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Mancini, Michele and Giuseppe Perrella eds. *Pasolini's Bodies and Places*. Zürich: Patrick Frey, 2017.
Pp. 640. ISBN 978-3-906803-41-8. € 78,00 (hardcover).

In 1981, just six years after the tragic death of Pier Paolo Pasolini, critics Michele Mancini and Giuseppe Perrella took on the colossal task of collecting, categorizing, and archiving almost 2000 photograms from his films. Thirty-six years later, in commemoration of the premature departure of co-author Michele Mancini, Benedikt Reichenbach took on another colossal task, that being the preparation of this work for today's English-speaking public. *Pasolini's Bodies and Places*, translated from the previously published *Pier Paolo Pasolini, corpi e luoghi*, is indeed an art book that can be read as an encyclopedia of Pasolinian im-signs: bodies, objects, places that dwell in his cinema, as well as an exceptional collection of unpublished writings. The almost 700-page volume constitutes a precious reference tool for anyone interested in an in-depth investigation of Pasolini's cinema, and the interconnections among his different films and their paratexts, as the authors carefully isolate recurrent visual signs and propose a network of correspondences amongst them.

Bodies and Places opens with Perrella's epigraph about his and Mancini's inspirations, in an effort to "give new life to the film frames and their impact on the imagination, to spur readers and viewers to leaf through and to rearrange pages of images" (vii). Immediately after, there is "Epitaph for Michele Mancini" written by Jobst Grapow, one of the translators of the new edition. Here, Grapow discloses the ideas that guided his translations towards giving Perrella and Mancini's work a new life within the twenty-first century English-speaking public. He overtly explains that his major objective was "to find the right tone" so that he would not betray the intentions of the authors, and, even less, those of Pasolini, striving instead to bring it all up-to-date (xvi). Grapow invites the translators to carefully choose each word, considering the cultural and historical meanings that a contemporary audience might attribute to them. The authors' purpose is then further outlined in "Speaking Visually," the introduction by Reichenbach that comes next. Here, the editor provides a history of the primal manuscript and its two editions, explaining how Perrella's architectural background was fundamental in giving the book its innovative structure, and how, at the same time, Mancini's previous publications on cinema led to the present volume. Reichenbach underscores how he aspires not only to provide accurate translations, but also to remain true to the spirit of the original *Corpi e luoghi* re-proposed in its format, layout, typography, and even in the cover. The primary motivation of Perrella and Mancini's quest was to deconstruct Pasolini's cinematic world, so that they could convey the artist's love for reality and its visual expressions, Reichenbach reiterates, while also suggesting, that this is his reason for publishing an English edition. The critical background for their search lies in Pasolini's ideas about cinema, as expressed in *Empirismo eretico/ Heretical Empiricism* (Garzanti, 1972), where he delineates, in his typically contradictory fashion, his groundbreaking theories on cinema and the screenplay, being "a structure that wants to be another structure," and using the "truthfulness of the concrete body ... to articulate concepts" and express them visually (xxi).

Further mirroring the original book, Mancini and Perrella's introduction is followed in translation by Ann Goldstein and Jobst Grapow. Mancini and Perrella explain that if for Pasolini cinema is the written language of reality, and through his cinema he endeavors to engage directly with the physicality of the bodies and objects, with their work they strive to highlight such a reality making even its more hidden details visible. Pasolini's cinematic sets, for him a workshop to study and unveil the actors' social and cultural differences as materialized in their own bodies and actions, expose linkages between persons and places. Put simply, Pasolini "makes visible a miscellany of aphasic and hidden practices, a 'primitive' realm normally concealed from our 'enlightened' societies" (xxv-xxvi). Thus, in collecting and categorizing previously unpublished writings of Pasolini

and carefully selected screenshots, the authors of *Bodies and Places* represent, analyze, and organize the auteur's lifelong search in all its magnitude.

The first section of the volume consists of a collection of unpublished texts that Pasolini wrote in the form of notes or comments to himself in the midst of the process of filming, translated by Stephen Sartarelli. "My Thousand and One Nights" contains notes that Pasolini wrote in 1973 while he was searching for the locations and protagonists of his *Il fiore delle Mille e una notte/ Arabian Nights* (1974). In this way, Pasolini the director, shares the mental journey he took during location scouting in Africa, encountering new people and cultures. This journal provides keen insights into the details of his filmmaking, including what he would look for when searching for the right face and body to give to his characters, or the right location to film a specific scene. Any Pasolini scholar or critic would benefit from reading the director's open goals before filming, vis-à-vis the finished products. It is interesting to see how Pasolini describes people's bodies, with an artistic and critical eye that highlights physical details and specific behavioral features, as if he were describing an object or a painting. The next chapter, "Notes for a Poem on the Third World," contains Pasolini's quite fragmented notes written in 1968 while he was planning to make a film in five episodes on the Third World. Of the five episodes, he realized only the one in Africa, which later became *Appunti per un'Orestiade africana/ Notes Towards an African Orestes* (1970). Readers can explore the director's creative ideas behind each of the planned episodes and his inner vision with "Introductory Notes," "Notes for the Film on India," "Note for 'The Savage Father,'" "Arab Countries," "South America," and "The Ghettos of North America." The successive notes "In Africa: Between Obedient Sons and Modern Youth," written in 1970, comprise a more detailed account of Pasolini's observations about different social behaviors he noticed in African communities and their respective economic trends. Pasolini's descriptions remain focused on the body, the location where history, traditions, and myths are written, and he often highlights his guiding principle, the search for reality. Following these topics are notes entitled "The Grace of the Eritreans" and "Postscript to 'The Grace of the Eritreans'" written respectively in 1968 and 1973. These two brief excerpts highlight Pasolini's expectations and initial, almost idyllic, descriptions of the landscape and people of Eritrea, and his subsequent disillusioned analysis, after having experienced it personally. The last section of unpublished texts, "Voices from the Set," puts forth full transcriptions of dialogues from a French television program on Pasolini, which brings together comments, notes, extracts from conversations with different peoples, actors and other film directors who worked with him, such as Franco Citti, Adriana Asti, Nino Davoli, Totò, Bernardo Bertolucci.

The second section of *Pasolini's Bodies and Places* is unquestionably the most innovative one, as the authors collect and catalogue screenshots taken from all Pasolini's films under the six major categories of "Families on the Set," "Modes of Behavior," "Places," "Objects," "Citations," "Writings," and "Censures"—divided into over thirty additional sub-categories such as "Biographical Families," "Characters" (for Families on the Set) or "Gestures," "Laughing," and "Nudity" (for Modes of Behavior), just to give a few examples. The authors differentiate between biographical families that participated in different roles and recurrent actors, facial features that recur in different films and characters, spaces that are urban and suburban, workplaces, places of surveillance, different houses that appear multiple times in various productions, and everyday objects or clothing. In this way, they both isolate and highlight visual signs typically unnoticed by the naked eye, that dwell in Pasolini's vast cinematic world and are specific to his films.

Using Pasolini's own neologism coined in *Empirismo eretico*, we can today call these visual signs cinematic "im-signs," captured from the infinite chaos of all possible images. The magnitude of Perrella and Mancini's work lies here: they are able to give Pasolinian "im-signs"—what Pasolini himself said did not yet exist—a specific classification or organization in a visual dictionary which

charges them with a more profound meaning across all his cinematography and is specific to it. Readers are given a map of people, objects, and places in Pasolini's cinematic world, and a guide through which to move horizontally along the path of his films, as well as vertically and in depth with each unique visual sign or category. It is a path that foreshadows discoveries, connections, and inter-connections among Pasolini's films: bodies, objects, and places located in Rome, in its outskirts, but also in the south of Italy, in major urban cities as well small towns, and in Third World countries. Such a path unveils strategic yet hidden connections between the language of different bodies and modes of behavior that are distinctive traits of Pasolini's world. *Bodies and Places* ends with a complete filmography, bibliography, and notes for a future exhibition project, which would allow the visitor to select a trajectory through the images, rather than be guided by the pages of a book. To complete the volume, Reichenback elegantly includes in an appendix the original Italian text by Mancini and Perrella.

It seems quite promising that the Anglophone field of Pasolini's studies, virtually abounding in recent years, will benefit from this translation and use it to continue to explore the director's cinematic world as a unified body of films. Reichenback's editing of *Pasolini's Bodies and Places* fills a significant gap in Pasolinian studies for the English-speaking public, as it offers a complete catalogue of the visual signs in his films—a catalogue which had not only been missing to date, but also makes an extremely valuable contribution to the ongoing and ever-relevant investigation, discovery, and re-discovery of Pasolini's cinematic art. It would have been even more enriching if, on the part of the editor, there had been a personal and critical reading on the recurrence of these visual signs. Reichenbach's choice, instead, to leave it as a reference tool fostering further studies, remains true to the intent of the original authors.

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