

Offprinted from
MODERN LANGUAGE REVIEW

VOLUME 117, PART 1

JANUARY 2022

Italy's South. She then concludes with a brief analysis of Segre's *L'ordine delle cose* (2017), observing that, unlike the other films discussed in the chapter, it offers no consolatory gestures of solidarity on the part of the Italian character portrayed.

Chapter 6 reflects on multiethnic cohabitations in contemporary Italy, and on the influences of comedy and drama on Italian migration cinema. In particular, the author discusses the rise of global melodrama, which highlights the state of anxiety experienced by hosting countries burdened by an unresolved relationship with their colonial past. Key examples are Segre's *Io sono Li* (2011), Noce's *Good Morning Aman* (2009), and Giovannesi's *Ali ha gli occhi azzurri* (2012), in which the impossibility of a true encounter between their first- or second-generation immigrant characters and their Italian counterparts is highlighted. In this chapter in particular, the close, detailed description of poignant scenes in the films truly enables the reader to understand the ambiguities of these narratives, and of the socio-economic scenario they aim to represent. Finally, the Afterword analyses Carpignano's *Mediterranea* (2015), which shows for the first time the presence of migrant resistance by portraying the protests of field workers in Rosarno. The author identifies in Carpignano an example of accented, transnational perspective that exceeds the traditional labels of national cinema, and urges the need to address the limits of film analysis based on the country of production.

By unravelling the specificity of each case study, and by locating urgent issues in Italian society through a detailed study, O'Healy calls for a more critically meticulous interpretation of recent films about migration, beyond their well-meaning message of solidarity towards displaced subjects. As such, this book is an essential read for scholars of Italian, migrant, and transnational cinema, and will also be of particular interest to students and researchers in Italian cultural studies.

FLORENCE

CATERINA SCARABICCHI

Carteggio 1947–1983. By GIORGIO CAPRONI and VITTORIO SERENI. Ed. by GIULIANA DI FEBO-SEVERO. (Istituto di Studi Italiani, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Officina, 4) Florence: Olschki. 2019. 222 pp. €25. ISBN 978-88-222-6612-5.

This volume collects the seventy-five letters exchanged between two of the greatest Italian poets of the second half of the twentieth century, Giorgio Caproni and Vittorio Sereni. There has been a growing interest in the correspondence of these two poets in recent years, with many publications, but this is the first time we see Sereni and Caproni writing to each other. The letters were found by the volume's editor, Giuliana Di Febo-Severo, in three different archives: the Archivio Vittorio Sereni in Luino, the Archivio Contemporaneo of the Gabinetto Viessesux, and the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence.

The oldest letter, which dates back to the immediate post-war period, touches upon two aspects that remain central throughout the entire correspondence. The first of these is that, being born in 1912 and 1913 respectively, the two men belong

to the same generation, and, more relevantly, to the same generation of poets. In 1947 Caproni writes to Sereni to involve him in the project of a *plaque* of emerging Italian poets to be printed in Spain, for which the two had been identified among the most representative. The second aspect they have in common is their mutual respect, first expressed by Caproni upon reading Sereni's *Frontiera*, but then reciprocated by Sereni. Greeting him in the first letter, Caproni assures Sereni of his 'lunga e vecchissima amicizia di lettore' (p. 111). These two elements can also be found in Caproni's essay on his friend's poetry, 'Le risposte di Vittorio Sereni' (in *La poesia di Vittorio Sereni* (Milan: Librex, 1985)), written in the aftermath of Sereni's sudden death in 1983.

The rich Introduction by Di Febo-Severo, entitled "La poesia è sempre un rimedio", gives an account of the key moments in the long-lasting dialogue between the two poets (for example, when they published their collaborative translation of René Char). The essay's title is taken from a sentence addressed by Caproni to Sereni to cheer him up at a time when Sereni was experiencing the affliction he liked to call 'silenzio creativo'.

The Introduction also displays an interesting approach which enriches the study of the letters: a meticulous examination of the private libraries of the two authors, detailing annotations in Sereni's copies of Caproni and vice versa. After all, many of the letters deal precisely with the two poets' books, and their sincere admiration for each other's work. The truly essential human and poetic remarks of the individual authors, as well as the broad cultural context in which the correspondence occurred, reconstructed in great detail in the introductory pages and in the notes accompanying the letters, remain almost in the background of this reciprocal and uninterrupted reading, of which the poetry of the two inevitably bears the mark. Sereni admits a sort of addiction to Caproni in his poem 'I ricongiunti', claiming that he had read something similar in one of Caproni's books. On the other hand, it is striking that Caproni's 'Stornello' seems to have been born from the proposal of a collaboration by Sereni.

From this point of view, the correspondence is above all the testimony of a poetic affinity which, during the troubled second half of the last century, represented something of a *rimedio* for Caproni and Sereni.

SCUOLA NORMALE SUPERIORE

MICHEL CATTANEO

Italian Chimeras: Narrating Italy through the Writing of Sebastiano Vassalli. By MERIEL TULANTE. (Italian Modernities) New York: Peter Lang. 2020. xii+322 pp. £50. ISBN 978-1-78997-704-2.

This is an excellent book about an author who perhaps does not deserve it. Merial Tulante knows her subject very well. She interviewed Vassalli twice, provides a detailed list of his publications, and analyses them with meticulous attention to both recurring themes and evolving stylistic details. Her study has a solid structure. Her interpretation is enlivened by intriguing comparisons (with Umberto Eco, Giorgio