

Aldo Moro's Rebirth in Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte*

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of the Arts in the Department of Romance Languages (Italian).

Chapel Hill
2010

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ABSTRACT

MICHAEL SGUERRI: Aldo Moro's Rebirth in Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte*
(Under the direction of Dino S. Cervigni)

This study examines the different representations of Aldo Moro and his abduction in the movies *Il caso Moro* (1986) by Giuseppe Ferrara, *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* (2003) by Renzo Martinelli, and *Buongiorno, notte* (2003) by Marco Bellocchio. According to certain critics, Marco Bellocchio's movie presents a resurrection of Aldo Moro's character. This examination looks at how a new conception of the character of Aldo Moro is born and how it undergoes a transformation in Marco Bellocchio's movie. This will be achieved by comparing *Buongiorno, notte* to Giuseppe Ferrara and Renzo Martinelli's films. The comparison between these movies will show how Marco Bellocchio's movie contains certain Christological elements that allow for a new representation of Aldo Moro's character.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Italy has witnessed a resurgence of interest by writers and directors in one of the country's most dramatic historical periods since World War II: the "anni di piombo." Demetrio Paolin, in his study entitled *Una tragedia negata: il racconto degli anni di piombo nella narrativa italiana*, asserts: "I conti con gli anni di piombo, per la narrativa, rimangono in sospeso almeno fino al maggio 2003. Da questa data assistiamo a una vera proliferazione di libri sul terrorismo rosso e nero. La maggior parte è costituita da romanzi, opere di fantasia, che tentano di dire la verità sul periodo" (24). 2003 does not only represent the year in which many of these novels were published, amongst which Anna Laura Braghetti's *Il prigioniero*, Bellocchio's source of inspiration for his movie *Buongiorno, notte*, but it also marks the year in which Bellocchio's movie was released.¹ Bellocchio adapted the title of the movie from one of Emily Dickinson's poems.² In portraying one of the principal characters in *Buongiorno, notte*, which is

¹ To be more precise, Anna Laura Braghetti's book *Il prigioniero* was published initially in 1998 by Mondadori but it was republished in 2003 by Feltrinelli.

² Emily Dickinson's poem is actually entitled *Good Morning, Midnight*, which goes: Good Morning--Midnight--/ I'm coming Home--/ Day--got tired of Me--/ How could I--of Him?/You--are not so fair--Midnight--/ I chose--Day--/ But--please take a little Girl--/ He turned away!" (Dickinson 408). In reference to Emily Dickinson's poem, Carlo Testa states: "While Dickinson's short composition offers Bellocchio no narrative elements (this would have been an impossibility since, unsurprisingly for a poem, it contains little or nought in the way of representational material), its first few lines suffice to articulate a dualism identical to that, of truly Manichean intensity, which powers the film's pendulum movement from (literal) darkness to light and thence back again. What matters to the director, and what he homologically re-creates in *Good Morning, Night*, is Dickinson's forceful contrast between the two extremes--and the discomfort evoked in the lyrical self by a figurative darkness deriving from an unspecified, though obviously

Chiara, Marco Bellocchio draws from the experiences described by Anna Laura Braghetti in her memoir on the kidnapping of Aldo Moro. Chiara's character, however, is loosely modeled after Anna Laura Braghetti because, as Giancarlo Lombardi asserts: "la stessa Chiara, infatti, è ben lontana dalla figura della Braghetti: se la prima sembra genuinamente atterrita, alla fine del film, dalle azioni compiute dall'organizzazione di cui fa parte, Laura Braghetti è solo all'inizio della militanza delle BR con rapimento Moro, e finirà per uccidere a sangue freddo, due anni dopo, Vittorio Blanchet" (477).

The field of cinematic production is witness to a similar resurgence, as seen in literature, of the interest in topics pertaining to Aldo Moro and the "anni di piombo." In regard to the recent cinematic reawakening of the adoption of topics such as terrorism in Italy, Christian Uva, author of the book *Schermi di piombo: il terrorismo nel cinema italiano*, states: "Nel periodo successivo al film di Giordana, il cinema italiano, seguendo in qualche modo la stessa strada romanzesca de *La meglio gioventù*, si rivolge al terrorismo per farne un ingrediente, tra gli altri, di un generale *revival* degli anni '70, periodo storico inquadrato, nel bene e nel male, come vero e proprio mito di rifondazione dell'immaginario collettivo italiano" (89).³ This statement also pertains to Renzo Martinelli's movie *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* which, as Bellocchio's film, came out in 2003 and proposes a reinterpretation of the Aldo Moro case.

inescapable abandonment. Up to the final catastrophe, Chiara (the choice of whose name on the director's part needs, I suppose, no further elucidation) hopes against hope that some light will eventually go on at the end of the ethical night in which she feels she has sunk" (781). Bellocchio, however, might have changed its name to *Buongiorno, notte* because the "anni di piombo" were also known as "la notte della repubblica," which was an expression coined by Sergio Zavoli in his inquiry on Italian terrorism which was televised on the RAI channel.

³ In 2003 Marco Tullio Giordana releases the movie *La meglio gioventù*, in which the director portrays the last four years of Italian history. Apropos Giordana's movie, Christian Uva comments: "Tra i principali sfondi storici allestiti da Giordana alle spalle dei protagonisti non poteva naturalmente mancare quello degli anni di piombo" (86). *La meglio gioventù* shows, through Giulia's character, how left-wing terrorism in Italy evolved from the protest movements of the Sessantotto. As a matter of a fact, according to Uva, "è questo il personaggio che nel film spinge il Sessantotto fino alle estreme conseguenze, [ovvero] quelle di una lotta armata motivata da un imprendibile bisogno di comunismo" (84).

Giancarlo Lombardi brings forth the notion of the Christological aspects that comprise the portrayal of Aldo Moro's character; as a matter of fact Lombardi states: "A mio parere, infatti, il Moro descritto da Bellocchio è una vittima sacrificale che muore e risorge non più uomo politico ma mero uomo" (392). Other critics, such as Nicoletta Marini-Maio and Carlo Testa, have also acknowledged the notion of Aldo Moro as a Christ-like/father figure. While these critics, especially Giancarlo Lombardi, provide a vast array of examples to prove the notion that Aldo Moro was presented as a Christ figure, the Christological aspects of the movie can be analyzed more in depth by taking into account other characteristics of the movie not discussed by these critics. In the research conducted by other critics, the emphasis is often placed on the death and the resurrection of the character of Aldo Moro; however, the movie *Buongiorno, notte*, also presents the birth of the character of Aldo Moro and the transformation that he undergoes until he reaches his moment of death.

In this essay, Marco Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte*, will be subjected to an analysis of the various Christological symbolisms that pertain to the birth, the death, and eventual resurrection of Aldo Moro's character. Particular attention will also be devoted, however, on the relation between Aldo Moro and Chiara, who becomes a means for the statesman's transformation. A crucial part of this analysis will involve comparing *Buongiorno, notte* to the two other movies on Aldo Moro: Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro* (1986) and Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* (2003). A comparison between these movies will allow for a better understanding of how Bellocchio's was able to create a new conception of the statesman.

This analysis will have Bellocchio's movie at the center of its analysis because

the director adopts a narratological thread quite different from the one used in other movies that deal primarily with the Moro affair. In fact, according to Giancarlo Lombardi, Bellocchio's movie "si distingue dagli altri film sul sequestro Moro perché sceglie di adottare una diversa prospettiva narrante, quella di una terrorista" (392). Still regarding the movie's originality, the critic Ernesto Laura declares that "Bellocchio non ha voluto ricostruire un evento nei suoi elementi storicamente documentati, quanto per la prima volta esplorare dall'interno lo stato d'animo d'un brigatista che sa che da lui e dai suoi pochi compagni dipende la vita di un uomo" (12). Through the eyes of the terrorists, the spectator can assist at the transformation of Aldo Moro's character, who, in the movie, is filmed almost entirely in the *prigione del popolo*.

CHAPTER 1

a. The 1960s and the Roots of Italian Terrorism

The 1960s in Italy can be seen as a period of gestation which gave birth to the subversive factions that stained the country with blood from the late 60s to the mid 80s. The understanding of the events that characterized the 1960s in Italy is of critical importance for the individuation of the roots of terrorist organizations such as the Red Brigades and the numerous other groups that proliferated during the 1970s. Even though the movies taken into consideration in this study focus solely on specific events, it is useful to trace the history of the armed struggle in Italy to obtain a better understanding of the political events that shaped the “anni di piombo” and that led to Aldo Moro’s kidnapping and murder.

When analyzing the 1960s one cannot emphasize enough the importance of the influence that certain global events, such as Mao Tse-tung’s revolution in China and the *beat generation* in most industrialized countries, had on the process of cultural rejuvenation that was happening in Italy during that period. The term *new left*, which came to be associated with the student protest movements that sprung up in Italy in the 1960s, was coined in fact by the American *beat generation*. The *new left* in the United States adopted antimilitarist and pacifist stances and often displayed sympathies for

Communist ideologies. While the Italian *new left* appropriated the same ideologies brought forth by the American *beat generation*, the student protest movements in Italy had stronger ties to Marxist ideologies than their American counterparts, as Colarizi clarifies: “Questo segno politico che resta relativamente sfumato nella contestazione studentesca americana, è invece assai più marcato nei movimenti giovanili dell’Europa continentale dove il marxismo ha tenuto a battesimo i grandi partiti di massa, nati nel XIX secolo” (399). Different causes contributed to the flourishing of the political ferment that pervaded Italy in the 1960s. The primary reason can be attributed to the fact that the country, even though it witnessed an economic boom in the 1950s, still preserved many laws and regulations that belonged to the Fascist era. In addition to this situation, the educational system was antiquated and it was not able to provide adequate services to the growing Italian student population. Colarizi further elucidates this matter by stating: “A far scattare la scintilla, in Italia come nel resto del mondo occidentale, è l’inadeguatezza delle strutture scolastiche e universitarie di fronte all’ondata gigantesca di studenti che invade gli istituti superiori e le facoltà, un tempo frequentate da un ristretto numero di privilegiati” (395). As a result, it is precisely in the academic realm that the new political movements found their roots. The university thus became a theatre in which the various extra-parliamentary organizations that developed during those years found their voice. The second half of the sixties saw the proliferation of student occupations of academic buildings and the founding of several magazines, such as *Quaderni rossi*, *Quaderni piacentini*, *La sinistra*, and *Classe operaia*, all of which helped bring back the problem of the working class struggle.⁴ The year 1968, with the birth of leftist extra-parliamentary

⁴ Interestingly enough, the magazine *Quaderni piacentini* was founded by Marco Bellocchio’s brother, Pier Giorgio Bellocchio.

groups such as *Potere Operaio*, *Avanguardia Operaia*, *Lotta Continua*, *Unione dei Comunisti Italiani*, and *Movimento Studentesco*, marked the height of intensity of the student protest movement.⁵ Many of these extra-parliamentary leftist groups came into existence not only as a reaction to the precarious conditions of the academic environment but also as a response to the PCI (*Partito comunista italiano*), which they believed had distanced itself from communism's true revolutionary ideals in favor of an approach that would push for a collaboration with the Democrazia Cristiana, Italy's primary political party. The leftist extra-parliamentary groups instead took a more militant stance in response to what they saw as the *fascistizzazione* of the Italian State; in fact, as Nicoletta Marini-Maio states: "*Lotta Continua* argued that the Italian Republic had retained the structural apparatus, the repressive nature, and the goals of the Fascist regime . . . The concept of *continuità* and *fascistizzazione dello Stato* played a decisive role in the radicalization of political and social conflicts in the 1970s" (107-8). The fear of the *fascistizzazione* of the State was exacerbated by several events, such as the tentative coup d'état by general Giovanni De Lorenzo in 1964, whose intention was not only to impede a proletarian revolution but also, as Giorgio Galli opines, the hindrance of "l'attuazione del programma riformista del governo di centro-sinistra Moro-Nenni" (21). The right-wing also witnessed the birth of several extra-parliamentary neofascist groups, such as *Avanguardia Nazionale*, *Ordine Nuovo*, and *Primula Goliardica*, whose assault at La Sapienza in Rome resulted in the death of the leftist student Paolo Rossi.⁶

⁵ The organization *Potere operaio* was founded by Antonio Negri, who came to be considered one of the most prominent intellectuals of the extra-parliamentary left. Negri also had a profound impact on the development of the armed struggle, as Giorgio Galli, in his volume *Il partito armato*, states: "La diffusa organizzazione di Toni Negri . . . sarebbe stata la più forte incubatrice del partito armato" (38).

⁶ Eli Karmon, in his volume *Coalitions Between Terrorist Organizations: Revolutionaries, Nationalists, and Islamists*, traces the history of all the major European terrorist organizations. In reference to the group

b. Piazza Fontana: the Spark that Ignites the “anni di piombo”

The political turmoil of the 1960's reached its apex on December 12th, 1969 when a bomb exploded at the headquarters of the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura, located in Piazza Fontana in Milan. The bomb blast killed seventeen people and wounded eighty-eight. The attack in Piazza Fontana would mark the beginning of the *strategia della tensione*, which was a strategy adopted by right-wing extra-parliamentary groups to create a state of emergency that would spread the fear of Communism. Colarizi further explains the concept of the *strategia della tensione*: “. . . le bombe di piazza Fontana che, come era prevedibile vengono all'inizio attribuite all'estrema sinistra, hanno proprio l'obiettivo di far salire la tensione nel paese, di esasperare ancor più i borghesi spaventati, di acuirne il senso di disagio fino a suscitare un vero allarme per la propria sicurezza personale” (412). Just as Colarizi explains, the Italian authorities began investigating several left-wing circles and arrested the anarchist activist Giuseppe Pinelli, who would die under mysterious circumstances by falling from the fourth floor of a police station in Milan, where he was being interrogated by Commissioner Luigi Calabresi.⁷ In light of all these events, December 12th 1969 ushered in the period of the “anni di piombo,” which would include all of the 1970s and the first half of the 80s. The year 1969, in addition to

Avanguardia nazionale, Karmon explains that “The AN was rebuilt in 1968 with the aim of establishing a new political order that would counteract the *materialism and mass-orientation* of the democratic regime by destroying the parties and parliament. The extremism of the radical right was fuelled by fear that the government was about to fall into the hands of the *lower classes*” (201).

⁷ Even though the objective of the bomb in Piazza Fontana was to inculcate left-wing political circles, as the arrests of the anarchists Pinelli and Valpreda demonstrate, further investigation showed that the attack was actually executed by right-wing terrorists, in collaboration with the Italian secret services. On this matter, Galli explains: “Proprio l'inchiesta su Piazza Fontana . . . evidenzia infatti le possibili responsabilità nella strage alla Banca dell'Agricoltura del gruppo veneto di estrema destra di Franco Freda (titolare delle edizioni Ar) e di Giovanni Ventura, gruppo collegato al Sid attraverso un giornalista e teorico della ‘guerra speciale’ Guido Giannettini” (59). Following the suspicious death of the anarchist Pinelli, the Commissioner Luigi Calabresi, who was responsible for Pinelli's arrest, was murdered in 1972. In reference to Calabresi's murder, Galli explains that “Nei primi anni Novanta- cioè un ventennio dopo- ‘il pentito’ Leonardo Marino chiamerà in causa Adriano Sofri e l'intero vertice di Lotta Continua quali responsabili (mandanti ed esecutori) dell'omicidio Calabresi” (59).

the bomb at the Banca Nazionale dell'Agricoltura, had been plagued by other acts of violence, such as the student march in Naples marred by a Neo-fascist attack with rudimentary explosive devices, the bomb at the FIAT stand at the Fiera Campionaria which wounded nineteen people, and eight bomb attacks targeting trains. Adriano Sofri, one of the protagonists of left-wing terrorism, labeled the day of the bomb in Piazza Fontana as "il giorno dell'innocenza perduta," because the escalation of violence had reached a new height and also because this event had a profound impact on the left-wing extra-parliamentary groups; in fact, according to Renato Curcio, one of the founders of the Red Brigades: "con la strage di Piazza Fontana il clima improvvisamente cambiò . . . Fu a quel punto che scattò un salto di qualità: prima nel nostro pensare poi nel nostro agire" (49-50). It was the terrorist attack in piazza Fontana that drove left-wing terrorists to embrace the armed struggle as a viable solution to achieve their political aims. With the PCI distancing itself from the revolutionary ideals of communism and the growing fear of Neo-fascist violence, many subversive left-wing groups saw the armed struggle as the only way to enact the revolution and to counteract the right-wing terrorist groups that were implementing the *strategia della tensione*.⁸

c. *The Birth of the Red Brigades*

From the climate of terror instilled by the right-wing terrorist groups arose the

⁸ A key event of the *strategia della tensione*, following the bomb in Piazza Fontana, was the attempted coup d'état ideated and operated in 1970 by Junio Valerio Borghese, an ex-commander of Mussolini's Social Republic X Mas. Regarding this event, Christian Uva, in his volume entitled *Schermi di piombo*, provides an account of the facts surrounding the attempted coup: "Nella notte tra il 7 e l'8 dicembre 1970 gruppi di militanti di estrema destra si riuniscono in alcuni luoghi della capitale e penetrano nell'armeria del Ministero dell'Interno, mentre alle porte di Roma si è concentrata una colonna armata di guardie forestali. A capo del complotto è il principe Junio Valerio Borghese, ex comandante della X Mas; il suo piano prevede l'occupazione dei ministeri della Difesa e dell'Interno, della sede della RAI, degli impianti telefonici e di telecomunicazione, nonché la mobilità totale dell'Esercito" (15).

Red Brigades, which would soon become the utmost left-wing terrorist group in Italy. The Red Brigades came in existence in 1970 from the ashes of the Collettivo Politico Metropolitano, which was formed in Milan by three Maoist students: Renato Curcio, Mara Cagol, and Alberto Franceschini, all of whom would eventually be known as the “nucleo storico” of the Red Brigades. The Red Brigades would gain recognition for the first time on September 17th 1970, after setting on fire the car of Giuseppe Leoni, who at the time was one of the executives of the company Sit-Siemens. According to Eli Karmon, the aim of the Red Brigades “was not so much to obtain economic benefits for workers, but rather to denounce capitalist exploitation of the working class, and to create propaganda that would prepare the masses for the violent and systematic opposition to the bourgeois order” (98). In addition to fighting for the working class, the Red Brigades’ actions served as a response to the “strategy of tension” that was being perpetrated by groups affiliated with the radical right. For the Red Brigades, the armed struggle was a continuation of the fight that the Italian Resistance endured during World War II in order to free the country from Nazi-Fascism. In their communiqués, the Red Brigades often used words like “azione partigiana” and “resistenza,” which, according to Marini-Maio “link the revolutionary praxis of the *Brigate Rosse* to national history, going back to the foundational myth of the Italian Republic, namely, the *Resistenza partigiana* of the last phase of World War II” (95).⁹ The main difference between right-wing radical groups

⁹ Regarding the link between the radical left-wing and the Italian Resistance, Marini-Maio explains: “A considerable part of the Italian partisan forces considered the Resistance to be the first phase of a revolutionary process that would bring the proletarian masses to emancipation from the capitalist system and to the ultimate goal of socialism. At the end of the war, the *Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale* (CNL), comprised of partisan leaders, feared a socialist insurrection from its most radical wing. In order to avoid the inevitable violent repression on behalf of the allied troops, the CNL required that the partisans consign their weapons and return to ordinary life. As Ginsborg points out, however, neither the recommendation of

and left-wing radical groups, apart from the contrasting ideological stances, was the way they executed their attacks; right-wing terrorism often targeted civilians by placing explosives in public places, which would often result in high numbers of victims, whereas left-wing organizations, such as the the Red Brigades, would choose to attack specific targets, according to their political and symbolic relevance. The years 1970 to 1972 saw the Red Brigades engaging for the most part in acts of propaganda, by disseminating flyers and other material in factories around Milan and Turin, and in acts of sabotage, which involved setting cars and trucks on fire with incendiary bombs. March 3rd, 1972 marked a shift in the Red Brigades' actions for, as Eli Karmon explains, "it was the first time the BR actually attacked a human target, in the person of a factory foreman who was kidnapped briefly" (100).¹⁰ The victim of the kidnapping was the industrialist Idalgo Macchiarini, who was an executive for the company Sit-Siemens.¹¹ The following year, the Red Brigades were again responsible for another kidnapping; this time the victim would be the FIAT executive Ettore Amerio, who was held captive for eight days.

c. Red and Black: Left-Wing and Right-Wing Terrorism and the Escalation of Violence

The year 1974 became emblematic for the whole phenomenon of the armed

the CNL nor the allies' roundups were sufficient to bring to light the impressive number of weapons that the partisans had been able to hide, in the hopes of using them for revolutionary ends" (97).

¹⁰ Even though the Red Brigades' first kidnapping took place in 1972, another left-wing radical group, known as the October XXII group, which was affiliated with the Red Brigades, had kidnapped Sergio Gadolla on October 5th, 1970.

¹¹ Galli's volume offers a detailed account of the kidnapping: "Il 3 marzo 1970, alle ore 19, un commando brigatista (tre uomini in tuta blu, giubbotto, volto coperto da passamontagna) sequestra l'ingegner Idalgo Macchiarini, dirigente della Sit Siemens, e lo fotografa con una pistola puntata alla tempia e un cartello al collo nel quale lo definisce 'fascista . . . processato dalle Br. I proletari hanno preso le armi, per i padroni è l'inizio della fine'. Nel volantino di rivendicazione il sequestrato viene definito 'un tipico neofascista: un neofascista in camicia bianca e cioè una camicia nera dei nostri giorni'; precisato che il dirigente è 'in libertà provvisoria', il volantino si conclude con le parole d'ordine: 'Mordi e fuggi! Niente resterà impunito! Colpiscine uno per educarne 100! Tutto il potere al popolo armato'" (50).

struggle in Italy. The period between 1974 and 1976 was in fact characterized by an escalation of violence never seen before in the country since the end of World War II. The “strategy of tension” implemented by the right-wing radical organizations reached a new height with the bomb in Piazza della Loggia in Brescia on May 28th, which left eight dead and ninety-four wounded, and the explosion of the *Italicus* train on August 4th, which caused the deaths of twelve passengers and wounded forty-four others.¹² The Red Brigades also started adopting more violent tactics and, as Marini-Maio explains, they “acquired a national dimension, identifying themselves as the armed party of the proletariat” (119).¹³ What allowed the Red Brigades to attain a national dimension was the kidnapping of the Genoese judge Mario Sossi, whom they detained for thirty-five days in the “prigione del popolo.” According to Galli, the Sossi kidnapping represents a crucial point in the history of the Red Brigades because “è da questo momento che i mass media cominciano a riservare ampio spazio alle imprese del partito armato” (88). The role of the mass media would become even more critical in the Aldo Moro kidnapping, as will be shown in movies such as *Il caso Moro* and *Buongiorno, notte*. In this phase of the organization’s existence, the Red Brigades not only opted for a more violent approach but

¹² The neo-fascist group Ordine Nero claimed responsibility for the bomb on the *Italicus* train. Giorgio Bocca, in his volume entitled *Gli anni del terrorismo*, further elucidates on this matter: “I neofascisti non nascondono di essere gli esecutori. Un volantino di Ordine nero proclama: ‘Giancarlo Esposti è stato vendicato. Abbiamo voluto dimostrare alla nazione che siamo in grado di mettere le bombe dove vogliamo, in qualsiasi ora, in qualsiasi luogo, dove e come ci pare. Vi diamo appuntamento per l’autunno; seppelliremo la democrazia sotto una montagna di morti’. Gli investigatori brancolano nel buio fino a quando un extraparlamentare di sinistra, Aurelio Fianchini, evade dal carcere di Arezzo e fa arrivare alla stampa questa rivelazione: ‘La bomba è stata messa sul treno dal gruppo eversivo di Mario Tuti che ha ricevuto ordini dal Fronte nazionale rivoluzionario e da Ordine nero. Materialmente hanno agito Piero Malentacchi, che ha piazzato l’esplosivo alla stazione di Santa Maria Novella a Firenze, Luciano Franci, che gli ha fatto da palo, e la donna di quest’ultimo, Margherita Luddi” (291).

¹³ In 1974 the Red Brigades also claimed their first victims: on June 17th a commando of five brigadists attacked the main office of the Movimento Social Italiano killing the right-wing militants Mazzola and Giralucci.

they also underwent an ideological adjustment, which was outlined in their first published document, known as the Risoluzione della Direzione Strategica. It is in this document that the metaphor of the “attacco al cuore dello stato” was first coined signifying that, as Marini-Maio explains, “the time had come to pass from spontaneous antagonism within the industrial setting to armed offensive against the *Stato imperialista delle multinazionali* (SIM)” (119). The Red Brigades continued to target industrialists but also they started focusing their attention on the Democrazia Cristiana, Italy’s primary political party, which they saw as supporting the SIM. Although in this phase the organization had strengthened itself, the Red Brigades suffered a setback when the members of the “nucleo storico” Curcio and Franceschini were arrested in 1974 and Mara Cagol was killed by the police while resisting arrest for the kidnapping of Vittorio Vallarino Gancia.¹⁴

d. Attack at the Heart of the State: the Aldo Moro Kidnapping

Undeterred by the dissolution of the “nucleo storico,” the Red Brigades, led by Mario Moretti, were able to reorganize and to assemble regional divisions known as *colonne* and *fronti*. This reorganization was done in preparation of the kidnapping of Aldo Moro, the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana, through whose kidnapping the Red Brigades wanted to demonstrate that they were willing to “alzare il tiro colpendo al cuore dello Stato” (179). By targeting Aldo Moro, the Red Brigades were aiming at preventing the *compromesso storico* between the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI) and the

¹⁴ On this matter, Giorgio Galli explicates: “Il sequestro di Vallarino Gancia . . . viene attuato da ‘Mara’ Cagol e da altri cinque brigatisti il 4 di giugno; il giorno successivo, un’auto dei carabinieri arriva nei pressi della cascina dove il Gancia era tenuto prigioniero senza essere avvistata: ne segue uno scontro a fuoco del quale esistono diverse versioni. Rimane ucciso l’appuntato Giovanni D’Alfonso, feriti il tenente Umberto Rocca e il maresciallo Rosario Cattafi; Cagol rimane uccisa, gli altri brigatisti riescono a fuggire, Vallarino Gancia viene liberato” (116).

Democrazia Cristiana (DC) from being implemented. The historical compromise formulated by Aldo Moro would have ensured a pact of alliance between the Democrazia Cristiana and the Partito Comunista Italiano, which at that time was not allowed to be part of the government. A conciliation with Aldo Moro's party would have allowed the PCI to gain recognition as a legitimate political force in the Italian government. At the same time, Aldo Moro sought an alliance with the Communists as an attempt to find a solution to the problem of political terrorism. Even though the compromise would have allowed the PCI to have a voice in the Italian political realm, the Red Brigades and other extra-parliamentary organizations opposed this alliance because they interpreted it as a way for the DC to constrain the uprising of the proletariat. On this matter Eli Karmon explains that "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" (103). For this reason, Red Brigades commandos abducted Aldo Moro on March 16th, 1978 in Via Fani. In addition to kidnapping the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana, the brigadists killed the five men of his escort. Needless to say, this particular event has been the subject of numerous literary works, such as Robert Katz's *Days of Wrath* and Sergio Flamigni's *La tela del ragno*, which eventually served as primary sources for Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro* and Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*. Once kidnapped, the Red Brigades kept the statesman captive for fifty-four days before killing him on May 9th, 1978 and leaving his body in the trunk of a car parked in Via Caetani, which is located between the headquarters of the Communist party and those of the Democrazia Cristiana. During the time of Aldo Moro's imprisonment in the *prigione del popolo*, the government maintained the *linea della*

fermezza, a hard line that refused to compromise with the Red Brigades, who were requesting the liberation of all political prisoners in exchange for Aldo Moro. The PCI as well stood in defense of the government and refused any negotiation with the terrorist group. The Aldo Moro case stirred up a plethora of conspiracy theories, some of which have been taken into account in Ferrara and Martinelli's movies. Regarding these conspiracy theories, Marini-Maio explains: "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). In other words, some of these conspiracy theories assert that the Red Brigades were exploited by right-wing organizations and by different governmental entities, such as the secret services and the Masonic society P2, in order to remove Aldo Moro from the political scene, thus impeding the actualization of the historical compromise which would have brought the Communist party into the government.

The purpose of this brief historical analysis, however, is not to examine all the details concerning Aldo Moro's kidnapping and execution. Further details regarding the Moro case will be discussed in the following chapters, in which particular attention will be devoted to specific facts and how they relate to the movies that comprise the core of this essay.

e. Italy After Aldo Moro's Death: The End of the Years of Lead.

Even though the Red Brigades believed that through Moro's kidnapping they

ignited the proletarian revolution by having attacked the heart of the state, this move proved to have initiated the downfall of the terrorist organization. Having already been repudiated by the Communist Party and its followers, the Red Brigades lost nearly all the sympathies of the working class. The signal that the Red Brigades' fight would soon come to an end was the murder of the syndicalist and member of the Italian Communist Party Guido Rossa, who was killed for having informed authorities about a Red Brigades member hiding flyers behind a booth; Colarizi further elucidates on this matter: "Tra le fasce estremiste operaie, l'assassinio a Genova nel 1979 del sindacalista Guido Rossa gela anche le residue simpatie per i *compagni che sbagliano*; e le BR perdono terreno persino in quell'area movimentista della nuova sinistra e dell'autonomia dove del resto si abbatte una durissima repressione poliziesca e giudiziaria" (451). Even though the Red Brigades continued their activities in the 1980s, the organization eventually abandoned the armed struggle and, with the exhortation of the members of the "nucleo storico" who were in prison, implemented the *ritirata strategica*, or the withdrawal from the armed struggle.

The end of the *anni di piombo* cannot be attributed to any specific year because the trail of violence of left-wing and right-wing organizations continued throughout the 1980s. As the Red Brigades carried out their last attempts at attacking the state, the "strategy of tension" left its last wound on Italian society with the bomb at the Bologna train station on August 2nd, 1980, which killed eighty-five people.¹⁵

¹⁵ The bomb at the Bologna train station has been attributed to the right-wing group Nuclei Armati Rivoluzionari. Even though the Neo-fascists Valerio Fioravanti and Francesca Mambro were arrested in relation to the bombing, a series of recent investigations suggest that the right-wing may not be involved in this attack, attributing the responsibility to different organizations such as the CIA, Licio Gelli's P2, and the PLO.

CHAPTER 2

a. Cinema and the “Years of Lead”

Thus far, this study has concentrated on the historical events that have constituted the “years of lead.” Even though the *anni di piombo* spanned over a period of about twenty years, the first cinematographic representation of these events, more precisely of the Moro kidnapping, was conceived only in the second half of the eighties, when political terrorism in Italy had already reached its breaking point. The presence of the theme of terrorism can be seen in movies throughout the 1970s; however, none of them focus on factual events, preferring instead to keep the *anni di piombo* as a backdrop for the plots. Many of the movies produced in the Seventies that make references to the armed struggle phenomenon can be classified as detective stories in which the main character is often a police officer whose duty is that of capturing a criminal who is affiliated with a radical political organization. Regarding the films of the 1970s, Christian Uva provides a useful description: “Come si è visto, in questo periodo è soprattutto il cinema popolare a tentare di fronteggiare, attraverso il filtro dei generi, un simile stato di cose. Nasce e velocemente si sviluppa il poliziesco all’italiana, o, come fu spregiativamente definito da certa critica ideologica il *poliziottesco*” (23). Many of these movies, such as Mauro Bolognini’s *Imputazione di omicidio per uno studente* (1972),

Stefano Vanzina's *La polizia ringrazia* (1972), Lucio de Caro's *Processo per direttissima* (1974), and Massimo Pirri's *Italia: ultimo atto?* (1977), take inspiration from factual events by adopting terrorism as a background, but the actual plots are purely fictional and the characters are invented, even though some may allude to real people. Among the cinematographic repertoire of the 1970s, only Elio Petri's *Todo modo* (1976) makes allusions to Aldo Moro, known in the movie as "M." The movie, which is an adaptation of Leonardo Sciascia's novel *Todo modo*, makes clear references to Aldo Moro and the DC, but the plot is purely fictional and the statesman's real name is never used.¹⁶ One will have to wait for Giuseppe Ferrara's 1986 movie *Il caso Moro* to find a cinematographic work that has factual events as its basis and that utilizes the real names of the people who were involved with the Democrazia Cristiana and the Red Brigades. *Il caso Moro* is crucial for the progression of this study because it is the first cinematographic representation of the Aldo Moro kidnapping and of the events that led to his death. It is also the first time that an Aldo Moro character takes part in a movie and becomes its main character. Another movie, which adopted *Il caso Moro*'s approach and inclusion of Moro, is Renzo Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, which was released

¹⁶ The character M., who is based on Aldo Moro, was portrayed by the actor Gian Maria Volonté, who also starred as the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana in Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*. The portrayal of Moro in the two movies, nevertheless, differs substantially, as in Petri's movie the character M. acquires a negative aura whereas in Ferrara's movie Aldo Moro is seen as a positive force. In discussing the two movies, Francesco Ventura, in his volume entitled *Il cinema e il caso Moro*, explains: "Il personaggio centrale del Presidente, la maschera di Aldo Moro interpretata da Gian Maria Volonté, incarna la figura del capo politico conciliante, accomodante, il 'mediatore' per eccellenza, che mira ad accontentare tutti, ma è segretamente animato da un'infinita sete di potere. La sua reputazione pubblica è immacolata, ma gli 'scheletri nell'armadio', si scoprirà, non mancano. Nell'interpretazione di Volonté, vicina a un'imitazione caricaturale e farsesca di Moro, il Presidente è viscido, quasi effeminato, estenuante e untuoso nella sua continua e ipocrita attività di 'mediazione', dall'oratoria contorta, melliflua, dubbiosa e tormentata" (182). The 'mediazione' mentioned in Petri's *Todo modo* could be an allusion to the *compromesso storico* between the Democrazia Cristiana and the Italian Communist Party. Ventura labels *Todo modo* as a 'profezia rovesciata' because at the conclusion of the movie, the President, or M., destroys his own party in order to save the country from political corruption and commits suicide. Little did Petri know that in 1978, a few years after *Todo modo*, Aldo Moro would be the one destroyed by the *linea della fermezza* held by the members of his own political organization.

on the 25th anniversary of Aldo Moro's death in 2003, the same year Bellocchio's movie *Buongiorno, notte* made its debut. Even though Ferrara and Martinelli's films differ considerably, they both try to create a new representation of Aldo Moro through an attentive examination of all the events surrounding the politician's kidnapping and subsequent execution. Also, interestingly enough, both Ferrara and Martinelli opt for an approach which takes into account conspiracy theories, thus distancing themselves from the common notion that Red Brigades alone were responsible for Aldo Moro's death.

In this chapter I will analyze the character of Aldo Moro delineated in *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* and I will attempt to clarify how these cinematic representations do not in fact create a new conception of the character of Aldo Moro. These movies provide an alternative interpretation of the events surrounding his death and they shed some light on who might have been responsible for his kidnapping but they also seem to overshadow the essence of the statesman's martyrdom. It is in Bellocchio's movie that there will be instead the conception of a new Aldo Moro, even though there are no attempts on the part of the director to examine the historical facts and the different conspiracy theories that deal with Aldo Moro's assassination.

b. Giuseppe Ferrara's Il caso Moro: The 55 Days of Imprisonment Revisited

Giuseppe Ferrara's *Il caso Moro* should be considered an emblem among all the movies dealing with Aldo Moro's kidnapping and the phenomenon of left-wing terrorism in Italy because it marked the first time that a director tried to reproduce faithfully the fifty-five days of the statesman's kidnapping. Even though one cannot underestimate the role played by the media during the Moro kidnapping, Ferrara's movie provided the first

historical portrayal of all the events that took place during the fifty-five days that kept the nation under suspense. Through the media, viewers were able to see the images of the aftermath of the Via Fani massacre and the pictures taken by the terrorists of Moro in the *prigione del popolo*. With *Il caso Moro*, however, Ferrara was able to show what nobody had seen before: the reconstruction of the kidnapping that took place in Via Fani, the interior of the *prigione del popolo*, and the statesman's execution itself. What renders *Il caso Moro* even more emblematic is Ferrara's biographical-chronological approach to the matter in question, which makes the movie a somewhat important historical document. Guido Panvini, one of the contributors of Christian Uva's volume *Schermi di piombo*, highlights the relationship between historicity and terrorism in Italy:

A ben guardare . . . esiste sul terrorismo italiano un'abbondante letteratura composta dagli studi delle scienze sociali, dalle inchieste giornalistiche, da indagini controfattuali, fino alla presenza di decine di testimonianze e memorie. Sembramancare piuttosto, in questa prospettiva, un lavoro di storiografia di ampio respiro che riordini il materiale a disposizione e lo ricollegli ai diversi contesti politici e culturali, problematizzandolo e relativizzandolo. (105)

What Panvini described was exactly the problem found in cinema before Giuseppe Ferrara's movie; with *Il caso Moro*, Ferrara took all the different eyewitness accounts, all the stories provided by the media, and all the information gathered by investigators up until that point and laid them in chronological order, creating the first docudrama on the Aldo Moro case. In addition to the materials provided by the media and by the investigations on the case, Ferrara also utilized Robert Katz's book *Days of Wrath: The Ordeal of Aldo Moro, the Kidnapping, the Execution, the Aftermath*, in which the American author meticulously reconstructs and pieces together all the events dealing with the statesman's death. Robert Katz even worked on the movie's script alongside the director, and even though Katz's contribution to the overall screenplay was minimal, his

input on the historical aspect of the movie was crucial, as Ferrara stated in a 2007 interview conducted by Francesco Ventura: “Il libro è comunque fondamentale per l’insieme delle cose che racconta, e che sono assolutamente veritiere” (165).¹⁷ Ferrara also seemed to follow Katz’s interpretation of the facts, according to which Aldo Moro’s death was a result of the collective efforts of the Red Brigades, the Democrazia Cristiana, and the Masonic lodge P2. In the foreword to his book, Katz lays out his hypothesis regarding the case:

He was annihilated . . . by a government of his own creation, by the political party over which he presided, by the first parliamentary majority in the Atlantic alliance hinged to Eurocommunist power, by an aggregate of mass media looting truth in a news grayout, and finally, and by an astonishingly uncritical consensus of world opinion led to believe that some Great Principle of Democracy was the price of the prisoner’s freedom . . . the intelligence services of this and other member nations of NATO were concerned about what the five-time Prime Minister might reveal. (xxi)

Throughout the movie, Ferrara seems to focus on the way the government, the media, and the secret services tried actually to dehumanize the statesman and show how the *linea delle fermezza* was used to annihilate him. Many are the instances in the movie in which Ferrara’s political commentary and personal ideas about the case are visible. One example can be seen the scene in which the police and the investigators arrive in Via Fani, shortly after the killing of the escort and the kidnapping of Aldo Moro. In this particular part, the viewer sees an agent removing a briefcase from the car in which Moro was riding. This briefcase might have contained documents that could have compromised the government and the authorities. Subsequently, in another scene, we see the army

¹⁷ In actuality, Roberto Katz wanted the movie to be a political thriller instead of it being a docudrama, as Ferrara instead intended to do. Concerning Katz’s intentions on the movie, Ferrara explains: “Voleva fare un film di fantapolitica, un po’ come quello di Martinelli; voleva metterci un brigatista che sapeva le cose sul caso Moro, e che veniva ammazzato in carcere. Ma quando mai?” (165).

general and another lower ranking officer discussing the briefcase, alluding to the fact that it is in their custody. Going back to the scene in Via Fani, one of the officers had told Aldo Moro's wife, who had rushed to the scene, that all the briefcases had been taken by the Red Brigades.¹⁸ Other interesting segments in which the director's conviction that a conspiracy lies behind Moro's death are the episodes of Via Gradoli and of the false communiqué of the hostage's death, which lead authorities to look for Moro's body at Lake Duchessa.¹⁹ In both episodes, Ferrara alludes to the possibility that certain members of the government and of the armed forces might have actually wanted to prevent Aldo Moro's release. Altogether, Ferrara's film stands out as an astounding representation of the events surrounding the Moro case and, through a meticulous attentiveness to historical accuracy and the use of real footage taken from news reports of

¹⁸ The controversy over Aldo Moro's briefcases is also discussed by Sergio Flamigni: "Secondo Eleonora Moro, il presidente della Dc usciva abitualmente con cinque borse. Una conteneva i documenti riservati, una seconda i medicinali e gli oggetti personali, nelle altre tre, Moro conservava soltanto ritagli di giornali e le tesi di laurea dei suoi studenti. Subito dopo l'agguato sulla macchina vengono trovate due borse. La terza sarà incredibilmente recuperata soltanto cinque giorni più tardi, nel bagagliaio posteriore" (29). The other two briefcases were allegedly taken by the Red Brigades.

¹⁹ Via Gradoli has been a recurring name in all the investigations concerning Moro's disappearance. According to Flamigni: "Gli agenti del commissariato Flaminio Nuovo, comandati dal brigadiere Domenico Merola, vanno al numero 96 di via Gradoli con il compito di perquisire il palazzo. Nel corso del controllo, gli inquilini dell'interno 9 riferiscono agli agenti di avere sentito provenire dallo stesso pianerottolo, quella notte, un ticchettio simile a quello di segnali morse . . . Su quel pianerottolo c'è l'appartamento occupato dall'ingegner Mario Borghi. Siccome l'inquilino non risponde agli agenti, l'appartamento non viene perquisito. Un mese più tardi, il 18 aprile, in casa dell'ingegner Borghi verrà scoperta una base delle Brigate rosse, frequentata da esponenti di primo piano della colonna romana, tra cui Mario Moretti, membro del comitato esecutivo e Barbara Balzerani" (52). The Red Brigades' base in Via Gradoli had been discovered because a neighbor reported a water leak coming from the apartment above. When the authorities entered apartment 11, they discovered one of the Red Brigades' bases and they also discovered that the water leak had been caused by somebody intentionally placing the shower head over a crack in the wall, which caused the water to seep through. Ferrara alludes to the fact that there were government officials who might have known about the Red Brigades' base in Via Gradoli but did not want it to be discovered until April 18th. The Lake Duchessa hoax was instead the result of a false communiqué that announced Aldo Moro's death by suicide and identified Lake Duchessa as the place where his body was dumped. Even though the experts affirmed that the communiqué was false and that Lake Duchessa had been iced over for four months, the authorities and certain members of the Democrazia Cristiana were convinced that the communiqué was not a hoax and thus proceeded to authorize a search team to scan the waters of the lake. Ferrara clearly shows in his movie how certain members of the Democrazia Cristiana used this event to stall Aldo Moro's liberation.

that period, the director is able to bring forth questions about Aldo Moro's death that had never been brought to the public's attention before. The film, however, even though it brings to the forefront new scenarios regarding Moro's death, does not create a new conception of the statesman, which instead is something that Bellocchio will do in *Buongiorno, notte*.

c. *Giuseppe Ferrara's Aldo Moro*

Despite the strong emphasis on the role of the Democrazia Cristiana and the P2 Masonic lodge, Ferrara's Aldo Moro, portrayed by Gian Maria Volonté, stands out and remains the fulcrum throughout the entire movie. Interestingly enough, Volonté, who had also been a member of the Communist Party, did not sympathize with Aldo Moro and did not intend to portray the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana in a positive manner; in fact, as Christian Uva asserts, "colpisce il fatto che Volonté non avesse affatto simpatia per il politico democristiano e che perciò intendesse inizialmente fare un film *contro Moro*" (59).²⁰ Regardless of the actor's personal opinion and political affiliation, Volonté was able to bring back to life an Aldo Moro that up until then had only been memorialized by the pictures taken during his captivity in the *prigione del popolo*.²¹

Ferrara's intention, however, was not to create a new conception of the statesman but was

²⁰ Gian Maria Volonté's negative opinion about Aldo Moro is reflected in one of the opening scenes, in which the statesman tells a fable to his nephew Luca. The fable was actually written by Renato Curcio while he was in prison. Volonté chose to use this fable to show his dissent towards the figure of Aldo Moro, as 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).

²¹ Aldo Moro was photographed two times during the fifty-five days of his imprisonment. The first one, which was taken shortly after his kidnapping, depicts him in the *prigione del popolo* in front of the Red Brigades' banner, while the second one was taken after the false communiqué about his death. In the second photo he is in front of the banner and he is holding an edition of the newspaper *La Repubblica* in order to show that he is still alive and that the communiqué was a hoax.

instead to portray Aldo Moro in an historically accurate manner utilizing the power of cinematography because, as he states, “il cinema ha questa qualità straordinaria, questo potere di ricostruire il passato come una macchina del tempo” (153). Ferrara tries to reconstruct every aspect of the statesman’s life starting from the morning of his kidnapping, in which Aldo Moro is seen saying goodbye to his family as he is about to leave for work, to the finding of his body in the trunk of the red Renault 4. The director also closely followed Aldo Moro’s series of letter exchanges with his wife and the members of the Democrazia Cristiana. In *Buongiorno, notte* instead, the only letter that is read is the one to the wife, in which Bellocchio makes sure to take out all the political commentary and the accusations against the Democrazia Cristiana. Volonté, by portraying all the different facets of Aldo Moro’s life, is able to restore humanity to the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana. We see Aldo Moro as a family man, at the beginning of the movie and through the letters to his wife; as a politician, through the letters to the DC and through his ideological exchanges with his captors; and also as a religious person, through his faith and his letters to the Pope. In Ferrara’s movie, we do not see Aldo Moro as a Christ-like figure, as we see in Bellocchio’s *Buongiorno, notte*, but rather we simply observe the recreation of the politician’s life as it really was, or at least as the film director thought it was. Ferrara’s intention was to bring him back to life as a man whom the Democrazia Cristiana and the secret services, according to the director’s thesis, tried to dehumanize. One clear example in the movie of the way Aldo Moro’s persona was being dismantled is the way the Democrazia Cristiana and some high ranking officials tried to strip away Aldo Moro’s humanity by asserting that the statesman had lost his sanity and that the statements included in his letters were a result of the

Stockholm Syndrome.²² The members of the Democrazia Cristiana, according to Ferrara's movie, tried to discredit Moro by questioning his sanity and by utilizing the media against him, whereas, through *Il caso Moro*, the statesman regains his dignity and is able to preserve his humanity. Even Katz shares Ferrara's same view about the Democrazia Cristiana's attempted dehumanization of Aldo Moro; as a matter of fact, the American author asserts: "The making of a nonperson of Aldo Moro, his physical and moral abandonment by society's forced withdrawal of his integrity, was determined by a curious conjunction of time and the vicissitudes of power" (xxii). Ferrara's intention is that of memorializing Aldo Moro's life by trying to reveal and bring forth the causes behind his death.

Both Gian Maria Volonté in *Il caso Moro* and Roberto Hertzlinka in *Buongiorno, notte* have immortalized the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana in their respective films and both have represented, to some degree, Aldo Moro in the mind of the viewers' psyche. Ferrara and Bellocchio, however, tried to focus on certain attributes of Aldo Moro's character, thus creating two very different portrayals. One clear example of how the two interpretations of Moro differ can be seen in their conversations between Moro and the members of the Red Brigades. The conversations between Bellocchio's Aldo Moro and the character of Mariano, who is based on Mario Moretti, acquire strong

²² In the article "Hostage Negotiation Consultant: Emerging Role for the Clinical Psychologist," Dwayne G. Fuselier explains: "The name of the syndrome comes from a 1973 hostage incident in Stockholm, Sweden, in which four bank employees were held for 5 days in a bank vault. Surprisingly, the hostages reported fearing the police more than their captors during the ordeal, and afterwards they felt puzzled because they had no feelings towards their captors. This phenomenon occurs quite frequently in hostage incidents and does not seem to be related to the age, sex, or nationality of either the hostages or the captors. The syndrome appears to consist of three conditions that may be present individually or in combination: (a) negative feelings on the part of the hostage toward authorities, (b) positive feelings on the part of the hostage toward the hostage taker, and (c) positive feelings reciprocated by the hostage taker towards the hostage" (177).

religious tones, more so than in *Il caso Moro*. In *Buongiorno, notte*, the interaction between Aldo Moro and Mariano appears to be more of an exchange of opinions regarding religious beliefs rather than a political debate. One such example in Bellocchio's movie is when Aldo Moro compares the Red Brigades' belief system to a religion and says: "Guarda che noi cattolici siamo molto più tolleranti, abbiamo maggiore disponibilità al compromesso, di quanto lo siate voi, che assomigliate più ai primi cristiani, i cristiani intolleranti delle crociate, antieretici, e che sacrificate in nome di un'idea totalmente la vostra vita privata" (167). In *Il caso Moro* the conversation between the statesman and the kidnapper 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 Democrazia Cristiana and the government in the strategy of tension and in the SIM. Ferrara still portrays Aldo Moro as a religious person by showing him listening to the Catholic mass and reading the Bible, but in the conversations with the members of the Red Brigades there are no exchanges of opinions about religion.

d. Renzo Martinelli's Piazza delle Cinque Lune

The Moro case, after Ferrara's 1986 movie, had remained untouched by film makers until 2003, when both Renzo Martinelli and Marco Bellocchio released their own cinematographic interpretations of Aldo Moro's life. As mentioned before, Martinelli's *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* and Bellocchio's *Buongiorno, notte* bring forth two contrasting views of the Moro case, causing the two directors to criticize each other's cinematographic creations. Renzo Martinelli, as Ferrara did before him, presents the conspiracy theory and develops the entire movie around a series of questionable details about the Aldo Moro kidnapping. Even though Renzo Martinelli's movie, stylistically

speaking, differs considerably from Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*, the two movies share a common goal, which is, according to Martinelli himself, "la 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). In *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, the evolution of the plot finds its root in a film reel that Sieneese judge Rosario Sarracino, played by Donald Sutherland, receives from a person who was involved in the Via Fani massacre. While watching the film reel, Sarracino realizes that what he is seeing is the actual footage of the Aldo Moro kidnapping. This discovery leads Judge Sorrentino to conduct his own investigation on the Aldo Moro case. Judge Sorrentino's findings reveal that behind Aldo Moro's kidnapping lies an intricate network of government officials, P2 members, and the CIA. In the end, however, Judge Sorrentino finds out that he himself was being kept under surveillance by the P2. Martinelli appears to follow the same hypothesis advanced by Ferrara; however, in *Il caso Moro* the conspiracy theory acts as a backdrop to the actual chronology of events portrayed in the movie. In *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, Martinelli prefers to discard the chronological approach adopted by Ferrara in order to focus primarily on the conspiracy theory, rendering his movie a political thriller or *fantapolitico*, as Ferrara labeled it. For this reason, Martinelli, and to a lesser extent Ferrara, have criticized Marco Bellocchio's movie for not being historically accurate and for bringing forth an erroneous interpretation of the historic events surrounding Moro's kidnapping. In an interview conducted by Francesco Ventura in 2005, Renzo Martinelli in fact stated: "Bellocchio fa un'operazione un po' insidiosa: prende il memoriale di Anna Laura Braghetti e da lì ricava la sceneggiatura. Secondo me qualche critica di

carattere etico andrebbe fattaNon puoi prendere il caso Moro e reinterpretarlo, lo trovo un atto deontologicamente scorretto” (145). Marco Bellocchio, however, did not intend to reinterpret the Moro case, as Martinelli asserts; *Buongiorno, notte* is a reinterpretation of Aldo Moro himself, regardless of what the historical circumstances surrounding his kidnapping were. Renzo Martinelli, instead, seems to be more concerned with specific details about the way the kidnapping and the murder of Aldo Moro were executed. Of the same opinion is Alan O’Leary, who, in his article entitled “Moro, Brescia, Conspiracy: The Paranoid Style in Italian Cinema,” asserts that *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* “is not a film about the Moro kidnapping, but rather a ‘continuation’ of it, fascinated with the photogenic commonplaces of the kidnapping and distinct only in scale and bravura from the television images of the time” (57). By presenting a different reading of certain events and details concerning the kidnapping, Martinelli prolongs the Moro case both by posing new questions that have never been answered before and by formulating a new conspiracy theory. Additionally, one could even say, as O’Leary asserts, that “*Piazza delle Cinque Lune* is not a Moro film at all” (58). As a matter of fact, Aldo Moro appears only in very few scenes and the times he does appear, it is in the form of real photographs in which the statesman is portrayed with his wife and other members of his family. Aldo Moro also makes an appearance in a brief scene where Martinelli reconstructs the moment in which the statesman was photographed in the *prigione del popolo* in front of the Red Brigades’ banner. These are the only instances in which Aldo Moro is visibly recognizable in the movie. The leader of the Democrazia Cristiana is also present in the film segment of the kidnapping, where Martinelli reconstructs the events that took place in Via Fani on the morning of March 16th. Aldo Moro, however, is merely

a pawn that the director utilizes to demonstrate the validity of his conspiracy theory. Just as in *Il caso Moro*, the recreation of the Red Brigades' attack in Via Fani becomes the event from which the film evolves. In Marco Bellocchio's movie, the reenactment of the massacre is not shown because *Buongiorno, notte* is a movie about how Aldo Moro underwent a transformation in the *prigione del popolo*. Showing the events of Via Fani would have been irrelevant to the evolution and genesis of the movie. The viewer is aware of what happened in Via Fani through the images shown on the television in the apartment in Via Montalcini but the details of how the kidnapping was actually conducted are never presented.²³

e. Conspiracies and the Viewer's Alienation

The issue with emphasizing the conspiracy theory is that the viewers' attention shifts from the victim, Aldo Moro, to the intricate maze of events and details that comprise the plot. In Martinelli's film, and to a lesser extent in Ferrara's *Il caso Moro*,

²³ Marco Bellocchio has been criticized for having chosen not to show the massacre of Via Fani. Giuseppe Ferrara, for example, when asked his opinions about *Buongiorno, notte*, stated: "Perché i brigatisti rossi, è inutile che continuiamo a dire 'erano compagni che sbagliavano'. Erano dei criminali. La loro politica non giustifica gli assassini. I cinque della scorta, nel film di Bellocchio, non vengono quasi rammentati. È una strage: ma li vogliamo vedere ammazzare questi cinque, che tra l'altro dal punto di vista cinematografico e fisico e storico non è un episodio trascurabile? No, omertà, silenzio... Bellocchio non li vuole proprio rappresentare i Br mentre assassinano" (156-57). In *Buongiorno, notte*, however, the five members of Aldo Moro's escort are memorialized in the actual footage of the aftermath of the Via Fani massacre. The actual clip shows the bodies of the victims of the shooting. Bellocchio pays his homage to the victims of the Via Fani massacre also by showing footage from their funeral and by showing pictures of the five victims when they were alive while their names are being said in the background. It is indeed true that Bellocchio does not show the death of the five members of Moro's escort and he does not show the statesman's execution; however, he still shows the terrorists' brutality through the way they talk. In one of the conversations between Mariano and Chiara, Mariano says: "Chiara, questa è una prova per noi che non ci devono essere limiti nella guerra rivoluzionaria. Non esiste un'azione che non si può fare. Per la vittoria del proletariato è lecito uccidere anche la propria madre. Quello che oggi ci sembra inconcepibile, assurdo, disumano è in realtà un atto eroico di annullamento della nostra realtà soggettiva. Il massimo dell'umanità. Noi dobbiamo ragionare così". Mariano says this to Chiara after she criticizes him for having decided that Moro's assassination is inevitable. Mariano's words attest to the Red Brigades' brutality and lack of moral boundaries. Bellocchio may use this quote to demonstrate the brutal ideology of the terrorists. Given the fact that *Buongiorno, notte* takes a more psychological approach to the Aldo Moro case, he relies more on showing the violence contained in words rather than showing physical violence.

the emphasis on the P2 conspiracy prevents viewers from accessing the true essence of Aldo Moro's victimhood because they will be more concerned with making sense and putting in order the events and the facts being presented. Alan O'Leary is of the same opinion: "Politically, the problem with the use of the conspiracy mode is that the success of the 'plot' may seem irresistible, and the viewer can be left feeling enervated and politically impotent" (50). In movies like *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, the viewer might feel helpless because in the end there is no resolution and the intricacy of the events prevents him or her from grasping the significance of Aldo Moro's death. Furthermore, the film's conclusion enhances the public's fear that the entire Italian society is under the threat of a very powerful clandestine group such as P2. In Bellocchio's movie, instead, the conspiracy mode is adopted minimally, allowing instead the focus to be primarily on Aldo Moro. In *Buongiorno, notte* there are a few instances in which the director might hint at the fact that a conspiracy could lie behind Moro's death; however, these episodes are subtle and they do not take the viewer's attention away from the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana. Some of the episodes in *Buongiorno, notte* that might allude to a conspiracy are when the Pope receives a letter from the government in which he is ordered to maintain the *linea della fermezza* in his address to the Red Brigades. Another scene that might allude to the conspiracy mode of viewing and interpretation is when Chiara takes Aldo Moro to the front door and through the peephole she sees police officers waiting outside the door. This particular scene might allude to the possibility that perhaps the authorities knew where Aldo Moro was being kept captive and that in reality they did not want to liberate him. In *Buongiorno, notte* there are also references to the false communiqué and the Lake Duchessa hoax. However, this information is provided

by the television in the kidnapper's apartment. The television plays an important role in Bellocchio's movie because, as Marini-Maio explains, "Constantly turned on, the appliance provides an intra-diegetic commentary on political and social reactions to the kidnapping, reporting the politicians' declarations and interviews, the images of mass protests in several Italian cities, and the Pope's appeals to the terrorists" (198). The use of the television allows the political commentary to remain in the background and allows the viewer's attention to remain on the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana. The viewer may or may not choose to pay attention to the information provided by the television. In *Buongiorno, notte*, one cannot refuse to pay attention to Aldo Moro because he is the pivot of the film, whereas in Ferrara and Martinelli's movies, the focus on Aldo Moro is constantly overpowered by the historical and political information contained in the films. By putting the political commentary in the background, Bellocchio allows Aldo Moro to be more accessible because the viewer does not have to interpret all the historical events and piece them together. It is precisely by putting the political commentary and the historical events in the background that Bellocchio is able to conceive Aldo Moro's transformation into a Christ-like figure in *Buongiorno, notte*. In *Il caso Moro* and *Piazza delle Cinque Lune*, Aldo Moro's character remains constrained within the boundaries set by the historical and political events surrounding his kidnapping. By slashing away at the web of history, politics, and conspiracy theories, we find at the heart of this dark forest a Christological light.²⁴ We find at the center of that luminescence none other than a renewed and Christ-like vision of Aldo Moro. For this reason Marco Bellocchio, when explaining some of his choices in *Buongiorno, notte*, states: "Non potevo subire la

²⁴ Interestingly enough, Martinelli decides to conclude his movie with a view of Rome from above superimposed with a spider web.

tragedia di venticinque anni prima, non potevo accettare quella fatalità religiosa. Dovevo tradirla, dovevo ribellarmi a quella cronaca inerte, indifferente, disperata” (74). By allowing Aldo Moro to free himself from the historical events that have defined him, Marco Bellocchio is able to create a new conception of the statesman.

CHAPTER 3

a. The Birth of Aldo Moro's Character

In his essay entitled *La passione secondo Marco Bellocchio*, Giancarlo Lombardi brings forth the notion of a resurrection of Aldo Moro's character; Lombardi, in fact, states that "il Moro descritto da Bellocchio è una vittima sacrificale che muore e risorge non più uomo politico ma mero uomo" (392). Lombardi, in addition to the concept of a resurrection, also mentions the transformation that Moro undergoes from the moment of his kidnapping to his execution. In regard to this transformation, Lombardi asserts that "[Aldo Moro] da *personaggio* diventa *uomo solo*, e da *uomo solo* diventa *creatura*" (393). The reason for making such a movie was not faithfully to represent the historical events, as other directors have done in the past. Bellocchio wanted to create a new understanding of the Moro kidnapping by bringing together historical events and imagination.²⁵ In reference to Bellocchio's depiction of the events surrounding Moro's death, Christian Uva states: "Così, l'opera di Bellocchio, attraverso la precisa *politica*, opzione di mettere sullo stesso piano realtà e immaginazione, si configura come una delle

²⁵ The opening scene, in which Chiara and Ernesto are seeing the apartment they intend on renting, is particularly interesting because the camera stops on the image of a poster of Hollywood. The affiche says "Hollywood Diner" and it shows Elvis Presley, James Dean, Marlon Brando, and Marilyn Monroe sitting at the counter in a diner. The three men and the woman in the poster might allude to the actual terrorists, who are also three men and one woman. Marco Bellocchio might have wanted to bring the viewer's attention to the Hollywood poster to show that *Buongiorno, notte* is fictional and that cinema has the power to change reality through the use of imagination.

più inventive e libera della filmografia sul terrorismo, intendendo non già dire la verità su quei fatti, bensì preferendo mostrare che cosa sia accaduto, quale evento oggettivo si sia prodotto nella nostra storia con il sequestro e l'uccisione di Aldo Moro *al di là della volontà e delle intenzioni di tutte le parti in causa*" (75). One of the aspects of the movie that Lombardi, as well as other critics, seem to overlook is the symbolism associated with the rebirth of Aldo Moro's character. Lombardi analyzes the symbols that could represent Aldo Moro's resurrection at the end of the movie; however, the same sort of analysis should also be conducted on the opening scenes of the movie, in which we see the presence of a newborn baby. As a matter of fact, the baby makes his appearance in the movie at the same time that Aldo Moro is first introduced in the apartment in Via Montalcini. The camera focuses on the image of the baby whom Chiara places on the couch, while in the background we see the *brigatisti* bringing into the apartment the wooden box containing Aldo Moro. In this particular scene, the director uses long lens in order to keep the viewer's attention on the baby, whereas the *brigatisti* in the background appear to be out of focus. Even though the background is not in focus, the spectator is still able to recognize the *brigatisti* bringing in the wooden box. The use of the long lens, however, makes it obvious that the director wanted the attention to be on the figure of the baby lying on the couch. It is also interesting to note how the baby is covered in a white blanket, which can be interpreted as a symbol of innocence.²⁶ This specific shot is critical for the understanding of Bellocchio's intentions in making *Buongiorno, notte*.

²⁶ The presence of the color white will reveal itself to be important especially in the now emblematic photos of Aldo Moro, in which the statesman's is photographed wearing a white shirt in front of the red banner of the Red Brigades. In regard to this, Giancarlo Lombardi comments: "Aldo Moro rimane simbolicamente vestito in quella camicia in cui viene ritratto nelle foto scattate dalle BR nel covo, le foto che appaiono sui giornali di tutto il mondo e negli ultimi anni a venire sulle copertine di moltissimi libri" (398).

The *brigatisti* then try to make the wooden box fit through the opening that they built through the bookcase, which conceals what will be Aldo Moro's prison. The *brigatisti*, however, are not able to make the wooden box fit through the opening because its proportions exceed those of the opening. At this point we hear Mariano, who is the leader of the terrorist cell, asking his comrades in what position was Aldo Moro placed in the box and where is his head. Mariano's question about the position of Moro's head might allude to some sort of birth because in a parturition the first part of the baby to exit the mother's womb is the head. In describing the scene of Aldo Moro's entrance in the *prigione del popolo* Lombardi uses the term "forzato," which can be associated to a parturition, because this episode can be interpreted as a "parto forzato" of Aldo Moro's character, who will transform himself during his imprisonment, analogous to a form of incubation. Once Aldo Moro is placed in his cell, we hear a door bell. As the kidnapers hide in the office room adjacent to Moro's prison, Chiara goes to the door and, seeing that is the neighbor, takes that baby and gives it back to her. The three male terrorists then ask Chiara who was at the door and she replies that it was "un bambino". One of the terrorists, who is obviously perplexed by Chiara's answer, repeats her answer and she replies again that it was a "neonato." Once again, this wording may be an allusion to the birth of the new character of Aldo Moro. Chiara could have said that it was the neighbor at the door, instead she only mentioned the baby. Anna Laura Braghetti in *Il prigioniero* does mention a few episodes in which the neighbor dropped a few items in her property and knocked at the door so that she could retrieve them. In *Il prigioniero*, however, there are no episodes in which the neighbor asked Anna Laura Braghetti to babysit. Bellocchio definitely drew some inspiration from Braghetti's memorial, as far as showing

the neighbor dropping items in the terrorists' property, but the scene of the baby is purely fictitious and brings forth the question of why the director chose to add this detail in the movie. If the scene is analyzed on its own, it almost seems to clash with the rest of the movie because there seems to be no logical explanation for its inclusion in the movie. If one analyzes it separately from the rest of the movie, one could even say that Bellocchio could have easily done without including the baby in the initial scenes. A macro-textual analysis, however, reveals that the infant was instead placed in the movie as to signify the birth of the new conception of Aldo Moro.

According to the critic Alan O'Leary, Chiara plays the role of the mother in this scene: "It could be argued that the character of Chiara is reduced (from Bragheti's self-portrayal in her memoir) to a reactive 'maternal' role" (34). As a matter of fact, Chiara improvises a motherly role because she has temporarily to take care of the baby that her neighbor left in Chiara's custody at the beginning of the movie. The character of Chiara, however, will eventually be reversed, as I will discuss later in this essay.

b. The Transformation of Aldo Moro from Statesman to Man

As soon as the character of Aldo Moro, as it is conceived by Bellocchio, is introduced in the *prigione del popolo*, he undergoes a transformation from a statesman known for his inaccessible and complex political speeches to an individual able to deliver a message accessible to all human beings.²⁷ In reference to Aldo Moro's transformation,

²⁷ Leonardo Sciascia, in his work entitled *L'affaire Moro*, makes reference to what Pier Paolo Pasolini said about the complexity of Moro's language: "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). Pasolini saw the Democrazia Cristiana as the continuation of the Fascist state and noted how the language adopted by these politicians started to change by becoming less accessible to the common man.

Giancarlo Lombardi asserts: “Quel che accade nella *prigione del popolo* dipinta da Bellocchio, tuttavia, è che mentre le BR rimangono preda di questa malattia endemica delle organizzazioni terroristiche italiane, Aldo Moro esperisce una vera e propria trasformazione” (395). The only member of the Red Brigades who does not seem to remain entrapped within the ideological walls that enveloped the terrorist group is Chiara, who is able to see Aldo Moro as a man and not as a statesman. Aldo Moro not only becomes an individual but also assumes the role of a father figure who looks over Chiara and assists her in her dreams and imagination. In regard to the conception of Aldo Moro as a father-like character, Virgilio Fantuzzi states: “Nel corso degli interrogatori ai quali l’onorevole viene sottoposto si ha l’impressione di assistere non già ad un confronto tra avversari politici ma al conflitto tra un genitore pieno di saggezza e i figli ribelli che, non trovando argomenti validi per contrastarlo sul piano delle idee, finiscono con il far prevalere le ragioni della forza che li inducono a sopprimerlo” (86-87). In one scene in particular we see the figure of Aldo Moro visiting Chiara while she is sleeping in her room. It is interesting to see how the image of Aldo Moro and the crucifix on the wall appear in the same frame, as if Bellocchio were alluding to perception of the statist as a Christ/fatherlike figure. While Chiara lies on the bed sleeping next to a copy of Marx’s and Engels’ book *The Holy Family*, Aldo Moro is shown shaking his head with 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 actions.²⁸

²⁸ *The Holy Family* was written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in 1844. In this book, Marx and Engels critique the Hegelian view of religion and the notion of a renovation of Christianity. In regard to *The Holy Family*, Raines states: “For Marx, religion is ‘the self-esteem of man.’ And given the oppressive conditions of the masses, that self-esteem expresses itself as the cry of ‘the heartless world of soulless conditions.’ Religion is a protest in the face of suffering. But for Marx this remains the expression of a consciousness that is inverted; it is the self-esteem of ‘man who has either not won through to himself or has already lost himself again.’ Rather than lead to struggle and change, religion makes suffering sufferable; it induces resignation before a higher power” (170). The reason for Aldo Moro shaking his head can be attributed to

Aldo Moro's transformation into a father figure might hint at the presence of a family in the apartment in Via Montalcini. On this matter, Marini-Maio states: "Moro and Chiara embody, respectively, the paternal role and the line of the feminine within the estranged kinship of the apartment's metaphorical family" (217). Aldo Moro, in fact, could possibly fill the void caused by the absence of the family in the kidnapper's life. All the members of the Red Brigades in the movie appear to be lacking a familial element of some sort. Chiara, for example, is lacking a paternal figure in her life because her father died. The other terrorists seem to be even more removed from their families. Mariano, in one of his conversations with Moro, talks about how his decision to join the armed struggle has separated him from his son. Ernersto is also lacking a familial element because on more than one occasion he complains about missing his girlfriend; he even leaves the apartment to see her but, when he returns, he professes his loyalty to the armed struggle by labeling himself as a "soldato." Throughout the movie, no information about Primo's family is released; however, we can deduce that he too is removed from his family. Primo never talks about his family and he does not join Chiara during the lunch with her relatives.

The presence of this metaphorical family comprised of Aldo Moro and the terrorists might explain the episode in which the priest comes to bless the house. During the blessing, the priest says: "Preghiamo insieme e diciamo: benedici Signore la nostra famiglia perché tutti i membri di questa famiglia siano riuniti nell'amore e nel vincolo della pace che sono il dono di Cristo risorto. Preghiamo. Benedici Signore la nostra famiglia."

his disapproval of Chiara reading a book that condemns religion but also to the fact that Chiara and the other *brigatisti*, by reading works such as *The Holy Family* and by absorbing its message, fail to see that they too have lost themselves, just as, according to Marx's view, a religious person does.

One should first reflect on the realism of this scene: the priest who visits each apartment in a building complex and invites each family to gather in prayer. This visit not only corresponds to a practice that still continues in Italy but it also points clearly to the season of the film's action: such visits by the parish priest take place during Lent, in preparation to Easter Sunday, the day on which Christianity celebrates the Resurrection of Christ. Thus, this gathering contains an implicit invitation to all characters to set aside differences and form a true family; in brief, an invitation to mutual forgiveness and family union. At the same time, however, it further highlights the brigatists' refusal to forgive and forge a new unity. Ultimately, therefore, it points out that the prisoner, present but excluded from the communal prayer because he is in his cell, is in fact present among them because of his forgiveness, and he is already assured a life beyond those walls and the brigatists' murderous actions. This episode might be another allusion to Aldo Moro's conception as a Christ-like figure and for the resurrection that is to come at the end of the movie. By forgiving his captors and by bringing forth a message of brotherhood, Aldo Moro is the only one who is able to live beyond the walls of political ideologies, within which the *brigitisti* will instead remain prisoners.²⁹

Chiara, as the movie progresses, tries to stand by her ideals with firmness even

²⁹ Another scene in which the notion of the family is present is when Chiara attends her relatives' Easter lunch. This is one of the few segments of the movie to be filmed entirely outside. In this particular scene we see Chiara's relatives, some of which were partisans in World War II, sitting together around a table. Chiara, instead, sits on a patch of grass close to the table with her brother and Enzo. At one point, Chiara's uncle gets up and invites everybody to make a toast to Chiara's deceased father, who had also been part of the Resistance. During his speech, the uncle talks about the partisans' experience during World War II and says that the Resistance was fighting for *la fratellanza* and for *la gioia di vivere*. These ideals stand in contrast to Chiara's ideologies, which instead are not based on brotherhood and the joy of life. Another interesting aspect of this scene is that a newlywed couple, which happened to be at the same location, joins Chiara's relatives as they sing an old Resistance song. The presence of the newlywed couple may allude to the fact that the Resistance, by defeating Fascism, was trying to build something positive. Just as the couple are starting a new family, the Resistance tried to create a new Italy, based on the ideals of freedom and brotherhood. The Red Brigades, instead, as well as all the other subversive organizations of the *anni di piombo*, stood as the antithesis of the ideals brought forth by the Resistance.

though, in reality, she is the only member of the Red Brigades to undergo a transformation, although not to the extent that Aldo Moro does. While Aldo Moro's character experiences a change from statesman to a Christ/father-like figure, Chiara becomes the only one among the *brigatisti* to show some sort of compassion toward the prisoner. According to Adriano Aprà, in his essay entitled *Tormenti, estasi, rigenerazioni*, Bellocchio is able to show Moro's transformation by focusing on the character's religious connotations; as a matter of fact, Aprà states: "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). It is exactly through faith and the religious aspects of the movie that the spectator is able to witness Aldo Moro's transformation into a Christ-like figure. For example, the first time that Chiara observes Moro through the peephole, the statesman is portrayed praying on his knees. Crucial to understanding the conception of Aldo Moro as a Christ figure is also the letter he wrote to his wife. Bellocchio, in order to put an emphasis on the religious aura that surrounded Aldo Moro's character, only used a small portion of Aldo Moro's letter to his wife. As a matter of fact, Bellocchio used only the elements of the letter that would help Moro deliver a clear Christian message of forgiveness and love for other fellow human beings. In the actual letter that Moro wrote to his wife, the statist begins by condemning the Democrazia Cristiana for how it handled the kidnapping and ends it with a remark about how the Pope as well did very little to convince the Red Brigades to release him. In the letter that Chiara reads in her room there is no political connotation and all we hear, from Aldo Moro's voice, is its Christian message.³⁰ In *Buongiorno, notte*, Aldo Moro begins

³⁰ Here are some of the portions of Aldo Moro's omitted by Marco Bellocchio: ". . . non mi pare il caso di discutere della cosa in sé e dell'incredibilità di una sanzione che cade sulla mia mitezza e la mia

his letter by saying “siamo ormai, credo, giunti al momento conclusivo.” Regarding Aldo Moro’s letter, Virgilio Fantuzzi points out that “Aldo Moro viene a trovarsi nelle stesse condizioni nelle quali si trovava Gesù nel Getsemani” (88). Aldo Moro appears in fact to resign himself to the fact that the moment of his death is now near, but he also seems to accept his death. After the letter’s opening statement, Aldo Moro proceeds to convey his Christian message and seems to offer his forgiveness towards the people who intend to harm him. The portion of Aldo Moro’s letter that Bellocchio adopts to put a stronger emphasis on the Christ-like characteristics of Aldo Moro is the following:

“ . . . 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)

The Christological aspects of this excerpt are striking because, through these words, Aldo Moro is able to deliver a strong Christian message that finds its foundations in the concept of forgiveness. Through this letter, Bellocchio is not only able to associate Aldo Moro’s character with Christ, but he is also able to shed Aldo Moro of any political ideology. Giancarlo Lombardi states: “Non bisogna dimenticare . . . che è anche Aldo Moro ad esser vittima, a modo suo, di un imprigionamento ideologico. La sola differenza è che Moro, nel film di Bellocchio, sembra liberarsi dell’ideologia proprio durante la

moderazione. Certo ho sbagliato, a fin di bene, nel definire l’indirizzo della mia vita. Ma ormai non si può cambiare. Resta solo di riconoscere che tu avevi ragione. Si può solo dire che forse saremmo stati in altro modo puniti, noi e i nostri piccoli. Vorrei restasse ben chiara la piena responsabilità della D.C. con il suo assurdo ed incredibile comportamento. Essa va detto con fermezza così come si deve rifiutare eventuale medaglia che si suole dare in questo caso. E’ poi vero che moltissimi amici (ma non ne so i nomi) o ingannati dall’idea che il parlare mi danneggiasse o preoccupati delle loro personali posizioni, non si sono mossi come avrebbero dovuto. Cento sole firme raccolte avrebbero costretto a trattare. E questo è tutto per il passato Tutto è inutile, quando non si vuole aprire la porta. Il Papa ha fatto pochino: forse ne avrà scrupolo” (286-87).

prigionia, e questo viene testimoniato dai suoi scritti dal carcere” (395). Aldo Moro is able to deliver a much stronger message than the one professed by the Red Brigades because, as the *brigatisti* are unable to break down Moro’s integrity with their political ideology, the statesman is able to pose an influence on at least one of the *brigatisti*: Chiara. Concerning the weakness of the *brigatisti*’s message, Virgilio Fantuzzi asserts: “... i suoi carcerieri sono prigionieri di schemi ideologici che impediscono loro di entrare in contatto con la realtà. Non vedono, non ascoltano, non capiscono, non ragionano. La loro visione del mondo è affidata al linguaggio delirante dei comunicati. La logica delle loro azioni parte dalla negazione della realtà e li conduce, come estrema conseguenza, alla negazione della vita” (88). Aldo Moro, instead, appears to make an effort throughout the movie to open himself to understanding the message that the Red Brigades were trying to convey. It is also interesting to note how Aldo Moro always refers to the *brigatisti* using the formal “Lei,” both as a sign of distance from the Red Brigades’ ideology but also as a sign of respect and openness, whereas Mariano and his comrades always refer to him using the informal “tu.”

The scene in which Chiara reads Aldo Moro’s letter is crucial not only for the understanding of the statesman’s transformation into a Christ-like figure, but also because it becomes a pivotal element in Chiara becoming the direct recipient of Moro’s message. Chiara, as the name suggests, is the only one who is capable of letting the light of compassion shine through her. Nicoletta Marini-Maio also agrees with the notion of Chiara as a source of light: “Chiara, which in Italian means ‘bright, clear’ in evident antiphrasis with the darkness in which she is psychologically immersed, is the central character and the focalizer for the whole film” (194). As Chiara is reading Moro’s letter,

with the crucifix affixed on the wall in the background, we hear Aldo Moro's voice as if he were reading the letter to himself, arguably Aldo Moro's voice penetrating Chiara's spirit. Chiara is then able to transpose Aldo Moro's letter with another letter written by a partisan to his wife while he is waiting to be executed by the fascists during World War II. This is the turning point for Chiara because it is now that she realizes that what she and her companions are doing is the same as what the fascists were doing in World War II. By resorting to murder, they would engage in an abominable act not only against Aldo Moro but against life itself. It is in this scene, in the presence of the crucifix, that Chiara understands Aldo Moro's real message of compassion and forgiveness. Giancarlo Lombardi provides further elucidation on this scene: "Sovrapposto ai morti della resistenza . . . Aldo Moro assume dunque ben altra carica simbolica — la sua morte assume le vesti di un sacrificio politico, civile e religioso" (397). By understanding and comprehending the real beauty of Moro's message, Chiara enables Aldo Moro's character to live beyond the walls of his cell and to eventually resurrect.

Adriano Aprà, also in regard to Moro's strength, states that "racchiuso fra quattro mura come un cane, è chiaro che la sua forza interiore gli consente di trapassare [quelle mura] quasi non esistessero" (21) and Chiara is the only one who is able to see the statesman's spiritual strength. Another scene in which the role of Chiara as a direct recipient of Aldo Moro's message is when the statist asks all of the *brigatisti*, except Mariano who is out, to express their opinion regarding the letter he wrote to the Pope. In the frame we see Aldo Moro giving his back to the camera, while he is standing under the light of his chamber, and the two *brigatisti*, Ernesto and Primo, are standing on the sides shrouded by the darkness of the room. Chiara is the only one facing the camera and a dim

light shows the traits of her face. Even in this scene, Chiara begins crying as she listens to Moro's letter, thus implying that she is the only one who is overwhelmed by the sense of compassion she feels for the man who stands in the cell. When Moro asks Chiara if she is crying because she was touched by his letter, she replies that what brought her to tears was the anger she felt as a reaction to the letter's tone of resignation and formality. However, when Aldo Moro then adds that he will rewrite the letter, we see an expression of regret on Chiara's face for having criticized his letter. Even though Chiara condemns Moro's letter for being too cold, her body language indicates that instead she was really touched by his plea for forgiveness and love. Even this scene might testify to Moro's as well as to Chiara's transformation. In fact, one can see a direct correlation between Aldo Moro's transformation and Chiara's change, which can also be attributed to the statesman's writing style. In fact, as Lombardi asserts "l'italiano del Moro prigioniero, per quanto rimanga spesso contorto, non partecipa più della freddezza del suo pensiero politico, ma persegue altre vie, umane e umanistiche" (392). Moro's change in writing style means that his message is now accessible to all, but only Chiara is able to grasp it and allow it to have its effect on her. In reference to this Nicoletta Marini-Maio states: "Moro gradually comes to dominate Chiara's imagination and dreams, inducing a process of inner metamorphosis that takes her from ideological rigidity and emotional detachment to historical awareness and human *pietas*" (217).

Although Chiara is the only one to show some sort of compassion towards the prisoner, it must be clarified that she is not exempt from the crime committed against Aldo Moro. Throughout the movie, Chiara does very little to free the prisoner, even though she could have easily released him from his cell on several occasions. For

example, Chiara could have freed him at night, when all her other comrades were sleeping. In one scene in particular Chiara is seen putting sleeping draught in the soup that will be eaten for dinner so that none of her comrades will be awake during the night. She also writes a message on Aldo Moro's napkin advising him not to eat his dinner. She then unlocks the prisoner's cell so that he could get out during the night, when all the terrorists are sleeping. All these actions, however, take place in Chiara's mind and in reality she really does nothing to facilitate his escape. She also tries to convince the other members of the terrorist cell to release the prisoner but her attempts are weak and she does not seem to be able to overpower her companions' ideological strength. After Mariano communicates to Aldo Moro his death sentence, Chiara confronts her comrades and professes her disagreement with the final verdict. During the confrontation, Chiara appears to be the weakest character because she is not able to overpower the other terrorists' ideological strength. Her disagreement over Aldo Moro's execution even causes the other *brigatisti* to question her commitment to the armed struggle; however, when she sees that her credibility as a member of the Red Brigades is being jeopardized, she quickly professes her loyalty to the group and she abandons her fight to convince the others to release the prisoner. Chiara appears as a weak character in comparison to the other kidnapers, but it is precisely through this weakness that she shows empathy with the prisoner and imagines his escape, even though in reality she does nothing to free him.

c. Trapped in an Ideology

Another aspect of *Buongiorno, notte* that may indicate the terrorists' ideological entrapment is the fact that the movie is almost entirely filmed inside closed spaces. None of the members of the Red Brigades, except Chiara, are seen outside of the apartment in

Via Montalcini. Even the scenes in which we see Prospero going on the terrace are filmed from inside the apartment, looking outside. The only segment of the movie in which one of the terrorists, more precisely Chiara, is seen outside is during the lunch scene. Chiara is seen outside even when she is on the bus and when she goes to buy the newspapers at the stand but, as Bellocchio explains, “La scena sull’autobus è un esterno apparente perché continuiamo a guardare dal di dentro. Anche nella scena di Chiara all’edicola . . . abbiamo mantenuto l’inquadratura sempre dal di dentro” (38). The episode of the family lunch is of particular interest because the Red Brigades’ ideology is put in contrast with that of the Italian Resistance.³¹ The man who stands up at the table, who was a partisan during World War II, makes an announcement in remembrance of Chiara’s father. During his speech, he quotes Chiara’s deceased parent and says: “Se un uomo esprimesse soltanto un quinto delle sue possibilità tutti i problemi dell’umanità sarebbero risolti. Regnerebbe solo l’amore, la pace, la giustizia, la fratellanza, la gioia della vita.” All these concepts stand in direct contrast to what the Red Brigades were doing by keeping Aldo Moro prisoner and by assassinating him. Enzo, Chiara’s friend, also plays an important role in this segment, as in the rest of the movie, because he condemns the Red Brigades’ ideology. Enzo appears to be the means through which Chiara gets in contact with the outside world. In addition to Enzo, Marini-Maio also identifies the television as a means through which the external world touches the enclosed life of the terrorists; in fact, she explains: “The external world flashes into the alienated life of the hideout mainly via two avenues: the television programs and Chiara’s colleague Enzo. Anticipating with ironical

³¹ The fact that a newlywed couple joins the group that is singing a song from the Resistance period might allude to the fact that the goal of the Resistance was to create something new for the country, after the fall of Nazi-fascism. Just as the couple is creating a new family, the Resistance wanted to create a new nation, free from Fascism.

anachronism the contemporary obsession with the small screen, Bellocchio portrays the brigadists' fixed gaze on television" (198).

d. Aldo Moro's Salvation

All the critics I have consulted for this essay have devoted ample attention to the final scenes of the movie *Buongiorno, notte* and to the symbolisms associated with Aldo Moro's imaginary resurrection. Both Lombardi and O'Leary, for example, agree on the fact that the scene in which Moro is portrayed outside of the *prigione del popolo*, while walking down the streets of Rome, symbolizes a form of spiritual resurrection. The final scene of Aldo Moro's funeral, in which the body is absent, furthers the notion of the symbolic resurrection of the character and its allusion to that of Christ. One key element to be taken into account is that Moro's salvation and resurrection is only possible because of Chiara. Apropos Moro's salvation, Virgilio Fantuzzi states: "Il sacrificio di Moro non è vano se, nel corso della sua prigionia, è riuscito ad aprire una breccia nell'impenetrabile corazza di chi si arrogava il diritto di fare di lui ciò che voleva" (89). Fantuzzi's statement means 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. Moro concludes the letter to his wife with the statement "[...] se ci fosse luce sarebbe bellissimo." Once again, here we see the relationship between the concept of light and the character of Chiara. As a matter of fact, there is a light, which is Chiara, or the one who imagines Moro's freedom. In interpreting the last scene, in which the image of Aldo Moro walking towards the EUR building is alternated with the footage from his funeral, Fantuzzi comments: "[...]la vita

dei vivi, come si diceva, della vita ha soltanto l'apparenza. Il morto ammazzato, al contrario, sopravvive non solo a coloro che lo hanno ucciso ma anche a coloro che hanno assistito impotenti alla morte" (89).³² The attendants of his funeral are still entrapped in their political ideologies, like the *brigatisti*, while Moro was able to look beyond politics and embrace freedom.

Looking in retrospect, after having analyzed the movie's key aspects, one can see a trinity of Aldo Moro. When Aldo Moro is brought in for the first time in the apartment in Via Montalcini, the leader of the Democrazia Cristiana assumes the role of the son, which is symbolized by the presence of the baby. Subsequently, Moro starts undergoing a transformation and becomes a father figure, which is visible in his relationship with his captors and also in Chiara's dreams. At the end of the movie, after his death, a smiling Aldo Moro is seen walking down the streets of Rome assuming the role of a spirit. Marini-Maio seems to be of the same opinion, although she prefers to label Aldo Moro strolling down the street after his death as a "specter"; Marini-Maio, in fact, declares: "Bellocchio's film *Buongiorno, notte* ends with a spectral rematerialization of Moro, who, smiling and free, strolls around the streets of Rome" (48). Aldo Moro thus becomes the spirit, or the specter, that haunts, not only Chiara's psyche, but that of an entire nation. The fact that films and theatrical pieces on Aldo Moro are still being made shows that the statesman's specter is still lurking beneath Italy's shadow.³³

³² O'Leary, who provides an explanation for Bellocchio's use of this image, states: "the Colosseo Quadrato is a building featured in a key scene of Roberto Rossellini's *Roma città aperta*, when partisans liberate a lorry-load of comrades, and Bellocchio no doubt intends the allusion, given the references to the Resistance, and use of clips from the same director's *Paisà*, elsewhere in *Buongiorno, notte*" (39).

³³ The year 2007 saw the debut of two theatrical pieces: *Aldo Moro- Una tragedia italiana* and *Se ci fosse luce – i misteri del caso Moro*. In 2008 instead Alberto Castiglione released the documentary *Nel cuore dello Stato*. In addition to Castiglione's documentary, Gianluca Maria Tavarelli's *Aldo Moro: il presidente* premiered on television on the 30th anniversary of the statesman's death. That same year, the theatrical piece *Roma, Via Caetani, 55o giorno* debuted. In recent years, director Aurelio Grimaldi has also been

CONCLUSION

A vast array of movies dedicated to the topic of Aldo Moro's assassination have been produced since then. *Buongiorno, notte* is just one of the latest cinematographic interpretations regarding this topic. The movie, however, stands alone amongst all films because it is the only one that really depicts the passion and sacrifice of Aldo Moro by shedding all of the political connotations associated with the character and focusing on what rendered him a genuine creature of God. By analyzing the Christological aspects of the movie and the interplay between the characters of Aldo Moro and Chiara, the viewer is able to see the human being that was concealed within the boundaries set by his political status. The purpose of such a movie is not to analyze the historical events that led to Moro's assassination, but to allow us to imagine how different Aldo Moro's destiny, as well as Italy's, would have been if the country had really been able to see the "luce" Moro was referring to at the end of his letter. Although obviously unable to alter historical events as they occurred, such as Moro's assassination, the film nevertheless achieved the goal, for the most part, of imagining the resurrected character of Aldo Moro and creating a different interpretation for today's audiences of what really was concealed in the *prigione del popolo*. I cannot but underscore Virgilio Fantuzzi's conclusion: "Alla luce degli ultimi film, i precedenti . . . appaiono come tappe o 'stazioni' di un cammino in salita che punta verso il Calvario, dove 'l'uomo nudo' (cioè il Cristo dei nostri giorni) lancia un urlo di disperazione prima di abbandonarsi tra le braccia della morte con un atto di oblazione che consente il recupero *in extremis* di quel senso autentico del sacro, vivo in origine, che si era offuscato col passare del tempo" (91). Therefore, Marco

working on a project entitled *Trilogia su Aldo Moro*. Because of post-production difficulties, the project was never completed as it was intended. The trilogy was eventually made into one part and it was released in 2009 with the title *Se sarà luce, sarà bellissimo*.

Bellocchio's movie may provide the conclusion that many other movies dedicated to Aldo Moro might have sought but were never able to achieve because they only focused on Moro "the statesman" instead of concentrating themselves on Moro "the human being."

The movies taken in consideration all come to different conclusions. In the conclusion of *Il caso Moro* we see the discovery of Aldo Moro's body in the trunk of the car in Via Caetani. This ending remains faithful to the historical account about the statesman's death. Even though the director does not seem to convey any particular message regarding Moro's death, the image of the lifeless body of the statesman might act as an accusation against all the people responsible for his death, such as the Red Brigades but also the Democrazia Cristiana, along with the P2. In both *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* and *Buongiorno, notte*, however, we see two conclusions that might allude to the state of today's Italian society and the way it has coped, not only with Aldo Moro's death but also with the phenomenon of political terrorism. The movie *Piazza delle Cinque Lune* ends with an aerial view of the city, superimposed with the image of a spider web. This imagery might allude to the fact that the director wanted to convey the feeling that Italian society is still subjected to the same political forces that were in power during the *anni di piombo*, such as the P2. In the conclusion of *Buongiorno, notte*, instead, we see Aldo Moro walking free in the streets of Rome. Aldo Moro was able to obtain his freedom by looking beyond his political ideologies and by bringing forth a message of peace and forgiveness. While the *brigatisti*, including Chiara, and the politicians who attended his funeral remain entrapped in their political ideologies, Aldo Moro is able to be free by ridding himself of the political and ideological animosity that

characterized the *anni di piombo*. In one scene in particular, Aldo Moro even professes what could be seen as his forgiveness towards the Red Brigades when he says to Mariano that he is not capable of hating him. Marco Bellocchio's choice to portray Aldo Moro's resurrection could also be his way, as well as the Italian Left's, of coming to terms with the murder of Aldo Moro.

Aldo Moro's death and the events that shook Italy during the "years of lead" are still relevant to this day. The assassinations of government officials, such as Massimo D'Antona and Marco Biagi, and the resurgence of the New Red Brigades in recent years show that the country has not yet been able to close the chapter of political terrorism. In conclusion, Aldo Moro's resurrection might serve as a message that the only way to close the chapter of the *anni di piombo* and to stop the perpetuation of violence caused by political ideologies is precisely by looking beyond political diversity and by embracing the forgiveness professed by the character of Aldo Moro in *Buongiorno, notte*.

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