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## **From the Geographical Dimension to the Ecological Perspective in Pasolini's Literature and Film**

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**Abstract:** The environmental aspects in Pasolini's work go far beyond Pasolini's famous *L'articolo delle lucciole* (*Firefly Article*) (1975). These aspects take shape, above all, in his interest in the transformation of the space, that is of the Italian environment controlled by a new, permissive fascism, a power without a face that is the worst kind of totalitarianism. The poet and writer focuses on the period of the so-called economic boom, which hit Italy after World War II. This article examines the potential contributions of Pasolini's intellectual agenda to contemporary ecocritical thought, built on the analysis of Pasolini's selected works between literary writing and writing for the cinema. The objectives of this contribution include the possibility of a new reading of Pier Paolo Pasolini's poetry, literature, and cinema under an ecocritical light, which presupposes an evaluation of his work that takes into account the relationship which the author determines between the individual of his own time and the surrounding environment, redefining the balance between literature and landscape.

**Keywords:** Pasolini; Ecology; Ecocriticism; Landscapes; Anthropocene; *Petrolio*.

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Pasolini's artistic production can therefore be read through a particular environmental attention that has always accompanied his reflections and contributed to defining his aesthetics on the emergent condition of a society that tends to a total homologation. Landscape is at the heart of Pasolini's relationship with reality. A landscape felt not as a decorative backdrop, a decorative or scenographic concept, but as a space of bodies, sounds, and life. While investigating this dimension of Pasolini's sensibility, we can trace ecological connotations, a kind of landscape ethics between linguistic-anthropological research and social denunciation. The objectives of this contribution include the possibility of a new reading of Pier Paolo Pasolini's poetry, literature, and cinema under an ecocritical light, which presupposes an evaluation of his work that takes into account the relationship which the author determines between the individual of his own time and the surrounding environment, redefining the balance between literature and landscape. More than other Italian intellectuals, Pier Paolo Pasolini was able to probe the fabric of the country at the height of

the economic boom and interpret its social and cultural changes.

What makes Pasolini particularly significant for an ecocritical discourse are the recurring themes in his writing. Generally whenever critics and theorists want to reconnect Pasolini with ecological and environmental issues, they always refer to the disappearance of fireflies, contained in the article published in the *Corriere della Sera* on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 1975 under the title *Il vuoto del potere in Italia* (*The Power Void in Italy*) and later renamed in the collection of *Scritti corsari*, as *L'articolo delle luciole*<sup>1</sup>. In the essay, he connects the beginning of the end for Italy in anthropological and cultural terms with the contemporary disappearance of fireflies from the Italian countryside due to the advance of the ecological crisis produced by industrialization:

In the early 1960s, due to the air pollution, and, especially in the countryside, due to the water pollution [...] fireflies began to disappear. The phenomenon was lightning-fast and dazzling. The phenomenon was sudden and traumatic. Within a few years, there were no more fireflies<sup>2</sup>.

Although there is a reference to pollution, it is only briefly mentioned in a metaphorical way. For Pasolini, here, the disappearance of the fireflies is merely a metaphor to indicate the transformation of power in Italy before and after the disappearance of the fireflies. Pasolini, with his sensitivity as a writer, poet and director, grasps and denounces this mechanism, which he calls the *anthropological mutation* of Italy. This term often used by the writer aims to articulate a historical moment, the

acceleration of the second industrial revolution in Italy between the mid-1960s and mid-1970s with environmental and urban transformations. Pasolini posited the destruction of the environment as tangible evidence of the rise of a new form of transnational fascism.

Nevertheless, the environmental aspects in Pasolini's work go far beyond the above-mentioned article. These aspects are primarily reflected in his interest in the transformation of space, that is of the Italian environment controlled by a new, "permissive" fascism, a "power without a face" that is the "worst kind of totalitarianism"<sup>3</sup>. The poet and writer focuses on the period of the so-called economic boom in Italy, that followed the Second World War, a time marked by significant social, environmental, and urban transformations, that at various times he referred to as the "anthropological mutation" or "cultural genocide"<sup>4</sup>. The consumer society, according to Pasolini, appears as a "new fascism", whose purpose is the brutally totalitarian reorganization and homologation/homogenization of the world. It is worth noting that Pasolini went so far as to characterize this transformation in *Lettere luterane* as an "apocalyptic picture"<sup>5</sup>. The upheaval that he chronicled in his articles mostly for *Il Corriere della sera* and *Il mondo*, which subsequently were collected in *Scritti corsari* and *Lettere luterane* apparently revealed itself to him as an apocalypse without palingenesis or "eschaton". In any case, the overall background of all Pasolini's reflections of the period is precisely the identification of this transformation of the new power<sup>6</sup>.

I will therefore limit myself to reiterating that this *new power* that Pasolini felt in the air, but which cannot define, does

not have homogeneous characteristics, it can take different forms dictatorship of enjoyment, total industrialization of life and violent transformation of the urban landscape.

As mentioned, this *power*, as well as homologating the consciences of the Italians, according to the writer, also destroyed irreversibly the agrarian and peasant space of pre-industrial Italy. Consumer civilization, which in Pasolini's terms is "the real fascism", destroys the inner landscape of humans just as much as the outer landscape.

In the poem *10 June* better known as *Io sono una forza del passato* (read by Orson Wells in *La Ricotta*), Pasolini evokes the power of the past and gives us the most accomplished portrait of man at the threshold of progress, as follows: "I am a force of the past. / Only in tradition is my love. / I come from the ruins, from churches, / from altar pieces, from villages / abandoned in the Apennines or the Pre-Alps, / where brothers have lived"<sup>7</sup>.

In this poetic imagery, he created two real opposing universes: on the one hand, an archaic and mythical universe, highly idealized, and on the other, the industrial modernity and development, which he condemns irrevocably.

### Reflections on Pasolini's *Weeping Excavator*

This contrast of universes – on the one hand the archaic and peasant, on the other the industrial and developmental – in Pasolini's work takes on various environmental overtones that concern the nature, the landscape, and the urban tissue/skin. In this concept we should note his magisterial poem *Il pianto della scavatrice*, which was

written in 1956 and published in the 1957 collection *Le ceneri di Gramsci*. This poem is a deeply personal and political poem, in which the author reflects on two different kinds of changes: those in his life since his move to Rome, and the radical transformations of the physical environment, with a particular focus on the construction of modern housing projects in the Roman periphery. During a night walk in the Roman suburbs, Pasolini describes the squalid and desolate landscape that surrounds him. Right from the start, the reader is introduced to a parallel between the affliction of the poetic self, which sees its reason for existence extinguished, and the urban landscape in decay. It is at this point that the real protagonists of the poem enter the scene: the bucket and the excavator. The tool and the machine become the symbol of the transformation of the city of Rome that is being rebuilt and an Italy that is being modernized. We can observe that in Pasolini's poem the excavator screeches a lament as it bulldozes away the old world. Such abrupt developments are symbolized in the poem by an "old excavator" that is "wailing". Pasolini humanizes the machine, transforming it into a sentient being that mourns the loss of the old, pre-industrial world. The Roman suburbs are thus awoken by the overwhelming wail of the excavator, which emits a *human* cry, breaking the innocent silence of the empty squares. Together with the digger, the poet's soul seems to weep, and with it the whole neighborhood and the entire city. At this point, the poet refers emphatically to the construction of the new neighborhoods in the outskirts of Rome in the 1950s, the destruction of the countryside, the transformation of the "grassy area" into

a “courtyard, white as wax”<sup>8</sup>. Those were the years when Italy underwent a significant transformation, being covered in concrete: a process that continued relentlessly in the following years. In the above mentioned poem, Pasolini makes a complaint concerning the environment and it is certainly one of the most representative poems representing the poet’s inner turmoil. It is the excavator, the blind instrument of that “faceless Power” that is modifying the Italian landscape, that weeps: “what has/ an end and begins again weeps. What was/ a grassy area, an open space, and has become/ a courtyard, white as wax, / closed in a decorum that is resentful”<sup>9</sup>.

With increasing concern for environmental destruction and global warming, we are at last recognizing the injuries that Pasolini so presciently condemned before his mind was tragically silenced by murder. Human manipulation and degradation of the environment has reached the point that cumulative global impacts are not only affecting our food, fiber, and water systems but also threatening people’s health and well-being<sup>10</sup>. Apparently, in today’s capitalist economy we must continue to destroy in order to turn a profit by ‘rebuilding’ or replacing. It is but a slower version of what happens in war.

### Cinema and Urban Decay

This contrast between urban spaces, portrayed as disharmonious and unsafe, and the Eden like countryside is a recurring feature in Pasolini’s work and is addressed in a number of his films<sup>11</sup>. Pasolinian places become *topos*, sites of the mind, coordinates of thought. They become places that eschew any concrete

connotation, any reality. However, Pasolini’s understanding of the environment goes beyond the geographical and natural dimensions to include its historical and human components.

Moreover, in Pasolini’s cinema there is always a contrast of spaces: on the one hand the countryside, on the other, the city that is inexorably advancing with its monstrous suburbs. We need only to think of many sequences from *Accattone* (1961) to *Mamma Roma* (1962)<sup>12</sup>, in which the sub-proletarian characters move in almost *hellish* spaces lapped by the new apartment blocks. The most incisive attention to urban architecture is due to the dramatic action of the main character. For example, *Mamma Roma* is determinedly looking for a new neighborhood to live in to change the existential horizon through the purchase of an apartment in a modern neighborhood. The landscape in which the events take place is, as usual, evocative, especially when we see a few characters moving between the archaeological remains and the meadows of the Roman countryside, increasingly encompassed by the new buildings under construction. A landscape in continuous transformation of which Pasolini was a great observer.

The arrival of *Mamma Roma* and Ettore at Cefalumo (where their new home and neighborhood are) takes place in a square arch in concrete and iron that leads to an empty and impersonal space like *Mamma Roma*’s new apartment, cold and white. The palaces of Cefalumo rise like anonymous blocks in front of a huge lawn dotted with ruins and the remains of the Roman aqueduct, monoliths of a pagan antiquity beyond history. In this immobile space, the eras, nature, and architecture are

not the sign of temporal stratification, but a limbo of history. Another example that we need to note is *Teorema*, a film that was released in 1968 at the same time as the novel. The character of Emilia (Laura Betti), the maid of an upper-class Milanese family destructured by the arrival of the godlike Visitor/Holy Guest (Terence Stamp), a sort of a new Dionysus, after the latter's seduction, leaves the bourgeois space of the villa to go to his hometown. Indeed, in one of the film's final sequences, Emilia leaves her home village and walks to the outskirts of the town in the company of an old woman (played in the film by the director's own mother, Susanna). The two reach a wasteland-like space on the outskirts of the city, most likely a construction site, as suggested by the presence of an excavator. The small village appears as a strip of countryside that has survived the advancing construction, a space that will soon be submerged and destroyed. Emilia, who is crying, lies down on the ground and orders the older woman to cover her up until only her eyes remain visible.

We are in a building site, all around buildings under construction and a stationary excavator, ready to resume its work of devastation, an excavator that looks so much like the one in the above poem. Little more than ten years have passed from the writing of that poem, but the process of devastation, for Pasolini, seems interminable. In these examples from his cinema, we can clearly see that the intent of Pasolini was to denounce the state of the Roman suburbs in the years of building speculation and the social impoverishment of the city territory. Pasolini's concern for preserving peasant and sub-proletarian communities and their dwellings from

erasure is very much in line with what Iovino brilliantly terms "an ecology of difference", arguing that the intellectual's artistic output is dominated by a line of enquiry that considers "diversity as essential to the existence of the whole"<sup>13</sup>.

The new fascism was born from the destruction of the environment, with the economic boom, and therefore the defense of the natural environment and the landscape had to be understood as a new form of resistance. Pasolini did not only look at the destruction of the environment and history in Italy, but also in the whole world, and in particular in that part of the world where the ancient beauty had to be preserved.

Environmental pollution, for Pasolini, is also aesthetic pollution. In saying that, I refer in particular to a documentary entitled *The shape of the city* (1974), the form of the town of Orte, a documentary broadcast in 1974 by the Italian state television RAI, in which Pasolini points out the offense and the pain that new buildings bring to his soul. Through the framing of his camera, the director contemplates the changes in landscape and urbanism. This metafilmic operation serves Pasolini to reconstruct the purity of the architectural perspective that has been distorted over the years by modern construction. Moving the camera lens, at a certain point, a cubic, newly constructed building appears in the field of vision, spoiling the silhouette of Orte's medieval buildings. I quote verbatim: "So what is it about them that offends me? It is the fact that they belong to another world, they have stylistic characteristics that are completely different from those of the ancient city of Orte, and the mixing of the two annoys, it is a crack, a disturbance of form, of style"<sup>14</sup>.

The form of the city, Pasolini says, “is defaced by something foreign, something that abnormally violates the landscape, like so many other medieval views in Italy, like many other medieval sights in Italy”<sup>15</sup>. Amazing the relevance that still emanates from those images today and it is truly heartbreaking.

In approaching the territory as a director, Pasolini observes the modernist building ripping apart the harmony of the cities. For this reason, he discarded as potential settings Israel and Romania, where he wanted to shoot respectively *Il Vangelo secondo Matteo* (1964) and *Edipo re* (1967), in favour of Lucania and Basilicata, the last areas where Pasolini could trace the pre-industrialized scenarios represented in ancient and religious texts.

Before moving on the discussion of animals in Pasolini’s film *Porcile*, I would like to mention the documentary *Le mura di Sana*, which vividly exposed the destruction of the medieval architecture of North Yemen’s capital city to make way for the modernization required by “neocapitalist policies”. How capitalist industrialization and modernization quickly erase the grace of this city. The film ends with a poignant sequence of shots panning across the ancient walls of Sana’a, while Pasolini’s voice intones a plea to the United Nations to take action: “We call upon UNESCO in the name of the true, if also unexpressed, will of the Yemenite people. In the name of simple men whom poverty has kept pure. In the name of the grace of obscure centuries. In the name of the scandalous revolutionary force of the past”<sup>16</sup>.

### **Pigsty and Anthropomorphism of the Animals**

Another example worth noting is the role of animals in *Pigsty*<sup>17</sup>. Our encounter with animals in the long journey of our species development helped us define our cognitive apparatus, our language, our imagery, and with them our sense of the sacred. In other words, humans must play an active role in managing their relationship with nature. I think it is important to point out the anthropomorphizing of the animal that highlights the abuse of animals. We thus witness a total reversal of values: on the one hand, animals become objects of love; on the other, humans are animalized. Pigs have a double meaning in the theatrical text and in the film: Julian loves real pigs and one episode, that of Spinoza (cut in the film), takes place in a real pigsty; but Julian is also the victim of metaphorical pigs (the fathers capitalists and bourgeois in the metaphorical pigsty of the neo-capitalist Germany). In its polysemic complexity, the animal in the pigsty is the place to reveal the mechanisms on which a capitalist society works. The neo-capitalist machine has reduced the animal to one and only one function: that of a raw material of the mass slaughter industry to be turned into steaks or sausages. The dismemberment of the body is not a result of the modern capitalism, rather modern capitalism is a product of fragmentation and dismemberment<sup>18</sup>.

Pasolini with the pigsty as a background uses expressions such as «the Germans are great consumers of sausages»<sup>19</sup>, «they fattened those pigs for Christmas»<sup>20</sup>, which play the role of effective puns that recall the fate of animals.<sup>21</sup>

Consider, for instance, the pig that Anna Magnani embraces at the beginning of the film *Mamma Roma*. We can say that the pig as a symbol of well-being in consumption becomes an object of criticism reflecting how power carries out its own function: the oppression of nature and exploited animals reflects the oppression of socially discriminated individuals and classes. The equation between the subjection of animals and the subjection of human beings in the new dominant system of total industrialization becomes clear in the script where there's a comparison between the pigsty, "the enclosed area where pigs are kept", and the concentration camps<sup>22</sup>.

Pasolini himself writes a letter to Anna Magnani about the procession of animals destined to be slaughtered, comparing it to the tragic fate that awaited thousands of people in the Second World War. Pasolini's thought about the similarity of wagons full of human flesh to wagons full of pigs is presented as a diagnostic thought in which he identifies the appearance of 'evil' and its symptoms in the era of total industrialization. Pasolini puts forward an alarming thesis: men and animals at the slaughterhouse. According to this perspective Pasolini sees no distinct boundary between human and animal, as both are inextricably ensnared in the same network of Power that consumes everything.

### ***Petroleum* and the Ecological Eschatology**

**P***etrolio*<sup>23</sup> insinuates a dystopian future making use of the major topic of dramatic actuality, that of the energy crisis and speculation on energy sources. Ample space is dedicated to the ecological drama

as many descriptions in the novel focus on the ecology of landscape. Apparently, the novel recounts the career of an engineer who quickly climbs the management ladder thanks to his willingness to collusion, with subversive plots and his trips to the Middle East to search for new oil fields. Carlo is an engineer working for ENI, the Italian state energy corporation and, in Pasolini's description, is a *topos of power*. Underneath the main plot, *Petrolio* contains several hints to this mutation of spaces, the increasing pollution, and talks about a power of which the Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi Eni (State Electricity Company) is a *topos*, a power that not only produces, but whose environmental repercussions have planetary effects no longer negligible. The interpretation levels of *Petrolio*, therefore, are multiple: not only political power, financial power, terrorism, but above all ecological catastrophe, oil exploitation. Thus, *Petroleum/Petrolio* resents a depiction of power, with Eni serving as a locus, that charts maps of the Earth – essentially defining a particular and hierarchical relationship between humanity and the land.

In Note 3d, *Prefazione posticipata* (*Petroleum*, unfinished by the author, is in fact made up of fragments of notes), the demonic character of Tetis begins a long journey, first on foot and then by train. Pasolini presents a poor perspective of the cities and landscapes that Carlo sees. They passed shapeless and anonymous villages where it seemed impossible that large modern buildings, grey and bare like barracks and prisons, could bury something as vital and aggressive as that land<sup>24</sup>. Gradually, the city began to approach and loom with long, terrible rows of high-rise buildings, with the construction of new

factories, including a large one from a northern automobile industry with the invasion of cars<sup>25</sup>. At a certain point, he arrives along the banks of a river “with rapid banks full of rubbish, which stinks acutely. It is, however, organic rubbish: plastic and polystyrene are still completely missing”<sup>26</sup>. The scene is set in May 1960 and Pasolini makes it clear that, at that time, polluting elements such as plastic and polystyrene were still missing. Subsequently, in Note 62, *Carmelo: la sua disponibilità e la sua dissoluzione*, in a narrative sequence set in the early 1970s, Carlo and Carmelo’s characters find themselves in a meadow on the outskirts of Rome, described as full of rubbish and car wrecks, around which the high-rise buildings of the new suburbs stand out, outlined like anonymous concrete cubes, lost in the winter haze. It is a space described almost as a new hell: “Further back there was a bus terminal full of buses, a cinema and, in short, hell”<sup>27</sup>.

Also Note 70, *Chiacchiere notturne al Colosseo* shows the nocturnal Roman streets around the Colosseum as criss-crossed by rubbish and dirty papers dragged by the wind. In *Petrolio*, Note 70 introduces the long infernal catabasis that the author describes in the sequence of notes called *Visione del Merda*, an allegorical vision, experienced by Carlo di Tetis. The “Shit” would be a young man from the bourgeoisie completely brutalized by the consumer society of the early 1970s. The vision that catches Carlo near the Colosseum takes place at the intersection of Via Torpignattara and Via Casilina in Rome. Carlo di Tetis travels through this urban hell made of distant aqueduct walls, new houses under construction, courtyards and

houses built by hand by their own inhabitants. At the moment when the protagonist Carlo confronts the “vision” images of suburban blocks of flats appear again, built in strips of space that used to be countryside. The same rigid and geometric spatiality of the buildings, courtyards and streets that accompany them and form obligatory paths to follow, seem to help maneuver the consciences of the Italians, now brutalized by consumer civilization. The choice is not random; Pasolini wants to show how “il Potere” is precisely changing this part of society, homogenizing it according to the process of industrialization. The same images return in a series of notes (121-124) entitled *La nuova periferia*: blocks of flats aligned with each other “in twin forms”, “repetitions of the same form”<sup>28</sup>, whose courtyards are characterised by ‘absolute emptiness’. Moreover, both in *Petrolio* and in many of his other works, Pasolini sketches the almost apocalyptic image of a world that seems to have reached its end: starting with *La Rabbia* (1963), a documentary of extraordinary poetic and tragic power in which, among the edited documentary images, the explosion of the atomic bomb returns obsessively.

### Conclusions

The examples and considerations presented highlight that Pasolini is not only, as he writes in *Scritti Corsari*, one who has nostalgia for the unlimited pre-national and pre-industrial peasant world, but he is also one of the first in Italy in the literary field to recognize the destructive power of consumerism, of the superfluous, and of the consequences of capitalism; Pasolini implicitly speaks of our own ecological



crises and the subsequent human catastrophes that result from them. The debate inaugurated by Pasolini on the relationship between housing and the urban landscape of ancient beauty is therefore still open today. Pasolini foresaw fifty years earlier the destructive era that we now call Anthropocene.

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## NOTES

1. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società*, Edited by W. Siti, S. De Laude, Milano, Mondadori, 1999, p. 404.
2. "Nei primi anni Sessanta, a causa dell'inquinamento dell'aria, e, soprattutto in campagna, a causa dell'inquinamento dell'acqua [...] sono cominciate a scomparire le lucciole. Il fenomeno è stato fulmineo e folgorante. Dopo pochi anni, le lucciole non c'erano più". *Ibidem*, 405. Unless otherwise indicated translations are made by the author.
3. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Il vero fascismo e quindi il vero antifascismo*, in *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società*, Milano, Mondadori, 1999, pp. 313-318. Pasolini's reflections on fascism and totalitarianism occur instead throughout a long period of his work, especially in his essays on contemporary society (*Scritti corsari* and *Lettere luterane*), where the two terms are used in some cases almost interchangeably. Using this metaphor Pasolini intends to highlight the completeness, in other words the totalitarian pervasiveness and thoroughness with which a group of people control the most intimate aspects of the nature and life of other human beings. In a retrospective discussion of his 1961 film *Accattone*, he claims along similar lines that between 1961 and 1975 a "genocide" took place that transformed the young boys of the working class into "Hitler SS" who are deprived of all meaningful values and social models. He thus gives voice to a sentiment that may be understood to achieve its fulfillment in Salò, his searing vision of murderous, Sadean cruelty under the fascist régime of the Republic of Salò.
4. The line of investigation leading to this realization can be traced back in De Martino, who published an article entitled "Cultural Apocalypses and Psychopathological Apocalypses" in a 1964 issue of the

- literary magazine *Nuovi argomenti*, which was founded by Alberto Moravia and featured Pasolini among its editors. Pasolini was familiar with De Martino's contributions to *Nuovi argomenti* and in fact made several references to them. For example, he mentions De Martino's work in some of the essays collected in *Scritti corsari* such as "Limitatezza della storia" and "Gli uomini colti e la cultura popolare". In "Il caos," the weekly column that he wrote for *Il tempo*, he mentions De Martino to support his view that drug use was a response to the feeling of the loss of "presence"; on Pasolini's readings and misreading of De Martino's theories, see Armando Maggi, *The Resurrection of the Body: Pier Paolo Pasolini from Saint Paul to Sade* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009.
5. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *I giovani infelici*, in *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società*, Milano, Mondadori, 1999, p. 547.
  6. Among the texts that constitute the pattern of Pasolini's argumentation on power need certainly mention: *Studio sulla rivoluzione antropologica in Italia, Il vero fascismo e quindi il vero antifascismo, Ampliamento del "bozzetto" sulla rivoluzione antropologica in Italia, L'articolo delle lucciole, Abiura dalla Trilogia della vita and Il genocidio* (now all, in Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Saggi sulla politica e sulla società*, Milano, Mondadori, 1999. In them are outlined the fundamental guidelines of a radical transformation of man, driven by two necessarily and intimately connected factors: consumerism and hedonism (so much so, that one can speak of consumerist hedonism).
  7. "Io sono una forza del Passato. / Solo nella tradizione è il mio amore. / Vengo dai ruderi, dalle chiese, / dalle pale d'altare, dai borghi / abbandonati sugli Appennini o le Prealpi, / dove sono vissuti i fratelli", Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Tutte le poesie*, vol. I, Edited by W. Siti e S. De Laude, Milano, Mondadori, 2003, p. 1099.
  8. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Tutte le poesie*, vol. I, a cura di W. Siti e S. De Laude, Mondadori, Milano, 2003, p. 848.
  9. "piange ciò che ha / fine e ricomincia. Ciò che era / area erbosa, aperto spiazzo, e si fa / cortile, bianco come cera, / chiuso in un decoro ch'è rancore", Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Tutte le poesie*, vol. I, p. 848.
  10. Whitmee S, Haines A, Beyrer C, Boltz F, Capon AG, de Souza Dias BF, Horton R, "Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch: report of The Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission on planetary health", *Lancet* 386(10007), 2015, p. 1973-2028.
  11. Therefore, cinema is for him a semiotics of reality because it reproduces on the screen real objects in and of themselves. This ontological aspiration to reveal ontological reality, coupled with what he perceives as a moral obligation to inveigh against the establishment, makes his films an acutely visceral expression of his personal freedom, the definition of which conforms to that of the sacred. According to Gutiérrez, for Pasolini spaces are a meta-discursive feature, landscapes of the mind and soul. For this reason the countryside is elevated to an extra-geographical concept, identifying Rome with the gates of a large periphery which consists the South of the world. There the Roman slum dweller sits on the same level as the North African peasant, and similarly the sub-proletarian of *Accattone* (1961) is universally comparable to the African Americans in the racially-segregated United States. This concept emerges in the scouting of the locations of his films. The spaces chosen do not correspond to the real ones, but are congenial to the evocation of a feeling and a vision of a tripartite society made of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The past corresponds to Friuli, where young Pasolini grew up, representing the embodiment of a lost world made up of churches and rurality; the present, being the Rome of the suburban slums in the process of decay and disappearance; and the future, incarnated by the dreamlike visions offered by exotic landscapes.
  12. In point of fact, the various shots of the Roman *borgate* presented at different hours of the day seek to imbue the place with epic qualities. The vacant lots, the dilapidated buildings or neglected banks of the Tiber, the territory of the prostitutes, are nothing less than *sacraria* – mythical and poetic locales – for Pasolini. They appear within the film as the objects of nobody's gaze, thus standing alone as sacred places.
  13. Serenella Iovino, *Ecologia letteraria. Una strategia di sopravvivenza*, Milano, Edizioni Ambiente, 2015, p. 103. See also Serenella Iovino, *The Ashes of Italy: Pier Paolo Pasolini's Ethics of Place*, in *Culture and the State: Landscape and Ecology*, vol. 1, ed. James Gifford & Gabrielle Zezulka-Mailloux (Edmonton, Alberta: CRC Humanities Studio), p. 70-91.

14. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *La forma della città*, in *Per il cinema*, Edited. by Walter Siti, Franco Zabagli, 2 vols, Milano, Mondadori, 2001, ii, p. 2124–29.
15. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *La forma della città*, in *Per il cinema*, Edited. by Walter Siti, Franco Zabagli, 2 vols, Milan, Mondadori, 2001, ii, p. 2124.
16. “Ci rivolgiamo all’UNESCO, in nome della vera, seppure ancora inespressa, volontà del popolo yemenita. In nome degli uomini semplici che la povertà ha mantenuto puri. In nome della grazia dei secoli oscuri. In nome della scandalosa forza rivoluzionaria del passato”. In fact, it was not until 1986, some fifteen years after the release of the film and eleven years after Pasolini’s death, that UNESCO granted the city of Sana’a status as a World Heritage site. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Per il cinema*, Edited by W. Siti, F. Zabagli, II, Milano, Mondadori, 2001, p. 2110.
17. In modern literature, the animal is represented as a kind of a saving element, a mirror of that dystopian image of society, technologically advanced, which imposes itself overwhelmingly in the sign of an apocalyptic destiny of destruction. See Lisa Gasparotto, “Sentieri animali, sconfinamenti umani”, in *In forma di parole*, no. 3, 32, 2012.
18. Bertolt Brecht, in Saint Joan of the Slaughterhouses, resorts everywhere to images of slaughter to describe the inhumanity of capitalists.
19. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Porcile* in *Teatro*, Edited by W. Siti, S. De Laude, Milano, Mondadori, 2001, p. 615.
20. *Ibidem*
21. For further details on this complex matter, see Georgios Katsantonis, *Anatomia del potere. Orgia, Porcile, Calderón. Pasolini drammaturgo vs. Pasolini filosofo*, Pesaro, Metauro Edizioni, 2021.
22. Derrida connects the increase of subjection and violent treatment of animals to the scientific and technological development of breeding, slaughtering, and use of animals for the improvement of human welfare. Matthew Calarco, *Zoografie. La questione dell’animale da Heidegger a Derrida*, Edited by M. Filippi, F. Trasatti, Milano-Udine, Mimesis, 2012, p. 115.
23. *Petrolio* was written between ’72 and ’75, at the height of the strategic tension and on the verge of the transformation of Eni into a multinational company and the oil crisis, simultaneously with the articles in *Corsair writings*, the *Lutheran Letters*, and the film *Salò*.
24. “Passarono paesi informi e anonimi dove pareva impossibile che delle grosse costruzioni moderne, grigie e nude come caserme e prigionieri, potessero seppellire qualcosa di così vitale e aggressivo come quella terra”, Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Petrolio*, in *Romanzi e racconti*, vol. II, Edited by W. Siti, S. De Laude, Milano, Mondadori, 1998, p. 1184.
25. “Piano piano la città comincio ad avvicinarsi e a incombere con lunghe, terribili fila di palazzoni, con la costruzione di nuove fabbriche, tra cui una grande di una industria automobilistica del Nord con l’invasione di macchine”, *Ibidem*, p. 1189.
26. “Dai rapidi argini pieni d’immondizia, che puzza acutamente. È tuttavia un’immondizia organica: mancano ancora completamente la plastica e il polistirolo”, *Ibidem*, p. 1180.
27. “Più indietro ancora c’era un capolinea pieno di autobus, un cinema e, insomma, l’inferno”, *Ibidem*, p. 1496.
28. “Palazzoni allineati gli uni agli altri ‘in forme gemelle’, ‘ripetizioni di una stessa forma’ i cui cortili sono caratterizzati da «vuoto assoluto», *Ibidem*, p. 1765.