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Abstract: In this article, Oliver Brett focuses on the role of the "object" in Pietro Marcello's docu-fiction film *La bocca del lupo* (2009). In a context where "difference" can be perceived as problematic—particularly if shaped through a politics of "identity"—his analysis draws on a phenomenological framework in seeking to elucidate the "queer" features of this award winning film. Working on the construction and de-construction of dominant discursive narratives through a performance of queer (dis)orientation, he argues that this film offers a noteworthy critique of gender and sexuality, and representation, in contemporary Italy.

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The Performance of (Dis)orientation; a queer reading of Pietro Marcello's *La bocca del lupo* (2009)¹

OLIVER BRETT

Introduction

In this article, I illuminate the potentiality of the “object” as a basis for the queer reading of filmic texts—particularly relevant in contexts such as Italy where the “queer” manifests itself in more subtle ways. In talking of the “object” in relation to the focus of my enquiry here, Pietro Marcello’s award winning “docu-fiction” film *La bocca del lupo* (which tells a story of Genoa and the unconventional love story of two real life “irregolari,” ex-convict Vincenzo Motta (Enzo) and transsexual Mary Monaco who meet while in prison many years previously, from where they start to exchange secret messages recorded on hidden cassette tapes), this can be seen to refer not only to the various animate and inanimate objects that contribute to the *mise-en-scène* but also to the felt presence of both the camera and a reachable and tangible source of montaged archival footage and tape recordings.² I argue specifically that the “object” plays a significant role in Enzo’s and Mary’s interlocking performances which are defined by a queer disorientation seen to challenge hegemonic discourse on both gender and sexuality, and representation. In exploring a selection of key queer performances in this film in view of the challenges posed by its relationship to these discourses, I appropriate Sara Ahmed’s phenomenological notion of “queer (dis)orientation” [my emphasis] which articulates the sudden (re)positioning of the “object” from being “among” to “alongside” other objects (the latter position suggesting greater awareness within the body–object experience, the former suggesting even greater dislocation).³ It is these dynamics which are most productive in approaching the “object” in this film. Before a close reading of the text, I start by locating *La bocca* in relation both to the term “queer” (within the context of Italy) and to the role of the “object” as “(dis)orientation” (within the context of the filmic text). Reflecting on a wider debate in documentary film studies on the complexities of “performance” (i.e. theatrical) and the “performative” (i.e. Butlerian), I then consider how these are problematized by *La bocca*, arguing that the various “constitutive” parts of the encounter can be seen to shape wider macro structures. In the second part of the article, I take a closer look at some of the key queer performances of this film which position the “object” centrally to what I consider its queer project. Momentarily taking stock of these preliminary points, I approach this study with two main questions in mind: how is the “queer” articulated in Italy? Is the performance of “queer (dis)orientation” a fruitful way of contributing to the study of Italian queer cinema and to Italian queer studies more generally? In answering these questions, I suggest that queer cultural output in Italy is one which is shaped by oscillation between “orientation” and “disorientation.”

¹ *La bocca del lupo*. Directed by Pietro Marcello. 2009. Genoa, Liguria: Italy: Avventurosa–Indigo film, 2010. DVD.

² See: Goffredo Fofi, “Elogio del sottoproletariato,” in *Genova di tutta la vita*, ed. Daniela Basso (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010), 73; Pietro Marcello, “Genova, una storia d’amore,” in *Genova di tutta la vita* (cit.), 22. Forming the majority of the film’s voice-overs, these personal recordings weave into a Genoa re-constructed through the montage of contemporary shots of the city with those of researched archival film footage taken by “[i] cineamatori genovesi” over the last century (and which Marcello felt contributed to “la genovesità” [Genoese-ness] of the film). From here onwards, I will refer to the film as *La bocca*.

³ Drawing on the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Frantz Fanon, Sara Ahmed articulates a non-linear queer politics centring on (dis)orientations between the body (as an “object”) and other objects within space, essentially between the vertical and flattened/horizontal positions. For further elaboration on these ideas see: Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology, orientations, objects, others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 157–160.

Queer objects in a performance of (dis)orientation

While there is increasing visibility of queer lives in Italy, the “queer” in European contexts is often more subtly defined than in the US; and, although Italy may be seen as inherently “queer” in its accommodation of “difference” in the universal space of the “private,” what Mudu describes as “repressive tolerance,” there remain difficulties in assuming a queer framework in the study of Italian cultural output.⁴ The purpose here is not to debate the issue of translation and reception of the term but rather to explore the ways in which the “queer” can be articulated in view of these limitations.

In approaching *La bocca* from a queer theoretical perspective, I use the term “queer” to refer to non-normative sexual identities (such as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender) as well as to “those gestures or analytical models which dramatize incoherencies in the allegedly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender and sexual desire.”⁵ At the same time, I recognize the limits of both identity politics and a focus centering solely on sexuality and gender— particularly relevant when analyzing this film as it espouses neither of these two positions. Of note in *La bocca*, however, is the attention paid to the various co-existing experiences of modernity such as is witnessed through issues of prostitution, drug abuse, immigration, unemployment, homelessness and social exclusion. Given the film’s lack of direct involvement with what could be deemed more obvious “queer issues,” it is the “intersectional” queer position of *La bocca* that is most convincing of its queer aims and its desire to somehow (re)position the viewer, documentarist, and documentary participant through the documentary encounter.⁶

Within this encounter, the “object” is both isolatable and universal in its application—a leveler in a queer sort of way. As Timothy Morton points out in his work on “object oriented ontology,” a challenge to traditional explanatory and interpretive notions of causality, the “object” has mystical features (it can suggest both a presence and an absence, for example) and is always located spatially in relation to another “object” (as such, space does not exist without objects and vice versa).⁷ Moreover, as “space” is constructed through objects, meaning that it (space) cannot be considered as a separate entity in itself, no one “object” can be superior to another as to suggest this would otherwise make the nominated “top object” the location of space in relation to which all other objects exist, thereby implying that “space” has a materiality rather than an organizational function and that this is located within the “top object” itself.⁸ Finally, the “object” should not be

⁴ See Luca Malici, “Queer in Italy: Italian Televisibility and the ‘Queerable’ Audience,” in *Queer in Europe*, ed. Lisa Downing and Robert Gillett (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 114–115; Michael O’Rourke, “Europe: Faltering Project or Infinite Task? (Some Other Headings for Queer Theory)” in *Queer in Europe*, ed. Lisa Downing and Robert Gillett (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), xv; and Pierpaolo Mudu, “Repressive tolerance. The gay movement and the Vatican in Rome,” *GeoJournal* 58, no. 2/3 (2008): 195.

⁵ Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1996), 1.

⁶ Marcello did not originally consider his film as a queer project, being surprised by its interest to LGBTQ film festivals following its release; see Francesco Boille, “Disadattati e marginali fondarono l’Italia, possono rifondare il cinema, intervista a Pietro Marcello di Francesco Boille,” in *Genova di tutta la vita*, ed. Daniela Basso (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010): 60–64. However, amongst the film’s many accolades is the Teddy Award it received at the Berlinale for best gay–lesbian documentary; see Francesca Esposito, “E c’era l’amore nel ghetto, nella prigione, nel ventre della città,” in *Genova di tutta la vita* (cit.), 86. Also, see Siobhan B. Somerville’s discussion on the shift within queer theory from a focus on “sexuality” to “interconnected struggles,” the latter position of which challenges neoliberal sexual politics and its attempts to separate the two out from each other. These struggles relate to issues of race, the nation and state, globalization and imperialism. Siobhan B. Somerville, “Queer,” in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, ed. Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 190.

⁷ Timothy Morton, *Realist Magic, Objects, Ontology, Causality* (Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press, 2013), 17–18, 43–44.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 43–44.

reduced either to its parts or to its completeness as to do so would delimit its full articulation.⁹ In drawing on these features of the “object” in my identification and analysis of key sequences later, and in advocating the queer potential of the “object” as a potential leveler, I do not ignore the socio-political discourses within which it is positioned but rather seek to expose them in their dominant organization of “space.”

Vivian Sobchak’s work on “documentary consciousness” is helpful at this point as it specifically considers the “object” in the context of the viewer’s interaction with film and the extent to which it impacts upon the illusion of reality.¹⁰ Drawing on Jean-Pierre Meunier’s study on identification and the filmic experience—which proposes a sort of sliding scale of engagement on the viewer’s part reflecting the demands placed upon him/her by screen objects and the style of film being experienced—Sobchack explains that the more a viewer is dependent upon screen content for comprehension the less likely he/she is to reflect beyond the frame. With respect to fiction film, it is suggested that the viewer largely relies on screen content for explanation whereas in the case of documentary film and the home movie the viewer becomes increasingly likely to draw on the “the constitutive activity of spectatorial consciousness.”¹¹ The defining feature in this case is the status of the “object” as a conduit to greater spatial awareness—the crucial difference between documentary and fiction film being, according to Sobchack, whether the “object” is focused “on” or “through.”¹² The latter positions the “object” as generalizable and evocative and is thereby potentially queer, I would argue. As *La bocca* uses all of the three styles of film cited by Sobchack, and with no overall consistency and coherence, the viewer’s normative associations of representation and the cinematic experience are tested. Moreover, the resultant foregrounding of the “object” through potentially increased “constitutive activity” on the viewer’s part contributes to the film’s relational queer project. In articulating these dynamics further, I turn now to Sara Ahmed’s work in *Queer Phenomenology* which seeks to “explore the relation between the notion of queer and the disorientation of objects.”¹³

Ahmed explains that, in the moment in which an object becomes something other than “just that” (i.e. something unnoticeable) and is felt instead as a “cold object” (i.e. something tangible), then it comes alive and affects the dynamics of the body-object relationship.¹⁴ She makes a subtle distinction regarding this relationship, which is particularly helpful here. The individual can be positioned either as an “object alongside other objects,” thereby functioning as a potential catalyst to greater awareness and participation as an “upright body” in an unequal world, or as an “object among other objects,” which points instead to the failed occupation of space.¹⁵ Similarly to Michel de Certeau’s work on “space” and “place,” where “l’espace est un lieu pratiqué” [space is a practiced place], the “documentary encounter,” perhaps if also seen as *cinécriture*, reinforces the film’s performance features in this sense, particularly when considering its detailed composition and structure, and how it plays with the vertical and horizontal.¹⁶ Within this process of “filmic

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Vivian Sobchack, “Toward a Phenomenology of Nonfictional Film Experience,” in *Collecting Visible Evidence*, ed. Jane M. Gaines and Michael Renov (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 243–241.

¹¹ Ibid., 244.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 160–161.

¹⁴ Ibid., 163.

¹⁵ Ibid., 160.

¹⁶ I borrow the term *cinécriture* from Agnès Varda who uses it to illuminate the process of filmmaking as well as the precision and structure of her work, i.e. shots, montage, choice of protagonist, use of words, etc. These features can be assigned to Marcello’s work in *La bocca*, although, I do not believe that my application of Varda’s term in this way reinforces the position of the auteur in opposition to wider interpretation of the film in a more universal sense (as Alison

writing”—whether the film is seen in its ability to circumscribe different realities and/or to critique the very act of filmmaking—the role of the “object” is useful in illuminating and critiquing what Chris Brickell describes, with reference to gender identity specifically, as the “constituted” and the “constituting” features of the “self.”¹⁷ *La bocca* critically positions those involved in the documentary and fictional encounter in relation to these features in a very dynamic way.

However, as *La bocca* can be defined as “docu-fiction,” and given its treatment of both gender and sexuality (specifically transgenderism and traditional Italian masculinity), the notions of the “performative” and “performance” are problematized, “performance” being the most obvious and demanding on the viewer’s part as a result of self-reflexive cinematic techniques established through clearly montaged sequences, the felt presence of the camera, and the camera’s attention to detail. While the performance of documentary as a self-reflexive project is different to the performance of gender in the Butlerian sense, I believe that performative content influences the performance of documentary in a range of ways other than for the purpose of pointing out its self-reflexive aims as outlined above. As such, I disagree with Stella Bruzzi when, in her challenge to what she describes as Bill Nichols’s “theoretical paradigm” of historically constructed documentary modes, she maintains a clear performative-performance divide in claiming that “documentary” essentially “[performs] the interaction between reality and its representation.”¹⁸ Although Bruzzi’s definition here is invaluable in articulating documentary as performance in the theatrical sense (documentary qua documentary), it restricts the development of a queer reading in separating it out too clearly from the performative. In drawing attention to the “object” as content and then as a “constitutive” and “constituting” feature of the self—i.e. through Mary’s articulation of her transgenderism and Enzo’s assertion of his masculinity—I demonstrate how consideration of a link between the performative and performance proves productive in circumscribing wider structural and queer features of the film. In addition, I consider how “space” is negotiated through these interconnecting processes, particularly in terms of how dominant discourse on gender and sexuality, and representation are challenged.

Acknowledging then the difficulties of cultural output in subverting hegemonic discourse, particularly in a context where the “queer” goes unembraced as a theoretical concept, and bringing together the various points discussed thus far, the role of the “object” can elucidate the political where the political may not seem to exist—in essence, borrowing from Randi Gressgård here, thereby representing the interrelationship of the “ontological” (the political that results from ontological difference) and the “ontic” (conventional political system, politics per se) which points to the “absent ground of society” where a whole range of other grounds are seen to exist.¹⁹

Smith points out in her work on Varda)—on the contrary, I believe that with the increased precision comes a greater focusing “through” of the object as previously discussed.

Alison Smith, *Agnès Varda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 14.

Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 117; Michel de Certeau, *L’invention du quotidien 1. arts de faire* (Saint-Amand: Gallimard, 1984), 173

¹⁷ While acknowledging the value of Butler’s work, Brickell seeks to move beyond her focus on parody as a process of re-signifying normative gendered identities by looking for a way to articulate the subversive in clearer ways—in this case, as one of action, self-reflexivity and an awareness of the self as ‘constituted’ and ‘constituting.’ For further details see: Chris Brickell, “Masculinities, Performativity, and Subversion: a sociological reappraisal,” *Men and Masculinities* 8, no. 1 (2005): 24–43.

¹⁸ Stella Bruzzi, *New Documentary*, second edition (London: Routledge, 2006), 197.

¹⁹ Randi Gressgård 2011. “Revisiting Contingency, Hegemony and Universality,” in *Hegemony and Heteronormativity: Revisiting ‘The Political’ in Queer Politics*, ed. Maria do Mar Castro Varela, Nikita Dhawan, and Antke Engel (Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), 25–41.

In approaching *La bocca* with this framework in place, I start by homing in on the way Mary's representation shifts from the "object" to the "subject"—bringing to the fore the material power of her voice in unsettling gender concordant narratives as exemplified by my subsequent discussion of Enzo's representation of traditional Italian masculinity in the *bella figura* that he seeks to maintain.²⁰ Through the "object," both Enzo and Mary are seen to construct and to de-construct dominant notions of gender and sexuality, and processes of representation.

Framing Mary: a journey to transgender subjecthood?

The comparative visual representations of Mary and Enzo in *La bocca* make clear a tension between private and public spaces, and the associated gender roles of those spaces; however, their respective performances overlay each other in ways that unsettle the fixity of gender and sexuality, and representation, with greater complexity than this—firstly, in Mary's progression from object to subject; secondly, by way of the materiality and verticality of Mary's voice-over performances which puncture Enzo's visual performance of *la bella figura* of Italian masculinity. Reflecting a changing sense of agency and subjectivity, Mary emerges out into the open space towards the end of the film; firstly in the interview scene and then in the house in the country.



Figure 1- Mary's picture frame on table

Aside from the public–private divide, the most significant contrast between their visual framings is that Mary is almost always framed within the camera's lens by another frame such as a picture frame, door, window, or mirror. The frame as "object" in these representations, like a less elaborate Sansovino picture frame, contrasts with and contains another "object," Mary. Sequestered from the openness of the space of the sea view behind her in her first scene, which introduces her very first framing, an additional key aspect to understanding these double framings is that Mary is never introduced as "Mary"—she is, therefore, faceless, voiceless, and immobile. Mary is also seen fleetingly in her drawn portrait in the picture frame that Enzo unwraps and places on the kitchen table when he arrives at their home in Genoa having walked from the ex-steelworks in Cornigliano

²⁰ For further details on Italian masculinity and *la bella figura* see: Jacqueline Reich, *Beyond the Latin Lover: Marcello Mastroianni, Masculinity, and Italian Cinema* (Indiana University Press, 2004), 1, 9.

(Figure 1). In the scene prior to this, Mary does not respond to his call to her while he eats food left for him—all rather unceremoniously if we accept the possibility that this is Enzo’s return after fourteen years in prison. There is then the glamorous portrait photograph of Mary as a much younger woman in the 1970s recalling Barthes’ “Tout-Image” [Total-Image] which—described as reflecting “La mort en personne” [Death in person]—results from the photographer’s desire to control (and objectivize) what is framed by the lens.²¹



Figure 2 - Mary in doorway scene

Continuing with this point, there is a particularly telling scene in which Mary is captured on camera while appearing to work as a prostitute from the studio below her apartment (possibly in a fictional reconstruction of an earlier part of her life); in one sequence shot she is framed from the front within the doorframe which leads directly out onto the street and in another she is framed not only by this doorframe but also simultaneously in the mirror that is located behind her (Figure 2). From the doorway position the camera at one point also adopts Mary’s point of view shot as she observes, firstly, another rather dignified-looking prostitute (possibly her friend Mammola) who is sitting in an armchair, and, secondly, a group of prostitutes who make lots of noise while drinking coffee and mocking one of the locals. These framings and point-of-view locate Mary in a confined geographical and economic space, her perspective on the world visually limited (upon watching this film, some viewers will not instantly recognize that this is Mary and may in fact confuse her with other women represented in the film).

The significance of these framings is reinforced by Mary’s lack of diegetic speech, which may relate, as Marcello suggests, to the difficulties he had in gaining her confidence and overcoming her skepticism of the filming process.²² It could be suggested that (outside of the later interview scene) the “double framing”—alongside Mary’s muteness and location within the confines of the spaces of home and work—points to her objectification as a woman and prostitute. She is framed and measured according to gender normative expectations, which is reflected in her location in the home, a relationship based on “husband and wife” and her desire to be seen as a woman (which is evidenced by the mirror and photographs). Perhaps primarily for reasons of safety as a marginalized transgendered individual, these framings also suggest her inability to control the visual domain

²¹ Roland Barthes, *La Chambre Claire – note sur la photographie* (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), 31; Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (London: Vintage, 1981), 14.

²² Pietro Marcello, “Mary per sempre,” in *Genova di tutta la vita*, ed. Daniela Basso (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010), 10.

beyond a physical performance of womanhood which attempts to fit into gender normative frameworks. There is a queer tactic here, however, in representing Mary as an “object among other objects.” Although I am suggesting that Mary is confined by space and is unaware of how she challenges the very constructions that she follows, I would also argue that she is represented in a way that upsets the dominant gender binaries by drawing attention to how the self can be “constituting” within existing essentialist and social constructivist notions of gender and sexuality (which points instead to its “constituted” nature).²³



Figure 3- Enzo's melon cart scene

Mary's objectification as a woman is more specifically reflected in the mannequin heads and wigs that adorn the shelf of her kitchen and which Enzo's point of view shot observes upon his return home in the scene mentioned above. The headless mannequins that line the shop window behind Enzo when he is out selling melons from his cart which has “amore come parli bene” written on the side also supports this argument (Figure 3). As Enzo's knife slices through the melon a “click” is heard from the tape which overlays this particular scene. As the tape recording is of Mary's voice, this click connects her words to Enzo's action of slicing the melon, an action which is returned through the words written on the side of his cart (translated as “my love, how you speak so well.”) This slicing and cutting, in full “view” of the window-framed headless mannequins behind Enzo's stall (which are seen to wear dresses), highlights the constructed nature of gender, sex, and desire, and cinematic representations thereof. Marcello's participation within this is underlined in the final scene of the sequence with an aerial shot of Enzo at his stall, which reflects the director's geographical positioning within the area he is exploring as a filmmaker and his role in the construction and deconstruction of representation. Marcello explains how he lived in a small apartment overlooking Piazza del Campo and was interested in observing life as it passed by his window and in the areas around vico Croce Bianca, via Prè and via Sottoripa.²⁴

The film's fragmentation of Mary's body is also paralleled by the disparate pieces of contemporary and archival footage that contribute to the construction of the film itself, which not only reinforces the constructed and performative nature of sex and gender but also offers a queer critique of the process of representation. Mary's representation within the public arena—as

²³ Brickell, “Masculinities, Performativity, and Subversion,” 24–43.

²⁴ Marcello, “Genova, una storia d'amore,” 19.

described here and when compared with the more private representation discussed above in the studio scene—demonstrates how documentary content shapes documentary form, firstly, by way of a performance of invisibility of Mary outside of the private space of the home (where her voice-over dominates), and, secondly, by way of a transgender representation in the public arena defined by the binaries of male and female, and strict constructions thereof.

Within the visual frame, Mary is (overall) an unnoticeable “object among other objects”; she does not speak and is never introduced as “Mary.” Her voice-over performances reinforce these objectified visual representations further, which demonstrates how she is “constituted” within gender hegemonic frameworks. Esposito claims that Mary’s vocal performances have the characteristic of the “acousmètre,”²⁵ which means that the connection between Mary’s voice and the onscreen image is ambiguous—her voice is neither inside nor outside the image.²⁶ The “acousmètre” is usually revealed at some point in the film, which would fit with Mary’s “*désacousmatisation*” during the interview scene; however, I would add that the irony of this is that Mary has already been seen on a number of occasions by the time her identity is revealed to the spectator.²⁷ Mary as “acousmètre” reinforces the objectification of her body in the visual domain of the film through the disconnection between her voice and body by the separation of her visual and vocal performances. I would assert that Mary could in fact be described as fulfilling Chion’s “[acousmètre paradoxical]” in the sense that she is only afforded a partial view in her (hesitant) collaboration with Marcello and editor Sara Fgaier.²⁸ The documentary encounter allows Mary to consider her place in the world, although she is not all-knowing and all-seeing in her participation as would normally be expected of the “acousmatic” character; rather much of her representation has to be attributed to Marcello’s and Fgaier’s vision more than anything. Mary’s “*désacousmatisation*” is, however, part of what Chion describes as “*mise-en-corps*”—which, while it may limit the voice to the body at this stage of the film, actually evidences a shift from her status as an object to one of subject.²⁹ The documentary encounter allows Mary to see both her microcosm (the medieval alleyways of “*i caruggi di Genova*”) and herself differently, a process within which the viewer is implicated. I return to a more detailed analysis of Mary’s voice later, although it is worth mentioning at this stage that the “voice” of the film is more open than formally structured along epistemically focused lines, thereby allowing a variety of interpretations on the viewer’s part.³⁰

The lack of additional framing in the interview scene, accompanied by her *désacousmatisation*, suggests an evolving agency on Mary’s part; she now has the ability to speak within the diegesis of the film, and, contrasting well with her earlier visual representation, is no longer constrained by the demands of being a “woman” as she sits looking rather ordinary in her neutral everyday clothes. It is also after this frank interview scene that Mary finally crosses the threshold of the doorway’s frame that features in her opening scene, which is symbolic of her verticality as a “constituting” subject who challenges dominant constructions of heteronormativity. However, as I will explore in the next section on Enzo’s visual performance, Mary’s disembodied voice, also by virtue of its verticality, plays a significant role in the main part of the film in puncturing the horizontal field of objects of which she is a part. Although the horizontal field of objects points to a lack of spatial awareness on Mary’s part, a consideration of the vertical aural field opens up that field more widely.

²⁵ Esposito, “E c’era l’amore nel ghetto,” 87.

²⁶ Michel Chion, *L’audio-vision, son et image au cinéma*. 2nd ed. (Paris: Armand Colin, 2005), 109.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 110.

²⁹ Ibid., 111.

³⁰ For more details see: Carl R. Plantinga, “Voice and Authority,” in *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film* (Michigan: Chapbook Press, 2010), 101–115.

Queering Enzo – masculinity and its representation

La bocca connects with Marcello's preceding film—*Il passaggio della linea* (2007)—in that it too is concerned with the vertical and the horizontal, and (respectively) by implication the mobile and immobile, the upright and inert.³¹ These horizontal-vertical features establish the idea of orientation and disorientation, which, as Ahmed suggests, points to either active involvement as a vertical being or to the failed orientation of space.³² A comparison between Enzo and “i naufraghi” [castaways] of the film's overarching poem proves useful at this point.

Enzo's vertical movement in and around Genoa works in tension with the voice of the film's overarching poem, which, structured in three parts, “un prologo, un intermezzo e un epilogo,” and recited as voice-over by Franco Leo, points to the collective in its use of the first and third person plural forms.³³ Its departure and return point, Quarto (dei Mille), are the same, which reflects the theme of circularity that features in the text in various different ways; evoked by the rhythmic nature of time through “il moto ondoso del mare” [the wave motion of the sea] and the rising sun that covers the faces of “i naufraghi” as they sleep.³⁴ These features extend to dynamics of space and time, the idea that those living in the caves having simply been washed ashore providing an ontological comparison to Enzo's verticality and mobility, and more elevated position at the end of the film. However, like “le macerie” [the rubble] that feature in the poem's intermezzo section, and similarly to Mary's visual framing, as the “object among other objects” (i.e. the unnoticeable), there is a queer tactic at work here which seeks to play on the (dis)orientation felt through closer proximity to the “object alongside other objects” (i.e. greater perceptual awareness of one's location in space and time). As a result of the tension between these vertical and horizontal positions, Enzo, and by implication the spectator, is afforded a more critical point of view in relation to the cinematic and narrative space represented.

While seeking continuity and authority in his performance, particularly when acting for the camera, Enzo reveals the instability of cinematic representations in attempts to integrate his point of view shot into the history of Genoa and Italy. Such attempts can be identified when his head is seen to tilt towards and away from various points in the distance, the contemporary and archival footage that follow suggesting his point of view.

Although not articulated in any direct way in *La bocca*, Enzo's performances represent a crisis in masculinity, which, reflecting on wider activity in Italian cinema of recent years, as described by O'Rawe, seeks to use strategies (in Enzo's case archive footage and the nostalgia that this evokes) to “[recenter] hegemonic masculinity.”³⁵ Drawing on the work of Kepley and Swender on the re-use of archive footage in secondary texts, I would argue that the original archive footage used in Enzo's point of view scenes makes no specific historical claim outside its former context although it is “naturalized” to reflect his nostalgic image of a former Genoa.³⁶ Notable archive footage used in the

³¹ Francesco Boille, “Per questa realtà. Frammenti di memori e sogno,” in *Genova di tutta la vita*, ed. Daniela Basso (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010), 110.

³² Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 160.

³³ For a full transcription of the poem, please see: Pietro Marcello, “Commentario,” in *Genova di tutta la vita*, ed. Daniela Basso (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010), 167–168.

³⁴ Quarto is a residential area to the East of Genoa, which faces the sea. Known also as Quarto dei Mille, it was from here that the *Spedizione dei Mille* set off during the Italian Risorgimento. The place evokes a sense of departure, particularly for those migrating away from Italy in the past. Those living in the caves here, “i naufraghi” [castaways] of Marcello's “poem,” suggest something different. See: Marcello, “Genova, una storia d'amore,” 21.

³⁵ Catherine O'Rawe, *Stars and Masculinities in Contemporary Italian Cinema* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 7.

³⁶ Vance Kepley and Rebecca Swender, “Claiming the Found: Archive Footage and Documentary Practice,” *The Velvet Light Trap*, no. 64 (2009): 6.

film which retains historical specificity because of the iconic nature of its content can be identified in scenes witnessing the construction of the steelworks in Cornigliano, the demolition of parts of central Genoa to make way for economic development in the 1970s, and images of the “la strada sopraelevata di Genova” (elevated roadway)³⁷ In Enzo’s scenes, I believe that something particular is occurring.

There is a noteworthy scene at the beginning of the film in which Enzo walks towards the camera and takes a sharp look to his right, which is immediately followed by a series of archival industry-orientated scenes from the distant past; he “sees,” for example, chimneys and billowing smoke, men and manpowered equipment, a man welding, steelworks in operation, and an aerial shot of a work plant. Later, Enzo is seen entering Genoa’s historical center before being observed from the front in a seated position while smoking and looking around. This is followed by a wide-angled shot of the city with the lighthouse (*La Lanterna di Genova*) in the distance, which gives the impression that this is again Enzo’s visual perspective (but seems unlikely as the angle of the shot would be too low if taken from within the historical center of Genoa). Another important scene takes place in the hilltop church where the spectator adopts Enzo’s point of view shot while he looks at a statuette of the Madonna and infant Jesus inside a glass cabinet, which dissolves into archival footage adopting the same perspective.

Enzo’s “naturalized” point of view shots attempt to establish a “secondary truth claim” through a process of stripping the original archive footage of its “specificity.”³⁸ However, by placing the protagonist’s point of view shot in tension with the spectator’s wide-ranging historical perspective, I would argue that Marcello’s and Fgaier’s work reflects Antonioni’s “project of freeing objects from the demands of human time and narrative” as well as his “obsessive work on decentering and dispersing the gaze.”³⁹ As such, Enzo’s use of space in *La bocca* is not controlled by temporal and narrative demands (unlike “i naufraghi”) but is instead represented as dispersed and fragmented, which renders the spectator’s gaze unstable in the process. Marcello seeks in *La bocca*, like Antonioni did in his films, “to destabilize the very act of looking,” which allows a sense of presence to occur as a result of objects being perceived differently.⁴⁰ This suggests that orientation within space is indeed concerned with what we see and how we see it. Enzo’s performance, while fragmented, attempts to offer a coherent view of the world, nostalgia for a former Genoa, but clearly cannot do so fully. The multiple unexplained images of the city, not all of which are placed to reflect Enzo’s direct perspective, point to the fragility of the spectator’s gaze and the inability, through representation, ever to get to the heart of, in this case, Genoa and its “genovesità.” Recalling the work of Sobchack at this point, the place of the “object” within this film, whether relating to the images represented within the frame onscreen or to the feeling of a reachable and tangible source of film reel, very much encourages a looking “through” by the spectator to wider spaces and memories beyond the frame than are possible by the mere representation of the footage.⁴¹

What can be identified from the archival footage chosen for inclusion in *La bocca* is the masculine gaze it affords in its focus on the construction and deconstruction of the city, suggesting a shared affection and/or disappointment for Genoa on the part of Enzo and Marcello.⁴² The film

³⁷ Sara Fgaier, “Piccole e grandi storie,” in *Genova di tutta la vita*, ed. Daniela Basso (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2010), 29, 32.

³⁸ Kepley and Swender, “Claiming the Found,” 4, 8.

³⁹ James S. Williams, “The Rhythms of Life: An Appreciation of Michelangelo Antonioni, Extreme Aesthete of the Real,” *Film Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (2008): 53.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Sobchack, “Toward a Phenomenology,” 241–254.

⁴² Conscious of Genoa’s industrial decline, which is the other main feature of this film (a metonym for Italy as a nation), Marcello explains that the city is no longer a point of departure for America, has little work to offer unlike in the past

also focuses on Enzo's natural and previously untapped ability to act, which is reinforced by his striking physical and masculine features. Of further note is that Enzo is only seen inside the home on two occasions and is otherwise located outside in the open space of the city—his verticality firmly positioned in the public arena. Enzo's performance exposes and is driven by what has been described as the *bella figura* of performed Italian masculinity, which focuses on *looking* and being *looked at* and maintaining a public/private divide centering respectively on the masculine and the feminine, the breakdown of which could threaten masculinity.⁴³ Reich's work, *Beyond the Latin Lover*, demystifies this public performance through her development of the figure of the "inetto" (inept man), which she achieves by looking at the performances of Marcello Mastroianni. The *inetto* dominated Italian cinema in the post-World War II period and pointed to a crisis in masculinity: "this figure is a man in conflict with an unsettled political and sexual environment" who exists in opposition to the traditional Italian masculine figure; he is passive, gutless, pusillanimous, emasculated.⁴⁴ Enzo's narcissism almost precludes him from the role of the *inetto*; however, his *bella figura* contrasts well to two other characters in the film who fulfill, more closely, these features of the *inetto*—his friend Stefano and the barman Claudio whose dance together, in the New Frisco Bar, to Serge Gainsbourg's "L'Eau à la Bouche," is reflected in one of the bar's mirrors. This queer performance destabilizes assumptions of straightness with these two characters and poses a challenge to the performance of traditional Italian masculinity that Enzo represents. In fact, according to Reich, the *inetto* is what lies behind the *bella figura*, and, of course, we know that Enzo has failings: "The Italian man is 'good at being a man' precisely because he masks the *inetto* through the performance of hypermasculinity: protection of honor, procreation, and sexual segregation."⁴⁵



Figure 4- Enzo's "pilgrimage" scene

and was the "teatro di violenze e repressioni" (theater of violence and repression) during the G8 summit of 2001. He also refers to the almost non-existent social fabric of the area in which Enzo and Mary live, an area surrounding Vico della Croce Bianca where much of the filming for *La bocca* takes place and which is part of Genoa's "caruggi." See: Marcello, "Genova, una storia d'amore," 19, 23

⁴³ David D. Gilmore, "Introduction: The Shame of Dishonour" in *Honour and Shame and the Unity of the Mediterranean*, ed. David D. Gilmore (Washington D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1987), 16–17, quoted in Jacqueline Reich, *Beyond the Latin Lover: Marcello Mastroianni, Masculinity, and Italian Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 4–5.

⁴⁴ Reich, *Beyond the Latin Lover*, 1, 9.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 9–10.

The superficial features of Enzo's *bella figura* are clearly identifiable in the suit he wears, the shape and ease of movement in his muscular body, the boldness of his moustache and strong jaw line. His navigation in and around Genoa is frequently seen to be concerned with maintaining this *bella figura*, such as when he confidently traverses the city in the opening scenes, in his climb to the hilltop church with his very large and phallic candle (Figure 4) which he lights in the church as an honorable gesture seeking penitence for shooting Callaghan and Kromato at the Zanzibar club, in his meeting with Padre Serafino who has known him for many years but who now appears unable to recognize him as a result of his failing health; and in the New Frisco Bar scene where he attempts to maintain his honor by telling Stefano, who has just asked him where he 'did his time' (thereby challenging the *bella figura* that he is trying to portray in his fictional role in the film), that he can mind his own business. It is clear, particularly in this latter scene, that cracks can be seen in Enzo's attempts at maintaining the *bella figura*. However, it would seem that nobody is interested any longer in those attempts, which adds to the challenge of the film in questioning (not necessarily Enzo) but the persistence of dominant masculine heteronormative frameworks regarding gender and sexuality. The crisis of masculinity as performed by Enzo (as a performative) is also performed within the wider structural features of the documentary–fiction encounter (as performance), through the dispersion of the male heteronormative gaze and the challenging of processes of *looking* and being *looked at* (primarily through the use of archive footage).

Returning to my point at the beginning of this section, I believe that of note regarding Enzo's performance of the crisis of masculinity is that the strategy is not "recuperative" as described in O'Rawe's review of Italian cinema, in the sense that it does not "[recenter] hegemonic masculinity."⁴⁶ Rather, it throws aside the coherence with which the constitutive elements of hegemonic gender structures organize representation. Marcello plays with the vertical and the horizontal in *La bocca* in a way that creates tension between the orientation and disorientation of objects, and perceptions thereof and therein. He exposes the unstable foundations of being orientated along the vertical axis according to hegemonic discourse regarding gender and sexuality, such as when Enzo presents himself as the *bella figura* as discussed above.

In arguing further for the queer nature of Marcello's project, I turn now to Mary's voice-over performances, which, while potentially functioning as the acousmatic guiding voice of the film, make a significant contribution to this queering process.

Queer voice

Michelle Duncan makes a useful distinction between "the [performative] voice that is constituted by matter and the [performative] voice that engenders material effect," the former referring to its sound, physicality and bodily-ness, the latter to its power to carry out a performative utterance in line with Judith Butler's theory.⁴⁷ This distinction allows Mary's voice-over performances to be considered as a material object with the potential to effect change upon normative frames of reference regarding gender, sexuality and desire. In support of this position, it is also worth noting that the term "object" has not always referred to something that is visible and tangible, but also sensual.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ O'Rawe, *Stars and Masculinities*, 7.

⁴⁷ Michelle Duncan, "The Operatic Scandal of the Singing Body: Voice, presence, performativity," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 16, no. 3 (2004): 290.

⁴⁸ 'Originally: something placed before or presented to the eyes or other senses. Now (more generally): a material thing that can be seen and touched.' Oxford English Dictionary, 2014, accessed Jan 16, 2015, <http://www.oed.com/>.

In Marcello's and Fgaier's piecing together of the film as a series of objects, Mary's voice plays a key role in challenging hegemonic discourse regarding gender and sexuality. In the film's adoption of an "open voice" in its textual structure, recalling the work of Plantinga from earlier, Mary's voice-over, through its idiosyncrasy, unsettles the traditional male, white, middle-class voice-over of expository documentary film.⁴⁹ Moreover, the central guiding position afforded to Mary's voice within the film can be considered as "an overt tool for exposing the untenability of documentary's belief in its capacity for imparting 'generalized truths' faithfully and unproblematically"; although, this does not stop her voice from having a queer "intersectional" quality.⁵⁰ I would assert that Mary's voice, within the general texture and tone of the film, draws attention to what Plantinga describes as the "vagaries of existence" and the "democracy of interpretation" in the way it wanders through and punctures various other narratives produced in and through the film.⁵¹

Useful at this point is Chion's reference to both the vertical and horizontal perspectives of image and sound; mobile they vacillate and interconnect at certain moments.⁵² Using Godard's documentary film *Lettre à Freddy Buache* (1982), Chion, referring to "the wandering text" [le texte errant] of the audio-visual relationship, explains that there are key moments when the "audio" meets the "visual" in a particular way (recall Enzo's cutting of the melon described above, which is intercepted with the click of the tape recording): "[...] the affirmative tone taken by the voice finds itself suddenly coinciding with a visual cut, as if something—meaning, coherence—had been found."⁵³ In the general flow of information that Mary provides to the viewer regarding their "piccola storia" within the "grande storia" that is Genoa/Italy, there are times when her voice pierces Enzo's visual performance in such a way that it undermines the integrity of his hypermasculinity.⁵⁴ As he is vertical in his movement around the city, she too is vertical in the materiality of her voice—which, contrary to her visual representation in the film, points to the particular of *who* is saying something and not to universal interpretations of *what* is being said.⁵⁵

The verticality of Mary's voice, its power to have effect, is actually sought out by Enzo at various stages of the film. Of note is a scene early in *La bocca* when Nino D'Angelo's song "Fra Cinquant'anne" is sung and whistled by Enzo while he observes a night-time street scene of faceless and voiceless women working as prostitutes, the outline of his body visualized through a brown hue from behind as the camera zooms out in the final scene of the sequence. The song can be considered one of Enzo's callings to Mary, to which a response is expected—particularly as he pushes Mary to sing it for him later in the interview scene. In Neapolitan dialect, the song talks of two becoming one: "Tutt'e duje avvim' addeventa' 'na cosa" [tutti e due dobbiamo diventare una cosa sola]. The content of the song—which is reminiscent of Mary's first visual representation in the film where she sits framed by the doorway behind her—focuses on what the narrator sees in the future, which is the love of his life as a content old woman sitting and waiting with her hands joined together trembling in anticipation of his return.

In becoming "una cosa sola," the song suggests Enzo's ability to dominate Mary as a sexual object; however, his demand that she sing it for him points to her ability to seduce him too. Marcello describes Mary as Penelope, the faithful wife waiting in anticipation of Odysseus who "sailing home

⁴⁹ For more on this, see: Stella Bruzzi, *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2000), 58.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁵¹ Plantinga, "Voice and Authority," 108, 118.

⁵² Chion, "L'audio-vision, son et image au cinéma," 148.

⁵³ Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision, sound on screen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 175-176.

⁵⁴ Fgaier, "Piccole e grandi storie," 24-44.

⁵⁵ Adriana Cavarero, *For more than one voice—toward a philosophy of vocal expression* (California: Stanford University Press, 2005), 29.

from war [...] decides to make a brief detour in order to listen to a song sung by creatures called Sirens.”⁵⁶ Mary’s work as a prostitute, however, challenges this image of “the faithful wife.” I would suggest instead that Mary and her voice-over performances are respectively symbolic of the Sirens and the Sirens’ call which are sought by Enzo in his various callings to the elusive Mary as he navigates the city. While the opening image of Mary reflects Penelope’s coherence, I would argue that Mary’s overall body–voice detachment and fragmentation in the film represents the confusion of the Sirens and the power to disorientate (both sexually and politically) through the transgendered body. The traditional position of the faithful wife can be queered as a result of these associations as can Enzo’s dominant male heteronormative perspective. Mary’s refusal to sing the song in the interview scene reflects her desire not to be subjected by Enzo, a stance which is further reinforced by her mixing of gender in the words she uses at this point in the film.⁵⁷ Also particularly telling is when, again in the interview scene, Enzo exclaims to the camera “io e lei siamo due dominatrici, due, lei domina me e io domino lei,” to which Mary responds that “comunque, uno non domina nessuno e nessuno domina l'altro.”⁵⁸ There is irony in this as Mary clearly has the ability, possibly through her middle-class upbringing, to undermine Enzo’s assertive masculinity, which demonstrates her power to control him and to destabilize gender normative associations in the process.

The “detachment” of Mary’s voice from her physical bodily representation concentrates its potential to disorientate dominant perspectives concerning gender and sexuality. Intimidated by Enzo when she first met him, Mary explains that she thought they were incompatible but that with time she realized that behind his hard exterior there was “la dolcezza di un bambino.”⁵⁹ She proceeds to explain that she noticed this gentle side to Enzo while watching him cry at Walt Disney’s *Bambi*. More interesting is when Mary slips in applying gender to language, using both the masculine and feminine form interchangeably. When talking of how physically attractive Enzo was when they first met and then about her previous drug dependency, Mary states “sono rimasta colpito dalla sua virilità,” and “ero disperato” and “ero distrutto,” which translates as: “I was [fem.] struck [masc.] by his virility” and “was desperate [masc.]” and “distracted [masc.]” When addressing Enzo in one tape-recording she states “ciao dolcissima, carissima, amore mia” (hello my dearest sweetest love), which alters the gender of a masculine word, “amore,” and a hypermasculine Italian man as a result. As Esposito would concur, this mixing of gender has the ability to queer the fixity of categories and render them unstable.⁶⁰ Enzo and Mary also refer to each other as “bastardo/a” on the tape-recordings, which suggests illegitimacy and a lack of place and connection to any solid ground or roots. This word is also suggestive of hybridity, which is further reinforced by Enzo’s tape-recorded warning to Mary that he will split her in two like a chicken or turkey (animals which are difficult to sex when born) should she be unfaithful while he is in prison. Their play on words could well be part of their “alfabeto muto” (secret language), which is never fully elaborated upon in the film and which could well contribute to their own queering of the documentary encounter of which neither director nor spectator is aware.

What is clear is that Mary’s vocal performances render unstable the confidence with which Enzo expresses his hypermasculinity, and the traditional discourses upon which this is based. There

⁵⁶ Marcello, “Mary per sempre,” 10.

Judith Ann Peraino, *Listening to the Sirens: Musical Technologies of Queer Identity from Homer to Hedwig* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 1.

⁵⁷ Esposito, “E c’era l’amore nel ghetto,” 89.

⁵⁸ Translation: Enzo: “we are both masters, the two of us, she dominates me and I dominate her”; Mary: “in any case, we dominate neither anyone else nor each other.”

⁵⁹ Translation: “the sweetness/softness of a baby.”

⁶⁰ Esposito, “E c’era l’amore nel ghetto,” 89.

is a poignant archival scene towards the end of the film —just prior to Enzo’s and Mary’s final shot where they are sitting against a blank interior wall of their new house in the country (suggesting their connection and new start)—of a woman taking control of a greedy donkey. This recalls a montage of two scenes much earlier in the film, the first of which is archival and which shows a horse and carriage proceeding through the streets of a sunny Genoa (during the petrol crisis), the second scene is contemporary and shows Enzo pulling his melon cart to the piazza. These two earlier scenes play on the idea of the object and the subject (and reversal between the two) and highlight the demise of Genoa’s industries upon which Enzo reflects during his journey in the film. The scene involving the donkey appears to mimic the calming of Enzo’s obstinate nature by Mary and the need for him to move on from a space which provides no guarantees in terms of what he sees and how he is seen.

Conclusion

La bocca is a key piece of contemporary Italian Queer Cinema, forming part of a wider emerging (often subtle) queer voice suggestive of a diversified cultural makeup of Italy today.⁶¹ Referring to *La bocca*, Caminati states that “[t]he ‘plot’ is very simple: a chronological reconstruction of [Enzo’s and Mary’s] love story since their meeting in prison to the present.”⁶² This seems in some way to betray the film’s complexity as its fragmented nature gives this story an anachronistic feel which reflects the impact of modernity on alternative realities and the associated difficulties in representing them.

In considering *La bocca* from a queer theoretical perspective in an attempt to grasp that complexity, even if only partly, I have drawn attention to the role of the “object” and the performance of “(dis)orientation” in destabilizing dominant ideas regarding gender and sexuality, and processes of representation. The fragmentation of *La bocca*, including its detachment of space from an exciting or heavily plotted narrative, demands a change in perspective on the spectator’s part and encourages the intermittent and momentary loss of perspective, and reconnection to the “object.” This, I feel, is its most influential feature as a queer project. The film has an ability to connect those involved in the filmic encounter on a number of different interconnecting levels, encouraging shifts in the orientation and disorientation of (and between) objects.

Enzo’s and Mary’s respective interaction with the documentary–fiction encounter, and subsequent representation, exposes the ongoing gendering of space and the complexity involved in circumscribing alternative realities. Although not perceived as a queer work by Marcello himself, the power of *La bocca* lies very much in its exposure of the “constituting” and “constituted” features of these processes. Within this, the role of the “object” is key, as is our relationship to that “object.” It is also clear that across both Enzo’s and Mary’s performances there are underpinning performative features that subsequently affect the way in which the film is performed at a macro level (i.e. Mary’s “invisibility,” Enzo’s *bella figura* as fiction). This performative–performance interface, forming part of a longstanding debate within the field of documentary film studies, is an important feature that

⁶¹ Italy has witnessed a surge in interest in documentary filmmaking since 2000—a situation described by Angelone and Clò as “one of the most innovative and creative artistic sites in Italy.” Offering new perspectives on the country and its people, including spaces beyond its border, Angelone and Clò add: “Another [...]trait that emerges from the work of Italian documentarians is the attention towards minor, marginal and marginalized subjectivities – immigrants, women, gays, lesbians, transgender persons and sub-proletarians, convicts and so on – that often do not find space in a mainstream cinema privileging an homogenized representation of the bourgeois nation.” For further details see: Anita Angelone and Clarissa Clò, “Other visions: Contemporary Italian documentary cinema as counter discourse,” *Studies in Documentary Film* 5, no. 2/3 (2011): 83.

⁶² Luca Caminati, “Narrative non-fictions in contemporary Italian cinema: Roberto Munzi’s *Saimir* (2002), Giorgio Diritti’s *Il vento fa il suo giro* (2005) and Pietro Marcello’s *La bocca del lupo* (2009),” *Studies in Documentary Film* 5, no. 2/3 (2011): 127.

needs to be explored further in relation to specific documentary film texts as it is seen to expose the ongoing hegemonic discourses upon which gender and sexuality, and representation are based.

A focus on the performance of “(dis)orientation” and the “object” are invaluable ways in which to address the queer aspects of a film text, particularly in those contexts where the term “queer” may have less influence—such as is the case in Italy. In exposing the experience of modernity and pointing out the underpinning structures at work within dominant discourse, Ahmed’s articulated queer theoretical position allows those very structures to be challenged through the marginalized perspective to which we can all relate in some way, thereby making Marcello’s project even queerer.

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