

ABSTRACT IN INGLESE

The Limit of Dramatization. A Conversation with Susanna Nicchiarelli

Edited by Roberto De Gaetano

There is a very close link between Susanna Nicchiarelli's cinema, a cinema of characters, proper names rather than stories, and the female biography; on the one hand a musician, *Nico 1988* (2017), then a public and political figure, *Miss Marx* (2020), and now a saint, Santa Chiara d'Assisi. These women are defined by the role they play publicly, an image that does not actually correspond to who they really are. They are not what they would like to be. They are driven by a sense of rebellion in order to complete themselves instead of being estranged, affirming their identity.

Projections of a life. Lenin and Soviet cinema

Alessio Scarlato

The essay reconstructs the evolution of Lenin's figure through Soviet and Russian cinema, from the avant-garde work of Vertov and Eisenstein to the open propaganda of the Stalinist years, to the silence during the Thaw and the tight confrontation of Sokurov. In comparing these works, it emerges the difficulty in separating the cult (and demythization) of Lenin from that of his heir Stalin.

Bio-graphica

Nicola Turrini

According to Thomas Elsaesser, cinema – as an inscription and storage *medium* – can be understood as “auxiliary memory”: a memory that, since it is anchored to an automatic and mechanical device, is consequently “non-human”. This paper would like to investigate how the notion of audio-visual biography is reconfigured by the concept of “auxiliary memory”. What happens to the notion of biography when its restitution takes place through an impersonal and machinic storage device? What does a “non-human” biographical memory testify to?

Life and Action. On the Modern Character of the Italian Biographical Giacomo Tagliani

Usually, fictional biography – both written or filmed – seems to trace back the distinctive aspect of a certain life only into the sphere of the activity characterizing it. In this sense, the biographical fiction considers an individual life as an exemplary moment to analyze to superimposition between oeuvre and operation, action and production, always linkable to an end. But what happens when the center of the narration is occupied by the absence of action, of any actions? Through Giorgio Agamben's interpretation of Aristotle's categories of oeuvre and action, this paper aims to define a paradigm of inoperosity in Italian biographical cinema to highlight its peculiar modern character and show its specific theoretical relevance for contemporary culture.

Mourning and Biography in Contemporary Italian Auteur Cinema Stefania Carpiceci

My Mother by Nanni Moretti, *Marx Can Wait* by Marco Bellocchio and *The Hand of God* by Paolo Sorrentino are three recent films of contemporary Italian authors that the essay analyzes with a particular focus on the trauma of death in the biographical and autobiographical fiction. The analysis of texts is carried out with a specific attention on the rich filmography of the directors.

Anti-Biopic. The Time of the Photographic Story in Roland Barthes Caterina Martino

The essay investigates the possibility of biopic narration in photography. Starting from comparing cinematographic biopic and photographic narration, the author refers to the book *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* as a case of study. Examining the Barthesian self-biopic through relevant references in the theory of photography and cinema, the author identifies two aspects that make photographic story farthest from biopic and closer to the so-called anti-biopic.

Memories and Biography of a Nation. The Cycle of *This is England*
Fabio Alcantara

The *This Is England* cycle – which comprises a feature film and a mini-series in three seasons – tackles the biographical dimension in a complex perspective, by retracing, between *autobiography* and *collective memory*, the broader *Story of England*, as evoked by the title. In this vein, by moving between cinema and television, stories and History, Meadows’s work aims to blur the spatial-temporal boundaries of the narrative, subjecting it to specific processes of abstraction that define a more general and significant *biography of a nation*.

Life Discomposed: the Genre Between Music(al) and Life
Simona Busni

If recent audiovisual production addresses itself to a reconfiguration of the biographical as proper genre, we can certainly reflect about the way this tendency crosses the most canonical taxonomies, particularly a metamorphic (and unclassifiable) genre like the musical, which was defined a genre “without matter” (because it has not fixed subjects, places and times of setting). What happens if the story of a life espouses the formal conventions of musical language? The essay aims to explore this specific rhetoric intersection, throughout some of the last works belonging to what is called *musical biopic*.

The Story of Life as an Event. A Reflection on the *Biografilm Festival*
Roy Menarini

The essay takes into consideration the Biografilm Festival. Born in 2005, the Festival was the first at a national level to take the “life story” as a possible horizon for a selection of works, a cultural event, an editorial line and a construction of public discourse.

The Biografilm, which over the years has transformed from a festival specialized in biographies to a multicultural event that celebrates lives narrated through the main features of the documentary, is a perfect case study to understand how much – in an era of historiographical crisis and lack of trust in institutions – cinema has changed its status to become (from a place of fiction that it was) a means of guaranteeing the veracity of the stories told (hence the obsession with the “taken from a true story”).

A Life Under Surveillance: *Erasing David* by Bond

Laura Cesaro

The convergence of audiovisual narrative and the aesthetics of pervasive surveillance control contributes to a new reshaping of the biographical narrative. The paper addresses this issue through the analysis of *Erasing David* (Bond, 2010), described by the author as a documentary about privacy, surveillance and databases. In experimenting with how and for how long it is possible to hide from the eye of the big surveillance Britain, Bond's aim is to stage the extension of personal data storage. The consequence will be further, and inevitable, self-exposure.

The Body of the Hero and That of the Nation in *American Sniper*

Giuseppe Previtali

Clint Eastwood is undoubtedly one of the American directors who more and before others contributed to the fortune of the biographical genre in contemporary cinema. He did so by drawing heavily on the great myths of American culture (the frontier, the head-on us / them, etc.) and tackling the key issues of contemporary American society head on. A particular case in this sense is offered by *American Sniper* (2014). *American Sniper* manages to blend the heroic-individual dimension of the story with the collective (and traumatic) dimension of Bush's War on Terror. Against the background of the key role that this conflict has had in the development of contemporary warfare, this essay intends to question the political function that the biographical cue plays in the Eastwoodian film, a true "a posteriori" mythical narrative of the American military campaign in Iraq.

***Ibi* by Segre: Biographical Narration and Found Footage Film**

Roberto Paolo Ormanni

Ibi (2017) by Andrea Segre is a found footage film that using *home movies* filmed by the same protagonist Ibitocho "Ibi" Sehounbiatou, migrant from Benin who became photographer and videomaker. This essay examines the way in which the biographical narration, built through the archival images, turns into the chance to allowed to speak the documentary representation subject. The act of shooting herself and her life, indeed, transforms the *home movies* into a *virtual home*, a virtual space where pictures collected mark (and consign) the identity self-determination of a woman living in diaspora.

Varda par Agnès: Putting a Life Into Shape

Irene Calabrò

Starting with *Varda par Agnès* (2019), this paper focuses on the way Agnès Varda narrates and portrays her own life. It aims to clarify that the *shaping of life* remains an aleatory operation as evidenced by the resonance of her latest documentary with her other autobiographical works. Indeed, a singular life is made by encounters with the others and events, which make it an uncapturable place of contradictions.

Biography of a symptom: *Ecstasy* by Moara Passoni

Clio Nicastro

Ecstasy by Moara Passoni tells of the anorexia that accompanies the protagonist of the film Clara from childhood to adulthood. The story of Clara – a half autobiographical and half choral character, the result of a series of interviews with women suffering from eating disorders – is intertwined with the political events that shocked Brazil in the 90s. Clara's body and the urban landscape of San Paolo dialogue through what Passoni defines as the 'geometry of hunger'. To avoid exposing the anorexic body, or to protect it by leaving its fragility out of frame, Passoni chooses to show the ecstatic spectacle Clara witnesses: her fantasies and desires, her idiosyncrasies and fears.

The Films do not Save Life: on *Dark Corner (Pugni in faccia)* by Fabio Caramaschi

Ivelise Perniola

Nonfiction film manages with admirable effectiveness to combine the closing of the cinematographic text with the opening of human existence, using precisely the rhetorical and structural forms of biography to reinforce the ultimate sense that the film wants to convey through its linguistic devices. In this sense, Fabio Caramaschi's film *Dark Corner (Pugni in faccia)*, (2018) is exemplary, in this documentary the director builds a two-way biographical journey starting from the childhood of the protagonist and following with admirable narrative ability his exemplary parable of self-destruction.