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Film Studies

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This survey covers the years 2020, 2021, and 2022.

1 Italian Cinema and Italian Cinema Studies beyond Italy

Between 2017 and 2020, a team of scholars from several Italian universities—including Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Università di Bologna, Sapienza Università di Roma, Università della Svizzera Italiana, and Università Roma Tre—developed a government-granted research project named ‘CinCIt. Circolazione internazionale del cinema italiano’ (‘International Circulation of Italian Cinema’). This project resulted in *Cinema Made in Italy. La circolazione internazionale dell’audiovisivo italiano*, ed. by Massimo Scaglioni (Rome: Carocci, 2020). This collection of essays is one of the first comprehensive works on the circulation of Italian cinema in the global market. The research incorporates various methodological approaches—from media industry studies to historiography—and relies on numerous sources, including interviews, archival documents, and data. The first part of the volume delves into the industrial strategies and distribution policies of Italian cinema abroad, both in the contemporary scenario and from a historical perspective. This includes exploring the secondary market and the presence of Italian cinema in film festivals. The second part presents the outcomes of a study on twenty Italian movies and their distribution, circulation, and critical reception abroad from 2007 to 2016. The third part provides several infographics that allow readers to visualize the actual presence of Italian cinema in the world.

From a slightly different perspective, the special issue of *Cinergie—Il cinema e le altre arti*, 18 (2020)—*Global Italy: Transmedia Representations of Italianness*, ed. by Giuliana Benvenuti, Giacomo Manzoli, and Rita Monticelli—focuses on Italy as a brand in contemporary audio-visual media, including film, television, and cultural events. Restricting my focus to those essays centred solely around cinema, I highlight the one by Damiano Garofalo, titled ‘Global Guadagnino: International Circulation and Critical Reception of Luca Gua-

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dagnino's Films' (37–47), which investigates the reception of Guadagnino's works in the United States and France. Guadagnino is a particularly interesting director as, according to Garofalo, he defies the traditional categories of lowbrow and highbrow Italian cinema and represents a mediation between a national and a global dimension. Catherine O'Rawe's article, 'The Non-Professional Actor in the Reception of Italian Cinema Abroad' (73–83), examines the fascination for non-professional actors in festivals and cinephile communities outside of Italy due to the tendency of utilizing neorealism as a culturally validating label. Giovanna Caterina De Luca, 'Cultural Exports: Italian Film Festivals in the US' (95–105), focuses on three Italian film festivals in the United States: Open Roads in New York City, Italian Film Festival USA in the Midwest, and Nuovo Cinema Italiano Film Festival in Charleston, NC. The article analyses their content, audience, financial resources, and cultural outcomes. Despite their differences, the three events share the objective of using cinema to promote Italian culture abroad, as mandated by the Franceschini Act of 2016. Valerio Coladonato's article, titled 'Sorrentino, *Loro* e gli altri. L'autore italiano contemporaneo nel contesto francese' (107–116), centres on the circulation of the film *Loro* in France and investigates the reasons for its lack of success. Similarly, Claudio Bioni and Elisa Farinacci, 'Da *Suspria* (1977) a *Suspria* (2018). L'identità in transito del cinema horror italiano', *L'avventura*, 2 (2022) 239–252, focus on the reception of Guadagnino's remake of Dario Argento's *Suspria* in the United States and the United Kingdom, which revived interest in Dario Argento's cinema. Through these case studies, the authors examine the circulation of Italian horror films abroad using a comparative ethnographic approach.

La valle dell'Eden, 37 (2021) is titled *Journey to Italy. Studiare il cinema e i media italiani fuori dall'Italia*, ed. Luca Barra and others. It focuses on the current state of Italian cinema and media studies outside of Italy. The volume features historiographic and theoretical investigations, analyses of specific case studies, and articles about institutions, venues, and cultural events. The contributions range from reflections on how famous Italian American directors have influenced the canon of Italian cinema—as in Valerio Coladonato and Damiano Garofalo's 'Martin Scorsese's Presents: On a Certain Tendency in the Canon of Italian Cinema' (23–36)—to specific studies of the international distribution of understudied authors, such as Miriam De Rosa's 'Foreign at Home: The Circulation of Angela Ricci Lucchi and Yervant Gianikian's Early Films Beyond Italy' (129–138). Other articles offer insights into emerging journals beyond Italy—Marco Arnaudo, Andrea Ciccarelli, and Carlotta Vacchelli, '*Simultanea*. Media, cultura popolare e studi di intersezione in italianistica' (177–180)—and into Italian institutions dedicated to global audio-visual media studies, exemplified by Elisa Farinacci and Emiliano Rossi, '*Mediating Italy in Global Culture:*

L'esperienza di una summer school internazionale all'Università di Bologna' (191–196). Furthermore, the issue contains articulate reflections on the discipline of Italian media studies in the United States, as presented in Giorgio Bertellini, 'Italian Media Studies. Una diagnosi un po' azzardata e un paio di proposte' (181–185). According to Bertellini, there is a need for increased interactions between film and media scholars in general, as well as explorations beyond the confine of Italian studies. In this context, he introduces two new columns hosted by the *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies* focusing on Italian archives and English translations of significant Italian essays.

2 Film Industries and Industries in Film

Marco Cucco, *Economia del film: Industria, politiche, mercati* (Rome: Carocci, 2020), offers a comprehensive investigation of the film industry, encompassing production, distribution, exhibition sites, the post-theatrical market, and public policies. This exploration considers recent changes in the audio-visual media landscape. In this context, the author opts for the term 'film' instead of 'cinema' to emphasize the role of individual audio-visual products in an environment where the industry no longer revolves solely around theatrical distribution. The volume primarily focuses on North American and European scenarios, while the concluding chapters, 6 and 7, are specifically dedicated to the Italian context. Chapter 6 delves deeply into the Italian film industry market, characterized by a consistent increase in the number of films being produced. This surge can be attributed to digitalization, which reduces production costs, as well as various public policies such as tax incentives and contributions provided by both state and regional entities. The chapter thoroughly investigates these policies—including direct public funding, tax credits, regional film commissions, and film funds—effectively highlighting their importance and critical aspects. The last chapter concentrates on the industrial strategies of Italy's primary film production and distribution companies—including broadcasters and over-the-top (OTT) platforms—as well as on three authors—Paolo Sorrentino, Luca Guadagnino, and Checco Zalone—whose commercial success offers insightful perspectives on the Italian film industry.

Another perspective emerges in *Italian Industrial Literature and Film: Perspectives on the Representation of Postwar Labor*, ed. Carlo Baghetti, Jim Carter, and Lorenzo Marmo (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2021). This collection delves into how Italy's economic boom gave rise to portrayals of industrialization in both cinematic and literary works, spanning various cultural traditions from neorealism to neo-avant-garde. Additionally, the volume highlights the significance

of audio-visual productions funded by private corporations, companies, and government entities, exemplified by Paola Bonifazio's chapter titled 'A Brief History of Sponsored Films in Italy' (pp. 56–76). The volume also hosts methodological explorations of industrial cinema and literature, along with analyses of specific case studies. Noteworthy contributions include Claudio Pannella's 'Industrial Labor in Italian Literature and Films before Neorealism' (pp. 25–40), which underscores the correlation between the working class's growth and the creation of films centred around rebellion, often resulting in censorship under the fascist regime. Lorenzo Marmo's chapter, 'Industrial Bodies of Industrial Labor in Italian Cinema, 1945–1975' (pp. 41–58), investigates how the worker's body became a model for depicting social struggle and crises throughout the post-war and post-boom periods of Italian cinema. Andrea Mariani's insightful analysis in 'The Working Class in Post-Neorealist Italian Cinema: Time and Politics in Mario Monicelli's *I compagni* (1963)' (pp. 427–438), offers a foundational perspective on how Monicelli anticipated pivotal issues related to emancipation and collective subjectivities ahead of his time. A particularly intriguing study is Luca Peretti's '*Italiani nel mondo* (1963): The Glorification of Italian Labor Abroad' (pp. 449–458), which examines a documentary portraying Italian labourers migrating to Argentina and the United States. Overall, this anthology provides a comprehensive exploration of the intersections between Italian industrial literature, film, and societal transformations during a crucial historical era.

Cinema e Storia, 1 (2022), is titled *Media-Impresa. Discorsi e pratiche mediatiche nella cultura industriale*, ed. Diego Cavallotti and others. It presents new perspectives on the relationship between audio-visual media and industrial cultures. The articles in the volume mainly adopt a historiographic approach and focus on how industries and labour organizations have produced, circulated, and utilized educational films, house-organ magazines, and media technologies. The collection also includes essential reflections on biopolitics and techno-humanism and studies on how industrial cultures influenced film theories. As an example, Simone Dotto's 'Istruzioni per l'uso. "Teorie d'utilità nel dibattito industriale italiano (1949–1973)"' (27–44), provides an overview of the debate on useful cinema in Italian film culture, both in film journals and in specialized magazines. Federico Pierotti, 'Cinema e psicotecnica. Biopolitiche del corpo nel cinema industriale del dopoguerra' (45–62), concentrates on a selection of post-war films produced by Olivetti and FIAT to reflect on Foucauldian theories of government and Hugo Münsterberg's psychology of industrial work. In other instances, as seen in Jennifer Malvezzi's 'Situazionismo, nuovi tecno-umanesimi e medialità tra le pagine di Caleidoscopio e Humus' (101–122), industrial cultures are engaged in conversation with contemporary

visual arts and new avant-gardes. Important archival research is presented in Marco Zilioli's 'Una lunga corsa: industria, cultura e cinema nelle riviste italiane Pirelli (1948–1970)' (123–142). Here, the author provides an overview of the discourses surrounding cinema in Pirelli's publications, as well as on the film retrospectives organized by the Centro Culturale Pirelli. This collection of essays demonstrates the intricate and multifaceted intersections between media, industry, and culture. All the contributors shed light on the dynamic interplay between audio-visual media and industrial landscapes by delving into historical contexts, theoretical frameworks, and artistic expressions. This special issue enriches our understanding of the intricate relationship between media and industry, offering fresh insights that contribute to a more comprehensive historical and cultural narrative.

3 Film Movements and Film Genres

Charles Leavitt IV, *Italian Neorealism: A Cultural History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020) stands as the most recent monograph discussing the paramount Italian national film movement. Leavitt offers original research beyond a mere focus on neorealist cinematic artefacts. Instead, the work centres on the broader cultural discourse surrounding neorealism, engaging in a multifaceted dialogue across various media and creative productions. The book examines conceptual evolution of the term 'neorealism' and its nuanced meanings, tracing the enquiry back to as early as the 1890s. Additionally, it presents comparative analyses of diverse texts and media forms, exemplified by the connection between Giuseppe De Santis' *Caccia tragica* (1947) and Italo Calvino's *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno* (1947). The volume further explores the theoretical lexicon of neorealism within post-war debates and reflects on the neorealist portrayal of historical events.

Claudio Bioni, *Cinema, sorrisi e canzoni. Il film musicale italiano degli anni Sessanta* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2020), delves into the genre of *musicarello*, which characterizes 1960s Italian cinema, which incorporated pop singers, bands, and songs. Despite acknowledging that *musicarello* is not a prominent genre in terms of its aesthetic features and commercial outcomes, the author highlights its significance as an example of low-cost Italian film production, showcasing the interaction between cinema and music, and illustrating the relationship between audio-visual language and the structure of new 1960s pop songs. In this context, *musicarello* effectively depicts the gradual decline of the film industry during that era, even as movies continued to serve as essential platforms for promoting pop singers' stardom. Furthermore, the genre exem-

plifies the growth and sudden transformation of the Italian music industry. The convergence of popular cinema and pop music in Italy also mirrors the evolving dynamics of Italian youth cultures, particularly among the baby-boomer generation. Bisoni's monograph has the commendable merit of exploring a relatively understudied category within Italian cinema and providing a comprehensive and multifaceted overview of this phenomenon.

4 Gender and Sexuality

Sergio Rigoletto, *Le norme traviate. Saggi sul genere e sulla sessualità nel cinema e nella televisione italiana* (Milan: Meltemi, 2020), provides an investigation of various Italian audio-visual texts that centre around non-normative and non-prescriptive sexual scenarios. The author examines a heterogeneous corpus of films and TV shows, effectively connecting their content with the sociocultural context within which they operate. In some cases, the volume offers innovative analyses of canonical film—such as Federico Fellini's *La dolce vita* (1960) and Dino Risi's *Il sorpasso* (1962)—exploring sexual marginality, masculinity, and socially imposed homophobia. In other instances, Rigoletto sheds light on essential yet understudied films, such as Steno's *La patata bollente* (1979) and its depiction of the turbulent relationship between the Italian Communist Party and the gay liberation movements, as well as the TV movie *Il padre delle spose* (2006) and its references to the contemporaneous political debate on gay marriages.

Dalila Missero, *Women, Feminism, and Italian Cinema: Archives from a Film Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), meticulously explores the often-overlooked contributions of women and feminist movements within the context of Italian cinema. The volume presents a remarkably diverse yet harmonious body of research, encompassing investigations into film consumption, distribution, intellectual dialogues, authorship, and the development of national cinemas. Missero examines film columns within various women's magazines, traces the history of feminist film retrospectives and festivals—particularly prominent during the 1970s—and provides valuable insights into the representation of lesbian audiences. Furthermore, the book delves into significant debates surrounding pornography and controversial films, such as Luis García Berlanga's *Grandeur nature* (1974) and Federico Fellini's *La città delle donne* (1980). It also explores the portrayal of women's sexuality, relationships, and marriage within the *commedia all'italiana* genre, and the pivotal roles played by female directors in a predominantly male-dominated industry. Of paramount importance, Missero dedicates a substantial portion of the volume

to exploring the intersection of gender and race, highlighted prominently in the essential chapter dedicated to Italo-Eritrean actress Ines Pellegrini. The book stands out for its interdisciplinary approach, seamlessly integrating film historiography, post-colonial studies, and feminist film studies. Consequently, it merits inclusion in educational courses the history and theory of Italian cinema.

In recent years, the Italian film and media studies community has shown an increased interest in eroticism, sexuality, and pornography. The work by Tommaso Subini, *La via italiana alla pornografia. Cattolicesimo, sessualità e cinema* (Florence: Le Monnier, 2021) is the result of an Italian government-funded project named ‘Comizi d’amore. Il cinema e la questione sessuale in Italia’ (‘Love meetings: Cinema and sexuality in Italy’). This volume offers a comprehensive overview of how the Catholic Church and the Christian Democratic Party sought to regulate sexuality and its portrayal in audio-visual media through censorship and political power, from the post-war period to the 1980s. The author employs rigorous archival research from various Catholic institutions to accomplish this. Similarly, *gender/sexuality/Italy*, 9 (2022), titles its themed section ‘Italy Talks Porn: Porn Studies in Italy’, ed. Giovanna Maina, Sergio Rigolletto, and Federico Zecca. The issue delves into the realm of porn studies in a broad sense. The section includes essays on cinema, audio-visual media, and politics. Among the exemplary articles, some offer insightful analyses of the political engagement of well-known porn actresses. For instance, Sofia Torre’s piece, titled ‘Oltre le gambe c’è di più. Analisi del rapporto con la politica e il femminismo nei casi di Cicciolina, Moana Pozzi e Valentina Nappi’ (25–37), provides such analysis. Additionally, other articles investigate dissident audio-visual practices to critique the conventional family structure. An example is Roberto Paolo Malaspina’s contribution, “Pornoestetica” familiare. La parentela erotica in Rosario Gallardo’ (37–57).

5 Authors and Actors

2020 and 2022 mark the centennials of Federico Fellini, Pier Paolo Pasolini, and Carlo Lizzani. *A Companion to Federico Fellini*, ed. by Frank Burke, Marguerite Waller, and Marita Gubareva (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2020), features fifty-eight contributors, including directors, journalists, and artists. Encompassing scholarly articles, anecdotes, testimonials, and interviews, the volume is one of the largest and most exhaustive collections of essays on Fellini. Frank Burke’s work, *Fellini’s Film and Commercials* (Bristol: Intellect, 2020), is an updated edition of the author’s prior monograph titled *Fellini’s Film: From Postwar to Postmodern* (New York: Twayne, 1996). This renewed version includes additional

discussions on post-colonial and racial theories in Fellini's films, a completely new chapter on his commercials, and a reworked analysis of *La città delle donne* (1980). The *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies*, 1 (2021), is entirely dedicated to Fellini. This special issue comprises various essays that vividly showcase the theoretical approaches applied to the director's work. Notable examples include examining the intricate relationship between Fellini and the television medium and industry, explored in Damiano Garofalo and Angela Mancinelli's piece, titled '“A Means of Distribution”: Federico Fellini and Italian Television' (27–43). Furthermore, the journal presents a discussion of Fellini's public image within the context of feminist criticism, as presented in Francesca Cantore's and Giulia Muggeo's essay 'Federico Fellini and the Debate in Italian Feminist Magazines' (45–61). Lastly, Barbara Corsi, Marina Nicoli, and Alfonso Venturini explore an archival investigation of Fellini as an entrepreneur in their article: 'Fellini the Founder? The Fellini Brand in Film Production' (133–147).

Ara H. Merjian, *Against the Avant-Garde: Pier Paolo Pasolini, Contemporary Art, and Neocapitalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), investigates Pasolini's aesthetic orthodoxy and his conflicting relationship with his coeval visual—as well as poetic—avant-gardes. Delving into Pasolini's most famous films and film theories—such as the 'cinema of poetry'—the volume ties together his work with four visual art concepts of his time: abstraction, pop art, arte povera, and performance art. The result is a compelling study of an unexplored topic that sheds light on Pasolini's conflicts and intellectual connections while meticulously reflecting on his historical and sociocultural context. The special issue of *Annali d'italianistica*, 40 (2022), titled *1922–2022. Pasolini e la libertà espressiva: lingua, stile, potere*, ed. by Paolo Desogus and others, collects together twenty essays, including the guest editors' note, exploring Pasolini's literary works, cinema, aesthetics, and political thought. Gabriele Fichera's piece—'Libertà come reattività. Note sull'ultimo Pasolini' (67–76)—and his analysis of *Salò o le 120 giornate di Sodoma* (1975) highlight how capitalism tears apart the possibility of expression. On a different note, Roberto Chiesi, in 'L'ultimo Pasolini. Un nuovo registro visionario' (189–206), reflects on the echoes of Dante's *Inferno* in Pasolini's films and literary works.

Bianco e nero, 597 (2020), is entirely dedicated to Carlo Lizzani. The issue compiles various articles that focus on the multifaceted cinema of Lizzani, encompassing his comedies, westerns, historical films, TV movies, and his work as a film historian and critic. Additionally, there are interviews with his family members and colleagues he worked with, such as Dario Fo and Harvey Keitel. The often-overlooked role of Lizzani as a director of the Venice Film Festival—from 1979 to 1982—is prominently featured in Gian Piero Brunetta's latest monograph. Gian Piero Brunetta, *La Mostra Internazionale di Venezia:*

1932–2022 (Venice: Marsilio, 2022), provides an exhaustive account of the history of the Venice Film Festival. The author dedicates three chapters to Lizzani, who, in collaboration with Enzo Ungari, introduced significant changes and established several successful cinephile niches within the festival.

Two recent monographs on Paolo Sorrentino and Francesco Rosi are noteworthy. Russell J. A. Kilbourn, *The Cinema of Paolo Sorrentino: Commitment to Style* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), offers a close reading of Sorrentino's films and TV series, spanning from *L'uomo in più* (2001) to *The Young Pope* (2016). The study draws upon various theoretical frameworks—from affect theory to poststructuralism, including cognitive studies—and incorporates concepts such as realism and 'intensified continuity' to analyse Sorrentino's style, subjectivity, and the political critiques he presents. Gaetana Marrone, *The Cinema of Francesco Rosi* (Oxford: OUP, 2020) provides a solid film-to-film analysis of Rosi's works. The book is structured chronologically, delving into the author's political and aesthetic concept of 'cinema as a testimony'.

Alberto Zambenedetti, *Acting across Borders: Mobility and Identity in Italian Cinema* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022), presents a captivating exploration of the careers of Amedeo Nazzari and Alberto Sordi, viewed through the lens of 'Italian cinematic mobility'. The book delves into the realms of migration, exile, and diaspora studies. Nazzari's films vividly portray the shifting political and social identities during World War II. At the same time, Sordi's characters mirror a post-war mediocre and cowardly bourgeoisie that stood in contrast to the national ethos. Zambenedetti's analysis dissects their performances using the metaphor of 'movement', encompassing cognitive and physical dimensions, marked by exploratory or nomadic traits, and driven by economic, social, or cultural motivations.

6 Unreviewed Material

Some volumes that might be of interest include: Giaime Alonge, *Un'ambigua leggenda. Cinema italiano e Grande Guerra* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2020); Stefania Carpiceci, *Amara terra mia/io vado via. Cinema italiano e canti nella grande migrazione del Novecento* (Pisa: ETS, 2020); Michael Guarnieri, *Vampires in Italian Cinema, 1956–1975* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020); Andrea Minuz, *Fellini, Roma* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2020); Emiliano Morreale, *La mafia immaginaria. Settant'anni di cosa nostra al cinema* (Rome: Donzelli, 2020); Marco Bellano, *Allegro non troppo. Bruno Bozzetto's Animated Music* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021); Marco Bertozzi, *L'Italia di Fellini. Imma-*

gine, paesaggi, forme di vita (Venice: Marsilio, 2021); Maria Pia Comand and Andrea Mariani, *Efemeridi del film. Episodi di storia materiale del cinema italiano* (Milan: Meltemi, 2021); Francesco Di Chiara, *Sessualità e marketing nel cinematografo italiano. Industria, culture visuali, spazio urbano* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2021); Elisa Mandelli and Valentina Re, *Le belle donne ci piacciono e come! Cinema Nuovo, cultura comunista e modelli di mascolinità* (Parma: Diabasis, 2021); Christian Uva, *L'ultima spiaggia. Rive e derive del cinema italiano* (Venice: Marsilio, 2021); Giorgio Avezzi, *L'Italia che ci guarda. Geografie del consumo audiovisivo* (Rome: Carocci, 2022); Gian Piero Brunetta, *L'Italia sullo schermo. Come il cinema ha raccontato l'identità nazionale* (Rome: Carocci, 2022); Gabriele Landrini, *Fotogrammi di carta. Venticinque anni di cineromanzo italiano (1950–1975)* (Milan: Meltemi, 2022); Mauro Resmini, *Italian Political Cinema: Figures of the Long '68* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2022); Paolo Villa, *La camera di Stendhal. Il film sull'arte in Italia* (Pisa: ETS, 2022); Martina Zanco, *Visto si stampi. I romanzi-film in Italia tra gli anni cinquanta e gli anni settanta* (Venice: Marsilio, 2022); and Paola Zeni, *L'amazzone bianca. Luisa Ferida attrice e diva nell'Italia fascista* (Milan: Mimesis, 2022).