he aligned himself with Communist ideals and in a 1972 interview with Jean Gili for *Cineaste* he explains that in his film he tries to express his Communist beliefs and aims to “reach those who are still outsiders to those ideas” (Georgakas and Rubenstein 56).²⁴ In the twenty years following the Second World War, many filmmakers were becoming frustrated with the hard political stances taken by the Christian democrats and the lack of social change in Italy. For Portis this period produced “an exceptional wellspring of commitment and idealism” from filmmakers, including Petri (“Pt. 1” 19).²⁵ The director began his career in film as an assistant to Giuseppe De Santis and was well rooted in neorealism and politically committed film.²⁶ His first feature length film, *L’assassino* (1961), tells the story of a young antiques dealer (played by Mastroianni) who is accused of the murder of his mistress. Mastroianni’s character is of working class origins, which makes him an even larger suspect in the case, since his mistress was also his benefactress. From this film on, class struggle and alienation became common themes in Petri’s work.²⁷

²⁴ Founded in 1967, *Cineaste* is an American film review with a commitment to film art and politics.

²⁵ Many directors during the 1960s made political films, but the majority of them, such as Marco Bellocchio and Bernardo Bertolucci were young university students and much younger than Petri. The director that Portis believes is most similar to Petri is Francesco Rosi (1922-2015) (“Pt. 1” 20).

²⁶ Giuseppe De Santis was one of the Italian directors at the forefront of neorealism. He was known to have Marxist conventions, similar to Petri. His film *Riso amaro* was one of the few commercial successes of neorealism (Bondanella 65-66).

²⁷ Alienation, especially in the workplace, would become a signature of Petri’s films. Portis writes that for Petri the problem is “that alienated work is part of a system of cultural isolation, the non-communicability necessary for economic exploitation and political control” (“Pt. 1” 23).

Although Petri was deeply devoted to political film, he did not believe that his films were able to change how people think about politics, rather, that the films called the major problems of current Italian society to the attention of the general public (Portis “Pt. 2” 47). He did tackle many of the major issues of Italian society in the 1960s and 1970s, including such topics as mafia involvement in the government in *A ciascuno il suo* (1967), police corruption in *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto* (1970), and the struggle of factory workers in *La classe operaia va in paradiso* (1972).²⁸ All of these films were praised by critics and won prestigious awards, but they received their fair share of criticism. For example, *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto* was highly praised, winning the Academy Award for Best Foreign Film in 1970, but it also received criticism from the Italian authorities due to its portrayal of the police force.²⁹ Also, *La classe operaia va in paradiso*, similarly to *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto*, was both praised and attacked. It won the Grand Prize at the 1972 Cannes Film Festival, but troubled the radical Left (Portis “Pt. 2” 47).

If one follows the trajectory of Petri’s films, from class struggle, to organized crime, to corruption and workers’ rights, the subject of *Todo Modo* is a likely next step. The film was released at the time when Aldo Moro first began discussing his historic compromise with the

²⁸ *A ciascuno il suo* was Petri’s first film adapted from a Sciascia novel and his first film in which he worked with Gian Maria Volonté. As in the novel, the film follows a Leftist professor living in Sicily who begins to investigate the murders of two townspeople. He is eventually kidnapped and killed by the same people who committed the first murders just as he has discovered their identities. The film was quite successful and won the award for the best screenplay at Cannes Film Festival in 1967. *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto* stars Gian Maria Volonté as a police commissioner in the Homicide department. He begins an affair with a young call girl whom he eventually murders. The police officer believes because of his high-ranking position he will not be a suspect in the crime. This time as a lowly factory worker named Lulu Massa, who loses a finger in a work-related accident and also loses his job. Lulu becomes involved in political activism, but is criticized for this as the film develops.

²⁹ Petri was inspired to make *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto* after the bombing in Piazza Fontana in 1969 and the death of Anarchist Giuseppe Pinelli. Before making the film he collaborated with several other filmmakers, including Marco Bellocchio, Ettore Scola, Lucchino Visconti, and Mario Monicelli on a documentary into the investigation of Pinelli’s death (Portis “Pt. 2” 45). In 1972’s *La classe operaia va in paradiso*, Gianmaria Volonté once again stars,

Italian Communist Party. Petri did not support the Italian Communist Party working with the Christian Democrats in the historic compromise, even though he had left the party in 1956.³⁰ Petri wrote when *Todo Modo* was released: “I wanted to make a film against the party that governed Italy for thirty years and shipwrecked the country, politically and culturally” (256). In the film Petri attacks the DC and the corruption within the party as well as the idea of “*trasformismo*” that has “always constituted the root cause of political corruption in Italy” (Bondanella 246).³¹ In his interview with Jean Gili, Petri states that he prefers films about “today’s political reality” and that he prefers “a fictional treatment of political themes” (Georgakas and Rubenstein 62). *Todo Modo* fits Petri’s description perfectly, being set in the present day and using a fictional storyline that includes elements of the current political reality.

The title of both the novel and the film *Todo Modo* comes from the teachings of Saint Ignatius Loyola and his dictum that “all measures (Todo Modo) must be employed to seek out the Will of God” (Bondanella 245).³² The spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius de Loyola were commonly practiced by Christian Democrat politicians at the time the novel was written and consisted of “structured ways of praying, meditating and breathing in order to repent and purify the soul” (Petri 254). Petri found that Sciascia’s use of Loyola as metaphor was the perfect mode for discussing the relationship that had developed over the past thirty years between the Catholic Church and the Christian Democrats (Petri 257). The film is split into sections based on the

³⁰ Petri left the PCI in 1956 after the party did not support the Hungarians during the uprising of 1956. He writes: “I left the Italian Communist Party in 1956 after founding a journal called *Città aperta*. I have maintained ties with the Italian Communist Party ever since, with issues of Marxism and Leninism, but I have always remained independent in my thinking and autonomous in my judgement and actions” (139).

³¹ *Trasformismo* is a system of government found in Italy in which there is a lack of stable majority, so political parties search for allies work together to form coalitions. This system of government is still prominent in Italy today (Ginsborg “A History” 141-142)

³² “Col nome di Esercizi Spirituali si definisce una pratica religiosa ideata di San Ignazio di Loyola nei primi decenni del 1500. Ufficialmente approvata dalla Chiesa nel 1548, per la grande efficacia spirituale, essa fu subito adottata come mezzo di formazione di uomini del potere economico e politico” (*Todo Modo*)

different phases of the spiritual exercises practiced in the film: The Vigil, Meditation on Sin, The Second Day, and Meditation on Hell.

Sciascia's novel is written in the popular genre of the *poliziesco*, which Petri also adapts for his film. The *poliziesco* had become a prevalent genre in film during the 1970s as a way to denounce the political problems of the day.³³ Petri believed that “our entire life is a form of private investigation – a detective story – on all sorts of manners” (Georgakas and Rubenstein 59). By using the *poliziesco* to tell the story of corruption within the DC, both Sciascia and Petri are trying to investigate the inner workings of the party and reveal truth to the Italian public. For Loreto Busquets, a professor of Italian and Spanish literature, the use of the detective genre is a “paradigma del processo cognitivo: di fronte al delitto, che è sempre un enigma su cui fare luce, valgono solo la constatazione dei fatti e le congetture” (19).

Like Elio Petri, Leonardo Sciascia abhorred the Christian Democrats. Sciascia spent most of his career examining power and its dark forces, and saw the DC as the root of many of Italy's problems.³⁴ He also had a negative perception of Aldo Moro and saw him as “the epitome of Christian Democratic ambiguity” but also recognized that Moro was an intelligent and shrewd man (Randall 35). Sciascia and Petri's political ideals align in both the novel and the film.

Busquets states that both works:

scaturiscono da un medesimo atteggiamento umano ed artistico: l'attenzione e la tensione morale e civile verso i problemi e le degenerazioni della vita pubblica nazionale italiana e il convincimento che l'arte può essere al servizio di un'idea politica ed essere strumento di svisceramento della realtà e di denuncia (17).

³³ The *poliziesco* developed out of the *giallo*, or mystery genre. The *poliziesco* feature a police investigation into a horrible crime and they also have “social concerns typical of the Italian political film” (Bondanella 453).

³⁴ For Federica Randall, “no Italian writer examined that power more perceptively than Leonardo Sciascia, who time and again wrote of the dark forces that would plague Italy in the last decades of the twentieth century” (32).

Through both of their investigations into the mysterious workings of the DC, Sciascia and Petri took all the means they found necessary, a form of “*Todo modo*” to bring truth to the Italian people.

Todo Modo is indeed, an attack, not just on the DC but, on the senses of the audience. The novel is told from the point of view of an outsider, a painter who has seen a sign for the Zafer hermitage and has decided he needs some solitude, in which to observe the events going on around his life. The film does not have a narrator and the audience is immersed in the curious atmosphere of the hermitage, which can be best referred to as grotesque.³⁵ Busquets refers to the idea of the grotesque in Petri’s films, saying that they tend towards caricature (26). He describes the men of power in *Todo Modo* as all dressed alike with dark glasses that function like masks, “uomini senza occhi, manichini come quelli di De Chirico, insignificanti e anonimi” (Busquets 26). The hermitage’s retreat center is underground and sparsely furnished. The walls are either white or grey, and the floors are black. It is as if the entire film has a tint of grey to it, emphasizing the darkness of the party working on policy within the walls of the center.³⁶ The only art within the building are the white marble statues that line the halls, with their empty faces watching the series of events. Busquets says that the film has “presage apocalittici” but I prefer to describe it as eerie, which is only enhanced by the discordant soundtrack from Ennio Morricone (26). I find the pervading darkness of the film to be unsettling, but the most disturbing element, in my opinion, are the characters in the film themselves. There are many unnamed politicians at the conference center, but the named characters, such as Don Gaetano, Voltrano, M and his wife Giacinta, are erratic and unpredictable, changing from calm to agitated

³⁵ Petri writes that he decided to not include the character of the artist, but rather “to substitute it with a Christian Democratic politician, who at the same time was the most emblematic of all the living ones” (257).

³⁶ Busquets writes that the pronounced use of grey and black “si allude al grigiore di idee e di personalità del mondo politico ed ecclesiastico” (26).

at the drop of a hat. The character who comes off as the most bizarre is M. himself, portrayed by Volonté.

Gianmaria Volonté is the actor most associated with Aldo Moro, as he plays him in both *Todo Modo* and the first film to be made after Moro's death, Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*. The two portrayals of Moro by Volonté will be completely different, which I associate with the time frames in which the two films were made. The basis of Volonté's career was political film and he is intimately associated with the genre (Bondanella 243). Besides starring in four of Petri's films, he also starred in films by other politically active directors such as the Taviani brothers, Marco Bellocchio, and Franco Rossi.³⁷ The choice of Volonté as Aldo Moro may seem strange at first, due to the fact that he was the polar opposite of Moro politically, but I find it another opportunity for Volonté to express his political opinions, which were strongly against the Christian Democrats. Volonté's portrayal of M in *Todo Modo* is physically similar to Aldo Moro, but he takes his performance to a whole other level when it comes to M's behavior in the film. While Volonté's portrayal of Moro "riprodurre con una fedeltà ed un realismo anatomico" (Busquets 26), for Isabella Pezzini: "Volonté provided the characterization of Moro with an unforgettable mask that verged on parodic caricature" (141). I do agree that Volonté looks the part of Moro, but Petri's creation is an extreme take on the president's personality. The portrayal of Moro borders on camp, and he is quite pathetic. M is weak, nervous, and dependent on his wife and the Church. The Moro of *Todo Modo* follows "il cliché degli uomini politici italiani legati alla chiesa, con il loro fare tra il femminile e il preteso, il loro linguaggio colto e sibillino, la voce sommessa, la gestualità servile e riverente" (Busquets 25).

³⁷ Volonté starred in *A ciascuno il suo*, *Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto*, *La classe operaia va in paradiso*, and *Todo Modo*. He worked with the Taviani brothers on *Un uomo da bruciare* (1962) and *Sotto il segno dello scorpione* (1969). He worked with Bellocchio on the film *Sbatti il mostro in prima pagina* (1972). He collaborated with on five films; *Uomini contro* (1970), *Il caso Mattei* (1972), *Lucky Luciano* (1973), *Cristo si è fermato a Eboli* (1979), and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1987).

Petri made M. the guiding character of the film, because he wanted the character to reflect the most recognizable politician in Italy at the time. His vision of M. is very personal and reflects his opinions on Moro. When discussing how he saw Aldo Moro, Petri states:

For many years Moro carried his power like a cross on his shoulders, and the torment of this sort of exhausting spiritual exercise was clear in his emaciated face, in his somewhat lost behavior, in the bitter grimace of his mouth, in his sickly gaze (257).

The character of M. embodies this depiction of Moro. He looks like he is in pain for much of the film. He doesn't like to be touched by others and shies away even from handshakes. When nervous, he makes a strange clicking sound and he cowers in uncomfortable situations, most often in the presence of domineering figures like Don Gaetano, the inspector, or the strange figure of Voltrano. There is even a point in the film where M. is disguised as a priest by the staff at Zafer and continues acting like a priest in his conversations with the investigator and conducts a non-sensical discussion of the murders. Volonté's Moro is completely bizarre, most overtly in his interactions with his wife, Giacinta, played by Mariangela Melato.

What little is written about the character of M.'s wife Giacinta is written about her in regards to the sexual-phobia of the Catholic Church (Busquets 21).³⁸ Although small, I find the role of Giacinta quite important in relation to Aldo Moro as martyr, because throughout the film she wishes for her husband to be "great". Giacinta's relationship with her husband appears incestuous. M. and Giacinta do not have a traditional husband/wife relationship, but instead it is more similar to a mother/son relationship. For example, when praying together in M.'s room, while using a *respiro profondo*, the prayer often leads to sexual tension. Giacinta reveals her right breast twice in the film, pulling it out for M. to suckle during their prayer. Giacinta also

³⁸ In regards to Giacinta, Loreto Busquets writes that Petri "le dà una tonalità oscura e barocca, ingrandendo mostruosamente la semplice allusion alla sessuofobia cattolica presente nel racconto. Il regista si compiace nel mostrare una sessualità di sagrestia vissuta sotto l'incombenza del peccato, che da luogo a un ampio spettro di ambiguità, anomalie e aperrazioni sessuali" (21).

cares for M. like a child, tying his shoes for him in the morning and bathing him when he returns from prayers. He often rests on her breast when together, and she gives him pep talks as a mother would give a son. Through watching his interactions with Giacinta, M. does not project the strong leader of the men of power at the retreat, but I find that when with his wife he resembles a small child, often in fear and needing guidance, their relationship represents an incest between a mother and child.

Giacinta struggles in her relationship with M. There are obvious points in the film when she is sexually attracted to her husband, as when she pulls out her breast for him, or the multiple times in the film when she is rubbing her breast. She never refers to herself as M.'s wife, but calls herself mother throughout the film. At one point in the film, Giacinta asks to confess her sins to Don Gaetano. She says that she has no sins, only desire, desire for M. to lead Italy. She declares: "Io, come una madre, lo vedo alla testa della nazione, vedo su un monumento." She says that he is Cavour or Garibaldi, but then shakes her head saying she can't make love to Cavour.³⁹ In her confession we can see that she desires power and glory for her husband, as a mother would for a son, but she struggles sexually with their relationship. She even says: "ma una madre non può fare l'amore con il proprio figlio." At the end of her confession with Don Gaetano, Giacinta even goes as far as to say M. is Christ and that she desires a monument for him, a monument of death.

This is not the first association of M. with dying in the film. There are small references to "the end" beginning with M.'s arrival at Zafer when he is told where everyone will be staying until the end. M. inquires the end of what and is told "la fine della fine." As the guests begin to

³⁹ Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour, was a prominent figure in the war for Italy's independence. He became the first prime minister of Italy in 1861. Giuseppe Garibaldi was an Italian general who led many of the battles for Italy's independence.

arrive, Voltrano, one of the men of power at the retreat tells some men of economic power: “Siete morti senza saperlo. Il popolo lo vuole. Dio lo vuole.” There is a scene later on when the men of power are attending mass and they recite a prayer in unison, saying that God gave his life for us and that we need to give our lives for our friends. Also, during the meditation on sin, Don Gaetano asks the crowd how much time is left and states that “il potere uccide.” He continues the discussion of power during the meditation on hell, telling the politicians that people with power will suffer the most in hell. These references to death, along with the continuing deaths of the attendees at the retreat, strongly allude to M.’s death in the film.

The scene of M.’s death is full of Christian imagery and meaning. The scene begins with M. exiting the retreat center and he is outside with the driver of his car. There are men spraying a thick white smoke around the building and M. is told that the smoke is to kill whatever is causing the epidemic. He is also told that fifty-eight people have now died from the illness. M. begins to walk towards the woods surrounding the retreat center, where we see multiple large crosses, similar to that on which Jesus Christ was crucified, scattered among the trees. As M. is walking, he comes upon a trail of paper, documents that Don Gaetano had been holding onto that kept track of all the men at Zafer, including pictures. Every time M. comes upon a picture along the path, shortly after he finds that person dead. The dead men are found in many different positions, including a man with a fishhook in his mouth, a man who has rolls of tape stuffed into his mouth, and a massive pile of naked men. As M. approaches the end of the paper trail he finds his own photo and knows that he is next to die. He falls to his knees and says “adesso può uccidere anche me”. He begins to pray the Our Father and the driver, who is behind Moro’s back, takes a few steps backwards, pulls out a gun and shoots M. five times in the back. The film ends shortly after with the driver/killer walking back towards the retreat center.

Can we call M.'s death in *Todo Modo* martyrdom in accordance with the above description? While taking into account the Roman Catholic definition of martyrdom, M. has born witness to the faith by continuing to pray to God while he is shot. Elio Petri included in some of his notes on *Todo Modo*, written before Moro's, death the following description:

I imagined that M. had a veritable vocation for martyrdom and it seemed to me that, among the murders that occur throughout the spiritual exercises, the final and most significant one had to be his own murder, even insinuating that he himself, was the instigator (257).

Petri's M. is not a likeable character, he is strange and weak, not words one usually associates with Jesus Christ.⁴⁰ He does stay loyal to his faith, praying until the moment of his death, but he is not a witness to the faith. If Petri was trying to portray M. as a martyr, he is desecrating the idea of Christian martyrdom. M. is also not similar to the secular definition of martyrdom, because he is not devoted to a cause or belief, he resigns himself to death at the end of the film because he knows it is inevitable. In my opinion the character of M. is a sacrificial victim, but he is a victim of Petri's ideals, not a martyr. His death in the film is only to promote Petri's belief that the Italian state needed to be reborn.

Elio Petri was not a fan of the Christian Democrats and their overriding power over the people of Italy. As previously mentioned, Petri explicitly stated after Moro's death that he had wanted to make a film that critiqued the DC. The death of M. in *Todo Modo*, along with the deaths of the men of power at the retreat center, are symbolic of what was necessary to bring about the end of the Christian Democrats, much like how the Red Brigades believed that Aldo Moro's death was a necessary evil for the good of Italy (Glynn and Lombardi 5). The death of M. in *Todo Modo* does not, in my opinion, fit either the Roman Catholic Church's definition or that of the Shorter Oxford English dictionary, rather M. is a metaphorical martyr and a symbol of

⁴⁰ Paul Middleton associates the image of martyr with "someone who demonstrates extraordinary courage in the face of persecution or oppression" (117).

the desire of Petri for a new political system in Italy.⁴¹ The character of M. undergoes death not for his beliefs, but for the beliefs of the filmmaker. Typically a martyr dies for standing up for his own beliefs, but in *Todo modo*, Moro functions more as a sacrifice to bring about a better Italy. In later films, his willingness to die for his own beliefs will be examined, especially in Marco Tullio Giordana's film *Romanzo di una strage*. The Moro in Giordana's film is the polar opposite of Petri's M., a strong, moral man who stands up for his beliefs. Although he is not shown dying, as M. is in *Todo modo*, Moro in *Romanzo di una strage* will better embody the image of a martyr based on his desire for a better Italy.

III. *Pro patria mori*: Foreshadowing Moro's Death in Marco Tullio Giordana's *Romanzo di una strage*

The only other film made that depicts Aldo Moro before his kidnapping and murder is also the most recent film about the politician, Marco Tullio Giordana's 2012 film *Romanzo di una strage*. The film tells the story of one of the most famous events of the *anni di piombo*, the Piazza Fontana Bombing.⁴² The bombing occurred at the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura in Piazza Fontana in the city of Milan on December 12th, 1969 and resulted in the deaths of seventeen people.⁴³ The bomb was initially attributed to anarchists, but later in the investigation both left-wing and right-wing political groups came under suspicion. What makes the case of the Piazza Fontana bombing so interesting to this day is the fact that although multiple people were

⁴¹ Valérie Rosoux writes that in reference to politics, the word martyr "ceases to be literal and becomes metaphorical" (84).

⁴² Peter Bondanella states that the most famous terrorist events of the *anni di piombo* are "the Piazza Fontana bombing in Milan in 1969, the kidnapping and murder of Aldo Moro in 1978, and the planting of a bomb at the Bologna train station in 1980" (454-55). The bombing of the Bologna train station will be discussed briefly in regards to *Romanzo criminale* in Chapter Three.

⁴³ Two other bombs of the same type went off at the same time in Rome, killing eighteen people (Ginsborg "A History" 333).

arrested for their involvement, including Communists, Anarchists, and Fascists, all were eventually acquitted.⁴⁴ Giordana's film investigates the bombing, as well as the deaths of two men involved in the investigation, Giuseppe Pinelli and Luigi Calabresi.⁴⁵ The film begins with a black title sequence with *Autunno Caldo* written in red capital letters.⁴⁶ Commissario Calabresi, played by Valerio Mastandrea, is on the scene of a protest led by Communist workers, where a young agent, Antonio Annarumma has been killed. While this is happening Aldo Moro, played by Fabrizio Gifuni, meets with President Giuseppe Saragat to discuss the severity of the event and the implications it will have with the US government.⁴⁷ Coincidentally Giuseppe Pinelli, played by Pierfrancesco Favino, is shown arguing at this time over whether to use violence to get the group's point across. Pinelli, who does not believe in using violence subsequently kicks out fellow group member Pietro Valpreda. These three events set up the different trajectories the film will follow as the investigation into the bombing continues.

Marco Tullio Giordana, similarly to Elio Petri, has a history of politically driven films, but unlike Petri, the majority of Giordana's films discuss historic political events, rather than current issues. Marco Tullio Giordana was born in 1950 and came of age during the student

⁴⁴ The first person arrested in relation to the Piazza Fontana bombing was Pietro Valpreda, a ballet dancer from Rome. He was arrested and spent three years in prison before being cleared of his charges. Franco Freda and Giovanni Ventura were two neo-Fascists found to be involved in the bombing. They were sentenced to life in prison in 1981, but were eventually cleared of all charges by the Italian Court of Appeals (Ginsborg 334). There is a note at the end of *Romanzo di una strage* that states: "Per la giustizia italiana tutti questi casi sono chiusi."

⁴⁵ Giuseppe Pinelli was an anarchist railwayman in the city of Milan. While being interrogated for forty-eight hours at police headquarters, he fell from the window of Police Commissioner Luigi Calabresi's office and died (Ginsborg 333). Luigi Calabresi was a police commissioner involved in the investigation of the bombing. He was murdered in 1972 by left-wing militants as revenge for the death of Pinelli.

⁴⁶ The *autunno caldo* was a result of immigration of Southern Italians to the North. Many students and young people were moving north for job opportunities, but cities such as Milan and Turin could not handle the increased populations and there were not enough jobs to satisfy the young workers. At this time many young Leftist revolutionary groups were formed in Italy, and they worked with trade unions for job reform (Ginsborg "A History" 311-13).

⁴⁷ Fabrizio Gifuni previously worked with Marco Tullio Giordana on the 2003 film *La meglio gioventù*.

revolts of 1968 and the *anni di piombo*, and he has continued to return to the events of these years in his films. His first feature length film, *Maledetti vi amerò* (1980), tells the story of a young man who had been involved in the events of 1968, who has returned to Italy after spending five years living in Venezuela. His second film, *La caduta degli angeli ribelli* (1981), tells the story of a woman who falls in love with a terrorist during the *anni di piombo*. In *Appuntamento a Liverpool* (1988), the film focuses on a young Italian girl whose father was killed in the terrorist bombing at the Heysel soccer stadium in Belgium who is seeking vengeance for his death. In his 2003 film, *La meglio gioventù*, Giordana follows the lives of two brothers, Nicola and Matteo Caratti from 1966-2003, and many of the political changes that occur during their lives, including terrorism. The *anni di piombo* and their long lasting legacy on Italian society have become a signature of Marco Tullio Giordana's work.

Romanzo di una strage takes into account one of the most tragic events of the *anni di piombo*, one that few people have attempted tackling in film. It is an event that still troubles the people of Italy, especially since no one has ever been found guilty of the crime. Carlo Lucarelli, an Italian author of crime fiction, as well as a journalist and TV presenter, is quoted on the cover of Christian Uva's *Schermi di piombo: Il terrorismo nel cinema italiano* as saying: "Mi piacerebbe molto scrivere un film su Piazza Fontana...; Ce l'ha oggi il cinema il coraggio di affrontare quelle vicende?" (Uva "Schermi di Piombo"). With his previous work dealing with the issue of Italian terrorism, and having lived through the events himself, Giordana's decision to take on the challenge of bringing the Piazza Fontana bombing and investigation to film is a logical move for a director known for returning to the historic events of his youth.

Romanzo di una strage highlights the tragedy of the events surrounding the Piazza Fontana bombing and the different controversies involving the investigation, but it does not do so in an overtly accusatory way. Jay Weissberg writes in his review of the film: "Giordana

avoids any grandstanding as if the serious nature of the subject and its continued impact on Italian life demands an even-tempered recitation” (22). The film does demonstrate the severity of the situation and emphasizes the tragedy in its stylistic choices. The entire film is very dark with a muted color palette and the “case, abiti, auto, interni ed esterni vengono annegati in una grisaglia indistinta, onnipresente, ... tutta giocata sui toni del grigio e del blu” (Giglioli 286). Weissberg writes that Giordana pays great attention “to how the actors are lit, using shadow and stark brightness to reinforce the murkiness and uncertainty of alliances” (22). Many of the important scenes happen in the dark of night, such as the bombing itself and the death of Giuseppe Pinelli. We rarely see bright color in the film, which is highly contrasted by the use of the color red, most noticeable in the bold font of the title sequences and the blood throughout the bank after the bombing.

The film is divided into a number of short episodes introduced by black title sequences with red capitalized letters. For example, for the sequence introducing the episode of the bomb, the title reads GLI INNOCENTI while the episode in which Pinelli is interrogated the title reads L’INTERROGATORIO. This structure is very similar to that which Petri employed in *Todo Modo*, dividing the film into smaller episodes based on the elements of the spiritual exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. I do not believe there is a deliberate connection between the structures of *Todo Modo* and *Romanzo di una strage*, but the use of title sequences in both films are examples of formalism and the filmmakers’ restructuring of time to “maximize a thematic idea” (Gianetti 354). *Todo Modo*’s title sequences emphasize the different elements of the religious retreat and set the events of the retreat within the structure of the spiritual exercises. *Romanzo di una strage*’s title sequences structure the time around the investigation into the bombing, and

follow each of the possible political groups that could be involved in the crime.⁴⁸ Also, both films feature investigations that have multiple parts, so the brief episodes help the audience to focus with more detail on smaller aspects of the investigation, which serve to keep the different parts of the investigations in order.

Unlike Petri, whose films were often controversial and blatantly expressed his political beliefs, Giordana investigates every side of the story and leaves the final judgment up to the audience. He and his co-scripters “rely on a thorough knowledge of the players and the cold-blooded real-politik of the time to get across their analysis of intrigue” (Weissberg 22).

Giordana’s treatment of the topic can also be seen as controversial, because although he investigates the anarchists, the communists, and the fascists, he fails to denounce any of the parties involved in the crime, like Petri would have done in the past. Instead, Giordana includes some notes at the end of the film, explaining what happened in the court system. For Daniele Giglioli, who writes crime and victim studies, “*Romanzo di una strage* getta sulla nostra storia recente il manto di una grande bugia retrospettiva: se non c’è nulla da fare è perché neanche allora c’era, ed è verosimile che non ci sia mai stato né si sarà mai” (288). Although the film is incredibly well researched and provides the audience with the true results of the investigations, *Romanzo di una strage* is not a *film di denuncia*, like the films of Petri and his contemporaries, but rather a film of political history.⁴⁹ In the political films of the 1970s like Petri’s films, there is

⁴⁸ For example, in the episode, LA PISTA ROSSA or the red path, the Milan police forces investigate the anarchists and discuss Giangiacomo Feltrinelli’s possible involvement in the crime.⁴⁸ In LA PISTA VENETA Calabresi investigates the possible involvement of the Neo-Fascists based out of Padova after he is shown a hidden arms storage center outside of Gorizia by the military.⁴⁸ The use of the title sequences demonstrates Giordana’s commitment to showing all sides of the story—the anarchists, the Communists, and the Fascists—rather than just the side that he believes committed the crime.

⁴⁹ Christian Uva, while discussing political filmmakers of the 1970s like Elio Petri, writes that these filmmakers had an ability “di fornire, attraverso il proprio lavoro, ‘un importante apporto al movimento di reazione democratica di fronte alle azioni destabilizzanti e al vero e proprio terrorismo proveniente da alcuni settori deviati dello stato’” (242).

a clear ideology and someone upon whom the audience can place blame for the social issues, such as Mafia corruption or workers rights in Italy. The *film di denuncia* called citizens to action, while Giordana's historical film shows that nothing was ever done about this event, and the crime may never be solved.

Another difference between Giordana's film and Petri's *Todo Modo* are their depictions of Aldo Moro. As previously stated, Aldo Moro was often criticized by the Left and filmmakers like Elio Petri. Even though *Romanzo di una strage* depicts a pre-kidnapping Aldo Moro, he is portrayed almost the opposite of the character of M. in *Todo Modo*. Fabrizio Gifuni's Moro is almost identical in looks to the real Aldo Moro, down to the white stripe in his grey hair, a closer physical resemblance to the politician than Gian Maria Volonté.⁵⁰ Much like the description Petri gave of Moro's struggle showing on his face, Giglioli writes that "Moro/Gifuni è perplesso e tormentato, ma fermo nella difesa della democrazia, sia pure alla sua contorta maniera" (284). He speaks softly, but with authority, unlike the nervous and agitated M. of *Todo Modo*. Aldo Moro of *Romanzo di una strage* is like a shining beacon of morality amongst all the corruption and shadiness of the police force and politicians in the film. He is a voice of reason, urging his fellow politicians that something must be done to stop the violence in Italy.⁵¹ Moro only appears a handful of times in the film, but the few times are worth mentioning because Gifuni's character provides the voice of reason in the film and is a much stronger example of the Christian definition of martyr than M. of *Todo Modo*.

The majority of Moro's interactions in *Romanzo di una strage* are with Giuseppe Saragat, played by Omero Antonutti, who was the President of the Italian Republic from 1964-1971. We

⁵⁰ Giglioli states that it is worth mentioning "il virtuosismo di Gifuni, che deve però vedersela con un antecedente difficilmente superabile quale il Volonté di *Todo Modo* e del *Caso Moro*" (284).

⁵¹ Isabella Pezzini claims: "Moro had always rejected violence with great conviction and was profoundly concerned by its persistence in Italy" (137).

see the two first talking after the death of Antonio Annamurra and Moro has come to speak with Saragat to urge him to do something about the violence in Italy. Saragat does not seem as worried about the protests of the Left as Moro is and lets him know that the United States and President Nixon do not appreciate his openness to the left.⁵² This is one of the first times in the film that Giordana alludes to Moro's future historic compromise and eventual death. Moro in the film is Minister of Foreign Affairs and is trying his best to keep the state from falling like Greece had in 1967. There are multiple references to the collapse of the Italian state in Moro's scenes. We see Moro meeting with a high-ranking military official, who keeps telling Moro that the state is at risk of a coup. Moro is also seen in Paris the day of the bombing, meeting with the European parliament to discuss Greece's relations with European Economic Community and urging that the same will not happen in Italy. He also discusses the prevented coup d'état that happened during the presidency of Antonio Segni five years earlier with a military official. He mentions how President Segni was just going to let the event happen, but Saragat threatened him with a charge of treason so that he would step down.⁵³ Moro is seen trying to find a solution to the violence in the film, unlike the other politicians, including Saragat, who are trying to cover up events.

Giordana's Moro also sheds light on much of the government corruption discussed in the film. The scene in which Moro truly tries to tackle corruption in the Italian government comes

⁵² Italy had long-standing ties to the United States. Once Italy joined NATO in 1949, the United States helped Italy re-equip their army (Ginsborg "A History" 148). At this point the number of American and NATO bases in Italy grew, as well as America's influence over Italy ("A History" 157). The United States were not open to Moro's plan to work with the left, which was re-affirmed in 1975 by John Volpe and Henry Kissinger (Ginsborg "A History" 374).

⁵³ Antonio Segni was forced to step down from office due to his involvement in the Solo Plan. Segni had worked with General Giovanni De Lorenzo, head of the Carabinieri, on a counter-insurgency plan, as he was not a fan of the Center-Left government that Aldo Moro was proposing in the upcoming elections. The Solo Plan was found to be very similar to the Prometheus plan that had been used by Colonel George Papadopoulos to establish Greece's military government in 1967 (Ginsborg "A History" 276-77).

after he has presented his investigation into the Piazza Fontana bombing and the death of Giuseppe Pinelli. The scene begins with a title sequence reading LA RAGION DI STATO. Moro is sitting in Saragat's office very calmly and begins to tell him about public opinion regarding the death of Giuseppe Pinelli. He says that the public is disturbed and wants to know the truth. He goes further to say "non la chiedono più dai socialisti, i comunisti, ma anche i liberali, i repubblicani, gran parte della Democrazia Cristiana e perfino Sua Santità." He alerts Saragat that there is a new expression being circulated around to describe Pinelli's death, a *strage di stato*. He then tells Saragat that if this name gains traction, that the security institutions and the military "non si sa più a chi rispondano, se ai ministri competenti o a lei, Signor Presidente." Saragat doesn't agree with Moro and tells him that the investigation is under control. Moro tells him that if he thinks that way, he will not bother him anymore with his personal investigation.

This talk with Saragat leads to a powerful moment in the film for Moro. Before leaving the office, Saragat tells Moro that no one can know about his investigation into the death of Pinelli. Moro, proceeds to admonish Saragat without raising his voice. He says after these few months we have many panicked, scared, and dead. He blames it on right-wing extremists who "sentono nei Servizi copertura e connivenza." He alerts Saragat to the government co-involvement with extremists, but Saragat says that he does not believe him, but believes in Italian democracy and has worked hard for it. Moro agrees that yes, the Italian democracy is young and fragile, but he further states:

Se io rendessi pubblico ciò che le ho fatto leggere, scioppierebbe una guerra civile, perché per molti sarebbe intollerabile anche solo l'idea che una parte dello stato abbia coperto o avallato questo orrore. Per questo non faremo nulla. E costringeremo a coprire tutto come i gatti con gli escrementi.

Saragat chooses to ignore Moro, and we do not hear anything else from Moro in regards to the case in the film. The last we hear of Moro is in fact a note at the end of the film stating that he was killed on May 9, 1978 by the Red Brigades.

Although Moro's eventual death is not portrayed in the film, his untimely demise is alluded to from the beginning of the film. When the audience is introduced to Moro he is speaking to a priest in a church. The bombing has yet to happen, but Moro is very worried about the violence that is happening at that moment in Italy. Moro is discussing his role in this world with the priest and asks "qual è il ruolo che il Signore mi ha assegnato in mezzo a questo mare in tempesta?" He goes on to say that he looks to his fellow Italians and rather than seeing a community, he sees "furbizia...viltà, opportunismo, violenza, al posto delle idee". Moro takes his concerns to a further extreme and continues lamenting to the priest, saying:

Tavolta penso che all'Italia sia necessario una catastrofe che distrugga tutto quello che vi abbiamo sovrapposto, i formicai, le auto, il cemento, e la riporti al deserto, alla nuda terra di prima, così che la natura possa riprendere il sopravvento e ricominciare dalla prima forma di vita, dal primo uomo, dal primo fuoco.

What makes the scene even more interesting is what Moro says next: "Ecco... di questo cataclisma, padre, io mi sento pronto a essere... la prima vittima." The priest calls this desire of Moro to die for Italy a sin of pride, but Moro calls it a sin of desperation.

This desire for Moro to become a victim for a new Italy shows is quite different from the M. of *Todo Modo*. This Moro, ready to do whatever it takes to save Italy from the chaos of the *anni di piombo*, plays to the public opinion that "on being murdered, Moro became a sacrificial victim" to the people of Italy (Pezzini 148). I would like to return to Marianne Hirsch's definition of post memory to discuss the image of Aldo Moro as "martyr" for the Italian state. Giordana was part of the generation that witnessed the struggles of the *anni di piombo* and the death of Moro, and the events still bring up unhappy emotions in people from that generation. I

believe that Giordana decided to include Moro's wish to die for Italy in the film as a nod to what would happen to Moro less than ten years later, and the impact Moro's death would have on the nation. This lasting impact would best be summed up by Giuseppe Saragat in *La Repubblica* the day after Moro's death: "accanto al suo cadavere c'è anche il cadavere della prima repubblica" (Ginsborg "Italy and its Discontents" 477).

These emotions of sadness and helplessness that are brought up in the minds of Italians in regards to Aldo Moro's kidnapping and death create a rhetoric of martyrdom that can be seen in *Romanzo di una strage*. Compared to *Todo Modo*, there is more evidence that Moro the character was willing to die in *Romanzo di una strage*, even though he does not actually die in the film. Traditionally martyrdom has had religious tones, with the death being directly attributed to a proclamation of faith. While there is not nearly as much mention of religion and faith as there is in *Todo Modo*, the character of Aldo Moro in *Romanzo di una strage* makes these claims of wanting to die for his country in front of a priest, and we do see Moro in church twice in the film. The interesting contrast is that the priest with whom Moro speaks does not agree with this urge to become a victim for the State; he calls it a sin of pride. I do believe that Moro's urge to become a victim in *Romanzo di una strage* fits a secular form of martyrdom. Moro is willing to die for his country, a desire called *pro patria mori*, a concept that dates back to antiquity (Rosoux 84).⁵⁴ This depiction of Moro as martyr for the Italian state only adds to his image of victim, his ghost forever haunting the Italian people.

IV. Aldo Moro as Martyr

Paul Middleton states that martyrdom "is created when a narrative about a death is told in a particular way. The central character is not the most important element in the creation of the

⁵⁴ Rosoux states that in ancient Athens and Rome that leaders referred to warriors who died for their country as demi-gods (84).

martyrdom; it is the narrator” (30). In *Todo Modo* and *Romanzo di una strage* we have two different narrators in directors Elio Petri and Marco Tulio Giordana. Although both directors employ imagery and language of martyrdom, with the character of M., Petri presents us with not so much a martyr, but with a victim of necessary political change, while Giordana gives the audience an image of Aldo Moro that is much more similar to the definitions of martyr presented throughout this chapter. After analyzing the two films that predict Aldo Moro’s eventual death and that use imagery of martyrdom, does Aldo Moro constitute a martyr, or has the story of his death been made into a tale of martyrdom? Valérie Rosoux, a scholar in memory studies, writes: “the liturgy of the fallen has a special urgency in the framework of nation building, for the principle of supreme sacrifice justifies the transcendent character of the nation” (85). Italy was still a relatively young nation at the time of Moro’s death, and as Saragat said, with the death of Moro came the death of the first republic. With his death Moro became of symbol of collaboration between parties and the change that was needed in Italy. Through the use of martyrdom, the two films discussed in this chapter promote Aldo Moro as an important figure of Italian history and engage in the mythmaking of Moro.

But do the films made that portray Aldo Moro before his kidnapping and death perpetuate this positive, almost heroic image of the fallen politician? First of all, the character of M. in *Todo Modo* is not a likeable character. He is weak and cowardly, and he does not embody the strong political leader that Italy needed in its times of trouble. Yes, Moro is a victim for the Italian state, with him and all of the fellow men of power dying at the retreat, but Petri takes this extreme stance in the film to show the Italian people that political change was indeed necessary. Middleton finds that a martyr “becomes a symbol of a community’s desires and hopes, or for that matter, their terrors and fears”. The character of M. is a symbol of Petri’s desire for a change in

Italian politics. The reason *Todo Modo* was successful in getting Petri's views across is that although it was fictional, it is a situation, while far-fetched, that could happen.⁵⁵

Giordana's *Romanzo di una strage* is part of modern political cinema that O'Rawe says has returned to a "vocation of civic reference and began to document the realities of history from a politically committed standpoint" ("A Past" 102). Giordana's Moro in *Romanzo di una strage* leaves a much more positive impression, with his private investigation into the Pinelli case and his dialogue of wanting to be a victim for Italy to bring about change. Moro still does nothing to change the corruption and cover up of the Pinelli case. He does get angry with Saragat and say the cover-up of the events will be on his shoulders, but he could have been depicted doing something about the situation. Giordana does stay historically accurate throughout the film since Moro did not release information about Pinelli and the Piazza Fontana bombing, but the lack of denouncement differentiates his film from Petri's.

By analyzing and comparing the only two films that portray a pre-kidnapping Aldo Moro, it is possible to formulate a better understanding of the politician before his untimely death. We see two completely different versions of him, the cowardly and agitated M. of *Todo Modo* and the morally dedicated Moro of *Romanzo di una strage*. The two versions we are presented with demonstrate the amount of change Moro's image has undergone in the more than thirty years since his death. M. of *Todo Modo* is more similar to the limited descriptions of the politician before his death, and his character represents the controversy surrounding the DC and the historic compromise before Moro's death. The Moro of *Romanzo di una strage* represents the much more positive image of the politician that is prevalent today. After Moro's death he became seen as a victim, and in the light of the political corruption that surfaced during

⁵⁵ In a later chapter we will again see this use of fantasy in the portrayal of Aldo Moro in Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte*, which reimagines the death of Aldo Moro by allowing the politician to be reborn.

tangentopoli and the Maxi trials, evidence began to appear that the Italian government could have participated in his death. The secret government organization *Operation Gladio* as well as the secret masonic lodge *Propaganda due* were thought by many to be responsible for the death of Moro.⁵⁶ When the people of Italy found out that the government could have been behind the terrible tragedy of Moro's death, the sympathy for the politician continued to grow, and he was now seen as the good guy in comparison to corrupt politicians such as Giulio Andreotti and Bettino Craxi.

Taking into account the initial change in Aldo Moro's image post-kidnapping, the next chapter will investigate two films that investigate the Moro affair in detail, but also include discussions of conspiracy theory. It did not take long for a film to be made about the Moro affair; only eight years after the Moro affair, Giuseppe Ferrara released his investigatory film *Il caso Moro*. The next film to be made about Aldo Moro, Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, would be released in 2003, twenty-five years after Aldo Moro's death. Both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* delve deep into the investigation of the Moro affair and who was truly responsible for his death, by using the facts know about the Moro affair, but also including much conspiracy theory that blames the government, as well as the United States, for being responsible for the death of Moro. Who was truly to blame for Moro's death will be a question explored throughout this project, in a variety of filmic genres. Although his death will be blamed initially on the Red Brigades, in the following years as more investigations were conducted, it was discovered that other politicians and groups could have played a part in Moro's death. The theme of who is guilty for the death of the politician will be further explored through conspiracy

⁵⁶ *Operation Gladio* was an organization formed by the Italian government that was supposed to quell Communist uprisings during the Cold War. Members of *Gladio* were trained by the United States CIA (Ginsborg "Italy and its Discontents" 171). *Propaganda Due*, commonly referred to as P2, was an Italian masonic lodge that operated between the years 1976 and 1981. The members of P2 were involved in many Italian crimes that came to light during *Tangentopoli*. For more information refer to Paul Ginsborg's *Italy and its Discontents*.

theories, imagined scenarios, and dream sequences. There is a sense of guilt felt by the Italian people even today for Moro's death, and a continued search for the true culprit in the Moro affair.

CHAPTER 2: CONSPIRACY THEORY AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH IN *IL CASO MORO AND PIAZZA DELLE CINQUE LUNE*

I. Introduction

In the years immediately following Aldo Moro's death, there were multiple investigations into what happened during the fifty-five days of Moro's captivity with the Red Brigades. Following Moro's death in 1978 there were four separate trials held by the Italian government with the objective of revealing who was truly responsible for the kidnapping and death of Aldo Moro and arresting those who were guilty.⁵⁷ Although the Red Brigades were very open about the crimes they had committed, and the majority of members involved in the affair were eventually arrested and imprisoned, there were still some details of the case that did not add up. As the trials continued, details surfaced of the conspiracies surrounding the events of the Moro kidnapping. The existence of a secret organization referred to as Operation Gladio was revealed by Giulio Andreotti during the *Mani pulite* investigations after being discovered by a man named Felice Casson while working in the archives of the Italian Secret Service (Ginsborg "Italy and its Discontents" 171).⁵⁸ During the *Mani pulite* trials the then unknown secret society, *Propaganda Due* was also exposed. For an Italian public still coming to grips with the terrible event of Aldo Moro's death, the fact that the Italian government was hiding these organizations from them led

⁵⁷ The first two trials (Moro uno and Moro bis) both concluded in 1985. More ter concluded on 1988 and Moro quarter in 1994. The fifth Moro trial ended in 1995 and there is still the possibility of a 6th trial (Glynn and Lombardi 7).

⁵⁸ Operation Gladio was a secret North Atlantic Treaty Organization operation put in place in Italy throughout the Cold War. Gladio was meant to protect Italians from the possibility of Communist terrorist attacks. It is believed that the CIA was involved with the Italian government in the strategy of tension as a part of Gladio.

to many investigations into conspiracy theories surrounding the Moro affair and provided new content for film directors.

The Moro affair provided the perfect backdrop for a *poliziesco film*.⁵⁹ The crime thriller film, often referred to as the *giallo* or *poliziesco*, has been a prominent fixture in postwar Italian film and began to grow in popularity again with the investigations into Italy's government corruption.⁶⁰ There are numerous books detailing the possible conspiracy theories attributed to Aldo Moro's kidnapping and death, but the first film to address these issues is Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro* (1986). A *poliziesco*, the film follows the fifty-five days from the morning Moro left his apartment to his eventual death and state funeral, showing not only Moro's side of the story, but what was going on with the terrorists, Moro's family, and the Italian government. *Il caso Moro* aspires to show exactly what happened during the Moro affair, leaving no stone unturned in its investigation, but it is not the only film to take an investigative approach to the Moro affair. The *poliziesco* genre was featured again twenty-five years after Moro's death in Renzo Martinelli's 2003 film *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*. A true thriller, packed with action scenes, *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* takes place in the present day, telling the story of a judge on the edge of retirement finding new filmic evidence of what happened the day Aldo Moro was kidnapped and prompts the reopening of the Moro case. Both Ferrara and Martinelli's films are

⁵⁹ Italian film has long had ties to politically committed film that presented real social issues in Italy, beginning with neorealism and then continuing with the political films of the 1960s, as well as the *poliziesco*. Crime thriller films, including mysteries and detective films, did not begin to flourish until the 1960s in Italy, but the genre has steadily increased in popularity over the years (Bondanella 373). At the height of the *poliziesco* genre, many plots and themes "could easily have been lifted from the pages of the *cronaca nera* (crime news) of any urban newspaper from the 1960s to the early 1980s, a period of great social and political unrest in Italy" (Bondanella 454).

⁶⁰ The term giallo (yellow) comes from the same term used for the mystery genre of literature in Italy. The name is derived from the popular series of mystery novels introduced by Mondadori publishing in 1929 that had yellow covers (Bondanella 372).

crime thrillers that have the intention of presenting the truth of what happened during the Moro affair, but both films also indulge in conspiracy theories, which are not necessarily fact based.

In the previous chapter I discuss how Aldo Moro's image was not as positive in the years before his death as it is today. This changing image, to a victim and possible martyr, is expanded upon in the *poliziesco* films I will discuss this chapter. In these films, which investigate the fifty-five days of Moro's ordeal, we are now presented with the image of Moro as a victim of the state. Both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* present an Aldo Moro who is a victim, not of the Red Brigades and terrorism, but rather of the Italian government. In this chapter I discuss both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* in depth, addressing both films' goal of presenting "what really happened" to Aldo Moro, as well as the long Italian tradition of the *poliziesco* in film, as well as its ties to realism. I also discuss how the filmmakers discussed in this chapter present conspiracies surrounding the Moro affair in a documentary style rather than as fantasy.

II. Realism and the Moro Affair

It took the Italian police forces almost four years to capture all the terrorists who had been responsible in the Moro affair, and the apartment which served as the Red Brigade base in Via Montalcini was not discovered immediately.⁶¹ The investigation into the circumstances of the Moro affair were open for many years, since there was much uncertainty surrounding the case, and new evidence continued to appear periodically. Due to the open-endedness of the Moro case, investigatory film was a natural step in the cannon of Moro films. Both Giuseppe Ferrara and Renzo Martinelli aspire to present fact-based representations of the Moro affair in their films and

⁶¹ All the terrorists involved in the kidnapping were found and tried by 1985, except for Germano Maccari, who was found guilty in 1995 (Glynn and Lombardi 7). The apartment in Via Montalcini was established as the place of Moro's imprisonment during Moro ter in 1988 (Glynn and Lombardi 7).

through their investigations provide insight into who they believe is at fault for the death of Aldo Moro. Both directors consider their crime films to be of the *cinema d'impegno* tradition, or “a cinema of political activism and engagement” (Bondanella 242).⁶²

The devotion to film engaged with social reality has long been a priority of Italian film, dating back to immediately after the Second World War.⁶³ In the aftermath of the war filmmakers wanted to represent the reality that Italians were facing in a country that was in political shambles. The films made in the immediate post-war would become part of what we now refer to as neorealism and they would influence Italian culture, especially filmmaking, for many years to come. The films of neorealism were a part of “a growing preference for an honest look at Italian realities (not any single ‘reality’) that had been ignored or suppressed during the Fascist period” (Bondanella 63). The works of such neorealist filmmakers as Roberto Rossellini, Vittorio De Sica, and Lucchino Visconti had an emphasis on social realism: “social content, historical actuality, political commitment, ‘realist treatment’, and popular settings” (Bondanella 61). In the opinion of Peter Bondanella the best neorealist films “usually focused upon serious contemporary social, political, or economic problems” and “most inevitably called attention to injustice and the need for social reform, if not revolution” (112). Neorealist films also presented progressive or leftist political views that often aligned with those of Communism. As the Christian Democrats began to rise to power in the late 1940s and take over the Italian government, it became risky to make films that expressed dislike of the current Italian political situation.

⁶² The idea of *impegno* can be defined as “an ethical or political position channeled through specific cultural and artistic activities, against any restrictive ideological brace” (Antonello and Mussgnug 11).

⁶³ For Pierpaolo Antonello and Florian Mussgnug, *cinema d'impegno* is typically associated with the 1940s to the 1960s “in which cultural and political actors converged on a communal project based on the strict ideological premises and tied to emancipatory and potentially revolutionary action” (9).

Italian film would still have political themes throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, but it wasn't until the student revolts of 1968 that many Italian filmmakers would return to making films that were politically engaged. Young filmmakers such as Elio Petri, Francesco Rosi, and Pierpaolo Pasolini who began their careers working with neorealist directors would go on to make films that “called attention to social problems, undermined conventional notions about traditional values, and at times legitimized discontent” (Bondanella 241). The political films of the late 1960s and the 1970s would continue the strain of *cinema d'impegno*, and renew the commitment to social realism present in neorealism. One of the most important filmmakers of this era, Francesco Rosi, believed that political cinema should be based on the idea of *inchiesta*, “an inquiry into the links between past events and the reality of the present” (Bondanella 223). Rosi wanted to make films that were not necessarily documentaries, but that documented the social issues of his time, similar to the films I will discuss in this chapter. The political films of the 1970s, along with the films of neorealism are concerned with Italian realities, but in a way that aligns with the film director's personal beliefs. The film scholars Robert Lapsley and Michael Westlake explain that “all political positions and programmes are premised on a conception of social reality, so concerned to present certain propositions as true and others as false,” an idea that I believe is very important when discussing both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*.

Many civically engaged Italian films today including *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* are considered docudramas, films that re-enact historical events using non-fiction techniques (Bruzzi 185). For film scholar Stella Bruzzi, the output of docudramas over the past thirty years “is predicated upon the assumption that drama can legitimately tackle documentary issues and uncontentiously use non-fiction techniques to achieve its aims” (153). Documentary is traditionally considered the closest film can be to reality, but many of the films that investigate

the Moro affair are fictional. Bruzzi explains that the archival footage used in documentaries is often altered or revised, and used to complement or emphasize other elements of the documentary (22).⁶⁴ By using archival footage similarly to documentary film, the fiction film appears more authentic to the audience.

Alan Rosenthal identifies two strands of docudrama: 1) biography and entertainment and 2) reconstructive investigations (17).⁶⁵ The main difference between the two strands is that docudramas based on biography and entertainment place an emphasis on the entertainment value of the film, while investigative docudramas want to uncover and reveal information for the good of the public (17). While both types of docudrama employ the use of archival footage, adding a sense of reality to the films, the reconstructive investigation is not as concerned with ratings, but with presenting truth, similarly to Italian *cinema d'impegno*.⁶⁶

What makes historical fiction films like *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* interesting is the fact that filmmakers pick and choose which parts of history they are representing and how they will represent these events. When discussing fictional re-tellings of historical events, Hayden White in his book *The Practical Past* writes that the actual facts are less important than the choice of how the story is told (39). *Cinema d'impegno* is treated with the highest regard in Italy for its commitment to presenting the truth in a corrupt society. While the films of this genre claim to be investigations into the truth, many of these films manipulate

⁶⁴ Often archival materials, such as photography and newsreel, are used in conjunction with interviews and voiceovers as part of an historic exposition (Bruzzi 22).

⁶⁵ Rosenthal explains that the first strand of docudrama, rooted in biography and entertainment has a “desire for highest audience ratings, an emphasis on entertainment values, and a rather loose regard for truth and accuracy”. The second strand of docudrama, the reconstructive investigation is a “very serious form, much closer to journalism and news than to conventional drama” (17).

⁶⁶ Rosenthal states that the goal of the reconstructive investigation is to “present a powerful enthralling drama that nevertheless gets as close to the truth as possible” (17).

history to present a director's personal view of the truth. White also states: "that an event occurred does not have to be established. What is at question is the nature of the event, its relative novelty, the scope and intensity of its impact, and its meaning or what it reveals about the society in which it took place" (46). Tragic events, such as the the Moro affair leave a lasting impact on society and the purpose of these historic docudramas is to provide information about the significant events and allow the audience to engage emotionally with the material. In both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, the directors will present the facts in such a way to advance their view that the Italian government is responsible for Aldo Moro's death, which generates even more sympathy for the dead politician.

III. Re-enacting the Moro Affair in Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*

In my first chapter I discussed Elio Petri's controversial film *Todo modo* (1976), which was the first film made featuring Aldo Moro as a character. *Todo Modo* and the majority of Petri's films are considered works of *cinema d'impegno*. The *cinema d'impegno* is considered a continuation of the commitment to social causes that had been a part of Italian film since neorealism. Peter Bondanella calls this commitment to politics in Italian film a:

"filone; literally a 'thread,' here a metaphorical one that runs through many directors, many genres, and a number of decades in Italian film history, that can never really be pinned down to originating in a specific film or director, and that continues more or less uninterrupted in most of the postwar period down to the present" (242).

The *filone* of political film found its way into crime film, such as in *Todo Modo*, because directors at the time had an interest in depicting Italy's social problems. Arguably one of the largest social problems of the latter half of the twentieth century in Italy, terrorism and Aldo Moro's death make compelling material for a crime film.

Following *Todo Modo*, the next film about Aldo Moro was Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*, which was not made until 1986, ten years after Petri's film and eight years after Moro's

kidnapping and death. Although different stylistically from Elio Petri, Giuseppe Ferrara has a history of political engagement in film. In 1969 he founded the group Cine 2000, which helped produce films that otherwise would not be made due to censorship. He is well known for his films that center on the “costruzione di una verità politica sulla base di inchieste documentate e di necessarie ipotesi per collegare indizi” (Mancino 31). In his films Ferrara, through an investigatory approach, aims to find the truth in unclear situations dealing with Italian politics. For Paolo Varvaro, Ferrara’s films “si tratta di un cinema di ispirazione giornalistico-televisiva, attento all’esposizione dei fatti classificati secondo un ordine cronologico e aliena da tecniche di spiazzamento” (157). He has a history of taking on difficult social topics, such as the Sicilian Mafia in *Il sasso in bocca* (1969), the involvement of the CIA in Italian affairs in *Faccia di spia* (1975), and the killing of General Carlo Alberto Dalla Chiesa in *Cento giorni a Palermo* (1984). Ferrara’s films are inspired by those of his contemporary Francesco Rosi, whose films *Salvatore Giuliano* and *Il caso Mattei*, take the approach of the *indagine* to discuss social issues facing Italy, including his portrayal of Moro in *Il caso Moro*.⁶⁷

The interesting connection between the *Todo Modo* and *Il caso Moro* is that in both films the actor Gian Maria Volonté plays the character of Aldo Moro.⁶⁸ Volonté’s second portrayal of Aldo Moro is incredibly different from that in *Todo Modo*, with a “change in tone from caricature to sympathetic” in *Il caso Moro* (O’Leary, “Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy” 52). Ferrara’s film is also quite a departure from Petri’s; by taking a chronological approach to the Moro affair, *Il caso Moro* takes on the form of a historic documentary, rather than the imagined political

⁶⁷ The title of *Il caso Moro* is believed to be a nod to Francesco Rosi’s film *Il caso Mattei*. Ferrara would use the term *caso* in another of his films, *I banchieri di Dio – Il caso Calvi* (Mancino 31).

⁶⁸ Volonté would win the Silver Bear Award for his portrayal of Aldo Moro in *Il caso Moro* at the Berlin Film Festival.

attack, portrayed in *Todo Modo*.⁶⁹ *Il caso Moro* is the first filmic portrayal of the events of Moro's fifty five days of imprisonment, and for the first time an audience was able to see a reconstruction of the actual kidnapping, what the *prigione del popolo* looked like, and how Moro was executed. The film is a loyal recreation of the details of the Moro kidnapping, with a "meticulous attentiveness to historical accuracy and the use of real footage taken from news reports of that period" (Sguerri 22). Ferrara focuses much of *Il caso Moro* on the *linea di fermezza* taken by the government and how this approach led to Moro's demise.⁷⁰ Much of his research into the Moro affair is based on Robert Katz's book *Days of Wrath: The Ordeal of Aldo Moro, The Kidnapping, The Execution, The Aftermath*, in which Aldo Moro's death is presented as "a result of the collective efforts of the Red Brigades, the Democrazia Cristiana, and the Masonic lodge P2" (Sguerri 21).⁷¹ Robert Katz was living in Rome at the time of Moro's kidnapping and what he knew of Aldo Moro was largely based on Gian Maria Volonté's performance of him in *Todo Modo* (Katz XXIII). He decided to conduct an investigation into the Moro affair because he "took notice of something amiss in Rome" and "someone was bound to fall" as the events processed (Katz XXIV). Katz's main sources for his investigation into the Moro affair were "the letters of Aldo Moro, the transcript of his interrogation, the nine communiqués of the Red Brigades, other published and unpublished documents (particularly those associated with investigations and trials of Italian terrorists), reports in the Italian press, and personal interviews" (Katz 289). The information presented in Katz's research was useful to

⁶⁹ For Paolo Varvaro, "La regia di Giuseppe Ferrara è lontano dallo stile visionario di Petri (157).

⁷⁰ The *linea di fermezza* was the firm stance taken by the Italian government against negotiating with terrorists. According to Norman Kogan, succumbing "to blackmail exposed other leaders to future kidnapping. It would also admit that the life of a political leader was worth saving, but not the lives of policemen, judges, journalists and businessmen" (305).

⁷¹ Robert Katz was an American who "wrote non-fiction books, novels, and screenplays, many set against the backdrop of 20th-century Italian history" (Weber 1).

Ferrara and he decided to employ Katz as one of the screenwriters for the film. Along with Katz's account, Ferrara utilized media reports and eyewitness accounts to compile a chronological account of Moro's imprisonment.⁷²

Besides portraying the facts of the Moro affair, Ferrara also includes the struggle of Moro's family, especially his wife Eleonora (Nora), throughout the events. Ferrara's film is unique among those I discuss as it is the only film featuring Aldo Moro that also has Nora and his children as characters in the film. The actress Margarita Lozano portrays Nora Moro as an intelligent woman who picks up on the fact that government officials are lying to her. Early in the film Nora arrives at the scene of the crime and discovers that the Red Brigades did not take all of Moro's briefcases, and realizes that the police are lying to her. Throughout the film Nora is shown as a strong woman willing to call out the Christian Democrats and their choice to not save her husband. The audience is also introduced to Moro's children in the film, his eldest daughter, Maria Fida, his son Giovanni, and his younger daughters Anna and Agnese, and as well as his grandson Luca.⁷³ Moro's family is most often seen in their home, working together to come up with a solution to save their father.

Rather than beginning in a government building or in a political situation, *Il caso Moro* begins with a glimpse into Aldo Moro's daily life. The first time the audience sees Moro is as a father-figure while playing with his young grandson Luca. The inclusion of Moro's family as characters in the film helps to humanize the character of Moro in the film. The audience sees a Moro that is a definite departure from the M. of *Todo Modo*. The Moro we are first presented with is surrounded by his family; he is playing with his young grandson Luca while his wife

⁷² Ferrara believed that Katz's "input on the historical aspect of the movie was crucial" (Sguerri 21).

⁷³ Alan O'Leary writes that *Il caso Moro* is above all "the story of a man and his suffering family" ("Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy" 52).

talks with their daughter Maria Fida.⁷⁴ We see his wife give him a kiss and leave their apartment, not knowing that just a few moments later Moro will be abducted by terrorists. Ferrara, like Katz, relied heavily on Moro's letters to his wife when writing the screenplay, using excerpts of the letters in the film (Sguerri 24). The inclusion of Moro's letters to his wife show his deep love for his family, and their inclusion allows the audience to sympathize with him during his time in the *prigione del popolo*.

Another noteworthy choice by Ferrara for *Il caso Moro* is using Gian Maria Volonté to portray Aldo Moro. As previously discussed, Volonté was highly praised for his portrayal of M. His performance as Aldo Moro in *Il caso Moro* is a totally different interpretation than the "verbose and ditheringly incompetent" prime minister of *Todo Modo* (Drake 115). Volonté was a well-known member of the Communist party who was committed to performing in films with political messages. He chose to participate in *Todo Modo* because like Petri, he believed that there needed to be changes in the Italian political system, most of all in the Democrazia Cristiana. Although Volonté was not a supporter of terrorism, he did not support the historic compromise and "non avesse affatto simpatia per il politico democristiano e che perciò intendesse inizialmente fare un film contro Moro" (Uva "Schermi di piombo" 59). Despite his being anti-Moro politically, Volonté committed to filling the role in *Il caso Moro* and artfully brings to life the imprisoned Moro, who until then had only been seen in the well-known polaroid photos taken by the *brigatisti*. There is much praise for Volonté's ability to humanize

⁷⁴ In the scene where Moro is playing with Luca, he asks his grandson if he remembers the tale of "il cacciatore del branco di lupi" and asks Luca questions about the tale. This choice of tale was made by Gian Maria Volonté and was a story told by Renato Curcio, the founder of the Red Brigades. Volonté chose this fable to show his disapproval of Aldo Moro and his allegiance to communism. Giuseppe Ferrara explains: "Chiaro che l'ha fatto provocatoriamente, per fare il brigatista rosso sotterraneo nel film. Ho lasciato comunque le parole di Curcio perché il bambino-attore che interpretava il nipotino era terribile, non voleva recitare nel modo più assoluto, e quindi rifare quella scena era impossibile" (155).

Aldo Moro in *Il caso Moro*; for example, Alan O’Leary writes that Gian Maria Volonté gives a “virtuoso central performance” that makes the film a “fundamentally human tragedy” (“Tragedia all’italiana” 21). He also calls Volonté’s performance “a font of resigned truth” that is “played with weary humanity” (O’Leary “Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy” 51-52). I agree that this portrayal of Aldo Moro is incredibly different from that of *Todo Modo*, where M. was a grotesque caricature of the politician, but I also believe that this new more human portrayal of Moro is more positive as a result of Moro’s death and Ferrara’s personal feelings towards those responsible for Moro’s tragic end. In the immediate aftermath of his death Aldo Moro’s image changed from that of controversial politician to that of victim of Italian politics and Ferrara’s film is the first in which we see this change come to fruition.

In addition to the central character of Aldo Moro in *Il caso Moro*, the terrorists play an integral role. This is the only film about Moro in which we see all the terrorists who were involved the day of the kidnapping, as well as their behind the scenes activity outside of the apartment in which Moro was imprisoned. In the film’s final credits the *brigatisti* are not named, and are instead numbered one through ten, but based on their actions in the film it is not difficult to figure out who some of the terrorists are, the most obvious being the first *brigatista*, Mario Moretti, since Moretti is known as the terrorist who shot and killed Moro.⁷⁵ Many of the details of the set design are faithful to the descriptions Moretti gave in his published interviews with Carla Mosca and Rossana Rossanda, entitled *Brigate rosse: una storia italiana*. The *prigione del popolo* is almost exactly as Moretti describes it, with “un letto, una specie di piccolissimo comodino dove Moro appoggia i fogli che scrive. Un WC chimico, una conduttura per l’aria

⁷⁵ Mario Moretti was one of the terrorists instrumental in the kidnapping of Aldo Moro. He admitted during his trial of being the terrorist who actually shot Moro. He was sentenced to six life sentences, but was partially paroled in 1998. For more information on Moretti refer to the book *Brigate Rosse: Una storia italiana*, which includes his in depth interviews with Carla Mosca and Rossana Rossanda.

condizionata” (Moretti 133). The conversations between Aldo Moro and Moretti that are presented in the film are faithful recreations of Moretti’s own descriptions of his interactions with Moro. They discussed the aims of the Red Brigades and Moro’s colleagues in government, as well as Moro’s role within the party. In *Il caso Moro* the conversation between Moro and Moretti “is strictly political and the focus seems to be primarily on the Red Brigades trying to get Aldo Moro to talk about the involvement of the Christian Democrats and the government in the strategy of tension and in the SIM” (Sguerri 25). A noticeable difference in the film from Moretti’s account, as well as that of Anna Laura Braghetti, one of the female terrorists involved in Moro’s imprisonment whose account of the Moro affair, *Il prigioniero*, will be discussed in a later chapter, is that Moretti was the only member of the Red Brigades to speak with Moro in the *prigione del popolo*. Moretti and any of the other terrorists who entered Moro’s prison were always masked so that he did not know who they were.⁷⁶ In Ferrara’s film multiple terrorists speak with Moro and none of them are masked.

As previously mentioned, Giuseppe Ferrara was known for incorporating investigation into his films. He often did this by making films in the style of docudrama, which often take a journalistic approach and use elements of documentary such as footage from newscasts or audio from interviews and are also known for their strict loyalty to fact. For example, Ferrara uses news footage from the day Moro was captured, showing the scene of the crime, as well as the helicopters flying over Rome, as well as footage of Enrico Berlinguer giving a speech in Rome denouncing the Red Brigades, and the news coverage of when Moro’s body was discovered in Via Caetani. *Il caso Moro* fits the characteristics of docudrama, by dealing with an historic event

⁷⁶ Braghetti describes the mask used in her memoirs: “Era un cappuccino fatto in casa, due triangoli di cotone nero cuciti insieme con fessure per gli occhi e per la bocca” (52). She states that Moretti was always masked when he questioned Moro because “era necessario che apparisse al nostro prigioniero non come un individuo, ma come l’incarnazione dell’organizzazione, delle Brigate Rosse, del proletariato che accusava e faceva giustizia” (52).

surrounded in controversy and taking an investigatory approach to the story, presenting the facts in chronological order. It is obvious that Ferrara put ample time into researching the film; Giancarlo Lombardi comments that Ferrara “presents the chain of events that led to the murder of Aldo Moro with the strict factual adherence proper to the docudrama” (“Il coraggio” 246). I do agree that the film is well researched, but I tend to side more with Anton Giulio Mancino when he states that “il contenuto della ricerca ha speso sopravvento sulla forma” (32). The film relies on conspiracy theory, rather than facts, to present the “truth” in the Moro affair.

There are numerous conspiracy theories that surround the murder of Aldo Moro, including the involvement of *Propaganda due*, the infiltration of the Red Brigades by the United States CIA.⁷⁷ Many authors, including Katz, believe that one, if not all of these organizations, worked together with the Italian government to ensure that Moro died. Ferrara includes the possible involvement of these organizations in his retelling of the Moro affair. O’Leary writes that the thesis of *Il caso Moro* “is that the P2 Masonic lodge and the Italian secret services, backed in word if not deed by the Americans, ensured that the official linea di fermezza of the government parties would end with Moro’s death” (“Locations of Moro” 157). Ferrara’s inclusion of P2 and the CIA in the film are not explicit, but there are nods to the groups’ involvement in the Moro affair. For example, after Moro has been kidnapped one of the terrorists failed to pick up all three of Moro’s briefcases that had been in his car. Nora Moro realizes that one briefcase had to have been taken after the others because the blood had not coagulated around the spot as fast as the others, and later in the film it is revealed that the general in charge of the investigation has access to the briefcase and that he is also a member of P2. There are also

⁷⁷ Michael Newton writes that there are accusations directed at “the secret involvement of Masonic Lodge Propaganda Due (P2), linked to terrorist activities worldwide and sometimes described as a ‘shadow state’ within Italy” (338). He also writes that both the United States Central Intelligence Agency, as well as NATO’s Operation Gladio are believed by some to be involved in Moro’s murder “to discredit leftist elements and the Soviet Union by promoting random acts of terrorism” (338).

multiple references to the military and government officials working with their allies, including the Americans, as well as talk of being involved in other countries with Communist governments, such as Yugoslavia. There is also a scene in the film in which we see some integral people involved in the investigation of Moro's kidnapping in a meeting of the P2. Information from Moro's briefcase, as well as all of Moro's letters he has written in captivity are passed along to the leader of the lodge. Before the letters are passed though, the General involved in the investigation speaks with a fellow member and asks how things are proceeding with their lodge. As the meeting progresses it is apparent that the P2 has its hands in the government, but Ferrara never announces outright that they are involved.

Although not named in the credits by the actual names, but by their government titles, the film includes the Christian Democrats Francesco Cossiga, Giulio Andreotti, and Benigno Zaccagnini, as well as Enrico Berlinguer from the Communist party and Bettino Craxi from the PSI.⁷⁸ The politicians and government officials are prominent characters in the film and are presented as how they presumably were. For Giancarlo Lombardi, "Ferrara's valiant effort to present the events in the most objective fashion is forcefully undermined by his insistence that the cast impersonate the originals so closely that they actually appear as mere caricatures ("Il coraggio" 247).⁷⁹ Much of what we see of the politicians, such as Cossiga and Andreotti, focuses on their negotiations with Italian military officials. At the beginning of the film it seems as if the politicians are genuinely upset over Moro's kidnapping. Zaccagnini says early on in the film "per noi dalla Democrazia Cristiana l'unica cosa importante dev'essere la vita di Moro,"

⁷⁸ Francesco Cossiga was the Minister of the Interior during the Moro affair, while Giulio Andreotti was Prime Minister and Benigno Zaccagnini was a member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Bettino Craxi was head of the Italian Socialist Party (Ginsborg "A History" 377). Enrico Berlinguer was Secretary of the Italian Communist Party at this time (Ginsborg "A History" 330).

⁷⁹ Lombardi expounds upon this sentiment, saying that the politicians in the film "are portrayed with the same stuffiness once reserved by Volonté for Aldo Moro in *Todo Modo*" (247).

and Andreotti cannot meet with fellow politicians because he feels ill. This concern for Moro does not last long, as Andreotti quickly puts the *linea di fermezza* into place. From the first letter of Moro's captivity that the government officials receive, Andreotti is successful in convincing the other officials that Moro is not in his right mind, that the Moro they know would never write these letters. The only politicians shown wanting to work to save Moro are Zaccagnini, who throughout the film keeps reiterating "what will we do without Moro", and Craxi, who meets with Mrs. Moro to try to work out a solution, but in the end neither efforts are of help to Moro. I agree with Alan O'Leary that Ferrara's portrayal of the politicians in the film and his inclusion of the possible involvement of P2 and the Italian secret services demonstrates his belief that the politicians of the DC are just as responsible for Moro's death as the Red Brigades ("Locations of Moro" 157). Although Ferrara includes plenty of footage of the terrorists and their strategy meetings, I find Ferrara's inclusion of the government's lack of helping Aldo Moro to be more incriminating.

Ferrara's efforts to remain neutral by presenting so many facts are contradicted by his support and inclusion of material from Katz's personal investigations in the film. Although the film is seen as a docudrama, because of its telling of a controversial political story utilizing news footage and following the events of Moro's fifty-five days of imprisonment in chronological order, the film cannot be taken as fact due to its inclusion of conspiracy theories as the truth. Unlike Elio Petri, who uses fantasy to represent the political reality of the historic compromise, Ferrara uses reality to discuss conspiracies. The structure of Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*, in which he attempts to show all sides of the story in the Moro affair, can be compared to that of Marco Tulio Giordana's *Romanzo di una strage* which appears twenty-six years later. Both *Il caso Moro* and *Romanzo di una strage* present the well-known facts of the Moro affair, but fail to provide any resolution. At the end of both films the audience knows what happened, but whether or not secret

organizations were responsible for the Moro affair are never proven. Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* will instead call out the Italian government and place the blame on them and the CIA.

IV. The Moro Affair as National Thriller in Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle cinque lune*.

In 2003, the year of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Moro affair, two new films were made about the Moro affair. One film, Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte*, which will be discussed in a later chapter, tells the story of Moro's fifty-five-day imprisonment from the point of view of the female terrorist who lived in the apartment where Moro was kept captive. The other film released to mark the anniversary is Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, a *poliziesco* thriller set in modern day Italy. Martinelli had the desire to make a film "unequivocally within the tradition of the *cinema d'impegno*, or more precisely the *cine-inchiesta*, but updated in order to appeal to the MTV generation" (O'Leary "Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy" 56). Much like Ferrara in *Il caso Moro*, Martinelli utilizes an investigatory approach to shed light on the conspiracies surrounding the Moro affair. *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* is not a copy of Ferrara's examination of Moro's kidnapping and death; rather it is a fantastical re-telling of the story that includes many of the same concerns regarding the involvement of the CIA, Operation Gladio, and P2 in Moro's death.

Piazza delle Cinque Lune is set in present day Siena during the famous Palio race. Judge Rosario Saracini, played by Donald Sutherland, has just retired and is getting ready to settle into a life of relaxation after many years of service. On the way home from his retirement party, an unidentified man calls to Judge Saracini from an alley and leaves him with a package of important evidence that he would like him to look over. Saracini finds a film reel inside and after

watching the film realizes that it is footage of the day Aldo Moro was kidnapped in Via Fani by the Red Brigades. When Judge Saracini realizes what the footage is, he calls in his longtime bodyguard Branco (played by Giancarlo Giannini), as well as his young colleague Fernanda to help him investigate the footage. This sets up a series of investigations that help the judge realize that there are many secrets surrounding the Moro affair, specifically the involvement of the CIA and its infiltration of the Red Brigades.

Martinelli views *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* much as Giuseppe Ferrara viewed *Il caso Moro*, as a historically accurate reconstruction of the events that happened during the fifty-five days of the Moro affair. He said in an interview that was published in *Rivista del Cinematografo* when the film was released:

abbiamo studiato per due anni migliaia di documenti, gli atti delle varie commissioni parlamentari sulla strage, le diverse perizie comprese quelle necroscopiche, le dichiarazioni dei politici in un lavoro di verifica incrociata delle fonti, tra le quali quelle preziose fornite ci dall'ex senatore Ds Sergio Flamigni (54).

As Ferrara found inspiration in Robert Katz's *Days of Wrath*, Martinelli also found inspiration in a book, Sergio Flamigni's *La tela del ragno* (1988). Flamigni was on the government commission for the Moro murder and *La tela del ragno* is an incredibly detailed account of his findings from 1980-1983.⁸⁰ In the introduction to the book Flamigni writes: "Nella vicenda Moro restano oscuri ancora oggi proprio i caratteri dell'intreccio" (8). *La tela del ragno* aims to reveal the overall responsibility for Moro's death by going into extreme detail; events mentioned in the book are broken down by what happened in minutes and hours, and there are numerous footnotes within the chapters. Much of Flamigni's investigation focuses on Italy's relationship with the United States, specifically the terse relationship between Henry Kissinger and Aldo Moro. He

⁸⁰ Flamigni was a member of the PCI and was a partisan during WWII. He was the head of the Moro commission from 1980-83 (Lombardi "Il coraggio" 247). While in government he was also a part of government investigations into the Mafia and *Propaganda due*.

makes it clear that Kissinger and Moro did not like each other and did not hide their mutual contempt (Flamigni 97). Flamigni writes that Kissinger considered Moro “un pericoloso cavallo di Troia del comunismo in Italia” and that he and the United States wanted to prevent the historic compromise at all costs (99). Flamigni also mentions American involvement in P2, mentioning that Howard Stone, who served as the head of the CIA in Rome, was a member of the lodge (99). Martinelli uses Flamigni’s discussion of the United States government’s distrust of Aldo Moro discussed in *La tela del ragno* to form the majority of his storyline in *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*. Along with the information from Flamigni’s investigation, Martinelli also consulted Alberto Franceschini, one of the founders of the Red Brigades. In an interview for *Film cronache* Martinelli said that “Alberto Franceschini confirmed that it was the CIA and KGB behind Aldo Moro’s death” (Natta 60).

What is most fascinating about Martinelli’s sources for his film is that he had the input and full cooperation of the Moro family to recount this obviously fictional investigation. Martinelli contacted the Moro family and worked with Moro’s brother Alfredo, his son Giovanni, and even his grandson Luca. Martinelli explains that he approached “con molta discrezione i familiari di Moro sottoponendogli la sceneggiatura che è stata letta dal fratello di Aldo Moro, Alfredo e dal figlio Giovanni i quali l’hanno giudicata attenta, onesta e rigorosa” (Jattarelli 54). Besides the letters that were read by members of Moro’s family, his grandson Luca, who is now a musician, sings a song and plays guitar during the credits at the end of the film. The involvement of Moro’s family in the film is intriguing, since Aldo Moro is not seen much in the film, except for the “footage” that is left with Judge Saracini or in flashback scenes.

Martinelli labels his movie as *un film d’inchiesta*, but I find *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* is more of a flashy action film than a historical docudrama. While Martinelli has tackled historic events in the past, he had never previously made a *film d’inchiesta*, unlike Giuseppe Ferrara.

Many of his films have taken on disastrous events in Italy. One of his early films, *Porzus* (1997), tells the story of a partisan massacre that occurred in Yugoslavia. His next film *Vajont – La diga del disonore*, released in 2001, portrays the collapse of a dam located in the Dolomite Mountains. His most recent film *11 settembre 1683* (2012), tells the story of the Battle of Vienna. He has also made other films about historical figures, including the Italian boxer Primo Carnera and Federico Barbarosa, an Italian king.⁸¹ As previously mentioned, Martinelli wishes to appeal to the MTV generation, which makes sense since he started his career in the music video industry during the 1970s. He believes that *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* falls within the category of *cine-inchiesta*, but I find his films are produced more similarly to big-budget action features than the *cinema d'impegno* of hitherto mentioned directors such as Petri, Giordana, and even Ferrara. Martinelli's stylistic approach differs from that of Ferrara in presenting the facts of the Moro affair, discarding the chronological sequence of events in *Il caso Moro* in favor of an action movie, implementing jarring camera angles, an amplified use of the sound track, and sweeping camera movements (Soncini 426-27).⁸² For *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, there was "widespread critique of Martinelli's formal approach in terms of its failure in ethical terms" (O'Leary "Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy" 57).⁸³

Martinelli's goal in making *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* was very similar to that of Ferrara. He states in an interview with Paolo Varvaro that the goal of *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* is "la

⁸¹ Martinelli's biographical films include *Carnera – The Walking Mountain*, released in 2008, and *Barbarossa*, released in 2009.

⁸² Enzo Natta finds that Martinelli's film follows the model of American political thrillers such as Oliver Stone's *JFK*, "piuttosto che ispirarsi alle ricostruzioni storico-critiche dei film-inchiesta di Francesco Rosi" (61).

⁸³ Most reviews of *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* were either negative or on the fence. For example, Dennis Harvey's review in *Variety* says that the film "offers reasonably engrossing intrigue as easy to forget as it is to watch" (90). Enzo Natta's review in *Filmcronache* says the film begins well but "finisce in farti per avitarsi su se stesso e farsi involute, confuse, irrisolto, sfiorando a più riprese il banale e naufragando in un finale che dovrebbe essere Kafkiano ma è soltanto assurdo" (61).

ricerca della verità ... Che è un po' il mio modo di vedere la storia: cercare una verità se c'è evocarla e comunicarla, che è quello che dovrebbe fare ogni intellettuale onesto in qualsiasi epoca" (151). The film is rooted in what Alberto Soncini calls "i codici del thriller politico," developing the film like a traditional giallo.⁸⁴ Much of the critique for Martinelli's film is correlated to his reliance on conspiracy theory to explain what truly happened to Aldo Moro. Instead of Moro being largely the focus of the film, as he was in *Il caso Moro*, he is just "a pawn that the director utilizes to demonstrate the validity of his conspiracy theory" (Sguerri 28-29). Judge Saracini's investigation finds that there was a whole network of people working together to kill Aldo Moro, including members of the Italian government, P2, and the CIA. The more the judge discovers, the more dangerous the investigation comes, for example, while Judge Saracini and Branco his body guard are exploring a home in the Tuscan countryside for clues, an airplane deliberately tries to crash into the judge and kill him. At one point in the film, the family of the judge's colleague Federica's involved in a terrible car accident with the unidentified organization trying to derail the investigation. This possible involvement of outside organizations in the government was present in *Il caso Moro*, but Martinelli takes it a step further in *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, with his graphic portrayal of violence employed by the unidentified group that makes it their goal to end Judge Saracini's investigation.

The most far-fetched claim made in regards to the conspiracy theories surrounding the Moro affair in *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* is based on the involvement of Mario Moretti, the leader of the terrorists who kidnapped Aldo Moro. Mario Moretti was one of the early members of the Brigate rosse, becoming a member in 1971. He was the main player in the Moro kidnapping; participating in the actual act of kidnapping Moro, acting as his jailer and actually

⁸⁴ "La struttura narrativa, tuttavia presenta un impianto tradizionale, privilegiando nettamente lo sviluppo giallo rispetto alla riflessione politica" (Soncini 427).

ending Moro's life. Moretti was arrested in 1981 and was sentenced to life in prison.⁸⁵ He was paroled in 1998, but is still required to return to prison at night and on the weekends. While in prison an in depth interview with Moretti was published in book form in which he explained how he became involved in the Brigate rosse, how the plan to kidnap Moro was formulated, a detailed account of his interactions with Moro, and what happened during his years on the run after Moro's death. In *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* it is theorized that Mario Moretti was actually working with the CIA and killed Moro for them rather than to make a statement for the Brigate rosse. Martinelli's reasoning in the film is that Moretti's goal was to end the historic compromise on which Moro had been working because he did not want the PCI to work with the Christian Democrats, but rather to run the government themselves. Moretti is portrayed as having agreed to work with the CIA to make sure that the PCI did not become a part of the government. The reason presented for the CIA killing Moro at the end of the film is that Moro's historic compromise was a risk for the peace that had been reached in the world with the Yalta Pact (Soncini 427).

Moretti states in the interview that the focus of the Red Brigades in 1978 was the Christian Democrat party, which was "l'epicentro del sistema, il nemico assoluto della lotta operaia" (111). The reason the BR chose to attack Aldo Moro, according to Moretti, was that they wanted to attack the DC and Aldo Moro was the acting president of the party, and that was the only reason they chose him over members of the DC (Moretti 115). He never mentions working with the CIA; he actually finds the idea ridiculous. He states in the interview "non ci sono misteri, zone di ombra, per quanto riguarda l'azione di Via Fani" (Moretti 124). Moretti even discusses the possibility of Moro being drugged or suffering from Stockholm syndrome that

⁸⁵ The terrorists involved in the Moro affair all received life sentences at the end of Moro uno and Moro bis in 1985 (Glynn and Lombardi 7).

the DC used to explain Moro's letters, which Moretti rebukes as "favole" (144-45).⁸⁶ It is difficult to believe that a man who confessed to killing Aldo Moro from the very beginning and was so heavily involved in the Red Brigades and *la classe operaia* would work with the CIA, especially after reading his interview with Carla Mosca and Rossana Rossanda.⁸⁷ The only time Moretti mentions anything that could seem out of the ordinary is that Moro discussed the presence of *Gladio* with Moretti, an organization that was not made public until many years later.⁸⁸ As previously mentioned, Moretti takes full responsibility for Moro's death and emphasizes that the government was not behind the killing.

The conspiracy theories presented in the film, coupled with the glitzy stylistic choices made by Martinelli, are more similar to a blockbuster film than *cinema d'indagine*. For Alan O'Leary, this use of conspiracy theory is a risk, which is "exacerbated by the ostentatious technical means and ultramodern effects employed in *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, which easily fades into kitsch" ("Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy" 57). The story of Moro's death is taken completely out of context, unlike Ferrara's film, and the conspiracy theories are made even more difficult to believe by the setting of the story. Moro's kidnapping and death took place in Rome and the choice to set the investigation of Judge Saracini in Siena, seems bizarre, but twenty-five percent of the film's budget was provided by the *Commune di Siena*, which required the film to be set there (O'Leary "Locations of Moro" 157). However, the choice to set the film in a city that historically has nothing to do with the Moro affair detracts from the historic validity of the film.

⁸⁶ "Si sono dette cose strane e non tutte innocenti: che Moro fosse drogato, coartato da psicofarmaci. Favole" (Moretti 144-45).

⁸⁷ Rosana Rosanda is one of the founders of *Il Manifesto*, a prominent Italian daily newspaper, aligned with Communism and the left (ilmanifesto.com)

⁸⁸ "Moro parla in cifra, annega le cose concrete in un oceano di genericità. Gladio, ad esempio, lo noti ora, quindici anni dopo, quando ne hanno parlato Andreotti e Cossiga" (Moretti 159).

In O’Leary’s discussion of *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* he refers to the film as a “tainted heritage film,” that promotes Italy’s reputation for corruption as a popular export of Italian culture (“Locations of Moro” 157). I agree that the film does taint history by creating an entirely fictionalized investigation, but my biggest objection is that *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* presents itself as part of *cinema d’inchiesta*. The plot, setting, and reliance on conspiracy present detract from the seriousness of the Moro affair. Although Ferrara incorporates elements of conspiracy in his film, by sticking to the chronological timeline of the Moro affair, I find his investigation is much more believable than that of Martinelli.

V. Presenting Aldo Moro as a Victim of the State

Both Giuseppe Ferrara and Renzo Martinelli believe their films are part of the long tradition of politically committed Italian films. Civil engagement and the representation of social realities have often gone hand in hand in Italian film. Italian political film has long aimed to reconstruct these social realities, frequently utilizing the construct of the investigation. *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* use the structure of an investigation, similarly to a *poliziesco*, but they also differ from the typical *poliziesco* of the 1970s because they are historical films, rather than films dealing with a current political reality. Jonathan Stubbs defines historical cinema as “films which engage with history or which in some way construct a relationship to the past” (19). Both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* engage the Italian public in the historical events surrounding the Moro affair, by returning to the investigation of the circumstances of the case, rather than dealing with a current social issue like a large number of Italian political films.

While the center of both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* is the Aldo Moro case, the focus is more on the investigation and conspiracies than on the emotions of Moro, his family, and the terrorists or the affects of the events on the Italian people. *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, and to a lesser extent *Il caso Moro* overemphasize conspiracy and try to prove that the Italian and

American governments were behind the death of Moro, which detracts from the character of Moro himself.⁸⁹ While in *Il caso Moro* we do have Moro as the central character, as the film progresses the emphasis changes from his emotions in the *prigione del popolo* to behind the scenes of the investigation, and the corruption of the Italian government. In *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* we do not even see Aldo Moro except for the footage of his kidnapping. Alan O’Leary states that in both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* the “hysterical thoroughness” of their investigations coupled with the conspiracies “lays claim to an authority and to a particular form of historical truth in which documentable accuracies generate and sustain spectacular fantasy” (“Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy” 45-46). I agree with O’Leary that *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* entertain the fantastical in their investigations of the Moro affair, rather I believe that it provides an important alternative framework from which to explore the Moro affair.

Ferrara and Martinelli’s films present themselves as docudrama, but are in fact more fantasy than reality. There are other filmmakers that have taken a different approach when portraying Aldo Moro, using incredibly fantastical approaches, including vivid dream sequences or ghostly apparitions, to portray Aldo Moro. *Todo Modo* was a completely fictional story used to propose a change in Italian politics and it is interesting to consider that Italians took the film so seriously and blamed it for attributing to Moro’s actual death. In my next chapter I will discuss another fantastical representation of Aldo Moro, Paolo Sorrentino’s *Il divo*, which can hardly be classified as a docudrama. In Sorrentino’s film, the focus is not on Aldo Moro, but the Italian politician Giulio Andreotti, who will be “haunted” throughout the film by the memory of Aldo

⁸⁹ Alan O’Leary believes that a function of films made about Aldo Moro is “to put Moro ‘back in the picture’: to give concrete visual form to an incarceration that was so intensely imagined by press and public at the same time” (“Tragedia all’italiana” 32).

Moro. There are many imagined situations that take place within the mind of Andreotti, which, although not documentary in style, help the audience to understand how Andreotti was involved in Moro's murder and the guilt he feels in regards to Moro. In another chapter I will discuss Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte*, in which Aldo Moro is "resurrected" in dreams, an event that is clearly imaginary. The audience is totally aware that Aldo Moro did not actually survive his kidnapping, but this re-imagining of the events helps the audience to feel realize the gravity of the event and what could have happened in Italy had Moro lived. The abovementioned films employ fantasy to portray the very real Aldo Moro, and allow the audience to engage in the suffering of Aldo Moro as well as formulate opinions about Italy's political history, rather than spending the whole movie trying to keep the facts and conspiracies straight as in *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*.

The theme of Aldo Moro as victim of the Italian State will continue in other films, but will expand to demonstrate the lasting impact of Aldo Moro's death. The next two films I will discuss deal with the government's choice to not negotiate with the terrorists and the long-lasting consequences of the *linea di fermezza*. In Michele Placido's 2005 film *Romanzo criminale*, which tells the story of the rise and fall of the Roman crime gang the *Banda della magliana*, we will see how a secret government organization hires the *Banda* to find Aldo Moro, but then calls off the search. Then in Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo* (2008), we are presented with a Giulio Andreotti who throughout the film is haunted by the memory of Aldo Moro, and who will eventually confess his guilt for Moro's death. Neither film is about Aldo Moro and his kidnapping, like *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, but they include of Moro as a part of the story-line to emphasize the feeling of guilt in regards to the death of Aldo Moro. Both films show that Aldo Moro's death will have a lasting and overarching impact on Italian history, and that there is a shared guilt over Moro's death that continues to effect Italians today.

Romanzo criminale and *Il divo* will also demonstrate how the style of films that include Aldo Moro varies, as both films are quite different stylistically from *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*. Both films are departures from the *poliziesco*, and instead are formalistic, rather than realistic. They will implement formalistic elements such as montage, flashbacks, and non-diegetic sound, a departure from the documentary-esque elements included in the films discussed in this chapter. *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo* will continue the tradition of politically driven Italian film, but through the use of the imaginary means rather than the reliance on facts and investigation.

CHAPTER III: MORO AS CULTURAL SYMBOL IN ITALIAN HISTORY IN *ROMANZO CRIMINALE AND IL DIVO*

I. Introduction

Traumatic events such as the Moro affair are not easily forgotten. As we have seen there is ample scholarship on the events surrounding Aldo Moro's kidnapping and death, such as the films and books discussed in the second chapter. While the actions taken by the Red Brigades during the fifty-five days of Moro's imprisonment are still the topic of numerous retellings, the consequences of the Moro affair and its lasting impact on Italian society are not discussed as often as the tragedy itself. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Giuseppe Saragat, the fifth President of the Italian Republic, would go on to say: "accanto al suo cadavere c'è anche il cadavere della prima repubblica," words that would come to fruition with the end of the Christian Democrats fifteen years later. Ezio Mauro, the editor of *La Repubblica*, wrote in a 2008 article: "La storia della Repubblica si divide in due, prima e dopo il sequestro di Aldo Moro" (I). The death of one of Italy's most prominent politicians has affected Italians to a large degree. The Italian population was deeply saddened by the death of Moro and as mentioned in the previous chapter, years later when the Italian public found out about the secret organization P2 and Operation Gladio, they were upset that the government could have had a hand in killing him. In less than fifteen years after Moro had died, the *Democrazia Cristiana* fell apart and the First Italian Republic came to an end.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ In the general elections of 1992 the DC only pulled in less than 30% of the vote (Pellegrino 164). After this disastrous election, in combination with the Mani pulite trials that began in February of that same year, the DC would continue to fall in popularity (Pellegrino 163). The party disbanded in 1994.

On the day of his kidnapping Aldo Moro had been on his way to put the historic compromise on which he had been working into law. This momentous occasion of including the Communist party in the ruling government coalition, an alliance of democracy, would be short lived. After Moro's death anti-Communist sentiment grew in Italy and the historic compromise would be dissolved by 1980. As the years went on, the Christian Democrats would begin to lose their power and with the *Mani pulite* trials of the 1990s the overarching corruption present in the Italian political system would be revealed, causing the fall of the First Italian Republic. The Christian Democrats, for whom Aldo Moro had been a loyal servant, disappeared after over fifty years of controlling Italian politics. David Moss writes that since Moro's death, "the political changes of the late twentieth century ... have not provided any encouragement to explore Moro's persona or political vision" (19). Instead of leaving a lasting memory with his political career, Aldo Moro's would be remembered for his tragic death as well the impact of this event on the Italian people.

Moro's death has become the quintessential symbol of the *anni di piombo*, the act that immediately comes to mind when thinking about this point in history. In retrospect, Moro's death has had a lasting impact on Italian society; an event that will forever be remembered. In more recent years, Italian filmmakers have returned to the events of the *anni di piombo*, and more specifically Moro's death, to try to make sense of what really happened and form a collective memory for the Italian people. Italian filmmakers have now begun tackling this lasting impact of the Moro affair in films dealing with Italy's more recent history by discussing his association with events of the *anni di piombo*, such as the bombing of the Bologna train station, as well the eventual dissolution of the Christian Democrats. For Rudolph Binion, a prominent psychohistorian, film "is better attuned to reliving of whatever sort, traumatic or not, in that repetitions are instantly recognizable when conveyed visually" (100). Of the multiple films that

refer back to this tragic event to situate the film in Italian history and emphasize its lasting impact on the Italian public, I will discuss two in depth: Michele Placido's *Romanzo criminale* (2005), that tells the story of the Roman crime gang the *Banda della Magliana*, and Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo* (2008), a biopic of the long-serving Italian politician Giulio Andreotti. Although neither film is directly about the Moro affair, his death is indirectly used in each as a symbol of what could have been if Moro had not died and continued to shape the course of Italian politics.

While films with a political commitment are still popular in Italy, many of the politically charged films of the past adhered to realism, which film makers such as Paolo Sorrentino are now recognizing may not be appropriate to capture the interest of current younger moviegoers.⁹¹ Italian political film is often judged by the prescriptive of "realism" (more specifically neorealism), and any film that is not neorealist in nature "is likely to be dismissed as naïve, or worse, politically specious" (O'Leary and O'Rawe 115). Filmmakers today are taking a more playful approach, using different genres and implementing formalist techniques to portray Italy's political past, including films depicting Aldo Moro. For Paolo Sorrentino, the days of Italian cinema "when there was a commercially viable audience for a cinema of civic conscience, à la Francesco Rossi, are long gone" and these days "primarily younger movie goers will have to be enticed to see films dealing with their own political history or contemporary affairs by packaging them in a more compelling, tricked out visual style" (qtd. Crowdus 34). I believe both *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo* can be categorized as part of this new political film style, because they reject many of the ideas of realism in favor of jarring formalism. Both films include different examples of the artificial by using montage, non-linear story lines, and non-diegetic sound, such

⁹¹ Paolo Sorrentino states in an interview with Gary Crowdus that Italian filmmakers "need to make more modern, not conventional or traditional films about politics" (Crowdus 34).

as pop music. They present evidence of truth, much like *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, but, unlike these conspiracist films, do not place blame, rather leaving the audience to decide who is at fault.

In this chapter I will discuss the importance of historic cinema and the filmic devices it uses to construct a relationship between events of the past and the audience of the present. I will also investigate the differences between realism and formalism and their places in Italian film. *Romanzo criminale* and *Il Divo* are historic films that include real characters from Italy's past, such as Aldo Moro, but they are incredibly stylized, and I would argue, fall into the category of formalism.⁹² I will also compare and contrast how Aldo Moro is used as an historical point of reference in both *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo*. Moro and his kidnapping play only a short part in *Romanzo criminale*, while in *Il divo* Giulio Andreotti is taunted by the image of his late colleague, who appears as a ghost throughout the film. Although the figure of Moro is more prominent in *Il Divo* than *Romanzo criminale*, both films provide political messages through the use of Moro's death, while taking new formalist approaches to historical film. Although the films are not part of the realist tradition, their formalist approaches demonstrate that Italian political film does not have to be realist in style to have a commitment to portraying a political message.

II. The Moro Affair as Gangster Tale in Michele Placido's *Romanzo criminale*.

The *anni di piombo* were a period of continued political unrest, and crime. The political terrorism that I have discussed in other chapters has often centered on Communist or Fascist terrorism, as well as political instability. As organized crime continued to grow, one group in particular that was at its peak during this time of turbulence was the *Banda della Magliana*. A group of local Roman criminals, the *Banda della Magliana* was involved in racketeering, drug

⁹² For Louis Gianetti, formalistic narratives “luxuriate in their artificiality” and can be seen as “showy” (368).

trafficking, gambling, prostitution, and a whole host of other illegal activities. The *Banda* also had ties to other criminal organizations, such as the Camorra and Cosa Nostra, as well as both Fascist terrorist groups and P2.⁹³ The *Banda della Magliana* is also believed to have been involved in some of the most violent events of the *anni di piombo*, such as the kidnapping of Aldo Moro in 1978 and the bombing of the Bologna train station in 1980.

Recently the *Banda della Magliana* has come into the spotlight due to the popularity of the novel, *Romanzo criminale*, by Giancarlo de Cataldo. Published in 2002, *Romanzo criminale* is a fictional re-telling of the formation, growth, and fall of the *Banda della Magliana*. The book's author is a judge in Rome, as well as a law professor, and is well versed in the workings of the Roman crime scene. He has written multiple crime novels, such as *Teneri assassini* (2000), *Nelle mani giuste* (2007), and *I traditori* (2010), as well as numerous articles and non-fiction criminal studies. *Romanzo criminale* is his most famous work, and due to its popularity was adapted into a screenplay in 2005, and was further adapted into a television series in 2008.⁹⁴

The novel *Romanzo criminale* is based on the true story of the *Banda della Magliana*, and focuses on their operations from the late 1970s to the early 1990s. The *Banda* forms initially to enter into the drug trade in Rome. The group is composed of three main members, *Il libanese* (Libano), *Il freddo*, and *Il dandi*, as well as many smaller characters. The band's original leader, Libano, believes this is the time to enter the drug trade since the Italian police are so preoccupied with the terrorist acts within the state. With their early success in the drug trade, the *Banda* expands their operations into prostitution and usury. The novel is split into three parts, each following the leadership tenure of a different member of the *Banda*. In the first section, under the

⁹³ The *Camorra* is the Neapolitan mafia and *Cosa nostra* is the Sicilian mafia. For more information refer to Tom Behan's *The Camorra* (1996) and John Dickie's *Cosa Nostra: A History of the Sicilian Mafia* (2004).

⁹⁴ For more information on the television series, refer to Catherine O'Rawe's book *Stars and Masculinities In Contemporary Italian Cinema* (2014).

leadership of Libano, named for his love of Lebanese hashish, we learn of the *Banda's* origins, their early crimes, and their goal to form a partnership with the Sicilian mafia, as well as the *Banda's* eventual involvement with the Italian state. In the second part of the novel, the *Banda* falls under the leadership of Freddo, and many of the members begin to fight with one another and end up in prison. In the final part of the novel Dandi is in power and we learn of the downfall and deaths of many of the group's members. The film follows roughly the same timeline, but in a much more compressed and stylized manner.

Although the film has a similar structure, being split into three different parts, the film version of *Romanzo criminale* is not a literal adaptation of the novel, but rather a cinematic re-writing of the novel.⁹⁵ Both the film and the novel tell the story of how the gang rose from committing petty crimes to becoming kings of the Roman crime scene, as well as their eventual downfall due to power struggles (O'Rawe "Stars and Masculinities" 97). Although the works are very similar, there are a few noticeable differences between the two texts. For example, in the novel the *Banda* is formed when Libano's gang combines with Freddo's gang after Freddo has bought a car that was stolen from Libano. In the film the connection between the *Banda's* three main members, Libano, Freddo, and Dandi, is formed in childhood, after the young boys have stolen a car and are followed by police to their secret hangout. The film emphasizes this sense of brotherhood between the members of the group more prominently than the novel. Another example of where the film strays from the original text is the group's involvement with the Italian secret services. Both in the novel and in the film the agents are sent by a man in higher power (in the novel named Il Grande Vecchio) but the agents become involved with the group at

⁹⁵ Millicent Marcus in *Filmmaking by the Book* writes that a cinematic re-writing of a literary source creates "an awareness of the unique signifying properties of each medium" and invites them "to find specifically cinematic solutions to the narrative challenges posed by the text" (15-16).

different points in the story. In the novel the agents contact the members of the gang in the days leading up to the bombing of the Bologna train station, while in the film the “amico di stato” first contacts Libano in regards to the kidnapping of Aldo Moro.

In their book *Postmodern Impegno: Ethics and Commitment in Contemporary Italian Culture*, Pierpaolo Antonello and Florian Mussgnug discuss how recent Italian film has returned to the idea of *impegno* while taking a postmodern approach. In the introduction they describe postmodernism as “as a triumph of eclecticism, a skeptical, but above all playful attitude towards social conventions, a loss of faith in definitive or at least comprehensive representations of the real” (2). Presenting the Moro affair in a gangster film is a unique approach, not previously done by Italian filmmakers. The film version of *Romanzo criminale* falls into the genre of gangster film, filled with elements that an audience expects from such a story-line: drugs, sex, and violence. Like *Il divo*, which will be discussed later in the chapter, the film is highly stylized and similarly referred to as Tarantino-esque, due to its soundtrack, bloody violence, and formalism (O’Rawe 107). Besides being formalist in style, *Romanzo criminale* falls under Antonello and Mussgnug’s descriptive of postmodern, due to the film’s structure. *Romanzo criminale* takes some of the worst events of the *anni di piombo*, such as Moro’s death and the Bologna bombing, and, rather than taking the approach of a *film d’inchiesta*, such as *Todo Modo*, *Il caso Moro*, or *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, sets these historic events in a fictional gangster tale. The film is rooted in truth, but presents the events in a new way, adapting history to get across a political message for a different audience.

I have already addressed conspiracy theory in regards to Moro’s kidnapping and death when discussing *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* and how many Italians still believe the State could have in fact saved Aldo Moro, but it is worth mentioning in relation to *Romanzo criminale*. Both *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle cinque lune* address the state’s involvement in the

Moro affair in relation to secret organizations such as Operation Gladio and Propaganda 2, but their use of conspiracy theory makes the films seem less serious. The films also claim to be documentary-like, and the use of conspiracy theory detracts from the reality that they are trying to present. In *Romanzo criminale*, a film that is not claiming to be documentary in style, has a much more realistic treatment of the Moro affair. In both the novel and the film the *Banda della Magliana* is asked to help find Moro after he has been kidnapped. In both versions the gang does indeed find him, but after doing so are told in both the novel and the film that their services are no longer needed. Unlike some of the previously discussed films, *Romanzo criminale* doesn't market itself as a *film d'inchiesta*, trying to expose the truth behind the Moro affair. Rather, it presents the Moro affair in a fictional story-line, but, similarly to *Buongiorno, notte*, which will be discussed in the following chapter, the film alludes to the fact that something could have been done to save Moro and if the *Banda* had found and saved him, Italian politics could be incredibly different today.

The storyline involving Aldo Moro in *Romanzo criminale* is small, but important. The audience only sees him in archival footage from the Moro affair. Even though he is not an actual character like in many of the other films I have discussed, his storyline is valuable because it sets into motion the *Banda's* involvement in Italian politics. Before Moro is killed in the film, the *Banda* does not work with the state, instead participating in a wide arrange of illegal activities including gambling and drugs. Freddo, one of the gang's leaders is even against working with the state, preferring to work in petty crime.⁹⁶ Once the group is called upon to help find Moro's

⁹⁶ "Of the three leaders, only Freddo invites viewer empathy, effectively reinforced by his desire not to come into contact with the Mafia or the Italian Secret Service, or to be involved in matters pertaining to the Moro kidnapping" (O'Rawe 248).

body, they will begin to work with the Italian state in other tragic events that occur, such as the bombing of the Bologna train station in 1980, and we see that the State has a very corrupt side.

Both the film and the novel of *Romanzo criminale* address the kidnapping and death of Moro, but there are slight variations between the two. In the novel, Libano is contacted by Il Sardo, a fellow criminal, who has been sent by Cutolo, a member of the Camorra.⁹⁷ Dandi has his objections, saying to Sardo: “A Sardo, che c’è stato un arruolamento straordinario? Siamo diventati i buoni?” (DeCataldo 61-62). Libano ends up accepting the orders and the *Banda* becomes involved in the search for Moro, eventually finding him. They are told by Sardo that their help is no longer needed, and Moro is found dead a few days later. As in the film, the gang is contacted to find Moro, but later told that their services are not required anymore. The important difference between the film and the novel is that in the film, instead of being contacted by a crook associated with a criminal organization, Libano is contacted by an agent of the state, which, similar to *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, attributes blame for Moro’s death to the Italian State.

In the film version of *Romanzo criminale*, leading up to the gang’s involvement in the Moro affair, Libano has been imprisoned for opening a brothel. He is visited by a stranger in prison who wishes to free Libano in exchange for his help in some matters. Upon his release, Libano and the gang buy the Full 80 club and there is a celebration. As Patti LaBelle’s “Lady Marmalade” plays and the members of the gang are dancing around the club, the audience is exposed to a montage of news footage of the Moro affair, interspersed with more cuts of celebration. This documentary like footage includes footage of coffins and the flags of the Democrazia Cristiana, the iconic image of Moro in front of the flag of the *Brigate Rosse* in the

⁹⁷ Renato Cutolo was the founder of the organized crime syndicate the Nuova Camorra Organizzata in the 1970s. The Camorra changed shape and form often and was older than the Sicilian Mafia (Ginsborg “Discontents” 200).

prigione del popolo, followed by more archival footage of the *Carabinieri* and people surrounding the crime scene. The disco is also mixed with the announcement of Moro's kidnapping by an Italian reporter. After this night in the club, the agent who freed Libano is told to contact the gang by an older man assumed to be a higher-level agent to ascertain their help in finding Moro. Dandi and Freddo are suspicious and ask what is in it for the gang, and Libano replies "He said the interested party would be grateful." When the agent tells his superior that the gang has found Moro, he is told "Never mind, stop everything". Soon after the phone call made to Francesco Tritto by the *Brigate rosse* instructing where Moro's body can be found is played, along with footage of Moro in the trunk of the car.⁹⁸

The decision to not have Moro as a character, but rather to use archival footage to portray his kidnapping and death enhances the idea presented in both the novel and the film that no one really cares if he is found or not. In both texts the search for Moro is called off and shortly after he is found dead, but this lack of attention to him is brought to the foreground in *Romanzo criminale*. The Moro affair, which lasted for fifty-five days, is only given a few minutes of the film, and is juxtaposed with the high-living of the *Banda della Magliana*. As the gang celebrates their new club and dances along to the disco music popular at the time, Moro's kidnapping and the subsequent events are only given rapid shots, and they blend in with the partying gangsters in the background (O'Rawe "More More Moro" 219). The images we are shown are familiar, due to their repetition in the media. The audience is able to instantly recognize the coverage of the

⁹⁸ Francesco Tritto was a former student of Aldo Moro and colleague at La Sapienza. He was the first to be told of Moro's death (Moss 23).

Moro affair, but because we are only provided with short snippets, it is impossible to know exactly what happened to Moro and secrets still abound.⁹⁹

The choice to use an agent of the state, presumably in the secret service, to ask the *Banda* to find Aldo Moro, adds to the secrecy of the Moro affair in *Romanzo criminale*, and, in my opinion makes a stronger political comment than the use of the Camorra members to enlist the help of the gang in the novel. At first it seems as if the state is trying to find Moro and save him, but when the *Banda* does indeed find the kidnapped Moro and Il Grande Vecchio calls off the search, we realize that the state does not have an interest in saving Moro. Il Grande Vecchio, whose true identity is never revealed, I believe to be a representation of secret government organizations that were hidden at the time of Moro's death. For Sebastiano Lucci, the film of *Romanzo criminale* "propone una realtà sotterranea, cupa e ambigua" (162). Not only is the *Banda della Magliana* an underground crime ring, but the State is also acting as a dark and deceptive organization. The statesman, like Giulio Andreotti in *Il Divo*, represents the ambiguity of power roles in Italian politics. Lucci writes that Il Grande Vecchio "racchiude tutte le contraddizioni, gli interrogativi e le perplessità di un'epoca al tramonto, di un mondo crepuscolare che era riuscito a sopravvivere alle grandi contrapposizioni politiche e sociali, mantenendosi in un precario equilibrio" (165-166). I believe that this description of Il Grande Vecchio is representative of many of the politicians of this time, especially the Andreotti with whom we are presented in *Il Divo*. Il Grande Vecchio, like Andreotti, knows many of the secrets of the Italian state, and even when he lets the audience in on state secrets, much like Andreotti during his confession scene, in the end of the film he chooses to keep them secret. The statesman

⁹⁹ Catherine O'Rawe writes that the "unknowability" of the Moro affair "is hinted at in the use of montage, while the shorthand technique of invoking events of 1978 through a few key images and scenes would appear to make these events knowable and usable to an audience" ("More More Moro" 222).

hires a sniper to kill Freddo at the end of the film so that the knowledge that the *Banda della Magliana* has about state secrets does not end up in the wrong hands (Renga and Cooper 2006). With Freddo's death, the little that the audience has gleaned about state secrets is lost, and nothing has been resolved.

Although the Moro storyline is only a small part of *Romanzo criminale*, its inclusion grounds the film historically and acts as a turning point for the *Banda della Magliana*. After the Moro affair, the gang goes on to work with the Italian state, acting with them in the Bologna train station bombing. We also see the *Banda* get more involved in criminal organizations, such as *Cosa Nostra* and the *Camorra*, as well as working with secret organizations like P2. Similar to the quote from Giuseppe Saragat about Moro's death bringing the end of the Italian Republic, the *Banda della magliana* begins to fall apart after the politician's death. In the aftermath of the murder, the *Banda* starts their demise, with Libano and Freddo both dying. The gang's criminal activities begin in the 1970s, but end in the early 1990s, paralleling the demise of the First Italian Republic.

The downfall of the *Banda della magliana* can also be compared to the demise of Giulio Andreotti's political career in *Il divo*. Sorrentino's film covers Andreotti's last term as Prime Minister of Italy and his attempt to become President of the Republic. Andreotti's previous term as Prime Minister had been during the Moro affair, and many people blamed him for Moro's death since he would not negotiate with the terrorists. In Sorrentino's depiction of Andreotti's last term in office we see that he is still haunted by the ghost of Moro, and we also witness his loss to become President due to the information that will come to light during *Tangentopoli* and the *Mani pulite* trials. Just as the *Banda della magliana* will lose their power in the years following the Moro affair in *Romanzo criminale*, Andreotti's fall from power and his guilt for the death of Moro will be portrayed in *Il divo*.

III. Haunting Guilt: The Ghost of Aldo Moro in Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo*.

One of the most discussed Italian films of recent years, Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo: La vita spettacolare di Giulio Andreotti*, tackles for the first time the notorious politician Giulio Andreotti, who was one of Italy's longest serving politicians.¹⁰⁰ As someone who held power in Italy for over sixty years, serving as a Senator for Life until his death in 2013, it would seem that there would be many books and films that depicted his life and accomplishments, but Andreotti was incredibly private and some of the only information that provides insight into this unknowable figure are the books and articles he published himself.¹⁰¹ *Il divo* is the first film that confronts the prominent politician and attempts to give insight into his political career. Although not much is known of Giulio Andreotti's private life and inner nature, Paolo Sorrentino attempts to paint a multifaceted picture of the politician. Much of Sorrentino's film is based in historic fact, but he chooses to present these facts through creative mediums, such as CGI graphics, the use of slow motion, and attention-grabbing camera angles (Crowdus 32). Sorrentino also embraces a fantastical approach to the "spectacular" life of Andreotti, including imagined scenarios and oneiric sequences in the film in which Aldo Moro is used to personify Andreotti's guilt.

Sorrentino's attention to detail and stylistic choices in *Il divo* are characteristics of all of his films and he has, according to film critic Guido Bonsaver, "un controllo quasi ossessivo su

¹⁰⁰ Giulio Andreotti served seven terms as prime minister (February 1972-June 1972, June 1972-July 1973, July 1976-March 1978, March 1978-March 1979, March 1979-August 1979, July 1989-April 1991, and April 1991-June 1992). He "served in the Italian parliament every year, in one ministerial role or another, from 1946-1992" (Crowdus 32).

¹⁰¹ Andreotti had many articles published in academic journals and newspapers. He was also the author of four books: *Two constitutions – the Vth Republic and the Italian Republic – parallels and comments* (1988), *Cosa loro: mai visti da vicino* (1995), *De (prima) Re Publica: ricordi* (1996), and *DeGasperi* (2006). All the books are on political history and do not include personal information about him.

ogni parte del processo creativo” (325).¹⁰² In many of Sorrentino’s films the protagonists are “dalla psicologia un poco oscura, criptici,” (Bonsaver 329).¹⁰³ Sorrentino often finds inspiration in characters that are turning inwards, stating that “nei film sono molto affascinato da certi miromondi autoreferenziali che si parlano addosso, che sono per me anche misteriosi” (Bonsaver 329-30).

This attention to self-reference is an important characteristic of *Il divo*. In past films Sorrentino had been interested in the worlds of soccer, the mafia, and music, but in *Il divo* his interest is in the idea of power. His goal with the film was to investigate the relationship between power and politics and what was happening behind the scenes. For Sorrentino, Andreotti “è un uomo che per quarant’anni ha deciso in qualche maniera – non da solo, ovviamente – i destini di un paese, e questo ne amplifica il significato,” which made him the ultimate personification of this relationship between politics and power (Bonsaver 330).¹⁰⁴ *Il divo* is not a biopic that depicts the entirety of Andreotti’s life in power, but rather focuses on the years 1992-1996, which included Andreotti’s last term as Prime Minister and the *Tangentopoli* trials. During his many years in office, it was rumored that Andreotti was involved in much of Italy’s corruption, which

¹⁰² He began his career not in directing, but in screenwriting and worked in both television and film. From his first feature length film *L’uomo in più* (2001) he began implementing a formalist technique, such as the use of slow motion filming and diverse camera angles. In *L’uomo in più* he also began his relationship with the actor Toni Servillo, who would go on to perform in almost all of his subsequent films. Many of his films, including *Il divo*, have won prestigious awards, such as his second film, *Le conseguenze d’amore* (2004), which won the Palme d’Or at the Cannes film festival, and *La grande bellezza* (2013) which won the 2014 Academy Award for Best Foreign Film.

¹⁰³ Some examples of the obscurity of Sorrentino’s characters include Titta Di Girolamo in *Le conseguenze d’amore* and Jep Gambardella in *La grande bellezza*. In *Le conseguenze d’amore* not much is revealed about Titta until towards the end of the film the audience realizes that he worked for the mafia and is in exile in Switzerland for crossing *Cosa nostra*. In *La grande bellezza* Jep is an aging socialite who as a young man wrote a famous book, but has not written anything since. After Jep turns sixty-five, he begins to investigate his life thus far and the audience is slowly provided with insight into the inner workings of Jep and his reasons for not continuing with writing.

¹⁰⁴ Sorrentino also says in his interview with Guido Bonsaver that Andreotti “riassume in sé tutte quelle caratteristiche dei personaggi che secondo me sono degni di essere portati sullo schermo in quanto racchiudono in loro una certa dose di mistero, di ambiguità, e anche di contraddizione” (Bonsaver 330).

included having ties to the Mafia, P2 and Operation Gladio. He was “tried (and, despite the occasional conviction, eventually acquitted) twenty-six times on various charges of conspiracy, corruption, and murder” (Crowdus 32). In his book *La maschera, il potere, la solitudine: Il cinema di Paolo Sorrentino*, Franco Vigni describes Andreotti as:

la longa manus di un impero teocratico, il manovratore oscuro e stratega imperscrutabile, il detentore di verità nascoste e taciute, il nocchiere solcatore delle acque del mare nostrum, il traghettatore carontesco di un fiume infernale che scorre attraverso un inestricabile e ultradecennale viluppo di interessi, complotti, segreti, omicidi. Ma è soprattutto un’image complessa, indefinibile e sfuggente (127-28).

Choosing to make an historic film about someone so shrouded in secrecy and conspiracy is a difficult task, especially in a country where the goal of the majority of political films is to reveal the truth of the matter. Instead of taking an investigatory approach based in fact similar to Giuseppe Ferrara in *Il caso Moro*, Paolo Sorrentino takes a more inferential approach, using an inventive formalism instead of the often employed realism to implicate the politician for his crimes.¹⁰⁵

Traditionally Italian political film has been dedicated to portraying reality and exposing artifice. As previously mentioned, Andreotti was tried many times, but almost always acquitted. He had been considered “by his political enemies to be the mastermind behind the complex system of corruption” in Italy, but there has never been enough evidence to condemn him (Bondanella 439-94). Instead of taking an investigative approach similar to the political film makers of the 1970s, Sorrentino “only loosely reproduces the reality of key historical events, preferring to skew historical coherency in favour of stylistic statements” in *Il divo* (Holdaway 29). In neorealism, the Italian film style most commonly associated with political engagement, filmmakers utilized non-professional actors, shot on location, and followed linear storylines, but

¹⁰⁵ Millicent Marcus refers to Sorrentino’s cinematic strategy as “guilt by montage” (254).

Sorrentino's style is dominated by "an ultra-sense of glamour, a polished aesthetics, a sleek and even mendacious use of film's trendy techniques" (Cristiano 42).

There have been numerous responses written about *Il divo's* "realism" in response to Millicent Marcus' polemic article "The Ironist and the Auteur: Post-realism in Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo*". In her article Marcus coins the term "post-realism" in regards to Sorrentino's style. There was much backlash over her terminology because, as scholars such as Pierpaolo Antonello, Alex Marlow-Mann, Alan O'Leary, and Catherine O'Rawe argued in subsequent articles, Sorrentino's film is far from being stylistically real, and the scholarly discussion needs to move away from the constant reference to realism. When Marcus' article was published, along with the article were two responses by Pierpaolo Antonello and Alex Marlow-Mann. Both scholars acknowledge that Marcus performed a very detailed analysis of *Il divo*, but that her creation of the new term "post-realism" creates problems. In Antonello's response he finds fault with the idea that realism and postmodernism are often referred to in binary terms instead of "two expressive modalities that cross genres" ("The Ambiguity" 259). He also makes it a point to mention that political cinema has always played with genres and is not strictly realist ("The Ambiguity" 259). Marlow-Mann focuses the majority of his response to the preoccupation of Italian cinema with realism with cinema d'impegno. He writes that it is a problem to continue to refer to realism in Italian film because it devalues the importance of Neorealism (Marlow-Mann 263). He also finds Sorrentino to be far removed from neorealism and does not like to use the term realism in association with him. Alan O'Leary and Catherine O'Rawe published an article together a few years after the Marcus article about *Il divo* in which they discuss the importance of not always referring to realism. They mention Marcus, as well as other film scholars who continue to refer to neorealism throughout the article, and their main issue is that they would prefer that the term realism be used as "a value or prescriptive rather

than as a descriptive term in the writing of Italian cinema history and in the discussion of individual films” (107).

Marcus is not defining realism in terms of style in her article, but rather its tradition of being politically engaged, and she states that *Il divo* still has this civic engagement of old, but with “contemporary media codes” (“The Ironist” 246). I understand Marcus’ reasoning for the term “postrealist” due to *Il divo*’s political commitment, but like the many scholars who responded to Marcus, the use of “realism” when discussing the film in my opinion is not necessary. I find that the film falls under the descriptive of postmodern, and I would call the film part of the new tradition of *postmodern impegno*, a term coined by Pierpaolo Antonello and Florian Mussnug in *Postmodern Impegno: Ethics and Commitment in Contemporary Italian Culture*. Postmodern *impegno* is defined as film that constitutes “a reconciliation between acute socio-political criticism, and an aesthetic of irony, pastiche, and metaphysical playfulness” and for me this definition perfectly sums up *Il divo* (Barotsi and Antonello 190).¹⁰⁶ I find all the discussions of *Il divo* and the use of realism as a prescriptive for the film important in discussing the presence of Aldo Moro in both this film, as well as *Romanzo criminale*, because I find that both films are far from realistic, but still have clear political messages.

Il divo’s formalist style is an aspect of the film that makes it part of the idea of postmodern *impegno* proposed by Antonello. While most realists are concerned with the content of the film, formalists place more focus on film techniques. Louis Giannetti states that a formalist filmmaker, such as Sorrentino, “exploits the limitations of the medium – its two-dimensionality, its confining frame, its fragmented time-space continuum – to produce a world that resembles the real world only in the superficial sense” (483). In formalist film, images can

¹⁰⁶ Other recent films that have been referred to as part of the new postmodern *impegno* tradition are Matteo Garrone’s *Gomorra* (2008) and Nanni Moretti’s *Il caimano* (2006).

be distorted to present a truth that the filmmaker believes is important. In *Il divo*, for example, towards the beginning of the film a montage of deaths attributed to Andreotti are shown in quick succession. Over the images of the corpses Sorrentino uses captions to identify who each person is and when they died, a technique commonly found in documentary film, but Sorrentino manipulates the captions and images, showing some corpses upside down or sideways, with the captions entering at odd angles, all while pop punk music plays in the background. The audience still receives the historic information, but Sorrentino presents it in such a way that emphasizes the confusion surrounding Andreotti and his crimes. Sorrentino also manipulates the space and time of the film. Instead of being told chronologically, the film is composed of many short scenes that jump around in time. The film is also highly staged and much detail is paid to the composition of the scenes. In an interview with Gary Crowdus for *Cineaste*, Sorrentino explains that he does not improvise during the shooting of a film, preferring to “previsualize” the scenes so that he can work with the actors when on set (Crowdus 35).¹⁰⁷ He also states that he likes “a very precise composition of the shot” which he believes is hard to achieve on set (Crowdus 35).

I’d like to note Sorrentino’s attention to scene composition while discussing the film’s introduction. The scene starts in complete darkness and the only sound we hear is Andreotti as he begins speaking about how a doctor once predicted his impending/imminent death. As Andreotti continues talking about how he is still alive and outlived that doctor, as well as many others, we see a small figure appear out of the darkness in the middle of the screen.¹⁰⁸ The camera slowly and steadily zooms in on this character and we see that it is a man, presumably Andreotti, sitting

¹⁰⁷ Sorrentino often creates storyboards, a technique most associated with such American directors as the Coen brothers and Martin Scorsese (Crowdus 35).

¹⁰⁸ Andreotti was well known for his ability to stay in power amidst scandal. Paul Ginsborg writes that Andreotti’s “political astuteness and ability to survive had become legendary, as had his aphorisms, of which the most famous was undoubtedly ‘power consumes he who has it not’” (“Italy and its Discontents” 41).

at a desk with his head bent down. As the camera zooms in on Andreotti, he continues talking about how he suffers from migraines and has tried many remedies. As he mentions that he is trying a new Chinese medicine, he lifts his head to face the audience. Perfectly centered within the shot, we see that Andreotti has acupuncture needles spaced symmetrically around his face and head. As his face becomes visible in the frame, shadows fall over his forehead and eyes making only the lower half of his face visible. He begins discussing how Mino Pecorelli, a noted journalist, made life more difficult for him and we hear the sound of a light being switched off.¹⁰⁹ In the darkness Andreotti says “anche lui è morto” in reference to Pecorelli. The entire scene harkens to a stage monologue in a theater production and demonstrates Sorrentino’s attention to detail in his compositions.

Andreotti’s mask-like face in the abovementioned scene also serves as an example of Sorrentino’s use of grotesque imagery to highlight the unknowability of Giulio Andreotti. The grotesque has been used by other Italian political filmmakers in the past, most notably Elio Petri, whose M. in *Todo Modo* is more caricature than copy of Aldo Moro. But unlike in *Todo Modo*, Sorrentino does not create fictitious names or a non-specific political party, instead choosing to call out Andreotti and the Christian Democrats (Marcus 253). The best specimen of the grotesque in *Il divo* is Andreotti himself. Played by the highly lauded Toni Servillo, the character of Andreotti “works on a corporeal register of the grotesque and caricature, rather than that of physical resemblance” (O’Rawe “Stars and Masculinities” 139). When preparing Servillo for the role, Sorrentino gathered large amounts of archival footage of Andreotti for the actor to watch, but Servillo decided to not look at any of the material, wanting to create an original

¹⁰⁹ Mino Pecorelli was a prominent Italian journalist investigating the death of Aldo Moro. He was shot four times in Rome on March 20, 1979 and died on the spot. His death is believed to have been carried out by the *Banda della Magliana*. Tommaso Buscetta, a mafia pentito, confessed that Pecorelli’s death had been on the order of Giulio Andreotti (“Italy Politics: An Extraordinary Verdict” 1).

representation of the politician.¹¹⁰ Sorrentino says that he discussed the idea of transmitting a man of power with Servillo, but both of them were not as concerned with making him look exactly like Andreotti (Crowdus 36). He also says that Servillo's Andreotti does have some similarities to the real man "such as the slouch and the way he walks and hold his body" (36). The grotesque body is "permeable and porous", and it is through Andreotti's grotesque body that we can see the deformities of Italian society during his years in power (O'Rawe "Stars and Masculinities" 154).

Besides being postmodern in film technique, *Il divo* can be considered postmodern in subject matter. Antonello and Mussgnug refer to films that are part of the postmodern impegno as embracing "multiplicity and the open, process-driven character of personal identity" (3). Sorrentino's film is trying to discover who the real Andreotti was, and although he was one of the most prominent politicians in Italy's history, he is still a mysterious figure and Sorrentino does not bring the audience any closer to knowing the true Andreotti, although he plays with the character and shows us his many angles. His bodily appearance, with his expressionless face, hunched back, and stiff shuffle is unnatural, and this physical impenetrability corresponds to the inability to discern the inner Andreotti. The politician shows hardly any emotions throughout the film and is not truly understood by any of his colleagues. For example, in a scene following Andreotti's corrente celebrating his run for *Presidente della Repubblica*, Franco Evangelisti, referred to as Andreotti's "braccio destro" in an earlier scene, gifts him with a watch and Andreotti responds with a monotonous "ehh" and "grazie." Evangelisti goes on to say it is a gift to signify the future and that Andreotti is always the future. Evangelisti says he would like to know Andreotti better and the stiff politician replies "non hai le chiavi di sapermi bene."

¹¹⁰ Toni Servillo actually based his performance more on Gian Maria Volonté's role in Francesco Rosi's film *Lucky Luciano* (Crowdus 36).

Sorrentino attempts to provide us with a character study of Andreotti, but the politician remains unknowable throughout the film.

Another scene that expresses the impenetrability of Andreotti is the scene in which Andreotti is meeting with Francesco Cossiga. The two have been discussing their time in office and what happened to Aldo Moro and Andreotti says to Cossiga that he has a secret to share with him. Cossiga leans in with a serious look thinking that Giulio is going to share a deep secret with him. Instead Andreotti goes on to tell him about how he had a crush on Mary Gassman, the sister of film star Vittorio Gassman, when he was a young man. Millicent Marcus writes that with Andreotti's teasing of self-disclosure to Cossiga, "we realize that our desires for true intimacy with the protagonist will never reach consummation – that we like Cossiga, will never experience the unmasking that the Divo's teasing promise had so coyly intimated" ("The Ironist" 249). Sorrentino's Andreotti is clever and uses rhetoric to distance himself emotionally from what he must do to remain in power. While in confession with the priest Mario, he discusses how ironia, or irony, "è la migliore cura per non morire."¹¹¹ Marcus refers to Sorrentino's Andreotti as an "ironist" and states that Andreotti's irony in the film:

allows him the intellectual distance to step back and to think dispassionately about his own existence as it rushes toward its mortal end, while affording him the power to undertake 'cure atroci' by orchestrating the destruction of those who would threaten his own survival: political, literal, or both ("The Ironist" 245).

The only times we see Andreotti actually express a sense of guilt for any of his "cure atroci" is when discussing Aldo Moro and his untimely death.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Andreotti meets with a local priest several times throughout the film. There is a famous quote from Indro Montanelli, an Italian journalist, who wrote of the difference between Andreotti and his mentor De Gasperi: "In Church, De Gasperi spoke to God, Andreotti to the priest" (qtd. Ginsborg 41).

¹¹² For O'Leary and O'Rawe, "Moro is the one element of the film that seems to escape the presiding irony, whether it be auteur's or Andreotti's" (163).

Giulio Andreotti was the Prime Minister at the time of the kidnapping and was to be a member of the new government of compromise brought about by Aldo Moro's work to include the Communist party in the government. Andreotti famously refused to negotiate for Moro's release from the *prigione del popolo*, taking the *linea di fermezza*, stating the state shall not bend, even though he received many requests to do so from Moro's family, friends, and even Pope Paul VI, who asked for Moro's life to be spared in exchange for his own. Aldo Moro wrote many letters from prison to members of the Democrazia Cristiana, including Andreotti, but the government believed that either the terrorists were actually writing the letters or that Moro was not in his true state of mind because they seemed so against his nature. Nicoletta Marini-Maio notes that the *linea di fermezza* "sounded odd in a society inclined to political compromise and mediation, skills which Moro possessed in the highest degree" (44). When Moro was killed on May 9, 1978, many people, including Moro's family, blamed Andreotti and his government for Moro's death.

The only moments when we see Andreotti express remorse in the film is when he discusses Moro. For example, while at confession with a local priest, Andreotti is asked if he feels guilt for the death of Salvo Lima, a member of the Andreotti corrente who has just been killed, but Andreotti admits instead that he suffers for Moro.¹¹³ Throughout the film Moro appears in the psyche of Andreotti, haunting him as if a ghost. The ghost of Moro serves to remind Andreotti "of his least absolvable sins," including the deaths of many of those close to Andreotti (Lombardi "Il coraggio" 247). Moro's presence comes in two forms, through voiceovers that include excerpts of the letters that he wrote from the *prigione del popolo*, as well as his ghostly presence, seen as a recreation of the famous photograph of Aldo Moro posed in

¹¹³ Salvo Lima "andreottiano di ferro" was killed by *Cosa nostra* in 1992 (Ravveduto 11).

front of the banner of the *Brigate Rosse* in the cell of his captivity.¹¹⁴ There are several voiceovers throughout the film, only heard during scenes when Giulio is in complete solitude. We hear Moro for the first time when Giulio is on a diplomatic trip to Moscow. Giulio cannot sleep and is standing outside with snow swirling around him. As Giulio stands in the cold we hear Moro say “Che cosa ricordare di Lei, onorevole Andreotti. Non è la mia intenzione evocare la Sua grigia carriera. Non è questa la colpa. Che cosa ricordare di Lei? Un regista freddo, impenetrabile, senza dubbi, senza palpiti, senza un momento di pietà umana.” We also hear Moro’s voice in a scene, when again in the throes of insomnia, Andreotti is pacing the halls of his apartment. Moro passes judgement over Giulio again, saying: “Passerà senza lasciare traccia, passerà alla triste cronaca soprattutto or anche le si addice.” Moro also threatens Andreotti and the DC by saying “Il mio sangue si ricadrà su di voi.”

The voiceovers are often accompanied by the same image of Moro in the track suit assumedly provided by the *Brigate rosse*, rather than the suit of a politician. He is often placed directly behind Andreotti to illustrate him as an invention of the politician’s guilty conscience (O’Rawe “Stars and Masculinities” 248). We see Moro for the first time after the voiceover in Moscow, and we also see him during one of Andreotti’s early morning strolls on Via del Corso, appearing in the back of a butcher’s van that Andreotti encounters. There is even a moment when an apparition of Moro appears “Banquo-like” to a startled Andreotti in a bathroom (Crowdus 33). Millicent Marcus writes that the reappearance of this haunting image “places us in the ‘prison cell’ of Giulio’s own mind – a mind haunted by the specter of the colleague whose sacrifice to the cause of political expedience weighs so heavily on the protagonist’s conscience” (“The Ironist” 255). The appearance of Moro in the psyche of Andreotti throughout *Il divo* is an

¹¹⁴ For more information on the famous photograph of Moro, refer to Christian Uva’s article *Tableaux morant: L’immagine di Aldo Moro tra fotografia, pagina, scritta e cinema* (2011).

attempt by Sorrentino to let the audience delve into the inner workings of the politician's mind. In his interview with Guido Bonsaver for *Sight and Sound*, Sorrentino states that when he met Andreotti in person, he did not sense the guilt that he felt for Moro's death, but he "imagined that there were true sentiments hiding behind his cold demeanor" (43). By including this ghostly Moro figure in *Il divo*, Sorrentino is conveying a representation of Aldo Moro's haunting of Italy and bringing to attention an event that weighs heavily on the Italian population even today.

Aldo Moro is the ultimate judge of Andreotti throughout the course of the film, and this becomes most important when Andreotti is supposed to confess the crimes for which he is being tried at the end of the film. One of the most entrancing moments of the *Il divo* is when Andreotti gives his imagined confession for his long list of crimes.¹¹⁵ Before his actual trial in Palermo begins, Andreotti imagines himself confessing his crimes to his wife Livia.¹¹⁶ The scene is highly staged similar to a "big theatrical moment" (Crowdus 34). We see Andreotti standing in front of a window and approaching a chair. The audience hears the sound of a spotlight turning on and sees Andreotti sitting alone facing the camera, similarly to the introduction of the film. He begins his confession by asking Livia if she remembers his proposal to her and we see a black-and-white flashback to Andreotti and Livia walking through a graveyard talking. As he continues his discourse he tells Livia, who is not present, that he must confess that he is behind all of the tragedies between the years 1969 and 1984. He states that it was necessary "perpetuare il male per continuare il bene" in Italia. He confesses to being a part of the deaths of all the figures shown at the beginning of the film: Roberto Calvi, Michele Sindona, Giorgio Ambrosoli, Carlo

¹¹⁵ Andreotti attended a screening of *Il divo*, but was angered by the imagined confession scene and threatened to walk out (Crowdus 34).

¹¹⁶ Andreotti's 1993 trial for Mafia involvement is depicted in *Il divo*. During this trial Tomasso Buscetta accused Andreotti of being responsible for the death of Mino Pecorelli. In 2002 Andreotti received a twenty-four year sentence for the death of Pecorelli, but this was overturned in the court of appeals (Day 211).

Alberto dalla Chiesa, and “caro Aldo.” He mentions that these people had a nature rooted in truth and that “tutti a pensare che la verità sia una cosa giusta, ma la verità è la fine del mondo e non possiamo consentire la fine del mondo in nome di una cosa giusta.” As Andreotti’s confession continues, the camera sporadically zooms in on his face and by the end we are at a close-up of an emotional Giulio. Andreotti’s mode of speech changes as well throughout the confession, going from his naturally calm and monotone voice increasingly towards a high-pitched and agitated manner of speech. As he closes out his confession he is almost screaming trying to explain that God knows “quanto sia necessario il male per avere il bene.”

This staged confession by Andreotti has a very similar function to that of Aldo Moro’s imagined resurrection in Marco Bellocchio’s 2003 film *Buongiorno, notte*, which will be discussed in depth in the fourth chapter. By confessing his crimes to the audience, but ultimately denying them in court, the audience sees what could have happened in Italy, similarly to Aldo Moro’s imagined resurrection in *Buongiorno, notte*, that unfortunately failed. If the *Brigate Rosse* had released Aldo Moro instead of killing him, Italy would be a much different place today; likewise, if Andreotti had confessed to the crimes he is believed to have committed, instead of being acquitted all of the twenty-six times he was brought to trial, Italian politics could have changed completely. For Alex Marlow-Mann, Andreotti’s confession “maintains a level of referentiality which is not directed to the factuality of what is said by the character, but to a compensatory projection that corresponds to the desire of an entire nation” (261). Through this imaginary confession Sorrentino criticizes the lack of truth present in Italian politics, the truth that Italians have desired for many years.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ While discussing the scene of Andreotti’s confession, Sorrentino explains that the crimes that Giulio confesses are what he believes actually happened with Andreotti and the Italian government (Crowdus 34).

When Andreotti does in fact go to the courts of Palermo, we are not presented with a confession, but with another voiceover from Aldo Moro. When we see Andreotti enter the courtroom the camera is from his point of view at first, taking in the crowd, including the photographers snapping his picture. After Andreotti has reached his bench in the court room, the camera zooms out and Andreotti enters the frame, shaking the hands of the lawyers on his team. The camera then pans around the room towards the judge's bench and we hear the judge's presence announced. The camera continues to circle the room, like a bird in flight and we hear the judge announce that the proceedings will begin. The camera focuses in on Andreotti and slowly zooms in on the politician as he sits awaiting his fate. Andreotti is centered within the frame, his gaze looking down at the table in front of him. The intense music that has been playing throughout the scene fades out and again we hear from Aldo Moro:

Andreotti remained indifferent, leaden, distant, cocooned in his dark dream of glory. He'd had to further his reactionary plan, not to disappoint the Communists, the Germans and who knows who else. What was the meaning, in the face of all this, of the inconsolable grief of an old spouse, the destruction of a family? What did all of this mean for Andreotti, once he'd achieved the power to do all evil just as he'd always done evil in his life? All this meant nothing.

As Moro places his judgment on Andreotti, the camera zooms in on Andreotti's face and the colors of the scene fade to gray. We are left with a black and white Andreotti with a very worried look upon his face before the scene cuts to black.

The last word of the film is not from Andreotti, but Moro, the personification of Giulio's guilt. For O'Rawe, Aldo Moro is "a somatic presence, part of the film's bodily discourse of power, and it is made clear that Andreotti's power is built on the suffering of Moro, who in turn becomes a bodily symptom for him" ("Stars and Masculinities" 156).¹¹⁸ Sorrentino uses the

¹¹⁸ In the film Andreotti says that for him "the contemplation of Moro's death is like a 'second migraine, only more agonizing'" (Crowdus 33).

figure of Moro, who is a symbol of good morals throughout the film, to counteract the *furbo* Andreotti.¹¹⁹ Andreotti, who has expressed multiple times during the film his immortality, is ultimately judged by his dead counterpart; this is when we see the power of Andreotti begin to crumble. With the final shot of the black and white Giulio, Moro has “seized control of Giulio’s narrative and replaced the premier’s ironic, guilt-denying voice with the value-laden and morally charged one of his most illustrious victim” (Marcus “The Ironist” 256). Through Aldo Moro we are better able to understand Andreotti and with his help the audience can come to a conclusion on Andreotti’s guilt, choosing to believe what Sorrentino presents us, or to make their own opinion of the politician.

IV. Conclusion

In the aftermath of Aldo Moro’s kidnapping and death, Italian politics changed forever. The Christian Democrats began to lose power, eventually dissolving totally, bringing an end to the First Italian Republic and ushering in the age of Berlusconi.¹²⁰ One thing that did not change was the lasting effect the Moro affair had, and continues to have on the Italian people. The ghost of Aldo Moro continues to haunt Italy to this day, as demonstrated in the films discussed in this chapter. While in *Romanzo criminale* this effect is not quite as obvious, we do see that working with the Italian state to find Moro changed the course of the *Banda della magliana*. The effect of Moro’s death in *Il divo* is more obvious, and he does appear as a ghostly apparition to Andreotti multiple times throughout the film. Moro serves as the conscience of Andreotti and points out the errors of Andreotti’s ways. Moreover, what both films demonstrate is that Aldo Moro has an overarching influence on Italian culture and it is possible to use Aldo Moro as an

¹¹⁹ Richard Drake writes that Giulio Andreotti’s “furbo image for cunning was exactly the opposite of that of the ‘good’ Moro” (64).

¹²⁰ The Christian Democrats would dissolve in 1994, the same year Silvio Berlusconi and his new political party *Forza Italia* would come to power (Day 54).

historical signpost to discuss more recent Italian history. What these films also address is how Aldo Moro's death was completely preventable and how his death caused profound change in Italy.

Romanzo criminale and *Il divo* are not films directly focusing on Aldo Moro, but they play an important part in the progression of films. Although Moro is not a major figure in either film, his presence in the story-lines shows the importance of his kidnapping and death not just for the world of politics, but in different spheres of Italian history. His story-lines in both *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo* are used to show how Moro has a lasting influence in Italian culture. In *Romanzo criminale*, the Moro affair is used as a symbol of the *anni di piombo* and helps add authenticity to the film. By incorporating Moro's ordeal into the story of the *Banda della Magliana*, the story seems more historically accurate, even though the film has a fictional story-line. In *Il divo*, Moro plays a greater role, but is still not a central character. His ghost is used to humanize Giulio Andreotti and show that he feels guilt for Moro's death.

It is also necessary to discuss these two films together because they show how films in which Aldo Moro is a part of the plot have continued to evolve stylistically. I find that both films can be categorized as formalist. *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo* are both highly stylized, using diverse camera angles, distortion of images, and non-diegetic sound. Both films are a departure from the films of neorealism and the *cinema d'impegno* of the 1960s and 1970s, but this is not necessarily a bad thing. There has been a call for a departure from realism and privileging it above other styles of filmmaking from many of the scholars mentioned throughout this chapter, and I find these films to be good examples of how a film can stray from realism, but still have a political message. *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, discussed in the previous chapter, aimed to be similar to the *cinema d'impegno* films of the past, searching for the truth in the Moro affair. Even though they implemented elements of documentary and were well-researched, it is hard to

take the films seriously because of their use of conspiracy theory. *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo* may not be loyal stylistically to realism, but they but they are both still concerned with a political and moral message.

These two films, particularly *Il divo*, demonstrate the movement of Italian political film from the real to the more fantastical. They include scenes that incorporate imagined situations to discuss historical time periods. They also indicate through their story-lines that there is still a sense that something could have been done to save Aldo Moro. In *Romanzo criminale* we see how the Italian State calls off the search for Aldo Moro, and he dies shortly after. In *Il divo* Andreotti is haunted by Moro's ghost and suffers over the death of his friend, eventually confessing his guilt in his death. In my next chapter I will expand upon this idea of using fantasy to discuss reality while analyzing Marco Bellocchio's 2003 film *Buongiorno, notte*. Based on the autobiography of Anna Laura Braghetti, one of the terrorists involved in Moro's kidnapping and death, the film follows the imprisonment of Aldo Moro in the *prigione del popolo* as seen from the eyes of the female terrorist. The film concentrates specifically on the Moro affair and the storyline does not delve into the aftermath of Moro's death, but similarly to *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo*, it indicates that Moro's death could have been prevented. I will argue that more so than any of the films I have discussed to this point, *Buongiorno, notte* is the most affective portrayal of the Moro, and that through the use of oneiric dream sequences, similar to those in *Il divo*, the audience is allowed to create their own collective memory of Aldo Moro and the possibility of a different Italy had Moro been released by his captors.

CHAPTER 4: MEMORY RE-IMAGINED: THE USE OF FANTAPOLITICA IN MARCO BELLOCCHIO'S BUONGIORNO, NOTTE

I. A Background in Fact

At the beginning of the new millennium, as Italy faced many cultural and economic uncertainties, the crises of Italy's past began to reappear in filmic production, with filmmakers taking time to rethink the events and figures of the *anni di piombo*, where Italians have come from since these events, and how they will progress towards the future.¹²¹ The terrorist events of September 11th inspired Italian filmmakers to return to times of tragedy in their history, taking uniquely Italian approaches to the violence and social issues of the past and present within the country. For Tiziana Ferero-Regis, a “specific preoccupation with history and memory emerges in many films of the last two decades of the century, signaling a work of mourning for collective political and social experiences and a shared national history by new directors” (xiii). Unlike the *neorealisti*, who turned to filmmaking that was against “expressionism, aestheticism, or more generally, against illusionism” to address the concerns of the nation, many filmmakers today have chosen to embrace *fantapolitica*, or political fiction, when regarding Italy's past and present, including the Moro affair (Marcus 4). Often related to science fiction, *fantapolitica* is an incorporation of fictional, or fantastical elements when talking about an actual political situation. Alan O'Leary writes that 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

¹²¹ In the first decade of this century, eight movies were released in Italy that dealt with events during the *anni di piombo*. These films include Marco Tulio Giordana's *I cento passi* (2001) and *La meglio gioventù* (2003), Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* (2003), Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte* (2003), Gabriele Salvatores' *Io non ho paura* (2003), Michele Placido's *Romanzo criminale* (2005), Daniele Luchetti's *Mio fratello è figlio unico* (2007), and Paolo Sorrentino's *Il Divo* (2008).

definitely known” (“Dead Man Walking” 34). Alex Marlow-Mann defines fantapolitica as “employing a fictitious situation of imaginary events in order to cast light on a real political situation” (266). Previously I discussed an example of Marlow-Mann’s definition of fantapolitica when analyzing the scene of the kiss between Giulio Andreotti and Totò Riina in Sorrentino’s *Il Divo*, an event that has long been speculated, but has never been proven true. Similar to Paolo Sorrentino’s use of the imaginary to illustrate the assumed crimes of Giulio Andreotti, the Moro affair, which in other films discussed throughout this project has typically been treated through the lens of realism, has also been re-imagined to draw attention to what truly did happen to Aldo Moro, in Marco Bellocchio’s 2003 film, *Buongiorno notte*.

In this chapter I aim to illustrate that *Buongiorno, notte*, through its reimagining of the Moro affair and use of fantapolitica, helps to illustrate the possibility of what could have happened to Aldo Moro had the terrorists freed him. Through the protagonist Chiara’s dreams Bellocchio shows the dreams of revolution of the Red Brigades, as well as the dreams of a freed Moro that the Italian population has today. This is not Bellocchio’s first film that deals the Moro affair, in fact, he released a documentary on the failed dreams of Italian Communism in 1995 entitled *Sogni infranti: Ragionamenti e deliri*. The documentary is composed of a series of interviews with four Italians involved in communist organizations at the height of Italian terrorism, Vittorio Foa, Aldo Brandirali, Enrico Fenzi, and Massimo Gidoni, as well as archival news footage of high profile historical events of this period.¹²² Some of the events discussed in the footage are the Red Brigade’s trial of Roberto Peci, the killing of Moro’s escort, and the

¹²² Vittorio Foa was a prominent leftist political activist and president of the CGIL (Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro) (Ginsborg “Contemporary Italy” 274). Aldo Brandirali is an Italian politician and the former leader of the Italian Communist Union (UCI). Enrico Fenzi and Massimo Gidoni were two members of the Red Brigades.

eventual discovery of Moro's body in Via Fani.¹²³ Through this film Bellocchio reconstructs the failed dreams of the youth revolution of 1968, beginning the story with the student protests, the growth of Communist movements such as *Autonomia operaia*, and the violent rebellion of the Red Brigades.¹²⁴ Nicoletta Marini-Maio, a film scholar, states that through this documentary, Bellocchio is able to come to terms "with the issue of collective responsibility, initiating a lucid process of self-criticism and cogent retraction of the Marxist-Leninist ideology that he adhered to in the 1960s" (185). In *Buongiorno, notte*, Bellocchio uses the fantastical dream sequences in a similar way to *Sogni infranti*, to come to terms with the guilt of the Moro affair that is still felt by Italians today.

The majority of the films depicting the fifty-four days of Aldo Moro's imprisonment are preoccupied with the surrounding conspiracies and portraying accurately the Moro affair, such as in *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*. For Michael Sguerri, the issue with placing emphasis on the conspiracies surrounding the Moro affair "is that the viewers' attention shifts from the victim, Aldo Moro, to the intricate maze of events and details that compromise the plot" (29). Marco Bellocchio's film *Buongiorno, notte*, released twenty-five years after the Moro affair, instead places the focus of the film on the relationship between Moro and his kidnapers, a point of view not previously seen in film. The film also "restores the long denied centrality of Moro – the presence of his analytical perspective and of his subjectivity – to the kidnapping" (Pezzini 148). Originally, *Buongiorno, notte* was commissioned by RAI as a film that was

¹²³ Roberto Peci was an Italian factory worker who was the brother of a former member of the Brigate rosse, Patrizio Peci, who became a pentito (Ginsborg "Italy and its Discontents" 386). He was kidnapped and put on trial similarly to Aldo Moro. The Brigate rosse accused him of being a traitor to the cause and blamed him for his brother's arrest. He was killed on August 3, 1981.

¹²⁴ *Autonomia operaia* was a leftist organization prominent in the 1970s that branched off from the movements *Potere operaio* and *Lotta continua* (Ginsborg "A History" 380). It was involved in the free radio movement and had many famous intellectual members, including Antonio Negri (Ginsborg "A History" 382).

supposed to cover terrorism in a broad sense. In her book, *Marco Bellocchio: The Cinematic I in the Political Sphere* (2010), Clodagh Brook mentions that Bellocchio himself thought to make a film encompassing modern global terrorism, but instead chose to deal with a topic closer to home, the political terrorism of the 1970s (106).

Told from the point of view of a female terrorist, Chiara, *Buongiorno, notte* follows Moro's kidnapping from his arrival in the *prigione del popolo* to his eventual death. The film is largely based on *Il Prigioniero*, the memoirs of the female terrorist Anna Laura Braghetti, who lived in the apartment in Via Montalcini throughout the fifty-four days of Moro's imprisonment.¹²⁵ Marco Bellocchio's choice to tell the story of the Moro kidnapping from a female point of view is a unique approach, and the film is also the first to portray the Moro affair from the point of view of one of the terrorists, instead taking an investigative approach, as in such previously mentioned films. While much of Bellocchio's film incorporates imagined situations and dream sequences, these scenarios are based on many of the experiences of Braghetti herself.

II. Bellocchio and Psychoanalysis

Bellocchio's approach to the female terrorist and her reactions to the Moro kidnapping are overtly fictional creations, rather than strictly biographical. *Buongiorno, notte* is an evolution of Bellocchio's own reactions towards communism and political violence. Besides being involved in the youth movements of the 1960s, Bellocchio also has a history in the documentary-esque, leading back to the beginning of his career. At the start of his career, according to Brook, Bellocchio held a documentary-style attachment to the real, which over the years, especially after

¹²⁵ Published in 1998, the twentieth anniversary of Moro's death, *Il prigioniero* is co-authored by Anna Laura Braghetti and Paola Tavella. The book was actually written by Tavella, but is based on numerous interviews with Braghetti.

1978, shifted to a cinema “marked by interiority, psychoanalysis, and the oneiric” (479).¹²⁶ This attention to the oneiric is quite noticeable in *Buongiorno, notte*, despite the faithful attention to detail Bellocchio uses in the creation of the film’s sets.

Two common themes in Bellocchio’s films are political engagement and psychoanalysis. From his first film *I pugni in tasca*, which takes place during the student movements of the late 1960s, the majority of his films have had a political commitment. Bellocchio’s interest in terrorism and the political issues of his youth is also present in previous films from as far back as 1986, such as *Diavolo in corpo*. The theme of psychoanalysis is also present in Bellocchio’s early films. In the late 1970s, his style of film became largely devoted to the inner life of his characters. This is also the period in which dreams and hallucinations began to play an integral part in each of his films (Brook 479). At this point in his career Bellocchio became close with Massimo Fagioli, a famous Italian psychoanalyst. Fagioli was quite controversial, believing in a rethinking of classical psychoanalysis, and was spurned by many for his denunciation of the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud.¹²⁷ Bellocchio was fascinated by Fagioli’s teachings and employed him as a collaborator on many of his films. Although he cut ties with the psychologist in 1994, the influence of Fagioli can still be reflected in Bellocchio’s “desire to better understand character psychology and motivation” (Brook 6). Both the desire to better understand the inner workings of his characters and his ties to political engagement are present in *Buongiorno, notte*.

¹²⁶ Only three of Bellocchio’s ten films released between 1980-2004 do not contain oneiric sequences.

¹²⁷ Fagioli famously stated “Freud è un imbecile”. He was kicked out of the Italian Association of Psychologists in the 1970s. (Brook 64)

III. Creating the Female Terrorist

Buongiorno, notte's main character is that of the female terrorist Chiara, and Bellocchio spends much of the film investigating Chiara's actual feelings about Moro. While Bellocchio's film focuses on the fifty-four days of Moro's imprisonment, Braghetti's memoir discusses many of the details leading up to the kidnapping, as well as her personal story before and after the kidnapping. The structure of *Il prigioniero* is meant to show how the kidnapping is the event that split Braghetti's life into two parts: before and after Moro. The odd-numbered chapters of the book discuss the fifty-four days in detail, giving much of the information known about the apartment where Moro was imprisoned, the daily conversation between the terrorists, and the interrogations of Moro by Mario Moretti.¹²⁸ The even-numbered chapters give us the background information on Braghetti herself, her upbringing, entrance into politics, involvement with the *Brigate rosse*, and her time in prison.¹²⁹

Bellocchio uses a large quantity of the details presented in the odd-numbered chapters in certain scenes in *Buongiorno, notte*, and constructed the set to resemble almost exactly what Braghetti has described. According to Clodagh Brook, the apartment in the film was a careful reconstruction of the real Via Montalcini 8, with the layout of the set being "broadly analogous" to Braghetti's descriptions.¹³⁰ Much detail was also paid to the dimensions of Moro's prison, as well as the use of the peephole, through which Chiara views Moro, often mentioned by Braghetti

¹²⁸ Moretti was in the upper ranks of the *Brigate Rosse* and was the leader of the terrorists involved in the Moro kidnapping and assassination. He was the only inhabitant of the *prigione del popolo* who spoke with Moro. He is the terrorist who sentenced Moro to death. Moretti relayed much of his conversations with Moro to Braghetti or she listened in on their discussions.

¹²⁹ Braghetti came from a middle-class Roman family. Her father had been a partisan during World War II and she and her brother had been involved in politics from a young age.

¹³⁰ Brook also mentions that Bellocchio often focuses on interior, rather than exterior, spaces. This is attributed to his interest in the interior of the mind (6).

in her memoirs.¹³¹ Bellocchio even includes some of the pets mentioned by Braghetti that lived in the apartment, two canaries often cared for by Prospero Gallinari, called Primo in the film, one of the male inhabitants of the apartment who was also Braghetti's romantic companion.¹³² There is a pervading attention to detail in as far as the sets and story-line of the film is portrayed, and although the film adapts many of the details provided by Braghetti, an exact re-telling of Braghetti's account is not Bellocchio's aim with *Buongiorno, notte*.¹³³ The departure from Braghetti's memoirs is most obvious in the character of Chiara, who is supposed to represent Braghetti in the film. The character Chiara has many dreams in which she questions keeping Moro in captivity, straying from Braghetti's description of her feelings towards Moro in her account.

By choosing to focus on the female terrorist rather than simply reenacting the Moro affair the audience is given a character with whom they are supposed to relate and identify. Braghetti's conflicting feelings in regard to Aldo Moro's eventual death opens the door for Bellocchio's depiction of the sensitive female terrorist Chiara in *Buongiorno, notte*. The character of Chiara in the film wavers in her political conviction, and the audience sees her struggle over whether or not to release Moro, which helps us to identify with her character. Chiara, although largely based on Braghetti, is not an exact replica of the female brigatista of *Il Prigioniero*. In fact, Bellocchio

¹³¹ There is a scene towards the beginning of the film in which Chiara is sitting in front of a sun lamp in an attempt to bronze her face before returning back to work from her supposed vacation. Braghetti did indeed ask her employer for four days of vacation in which she told everyone she had gone skiing in Pescasseroli (19-20). Another situation in the film taken from Braghetti's memoirs is when a neighbor comes by the apartment to retrieve an item that she had dropped in the garden. Braghetti describes her role as "young wife" in the apartment, the face of normality for the terrorists, "capace di reggere la visita di un vicino sceso a recuperare in giardino il pallone di suo figlio" (36).

¹³² Braghetti would marry Gallinari in prison in 1979. They eventually separated, and he died in 2013.

¹³³ "This seeming attention to realism, to *objective absolue*, and the recreation of history are not, however, where either the focus of the political thrust of the film lies. Its politics in fact emerges only through, the overturning of objectivity" (Brook 108).

did not want Maya Sansa, who portrays Chiara, to meet with Braghetti or any of the other terrorists involved in the Moro affair because he did not want them to influence her depiction, similarly to how Paolo Sorrentino did not have Toni Servillo watch any footage of Giulio Andreotti or meet the prime minister for the filming of *Il Divo* (Brook 114).¹³⁴ Braghetti refers to the Moro affair in *Il Prigioniero* as “una tragedia, destinata a cambiare la storia d’Italia, delle Brigate rosse, e anche la mia” (32). She had long been involved in political organizations, participating in strikes and manifestations from a young age.¹³⁵ She describes her choice to join the Brigate rosse as “il frutto di un lungo, lento corteggiamento, un avvicinamento graduale, passo per passo” (Braghetti e Tavella 165). Her strong political beliefs were what kept her going even when she felt conflicted with the decisions of the upper echelon of the Brigate rosse. As the days of Moro’s imprisonment drag on, Braghetti explains that the inhabitants of the apartment began to have a change of heart in regards to Moro. She first introduces Moro as the “corpo di stato” and describes how he stands for the Democrazia Cristiana and their exclusion of the Communist party from the government, which Moro later denies in his talks with Moretti.¹³⁶ As Braghetti and the other terrorists learn more about Moro, “a contrast emerges between the frailty and vulnerability of Moro as a human being and the power suggested by his political position” (Glynn “Moro as Figure of Speech” 84). Braghetti is most affected by Moro’s constant concern for his family. This concern for his family and the many letters he wrote to his wife and loved

¹³⁴ Sansa was instructed by Bellocchio to read Braghetti’s memoirs before filming began (Brook 114).

¹³⁵ Braghetti was involved in politics beginning at age fourteen and had participated in Lotta continua, another leftist organization. She joined the Brigate rosse with Bruno Seghetti, her then lover (Brook 114).

¹³⁶ Braghetti overhears Moro asking “Perché avete rapito me, che sono un uomo mite, che ho sempre mediato fra destra e sinistra” (267).

ones makes Braghetti think of *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana*.¹³⁷

Braghetti mentions that she begins to have disturbing dreams and cannot sleep at night because she is so bothered by Moro's impending death. She states in the book that she thought about leaving the apartment and the *Brigate rosse*, but in the end "la fede rivoluzionaria unita all'autodisciplina e alla necessità di mettere le mie emozioni al secondo posto, sperimentate fin dall'infanzia erano più forti di qualunque altra cosa" (170). Bellocchio's Chiara does not come off as dedicated to the cause of the Red Brigades as Braghetti in her memoirs.

As previously mentioned, Braghetti did feel a small amount of sympathy for Moro but was devoted to her political ideas above all else. Braghetti continued her involvement with the *Brigate rosse* for years following the Moro affair and committed multiple violent acts.¹³⁸ On the contrary, the female terrorist in *Buongiorno, notte* does not demonstrate such high levels of commitment to the *Brigate rosse* and is almost overcome by her yearning to free Moro, present in the dream sequences of the film. She is never depicted participating in politically driven conversations with her male companions and does not carry any sort of weapon, although Braghetti was known to have a pistol of her own. Bellocchio's female terrorist is not meant to be an exact portrayal of Braghetti, but rather he is suggesting through Chiara that if the female terrorist had "followed her feminine instincts, Moro might not have died" (Brook 115). Instead of being an exact representation of Anna Laura Braghetti, the character Chiara comes from the small hesitations revealed by Braghetti in *Il Prigioniero*.

¹³⁷ Bellocchio uses a copy of *Lettere di condannati a morte della Resistenza italiana* in his depiction of Chiara the female terrorist, and as a catalyst for the dreams she has throughout the film. The book is a compilation of letters written by partisans from World War II to their families and friends that Braghetti had read in the past, and she states that it reminds her of her own family, to whom she was extremely close.

¹³⁸ In real life Braghetti remained an active member of the BR and went on to assassinate Vittorio Bachelet, the vice-president of the Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura (the regulatory body of the Italian magistrature), in February 1980 (O'Leary 40).

The use of the character Chiara to gain sympathy from the audience plays on the traditional stereotype of women as softer than men and having a compassionate nature (Nacos 437). I believe that Bellocchio utilizes Chiara and her doubts about killing Moro further his vision of Moro as father figure and someone who is worthy of the sympathy of the Italian people. What I find interesting though is not the use of Chiara as a soft female character, but as the atypical female character in her role as terrorist. Although in the history of modern terrorism there have been large numbers of female members and even leaders in terrorist organizations, females are not seen as “fitting the terrorist profile” (Nacos 436-437). When women are seen as committing acts of terror, according to terrorism scholar Brigitte L. Nacos “most people react with an external level of shock and horror” (436). I agree with Nacos’ statements on women not being seen as “evil” enough to be terrorists, and that is why I believe seeing the Moro affair through the eyes of the female terrorist makes the Moro’s death even more tragic. By not preventing Aldo Moro’s death, even though she has doubts, the female terrorist Chiara negates the compassion typically associated with the feminine spirit.

IV. Fantapolitica and the Oneiric

Although *Buongiorno, notte* includes many of the facts from Braghetti’s memoirs and to the descriptions of Via Montalcini 8, the film is far from an exact adaptation of the Moro affair. Rather, *Buongiorno, notte* is an example of *fantapolitica*. Bellocchio’s attention to Chiara’s dreams, which are elements of fantasy, helps to drive the re-evaluation of political terrorism and the Moro affair and create a new collective memory of Aldo Moro for the people of Italy. Pierpaolo Antonello defines collective memory as “the understanding of how groups of people, with a shared historical and cultural identity, create ways of perceiving themselves, gathering narratives and values, leaders and heroes into an account that helps them in self-understanding” (“Postmodern Impegno”236). Where Bellocchio is most successful in creating a new

understanding of Aldo Moro is through his use of *fantapolitica*. The examples of Chiara's resistance to Moro's death in *Buongiorno, notte*, as well as Bellocchio's attention to the oneiric, are portrayed through her fantastical dreams. Although the oneiric typically refers to dreams or the act of dreaming, for Bellocchio it can also represent imaginings and hallucinations, even sometimes including allusions to the supernatural. In *Buongiorno, notte* specifically there are both dreams as well as imaginings while the character Chiara is awake.

Clodagh Brook identifies two specific strands of the oneiric in *Buongiorno, notte*. The first strand consists of Chiara's dreams and imaginings, which include four black and white inserts of diverse Communist/partisan propaganda. The second strand of the oneiric in the film is the re-imagined ending in which Chiara frees Moro and he happily walks the streets of Rome (488). The first example of the oneiric, the black-and-white imagery, is actually taken from real material, including Soviet propaganda films and one of the most important of all neorealist films, Roberto Rossellini's *Paisà* (1946). These dreams begin the evening after Aldo Moro's kidnapping. Chiara's early dreams are filmed conventionally, in black and white, with superimpositions, as well as "silent images accompanied by music" (Brook 488). The black and white material of her dreams are not images created by Bellocchio, but rather selected from public footage, including documentary footage of the death of Lenin and the new Stalinist Russia, as well as footage from the sixth episode of Rossellini's *Paisà*.¹³⁹ The choice of including the death of Lenin and the sixth episode of *Paisà* are deliberate on Bellocchio's part because both Lenin and the partisans present in *Paisà* were heroes for the Red Brigades, and their deaths highlight the struggle of which the Red Brigades believe they are a part.

¹³⁹ Roberto Rossellini's film *Paisà* is episodic in structure, showing the progress of soldiers and Resistance fighters from the South to the North of Italy. The sixth and final episode, from which Bellocchio draws some of the material of Chiara's dreams, is set in the Po river valley and follows partisans trying to attack a German encampment with the help of an American POW named Dale.

The earliest of Chiara's dreams is made up of footage from the documentary *Three Songs About Lenin* made by Dziga Vertov, a Soviet documentary filmmaker.¹⁴⁰ This footage includes images of reminiscent of Lenin, his funeral procession, and close ups of people saddened by the loss of their leader. In her first dream, Chiara sees an empty bench in the snow. The emptiness of the bench echoes the loss of Lenin, a father figure for the people of Russia, and I find that the bench also signifies the loss of Chiara's own father, from whom she learned her political beliefs, as well as the impending death of Aldo Moro. Chiara's father, who had been a partisan, and had worked to bring change to Italy with his own actions during the second World War. Chiara's second black and white dream is of the public funeral procession following Lenin's death. Bellocchio chooses to focus upon an image of a young girl crying due to her sorrow over Lenin's death from Vertov's film. According to Brook, the clips from Chiara's early dreams involving Russian documentary footage "link the action of the Red Brigades in kidnapping Moro with the death of a man who was a great symbol of communism and whose death was read, by many, as marking the end of the communist utopia" (117). Just as the young girl is crying over the death of a political leader, Chiara cries for Moro and his impending death. With Moro's death, Italy lost a great leader who, and although not a Communist, was willing to work with the party in the government, finally bringing progress for the PCI. The use of Leninist imagery also illustrates the loss of hope for Communism that is prevalent throughout Bellocchio's film. I find that with the allusion to Moro's impending death, much like with Lenin's own death, there is this sense of "what could have been" and different possibilities for today that Bellocchio is trying to highlight through his use of *fantapolitica*. For Alan O'Leary:

¹⁴⁰ Also known as David Kaufman or Dennis Kaufman, Vertov is best known for his theory of Kino-Pravda, or "film-truth", or truth's that could not be seen by the human eye. For a detailed explanation of Vertov's film theory, consult Gilles Deleuze's *The Movement Image*.

If the clip of Stalin benignly waving to an adoring crowd is unlikely to impress us today with anything but its sinister absurdity, the glimpse of the Italian partisans being drowned from the end of Rossellini's *Paisà* has lost none of its power to move or to mythologize the struggle against Nazi-Fascism at the end of the Second World War in Italy ("Dead Man Walking" 42).

What makes these clips in particular interesting is their ability to focus the attention of the audience to how film is able to influence our impression of history. Both the Soviet documentary footage and the footage from *Paisà* in her later dream have strong ties to Chiara's political beliefs, but the footage from Rossellini's film, which appears in later dreams, triggers an even more emotional reaction from Chiara.

The sixth episode of Rossellini's film, from which Bellocchio draws more of the black and white footage of Chiara's dreams, centers on the struggle of partisans in the Po River Valley towards the end of World War II depicted in *Paisà*. The episode begins with a dead man floating in a life raft down the river, a sign saying *partigiano* strung around his neck. The body is taken from the river by some other partisans, including an American named Dale and an Italian named Cigolani. Fellow Resistance fighters give the man a proper burial before they themselves are captured and executed by Nazi soldiers. For Millicent Marcus the burial of the dead partisan is an act of pietas on the part of Dale and Cigolani, giving the man dignity in death ("Rossellini's *Paisà*" 297). She also states that although the partisans cannot give the dead body a name "they can give it an identity – one which involves a subversive rewriting of the Nazi caption" (Marcus "Rossellini's *Paisà*" 298). As the episode continues, the six Italian partisans with whom Dale was captured are executed by firing squad. Instead of watching them die, Dale runs to try to protect them, also dying in the process.

I believe Bellocchio chose to incorporate this episode from *Paisà* in particular due to the fact that Dale's death puts clearly into focus what Chiara could have done for Moro. Chiara had been inspired by the fight of the partisans throughout her life because her father was one of them,

and she is pictured throughout the film reading a book of letters written by partisans. Carlo Testa, a scholar of film and political violence, makes a comparison of the relationship between the partisans and the Nazi-Fascists of WWII to the struggle between the Red Brigades and the Democrazia Cristiana. He refers to the Brigate rosse as a “second resistance” (782). For many of the youth of the late 1960s and the 1970s, the Resistance was a failure in bringing about an actual Communist revolution in Italy. Groups such as the Red Brigades felt it their duty to continue the fight of the partisans. Although the Red Brigades saw themselves as similar to the partisans, their actions were not seen as legitimate by the majority of the Italian population, compared with those of the Resistance fighters. For many Italians the partisans of the Second World War, similar to those in the sixth episode of *Paisà*, were heroes likened to Christian Martyrs. Alan R. Perry, who works in contemporary Italian folklore, finds that many Italians associated the partisans with Christian stories, and writes that Italians “believed that through death, partisans ransomed Italy just as Jesus of Nazareth’s death had ultimately ransomed human kind and just as martyred saints had ransomed the church” (435). Unlike Dale in Episode Six of *Paisà*, who loses his life trying to save the partisans, Chiara does not sacrifice herself for Moro, but rather allows the innocent victim to die. By killing Moro, Chiara and the other terrorists betray the ideals of the partisans that had inspired them to work for political change in the first place, and instead of becoming martyrs, they make a martyr of Aldo Moro, giving him dignity in death.

I also believe that Bellocchio used the footage from *Paisà* in Chiara’s dream because the film was an important part of the neorealist film movement and would be easily recognizable by critical audiences. Film has a way of bringing society together in times of struggle by creating myths and dreams in which society could believe (Sklar 159). *Paisà* is a film of neorealism, a film movement that was considered a specifically Italian phenomenon. Neorealism brought

attention to Italian audiences the struggles of the nation in the immediate post-World War period and helped to visualize the hopes and fears of Italy. *Paisà* was a very popular and important film when it was released and embodied the struggles of the partisans during the war. By using such a recognizable image, Bellocchio is harking back to the previously mentioned myth of the partisan and juxtaposes the partisan movement with that of the Red Brigades. Bellocchio is also considered to be a part of the “postneorealist generation of directors,” who through their films “continued the interest of neorealist filmmakers in social and political problems” (Bondanella 222).¹⁴¹ Bellocchio participated in the youth movements of 1969 and was aligned with Communism. He wished to highlight the social issues of his times in the same way as the partisans worked to change Italy during World War II and filmmakers such as Rossellini engaged with the political issues of their times. Later in his life, he retracted his Communist beliefs, which he addressed in *Sogni infranti*.

The second example of the oneiric, and perhaps the most fascinating element of *Buongiorno, notte*, is the inclusion of the obviously fantastical release and freedom of Aldo Moro at the end of the film. Film has a capacity to bring the audience into contact with the mental life of a character and throughout the film, the audience sees Chiara mentally struggle with her ideals and whether it is right to keep Moro imprisoned. For Marini-Maio, Moro’s eventual domination of Chiara’s dreams induces “a process of inner metamorphosis that takes her from ideological rigidity and emotional detachment to historical awareness and human pietas” (217). The audience sees that her interactions with Moro are upsetting, especially in the scene when Moro has been reading a letter he has written to the Pope aloud to Mariano and asks

¹⁴¹ Bondanella refers to this new generation of directors, which included filmmakers such as Bellocchio, Bernardo Bertolucci, Francesco Olmi, the Taviani brothers, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Francesco Rosi, as working in “the shadow of Rossellini” (222).

Chiara her opinion. Chiara is in the shadows crying because the letter has touched her, but does not show Moro this emotion. Instead she says his letter is too cold and makes her angry, even though her body language indicates otherwise. This inner fight for Chiara is a fictional inclusion on Bellocchio's part, considering that the real Chiara, Anna Laura Braghetti, remained loyal to the BR and was active in the organization after Moro's death.

Moro's imagined release is made up of two scenes in the film. In the first version, Moro is shown freely walking out the door of the apartment after Chiara leaves his prison unlocked. After we see Moro escaping, the film cuts to his kidnapers taking him to his death, followed by archival footage of his body being found and his state funeral. The second incarnation of this scene plays as the film is ending, with the audience witnessing Moro traipsing the streets of Rome, the *Colosseo Quadrato* in the background.¹⁴² Clearly the audience understands that this is an imagined scenario, since it is well known how Moro came to his death. As mentioned earlier, the Italian people are still haunted by Moro's death and much uncertainty still surrounds the Moro affair. Similar to the generation of Italians who had to come to grips with the horrors of World War II, it is necessary to assign meaning to what happened to Aldo Moro. As many Italians regarded the partisans as martyrs, Aldo Moro has been assigned in this film, and the majority of others after his death, the role of martyr. The idea that Moro could have been saved adds to the deep-seated guilt many Italians still feel regarding his death. Moro's release in the film, for O'Leary, "indulges a national fantasy", but still does not provide comfort to the Italian people ("Dead Man Walking" 42). Instead, this imagined scenario creates an emotional memory, rather than a simple reconstruction of the facts and conspiracies surrounding Moro's death.

¹⁴² This is an obvious nod to Rossellini's *Roma città aperta* when partisans liberate a truckload of comrades with the same building in the background (O'Leary 39).

V. The Transformation of Moro

The most prominent character in *Buongiorno, notte* is in fact Chiara, but it is through her eyes that the audience sees the image of Aldo Moro that Marco Bellocchio is aiming to memorialize. Although Chiara only speaks to Moro once in the film, she is often found listening in on Mariano's interrogations of Moro or observing Moro through the peephole to his prison cell. Anna Laura Braghetti mentions several times throughout *Il Prigioniero* her looking through a peephole into Moro's cell and this detail is prominently featured in the *Buongiorno, notte*. The first time that Chiara observes Moro through the peephole he is kneeling in prayer. Aldo Moro was known for being a pious man, but the Red Brigades believed him to be the heart of the evil of the Democrazia Cristiana. While gazing at Moro through the peephole, Chiara is able to focus on Moro the person and observe his suffering, which initiates his transformation from the powerful statesman hated by the Brigate rosse to a human being in distress.

Aldo Moro was a very private man and conducted himself in a formal and reserved demeanor, but the Moro of *Buongiorno, notte*, is not quite as rigid. During his lifetime he gave numerous speeches and taught many lectures, but was known for being "austere to the point of rigidity" (Moss 23). He often confused others with his comments and rarely gave specific examples. Braghetti even mentions in *Il Prigioniero* that Moro was "il massimo virtuoso di un linguaggio che ci trovava orgogliosamente analafabeti" (38-39). The Aldo Moro portrayed in *Buongiorno, notte* still comports himself in a formal manner, always referring to Mariano in the formal "Lei" in their conversations, but he is not incomprehensible.¹⁴³ Bellocchio's Moro is emotional, clearly expressing his concern for his family. The audience sees his profound

¹⁴³ The Brigate rosse are not shown demonstrating the same respect to Aldo Moro in the film. He is always addressed with the informal "tu". For Michael Sgueri, Moro's use of the formal address is "a sign of distance from the Red Brigades' ideology but also as a sign of respect and openness" to what his captors have to say (42).

suffering through the eyes of Chiara. Although Moro never sees Chiara, the audience sees her looking at him and when he happens to glance her way it is unsettling to her and the audience. The glances towards Chiara's eye in the peephole are similar to Moro glancing straight at the camera. It is as if Moro is looking at us to make a decision different from that of Chiara. For Brook, these short and sudden glances by Moro imply "an active spectator who must make the decision that Bragheti or Chiara does not make: to resist terrorism, to see the victim always and above all as a human being" (121). Through Chiara's observation of Moro through the peephole the audience witnesses the beginning of Moro's transformation from politician to human being, but he further transforms through his interactions with Chiara, into a father figure.

Much has been written about the role of family in *Buongiorno, notte*. For Alan O'Leary the film is a "representation of Moro and his kidnappers as a parody family unit" (160).¹⁴⁴ Almost the entirety of the film takes place within the apartment, and the terrorists are portrayed as extremely disciplined in their management of the house, turning the "everyday life of the four young radicals into an obsessive domestic routine centered on mock family rituals" (Marini-Maio 195). Chiara cooks and cleans, they eat dinner as a "family", and they watch television together. The terrorists refer to Moro as their prisoner, but they treat him similar to a sick family member, bringing him meals prepared on a tray and letting him listen to mass being celebrated on the radio. Aldo Moro placed great importance on family during his lifetime and assumes a familial role in the apartment in Via Montalcini. I agree that Aldo Moro and the terrorists resemble a family unit, but what I feel is important to highlight is how many of the actual terrorists were without families. Bragheti mentions in her memoirs that her mother had died

¹⁴⁴ Besides acting as a family unit, the concept of family also comes into play in Bellocchio's use of excerpts from the letters that Aldo Moro wrote while imprisoned. The majority of Aldo Moro's letters that Bellocchio has decided to include in the film are those that Moro wrote to his family. Moro prays for his family and asks for them throughout the film.

when she was five and her father died when she was twenty-one (11-12). She was still close to her extended family but that once she joined the Brigate rosse she had to distance herself from them, similarly to Chiara in the film. Braghetti also mentions how Mario Moretti had to leave his son Marcello in Milan and go into hiding with the Brigate rosse (57). Prospero Gallinari also had close ties to his family, but had been in hiding for many years and did not hear from his family.¹⁴⁵ In the film, one of the terrorists has such trouble being away from his girlfriend he leaves the house for a while. This lack of family takes a toll on the terrorists and Moro's character in the film is shown to fill this void and fill in as father of the group.¹⁴⁶

The four brigatisti band together out of loneliness, but they are never truly a family unit. In the film the closest example of a familial relationship is that between Chiara and Moro. Nicoletta Marini-Maio observes that Moro and Chiara “embody, respectively, the paternal role and the line of the feminine within the apartment's metaphysical family” (217). The relationship between Chiara and Moro is similar to that of a father and daughter. This relationship is well demonstrated in the scene where Chiara is sleeping and Moro watches over her in her room. Chiara is shown asleep in her bed with a copy of Marx and Engel's *The Holy Family* lying on her bedside table.¹⁴⁷ Moro quietly watches over Chiara, like a father watching over a sleeping a child. When he sees the book, he shakes his head, a “benevolent expression on his face as a sign of disapproval of her reading choices, as a father who disapproves of a son's or daughter's

¹⁴⁵ Prospero Gallinari confided to Braghetti that he was extremely loyal to his family and that he suffered because he did not have any news from them (Braghetti 33).

¹⁴⁶ “Tutti avevamo lasciato persone alle quali eravamo legati. Non avevamo previsto, però, quanto ci saremmo sentiti spezzati, e quante energie avrebbe richiesto il tenere a bada l'affollarsi di emozioni elementari” (Braghetti 56).

¹⁴⁷ *The Holy Family* is a critique of the Young Hegelians, a group of philosophers devoted to Georg Hegel. The foremost members of the movement, Bruno and Edgar Bauer, were urging a rejection of Christianity.

actions” (Sguerri 37). The theme of Moro as father-figure will continue throughout the film, but in more religious terms.

Not only is Moro portrayed as a father figure to the terrorists in the apartment, but it has also been noted that he is similarly portrayed as a religious father figure, who, like Jesus Christ, rises from the dead and watches over his family. Giancarlo Lombardi states that Aldo Moro “da personaggio diventa *uomo solo*, e da *uomo solo* diventa *creatura*” (393). For Adriano Aprà: “Nell’ eleggere a padre-modello Aldo Moro in *Buongiorno, notte* . . . Bellocchio accetta il lato positivo dello statista, che è anche, forse principalmente, quello della sua fede” (20). I agree with these scholars that there is an abundance of religious imagery associated with Aldo Moro, and that his character’s suffering is portrayed in a way that alludes to the suffering of Jesus Christ. I find that the portrayal of Moro as Christ-like demonstrates that the *Brigate rosse* believed Aldo Moro had to die for the good of Italy just as Christ died on the cross to save his fellow man.

Marco Bellocchio grew up with a strict Catholic upbringing and includes religion in many of his plotlines. There are many Christological elements present in *Buongiorno, notte*, such as the presence of crucifixes in rooms of the apartment and the appearance of religious figures throughout the film. Besides these Christological elements, the character of Aldo Moro professes a Christian message of understanding and forgiveness throughout the film. Moro listens to his captors and tries to understand their views on politics and reasons for kidnapping him. As previously mentioned, Aldo Moro was known for his complicated manner of speech. In *L’affaire Moro*, Leonardo Sciascia even comments that:

Nella fase di transizione . . . gli uomini di potere democristiani hanno quasi bruscamente cambiato il loro modo di esprimersi, adottando un linguaggio completamente nuovo (del resto incomprensibile come il latino): specialmente Aldo Moro: cioè (per una enigmatica correlazione) colui che appare come il meno implicato di tutti nelle cose orribili che sono

state organizzate dal '69 a oggi, nel tentativo, finora formalmente riuscito, di conservare comunque il potere (14).

As the film progresses, Moro becomes much more comprehensible to the terrorists and they begin to see that he is in fact, a human with deep feelings and religious faith. Although the terrorists go through with ending his life, Moro does make an impact on them, especially Chiara.

Bellocchio chooses to include only certain parts of Moro's letters that he wrote from the *prigione del popolo*. The selections from the letters put forth a Christian message of forgiveness and exclude the parts of his letters that called out those who did not help him in the end of his life. For example, Bellocchio includes Moro reading this selection from a letter he wrote to his wife towards the end of his imprisonment:

. . . Per il futuro c'è in questo momento una tenerezza infinita per voi, il ricordo di tutti e di ciascuno, un amore grande Uniti nel mio ricordo vivete insieme. Mi parrà di essere tra voi . . . Per carità, vivete in una unica casa . . . Bacia e carezza per me tutti, volto per volto, occhi per occhi A ciascuno una mia immensa tenerezza che passa per le tue mani. Sii forte, mia dolcissima, in questa prova assurda e incomprensibile. Sono le vie del Signore . . . Vorrei capire, con i miei piccoli occhi mortali, come ci si vedrà dopo. Se ci fosse luce, sarebbe bellissimo . . . (286-87).

At this point Aldo Moro is aware that he will probably die, but similarly to Christ, accepts his time of death. For Fantuzzi, Moro “viene a trovarsi nelle stesse condizioni nelle quale si trovava Gesù nel Getsemani” (88). He knew that his death was upon him, and he continued to pray, eventually being sacrificed by the Red Brigades, and with his death comes a change in Italian politics. By resigning to his fate and forgiving his captors for what they have done, Aldo Moro is able to live a life outside of closed-minded political ideologies, while his captors remain trapped within the walls of the apartment. Moro's death does not bring the changes in Italian politics that the *Brigate rosse* hoped to initiate, in fact, the historic compromise fell apart and the PCI's power began to dwindle, with the party actually dissolving in 1994. With the death of Moro died any

hope of Communism having a place within the Italian government and the revolution the young terrorists had hoped for. Moro's words of forgiveness are not in vain though, because he does manage to have a small impact on Chiara.

The name Chiara means "bright" or "clear" in Italian and for Marini-Maio, the name is in "evident antiphrasis with the darkness in which she is psychologically immersed" (94). Aldo Moro's words, especially in his letters to his family, have a great impact on Chiara and enable the audience to see her compassionate side. Michael Sguerri writes that if Chiara "had not opened herself to Aldo Moro's Christian message, she would have never imagined the statesman's escape from the apartment in Via Montalcini, thereby making his resurrection impossible" (52). Typically, a dream is about the doubts and longings of a character and in Chiara's dreams we see that she truly desires to release Aldo Moro, a dream shared by the audience. Through her dreams, especially in which Moro is resurrected, Chiara is somewhat able to live up to her name, letting the gleaming light of compassion shine through her emotions. A good example of this is when Chiara listens to Moro read the letter he has written his wife, and she is moved to tears, allowing the audience to see her let her guard down. Also, in Chiara's dreams of releasing Moro show how she struggles over whether she should do the right thing. Although Chiara ultimately lets Moro die, it is possible to see that she does have emotions and the Moro affair did upset her.

VI. Re-evaluating the Moro Affair

Bellocchio's fantastical approach in *Buongiorno, notte* may not be an exact re-telling of Braghetti's memoirs, but it does have a clear political message, which remains loyal to the canon of Italian political films. For Alan O'Leary, *Buongiorno, notte* is a palimpsest and is "posited upon the spectator's knowledge of the Moro kidnapping and its outcomes, but also on

the variety of representations and theories about the kidnapping” (159). The spectator is familiar with the events of the Moro affair, but the event still unresolved in the hearts of the Italian people. For an event that has such different interpretations and incarnations in Italian remembrance, it is important to create a collective memory to deal with the pain and confusion of Moro’s death. By memorializing Moro through the imagining of what his ordeal was like and how one of his captors could have struggled with keeping him a prisoner, Bellocchio is able to create a new representation of the politician, one that is a positive mythic representation of Moro, but also demonstrates what could have happened if the terrorists had released Moro. For Antonello, when history and myth are combined, myth creates an “emotional revivification” that makes history more alive and concrete, as well as relatable to life experiences (“Postmodern Impegno” 239). Bellocchio wishes to re-evaluate the political terrorism of the 1970s and show that the story of Moro’s life, and that of Italy, could have been different, which I believe he accomplishes through the dream sequences. Bellocchio’s inclusion of the oneiric is an example of the revivification that Antonello proposes. In the dream sequences, especially those in which Moro lives and escapes the terrorists, the audience is able to participate in Chiara’s desires and be a part of what R.T. Eberstein refers to as a collective dream experience (54). A collective dream is representative of the wants and desires of a society, and by participating in Chiara’s dream of a free Moro, it becomes our dream as well. By including elements of fantasy and the oneiric, Bellocchio is able to take historical fact and create an emotional historic memory for the Italian people.

For O’Leary, the approach that Bellocchio has taken in regard to the relationship between Aldo Moro and Chiara, although unrealistic, “enters through a route dear to the Italian psyche and social structure – the family” (“Locations of Moro” 160). The use of Moro as a father figure, watching over his daughter and trying to help the terrorists, his pseudo-family members see the

error in their ways, can be similarly interpreted as his role as a father figure for Italy. Aldo Moro worked for a historic compromise between the Democrazia Cristiana and the Communist party, a party that would resemble a family.¹⁴⁸ Through his kidnapping and eventual death, much of the hope for political change was gone, *un sogno infrante*, much like the title of Bellocchio's earlier documentary on the Moro affair. As stated in in the third chapter when discussing the aftermath of the Moro affair, Ezio Mauro believed that the history of the Italian Republic could be divided into before and after Aldo Moro (I). Since Moro's death, the Democrazia Cristiana and the PCI dissolved, and many of the political changes of the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century do not support Moro's political vision of compromise. By showing the changing relationship between Chiara and Moro, with her realizing that he is in fact, a humane person and not a ruthless politician, Bellocchio demonstrates that the female terrorist could indeed have prevented Moro's death.

Seeing Aldo Moro through the eyes of Chiara has a mirroring affect on the audience. Bellocchio's aim for *Buongiorno, notte* is to help the audience construct a new and better understanding of the events surrounding the Moro affair. By manipulating history through the inclusion of the oneiric, especially Chiara's dream in which Moro is freed, Bellocchio is forcing us to re-evaluate political terrorism (Brook 113). Often when dreaming we have a rational acceptance that the images we see and the associations we make are not real, and upon waking we realize the strangeness of the dream (Sharot 74). When the audience sees Moro resurrected, alive and well, this act highlights the fact that Moro is dead and was not saved, a fact that has long haunted the Italian public. Nicoletta Marini-Maio refers to Aldo Moro as a specter, "an icon of martyrdom... looking for justice and responsibility" (47). For Marini-Maio, the fact that Moro

¹⁴⁸ David Moss writes that Moro "wanted a party that resembled a community, or perhaps a family, whose leaders could listen to the different views of members and propose a way forward acceptable to all" (24).

continues to show up in Italian cultural productions illustrates that his death has not found a place in the collective unconscious of the Italian people (58-9). I find that by focusing on what could have happened to Aldo Moro in Chiara's dreams, Bellocchio is emphasizing even more the tragedy of what happened to Moro, illuminating the burden of this historic event on the Italian people.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this dissertation has been to examine films in which Aldo Moro is a character or a part of the story-line and how his portrayal has evolved over the years. The seven films studied in this dissertation display the metamorphosis of Moro in film, as well as the lasting impact of the Moro affair on Italian cultural production. Ruth Glynn and Giancarlo Lombardi explain that “a number of critics suggested that cultural production had assumed the role and responsibilities of commemorating and working through Italy’s experience of political violence” (8). All of the filmmakers discussed in this project lived through the *anni di piombo* and the Moro affair, and have all chosen to work through a piece of their history to help create a collective memory of Moro for future generations.

Throughout this dissertation I have discussed the idea of the lasting guilt felt by the Italian people for Moro’s death. There have been multiple interpretations of who is truly to blame for the politician’s death: The Red Brigades who kidnapped and killed him, the Italian State for not negotiating with the terrorists and letting Moro die, and secret organizations such as *Propaganda due* and Operation Gladio. The affair was highly publicized through television, radio, and print media, which gave the public access to the different communications passing between the Red Brigades, Moro, and the Italian government, and the population joined the debate of whether or not Moro should have been saved. For Glynn and Lombardi, Moro’s death “implicated, alongside the BR and Italy’s political leaders, the wider Italian public” (5). This public guilt for Moro’s death has led to a return to the death of the statesman time and again in

film to recreate the events of his kidnapping and show what could have been done had anyone attempted to save Moro.

In Chapter Two I discussed how the first film to be made after Moro's death, Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*, attempted to recreate the events of the fifty-five days of captivity and through the genre of the poliziesco, find who was truly responsible for his death. Ferrara heavily researched the Moro affair, and being inspired such books as Robert Katz's *Days of Wrath: The Ordeal of Aldo Moro; The Kidnapping, the Execution, and the Aftermath*, which discusses the potential involvement of Operation Gladio and P2 in the death of Moro, Ferrara centers his investigatory film on the possible conspiracies surrounding the Moro affair. This same approach is taken by Renzo Martinelli in his 2003 film *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, in which he returns to investigate the Moro affair twenty-five years after the politician's death. Martinelli also utilizes conspiracy theory, this time saying that the United States CIA was working with the Red Brigades to kill Moro. Both films take an investigatory approach to find who is truly to blame for Moro's death, but with their inclusion of conspiracy theory, these films are hard to take seriously, compared to the more fantastical films such as *Il divo* or *Buongiorno, notte*. Even though many of the other films discussed in this project include imagined scenes and scenarios, they come off as more historically accurate.

Two of the films that include fantastical story-lines, Michele Placido's *Romanzo criminale* (2005) and Paolo Sorrentino's *Il divo* (2008), are analyzed in the third chapter. By looking at these films we can see how the Moro affair is also used as a symbol of the *anni di piombo* to add historical validity to films. In *Romanzo criminale* Moro's kidnapping and death is used as a reminder of the *anni di piombo* and how it affected even the world of underground crime. Although the film includes the imagined story-line of the Banda's involvement in the Moro affair, its depiction of the Italian State as not wishing to help Aldo Moro illustrates how

both the *Banda* and the State began to deteriorate in the aftermath of the Moro affair. In *Il divo* the focus is Giulio Andreotti, who is often blamed for having a part in Moro's death due to his staunch upholding of the *linea di fermezza*. The ghostly apparition of Moro who appears to Andreotti throughout the film demonstrates the long-lasting guilt felt over Moro's death not only by Andreotti, but by the Italian people. Neither *Romanzo criminale* and *Il divo* are films about the Moro affair, but the presence of his storyline validates Moro's death as an important event of the *anni di piombo* that affected numerous people and that continues to affect the Italian population today.

The idea of working through the trauma of the Moro affair comes to fruition in Marco Bellocchio's 2003 film *Buongiorno, notte*. This film returns to the fifty-five days of captivity, but is told from the point of view of the female terrorist. Chiara's dreams throughout the film shows her struggle to free Moro from captivity or not, and when he does die at the end of the film, it is a let-down for the audience. Similar to *Il divo*, the figure of Moro haunts Chiara, and this highlights how the people of Italy are also still troubled by his death. As we know, Moro does indeed die, but the fantastical re-birth of Moro in the film demonstrates that he could have been freed, and if he had been let go, what a different place Italy would be today.

Before his death, Aldo Moro was set to put the historic compromise into place, guaranteeing a spot in a coalition with the Christian Democrats to the Communist party. The historic compromise was met with concern by some Christian Democrats, who were afraid that by including the PCI in the coalition that they would eventually take over the government, as well as some Communists, who felt that the party should not be working with the Christian Democrats, but leading on their own. The one film in which Moro was a character before his kidnapping, Elio Petri's *Todo modo* (1976), exhibits dislike of the historic compromise by calling for a new style of government that comes from the death of current politicians, including

Moro. After Moro's death, *Todo modo* became highly criticized for inspiring to kill the politician. Although Moro was a somewhat controversial politician during his lifetime, as demonstrated in *Todo modo*, in the aftermath of his death the historic compromise fell apart, the First Italian Republic came to an end, and the Christian Democrats dissolved. In the years following his death, Italy became a place that did not promote the spirit of compromise that Moro had been working for, causing a return to this event in Italian film by filmmakers experiencing the current political reality. Moro's image also began to become more positive in film in the years following *Todo modo*.

Starting with *Il caso Moro*, the first film made after his death, the image of Moro changes from dithering and cowardly to a strong leader and family man. This extreme difference in the two depictions is highlighted by the fact that the politician is portrayed by the same actor, Gian Maria Volonté in both films. From *Il caso Moro* on, I find that the character of Moro grows into a figure of morality. His character in *Il divo* haunts Andreotti and acts as his conscience, leaving the final judgment of the politician at the end of the film. In *Buongiorno, notte*, he is a father figure to the terrorists living in the apartment, and is thought by many scholars to resemble Christ in his rebirth in the film.¹⁴⁹ In the most recent film made in which he is a character, Marco Tulio Giordana's *Romanzo di una strage*, Moro wants to offer himself up as a victim to save Italy and keep it from destructing. For Isabella Pezzini, film has changed the image of Moro from "grotesque satire to crude real politik, to tragedy and finally to sincere mourning" (141). The progression of Moro's character the more recent depictions the statesman in film establish Moro as a figure to be emulated in the eyes of Italian filmmakers.

¹⁴⁹ See Chapter 4 for more information on Moro and Christian imagery.

By returning again and again to the story of Aldo Moro and his untimely death, filmmakers are showing the significance of the statesman in the more than thirty years since his death, and beyond. Moro continues to haunt the people of Italy and through the plentiful films featuring the statesman it is possible to gain a better idea of who the politician was and why we still care about his story. O'Leary refers to the idea of haunting associated with Moro as the politician's continued presence in the psyche of the Italian people ("Locations of Moro" 156). One important aspect of Moro's haunting of the Italian people is the fact that there are still elements of the affair that remain mysterious. Since there was much uncertainty surrounding the Moro affair, finding the truth of who was behind the kidnapping, and if Moro could truly have been saved have been common themes of the films wishing to memorialize Moro.¹⁵⁰ By recreating the events of the Moro affair, generating a new shared memory, the films discussed in this dissertation help to "make visible the events of the past, in a gesture that is hopefully recuperative" (O'Rawe "A Past" 110).

The Moro affair also produces a sense of guilt in the Italian people, adding to the haunting of Italian citizens. Many of the films discussed in this project question how Italy could have been different had Aldo Moro been saved, especially in the years following the politician's death when Italian politics began to change. Since the end of World War II the Christian Democrats had held power in Italy, but with the revelation of high amounts of corruption discovered during *Tangentopoli*, as well as the possible government involvement in organized crime investigated during the Maxi trials, the Italian people lost trust in their leaders. The DC could not withstand the tremendous pressure they were under and collapsed in 1994. With the end of the DC came the emergence of Silvio Berlusconi and more years of political turmoil. For

¹⁵⁰ O'Leary writes that "the focus of ascertaining the truth of particularly salient events has taken precedence over the historical analysis of social movements and processes in the anni di piombo" ("Locations of Moro" 163).

Anna Cento Bull, the events of the *anni di piombo*, including the Moro affair, continue to be discussed due to the fact that Italian politics seemed to be repeating itself again in the early 1990s (264). The continued discord between right and left has caused filmmakers to return to the Moro affair to compare the events of the *anni di piombo* to those in Italy's more recent history.

Through the seven films studied in this dissertation I have aimed to create a collective memory of Aldo Moro that answers some of the uncertainties facing the image of the late statesman. By looking at every Italian fiction film featuring Moro as a part of its storyline, it is possible to gain a better understanding of the continued importance of the Moro affair in Italian history and today. Therefore, by comparing and contrasting the canon of Moro films in its totality, it is possible to come to a deeper understanding of the lasting trauma of the *anni di piombo*, as well as comprehend how Aldo Moro will remain an enduring symbol of divisive Italian political culture.

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