

DISSERTATION PROJECT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The cinematographic value of urban space has been the object of numerous interdisciplinary works, ranging from film studies to visual cultures, from the history of architecture to cultural geography. Cinema can reveal the stratification of shared cultural meanings of the urban space over time. Moreover, it contributes to producing new perspectives that shape the idea of the city fixed in the collective imagination. This is particularly evident in the cinematic representation of Rome, an iconic urban space that resists, disputes, and renews its cultural meaning over time. Nonetheless, in this cognitive/cognoscitive process of the spatial dimension, it becomes crucial to consider the ontogenetic value of time. At present, in the corpus of Italian cinema studies, there is not a theoretical approach that, in addition to the spatial dimension, takes into consideration the functionality of time as an aesthetic principle capable of producing new forms of meaning (cultural, historical, social, poetic, and visual) within the Roman urban space. My dissertation aims to contribute to this theoretical perspective, demonstrating the poetic force of time in the cinematic representation of the city, considering the multiple interconnections between time and history. I ask: to what extent are the chronotopes of cinematic Rome conditioned and shaped by the *historical*, *meta-historical*, and *neo-historical* values of the time? In other words, how can time produce meanings in the filmic urban space according to its adherence to historical experience, detachment from history, and ability to create a new historical dimension?

To answer these questions, I develop a textual-filmic analysis of a selection of sequences taken from twenty-one films that, from the late forties to the present day, significantly express the threefold “poetics of time” I theorize. In this selection, four feature films - shot entirely or partially in Rome - are essential for my theorization: *Accattone* (1961) and *Mamma Roma* (1962) by Pier Paolo Pasolini, *L'avventura* (1960) and *L'eclisse* (1962) by Michelangelo Antonioni. Many archival materials related to these films have not yet been published or distributed internationally and are kept in five prestigious Italian archives in Rome, Ferrara, and Bologna, where I conducted my research.



Accattone (1961)



L'eclisse (1962)

ARCHIVAL ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS

I arrived in Italy at the beginning of June and spent eight weeks conducting my research in the following archives:

- *Centro Studi Archivio Pier Paolo Pasolini* (Bologna). Here, I consulted the following materials: a collection of magazines and journals in which Pasolini collaborated during the shooting of *Accattone* and *Mamma Roma*; press documentation of studies, reviews, interviews, statements, and a collection of about 1000 audiovisuals, including scripts, notes, “cut-off” sequences; a photographic collection of around 3000 prints and 4000 negatives and plates that concerns the cultural, artistic, private and public life of the director in the early 60s.
- *Archivio Michelangelo Antonioni* (Ferrara). The archive contains materials relating to the director's intellectual and aesthetic world, including his critical, literary, and artistic work. In the two sections dedicated to *L'avventura* and *L'eclisse*, I consulted unique material such as treatments, scriptments, scripts, notes of the director, set photos, press releases, and “cut-off” scenes. This is the only archive in the world that keeps this analogic material.
- *Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia-CSC* (Rome). In the CSC library, I consulted published and unpublished material about the four films under examination. The archives contain works created by the students at the CSC Film School: in this section, I accessed the works of the young Antonioni (a former student of the CSC) related to Rome. Notables were the sections dedicated to non-film materials. In the Photographic Division, I consulted the Alfredo Bini collection, mainly composed of stage and set photographs of Pasolini's Roman features.
- *Archivio Storico dell'Istituto Luce* and *Archivio Storico Romano* (Rome). In these archives, in addition to consulting unpublished cinematographic and photographic material, I explored the broader historical, social, and cultural context of Rome in the early 1960s. At the *Istituto Luce*, I consulted the archives of the Dial-Press and V.E.D.O. agencies, which document Italy's political life, customs, and the profound cultural shift in Roman society between 1948 and 1967. In the photographic section of the *Archivio Storico Romano*, I had access to an essential collection of images of an interdisciplinary nature - historical, archaeological, artistic, architectural, urban, and folkloric - relating to Rome and its territory.