

4. ROSSELLINI'S CITIES OF WAR AND RESISTANCE

there is . . . the Casilina road
onto which sadly are opened the doors of Rossellini's city . . .
there is the epic neorealist landscape [. . .]
Almost an emblem, by now, the scream of Magnani,
beneath the disorderly absolute locks
resounds in the desperate pans,
and in her vivid and mute look,
thickens the sense of tragedy
It is there that the present is dissolved and mutilated
and deafens the poet's song.
Pier Paolo Pasolini, *La religione del mio tempo*, 1961 (2003)

OUT OF THE RUINS: *OPEN CITY*

Deleuze's view of neorealist film as having unprecedentedly visualised senses of time and of spatial disconnection echoes Rossellini's own understanding of cinematic narration as a matter of 'waiting: [. . .] it is waiting that makes live, it's waiting that unleashes reality, the waiting that, after the preparation – gives liberation [. . .] Waiting is the force of every happening of our life, and so also for the cinema'. As a dramatic device, waiting involves tracing the characters' movements and revealing the spaces in which they move, while suspending the dramatic moment that eventually strikes them, unexpectedly, irreversibly (Rossellini 1987b: 92–3; 1995: 17–20). As a force of social conscience

and cultural change, however, in wartime Italy, waiting implied longing for political as well as artistic liberation. After *L'uomo della croce* was shot in the summer of 1942, a consortium of producers unimpressed with Rossellini's irreverent methods banned him from any cinematic activity. Once Vittorio Mussolini ensured him the rights to realise a story treatment Giuseppe De Santis had written on the work of railwaymen, the project was immediately set back by the turmoil of 1943. What little Rossellini was able to shoot between the Allies' first air strikes in July and the establishment of the Nazi-fascist Republic of Salò in September was later inserted into a completely different drama of fatal passions entitled *Desiderio* (1946).¹

The combination of living in a country split between foreign forces and of refusing, as Rossellini and most other cineastes did, to join the fascists' cinema in Venice, did not merely cause another period of professional waiting. As for most other Italians, the fall of fascism confronted Rossellini with an obligation and liberty to take a stance and *Open City* is, both in inspiration and realisation, a reflection of this ultimatum. It reconstructs the risks involved in active and passive resistance, and both the dramatic start where Manfredi barely escapes arrest, thanks to a timely warning from his landlady, and Pina's death in front of a traumatised neighbourhood, would have confronted contemporary spectators with recent and far from uncommon horrors. Another and perhaps even more significant objective of these sequences was to celebrate the 'web of solidarity' that arose among the several hundred thousand Italians who were persecuted during the occupation and to create a memory of the more than 650 ex-soldiers and civilians who died while defending Rome against advancing Nazi troops, the 1,735 partisans who lost their lives in combat or were tortured and executed during the ten months of occupation and the hundreds of civilians who were killed in the streets or in mass executions (Bentivegna 2002). Among the darkest memories of the occupation in Rome is the deportation of more than 3,000 civilians, mainly Jews, of whom only 420 returned, and the Fosse Ardeatine massacre (24 March 1944), which constituted a reprisal for an attack members of the GAP (Groups of Patriotic Action) had conducted in via Rasella the previous day, causing the death of thirty-three German military policemen.² The massacre was ordered by Hitler and many were rounded up indiscriminately to fill the 1:10 reprisal quota, but the majority of the 335 victims came from via Tasso and other prisons, as did the Resistance priest Don Pietro Pappagallo whose work and death created an instantaneous oral legend (Forgacs 2000: 14; Roncoroni 2006: 351).

While the execution of Don Pietro is the only reference included to these tragedies, they constitute a tacit premise not only for the thematics of *Open City*, but also for the collective engagement that inspired it. Months of inactivity, fear, wandering and hiding brought Rossellini closer to militant cineastes

and Resistance activists who in the spring of 1944 held 'passionate' clandestine meetings aimed at developing 'a program of the Resistance' to be activated following the imminent Liberation. The debate centred around realism, popular art and relations between art and society and Alicata, who had anticipated these questions as a *Cinema* critic and as a collaborator on *Obsession*, recalled that this was when Gramsci's concept of national-popular-art gained currency (quoted in Roncoroni 2006: 409). These collective concerns with art and the people operate, in harmony with Rossellini's predilection for choral representations, to form a view in *Open City* of history as built on the struggles of ordinary people. In discussing the film's 'documentary' qualities, critics have conventionally emphasised its aesthetics, the immediacy of its historical chronicle, and the authenticity it seeks in conveying the spirit of the Resistance as a popular force of solidarity and regeneration (Wagstaff 2007: 97–8). To these qualities, we must therefore also add the testimony it bears to a climate of regeneration and the practical model it provides for a new culture dedicated to redress decades of social injustice and enhance the country's moral rebuilding.

Started three months after the liberation of Rome on 5 June 1944 and released five months after Mussolini's execution on 25 April 1945, *Open City* was unique in the immediacy with which it reconstructed what in the film's working title was called 'Yesterday's Stories'. Nevertheless, Rossellini was not the first to envision a cinematic chronicle of recent tragedies. In fact, the idea for *Open City* came from a treatment for a documentary on Don Pappagallo written by Alberto Consigli, with whom Rossellini had collaborated on *L'uomo della croce*, and De Santis had already announced a film – unfortunately never realised – on GAP-fighters in Rome that would also have commemorated Teresa Gullace, a pregnant woman shot by the Germans outside the barracks where her husband was awaiting deportation (Roncoroni 2006: 22–6; 355). As the script developed, this episode gave life to Pina, and the story of Don Pappagallo was fused with that of another Resistance priest, Don Giuseppe Morosini. A common motivating factor among several scriptwriters, of whom only Sergio Amidei and Fellini have been credited, was the urgency, after years of forced adherence to official realities, to 'narrate what had happened, what we had seen', and when the title became *Rome: Open City*, it was to reinforce this testimonial function in historically very precise terms.³ Following the Allies' attacks in the summer of 1943, Rome, as the centre of Catholicism, had been declared a demilitarised zone or an 'open city'. This declaration passed through the Vatican and was repropounded as the condition on which the defeated Italian army surrendered Rome to the Germans. Neither the occupying nor the liberating forces respected the agreement and the term 'open city' was soon redefined by Resistance activists as a slogan around which to provoke anti-German sentiments (Forgacs 2000: 106).

The title therefore contains a sarcastic reference to historical realities that no contemporary viewer would have overlooked, while it also evokes the solidarity and sacrifices involved in the citizens' struggle to reclaim the right to their city.

In part, it was in order to capture this spirit of opposition while it could still be sensed that Rossellini started to shoot prematurely in January 1945, facing practical barriers as they came, while selling off personal belongings as well as the furs and jewellery of his wife and girlfriend respectively until more stable backing was found (Rondolini 1989: 98). The predicaments of having to pilfer electricity from a nearby American newspaper and procure film stock in bits and pieces, as well as the financial impossibility not only of shooting with a soundtrack, but also of developing the film stock in daily rushes to revise and keep track of what was shot, would have caused the greatest difficulties.⁴ Between technical hitches and moral as well as artistic drives to complete the project, Rossellini was obliged, as he would later recall

to invent a new technique that allowed making films without using studios. This realism was simply born from the condition of work. Perhaps also from the stubbornness, the desire to do things completely, despite the terrible conditions of work, without giving in to the temptation to say to oneself that in Rome in that moment, there were more important things to be done. (1987a: 106)

Implied in this account is not merely the physical and economic disintegration of the industry, encapsulated by the destruction of Rome's major studio, Cinecittà, at the hands of Allied and German invaders, and its temporary use as a camp for the homeless once the city was liberated (Rondolini 1989: 72). Like Zavattini, Rossellini considered the provisional lack of traditional industrial structures as having created an unprecedented freedom, opening up the most extraordinary and hitherto considered unworkable projects. Deprived both of the financial guarantee and the exigencies of film producers, Rossellini found that the distaste for rigid programmes for which he had once been excluded from the cinema had all of a sudden become an invaluable ability to survive and innovate.

There is no question that *Open City* was immediately considered 'exceptional, even emblematic, of a new, absolutely abnormal mode of working', but there are several reservations to the legend of insuperable obstacles and total reinvention of structures (Rondolini 1989: 81). Made 'from the truth', it still followed the 'old schemes' of cinematic techniques and narration, Amidei would later observe, pointing in particular to the many gags and melodramatic themes as well as to the characters' emblematic quality. Most of the indoor scenes were reconstructed in a vacant horse racing hall in via

degli Avignonesi and shot with classical, albeit terribly inadequate, lighting (quoted in Roncoroni 2006: 430–1) and the rough photography would have been caused by artificial light drawn from poor electricity and by damage that occurred during the development of the finished film, rather than by the stock which in itself was both available and appropriate for Rossellini's particular needs (Wagstaff 2007: 96–104). Furthermore, initial interruptions in shooting appear to have been a reflection of poor preparation as much as lack of funds, and the decision of the distribution company CIS Nettunia to rescind its contract with Rossellini in February 1945 on the basis of unsatisfactory previews suggests that some rushes were available early on, despite Rossellini and his collaborators' affirmations to the contrary (Roncoroni 2006: 27). What made *Open City* look intrinsically new was therefore first and foremost the subject matter, the immediacy it gave to the historical material and the authenticity it achieved in dramatising national sentiments. Only by relocating our perspective from the film's aesthetic to its moral qualities can we perceive the position it immediately acquired as the marker of national as well as cinematic rebirth.

The coexistence of the old and the new also shapes the cast as lesser-known performers, friends of the authors and ordinary citizens appear alongside Aldo Fabrizi, nationally the best paid and most in-demand actor and a perfect fit for the role of Don Pietro, and Anna Magnani, who with *Open City* attained iconic status as the quintessential *popolana* (woman of the people). Both claimed disproportional amounts of the non-existent budget and were crucial in making the hazardous project economically viable.⁵ Contemporary cinema-goers would, in particular, have recognised them as the jovial working-class protagonists of *Campo de' fiori* (Bonnard 1943) and *L'ultima carozzella* (Mattoli, 1943) which, being scripted by Zavattini, Fellini, and Amidei, and shot on location in the ordinary neighbourhoods of central Rome, testify to the regenerative function of certain wartime experiments. The birth of neorealism as a 'dialectal' cinema was born with these romantic yet anti-illusionist comedies, Rossellini later observed, and with the 'spontaneous creation' of the two Roman actors who had both been trained in the vernacular style of variety theatre (1995: 52). Their sympathetically imperfect personae had effectuated a decisive break with the falsifying structures of 'white-telephone films' and re-appropriating them in *Open City* was a crucial strategy that helped to form an image of the present with which the public could identify.

YESTERDAY'S STORIES

Set in the winter of 1944, *Open City* establishes its spatiotemporal anchorage with a panoramic shot over the city's skyline, capturing Saint Peter's cupola in the distance. Superimposed are the main titles and a caption reading:

The facts and characters of this film, albeit drawn from tragic and heroic stories of nine months of Nazi occupation, are imaginary. Thus, any identification with real facts and characters should be considered incidental.

As the camera pans slowly leftwards, an initially dramatic score gives way to singing German soldiers captured in archive footage while marching up the Spanish Steps. The fictional part of the narrative then begins with the SS arriving at an apartment block in the same square.⁶ A woman catches sight of them from the window and a cut leads to Manfredi who, in contrast to the Germans' song of terror, is listening to the illegal 'Voice of London', reminding us that the BBC had been broadcasting in Italian since 1938. Thanks to a warning from his landlady, Manfredi escapes by way of the roofs over the adjacent Spanish embassy, an area the SS would rather avoid.⁷ The following morning, Manfredi goes to Francesco's place and is received by his fiancée, Pina, unleashing an episodic narrative where singular stories are tied together respectively by relationships of solidarity, betrayal and monstrous power. The latter thread unfolds with the appearance of Gestapo leader, Bergmann, and involves his men as well as the fascists as passive accomplices; the former thread emerges from women raiding local bakeries for severely rationed bread and from partisans disposed to die for collective liberation.⁸ Their story reaches a caesura with the death of Pina and a conclusion with that of Don Pietro. Between good and evil we find Marina, Manfredi's ex-girlfriend, and Pina's sister, Lauretta, who have abandoned their working-class roots in pursuit of an easy life as nightclub entertainers.

Once Manfredi – a military leader of the CLN – has been reported, he must hide, and he asks assistance from Don Pietro whose priestly clothing and authorisation to go out after curfew will make the carrying of money to partisans easier. The mutual respect with which the two engage encapsulates ideals of a cross-political and unitary struggle, as does Don Pietro's immersion in secular life and his concern for matters of material and historical urgency. He may be slightly alarmed by Pina's son, Marcello, who instead of attending church receives lessons in Marxist thought from Romoletto, but during the round-up at Pina's place, he resolutely abandons the children gathered for Sunday school to cover up for the revolutionary kid's weapons. In vain does Bergmann talk of Manfredi as an enemy of the church in order to make Don Pietro betray him, since the priest is convinced that everyone who fights for freedom walks in the path of the Lord. This atmosphere of extreme deprivation and indiscriminate solidarity sets the context for the war-time wedding Pina plans to celebrate in a modest apartment where only the stairway offers a room for privacy and dreams. Francesco is confident in promising her the 'new springtime' she longs for, unaware as he is of the tragically ironic turn their wedding day will take. Having witnessed Pina's deadly protest against his

arrest, Francesco escapes two deaths: the first thanks to the partisans' attack on the convoy deporting him, and the second just before he is about to seek asylum in a convent. Marcello insists he take a scarf Pina gave him, delaying his departure by the two seconds necessary to escape the SS who capture Manfredi, Don Pietro and an Austrian deserter. The child's search for a connection of future togetherness will, it is assumed, allow them both to see the city reclaim its openness.

These scenes of collective struggles and sacrifices are juxtaposed with snapshots of Marina's apartment in the refined district of Parioli. Unable to renounce the intoxicating effects of consumer goods and cocaine, she is more uneasy about inhabiting a grey area of non-being and non-belonging than Lauretta, who spends her carefree nights with German soldiers. She therefore does not dismiss Manfredi's moralistic disapproval of her lack of values, but declares that if he had loved her, he would have made her change. The betrayal she immediately regrets is just as much a way not to acknowledge what human and emotional losses her desires of social mobility have brought about as it is a means to avenge Manfredi's abandonment. Marina's moral distance from the world she once inhabited shapes her characterisation as well. In contrast to Pina who, despite the sentimental pathos of her story, retains strong individual traits (her Roman speech, her sympathetic candour and her sense of solidarity and care for others) that make her credible as a woman of the people, Marina is easily recognisable as the 'fallen woman' of nineteenth-century melodrama, whereas Ingrid personifies the lesbian 'femme fatale' – a predatory figure developed by stereotyping homosexual identity. The captivating relationship of seduction and treason that unfolds between these two women serves primarily to establish a narrative connection to the enemy, and the overstated fictionalisation of their characters are attuned with the staged world of the Gestapo headquarters. Constructed and lit as a stage, Bergmann's office is conveniently located between a salon of whisky-drinking officers and the adjacent torture chamber, enabling an easy transgression between the two spheres, and both the intense desk light he points towards his victims during interrogation, and the illumination of Manfredi's grotesquely mutilated body, reveal the calculated use of chiaroscuro effects to accentuate the opposing images of the crude realism of relentless resistance and the performance of social and moral degradation.

This theatricalisation of the Gestapo leaders highlights not only the good and those that ultimately win, but also Italians who, like the Questore (head of the fascist police), are involved in their network. He smiles and nods at Bergmann's impressive city map which, modelled on what historically was known as the Schroeder-plan, divides the city into 14 zones to economise round-ups. Although they are both seeking to uncover facts about Manfredi, who escaped imprisonment in 1928 and fought with the communists against

Franco in Spain, Bergmann evidently does not trust his partner enough to allow him to capture their victim. The Questore, for his sake, appears slightly disturbed over the screams of pain penetrating Bergmann's office and he is never involved in torturing partisans or in decadent gatherings. Both characters were modelled on historical figures, but their representation is far from accurate, or even verisimilar. Whatever effeminate traits the Gestapo leader Colonel Herman Kappler historically may have possessed, these are magnified by the exaggerated mannerism of the declared homosexual Austrian-Jewish dancer, Harry Feist, whereas in the Questore we see little of Pietro Caruso, who was sent to Rome by Mussolini to handle intensified anti-fascist activity and later executed as responsible for the Fosse Ardeatine massacre. At worst, Rossellini's Questore appears ridiculous and completely undermined by Bergmann's rhetorical skills and devilish set-up. This systematic use of generic types and dramaturgic commonplaces to distinguish between the moral worlds that cohabit in the city point to the film's basis in traditional narrative structures, but the unbalanced distribution of evil also reveals an intent to ignore the nation's sins in favour of a conciliatory discourse aimed at unifying the people around ideals of collective rebuilding.

RECONSTRUCTING YESTERDAY

Moving between the city's adversarial spheres, the narrative unfolds as a string of episodes interrelated either by continuity or by opposition with regard both to characters, form of action and generic elements. From the melodramatic intensity and treacherous luxury of Marina's life, the film cuts to Don Pietro's spartan rooms of unconditional hospitality, and from his gag of staging a fictitious last rites during the fatal raid, we are lead to the tragedy of Pina's death and the detached observation of the partisans' rescue manoeuvre. Such forms of 'ethical intercutting' invest spatial and moral oppositions with an evaluative commentary, while also reinforcing dramatic tensions by providing more knowledge of the events than the protagonists themselves possess (Gottlieb 2004: 33). The frequent juxtaposition of parallel actions within the Italian and the German sphere of action is, in that respect, telling. After Manfredi's escape, a cut to the Gestapo headquarters leaves little doubt as to what it meant to have barely avoided capture, and it also explains why Manfredi's landlady later displays such terror at the thought of 'ending up in via Tasso'. Suggestive parallels can be drawn to *Uomini e no*, which was written and published contemporaneously with *Open City*. Vittorini employs similar literary techniques of cross-cutting to reinforce personal experiences with an encompassing and ethically evaluative insight, but in reconstructing 'the fear of everyone, but of mine in particular. I too have fled, I too have had friends who have been captured and killed', Rossellini created something rather different from

Vittorini's Resistance city, where the atmosphere of collective terror forms the backdrop to scenes of urban guerrilla fights and mass executions (Rossellini 1987b: 92). *Open City* tends to view the Resistance through clandestine connections, and only the children's sabotage of a German train and the attack on the German convoy represent the 'explosive city' the Gestapo leader Herbert Kappler described while being sentenced to life imprisonment in Italy in 1947 (Bentivegna 2002).

The partisan attack proves, however, to convey more subtle functions than the merely narrative one of connecting Francesco's arrest with his and Manfredi's successive arrivals at the *trattoria* where they escape the attention of German soldiers but fall into Marina's trap. Set in the outskirts of EUR, an area approximately 10 kilometres south of the city which Mussolini developed in view of the 1942 World Fair as the very incarnation of fascist planning and urban expansion, this manifestation of armed Resistance contains ideological undertones that appear reinforced if we consider the violent protests Gullace's assassination historically caused and, more specifically, the attack in Via Rasella. Given the scale of reprisals and the contradictory sentiments this operation had caused among both the Resistance and the citizens, it was a particularly uneasy chapter of collective memory that could only be implicitly evoked. This forms another contrast to Vittorini's narrative, which moves from a celebration of a similar GAP attack in Milan to elaborate descriptions of the atrocious reprisal it caused.⁹ The film's selective history is even more obvious in its categorical conceptualisation of the enemy. Pina, who acts as the oracle of popular opinion, may identify the ruins outside her house as the result of the Allies' liberation, and she refuses to be married by a fascist in the city hall, but evil as such resides exclusively within the Germans. Whether they gun down sheep for their dinner or manifest themselves through a disturbing equation of Nazism and homosexuality, the perversity of the foreign invaders permeates their every action. In a moment of drunken lucidity, Major Hartman severely questions the laws of the 'master-race', condemning the assumption of superiority and the hatred caused, but the moral ambiguity of his soliloquy is denied the following morning when he yells at the Italian firing squad for its hesitance to shoot a priest and dispatches Don Pietro with a furious *coup de grâce*.

As suggested by the opening caption that exclusively establishes Nazism as the context for tragic and heroic stories, *Open City* develops a Manichean perspective that dismisses not only the man within the beast but also the beast within the nation's self. The fascists who stop Francesco on his way home, and those who raid Pina's place, are more inclined to hunt women than the enemies of the Reich, and the firing squad of Italian soldiers refuses, passively, to kill Don Pietro. Even more problematic is the total exclusion of atrocious events in which Mussolini's men were actively involved – chiefly the deportation of the Jews in the winter of 1943–4 and the Fosse Ardeatine massacre

the following spring. The change in focus from Don Pappagallo, a victim of the massacre, to Don Morosini, reveals the systematic attempt to avoid the civil war upon which Vittorini's narrative and philosophical perspective focuses. In addition, while celebrating the sacrifice of exceptional priests, the film ignores the Church's official collaboration with fascism and its passivity vis-à-vis Nazi-fascist violence (Forgacs 2000: 64–5; Roncoroni 2006: 33). This systematic reduction of national conflict must be related to uneasy compromises between often conflicted authors and between authors and censors. In particular, Ivanoe Bonomi, head of the multi-party government that ruled Liberated Italy in the last year of the war, interfered with measures of a priori censorship to align the film's messages with the official policy of national pacification rather than the revolutionary tendencies within the Resistance. What the original script outlined as an explicitly anti-fascist representation and the ideals of historical accuracy and artistic freedom with which it would be realised had all to be sacrificed on the 'altar of realpolitik'.¹⁰ When the time came for *Paisà*, Rossellini would take a more critical stance toward conflicts and divisions during the war for liberation, but in 1945, to evoke yesterday's stories meant first and foremost to provide a coherent moral basis for a collective tomorrow.

CLAIMING AN OPEN CITY

If, in the attempt to bridge ideological and geographical divisions and provide foundations for restored national life and identity, *Open City* in effect came to anticipate the collective amnesia that reigned in post-war Italy, we must also recognise the call for change – social and moral, within and beyond the Church – that lies beneath its conciliatory discourses. As Forgacs has demonstrated in a sophisticated study of the film's spatiality, the diegetic world is seen through two major perspectives: a panoptical one connected to schemes of surveillance and extermination, on the one hand; and another that moves along the ground, following the steps of those who seek to escape these very schemes, while also bringing forth undiscovered areas and new uses of the city (2000: 33–6). After the first scenes near the Spanish Steps, the narrative gravitates away from the centre towards the working-class district of Prenestino where life takes place in streets that open up for collective protest (at the bakery) but also fragmentary exchanges and reflections (between Pina and the *brigadiere*; Don Petro and Marcello, Don Pietro and Pina), and where the interiors house clandestine networks and unconditional charity. What emerges is a decentralising entity that infringes not only upon the Gestapo's city map, but also upon sites of monumental importance (Aprà 2006: 41). Between the distant appearance of Saint Peter's in the first and the final shot, papal institutions are displaced in favour of a parish church open to children, deserters and resisters

whereas an evanescent view of the Palazzo della Civiltà del Lavoro which was built with 'a classical and monumental feeling' as the main building for the ultimately unrealised World Fair is all that is left to recall Mussolini's imperial city (Grundman 1998: 323). Symbolically, it is in the EUR district and in front of this rationalist structure that the partisans liberate Francesco.

The extent to which Don Pietro allows the authority of hierarchical ecclesiastic structures to disintegrate in the face of the pressing needs of providing asylum, forging documents and assisting guerrilla fighters becomes evident when he postpones Pina's requested confession to honour his clandestine mission. As they leave church together, she nevertheless leads the conversation into a confessional mode, encouraged no doubt by the unorthodox approach to Christian charity of a priest who acts not as a mediating judge but as an interlocutor in questions of existential and doctrinal matters. That the wedding comes a bit late for her condition is a lesser concern for Don Pietro; what worries him are those who expect heavenly intervention in terrestrial suffering, without realising that the war is a divine punishment for collective disobedience and that the only means to peace is prayer and moral change. Most noteworthy here is not perhaps the ahistorical explanation of a conflict he fights with historical means, nor the collective 'us' he accuses, making no exception for clergy members or other privileged classes. Void of liturgical formulas, his response to Pina's concerns deconstructs both the sermon and the confession and what unfolds is an unintentional act of reformulation that continues in the Gestapo offices when Manfredi attempts to confess his subversive affiliations. The guards interrupt them and Don Pietro is not too anxious to hear what he probably has understood anyway and, seeing his comrade tortured to death, he praises his mortal silence and grants him unconditional absolution. Both interactions embrace the Christian imperative of social justice rather than Don Pietro's official mandate, but more than redeeming the Church by celebrating an alternative to comfortable neutrality, as has been suggested (Marcus 1986: 51), they call for a democratisation of a sacrament that has traditionally been questioned precisely for its reliance on authoritarian mediation.

One function of these spontaneous confessions is to give the quest for openness, understood in spatial and military terms, an ideological connotation and make it applicable to the Church but also other institutions that during fascism had disallowed debate and diverse viewpoints. If the truncated exchange between Manfredi and Don Pietro synthesises the Revolution and the Calvary as roads to tolerance and freedom, the last interaction between Pina and Don Pietro bridges the parallel processes of civil decentralisation and religious deinstitutionalisation. Leading away from the parish church, along the scarcely spectacular railways and towards the mountains where partisans are fighting, Pina and Don Pietro's walk captures the essence of what according to Sandro Bernardi defines Rossellini's realism: an exploration of the sacred within

human interaction and the landscape (2000: 50–1). If there is a nod here to the ‘religiosity’ and ‘choral quality’ that Rossellini identified as constants in his work (1987b: 88–9), the idea of an essentially social concept of the sacred also points to *Open City* as embedded in the ethos and culture of the Resistance, giving space and voice to traditionally underrepresented social subjects, who during the occupation emerged as historical agents. Pina, Don Pietro and the others are not heroes as Manfredi explains, calmer than ever in front of the agonising death awaiting him. At least, they are not the type of heroes fabricated by fascist rhetoric. Their opposition to the totalitarian state as well as their humble condition and individual imperfections (atheism, extramarital pregnancy, political use of ecclesiastic privileges), prove their affinity with Visconti’s Gino, who had already introduced the anti-hero as a new cinematic protagonist. Born out of the ruins of the war, however, Rossellini’s characters seek, successfully or not, to transform the wanderer’s destructive rebelliousness by defending their city and by engaging in historical action.

Connection between a new human type, on the one hand, and new perceptions of space and of cinematic narration, on the other, emerge more clearly when Pina falls to the ground, a moment so unfathomable that when Don Pietro embraces her lifeless body, assuming the posture and expression of a *mater dolorosa*, he does not immediately administer the last rites, in contrast to when Manfredi dies. It is not only the bystanders that feel the traumatic effects of this scene, but the spectators, unprepared as we are for the grotesque elimination of such a central and positive character (Marcus 2008: 428). The film, on the other hand, while tracing Pina’s movements to lay bare the environment in which she lives and map out her position at the edges of the city, has ‘waited’ precisely for this moment (Rossellini 1995: 20). If the unexpected tragedy serves to convey Pina’s lack of political agency through a dramatic situation that literally silences her voice, the complete futility of her protest motivated by passion rather than any notion of historical action also presents us with a woman who sees and reacts, but who fails to act in other than self-destructive ways. Existentially, as well as socially and topographically, Pina belongs to the margins, between the ‘agent’ and ‘seer’, announcing the essentially modern subjectivity that Deleuze sees visualised within decentralised spaces. The images from via Montecucciolli where Pina is slain amidst destroyed buildings and terrified inhabitants offers a rare ‘documentary record’ of Rome in 1945 as well as a suggestive indicator as to what everyday life during the occupation was like (Forgacs 2000: 22). As a cinematic space, however, it embodies the undefined, and fragmentary quality of the ‘any-space-whatever’. Invested by the ‘tragedy’ of sacrifice that in the late 1950s made its way into Pasolini’s Roman poetry with such an expressivity as to mute the poet’s own voice, the ‘neorealist landscape’ is to a great extent composed of such spaces where unspectacular streets and ordinary people may achieve the status of emblems.

Within this world of the ordinary and the unspectacular, we discern the techniques of deformation Jakobson saw as central to the formulation of new realisms. Along similar lines, Deleuze observes that it is precisely the exclusion of recognisable and logically interconnected spaces that separates neorealism from traditional realism (1986: 212–13). *Open City* relies on conventions of cinematic narration, but its intent to disorient us has highly innovative effects. From the roofs of Manfredi's apartment, the film cuts to a claustrophobic world of evil, and eventually to a raided bakery; from an inner-city tragedy, we are relocated to a suburban claim to justice, being constantly asked to reflect on the individual spaces before attempting to reconstruct their logical correlations. In response to Pasolini's regret over neorealism's political failures, Deleuze would point to the cinematic revolution promoted by its many discontinuities and the potential the proliferation of empty, decentralised space offers for rebuilding and renewal. Given their lack of inner and external connections, 'any-space-whatevers' may be reconnected in an infinite number of ways and constitute therefore 'loci' of the 'possible' or of 'becoming' (Deleuze 1986: 109). This sheds light on the conclusion of *Open City* at the Forte Bravetta – a fortress which historically saw the execution of seventy-seven anti-fascists, including Don Morosini, and later, Pietro Caruso, among other war criminals. Decentralising the fortress itself, a series of long shots visualise a seemingly unconfined field before the camera identifies Don Pietro, tied to a chair in the centre, and only when Marcello and the other boys leave the site do we see how displaced the fortress is from the city centre. Don Pietro's last prayer takes place in open space as does Pina's last scream. Both sacrifices are removed from landmarks of authority and glory, and just as the fatal passion of Pina's body seems to radiate in the street, so, too, does the moral and spiritual force of Don Pietro invest the ground beneath him. Capturing the parallel processes of decentralisation and deinstitutionalisation, the respective spaces of martyrrial death are loci of becoming in which the new, free civilisation will take on life. A creative entity as much as it is a reproduction of documentary value, the cinematic city offers a model for a new social formation that leaves room for collective redemption, but that more than anything else sets out to offer the children of the Resistance a place of tolerance and social justice in which to restart civic life.

DISCOVERY OF SELF AND OTHER: *PAISÀ*

Much of what emerged and what was aimed at in *Open City* takes more articulated forms in *Paisà* which elaborates on the cinematic potential of collective experiences while bringing the aspiration to sincerity, innovation and confrontational observations much further. The idea of a cinematic rendering of the Italian Liberation stirred immediate enthusiasm among Allied Forces, which

willingly provided soldiers, tanks and German prisoners. Initial relations with American producers grew, on the other hand, far more tenuous due not to the film's unconventional composition of six episodes all of which present different situations and characters, but to the authors' methods, the lack of detailed plans and the rejection of stars (Rondolini 1989: 94–5). According to Rossellini and his scriptwriters, *Paisà* should not 'describe actions of war' – in that case Hollywood heroes would have done – but it should create a 'realistic' and 'faithful' image of the Americans' relations with the Italian people. Such an objective demanded that actors, both American and Italian, be non-professionals and chosen as far as possible from within the environments represented (quoted in Aprà 1987: 93). Refusing all norms of cinematic spectacle, Rossellini insisted that faces, as well as spaces, be unknown to the screen and found himself, once again, searching for the required capital.

When shooting started in January 1946, an original scenario written by Amidei, Fellini, and others existed. The individual episodes were, as assistant director Massimo Mida recalled, substantially modified and to a great degree improvised, as the script took form day by day to incorporate the impressions and human conditions of locations and actors brought forth 'by chance' (quoted in Faldini and Fofi 1979: 108–9). Openness towards lived material became increasingly determining as the *thought* of a film developed into cinematic *experiment*, something which is suggested by the substitution of the provisional English title *Seven from the U.S.* with *Paisà*: a dialectal form of *paesano* (fellow villager/compatriot), etymologically rooted in *paese* (country/village), that embodies not only an 'epithet' and a 'sign of recognition' but also a 'sound' clear and elementary enough for foreigners to assimilate (Fanara 2000: 339). Besides the shift in focus it implies from the liberating forces to encounters between people brought together under circumstances and geographical zones defined by the war for liberation, this title also conveys the communion and choral quality that in Rossellini's world infuse both landscapes and human relations.

It was not only between Americans and Italians that a magical word of fraternity served to establish common ground; but also within a historically divided population that experienced the months between 1943 and 1945 very differently (Fanara 2000: 339). Whereas underground networks were ready to surface in Northern and Central Italy when fascism fell, Southern Italy was subjected to Allied power and a useless ex-fascist leadership within a few months and knew no Resistance. It may have escaped civil war but not socio-economic destruction and the ideals of unity, solidarity and social reform that initially marked the Reconstruction in the North had little or no meaning in the South where liberation meant not the establishment of a new society, but, instead, the return to power of great landowners and criminal organisations. These historical and socio-geographic divisions illuminate the film's twofold process of

recognising regional and cultural specificities, while at the same time seeking to reconnect fragments through a journey of national recomposition. Unfolding, as Bazin acutely observed, as the first filmic 'equivalent to a collection of short stories' (2002: 277), *Paisà* relates the encounters respectively between: Allied troops and civilians in Sicily; an MP (Military Policeman) and an orphan boy in Naples; a soldier and a girl turned prostitute in Rome; a nurse and partisans in Florence; military chaplains and friars in Emilia-Romagna; and lastly, Allied soldiers and partisans in the Po Delta. Discovering peripheral realities and experiences of waiting, chance encounters, warfare and unexpected moments of loss and death, this re-enacting of the long war for liberation becomes an artistic and moral act of reconstruction, far less equivocal and pacifying than *Open City* in its intent both to view history from below and to contribute to a national redefinition of self.

ASCENDING THE COUNTRY

1. *Paisà* opens with nocturnal images of ships docking in the harbour and troops coming ashore, while a voiceover contextualises this view as occurring during the Allies' landing in Sicily on the night of 1 July 1943. Similar para-fictional sequences composed for the most part by archival footage introduce each episode except the last, before the events are presented through what Bazin defined as 'reconstituted reportage'. Unsure of their direction and afraid of danger, the invading American soldiers end up by chance at a church where a number of Sicilians have sought refuge from bombardment. Tony talks to them in Italian, revealing his Sicilian origins, and gets information about the Germans' movements, but only Carmela, who wanders in search of her brothers and father missing at sea, knows where the roads are free from mines. Dismissing objections from the village women, she guides the soldiers on the stony trails along the cliffs until they reach a tower where the squad sets out on patrol, while Joe from Jersey remains with her. The initial aversion towards this unexpected moment of togetherness soon fades against the shared interest in challenging insuperable language barriers to kill time, and the illusory protection of sea and starlit sky makes them forget the surrounding dangers. Betrayed by the flame of his Zippo, Joe is shot by a distant German sniper in the dark. Intercuts between the group of Nazi soldiers and Carmela allow us to follow her haste in hiding Joe before they arrive at the tower and her plot to attack them with his carbine once she discovers that he is dead, whereas a narrative ellipsis leaves us in doubt as to whether the Germans effectuate their talk to assault her. What appears clearly from the conclusive parallel scenes is the revenge they take in throwing her onto the rocks on the seashore, while the Americans deduce from Joe's death that she betrayed him, unaware of the sacrifice she committed to protect them all.

As was the case with *Open City*, story information originates from within antagonistic sources, but the effect is not so much to elaborate on Manichean perspectives – even the Germans, after all, manifest human qualities of exhaustion and homesickness – as it is to explore encounters that evolve, gradually, from mutual suspicion to intuitive contact. Upon arriving, the liberating soldiers are lost in the Sicilian wilderness and would rather have completed their thankless mission without mixing with the local people, whom they have indiscriminately preconceived as being fascists and thus potential traitors. Instead, they must accept the guidance of a simple girl who is perfectly at ease in the obscure terrain and in the spooky tower that to them evokes the realm of Hollywood's *Frankenstein*, and not that of the war they have come to end. The Sicilian community, on the other hand, is powerless against foreigners with a gun ('You are all alike', Carmela complains to Joe 'you, the Germans, the fascists'). Luca, a fascist, hopes they are Germans and tries to hinder all collaboration when it appears, to the other villagers' relief, that they represent the liberating forces and Tony establishes a sense of fraternity and identification around common origins and shared objectives. The camera works with distance and mobility to include interactions within and between the two groups, revealing the foundation for a contact that will develop in various directions as the campaign for liberation progresses, whereas medium close-ups and long takes trace the understanding that emerges between the two protagonists. Slow-motion photography of Joe falling to the ground enables us to share Carmela's immediate incomprehension and the beginnings of a grief later conveyed in a studied close-up and chiaroscuro light that assign dignity to an unsophisticated character about to meet her tragic end. Carmela's sacrifice is known only to the spectator, and her body, facing the sea to which she belongs, conveys a no less exquisite message about injustice than Pina's.

Founded on the concreteness of historical events and socio-geographical landscape, no diegetic information reveals that the Sicily episode was actually shot on the Amalfi coast; that the last image of Carmela was filmed in Anzio six months later; or that Carmela Sazio came from a Neapolitan family of poor fishermen, and not from Sicily, as the other village people did. The Germans were prisoners held in Allied custody, while the Americans were soldiers stationed in Naples, who, like Carmela, invest the story with biographical experiences. Robert Van Loon was a soldier from Jersey, emotionally attached to the ocean like Carmela, and he possessed a natural acting talent her impassive performance failed to display.¹¹ Carmela's major communicative force is a matter of presence, her dark colours and clumsy body merging with the very surroundings that estrange and deceive Joe, and the expressive valence of the sequence resides unquestionably in their exchanges. Among the words Joe lists to align his experiences with hers – including 'spaghetti', 'mangiare', 'c'est la guerre' (which he mistakes for Italian) and 'Carmela' – it is 'paisà' that

captures the sense of identification and fraternity brought forth during this unpredicted encounter. The overlapping in this episode of English, German, and Italian spoken with foreign or Sicilian accents establishes the polyphonic immediacy and proliferation of vernacular expression Rossellini had experimented with since *La nave bianca* and made a primary basis for claims to authenticity in *Open City*. This and the successive episodes of *Paisà* provide, however, an even stronger sense of a 'linguistic Babel captured live' thanks to the economic possibility this time of shooting with sound and the considerable reduction of standard Italian conventionally used in pre-war cinema.¹²

2. Moving from the temple at Paestum outside Salerno, where white crosses mark the sacrifices of Allied soldiers, through Vesuvius to a harbour where military material is being unloaded, the second episode brings us to Naples which by the end of September 1943 had become the logistic centre for the war in Italy. The film's interest is however not in the official life of this port city, but in its children who, like the Roman street boys featured in Di Sica's contemporary *Shoeshine*, have had to grow up, despite themselves, making whatever they can at the outdoor market. Pascà is hired to look out for the police while his friends try to sell Joe – a black MP too drunk to defend himself – as if he were a black-marketable object, but he takes him instead to a puppet show where Roland, the legendary knight of Italian Renaissance epics, is featured in a battle with his Saracen enemy. Joe interprets the religious war between Christians and Muslims as an allegory of the racial prejudice he lives with in America, and he jumps on the stage in defence of the black knight, causing anger among the puppeteers and spectators in a manner that recalls the equally legendary adventures of *Pinocchio*. While forming a comic contrast to images of severe social disintegration, the sequence also demonstrates the intactness, amidst ruins and alarming living conditions, of the city's vernacular traditions. Neapolitan collective life and proverbial expressivity is personified by Pascà, who with a thief's honesty warns the inexperienced MP about falling asleep, since by nature and by necessity, he will steal his shoes. When a few days later Joe catches Pascà helping himself to supplies from a military truck, he demands to meet his parents and is brought to the Mergellina Caves where the boy lives along with many of the 200,000 Neapolitans whose homes were destroyed during the war (Ginsborg 1990: 37). Astonished by the view of a neglected city, Joe enquires in broken Italian about his parents ('*Dov'è mamma e papà?*') and understands, as Pascà imitates the sound of bombs, why the children of Naples steal.

The encounter between the orphan and the foreigner evolves through aimless wanderings and small adventures; through looks and gestures and eventually also music as Pascà plays the harmonica while Joe responds with a spiritual about life's tribulations. This picaresque composition reflects qualities that the non-professional actors, Alfonso Bovino and Dots Johnson, brought

to the characters – chiefly a shared inclination towards performance illustrated by Joe’s dream about navigating a military plane and of being welcomed back home as a war hero. Pascà is amused by his gesticulations and onomatopoeic words so akin to his own ways of expression and remarks that the airplanes have caused an awful disaster, but he cannot follow Joe’s swift change in mood when he remembers that his ‘old shack’ is surrounded by tin cans, very much like the pile of ruins where they are sitting. Joe’s resignation towards the poor in the caves conveys a sudden awareness of what suffering the Allied bombing campaign has inflicted upon the local population, but their physical and metaphorical displacement to the margins of society also reminds him that the country he serves deprives him of a material and an emotional home. Joe’s intervention in defence of the black puppet and the fantasy of honour, absurd as they are, both convey a critique of the ‘American Dream’ that points to the film’s overarching commitment to represent the most marginal and suppressed of social experiences.¹³ Among the Hollywood sources Rossellini acknowledged, including *Citizen Kane* and *The Crowd*, which he invoked in the construction of space and of cityscapes respectively, it would have been the representation of African-American sharecroppers in King Vidor’s *Hallelujah* that inspired this commentary on racial tension (Rossellini 1987b: 92). Remarkably, these influences later found their way back to the margins of Hollywood in Spike Lee’s *Miracle at St. Anna* (2008) where the encounter between African-American soldiers and the victims of one of the most savage Nazi reprisals Italy ever knew is reconstructed around the instinctive understanding between a black GI and an Italian boy.

3. The cinematic ascent of the country offers no conciliatory conclusions or harmonic passages and from the darkness of Pascà’s caves we are bought into the sunlight of Rome’s liberation on 4 June 1944. There tends, however, to be a temporal continuity between the parafictional narrative and the fictional one that in this episode is resolutely broken. After archival footage shows Nazi troops beating a hasty retreat from the Eternal City followed by the Allies’ triumphant arrival to the cheers of the citizens, a title superimposed on a nocturnal image brings us six months forward in time and to the boogie-woogie rhythms emanating from Moka Abdul, a noted meeting place for GIs and Italian girls such as Francesca. Their exchanges were written and shot in the bar itself, and like the MP’s round-up which she barely escapes, it reconstructs the socio-cultural specificities of this environment, giving a bleak portrayal of the winter crisis of 1944–5 when alarming levels of hunger and unemployment saw an increase in prostitution.¹⁴ Where this authentic reconstruction approaches the fictionalised qualities of Marina’s story in *Open City*, is when Francesca (played by the same Marina Michi), who escapes the police with the help of a usher in the nearby cinema, runs into Fred, a drunken soldier completely unresponsive to her advances. ‘Rome is full of girls like you,’ he

complains, recalling how different everyone was when he first arrived in Rome and met a girl named Francesca. A flashback-sequence reconstructs the previously documented arrival of the Allies with Fred as a hero who is invited into Francesca's middle-class home, presumably shared with her parents. In a city whose piazzas look alike to the foreigner, Fred has failed to relocate her apartment building and he is unaware that the 'happy' and 'fresh' girl is the stranger he has just met. Francesca moves to the edge of the bed, in front of the camera, while he dozes off behind her, and two sequence shots capture their distance as she explains quietly that many Italian girls have overcome hardship in more honest ways, an affirmation proven by the usher in the cinema who refused the money she offered. The next day before leaving the city, Fred throws away the note with her address, while she waits until night-time outside her old house for a reconciliation that will never happen.

It is in particular the conventional narrative, reinforced by medium shots and rapid editing, and the fictionalised characters, that makes this episode so out of place in a film considered the manifesto of neorealism precisely for its openness, visually and ideologically, to historical realities and for its deconstruction of generic conventions. The nostalgic look at lost love caused by an instance of fate but actually deeply rooted in socio-economic conditions may recall French poetic realism, and the last shot of Francesca, dressed up in the cold December rain to evoke the sun and smiles of the Liberation reaches a similar melancholic beauty. Although most contemporary critics, including Bazin, glossed over the episode as a pathetic, or even ridiculous, story at the margins of the film's true themes because it failed to achieve the dark tones of human insight and socio-political commentary of Renoir and Carné,¹⁵ we must appreciate the singularity of the flashback structure – unique in Rossellini's oeuvre – which juxtaposes the past (June 1944) to the present (December 1944) to suspend the film's progression and question the historical processes it traces (Fanara 2000: 369–70). The first encounter takes place in daylight and is marked by joy after months of waiting ('What took you so long?' Francesca asks Fred); the second is nocturnal and presents the disintegration of the collective spirit. This distinction of before and after repropose the Manichean vision of *Open City* with a crucial difference. The attempt in the former to downplay conflict and forge an image of national unity and innocence could, in 1946, no longer be upheld; instead, it recognises that the corruption and moral degradation previously ascribed to traitors and enemies resides within the city itself. At a moment when the 'springtime' Pina longs for is unmasked as an illusion and Don Pietro's sacrifice stands out as a lost opportunity for collective rebuilding, the rain may purge the fallen woman but it cannot restore the hopes she had or make her what she might have been.

4. The Florence episode takes us back to August 1944 when the material and moral reverberations of the war are still to come. Archive footage featuring the

arrival of the Allies through the Tuscan hills and tanks preparing for attack, leads smoothly into the fictional section where military ambulances filled with soldiers and partisans arrive at an infirmary. The voiceover recounts briefly the state of the city: only the southern side of Arno is controlled by the Allies and across the river partisans are fighting Nazi-fascists. The temporal gap before and after the liberation of the previous episode is therefore collapsed into a standstill where both moments occur in the present. Wounded partisans relate news from the war on the northern side and Harriet, an American volunteer at the hospital, learns that a painter she knew before the war has become the legendary partisan leader Lupo. Abandoning her duties, she sets out to find him and arrives at the Palazzo Pitti where the word is spreading that Lupo is wounded. Massimo joins her in the hazardous project of crossing the river where the Germans have destroyed all bridges apart from the Ponte Vecchio, and in the chaos of ruins and constant shooting, they almost forget the obvious solution of the Corridorio Vasariano.¹⁶ Breaking the barricade of partisans committed to keeping this passageway hidden from the enemy, they venture over to the other side where streets void of civil life offer an arena for German patrols and urban guerrilla fights. Disregarding once again the partisans' instructions, Massimo crosses the street to reach his family, escaping bullets that instead hit a resistance fighter. Before he dies in Harriet's arms, the wounded partisan announces that Lupo has just died, unaware of her acquaintance with him, while the other partisans execute a group of fascists.

Harriet's story of lost love presents as many implausible coincidences as Francesca's and it is no less fictionalised, if we consider the historical impossibility in 1944 of crossing the Uffizi Gallery and the bizarre encounters first with two British officers who contemplate the famous cityscape while waiting for their troops to arrive – the implicit critique being far from subtle – and an equally unconcerned World War I veteran analysing the warfare from his roof. Nonetheless, the quest through Renaissance Florence gains a considerable sense of authenticity thanks both to the prevalence of outdoor scenes shot in natural light and with spacious frames outlining the protagonists' milieu and to its anchorage in the Resistance, which is guaranteed by the co-operation of ex-partisans in telling the story, including the Florentine novelist Vasco Pratolini (Faldini and Fofi 1979: 109). The passage through crowds, endless ruins and devastating chance encounters delineate divisions between the liberated side of the city, where collective life is flourishing again, and the other, where social interaction is anxious and confined to domestic spheres. Both the civilians' passive resistance and the adventurous wanderers' selfless search contrasts with the partisans' actions, whose commitment and sacrifice is emblematised by the execution of the fascists and the deaths of Lupo and the partisan. These are the dramatic moments that we have *waited* for and which make the protagonists' dilemma appear secondary to the collective

cause they constantly jeopardise. From the partisans who arrive at the hospital with an urgent need to *tell* and the crowd discussing Lupo's critical situation, to the partisans' unitary defence and final act of punishment, this cause personifies the oral quality Calvino associated with the Resistance. While reaching another level of immediacy to the partisan war compared to *Open City*, *Paisà* also radically revises its selective history: the resister who falls in the street the way Pina does, his body evoking the Deposition of Christ until Harriet's Madonna-like figure embraces it, is significantly not killed by a foreign brute (Zagarrio 2005: 90). There is a clear intent to celebrate the partisans who were instrumental historically in the liberation of Florence where the northern side was temporarily governed by the Tuscan CLN (Ginsborg 1990: 55). However, in dramatising the civil war that *Open City* carefully avoids, this episode also conveys that for an act of commemoration to serve, as it should, to ensure that the past not be repeated, it would have to account not merely for innocent deaths and glorious sacrifices, but also for the many contradictions, conflicts and betrayals involved in the war for liberation.

5. Approaching the last and toughest phase of the war, the penultimate episode opens with battle scenes reinforced by a voiceover stating the impregnable quality of the Gothic Line – the German defence line that kept the Allies immobile across central Italy until April 1945, despite attempted breakthroughs dating from the previous fall. From this parafictional section the film cuts to a monastery in the Aventine mountains, at the moment when the ceasefire is announced. The friars gather to thank the Lord for the restored order; some farmers come to retrieve animals left in their custody, but it is the arrival of three American army chaplains that makes this day unusual. The strangers are served homemade liquer and they reciprocate with army rations and news from the conflict that has left their monastery comfortably untouched. Not until the friars discover that two of their guests, Jones and Feldman are respectively Lutheran and Jewish is their cordiality and curiosity challenged. Approaching Martin, who speaks Italian and professes the 'true faith', the guardian father asks whether he has not 'scrutinised' his friends' 'conscience' and attempted to save them, but their uncontested dogma is as foreign to Martin as is his relativistic understanding of faith to them. The tension increases during dinner when the cook, provided with gifts from the farmers, comes up with a meal none of them have seen for ages only to leave it exclusively to the guests. Such a sacrifice will presumably ensure that the two lost souls be illuminated by divine light, the guardian father explains with a bigotry accentuated by a close-up that reveals his literally and physically unreceptive eyes, whereas Martin, even more perplexed than before, responds by thanking them for the lesson of 'humility, simplicity, and pure faith' and concludes with an invitation to peace. In contrast to the agonising images of loss that close the other episodes, this retreat from the horrors of the war leaves

the spectator confused over the enormous gap between the incomprehension of the friars and their guests' essentially ambiguous expression of gratitude and recognition.

The idea of a place 'the war had touched but without entering it, a human collective left intact and primitive' came from a monastery on the Amalfi coast where this episode in fact was shot. For the Southern friars to welcome a film crew and American actors, among whom there were a Jewish and a Protestant chaplain, presented no reason for scandal, but an 'unusual air of holiday' that nevertheless never challenged their conviction of professing the only 'truth' (Mida, quoted in Faldini and Fofi 1979: 109; Aprà 1987: 142). Through these highly unusual circumstances, the idea of historically contingent encounters between strangers are related to more universal questions of cultural and religious differences. Upon arriving, Martin speaks solemnly about the monastery's foundation before America was even discovered, but Jones and Feldman joke about miracles and wonder if the Franciscans are still living in the 1400s, suggesting that if America once was associated with nature and the monastery with culture, this binary relationship has now been turned upside down. The Hershey bars and canned food constitute marvels within a humble kitchen based on garden produce and Providence, but the true progress of the 'New World' is reflected in the open-minded chaplains, two of whom have entered into a forbidden religious domain (Martini 2005: 110). Coming from a society constructed on difference, and, more recently, from an immersion in the present that constantly exposes the fleeting nature of life, Feldman is justified in wondering: 'How can they judge us and life if they do not know what surrounds us?' True to his faith, Martin may admire the friars' 'joy', so simple in its limitedness, but he cannot consider as mistaken, or even different, the chaplains with whom he has shared a historical mission. Lingering between commotion and irony, the speech he delivers repropose the questions of tolerance, openness and democratisation of the sacred that Rossellini had played with already in *L'uomo dalla croce*, where an Italian army chaplain dies while giving the last rites to a Russian soldier, and which was developed in *Open City*. Don Pietro significantly shares the Americans' view of the need to live in contact with people's immediate, concrete realities, as well as the ability to respect people of different views and beliefs, provided there is unity around the search for peace.

6. From the Apennines, the journey proceeds to the Po, the river running from Piedmont to Veneto where it empties into the Adriatic Sea, forming the vast delta in which the final act of discovery and commemoration unfolds. No archive footage from the war introduces this segment; instead, long takes of a corpse drifting down the quiet stream, sustained by a lifejacket and labelled 'partisan', lead us directly into a crudely verisimilar reconstruction of a war fought by partisans and American OSS soldiers in harmonious unity. Shots

from both sides of the river banks show what reaction the death of yet another partisan causes respectively among civilians, some German soldiers, and, finally, Dale and Cigolani, who in order to retrieve the body explode a mine to distract the Nazi guards. While the unknown partisan is buried, some of Dale's OSS colleagues bitterly relate the last orders from Allied Headquarters to cease all operations and for the partisans to go home. Meanwhile, ammunition and provisions will be dropped during the night, on signals that will not escape the guards. 'We will die anyhow', one of them concludes, 'but that's a small matter for headquarters.' To reciprocate for the eels and polenta they are provided with by the farmers at the Casal Madalena, Dale leaves mosquito repellent for a child, and only when he returns to the farmstead after the supply drop has failed and discovers the massacred family and the screaming child, does he realise the fatality of this exchange. Several successive events- an aerial battle, the rescue of two British pilots from the crashed plane, the warning from other British soldiers about the rapid advance of well-equipped Nazi forces – all indicate the impending defeat. Seeing how the battle is evolving, one partisan shoots himself; Dale is out of bullets and throws his rifle; and one of the British soldiers lights a cigarette, before they are all captured and separated. When dealing with the Anglo-Americans the Germans intend to respect the Geneva Convention, whereas the partisans are tied up outside and thrown into the river the following morning. In an act of protest as spontaneous as Pina's, Dale jumps up and cries out, manifesting an unconditional solidarity with those who fight not for the British Empire, as one of his colleagues observes, but for their life. 'This happened in the winter of 1944', the voiceover concludes. 'A few months later the war was over.'

Historically embedded in a communication broadcast from the headquarters of General Alexander, the Chief Commander in Italy, on 13 November 1944, the episode gives testimony to the depressing implications of his order – only partially obeyed – to 'cease all large-scale organized operations' and go home, not only because these 'homes', if they existed, were surrounded by Germans, but more significantly because the partisans were unwilling to sit down and wait to be liberated (Pavone 1994: 667). If the retreat from the historical conflict to the monastery may be considered as symbolically representing the months of stagnation in the Allied campaign, this immersion into a struggle the war bulletins neglected and that, as the narrator observes, was perhaps more difficult and desperate than any other, gives voice to the operations and the many deaths caused during the winter crisis of 1944. Both episodes relied on the personal qualities and invaluable testimonies of actors playing themselves – the friars provided material around which to improvise a scenario, as did the farmers and Cigolani, a hunter who had helped the partisans in the area – but the dramatisation of the encounter between soldiers and partisans is unique both in its fidelity to life and its ability to capture the film's thematic



Figure 4.1 Dale shortly before he is killed by Nazi soldiers in Rossellini's *Paisà*.
Courtesy of the Fondazione Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia.

concerns and visions (Aprà 1987: 137). Nowhere is 'paisà' as an experience of identity and belonging more eloquently illustrated than in the interactions between Dale and Cigolani who understand each other's English and accented Italian perfectly, being bound by a fraternity of common action that extends to include the ensemble of soldiers, partisans and local people. Assuming Cigolani's historical cause and moral attitude, Dale has also immersed himself in his world, directing the wooden boats with the same ease and experiencing the sodden marshes and dense reeds with an equally ambivalent sense of being protected and isolated. The languid rhythms of the Po personifies the harmony embedded in their social and natural habitat, but it also crucially captures the *waiting* Rossellini considered as a source of life and liberation, and that which in this cinematic journey increasingly appears as an anticipation of death.

It was in particular the visualisation of continuities between the human and the topographic landscape that Bazin referred to when singling out *Paisà*, and its last segment more specifically, as a supreme manifestation of the spatial realism he championed. By featuring the horizon at the level on which it subjectively would be perceived, the cinematic gaze manages to align our viewing

experiences with the perceptions of those who live and die 'between sky and water'. Identification with the characters is therefore encouraged not on the basis of subjective shots which limit autonomy, but, on the contrary, on deep-focus photography and reduced editing which allow us to view the diegetic world the way we would in reality. Within this visual field, the characters' movements and interactions, as well as single events such as the killing of an eel and the screams of a terrified child are allowed to appear in all their extensions and ambiguity. Observing the force such 'facts', or fragments 'of brute reality, in itself both multiple and equivocal', assume as signifying elements, Bazin concludes that 'the unit of cinematographic narration in *Paisà* is not the shot, an abstract perspective on the analysed reality, but the fact' (2002: 281). As the viewer must interconnect singular objects for their significance to emerge, hence allowing the appearance of the 'facts' to precede the construction of meaning, this form of composition presents all aspects of the pro-filmic as 'equally apparent'. Since human life is not privileged over other facts, the actors acquire much more meaning from the environment than in conventional film (Bazin 2002: 281–2). Far from connected by logic and causality, the intrinsically ambiguous nature of these 'fact-images' is reinforced by the 'ellipsis' they leave in the story. How the Americans and the partisans got together in the first place is never explained and how the Germans learned about the farmers' hospitality and why the child and the dog are still alive remain unresolved (Bazin 2002: 279). In light of this, we can appreciate why Bazin would refer to the reportage and fragmentary narrative of Hemingway and Steinbeck, among other American writers, as having inspired a mode of cinematic narration that in the aim for a total vision, alludes, suggests and shows, without ever demonstrating relations between the facts of the world represented.

IN SEARCH FOR THE MAN WITHIN THE BEAST: *GERMANIA ANNO ZERO*

The thought of having once been banned from the Italian film industry must have amused Rossellini at a time when *Open City* and *Paisà* were awarded and applauded for months in the world's capitals and neither the French nor the other occupying forces in Germany hindered him and assistant director, Carlo Lizzani, from filming in Berlin, despite their belonging to an ex-enemy.¹⁷ After the focus on everyday tragedies and non-heroic characters had mainly served national memory and regional representation, the time had come to look towards those for whom the Liberation had meant defeat. Rooted in a conviction that 'the Germans were human beings like anyone else', the project reflected both a need to understand 'what could possibly have brought them towards a similar disaster?' and an aspiration to create a 'just', albeit 'incomplete' image of Germany (Rossellini, quoted in Faldini and Fofi 1979: 111–12). Nonetheless, *Germania anno zero* does not lead towards the genesis

of a historical catastrophe, but to an innocent boy who when the only world he knows lies shattered in front of him, is lead by false ideals of strength and heroism to the cruellest of crimes. What confronts him with the monstrosity of his act is a 'little flame of morality' that totalitarian destruction has failed to extinguish (Rossellini, quoted in Faldini and Fofi 1979: 111–12). Elaborating on the neorealist topos of child focalisers and deprived childhoods, the film moves from socio-historically specific events through mental spaces to arrive at more universal experiences that escape Manichean categorisation.

Shot in August 1947 after months of research and an endless search for funding, Edmund's story came to life around a schematic treatment that outlined each passage except its tragic finale (Rondolini 1989: 117–21). Research conducted into the topographic and socio-economic conditions of Berlin, and of its youth in particular, was incorporated as the script took form during filming in collaboration with the French writer, Max Colpet. All location shooting in Berlin was completed in less than two months, but the regulations of the Franco-Italian production required that indoor scenes be completed in Rome months later. Except for scenes involving American soldiers and French bar customers who give a sense of the linguistic presences in Allied-occupied Berlin, the film was shot in German and starred professionals alongside 'discoveries' such as Edmund Meschke in whom Rossellini would have recognised the seven-year-old son, Romano, he had lost a year earlier (Lizzani 2009). Authentic speech and locations and the dramatisation of everyday concerns and interactions are coherent with Rossellini's previous films, but it is in particular the initial *idea* that is allowed to develop in relation to spaces, testimonies, and impressions, as well as the primacy of long takes and spatiotemporal duration, that confirm his 'method'. Beneath opening credits and a dedication in memoriam to Romano, the destroyed city is introduced by a tracking shot moving rightward along a deserted road to map out wastelands of ruins. In the Italian release print, a caption establishes the historical and ideological context before the same shots reappear, accompanied this time by the director's voiceover. Conceived of as an 'objective' and 'faithful' portrait of 'an immense semi-destroyed city in which 3.5 million drag out a dreadful and desperate existence [. . .] not by faith, or spirit, but by tiredness,' *Germania anno zero* presents neither a defence, nor an accusation but a 'quiet attestation of facts' aimed at provoking awareness of the urgent needs of Germany's children.¹⁸

Objectivity, as always in Rossellini, is best understood in terms of a look that by seeking distance to and room around the facts of the story facilitates an autonomous perception of the diegetic world, without allowing indifference towards it. Although these and successive exterior shots document the appalling state Berlin still found itself in two years after the war, the material is selected and constructed in far from neutral ways to make us reflect on the

responsibilities involved in the course of history and Edmund's role as focaliser and emotional centre serves this purpose. We first see him digging graves alongside several adults but, too young to get a work permit, he is sent away from the churchyard. What the loss of this expected income means to him is put into perspective when he ends up in a crowd of people busy grabbing their share of a dead horse. All the boy catches is some coal: a poor contribution to a household where his father is ailing, his sister spends the days in ration queues and the nights in bars and his brother Karl-Heinz, a veteran who fought for Germany until the last minute, hides in fear of being sent to a prison camp. Mutual accusations and a shared sense of guilt are reinforced by the intolerable cohabitation with the Radermachers who, having been forced by the housing authorities to take Edmund's family in, avenge their intrusion through constant intimidation.

Narratively, we witness a detour from the innovations of *Paisà* for the more conventional, partly theatrical structures of *Open City*. The apartment becomes a stage where knowledge about the characters is delivered through heavily constructed dialogues and conflict either within or between the families, but compared to the Gestapo headquarters it still appears far more authentic thanks to the immediacy established by precarious living conditions and to a more nuanced portrayal of the Germans. Edmund's anti-Nazi father sought unsuccessfully to keep him out of the Hitler Youth; his embittered brother detests both the regime he served and what he refers to as the 'so-called victims of fascism', whereas his sister who, like most of Rossellini's women, reflects no ideological position, appears as a passive victim waiting for her war prisoner to return. Herr Radermacher is clearly disappointed over his country's defeat and declares to Edmund that they would all be better off if his father died, betraying a belief in the survival of the fittest that is more insistently advocated by Herr Henning, a school teacher expelled for Nazi convictions he still professes. Both represent the 'ideologies gone astray' and the 'criminal folly' announced in the intertitle as the origins to the story and that, far from producing a Master Race, has created a people driven to live on out of sheer exhaustion. To manage his own misery, Henning sends Edmund out to sell some recordings of Hitler's speeches and offers him a small percentage of what the American soldiers pay for the voice of a regime whose dominance still lingers through its destruction. Besides the devilish rationality, what in particular recalls Major Bergmann is the sensual pleasure Henning and his decadent friends take in angel-faced boys, giving life to an equation between Nazism and sexual deviance that severely weakens the authorial aspirations of producing unprejudiced portrayals of the enemy.

What strikes us about the cinematic city is its congruence between physical, socio-economic and moral disintegration. Fields of ruins more reminiscent of churchyards than of urban centres go along with disintegrated familial and

social relations, and the constant search for scarce provisions and questionable incomes are paralleled by a total lack of vision for the future that was unseen even in Francesca's Rome. While the extensive, undefined areas and the disconnected streets recall the spatial characteristics of *Open City* and *Paisà*, the ghostly atmosphere is unique to Edmund's world, infusing both the uninhabited inner-city zone of Alexandersplatz where he lives and the obscure suburbs he is driven into by the street kids Cristil and Jo, who are acquainted with Henning and experts in fraudulent transactions. The vast, deserted spaces contrast sharply with his claustrophobic apartment but they are no less ensnaring to Edmund who gets lost and must spend the night outdoors. His encounters and movements within the city's exteriors are, however, entirely unpredictable and bring him ultimately far away from the 'happy ending' outlined in the story treatment. Compared for example to the calculated gestures with which he takes the poison into the hospital and infuses it in a tea made exclusively for his father, his playful zigzag jumping from relic to relic and his visits to ruined buildings suggests that these sequences were largely improvised (Rondolini 1989: 119). As Bazin observed, however, none of these moments are tainted by the 'sentimental sympathy' that tends to arise from child characters – *Open City* and the Naples episode in *Paisà* being no exceptions. No signs on the child's face allow us to conclude anything more about 'his indifference and his cruelty, than of his possible sorrow' (Bazin 2002: 123), and only when he realises the impossibility of going home, turning to Henning who hysterically disapproves of the implementation of his own teachings, do we see the despair behind the child's apparently unconcerned and unmotivated use of space. In a last attempt to recover lost innocence, Edmund seeks to intervene in some smaller children's play, but their resolute disapproval only affirms his irreversible exclusion from the kingdom of childhood.

Driven away from all spheres of belonging – domestic, instructive, recreational, authoritative or affective – the abandoned city-dweller follows a long, lifeless street flanked on each side by uninhabited, demolished houses. His path is captured by a deep-focus photography that maps out no social ambience but rather a sinister immensity of distinctly gothic features. All of a sudden, this physical and mental necropolis is infused by a diegetic, initially off-screen organ music originating from a semi-destroyed church. Someone plays the tune of Handel's 'Ombra mai fu' – an aria that, in suggestive contrast to the scene's visuals, features the title character, Xerxes, as he contemplates the beauty and peacefulness of his plane tree. Along with other mesmerised wanderers, Edmund stops for a while before running away, as if afraid to seize the salvation this moment of spontaneous serenity might offer. A cut leads back to ruins and to hellish extra-diegetic rhythms introducing his last walk towards death. That the suicide, in contrast to the patricide, is the spontaneous outcome of growing self-annihilation appears when he reaches the last floor

of a building made immensely spacious by its destruction. Playing at war with his shadow and directing a pistol-shaped stone to his head, he seems to convey that all enemies are within himself. Some subjective shots directed towards the street below allow us to share the panoptical position from which he observes his home and his life. Seen from the outside, their apartment block is just as demolished as the one he stands in, and neither his brother's amnesty, nor the view of his father's coffin being taken away, nor his sister's anxious calls for him, are able to provoke a detour in his walk. Contrary to Pina, Don Pietro, Carmela and the partisans who die in open space and as a result of claims to freedom and reform, Edmund falls into a narrow spot between ruins and is driven by a refusal to live; by an inability to face a future that, compared to these previous cases of sacrificial deaths, leaves even greater doubts about the possibility of redemption, while stating more desperately the call for a complete, material and moral, rebuilding.

Marking a defeated country's year zero, the child's abyss brings us to a point of arrival. From dualistic perceptions of 'we' and 'they' based upon categorical conceptions of good and evil, the authorial vision has formulated a fragmentary exploration of common desires and destinies in order to arrive, finally, at a recognition of the enemy's obscure humanity. Experiences of communion in *Open City* have dissolved into the singular accounts of *Paisà* where the choral voice is constantly interrupted by personal tragedies that, in *Germania anno zero*, lead away from historical and nationally specific circumstances towards a death that severely questions the human rebuilding embraced in the previous films.

A constant in these works is the connection of space to death and to visions of life that in this case makes a rather surreal and entirely symbolic use of a specific topography (Bernardi 2000: 55). In that, we see that while Edmund's story synthesises and marks the peak of Rossellini's neorealist work, it also launches the direction he would take, particularly in *Viaggio in Italia* wherein a woman's wandering among Naples' dystopian realms parallels the crisis and the miraculous re-establishment of her marriage. This intensification of 'the religious, the mystic and the irrational' already present in the war trilogy, was criticised as an 'involution' of neorealism that according to Aristarco affirmed Rossellini's inability to let his interpretation of the world work 'didactically', in a Brechtian way, to modify it (Aristarco 1980: 58–65). Objecting to essentialist concepts of neorealism and ideological evaluations of artworks, the *auteur*-oriented Bazin praised Rossellini's abilities in times when most filmmakers had accepted 'commercial compromises' to maintain his 'elliptic and synthetic way of representing the events [. . .], filtrating' rather than analysing reality 'through the conscience of the heroine' (Bazin 1975: 687–90). His defence echoed among fellow critics of *Cahiers du Cinéma* who in 1958 ranked *Viaggio in Italia* as the third of All-Time Best Films (Hillier 1985: 287),



Figure 4.2 Edmund in Rossellini's *Germania anno zero*. Courtesy of the Fondazione Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia.

identifying in the story 'loose, free, full of breaks' a freedom from pre-existing uses of the cinematic language (Rohmer 1985: 205–6) that made it 'our cinema;' a unique starting point for aspiring directors of the emergent *nouvelle vague* (Rivette 1985: 203). This recognition of an anti-traditionalism the critics illustratively compared to the modern visions of Mozart and Édouard Manet intuitively drew from Bazin's notes on the 'disconnected' neorealist narrative to the 'time-image' which originates in the visions of immobilised characters who disjoin the causal chain between perception and action. To consider Edmund a 'seer' incapable of performing actions without failing (to work, to secure provisions, to trade without being cheated) and as someone who dwells in fragmented space and counted time while contemplating his life void of a future allows us better to account for the film's position between the classical and the modern cinema and for the testimony it bears both to the life of a post-war city and to the existential and emotional effects of historical catastrophes.

NOTES

1. See Rossellini (1987a: 91–2). The film was completed after the war by Marcello Pagliero who stars as Manfredi in *Open City*.
2. The ‘policemen in Nazi uniform’ who made their daily march to via Rasella in the centre of Rome were, as recently explained by Rosario Bentivegna who took part in the attack, ‘not there by chance: they were in fact “volunteers” who had chosen the police and not the army, for two reasons: to avoid the extremely harsh Russian front and to get higher pay. With this noble intent, they had sworn fidelity to Hitler . . .’ (2007: 22).
3. On the basis of a reconstruction of the original screenplay, testimonies and documents, Stefano Roncoroni has demonstrated that both Consiglio, Feruccio Disnan, and Ivo Perilli were involved at various stages and to a varying degree in writing either the story treatment or the script until conflict with Amidei made them leave the project (2006: 32; 52; 419; 432–4). As for the ‘collective paternity’ of Italian scripts more generally, Bazin observed that: ‘Almost all credits of Italian films present a dozen names under the heading “script”. One should not take this imposing collaboration too seriously. It has more than anything else the function of providing the producer with very ingenuous political cautions: usually there are the names of a Christian Democrat and a communist (as in the films there is a Marxist and a priest). The third scriptwriter is famous for knowing how to construct a story, the fourth to identify the gags, the fifth because he creates good dialogues, the sixth “because he knows the meaning of life” etc. [. . .] this interdependence is best compared to the improvisation of *commedia dell’arte* or of hot jazz’ (Bazin 2002: 275).
4. See Rossellini (1987a: 101–3 and 1995, 11–12). For a substantial account in English of the genesis of *Open City* see Gallagher (1998).
5. Out of a total budget of 11. 246. 579 Lire, Fabrizi’s honorary reached 830 000, against the 1000 000 that he initially requested, whereas Magnani had to content herself with 440 000 (Roncoroni, 2006, 399–400).
6. This study of *Open City*, as well as of *Paisà* and *Germania anno zero*, is based on the 2009 The Criterion Collection ‘Roberto Rossellini’s War Trilogy’, which reproduces the films’ original release print. Some scene-description may therefore not correspond to previous Anglo-American versions.
7. The episode replicates Amidei’s own experiences from escaping a Nazi raid; it was shot in the apartment at the Spanish Steps where he lived and where Rossellini and many others had been hiding during the occupation (Roncoroni 2006: 429).
8. It is the second time in a week that Pina and the other women raid the local baker. Such desperate measures against starvation allude to a radical reduction in bread rations that was introduced by the fascists, in agreement with the Nazis, on 25 March 1944 – the day after the Fosse Ardeatine massacre. Along with the deaths of Don Pappagallo, Gullace and Don Morosini, which all occurred in March–April 1944, this episode enables us to locate the diegesis of *Open City* in the late winter/early spring of 1944 (Roncoroni 2006: 351).
9. One of the several points of disagreement between the scriptwriters was the question whether to represent, or not, the GAP attack in via Rasella which Amidei, a member of the Communist Party, considered a deed of the partisans, but which many others condemned as the cause of the Fosse Ardeatine massacre. Both episodes were eventually left out of the script due to the conflicting views they had provoked not only within the CLN, and the Communist Party more specifically, but also among the citizens (Roncoroni 2006: 432).
10. The original screenplay stated explicitly, and with historical accuracy, that the firing squad responsible for Don Pietro’s execution belonged to a branch of the

fascist police. Bonomi's objections regarded allegedly the negative representation this would create of the police in general, but his intentions were unquestionably to hinder a portrayal that could promote the tendency among the communists to discredit the police forces that had lived in collaboration with fascism and Nazism. Considering the close connections that existed between those involved in *Open City* and the Communist Party, the ultimate objective would have been to hinder the film from becoming a vehicle for anti-government messages. As a compromise, Rossellini and his collaborators were provided uniforms belonging to the Italian Army, which were subsequently used in the scene, with the result of attributing the atrocity to the only group that had had absolutely nothing to do with it. Similarly, the *coup de grâce* that Major Hartmann fires on Don Pietro would historically have been fired by a fascist officer (Roncoroni 2006: 27; 369; 40).

11. Massimo Mida recalls how difficult it was to have the almost alphabetic Carmela move and talk in front of the camera. Sadly, she became 'the first victim of neo-realism', unable as she was to readjust to her impoverished living conditions once she had discovered the world beyond perpetual misery (quoted in Faldini and Fofi 1979: 108–9).
12. Where the actors' voices were dubbed, it was either to improve on the quality of sound and articulation, or to give the characters other dialects than their own: Carmela's Neapolitan speech was dubbed by that of a Sicilian, and the Neapolitan friars in Episode IV, which was shot on the Amalfi coast, were dubbed by voices from the Romagna area in which the episode is set (Parigi 2005b: 17–19). The budget of *Paisà* was 56,000,000 lire, compared to the 11,000,000 that went into *Open City* (Mida, quoted in Aprà 1987: 137).
13. The on-location scripting and realisation of the Naples episode produced a completely different tone compared to the original treatment which the novelist Alfred Hayes and Klaus Mann – the son of Thomas Mann who served in the US Army in Italy – had developed to reassure American authorities (De Franceschi, Leonardo (2005) 'Fra teatro e storia, la doppia scena del reale: Il secondo episodio', in Parigi 2005: 57; 66–7).
14. See Aprà (1987: 143). Post-war crisis as reflected not merely in the moral fall of honest women, but also wide-scale trafficking in young girls and other goods is the focus of Lattuada's *Il bandito* and *Senza pietà*, discussed in Chapter 7. The historical period is otherwise marked by the newsreel showing in the cinema where Francesca seeks refuge and which juxtaposes her nocturnal life to the war that still is going on in the North. The usher who helps Francesca while refusing to be paid for the favour seems to present a homage to Maria Michi, who herself worked in one of Rome's major cinemas (Fanara 2000: 369).
15. See Bazin (2002: 278); Francesco Callari's notoriously negative review of *Paisà* is reprinted in Aprà (1987: 147–62).
16. In 1561, Grand Duke Cosimo de' Medici commissioned Giorgio Vasari to construct a corridor that in connecting the Palazzo Vecchio with the Palazzo Pitti would cross the Arno above street level.
17. See Lizzani (2009). *Open City*, awarded the Grand Prix at Cannes, ran for a year-and-a-half in New York and *Paisà* ran for five months in London (Wagstaff 2007: 19); both films were nominated for Academy Awards and received awards from the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Board of Review, USA.
18. 'When ideologies go astray from the eternal moral laws and from Christian devotion that are the basis of human life, they end up as criminal folly. Even childhood prudence becomes contaminated by it and dragged from one horrendous crime to another; no less severe, in which, with the ingenuity typical of innocence [the child] believes that liberation from guilt may be found.'