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Edited by Daniel Biltereyst and Daniela Treveri Gennari

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Moralizing Cinema

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Routledge

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**Edited by Daniel Biltereyst
and Daniela Treveri Gennari**

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7 A Triple Alliance for a Catholic Neorealism

Roberto Rossellini According to Félix Morlion, Giulio Andreotti and Gian Luigi Rondi

Elena Dagrada

There is no doubt that the inspirational task of Christianity in the field of motion pictures will be of immense importance in post-war reconstruction.¹

(Félix A. Morlion)

In a book of memories about the USSR, the Italian Christian Democratic politician Giulio Andreotti recalls his first encounter with the Belgian Dominican Father Félix Morlion:

In February 1944, in full German occupation, a Dominican priest with a foreign accent and a large ruddy face, pretty rare in that dietary difficult time, asked to see De Gasperi. He said he came from the USA and was bearer of a signed letter by don Luigi Sturzo, from Jacksonville in Florida [. . .]. Sturzo presented to his dear Alcide "Father Morlion, a great friend of us and of our Belgian friends' ideas, who is doing here an excellent job with the Center Pro Deo and can be of great help not only to us in Italy but also to all our friends in other countries."²

In all likelihood, Andreotti confuses one month for another. Correspondence shows that Morlion (see Chapters 10 and 15) was still in the United States in February 1944. First, there is the correspondence between Morlion and the Italian Catholic priest and anti-Fascist politician Luigi Sturzo, who had been in exile in the United Kingdom and later, during the Second World War, in the United States.³ Second, a later letter written by Sturzo, dated May 4, 1944, shows how the spiritual father of Italian Christian Democracy asked Earl Brennan (chief of the OSS Italian Sector in Washington, D.C.) to help Morlion obtain an exit permit and a visa to leave the United States for Italy.⁴ In the following lines, however, Andreotti clearly grasps at least three definite peculiarities of the Belgian priest. First: in spite of an air of mystery, his evangelizing exuberance was brimming over. Second: he was the inventor of an original didactic methodology, which was opposite to

the traditional Italian one; while he appreciated academic professors, he preferred young teachers for his Pro Deo activities and looked for relationships with "others."⁵ Third: he showed a great consideration for cinema—an important medium and a delicate milieu in which his exuberant behavior ultimately upset the ecclesiastical hierarchies.

Certainly, in August 1944, Morlion was on his way to Europe. And in September 1944, he was already in Rome.⁶ Here, among other things, he arrived ready to lavish his evangelizing exuberance and to import his original didactic methodology, which he would also apply to cinema. His specialty was in mass propaganda and directing public opinion. He surely knew Walter Lippmann's book *Public Opinion*, which was published in 1922.⁷ He had himself already published on the subject, mostly notably *The Apostolate of Public Opinion*.⁸ Above all, Morlion knew very well that public opinion could be better directed through media like radio and film. He had been active in cinema since the 1930s in Belgium, where in 1930–1931 he had founded *Documentation Cinématographique de la Presse* (DOCIP), a press service that specialized in film topics and worked in conjunction with *Office Catholique International du Cinéma* (OCIC) (see Chapters 1 and 15). In the United States, he had created the international press service INTERCIP (often referred to as CIP, i.e., the Center of Information Pro Deo), which he planned to introduce to Italy too.

Public opinion was important in post-war Italy. After liberation, in June 1946 Italians chose by referendum to end the monarchy in favor of becoming a republic. This brought about profound political and cultural changes in Italian society, due to the need to create a democratic country. On the one hand, the following years were dedicated to reconstruction and to pacification efforts by successive coalition governments, while a constituent assembly wrote the Italian constitution (which came into force on January 1, 1948). On the other hand, this era of transition was characterized by the great mobilization generated by the first parliamentary elections of the newborn Italian republic in April 1948, which reflected how Italy was already embroiled in a Cold War tangle. Italy was strategically important as a nation, politically and geographically, and its restored democratic election outcomes were important for both the United States and the USSR, as well as for an inside state such as the Vatican.⁹ Moreover, the outcome of this first parliamentary post-war election was uncertain, because in the 1946 elections of the constituent assembly, the Socialists and Communists ran separately, but together, they had the majority of votes. Since in 1948 they ran a joint election campaign, this further increased Catholic concerns about Communism.¹⁰ It was in this climate of fear that Morlion founded in Rome the *Istituto Internazionale Pro Deo*,¹¹ which from November 15, 1947, onward published *L'ora dell'azione*, a propaganda magazine conceived in view of the April 1948 elections.¹² After the Christian Democracy's victory, the institute was transformed into the *Università Internazionale di Studi Sociali Pro Deo*,¹³ which included the first academic cinematographic department.¹⁴

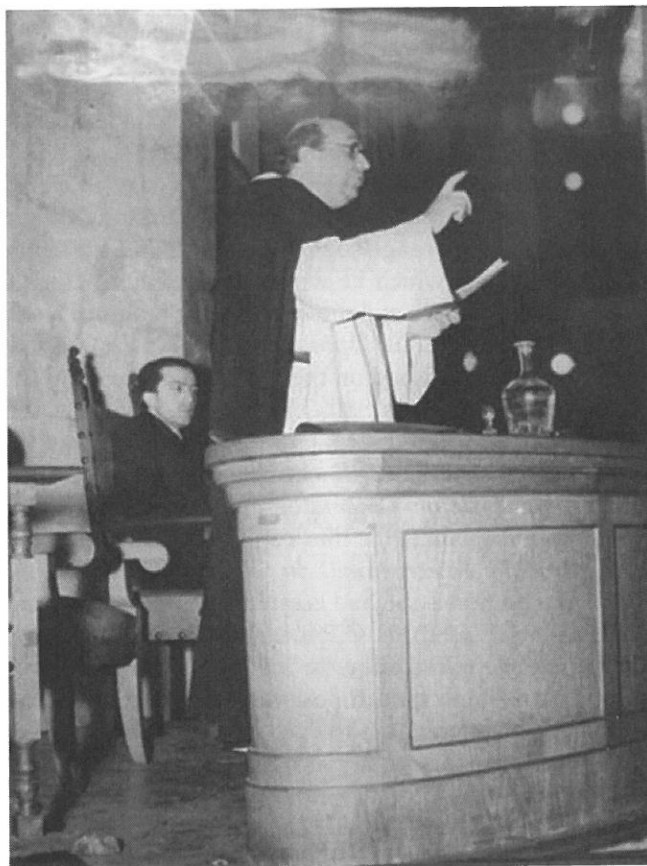


Figure 7.1 Giulio Andreotti and Father Félix Morlion at Pro Deo (1948).

Source: Author's personal archive.

In addition, public opinion about Italy was important, especially internationally. Indeed, this was a main preoccupation for people like Sturzo and Morlion, as is proven in their correspondence with each other, as well as by the specific studies conducted by CIP.¹⁵ In fact, the United Nations' attitude towards a defeated Italy could be strategically modulated, taking into account the extenuating circumstances of a population perceived as not guilty of, or as less guilty of, Fascism than the Nazi Germans or Japanese.

Then, *Roma città aperta* (Roberto Rossellini, 1945) and *Paisà* (Roberto Rossellini, 1946) were released. Or better: their international fame mushroomed and even was more efficacious in promoting positive international opinion about Italy, obtaining better and faster what secret services

had been planning for years. To that effect, neorealism¹⁶ became the best ambassador of the Italian boot. It acquitted Italians from blame and conveyed resistance by showing the everyday heroism of an innocent, suffering population.

Italian Catholics were hostile towards neorealism because it was considered near to the left.¹⁷ Nevertheless, neorealism was the most important cultural phenomenon in post-war Italy. Morlion saw this for himself at the Brussels *Festival mondial du film et des beaux-arts*, in June 1947,¹⁸ when the Belgian government awarded a prize to *Paisà* and the OCIC jury presented its Gran Prix to *Vivere in pace* (Luigi Zampa, 1946).

Also in June 1947 in Brussels, Morlion met film director Roberto Rossellini, and by Morlion's own recollection, he began collaborating with him about a year later in Venice, in September 1948.¹⁹ Between 1947 and 1948, three important things occurred. First, Giulio Andreotti was designated undersecretary to the presidency to the Council of Ministers with a mandate for Entertainment, the equivalent of a ministry, previously nonexistent at that time.²⁰ Second, Christian Democracy won the April 1948 elections. And third, Ingrid Bergman wrote to Roberto Rossellini.

Fifteen years younger than Morlion, Andreotti had been one of the first collaborators with the Italian CIP on the Dominican side. He met Morlion through Alcide De Gasperi, the founder of the Christian Democracy party who would be the Italian prime minister in eight successive coalition governments from 1945 to 1953. Andreotti started his role on June 4, 1947, and kept the Entertainment mandate from the fourth De Gasperi government (May 31, 1947) to the end of the Pella government (January 12, 1954). Unlike Morlion, he had never been particularly interested in cinema, except for censorship and control possibilities;²¹ besides, the entertainment mandate was just one of his many other positions. From the beginning, however, he was deeply aware of the importance of his thorny assignment.

The Christian Democratic victory in 1948 strengthened Andreotti, who soon strove to increase the Catholic influence on cinema's activities, most notably through production control and the expansion of parish cinemas.²² Importantly, he adhered to Morlion's policy to reclaim neorealism praise from the monopoly of left criticism and to Christianize what international film critics called the "new Italian cinematographic school." According to Morlion, this school could no longer be ignored by Italian Catholics. He wrote about it explicitly in June 1948 in the *Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia's* magazine *Bianco e Nero*,²³ asserting that foreign Catholic critics reacted with instinctive sympathy for Rossellini's *Roma città aperta* and *Paisà*, and for the "neorealist Italian school."²⁴ A few months later, Andreotti wrote the same. Unofficially, Andreotti wrote it in a letter to Giovanni Battista Montini²⁵ dated November 9, 1948. Officially, in a speech pronounced on November 27, 1948, and subsequently published in

December in *Bianco e Nero*,²⁶ he wrote that it was impossible to ignore the “neoveristic cinematographic school,” despite how its traits and features were difficult at times to embrace. That school was too greatly appreciated abroad, where it honored Italy; and therefore, it would be better to promote a sane, very moral production, which can worthily belong to that school and enrich it with spiritual values.

Even if Ingrid Bergman hadn’t written to Rossellini, entering his life and films so strongly, he probably would still have been the most consequent choice as the “pioneer [. . .] of Catholic neorealism, correcting the other one which did not seem Christian enough.”²⁷ Rossellini made neorealism famous in the world with *Roma città aperta* and *Paisà* (the latter produced with American money, which also proved his reliability). Both films depicted positive examples of priests and were able to impress Catholic critics internationally. Moreover, he was not a Communist;²⁸ in fact, he was considered by many as being close to the Christian Democracy party.²⁹ Rossellini was actually a filmmaker who was difficult to classify: he had left Fascism for resistance;³⁰ he was close to Communists like Sergio Amidei and Giorgio Amendola;³¹ but he also attended Christian Democracy meetings.³² According to Morlion’s “original methodology,” all this made Rossellini the best person to convert neorealism to Christianity. Would Rossellini be a clerical director, he could arouse suspicion, like those excessively biased films that make spectators diffident. Rossellini’s pictures, on the contrary, dealt with social matters within emotional stories.³³

However, as a famous film star with an international following, Ingrid Bergman was a guarantee for a wide audience, larger than the ones already gained by *Roma città aperta* and *Paisà*. She represented an opportunity, and not only for Rossellini.

When he received her letter, in May 1948, Rossellini found himself in a difficult position. *Germania anno zero*—shot in Berlin and Rome in 1947—had been halted by censorship,³⁴ and *L’amore*—a diptych composed by *Una voce umana* and *Il miracolo*—would not be greeted as hoped, particularly because of its second part.³⁵ Rossellini entered it in the 1948 Venice Festival, where it won no prizes. Even Morlion, appointed by Andreotti as a member of the jury,³⁶ judged its “religious inspiration”³⁷ as being mistaken. Nonetheless, contextually, the Dominican “accepted” to elaborate on the “religious theme” of Rossellini’s next film. Or—more probably—Rossellini “accepted” Morlion’s helping hand, since he realized how much the disapproval of the Catholic milieu cost, both in Venice and later, when the *Centro Cattolico Cinematografico* (CCC) excluded both *Germania anno zero* and *L’amore* from parish cinemas. The leftist milieu had also abandoned Rossellini, accusing him of betraying neorealism and deserting choral and social film in favor of an introspective turn labeled “involution.”³⁸ In a way, Rossellini had no choice.



Figure 7.2 Father Morlion (here with Jean Cocteau) during the Venice Film Festival in 1948.

Source: Author's personal archive.

* Rossellini’s next film was *Stromboli*, starring Ingrid Bergman. Despite Morlion’s claim that he elaborated its “religious theme” before Rossellini met the actress,³⁹ the first draft of the plot was in fact dated May 1948, i.e., before Morlion “accepted” to elaborate it. Rossellini sent it to Bergman shortly after receiving her letter. It describes a “tall, blond stranger” (later named Karin) confined in a displaced persons’ camp near Rome, who marries a Sicilian fisherman to remain in Italy and follows him to his volcanic island. She thought she could find salvation, but the savage island, shaken by the volcano, rejects her, and the black sulfurous sea impedes her to escape; so she hopes for a miracle, without realizing that something has already happened. She finally understands the power of those who possess nothing, the lure of freedom, and becomes a sort of Saint Francis. In this early draft, the only reference to God is the Lutheran protagonist’s cultural differences with respect to the Catholic islanders. Namely, it is in tune with Rossellini’s basic idea of the contrast between a stranger and her hostile environment, engendering a strong feeling of difference and exclusion.

Only in the second draft, dated November 6, 1948, and written with Morlion’s collaboration, is the “religious theme” shaped. Here, the protagonist mends her ways when a sudden revelation of God helps her discover her faith after a night on the volcano. In the end, she returns to the village with

her husband: a solution that respects the indissolubility of the sacrament of marriage, and is retained in the RKO version of the film.⁴⁰ Another possible suggestion by Morlion is the introduction in the plot of a parish priest and the celebration of the marriage in a church, instead of in a small camp office. It is highly likely that Morlion also suggested quite early on the title he would succeed in imposing on the Italian version: at the end of September 1948, Ingrid Bergman wrote to a friend that she heard from Mr. Rossellini "that his proposed film now had a title, *Terra di Dio, God's Earth*."⁴¹

In any case, the whole treatment of the story was affected by the Dominican's collaboration.⁴² In fact, draft after draft outline two main nuclei: a melodramatic one, centered on a cultural conflict between Karin and the environment; and a mystic-religious one, centered on a spiritual conflict between Karin and God. The RKO version accentuated the first conflict, downplaying as much as possible the second one. Notably, the other two versions—especially the Italian one—developed the spiritual conflict underscoring Morlion's religious theme, conceived to Christianize neorealism and use cinema in order to promote Christian ideals in public life. The potential success justified the effort: the film was expected to be released during the Holy Year, and Ingrid Bergman was supposed to guarantee its appeal to the general public.⁴³

But scandal was lurking. The relationship between the director and the actress—both married to someone else—soon became an international breaking-news story. And when Morlion tried to organize a meeting with Pope Pius XII, on occasion of the Italian release of *Joan of Arc* (Victor Fleming, 1948) starring Ingrid Bergman, the news of her pregnancy messed everything up.⁴⁴ Morlion also was caught up in the scandal, especially through the US press, and in February 1950, he issued a statement through the CIP. In clarifying his position, he affirmed that the religious value of art has always been recognized as being independent of the artist's behavior, as is testified by art history.⁴⁵ About one month later, on April 4, 1950, Andreotti repeated the same arguments during a parliamentary point of order by Alberto Consiglio,⁴⁶ who asked whether the case might be to defend Rossellini against the slanders made by the American senator Edwin C. Johnson. On March 12, *Stromboli* received the Rome Prize for Cinema, a governmental award negotiated inside Christian Democracy. Thus, in his acceptance speech, Andreotti also underlined its symbolic importance, since the film was championed at the same time that the American Senate attacked his director,⁴⁷ which proved that Italy was right to put art first. What Andreotti did not say, however, is that De Gasperi had expressly asked that Rossellini be prevented from appearing at the award ceremony because his presence would embarrass him.⁴⁸

The Rome Prize jury included, among others, Gian Luigi Rondi,⁴⁹ who officially came into action on this occasion, but had been unofficially active since Ingrid Bergman's arrival in Italy. Almost three years younger than Andreotti, he was close to both the undersecretary and Morlion.⁵⁰ His task was to promote *Stromboli*'s relished exegesis and to present or review the

picture through various media, sometimes without name, sometimes with his own or others' names (including, later, Rossellini's name).⁵¹ In spite of the film not yet being released and that it only had been seen by the critics,⁵² the Rome Prize generated considerable interest and flattering reviews. This was, however, a temporary success, and one that would not be repeated.

Indeed, at the 1950 Venice Festival, *Stromboli* was presented out of competition on August 26, the same day as Rossellini's *Francesco giullare di Dio*, which prompted the press to "baptize" this as "Rossellini day." The print's dialogue was in English, but the film was presented with the title planned for the Italian version *Stromboli terra di Dio*, with a press release in English that focused on the religious contents and translated the title as "*Stromboli*" (*God's Earth*).⁵³ Everything was orchestrated to concentrate critics' attention on the centrality of the religious theme of the two last Rossellini's films (which both had 'God' in their title). Yet, the Catholic critical reception was conflicted. If left-wing critics spoke about involution, further compromised by clerical involvement and inspiration, then some Catholic critics appeared dissatisfied and even more punctilious in expressing their reservations. Notably, the miraculous end and Karin's conversion were judged too quick and devoid of sufficient psychological motivation. On August 30, Piero Regnoli wrote in the Vatican daily *L'Osservatore Romano* that Karin's redemption, handled in "five minutes of hasty shots," represented the falsest aspect of the picture, along with a simplistic happy ending, which was often criticized by "who today wants to sustain the pretense spirituality of the final miracle."

Rondi was the one "who today wants to sustain the pretense spirituality of the filmic miracle." Three days earlier, on August 27, 1950, he openly praised *Stromboli*'s miraculous ending in the daily *Il Tempo*, making the Regnoli's remark on *L'Osservatore Romano* sound like a disavowal, even sharper because it referred to a picture endorsed by an important part of the Catholic world, including the well-known Father Morlion. This comment was not even without its consequences. In the Italian version, distributed months later,⁵⁴ the end was changed in response to Regnoli's criticism⁵⁵ and contained additional footage shot to correct the quickness of Karin's conversion.⁵⁶ Many years later, Morlion stated that he had personally shot these new frames—even if Rondi probably collaborated in their conception⁵⁷—showing Karin invoking God for some peace. Positioned between her most extreme desperation and her awakening in the dawning light, these frames are easily recognizable, thanks to the tidiness of Bergman's hair, her freshly ironed garment and her clean handkerchief. But on the occasion of its Italian release, critics—including Catholics—ignored these changes and repeated the same judgment already expressed in Venice.

Yet, the Italian version was really modified in order to underline Morlion's religious theme, which relegated the islanders and nature to a "chorus role" (as in Greek tragedy) and conferred to God the role of antagonist. This is what Rondi repeated in his reviews, disseminating widely the "correct" exegesis of the film and adding that Rossellini was to be intended as the

initiator of a Christian filmic art, which was conceived as a modern prosecution of the ancient Greek tragedy. Rondi further repeated this on March 18, 1951, in *La Fiera letteraria*, when reviewing the picture on the occasion of its Roman opening.⁵⁸ He also included a detailed description of the additional shots. But his efforts were in vain, since *Stromboli* was classified “for adults without reservation” by the CCC (see Chapter 13), whose magazine *Rivista del Cinematografo* published a negative review, and was especially critical of its miraculous ending.⁵⁹

As a matter of fact, *Stromboli* became a battleground for divergent opinions among Catholics. While Catholic leading figures like Morlion, Andreotti and Rondi attempted to make Rossellini the “pioneer of Catholic neorealism,” the Vatican hierarchies were not satisfied with the supplementary invocation to God. In addition to concerns about the film, Rossellini himself bore the brunt of the disagreements, as he was considered a sinner. In turn, Morlion was considered culpable for compromising his apostolate by working with a sinner, for exposing himself too much and for acting on his thoughts outside the proverbial box.⁶⁰

Unlike *Stromboli*, at the 1950 Venice Festival, during the “Rossellini day,” *Francesco giullare di Dio* was included in the competition, but was unsuccessful. Although Andreotti wanted Morlion to be on the jury, as in 1948, the Vatican forbade it; and Rondi’s presence was not enough for the film to win an award.⁶¹

The film was developed in 1949 from an old project of Rossellini’s (affecting also *Stromboli*’s first draft, as we have seen), and was shot between January and June 1950 with the explicit intention of releasing it during the Holy Year.⁶² In this picture, Morlion’s influence is less easy to detect, but his strategic role is nonetheless clear. He personally designated the Franciscan adviser Antonio Lisandrini, whose name also appeared in the credits. He maintained contact with the Vatican and with the General Master of Franciscan Order, assuring them of his oversight of the film on the strength of a specific agreement between Rossellini and Pro Deo. Morlion was designated in turn by the same General Master to visit Franciscan convents where friars were chosen to appear in the picture.⁶³ It is also possible that he thought of Ingrid Bergman to play the role of Santa Chiara (St. Clare of Assisi). On January 28, 1950, *La Settimana Incom* published an article by Ermanno Contini titled *Ingrid per devozione farà la parte di Santa Chiara* [Ingrid, for devotion, will play the role of Santa Chiara]. The news was probably unfounded: Bergman would give birth to Robertino on February 3, 1950. Nevertheless, it provoked interest from the press, and it is little wonder that it monopolized the title of Contini’s article, in which the word “devotion” applied to a shyly Protestant actress could be prompted by the Dominican. It was precisely this interest that most displeased the religious milieu, especially since Rossellini’s private life was discussed more and more in the tabloid press. The increased coverage of the progressive surfacing of his controversial behavior was coupled simultaneously with delays in finishing the picture, which in the end revealed to be different from what was expected.

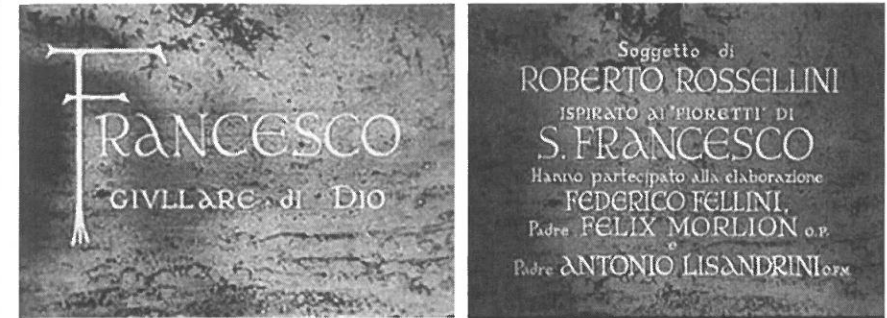


Figure 7.3 and 7.4 Stills from *Francesco giullare di Dio*.

Source: Author’s personal archive.

Once more, the response of critics was mostly negative. The main complaint was that Francis of Assisi had not been presented in a respectful, hagiographic manner. Significantly, the most negative reviewers were Catholic, who also criticized Rossellini’s ecclesiastical advisors, and sometimes quoted Morlion’s name explicitly, as well as his hasty “annexation policy.”⁶⁴ Even Lisandrini had to intervene to defend the film against attacks focusing on what was considered a misinterpretation of Francis’s holiness.⁶⁵

It is no coincidence that on September 26, 1950, soon after the presentation of *Francesco giullare di Dio* at the Venice Festival, a *cine-novel* with the same title was published, which partially corrected the representation of Francis in this picture. Once again, religious consultants signed it: Morlion signed the *Presentation*; Lisandrini the *Introduction* and the *Prelude*; Father Gabriele Sinaldi—a young Dominican close to Morlion—signed the whole novelization. Transposed on the page, the episodes of Saint Francis’s life regained the hagiographic quality that they had lost in Rossellini’s film. Moreover, a few but focused comments brought the Holy Year’s film back to the intended aim of creating a Christian neorealism starting from the plots. As Rondi wrote when reviewing the picture, this had to be seen as a step forward with regard to the outcome of *Stromboli*. There, the drama of the soul was depicted as being in conflict with the creator; here, the drama of the soul sprung from the desire to be completely given to God. Between the Venice Festival and *Francesco*’s Italian release, Rondi revised part of his judgment and significantly included some criticisms. However, he did not desist from dictating the interpretive line, nor did he revise his opinion about Rossellini as the initiator of a Christian filmic art.⁶⁶

A similar dynamic occurred with *Europa '51*, the third and last Rossellini film made with Morlion’s collaboration. Conceived while *Francesco giullare di Dio* was being shot, this was also the third Rossellini film connected with Saint Francis. The idea came to Rossellini while in conversation with Aldo Fabrizi about what would happen if Francis were to return to earth in the modern world: he would be held as a fool.⁶⁷

Europa '51 was also the most political of the Rossellini films. At that time, the Italian director faced increasing problems: he experienced marginalization (from critics and from the Italian filmmaking system) and was confronting the difficulties of a new life and new expectations. He initially planned to make the picture in Paris and sought financing abroad during the summer of 1950.⁶⁸ Possibly, the failure to win at the Venice Festival did not help, and it is probable that he worked on the first treatment in Rome and Paris. The Italian draft was signed by Morlion, Tullio Pinelli, Federico Fellini and Rossellini himself.⁶⁹ This depicted Irène Girard, a woman of significant social standing, who becomes lost after her son's suicide attempt. She leaves her husband and begins an affair with a Communist named André. At Irène's side, André changes his understanding of Communism, and following an internal investigation he is temporarily relieved of his duties. Unable to live outside the political militancy, André leaves Irène, who is accidentally caught in a 'roundup' on her way home and finds herself assisting a dying prostitute (here named significantly Madeleine; Ines in the picture). When her husband finds her, he has her committed to an asylum for an observation period. During this time, Irène hears voices and experiences 'mystic calls,' which lead her to embrace more deeply the Christian faith. Her husband seeks a divorce, and Irène, who was declared insane but harmless, rejoins the poor in the Paris *banlieue*, and is consoled by a renewed communion with her son.

In this first treatment, although she was declared insane, Irène was not committed to the asylum indefinitely, and in the end she could freely practice Christian charity among poor people. Moreover, the plot had many positive religious characters, and the two poles oppressing Irène were, on the one hand, the "cold scientific laicism" of the bourgeois world, represented by her husband, and on the other, Communism and its gaunter solutions to human problems. On the contrary, the asylum chaplain—acting differently compared to what happens in the picture—overcomes his initial suspicions to bless Irène, declaring that there's no border between folly and holiness and by giving her the Eucharist as she leaves the asylum.

However, prospects of a French production floundered and the film was later produced in Italy. Its shooting eventually began in November 1951; meanwhile, the story changed through various rewrites, beginning with the summary of a new treatment, announced in a letter by Morlion himself who strove to overcome production problems using Andreotti's contacts.⁷⁰ In it, Morlion elaborates even more clearly a "central theme," according to which Irène should affirm her Christian singularity as a "scandal for the hypocrites, a folly for the pagans,"⁷¹ clashing with both bourgeois indifference represented by her selfish husband (the hypocrites) and Communist aridity represented by André (the pagans). Moreover, since Irène exercises a positive influence on the "good" communist André, who is reprimanded by the party, here the story changes from André leaving her to Irène leaving him, as she is disappointed by his lack of courage in passively accepting the

steely line of materialism. Other aspects were also revised, including Irène's son's attempted suicide becoming suicide, the divorce being replaced by a legal separation and Irène's mystic experiences being assimilated to those of Joan of Arc.

Nonetheless, after production problems were resolved, new collaborators operated on the following treatment,⁷² the narrative outline changed substantially and the story was transferred to Italy. Secondary religious characters disappeared, while new characters appeared (such as Giulietta, a poor sickly child, the young thief Irène helps to escape). The process against the Communist André was replaced by a simple rebuke, as well as by a process against Irène. For this purpose, a lawyer was introduced, and the judge and the psychiatrist were more developed. In the end, Irène rejoined her husband, interdicted but happy. Then, in the final version of the screenplay, which was submitted for censorship in January 1952 (after shooting had already begun), the "central theme" Morlion wanted went through a further drastic repositioning, and the equilibrium between characters turned into that of the final picture. In the film, Irène is judged insane by exponents of every institution, including the Church, and during the final process in which, for the first time, her reclusion is decided, the priest, too, deposes against her and condemns her as a heretic.⁷³

After Andreotti saw *Europa '51*, he wrote a letter to Rossellini on July 14, 1952, who had asked his socio-political opinion on the picture.⁷⁴ In it, Andreotti raised essentially three issues. First, he questioned the lack of a distinction between Communism and Socialism.⁷⁵ Second, he questioned the positive actions of the Communist character, both in favor of peace and in caring for the poor, sickly child (as if only Communists cared for poor people, ignoring the Catholic tradition of charity). Third, he questioned the negative representation of the lawyer, the judge and Irène's family, as well as of the priest, unhappily juxtaposed to Irène's natural Christianity, especially in the ending, when Irène is locked up and, under her window, poor people quiver against the injustice committed, whereas her family and the priest are shown to walk away.⁷⁶ Then, after praising the beauty of the picture, Andreotti concluded that with suitable changes to the dialogue, it would be easy to restore the film to the intended outcome.

Andreotti's intended outcome—which was shared and pursued from the outset by Morlion—emerged even more clearly in another note handwritten by the undersecretary on July 23, after meeting with Rossellini. He duly noted that Rossellini "wanted and wants to do a picture as a Christian Democracy party man" (at least, this is what the film director must have told him).⁷⁷ That is, *Europa '51* had to be a political film about Christian Democracy as a central party, opposing both Communism and right-wing forces, mostly likely in view of the forthcoming 1953 parliamentary elections. This was to represent Irène in Morlion's central theme: a political theme, replacing the religious one in *Stromboli*, but still using religion for political goals.

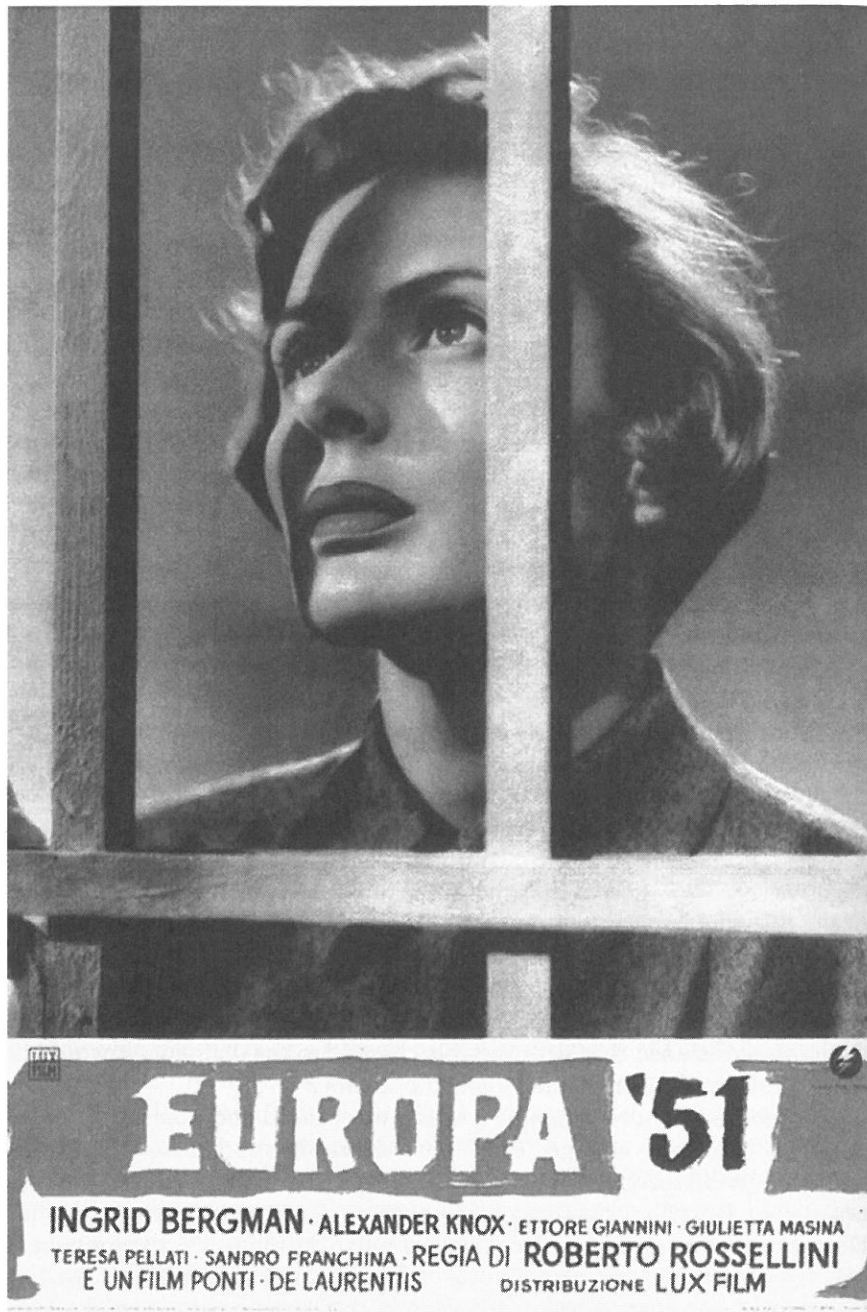


Figure 7.5 Poster for *Europa '51*.

Source: Author's personal archive.

As far as was possible, changes were made to address this. Ahead of Venice, the dialogue in which the Communist is defined as the “dove of peace” disappeared (it survives only in English spoken versions). Moreover, other changes were made before the Italian film release.

At the Venice Festival, *Europa '51* was harshly criticized, despite winning the International Jury Prize, divided *ex aequo* between *The Quiet Man* (1952, John Ford) and *The Life of Oharu* (1952, Kenji Mizoguchi).⁷⁸ Critics from the left might strike hard, but so do their Catholic counterparts.

Writing in *L'Osservatore Romano*, on September 15–16, 1952, Regnoli praised Bergman's interpretation and defined *Europa '51* as the best Rossellini picture in recent years (i.e., the years during which Rossellini did not make good films), but he explicitly criticized the representation of the priest, the judge and the psychiatrist. Also, Giovanni Battista Cavallaro, writing in the *Rivista del Cinematografo*, declared himself disappointed by Rossellini, who, instead of confirming as a “pioneer [. . .] of Catholic neorealism, correcting the other one which did not seem Christian enough,”⁷⁹ proved to be incapable of seeing, in present society, the potential of a truly Christian solidarity.

Again, after Venice, *Europa '51* changed in compliance with Regnoli and Cavallaro's recommendations. The CCC, however, still classified it “for adults with reservation” (worse than *Stromboli*) and asked Renato Buzzonetti to explain why in an article titled *Europa '51 è un messaggio cristiano?* [Is *Europa '51* a Christian message?] in *Rivista del Cinematografo*. Buzzonetti wrote that it tried to be Christian, but it did not fully succeed because, among other reasons, it condemned the whole of present society, whose institutions appear erroneously committed to denying the Christian values.⁸⁰

Yet, the Venice presentation of *Europa '51* had been preceded by an endorsement, similar to the Rome prize for *Stromboli*, newly orchestrated by Rondi. Between 1951 and 1952, Rondi himself published an essay in the collection “Quaderni della Mostra di Venezia,” which reaffirmed that Rossellini was the initiator and a profound interpreter of Christian neorealism.⁸¹ And in February 1952, during the *Europa '51* shooting, Giuseppe Sala,⁸² the newly recruited director of *Bianco e Nero*—appointed by Andreotti and immediately converted to Rossellini's cause—dedicated a special edition to him. In it, *Europa '51* was already confirmed as a model of an itinerary that was intended to be read from a religious viewpoint. Sala himself introduced the special edition of *Bianco e Nero* with an essay that revisited Rossellini's work from *Roma città aperta* to *La macchina ammazzacattivi* and *Europa '51* (both still unreleased), including *Paisà*, *Germania anno zero* and *Stromboli* (but significantly omitting *L'amore*), and defined Rossellini as the definitive exponent of a religious neorealism.⁸³ Other writings attributed to this reading go back to *La nave bianca* (1941).⁸⁴ This critical approach was pursued also after *Europa '51*'s Venice presentation and its Italian release, despite its evident problematic aspects,

which were sometimes recognized, but were nonetheless incorporated into a Christian reading.

Despite this considerable endorsement, not even *Europa '51* succeeded in making his director the pioneer of Catholic neorealism. On the contrary, it further sharpened opposition between ecclesiastical hierarchies and the "triple alliance" of Morlion, Andreotti and Rondi,⁸⁵ who had invested in such a controversial figure. According to the Vatican, Rossellini remained a sinner, who in addition made films that deviated substantially from Morlion's writings, Rondi's reviews and Andreotti's expectations.

Although he sought Catholic support, Rossellini always made his personal viewpoint prevail. This was true in *Stromboli*, *Francesco* and *Europa '51*, which were deeply autobiographical and sprung from Rossellini's own sense of exclusion and difference. He did this even in *Europa '51*, which Morlion was involved in from the very beginning, influencing the plot as emotional propaganda and affecting the protagonist by opposite extremes. However, Rossellini overturned this and projected himself onto that character, who was charged with anti-conformism and held as a fool by refusing to take sides during a Cold War political (and cultural) tangle.

Europa '51 was the last Rossellini film to star Ingrid Bergman, which was shown in Venice (where the actress never won an award). *Viaggio in Italia* (1954) was not even shown out of competition and was released almost one year and a half after it was made. During this long wait, Sala's *Bianco e Nero* operated a covert promotion by publishing some dialogue and commenting on the underlying spiritual aspects of its plot.⁸⁶ After the film was released, a rare positive review by Rondi appeared in the *Rivista del Cinematografo*, while he had previously written a less favorable review for the picture in *La Fiera Letteraria*.⁸⁷ In doing so, he once again focused on the underlying spiritual orientation of Rossellini films from a Christian viewpoint, repeatedly reiterating the critical line about neorealism and its initiator.

Meanwhile, in 1954, Andreotti relinquished his mandate, and Morlion took his originality and his exuberance elsewhere. The climate of fear and urgency that characterized the immediate post-war years was over, and in 1950s Italy, both Morlion's behavior and his innovative methodology were increasingly problematic. Not only were his means of forging relationships with "others" problematic, but his positive ideas about the power of communication, visibility and the power of images differed from the Vatican's policy at that time as well.

On the larger stage, the Vatican's attitude towards communication, visibility and the power of images changed, and Morlion, who like Rossellini was a sort of outsider in the Italian context of the time, would now probably be regarded as a pioneer. Likewise, critical perception and cinematic sensitivity also changed, and the Rossellini films that were so troublesome when first released are now read in a positive manner.

When it came to creating a Catholic neorealism, the project failed to make good political capital of Rossellini's production. It succeeded, however, in

enabling a religious reading of Rossellini by focusing on the presence of an authentic spiritual sensitivity. And, of course, such a reading is ultimately open to a Christian interpretation.

NOTES

1. Morlion, Félix A. 1944. *The Apostolate of Public Opinion*. Montreal: Fides, 115.
2. Andreotti, Giulio. 1988. *L'URSS vista da vicino*. Milan: Rizzoli, 307. My translation.
3. The Fondo Luigi Sturzo (in Archivio Storico Istituto Luigi Sturzo, Rome—ASILS from now on) preserves the epistolar exchange between Sturzo and Morlion, proving Morlion's difficulties in going to Italy before summer 1944.
4. This letter, translated in Italian, is reproduced in Tranfaglia, Nicola. 2004. *Come nasce la Repubblica. La mafia, il Vaticano e il neofascismo nei documenti americani e italiani 1943–1947*. Milan: Bompiani (the original in English is conserved at the National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland). The Fondo Luigi Sturzo (in ASILS) also includes part of the original correspondence between Sturzo and Brennan, who on May 6, 1944, writes: "Concerning Father Morlion's exit permit, I gathered from his conversation that he understood the proper procedure, and that he was going to go ahead with the necessary steps, in which he expected to have help from his embassy here." Sturzo answers Brennan on May 9 sending "a memorandum on the reasons for his [Morlion's] trip to Italy [. . .] a sheet on Pro Deo Movement [. . .] a letter for His Exc. Rodino" and concludes: "I know personally Father Morlion; he is hundred per cent pro Allies and pro democracy. His work in the catholic milieu in many countries is very good."
5. Morlion's originality consisted not only in using young teachers, possibly layman teachers (including Andreotti and Gian Luigi Rondi, as well as Roberto Rossellini, Federico Fellini or Communists like Cesare Zavattini and Sergio Amidei). It also consisted in the conviction that Communists were not all the same and that "good" Communists could be seduced and persuaded to cease to be Communist. As we shall see, this conviction can also be found in his contribution to the *Europa '51* treatment. Among others, see Morlion, *The Apostolate of Public Opinion*.
6. See Brady, Anna M. 1944. "Introduction" to Morlion, *The Apostolate of Public Opinion*, dating "The Feast of Assumption, New York, 1944" when Morlion "is on his way back to Europe to reconstitute the Pro Deo work there" (p. 32). See also the "Presentazione del movimento 'Pro Deo' ai cattolici militanti italiani," i.e., the presentation to the Italian edition of Morlion's book, translated as *L'Apostolato dell'opinione pubblica* (Rome: Sudium, 1947) by Vittorino Veronese who writes that Morlion arrives in Rome in September 1944.
7. Lippmann, Walter. 1922. *Public Opinion*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.
8. According to the colophon of the Italian edition, the book was first written in English and also published in French (in Montreal by Fides), Spanish (in Buenos Aires) and English by CIP in New York. However, the English edition I consulted was published in Montreal by Fides.
9. See Treveri Gennari, Daniela. 2009. *Post-War Italian Cinema. American Intervention, Vatican Interests*. New York: Routledge.
10. See Andreotti, Giulio. 2006. *De Gasperi*. Palermo: Sellerio. See also a Earl Brennan letter to Vincent J. Scanporino (OSS, Algeri) dated November 15, 1943, conserved at the National Archives and Records Administration,

- College Park, Maryland, and translated in Italian in Tranfaglia, Nicola. 2011. *La santissima trinità. Mafia, Vaticano e servizi segreti all'assalto dell'Italia 1943-1947*. Milano: Feltrinelli.
11. The institute was founded to work as a connection for the cooperation between Vatican and American secret services against the advent of Communism in Italy (see in the Fondo Luigi Sturzo, in ASILS, the epistolar exchange between Sturzo, Anna Mary Brady and Morlion, notably a letter by Morlion to Sturzo dated January 27, 1944, in which the Dominican proposes to the Italian politician to use propaganda services from Pro Deo in the imminent post-war Italy). Morlion becomes its president on March 14, 1946, by appointment of Martin Gillet, General Master of Dominicans, who signs a letter published in the Italian edition of *The Apostolate of Public Opinion*. *Nihil obstat* came from Giovanni Battista Montini, future Pope Paolo VI, at that time substitute of the Vatican State Secretary [Segreteria di Stato Vaticana]; Andreotti (*L'URSS vista da vicino*) recalls that Morlion had been recommended to Montini by the well-known publisher Henry Luce.
 12. Until the 1948 elections, *L'ora dell'azione* dealt only with political issues. After the Christian Democracy's victory, it started a film review column in cooperation with the cinematographic department of the *Università Internazionale Pro Deo* in Rome, the DOCIP (*Documentation Cinématographique de la Presse*) in Brussels and the *Centro Cattolico Cinematografico* (CCC) in Rome. See "Per la fase costruttiva dell'apostolato del cinema," *L'ora dell'azione*, no. 42, 18 novembre 1948. The magazine ceased to be published in November 1952.
 13. See Morlion, Félix. 1948. "Cos'è l'Unione Internazionale 'Pro Deo'?" *L'ora dell'azione*, June 27.
 14. See Morlion in Brady, Anna Mary, "Come si sgonfia una grossa montatura giornalistica," *L'ora dell'azione*, February 25, 1950.
 15. See *Fundamentals on Italy*, CIP, vol. 1, no. 3, June 1943.
 16. In addition to *Roma città aperta* and *Paisà*, a similar role has been played by *Il sole sorge ancora* (Aldo Vergano, 1946) and *Vivere in pace* (Luigi Zampa, 1946). Let's notice that this cannot be said about neorealistic films by Vittorio De Sica as *Sciuscià* (1946), *Ladri di biciclette* (1948) and *Umberto D* (1952), lacking an addition of positive priests.
 17. See, among others, Bernadrini, Aldo. 1981. "Cattolici e cinema italiano," in Gianfranco Gori and Stefano Pivano, eds. *Bianco e Nero. Gli anni del cinema in parrocchia*. Rimini: Maggioli.
 18. Morlion is there to promote a film destined for oratory movie theaters—*O.K. John!* (Ugo Fasano and Giovanni D'Eramo, 1946)—about a young priest helping ragamuffins; see "Okey John! a Bruxelles," *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XX, nos. 7-8, July/August 1947.
 19. See Morlion in Brady, "Come si sgonfia una grossa montatura giornalistica."
 20. In a filmed interview by Tatti Sanguineti, entitled *Giulio Andreotti. Il cinema visto da vicino* (its first part was presented at the 2014 Venice Festival), Andreotti states that his designation was suggested to De Gasperi by Monsignor Giovanni Battista Montini, future Pope Paolo VI. See "Il giovane Divo e il cinema," *Il Fatto Quotidiano*, May 18, 1913.
 21. See Andreotti, Giulio. 1947. *Per la libertà di stampa*, speech pronounced at the constituent assembly on April 14, 1947. The speech can be accessed at <http://www.sturzo.it/archivio-andreotti/scritti-discorsi/banca-dati>.
 22. See, among others, Quaglietti, Lorenzo. 1980. *Storia economico-politica del cinema italiano 1945-1980*. Rome: Editori Riuniti.
 23. Morlion, Félix A. 1948. "Le basi filosofiche del neorealismo cinematografico italiano," *Bianco e Nero*, IX, no. 4, June.

24. Surely Morlion thinks of André Bazin ("Le réalisme cinématographique et l'école italienne de la libération," *Esprit*, XVI, no. 1, January 1948). See also Vasile, Turi. 1947. "Festival," *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XX, nos. 7-8, July/August 1947.
25. See Giulio Andreotti, letter to Giovanni Battista Montini, November 9, 1948, conserved in the Archivio Giulio Andreotti (AGA from now on), in ASILS, in which Andreotti literally negotiates the possibility to adopt, among others, a positive attitude towards neorealism. See also Andreotti, *L'URSS vista da vicino*.
26. Andreotti, Giulio. 1948. "I film italiani nella polemica parlamentare," *Bianco e Nero*, IX, no. 10, December.
27. Cavallaro, Giovanni Battista. 1952. "Bilancio di un Festival," *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XXV, nos. 9-10, September/October: 6.
28. Unlike Aldo Vergano, who was a notorious Communist, even if his *Il sole sorge ancora* (1946) includes a positive priest. See Marcello Vazio, "Una cisazione seccante ma necessaria," *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XXI, nos. 5-6, May/June 1948.
29. Luigi Chiarini affirms it openly in "Avviso," *Bianco e Nero*, IX, no. 1, January 1948.
30. See Serri, Mirella, 2005, *I redenti. Gli intellettuali che vissero due volte 1938-1948*, Milano: Corbaccio; and Siniscalchi, Claudio, "Il cinema e la politica nell'Italia del dopoguerra," in Preziosi, Ernesto, ed. 2014. *Luigi Gedda nella storia della Chiesa e del Paese*. Rome: AVE.
31. Giorgio Amendola had been a Rossellini schoolmate, who subsequently signed the *Roma città aperta* visa. See, among others, Roncoroni, Stefano. 2006. *La storia di Roma città aperta*. Bologna/Recco: Cineteca di Bologna/Le mani.
32. Andreotti states it in an interview in Farassino, Alberto, ed. 1989. *Neorealismo. Cinema italiano 1945-1949*. Turin: EDT.
33. To Morlion, an exemplum of efficacy were Frank Capra's pictures; see Morlion, *The Apostolate of Public Opinion*. See also Forni, Gino. 1949. "Padre Morlion ammira Ingrid Bergman e Spencer Tracy," *Il Mattino*, February 11, 1949.
34. See Andreotti's interventions to help the picture obtain a visa in documents conserved at the Direzione Generale per il Cinema (MIBACT).
35. See Johnson, William Bruce. 2008. *Miracles & Sacrilege. Roberto Rossellini, the Church, and the Film Censorship in Hollywood*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. See also Wittern-Keller, Laura and Haberski, Raymond. 2008. *The Miracle Case. Film Censorship and the Supreme Court*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.
36. Andreotti himself writes it in his November 9, 1948, letter to Montini (in AGA, ASILS).
37. Morlion in Brady, "Come si sgonfia una grossa montatura giornalistica."
38. See Martini, Andrea, ed. 2010. *L'antirossellinismo*. Turin: Kaplan.
39. See Morlion in Brady, "Come si sgonfia una grossa montatura giornalistica."
40. On *Stromboli*'s versions and variants, see Dagrada, Elena. 2005 [2008 2nd enlarged edition]. *Le varianti trasparenti. I film con Ingrid Bergman di Roberto Rossellini*. Milan: LED.
41. Bergman, Ingrid and Burges, Alan. 1980. *Ingrid Bergman. My Story*. New York: Delacorte Press, 192. See also Vigorelli, Giancarlo. 1949. *L'avventura italiana di Ingrid Bergman*, "bellezza d'Italia," III, no. 4, who relates discussions among Morlion and Sergio Amidei about the film title.
42. In all versions of *Stromboli*, the story was signed by Sergio Amidei, G.P. Gallegari, Art Cohn and Renzo Cesana. Morlion's name appears in the credits of the international distributed version this way: "Religious theme inspired by FATHER FELIX MORLION O.P."

43. See a testimony of this optimistic forecast in Bergman-Burges, *Ingrid Bergman. My Story*, 259–260: “On December 14, 1949, a letter from the Belgian RKO representative in Brussels reached Roberto and Ingrid. The night before, he had had the privilege of screening the first print of *Stromboli*. He was ecstatic: *Stromboli* is overwhelming. Here is a picture which will satisfy the taste of the most discriminating movie-goers (including the most refined film critics) and which will have at the same time irresistible appeal to the general public. *Stromboli* is the best Rossellini picture. *Stromboli* is the best Bergman picture. *Stromboli* is the picture of 1950. Ingrid Bergman’s performance in *Stromboli* is without question and by far the best of her brilliant career [. . .] In short *Stromboli*, the first of our all European releases for the 1950–1951 season, will be the sensation of Europe, and I want you to start talking to exhibitors right now.”
44. See Rondi, Gian Luigi. 1998. *Un lungo viaggio. Cinquant’anni di cinema italiano raccontato da un testimone*. Florence: Le Monnier.
45. See Morlion in Brady, “Come si sgonfia una grossa montatura giornalistica.”
46. At that time, Consiglio was a member of Italian parliament, but he was also Rossellini’s friend and former collaborator for *Roma città aperta* and *L’uomo dalla croce*. Andreotti’s speech can be found at <http://www.camera.it/>.
47. Actually, Senator Johnson pronounced his speech on March 14, 1950. Andreotti’s documentation on this event is conserved in AGA, ASILS.
48. See Rondi, *Un lungo viaggio*; and Rondi in Casavecchia, Simone. 2008. *Rondi visto da vicino*. Cantalupo in Sabina: Sabinæ.
49. Other members were Antonio Baldini, Emilio Cecchi, Piero Gadda Conti, Mario Gromo, Filippo Sacchi and Gino Visentini.
50. About Rondi teaching at Pro Deo from 1948 and 1949 to 1953, as well as about his presence on *Stromboli*’s set, see especially Casavecchia, *Rondi visto da vicino*. See also a recent interview by Antonio Gnoli in *la Repubblica*, July 21, 1913, where Rondi talks about his ties with Andreotti and claims his support to Rossellini. It is important to underline that when Ingrid Bergman arrived in Italy, she could not speak Italian; with Rondi, she could speak French and, above all, with Morlion she could speak English.
51. See Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*, and Dagrada. Elena. 2010. “Quanto la critica si divide. A proposito degli ‘anni Bergman,’” in Martini, ed. *L’antirossellinismo*.
52. It had also been seen by many priests and bishops, as is testified in Bergman-Burges, *Ingrid Bergman. My Story*, 269: “[In February 1950], the first version of *Stromboli* was being shown to a selected audience of several hundred priests and a sprinkling of bishops to illustrate that its ending was inspired and uplifting and had little in common with the hurriedly edited version slapped together by RKO and released across the United States.”
53. The document is reproduced in Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
54. See Dagrada, “Quanto la critica si divide.” Because of all these problems, the film likely could not be released during the Holy Year.
55. See Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
56. It also contained the cutting of a scene in which Karin stares at length at the fish just caught by her husband, then goes to bed and lies there pensively for a while. The next morning, she starts decorating her home, following the advice the parish priest gave her in the previous sequence. Likely, this cut was aimed to avoid detracting from the influence of God’s minister on Karin’s decision. It is probably Morlion’s voice pronouncing the advice: “If you do this, merciful God will help you,” addressed to Karin at the end of their conversation on the cliff. In fact, it differs from the actor’s voice interpreting the priest; see Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.

57. See Morlion in Arosio, Mario. 1977. “Il figliol prodigo,” *Rivista del Cinematografo*, LL, nos. 7–8, July/August. See also Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
58. Its title is significant: *In Stromboli una donna chiama Dio in soccorso contro se stessa* [In *Stromboli* a woman calls God against herself]. On the one hand, it echoes the biblical quotation of San Paolo, positioned at the beginning of the picture (missing only in the RKO version), which in the international version becomes the Isaiah verse (“*I was found of them that sought me not: I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.*”). That is, it echoes the synthesis of Morlion’s religious theme. On the other hand, it mediates Morlion’s changes, guided by Regnoli.
59. See Santarelli, Giorgio. 1951. “*Stromboli*,” *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XXIV, no. 5.
60. See at least Andreotti (1988) on a polemics about a picture showing Morlion and Anna Magnani at the Venice Festival.
61. See Subini, Tomaso. 2011 [2013 2nd enlarged edition]. *La doppia vita di “Francesco giullare di Dio.” Giulio Andreotti, Félix Morlion e Roberto Rossellini*. Milano: Libraccio. The mistake, of course, had been not to present *Stromboli* in competition: Bergman played with her own voice and would surely win a prize.
62. Former Rossellini collaborators were Diego Fabbri and Federico Fellini. Subsequently, a main collaborator was Brunello Rondi (Gian Luigi’s brother).
63. See Subini, *La doppia vita di “Francesco giullare di Dio.”*
64. See Pitta, Antonio and Capriolo, Ettore, eds. 1952 “Sacerdoti: Dio ha bisogno degli uomini,” *Cinema*, no. 89, June 30, 1952.
65. See “Ita. Rassegna di informazioni,” XVIII, no. 4, April/May 1951 (column: *Il cinema italiano all’estero*).
66. See Gian Luigi Rondi, “‘*Stromboli*’ e ‘Francesco’ due film di Roberto Rossellini,” *Il Tempo*, August 27, 1950; “Panorama dal festival di Venezia,” *La Fiera Letteraria*, V, nos 35–36, September 10, 1950; and “*Francesco giullare di Dio*. Cinema di “verità interiori,” *La Fiera Letteraria*, V, no. 51, December 24, 1950.
67. See Schérer, Maurice, Rohmer, Eric and Truffaut, François. 1954. “Entretien avec Roberto Rossellini,” *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 37, July.
68. See Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
69. An identical unsigned French version also exists. It is part of the Fond Le Chanois and is conserved in Paris at the BiFi (Bibliothèque du Film et de l’Image). Other Rossellini collaborators were at least Jean-Paul Le Chanois, Charles Spaak and Enrico Fulchignoni.
70. See Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
71. Quoting Saint Paul (1 Cor 1:23). Summary is reproduced in Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
72. This treatment is conserved in the Archivio Antonio Pietrangeli (Centro Cinema—Città di Cesena), and in Rome at the Archivio Centrale dello Stato (ACS). In time, other Rossellini collaborators were Sandro De Feo, Ivo Perilli, Brunello Rondi and Diego Fabbri, and subsequently Mario Pannunzio and Antonio Pietrangeli. Also, Massimo Mida, Ennio De Concini and Antonello Trombadori were consulted. Rossellini used to abound in collaborators in order to feel more free to act his own way.
73. On *Europa* ’51 versions and variants, see Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
74. The letter is preserved in AGA (ASILS) and is reproduced in Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
75. This distinction was important not only in itself, but also because in those years Christian Democracy was actually adopting social politics inspired by

- Christian values, while Communism was identified with Soviet bloc activity during the Cold War, and Italian Communist party was tied to the USSR.
76. On this point, see Dagrada, *Le varianti trasparenti*.
 77. The handwritten note is preserved in AGA (ASILS). During the 1953 electoral campaign, right-wing members were particularly present (and obtained good results at the elections). *Europa '51* was released in December 1952 and reached main Italian cities in 1953.
 78. Ingrid Bergman could not be awarded because *Europa '51*'s Italian version was dubbed.
 79. Cavallaro, *Bilancio di un Festival*, 6.
 80. Buzzonetti, Renato. 1953. "Europa '51 è un messaggio cristiano?" *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XXVI, no. 1, January 1953.
 81. See Rondi, Gian Luigi. 1951. *Cinema italiano 1945-1951. Il dopoguerra, in Il neorealismo italiano. Documentazioni*. Rome: Quaderni della Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica di Venezia.
 82. On Giuseppe Sala, see Brunetta, Gian Piero. 1982 [1993 2nd revised edition]. *Storia del cinema italiano*, vol. III, *Dal neorealismo al miracolo economico. 1945-1959*, Roma: Editori Riuniti. See also Verdone, Mario. 1990. "Il ruolo di 'Bianco e Nero' negli anni Cinquanta," *La scena e lo schermo*, nos. 3-4.
 83. See Sala, Giuseppe. 1952. "Significato di Rossellini," *Bianco e Nero*, XIII, no. 2, February. It's worth noting that other Rossellini films in that period were Catholic productions.
 84. Rossellini, Roberto and Verdone, Mario. 1952. "Colloquio sul neorealismo," *Bianco e Nero*, XIII, no. 2, February.
 85. As we have seen, the tasks in this alliance were quite definite: Morlion would write (he kept for himself the role of "religious councilor" and ghost screenwriter); Andreotti would "produce" (i.e., he would facilitate production contacts and financings, also through film awards and the like) and Rondi would review (through a widespread presence as a film critic in many film journals and newspapers, and other official contexts, also involving other signatures). However, on the one hand, Morlion and Andreotti were active in promoting a cultural policy aimed at the making of Catholic neorealistic films (not only by Rossellini) and of Catholic films in general. On the other hand, Morlion was really convinced that screenwriters were more important than film directors. In a way, he was against the "politique des auteurs" just before it existed, and he really thought he could write stories to which film directors would only "add shots." See Morlion, Félix A. 1949. "Débat Réalisateur-Scénariste. L'expérience italienne dans la crise mondiale du scénario," *Revue internationale du cinéma*, I, no. 4; and Agel, Henri. 1952. *Le cinéma a-t-il une âme?* Paris: Cerf. See also François Truffaut, "Une certaine tendance du cinéma français," *Cahiers du cinéma*, no. 31, 1954.
 86. See "Viaggio in Italia di Roberto Rossellini (Frammenti di dialogo)," *Bianco e Nero*, XIV, no. 11, November 1953.
 87. See *Rivista del Cinematografo*, XXVII, no. 11, 1954; and *La Fiera Letteraria*, October 24, 1954.

Part III

Technology and Production